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**LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC PRECONDITIONS TO
PROCESSING SPOKEN DISCOURSE IN A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE**

**Lingvistiskie un pragmatiskie priekšnoteikumi
mutvārdu diskursa uztverei svešvalodā**

Promocijas darbs – disertācija filoloģijas doktora grāda
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DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I, Inese Ozola, hereby declare that this study is my own and does not contain any unacknowledged material from any source.

May 18, 2007

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(signature)

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INTRODUCTION

The significance of the theoretical and practical issues of the second and foreign language acquisition has increased in Latvia since its accession to the European Union. In the new European dimension the foreign language proficiency gives the opportunity to compete successfully in the labour market, get involved in various international programmes, participate in student exchange programmes in educational institutions abroad. Listening as a receptive skill and one of the four language skills is a significant element of the spoken communication.

According to Grabe (2002:11) “applied linguistics address language learning problems (emergence, awareness, rules, use, context, automaticity, attitude, expertise) and language teaching problems (resources, training, practice, interaction, understanding, use, contexts, inequalities, motivations, outcomes)” among others. Listening skills development is an integral part of foreign language acquisition that should be paid due attention to in the learning/teaching process. Listening comprehension in a foreign language is a complex and active process that comprises the discrimination between sounds, understanding vocabulary and grammatical structures, the stress and intonation, processing of all the information and interpretation of the information within the larger socio-cultural context of the discourse. Their co-ordination demands a serious mental activity on the part of the listener. Besides, listening is an integrative skill, it plays an important role in the process of foreign language learning/acquisition. Researchers of listening comprehension in a foreign language (Brown, Rost, Buck, Flowerdue) claim that listening integrates phonological, syntactic, lexical, semantic and pragmatic knowledge.

The importance of preparing learners to understand spoken English was partly neglected in the 1970s and 1980s in Latvia’s schools. Students learned grammar rules and vocabulary and then later on practised them in communication. The focus on the spoken forms usually began with paying particular attention to correct forms without understanding the message itself. This gave rise to various kinds of mechanical drills. Since the middle of the 90s the situation has improved remarkably. The study programmes at the universities incorporated the latest findings of the foreign and second language acquisition research worldwide. The Communicative Language Teaching approach started to be increasingly employed in the

classrooms. English language learning text books were supplied with class cassettes with real-life and authentic spoken texts. In 2002 the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia introduced The National Year 9 and Year 12 English Exams that contained the listening part as well. However, listening skills still remain a major problem, and at any examination or test, the listening part is the one that usually turns out to be the most troublesome and discouraging for many learners. According to the results published in the official website of ISEC (www.isec.gov.lv), the scores of the Year 12 English Exam in 2005 in Latvia show that the listening part had a quite poor overall result out of the four language skills (speaking: 59%, reading: 53%, writing: 43.75% and listening: 43.43%).

Research in listening comprehension is necessary in order to explore how foreign language learners cope with listening tasks and to suggest ways of improving teaching/learning foreign languages in the educational environment. The present study explores how language learners (youngsters at the age from 18 to 20) process spoken discourse that is recorded on the tape. The choice of the age group was determined by the fact that the young people of this age prepare for the Year 12 English exam.

The research conducted in recent years abroad in processing of the spoken discourse in a foreign language has focused on the strategies the learners apply (Field, 2000, Goh, 2000, Vandergrift, 1999, 2003) and the interaction of the two processing models: bottom-up and top-down (Shohamy and Inbar, 1991, Tsui and Fullilove, 1998). However, not so much experimentation has been carried out regarding the role of top-down approach in the lexical processing of the transactional spoken discourse in a foreign language. To the author's knowledge, there is no research at doctoral level carried out in Latvia that investigates the results of learners' performance while listening to the spoken discourse in a foreign language.

The goal

The goal of the present study is to investigate the processing of the spoken transactional discourse in the target language applying the top-down approach that activates the background knowledge of the listeners, to carry out the empirical study to explore the processing of the spoken transactional discourse in the target language by means of retrospective tasks and to determine the linguistic and pragmatic sources of knowledge necessary for the listening comprehension of the spoken discourse.

Hypothesis

Audially perceived lexical material enters the learners' active vocabulary and enhances the comprehension of the meaning of the transactional spoken discourse if relevant linguistic and pragmatic pre-conditions are observed.

