

TCFL Listening Class

Wang Manling
College of International
Cultural Exchange





What is listening?

Background to teaching listening.

Principles for teaching listening

Classroom techniques and tasks

I. What is listening?

1. Receptive Skills vs. Productive Skills

	Receptive skills	Productive Skills
Aural Skills	Listening	Speaking
Visual Skills	Reading	Writing



Real Life Listening Situation: What do we listen to?

- Telephone conversations;
- Lectures or speeches;
- Watching movies;
- News in the radio or TV;
- Interviews ;
- Listening to songs;
- Conversations with foreigners;
- Watching television programmes ;
- Broadcast at airport or railway station ;
- Hotel and restaurant services;



Feature of Real-life Listening Situations (Ur,2000:106-107)

- The language is spontaneous, with lots of redundancy and ungrammatical structures, hesitation, rephrasing and self-correction.
- The vocabulary used may be colloquial.
- The pronunciation is not always clear.
- Listeners have clear purposes for listening.
- The speaker or other visual stimuli is visible to listeners.
- Listeners usually need to give ongoing, purposeful response to the speaker.
- The speaker may adjust the speed of their speech, or adapt the discourse to accommodate to the listeners' need.



Why is Listening More Difficult?

- Different speakers produce the same sounds in different ways, e.g. dialects and accents, stress, rhythms, intonations, mispronunciations, etc.;
- The listener has little/no control over the speed of the input of the spoken material;
- The spoken material is often heard only once (unlike the reading material);
- The listener cannot pause to work out the meaning;
- Speech is more likely to be distorted by background noise or the media that transmit sounds;
- The listener sometimes has to deal simultaneously with another task while listening e.g. note-taking etc.



2.Types of Listening


Listener's role: whether the listener is required to take part in the interaction	Reciprocal listening (two-way)	Telephone conversation interview
	Nonreciprocal Listening (one-way)	listen to news report
Function of listening: to obtain message, to convey information	Transactional listening	asking and giving directions, doing shopping Buying tickets
	Interactional listening	Conversation between old friends or family members




What is listened in classroom?

- In our listening classroom, learners are usually involved in nonreciprocal listening, which is rare in real world.
- The absence of the reciprocal listening in the classroom may lead to students' inability to cope with two-way communication in real life.






 The message is that we should bear in mind what we listen in real life, so that when we select listening materials for our TCFL classroom, we not only have a **greater variety** but also meet the needs of different students

II. Background to the teaching of listening

- In the late 1800s, Gouin's series method, the first time listening played a key role in language teaching methodology.
- Before world War II, Charles Berlitz' direct method, promoted the teaching of listening comprehension and the idea that new teaching points should be introduced orally.
- After World War II, audio-lingual method heavily influenced by behavioral psychology, emphasized MIM/MEM(mimicry/ memorization) of new structures. The method leveled with the establishment of language laboratories for dialogue and pattern practice drills.



- 
- In the 1970s and early 1980s, communicative language teaching increased the role of listening.
 - During the period, Stephen Krashen's input hypothesis emphasized learner's understanding of input language. Listening was seen as a major source of comprehensible input.


III. Principles for teaching listening

- Expose students to different ways of processing information.
- Expose students to different types of listening.
- Teach a variety of tasks.
- Consider text, difficulty and authenticity.
- Teach listening strategies



1. Expose students to different ways of processing information

 **The Bottom-up Model**

 **The Top-down Model** (first proposed by Rumelhart and Ortony ,1977)

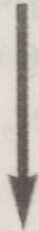
 **The Interactive Model**



Top-down

Based on:

- general knowledge/life experience (content schema)
- knowledge of situational routines (textual schema)




Bottom-up

Knowledge of:

- vocabulary
- grammar
- sounds



The Bottom-up Model

 This model is based on the theory that listening is a process of decoding the stream of sounds that one hears in a linear way, from the bottom to the top of the system of language.




The Bottom-up Model

Linguistic knowledge

Discourses
Sentences/
Phrases
Words
Morphemes
Phonemes



The Bottom-up Model

 In the Bottom-up Model, the teacher teaches listening by introducing vocabulary and new words first and then going over the material sentence by sentence. This is followed by some questions and answers.



The Top-down Model

- This model is based on the theory in which listening is regarded as a **prediction-check process, “a psycholinguistic guessing game”** (Goodman, 1970).
- Listening is a reconstruction process, in which listeners use background knowledge schema and context to make sense of what they hear.



The Top-down Model


Schema to be activated
language schema
content schema
textual schema



Discourses
Sentences/
Phrases
Words
Morphemes
Phonemes



The Top-down Model

 Therefore, it is believed that in teaching listening, the teacher should teach the background knowledge first, i.e. to activate student's schema, so that students equipped with such knowledge will be able to guess meaning from the printed page.

