Rethinking comprehension and strategy use in second language listening instruction

BERNADETTE LING
Queensland University of Technology International College

MARGARET KETTLE
Queensland University of Technology

In second language classrooms, listening is gaining recognition as an active element in the processes of learning and using a second language. Currently, however, much of the teaching of listening prioritises comprehension without sufficient emphasis on the skills and strategies that enhance learners' understanding of spoken language. This paper presents an argument for rethinking the emphasis on comprehension and advocates augmenting current teaching with an explicit focus on strategies. Drawing on the literature, the paper provides three models of strategy instruction for the teaching and development of listening skills. The models include steps for implementation that accord with their respective approaches to explicit instruction. The final section of the paper synthesises key points from the models as a guide for application in the second language classroom. The premise underpinning the paper is that the teaching of strategies can provide learners with active and explicit measures for managing and expanding their listening capacities, both in the learning and 'real world' use of a second language.

Keywords: *listening skills; comprehension; strategies; real-world texts*

Introduction

Second language (L2) learners commonly identify listening comprehension as one of the most difficult skills to improve. One research response has been to investigate the strategy use of more proficient listeners in order to teach less able listeners more effective strategies (Grenfell & Harris, 1999, as cited in Chamot, 2005). Although strategies have been an area of interest in research, there is little evidence of explicit strategy teaching in

adult General English classes (Berne, 1998). Indeed, listening instruction continues to emphasise comprehension with the comprehension approach commonplace in coursebooks and English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. This is despite the claim that teaching comprehension alone may not develop students' listening skills as effectively as teachers wish (Field, 2008).

In this article we focus on second language listening instruction. As second language teachers and researchers we are interested in addressing questions about improving the teaching of listening, particularly in classroom contexts mandating the use of generic coursebooks. We begin the paper by canvassing the literature on listening, notably the key processes and strategies for effective listening, especially in a second language. For the purposes of this paper, we draw on Oxford's (2003, p. 81) definition of second language learning strategies as "specific plans or steps – either observable … or unobservable ... – that L2 learners intentionally employ to improve reception, storage, retention, and retrieval of information". We look at current approaches to teaching listening and concerns about the lack of 'real world' texts and tasks, particularly in commercially-produced materials intended for diverse markets. The second part of the paper presents the listening strategy-based teaching programs proposed by Mendelsohn (1995, 2001), Vandergrift (2004) and Field (2008). We conclude by synthesising the key points from the models to propose a set of guidelines for TESOL practitioners in their teaching of listening. Fundamental to the paper is the argument that existing approaches to second language listening instruction, centred on comprehension, need to be supplemented with strategy instruction and the increased use of authentic texts and tasks.

Second language listening
Learning to listen
Second language listening research is a relatively new field of study. Because both reading and listening are receptive skills, early theorists of listening grounded their studies in first language (L1) or L2 reading research, resulting in a transfer of methodology between the two (Field, 2008). However, many differences exist between the two skills, which we argue need to be considered in teaching methodologies. For example, in speech, pronunciation varies widely from person to person, utterance to utterance, whereas written language features more standardised features such

as word spacing and spelling (Field, 2008). Moreover, spoken language occurs in real time, with input needing to be processed quickly and retained in the memory (Buck, 2001). Readers, on the other hand, can return to a written text many times to construct and aggregate meaning (Buck, 2001).

For language learners, developing listening comprehension in a new language is a process of moving through stages. According to Horwitz (2008, pp. 73-74) drawing on Taylor (1981), five stages are discernible: (i) recognising the target language (distinguishing the target language from other languages); (ii) recognising isolated words (noticing particular words from the general 'blur' of the L2); (iii) recognising phrase boundaries (beginning to distinguish between words, phrases and sentences but not understanding most of what is being said); (iv) listening for gist (discerning the general meaning and topic of a listening text); (v) true listening (building the meaning of a passage although continuing to encounter words that are unfamiliar and to face breaks in comprehension due to attention lapses and the inability of the memory to retain the information).