Object:

The linguistic material acquired via audial perception in the form of:

- 1) participants' retrospective oral summaries,
- 2) answers to the comprehension questions.

Subject:

Linguistic and pragmatic factors influencing the relevance of the perceived audial material.

Objectives:

- to analyze and investigate theories in linguistics and applied linguistics relevant to the study in order to provide a sound theoretical basis for the research;
- to identify the efficiency of activating the prior knowledge and pragmatic knowledge before listening to the spoken transactional discourse;
- to design and administer research tools, questionnaires, interviews, observation check lists, in order to ensure reliability and validity of the study;
- to carry out qualitative and quantitative research methods to prove the validity of the hypothesis.

The **research methods** employed:

Theoretical: the study and contrastive analysis of the relevant theories of linguistics and applied linguistics.

The theoretical basis for the present research has been grounded in the linguistic theories of A. Anderson and T. Lynch, J. Brown, J. Field, M. Rost, J. Richards, T. Hedge, and J. Yule in the listening comprehension theory; T. Van Dijk, G. Cook, D. Shiffrin, J. Brown and J. Yule, J. Rozenbergs in the discourse theory; H. Grice, M.A.K. Halliday and R. Hasan, S. Levinson, J. Mey in the area of pragmatic theory; R. Shank and R. Abelson, D. Rummelhart in the Schema theory.

Practical:

1. the quasi-experiment as the qualitative research method carried out in the time period from March, 2005 till September, 2005 (based on Hatch and Farhady, 1982). The experimental data were analyzed with SPSS-13.0 Pearson Chi-Square Test and Exact Test.
2. Introspective study (according to Brown and Rodgers, 2002).
3. Triangulation was used in order to ensure validity and reliability of the study. Such research techniques as interviewing, administering and analyzing questionnaires, observations, documents relevant to the research were employed as the source of evidence.
4. In order to ensure the objectivity and validity of the research data, the following language material and documents were analyzed:
 - 216 transcribed oral summaries of the participants, total number of word units: 18 534;
 - the results of the post-tests: 1512 answers to the post-test questions;
 - 216 questionnaires;
 - transcribed interviews of the introspective study.

Novelty of the research:

- the design and implementation of the study of the processing of oral discourse in a foreign language,
- the lexical analysis of students' oral summaries as a retrospective post-test after the exposure to the spoken transactional discourse,
- the examination of the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge sources used in the lexical inferencing while listening to the spoken discourse,
- recommendations for facilitating the listening comprehension in a foreign language through listening tasks.

Research questions:

- Does the activation of schemata in the pre-listening stage have any impact on the recognition of words during the while-listening stage?
- What is the effect of pragmatic knowledge of the listener on the processing of the spoken discourse in a foreign language?
- What linguistic and pragmatic sources of knowledge do learners use in lexical inferences?

- What are the lexical characteristics of the participants' retrospective oral summaries?
- Can teaching techniques influence what students can contribute to the learning process?

Target Audience

First and second year students from the Faculty of Modern Languages, University of Latvia, and the Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture. Their age is from 19 to 20, the English Language Proficiency Level according to the results in The National Year 12 English Exam varies from Level A to C, accordingly, the proficiency level of the participants might be characterized as the intermediate to upper-intermediate level.

The results of the present research have been reported at 10 international conferences and in 8 publications in the Republic of Latvia and abroad from the year 1999 till 2006.

The Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of introduction 6 chapters, conclusions of the research, Bibliography and appendices.

Chapter 1 deals with the linguistic features of the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language; characterize two models of processing of the spoken transactional discourse: bottom-up and top-down models, paying particular attention to the theoretical assumptions underlying top-down approach (the concepts of schemata and scripts).

Chapter 2 describes the linguistic sources of knowledge listeners need to understand the semantic meaning of the spoken discourse in a foreign language. The literature overview in this chapter is narrowed down to the issues concerning the perception of the spoken text in the English language as a foreign language and concerns the theories connected with the foreign language teaching/learning. Phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic and discourse knowledge is used in order to understand the spoken message.

Chapter 3 deals with an analysis of pragmatics, the sub-discipline of applied linguistics in terms of identifying those pragmatic concepts that refer to the interpretation of the meaning of the spoken transactional non-collaborative discourse in educational settings. From the

micropragmatic perspective, this chapter explores the role of situational context, deictics, references, presuppositions and implicatures, the Cooperative Principle and the Relevance Principle in understanding of the semantic meaning of the spoken discourse.

