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The Development of Two Units for *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching*

English to Speakers of Other Languages: “Developing English

Language Learners’ Listening Skills” and “Developing

English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills”

Udambor Bumandalai

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

The Development of Two Units for *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*: “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” and “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills”

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Department of Linguistics and English Language, BYU
Master of Arts

Today, a countless number of untrained and volunteer English as a second or foreign language teachers are working throughout the world to help meet the rising need for English teachers. Many of these volunteers have little or no training in teaching English. However, *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (BTRTESOL)* is a book and website that can be used as both a teacher-training program and a self-learning resource to help prepare these volunteer teachers. The idea for this program started with Dr. Lynn Henrichsen, who later invited a team of graduate students at Brigham Young University to work with him.

This report documents the developmental process of two BTRTESOL units, namely, Unit 6A, “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” and Unit 6B, “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills.” Both of these BTRTESOL units were designed to, first, familiarize novice and volunteer teachers with what it takes to listen and speak in a second language so that these teachers can identify the needs of their students successfully and plan and teach effectively. In addition, *Unit 6A* identifies several factors that make the second language listening process challenging. *Unit 6B*, on the other hand, describes four important characteristics of successful speaking activities. Finally, some of the most commonly used listening and speaking activities are recommended for novice and volunteer teachers to use with all levels of students. Additional resources, both print and electronic, are included at the end of each unit to help users learn more about each subject area and get additional teaching ideas.

Keywords: listening, speaking, speaking accuracy, speaking fluency, listening activity, speaking activity, developing speaking skill, developing listening skill, listening process

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a general overview of the *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (BTRTESOL) program by discussing the worldwide need for English language learning, which has created the demand for more English teachers both in the USA and abroad, and how this program meets this need. It also includes my rationale for choosing to work on two BTRTESOL units, which deal with the challenges and must-know aspects of developing listening and speaking skills in English language learners. Finally, this chapter provides a brief outline of the remainder of this master's project report.

The Worldwide Need for English Language Skills

The English language has become increasingly popular since around the mid 1900's (Crystal, 2003; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). In fact, English is the language that is spoken most widely in the world (Lewis, 2009). Crystal (2003) connects this sudden popularity of English to globalization. Globalization is a process that has created equal access to global markets and information exchange among the people of the world (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008). As a result, the world's major corporations have entered underdeveloped countries; international tourism has gotten much more attractive than ever; and, in short, a new globalized interaction has developed through international business, scientific exchange, and media (Warschauer, 2000). Moreover, the two countries that played a key role in the rise of globalization, the USA and UK, both have English as their primary language; therefore the rest of the world, out of necessity, turned to English as a common language. Richards (2002) also confirms this new role of English as he states, "English is no longer viewed as the property of the English-speaking world but is an international commodity sometimes referred to as World

English or English as an International Language” (p. 1). According to Crystal (2003), over one billion people spoke English around the world and more than half of them were people who learned English as a second or foreign language at the beginning of the 21st century. Since then, over a decade later, learning English as a second and foreign language continues to be in high demand, and coming up with an accurate number of people who speak English has gotten more complicated.

English Teacher Shortage

As the number of people who want to learn English has increased, so has the need for English as a Second language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. In the United States, according to a report from the National Center for Education Statistics, 37% of American public schools in rural areas experienced the hardest time filling vacancies in English as Second Language (ESL) teaching during the school year of 2003 and 2004 (Provasnik, KewalRamani, Coleman, Gilbertson, Herring, & Xie, 2007). A more recent report made available by the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy confirmed ESL as one of the fields in the United States’ Educational system that has an acute shortage of teachers and “the states collectively anticipate the need for 56,000 new ESL teachers, which represents an increase of more than 38 percent from the current ESL instruction workforce” (Terrazas & Fix, 2009). As reported by the Migration Policy Institute, the number of US residents who have limited English proficiency reached 25.2 million by the end of 2010, which was an 80% growth since 1990 (Pandya, McHugh, & Batalova, 2011). Factors like these and others make the English language teacher shortage in the US far worse.

Elsewhere around the world, Graddol (2000) explains that many countries lack qualified teachers or other resources to make the teaching of English in primary schools effective. Simple

evidence of how the rest of the world's countries are in need of EFL teachers can be seen in the websites of organizations that recruit such teachers year round, year after year. More information on a few of the many organizations that send volunteers to teach English throughout the world will be provided in the next section of this chapter. The demand for English teachers has existed in the past, and it undoubtedly will continue. Unfortunately, traditional university-based teacher preparation programs come short of supplying this demand, causing schools and other organizations that offer English instruction to seek out ways to recruit English language teachers, even without professional training.

Volunteers as English Teachers

Today, a large number of volunteers and other individuals with less than adequate training are teaching English as a foreign/second language in a wide variety of institutions, from government sponsored to private schools throughout the world, (Chung, 2011; Crandall, 1993; Henrichsen, 2010). A few examples follow below.

The Nationalities Service Center (NSC) is one of many organizations in the US working to reach out to immigrant and refugee communities from over 90 countries. Included in this outreach is teaching English, so that immigrants and refugees can successfully take part in American society. NSC's work depends on their volunteer English teachers, who have minimal training, and so far about 4000 ESL students have benefited from this ESL program. This program has been operating with the help of unpaid volunteer teachers. Because their volunteer teachers serve for short and long terms and sometimes even intermittently, they have no way to come up with an exact number of how many volunteer teachers they have used so far.

Project Abroad is another very successful, international volunteer organization that sends over 7000 volunteers annually from the US and Canada to 26 different countries around the

world to teach conversational English and provide many other service projects. However, their volunteers are given only a general orientation through the program's website on what to expect when they start teaching.

The list of organizations and programs that use volunteers and untrained people to teach English can go on and on, however, the key point that needs to be addressed here is how and what can and needs to be done to professionalize these teachers. When the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan (2009), gave an address regarding education reform for future success, he urged the following, "To keep America competitive, and to make the American dream of equal educational opportunity a reality, we need to recruit, reward, train, learn from, and honor a new generation of talented teachers" (Press release). Mr. Duncan's words could easily apply to the field of TESOL when it comes to professionalizing volunteer and untrained individuals who are willing to share what they have to give to the field. It is important to remember that in each teaching situation, whether it is a classroom full of immigrants and refugees, or an Intensive Language Program at a university, there are students who will benefit from learning the English language so that they can succeed in their future endeavors. For this very purpose *Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More* (BTRTESOL) has been created, striving to bridge the gap between the rising need for English learning and the shortage of English teachers by offering basic training and resources to volunteer and untrained individuals.

Basic Training and Resources for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

BTRTESOL is a teacher-training program designed to provide volunteers and untrained persons with basic resources for teaching English to non-native speakers. Keeping the needs of its prospective users in mind, BTRTESOL touches on a wide range of areas that pertain to

principles and practices of teaching a language, such as lesson planning, assessing learners, learning styles, cultural aspects of language learning, teaching learning skills and strategies, classroom management, making learning fun and effective, and many more. While BTRTESOL intends to make many important concepts of teaching available, it takes a minimalist and connectivist approach by providing only key elements of each concept in order to prepare volunteers with fundamental knowledge of teaching and then directing them to additional resources for their further development.

The entire BTRTESOL program includes nearly fifty units that have been arranged under ten main sections. Each unit is organized with the same format and starts with an introduction and scenario that help activate prior knowledge, a set of objectives, a main body with information relevant to each topic within the unit, a video segment, and follow-up questions. Finally, each unit ends with information, including both paper and electronic resources where teachers can go to learn more about the unit topic. BTRTESOL is easily accessible online at www.btrtesol.com and hard copies of the book will be available in the near future.

Rationale for Selecting to Work on BTR TESOL Units 6A and 6B

I was introduced to the BTRTESOL program through Dr. Henrichsen in December 2009 while I was seriously considering going into the MA TESOL program at BYU. As I read the prospectus for the BTRTESOL program provided by Dr. Henrichsen, it immediately caught my interest because I realized that my past language learning and teaching experiences made me an ideal fit for this project and also it would start my experience for everything that I wanted to accomplish in my career for the future.

First, the primary purpose of the BTRTESOL program was to be used as a teacher training resource. It aligned perfectly with my career goal of working to prepare and train future

teachers for their professional success. This personal goal of mine stems from my personal experiences with being taught by undertrained or even totally untrained English teachers in Mongolia, and later on becoming a professionally trained teacher of English myself and knowing how training and resources could better equip teachers.

Another important part of my decision to work on this project and choose the two units focused on developing listening and speaking skills in language learners, also started with my personal experience in Mongolia. I was one of many EFL learners who were at a disadvantage when it came to developing listening and speaking skills mainly because of the lack of professionally trained teachers and authentic context or environment in which to build these skills. Working on the two units of my choice in the BTRTESOL program would help me expand my knowledge and specialize in these two subject areas in the future.

Lastly, working on the BTRTESOL program was to give me an experience with materials development in TESOL, which I have always wanted to pursue sooner or later. There are a lot of needs to be met in TESOL in Mongolia and I have always known that I have to contribute to the future of English language teaching and learning in my country. The following information will provide a better look into my personal experiences with learning and teaching English. It will also clarify my above-mentioned rationale more in depth.

In the early 1990s, not long after the fall of Soviet Union, Mongolians found an opportunity to be connected to the western world. This opportunity came with the new change that took place in the educational system, which was to add English as an additional foreign language to be taught in all public schools. Even though the government lacked large number of well prepared teachers, as well as adequate and appropriate teaching materials, things moved along faster with the new change. As a result of this change and the lack of modern English

teaching materials, schools began using textbooks solely focused on teaching English grammar and vocabulary, leaving listening and speaking skills far behind.

Soon, students realized that knowing English meant knowing more than English grammar. The real world required them to communicate in English confidently, not only in the form of written language but also in the spoken. Therefore, this new demand caused Mongolians to seek out ways to learn spoken English. Many jobs even began requiring applicants to have adequate spoken and written English skills. However, public schools continued to teach grammar-based English due to financial and curriculum constraints, while private institutions began seeking out ways to have access to native speakers, thinking they would be the solution to filling in the missing piece of developing listening and speaking skills in their students.

With an intensified focus on incorporating listening and speaking aspects of English language learning into the curriculum and again without devoting adequate time and careful planning for the curriculum, educators rushed into the next stage of English language teaching in Mongolia. It was to find native English speaker teachers for each classroom. The simplest and fastest way to recruit native speakers was through various humanitarian service organizations. These teachers usually offered free service, but most of these teachers had no training in teaching English. This approach was what the Mongolian government could afford at the time because the government did not have enough time and resources for laying out a well-designed curriculum for teacher training and materials development to catch up with the demand or paying for professional English language teachers.

Sadly, I was one of many students who fell into this gap in the unplanned educational system of Mongolia. I had both non-native and native-English-speaker teachers while I studied English in Mongolia for six years. My non-native English speaking teachers (NNEST) focused

only on grammar and vocabulary, never attempting to teach listening and speaking skills, leaving that job to the native English-speaking teachers (NEST). On the other hand, my NESTs were usually people who had no training in planning lessons and identifying appropriate activities according to the learners' needs. Finding professionally trained NESTs was and still is challenging in Mongolia due to the financial limitations most institutions face. As a result, learning to speak and listen in English still is in high demand among learners.

As I think back, I remember my NESTs mostly attempted to teach us the things that they knew or liked, such as nursery rhymes, children's games and, of course, American holidays and traditions. They seldom had a well-thought-out syllabus to follow, and it was often apparent that they were teaching us whatever they thought of doing that day, which in most cases was playing games. I remember being just bored while sitting through those classes because I wanted to learn to carry on conversations on various topics beyond playing simple games. Sometimes, I was successful because I managed to go and ask my teacher whether we could talk about something that I wanted to hear about. Some days I just did not come to class because I felt that I was not going to learn anything useful anyway.

After learning English for six years and being taught by both NNESTs and NESTs, I still lacked the skills to adequately speak and listen in English. Fortunately, I was able to improve my listening and speaking skills when I went to serve on a religious service mission in an English-speaking country. Gaining confidence and improving my listening and speaking skills brought me a whole new perspective about learning an additional language. I remember feeling strongly about teaching my fellow Mongolians everything that I learned about listening and speaking and most importantly, feeling the need for another change that needed to be made in the Mongolian educational system in regard to teaching listening and speaking skills.

Following this experience, I worked for three years in my country teaching and tutoring English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and translating books, magazines and documents. I saw my students feel the excitement of being able to communicate in English by listening and speaking on their own, and I was even assured by my then administrators about the great work I was doing. It was then I witnessed the importance of the difference made by a qualified teacher, who was experienced and knew what needed to be done to inspire learners by teaching correctly and knowledgeably. I also realized that I needed to improve myself professionally so that I could bring change to Mongolia by contributing my knowledge and expertise as a trained future professional. I pursued my goals and received a bachelor's degree in linguistics with a minor in TESOL from Brigham Young University (BYU) in 2007, then a TESOL graduate certificate in 2010. While I improved myself educationally, I continued to teach ESL in the USA at BYU's English Language Center. I taught listening and speaking skills for eight semesters to students at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels who came from many different countries, such as Brazil, China, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, Russia, Spain, Taiwan, and the Ukraine. This experience gave me a better understanding of how learners gain these skills and what teachers should know and use to teach listening and speaking skills effectively and successfully.

In addition to gaining valuable experiential knowledge through teaching, I was able to expand my theoretical knowledge of second and foreign language teaching by taking courses on conducting research in TESOL and teaching listening and speaking to second and foreign language learners, which were taught in two separate courses for each skill area. Chapter two of this master's project will give a detailed look into the literature review that I completed studying and learning about teaching listening and speaking skills in TESOL. The BTRTESOL program is

a much-needed resource that will help guide volunteers and untrained teachers to step up to a professional level of work by giving them the basic principles behind teaching English as a second or foreign language. Most importantly, it will give teachers access to guidelines to teaching listening and speaking skills through these two units, which will lead them and their students to positive and meaningful teaching and learning experiences. As I broadened my knowledge both experientially and theoretically, I was better prepared to work on the two BTRTESOL units that I chose.

Constraints of This Project

While working on this master's project, the following two major constraints made it specifically challenging. The first challenge that was felt immediately and throughout the process of researching my two units' content was to clearly understand the needs of the prospective users of this program. This meant that I needed to understand and know what untrained and volunteer teachers felt and experienced when they taught English to others. Then, I needed to carefully select the most relevant and useful information for my two units for future teachers to be better prepared to teach. Teaching listening and speaking skills in a university-based intensive English language program for a number of semesters was not enough for me to become familiar with the needs and challenges of volunteer teachers of English in many very different teaching situations. In fact, I often found myself writing my units more towards people who were being trained at a college level. At this point, my qualifications and experience sometimes worked against me. Later, by observing, interviewing, and surveying prospective volunteer teachers, I was finally able to understand how much these novices knew and what they needed to know to teach.

Another equally challenging constraint was the limited space given for each unit's content. Since the BTRTESOL program was designed to provide information that is minimal or

the least volunteers and untrained teachers should know, I was told to keep the amount of content for each of my two units within 5-7 pages. Users of this program will most likely not have enough time or interest in knowing every fact and principle about teaching listening and speaking skills. Therefore, I was expected to include enough information for them to start teaching listening and speaking skills. This constraint meant that I needed to make my units extremely practical yet concise. Balancing these two elements was truly challenging and time consuming, but worth having the experience for the quality of work that was produced in the end.

Outline of This Project

This master's project report describes in detail the development of two BTRTESOL units titled "Developing English Language Learner's Listening Skills" and "Developing English Language Learner's Speaking Skills." Several graduate students developed other units of the BTRTESOL program prior to mine, and thus this master's project will provide additional support to document the rationale and purpose of the entire program and the two additional units that I developed for the BTRTESOL program. University regulations require all master's projects to follow a certain format, which caused a strong structural resemblance among all these BTRTESOL project reports. However, the contents of the developmental stages and literature sections of this master's project stand largely distinct from all past BTRTESOL project reports.

Chapter One of this master's project provides an introduction to the need for BTRTESOL and English learning in general along with a summary outline of the project. It also explains my personal experiences of learning to listen and speak in English as a foreign language and later on teaching listening and speaking English to learners, which provided me with the knowledge and skills to work on my two BTRTESOL units that pertain to developing listening and speaking

skills in learners.

Chapter Two contains a review of relevant literature related to the concepts of teaching listening and speaking skills in English language learners and the recommendations of experts regarding the most effective activities and tasks for developing such skills. Listening and speaking are two of the most sought after skills that English language learners want to develop because of the worldwide need for communication (Richards, 2008). As teachers find out what factors play key roles in developing learners' listening and speaking skills and then use the most effective teaching techniques to help learners, both teachers and learners will be able to experience effective as well as successful teaching and learning opportunities.

Chapter Three describes the developmental stages that took place in the process of creating two BTRTESOL units by including detailed information on my the use of the ADDIE model and the role of required and relevant coursework completed.

Chapter Four discusses in detail the stages of evaluation and revision that my two BTRTESOL units underwent while Dr. Henrichsen and other members of my master's advisory committee evaluated them. The results of feedback and reactions from fellow professionals in TESOL received at the TESOL International Association's International Convention and English Language Expo and Intermountain TESOL Conferences have also been included. Pilot testing my units with Ling 377 students at Brigham Young University (BYU) and HELP International volunteers helped in the evaluation and revision process also. Finally, the data collected from two readability programs helped ensure that my units were at an appropriate reading level for our program users, which also became an important factor to moving the process of evaluation and revision forward.

Chapter Five provides the final text of the two units that have been created during the

developmental process of this master's project, which can also be found in Units 6A and 6B of the online revision of the BTRTESOL program at www.btrtesol.com. This chapter also includes the rationale for the two units' contents.

Chapter Six, Recommendations and Conclusions, offers lessons that I learned from working on this master's project and suggestions for future BTRTESOL unit developers. Finally, this chapter concludes with my insights on the importance of the BTRTESOL program in general and especially, the value of developing listening and speaking skills in English language learners.

Appendices provide a prospectus for the BTRTESOL program, which was written by a team of students who have worked and are working currently to create this project. Each student on the BTRTESOL team took an active part in the creation of this document by finding more extensive information on the rationale, target audience, and competition for this product. Additional appendices also include the original drafts of the two BTRTESOL units of this master's project, survey and interview questions used for pilot study, and a record of the hours that I spent creating this master's project report.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the topics of teaching listening and speaking skills to English language learners. The first half of this chapter focuses on the information regarding teaching listening. It discusses what listening in a second or foreign language is, how teaching listening has evolved from the past until now as professionals took different approaches to the teaching of listening, characteristics of listening, and listening processes. It also talks about what makes listening challenging for learners and tasks that develop stronger listening skills in learners. The last half of this chapter orients readers to current approaches to teaching second or foreign language speaking skills following a general pattern similar to that which was used for discussing teaching listening.

Developing Listening Skills in Language Learners

Listening is considered by many experts (Ashcraft & Tran, 2010; Feyten, 1991; Nord, 1980) to be the most important of the four key skills of language. Morley (2001) states: “In reality, listening is used far more than any other single language skill in normal daily life. On average, we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write.” In higher education settings, listening becomes even more crucial since more than 85 percent of students’ class time is spent in listening (History and Overview of Listening, n.d.). Dunkel (1988) reported that her students themselves explained that their lack of academic listening skills contributed to their poor performance in school. Studies indicate that as language learners develop stronger listening skills, their learning in other subject areas becomes more successful. Feyten (1991) investigated the relationships between good listening skills and overall foreign language proficiency, and between listening comprehension skills and foreign language oral proficiency. Her subjects were students enrolled in a summer

intensive program of the Department of Romance Languages at the University of Tennessee, a total of ninety students, about two-thirds learning Spanish and the rest French. The students took the Watson-Barker Listening Test at the beginning of the language program and took the departmental foreign language test at the end of the program. The Watson-Barker Listening Test was given in the form of five subtests in order to measure the students' listening skills by having them perform the following: 1) evaluating the content of a message, 2) showing their understanding of the meaning of conversations, 3) understanding and remembering information from listening to lectures, 4) identifying emotional meaning in messages, and 5) showing their ability to follow instructions and directions. On the other hand, the students' overall language proficiency level was measured by their levels of competence in each of the four communication skills in the foreign language, which was assessed at the end of the summer program, in which these students were tested. Tasks included 1) an oral interview, 2) a listening comprehension test, 3) a written grammar test, and 4) a reading and vocabulary test. The relationship between listening ability and foreign language proficiency was computed using a simple bivariate correlation and multiple regression correlation coefficients. From this study, Feyten (1991) found that there were statistically significant relationships showing that listening skills complemented learners' language proficiency. Strong listening skills not only accelerate learners' language development, but also play a critical role in the effective functioning of an individual in interpersonal relationships, academic environments, and work settings (Dunkel, 1991). In sum, listening should be a part of any language curriculum, especially in today's communication-oriented globalized world.

Characteristics of Second Language Listening

Listening is a process in which listeners create a meaningful mental image of what they are listening to (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). Unlike first language listening, which is developed over a much longer period of time (Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Rost, 1990), second language listening is a complex process that learners often need to develop within a relatively short period of time. Successful listening involves several important elements.

The first important element of the second language listening process is that it requires *active and purposeful participation* from the listener. Therefore, listeners must pay close attention to the purpose of what is being said when participating in any sort of listening activity, whether it be listening to a lecture at a university or talking to a friend on the street. If not, failing to follow spoken messages will result in simply hearing something without understanding the meaning of the message. Listening and hearing are very different in this aspect; one requires active work to understand spoken input and the other does not (Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Helgesen & Brown, 2007). Thus, paying close attention to and having a purpose make the second language listening process more complex (Brown, 2006; Helgesen & Brown, 2007).

Another equally important element of the second language listening involves *knowing what to listen for* so that listeners can interpret messages successfully. This means listeners will need to learn to listen for key words, detect the meaning of voice tone and intonation, and interpret visual clues (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). Richards and Burns (2012) explain that “in natural listening contexts, native speakers only understand, or pay attention to, a small proportion of the talk ... Therefore, it is unrealistic to expect learners to reproduce or remember 100 percent of the listening text” (p. x).

The listening process also requires listeners to *decode spoken utterances by successfully integrating information from a range of sources* such as phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information (Celce-Murcia, 1995). Even though the first language listening process involves the same form of decoding process, it develops in most cases naturally over a longer period of time through a greater variety of input. However, as second language learners develop their listening skills through repeated input and training over time, this process of decoding information may become near natural (Celce-Murcia, 1995).

Most listening situations in conversational settings happen *in real time*, which means listeners are not able to see a written representation of what is being said, or even to go back and listen again if they miss some parts of the spoken message (Richards, 2008). It also means that the above-mentioned complex process of decoding information from various sources to make sense of spoken input needs to be made at a fast pace. For lower level learners, quick and real time processing of information through listening becomes extremely challenging causing them to miss or even misinterpret information (Buck, 2001). As learners get more exposed to real time listening and train their ears as well as increase their vocabulary, grammar, and cultural knowledge of the language, they learn to process listening input at a faster pace.

Language learners, in general, experience two types of listening activities. The first one occurs in conversations between two or more people. This type of listening has been called *reciprocal* (Helgesen & Brown, 2007), *conversational* (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005), *bidirectional* (Morley, 2001), and *two-way* (Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards & Burns, 2012) listening. During conversations, participants exchange ideas and give feedback. This means listeners not only receive information, but they process it and respond accordingly (Ashcroft & Tran, 2010; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Helgesen & Brown, 2007.) Responding is one of the

four key activities a person does when listening effectively. It represents a person's reaction to a spoken message by the use of proper verbal and nonverbal cues (Feyten, 1991). Nevertheless, two-way listening can overwhelm learners if they do not know how to listen "carefully for specific details" (Richards & Burns, 2012, p. 4).

One-way or unidirectional (Morley, 2001) and *non-reciprocal* (Helgesen & Brown, 2007) listening is another type of listening that learners may have to perform. It is used mostly during lectures, when watching movies or TV programs and listening to radio, or when people just overhear others while in public. The information people receive through this kind of listening simply informs them, and listeners do not need to do anything in response. People get engaged in these two aforementioned types of listening activities in either their first or second language. However, learning to listen in a second or foreign language requires hard work and practice. Knowing about these two types of listening will assist both teachers and learners as they experience more positive and effective teaching and learning processes.

Listening Processes

Today, experts know more about what exactly happens during the process of listening in a second or foreign language. The following three listening processes have been deemed the most important.

The first is called *bottom-up processing*. Bottom-up listening occurs as listeners use their second language knowledge of individual sounds, words, clauses, sentences, and text to create meaning with them (Brown, 2007a; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2008). To be specific, as a bottom-up listener hears the expression "What's your name?" he starts with the smallest units, which are the individual sounds *w-a-t-s*, etc. Next, he puts these sounds together and determines where word boundaries

fall to form words and then adds up the meaning of all the words in the utterance to build meaning for the sentence noting the grammatical features of each word and the utterance as a whole. Gough (as cited in Carrell, Devine & Eskey, 1990) outlined this model of information processing in 1972 as it relates to reading, emphasizing the importance of all segments being accounted for during the bottom-up processing. Later, researchers began applying this model to second language listening. Language learners depend on bottom-up processing extensively while they are first beginning to learn a new language. Even advanced learners may sometimes need to use bottom-up processing when they are listening to difficult speech. Since during bottom-up processing listeners have to attend to every element of the spoken utterance to make meaning, time becomes an unavoidable difficulty, especially with lower-level learners. Consequently, having learners work on practicing word segmentation skills, which is the ability to parse a sound stream into meaningful units, can help them become good at using bottom-up processing. As language learners learn to pay close attention to stress, intonation, and pause boundaries, word segmentation skills can successfully be developed (Vandergrift, 2007).

The second major listening process is called *top-down processing*. It utilizes learners' background knowledge as much as or more than the actual spoken input. Background knowledge is also called *schema*, which includes both the learners' knowledge of the content (from their life experiences) and their knowledge of the language itself (in terms of grammar, vocabulary, etc) to determine the general meaning of a spoken utterance (Brown, 2007a; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2008). More advanced learners of a language are better able to use this type of processing. For instance, when a learner hears the following, "*I woke up late this morning because I did not hear my ...*," she should be able to complete this statement with her background knowledge of English grammar (knowing that after

a possessive pronoun like *my*, a noun is most likely to follow, especially when it is at the end of the sentence, in direct object position). After hearing *wake up*, the listener also uses her knowledge to predict that the final noun in this sentence will be “alarm clock.” The listener does not even need to attend to every sound or syllable in *a-l-a-r-m c-l-o-ck* to know what the noun in this sentence is. She merely notices enough of the spoken signal to confirm her prediction. Learners begin to use top-down listening once they reach the intermediate level and beyond. However, using only top-down processing during listening is not the best way to listen. Listening to just some of the words and making guesses based on linguistic knowledge and past experiences does not always result in a correct or complete understanding of spoken messages (Rubin, 1994).

The last listening process is a combination of the first two, and advanced second language listeners use it very commonly. It is termed *interactive processing*. Rumelhart (as cited in Carrell, Devine, & Eskey, 1990) first developed this information-processing model in the context of reading. Later on, it was adapted to listening, which, like reading, is also a receptive language skill. Employing interactive listening processing, listeners use both bottom-up and top-down processing simultaneously allowing them to process the information rapidly and accurately (Brown 2007a; Richards, 2008; Vandergrift, 2011). Brown (2007a) states, “It is important for learners to operate from both directions since both can offer keys to determining the meaning of spoken discourse” (p. 312). Richards (2008) also says, “The extent to which one or the other [processes] dominates depends on the listener’s familiarity with the topic and content of a text, the density of information in a text, the text type, and the listener’s purpose in listening” (p. 10). The following example illustrates an incident where the use of interactive listening processing occurred during a TOEFL preparation class at the English Language Center of Brigham Young

University in Provo, Utah, USA in a summer of 2012. As the following statement was played as part of a listening passage to the class “*Let me tell you about a classic experiment on rats. I think it was first done in the early seventies by Weiss and reported in the Scientific American*” (Sharpe, 2010, p. 703), a student asked for the meaning of the word “*Weiss*.” A second student quickly responded stating that it was someone’s name. The classmate, however, continued to doubt her peer’s response and asked how she knew that this word was just someone’s name. It was then the student explained how she was able to figure it out by explaining that she did not know the meaning of this word either as soon as she heard it. So she first quickly checked the pronunciation of the word and carefully compared it against the word “*wise*” and determined that the last two consonant sounds differed, and therefore they could not be the same word. At this point, this learner had used bottom-up processing by focusing on individual sounds in the two words. She then searched for a possible meaning of the word “*Weiss*” based on her vocabulary knowledge as a low advanced level speaker of English and determined that she did not know this word. Next, she decided to use her grammar knowledge of the English language at which point she became sure that this word had to be a noun because of its location following a preposition. She also remembered to pay attention to the context in which this word was being used by recalling the first sentence of the statement, which mentioned that this listening passage was about a “*classical experiment on rats*” and this helped her guess that “*Weiss*” had to be a name of the person who first conducted this experiment. She also knew that the preposition “*by*,” when used in sentences in passive voice would always be used to introduce the agent or the doer of the action. Her ability to use grammar knowledge was the result of top-down listening processing. Some intermediate and most advanced level learners depend on the use of both bottom-up and

top-down processing. Beginning level learners are able to use interactive listening process but only within their limited linguistic, social, and cultural knowledge of the English language.

What Makes Second Language Listening Challenging?

The process of listening in a second or foreign language does not end with what so far has been mentioned. As was also noted earlier in this write-up, listening entails additional, complex factors and processes that cannot be easily represented in the above-mentioned listening models. Several factors explained below make listening challenging for language learners.

