Teaching Language Skills - speaking & listening

Week 11

Teaching Language Skills (Part IV)

- Chapter 18. Teaching Listening

- Chapter 19. Teaching Speaking

- Chapter 20. Teaching Reading

- Chapter 21. Teaching Writing

- Chapter 22. Form-focused Instruction (Teaching Grammar and vocabulary)

- Chapter 17. Integrating the four skills

Ch 18. Teaching Listening

Listening comprehension in pedagogical research

- late 1970s: Total Physical Response (Asher)

- The Natural Approach

  => the importance of *input* in SLA (Krashen)

  => converting input into **intake** is crucial

- 5 elements of the listening process: text, interlocutor, task, listener, process characteristics (Rubin, 1994)

- Types of meaning involved in comprehending language: phonological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic knowledge + nonverbal elements

- First language listening ability contributes to second language listening ability (Vandergrift, 2006)

- Listening strategies (Flowerdew, 1994)

- Qs that teachers need to consider regarding listening comprehension

  - What are listeners doing when they listen?
  - What factors affect good listening?
  - What are the characteristics of "real-life" listening?
  - What are the many things listeners listen for?
  - What are some principles for designing listening techniques?
  - How can listening techniques be interactive?
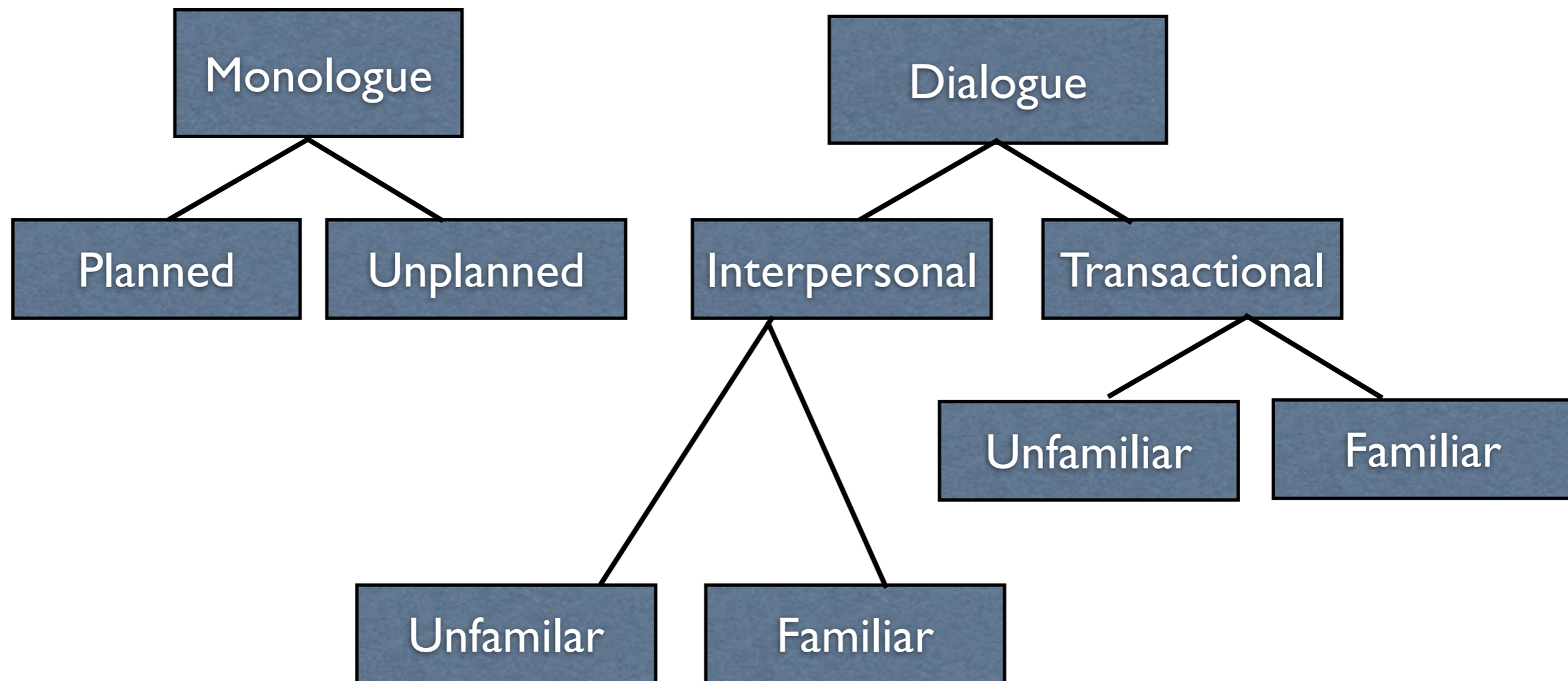 - What are some common techniques for teaching listening?