The aim of Chapter 4 is to analyze the theoretical assumptions concerning lexical inferencing of unknown words of spoken discourse in a foreign language. The difficulties learners face while listening to a foreign speech in the educational environment are described, the notion of lexical inferencing and the use of verbal protocols for collecting data for the analysis of the learners' performance are explored.

Chapter 5 deals with the description of the empirical study of the results of listeners' performance in transactional discourse. The procedure of the three phases of the empirical study, the analysis of the results of the quazi-experiment with its two post-tests and the collection of linguistic data, the analysis of the participants' questionnaires and the results of the introspective study are included in the chapter.

Chapter 6 suggests the techniques that could be used for implementing the findings of the present study in the language learning/teaching and describes pre-listening and while-listening activities for additional tasks that activate the background knowledge of the learners and add pragmatic information to the listening texts.

Chapter 1

Top-down Processing of the Spoken Transactional Discourse

Organization of this chapter

As the present study investigates the lexical processing of transactional oral discourse in a foreign language, the aim of this chapter is to state what is meant by transactional oral discourse and explore linguistic features of the transactional spoken discourse and characterize the two models of the comprehension process of the transactional spoken text: top-down and bottom-up.

This chapter focuses on the

1. linguistic features of the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language
2. characteristics of the two models of processing of the spoken transactional discourse: bottom-up and top-down models.

1.1. Linguistic Features of the Spoken Transactional Discourse

The notion of discourse has been defined in various ways, depending on authors' theoretical orientation and audience. A functionalistic definition of the discourse is represented by Brown and Yule (1983:1): "The analysis of the discourse is necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs." They (Brown and Yule, 1983:24) treat a text as a product and a discourse as a process, stating that a researcher should focus on the function and purpose of a discourse and the way it is processed by the producer and by the receiver. Van Dijk (1997: 3) suggests the following definition: "Discourse studies should deal both with the properties of text and talk and with what is usually called the context, i.e., the other characteristics of the social situation or communicative event that may systematically influence text or talk. To sum up, discourse studies are about talk and text in context". Cook defines discourse as stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive (Cook, 1990:156). Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2005:729) propose that discourse is an instance of spoken or written language that has describable internal relationship of form and meaning that relate coherently to an external communicative function or purpose and a given audience/interlocutor. Furthermore, the external function or purpose can only

be determined if one takes into account the context and participants (i.e., all the relevant situational, social, and cultural factors) in which the piece of discourse occurs. In the light of the present paper, discourse is defined as the meaningful language used in complete spoken texts for a certain purpose in a context.

It is necessary to recognize different purposes that listeners may have in different situations and how these differences in purpose affect the comprehension. In a conversation when interaction between the listener and the speaker takes place, the participants can negotiate the meaning to avoid misunderstanding. However, there are listening situations where the listener cannot or does not interact with the speaker. Language functions can be divided into two major divisions: language for transactional purposes and language for interactional purposes. Researchers (Brown and Yule: 1983; Richards: 1990; Rost: 1990, Flowerdew: 2005) define two-way interaction discourse as **interactional** and one-way message oriented discourse as **transactional**. Transactional language corresponds to Halliday's notion of ideational, while interactional language corresponds to his term interpersonal (Halliday, 1970: 143). Transactional discourse communicates information and it is primarily concerned with transmitting and receiving information. In addition, it is "message" oriented rather than "listener" oriented. It is usually characterized by the speaker having long turns; as it is "message" oriented, the turn that contains the message, is the extended one. The examples of the language being used for a transactional purpose comprise news programs, lectures, descriptions and instructions, types of expository texts that are typical of a foreign language teaching/learning.

