

Assessing L2 listening

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Opening reflection

What is your biggest challenge in teaching and assessing L2 listening?

Write answers in chat box

Poll: How did you assess comprehension during your last classroom listening activity?

- a. Corrected textbook/workbook comprehension questions
- b. Discussed comprehension problems after a listening activity and the strategies used to solve comprehension breakdowns
- c. Discussed the content of the text (what students understood) with the class
- d. Recorded the mark in my gradebook
- e. Practiced how to listen to an oral text

Webinar overview

- Reflect on assessment of listening (Louise's classroom)
- Overview of formative and summative assessment
- Examine different formative assessment tasks and instruments for listening development
- Clarification questions on tasks/instruments presented
- Consider some fundamental criteria for formative and summative assessment of listening
- Questions and answers

Listening assessment in Louise's classroom (1)

See Figure 1:
Checklist to guide listening performance

Listening assessment in Louise's classroom (2)

See Figure 2 (Checklist for Level B1, CEFR, Lenz & Schneider, 2004)

Overall descriptor for B1 listening: Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent. Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc., including short narratives. Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type, provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated. Detailed descriptors:	I can do	I can do with help	My objective
I can follow clearly articulated speech directed at me in everyday conversation, though I sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.			
I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around me, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.			
I can listen to a short narrative and form hypotheses about what will happen next.			
I can understand the main points of radio news bulletins and simpler recorded material on topics of personal interest delivered relatively slowly and clearly.			
I can catch the main points in TV programs on familiar topics when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.			
I can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment.			
(Additional goals related to course/program objectives)			

Listening assessment in Louise's classroom (3)

- During a unit of study: quizzes
- After completion of a unit: unit/achievement test
- At the end of a course: final exam
- High school exit exam: Standardized exit examination that may be international in scope with a certificate attesting to a certain level of language proficiency (including listening).

Purpose of the assessment

What is the purpose of each type of assessment in Louise's classroom?

- Activity checklist (1)?
- Unit/course checklist (2)?
- Quizzes?
- Unit test?
- Final exam?
- Certification test?