Understanding stress and intonation. *Stress* is one of the key components that makes speech intelligible. In any given words stress makes a certain syllable louder and longer (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010). Brown (2007a) emphasizes the importance of word stress, as well as stress in phrases, in English speech because English is a stress-timed language. If learners do not understand where the stress is placed in words, it becomes challenging for them to discriminate word boundaries and even meaning. As a result, miscommunication can easily occur. For example, the word *present* can convey two different meanings depending on where the stress is placed. If the stress is placed on the first syllable, the meaning of this word changes to a noun meaning a *PREsent*. If the stress is placed on the second syllable, it means, to *preSENT*, referring to an action.

Intonation refers to the variation of the pitch in a spoken language. English intonation can be rising, falling, etc. Not knowing the proper use of intonation can also cause difficulties for learners because it helps them differentiate statements, questions, sarcasm, compliments, etc. For instance, the following statement can mean two different things if a small change with the intonation is made at the end. *He is eating.* is a simple statement indicating that one is eating at

the moment. However, if it is stated as *He is eating?* (With a rising tone in the end), the meaning of this statement changes to that of asking a question with a surprised tone.

Understanding reduced forms. Listening to spoken discourse can become truly challenging to learners as they encounter many reduced forms in spoken English. Spoken English has a few different kinds of reduced forms such as phonological, morphological, and syntactic. First, phonological reduction occurs when one sound affects the other in consonant clusters, with vowel reduction, and assimilation. For example, language learners who can easily read a statement “Where did you go yesterday?” may have trouble when it is said and turns into “Wheredjoogo yesterday?” as a result of assimilation. Second, morphological reduction occurs in spoken English when contractions (as in *she'll*, *I'd*, and *we've*) are used. However, syntactic reduction can be found in sentences in elliptical forms where some words in the sentence are missing yet the meaning of this sentence still remains accurate. For instance, when people are asked, “Where are you going to?” they simply reply, “Library.” (Brown, 2007a; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009).

Less proficient listeners can easily misinterpret reduced forms if they are not taught about reduction in advance. Because so much of the signals is lost, being able to successfully understand reduced speech depends heavily on the learners’ ability to use a top-down listening process.

Dealing with redundancy. Ordinary communication and even lectures often consist of not well-organized or informal language that makes use of redundant words, rephrased expressions, and elaborations. Even though stating one’s ideas over again can help people get a better idea of what is being discussed, it can also easily confuse lower-level learners, who lack the knowledge of how to recognize when a speaker is introducing a new point, ending an old

point, or restating the previous point. Speech markers that signal meaning change can be transition words, such as *and then, second, but*, etc. Words such as *for example, like, I mean, You know* indicate the point is being restated or has not changed yet (Brown, 2007a; Underwood, 1989; Ur, 1984). As teachers point out these markers to learners and help them practice recognizing the different signals that mark the repeated ideas, learners are able to develop the ability to recognize redundancy in speech.

Dealing with noise. Communication periodically takes place in noisy settings, such as on a bus, during a classroom activity, at a store, on the phone, etc. In most cases, listeners cannot control the interference of noise. In addition, Ur (1984) claims that “noise” in communication involves more than the actual outside disturbance of sound. It can be internal and caused by a listener’s lack of attention. Shannon and Weaver (1994) state that “if noise is introduced, then the received message contains certain distortion, certain errors, certain extraneous material, that would certainly lead one to say that the received message exhibits, because of the effects of the noise, an increased uncertainty” (p. 19). Using a top-down listening process is one thing that learners can do to overcome this challenge because the top-down listening process allows listeners to make up for the lost parts of the message by filling in the “blanks” with information from their own minds. Cloze listening activities, which have certain information (words or expressions) missing, come highly recommended for developing top-down processing skills to overcome the challenges that noise poses.

Rate of speech. According to Richards (1983), the number of pauses a speaker makes in any given speech causes spoken discourse to sound fast or slow or in other words at different rates of speech. Brown (2007a) also confirms that compared to speakers, listeners are at a disadvantage due to their inability to control the speaker’s rate of speech. Therefore, they face

the challenge of not being able to understand what they are listening to until they learn to understand where and how pauses are placed which is a challenging learning process in itself.

Blau (1990) conducted a study that involved 36 Polish and 70 Puerto Rican first-year students who were learning English at two universities, one in Poland and the other in Puerto Rico. The students were randomly assigned to three different groups and were given the same listening passage that had been modified into three different versions. One group listened to the original listening passage with a speed of 200 wpm. Another group listened to the version of the same listening passage that had been slowed down to 185 wpm by using VSC Soundpacer. The final group listened to the version that had three-second pauses inserted every 23 words on average. At the end of the listening task, students were asked to respond to *wh*-questions as a comprehension check. This study revealed that both groups of students performed significantly higher on the version with inserted pauses, proving that the listening passage with added pauses was the most comprehensible. Blau concluded that a number of different techniques, such as rephrasing, restatement, simplification and slowing down the speech are most commonly used solutions for helping learners to overcome the challenges that a high rate of speech creates. However, pausing proved to show a significant effect on comprehension than any of these techniques.

Hesitations, false starts, silence, and corrections. Real-life daily communication is full of hesitations, false starts, silence, and corrections (Gilmore, 2007). Richards (1983) writes, “In natural speech, between 30% and 50% of speaking time may consist of” these elements (p. 225). Speakers use false starts, hesitations, silence, and corrections in spontaneous speech for various reasons, such as not having enough time to think and organize their thoughts, thinking about or changing their ideas in order to correct their own errors, and because a lot of interaction is going

on during a conversation. In planned speeches and lectures, where speakers follow scripts, these speech factors rarely exist. However, in second language listening involving natural conversation or speech, these natural performance factors may become a challenge, creating confusion, misunderstanding, and discouragement. When language learners know about the existence and effects of these factors in spoken language and more importantly learn to recognize them when they occur, they can then become confident at handling them. Recognizing these factors when they occur requires learners to use an interactive listening process where they need to be paying attention to the theme of the conversation while listening for each individual word and how they contribute to the meaning of the conversation.

Background knowledge. Another common factor that causes difficulty in second language listening is learner's lack of background knowledge for the topic of the discussion that they are listening to. According to Long (1990), "Schemata aid comprehension by providing a context and filling in missing information" (p. 66). Additionally, the culture that they grow up in, which influences their ways to interpret the views of the world, sometimes affects learners' background knowledge. As a result, not every person experiences the same things the same way, and learners often misinterpret or misunderstand when they do not know how things are done in a new culture (Mendelson, 1998; Ruben, 1994).

Sadighi and Zare (2006) carried out a study with the main purpose of discovering the effects of background knowledge of the learners on second language listening comprehension. Students studying in TOEFL preparation classes in two schools, the treatment group was in Pouya Language Institute, the control group was in Shiraz University Language Center, were given a TOEFL test, which consisted of 50 listening questions. The treatment group received instruction for two sessions in which they studied in advance about topics that they might listen

to and be tested on. Two groups, then, were administered the same test in which the listening materials were played on a tape recorder only once. The descriptive statistics, the mean, standard deviation, range, skewness, and kurtosis were calculated for both group tests as well as a t-test was run to determine the significance of difference between the two groups. Sadighi and Zare concluded that activating prior knowledge assists greatly in the process of aural decoding. They, furthermore, suggest that holding pre-listening activities that specifically focus on activating prior knowledge can make significant contributions to learners' performance. Besides, learners develop their top-down listening skills as they use background knowledge to interpret the message to which they are listening.

Vocabulary. Vocabulary also presents problems for language learners during listening tasks. When Flowerdew and Miller (1992) studied the lecture listening comprehension performance ability of 30 first-year Hong Kong Chinese students, they discovered that unknown vocabulary, terminology, and concepts caused major problems for them. Brown (2007a) also adds that idioms and slang make spoken language greatly different from written language requiring language learners to know and understand additional meaning of words and expressions that otherwise would have completely different meanings were they not being used only as idioms and slang. Technical terminologies that are specialized are another type of vocabulary that causes problems in listening comprehension for learners (Flowerdew & Miller, 1992). Limited vocabulary knowledge is a problem for all levels of learners experience because vocabulary knowledge is subject to the topic of listening material. Teachers can make this challenge less problematic as they incorporate vocabulary activities prior to listening activities. The purpose of this section has been to give some insights into factors that may make listening challenging for language learners. Although these factors are real and sometimes overwhelming,

it is possible for English language learners to overcome them. As teachers use carefully planned and effective tasks to help develop stronger listening skills in their students, all the above-mentioned challenges can be managed. The following section of this chapter will, however, provide information about how teaching second language listening has evolved throughout years since the eighteenth century, which became an active starting point for oral and aural language skills development in second language acquisition.

A Brief History of Teaching Second Language Listening

Traditionally, listening has not always been perceived as a significant part of the foreign language teaching/learning process. In the curriculum of first language instruction, only reading and writing have been emphasized for many years because most listening and speaking skills (except public speaking) were acquired naturally or automatically. This same pattern was carried over to second language teaching and became the underlying reason for oral and aural skills' research to be overlooked. However, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, pp. 18-20), the reformers of the Natural Method movement first began challenging the usefulness of the Grammar Translation Method, opening doors to oral language teaching/learning. Eventually, listening became the last of the major skill areas for which experts started exploring and creating instructional materials (Brown, 2007a; Lund, 1990; Mendelsohn, 1998; Morley, 2001; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2005; Vandergrift, 2007). A brief overview of the development of second language listening instruction will be provided in the remainder of this section.

The spread of English language learning started in the 18th century, even though foreign language learning, mainly Latin and Greek, existed long before then, during the Classical and Medieval periods and as well as Renaissance. However, starting with the earliest of the *modern*

foreign language teaching methods, the Grammar Translation Method in the early decades of the nineteenth century, listening was not emphasized at all (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985). The primary concern of this language teaching method was not to use a foreign language to communicate through spoken language but to understand written texts. The only listening learners had to do was to listen to the explanation of the grammar concepts by their teachers given in the students' first language (L1). Thus, the developing of oral proficiency in learners was completely ignored, which became the central argument of the reformers of the Natural Method movement, as they questioned the effectiveness of the Grammar Translation Method later in the nineteenth century (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 20). The Natural Method played a key role in shifting the focus from studying grammar to the importance of immersing learners in oral and aural language.

Even though the notion of oral and aural language learning was brought to the center of teachers' attention during the Natural Method period, teaching listening did not start to be a part of foreign language classroom instruction until later in the late 1800s, through the Direct Method, which was "an extension and refinement of the natural method" (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 31). The Direct Method emphasized the concept of learning a language naturally, as children learned their first language by first listening to the foreign language and delaying speaking. Teachers were expected to use only the second language for instruction. The listening materials mainly came from the instructors, who were native speakers of the target language and used objects, demonstrations, pictures, and extensive verbal explanation to teach daily vocabulary, correct pronunciation, and grammar points (Flowerdew & Miller, 2009).

Although the Direct Method was the first method to highlight the importance of listening in language teaching, it was missing an essential aspect of teaching and learning a new language—

the development of listening skills through systematic strategies. As a result, Direct Method learners had to listen to spoken input without completely understanding but aimlessly listening to a recording or the teacher in order to imitate them, expecting their spoken language to improve automatically and their listening comprehension to catch up eventually on its own (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010). Direct Method teachers also experienced frustration from attempting to explain abstract and complex grammar points using only the second language (L2) (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985). Despite these drawbacks, the Direct Method was not all ineffective. One of its advantages was that it helped language experts see, as mentioned above, what was working and what was not working in teaching language in general. For instance, language educators came to understand that learning a new language is not simple memorization, but a habit-forming process that requires time and practice, especially for oral skills to be developed.

When World War II started, the need to use a foreign language, especially for spoken purposes, became the key driving force in foreign language teaching and learning in America. A new method for teaching a foreign language, the Audiolingual Method, was then introduced in America in the late 1930s. Similarly, in the 1920s and 1930s British applied linguists began developing an approach called Situational Language Teaching, also known as the Oral Approach, attempting to create a “more scientific foundation for an oral approach to teaching English than was evidenced in the Direct Method” (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 36). The Audiolingual Method, originally known as the “Army Method” (Hughes, 1968), stressed the effectiveness of imitating spoken input with the help of drills and the repetitive practice of dialogues after carefully listening to pronunciation and paying close attention to the grammatical features and vocabulary of spoken utterances. Teachers modelled the correct pronunciation of

words, and tape recordings were also available for the learners to listen to carefully and learn from. Listening to imitate, notice patterns, and eventually memorize structure and vocabulary to facilitate learning is still used to a certain degree in today's listening classrooms. It proves to be particularly effective for lower level learners (Flowerdew & Miller, 2009). Unfortunately, audiolingualism failed to withstand challenges, such as Chomsky's argument that the foreign language learning process is not just "a set of habits" learned "through mimicry, memorization, and overlearning" but rather, it was a "rule-governed" and "creative process requiring considerable learner initiative" (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 37).

After the popularity of audiolingualism died down, there still was a period of time when language teachers focused on teaching the pronunciation of segmentals and suprasegmentals. Flowerdew and Miller (2009) call the approach used during this period the Discrete-Item Method. Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty (1985), however, give a better perspective into this period of time as they state: "During the Audiolingual period, linguists examined features of the native language which contrasted with features of the foreign language, indicating that these would be areas most likely to cause difficulty for foreign language learners" and thus this was referred to as contrastive analysis research (p. 58). Teaching segmentals highlighted the important role the individual sounds played in spoken language. Therefore, teachers commonly used minimal-pair drills, which use "words that differ only by a single sound in the same position in both words" (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010, p. 4). Learners struggled the most when they listened to sounds that their first languages did not have. Furthermore, teaching suprasegmentals allowed learners to pay closer attention to the stress and tone used in articulating words properly. Learners had access to both the teacher and taped recordings when learning to articulate sounds accurately. Having learners practice in these ways and gain understanding as well as skills to

listen to and discriminate different sounds in a foreign language constituted considerable progress in teaching listening, though it was still not enough.

Teaching listening started to get more attention among language teachers and researchers in the 1980s when communicative language teaching was born. Communicative language teaching connected word, phrase, and sentence-level sound, stress and tone discrimination instruction to real-life listening tasks, in which learners had to apply their knowledge to complete various communicative tasks. These kinds of tasks often required learners to have stronger listening skills. Some of the most effective and commonly used listening activities today, such as information gap activities, summarizing, and giving feedback became popular during this time. Using authentic listening materials also became important during the communicative language teaching period as many listening activities were focused around themes that mirrored real-life activities that learners would eventually be engaged in (Flowerdew & Miller, 2009, Richards, 2006).

Nowadays, listening instruction is mainly shaped by task as well as strategy-based and integrated approaches. From these past years of exploration and research on teaching listening, it has become obvious that listening is a purposeful process that happens in real time. Therefore, learners should not only be able to accurately listen and understand isolated words and sounds, but also take that information and do something or complete a task with it. Then the learning becomes deeply engrained. Richards (2005, 2008) identifies these two different processes of listening that learners should be able to perform as *"listening as comprehension"* and *"listening as acquisition."* Lately, it has also become equally important to accept the fact that each learner is unique in his or her language learning process. Therefore researchers have come to the conclusion that learners should be able to know and understand which strategically planned

listening tasks will help them develop stronger listening skills. Teachers should target teaching towards the learners' needs and encourage them to take an active part in their learning processes and become autonomous learners. Nowadays listening instruction has also started involving an integrated approach, providing learners with not just a single skill (e.g. to listen for the main idea) but also to take that information and use other skills to, for example, write an essay exploring the subject in depth. It is, in this sense, we have seen integrated listening and speaking classes dominate language programs in recent years rather than seeing classes dedicated for developing listening skills only (Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Hinkel, 2006; Mendelsohn, 1998; Morley, 2001).

Teaching Listening Through Skill Building Activities That are Based on Effective Strategy Use

Brown (2007b) describes language-learning strategies as “techniques that [learners] employ to solve ‘problems’ posed by second language input and output” (p. 132). The use of strategies to teach language skills, especially teaching listening skills, has been actively adopted in the field of language teaching over the last couple of decades. Different teachers and researchers have come up with different ways to categorize strategies for teaching second language listening, but the three categories that O’Malley and Chamot laid out in 1990 seem to have been accepted by many: cognitive, metacognitive, and socioaffective (Brown, 2007b; Brown, 2011; Field, 2008; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Richards, 2008).

As language learners make use of different strategies, they gain skills that are “a set of aptitudes which the first-language listener possesses and which the second-language listener aims to acquire” (Field, 2000, p.189). Mendelson (1998) and Rubin (1994) report in their research in teaching listening comprehension that several studies have shown the positive

relationship between strategy use and proficiency level of language learners. Evidence of this relationship can be found in the study done by Green and Oxford in 1995. A total of 374 students learning English in three different levels at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez participated in their study. Green and Oxford were interested in seeing whether there were significant correlations between strategy use and success in language learning as well as gender. Participants responded to a survey developed by Oxford called the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which was a self-scoring, paper-and-pencil survey. The results of the survey revealed that successful learners used more language learning strategies and that women used more strategies than men.

Some of the successful skill building listening activities that use effective listening strategies are *listening for gist*, *listening for detailed information*, and *making inferences*. The goal behind using each of these listening strategies has been to incorporate the use of the bottom-up, top-down and interactive listening processes that were mentioned earlier. Hinkel (2006) states that these three skill building strategy-based activities are considered crucial because they can be applied to “a broad range of teaching contexts and can meet diverse learning needs” (p. 118). They also become the means for accomplishing a purpose for learners to listen for, which is the foundation of all real-life listening, and to help teachers have effective listening classes (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). Each of the three above-mentioned activities will now be discussed.

Listening for gist. Listening for gist means having students listen to a live or recorded spoken passage and find the main idea or overview of what is being said without worrying about details (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). In this way, learners practice using top-down listening processing in which they do not need to listen to and understand every single word; instead they focus on gathering general information. Learners are encouraged to pick up on key words,

intonation, or other clues to make their best guess. Planning activities to have learners practice listening for gist can sometimes take the least amount of time for teachers to prepare as long as they have a passage for students to listen to. However, teachers need to ensure that they have taken the following factors into consideration. Listening passages do not always have to be pre-recorded. The teacher can easily read the script on the spot. This process is ideal, especially if the teaching setting is in a place where an audio source or player is unavailable. In addition, teachers must carefully consider the lexical, grammatical and cultural complexity of the content and the length of the listening passage, keeping in mind the proficiency level of their learners' language. This level can be determined as teachers pay close attention to their students' language needs and performances.

As for the learners, they are not required to write down any information because the only thing they need to do is to listen carefully to find the main point. The most common questions that elicit the main point of a listening passage are “What is the main topic of this conversation/story?” and “What was this conversation/story about?” Listening for gist can be used in all levels of listening classes. However, listening for gist can be challenging for lower level students, especially when they lack sufficient vocabulary, grammar, or cultural knowledge. Therefore, teachers must always ensure that some pre-listening time is devoted to introducing new vocabulary and cultural concepts.

Listening for detailed information. When learners are asked to listen for detailed information, their assignment is much more focused than the previous one. Questions for this kind of strategy developing assignment direct students towards finding much narrower, more specific information. When listening for detailed information, learners still do not need to listen for every single word. If learners try to listen word by word, they run the risk of losing their

focus. Therefore, it is important for learners to know what they are looking for and focus on listening for it. As learners work on this kind of listening, they get to practice using the bottom-up listening process as they focus on finding a single word or specific answer (Helgesen, 1998). They may also need to use top-down strategies though to know where to find that single word. Many published materials that have listening sections commonly make use of this strategy. Thus, teachers should be able to find lesson materials easily in most textbooks that are designed for teaching listening and speaking. Teachers also can easily create their own questions that elicit detailed information by using *wh-* questions, *yes/no* questions, and *true/false* questions. It is also important for teachers to choose listening materials that are level-appropriate both in vocabulary and rate of speech while using this kind of activity to avoid discouraging the students and wasting time.

Moreover, schema plays an important role in second language listening comprehension. Long (1990) investigated the crucial role that background knowledge has in L2 listening comprehension. In her study, Long worked with 188 students enrolled in Spanish course at the Ohio State University. She used two listening passages, one on the subject of a gold rush in Ecuador and the other one on the rock band U2. Prior to their listening, her students had completed a survey that assessed their prior knowledge of these two subject areas. Students then listened to each of these passages twice in Spanish without taking notes, after which they were asked to summarize what they learned in English. The result of this study indicated that the students were able to recall more information and make fewer mistakes on the U2 passage than on the gold rush passage, simply because they were more familiar with U2. However, they relied more on their linguistic knowledge to summarize the listening passage on the gold rush in Ecuador. Therefore, Long's study confirmed the importance of background knowledge assisting

L2 listening comprehension. It also advises teachers about the usefulness of providing activities that help activate prior knowledge before having students work on tasks that require them to listen for detailed information.

Making inferences. The last commonly used strategy that helps learners expand their listening skills is making inferences. This means learners have to figure out information that was not said directly, or could not be heard in a listening passage by using clues given elsewhere in the listening passage. In other words, learners have to learn to “listen ‘between the lines’ when information is incomplete” (Helgesen & Brown, 2007, p. 67). People do this in real-life listening all the time. This kind of listening activity requires learners to use interactive listening process, which combine both top-down and bottom-up listening processes.

Goh (1998) conducted a study among ESL learners from the People’s Republic of China studying in an intensive English program in Singapore. The purpose of her study was to find out how learners with different levels of listening abilities used different strategies. She selected 16 subjects, eight of whom were considered to have high listening ability according to the results of a test used in the program (the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test or SLEP). The low-ability group also had eight students who had tested in the bottom 30% on the SLEP. Goh used a stimulated recall procedure (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p.78) involving 30-minute interviews and listening diaries to gather her data from the students. Immediately after she had each student listen to a passage with no more than 250 words, she asked the students to explain to her sentence by sentence how he or she was able to understand what was heard. Listening diaries were also kept over a period of eight weeks. Following their weekly listening activity, these students wrote down an explanation of how they had tried to understand what they heard. From these data, using qualitative analysis, Goh discovered that inferencing was the strategy that the

students in both high and low ability groups used the most. Besides looking into students strategy use, Goh intended to learn what kind of tactics her subjects used while carrying out each strategy. She organized these tactics into five categories: “using context, key words, knowledge about the world, knowledge about English, and speaker’s body language and visual aids” (Goh, 1998, p. 134). An interesting finding of Goh’s study was that even though both high and low ability students used the inferencing strategy during listening, the students with high listening ability used more tactics than the students with low listening ability. Inferencing is probably one of the most challenging strategies that students need to learn because they have to work to make meaning out of something that cannot be found directly in the passage. The words *imply*, *infer*, and *suggest* are often used in inference questions. Inferencing is a key area that teachers should work on helping low-level students with while teaching them how to make inferences successfully.

Additional Suggestions for Teaching Listening

The following additional suggestions may help listening classes be more successful.

Always create a purpose for listening. As was mentioned earlier in this report, real-life listening always has a reason or purpose and so should second language listening class activities (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). Therefore it is important for teachers to create a purpose for students’ listening by planning lessons with *pre*, *while* and *post* listening activities that guide students to listen for a purpose.

In real life, people are usually aware of what they are going to listen to whether it be through someone telling them about it in advance, or the passage itself (eg. a TV program) indicates what is coming up next. Sometimes people simply have enough background information from their life experiences to know. If people are not told or warned what they are

listening to or for, they will probably not listen attentively and effectively or even be interested in listening.

Pre-listening activities help get students' attention, activate their prior knowledge, stimulate interest, ensure that "learners achieve the balance between top-down and bottom-up" (p. 10) listening processes, and most importantly facilitate comprehension (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). By using a variety of activities, such as simply going over the instructions, previewing questions that students will need to find answers to during the listening, reading a short text relevant to what students are about to listen to, introducing new vocabulary, having a discussion on the topic of the listening passage, or using pictures, graphs, and other visual aids as a discussion prompt, teachers can successfully create a purpose for students at the beginning of the listening activity (Richards & Burns, 2012; *Teaching Listening: Developing Listening Activities*, n.d.). Therefore, pre-listening activities are crucial and should have a place in listening classes (Vandergrift, 1999). It is also worth noting that pre-listening activities do not only require students to use their listening ability but they also make use of the other language skills such as reading, writing, and speaking.

While-listening activities are tasks that students complete during and or immediately after the listening passage by responding in the form of answering questions, summarizing the main idea, or finding missing information. Students are given these tasks in advance, usually at the end or as part of the pre-listening activities. These tasks are the central part of all listening lessons because they work as a guide to ensure that students fulfill their purpose of listening meaningfully and successfully (Helgesen, 1998; Richards & Burns, 2012). When students are left without clear directions on what to do during listening, then they may become frustrated and unsuccessful. Furthermore, both teachers and students will have wasted their time and they will

not have experienced any teaching or learning. In other words, they will have worked for no specific purpose. As a result, students lose an opportunity to practice and gain more listening skills.

Richards and Burns (2012) also recommend teachers keep in their minds an important fact of *while-listening* activities, which is to keep them manageable. By this, they mean to include tasks “where listeners do something with the information they take from the [listening passage], such as responding, labeling, sequencing, selecting, or filling out a form ... and can do it quickly in real time” (p. 100). Using graded tasks, such as having the students work on “a relatively simple task the first time,” and introducing more challenging tasks later on when the passage is played for the second and third times depending on the need of students can make *while-listening* activities much more manageable (Richards & Burns, 2012, p. 102). Moreover, Berne’s (1995) study of how varying pre-listening activities affected second language listening comprehension discovered that using an activity of question previewing, which is to go over the actual questions that need to be answered during the *while-listening* period with the students prior to listening, resulted in helping the students get significantly higher scores. Therefore, teachers are able to safeguard the efficiency of *while-listening* activities if they incorporate a part of these tasks in the *pre-listening* activities as Berne’s study suggested.

Post-listening activities serve as a follow-up stage for teachers to assess students’ learning. Teachers can use this time to check students’ understanding of the listening passage, work on error correction, expand on the topic of the passage and have a discussion activity, and examine some linguistic features of the listening passage, such as vocabulary, grammar, and structure (Richards & Burns, 2012). *Post-listening* activities also give students more opportunities to practice integrating other language learning skills. However, not every teacher

uses these activities mostly due to time restrictions. As a result, they get combined with homework assignments (Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Richards & Burns, 2012). Richards and Burns (2012) also suggest that teachers should use certain *post-listening* tasks when they see a need in learners rather than feeling obligated to use them for each lesson period. Besides, the post listening stage is perhaps the most ideal time to assess students' listening skills spontaneously and informally.

Using games to assist with listening skills' development. Some games can provide good listening practice, especially games that require learners to listen for teachers' instructions and act. Examples of such games are "Simon says" and "Bingo." As learners listen for instructions, they practice using both bottom-up and top-down listening processes. For instance, during the game "Simon says," students start out listening for every word of the instructions as the teacher says, "Simon says raise your right hand," or "Simon says open your book," or "Simon says stand up." Students, therefore, have to use bottom-up listening processes by attending to the sound and meaning of each word until they make sense of the sentence by responding appropriately through their actions. Eventually, as the game progresses, students stop using the bottom-up listening process. In other words, they stop listening for the phonetic details of "Simon says," and merely check to see if it is there or not. Instead, they start using the top-down listening process by predicting that "Simon says" will stay as is, whenever it is stated and leave the remaining part of the statement for the use of bottom-up or top-down listening processes to be used depending on students' knowledge of the vocabulary. As this example illustrates, games can be used to develop both bottom-up and top-down listening processes. Also games can be a highly motivational, as well as enjoyable, way to help reinforce listening skills in learners.

Developing Speaking Skills in Language Learners

Language is a tool for people to communicate, whether it is in spoken or written form. However, people usually think that knowing a second language means, first and foremost, speaking it. In fact, Richards (2008) says that for many second or foreign language learners the top priority is to master speaking skills. Therefore, spoken language proficiency is often used as the key measure to determine one's success in language learning. Bygate (1987) says speaking is the skill by which language learners "are most frequently judged, and through which they may make or lose friends" (p. vii).

In today's world, the demand for global communication has created an increased need for spoken language skills as people interact for business purposes, while traveling, and for educational and other reasons. Because English is the modern-day international language, stronger English language speaking skills open many doors. Some such advantages include having effective conversations, career boosts, opportunities for better education, business expansion through worldwide partnerships, and increased chances to see the world.

Although decades ago reading and writing may have been emphasized over the oral language skills, for example during the hayday of the Reading Approach in the 1930s (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010), speaking has been the central part of English language teaching/learning for some time now. Many studies have been conducted and books have been written to explore various aspects of second and foreign language speaking (Goh & Burns, 2012; Stewart, 2009; Thornbury, 2005). A few of these books will be described in the following paragraphs.

Goh and Burns' (2012) book on teaching speaking is one of the latest publications that gives a closer look into the nature of second language speaking by proposing principles,

strategies, and procedures for teaching spoken English. It is based on the authors' years of experience in teaching spoken English as well as the relevant professional literature.

TESOL International Association recently published a book, edited by Tim Stewart (2009), with the goal to “shed light on current ESOL practice in teaching speaking” (p. 2). It gives a fresh look into the classroom practices of teacher-researchers who are currently working in the TESOL field as they share valuable information on finding, developing and implementing teaching materials, teaching public speaking skills, and assessing speaking.

In his book titled *How to Teach Speaking*, Thornbury (2005) attempts to make it clear that teaching L2 speaking is quite different from teaching L1 speaking and thus a new approach needs to be taken to teaching L2 speaking. He then suggests that in order to develop strong speaking skills in their L2, learners must experience three stages: 1) awareness raising; 2) appropriation; and 3) autonomy.