In relation to the structure of transactional discourse, the spoken texts are divided into **unplanned** discourse and **planned** discourse (Cook, 1990: 50, Buck, 2002: 5). An unplanned discourse is a spontaneous utterance and is produced without taking much time for planning and organization. People think of something and then say almost immediately. The listeners of such utterance will hear something that will consist of initial ideas, and first reactions, poorly organized, with hesitations, false starts, restatements, vocabulary repair, and even grammatically improper sentences. In an unplanned discourse the context might be used to connect the propositions: they can be put just next to each other. Planned discourse may be thought of as polished, worked text, for example, a tourist guide telling a story about a famous place of attraction. Researchers (Hedge, 2002; Veisbergs, 2005) mention **unscripted** and **scripted** spoken texts. Scripted spoken texts are monologues that

have been written on the paper and read by the speaker. They are similar to written prose with little repetition, rephrasing, hesitations, there are no grammatically incorrect constructions, the range of discourse markers is narrow. The speed is reasonable, the register is relatively formal. Unscripted spoken texts could be monologues and dialogues that are not written down on the paper for reading. They contain repetitions, rephrasings, reformulations, hesitations, contracted forms, variety of accents.

As far as the number of participants is concerned, oral discourse could be in the form of a **monologue**, a **dialogue** or a polylogue (Rozenbergs, 2004: 278). The degree of interaction between the listener and the speaker plays an important role. Rost (1990: 92) and Urbanovica (2001: 34) distinguish between **collaborative** discourse and **non-collaborative** discourse. By collaborative discourse they mean a conversation in which all participating parties contribute verbally, even if their participation is asymmetrical, competitive, or presents conflict. Non-collaborative discourse means situations of language use such as lectures and distant presentations, such as TV viewing, in which listeners have few, if any rights or opportunities to contribute verbally to an interaction with the speaker (Rost, 1990). In collaborative listening situations the listener's role may involve necessary requests for clarification, back-channelling, making responses, or taking part in turn-taking. Spoken texts can be divided in relation to the tone or the emotional attitude of the speaker into **neutral** and **emotionally expressive** (Rozenbergs, 2004: 277). Emotionally expressive texts are official, solemn, humorous, ironic, satirical, etc.

Halliday (1990: 80) claims that spoken language tends to have a lower lexical density than written language suggesting that in English the lexical density of written language is likely to be twice as high as that for speech. "Written language represents phenomena as products, spoken language represents phenomena as processes. The complexity of the written language is static and dense. That of the spoken language is dynamic and intricate. Grammatical intricacy takes the place of lexical density. The highly information-packed, lexically dense passages of writing often tend to be extremely simple in their grammatical structure, as far as the organization of the sentence (clause complex) is concerned (Halliday: 1990, 87). Flowerdew (2005: 51) describes differences between spoken and written form of the discourse: the spoken texts have a bigger amount of repetitions, the punctuation is replaced in speech by pauses.

The following linguistic features of the spoken text are suggested by the author of the present paper (based on Flowerdew (2005: 48), Rost (1990: 49 and 2002: 31), Brown (1982:76), Buck (2002: 14):

1. phonological contractions and assimilations,
2. frequent use of additive ordering *and, then, so, but*,
3. hesitations, false starts, and filled pauses,
4. some incomplete units rather than clauses,
5. units of speech are not dependent on syntax but rather they are structured according to tone units,
6. in general, high-frequency words are used more in the language, words from academic vocabulary are less used,
7. speech is marked by a high ratio of function words (particles, prepositions, articles, 'be' verbs, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions) to content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, question words)
8. frequent use of ellipsis, omitting known grammatical elements and unstated topics,
9. frequent use of discourse markers at the beginning or end,
10. the topic may not be stated explicitly,
11. undetermined (unplanned) macro-structure for discourse,
12. lots of fillers and interactive markers,
13. first and second person pronouns,
14. deixis (reference outside the text),
15. lots of repetitions,
16. non-verbal cues are used,
17. speakers use variable speeds, accents,
18. paralinguistic features and gestures.

In spoken language idea units tend to be shorter, with simpler syntax, frequent use of coordinating conjunction (and, or, but etc.), there are pauses, fillers and repetitions that give the speaker more thinking time, as well as false starts, sometimes corrections of grammar or vocabulary. Speakers sometimes use dialects, slang and colloquialism. The spoken language tends to be far more personal, with more emotional involvement and much less precision. Speakers tend to indicate their feelings more, with expressions such as "I think" or "I mean", or by making direct references to the listener. They also tend to be content with gross approximations, or use overstatements and exaggerations.