Take two minutes to reflect and write in chat

Differences between formative and summative assessment

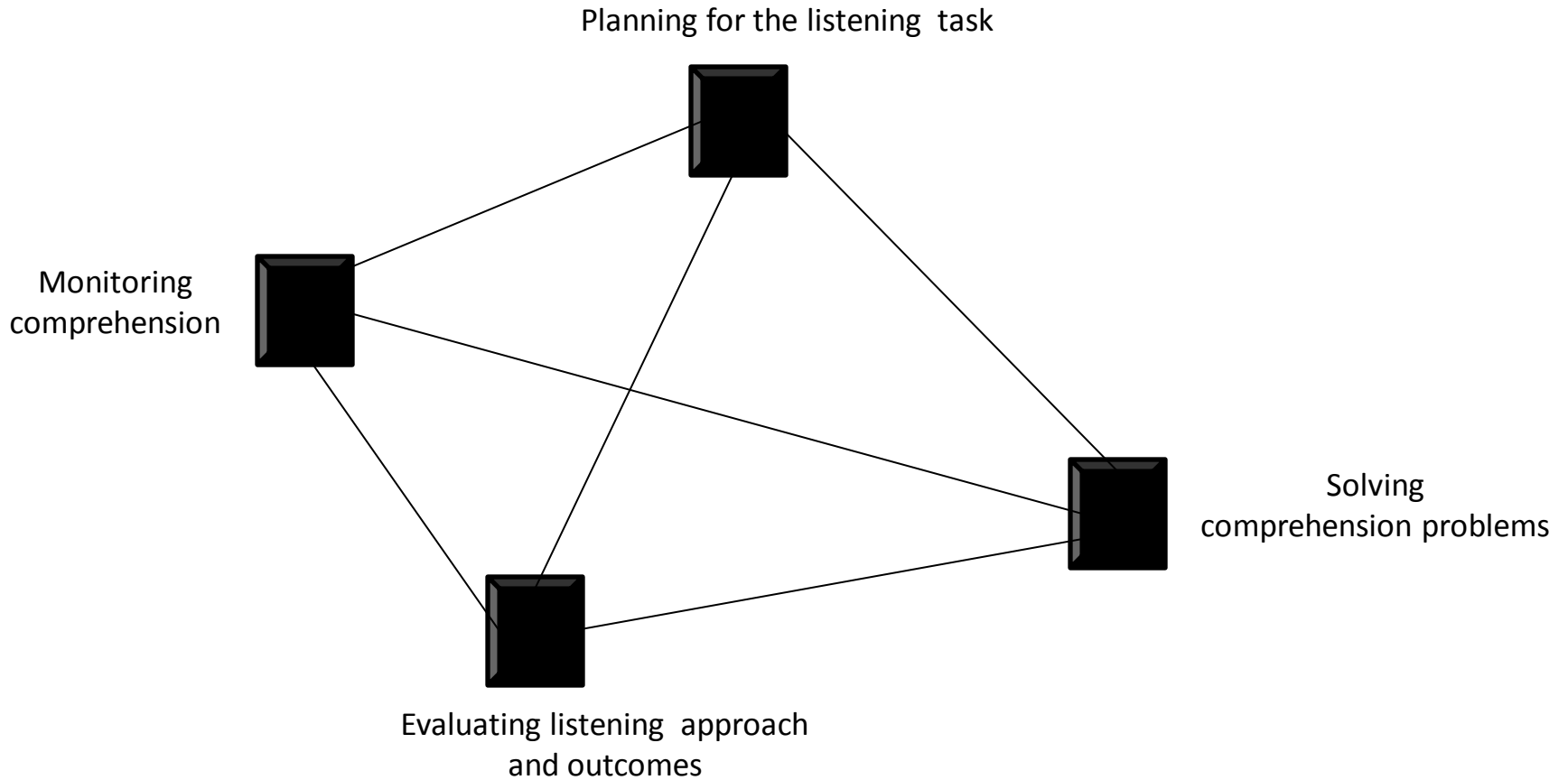
	Formative assessment	Summative assessment
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ All objectives of the unit, a few at a time ▶ Learning processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Selected course/program objectives, representative of the level assessed
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide feedback to student and teacher on progress in learning ▶ Determine need for and/or type of remediation required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Determine level for placement purposes ▶ Course pass/failure ▶ Certification
When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continuous, as part of regular learning activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Periodic, at end of a course or program
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Observation ▶ Checklists ▶ Portfolios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Standardized tests (norm-referenced) ▶ Achievement/Placement/Proficiency tests
By whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teacher ▶ Student ▶ Peer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teacher ▶ Institution ▶ Educational jurisdiction (school board, government)
Decision to make?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adjust teaching procedures ▶ Adapt learning activities ▶ Provide individual remediation on strategies and/or targeted skill(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Award credits (promotion) ▶ Certification ▶ Program evaluation

Assessment & Learning

1. Assessment need not be stand-alone activity at odds with teaching & learning; it can be a form of inquiry that accompanies daily practices and interactions;
2. Teachers are implicated in this process through support and the systematic and tailored feedback they provide;
3. Learners are expected to move toward their own source of feedback/support, guiding themselves more independently.

(Poehner, Foreign Language Classroom Assessment in Support of Teaching and Learning)

Metacognitive listening processes and their interaction



Metacognition and formative assessment

- Metacognition can best be enhanced with formative assessment (low-stakes activities that provide teachers with feedback on level of student understanding) (Lang, 2012)
- Learners experience greater success in listening comprehension and weaker learners benefit **most** (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010)

Figure 3: Guide for listening

- Worksheet that can be used with any listening text
- Emphasizes the 'top-down' dimension of listening
- Teacher contextualizes students by
 - Informing students of the topic, or
 - Engaging students in a discussion of the topic, or
 - Preceding the listening activity with a reading activity on the same general topic.