These books are only examples of many other titles that are directed towards teachers and researchers of L2 speaking. Teacher-researchers also continue to report on their independent research and refine the studies of speaking even further through many journal articles. In addition, numerous general language textbooks offer exercises and activities that are designed to help develop oral skills in language learners.

However, teaching speaking still poses challenges to learners simply because of its complex nature. Ferris (1988) conducted a survey to analyze the language needs of international students in American universities, and the result proved that an overwhelming 65-75% of international students struggled with participation in class discussions due to their lack of oral and aural skills. Han (2007) also states, “When L2 students are exposed to academically required class and group discussion techniques, the oral/aural language skills needed to participate

effectively in such activities become a high hurdle for the L2 students to overcome” (pp. 19-20). Learning to speak in a new language is truly a complex process. Stewart (2009) refers to it as a task that requires simultaneous attention to a range of subskills.

What Is Speaking?

Florez (1999) defines speaking as “an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information” (p. 1). Pennington’s (1995) explanation of what spoken language competence involves may help us better understand this definition of the speaking process. According to Pennington, two aspects of speaking enable learners to have spoken language competence. The first is the *mechanical aspect*. This aspect reflects a learner’s ability to discriminate and produce sounds and ultimately connect these in syllables, words, phrases and sentences in a fluent manner. Activities and tasks that target practicing pronunciation and fluency help build these skills in learners. The second aspect is called the *meaningful aspect* of spoken language. This refers to the learners’ knowledge of how to create grammatically coherent utterances and do it successfully and appropriately in any given social and cultural context. Through accuracy-focused exercises and also activities that give cultural knowledge, learners are able to increase their grammatical, cultural and social knowledge.

One of the features that sets spoken discourse apart from the written form of language is that it occurs in real time. Goh and Burns (2012) explain that because of its “online” (p. 78) nature, spoken language does not allow speakers to “plan what they will say in advance, but (co-) construct their interactions with others, as the talk unfolds” (p. 79). Furthermore, speakers are expected to think of, process, and produce meaningful spoken messages with the use of accurate lexical, phonological, and pragmatic forms within a short amount of time.

As a result, spoken language usually contains fewer academic words. Also Flowerdew and Miller (2009) describe normal speech to be “fragmented (loosely structured)” (p. 48). In contrast with written language, spoken language commonly features repetition, elaboration, rephrasing, reduced forms, sentence fragments, clustering, idioms, and slang. Nevertheless, it is important to note that different types of spoken language use more or fewer of these features depending on register and purpose. These are the key elements that create variety in spoken discourse. More on the different types of spoken discourse will follow below.

Types of Spoken Language

Teachers need to understand that two major types of spoken language exist (See Figure 1). They also need to realize the importance of learners gaining experience with using them. The first type is monologue, which represents spoken discourse that is produced by one speaker, such

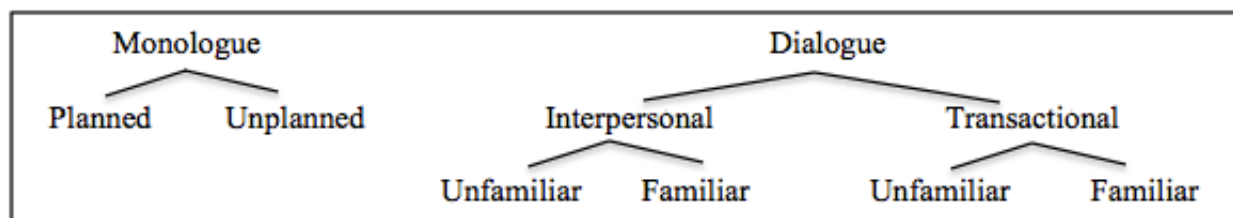


Figure 1. Types of oral language (Taken from Brown, 2007a, p. 303)

as lectures, speeches, readings, news broadcasts. Monologues vary in length and include both planned and unplanned forms. Planned monologues are better structured and are more likely to contain formal language, while unplanned ones tend to include more redundancy and can be fairly unstructured due to the fact that they are delivered in an impromptu manner.

Dialogues are the second type of spoken language that is used most commonly. This type of spoken discourse occurs in interactions involving two or more participants. Dialogues come in two types, one is interpersonal, and the other is transactional and each can be produced in both planned and unplanned circumstances. The interpersonal type of spoken language is used when

people are maintaining social relationships, like carrying on small talk, greetings, and other casual conversations that accommodate daily social interactions. This kind of spoken discourse is full of non-academic vocabulary, jokes, sarcasm, and slang. As for transactional language, it is used in conversations that convey facts and specific information, and the purpose of this kind of language is to ensure the main message is being transmitted accurately (Richards, 2008).

Therefore, participants in a transactional conversation must carefully listen and use clarification if necessary. This kind of conversation can occur, for instance, during a group discussion, while shopping, or when ordering food at a restaurant.

As we can see above, monologues and dialogues are two very different types of spoken language that learners are required to learn to use and not developing skills to handle either of these types of spoken language can make spoken language learning challenging.

Challenges of Learning to Speak in a Second or Foreign Language

Learning to speak in a new language involves a lot of work and commitment, and often learners do not realize it until later. However, as learners work closely with their teachers who guide them through their challenges, learning to speak can become less intimidating. Generally, two things make speaking challenging. First, the linguistically complex nature of the spoken language itself creates a distinct challenge for learners. Second, learners are also influenced by an affective factor in second or foreign language learning—*anxiety*. This section will discuss each of these challenges in detail.

Complexity. Compared to written language, the spoken form of language becomes challenging for language learners due to its complex nature. Both Richards (2008) and Brown (2007a) agree on this fact as well. Brown (2007a) mentions eight elements that make speaking in a foreign language difficult. They are, (1) *clustering or chunking words*, which means that native

speech consists of phrases that have been chunked or grouped together rather than kept separate in individual words, (2) *redundant use of words and expressions* that are used in spoken language for the purposes of clearly stating, elaborating, and expanding, (3) *reduced forms*, as they are used in contractions, reduced vowels, and consonant clusters, (4) *variables* including hesitations, pauses, backtracking, and corrections to accommodate the thinking process during conversations, (5) *colloquial language*, which consists of slang, idioms, and expressions that are found only in spoken language, (6) *rate of speed* at which the speech gets delivered, (7) knowledge and use of *suprasegmentals* which enables language learners to interpret different uses of stress, rhythm, and intonation, and (8) *lack of interaction* that takes away the most important aspect of communication. Both monologues and dialogues can create these challenges for learners, but not all eight of these challenges exist in each type of spoken language. As learners become more aware of these elements, and most importantly recognize which of these linguistic features cause them to struggle, then they can work on them until they turn their weaknesses into strengths.

Anxiety. Another very common challenge language learners face is dealing with anxiety. Brown (2007b) notes that anxiety has “a major affective role in second language acquisition” and describes it as “feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry” (p. 161). Goh and Burns (2012) note that anxiety truly intervenes in learning, especially with learning to speak and listen because these productive skills in most cases require learners to perform actively “in the presence of others who may be evaluating” (p. 26) them without giving them adequate time to think and prepare. Yet, even with preparation time speech produces anxiety. Learners may experience language anxiety at many different levels depending on their personalities, the situations they are in, their level of self-esteem, their inhibitions, and the types of tasks in which

they are involved. Some of the effects of language anxiety can include an unwillingness to make mistakes, feeling uncomfortable with speaking in general, and also not taking risks (Goh & Burns, 2012).

Learners often do not realize that there is so much to speaking. Novice teachers do not realize how complex speaking is either. Nevertheless, despite the challenges that the development of speaking skills brings, language learners continue to prove that with the help of effective skill-building tasks and hard work, it is possible to gain and improve second language speaking skills.

The remainder of this chapter will review how teachers and language experts have dealt with this challenging task of developing speaking skills in learners over the centuries of teaching second language speaking skills and conclude with a description of effective speaking activities.

Historical Overview of Teaching Second Language Speaking

As was noted in the previous section on the history of teaching second language listening, teaching of English aural and oral skills did not start until after the Renaissance (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 24). According to Nation (2011), two key notions influenced this circumstance. First, the use of a foreign language was initially intended to serve the purpose of studying and/or reading the works of classical writers (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985). Therefore, there was no need for language learners to use a spoken form of language. Second, some supporters of the Direct Method believed that “an incubation period of listening prior to teaching students how to speak” should exist (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 24). The rationale behind this approach was to model L2 learning after the way the first language was learned, which was to mimic the process children go through, first listening and only later on beginning to speak. Nation (2011) also mentions other experts who in the 1970s advocated the

“comprehension approach” (p. 444). These people also believed in delaying the use of spoken language in order to prevent errors, which could become habits at the early stage of language learning.

However, once spoken language use started getting central attention in language teaching in the 1940s, professionals began researching explicitly about second language speaking and exploring teaching techniques as well as creating materials for teaching speaking. As a result, much more has become known about the teaching and learning of speaking to this day.

Reading various studies regarding the teaching of speaking revealed an interesting point. In the history of the teaching or development of spoken language skills, three major concepts repeatedly come up: teaching pronunciation, teaching conversation, and balancing oral fluency and accuracy. Using these three concepts as the framework for the remainder of this section may allow us to better understand what has happened in the history of teaching speaking.

Teaching pronunciation. As early as the late 1800s, which was during the high point of the Direct Method, speaking classes focused on teaching learners how to pronounce words correctly through “intuition and imitation” (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin, 2010, p. 3). During this period, teachers and later audio recordings were used as sources by which learners would model their pronunciation (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin, 2010). Pronunciation errors were not seen as critical because they were considered to be natural and developmental. Learners would overcome them as they became more proficient. However, the primary concern of teachers in these classes was not only to have learners pay close attention to pronunciation but to do so after exposing them to hours of listening experience in the target language while delaying spoken language. The supporters of this approach believed that not putting pressure on speaking and allowing learners to listen first would give them “the opportunity to internalize the

target sound system,” and ultimately, when they got ready to speak, their pronunciation was expected to be “quite good” (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010, p. 3).

In the 1890s, pronunciation teaching saw a major development as a group of language experts led by Paul Passy got together and founded *The Association*, whose name later was changed to the *International Phonetic Association (IPA)*. The purpose of *The Association* was “to press the case for [a newly developed linguistic tool], phonetic notation, to be used in schools as a method of helping children to acquire a realistic pronunciation of foreign languages” (Handbook of the International Phonetic Association, 1999, p. 194; Howatt, 1984). Eventually, the IPA grew bigger, attracting the support of language teachers and phoneticians from several different European countries (Handbook of the International Phonetic Association, 1999). IPA “made it possible to represent the sounds of any language visually and accurately because ... there was a one-to-one relationship between a written symbol and the sound it represented” (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010, p. 3). With the emergence of IPA, both teachers and learners needed to get training in phonetics and instructional contents also needed to be adjusted accordingly.

As World War II influenced the birth of the Audiolingual Method (ALM) in the 1940s, speaking classes focused explicitly on teaching pronunciation as well (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010). Producing native-like speech was the main goal for ALM learners to reach, which required them to work on imitating and repeating the teacher or recordings. Experts also believed that having learners memorize words and expressions and forming speech habits would eventually help learners start speaking on their own (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985). Using minimal pair drills to teach learners to discriminate between contrasting sounds began to be used extensively.

Since the ALM era, pronunciation teaching has been through a couple of “designer” (still alive but not popular) approaches namely the Silent Way (focused on the phonetic and grammatical accuracy of the target language with maximized student initiation and involvement) and Community Language Learning (emphasized the need for learner-centered and live language counselor assisted learning of pronunciation) (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2009). Nevertheless, in the 1960s, during the Cognitive Approach period, an important conclusion that professionals reached was the fact that gaining native-like pronunciation was unrealistic and being able to speak in a new language was more than pronunciation learning (Burns, 1998; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2009).

Also Bowen’s technique of emphasizing “accurate pronunciation as an integral part of communication” which helps learners become more aware of their pronunciation errors through rehearsed practices combined with extemporaneous speeches has been recommended by experts in modern day classrooms (Henrichsen, Green, Nishitani, & Bagley, 1999, p. 2). Today, teaching pronunciation is only a part of listening and speaking classrooms, and teachers and learners both seem to understand there is more to speaking than just working on the perfected production of isolated speech sounds.

Teaching conversation. Conversation has been used in language learning and teaching for decades (Kelly, 1976). During the ALM period, dialogues that simulated conversation were heavily used, but they tended to be artificial, and were memorized often without variation. However, the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) since the 1980s has transformed the way speaking is taught. CLT pushed the importance of spoken language as an important part of communication. This meant that learners would need to make use of spoken language in real-life, communicative situations involving information gaps, interaction, communicative strategies,

and no predetermined dialogues (Brown, 2007a; Pridham, 2001). Communicative competence, a key part of CLT, required learners to use the target language accurately and appropriately to achieve communication linguistically and socially. To be specific, communicative competence meant not only the mastery of linguistic forms but also the ability to engage in socially appropriate exchanges (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p. 49). Competent second language speakers were also able to produce native-like language when they spoke at length with few pauses, coherently, appropriately and accurately in various contexts (Rossiter, 2009). A competent language user was also considered to be a person who was aware of and functioned well in culturally diverse circumstances (Bailey, 2005).

Many speaking materials thus started including interactive and communicative activities where learners were required to use spoken language to interact and speak freely rather than using controlled speaking activities, such as memorizing and reciting dialogues (Burns, 1998; Murphy, 1991). Interviews, gathering information from the community, show and tell, informal debate, and giving and getting directions were some of the communicative activities learners engaged in to develop speaking skills (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985).

Balancing oral fluency and accuracy. The main goal of most speaking classes is to help learners successfully produce spoken language in a linguistically and culturally competent manner, and the latest practice in second language teaching to ensure this to happen has been to take a fluency and accuracy oriented approach to teaching speaking classes (Goh & Burns, 2012). Nation (2011) reports “research on spoken fluency development has shown that the traditional separation between fluency and accuracy may not be well justified” (p. 451). Hammerly (1991) also states “accuracy and fluent second language communication is best

attained in classroom programs when it is recognized that *accuracy must be insisted upon from the beginning but fluency is a long-term goal*" (122).

Today, according to Segalowitz (2007), "fluency manifests itself in language performance as speaking or reading at an appropriate rate, speaking without undue hesitation or pauses, comprehending rapidly presented oral or written language, and the ability to perform under a range of social and physical circumstances" (p. 181). Accuracy, on the other hand, refers to the learner's ability to both produce as well as to comprehend with high level of accurateness and/or with few grammatical errors (Nation & Newton, 2009).

Nation (2011) reports "increases in fluency (as measured by speed and hesitations) were accompanied by positive changes in accuracy and grammatical complexity" (p. 451). Bailey (2005) also notes "while students are at the beginning and intermediate levels of language learning, that is, while they are still developing their proficiency, fluency and accuracy often work against each other" (p. 5). By stating this Bailey attempts to explain the tendency learners often have which is to produce speech with poor fluency because of focusing consciously on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary while they are still developing this skill. On the other hand, language learners may speak at length with decent fluency while ignoring appropriate grammatical rules and using incorrect vocabulary. Brown (2007a) explained that fluent as well as accurate speaking helps language learners be better accepted or liked by their peers, improves the learners' self-confidence, and motivates them to learn the target language better. Therefore, oral proficiency is not only important to the language learners; it also defines the way others perceive these language learners.

The key to developing oral fluency, thus, is to use communicative activities that promote opportunities for learners to work in groups and also "tasks that require learners to attempt real

communication” (Richards, 2002, p. 16) and cause them to be engaged in discussions. Working in small groups is less intimidating to learners since they talk to their peers in real life outside the classroom already, and it also makes it easier for them to have meaningful discussions or conversations. Also, since many groups function in one class at the same time, students get more chances to improve and practice their speaking skills. On the other hand, allowing more time for interaction among peers during class time reduces the amount of error correction made by teachers because during group activities a teacher is unable to monitor all the groups at the same time and correct the errors learners are making.

Nation and Newton (2009) also recommend three conditions to be met to ensure the development of fluency for students at intermediate and higher levels. These conditions are as follows:

First, activities must focus on meaning. When learners focus on the message itself and do not overly worry about other aspects of the spoken language, such as grammar and pronunciation, then they become more motivated to speak at an extended length. Ellis (2005) also agrees with this idea, especially in the sense of “focus on meaning relates to pragmatic meaning” (p. 211). By pragmatic meaning, Ellis refers to the contextualized meanings that language learners try to interpret and understand during various acts of communication, and he believes that mastering this skill is crucial to language learning.

Second, activities must be on topics that learners are already familiar with. This means learners will be able to talk about their past experiences, for instance using vocabulary and structure that they already know. In this way they do not have to think too hard about what to say and can focus on how to say it.

Third, learners must be encouraged to perform at a higher level. Learners can build fluency by speaking and comprehending faster, as they work under time pressure during fluency building activities (such as interviews, conversations, role-plays, and impromptu speeches) and do not worry about other aspects of the language (Nation & Newton, 2009, pp. 152-153).

In addition, by strategically planning to use activities that draw attention to grammatical forms and structures, teachers can achieve the goal of raising grammatical awareness in learners. Learners are more likely to develop correct spoken language as they work on communicative activities that focus on form or accuracy (Ellis, 2005). Accuracy focused instruction can simply be in the form of a reminder to students asking them to focus on using certain tenses or grammar structures as they talk. Teachers also can instruct learners to give error-based feedback to each other. This way the class activity can easily be focused on accuracy. The disadvantage of focusing on accuracy is it increases learners' anxiety and as a result fluency decreases. Learners also cannot always be the best sources for giving effective feedback especially if they lack accurate and adequate grammatical knowledge. Modern technology has, however, allowed teachers to capture spoken discourse by making speech-recording programs easily accessible in language classrooms. This has provided a new way to help teachers focus on teaching accuracy as learners record their own speech and listen to their recorded speech samples afterwards to analyze their own errors.

The development of teaching second-language speaking has a long history—much too long to explain in detail here. The purpose of this section was to mention only the most significant developments in the history of teaching second-language speaking and relate them to (or contrast them with) current practices in this area.

Effective Activities for Developing Speaking Skills

Spoken language skills can be successfully developed when learners have plenty of opportunities to use them both in and outside the classroom. In the classroom, teachers should carefully choose speaking activities that facilitate the objective of each lesson. Many speaking activities have been created for English teaching purposes and designed specifically to help develop language learners' speaking skills: in-class conversations, interviews, role-plays, dramas, debates, speeches, presentations, and so on. However, not every speaking activity can be considered equally effective for helping learners to develop stronger speaking skills. Ur (1996) suggests four basic features that effective speaking activities should have. They are the following:

- 1) *Learners talk a lot.* The learners should be talking for as much time as possible during the activity.
- 2) *Participation is even.* A minority of talkative participants should not dominate the discussion during a speaking activity, and everyone involved should get a chance to speak and contribute equally.
- 3) *Motivation is high.* Learners should be eager to speak because (a) they are interested in the topic and have something to say about it, and/or (b) they want to contribute to achieving the goal of the task.
- 4) *Language is at an acceptable level.* Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and at an acceptable level of language accuracy. It is also important to remember that teachers, not learners, have primary responsibility for keeping these four features of successful speaking activities balanced.

Some of the most effective speaking activities that have been recommended repeatedly in various textbooks in TESOL (Bailey, 2005; Brown, 2007a; Thornbury, 2005) are conversations, interviews, role-play, drama, and information gap and jigsaw activities. The following sections will discuss each of these activities.

Conversations and interviews. Conversation and interview are two kinds of speaking activities that are similar in nature. During both, two or more students are engaged in interactive communication while a given topic and/or a list of interview questions guides the interactions. Classroom conversations and interviews can both successfully reflect the four key features that Ur (1996) laid out for effective speaking activities as teachers guide students to get equal chances to freely talk, participate evenly, discuss things that interest them the most, and use grammatically correct and level appropriate language. Teachers can adjust the topic and level of language difficulty and use these activities with all levels of learners. As learners experience having conversations and interviewing each other, they develop learner autonomy, which is the ability to speak in a new language without others' assistance (Thornbury, 2005). Additionally, conversations and interviews can both be used to increase fluency and accuracy in learners as teachers carefully select activities according to the needs of the learners. Learners also feel less pressured or intimidated when they are interacting with their peers rather than the teacher. This way they experience less anxiety and higher motivation to participate and use spoken language. While conversations and interviews are similar in their format, there are certain features that set these two kinds of activities apart.

First, conversations are one of the most frequently used spoken activities in which people participate in their daily lives. Speaking activities, such as conversations, that attempt to create such experiences for language learners have without a doubt been popular. As mentioned earlier

in this chapter, learners' memorization of scripted dialogues and commonly used statements in order to help them carry on conversations was a major technique in the past. Today, however, language learners are encouraged to carry out conversations on their own by responding to given prompts and by making free use of the vocabulary and grammar that they already know (Bailey, 2005). In this way, learners engage in spontaneous communicative activity that makes them use the true knowledge of their L2 in a friendlier and less intimidating environment. During conversations, learners also may notice each other's errors, which raises the learners' awareness of grammar and vocabulary use. Furthermore, as learners become more aware of the errors that they make, that awareness contributes to the accuracy of their spoken language positively (Thornbury, 2005).

Finally, Brown (2007a) suggests that interviews can be used "at all levels of proficiency" (p. 232). Interviews are a form of conversation that can be "an excellent way to employ speaking skills" (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985, p.113). During an interview, one of the participating students asks a list of interview questions while the other responds. Not all interviews are one-way. In other words all the questions do not have to be directed to one student, but they can occur between two students as students ask and answer the same questions from the list. Interview topics are in general predictable and teachers need to help and guide learners to become aware of the appropriateness of some questions and answers during interviews (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985). Brown (2007a) suggests that it is ideal for learners to focus on accuracy by working on simplified interviews with the goals "limited to using requesting functions, learning vocabulary for expressing personal data, producing questions, etc. At the higher levels, interviews can probe more complex facts, opinions, ideas, and feelings" (Brown, 2007a, p. 232). This way, advanced learners can focus on developing their speaking fluency.

Role-play and drama. Role-play and drama are two other excellent sources of activities that encourage learners to use spoken language. Thornbury (2005) states that when learners take part in role-play and drama, they “take an imaginative leap out of the confines of the classroom.” Also role-play and drama “provide a useful springboard for real-life language use” (p. 96). English language teachers can take advantage of this type of speaking activities because with careful preparation and planning by teachers, they can easily have the four qualities of effective speaking activities that Ur (1996) suggested earlier. Role-play and drama give students the control of their learning and leave the teacher to act as a facilitator or controller who oversees the general flow and structure of the activity, ready to provide guidance when needed (Tompkins, 1998). Finally, both role-play and drama can be used in all levels of language classrooms.

Role-play is a kind of speaking activity in which each student takes on a role of someone else or acts as themselves in an imaginary situation. Both the teacher and students can be involved in choosing the theme of the role-play. Role-play themes can be situations that students have already experienced in their real lives, or they can also be situations with which they are not familiar. For example, students could role-play a situation that takes place at a store. One student can act as a customer, which would be a fairly familiar role to take on since most students will have experienced making purchases in their lives. Another student can act as a store clerk, a role not that many students have had experience with in the past. Using role-playing in language classrooms has many benefits, such as being a source of fun and motivating learning, giving opportunities to timid or quiet students to open up and and speak at their own pace, and preparing students for L2 communication in socially and culturally different contexts (Kodotchigova, 2002; Livingstone, 1983; Tompkins, 1998).

During activities involving drama, learners are given roles and scripts, and they are expected to memorize their scripts as well as understand the content of their scripts and when ready act out their parts (Brown, 2007a). Dramas are often scripted with utterances that are longer than those in normal conversation and more grammatically accurate (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985; Pridham, 2001). However, drama can become an effective choice of activity for teachers when the focus of the class is accuracy such as producing spoken language with correct stress, intonation and pauses and/or paying attention to grammar points in certain expressions in the script. Royka (2002) also explains that using drama can be especially successful with younger learners due to the fact that they see it as playing games and fun. In contrast, adult learners sometimes hesitate to participate in dramas because they simply avoid feeling silly or anxious in front of each other, or they feel that drama is not a real-life situation and thus they fail to take it seriously. Moreover, some teachers also have a tendency not to use drama because they do not know how to use the activities, because they have limited resources, because they do not have enough time for it, and because they fear looking and feeling foolish in front of their students (Royka, 2002).

Information gap and jigsaw activities. During the Communicative Language Teaching period, which started in the 1980s, information gap and jigsaw activities have become one of the most commonly used activities in language classrooms (Doughty & Pica, 1986). These activities allow students to use spoken language actively and engage them in settings that resemble real-life experiences. Ur's (1996) four features of effective speaking activities can again easily be embodied in these activities.

Information gap activities are designed so that one person has some information that the other person does not. Thus, learners have to use spoken language in order to find out from their

partner the information they are missing (Bailey, 2005; Brown, 2007a; Doughty & Pica, 1986). Information gap activities can be used at all levels of language proficiency (depending on the size and nature of the gap) and also can be used to develop both accuracy and fluency as all the above-mentioned activities do. Examples of information gap activities include learners asking each other information regarding their family, favorite food, sports, birthday, and address. The list of topics seems endless.

Jigsaw activities are a form of information gap activity in which each student in a group is given some information. However, group members must piece together all the information each one has in order to complete the assigned task. The key is that learners must not show the information they have to each other; instead, they need to talk with each other to communicate the information they have. Also the main difference between information gap and jigsaw activities is that jigsaw activities can use more than two participants. A commonly used jigsaw activity is putting together a story that has been cut into individual sentences and given to different learners. Students, therefore, must talk with each other in order to piece together the story (Brown, 2007a).

Summary

The goal of this chapter was to examine two language-learning skills, listening and speaking, and introduce a number of key historical developments in the areas of teaching and developing listening and speaking skills in second or foreign language learners. The first half of the chapter defined the teaching and learning of listening and presented a brief historical overview of teaching listening skills. It also looked at the characteristics and processes of second or foreign language listening and discussed the factors that make second or foreign language listening challenging. Finally, suggestions for more effective listening strategies for developing

stronger listening skills in language, as well as some important aspects of teaching listening classes, were explored. The last half of this chapter addressed the key developments in the teaching of speaking by first discussing the importance of speaking skills in today's language learners. Next, it focused on the most significant historical events in the development of the teaching of speaking. Furthermore, key features of the speaking process, and challenges learners face when speaking in a new language were discussed in the chapter. At last, some of the most used, as well as most effective, speaking activities to help language learners developing speaking skills were described.

CHAPTER 3: THE PROCESS

This chapter will discuss the developmental steps that have been taken in the process of designing two units for BTRTESOL, namely Unit 6A “Developing Listening Skills in Language Learners” and Unit 6B “Developing Speaking Skills in Language Learners.” The design process for these two units involved the steps that the instructional design model ADDIE and Greer’s ID Project Management Model suggested as well as relevant coursework that I have taken.

Project Management and Instructional Design Models

Instructional design, according to Smith and Ragan (1999), is a “systematic and reflective process of translating principles of learning and instruction into plans for instructional materials, activities, information resources, and evaluation” (p. 2). The success of this process of designing instructional materials can be assured when it follows a clear and effective organizational model. In the field of instructional design, a number of models have been developed that guide the process of materials development. However, in Ling 678, Advanced Materials Development, I was introduced to two of these models: one was called *Greer’s ID Project Management Model*, and the other one was the *ADDIE Model*. Both of these models were very helpful for the creation of my two BTRTESOL units and thus each of them will be closely looked at in the following sections.

Greer’s ID Project Management Model

Greer (1992) developed this model for those who manage instructional design projects to ensure that a project be done on time, within budget, and with exceptional quality. Specifically, Greer’s ID Project Management Model is used to organize the developmental process of the project after all the decisions, such as conducting needs analysis and deciding on what kind of material is needed, have been made. Greer created these guidelines based on his years of

experience working as a project manager as well as teaching others how to manage their instructional design projects effectively.

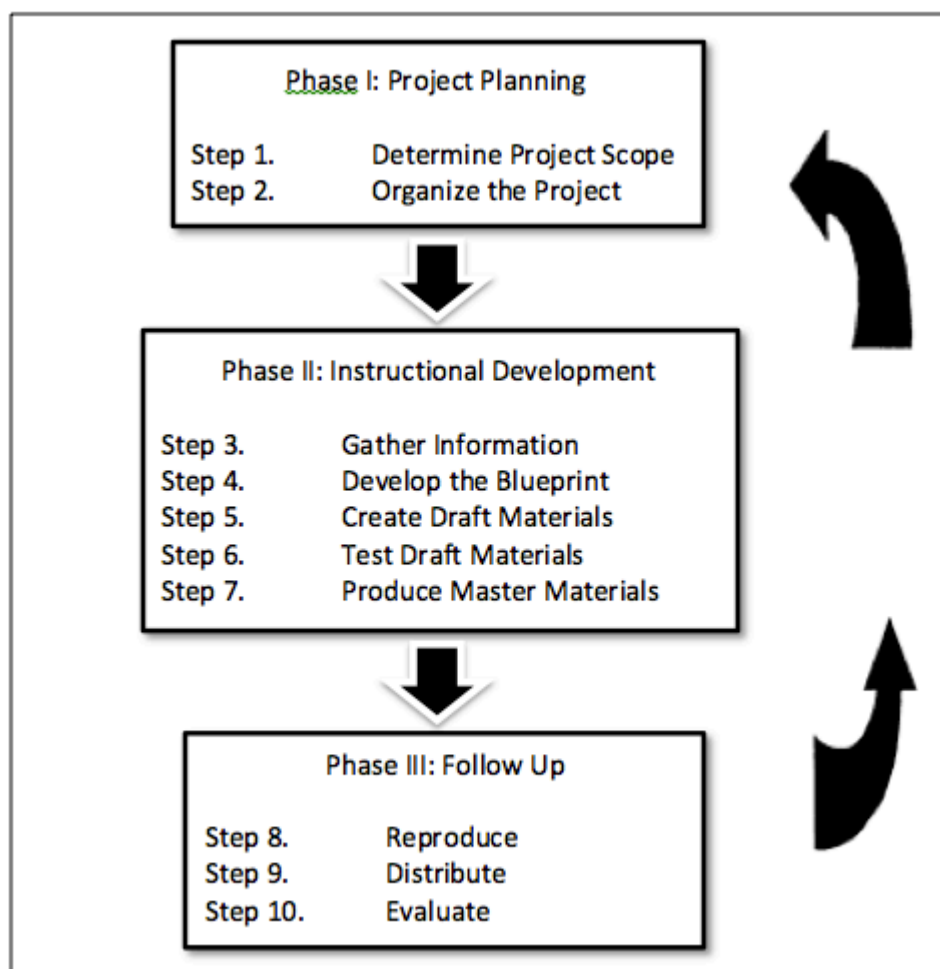


Figure 2. Greer's ID Project Management Model (Taken from Greer, 1992, p.5)

As shown in Figure 2, Greer's ID Project Management Model contains three major linear developmental phases called Project Planning, Instructional Development, and Follow Up. Within these three phases, a total of ten steps are included. This model is designed to guide project managers to effectively complete the process of designing and developing instructional materials as they carefully follow each of these steps.

