

Authentic Materials Designing for Listening and Speaking Skills

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Abstract: The article provides information on finding out how developing materials on listening and speaking skills help to conduct the lessons effectively and improve learners' ability on listening and speaking in an appropriate way. This data can be used for providing an extensive resource to develop speaking, listening skills and to support staff working with students for whom English is a first language.

Keywords: authentic materials, target language, international language.

Introduction

Modern requirements of knowledge include various principals, which skilled teachers should adopt, for instance, they have to obtain ability to conduct and design comprehensive lessons as listening and speaking, they should have enough ability to develop necessary materials on these certain types of lessons. Materials design and development for listening and speaking comprehension has received more and more attention in education circle in recent years. Many researchers and classroom teachers are doing research to find out what listening and speaking comprehension in the target language is, and to solve the learners' problems in English listening and speaking comprehension. The researchers and teachers tended to do more research on reading, writing and speaking rather than listening. They often considered that listening was something which could be picked up easily and saw little need for developing a specific research or approaches to teach listening. As a result, listening remains under-researched point. So, this data helps to develop and design materials for listening and speaking skills, as well as to discuss how these materials can be widely used to improve students' ability in English. Based on this, it is considered that collection of various materials both authentic and traditional ones exploit success in listening and speaking.

Many classroom teachers turn to the authentic materials for help, they are trying their best to equip learners with limited target language knowledge to meet the challenge of real life listening.

As Guariento, W. & Morley, J. (2001) claimed that the design is the process of determining what changes actually need to be made, and how those changes should be made so that they are functional and attractive. Design is done with the help of a consultant. The consultant will work with you to figure out what needs to be done, how much it will cost, and how it will look when it is complete. Strategic development is an organization's process of defining, often in hyperbolic terms, its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy, including its capital and people. Various business analysis techniques can be used in strategic planning; strategic development is the formal consideration of an organization's future course. All strategic development deals with at least one of three key questions:

- "What do we do?"
- "For whom do we do it?"
- "How do we excel?"

The teaching and designing materials of listening and speaking comprehension have received more and more attention in recent years. Many researchers and classroom teachers are doing research to find out what listening and speaking skills in the target language is, and to solve the learners' problems in English listening and speaking comprehension. Selecting the suitable listening materials is one important research branch. Because authentic materials –unsolicited, spontaneous, natural and covering a wide spectrum of styles from formal to very informal, can truthfully reflect the real life language, narrow the distance between the learners and the target language used in reality, it becomes increasingly attractive to language experts, classroom practitioners and the learners.

“Compared with foreign language teaching as a whole, listening teaching in the target language appeared much later. It first appeared in the Cambridge ESOL FCE exam in 1970, in the form of written texts read aloud. In the early days of English language teaching, listening chiefly serves as a means of introducing grammar through model dialogues. It was not until the late 1970s and the advent of the communicative approaches that the skill was first taught in its own right” (Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2002, para.2).

The researchers and teachers have opportunity to do more research into reading, writing and speaking rather than listening. They often considered that listening was something which could be picked up easily and saw little need for developing a specific research agenda or approaches to teach listening. As a result, listening / speaking remains very under-researched.

Integrated listening and speaking is drawing more and more of people's attention in recent years. People recognized its important role in the language learning and communication in the target language. Krashen (1980) demonstrated his Input Hypothesis which emphasizes the importance of listening comprehension. And more and more books on listening, both practical and theoretical, especially dealing with listening skills, have been published. Listening/Speaking has been given an unprecedented attention. Under this background, a considerable amount of research has been done into these very skills materials.

As Lingzhu & Yuanyuan (2002) overstated that many published textbooks on certain skills, at present, often include the recorded materials of written language. These materials are usually extracted from written articles in Standard English. There are rarely any “noise”, mispronunciation, misused words, and the intonation is always smooth and monotonous. Besides, many textbooks were made years ago, and there had not been any change in a long period of time. As a result, the content of these materials is outdated with no contact with the life reality (Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2002. p.2).

In most cases, what students listen to conversations and stories, but in reality they listen to far more things. The listening exercises, which are often prepared in advance and are often in the forms of true or false questions, multiple—choice and short question answering, are usually recorded on the tape, and don't provide students with the kind of practice needed. Conducting this kind of class is an easy job for teachers, but it does not provide learners with realistic preparation for real life listening. If students get used to this kind of slow and clear English, they will find it hard to communicate with English native speakers in real-life listening, because they may fail to follow the speed of speech and to understand the idioms and slangs used by native speakers. Many classroom teachers turn to the authentic materials for help. They are trying their best to equip learners with limited target language knowledge to meet the challenge of real life listening.

Conclusion. The authentic materials should be used in accordance with the students' level of knowledge and the students should be helped by their teachers to overcome the difficulties they encounter. Some studies provided insights about learners' attitudes toward authentic input.

Listening and speaking skills in the process of target language teaching during lessons play an important role in education nowadays. Learners should be able to use English fluently because English as an international language is demanded from people to be intelligent as well in contemporary situation. Using authentic materials for developing learners' listening and speaking skills will help to improve quality of lessons and knowledge of students in target language.

Literature

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