Second language researchers such as Krashen (1996) argue that listening is the most important of language abilities, and while it may be a receptive skill, it is in no way 'passive'. Indeed, given the importance of listening in language use and learning, it is surprising that it does not receive more attention in language classes (Horwitz, 2008). Some of the reasons may relate to the difficulties and dilemmas about presenting 'real world' language in the second language classroom. Teachers may use the target language but have difficulty in procuring examples of 'real world' conversations appropriate to their context. Equally other teachers may be concerned that 'real world' language is too difficult for learners to understand and may rely on commercially-produced second language materials that provide modified language and clearly articulated sentences. The problem with these materials is that they fail to replicate natural speech with its false starts, pauses, digressions, elision[1], assimilation[2], and slurring of word boundaries.

---

[1] Elision relates to connected speech and is the disappearance of certain sounds, for example, 'next week' is pronounced '/neks wi:k/' (Kelly, 2000, p. 110).

[2] Assimilation is the modification of sounds when in contact with one another, often across 'word boundaries', for example, 'Right you are' is pronounced 'rye chew are' (Field, 2003, p. 331).

Contextual cues and redundancies that are crucial characteristics of 'real' listening situations can also be missing from materials produced for diverse commercial markets (Horwitz, 2008). In real contexts, the participants, purposes and types of texts are usually obvious and contribute to comprehension. Effective listeners bring a relatively sophisticated set of understandings to the task of real-world listening in order to create both cultural and linguistic understanding (Diaz-Rico, 2004). As well, authentic speech includes communicative redundancies whereby a speaker communicates a piece of information several times. The redundancies enable the listener to process and comprehend the information through repeated exposure. For second language learners, particularly those using the language in 'real' interactions, the differences between the 'sanitised' language of classroom materials and that of the real community can be frustrating and confronting (Horwitz, 2008).

Listening comprehension processes and teaching
Many theorists consider listening to be a "complex ... active process of interpretation" (Vandergrift, 2002, para 2). Rumelhart (1975) theorises that listening comprehension results from a synthesis of two parallel yet separate processes: top-down and bottom-up processing. Listeners use top-down processes when they draw upon context and background knowledge (topic, genre and culture, for example) to develop a conceptual framework (Vandergrift, 2007). Alternatively, bottom-up processing involves decoding information (Helgesen, 2003), whereby meaning is constructed incrementally from phonemes to words to phrases (Buck, 2001). The greater reliance of one over the over is affected by a number of factors: context, purpose for listening, amount of background knowledge, and proficiency level of learners (Horwitz, 2008; Vandergrift, 2007). Furthermore, it is thought that top-down and bottom-up processes may involve strategies that are complementary. For example, Field (2008) believes one form of processing may compensate for the shortcomings of the other when comprehension breaks down. Helgesen (2003) suggests interactive processing in which the decoding of component parts combines with the processing of general knowledge/life experience and textual knowledge to promote comprehension.

Research on second language teaching suggests that teachers and students may have different expectations about these processes. For example, Horwitz (2008) found that students believed they

had to understand everything their teachers said and deployed rigorous bottom-up processing in the form of word-by-word translation, generating high levels of anxiety and frustration. The teachers, on the other hand, believed that the students' listening comprehension capabilities would be improved through the application of background knowledge (top-down processing) to understand amusing anecdotes. They were equally frustrated when the lessons were not enjoyable for the students. Horwitz's conclusion from the research is that while both processing types can be successful, it is important for teachers to explain the purposes of listening lessons to students. She argues that it is important for teachers to make explicit the strategies that are appropriate for particular types of listening.

Strategies and strategy instruction
Strategies and strategy instruction is a growing area of interest in second language teaching and learning. A well-known taxonomy of learning strategies was developed by Chamot and O'Malley (1994): (1) metacognitive strategies for regulating learning through planning, monitoring and evaluating a task or behaviour (for example, selective attention and monitoring comprehension); (2) cognitive strategies for enhancing learning through elaboration, grouping, inferencing and summarising the information to be understood and learned (for example, taking notes and making predictions); and (3) social/affective strategies which involve interacting with others or controlling emotions to assist learning (for example, seeking clarification and controlling anxiety through positive self-talk). Chamot and O'Malley (1994) found that metacognition rather than the frequency of strategy use was a major factor in determining the effectiveness of a person's attempt to learn and use another language, especially in an academic context.