The "Project Planning," which is the first phase, contains the first two steps. "Determine Project Scope" is the first step in phase one, which gives a project manager a chance to take an

initial look at the overall needed cost, time, and materials for a project. This step is then followed by the second step, “Organize the Project.” Greer (1992) calls it the actual time for the project manager to start working on the project because by this time the project is usually approved so the project manager is typically in the process of confirming the validity of the budget, time, and materials that have been projected in advance, putting together a team of people to work on the project, and calling them to an initial meeting to start the work.

During the second or “Instructional Development” phase, the project manager needs to gather information (step three), develop a blueprint (step four), create draft materials (step five), test draft materials (step six), and produce master materials (step seven). These steps entail gathering detailed information about the target audience, learning environment, and instructional material’s content, then creating a detailed description or blueprint of the material to be developed. Additional steps include coming up with a first draft and reviewing the draft with the design team, next testing the initial draft with the target audience, and lastly, producing the master material.

The final or third phase of Greer’s ID Project Management Model is called “Follow Up.” This phase consists of three final steps: reproducing the high quality finished materials as requested, distributing the materials properly to the designated places, and finally, evaluating the quality of the product by following-up with the users of the materials for the benefit of future revision.

Greer’s Project Management Model is a very practical and thorough model; however, I felt that it was more directed towards project managers, or in the case of the BTRTESOL program, the lead author Dr. Henrichsen, who had more authority over all aspects of this project such as the budget, production, and distribution. I, on the other hand, acted as a co-designer of

the two units within the bigger BTRTESOL program, and following the ADDIE model defined my role in this project much better.

ADDIE Model

The *ADDIE Model* was designed for the purposes of developing educational and training programs (Hannum, 2005). As was explained in chapter one, BTRTESOL is an instructional training program for novice/volunteer ESL and EFL teachers. In addition, a key feature that enabled an ongoing evaluation process in each developmental stage played an important role in the designing and developing process of the BTRTESOL program, which allowed several pilot testing along with some very useful feedback from our target audience to be reflected in the developmental process through multiple revisions to the units. Using the ADDIE model for the development of my two BTRTESOL units was a good fit.

The ADDIE model suggests a cyclical process for instructional materials development projects by guiding instructional designers through five simple phases of development. Figure 3 shows a diagram of the ADDIE Model and gives a better visual understanding of this process.

The name for this model *ADDIE* is an acronym that represents the five phases of development: *A*nalysis, *D*esign, *D*evelopment, *I*mplementation, and *E*valuation. A brief description of each of these phases will be provided in the following paragraph.

*A*nalysis is the phase that determines the needs and characteristics of the target audience. It also clarifies the knowledge and skills of instructors and learners, the learning environment, teaching and learning constraints, and instructional goals and objectives. Once this phase is completed, the *D*esign phase begins. During this phase, the information collected from the previous phase is strategically planned into the establishment of instructional goals and

objectives and the creation of the blueprint of the instructional material to be developed. Next, the *Development* phase focuses on writing the instructional material. When instructional

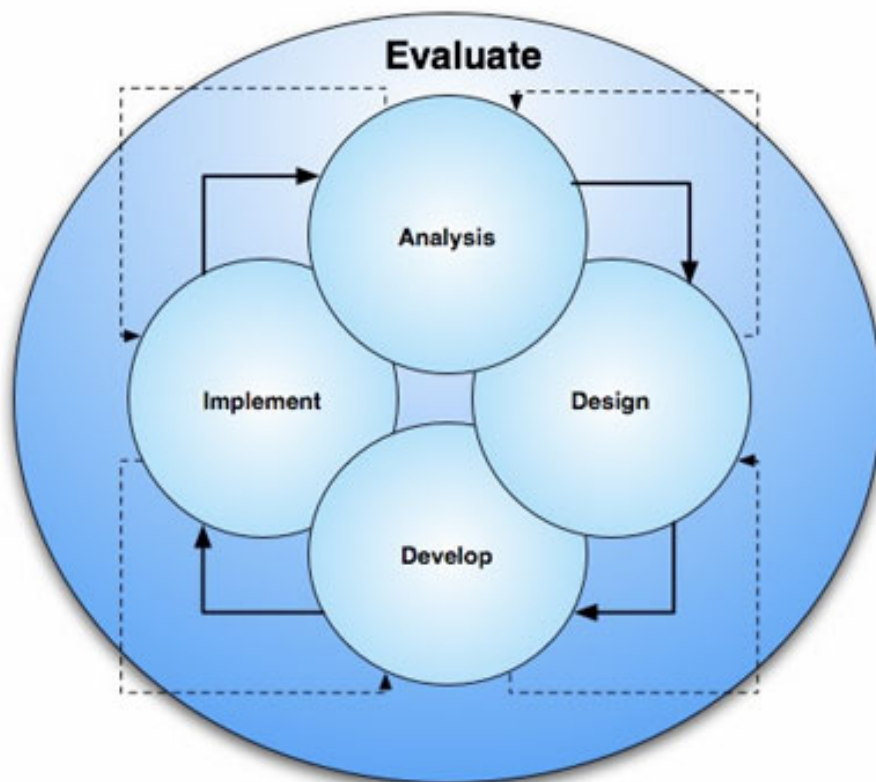


Figure 3. ADDIE Model (Taken from ADDIE Timeline)

designers keep in mind the information gathered from the *Analysis* phase and decisions made during the *Design* phase, the *Development* phase goes smoothly and the instructional material is created successfully. Once the instructional material is ready, the *Implementation* phase or the time to let the users try out the newly developed material begins. This also becomes valuable time for the developers to prepare themselves to receive honest feedback for the effectiveness and content correctness, as well as completeness, of the material. The *Evaluation* phase, however, is the most essential part of the instructional design process that works to ensure that the ultimate goal is met. Although the evaluation comes at the end of the ADDIE acronym, the evaluation phase is actually continuously conducted throughout the design process. This simple

yet flexible nature of the *ADDIE* model worked perfectly for guiding the creation of the two units of the BTRTESOL program that I worked on because it enabled problem solution and incorporation of feedback throughout the development of these two units. The following sections will describe the process that I went through to create the two BTRTESOL units I worked by following the *ADDIE* model.

Analysis Phase

The analysis phase of this master's project began in the spring of 2010 when I joined the BTRTESOL team. A team of students was already working on several other units of the BTRTESOL program, and they, along with Dr. Henrichsen, had also created a prospectus document for the BTRTESOL program. Talking to these students and reading the prospectus was a good starting point for me because both of these sources gave me some vital information regarding the purpose, target audience, and competition of our program, which was the most important part of the analysis phase.

Additionally, clearly understanding the needs of the BTRTESOL program target audience was probably the most challenging part of the analysis phase. Both Dr. Henrichsen and the earlier team of students of the BTRTESOL program warned me of how hard it was to understand the true needs of our audience. Listening to the words of my fellow students and Dr. Henrichsen this way was helpful, but it was still not enough. Much later, when I actually talked and gave presentations to some prospective users and listened to and read their valuable feedback, I was able to better understand and feel the real needs of our audience. Some of the prospective users that I talked to and gave presentations to were people volunteering to teach English in China through BYU Kennedy Center as well as through HELP International in Utah County, Latter-day Saints (LDS) service missionaries teaching English at Deseret Industries in

Provo, Utah area, and the students of Ling 377 class at BYU. I was also privileged to receive important insights from other teachers in the TESOL field on my units as I gave several presentations at professional conferences, such as the TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo and the Intermountain TESOL Conferences.

Another helpful thing that contributed to the progress of this analysis phase was to work on the revision of the BTRTESOL prospectus, which solidified my understanding of the ever-increasing need for a program like ours. During the Fall 2010 semester, I took Ling 678, Advanced Materials Development, for which I was required to write a prospectus for my master's project. Since my two units were a part of the bigger BTRTESOL program that had already been in progress and an earlier group of students had created a prospectus for it, I was expected to help revise this prospectus along with three other new members of the BTRTESOL team. We worked on finding more valid sources for the need of our program to make our prospectus more solid and reliable. As a team we searched on the Internet for information about organizations that sent out volunteer English teachers throughout the world and contacted them both by email and by phone. To name some of these organizations: ProLiteracy, Project Abroad, and Nationalities Service Center. As a result, we learned that there were so many organizations—large and small—that were involved in recruiting volunteers to teach English throughout the world that it was impossible for us to come up with the exact number of them. Additionally, we learned that many of these volunteers were being sent out without adequate training in teaching English and could truly benefit from our program.

Our research into existing competition for the BTRTESOL program also revealed that many of the books that had already been written for the purpose of training novice ESL teachers were also lacking in terms of fully addressing the needs of today's volunteer teachers. Some of

the shortcomings of the existing books similar to our program were the following: some were simply outdated, others were program specific and could not be used in wider contexts, some did not provide adequate resources, or did not provide enough topics for users. More detailed information for the research on our competition can be found in the revised prospectus found in Appendix A. Realizing the need for an up-to-date training program such as BTRTESOL was an essential part of the analysis phase because it ensured me that the BTRTESOL program would conform to the needs of its audience.

Finally, researching and studying about the key principles and theories that support the content of my two units, teaching listening and speaking skills, was an essential part of this analysis phase. Working on the literature review of Unit 6A “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” began in the spring of 2010 as I took Ling 674 Listening Theory and Pedagogy at BYU. Then, during the Fall 2010 semester, I continued to read and learn more for Unit 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills” as well as take Ling 625 Speaking Theory and Pedagogy during the Spring 2011 semester.

Not all parts of this analysis phase was completed prior to starting the other phases, but because of the flexible and cyclical process that the ADDIE model provided, each part has been revisited and revised number of times which resulted in giving the end product better quality and the writer, myself, a deeper understanding of what I was working on.

Design Phase

As was explained earlier, the design phase was a time to strategically plan and outline the goals and objectives of each of my units by carefully considering the information that the analysis phase revealed about the needs of the target audience and the content knowledge on teaching listening and speaking. After I discussed with two different sets of target audiences,

volunteer English teachers going to China through BYU Kenndy Center and staying in the Utah area at Deseret Industries' ESL at workplace program, I immediately outlined the content of Unit 6B "Developing English Language Learners' Speaking Skills" in the Fall of 2010.

The design of my second unit 6A "Developing English Language Learners' Listening Skills" took place during the Fall 2011 semester. After my first experience with creating a design plan for the first unit, it was simpler to come up with the general outline of this unit because the content areas of my two units were relatively similar in format. As I was deciding to choose the content of this unit, I had a chance to give a presentation on part of this unit's content at the Intermountain TESOL Conference in October of 2011. The audience of this conference was not the target audience for which my unit was being written. Instead they were professionals in the TESOL field with training and experience, so their feedback helped guide me in the right direction.

As was mentioned beforehand, the BTRTESOL program was already underway with some students working on a number of units along with Dr. Henrichsen, who had already developed a number of units on his own. So designing the format of this program part had already been done for me. For instance, Dr. Henrichsen had already decided on the visual, typographical, and information design (font, heading style etc), the length of each unit, the names of my two units, and the design of the BTRTESOL website. Since BTRTESOL will eventually be a book, the style and format of the page layout for each unit needed to be identical to the book would be cohesive. For this reason, I was given a sample unit that had already been developed to use as a template.

At last, the selection of video segments that depicted the key concepts of each of my unit's was done as I met with Dr. Henrichsen, who allowed me to use some of videos that he had

taken of novice teachers working in various classrooms around the world teaching listening and speaking classes. Having access to these videos was very valuable to me because they had already been recorded in authentic settings and the people who were in these videos had already consented to the use of their images. For these reasons, I did not need to come up with my own video segments, which would have required much more time and additional work.

Development Phase

The actual developmental process for my units, which was very long, began at two different times. I started working on Unit 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills” in Fall 2010 and on Unit 6A “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” in Fall 2011, and they were both completed in Summer 2012. Each unit was revised several times in order to implement suggestions and comments received at a number of different presentations. Other revisions were made as I researched and gained more knowledge on the subject matter of each unit. The BTRTESOL pilot users that I interviewed and presented to were such a diverse audience—some of the volunteers had no teaching background in any fields while others were retired K-12 English or other subject area teachers—that it became more challenging to create training material that would satisfy the needs of all. Therefore it was important to conduct thorough and repeated analyses during the developmental process. During this phase, I also worked on editing short video clips for each of my units from the longer videos I received from Dr. Henrichsen. I was able to use the video editing program iMovie to cut segments portraying listening and speaking activities that corresponded to the points made in my units. For anyone interested in seeing all the changes I made during the design phase, the original drafts of my two units are included in Appendix B and the final version of each unit can be found in chapter five.

Implementation Phase

The implementation phase of this project was an ongoing process as well. I had two major sets of novice teachers give feedback on my two units since they have been implemented. The first set of novice teachers consisted of volunteers of the BYU Kennedy Center China Teachers Program and Deseret Industries' ESL at Workplace Program. The second set of novice teachers were the students of Ling 377 and Ling 477 classes at BYU, and HELP International volunteer workers. Each of these implementation process took place during the following time frames: Unit 6B in Fall 2010, Unit 6A, in Fall 2011, and Units 6A and 6B, in Fall 2012. Working closely with our audience was probably the most effective and practical method in completing this phase. For instance, each group of these novice teachers read through my units and gave their honest and valuable feedback, which helped me to dramatically improve my units.

Evaluation Phase

The evaluation phase was the most critical phase, without which this project would not have succeeded. In Figure 3, which depicts the process of ADDIE model, we see that evaluation phase is a circle that encompasses the entire instructional materials development process. It is because of this ongoing evaluating process that each unit of my project went through a number of revisions as explained above. This phase also worked as a constant reality check determining the effectiveness of the unit contents.

Some of the methods and processes that I used to evaluate the progress of my project were surveys, interviews, working as a team, and working with my committee. Surveys were used during pilot testing and presentations that were given to bigger in size audience at places, such as the HELP International workshop, Ling 377 classes, TESOL professional conferences. Interviews, however, were used with smaller groups of volunteers namely from Kennedy Center

China Teachers Program and Deseret Industries' ESL at Workplace Program as time and settings enabled one on one informal interviews. The questions of these surveys and interviews are found in Appendix C of this document. At last, working on the BTRTESOL team as well as working with my committee was a crucial part of this materials development process because it allowed valuable exchange of ideas, input, and collaboration, which made the evaluation process more effective.

Relevant Coursework

The purpose of this project was for me to focus on gaining knowledge and experience with creating instructional materials. One of my goals in this process was also to take the most relevant courses in order to ensure that well-researched as well as informed approaches would be employed to successfully complete my project. There were four very important courses that I completed that provided the most useful resources and directions for me.

Linguistics 500 – Introduction to Research in TESOL. Ling 500 was one of the most practical courses that I took when I was first admitted to the TESOL Graduate Certificate program at BYU in Fall 2008. In fact, Dr. Henrichsen, who later on would become my chair, taught this course and introduced me to the fundamentals of analyzing and interpreting published research in the field of language teaching, writing a review of literature using a proper writing style, and conducting experimental mini-research that was acceptable. Taking this course gave me a clear idea of what it takes to conduct academic research and contribute to the field of language teaching. It also solidified my desire to pursue my goals of becoming a professionally trained language teacher and expert for the future. Knowing how to read research articles in my area of interest and using them to write a review of literature was a valuable start for my TESOL

MA program and it especially helped guide me as I worked on the second chapter of this project report.

Linguistics 674 – Listening Theory and Pedagogy. Ling 674 was a key course (taken during Spring 2010 semester) that familiarized me with the concept of second language listening and what it takes to teach as well as learn it. One of many important things that I learned in this class was to understand that listening is not a passive skill that will develop on its own. Instead, many elements need to be taken into consideration in order to successfully develop this skill in learners. Some of the things that I enjoyed learning about were second language listening processes and the history of second language teaching and learning of listening. I also learned how teaching learners to use strategies could facilitate their successful development of listening skills. This class also introduced me to materials, assessment practices, and issues relevant to teaching second language listening. Everything that I learned in this class was invaluable and became an essential source for Unit 6A.

Linguistics 625 – Speaking Theory and Pedagogy. I enrolled in Ling 625 in spring of 2011. In this course, I learned about the history of teaching second language speaking, but more specifically about the history of teaching pronunciation. This course made me realize that the area of second language speaking is much more than just teaching pronunciation, which was, in fact, an influential starting point for the development of teaching speaking. Since its beginning where speaking classrooms mostly focused on teaching rote memorization of isolated words and expressions, strictly concentrating on the accurateness of the pronunciation, the teaching of second language speaking has been through a lot, eventually becoming an important part of today's communicative language teaching world. This class also gave me a chance to experience doing phonetic transcription. In addition, I was introduced to current methods, materials, and

strategies for pronunciation teaching. Even though this course did not strictly focus on teaching speaking, which was the main subject of my Unit 6B, it helped me realize what I should and should not include in my unit because the BTRTESOL program had a unit already designated for teaching pronunciation (Unit 7B).

Linguistics 678 – Advanced Materials Development. Finally, Ling 678 was a major course that impacted the outcome of the two units that I designed for this master's project. I took this course in the fall of 2010, which was the second major course to take in my program. In this class, I learned about how to organize information to create and publish instructional materials. This class was a very practical class in which I had to format and organize the content of a source, analyze published materials, learn to use some instructional programs such as *Dreamweaver®*, *Photoshop®*, and *iMovie®*, which later became useful when I worked to insert picture and audio files into my units and also prepare them for the BTRTESOL website. Besides formatting, organizing, and editing information, another very important knowledge that I gained in this class was to understand what an instructional material developer must know in order to create good materials, and most importantly what processes and procedures one must go through. I was introduced to two commonly used models, ADDIE Model and Greer's ID Project Management Model. These models guided me through every step of the way as I worked to create my two BTRTESOL units.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the developmental phases the two BTRTESOL units that have been created for the completion of this master's project went through. For the most part the elements of the ADDIE instructional design model were used to

guide the developmental process of these two units. In addition, some key courses that I completed at BYU prepared me to successfully complete this project.

CHAPTER 4: EVALUATION AND REVISION

This chapter describes the process of evaluating and revising of the two BTRTESOL units that I created. Many of the changes that were made to the units were the results of data gathered during the Implementation and Evaluation phases that I went through, and which were explained in chapter three. Data gathering during the implementation and evaluation phases came from the following three activities: presentations given to novice teachers as well as at professional conferences, feedback from my advisory committee, and the results produced by readability programs.

Introduction

Examining the Implementation and Evaluation Phases of my BTRTESOL units' developmental process reveals what steps were taken to pilot test the units' ability to meet the target audience's needs and how that feedback had improved the quality of the units. The examination also shows, once again, that using the ADDIE model for designing my instructional units was an ideal route for me. The flexibility that came from the use of a formative evaluation process, in every step of the design process allowed me to continuously evaluate my work in order to get the best end result. Three main sources produced important feedback that resulted in greater effectiveness of my two units. This process will be explained in the following sections.

Presentations and Feedback

Throughout the process of improving the quality of my two units, I had multiple opportunities to give presentations to two very important audiences who helped guide through my units' development processes. The first type of audience that I had several opportunities to observe and have conversations with in order to assess their needs and present the rough drafts of my two units to for their feedback was volunteers and novice teachers. These were the people for

whom the BTRTESOL program was designed, so being able to interact with them was vital for me for two reasons: first, it allowed me to better understand who these people were and what kind of background knowledge they brought to teaching English as novices, and second, they were able to give honest feedback as I presented my units to them. I worked with four different groups of target audiences during this process.

Group 1: China Teachers Program volunteers. The China Teachers Program is an educational program that is organized by the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies at BYU and has been in operation since 1989. One of the key goals of this program is to recruit and place volunteer English teachers from the US in Chinese universities in order to “increase [Chinese students’] English language skills and their awareness of American culture” (China Teachers Program Handbook for Participants, 2011, p. 5). Dr. Henrichsen has been providing a two-week English language teaching workshop for the participants of this program annually for many years. He invited me to come to one of his workshop session in 2010 where he gave training on teaching listening skills to learners. As Dr. Henrichsen introduced the basic characteristics and elements of the listening process and gave suggestions for activities to use, as well as books with other sources that helped develop listening skills in learners, I was able to observe the reactions and interactions of the volunteer teachers. After the workshop session, I was also able to informally converse with several of the volunteer teachers to find out some information about their background knowledge in teaching in general as well as teaching English as a foreign language in particular. The purpose of my observation and conversations was mainly to get better informed about the target audience. Some of the questions that I asked during my conversations were, *Have you taught English before and in what settings? How confident do you feel about teaching listening and speaking skills to your future students? What are some things*

you want to know about teaching listening and speaking? Do you have some ideas of how your teaching of listening and speaking classes will go? At the end of my conversations, I quickly learned that this audience had a wide variety of skills, knowledge, and experience. The majority of the males had had teaching jobs during their careers, but very few of them had taught English as a second or foreign language. I talked to a woman who was a retired English teacher with a life of experience teaching high school students who felt very confident and well prepared to teach EFL in China. However, there were still others who had not held any kinds of teaching positions in the past and felt a little bit lost, though they were still willing to do all they could to make the most out of their experience teaching in China. These people seemed to appreciate anything that would give them direction about how to start their lessons, what to include in their lessons, and simply anything important that they should know that would make their classes successful.

Group 2: LDS service missionaries teaching English at Deseret Industries' ESL at Workplace Program. Deseret Industries (DI) is a nonprofit vocational facility set up by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Western United States. DI provides various types of vocational training to individuals who are in need of job skills. Furthermore, it allows them to work in its facilities to help them develop valuable work experience. Many of these individuals who need job skills speak languages other than English and have limited English language skills, so DI uses LDS service missionaries to teach basic English to its employees at its facilities. I was given the opportunity to get to know more about the work of these service missionaries through Iva Crookston, a former BTRTESOL team member, who was giving a teacher-training workshop to the service missionaries assigned to teach English at the Provo area DI in Fall 2010. The general structure of this workshop was first to teach the missionaries about

how to plan for their lessons and what to include in a typical lesson using the teaching materials to which they had access. The second half of the workshop was an open discussion session where the service missionaries were asked follow-up questions about what was discussed and they were expected to come up with a sample lesson plan. During this part of the workshop, I was able to explain a little bit about the BTRTESOL units I was developing to these service missionaries and get involved in their discussions by answering some of their questions about teaching spoken English to learners. These service missionaries had not had any teaching experiences in the past so their need as English teachers was to know about the most basic aspects of teaching starting with how to start their lessons and what to include in them and so on. Seeing people like these service missionaries who had the desire to teach English but no knowledge of where to even start was an eye opening experience to me. This experience helped me realize that our target audience truly consisted of wide varieties of novice teachers.

Group 3: Ling 377R and Ling 477 students. Ling 377R, Basic Training in TESOL, is an undergraduate course at BYU and is designed to provide students with “basic preparation to teach English” as international service volunteers in ESL and EFL settings (Undergraduate Courses, n.d.). These students also represented the intended audience of our BTRTESOL program, so it was very important for me to become acquainted with these novice teachers. I was able to give two presentations on the rough draft of my Unit 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills” to this class during the winter 2011 and winter 2012 semesters. My presentation lasted for about 50 minutes the first time and 30 minutes the second, and I used a Power Point® presentation, which introduced the key points covered in Unit 6B. At the end of the presentations the students participated in a short survey with five questions. A total of twelve students took these surveys and the results of these surveys revealed that Unit 6B was easy to

understand but there were a few typos. Some things that were the most helpful to them were the explanation of what speaking in a new language involves and some ideas for activities that helped English learners develop speaking skills. They also liked the list of website sources where they could go and get some additional teaching ideas. When asked what other things about developing speaking skills would be helpful for them to know, the students responded that they needed to see examples of activities that they can actually use to develop speaking skills. They also suggested that my unit was more focused on theory and definition but lacked in some things that they could use in their classrooms immediately.

From this feedback I realized that I had mainly focused on describing and making sure that teachers understood some key concepts of teaching speaking rather than giving them ready-to-use ideas. As a result, my unit sounded more like a theory-oriented, university level course. This made me realize that I needed to make my unit much more practical.

In winter 2012, I also had my first chance to give a presentation to a new group of Ling 377R students on Unit 6A “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills.” The general structure of my presentation was similar to what I did for the presentation of Unit 6B, which was mentioned above. Ten students were present during my presentation and from their survey results, I learned that Unit 6A was interesting and helped them learn about teaching listening skills. Everyone mentioned how important it was to understand the top-down and bottom-up listening processes so that they could better help their students when they might have challenges with listening in English. The students also liked that I included a list of websites that suggested different listening activities, but they suggested that giving a short description for each website including information such as what kind of listening activities each of them offered would be even more helpful. Half of the students wanted to see examples of listening activities

for each recommended listening activity in the unit, which could have made it much clearer on how to use them. A couple of students preferred to see pictures or some kind of visual representation of how the listening activities worked. This made me realize that I should have used the video clip that is included in the unit during my in-class presentation, or even explained to the students that my unit included a video clip featuring a sample listening class.

Overall, the Ling 377R class students responded positively to this unit, but (as with Unit 6B) I felt that I needed to make this unit a little bit more practical by adding more hands on and practical teaching ideas for teaching listening.

Lastly, another opportunity to pilot both of my units with a student audience came in the fall of 2012. Dr. Henrichsen was teaching Ling 477, Methods and Strategies in TESOL, which was a class offered to undergraduate students who were minoring in TESOL but majoring in other subjects in the College of Humanities at BYU. Ling 477 was designed to prepare students to have experiences learning about instructional methods and strategies for teaching English as a second or foreign language, curriculum development for teaching listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Few of these students had experience teaching English in the past, but they all hoped to teach English some time in the future which was why they were taking this class. I did not give a presentation to this group of students, but they were required to read the near final versions of my two units and come prepared to discuss what they learned from them in class. Even though I did not conduct a survey to get feedback from these students, I was able to sit in their classes where they discussed the content of my two units. Their participation and reaction to their reading of my two units seemed to have been satisfactory because they did it in confidence. I had a chance to talk to three students and get feedback on my units. They all expressed that what they learned in my units was very easy to understand and informative. I, therefore, took

their comments as a sign that the work on my two units should be concluded. This was also a moment for me to feel very confident about what I did with my two units.

Group 4: HELP International volunteers. In March 2011, another opportunity to pilot test my Unit 6B came up, as our BTRTESOL team was asked to give a short presentation at a training session for HELP International, a non-profit organization founded by BYU faculty and students and engaged in projects in public health, education, and entrepreneurship around the world. HELP International has been sending volunteers throughout the world to fight poverty and empower people since 1999 (Mission & History, n.d.). Teaching English is one of the educational projects in which their volunteers engage. The HELP International volunteers who were in my training session consisted of about 50 college students. Due to a time restriction, I was given only five minutes to present my unit on teaching speaking, which resulted in not sending out a follow-up survey. However, from this experience I realized that our program audience was indeed very diverse, ranging from people with no teaching experience at all to people who had taught other subject areas other than English for many years. Our BTRTESOL audience is also comprised of people from different sociological backgrounds in terms of their age, education, and life experiences. This meant that I could not meet the needs of every single novice teacher, but rather I should focus on understanding and addressing the common factors these people share, which was desire for practical ideas to use immediately.

Overall, my experiences interacting with the above mentioned four groups of novice teachers were very informative and eye opening. With each group of novice teachers I was able to better understand their true needs and stay focused on what I needed to do for my BTRTESOL units.

The second type of audience with which I was able to work, consisted of ESL teachers and teacher educators who had been trained professionally and were already teaching English in various settings, such as intensive English programs, community English programs, and K-12 settings. The access to these professionals in the TESOL field became available through opportunities to present at *Intermountain TESOL (ITESOL) Conferences* and the *TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo*. Getting feedback from professionals in TESOL was invaluable and reassuring because they helped me to have a better idea of what the TESOL professionals valued as the most important in teaching listening and speaking currently. They would also know what worked and what did not, so this audience was an essential part of my evaluation phase.