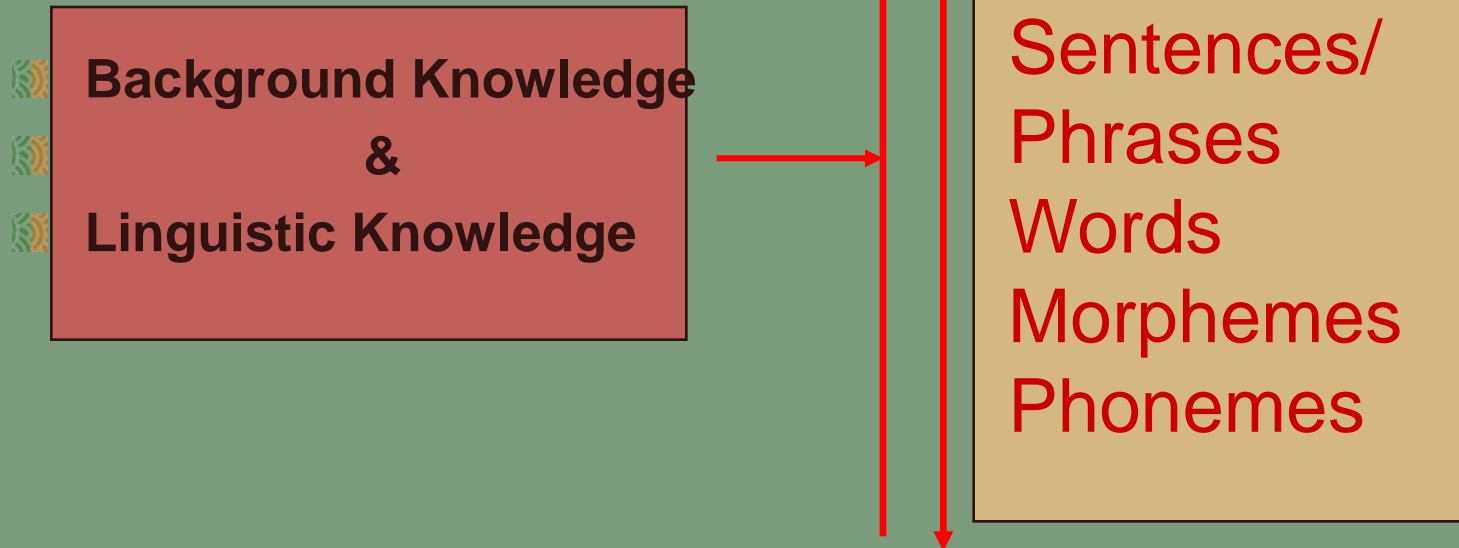


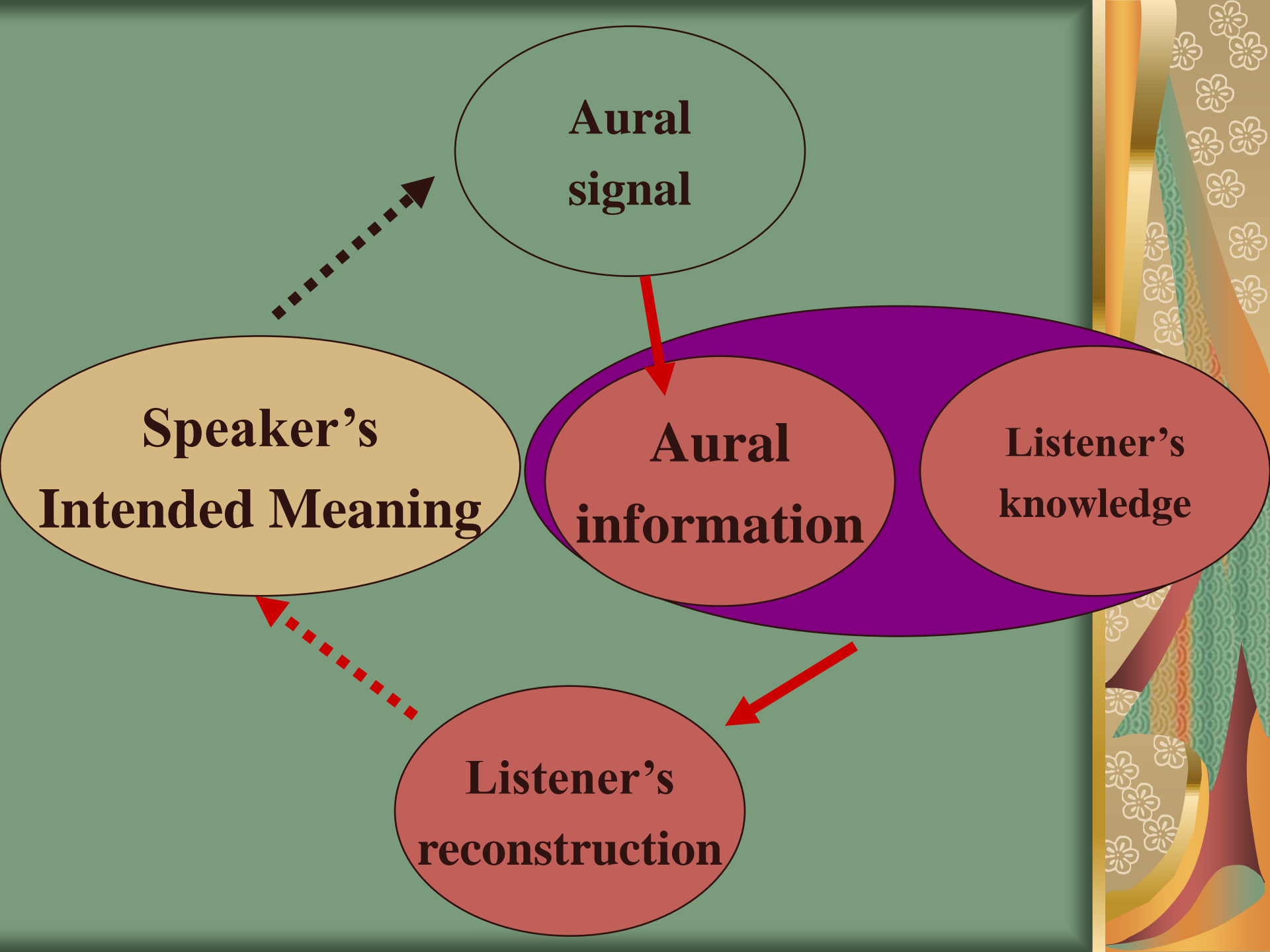
The Interactive Model

- This is based on the theory in which listening is viewed as an interactive process combining both bottom-up and top-down processing. |
- Listeners utilize both prior knowledge and linguistic knowledge in understanding messages.




The Interactive Model





The Interactive Model

 Based on such understanding, teaching listening in the classroom divides listening activities into basically three stages, in which **bottom-up and top-down techniques are integrated** to help students in their listening comprehension and in increasing their language efficiency in general.



Three-Stage Design

<p>Pre-listening</p>	<p>Predicting Setting the scene</p>
<p>While-listening</p>	<p>confirm or reject their predictions on their knowledge of life and the linguistic knowledge activated Listen for the gist Listen for the specific information Make inference</p>
<p>Post-listening</p>	<p>Evaluate comprehension Test comprehension (not just memory) from listening to speaking</p>



Pre-listening: purpose and function P.163

- to arouse learners' interest and motivation
- to set purposes for listening
- to establish what is already known about the topic
- build necessary background
- to generate language, particularly the activation and learning of topic-related vocabulary.



Pre-listening: classroom activities

- Brainstorm vocabulary related to topic
- ask learners to predict the content of the listening, the vocabulary to be heard, or to predict the language features of the listening text.
- pre-learning vocabulary or grammatical structures.
- read some materials related to the text.
- providing some background knowledge about the text
- have a discussion on the topic of the text
- true or false predictive questions



During-listening: purpose and function

- to enable learners to use both bottom-up and top-down processing skills to make sense of the listening text.
- to engage learners in employing different listening strategies