Strategy use within listening can be influenced by a number of factors including cultural background, preferred learning style and language proficiency (Rivera-Mills & Plonsky, 2007). The strategies themselves that are considered to be significant for effective listening are: prediction; selective attention; monitoring and evaluating comprehension; and use of a wide variety of clues (Macaro, Graham & Vanderplank, 2007). An extended list includes: predicting (thinking about what one will hear); inferring ('listening between the lines' for extra information); monitoring (noticing what one does and does not understand; clarifying (asking

questions); responding (being able to react to what one hears); and evaluating (checking one's understanding) (Helgesen, 2003). From the perspective of the second language learner, Vandergrift (2003b) underlines the necessity for the learner to analyse task requirements in the L2; to activate the appropriate listening processes; and to evaluate the success of their approach. Wenden (1987) highlights the amenity of listening strategies to change. For example, listeners might modify existing strategies to suit new tasks or learn new strategies to resolve unfamiliar problems.

Research suggests that more and less proficient listeners use different strategies. Skilled listeners are characterised as confident, active participants in the learning process (Fujita, 1985, as cited in Berne, 2004). They effectively combine a wide range of strategies, as well as top-down and bottom-up processes to facilitate comprehension (Goh, 2002). Skilled listeners can attend to chunks of input (O'Malley, Chamot & Küpper 1989) as well as ignore irrelevant data and use world knowledge to monitor comprehension (Vandergrift, 2003a). Finally, more proficient listeners are better able to understand the overall meaning of a listening text (Chao, 1997, as cited in Berne, 2004). In contrast, less proficient listeners use greater bottom-up processes to facilitate meaning. They rely heavily on direct translation and key word strategies (Vandergrift, 2003b). Less able listeners are often concerned with the meaning of words, believing successful listening requires 100 percent comprehension (Hasan, 2000). Because of the heavy cognitive demands of bottom-up processing, they have less attentional resources to relate what they hear to their previous experiences (Berne, 2004). Furthermore, less proficient listeners may only comprehend small sections of a passage, not the overall meaning (Goh, 2000). These profiles provide general descriptions of the strategy use by different learners, although a note of caution is advised in seeing them as definitive because of differences in research design between studies (see Berne, 2004). Indeed, Graham, Santos and Vanderplank (2008) argue that the distinction between skilled and less skilled listeners might be in how strategies are used, not what strategies are used.

Current approaches to listening instruction

In English Language Teaching contexts focusing on General English, courses are often based on commercially-produced coursebook series, with the same books being used in classrooms as diverse as ELICOS in Australia and the Volkshochschule in

Germany. The approach to listening instruction evident in these books and promoted by teacher training courses emphasises comprehension and is known as the comprehension approach. A typical lesson follows a three-phase format: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening.

The pre-listening stage is intended to activate the learners' prior knowledge of the topic (or schemata) while simultaneously generating interest in the passage (Field, 2002). Learners usually engage in a discussion of the listening topic (Richards, 2005) or predict content through pictures and key words from the text. Instructors will often teach key vocabulary in this phase. The during-listening phase provides listeners with comprehension practice. Teachers provide activities and set questions which focus attention on the main ideas and details of the text. The recording is played several times depending on the needs of learners. With each listening, the students gather meanings and build a more detailed understanding of the passage. When most students have completed the task, the teacher elicits the answers to the questions and tasks. The post-listening stage varies depending on the overall focus of the lesson but often involves the students in a production activity based on their understanding of the text (Richards, 2005). Alternatively, the passage might be used to analyse target language such as grammatical structures or vocabulary items (Field, 2002).