An Interactive Model of Listening Comprehension

- Listening is an interactive process (i.e., brain acts on the receptive nerve impulses)

- 8 processes involved in comprehension

  1. hearer processes "raw speech" and holds an "image" of it in short-term memory

  2. hearer determines the type of speech event and "colors" the interpretation

  3. hearer infers the objectives of the speaker

  4. hearer recalls background information (schemata)

5. hearer assigns a *literal* meaning to the utterance (e.g., Do you have the time?")

6. hearer assigns an *intended* meaning to the utterance - matching **perceived** meaning with **intended** meaning is key to human communication

7. hearer determines whether information should be stored in short-term or long-term memory

8. hearer deletes the message form ("pruning"), important information is retained *conceptually*

Types of Spoken Language

- Teaching aural comprehension - classification of types of oral language (Nunan, 1991)

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                    Monologue                                Dialogue

         Planned        Unplanned          Interpersonal        Transactional

                                                                  Unfamiliar   Familiar

                               Unfamilar   Familiar
```

What makes listening difficult?

- 8 characteristics of spoken language

1. Clustering: breaking down speech into smaller groups of words (clauses, phrases, words)

2. Redundancy: rephrasings, repetitions, elaborations, insertions (e.g. I mean, y'know)

3. Reduced Forms: phonological ("djeetyet?"), morphological ("I'll"), syntactic ("Tomorrow."), pragmatic ("Mom Phone!") reduction

4. Performance Variables: hesitations, false starts, pauses, corrections (e.g., But, uh -- I also -- to go with this of course if you're..) / casual speech and certain dialects may contain ungrammatical forms

5. Colloquial language: idioms, slangs, cultural knowledge

6. Rate of delivery

7. Stress, rhythm, intonation: prosodic features of English (stress timed, intonation patterns)

8. Interaction: negotiation, clarification, attending signals, turn-taking, topic nomination, termination - good listeners are good responders

Macroskills and Microskills of Listening

- Table 18.1 (Brown, p. 308) microskills (aural skills at the sentence level) & macroskills (aural skills at the discourse level)

➡ Helps break down what your learners need to actually perform as they acquire effective listening strategies

➡ These 17 skills apply to conversational discourse NOT academic lectures etc...

Brainstorm and compare with Table 18.1

Microskills	Macroskills

Types of Classroom Listening Performance

1. **Reactive**: listener as a "tape recorder"

2. **Intensive**: focus on components of discourse - e.g. listen for cues in drills, repetition of words/ sentences, noticing

3. **Responsive:** T asks questions, gives commands, seeks clarification, checks comprehension

4. **Selective**: scanning for certain information (in longer stretches of talk), requires field independence

5. **Extensive**: aims to develop a top-down, global understanding of spoken language

6. **Interactive**: debates, conversations, role plays, group and pair work

Principles for Teaching Listening Skills

1. Include a focus on listening in an integrated-skills course

2. Use techniques that are intrinsically motivating: appeal to listeners' personal interests and goals

3. Utilize authentic language and contexts

4. Carefully consider the form of listeners' responses: they should indicate whether or not their comprehension has been correct, Lund (1990) - 9 ways to check comprehension (p. 311)

5. Encourage the development of listening strategies: *looking for key words, looking for nonverbal cues, predicting a speaker's purpose by the context, guessing at meanings, seeking clarification, listening for the general gist...* - "teaching learners how to learn"

6. Include both bottom-up and top-down listening techniques

- Bottom-up processing: focus on sounds, words, intonation, grammatical structures

- Top-down processing: activation of schemata, deriving meaning, interpretation of a text

Listening Techniques from Beginning to Advanced

- Table 18.2 pp. 313-317

Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