ITESOL Conferences. Presenting at the ITESOL Conference in October of 2010 was my first time to give a presentation to experienced teachers in TESOL. This conference was held in Odgen, Utah, where I was able to give a five-minute presentation on one of my units as part of our BTRTESOL group presentation. I presented on Unit 6B Developing English Language Learners' Speaking Skills. I had a little over a month to conduct a needs analysis with two sets of target audiences through informal conversations and observations and do a review of literature to come up with a first draft of this unit. Due to limited time constraints, this presentation was kept short, covering only the key points of Unit 6B, which included the scenario, what it meant to speak in a second or foreign language, and the most effective activities that develop speaking skills in learners. A short survey was conducted at the end of the presentation with the intention of finding out what parts of the unit were helpful, whether the audience had any recommendations for changes or ideas about important aspects of teaching speaking that had not been included, and what other resources could be helpful. The majority of the participants of the

survey stated that the description of the nature of spoken language was very helpful to be reminded of once again. They also indicated that all of the speaking activities that were recommended in the unit were in fact the most useful activities that they used in their classrooms. Every participant also indicated that the list of online resources was probably the most helpful part of this unit. A couple of people suggested that including some information on teaching pronunciation would be important because teaching pronunciation was still part of many speaking classes. This was helpful feedback to receive because Unit 6B focused on teaching speaking skills in general and did not go in depth into teaching specific aspects of teaching speaking such as teaching pronunciation because the BTRTESOL program already had a separate unit dedicated for teaching pronunciation. Instead of adding pronunciation to my unit, I incorporated the appropriate information directing the readers to the other BTRTESOL unit on teaching pronunciation.

In October of 2011, another opportunity to present at ITESOL became possible when I was accepted to give a presentation individually on Unit 6A “Developing Listening Skills in Language Learners” in Taylorsville, Utah. For this session, I was given 40 minutes to present and five minutes for questions and comments. A total of nine people attended and the content of this presentation included more in depth information on the characteristics of second language listening process, the challenges of second language listening, listening activities that develop stronger listening skills in learners, and additional resource recommendations for teaching listening. Following the presentation, a survey was conducted. The result of this survey revealed that the audience overall was very pleased with the information they received on teaching listening. A few people suggested that including examples of activities that developed listening skills would be much more helpful rather than merely explaining about which activities are

important for developing listening skills. This was the same as the feedback I received from the Ling 377 class students. Including sample activities in my units was beyond my control because of the limitation that was put on keep the units only five to seven pages long. However, this recommendation encouraged me to carefully choose the wording of my unit when discussing listening activities. The most positive reaction to this presentation was on the online resources section of the unit. All participants left their email addresses asking for me to share the links with them.

In addition to presenting individually at ITESOL in October of 2011, I gave a second presentation as part of our BTRTESOL group along with Dr. Henrichsen on the same day. I was given seven minutes to present one of my units. During this presentation I chose not to conduct a survey, as time was limited. However, during the questions and comments period, I was pleased to know how even the professionals in TESOL found our program useful.

TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo. TESOL Conventions are held annually and each year over 6,500 attendees come from all over the world to take part in this event and to professionally develop themselves (International convention and English language expo, n.d.). I was able to attend this convention twice. The first time I attended a TESOL Convention was in March of 2011 in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA. I was accepted to give a poster presentation on Unit 6B at the Graduate Student Forum of the TESOL Convention. The Graduate Student Forum is intended to give students pursuing master's degrees in TESOL, opportunities to "share their research results, teaching ideas and experiences, and teaching materials and meet and network with graduate students and faculty from other universities" (Graduate student forum at annual convention, n.d.). For this poster session, I was expected to make a 4-foot by 8-foot poster, which displayed the key elements of my unit. During the poster

presentation I was given one hour to have informal discussions with attendees, who mainly consisted of graduate students as well as professors from different universities from around the world. Since the layout of this presentation was informal, I did not conduct a formal survey because it was impossible since the pace of each discussion went very fast. In general, people were very receptive about our BTRTESOL program and expressed their interest in using the *Where to go to learn more* section where additional resources were included.

The second time I participated in a TESOL Convention, it was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in March 2012. I presented with Dr. Henrichsen and three other BTRTESOL team members. My presentation segment was on Unit 6A and I had eight minutes to present the key elements of my unit. The time was again so limited that I did not pass out surveys. However, our BTRTESOL group presentation was very well received, as there was a room full of attendees asking questions and making positive comments about the usefulness of our program. Watching professionals in TESOL recognize the need of our program this way was reassuring. It helped me to know that what we were doing was something that not only volunteer and novice teachers would use, but it could be applicable to many others in the profession.

On the whole, conducting surveys among the novice and experienced teachers was crucial to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the work I was doing. Without their feedback this master's project would not have progressed the way it did.

Advisory Committee Feedback

During the developmental process of this master's project, I was privileged to work with three advisory committee members who gave me valuable feedback and guidance, which became another important part of the evaluation and implementation processes of this project's development. These three members were Dr. Henrichsen, Dr. Tanner, and Dr. Smemoe.

As the chair of my advisory committee Dr. Henrichsen has worked with me closely from the beginning of Spring 2010 semester. In fact, Dr. Henrichsen was the person who informed me of the opportunities to interact with and give presentations to the four different groups of novice teachers that were mentioned above. Dr. Henrichsen was also present at all of my unit presentations at professional conferences and some of the presentations to Ling 377 students. His willingness to provide tailored feedback after some of my presentations helped me accomplish major improvements in the developmental process of this project.

In winter of 2011, after attending my presentation to his Ling 377 class, in which I pilot tested the first draft of the Unit 6B, Dr. Henrichsen helped me realized how I focused on explaining the principles and theories of teaching speaking when in reality our audience needed to know the most practical elements of teaching speaking skills that they could get trained on quickly and use immediately. Then, in October 2011, after my individual presentation on Unit 6A at ITESOL Conference, Dr. Henrichsen, once again, gave me valuable feedback in which he helped refocus me on one of the approaches the BTRTESOL program had, which was to be minimalistic. This was my first time to pilot test the first draft of the Unit 6B and I had included too much information. After listening to Dr. Henrichsen's feedback I cut out sections on assessing listening and listening strategies.

Starting in April of 2012, I started meeting with Dr. Henrichsen bi-weekly and getting his feedback on individual chapters of my project. Dr. Henrichsen was willing to share resources that he had available or he knew that would be helpful additions to my review of literature section. Finally, during the Fall 2012 semester, Dr. Henrichsen, took time to comment on my individual units' contents and structure.

The other two members of my MA advisory committee were Dr. Tanner and Dr. Smemoe, who also gave valuable suggestions on reading materials as well as my units' contents and organization.

Readability Programs

The last key part of the evaluation phase of this project development process included evaluating the readability level of my two units in order to find out whether they were likely to be readable to the BTRTESOL program audience. Since the BTRTESOL program audience is very diverse, includes volunteers who have little or no professional training in TESOL, and are most likely to have little teaching time and preparation, the past BTRTESOL program unit developers were asked to keep the readability level of each unit at around a ninth or tenth grade reading level. In this way our audience could read our material with ease, comprehend fully, and make better use of our program. In order to keep my units' reading level consistent with the rest of the BTRTESOL program, I used the same programs to evaluate readability and vocabulary that had been used for most of the previously developed units.

The first program used was an online program found on www.read-able.com. This program included several readability indicators, such as the Flesch Kincaid Reading Ease, Coleman Liau Index, Flesch Kincaid Grade Level, Automated Readability Index (ARI), SMOG, and Gunning Fog Score, to assign a reading level of understanding for a reading text. Units 6A and 6B were run through this online program individually. The results for each unit are found in Table 1. The readability results for both units were determined to be at tenth grade reading level. Looking closer into each readability indicator's score will reveal how Units 6A and 6B were scored.

The result of the first readability indicator shown in Table 1 is the Flesch Kincaid Reading Ease score. This indicator evaluates readability based on the average number of syllables per word and the average number of words per sentence, then a score between 0 and 100 is assigned to determine the Reading Ease. The higher the score, the easier the reading material is to read. Reading material with a score of 100 is considered to be fairly easy to read and equivalent to fourth-grade level reading material, while material with a score of 0 is considered to be at 12th grade level. A score between 30 and 70 indicates the material to be easily read by wide range of people at sixth through 10th grade levels (Burke & Greenberg, 2010). The results of the Flesch Kincaid Reading Ease score were 65.8 for Unit 6A, and 64.1 for Unit 6B. This meant that both of my units could easily be read by 13-15 year olds.

Table 1

Readability Results of Units 6A and 6B from www.read-able.com

Unit 6A Readability results Grade level about 10		Unit 6B Readability results Grade level about 10	
Flesch Kincaid Reading Ease	65.8	Flesch Kincaid Reading Ease	64.1
Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	7.6	Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	7.5
Gunning Fog Score	9.5	Gunning Fog Score	9.6
SMOG Index	7.2	SMOG Index	7.5
Coleman Liau Index	14.2	Coleman Liau Index	14.8
Automated Readability Index	9.8	Automated Readability Index	9.5

The second indicator showed the grade level indices assigned to each of these units based on the Flesch Kincaid Grade Level scores, which for both units came up a little bit above seventh grade level, a grade level of 7.6 for Unit 6A and 7.5 for Unit 6B.

Next, the Gunning Fog Index is shown. The Gunning Fog Index readability formula uses the number of words in sentences to determine the average sentence length and the percentage of

difficult words based on the number of words with three or more syllables. A text with a Fog index under 12 is considered to be easy (The Gunning Fog index (or FOG) readability formula, n.d.). Unit 6A's Fog index was 9.5 and Unit 6B's Fog index was 9.6, which came up to be right on target for both units.

Another readability formula used was the SMOG Index formula. This formula takes sentence length and number of complex words into consideration and bases the readability level on 100% comprehension (Burke & Greenberg, 2010). The SMOG index for Unit 6A came up to 7.2 and for Unit 6B, it came up to 7.5 which indicated that people with seventh and above grade reading level will be able to read these two units with 100% comprehension. This was very reassuring.

The Coleman Liau Index was one of the indicators that helped calculate the final reading grade level of my two units. This formula uses the average number of characters or letters per 100 words and the average number of sentences per 100 words to calculate the reading grade level of a text (The Coleman-Liau readability formula, n.d.). The results of Coleman Liau Index was 14.2 for Unit 6A and 14.8 for Unit 6B, considerably higher than what the other readability formulas have been assigning. This difference may have occurred because Coleman Liau was designed to assign reading level based on the number of characters per word rather than the number of syllables per word, which was the case for most other indicators. Both of my units contained a long list of website links for additional resources, and the Coleman Liau could not have been programmed to recognize website addresses and exclude them from affecting the final results.

Lastly, the results of the Automated Readability Index, which is a formula that uses measures of word and sentence difficulty to assign reading grade level, was calculated.

According to this formula, both units were above ninth grade reading level, 9.8 for Unit 6A and 9.5 for Unit 6B.

According to the results of the www.read-able.com calculation, Unit 6A and Unit 6B are at a tenth grade reading level.

Additionally, the readability level of the website for the entire BTRTESOL program found at www.btrtesol.com was also checked to ensure consistency between the reading grade levels of Units 6A and 6B and the BTRTESOL program.

Table 2

Readability Results of BTRTESOL Program Website from www.read-able.com

BTRTESOL program website readability results Grade level about 9	
Flesch Kincaid Reading Ease	62.4
Flesch Kincaid Grade Level	5.7
Gunning Fog Score	7.3
SMOG Index	5.3
Coleman Liau Index	17.6
Automated Readability Index	7.6

Table 2 contains the results for the BTRTESOL program website readability level calculated by www.read-able.com. The average reading grade level of BTRTESOL program website was ninth grade. Overall, the readability results of Unit 6A and 6B were about two grade levels above and below compared to the entire BTRTESOL program website's. For instance, the score of the Flesch Kincaid and SMOG indices for BTRTESOL program website was at fifth grade level, but both of my units came up at seventh grade level. However, the score of Coleman Liau Index for the BTRTESOL program website was at 17th grade or college level while my units were at 15th or two levels lower. Even though the individual formula scores varied between

my two units and the BTRTESOL program website, the overall grade level of my units still come up to the desired reading grade level. Besides, being two grade levels away from the average reading grade level of the BTRTESOL program website is not a significant difference.

After checking the readability levels of my units, I used Paul Nation's Range program, as Dr. Henrichsen suggested, to analyze the use of vocabulary in my units. The Range program analyzes vocabulary based on several different frequently used word lists. The first list consists of the 1000 most frequently used words in the English language. The second list contains the second most frequently used 1000 words and the third list has 1000 most commonly used words in academic contexts that are not found in the first or second word lists. The words that are not part of these three word lists then are categorized as "Not in the list." Analyzing and comparing the vocabulary used in my units to these four frequency based categories helped determine the reading difficulty as well as the comprehensibility level of my units based on the use of high frequency words and make adjustments.

Table 3 shows the initial results of the Range program for Unit 6A and 6B vocabulary analyses in detail. According to the initial results of the Range program, around 80% of the vocabulary used in each unit were from the first word list, which represented the most frequently used 1000 words. An additional five percent, 5.48% of Unit 6A and 5.73% of Unit 6B, to be specific, were words that belonged to the second word list, which determined my two units' general readability. However, 13%-14% of the vocabulary used in each unit was still considered as not commonly used or commonly used in academic or university level texts, and these words were listed under the word list three and the group called "Not in the list." Looking at these two lists of words and making other revisions was then the next step to make my units more readable.

These two lists of words revealed that not all of these words could be changed. Most of the words that made to the “Not in the list” group were in fact words that I could not change.

Table 3

Initial Readability Results from Range Program

Word List	Tokens / Percentage		Types / Percentage		Families	
	Unit 6A	Unit 6B	Unit 6A	Unit 6B	Unit 6A	Unit 6B
One	2454/81.50	2405/79.64	501/63.82	450/61.56	344	344
Two	165/5.48	173/5.73	78/9.94	68/9.30	62	52
Three	161/5.35	192/6.36	80/10.19	101/13.82	62	72
Not in the list	231/7.67	250/8.28	126/16.05	112/15.32	Not available	Not available
Total	3011	3020	785	731	468	438

They consisted of links to websites, acronyms, and proper nouns representing the names of book authors that were found in the section *Where to Go to Learn More*. Other words, such as *authentic*, *minimal pair*, *auxiliary*, *bottom-up*, *top-down*, *above-described*, *articulate*, *role-play*, *adverbs*, and *adjectives*, were also counted as part of the academic word list—the third 1000 words’ list and the “Not in the list” group. Some of these words were specific terms that were used to describe important concepts used in teaching listening and speaking skills in the field of second language teaching and thus were left without changes. However, statements that gave detailed and clear explanation accompanied by examples were added to help make the readability of these terms easier for readers.

After these changes, the two units were run through the Range program for the last time and the results are shown in Table 4. The post revision readability results showed both units to be generally readable to the target audience containing 83%-87% of the words of each unit from the first and second word lists. Even though the revision process did not make a significant

difference to the percentage of words (around 15%) that were categorized as not commonly used, it allowed me to make important changes to the way certain terms were presented in the units.

Table 4

Post Revision Readability Results from Range Program

Word List	Tokens / Percentage		Types / Percentage		Families	
	Unit 6A	Unit 6B	Unit 6A	Unit 6B	Unit 6A	Unit 6B
One	2459/82.02	2388/78.92	504/64.95	443/59.46	345	310
Two	166/5.54	176/5.82	79/10.18	71/9.53	63	57
Three	153/5.10	202/6.68	74/9.54	106/14.23	57	78
Not in the list	220/7.34	260/8.59	119/15.34	125/16.78	Not available	Not available
Total	2998	3026	776	745	465	445

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to describe the processes of evaluation and revision that Units 6A and 6B went through. These units would not have reached their current condition, containing the most important information about teaching listening and speaking skills to English language learners with words and examples carefully selected for easy readability if not for the evaluation and revision processes I went through. Feedback from novice and experienced teachers as well as the members of my advisory committee together with the results of the readability programs helped make this master's project complete and successful.

CHAPTER 5: FINAL VERSION OF UNITS AND RATIONALE

This chapter contains the final version of Units 6A and 6B. The units were written primarily to assist those teaching listening and speaking skills to English language learners. The rationale for the content for the units is included in the second half of this chapter.

Final Version of Unit 6A and Unit 6B of the BTRTESOL Program

The instructional material development process that I went through resulted in the creation of two BTRTESOL program units, namely, Unit 6A “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” and Unit 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills.” These two units can be accessed electronically through the following two links:

Unit 6A: http://btrtesol.com/units/06developing_language_skills/6a_listening_skills.php

the LEAST you should know

Basic Training and Resources

for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

and where to go to LEARN MORE

by Lynn Henrichsen

Menu:

- HOME
- 1 - BASIC CONCEPTS
- 2 - DESIGNING PROGRAMS AND LESSONS
- 3 - FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING SKILLS
- 4 - KEY PRINCIPLES
- 5 - KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS

BTR-TESOL Unit 6A - Listening Skills
by Udambor Bumandalai

outline *Scroll down or click on the links below to jump to sections in this unit*

- [INTRODUCTION](#)
- [SCENARIO](#)
- [OBJECTIVES OF THIS UNIT](#)
- [THE LEAST YOU SHOULD KNOW](#)
- [COMPREHENSIVE QUESTIONS](#)
- [VIDEO EXAMPLES](#)
- [REFLECTION AND RESPONSES](#)
- [WHERE TO GO TO LEARN MORE](#)

Figure 4. Screen Shot of Unit 6A Webpage

Unit 6B: http://btrtesol.com/units/06developing_language_skills/6b_speaking_skills.php



the LEAST you should know

Basic Training
and
Resources

and where to go to
LEARN MORE

for Teaching English to
Speakers of Other Languages

by Lynn Henrichsen

Menu:

- [HOME](#)
- [1 - BASIC CONCEPTS](#)
- [2 - DESIGNING PROGRAMS AND LESSONS](#)
- [3 - FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING SKILLS](#)
- [4 - KEY PRINCIPLES](#)
- [5 - KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS](#)
- [6 - DEVELOPING LANGUAGE SKILLS](#)

BTR-TESOL Unit 6B - Speaking Skills

Outline *Scroll down or click on the links below to jump to sections in this unit*

- [INTRODUCTION](#)
- [SCENARIO](#)
- [OBJECTIVES OF THIS UNIT](#)
- [THE LEAST YOU SHOULD KNOW](#)
- [KNOW WHAT IT TAKES TO SPEAK](#)
- [COMPREHENSIVE QUESTIONS](#)
- [ASSESSING LEARNERS' SKILL](#)
- [COMPREHENSIVE QUESTIONS](#)
- [INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES](#)
- [SPEAKING EFFLUENCY](#)

Figure 5. Screen Shot of Unit 6B Webpage

However, the BTRTESOL program is still in the process of development. The copies of the final versions of these two units are shown below. The video clips that go along with each unit will be found on the BTRTESOL program website.

Final Version of Unit 6A

Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills

by Udambor Bumandalai

Introduction

More than 45% of people’s daily communication time is spent listening to spoken messages. This number is even higher if the communication is carried in an educational setting. Strong listening skills are, therefore, key to the success of communication activities people participate in. This unit will give you some useful information on how people listen in a second or foreign language, what makes the listening process challenging for students, and what kind of listening activities can help develop stronger listening skills in your students.

Scenario: Teaching Listening English in China



Catherine was assigned to teach an English listening and speaking class to a group of college students who had been learning English for over three years in China. On her first day of teaching, Catherine wanted the students to introduce themselves to her. She began with a simple question asking a student: *What’s your name?* To her question, the student replied: *Yes*. However, a classmate quickly noticed the misunderstanding and helped the student understand the question by translating it into Chinese. Catherine noticed similar problems with the rest of the students

who struggled to understand her throughout the rest of the class period. At the end of the class, several students came to her asking whether she would teach them how to listen and understand better. It was possibly the first time they had listened to things in English without having them said twice or three times, or even translated. Catherine had never taught English before and felt lost about helping her students improve their English listening skills.

Reflection Questions



1. What would you do if you were Catherine?
2. What do you think made listening very difficult for these students?
3. What might Catherine do to help her students improve their listening skills?
4. Where and how can she find appropriate listening materials to use in her class?

Objectives of This Unit

After working through this unit, you will be able to...

- Explain what listening is.
- Identify two important listening processes.
- Describe what makes listening challenging and how to overcome those challenges.
- Choose and use the most effective listening activities in your classroom.

As you learn the content of this unit well, you will better understand how students listen to and understand spoken messages, what makes listening a challenging skill to develop, and how to use effective listening activities that help improve students' listening skills.

Developing Listening Skills–The Least You Should Know

People typically think that they listen with their ears, but there is much more to listening than just hearing. Listening is a mental process in which people create meaning from a spoken message. When people listen, they need to listen actively to what is being said by paying close attention. If they do not pay attention, then this process will only become hearing where no meaning is understood. When people listen actively, they recognize words by the way they sound and assign correct meanings to them. Then they try to understand the relationships between the words within a sentence and get a meaningful message out of it. The listening process, however, does not always go easily. A number of features of spoken language make the listening process challenging. However, many useful learning activities can help students gain stronger listening skills.

1. Processing information during listening

Whenever people listen to old or new information, they process it in two different ways: bottom-up and top-down. Language learners at different levels use one or both of these listening processes. They do not necessarily realize that they are using these processes when listening. However, it is important for teachers to know which listening process their students are using or should learn to use so that their listening skills can improve. This knowledge also helps teachers plan suitable listening activities according to their students' abilities.

Bottom-up listening

When students listen to a message, they try to understand it by paying close attention to sounds, words, and grammar in a step-by-step manner. For example, when a student hears the statement *Call me tomorrow*, he starts with listening for each word. Once he is able to recognize the individual words of this statement, he connects each word to its meaning, and finally he puts together all the words and connects the meaning of each word within the statement to understand the whole meaning. This process of collecting small bits of information and combining them to make sense is called bottom-up listening. Students with lower-level English proficiency tend to use this listening processing more often. However, when the content of the message is new or unfamiliar, even students with higher levels of proficiency use this listening process.

Top-down listening

Top-down processing, on the other hand, means trying to make sense of the heard message with the help of past knowledge and experience. When students use this process, they recognize some of the words in a conversation and then guess what is being discussed without having to listen for every sound, word, or grammar point. For example, when a student hears a statement *I am hungry because I didn't ...*, he can use his knowledge of English grammar that the auxiliary *didn't* needs to be followed by a verb, and also based on his general life experience he can figure out that not eating something causes a person to feel hungry. This way he guesses that the missing word must be *eat*. Students in intermediate and higher levels use this process more often than lower level students do.

To become skillful listeners, students need to learn to use both bottom-up and top-down listening processes.

2. What makes listening challenging?

Listening is hard because the spoken signal is so fleeting. It lasts only a few seconds. Listening is also difficult because listeners cannot control the rate of speech, the vocabulary, or the grammar that the speaker uses. Therefore, they may struggle to understand fast speech, unfamiliar words, or complicated sentences, as well as new ideas. Finally, spoken language does not always follow written language forms and rules. Students often find listening to be challenging when they expect spoken language to be like written language. Here are some features of spoken language that may make listening difficult for students.

Speech rate

Not every listening message is delivered at the same speaking rate. Some people speak quickly while others speak slowly. Since the listener is not in control of the speed, speech that is too fast is sometimes difficult to understand. When this happens, students need to be able to ask people to speak more slowly, request clarification, or find ways to listen to the message one more time. Usually listening multiple times helps.

Individual sounds

Not all languages share the same sounds. English has some sounds that are challenging for students from different language backgrounds to hear. For example, Japanese speakers have a hard time telling the English sounds /r/ and /l/ apart because they do not make a distinction between these sounds in their language. So listening to words like *right* and *light* becomes challenging for them. Teachers can use minimal pair drills (explained later in this unit) for sounds that are challenging to their students.

Repeated statements

Spoken language is usually unplanned or unscripted. This causes people to say things repeatedly or redundantly. Sometimes people say things wrong and they correct themselves without warning by restating what they said. Not knowing or not paying attention to restated words can easily confuse students. When students know that redundancy occurs and learn to recognize it, they can overcome this challenge. Learning expressions that signal restatement, such as *I mean*, *you know*, and *like* can also help.

Reduced speech

In spoken language many words often get reduced and sound different. For example, reduction occurs when using contractions, such as *you'll*, *we're*, and *they've*. Sometimes sounds change and become more like their neighboring sounds. For example, the statement *Did you eat yet?* sounds like *Dija eechet?* As teachers give students more experience with listening to reduced speech, students learn to listen more successfully.

Intonation and stress

In spoken language, the speaker's tone of voice expresses different meanings. For example, a rising tone at the end of the statement *More cookies?* makes this statement a question while a falling tone leaves it as a simple statement. Also word stress plays an important role in listening. For example, the word *present* can have two meanings. If the stress is placed on the first syllable

(*PREsent*), it refers to a noun that means a gift. When the stress is placed on the second syllable (*preSENT*), the meaning changes to an action verb of giving something or delivering a speech. (Learn more about intonation and stress in BTRTESOL Unit 7B “Teaching English Pronunciation.”)

These are some of the most common features of spoken language that make listening difficult. Students often do not realize them unless teachers point them out and teach students how to deal with these challenges.

3. Activities to develop listening skills

Students can learn to listen successfully when teachers carefully select and use activities that develop students’ listening skills. The following are some useful listening activities arranged in order from those that are good for beginning learners to those that are for advanced learners.

Intensive listening

This kind of activity focuses on a feature of spoken language that students have not mastered yet. For example, to teach students how to distinguish between the sounds /r/ and /l/, the teacher can have students work on an intensive listening task by having them listen to pairs of words that are exactly the same except for two sounds (minimal pairs), such as *grass-glass*, *right-light*. Any of the above-described features of spoken language that make listening challenging for students can be focused on one at a time in this kind of activity and studied and practiced intensively. As students focus on one area of listening this way, they learn to use bottom-up listening processes.

Cloze activity

This is an activity in which students are asked to listen to a spoken passage and then write down the words that have been removed from the written version of the same passage and replaced with blank spaces. This kind of activity helps students listen for individual words correctly and makes use of their bottom-up listening and top-down predicting abilities. When students listen for individual words correctly, it encourages them and makes listening less intimidating.

Listening for the main idea

During this kind of activity, students are expected to figure out the general idea of what is happening in a spoken passage by listening to key words, intonation, and other clues that might help them guess the general meaning. This kind of activity requires students to use top-down listening processes. Understanding the general meaning of a listening task helps students see the big picture of what they are listening to and it also helps them realize the relationship between different ideas in the listening passage.

Listening for detailed information

Asking students to find specific information given in listening materials is another good way to develop strong listening skills. Teachers give students a list of questions to which the answers can be found as students listen to the listening passage. This kind of activity helps increase students’ ability to listen for individual words, and pay attention to grammar and meaning in detail. In this way students get to practice using bottom-up listening processes. This kind of activity is useful in classes at all levels.

Predicting meaning from the context

This type of activity requires students to figure out information that is not said directly in a listening passage. For example, if students hear that a man has many cars and a large house, they can infer that he is rich, even if that fact is not stated directly. Because students need to think about the relationships between different bits of information and figure out the meaning that was not given directly, this activity is most suitable for students who are a little bit more advanced. For this kind of listening, teachers can provide inference questions at the beginning or at the end of a listening task. Predicting information in this way requires students to use both top-down and bottom-up listening processes.

Comprehension and Reflection Questions



1. What is listening and how does it differ from hearing?
2. How do people process information when they listen?
3. What are some of the challenges that students face during a listening task?
4. What are some activities that help students develop listening skills and how do they work?

Video Example

Click below to view a short video of a listening activity in a college English class in Mozambique (where Portuguese is the school language). As you watch this video think about how it can be related to what you have learned in this unit. Then answer the questions in the following “Reflection and Responses” section to check your understanding of this unit.

Reflection and Response

As you view this video, think about each of the following questions.

1. What was especially good about this class?
2. What teaching principles/techniques discussed earlier in this unit did you notice in this video?
3. What adaptations could you make for the situation you are (will be) teaching in?
4. What other things might you do differently to make your listening lessons even better?

For future (Web-based) use: Write your reflections in the box provided. Then, click on the button by each box to see what other people have said after viewing and reflecting on this video. *

Where to Go to Learn More

Here are some other units in the BTRTESOL program that relate to the topics that have been addressed in this unit about teaching listening skills. By better understanding these additional aspects of listening, you will be better prepared as a teacher to develop listening skills in your students.

Connection to Other Units in this Program

- 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills”
- 7B “Teaching English Pronunciation”

Online and Other Electronic Resources

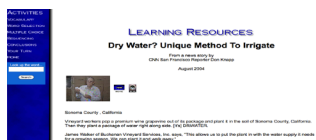
- Here are some websites that have activities already created for you like those described above.



Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab. www.esl-lab.com This website has all of the above-described activities except for the intensive listening activity. The activities are also organized according to students' proficiency levels.

Ello. <http://www.ello.org/> This website has all of the above-described activities except for the intensive listening activity.

Breaking News English. www.breakingnewsenglish.com This website is full of great listening activities described in this unit except for the intensive listening activity.



Literacy Works. <http://literacynet.org/cnnsf/archives.html> This website provides activities for listening for main and detailed information and predicting meaning from the context.

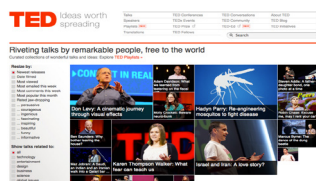
California Distance Learning Project. <http://www.cdiponline.org/> This website has activities for listening for main ideas and detailed information.

Real-English. <http://www.real-english.com/> This website has activities for listening for main ideas and detailed information, and cloze activities as well.

- Here are some websites with useful listening materials for your classrooms, but you need to come up with your own activities.