Despite the ubiquitousness of the comprehension approach in ELT, concerns have been raised about its effectiveness. For example Field (2008) argues that if the goal of listening instruction is to equip students with the skills and strategies to comprehend everyday, real-world texts, then a teaching approach that emphasises comprehension is of little assistance in achieving this goal. The listening lesson that focuses on comprehension addresses only two strategies. First, in the initial phase of a lesson, background knowledge is activated. This is important for predicting and formulating hypotheses which are either confirmed or rejected (Field, 2008). Second, when teachers focus students' attention on a specific feature of a text such as key words, they promote selective attention, which is a metacognitive strategy. The concern is that these two strategies account for only a small number of the strategies needed to meet the complex demands of everyday listening in a L2. Field (2008, p. 29) argues that teachers who follow the comprehension approach promote "localised learning", not transferable knowledge. Mendelsohn (2001) maintains that students may not know how to transfer knowledge from one

listening task to another because instructors rarely comment on the effectiveness of the students' strategy use.

Concerns are that instructors following the comprehension approach fail to differentiate comprehension from performance. Many teachers equate successful listening with a high score on a comprehension activity. However, students, particularly those from traditional educational backgrounds, may have well-developed 'test-wise' strategies, enabling them to guess the correct answers (Field, 2002). As a result, learners are judged on the product of their listening not the processes (or strategy use) that support it (Field, 2008). In turn, teachers are left feeling helpless when they are unable to assist their students to become more effective listeners (Field, 2008).

For the remainder of this paper, we will engage with ways that teachers can address concerns about how to teach listening in their L2 classrooms. We acknowledge Berne's (2004) point that some teachers may not know about listening strategies or how to teach them, and agree that it is not surprising given the debates in L2 literature. It is also not surprising given the relatively limited exposure to strategy training in coursebooks, many of which form core curricula in General English courses. Furthermore, listening passages in coursebooks have been found to bear little resemblance to real-world texts, leaving some students with few opportunities to make meaning from authentic speech (Field, 2008). Such concerns align with Mendelsohn's (2001) point that the application of listening research is rarely manifested in coursebook listening activities. Our intention is to harness the research literature for three models of strategy instruction from which we will devise a set of guidelines for teachers. Our aim is to provide ways that teachers can fuse existing approaches to teaching listening with new understandings of strategies and strategy instruction.

Models of strategy instruction

The three different models for engaging with strategies have been developed by Mendelsohn (1995), Vandergrift (2003a) and Field (2008). Each model can be located at a different point on a continuum of 'explicitness', where direct training is at one end and embedded training is at the other (Chen, 2005). While each of the models differs in its approach and methods, all aim "to equip learners as rapidly as possible with a range of strategies that will assist them to deal with everyday texts" (Field 2008, p. 310).

An explicit approach to listening instruction

Mendelsohn's (1995) approach proposes an explicit approach to listening instruction and is positioned towards the direct training end of the continuum. In the explicit instruction model, teachers inform learners of the value and purpose of target strategies. Demonstration think-aloud protocols, practice activities and teacher feedback help students to develop a detailed understanding of how, when and why to apply listening strategies (Chamot, 2005). Chamot believes this approach to L2 instruction is now widely valued amongst researchers. The core element of the approach is strategy training, which may necessitate the rewriting of listening curricula (Mendelsohn, 1995).

The approach advocates that teachers use authentic texts as the primary source of listening materials. When selecting passages, three criteria should be considered: the proficiency level of the learners; the appropriateness of the topic; and the relevance of the topic to students' lives (Mendelsohn, 1995). Scripted and graded passages should be restricted to practice exercises only. Moreover, teachers should design comprehension tasks which are simple to administer and do not burden students' recall of information (Mendelsohn, 1995).

At the outset, teachers need to conduct a class needs analysis to plan a series of units of work. Questionnaires can determine students' current and future listening needs, preferred learning styles and strategy use (Mendelsohn, 1995). The resulting information can be used to develop a syllabus. Units may be organised around individual strategies, situations or settings. Interposed amongst the units is unguided listening practice to allow students the opportunity to transfer previously learnt strategies to new situations. To assist planning, Mendelsohn (1995) provides a list of essential strategy-based units, each with six features. First, teachers use consciousness-raising activities to highlight the value of strategy use. Second, they need to plan varied and interesting pre-listening activities to activate learners' schemata, providing learners with a foundation for formulating hypotheses and predicting data. Third, teachers should provide a purpose for listening, thus modelling real-world practices. Fourth, teachers should plan guided exercises to practice the use of different strategies. This feature has implications for text selection. Fifth, teachers should provide opportunities for general comprehension practice using natural recordings. Finally, instructors need to provide post-listening production activities that simulate real-world activities.