Discriminate b/w Intonation Contours in Sentences	Recognize Fast Speech Forms	Use Features of Sentence Stress to Identify Important Information for Note Taking
Discriminate b/w Emotional Reactions	Analyze Discourse Structure to Suggest Effective Listening Strategies	Use the Introduction to the Lecture to Predict Its Focus and Direction

Interactive
Exercises

Assessing Listening in the Classroom

- "assessments": an ongoing pedagogical process that includes a number of evaluative acts on the part of the teacher

  - Informal assessment

  - Formal assessment

- "tests": planned set of tasks or exercises with designated time frams

- Listening is unobservable - inferencing comprehension abilities poses a challenge

- Assessing types of listening & micro-, macro skills
  - *Intensive listening tasks*: e.g. distinguishing phonemic pairs, morphological pairs, stress patterns, paraphrase recognition, repetition
  - *Responsive listening tasks*: question, simple discourse sequences...
  - *Selective listening tasks*: cloze tests, verbal information transfer, chart completion...
  - *Extensive listening tasks*: dictation, dialogue, lecture, interpretive tasks, stories...

Group work

- **Fill in the blanks** after you listen to the recorded 911 call. In your group 1) discuss the types of **micro- and macro-skills** you used to complete the activity 2) **bottom-up, top-down listening techniques** you used and 3) **listening strategies** that you employed.

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Indianapolis 911

01  Dsk:      Indianapolis _____?
02  Clr:      _____ please.
03  Dsk:      Go ahead.
04  Clr:      Yeah. Uh I live at twenty seven,
05            twenty five albert s- south? And, uh there's a _____
06            sittin' across the _____ from t[he house=
07  Dsk:                                       [Uhhuh,
08  Clr:      =an' I can't tell from here kind'of hard- hard to see
09            I dunno it's been kind of _____ it's sittin' there
10            with its _____ on and everything else and I don't
11            know if anybody, if they forgot to _____ or
12            somebody's just sitting there watching the _____ or
13            what this is. It's making me _____.
14  Dsk:      How long has it been there.
15  Clr:      U::h it's been there for a _____ only.
16            I didn't see who it was that got on. It's white with-
17            with a _____?
18  Dsk:      The car (is) uh white with a _____?
19  Clr:      Right.
20            (1.0) (.hhhhh)
21  Clr:      ^Well jus' kind of wondering the- I don't know who
22            if it- which neighborhood it _____ or what it-
23            maybe they  just got out of it an' .hhhh and uh,
24            _____ on or somethin'=
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Ch 19. Teaching Speaking

Oral Communication Skills in Pedagogical Research

1. Conversational discourse: demonstration of an ability to accomplish pragmatic goals through interactive discourse with other speakers of the language

2. Teaching pronunciation

3. Accuracy and fluency: both important goals to pursue in CLT and TBLT - message oriented (teaching language use) vs language oriented (teaching language usage)

4. **Affective factors**: language ego - "It's better to keep your mouth closed and have others think you're ignorant than to remove all doubt" (Mark Twain) - T should create an embracing climate

5. **The interaction effect**: negotiation of meaning, interlocutor effect

6. **Questions about intelligibility**: new standards towards *correctness* and *accent*

7. The growth of spoken corpora

8. Genres of spoken language

What makes speaking difficult?

1. Clustering

2. Redundancy

3. Reduced Forms

4. Performance Variables

5. Colloquial language

6. Rate of delivery

7. Stress, rhythm, and intonation

8. Interaction

Micro- & Macroskills of Oral Communication

Brainstorm and compare with Table 19.1

Microskills	Macroskills

Types of Classroom Speaking Performance

1. **Imitative**: drilling (controlled activity)

2. **Intensive**: practice some phonological or grammatical aspect of language

3. **Responsive:** short replies to questions

4. **Transactional (dialogue):** conveying or exchanging specific information, negotiative (e.g. "what do you mean?" type questions)