During-listening: activities P.164

- Listen and tick.
- Listen and draw.
- listen and order
- listen and act
- spot dictation (listening to a passage and filling the missing words).
- compound dictation (filling the missing words and short sentences).
- listening and filling a form
- true or false judgment of statements.



Post-listening: purpose and function

- to give students opportunities to relate what they have heard to what they have known or what they feel.
- to enable students to produce language based on what they have learned.



Post-listening: activities P.169

- group discussion
- role-play
- retelling the main idea of the text.
- Writing: Learners are asked to write a summary of the text or something related to the passage.



2. Expose students to different types of listening.

- Listen for gist
- Listen for specific information
- Make inference(listen between the lines)



例1:

甲：我们出去吧，去散步或者打会儿球。

乙：你看外面，要下雨了。

甲：哦，是要下雨了。



Listen for gist

- Students try to understand in a more general way.
- Tasks involve identifying main idea, noting a sequence of events, or identifying pictures that match the text.
- What are they talking about?/what is the main idea?



Listen for specific information

- Students try to understand in a more specific way.
- The task involves catching concrete information including names, time, specific language forms, etc.
- Dictation and cloze



Make inference(listen between the lines)

- Students listen for meaning that is implied but not stated directly.
- Inference requires abstract thinking and it's a higher level skill.
- How do the speakers feel? How do you know that?



3. Teach a variety of tasks

- Combine receptive tasks and productive tasks (listening, speaking, reading and writing).
- Grade difficulty level appropriately (short, focused tasks).



Authenticity of listening material

- There are both strong arguments for using authentic and non-authentic materials in listening classrooms.
- TCFL teachers need to make insightful choices concerning the materials we are going to use in the classroom.