An implicit approach to listening instruction: The metacognitive cycle
In contrast, Vandergrift (2003a) proposes an implicit instructional model located at the embedded end of the explicitness continuum, known as the metacognitive cycle. In implicit instruction, teachers facilitate students' procedural knowledge through materials that elicit the use of specific strategies. Students are not informed of why or when the strategies are appropriate to use. Similar to Mendelsohn (1995), Vandergrift (2004) recommends the selection and use of authentic texts and suggests that beginner level students can successfully comprehend short announcements and advertisements. Task performance is said to improve through practice, particularly when learners are prompted to reflect on their strategy use (Pressley, 2002, as cited in Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). Furthermore, theorists now agree indirect knowledge can play a significant role in L2 acquisition (Ellis, 2006).

The metacognitive cycle consists of five phases. In the pre-listening stage, the teacher provides learners with the topic and genre of the passage. This is used to predict the type of information and language (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). During the first listening, students verify their initial hypotheses, making notes to correct and add data (Vandergrift, 2003a). Learners then compare what they have comprehended with their peers and make modifications to their notes (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). As a group, students discuss what problems remain and which sections of the passage require further attention (Vandergrift, 2003a). During the second listening, learners verify points of disagreement and note extra information. The teacher leads a class discussion to reconstruct the main ideas and important details of the passage. Learners reflect on their strategy use in comprehending specific words and ideas (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). During the third listening, students listen for information elicited in the class discussion that they were not able to understand independently. In the final reflection stage, learners set goals for the next listening activity based on their performance of the task.

Additional bottom-up exercises can be inserted into the framework. After the reconstruction activity, students may be given a transcript of the passage to read during the third listening. This allows learners to match incomprehensible parts with their written notes, leading to greater awareness of phrases and syntactic structures (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). This type of activity can develop auditory discrimination and word recognition skills (Mareschal, 2007, as cited in Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

An eclectic approach to listening instruction

Field (2008) proposes a multi-strand teaching model that is located midway along the explicitness continuum. The model endeavours to realise the benefits of both direct and embedded instruction, with the view that an eclectic approach to listening instruction is more effective in catering for different learning styles. The multi-strand approach uses an alternative inventory of strategies to those proposed by Mendelsohn (1995) and Vandergrift (2003a). Four categories of strategies are identified: achievement, repair, pro-activity and avoidance. Achievement strategies assist students to "make maximum sense of what has been decoded", while repair strategies enable "learners [to] appeal for help" (Field, 2008, p. 298). Pro-active strategies assist in the prevention of comprehension breakdowns and avoidance strategies help learners to 'get by' without understanding all of the input. Teachers are advised to expose low proficiency level students to short narrative or instructional recordings. Tasks may be simplified or staged to ensure level appropriateness but learners should be gradually introduced to authentic texts.

Within the multi-strand model, Field (2008) proposes four approaches to listening instruction. The first approach introduces learners to the processes that promote effective listening. Low-level students practice decoding recurring lexical chunks and individual words. Short transcription (dictation) exercises performed regularly over time can lead to greater automatisation. Later, meaning-based activities are gradually introduced. The second approach uses tasks to introduce and practice strategies within a broader listening activity. This approach resembles Vandergrift's (2003a) metacognitive cycle. Authentic texts are carefully selected to elicit certain problems which learners become aware of as they engage with the passage (Field, 2008). Students listen extensively, answering general questions about the context and attitude of speakers before listening intensively to short, 20-30 second 'bursts' of the recording (Field, 2008). While listening, learners note words and phrases before comparing their notes with colleagues. During a replay of the extract, they revise their notes, adding more details. Students then discuss their understanding of the text in small groups. During the second replay, they check their understandings before discussing them as a class. During the third replay, students decide which understanding of the text is the most accurate. The teacher leads a class discussion to provide feedback and to elicit the reasons why certain interpretations were selected.