VOA News- Learning English. <http://www.voanews.com/learningenglish/home/> This website has daily short news videos with transcripts.

Hulu. www.hulu.com This website allows users to view many TV shows and movies for all age groups online.



Technology Entertainment and Design (TED): Ideas worth spreading. <http://www.ted.com/> This is a website with more than 900 talks ranging from five to 18 minutes long in length on topics related to technology, entertainment, and design. Each talk comes with a transcript in both audio and video forms.

National Public Radio (NPR). www.npr.org This is a public radio network that broadcasts national and world news, music and entertainment programs on wide varieties of interesting topics. Transcripts are available for most archived audio programs.

CNN Student News. <http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/> This website has daily ten-minute news videos for middle and high school student audiences. A transcript for each news video is also available free of charge.

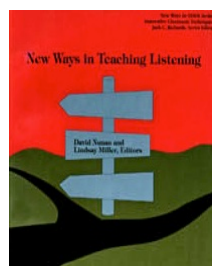


Easy Conversations. <http://www.eslfast.com/easydialogs/index.html>
This website has simple conversations for beginning level learners to listen to. Transcript of each conversation is provided and conversations are organized under 15 different topic areas.

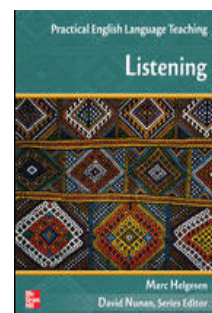
ESL Fast (365 ESL Short Stories). <http://www.eslfast.com/> This is a website with 365 different short story audio files along with their transcripts for intermediate-level students.

English for Children. <http://www.rong-chang.com/children/index.htm> This is a website with over 100 simple stories for children available in audio form and along with transcripts.

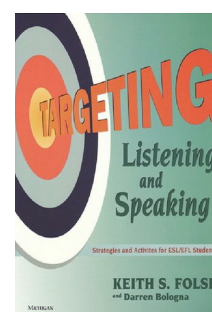
Print and Paper-based Resources



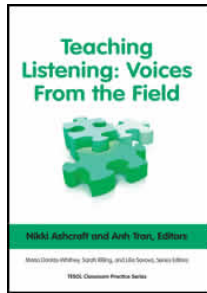
David Nunan and Lindsey Miller. *New Ways in Teaching Listening.* Publisher: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc, 1995. ISBN 0-939791-58-7. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=New+Ways+in+Teaching+Listening. This book gives detailed information on how listening strategies can be developed in learners and offers insights developing listening skills. It also provides useful information on choosing authentic listening materials, proper technology, making listening fun, etc.



Marc Helgesen and Steven Brown. *Practical English Language Teaching: Listening.* Publisher: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2007. ISBN 0-07-111921-3. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Practical+English+Language+Teaching%3A+Listening&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3APractical+English+Language+Teaching%3A+Listening. This book introduces teachers to the key aspects of teaching listening at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. Readers are offered reflection questions and action tasks throughout this book to apply their understanding of the ideas. It also includes further suggestions for books, articles and websites.



Keith S. Folse. *Targeting Listening and Speaking.* Publisher: University of Michigan Press, 2003. ISBN 047208898X. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Targeting+Listening+and+Speaking.&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3ATargeting+Listening+and+Speaking. This is a book that is specifically designed for developing speaking and listening skills through carefully designed activities under six major topics such as food, animals and pets, free time and hobbies, and travel. There is a companion website that goes with this book where teachers can find additional sources for testing.



Nikki Ashcraft and Anh Tran. *Teaching Listening: Voices From the Field*. Publisher: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc, 2010. ISBN 978-193118569-1. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Teaching+Listening%3A+Voices+From+the+Field. Read more about what listening teachers are doing these days to make their classes successful. This book includes chapters on designing listening courses and effective listening activities, using music and other authentic materials, and advanced and academic listening ideas.

If you have suggestions for other resources (books, websites, etc.), please send them to btrtesol@byu.edu

Final Version of Unit 6B

Developing English Language Learners' Speaking Skills

by Udambor Bumandalai

Introduction

Speaking is one of the most sought after skills in foreign language learning. Because people need and want to communicate via speech for business, networking, education, and traveling, language learners are highly motivated to improve their speaking skills. Nevertheless, speaking skills are complicated and difficult to develop. It is important for anybody who is going to teach speaking to language learners to better understand what it takes to speak in a new language and know how to effectively teach speaking skills.

Scenario: An American Humanitarian Service Worker in Mongolia



Ben is an American who went to Mongolia as a volunteer to help with a humanitarian service project. His primary responsibility was to help with local development projects such as assisting with events and workshops, helping with building projects, or caring for the needy. However, after he arrived, a change was made to his assignment. He was asked to teach an English speaking class to local young adults who had studied English in Mongolian schools for several years but still couldn't speak it. After teaching the first week of classes, Ben noticed that he did most of the talking in class while his

students listened to him for the most part. When Ben asked questions, his students usually answered with only a word or two. He also sensed that his students seemed hesitant to speak in English. Unfortunately Ben did not know how to change this situation. He had no training in English teaching and wondered what and how he should teach this speaking class.

Reflection Questions



1. What would you do if you were in Ben's situation?
2. What do you think made Ben's students avoid speaking in English?
3. What kind of activities could Ben have used to encourage his students to speak more?

Objectives of This Unit

After working through this unit, you will be able to...

- Explain two key components of spoken language
- Identify four features of successful speaking activities
- Choose and use instructional activities that help students develop their English speaking skills.

As you learn the content of this unit well, you will better understand what students go through when they try to speak in a foreign language, and be able to successfully identify their weaknesses and use activities that help them improve their speaking skills.

Developing Speaking Skills–The Least You Should Know

The ability to speak in a new language involves many complex processes. In order to speak, language learners need to hear a spoken message, then understand and process it, and finally respond to this information by producing a meaningful spoken message. Producing a successful spoken message requires students to connect appropriate words with correct pronunciation and grammar in the right context and in culturally appropriate ways. Much speaking also happens in real time, which means that learners need to learn to respond quickly. In class, students often need to speak in front of classmates and the teacher, which adds an element of fear or anxiety. As teachers use activities that help develop stronger speaking skills, students gradually learn to put together the different aspects of speaking mentioned above and become confident speakers. Because the speaking process involves so many factors and it is difficult to get them all correct at the same time, students may become discouraged easily. However, as you recognize your students' weaknesses and teach to their needs by using activities that will help improve their speaking weaknesses, your students can successfully gain speaking skills.

1. What does it take to speak?

Several factors contribute to the complexity of the speaking process. However, they can be organized under two key components of spoken language. Spoken language needs to be first, accurate and second, fluent. When students develop both accuracy and fluency, they become successful and confident at communicating in English. Students' speaking skills will improve as teachers use activities that specifically develop speech accuracy and fluency.

Accuracy

Speaking accurately means being able to use the correct sounds, words, and grammar when speaking. Spoken language needs to be accurate in order for communication to be successful. Students who are beginning to learn English often focus on speaking accurately first. When students become more proficient, they sometimes stop thinking too much about accuracy. When teaching students how to speak accurately in English, you need to keep in mind the following features of speaking accuracy.

Vocabulary. Knowing enough words to produce spoken language is the very first thing students need to learn. To participate in meaningful conversation, learners need to know basic vocabulary. In addition, students need to know when or in what context to use words accurately. (See BTRTESOL Unit 7D to learn more about vocabulary teaching.)

Sounds. Accurate spoken language is produced when students can correctly pronounce the words that they use when speaking. Not knowing how to correctly articulate certain sounds often causes miscommunication and misunderstanding. For example, the words *slept* and *slipped* can change the meaning of a sentence drastically when the sounds /ɛ/ (“eh”) and /i/ (“ih”) are articulated incorrectly. (See BTRTESOL Unit 7B “Teaching English Pronunciation” to learn more about pronunciation teaching.)

Grammar. Knowing grammar is another equally important factor in learning to speak because it allows students to place words correctly within sentences and ultimately enables them to carry on meaningful communication. Consciously learning grammar, as opposed to acquiring language naturally through exposure and interaction, is probably the most challenging part of the language learning process because there are many rules and exceptions to be learned. It takes a long time and a lot of practice for students to master English grammar. (See BTRTESOL Unit 7A to learn more about teaching grammar.)

Culture. Every aspect of life is subject to certain cultural patterns and rules. So when people are communicating, the knowledge of what is appropriate when and where always comes up. When students are taught about expectations based on cultural differences, they learn to communicate effectively. (See BTRTESOL Unit 1D “Understanding and Adapting in a New Culture” to learn more about teaching culture.)

Fluency

Speaking fluently in a new language requires the ability to speak with appropriate speed, acceptable flow, and proper tone of voice. When students are first learning to speak, they often tend to focus on their language accuracy and this focus frequently slows down their speech causing them to be less fluent. With students at the high intermediate and advanced levels, you should focus on fluency. To develop speaking fluency, you can focus on the following features:

Speaking rate. Students need to speak with acceptable speed. Speech that is too slow or too fast results in miscommunication. When students pause too long or too many times, such as after every word, they speak too slowly. On the other hand, students who do not pause properly while speaking also produce incomprehensible speech. So you need to help your students speak at an appropriate rate by teaching them how and when to pause.

Stress. When a syllable sounds louder and longer, it is called a stressed syllable. For example, the word *English* has two syllables: *En-glish*. The first syllable of this word sounds louder and longer than the second syllable: *ENglish*. When students learn to place stress correctly in words, their language accuracy and fluency improve.

Intonation. When people speak, they use high or low tones to convey different meanings. For instance, a rising or high tone at the end of the following statement makes it a question: *He’s your friend?* A falling or low tone makes it a simple statement: *He’s your friend.* Teaching students how to use intonation correctly will help them with both accuracy and fluency.

Reduced words. In spoken English not all words are clearly said. In fact, many words are used in shortened forms and some words even get combined. For example, the expression *How is it going?* is often said as *Howzit goin?* You can and should teach this process of reducing words to students. For instance, you can explain that within a sentence, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs usually get stressed and said clearly. In contrast, connecting words, helping verbs, pronouns, and prepositions often get reduced.

As you can see, speaking in a new language is truly a complex process that includes many important elements. For this reason, developing speaking skills in students can be a long journey.

You can make the journey shorter and more pleasant by using activities that have characteristics that experience has shown to be most helpful.

2. Characteristics of successful speaking activities

Students' speaking skills can improve considerably when you keep in mind the following four principles of successful speaking activities suggested by Ur (1996). Many of these characteristics are also explained in more detail in BTRTESOL Unit 8A "Conducting Effective and Enjoyable Conversation Classes."

Students talk a lot

Learning to speak in a new language requires students to speak a lot both in class and outside. Thus, students should talk as much as possible during any class period. Plan activities that require students to talk during class.

Participation is even

During any speaking activity, every student should have an equal opportunity to speak. You should carefully monitor classroom discussions and ensure they are not being dominated by a minority of talkative participants.

Motivation is high

When students are highly motivated to participate in classroom discussions, they overcome fear and eventually develop stronger speaking skills. You can keep students motivated by selecting topics that your students are interested in or already know. Playing games or having contests will also keep students excited about participating.

Language is at an acceptable level

When the language used in speaking activities is too easy or too difficult, students get discouraged or lose their motivation easily. Make sure that your classroom activities use language at the right level for your students.

3. Activities to develop speaking skills

Now that you know what to do to make speaking activities successful in your classroom, here are some speaking activities that are frequently used in speaking classrooms to help language learners develop stronger speaking skills.

Picture-based activities

Pictures are a great way to start students talking. Picture-based activities can be as simple as having students describe what they see in pictures. That will help lower-level students develop speaking accuracy skills. Or you can use pictures for discussions with intermediate and advanced students to help build their speaking fluency. Picture-based activities can be used with all levels of classes. You just need to adjust the nature of the activity according to your students' level.

Information-gap activities

In this kind of activity, students usually work in pairs. One person has information that the other does not have. Students then ask questions to each other to find the missing information. Information gap activities help build both accuracy and fluency and can be used with all levels of English classes. (See BTRTESOL Unit 4C "Communicative Language Teaching and Information Gap Exercises" to learn more about information gap activities.)

Dialogues

Dialogues and drama are another way to get students talking. With dialogues, students are assigned roles and given scripts for their parts. Then they practice reciting their lines and perform when ready. This is a good way to build confidence in learners because they know what they are saying is correct and that they know exactly when to say what. Students notice structures and learn new vocabulary, which helps develop their speaking accuracy. Students also get to practice speaking fluently as they focus on pausing and using intonation in the right ways to deliver authentic performances.

Role-play

Role-plays are like dialog performances, but there is no predetermined script. You assign students roles and a situation and they act accordingly using language they have learned previously. It helps to review the words and phrases they might need in the role-play before they start. Role-playing is a good way for students to practice using spoken language. It is helpful for all levels of students and develops both accuracy and fluency.

Conversations

Participating in classroom conversations is a common way for students to develop speaking skills. During conversation sessions, students and teachers talk about topics that are interesting to them and at the right level for their language skills. As students speak extemporaneously, they build speaking fluency. Conversations are most suitable for use in intermediate and higher level classes. (See BTRTESOL Unit 8A “Conducting Effective and Enjoyable Conversation Classes” to learn more about how to teach conversation classes.)

Rehearsed presentations

To build your students’ speaking accuracy and fluency, you may assign them to give short speeches on various topics. They should have a chance to think, research, plan, and rehearse their speeches. Rehearsed presentations are usually most successful when students are at intermediate and higher levels because they usually require stronger speaking skills. (See BTRTESOL Unit 4E “Imitative, Rehearsed, Extemporaneous Practice” to learn more about rehearsed presentations.)

Songs and games

Using songs and games in teaching English is also good for developing students’ speaking skills. Songs and games can be used for developing either accuracy or fluency. (See Units 8B “Using Songs to Increase Participation, Recall, and Enjoyment” and 8C “Using Games for English Language Teaching” to learn more about using games and songs for teaching English.)

Comprehension and Reflection Questions



1. What two key aspects of spoken language do you need to help your students develop?
2. What are some things that you should watch for to make speaking activities successful?
3. Describe at least three activities that can help develop students’ speaking skills.

Video Example

Click below to view a short video of a novice teacher teaching at a university in China. As you watch this video think about how it can be related to what you have learned in this unit. Then answer the questions in the following “Reflection and Responses” section to check your understanding of this unit.

Reflection and Response

As you view this video clip, think about each of the following questions.

1. What was especially good about this class? What did the teacher do right?
2. What teaching principles or activities discussed earlier in this unit did you notice in this clip?
3. What adaptations could you make for the situation you are (or will be) teaching in?

For future (Web-based) use: Write your reflections in the box provided. Then, click on the button by each box to see what other people have said after viewing and reflecting on this video clip. *

Where to Go to Learn More

Here are some other units in this program that relate to the topics that have been addressed in this unit about teaching speaking skills. By better understanding these additional aspects of spoken language, you will be better prepared as a teacher to develop speaking skills in your students.

Connection to Other Units in this Program

- 1D “Understanding and Adapting in a New Culture
- 4C “Communicative Language Teaching and Information Gap Exercises”
- 4E “Imitative, Rehearsed, Extemporaneous Practice”
- 7A “Teaching English Grammar”
- 7B “Teaching English Pronunciation”
- 7E “Teaching Culture”
- 8A “Conducting Effective and Enjoyable Conversation Classes”
- 8B “Using Songs to Increase Participation, Recall, and Enjoyment”
- 8C “Using Games for English Language Teaching”

Online and Other Electronic Resources

- For conversation and interview based activities



ESL Gold. http://www.eslgold.com/speaking/topics_conversation.html. This website provides conversation topic ideas along with vocabulary and expressions.

Dave's ESL Café. <http://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?Speaking>. This website has a list of interesting scenarios that can be used as sources for conversations.

ESLgo.com. <http://www.eslgo.com/resources/sa.html>. This is a website with many ideas and activities for interesting conversations.



ESLflow.com. <http://www.eslflow.com/Interviewquestions.html>. This website has a section with some helpful information as well as sample activities for job interviews.

Daily ESL. <http://www.dailyesl.com>. This website has ideas for conversation activities that make use of different scenarios given through listening and reading passages.

- For role-play and drama activities

ESLflow.com. <http://www.eslflow.com/roleplaysdramatheatre/games.html>. This website provides worksheets for many role-play activities.

Iteslj.org. http://iteslj.org/links/TESL/Lessons/Role_Plays/. This website provides a list of links to lessons that make use of role-play activities.

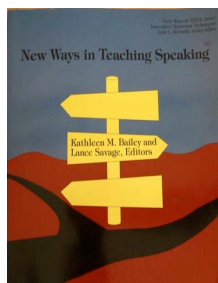


Dave's ESL Café. <http://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?Speaking>. This website provides interesting scenarios for having role-play activities in your classrooms.

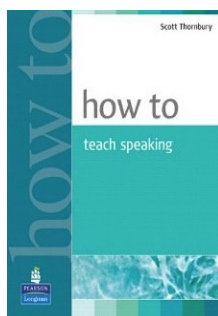
- For picture based activities

ESLflow.com. <http://www.eslflow.com/picturelessonsandteachingideas.html>. This website has many lesson ideas for using pictures to teach speaking.

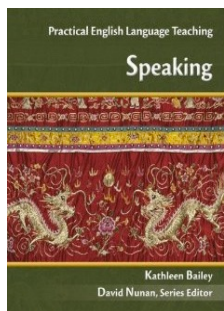
Print and Paper-based Resources



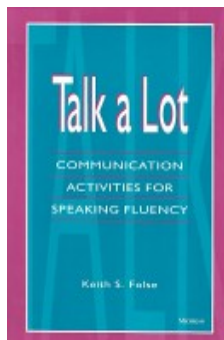
Kathleen M. Bailey and Lance Savage. *New Ways in Teaching Speaking*. Publisher: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc, 1994. ISBN 0-939791-54-4. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=New+Ways+in+Teaching+Speaking. This book provides a wide variety of activities that are organized under four main sections that include 14 subsections. Some of the subsections include teaching ideas using dialogues and role plays, games for speaking, using audiovisual aids, and group work.



Scott Thornbury. *How to Teach Speaking*. Publisher: Longman, 2005. ISBN 978-0-582-85359-1. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=How+to+Teach+Speaking&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3AHow+to+Teach+Speaking. *How to Teach Speaking* talks about many components that are required for speaking in another language and how it is different from speaking in one's first language. This book also suggests activities that will help develop speaking such as dialogues, drama, jokes, out-of-class speaking, and using live listening.



Kathleen M. Bailey. *Practical English Language Teaching: Speaking*. Publisher: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2005. ISBN 0-07-310310-1. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Kathleen+M.+Bailey.+Practical+English+Language+Teaching%3A+Speaking&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3AKathleen+M.+Bailey.+Practical+English+Language+Teaching%3A+Speaking. This book introduces teachers to key aspects of teaching speaking and gives in-depth information on teaching speaking at all levels. Readers are offered reflection questions and action tasks throughout this book to apply their understanding of the ideas.



Keith Folse. *Talk a Lot: Communication Activities for Speaking Fluency*. Publisher: University of Michigan Press, 1993. ISBN 0472082450. Available for purchase at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Talk+a+Lot%3A+Communication+Activities+for+Speaking+Fluency&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3ATalk+a+Lot%3A+Communication+Activities+for+Speaking+Fluency. This book contains exercises that require learners to speak based on the knowledge that they already have and build on that knowledge and improve their speaking fluency.

If you have suggestions for other resources (books, websites, etc.), please send them to btrtesol@byu.edu

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Rationale for My Two Units' Contents

Choosing content for each of my units required me to make well-informed and carefully thought-out decisions throughout this materials development process. This started with my careful attempt to better understand the purpose of the BTRTESOL program and the needs of its target audience so that I could start collecting the necessary information for the content of my units. After meeting with the other members of the BTRTESOL team, talking to some novice teachers, reviewing relevant literature for many hours, and pilot testing my units with prospective users of our program several times, I was finally able to complete BTRTESOL Units 6A and 6B.

In the process of creating my two units, there were two things that I kept in my mind constantly, and they also guided me in everything I did. These two things were first, the

predetermined guidelines relevant to designing and organizing each unit's contents, and second, coming up with the right content that answers and addresses the needs of our target audience.

Some of the predetermined guidelines that I was expected to follow while creating my units were to accomplish the BTRTESOL program's purpose by taking minimalist and connectivist approaches. This meant that each unit was to be kept short and simple, within five to seven pages in length, and organized under a predetermined framework of sections including, "Introduction," "Scenario," "Objectives of This Unit," "Video Example," and "Where to Go to Learn More." The writing level at which I was required to write was around 9th to 10th grade readability level. The video example section needed to contain a video clip that was no longer than three minutes in length and small enough in size to enable streaming in slower Internet connection available areas.

On the other hand, determining and deciding on the most useful topics to be included in the contents of my units was the next important thing to keep in mind. As I studied and reviewed literature regarding teaching listening and speaking, I quickly learned how there were many important aspects to teaching listening and speaking in order to develop stronger listening and speaking skills in language learners. Learning so much about teaching listening and speaking was, however, not enough for me to start putting together the units' content. In fact, I learned that the first drafts of both of my units mainly focused on and contained information about theoretical aspects of developing listening and speaking skills. The feedback that I received from both volunteer teachers and professionals in TESOL helped me realize how removed my content choices were from what people actually wanted and needed to know. Since this experience, I paid closer attention to the feedback of our prospective users and carefully selected and wrote the

final drafts for each of my units. The remainder of this chapter will discuss the rationale for each section of my two units.

Scenario. After a brief introduction statement, each unit starts with a section called “Scenario.” The scenarios used in Units 6A and 6B were both relevant to each unit’s main theme and designed to help readers to start brainstorming ideas that would be discussed in each unit later on. The stories depicted in each scenario were true incidents. The scenario used in Unit 6B, in fact, happened to me while I was learning English in Mongolia. However, I told this story from my teachers’ perspectives because these BTRTESOL units were written for teachers, and telling these stories from the teachers’ perspective made it easier for BTRTESOL users to relate to them. Next, the scenario of Unit 6A takes place in China, which was based on an experience that a friend of mine had while learning English in China. Even though this same incident happened to me while I was learning English in Mongolia, I decided not to tell my experience again. Another reason for my decision was because I tried to avoid using the same place in both of my units, which were placed next to each other. I also wanted to make the story sound more interesting and show that these incidents happen everywhere in the world. The reflection questions that followed each scenario were carefully constructed to engage readers in the reading that followed it and encourage them to start thinking about key issues that would be discussed in the same unit later on.

Objectives of this unit. Selecting the content of my two units was the most important and time-consuming part of this project development. The most difficult part was taking a minimalist approach and selecting the most essential or must-know facts for novice teachers about developing listening and speaking skills. This selection process consisted of first studying and learning about current theories of teaching listening and speaking skills, next surveying and

understanding the needs of the target audience, and finally, selecting the most applicable information to be included in the content of my two units.

Teaching listening and speaking skills is a very broad area, so there were many sources to consult. To get a better idea of how teaching listening and speaking has evolved over the years, I started studying the history of teaching second language listening and speaking instruction starting in the Middle Ages and continuing all the way up to the most recent practices. Chapter Two of this report contains detailed information on what I learned about teaching listening and speaking through this study. After learning about teaching listening and speaking in more depth, I realized that there were many important matters that I could include in my units from which novice and volunteer teachers could benefit greatly. However, after surveying and interviewing some prospective users, it became apparent that volunteers and novice teachers did not really have time to learn every important aspect about teaching listening and speaking the way that professionally trained ESL and EFL teachers do. In fact, our target audience simply needed to be introduced to the concept of teaching listening and speaking, and most importantly, they wanted to know activities and other useful materials that they could use instantly to teach listening and speaking classes to help learners develop listening and speaking skills.

Learning the needs of our target audience, as well as getting feedback from my advisory committee members, helped greatly in narrowing down the information to be included in the content areas of my two units. Both units start with an explanation of what it means to listen and speak in a second or foreign language. From my experience interviewing and interacting with volunteer and novice teachers through presentations and pilot testing, I realized how much these teachers did not fully understand what second language listening and speaking were. It is simply impossible for them to teach a subject when they do not know what they are teaching. The key

points describing the concepts of listening and speaking came mainly from books and articles written by Brown (2006), Flowerdew & Miller (2009), Goh & Burns (2012), Helgesen & Brown (2007), Richards (2005, 2008), Richards & Burns (2012), and Stewart (2009).

Processing information during listening. The first key point for Unit 6A, the section on listening processes, was chosen with the intention of giving readers a better understanding of what kind of processes language learners go through when they listen to messages spoken in a new language. Every single book about teaching second language listening that I read emphasized the importance of listening processes, namely, bottom-up, top-down, and interactive (Brown, 2007a; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2008). For Unit 6A, therefore, I chose to discuss bottom-up and top-down listening processes in detail and with examples. This unit also briefly mentions the interactive listening process without mentioning it by name. I chose not to include extensive explanation of the interactive listening process because it is the process that more advanced listeners would use commonly and the chance of our program users teaching advanced listening classes was so low.

What does it take to speak? Unit 6B, on the other hand, starts with its first key point focused on the complex nature of spoken language explaining many features that shape it. This section was organized using the two main characteristics of acceptable spoken language, *accuracy* and *fluency*. The idea to emphasize accuracy and fluency came from my committee's feedback. Explaining the nature of spoken language in connection with these two components was the simplest, most direct, and most understandable approach. However, it is also important to note that not every possible feature of speaking accuracy and fluency was included in Unit 6B. Due to the nature of the BTRTESOL program, only the most applicable and manageable information was selected to be included. Thus, the part on speaking accuracy discussed

vocabulary, sounds, grammar, and culture as playing key parts in the correctness of spoken language; while the part on speaking fluency emphasized *speaking rate, stress, intonation, and reduced words* as the most important factors that determine one's speech fluency.

What makes listening challenging? The second key point of unit 6A focuses on the features that make second language listening challenging. It explains the process that second language learners go through during listening, but it also informs teachers about how spoken English itself has many features that are confusing and difficult for listeners to listen and understand. My idea was that knowing about these challenging features of spoken English would help prepare teachers so that they would better comprehend the true challenges and the needs of their students, and therefore teach effectively. Brown (2007a) and Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin's (2010) books became my primary sources for this section.

Characteristics of successful speaking activities. Unit 6B, however, includes four main characteristics of successful speaking activities in the second main section. I did not dedicate a separate section to the challenging nature of spoken language because it was indirectly mentioned in the first key point indicating that all the factors that made spoken language acceptable were the features that constituted spoken language accuracy and fluency. Instead, Ur's (1996) four key characteristics of successful speaking activities were included in Unit 6B. Ur suggested these four characteristics as the key evaluation measurement for teachers to use when choosing activities for speaking classes. This idea was originally part of Unit 4C "Communicative Language Teaching and Information Gap Exercises" of the BTRTESOL program. However, Dr. Henrichsen and Dr. Tanner suggested that it would best meet the needs of teachers teaching speaking classes, and thus it became a part of Unit 6B. After reading more in Ur's book, I also came to agree with this change. Speaking is a skill area that can easily

become challenging for teachers if they do not know how to decide if the activities they are using guarantee the best outcome. In fact, Ur's four characteristics help overcome several of the challenges speaking places on learners, such as fear of speaking, lack of motivation, and not using level appropriate language.

Activities to develop listening/speaking skills. The third key point of both Units 6A and 6B attempts to offer ideas for activities that are most commonly used for developing listening and speaking skills in language learners. These sections had to be included because according to my survey responses, these practical ideas were exactly what our users were looking for and suggested that learning about specific activities that they can use in their classrooms would benefit them the most. As I researched more about the most effective as well as commonly used activities to teach listening skills, using strategy based activities, namely, *listening for the main idea*, *listening for detailed information*, and *predicting meaning from the context*, were recurring in different studies and even many textbooks for teaching listening (Brown, 2007a; Flowerdew & Miller, 2009; Helgesen & Brown, 2007). As Dr. Henrichsen and Dr. Tanner suggested, cloze activities for developing listening skills as well as intensive listening activities were added to this section because they both benefit lower level students to improve their listening skills by providing them opportunities to practice listening for individual sounds and words that are challenging, as well as to overcome listening passively (King, 2002).

The activities that are recommended in Unit 6B for speaking class teachers' use were also selected because of their recurring usage in various textbooks and recommendations by researchers (Bailey, 2005; Brown, 2007a; Folse, 1993; Kodotchigova, 2002; Livingstone, 1983; Richards, 2008; Thornbury, 2005; Tompkins, 1998; Ur, 1996).

Video example. The video clips that are used in my two units were selected and taken

from videos recordings of actual listening and speaking classes taught by volunteer novice teachers in two different countries, Mozambique and China.

Unit 6A's video clip takes place in an English listening and speaking class in Mozambique. In the video clip, the teacher uses two kinds of games that require students to use listening skills. The first game is "Simon says ..." and the other one is giving directions to a student who is blindfolded and has to go from point A to point B. To find a video of an actual listening class where students listened to listening passages and responded to comprehension questions was very challenging. All the videos that Dr. Henrichsen had included lessons that focused on listening and speaking integrated skills' classes. During each lesson, the majority of the class time was devoted to practicing speaking skills. The only type of listening activity that these novice teachers used involved games.

Even though finding a better video that depicted good listening instruction was a challenge, it also revealed an important fact about what novice teachers do not know and do when teaching listening classes. First, it is an obvious indication of how teaching listening skills can easily get ignored because it is a receptive skill and thus does not often get noticed. Since people do not easily notice and assess learners' listening ability, it often gets neglected. Since untrained novices do not think it is important, they do not look into teaching this skill. Another cause for this situation can simply be that volunteer teachers do not know how to help develop their students' listening skills and thus avoid teaching listening classes.