According to Tannen (1982) in (Buck 2002: 11), if to imagine a continuum, with oral texts of collaborative discourse at one end of it, and literate texts having more characteristics of expository written prose, at the other end, then it is possible to determine the degree of the difference between written and spoken discourse. Buck (2002: 15) argues that the features that determine where texts go on the continuum include: linguistic features (the sound system, phonology, stress, intonation, vocabulary choice, grammar), paralinguistic features (tone of voice, gestures, facial expression), planning, the type and degree of shared context between the participants, and the function of the text. Transactional discourse, i.e., a lecture, a guided tour, a scientific report, a radio programme, will be more “written” than “spoken” since transactional discourse is less spontaneous and mostly well planned. Halliday (1990: 79) posits that the spoken language is, in fact, no less structured and highly organized than the written, arising out of the nature of its medium, in which text is a process. Bygate (1991: 11) characterizes the speech in terms of the processing conditions and claims that two features distinguish the spoken language from the written language. Firstly, the form of spoken language is affected by the time limitations. The words are being spoken, and at the same time, comprehended by the listener. The reader can reread the text for the clarification while the listener cannot use such a technique. Secondly, as Bygate (1991: 13) has noted, listening in real life situations is a “reciprocal activity”, in other words, it involves two-way interaction that compensates for the limitations caused by the time factor.

To examine the relevance of the above list of linguistic features of transactional discourse, the following authentic spoken text (the interview with Alex, Professor at the University of Surrey, the UK, recorded on the tape by the author of the present paper in 2003) has been transcribed:

(key: / = pause)

I've also been asked about / when one shakes hands, /when one does not. / I think / that/ it is common, / certainly, in business circles / that / when in one's meeting one's colleagues or acquaintances / one shakes hands. / If a man is introduced to a woman / whether you shake hands / depends on her. / If she extends the hand, / you shake it, / if she does not, / perhaps, it's just a little bow / or some indication that she is there, / but that as I say / is very much up to her. / Um.. / In non-business circles / there's an increasing tendency / for a man to still shake hands / when they meet, but when the man is introduced to a woman, / it is much more common / for a kiss on the cheek / to be given, / but again it depends very much on / what the woman wishes to do.

The above spoken transactional discourse contains four cases of contracted forms, “*but*” is used three times, the text contains one hesitation “*um*”, there are fillers “*certainly, perhaps*” and repetitions, i.e., “*one*”. In contrast, the connectives “*then, so, and*” are not used, there are no false starts, the speaker uses complete sentences, the sentences contain academic words, the topic is stated clearly at the beginning of the passage. The units of speech are not dependent on syntax but rather they are structured according to tone units, the feelings are expressed with “*I think, as I say*”, and first and second person pronouns are used. As the recording is on the tape, listeners cannot have any non-verbal cues. Thus it is apparent that transactional discourse might not have all features of the spoken text, and on the continuum (see Fig. 1) this type will occupy the place closer to the written discourse. It depends on the speaker, the purpose of the discourse, and the context.

The focus of the present study is on the spoken discourse used in a foreign language learning/teaching situation. The format of such spoken discourse is the text recorded in the form of a monologue or a dialogue by native speakers on the tape or disc. Hedge (2000: 245) states that recorded listening texts for language classroom use (monologues and dialogues) might be unscripted and scripted. Relating to monologues used in the classrooms, Hedge (ibidem) suggests the following types of text features: **unscripted** monologues (but possibly prepared), e.g., lectures, talks, speeches; **scripted** monologues, e.g., news, written talks, stories read to children, public announcements. As regards unscripted dialogues, they include spontaneous conversations between native speakers, or non-native speakers, spontaneous commentary, telephone conversations.

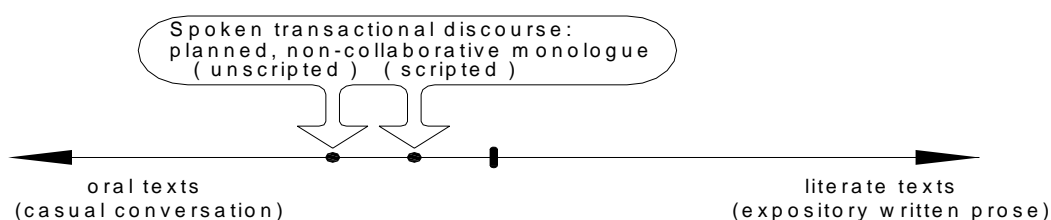


Fig. 1. The place of the spoken transactional discourse used in the educational settings on the continuum (modified from Tannen, 1982 cited in Buck, 2002).