The third approach is a diagnostic and focuses on identifying learners' problems in processing input. Finally, the fourth approach is similar to Mendelsohn's (1995) and is explicit instruction in strategy use, particularly in more general repair and pro-active strategies (Field, 2008). A series of exercises for a wide range of strategies is available to help teachers plan single strategy micro-lessons. Within Field's multi-strand teaching model, the comprehension approach with its sole focus on comprehension features only to a limited degree. For example, a traditional listening lesson may be planned to provide students with the opportunity for comprehension practice that is unguided in terms of strategy use (Field, 2008).

Guidelines for second language listening instruction
In this section, we draw together key points from the three models to provide a set of guidelines. The guidelines are intended to assist teachers with integrating new approaches into their teaching of second language listening.

Consciousness-raising
Teachers should help learners to see the value of strategy instruction. While many students are aware of their listening problems, they may not associate their difficulties with the strategies they use (Graham, 2006). Alternatively, learners may know their strategy use is ineffective but lack knowledge about more effective strategies and how to apply them (Zhang & Goh, 2006). Strategy training expects learners to be *active* and *interactive* participants in the learning process (Mendelsohn 1995). Students who are aware of the benefits of effective strategy use are more likely to accept changes in classroom teaching approaches. As teachers introduce strategy instruction, they need to be patient with learners as the latter become familiar with their new role as participants in the management of their own learning through the conscious choice and deployment of strategies.

Mendelsohn (1995) describes a consciousness-raising activity that can be used with low-level students. Teachers compile eight, 20-30 second extracts of different listening genres in an unfamiliar language. Genres may include a radio commercial, sports commentary or news report. Students listen to each excerpt, identifying the genre and justifying their interpretation. The students' decisions are discussed as a class. Mendelsohn (1995, p. 136) maintains that the students "are amazed with how much

they are able to determine, merely … [from] tone of voice [and] speed of delivery". Similar extracts can be played using excerpts in the second or target language. This type of activity generates an awareness of listening strategies and the confidence to try new strategies (Mendelsohn, 1995).

Needs Analysis

A class needs analysis should be conducted early in the strategy instruction program to identify learners' listening goals. Teachers can interview students informally about their learning needs, motivations for studying the target language, knowledge of listening strategies, and preferred learning styles. Metacognitive awareness listening questionnaires, mostly used for research purposes, can be adapted for implementation with pre-intermediate and intermediate students (see Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010; Zhang & Goh, 2006).

A comprehensive inventory of strategies

The lists of strategies listed by the respective models can be combined to create a comprehensive inventory. Some are more specific to listening while others are general and apply to all learning. The models present ways of teaching which foreground particular strategies and methods for making them explicit to students. The aim is to provide the students with the resources to manage their own learning; in this case, the strategic and effective engagement with listening texts in a second language.

Strategy Instruction

Choosing a model of strategy instruction requires understanding the curriculum, teaching and assessment priorities of a course and the learning needs of students. An eclectic approach appears more inclusive of different teaching and learning styles. It also caters for the different characteristics of learning strategies. Field (2008) suggests that certain types of strategies should be taught using different teaching techniques. Pro-active (or metacognitive) strategies may be more amenable to a direct instructional approach, while achievement (cognitive) strategies can be taught using a task-based approach (Field, 2008). For example, using a direct approach, students learn how and when to use a particular set of strategies which can lead to transferable knowledge (Field, 2008). In subsequent lessons, an indirect approach can provide learners with additional practice through the use of real-world listening texts.