All in all, using games to develop listening skills still is a good way. "Simon says ..." and "Following directions" are both effective games that require students to use both both-up and top-down listening processes, but they are only challenging enough for lower level students. The listening activities that are recommended in Unit 6A are good for use in all levels of classes and

will provide much better and clearer ideas for teaching listening.

In contrast, Unit 6B's video clip was taken from a university level advanced English listening and speaking class. It shows a teacher using an activity called "A Thought of the Day" and incorporating it into a speaking conversation activity. As was indicated in Chapter Two, conversation activities are suitable in all levels of classes but best for intermediate and higher level students. The theme or focus of the conversation was wisely selected through a quote given by someone influential. Then, the students were asked to share their opinion about the quote.

Another reason that I selected this video was because the teacher of this class did a great job of clearly stating the expectation of the activity as she gave clear instructions, allowed reasonable time for students to discuss their opinions, and finally followed up on what students learned and discussed by asking for a volunteer to respond. This activity also embodied the four key principles of successful speaking activities, by (1) involving all students to a conversation with their peers to talk equally, (2) allowing students to talk more than the teacher, (3) giving an interesting prompt that applied to these students' circumstances the best and motivating them to take part in this activity, and (4) ensuring that students had acceptable language ability to perform this task by choosing a prompt that was not too difficult to talk about.

Where to go to learn more. Finally, the websites and books that were recommended in each unit were carefully selected to give BTRTESOL users something that would be practical yet educational. These websites and books were chosen because I found myself using them often and received similar positive feedback from many of my coworkers who used them. I have also recommended several of these websites to my students to use as a supplemental material who in return usually gave positive feedback as well. Many of the recommended websites offer listening and speaking activities that have already been created and are ready to be used. In addition, there

are some websites that have authentic listening materials for teachers who want to create and use their own listening activities. Most of the recommended websites are simple and easy to navigate through. The books recommended were selected on two conditions: they were (1) books that contain additional activities and teaching ideas for both listening and speaking classes, and (2) books that our users can read in order to learn more about teaching listening and speaking to develop themselves professionally. In addition, all of the books are fairly easy to read and understand.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the final versions of Units 6A “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” and 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills” along with the rationale behind selecting the content for each of these units, which were strictly based on what was researched (Chapter 2) and found through the pilot studies (Chapter 3).

CHAPTER 6: LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the knowledge and lessons I learned throughout the process of working on this master's project. It also includes my recommendations for future students who will choose to work on the BTRTESOL program with hopes that they will benefit from what I have to say.

Lessons Learned

First of all, achieving a master's degree in TESOL was the best choice that I have made in my professional growth. I came to this point of my life with considerable teaching experience (refer to Chapter One) and excitement to grow professionally. However, I had not fully realized how graduate school would change me not only professionally but also as a person. I have learned many lessons during this process, and I would like to mention some of the most noteworthy ones here.

The growth that I gained academically was substantial and the most valuable. BYU's TESOL MA program could not have been any better. The courses that I took prepared me well in many areas of English language teaching as well as conducting research. The opportunity that each student had to work as a student teacher in the university's English Language Center gave me opportunities to apply the knowledge I gained in the classroom into a work environment that was nurtured and safe. It was probably the most practical way possible to learn to become an ESL teacher.

Experiencing an educational materials development process firsthand was also a big highlight in my professional development path. It was an intimidating journey to start on because it was my first major materials development project. However, working on the BTRTESOL team—collaborating, learning, and sharing our ideas and experiences—made my experience

working on this project much less intimidating and kept me motivated. The times that I talked to the other team members about the progress of their units and learned from their experiences, as well as the many meetings that I had with Dr. Henrichsen going over his feedback and comments on my written report drafts and learning to accept my shortcomings rather than feeling discouraged by and shying away from them, were a few of the most noteworthy lessons that I learned during this process of developing this instructional material. I, finally, realized that everyone starts as a novice at doing something, and with time and more practice, I will and can become more experienced and comfortable with materials development as I work on creating similar projects in the future. I cherished this experience more because of my background (refer to Chapter One) where educational materials development was needed more than anything else. I am eager to use my experience in the near future as opportunities for teaching, conducting research, and training teachers present themselves to me and also as I seek them out.

Another equally important lesson, but more of a satisfaction or reward, that I learned or gained from this experience was the impact of training future teachers. As an ESL teacher, I have been able to teach many students over the past seven years and enjoy the differences that I made in my students' English language learning processes. However, being able to work on the BTRTESOL program opened my eyes to a whole new type of professional development opportunity, which is to reach out to teachers and more specifically novice teachers and be involved in training them. As I worked with various audiences while pilot testing my units, I realized that what we were doing would benefit not only the novice teachers but also those who were already in this field teaching by connecting them to various web and text resources that each BTRTESOL unit recommends for further exploration. This also meant that through all the teachers, who will benefit from the BTRTESOL program in the future, we will be able to reach

out to many more students than if I only taught in the classroom a semester at a time. So this materials development process was a great personal growth promoting experience that helped me appreciate more of what teachers do.

Finally, the subject knowledge that I gained about teaching listening and speaking skills to second or foreign language learners was the most exciting part of working on my master's project. As I read and researched more about teaching second or foreign language listening and speaking, I was able to learn what the key characteristics of each of these skill areas were, what kind of challenges they place on language learners, and how using certain skill building activities could sustain the learners' language learning progress. In fact, I was able to apply this knowledge to my work while I taught listening and speaking classes. As I watched my students struggle with listening and speaking in English, I found myself being much more effective with identifying their individual learning needs and was able to give useful feedback to my students.

Additionally, in EFL settings, teaching listening and speaking skills is often a neglected area due to the lack of trained professionals, teaching resources, and well designed curricula. For this reason, I feel more privileged for having gone through my experience of researching in depth the teaching of listening and speaking. I believe my experience in these areas will be very useful in the future, especially when I teach in Mongolia.

Recommendations for Future Team Members

As I mentioned earlier, working on the BTRTESOL program has taught me many lessons. I feel strongly about sharing a few of them with future students who will work on the BTRTESOL program. It is my hope that the recommendations I make here will help the future students to have better experiences through having clear directions, saving time, and benefiting from working closely with their advisory committees.

Understanding the general structure of your report and knowing what is expected of you will probably be the best way to start your report writing process. I realize that it is overwhelming to think about what you will have to do for your units, where you will get information to include in the units, and how they will all come together in the end. However, when I knew what I needed and where it needed to be, my days working on writing this report went much more productively. One thing that helped me to stay more organized, which I realized half-way through my writing process, was to keep a record of what I was reading for the purposes of my literature review section and what I was doing for the chapter on the unit development process I went through. In my case, I kept an online journal of my report process as well as a record of my project work hours (see Appendix D). I also created file folders on my computer for each important area of teaching listening and speaking that I was researching and saved relevant articles in the assigned computer file folders, which helped save time for me later on when I began working on the literature review chapter. Having all the necessary information in the right places can save a lot of time and hassle.

As for working on the formatting part of the project report, I would highly recommend taking the free classes offered through BYU's IT training department on helping with the use of programs, such as Word®, Dreamweaver®, EndNote®, and how to prepare Electronic Theses and Dissertations. These classes are very practical and to the point, and they will provide many useful and timesaving ideas that will help move your report writing process forward considerably.

Additionally, taking every opportunity to pilot test your units for feedback from potential users will help you better understand your target audience and analyze their needs thoroughly. Reading and researching the current theories and practices in your chosen subject area can

expand your knowledge significantly. However, this process presents the danger of encouraging you to focus on the theoretical or technical aspects of your report writing process, which could result in moving away from what you should really be focusing on, which is to accurately assess the needs of your target audience and effectively meet them in your units. So actively taking part in presenting opportunities will allow you to stay on the right track. Ling 377 students, China Teachers Program participants, and HELP International volunteers are easily available audiences in the area; however, reaching out to other target audiences in other regions, both within the United States and abroad, if opportunities come up, can only strengthen the quality of your units. Finally, working closely with your advisory committee, especially your chair, will help guide you towards completing your part of the work effectively. Your chair and the committee members will guide you through your learning process as you work on your write-up and give valuable feedback. As soon as I started working closely with my chair by setting up bi-weekly meetings, I was able to commit myself to working more seriously on my project. I would encourage you to look for every opportunity to counsel with your advisory committee to move your work forward.

Conclusion

Working on the BTRTESOL program has been a great learning opportunity for me that has taught me many lessons. First and foremost, it allowed me to have an authentic experience with materials development, a valuable lesson that will probably guide me through many more future opportunities developing educational materials in Mongolia. This was also a time for me to evaluate my growth academically as I was able to put the knowledge I gained from several different courses in the TESOL MA program at BYU to work and show how much I have grown as I am about to set foot in the real working world. Additionally, BTRTESOL is a teacher-

training program that can have a great impact on reaching countless learners of English language throughout the world. I feel truly privileged to have had this opportunity to be a part of this program. I am also equally enthusiastic about the subject areas that I was able to research extensively to write my two units. Finally, I hope the recommendations that I have made for future members of the BTRTESOL team will be useful and help others carry out exceptional work that will bring more success to the BTRTESOL program in the future.

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APPENDIX A: BTRTESOL PROGRAM PROSPECTUS

Basic Training and Resources for TESOL:

The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More

Prospectus prepared by
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• Product Overview

Basic Training and Resources for TESOL: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More is a book and a website (supplemented by video clips) that utilizes a minimalist, connectivist approach to helping minimally trained, novice ESL/EFL teachers be more effective, professional, and successful. It is usable in two ways: in a traditional, face-to-face class with a teacher and regular meetings, or by independent self-study, according to an individual's particular interests, needs, and schedule.

• Audience/Market

Many untrained or minimally trained people teach ESL/EFL in community programs, commercial schools, public libraries, churches, homes, language schools abroad, etc. *Basic Training and Resources for TESOL: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More* is designed for the thousands of untrained or minimally trained teachers of ESL (in the United States and other English-language environments) and EFL (in other settings around the world). It will also be attractive and useful for untrained people who are on the verge of teaching ESL/EFL. For various reasons (finances, timing, location), most of these teachers are unable to enroll in full-scale TESOL teacher-preparation programs, but they still need and want basic training in effective classroom procedures and materials, as well as in the teaching and learning principles behind them. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (Kutner et al., 1992) initiated a 30-month study into the training of teachers and volunteers working in adult basic education [ABE] and ESL. The study "was launched ... in response to the widespread concern that inadequate training is a major impediment to the effective delivery of adult education services" (Kutner et al., 1992, p. 8). Nine sites were visited across the U.S. to better understand the training of volunteers and teachers in adult education. Reasons cited for lack of training included high turnover, lack of funding, and limited requirements. The most common form of training was a single-session workshop. The study offers two suggestions for developing training programs that are especially relevant, they discuss the importance of giving volunteers ownership in their training and providing training that is easily accessed and meets their needs.

No one knows exactly how many novices or volunteers teach ESL in the United States. The number, however, is undoubtedly large. The 2005-2006 Statistical Report of ProLiteracy states that 120,480 volunteers worked in its 1,200 affiliate programs, 88% of which provided ESL services. The number is undoubtedly greater today with the recent floods of refugees and immigrants to English-speaking countries and the growing demand for English around the world.

The 2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics indicated that in 2009 the US received 74,602 refugees from various countries, the greatest amount received in the last 10 years (US Department of Homeland Security [DHS], 2010). Many companies advertise several tens of thousands of EFL teaching jobs in many locations around the world. The website volunteerabroad.com lists 600 plus organizations that send volunteers around the world, many of them to teach English. We contacted several of these organizations to assess the number of volunteers. Three of these organizations totaled 600 volunteers (personal communications, October 2010). Help International sends 150 volunteers a year and International Language Programs (ILP) sends 350 per year (personal communication, October 2010). Some of these programs, of course, provide at least minimal in-house training for their volunteers. Additionally, Bridge TEFL trains 3,400 in certification programs (personal communication, October 2010). The number of untrained teachers, who work independently or with programs that provide minimal and often inadequate training, is probably very large. It is these people, a huge group of teachers needing more preparation and resources, that constitute the market for *Basic Training and Resources for TESOL: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More*.

• History

Over the years many training manuals have been produced for various volunteer tutors within specific organizations. These manuals desire to provide novice, often volunteer, teachers with the skills needed to teach English to adults in various situations. These programs rely on volunteers to meet a need in the community. *The HER Project: Homebound English for Refugee Women* (Beck, 1982) was developed for the Tacoma Community House. The manual itself consists of approximately 37 pages of basic information about teaching ESL and lesson plans for teaching primarily oral, survival English. The basic information section includes ideas about teaching vocabulary, structure, pronunciation and listening skills it also includes ideas on evaluation, using visual aids, and and general information about teaching ESL. More recently the Tacoma Community House (2001) has produced another handbook for ESL tutoring. This handbook, *Tutoring ESL: A Handbook for Volunteers*, includes information for tutors on activities in the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Additionally, it includes information on assessment, lesson planning, and general teaching tips and techniques. Other information is available on their website www.nwlincs.org.

Another common method for training volunteers is through a one-time workshop. One workshop by Literacy Volunteers of America – Connecticut, (*Teaching Basic Skills*, 1992) was conducted to train volunteers to teach basic literacy and life skills in ESL. It was a two and a half hour workshop and the participants received information and handouts about curriculum and tutoring techniques.

• Approach and Distinctive Features

Basic Training and Resources for TESOL: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More employs a minimalist and connectivist approach to teacher preparation. It does not attempt to cover every teacher-preparation topic in great breadth and depth. Rather, in a large number of short chapters (5-10 pages each), it introduces teachers to key concepts and procedures related to a particular teaching topic and then directs them to other sources for additional, in-depth information.

In contrast to many TESOL teacher-education textbooks that present teaching/learning theories and practices in a didactic fashion and then hope readers will be able to apply them in

actual classroom settings, each chapter in *Basic Training and Resources for TESOL* takes an engaging, highly practical, problem-solving approach to teacher preparation by beginning with short case studies and classroom scenarios situated in ESL (in the United States) and EFL (in non-English speaking countries worldwide) settings that illustrate the challenges that teachers face in the real world. In this way, each chapter immediately confronts teachers with authentic instructional challenges and involves them in realistic analytical and problem-solving tasks. To support the textual explanations in the book, many of the case studies and scenarios are also viewable on an accompanying DVD or on the website.

Basic Training and Resources for TESOL also focuses primarily on proven instructional procedures that can immediately be put into practice. In accordance with Hersey and Blanchard's (1985) Situational Leadership Model, the book's underlying approach recognizes that the preparation needs of teachers vary depending on their levels of competence and commitment. Novice, short-term, volunteer teachers—in contrast with the committed, experienced, career-oriented teachers found in many graduate-level TESOL teacher education programs—typically need and want simple, direct teacher training. Therefore, *Basic Training and Resources for TESOL* provides specific instructions for classroom teaching strategies. Chapter one introduces the reader to the scope of this material, however there is no specified sequence to these chapters. Novice teachers are able to assess their needs and focus on relevant units that interest them. Each chapter carefully guides novice teachers through the process of identifying language-teaching problems, setting goals, developing action plans, carrying them out, and evaluating their success. At the same time, it helps them recognize and understand the underlying principles that affect success in language teaching.

• Competition

The competition for the program is summarized in Table 1 and Table 2.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Competition

Table 1

Title	Strengths	Weaknesses
TESOL Core Certificate Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Includes a 60-hour foundation course in teaching theory and practice. ◦ Includes a 60-hour course on language skills and assessment. ◦ In the second course one has the option of focusing on adult or young learners. ◦ The course designers and teachers appear to be qualified. ◦ It has the TESOL name ◦ Focuses on ESL and EFL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ It is costly ◦ One must register months in advance so it is not immediately accessible ◦ Limited availability (limited number of openings) ◦ It is not necessarily connected to a real teaching position (limited applicability)

Colorin' Colorado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Many links to other web resources and books ◦ Good for an ESL (U.S.) setting ◦ Has online webcasts with professionals ◦ Good resources for parents and educators ◦ Good resource for boosting reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mainly targeted to Hispanic ESL learners, with only materials up to the third grade in Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Navajo, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese ◦ Only targets children K-12, not adults ◦ Would not always be as beneficial in an EFL setting ◦ Only targets reading specifically and not all skills
More Than a Native Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Helpful appendixes on course planning, culture topic list ◦ Could be useful with other materials that will add more practical information ◦ Text is user friendly and readable ◦ Does not use big terms, good explanations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Difficult for new or less experienced teachers to decide in what situation, for what level to use examples of assessment, teaching principles, etc. ◦ Book is outdated ◦ The title does not give us any hint that "More Than a Native Speaker" is a guide for volunteer native English teachers teaching abroad ◦ Contains only plain text, no graphics, pictures ◦ Very little about different proficiency levels, classroom management etc.
Teach English: A training course for teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Very specific guidelines for beginning teachers ◦ Step by step instructions ◦ Pictures ◦ Example lesson plans ◦ Activities to be used and copied in class ◦ Unit on the importance of assessment and how to use it effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ It is old, but it has been reprinted in several editions ◦ The cover does not look interesting

A Training Course for TEFL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Helpful activities for teacher to help identify teaching strategies and activities for the learners ◦ Offers discussion examples of dialogue between students and teachers ◦ Gives references for further readings ◦ Charts ,graphs and symbols to illustrate principles and ideas ◦ Communicative teaching tasks ◦ Offers techniques for all skills to be taught 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Outdated, now there are other techniques and strategies that need attention. ◦ May be out of print ◦ For more technical and graduate level students. Not built for volunteers with little or no understanding of technical language
Oxford Basics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Offers 25-30 basic lesson plans per book ◦ Covers a wide variety of topics including grammar, teaching children, intercultural activities, etc. ◦ Affordable price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Each book focuses on a specific area, listening, speaking, grammar so you may need to buy several books ◦ Few overall principals of teaching English. ◦ Some of the activities seem very contrived, they try to coordinate lessons across books which sometimes results in either very similar lessons or very contrived lessons ◦ All lessons at a beginning level
Teaching English Worldwide: A New Practical Guide to Teaching English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Helpful visual aids such as charts, cartoons and graphs ◦ Good explanation on commonly asked questions in chapter 1 ◦ Reasonable price ◦ Includes the necessary and basic information needed for a teacher who may be responsible to teach all skill areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No specific level of learner mentioned ◦ Not sufficient information in each section ◦ Hard to create a lesson plan with only the given information

Highway to E.S.L.: A User-Friendly Guide to Teaching English as a Second Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Helpful information on choosing an overseas job ◦ Covers a variety of topics in different skill areas ◦ Offers where to go to find more in each chapter ◦ User friendly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Not enough on the different skills ◦ Analogy of Highway is a bit of a stretch at times ◦ Useful only for teachers studying abroad ◦ Not enough meat in each chapter, very simplistic
Teaching English as a Foreign Language for Dummies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Plethora of information ◦ Author is experienced ◦ Information on numerous countries and teaching situations ◦ Lesson planning for different skills presented ◦ Information on choosing TEFL as a career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Doesn't cover subjects completely only peripherally ◦ Focuses mostly on those who are not teachers at the moment, probably would not be helpful for those with more knowledge ◦ Little focus on developing a teaching personality and classroom management ◦ Needs more on ESP, EAP and Content-Based Teaching ◦ No mention of assessments such as TOEFL, TOEIC and Michigan

Competition: Bibliographical Information

Table 2

Title	Author	Publication Information	ISBN	Price
TESOL Core Certificate Program	TESOL	TESOL, 2010	N/A	\$1,000
Colorin' Colorado	WETA (with the American Federation of Teachers, National Institute for Literacy, U.S. Department of Education)	Web-based service, 2008	N/A	free
More Than a Native Speaker	Don Snow	TESOL, 1996	0-939791-64-1	\$ 31.20
Teach English: A training course for teachers	Adrian Doff	Cambridge University, 1990	0-521-34864-1 0-521-34863-3	\$32.00 \$28.00

A Training Course for TEFL	Peter Hubbard, Hywel Jones, Barbara Thornton, Rod Wheeler	Oxford University, 1983	019432710	\$15.00
Oxford Basics	Various	Oxford University, 2000	Various	\$12.50
Teaching English Worldwide: A New Practical Guide to Teaching English	Lindsay, Paul	Alta Book Center Publisher, 2000	1-882483-77-4	\$26.95
Highway to E.S.L.: A User-Friendly Guide to Teaching English as a Second Language	Dang, Pinky Y & Ruiter, Rik	iUniverse Inc, 2005	978-0595342211	\$18.68
Teaching English as a Foreign Language for Dummies	Maxom, Michelle	Wiley, 2009	978-0470745762	\$18.63

• Scope and Sequence

The forty-plus units in *Basic Training and Resources for TESOL: The Least You Should Know and Where to Go to Learn More* cover a broad range of teacher-preparation topics.

The 42 units cover a broad range of teacher-preparation topics, divided into 10 major areas:

1. Introduction: Basic Concepts
 - A. “The Least You Should Know” (the purposes and delimitations of this program and suggestions for follow-up TESOL courses, resources, and professional organizations)
 - B. Differences between teaching English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL)
 - C. Tutoring vs. teaching: How they are different
 - D. Understanding and adapting in a new culture
 - E. Working successfully within foreign educational and administrative systems
2. Designing Language-teaching Programs, Courses, and Lessons
 - A. Setting up and operating successful courses for adult English language learners (i.e., administrative concerns)
 - B. Planning a curriculum that fits your students and meets their needs
 - C. Designing effective lessons for language learning and teaching (i.e., lesson planning)
 - D. Assessing your students' language proficiency (for course design purposes and for determining student placement)
3. Developing Fundamental Teaching Skills
 - A. Developing a successful teaching personality

- B. Adjusting your spoken English to make it comprehensible and helpful to English language
 - C. Managing classes of English language learners (encouraging participation, maintaining discipline, building a supportive sense of community, avoiding demeaning or negative behavior, setting up groups, dealing with multiple levels of proficiency in the same class)
 - D. Correcting language learners' errors productively, and developing their self-monitoring skills
4. Understanding Key Principles Behind Successful Language Teaching
 - A. Basic principles of second language acquisition
 - B. Creating and using exercises for mechanical, meaningful, and communicative practice
 - C. Communicative language teaching and information gap exercises
 - D. Encouraging cooperative and collaborative learning to increase student interaction
 - E. Creating activities that provide imitative, rehearsed, and extemporaneous practice
 - F. Developing an awareness of teaching styles and cross-cultural style differences
 5. Knowing Your Students: Learner Types, Styles, and Strategies
 - A. Understanding, respecting, and appreciating adult ESL learners
 - B. Working successfully with young English language learners
 - C. Understanding your students' language learning styles—including cross-cultural differences in learning styles—and then teaching them accordingly
 - D. Recognizing multiple intelligences and their implications for language teaching
 - E. Teaching your students to use language-learning strategies commonly employed by successful language learners
 6. Developing Language Skills
 - A. Developing English language learners' listening skills
 - B. Developing English language learners' speaking skills
 - C. Developing English language learners' reading skills
 - D. Developing English language learners' writing skills
 - E. Integrating multiple language skills in one class
 - F. Teaching content-based language classes
 7. Teaching English Language Components
 - A. The least you should know about English grammar and how to teach it
 - B. The least you should know about English pronunciation and how to teach it
 - C. Planned and unplanned vocabulary teaching
 - D. Vocabulary teaching and learning strategies that work well
 - E. Teaching culture
 8. Making Language Teaching and Learning Enjoyable and Memorable
 - A. Conducting effective and enjoyable conversation classes
 - B. Using songs to increase participation, recall, and enjoyment
 - C. Using games for English language teaching
 - D. Using computers and Internet resources for English language teaching
 - E. Using video for teaching English
 9. Testing English Language Skills
 - A. Widely used general proficiency tests (e.g., TOEFL, BEST, CET)
 - B. Developing valid and reliable local measures of student achievement

10. Choosing, Creating, and Adapting Language Teaching Materials

- A. Locating, evaluating, and selecting authentic, effective print/electronic teaching materials for language learners
- B. Collecting and creating your own language-teaching materials
- C. Successfully adapting existing materials for greater teaching enjoyment and success

These units are designed to be used independently, in any sequence, according to users' interests.

• Ancillary Materials

Each unit includes video clips of ESL/EFL teachers in authentic classroom situations. These clips illustrate the principles and procedures described in the unit, and they provide the basis for observation and reflection activities. For the book, these videos will be provided on an accompanying DVD. They will also be available online as part of the website.

• Current Status of the Work

Number of units completed: 10 (video clips to be inserted later)

Number of units nearly completed: 5

Number of units under development: 20 (various stages)

Number of units no one is working on: 6 with others posited as well

Number of units we are working on this semester: 6

Over the next year other units will be developed and finished available for use. As they become available they will also be posted to the website.

• Field Testing

Over the course of the year we will have numerous opportunities for feedback. As a group we meet weekly and give each other feedback, and we have individual meetings with our professor, Dr. Henrichsen, to receive feedback. We gave a presentation at the ITESOL conference in Ogden, UT on October 23, 2010 where we asked attendees to fill out a questionnaire about each of our individual units. We each received feedback on our units. The following is the summary of the feedback on our individual units.

Unit 5 B Working Successfully with Young English Language Learners

I received 10 responses to my request for feedback. Most of the people who filled out the feedback sheets commented that they liked the content and that the information of characteristics and how young learners learn was good. It helped me recognize that I have recognized some of the key factors in teaching young learners. Suggestions for improvement included, discussion of expected behaviors, list of teacher characteristics, information on development, information on TPR. I also received a couple of resource suggestions such as, Starfall.com, Center for Applied Linguistics: Teaching English in the Elementary Classroom, and Making it Happen by: Patricia A. Richard-Amato.

Unit 6 F Content-Based Language Teaching

Unit 6F received feedback from 14 people. The majority of this feedback was a pat on the back letting us know we were headed in the right direction. Some suggestions for improvement were given including: include more vocabulary practice, use modified texts, use authentic texts, look at local immersion programs, break unit into separate units, move from realia to interaction to writing and reading.

Unit 6 B Developing English Language Learners' Speaking Skills

Ten people gave feedback on this unit. All of the participants indicated that the content of this unit was very interesting and useful. Six people suggested that the following should be included in the unit: grammar, pronunciation, examples to go along with each areas that are involved in speaking, culture, level of learners and ways to identify needs. One comment made on additional resources that would be helpful was TPR storytelling. Another comments was to indicate information on how the tongue, teeth and lips are involved in producing accurate pronunciation. Overall, it was encouraging to know what future users are looking for in this unit and these comments have helped to sort out the necessary things that should go into this unit.

Unit 8 B Using Songs to Increase Participation, Recall, and Enjoyment

For this unit much of the feedback received commented that including this unit in the book is a good idea as it involves more creativity and fun exercises added to the book. A couple of people suggested that it is important to maintain the class professional while using songs to improve the students' motivation and participation level so that it does not distract the learning atmosphere of the class from being too casual but helps to create a better, enjoyable educational environment.

In Winter of 2011 we will receive feedback from students in Ling 377, a class to train students to teach English abroad for Help International and other organizations. Finally we will receive feedback from pilot users. Pilot users will be able to link from the website to a Qualtrics survey that has been created for each unit.

• The Authors

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APPENDIX B: ORIGINAL DRAFTS OF UNITS

Unit 6 A

Developing English Language Learners' Listening Skills

Introduction

More than forty-five percent of our general communication time consists of listening to spoken messages. This number is even higher if the communication is in an educational setting. If teachers know and use activities and strategies specifically designed to develop listening skills, both teachers and students can have beneficial experiences teaching and learning.

Scenario

Catherine was assigned to teach English to second year college students whose major was to become English Russian interpreters. Her students seemed to have very well mastered grammar and written language skills compared to their speaking and listening skills. This was their first time to have a native English-speaking teacher for their listening and speaking class. Most of her students were very excited to learn from her, therefore they emphasized that listening to native speakers was by far the most difficult thing to do. So they specifically requested Catherine to help improve their listening skills by teaching them tricks and anything else that were necessary. The textbook Catherine was given to teach from did not have much to use for listening practice. Besides, her students complained about the dialogues that were in the audio tape which came with the textbook not being a true representation of a real listening that they had to listen to such as movies, TV shows and news.

- What would you do if you were Catherine?
 - What made listening very difficult for these students?
 - What kind of tricks and strategies can Catherine teach to her students to help them get better?
 - Where and how can she find appropriate listening materials to use in her class?
-

Objectives of this unit

As you work through this unit, you will be able to...

1. Explain what listening is.
2. Identify the special characteristics listening in a second or foreign language has.
3. Understand three different ways people make sense of what is being said to them.

4. Know and use the most effective strategies that develop stronger listening skills.
5. Identify unique features of a listening class.

The Least You Should Know

Listening is the most used skill in daily conversations that people have. In fact, over eighty percent of educational activities that students experience takes listening. Therefore it is important for teachers to know the underlying aspects of a second or foreign language listening process and know about strategies and activities that will help learners master stronger listening skills. This unit will cover the following key points.

1. What is listening and how it differs from hearing?
2. How listening messages are processed?
3. Most effective strategies that help develop listening skills in learners
4. Features unique to listening classes

1. What is listening?

Listening is a mental process to put together meaning from a spoken message. As people listen to instructions, questions and all other kinds of messages, they respond to them accordingly whether by following instructions, answering questions or other necessary ways. Listening in a second or foreign language is done successfully, as listeners understand each sound, word, and grammatical structure. Therefore, listening is an active and purposeful process. It means people select and interpret what they hear at the time they hear. If listeners do not pay attention to what is being said, then this process will only become a hearing where there is no meaning is understood.