Figure 4: Discovery listening

- Listening phase
 - Listening and note taking
- Reconstruction phase
 - Work in small groups to reconstruct text on basis of notes (dictogloss)
- Discovery phase
 - Compare transcript of text with reconstructed text and analyze discrepancies

Figure 5: Reconstruct story chronology

- Use with longer and more difficult texts where students can benefit from some written support
- Emphasizes the 'bottom-up' dimension of listening
- Students engaged in predicting (planning), monitoring, problem-solving and evaluating their listening

Figure 6:

Listening questionnaire (MALQ)

- Increase student awareness of listening processes; that is, how to listen
- Self-assessment/reflection on what to do to improve comprehension over time
- Diagnostic use by teacher (formative assessment)

Clarification questions on Figures 3 – 6

take a few minutes to ask questions in chat and I will try to cover some recurrent themes in my responses

Face-to-face interventions

- Stimulated recall
- Dynamic assessment

Stimulated recall

- Teacher: With regard to [MALQ] item 14 “After listening, I think back to how I listened, and about what I might do differently next time,” you disagreed at first, then you slightly disagreed, now you strongly agree. Is that correct?
- Student: I think, um, I think that’s how I was making like, a mistake before: this is like, I would listen, but I wouldn’t really decide: “O.K., next time...,” I don’t know, I think I didn’t pay as much attention before as I do now before, but now, it’s like: “O.K., next time, I have to figure this out,” like more, like focus more that way, and maybe that will help me understand more...

Dynamic assessment exchange (Ableeva, 2008, p. 74)

Student: ...qu'est-ce que c'est belge? (what does it mean 'belge'?)

Mediator: Belge? Belgian...donc, Léon de Bruxelles...Bruxelles c'est la capitale de la Belgique? Belgique (Belgian...so, Léon de Bruxelles...Brussels is the capital of Belgium)

Student : ah, ok

Mediator : et c'est un restaurant...quel restaurant? français? canadien? (and it's a restaurant...what kind of restaurant? French? Canadian?)

Student: Belgian

Mediator: Oui, belge...ok...la Belgique c'est un pays...Belgium...en français on dit la Belgique et l'adjectif c'est belge, par exemple, un restaurant belge...(yes, Belgian...ok...la Belgique it's a country...Belgium...in French they say 'la Belgique' and the adjective is belge, for example, a Belgian restaurant...)

Formative evaluation of interactive listening/speaking: Teacher observation checklist

<u>Objectives</u> → <u>Legend</u> Y=yes N=no ~ =with help	Can understand instructions	Can follow directions	Asks for clarification when necessary	Etc.				
Student:								
Student:								
Student:								

Summative assessments

- More high stakes in nature
- Provide information to stakeholder recipients (learner, parent, teacher, educational jurisdiction) on learner competence at a given point in time
- Quizzes, achievement tests, proficiency tests, standardized tests

Issues in listening assessment

- **Validity:** To what degree does it accurately measure what you want to measure?
- **Reliability:** To what degree is it dependable?
- **Authenticity:** To what degree is it representative of real-life language use?
- **Washback:** To what degree does it provide useful feedback for the learner and influence the teaching process?

(Brown and Abeywickrama, 2010)

Validity in listening assessment

- measure comprehension (not hearing, spelling, prior knowledge of a topic or reading long multiple choice questions)
- reflect the learning objectives and listening tasks of the unit/course

Reliability in listening assessment

- Minimize anxiety
- Ensure all learners can hear/see the text/video equally and that there are no distracting noises
- Avoid ambiguous or 'trick' test items
- Ensure more than one scorer for correcting open-ended test items
- Critical to high-stakes exams

Authenticity in listening assessment

- Use texts with authentic, real-life speech
- Avoid using texts that are dense and cognitively demanding (meant to be read and not listened to)
- Choose comprehension tasks that reflect real-life purposes for listening
- Avoid difficult accents and dialects

Washback in assessing listening

- Impact of assessment on classroom teaching
- Potential of assessment to provide feedback for future learning

Further information

Vandergrift, L. & Goh, C. (2012). *Teaching and learning second language listening: Metacognition in action*. New York: Routledge.

Chapter 12: Assessing Listening for Learning (pp. 239-268)

Questions

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