Discourse types used in the foreign language classrooms are determined in “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”. Transactional spoken discourse types include the following: public announcements and instructions, public speeches, lectures, presentations, sermons, rituals (ceremonies, formal religious services), entertainment (drama, shows, readings, songs), sport commentaries (football, cricket, boxing, horse-racing, etc), news broadcasts, public debates and discussions.

The present study explores the performance of foreign language learners when processing the spoken discourse recorded on the tape for educational environment. Summing up the description of the features of the spoken discourse, the conclusion can be drawn that **the spoken transactional discourse** recorded on the tape or disc by a native speaker for the application in learning/teaching a foreign language is *planned, non-collaborative monologue either scripted or unscripted*. The transactional discourse in classroom settings is not reciprocal.

1.2. Top-down and Bottom-up Processing of the Transactional Spoken Discourse

Language skills are categorized as receptive or productive. Listening, along with reading, is a receptive skill. It requires a person to receive and understand incoming information or input. Since listening is a receptive skill, FL learners can listen to and understand texts at a higher level than they can produce. Nevertheless, listening comprehension in a foreign language is a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammar structures, interpret the stress and intonation, retain and process all the information and interpret it within the concrete and larger socio-cultural context of the utterance. The co-ordination of all these processes involves serious mental activities on the behalf of the listener.

In the last two decades foreign language listening comprehension researchers (Anderson and Lynch, Brown, Celce-Murcia, Cook, Nunan, Richards, Rost et al) mention two models of comprehension processes: bottom-up and top-down. Guy Cook (see Fig. 2) contrasts the two approaches in the following way: ”A top-down approach to language regards all levels of language as a whole working together, while bottom-up approach divides communication into discrete levels which can be dealt with separately”(Cook, 1990: 80). In their book on listening, Anderson and Lynch compare bottom-up processing with “listener as tape recorder” and top-down processing with “listener as model builder”

(Anderson & Lynch, 1988: 11). The view of the listener as a tape recorder suggests that the listener takes in and stores aural messages in much the same way as a tape recorder. However, people cannot remember the exact wording of the message.

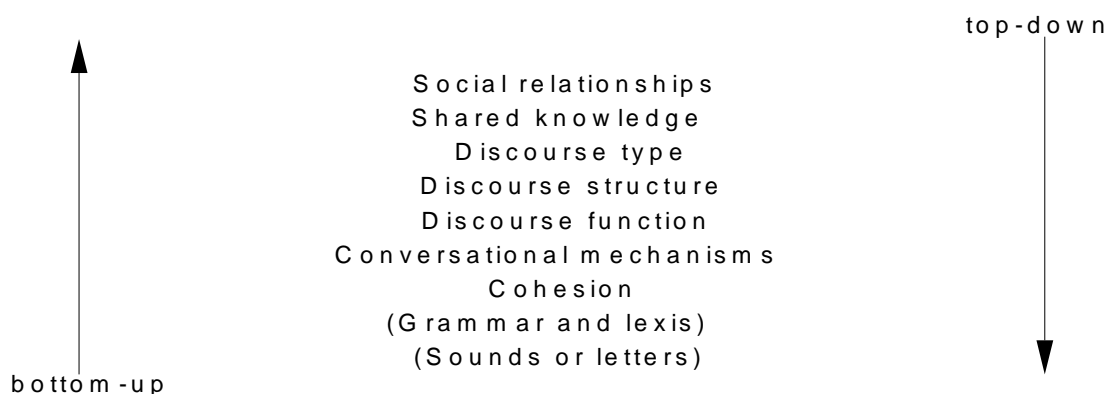


Fig. 2. Top-down and bottom-up language comprehension processes (Cook, 1990: 80)

The metaphors “top” and “bottom” are used to depict the stages through which listening proceeds. In listening, the lowest level is the phonetic feature. A listener combines phonemes into syllables, syllables into words, words into clauses and clauses into propositions or meaningful phrases (Field, 1999: 338). At the “top” is general meaning of the discourse, into which new information is integrated as it proceeds. Listeners use the knowledge of the theme to understand the meaning of the discourse trying to compensate for the insufficient linguistic knowledge of a foreign language.