There are two kinds of listening process in general. The first one is called a reciprocal (two-way) listening, where listening is used between more than two people. This kind of listening happens when there is a conversation going on where speakers and listeners listen to information and respond with ideas, comments, or clarify understanding. The other kind of listening is nonreciprocal (one-way) which doesn't require listeners to participate. Nonreciprocal listening occurs during lectures, when listening to voice messages, news and radio or just eavesdropping.

2. Processing information while listening

Whenever people listen to information whether they are old or new, they process them three different ways: bottom-up, top-down and interactive processes. Learners do not necessarily realize that they are using these processes when listening. However, it is important for teachers to know which processing can be used how and when, so that they can make sure that their students are having balanced practices using all three listening processes.

Bottom-up listening process

When students listen to a message that they are not familiar with, they try to understand it by paying close attention to each sound, word and grammar. It is like taking a small step at a time to get to your final destination. Therefore this process of collecting small information at a time to make sense is called a bottom-up listening process. Students are more likely to use this processing when the content of the message is new and unfamiliar to them, or their English language level is lower.

Top-down listening process

Top-down processing, on the other hand, means trying to make sense of what students hear with the help of their past knowledge and experience. When students use this process, they may recognize a word or two in a conversation and try to guess what is being discussed without going to have to listen for every sound, word and grammar to build meaning. Students in intermediate and higher level feel comfortable with using this processing.

Interactive listening process

At an advanced level, students feel much more confident about using language and they use both bottom-up and top-down listening processes. Therefore it is called an interactive listening process where students will pay attention to a new vocabulary, but at the same time attempt to predict its meaning and usage based on their language skill and experience. Professionals consider this processing the most effective strategy for students to use.

3. Listening strategies to assist with gaining strong listening skills

The following strategies are specially designed to develop stronger listening skills in students in all levels. When teachers carefully select to use these strategies according to their students' levels, they will be able to see considerable improvement in their students' listening development.

Listening for main idea

Learning to listen to a general idea of a spoken message is the very first skill that students develop. Therefore this is the strategy that needs to be taught to lower level students and need to be reinforced throughout all levels. Students learn to listen for a main idea by paying attention to words that are being emphasized and repeated. Words that signal change in the spoken message (transition words) can also help students to understand better.

Listening for detailed information

Most listening tasks require students to listen for detailed information. Teachers can guide students by giving specific questions to find out more information about the listening material. All levels of students can work on this strategy to improve their listening skills.

Predicting meaning from the context

This strategy gives students a chance to figure out meaning from the context when it is not said directly. It is appropriate to use activities that will develop this strategy when the students' level is higher.

Listening for voice tone

People use different voice tones to express different meanings. Learning to identify different voice tones will help speed up the learning dramatically. This strategy is best to be taught for beginning level students.

4. Features unique to listening class

Listening classes require teachers to know about and be prepared for the following important aspects. Knowing these will only help increase the effectiveness of your lessons.

Planning to teach

When planning to teach a listening class, it is important to include the following three guiding parts in your lesson plan.

Pre-listening. Students should always be informed of what they are going to do before they begin listening. This part works as a warm where the teacher asks questions to recall their background knowledge and gives specific instructions on what they will do as they listen. Teachers can use

While listening. Whenever students are listening to something, they should always have a purpose to listen to. This means teachers need to provide students specific tasks to work on as they listen. These tasks should focus on developing stronger listening skills as the teacher carefully selects to have the students work on different listening strategies mentioned above.

Post-listening. At the end of each listening activity teachers should check on how the students did by finding out how they completed their tasks during listening. Most post-listening activities are in the form of speaking tasks requiring them to report on what they did. This part of a listening class is important because it gives the teacher a chance to track the progress of the students thus aiding them to plan effectively for future.

Choosing level appropriate listening materials

Listening materials come from many different sources, such as, radio, audio tape that come with the textbook, movies, TV, or the teacher in the forms of lecture, conversations, songs, announcements, advertisements, etc. For each material to use, teachers need to carefully choose considering the level of their students. For lower level students listening materials are best when they are short and simple and prerecorded as well as clearly stated. As for intermediate and advanced level students all other sources can be used. However, as teachers, our goal is to see the students succeed and thus giving opportunities to listen to all forms of listening tasks will only help improve the students.

Consider for use of technology

It is needless to say, but important to remember that teachers must always have an easy access to some sort of audio recording listening tool.

Video example

Here you will view a video clip of a listening activity. As you watch this video clip think about how it can be related to what you have learned in this unit and answer the questions in the following “Reflection and Responses” section to check your understanding of this unit.

Reflection and responses

As you view this video clip, think about each of the following questions.

1. What was especially good about this class?
2. What strategies discussed earlier in this unit did you notice in this clip?
3. How was the listening class planned?
4. What adaptations could you make for the situation you are (will be) teaching in?
5. What other things might you do differently to make your lessons even better?

For future (Web-based) use: Write your reflections in the box provided. Then, click on the button by each box to see what other people have said after viewing and reflecting on this video clip. *

Where to go to learn more Connections to other units in this program

Here are some other units in this program that relate to topics we have addressed in this unit.

3. Unit 8 B, “Using Songs and Chants to Increase Participation, Recall and Enjoyment”
 4. Unit 7 B, “Teaching English pronunciation.”
-

Online and other electronic resources

Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab	www.esl-lab.com
Ello	http://www.ello.org/
Breaking News English	www.breakingnewsenglish.com
VOA News- Learning English	http://www.voanews.com/learningenglish/home/
English Listening Lounge	http://www.englishlistening.com/
Literacy Works	http://literacynet.org/cnnsf/archives.html
California Distance Learning Project	http://www.cdlponline.org/
Hulu	www.hulu.com
Real-English	http://www.real-english.com/
Technology Entertainment and Design (TED)	http://www.ted.com/
National Public Radio (NPR)	www.npr.org
CNN Student News	http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/
Easy Conversations	http://www.eslfast.com/easydialogs/index.html
ESL Fast (365 ESL Short Stories)	http://www.eslfast.com/
English for Children	http://www.rong-chang.com/children/index.htm

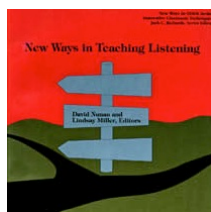
Medical English Listening
China Radio International
American Rhetoric
(Top 100 Speeches)

<http://www.englishmed.com/dialogues/>
<http://english.cri.cn/>

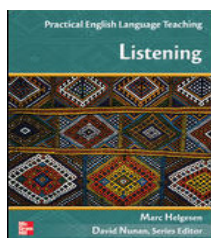
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/top100speechesall.html>

Print and paper-based resources

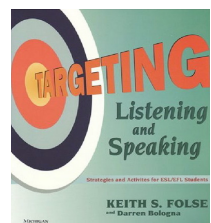
Here are some published books that have proven to be helpful resources for teaching speaking skills.



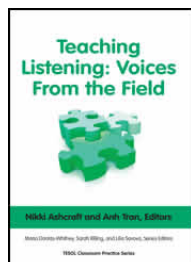
David Nunan and Lindsey Miller. *New Ways in Teaching Listening*. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc, 1995. ISBN 0-939791-58-7
“This book gives indepth information on how listening strategies can be developed in learners and offers insights on how listening skills can be developed along with other skills. It also provided information on choosing authentic listening materials, proper technology, making listening fun, etc.”



Marc Helgesen and Steven Brown. *Practical English Language Teaching: Listening*. McGraw-Hill Companies, 2007. ISBN 0-07-111921-3 This book introduces teachers to the key aspects of teaching listening methodology through giving in depth information on teaching listening in beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. Readers are offered reflection questions and action tasks throughout this book to apply their understanding of the ideas. It also includes further suggestions for books, articles and websites for additional information.



Keith S. Folse. *Targeting Listening and Speaking*. University of Michigan Press, 2003. ISBN 047208898X This is a book that is specifically designed for developing speaking and listening skills through carefully designed activities under six themes such as food, animals and pets, free time and hobbies, and travel. There is a companion website that goes with this book where teachers can find additional sources for testing.



Nikki Ashcraft and Anh Tran. *Teaching Listening: Voices From the Field*. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc, 2010. ISBN 978-193118569-1 Read more about what listening teachers are doing these days to make their listening classes successful. This book includes chapters on designing listening courses and effective listening activities, using music and other authentic materials, and advanced and academic listening ideas.

Unit 6 B

Developing English Language Learners' Speaking Skills

Introduction:

Learning to speak is probably one of the most sought after part of foreign language learning. Because people need to and want to communicate, language learners are constantly motivated to improve their speaking skills. It is important for anybody, who is going to teach speaking to language learners, to understand what and how they are going to teach when it comes to teaching speaking skills. This unit will help you understand the knowledge that takes to speak in a second language and provide you with basic information to understand learners' needs and therefore teach them effectively.

Scenario:

An American Humanitarian Service Worker in Mongolia

A young American in his early twenties went to Mongolia as part of a humanitarian service project. His primary responsibility was to help with any kinds of local development projects whether it would be organizing events, helping with building projects, or caring for the needy. Then, he was asked to teach English speaking skills to the local adults who have studied English in Mongolian schools for several years but still couldn't speak it. He was told that he could teach his classes any way he wants. That's the hard part. He has never taught English before, has never studied speaking, and is wondering what and how he should teach.

- What would you do if you were in his shoes?
- Would you focus on grammar, vocabulary, and/or pronunciation, or would you just go in and start talking to the students?
- What if they don't talk back?
- What would you talk about?
- How would you correct their mistakes?

Objectives of this unit

As you work through this unit, you will be able to...

1. Describe what knowledge and skills speaking in a foreign language requires.
2. Assess which knowledge and skills your students need to develop in order to speak English better.

3. Choose instructional activities that will help your students develop their speaking abilities in English.

As you learn the content of this unit you will understand what the learners are going through as they try to speak in a foreign language, and effectively identify their weaknesses and help to improve their speaking skills.

The Least You Should Know

The objective of developing English language learners' speaking skills is to understand what area of speaking they need to work on to improve speaking skills. There are some key knowledge that each teacher need to know that speaking in another language requires. They are...

1. What does it mean to speak in a foreign language and how is it different from speaking in one's native language?
2. How do teachers know what exactly their students need to work on to improve their speaking skills?
3. What are some activities and tasks that will develop speaking skills?
4. What activities will help develop which speaking skills?
5. What are the some basic principles of successful speaking activities?

The remainder of this section will talk about these topics.

1. Know what it takes to speak

Speaking is a complex process. Speaking is also “an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information” (Bailey, 2005). When a person is speaking in his first language, he successfully connects appropriate words with correct pronunciation and grammar in the right context. It is because he had spent his lifetime to learn and practice using his native language in speaking.

On the other hand, foreign language learners find it challenging as they try to start speaking within short amount of time after they began to learn the language. The time that has been spent in learning a foreign language is not the only challenge that stands on the way to successful speaking. There are several factors that contribute to it.

- Knowing enough vocabulary to produce spoken language is the very first thing to watch for. Before anything happens learners need to know the basic vocabulary to participate in meaningful conversation. You may refer to Unit 7D for vocabulary learning strategies.

- The next step is to know the grammar which gives information on which words go where within a sentence in what forms. Further information on how to teach grammar can be found in Unit 7A.
- No matter how many words the learners know and no matter how well they can use the proper grammar points, without the knowledge of correct pronunciation (see Unit 7B), spoken language cannot be comprehensible.
- It is also important to know what kind of language is appropriate to use in which context. Knowing when to use formal and informal language makes a big difference in successful communication. It also gives the speaker the confidence to speak.
- Having cultural background knowledge of the spoken topic is a very important thing for learners to know. Therefore cultural information should be taught in language classrooms (see Unit 1D).
- At last understanding body language when speaking is another thing that needs to be mentioned. Although most languages may have similar facial expressions, gestures in different language convey different meaning causing misunderstanding. Therefore it is important for teachers to discuss about it in class. For example, in English, pointing a right thumb up means good, while pointing it down means bad. However, in Mongolian, pointing a right thumb up means good, but pointing a right pinky means bad.

Comprehension and Reflection Questions

1. What does speaking mean?
 2. How does speaking in one's native language differ from speaking in another language?
 3. What kind of elements does speaking involve?
-

2. Assessing learners' speaking skills to determine what to teach

Knowing what to teach in a speaking class can become a challenging task when teachers fail to understand what their students need and want to learn. Before beginning to teach, each teacher should conduct an informal assessment of his or her students' language learning goals. Since you know what it takes to speak in a foreign language, it will be fairly easy to find out what areas of speaking your students need to improve. Just make sure you include questions that will cover the above-mentioned areas and be specific. Some possible questions can be: *Why do you want to learn to speak? How important is it for you to improve your speaking pronunciation? How easy is it for you to express yourself grammatically correct? How challenging is it for you to think of words to use in your speech?* There are several ways you can find out your students' needs.

Interview the students

Meeting with your students individually to find out what their learning goal is for the speaking class is the most direct and effective way. Interviews can give you a better understanding of how

much your student already know because you will have a chance to hear from you student directly. It also gives students a chance to open up and directly ask the teacher what they want. It is important to take good notes during interviews on each student's individual needs and often refer to your notes to check whether you are meeting your students' needs. However, interviews can become time consuming especially when you have a big class.

Conduct a survey

When you don't have enough time to interview every student, conducting a short survey can be very helpful. In your survey you can include questions that you would have asked your students if you had interviewed them. Remember that depending on the level of your students you want to keep the survey questions from simple to difficult.

Have a diagnostic test

Creating a diagnostic test that includes tasks that will require different speaking skills to complete the task also can give you a good idea of what the strengths and weaknesses of your students' speaking skills are. Test creating can sometimes take a long time, but having your students work on a good test can be very effective way to find out what your students' speaking abilities are. For more information on creating tests refer to Unit 9B.

After conducting one of the above assessment tools, you will be able to analyze and understand the level and needs of your students' speaking ability. You may use more than one of the above ways to assess your students' needs if using one seems to give you incomplete information about your students' real needs. These assessments should not only be limited to one time. It is valuable to you constantly assess your students throughout the semester to make sure that your students are improving and also to check how well you, as a teacher, doing.

Comprehension and Reflection Questions

1. What are some ways to find out what your students' speaking skills?
 2. What are some other possible questions that you can think of to include in your survey?
-

3. Instructional activities to develop speaking skills

Once you know what you need to focus on in your classes, the next step will be to choose appropriate tasks and activities that will help your students improve their speaking skills. The following are the most used activities for speaking development.

Conversations and interviews

Spoken language is mostly used in conversations in real-life therefore holding activities that resemble real-life conversations is a very effective way to develop speaking skills in learners. Conversations can happen unplanned as people run into each other on the street and start talking while some other conversations can be created according to a given prompt by the teacher. To learn more about how to teach conversation classes, refer to Unit 7D. Interviews are also another

type of conversation that people get involved in real-life. Interviews can be somewhat planned. For instance, a person who is going to a job interview can plan to answer some common questions that may be asked but at the same time it is still unknown what other questions can be asked by the interviewer. This kind of activities can be used in all levels English classrooms by adjusting the topic and expectations of the assignments.

Information gap activities

This is a kind of activity that one person has information that the other doesn't have. Therefore the speaker must use English to find out the missing information. Teachers can create this kind of activities easily by taking out some of the information and giving it to the other person. Students then will be required to ask questions from each other to find the missing information. In real-life people make this kind of language use by asking for directions, when doing a shopping, and many other ways when looking for more information. This kind of activity is used in all levels.

Role-playing, scripted dialogues and drama

Acting in one's place and reciting a rehearsed language is another very useful activity for speaking. They help build confidence in learners because they know what they are saying is correct and that they know exactly when to say what. Some role plays can be unprepared as the learners act as themselves and come up with their own ideas. All levels of classes can make a use of this kind of activity.

Picture-based activities

Pictures and graphs can become a great tool to create a good speaking activity and can be used in all levels of classrooms. There are many advantages of using this kind of activity, for the visuals will help draw the attention of the learner away from focusing too much of the structure, activate background knowledge of the topic, and bring a different dynamic into the classroom.

Presentation and public speaking

This kind of activity works more successful in advanced levels because students usually have enough language that will produce impromptu speech.

At last, successful speaking activities include the following four basic principles. They are derived from Ur (1996):

1. Learners talk a lot. The learners should be talking for as much time as possible.
2. Participation is even. Classroom discussion is not dominated by a minority of talkative participants. All get a chance to speak, and contributions are fairly evenly distributed.
3. Motivation is high. Learners are eager to speak because 1) they are interested in the topic and have something to say about it, and/or 2) they want to contribute to achieving the goal of the task.
4. Language is of an acceptable level. Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy.

4. Speaking fluency

When talking about speaking in a foreign language, fluency is a major factor that measures speaking development. According to Fillmore (2000), fluency is “the ability to talk at length with few pauses, the ability to fill time with talk, the ability to talk in coherent, reasoned, and ‘semantically dense’ sentences, ability to have appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts, the ability to be creative and imaginative in language use.”

Why is speaking fluency important to develop in language learners? Brown (2007) explained that fluent as well as accurate speaking skill helps language learners to be better accepted or liked by their peers, improves the learner’s self-confidence, and motivates them to learn the target language better. Oral fluency is not only important to the language learners; it also defines the way others perceive these language learners.

The key to developing speaking fluency is for learners to use the language through effective activities that have been recommended above. Remember the key to speaking successfully is to speak, speak and speak. Speaking fluently is a skill that requires time, practice and persistent work from learners. Therefore it is important for teachers to help the learners realize these facts and stay motivated.

Video example

Here you will view a video clip of a speaking activity. As you watch this video clip think about how it can be related to what you have learned in this unit and answer the questions in the following “Reflection and Responses” section to check your understanding of this unit.

Reflection and responses

As you view this video clip, think about each of the following questions.

1. What was especially good about this class?
2. What did the teachers do right?
3. What teaching techniques discussed earlier in this unit did you notice in this clip?
4. Which principles of successful speaking activities did you notice in the activity this teacher used?
5. What adaptations could you make for the situation you are (will be) teaching in?
6. What other things might you do differently to make your lessons even better?

For future (Web-based) use: Write your reflections in the box provided. Then, click on the button by each box to see what other people have said after viewing and reflecting on this video clip. *

Where to go to learn more

Connections to other units in this program

Here are some other units in this program that relate to topics we have addressed in this unit.

- Unit 7 A, “Teaching English grammar.”

- Unit 7 B, “Teaching English pronunciation.”
- Unit 8 A, “Conducting effective and enjoyable conversation classes.”
- Unit 8 B, “Songs and chants.”

Online and other electronic resources

<http://iteslj.org/questions/> conversation questions for ESL/EFL classroom.

<http://www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?Speaking> Dave’s ESL Cafe, ideas for various speaking activities.

<http://www.eslgo.com/resources/sa.html> various speaking activities.

<http://www.eslflow.com/debateanddiscussionlessons.html> debates and conversation topic ideas.

<http://www.eslflow.com/roleplaysdramatheatre/games.html> role-plays and drama ideas.

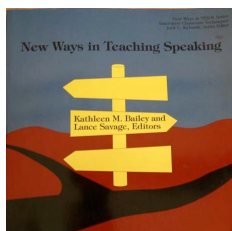
http://iteslj.org/links/TESL/Lessons/Role_Plays/ ideas for role-play topics.

<http://www.dailyesl.com/> conversation starters

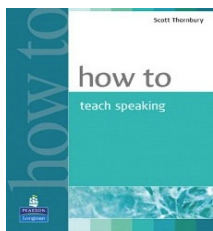
<http://www.eslflow.com/picturelessonsandteachingideas.html> ideas for pictures-based activities

Print and paper-based resources

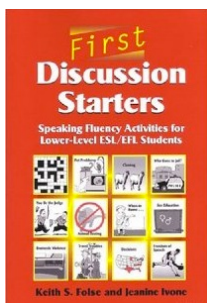
Here are some published books that have proven to be helpful resources for teaching speaking skills.



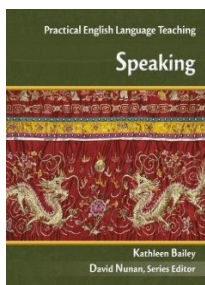
Kathleen M. Bailey and Lance Savage. *New Ways in Teaching Speaking*. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc, 1994. ISBN 0-939791-54-4 “This book provides wide varieties of activities that are organized under the following four parts with 14 subsections: Fluency, Accuracy, Pronunciation and Suprasegmental Phonemes. Some of the subsections include teaching ideas using dialogues and role plays, games for speaking, using audiovisual aids and group work.”



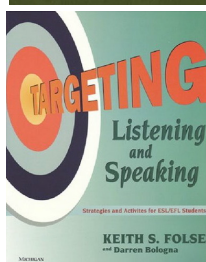
Scott Thornbury. *How to Teach Speaking*. Longman, 2005. ISBN 978-0-582-85359-1 “*How to Teach Speaking* talks about many components that are required for speaking in another language and how it is different from speaking in one’s first language. It also suggests activities that will help develop speaking such as dialogues, drama, jokes, outside-class speaking and using live listening. Lastly, it provides information on assessing speaking.



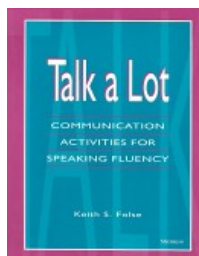
Keith S. Folse & Jeanine Ivone. *First Discussion Starters: Speaking Fluency Activities for Lower-Level ESL/EFL Students*. University of Michigan Press, 2002. ISBN 10: 0472088955 This is a great book to keep handy because it offers a variety of tasks and exercises based on real-life situations from all over the world that will can be used as topics for speaking activities. Some of the topics include pets, travel and lottery. It also provides activities that require students to work together and build speaking fluency. Each unit includes links for related websites. There is also a separate book by the same authors for advanced level students that is worth using as well.



Kathleen M. Bailey. *Practical English Language Teaching: Speaking*. McGraw-Hill Companies, 2005. ISBN 0-07-310310-1 This book introduces teachers to the key aspects of teaching speaking methodology through giving in depth information on teaching speaking in beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. Readers are offered reflection questions and action tasks throughout this book to apply their understanding of the ideas. It also includes further suggestions for books, articles and websites for additional information.



Keith S. Folse. *Targeting Listening and Speaking*. University of Michigan Press, 2003. ISBN 047208898X This is a book that is specifically designed for developing speaking and listening skills through carefully designed activities under six themes such as food, animals and pets, free time and hobbies, and travel. There is a companion website that goes with this book where teachers can find additional sources for testing.



Keith Folse. *Talk a Lot: Communication Activities for Speaking Fluency*. University of Michigan Press, 1993. ISBN 0472082450 This book contains exercises that require learners speak based on the knowledge that they already have and build on that knowledge and improve their speaking fluency.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

BTRTESOL Unit 6A “Developing English Language Learners’ Listening Skills” survey

questions used at TESOL and ITESOL conferences:

1. What parts of this unit were the most helpful to you?
2. What other important things about teaching LISTENING did I miss to include in this unit or you would have liked knowing more as a novice teacher?
3. Are there any parts that need to be changed (unclear), or taken out of this unit (not that helpful)?
4. If you have any other comments to make please do so here.

BTRTESOL Unit 6B “Developing English Language Learners’ Speaking Skills” survey

questions used at TESOL and ITESOL conferences:

1. What parts of this unit did you find the most helpful?
2. What other important things about teaching SPEAKING did I miss to include in this unit?
3. Are there any parts that need to be changed or not that helpful therefore needs to be taken out of this unit?
4. If you have any other comments to make please do so here.

BTRTESOL Units 6A and 6B survey questions used with Ling 377 students and HELP

International Volunteers:

1. What parts of this presentation did you find most helpful for you?
2. What parts of this presentation were difficult to understand or not helpful and therefore need changes made?
3. What other things about teaching listening/speaking would you like to learn more in these units?

4. Any other comments and suggestions?

Questions used during interviews and informal conversations with volunteers of China Teachers Program at BYU Kennedy Center and ESL at Workplace Program at Deseret Industries in Provo Utah:

1. When and where will you be teaching English for how long?
2. Have you taught English before and in what settings?
3. How confident do you feel about teaching listening and speaking skills to your future students?
4. How well prepared do you think you are to start teaching listening and speaking?
5. What are some things you want to know about teaching listening and speaking?
6. Do you have some ideas of how your teaching of listening and speaking classes will go?

APPENDIX D: RECORD OF PROJECT HOURS FOR TESOL MA PROJECT

Date	Duration (hrs)	Tasks
3/31/2010	2	Organized my thoughts, did some brainstorming on what can I include in my project, started keeping a blog.
4/8/2010	2	Talked to BethAnne a student who has been working on BTR TESOL project for a year and listened to her feedback on how to start organizing, surveying prospective users and even keep track of the project hours and many more things.
5/14/2010	1	Brainstormed more ideas on the organization of my Listening Unit and did some library research
5/18/2010	1	More brainstorming and came up with questions for my survey for prospective users
5/27/2010	1	Added more to the organization of my listening unit.
8/2/2010	2	Observed China Teacher Workshop given by Dr. Henrichsen on BYU campus, had some informal conversation with volunteers going to China to teach English to assess how much they already know about teaching Listening and Speaking and how well prepared do they feel.
9/12/2010	1	Went over my unit content and did more brainstorming mostly on refocusing on prospective users and assessing their real needs.
9/13-12/6/2010	12	Started meeting with the BTR TESOL team (Dr. Henrichsen, Heidi Healy, Julie Chung, Amanda Malaman) to work on the prospectus
9/29/2010	1	Met with Dr. Henrichsen to talk about Unit 6B content and structure
10/2/2010	3	Worked on the first draft of Unit 6B by doing literature review and organizing the unit content.
10/9/2010	4	Worked on the first draft of Unit 6B by doing literature review and organizing and adding to the unit content.
10/16/2010	3	Worked on the first draft of Unit 6B by doing literature review and reorganizing the unit content.
10/20/2010	2	Worked on the first draft of Unit 6B by doing literature review and organizing and adding to the unit content.
10/23/2010	1	Prepared and presented Unit 6B for the first time at ITESOL 2010 got some feedback
10/25/2010	2	Worked on my literature review of Unit 6B.
10/26/2010	1	Met with Dr. Henrichsen to talk about Unit 6B content and the video for it.
11/27/2010	3	Worked on the final draft of my Unit 6B, selected a video for Unit 6B and finalized it.
Year 2010 Subtotal: 42 hours		
3/2/2011	2	Worked on the literature review, met with Dr Henrichsen to talk about Unit 6A content and structure and video.
3/9/2011	1	Prepared and presented Unit 6B to Ling 377 students and got

		some feedback
3/12/2011	2	Worked my literature review.
3/16/2011	1	Gave a poster presentation on Unit 6B at the 2011 Graduate Student Forum in New Orleans, got some informal feedback from follow graduate students and professors from different universities around the world.
3/25-3/26/2011	1	Prepared and presented Unit 6B at HELP International volunteers' training.
4/15/2011	1	Worked on my literature review for listening unit.
4/16/2011	2	Worked on my write-up.
7/19/2011	1	Observed Julie Chang's defense
7/23/2011	1	Added to the literature review write-up.
8/5/2011	2	Did more research for my literature review on teaching listening
8/13/2011	2	Worked on my write-up.
10/22/2011	1	Presented my unit on Listening at ITESOL Conference and got feedback from colleagues got Dr. Henrichsen's feedback on my unit 6A structure and content.
10/29/2011	1	Worked on web sources for listening skills' development
12/20-12/22/2011	6	Worked on my write up (Chapter 1).
12/27/2011	4	Worked on my write up (Chapter 1 & Appendices)
12/29/2011	6	Completed writing Chapter 1 of my master's project
Year 2011 Subtotal: 34 hours		
1/12/2012	4	Worked on completing Unit 6A draft
1/13/2012	4	Completed writing Unit 6A and got feedback on chapter one write-up from Dr. Henrichsen
1/14/2012	4	Worked on revision of Chapter 1 based on Dr. Henrichsen's feedback, worked on Unit 2 and updated Appendix B
1/18-2/24/2012	22	Worked on Chapter 2 Literature review (read more on the research of second language listening)
4/5/2012	1	Had a meeting with Dr. Henrichsen, got some feedback on Chapter 1 and
4/13-4/23/2012	40	Worked on Chapter 2 revision,
4/24/2012	1	Met with Dr. Henrichsen to discuss about Unit 6A and 6B contents and scheduled a committee meeting
4/25-7/1/2012	61	Added more to Chapter 2 part two on teaching speaking
7/2-7/10/2012	20	Worked on Chapter 3: The process
7/14-8/30/2012	40	Worked on Chapter 4 & 6 of this write-up
9/12/2012	30 min	Had a meeting with Dr. Tanner and Dr. Henrichsen to discuss about the status of this write-up and project development process
9/14/2012	30 min	Met with Dr. Smemoe to talk about the status of this write-up and

		project development process.
9/14- 9/23/2012	20	Worked on completing Chapters 4 and 5.
9/21- 12/5/2012	7	Met with Dr. Henrichsen 5 times working on getting feedback on Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6.
9/21- 12/5/2012	25	Worked on the revision of chapters 2 and 5.
12/28/2012- 1/10/2013	16	Worked on making final revisions to all chapters and got it ready to be turned in to Dr. Henrichsen for an approval to send it out to all members of my advisory committee.
1/10/2013	30 min	Met with Dr. Henrichsen to turn in the completed project for an approval and final review.
1/15/2013	30 min	Received additional feedback from Dr. Henrichsen and got approval to send out the most up-to-date draft to the rest of the advisory committee
1/18/2013- 3/7/2013	10	Defense and final revisions
Year 2012 Subtotal: 277 hours		
Grand Total: 353 hours		