

The Effects of Text Type on Taiwanese College English Majors' Listening Comprehension

黃姿樺、倪淑芳

E-mail: 9601308@mail.dyu.edu.tw

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the effects of text type on Taiwanese college English majors' listening comprehension. After reviewing a number of studies, it is understood that text type of listening stimuli and listeners' proficiency can affect listeners' listening comprehension (LC) and cause listening difficulties. Moreover, distinct results still remain in the text type of listening stimuli. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the effect on the text type further in order to provide a consistency in this issue. The subjects chosen for this study were 93 English majors from freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors of a university in central Taiwan. This study adopted quantitative methods to collect data. The instruments consisted of a listening proficiency test of online learning and testing GEPT website of a university, a listening comprehension test and a listening difficulty questionnaire. The findings of the study were summarized as follows: (1) college English majors comprehended significantly more while listening to the dialogue rather than the monologue, (2) effective listeners understood equally while listening to the monologue and dialogue and so did less effective listeners, (3) in the top ten listening difficulties of the listening difficulty questionnaire, students had listening difficulties while listening to the monologue in fast speed, unknown idioms and slang, insufficient pauses, lengthy content and so forth. Meanwhile, students had listening difficulties in linking sounds, insufficient pauses, fast speed, stress and so on while listening to the dialogue. Based on the major findings, some pedagogical implications were provided: (1) language teachers can offer more monologues for listening inputs, (2) if students' listening proficiency is quite the same in a class, EFL teachers can provide as many different types of listening texts as possible to enhance students' LC, (3) English teachers can teach students listening strategies to reduce learners' listening difficulties.

Keywords : text type ; monologue ; dialogue ; listening difficulty ; listening comprehension

Table of Contents

Cover page Signature Authorization.....	
..... iii Abstract (Chinese).....	
..... iv Abstract (English).....	
..... v Acknowledgements.....	
..... vii Table of Contents.....	
..... viii List of Tables.....	
..... xi List of Figures.....	
..... xii Chapter I. INTRODUCTION 1.1	
Background of the Study.....	1 1.2
Motivation of the Study.....	3 1.3
Statement of the Problem.....	7 1.4
Purpose of the Study.....	8 1.5
Research Questions and Hypotheses of the Study.....	8 1.6 Significance of the Study.....
..... 9 1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	
..... 10 1.8 Definitions of Terms.....	
..... 11 1.9 Summary.....	
..... 13 Chapter II. LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Theory of Listening Comprehension.....	14 2.1.1 What is
Listening?.....	14 2.1.2 Anderson's
Three-phase Listening Comprehension Model.....	15 2.1.3 The HURIER Model.....
..... 16 2.2 Factors Affecting Listening Comprehension.....	
..... 17 2.2.1 Rubin's Five Characteristics of Listening Comprehension.....	
..... 18 2.2.2 Goh's Five Factors of Listening Comprehension.....	
..... 19 2.3 Theory and Studies in Orality and Literacy.....	20 2.3.1 What are

