

A study of dictation

Kanazawa Sakuragaoka S.H.S
Masahiro MAEDA

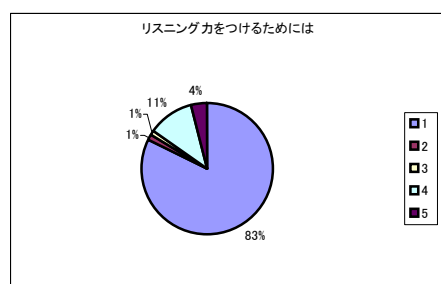
要約

大学入試センター試験にリスニングテストが導入され、学校現場でもその指導法の確立が課題となっている。試験では、ただ単に英語を聴いて理解するというプロセスの他、適切に問題を解くことが必要となってくるが、そこには集中力や設問への処理能力が大切である。この論文は、リスニング中に適切にメモをとることでその能力の向上が図れるのではないかという仮説のもとに行ったディクテーション指導とその実験についてまとめたものである。

1 Introduction

1.1 How to improve listening comprehension

The purpose of this study is to examine how dictation practices effect listening comprehension. The concern with how to teach listening comprehension has been growing on account of having introduced listening comprehension into the center exam for university. Little attention, however, has been given to the practical procedure to teach listening comprehension. The problem is that not only students but also teachers regard just listening to a lot of English and getting accustomed to it as the first priority. Here is a figure which shows the result of a survey. We asked students what they needed to do in order to improve their listening comprehension. As the diagram indicates, more than eighty percent of the students answered listening to a lot of English is what they need to do. On the other hand, few students answered taking notes while listening or learning the points of pronunciation as being important.



Question: What should you do in order to improve your listening comprehension?

Options: 1 Listen to a lot of English
2 Take notes while listening
3 Learn the points of pronunciation
4 Practice not only listening but also other language skills

Figure 1 How to improve listening comprehension (n=80)

With these issues in mind, take a look at our main concern. As I said at the beginning, we must think about how we should teach students listening comprehension effectively.

The importance of taking notes

The first point that we should discuss is the differences between good listeners of English and poor listeners. The question booklet that is used in the listening comprehension exam offers the key to an understanding of this issue. When we examined the question booklet after the exam, good listeners took more notes about the contents of listening in comparison with poor listeners. From this point of view, it is presumed that whether students can take notes while listening or not is the important element in improving their listening comprehension. Assuming that the hypothesis is correct, how should we teach students to take notes effectively?

Dictation

Sugiura(2002) studied how dictation practice can improve listening comprehension. 147 undergraduate students participated in the experiment. It was found that the score after the dictation practices had been raised by 33%. The results clearly show that dictation has an effect on improving listening comprehension. My views have much in common with this experiment. We will discuss the dictation experiment that we conducted in the following chapter.

2 The experiment of dictation

2.1 The aim of this experiment

I would like to emphasize the importance of taking notes while listening as mentioned above. The second chapter presents the dictation experiment on the basis of this idea. It is possible to establish two hypotheses here. Firstly, whether students can take notes effectively or not has a connection with the score. Secondly, students who practice dictation are better than those who don't at taking notes.

2.2 Procedure

This study was conducted with 160 first grade students from public senior high school in Ishikawa. Students are classified in four groups. Students who practiced dictation regularly in classes were classified in Group A or Group B. Students who didn't practice dictation were classified in Group C or Group D. When about six months after the dictation practice had started,

the listening comprehension was conducted. During the test, students in Group A and Group C were allowed to take notes. On the other hand, students in Group B and Group D were not allowed to take notes. In this test, questions from grade pre 2 of STEP Eiken were used. The reason for using these questions in this study was that the participants were required to take notes whilst listening to long conversations. They were then required to answer a series of questions related to the conversations.

Table1: Grouping

	Numbers	Dictation practice	Note-taking
Group A	40	Conducted	Allowed
Group B	40	Conducted	Not-allowed
Group C	40	None	Allowed
Group D	40	None	Not-allowed

2.3 The result

Table2 : The result of this experiment

	Score	The number of words		Notes which contain correct answers	
		Eng	Jap	Eng	Jap
Group A	4.3	15.2	10.4	2.8	2.6
	Students who took notes				
Group B	4.4				
Group C	4.8	7.7	13.5	1.8	2.6
	Students who took notes				
Group D	4.2				

(Maximum=10)

Table2 shows the result of this study. The average score indicated Group C > Group B > Group A > Group D and contrary to our first hypothesis, dictation practice is irrelevant to the result. However, as far as the students who could take notes is concerned, we may say that being able to take notes has a connection with a higher score (Group C > Group A > Group B > Group D). Although we cannot find the differences on the average score from the statistics' point of view, we can see the differences between students who can take notes and students who can't.

3 Conclusions

In conclusion, students who practice dictation can take notes in English rather than in Japanese. As we can see from the results above, the ratio of students in Group A is much higher than that of Group C in terms of taking notes in English (Group A—15.2 words、 Group C—7.7 words) . What is more, the number of the English words in Group A that contain the correct answers was one point higher than that of Group C (Group A—2.8、 Group C—1.8). On the contrary, the ratio of students in Group C is much higher than that of Group A in terms of taking notes in Japanese (Group A—10.4 words、 Group C—13.5 words) . However, the number of the Japanese words in Group C that contain the correct answers wasn't higher than that of Group A. Consequently, we can conclude that dictation practice contributes to the improvement of note-taking. That is to say, students will be able to take notes in English a lot if we have them do dictation practice.

In the matter of the permission of taking notes while listening, the average score of students who can take notes in Group A and Group B is higher than that of Group C and Group D who are not allowed to take notes while listening. As for the questionnaire about taking notes, 26 students (33.3%) say that they wanted to take notes or they would have got the higher score if they could have taken notes while listening. It is reasonable to suppose that those students have disadvantage in terms of not only language competence but also psychologically. Kimura (1998) points out that “We must recognize that listening to some stories and answering T/FQs about them are focused on memory rather than listening comprehension.”

In this study, there is still room for researching the differences between the students who can take notes and those who can't. It is unclear whether students who can't take notes don't have the ability to do so or just don't feel like doing it. From now on, a more practical instruction will be needed for students to be able to take more notes. A further direction of this study will be to find practical instruction such as dict-gloss as one of the procedures for students to take notes and reconstruct the original story from their notes in a group.

References (*は引用文献)

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