

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Series Editor: Jack C. Richards

*In this series:***Agendas for Second Language Literacy** by Sandra Lee McKay**Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms** by Jack C. Richards and Charles Lockhart**Educating Second Language Children: The Whole Child, the Whole Curriculum, the Whole Community** edited by Fred Genesee**Understanding Communication in Second Language Classrooms** by Karen E. Johnson**The Self-Directed Teacher: Managing the Learning Process** by David Nunan and Clarice Lamb**Functional English Grammar: An Introduction for Second Language Teachers** by Graham Lock**Teachers as Course Developers** edited by Kathleen Graves**Classroom-Based Evaluation in Second Language Education** by Fred Genesee and John A. Upshur**From Reader to Reading Teacher: Issues and Strategies for Second Language Classrooms** by Jo Ann Aebersold and Mary Lee Field**Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom** by Richard R. Day and Julian Bamford**Language Teaching Awareness: A Guide to Exploring Beliefs and Practices** by Jerry G. Gebhard and Robert Oprandy**Vocabulary in Second Language Teaching** by Norbert Schmitt**Curriculum Development in Language Teaching** by Jack C. Richards**Teachers' Narrative Inquiry as Professional Development** by Karen E. Johnson and Paula R. Golombek**A Practicum in TESOL: Professional Development Through Teaching Practice** by Graham Crookes**Second Language Writing** by Ken Hyland**Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice** by John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Second Language Listening

Theory and Practice

John Flowerdew

City University of Hong Kong

Lindsay Miller

City University of Hong Kong



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521781350

© John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Flowerdew, John, 1951–
Second language listening : theory and practice / John Flowerdew, Lindsay Miller.
p. cm. – (Cambridge language education)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-521-78135-3 – ISBN 0-521-78647-9 (pbk.)
1. Language and languages – Study and teaching. 2. Listening – Study and teaching.
I. Miller, Lindsay II. Title. III. Series.
P53.47.F58 2005
418'.0071–dc22 2003066738

ISBN-13 978-0-521-78135-0 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-78135-3 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-78647-8 paperback

ISBN-10 0-521-78647-9 paperback

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

Series editor's preface ix
Preface xi
Acknowledgments xiv

Part I HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 1

- 1 Approaches to Language Teaching and the Role of Listening 3
 - Introduction 3
 - The Grammar-Translation Approach 4
 - The Direct-Method Approach 5
 - The Grammar Approach 6
 - The Audio-Lingual Approach 8
 - The Discrete-Item Approach 10
 - The Communicative Approach 12
 - The Task-Based Approach 14
 - The Learner-Strategy Approach 16
 - The Integrated Approach 18
 - Conclusion 19
 - Discussion 20

- 2 Models of Listening 21
 - Introduction 21
 - Listening Development in the First Language 21
 - Speech Recognition and Short- and Long-Term Memory 23
 - Models of the Listening Process 24
 - Second Language Listeners 27
 - Conclusion 28
 - Discussion 29

vi *Contents*

3 Types of Meaning for Listening 30

- Introduction 30
- Types of Meaning 30
- Conclusion 46
- Discussion 46

4 The Nature of Spoken Language 47

- Introduction 47
- Speech Versus Writing 48
- Conversational Listening 52
- Conclusion 59
- Discussion 59
- Appendix 59

5 Learning Styles and Listening Strategies 62

- Introduction 62
- General Learning Styles 62
- Learning Strategies 65
- Effective and Ineffective Listening Strategies 69
- Listening Strategies in the Classroom 72
- A Strategy-Based Approach to Teaching Listening 72
- Conclusion 80
- Discussion 82

Part II A PEDAGOGICAL MODEL AND ITS APPLICATION 83

6 A Pedagogical Model for Second Language Listening 85

- Introduction 85
- Dimensions of Listening 87
- A Listening Dimensions Evaluation Checklist 96
- Conclusion 97
- Discussion 97

7 Materials and the Pedagogical Model for Listening 98

- Introduction 98
- Beginners 98
- Low-Intermediate 103
- Intermediate 106

Advanced	111
Preparing and Piloting Listening Comprehension Materials	115
An Example of Specially Prepared Listening Material	117
Conclusion	123
Discussion	123
8 Case Studies and their Relation to the Pedagogical Model	124
Introduction	124
Case Study 1 – Young Learners	125
Case Study 2 – Using Technology to Improve Listening	129
Case Study 3 – Academic Listening	137
Case Study 4 – Self-Access Language Learning	148
Case Study 5 – An Intensive Language Course	155
Conclusion	162
Part III KEY ISSUES IN TEACHING AND TESTING	163
9 Developing Listening Skills through Technology	165
Introduction	165
Radio	165
Audiotapes	167
Language Laboratory	171
Video	172
Computer-Assisted Language Learning	178
Conclusion	182
Discussion	183
10 The Role of Questions in the Teaching of Listening	184
Introduction	184
Models for Integrating Questions while Teaching Listening	184
Question Types	186
Questions and the Pedagogical Model	194
Conclusion	196
Discussion	196
11 Testing Listening	198
Introduction	198
What to Test	202