Orality and Literacy in the Listening Text?.....	20
2.3.2 Features of Oral and Written Texts.....	20
2.3.3 Five Distinct Results in the Text Type of Listening Stimuli.....	22
2.4 Studies in Listening Difficulties.....	23
2.4.1 Listening Difficulties in Second Language Acquisition.....	23
2.4.2 Studies in ESL/EFL Listening Difficulties.....	25
2.4.3 Reviews in Taiwanese Listening Difficulties.....	27
2.5 Summary.....	28
Chapter III. METHODOLOGY 3.1 Independent Variable and Dependent Variable.....	30
3.2 Subjects.....	30
3.3 Instruments.....	31
3.3.1 Listening Proficiency Test.....	32
3.3.2 Listening Comprehension Test of Text Type.....	33
3.3.3 Listening Difficulty Questionnaire.....	35
3.4 Data Collection Procedures.....	37
3.5 Data Analysis.....	38
3.6 The Pilot Study.....	38
3.7 Summary.....	39
Chapter IV. RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS 4.1 Results of Demographic Data.....	41
4.2 Results of Research Questions.....	43
4.2.1 Results of Research Question 1.....	43
4.2.2 Results of Research Question 2.....	44
4.2.3 Results of Research Question 3.....	45
4.2.4 Results of Research Question 4.....	49
4.3 Discussion of Hypotheses Derived from Three Research Questions.....	51
4.3.1 Discussion of Hypothesis 1.....	51
4.3.2 Discussion of Hypotheses 2 and 3.....	53
4.3.3 Discussion of Research Question 3.....	56
4.3.4 Discussion of Research Question 4.....	58
Chapter V. CONCLUSION 5.1 Research Findings.....	62
5.2 Pedagogical Implications.....	64
5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies.....	66
5.4 Conclusion.....	67
CHINESE REFERENCES.....	68
ENGLISH REFERENCES.....	69
APPENDICES APPENDIX A Guided Questions of the Monologue and Dialogue.....	79
APPENDIX B Transcriptions of the Dialogue and Monologue.....	82
APPENDIX C The Listening Comprehension Test for the Monologue Group.....	87
APPENDIX D The Listening Comprehension Test for the Dialogue Group.....	92
APPENDIX E The Listening Difficulty Questionnaire for the Monologue Group.....	97
APPENDIX F The Listening Difficulty Questionnaire for the Dialogue Group.....	101

REFERENCES

- CHINESE REFERENCES Teng, Hwei-Chun (鄧慧君), 1995. 聽前活動對臺灣技職學生英文聽力之影響。國科會專題研究計畫。編號 NSC83-0301-H224-005。
- ENGLISH REFERENCES Anderson-Hsieh, J., & Koehler, K. (1988). The effect of foreign accent and speaking rate on native speaker comprehension. *Language Learning*, 38, 561-613.
- Anderson, J. R. (2000). *Cognitive psychology and its implication* (4th ed.). New York: W. H. Freeman.
- Asher, J. (1969). The total physical response approach to second language learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 53(1), 3-17.
- Atkinson, M. (1984). *Our master's voices: The language and body language of politics*. New York: Methuen.
- Barnitz, J. (1986). Toward understanding the effects of cross-cultural schemata and discourse structure on second language reading comprehension. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 18, 95-116.
- Berne, J. E. (1993). The role of text type, assessment task, and target language experience in L2 listening comprehension assessment. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED358737)
- Bilbow, G. T. (1989). Towards an understanding of overseas students' difficulties in lectures: A phenomenographic approach. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 13, 85-89.
- Blau, E. K. (1990). The effect of syntax, speed, and pauses on listening comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24(4), 746-753.
- Blau, E. K. (1991). More on comprehensible input: The