The use of authentic texts and tasks

All three models presented above advocate the use of authentic listening texts. Sourcing a range of authentic listening materials in some teaching situations is not easy. Equally the tasks associated with listening texts need to simulate real world listening, where the purpose and genre of the text are focussed upon as part of the teaching. Authentic listening texts may include feature films, television and internet based resources. Vandergrift (2007, p. 200) believes that such materials help to achieve the goal of listening "because they reflect real-life listening, are relevant to students' lives (and) provide context and non-linguistic input in order to activate top-down processing". Seo (2002) maintains that language learners who listen and view simultaneously may use more top-down strategies to compensate for insufficient linguistic knowledge than those who listen only. Thus using authentic videotexts in the classroom can promote a wider range of strategy use than that elicited by listening to an authentic audio-only text.

Careful consideration must be given to the selection of videotexts for strategy training. Key selection criteria relate to the need for comprehensibility, clear storylines and appropriate content (King, 2002). In addition, teachers must analyse texts carefully to determine the listening strategies they elicit (Mendelsohn, 1995). Building a bank of resources which satisfy all criteria may be a lengthy process and involve some trial and error, particularly in identifying strategies and developing appropriate teaching activities.

For some teachers, the use of authentic videotexts with beginner-level students may be controversial. Consequently, Field's (2008) recommendation of the staged use of authentic texts may be helpful. On the other hand, Joiner (1990) provides examples of how short video clips may be used with elementary students, suggesting comprehension activities that involve physical response tasks such as raising a hand and the completion of simple checklists.

Conclusion

This paper had its genesis in the concerns of second language teachers and learners about listening instruction. Much of the current teaching of listening concentrates on comprehension and attempts to build students' comprehension of texts through repeated listening opportunities and scaffolded exercises, moving from gist to detail to productive engagement with the information in the text. The paper draws together existing literature to argue

for the augmenting of teaching practices, particularly those constrained by generic, coursebook-based curricula, with a focus on listening strategies.

Drawing on the work of researchers in the field, we have argued that comprehension is not enough to ensure that second language learners are equipped to manage their listening to and understanding of real world texts, and to stage appropriate responses. Rather, we propose that learners need exposure primarily to real-world texts and to the strategies necessary to negotiate these texts. For teachers unsure about strategies for listening and how to teach them, we have presented three models of strategy instruction that vary in degrees of directness and explicitness. We have synthesised key points to provide guidelines for the implementation of strategy teaching in a listening program. By providing students with instruction in strategy use, teachers can contribute to students' L2 listening development and to their capacity for managing their own learning.

References

Berne, J. (1998). Examining the relationship between L2 listening research, pedagogical theory and practice. *Foreign Language Annals, 31*(2), 169-190.

Berne, J. (2004). Listening comprehension strategies: A review of the literature. *Foreign Language Annals, 37*(4), 521–531.

Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chamot, A., & O'Malley, M. (1994). Language learner and learning strategies. In N. C. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages* (pp. 371-392). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Chamot, A. U. (2005). Language learning strategy instruction: Current issues and research. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 25,* 112-130.

Chen, Y. (2005). Barriers to acquiring listening strategies for EFL learners and their pedagogical implications. *TESOL – EJ, 8*(4), 1-20. Retrieved September 15, 2010 from http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume8/ej32/ej32a2/

Diaz-Rico, L. T. (2004). *Teaching English learners: Strategies and methods.* Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*(1), 83-10.

Field, J. (2002). The changing face of listening. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (pp.242-247). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Field, J. (2003). Promoting perception: Lexical segmentation in L2 listening. *ELT Journal, 57*(4), 325-334.

Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the language classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goh, C. (2000). A cognitive perspective on language learners' listening comprehension problems. *System, 28*(1), 55-75.

Goh, C. (2002). Exploring listening comprehension tactics and their interaction patterns. *System, 30*(2), 185-206.

Graham, S. (2006). Listening comprehension: The learner's perspective. *System, 34*(2), 165-182.

Graham, S., Santos, D., & Vanderplank, R. (2008). Listening comprehension and strategy use: A longitudinal exploration. *System, 36*(1), 52-68.

Hasan, A. (2000). Learners' perceptions of listening comprehension problems. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum, 13*(2), 137-153.

Helgesen, M. (2003). Listening. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Practical English language teaching* (pp. 23 - 46). New York: McGraw-Hill/Contemporary.