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii *Contents*

How to Test	203
What to Measure	206
How to Assess Listening	208
Conclusion	209
Discussion	209

Appendix: Concluding Questions for Reflection	211
References	213
Index	221

Series editor's preface

Acquiring good listening and speaking skills in English is the main concern of many second and foreign language learners, and today's English teacher needs to be well versed in current approaches to the teaching of the aural/oral skills. Second language listening, relatively ignored for many years within applied linguistics, has today come into its own. Although still somewhat neglected in second language acquisition research, listening now plays a more central role in language teaching. University entrance exams, school leaving tests, and other examinations have begun to include a listening component, an acknowledgment that listening ability is an important aspect of second language proficiency.

The nature of listening comprehension is also now better understood. Earlier views of listening saw it as the mastery of discrete skills or microskills, which formed the focus of teaching and testing. A skills approach focused on such things as discriminating sounds in words (especially phonemic contrasts), deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words, predicting content, differentiating between fact and opinion, and noting contradictions, inadequate information, and ambiguities.

The changed status of listening in recent years was partly prompted by Krashen's emphasis on the role of comprehension and comprehensible input in triggering language development. In the 1980s and 1990s, applied linguists also began to borrow new theoretical models of comprehension from the field of cognitive psychology. It was from this source that the distinction between bottom-up processing and top-down processing was derived – a distinction that led to an awareness of the importance of background knowledge and schema in comprehension. Listeners were viewed as actively involved in constructing meaning based on expectations, inferences, intentions, prior knowledge, and selective processing of the input. Listening came to be viewed as an interpretive process. At the same time, the fields of conversation analysis and discourse analysis were revealing a great deal about the organization of spoken discourse, leading to a realization that written texts read aloud could not provide a suitable basis for developing the abilities needed to process real-time authentic discourse. Authenticity in

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

x *Series editor's preface*

materials became a catchword and part of a pedagogy of teaching listening that is now well established.

Second Language Listening examines these issues and provides a valuable overview of recent and current approaches to the role of listening in language teaching. The authors present a highly readable account of the linguistic, psycholinguistic, cultural, interactional, and pragmatic factors involved in understanding spoken discourse. They also describe an original pedagogical model of second language listening that reflects the complexities of the listening process. They then show how the model can be used to evaluate published materials and to develop criteria for planning, evaluating, and creating listening materials and programs, including both conventional textbook materials and materials employing new technology. The authors include illuminating case studies from a range of contexts to show how listening can be taught and assessed at different levels.

Second Language Listening should therefore serve as a valuable resource for teachers, curriculum developers, and others concerned with the nature of second language listening processes.

Jack C. Richards

Preface

For a long time, listening has been treated as the Cinderella of the four macro-skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, as an essential part of communicative competence, listening is a skill that deserves equal treatment with the others, both in the classroom and in the preparation of language teachers. With the unrelenting trend toward globalization, which manifests itself in greater international trade, travel, education, Internet use, cheap international telephone calls, and mass entertainment, English has become a world language. The need to be able to understand English is increasing by the day. There is a growing need, therefore, for international citizens to be able to understand not just standard British or American spoken English, but other varieties spoken around the world.

Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice combines up-to-date listening theory, a pedagogical model developed by the authors, and case studies of pedagogical practice. The volume draws on the authors' own research and experience, where appropriate, but is eclectic in encompassing a full range of current views on theory and practice. Each chapter contains tasks and discussion questions that contextualize the material and encourage readers to engage with the concepts presented.