effect of pauses and hesitation markers on listening comprehension. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED340234) Boyle, J. P. (1984). Factors affecting listening comprehension. *ELT Journal*, 38(1), 34-38. Brown, G. (1990). *Listening to spoken English*. New York: Longman. Brown, G. (1995). Dimensions of difficulty in listening comprehension. In D. J. Mendelsohn & J. Rubin (Eds.), *A guide for the teaching of second language listening* (pp. 59-73). San Diego: Dominie Press. Brownell, J. (1996). *Listening: Attitudes, principles and skills*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. Buck, G. (1995). How to become a good listening teacher. In D. J. Mendelsohn & J. Rubin (Eds.), *A guide for the teaching of second language listening* (pp. 113-131). San Diego, CA: Dominie Press. Call, M. E. (1985). Auditory short-term memory, listening comprehension, and the input hypothesis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 765-781. Carrod, S., & Pickering, M. J. (2004). Why is conversation so easy? *TRENDS in Cognitive Sciences*, 8(1), 8-11. Cassell, J., McNeill, D., & McCullough, K. E. (1999). Speech-gesture mismatches: Evidence for one underlying representation of linguistic and nonlinguistic information. *Pragmatics & Cognition*, 7, 1-33. Chafe, W. (1982). Integration and involvement in speaking, writing and oral literature. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Co. Chafe, W. (1985). Linguistic differences produced by differences between speaking and writing. In D. Olson, D. Torrance & A. Hildyard (Eds.), *Literary language and learning* (pp. 105-123). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chamot, A. U. (1995). Learning strategies and listening comprehension. In D. J. Mendelsohn & J. Rubin (Eds.), *A guide for the teaching of second language listening* (pp. 13-30). San Diego, CA: Dominie Press. Chang, H. F. (2003). Listening strategy use of high- and low- level technology college students. *Selected Papers from the Twelfth International Symposium on English Teaching* (pp. 164-172). Taipei: Crane. Chang, H. R. (2005). A study of junior high school EFL teachers' beliefs and practices on listening instruction in Taiwan. Unpublished master's thesis, National Changhua University of Education, Taiwan. Chang, Y. L., Chang, T. S., & Kuo, C. H. (1995). Listening difficulties and learner strategies of non-native speakers. *The Ninth Conference on English Teaching and Learning in the Republic of China* (pp. 145-158). Taipei: Crane. Chao, Y. G. (1999). EFL listening strategies by English majors in Taiwan. *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Conference on English Teaching and Learning in the Republic of China* (pp. 465-479). Taipei: Crane. Chao, Y. G., & Cheng, Y. P. (2004). Listening difficulties of Taiwanese EFL students in senior high schools. *Selected Papers from the Thirteenth International Symposium on English Teaching* (pp. 250-258). Taipei: Crane. Chao, Y. G., & Chien, L. Y. (2005). College English majors' listening strategies and difficulties while taking TOEFL. *Selected Papers from the Fourteenth International Symposium on English Teaching* (pp. 292-301). Taipei: Crane. Chao, Y. G., Liu, L. X., Wang, A. Y., & Wu, C. S. (2003). A survey of EFL university freshmen's listening strategies and difficulties. *Selected Papers from the Twelfth International Symposium on English Teaching*, (2) (pp. 26-38). Taipei: Crane. Chao, Y. G., & Wang, W. Y. (2002). Senior high school students' listening comprehension strategy use. *The Proceedings of the Nineteenth International Conference on English Teaching and Learning* (pp. 77-89). Taipei: Crane. Chaudron, C., & Richards, J. C. (1986). The effect of discourse markers on the comprehension of lectures. *Applied Linguistics*, 7 (2), 113-127. Chen, S. W. (2002). Problems in listening comprehension for learners of EFL. *Studies in English Language and Literature*, 10, 57-70. Cheng, Y. P. (2004). An investigation of listening difficulties encountered by EFL students in senior high schools. Unpublished master's thesis, National Changhua University of Education, Taiwan. Chiang, C. S., & Dunkel, P. (1992). The effects of speech modification, prior knowledge, and listening proficiency on EFL lecture learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(2), 345-374. Crystal, D. (1995). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Dalton-Puffer, C., Kaltenboeck, C., & Smit, U. (1997). Learner attitudes and L2 pronunciation in Austria. *World Englishes*, 16, 115-128. Dunkel, P. (1991). Listening in the native and second/foreign language: Toward an integration of research and practice. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 431-457. Dunkel, P., Henning, G., & Chaudron, C. (1993). The assessment of L2 listening comprehension construct: A tentative model for test specification and development. *Modern Language Journal*, 77, 181-191. Dunkel, P., Mishra, S., & Berliner, D. (1989). Effects of note taking, memory and language proficiency on lecture learning for native and nonnative speakers of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23 (3), 543-549. Eykyn, L. B. (1992). The effects of listening guides on the comprehension of authentic texts by novice learners of French as second language. Unpublished Dissertation, University of South Carolina, USA. Flowerdew, J. (1994). Research of relevance to second language lecture comprehension - an overview. In J. Flowerdew (Ed.), *Academic listening* (pp. 7-29). New York: Cambridge University Press. Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (1992). Student perceptions, problems and strategies in second language lecture comprehension. *RELC Journal*, 23(2), 60-80. Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (1996). Lecturer perceptions, problems and strategies in second language lectures. *RELC Journal*, 27 (1), 23-46. Fox Tree, J. E. (1999). Listening in on monologues and dialogues. *Discourse Processes*, 27(1), 35-53. Glisan, E. W. (1985). The effect of word order on listening comprehension and pattern retention: An experiment in Spanish as a foreign language. *Language Learning*, 35(3), 443-472. Goh, C. (1999). How much do learners know about the factors that influence their listening comprehension? *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 4(1), 17-40. Goh, C. (2000). A cognitive perspective on language learners' listening comprehension problem. *System*, 28(1), 55-75. Griffiths, R. (1991). Pausological research in an L2 context: A rationale, and review of selected studies. *Applied Linguistics*, 12(4), 345-364. Griffiths, R. (1992). Speech rate and listening comprehension: Further evidence of the relationship. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(2), 385-390. Hasan, A. S. (2000). Learners' perceptions of listening comprehension problems. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 13 (2), 137-153. Heaton, J. B. (1990). *Classroom testing*. New York: Longman. Henrichsen, L. E. (1984). Sandhi-variation: A filter of input for learners of ESL. *Language Learning*, 34(3), 103-126. Huang, C. S. (1991). Two major difficulties Chinese students encounter in the process of English of English listening comprehension. *English Teaching & Learning*, 15(4), 39-45. Hughes, A. (1989). *Testing for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Jarvella, R., Bang, E., Jakobsen, A. L., & Mess, I. M. (2001). Of mouths and men: Non-native listeners' identification and evaluation of varieties of English. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(1), 37-56. Katheleen, K., & Kenji, K. (1996). *Testing listening*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED398257) Kelly, P. (1991). Lexical ignorance: The main obstacle to listening