5. **Interpersonal (dialogue)**: purpose is to maintain social relationships - casual register, colloquial language, emotionally charged language, slang, ellipsis, sarcasm...

Amy: Hi Bob how's it going?
Bob: Oh, so-so.
Amy: Not a great weekend, huh?
Bob: Well, far be it from me to criticize,
       but I'm pretty miffed about last week.
Amy: What are you talking about?
Bob: I think you know perfectly well what I'm talking about.
Amy: Oh that. How come you get so bent out of shape over
       something like that?

6. **Extensive (monologue)**: oral reports, summaries, short speeches - planned or impromptu

Principles for Teaching Speaking Skills

1. Focus on both fluency and accuracy depending on your objective

2. Provide intrinsically motivating techniques: sometimes students don't know why we ask them to do certain things

3. Encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts: even drills can be structured to provide a sense of authenticity (pp. 342-343)

4. Provide appropriate feedback and correction: EFL contexts - SS are dependent on T for linguistic feedback

5. Capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening

5. Give students opportunities to initiate oral communication: nominate topics, ask questions, control conversations, change subject

6. Encourage the development of speaking strategies

- asking for clarification
- asking someone to repeat something
- using fillers to gain processing time
- using conversation maintenance cues
- getting someone's attention
- using paraphrases
- appealing for assistance
- using formulaic expressions
- using nonverbal expressions

Teaching Conversation

- Indirect approach

- Direct approach

- The learner's inductive involvement in meaningful tasks as well as consciousness-raising elements of focus on form

- Examples (pp. 334-339)
  a. Conversation - Indirect (strategy consciousness-raising)
  b. Conversation - Direct (gambits)
  c. Conversation - Transactional (ordering from a catalog)
  d. Meaningful oral grammar practice (modal *would*)
  e. Individual practice: Oral dialogue journal
  f. Other interactive techniques

Teaching Pronunciation

- A top-down approach: relevant features of pronunciation in a whole stream of discourse are given high priority

- Our goal should be more realistically focused on **clear, comprehensible** pronunciation

- Factors that affect pronunciation: native language, age, exposure, innate phonetic ability, identity and language ego, motivation and concern for good pronunication

- 3 techniques for teaching different aspects of English pronunciation (pp. 342-344)

  - Intonation -listening for pitch changes

  - Stress- contrasting nouns

  - Meaningful minimal pairs

Focus on Form and Error Treatment

- The role of feedback (traffic metaphor by Vigil and Oller 1976, p. 345)
    - *Fossilization* may result with too many green lights
    - There should be an *optimal* amount of cognitive feedback
    - Avoid the administration of *punitive* reinforcement

- **When and how to treat Errors:**

  - **"when"**: discern the difference b/w global and local errors (e.g. There is a French widow in every bedroom" vs "The different city is another one in the another two")

  - **"how"**: direct treatment of errors vs not treating them - balancing overpoliteness with expectations that learners bring (e.g., Bailey's 7 options, p. 347)

  - Error treatment vs Error *correction*

  - Ts need to build the intuition through experience and established theoretical foundations (e.g. Figure 19.9 p. 349)

Assessing Speaking in the Classroom

- Speech is observable, recordable, and measurable BUT acceptable responses are more difficult to specify reliably

- Item Types and Tasks for Assessing Speaking

  1. Imitative speaking tasks

  2. Intensive speaking tasks

  3. Responsive speaking tasks

  4. Interactive speaking tasks

  5. Extensive speaking tasks

- Evaluating and Scoring Speaking Tasks: you need to be clear in specifying the level of language you are targeting

  - pronunciation

  - fluency

  - vocabulary

  - grammar

  - discourse features

  - task

Group work

- Locate the **techniques** described in the sections **"Teaching Conversation"** and **"Teaching Pronunciation."** Decide the extent to which the 7 principles for designing speaking techniques were appropriately included.