Textbooks are normally viewed as presenting established bodies of knowledge to uninitiated students. In *Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice*, we have tried to go a little beyond this traditional approach by incorporating our own innovative pedagogical model of listening. This is introduced in Chapter 6 and applied in subsequent chapters, which deal with materials and methodology, primarily by means of a range of case studies.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I is entitled "Historical Background." In Chapter 1, we look at the main approaches that have been taken to language teaching over the years and the role of listening in these approaches. The approaches are grammar-translation, direct-method, grammar-based, audio-lingual, discrete-item, communicative, task-based, learner-strategy, and integrated. After introducing each approach, we identify the main learning goal for listening and, where appropriate, exemplify

xii *Preface*

and critique each approach with a textbook task. Chapter 2 describes current models of the listening process. After brief descriptions of speech recognition, listening developments in the L1, and long- and short-term memory, we describe three models: the bottom-up, the top-down, and the interactive models. Chapter 3 describes what a spoken message consists of in terms of the different types of meaning it may convey: phonological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and kinesic. All these elements of meaning play a role in comprehension, although deficiencies in one area can be made up for in others. Chapter 4 describes the features of spoken language that distinguish it from written text and the differences between monologue and dialogue. Considerable attention is given to the specific features of spoken interaction, such as turn-taking, topic shift, back-channeling, and repair. Chapter 5 discusses different learning styles and strategies for listening. We describe the extensive work on general learner strategies that has been conducted over the past 25 years and then focus in particular on learner strategies in L2 listening. The chapter concludes with an example of a strategies-based approach to teaching listening.

In Part II, “A Pedagogical Model and Its Application,” we present and apply our own model of second language listening. In Chapter 6, we map out what we consider to be the essential features of such a model. In addition to the psycholinguistic theories presented in Chapter 2, our model incorporates a set of dimensions that we have derived from a range of theories relevant to listening. These dimensions are eclectic insofar as they draw on cognitive, social, linguistic, and pedagogic theory. Drawn together, they can enable us to develop a unified model of second language listening. These dimensions make the model individualized, cross-cultural, social, contextualized, affective, strategic, intertextual, and critical. It is stressed that not all of these dimensions will apply at any one time, but any of them may be drawn upon, where appropriate, in the design, adaptation, or evaluation of pedagogic materials. In Chapter 7, we examine listening materials from a variety of modern textbooks. Each activity, from beginner to advanced, is evaluated in light of the model presented in Chapter 6. Chapter 8 presents a series of case studies of a range of pedagogic listening situations – a primary school course, an academic listening course, a radio series, a self-access context for listening, and an intensive English language course. Each of the case studies is again evaluated in light of the pedagogic model presented in Chapter 6.

Part III, “Key Issues in Teaching and Testing,” consists of three chapters. Chapter 9 deals with the role of technology. Radio, audio recordings, the language laboratory, video, and computer-assisted listening are all considered in relation to their ability to facilitate listening pedagogy. In Chapter 10, we

Cambridge University Press
0521786479 - Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice
John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Preface xiii

focus on questioning techniques and analyze the different types of questioning formats: display versus referential, closed versus open, the use of the L1 versus the L2, focus on form versus focus on function, visually supported versus nonvisually supported, and individual versus group. Chapter 11 is devoted to testing. Three approaches to the testing of listening are introduced: the discrete-point approach, the integrative approach, and the communicative approach. It is suggested that the communicative approach is best suited to the pedagogical model of listening presented in Part II.

The book includes an appendix, “Concluding Questions for Reflection,” which can be used by the reader to reflect on issues examined in the book and by tutors using the text as a course book.

Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice is designed to be used by both pre- and in-service teachers. It has been extensively piloted with both preservice BA-TESL students and MA part-time in-service teachers. Although the examples used in the book are from the perspective of English as a foreign or second language, the book may also be used by students and teachers of languages other than English.

Note: Transcriptions in the book reflect the contributor’s original work and have not been altered to reflect American English.

John Flowerdew
Lindsay Miller

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the following people who have assisted us in various ways with the book: Jack Richards, for inviting us to take part in this series; Mary Sandre, Debbie Goldblatt, Angela Castro, and Julia Hough, the editorial team at CUP New York, for having the patience to work with us; Virginia Costa, for proofreading and valuable advice about earlier drafts of the manuscript; June Titheridge, for reading and commenting on the final draft; BA-TESL and MA-TESL students at the City University of Hong Kong, for allowing us to pilot the materials with them; staff and students at Cambridge University, the University of Salzburg, and Baptist University, Hong Kong, for useful feedback on seminar presentations of the model presented in Chapter 6; Gunther Kress, for comments, also on Chapter 6; Professor Gillian Brown of the University of Cambridge, who read the manuscript and gave valuable comments, as did Dr. John Williams, also of the University of Cambridge; Dino Mahoney, for the information regarding the technology case study; Jackie Newbrook and the staff at Bell School, Safron Walden, for the information about the self-access case study; Henry C. F. Li and the staff of Kai Chi Primary School, for information about the young learners case study; Randi Reppen, for the information about the intensive language course at Northern Arizona University; Richard W. Forest, for help with proofreading; and Jasper Chan Chap Choi, for assistance with the computer work. We also acknowledge the very useful feedback provided by the anonymous reviewers of the manuscript.