comprehension with advanced foreign language learners. *IRAL*, 29 (2), 135-149. Koichi, N. (2002). How to teach listening. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED475743) Kung, H. I., Ho, W. C., & Shen, Y. S. (1999). Repetition and L2 listening comprehension. Paper from Proceedings of the Sixteenth Conference on English Teaching and Learning in the Republic of China. Taipei: Crane. Lee, D. S. (1997). What teachers can do to relieve problems identified by international students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 70, 93-100. Li, Y. F. (1999). The effects of slow speech on Chinese EFL learners' listening comprehension. Unpublished master's thesis, National Changhua University of Education, Taiwan. Liu, C. Y. (2005). A study on the effects of native and non-native speakers of English on Taiwanese college English majors' listening comprehension. Unpublished master's thesis, National Changhua University of Education, Taiwan. Long, D. R. (1989). Second language listening comprehension: A schema-theoretic perspective. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73 (1), 32-40. Long, D. R. (1990). What you don't know can't help you: An exploratory study of background knowledge and second language listening comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 65-80. Lynch, T. (1998). Theoretical perspectives on listening. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 3-19. Markham, P. L. (1988). Gender and the perceived expertness of the speaker as factors in ESL listening recall. *TESOL Quarterly*, 22 (3), 397-406. Markham, P. L., & Latham, M. (1987). The influence of religion-specific background knowledge on the listening comprehension of adult second-language students. *Language Learning*, 37(2), 157- 170. Mendelsohn, D. J. (1998). Teaching listening. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 81-101. McGurk, H. & MacDonald, J. (1976). Hearing lips and seeing voices. *Nature*, 264, 746-748. Nagano, K. (1991). Investigating FL listening comprehension strategies through thinking aloud and retrospection. Unpublished master's thesis, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan. Nazikian, F., & Omoto, K. (2002). Listening in context and improvement of proficiency. Selected Paper from Fourteenth Central Association of Teachers of Japanese Conference (pp. 123- 137). University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. Nic, U. (1987). Testing spoken language: A handbook of oral testing techniques. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Omaggio, A. H. (1993). A proficiency-oriented approach to listening and reading. *Teaching Language in Context* (pp. 162-227). Boston: Heinle & Heinle. O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). Learning strategies in second language acquisition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., & Kupper, L. (1989). Listening comprehension strategies in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 10(4), 418-437. Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House. Oxford, R. L. (1993). Research update on teaching L2 listening. *System*, 21(2), 205-211. Read, J. (2002). The use of interactive input in EAP listening assessment. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 1, 105- 119. Richards, J. C. (1983). Listening comprehension: approach, design, procedure. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(2), 219-240. Richards, J. C. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ridgway, T. (2000). Listening strategies - I beg your pardon? *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 179-185. Rubin, J. (1994). A review of second language listening comprehension research. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(2), 199- 221. Rubin, J., & Thompson, I. (1994). *How to be a more successful language learner: Toward learner autonomy*. MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers. Schwartz, A. M. (1998). Listening in a foreign language. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED433723) Seright, L. (1985). Age and aural comprehension achievement in francophone adults learning English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(3), 455-473. Shohamy, E., & Inbar, O. (1991). Validation of listening comprehension tests: the effect of text and question type. *Language Testing*, 8(1), 23-40. Sun, K.C. (2002). Investigation of English listening difficulties of Taiwan students. Selected Papers from the Eleventh International Symposium on English Teaching/Fourth Pan-Asian Conference (pp. 518-525). Taipei: Crane. Tannen, D. (1982). The oral literate continuum of discourse. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy* (pp. 1-16). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Co. Tannen, D. (1985). Relative focus of involvement in oral and written discourse. In D. Olson, D. Torrance & A. Hildyard (Eds.), *Literary language and learning* (pp. 124-147). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Tauroza, S., & Luk, J. (1997). Accent and second language listening comprehension. *RELC Journal*, 28(1), 54-71. Teng, H. C. (1994). Effects of cultural schema and visual cues on Chinese students' EFL listening comprehension. Paper presented at the Eleventh National Conference on English Teaching, Republic of China. Taipei: Crane. Teng, H. C. (1998). The effects of text type and testing method on assessing EFL listening comprehension. *English Teaching & Learning*, 23(1), 5-18. Teng, H. C. (2002). An investigation of EFL listening difficulties for Taiwanese students. Selected Papers from the Eleventh International Symposium on English Teaching/Fourth Pan-Asian Conference (pp. 526-533). Taipei: Crane. Thompson, I. (1993). An investigation of the effects of texts and tasks on listening comprehension: Some evidence from Russian. *Georgetown University Round Table on Language and Linguistics*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. Thompson, I. (1995a). Testing listening comprehension. *AATSEEL Newsletter*, 37(5), 24-31. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED386916) Thompson, I. (1995b). Assessment of second/foreign language listening comprehension. In D. J. Mendelsohn & J. Rubin (Eds.), *A guide for the teaching of second language listening* (pp. 31- 58). San Diego, CA: Dominic Press. Underwood, M. (1994). *Teaching listening*. (4th ed.). Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers. Valette, R. M. (1977). *Modern language testing*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Vandergrift, L. (1996). Listening comprehension strategies of core French high school students. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 52 (2), 200-223. Vandergrift, L. (1997). The comprehension strategies of second language(French) listeners: A descriptive study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 30(3),387-409. Vandergrift, L. (1999). Facilitating second language listening comprehension: Acquiring successful strategies. *ELT Journal* Volume, 53(3), 168-176. Vandergrift, L. (2003a). From prediction through reflection: guiding students through the process of L2 listening. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 59(3), 425-446. Vandergrift, L. (2003b). Orchestrating strategy use: Toward a model of the skilled second language listener. *Language Learning*, 53 (3), 463-496. Vanderplank, R. (1993). 'Pacing' and 'spacing' as predictors of difficulty in speaking and understanding English. *ELT Journal*, 47(2), 117-125. Wilson, M. (2003). Discovery listening - improving perceptual processing. *ELT Journal*, 57(4), 335-343. Yen, A. C. (1987). An

assessment of listening comprehension difficulties encountered by Chinese college English majors. Unpublished master ' s thesis, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan. Zhao, Y. (1997). The effects of listeners ' control of speech rate on second language comprehension. *Applied Linguistics*, 18(1), 49- 68.