Horwitz, E. K. (2008). *Becoming a language teacher: A practical guide to second language learning and teaching.* Boston, MA: Pearson.

Joiner, E. (1990). Choosing and using videotexts. *Foreign Language Annals, 23*(1), 53-64.

Kelly, G. (2000). *How to teach pronunciation.* Essex: Longman.

King, J. (2002). Using DVD feature films in the ESL classroom. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 15*(1), 509-523.

Krashen, S. D. (1996). The case for narrow listening. *System, 24,* 97-100.

Macaro, E., Graham, S., & Vanderplank, R. (2007). A review of listening strategies: Focus on sources of knowledge and on success. In A. D. Cohen & E. Macaro (Eds.), *Language learner strategies: 30 years of research and practice* (pp. 165-185). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mendelsohn D. J. (1995). Applying listening strategies in the second/foreign language listening comprehension lesson. In D. J. Mendelsohn & J. Rubin (Eds.), *A guide for the teaching of second language listening* (pp. 132-150). San Diego, CA: Dominic Press.

Mendelsohn, D. (2001). Listening comprehension: We've come a long way, but ... *Contact, 27*(2), 33–39. Retrieved September 15, 2010 from http://www.teslontario.org/uploads/publications/researchsymposium/ResearchSymposium2001.pdf#page=33

O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., & Küpper, L. (1989). Listening comprehension strategies in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics, 10*(4). 418-437.

Oxford, R.L. (2003). Toward a more systematic model of L2 learner autonomy. In D. Palfreyman & R. C. Smith. (Eds.). *Learner autonomy across cultures: Language education perspectives* (pp. 75-91). Basingstoke, Eng.: New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Richards, J. (2005). Second thoughts on teaching listening. *RELC Journal*, 36(1), 85-92.

Rivera-Mills, S., & Plonsky, L. (2007). Empowering students with language learning strategies: A critical review of current issues. *Foreign Language Annals, 40*(3), 535-548.

Rumelhart, D. E. (1975). Notes on a Schema for Stories. In D. G. Bobrow & A. Collins (Eds.), *Representation and Understanding: Studies in Cognitive Science* (pp. 185-210). New York: Academic Press.

Seo, K. (2002). The effect of visuals on listening comprehension: A study of Japanese learners' listening strategies. *International Journal of Listening, 15*(1), 57-81.

Taylor, H. (1981). Learning to listen in English. *TESOL Quarterly.* 15, 41-50.

Vandergrift, L. (2002). *Listening: Theory and practice in modern language listening competence.* Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies Guide to Good Practice. Retrieved July 5, 2010 from http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/67

Vandergrift, L. (2003a). From prediction through reflection: guiding students through the process of second language listening. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 59*(3), 425-440.

Vandergrift, L. (2003b). Orchestrating strategy use: Towards a model of the skilled second language listener. *Language Learning, 53*(3), 436-496.

Vandergrift, L. (2004). Listening to learn or learning to listen? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 24*, 3-25.

Vandergrift, L. (2007). Recent developments in second and foreign language listening comprehension research. *Language Teaching, 40*(3), 191-210.

Vandergrift, L., & Tafaghodtari, M. (2010). Teaching students how to learn does make a difference. *Language Learning, 60*(2), 470-497.

Wenden, A. L. (1987). Conceptual background and utility. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubrin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 3-14). London: Prentice-Hall International.

Zhang, D., & Goh, C. M. (2006). Strategy knowledge and perceived strategy use: Singaporean students' awareness of listening and speaking strategies. *Language Awareness, 15*(3), 199-219.

Bernadette Ling has worked as a teacher and administrator in the English Language Teaching field. She is interested in teacher professional development, particularly in the areas of listening instruction and the use of video for second language teaching.

Margaret Kettle is Lecturer in TESOL at Queensland University of Technology. She teaches on the Master of Education in the areas of second language teaching methodologies, second language acquisition and sociolinguistics. She has published in national and international journals on academic practice, oracy, teaching in Higher Education, and critical discourse analysis.

Correspondence: m.kettle@qut.edu.au