1.2.1. Bottom-up Processes in Listening

In the bottom-up approach of the listening process, people use the knowledge of language and our ability to process acoustic signals to make sense of the sounds that speech presents to us. Thus it is the lowest level, the “bottom”. A simple analysis might present the listener as combining groups of features into phonemes, phonemes into syllables, syllables into words, words into clauses, and clauses into propositions.

The knowledge of bottom-up strategies comes from researchers, such as Clark and Clark (1977), Anderson (1995) among others, interested in speech perception. The model of speech processing developed by Clark and Clark (1977: 175), formulates that when

listeners take in raw speech, words verbatim are not stored in memory. During the construction process, the verbatim constituents are held in working memory only for a very brief period of time, after which they are eliminated and replaced by representation of the finished interpretation of the sentence, which is finally retained in long-term memory.

Anderson (1995: 379) has proposed a three-phase model of listening comprehension that consists of perception, parsing and utilization. Perceptual processing is encoding of the acoustic or written message. In listening this involves segmenting phonemes from the continuous speech stream. During this listening phase, a person attends closely to the input and the sounds are retained in the echoic memory. During parsing, words are transformed into **mental representation** of the combined meaning of these words. This occurs when an utterance is segmented according to syntactic structures or cues to the meaning. These segments are then combined to generate a meaningful representation of the original sequence. This mental representation is related to the existing knowledge and stored in long-term memory as propositions or schemata during the third phase, utilization. At this stage the listener may draw different types of inferences to complete the interpretation and make it more personally meaningful, or use the mental representations to respond to the speaker. Perception, parsing and utilization represent different levels of processing, with perception being the lowest. All three phases are interrelated and recursive, and can happen concurrently during a single listening event. They are “by necessity partially ordered in time, however, they also partly overlap. Listeners can be making inferences from the first part of a sentence while they are already perceiving a later part” (Anderson, 1995: 379).

In bottom-up processing the listeners’ lexical and grammatical competence in a foreign language provides the basis for working out the meaning. Clark and Clark summarize this view of listening comprehension in the following way: “1) They [listeners] take in raw speech and retain a phonological representation of it in “working memory”. 2) They immediately attempt to organize the phonological representation into constituents, identifying their content and function. 3) They [listeners] identify each constituent, they use it to construct underlying propositions, building continually onto a hierarchical representation of propositions. 4) Once they have identified the propositions for a constituent, they retain them in working memory and at some point purge memory of the phonological representation. In doing this, they forget the exact wording and retain the meaning” (Clark and Clark, 1977: 49).

Hedge (2000: 230) claims that applying the bottom-up approach to processing the spoken discourse, people simultaneously use the following clues to infer the meaning from the developing speech: 1) the placement of stress on the meaningful words, the use of pauses, the relationship of stressed to unstressed syllables, plus increased tempo, distinct pronunciation of certain words, 2) lexical knowledge 3) logical reasoning, 4) the knowledge of syntactic structure and non-verbal communication. In the English language a typical structure of noun phrase as agent, verb phrase as action, followed by a noun phrase as object is expected.

1.2.2. Top-down Processes in Listening

Top-down comprehension strategies involve the knowledge that the listener brings to a text called as the previous knowledge or the knowledge of the world. This information is not available from the text. Top-down listening infers the meaning from contextual clues and from making links between the spoken message and various types of prior or background knowledge (Cook, 1990, Hedge, 2000; Celce-Murcia, 2001, Field, 1999). The knowledge of the particular situation, i.e., speakers, the setting, the topic, the purpose of the spoken discourse and from the knowledge of what has been said earlier suggest the contextual clues to meaning of the spoken text.

The role of background knowledge in the spoken language comprehension has been formalized as the Schema theory (Bartlett, 1932, Rumelhart, 1980). The term **schema** was coined in 1932 by the psychologist Bartlett in his classic study of how human memory works. His work has come into light as a result of Artificial Intelligence research for computers. According to the Schema theory, the text, any text, either spoken or written, does not by itself carry meaning. Rather a text only provides directions for listeners or readers as to how they should retrieve or construct the meaning from their own, previously acquired knowledge. This previously acquired knowledge is called either background knowledge (Cook, Richards, Nunan, Rost, et al) or the knowledge of the world (Richards, 1987), or the prior knowledge (Shank and Abelson, 1977; de Beaugrande, R. Dressler, 1981). Previously acquired knowledge structures are called schemata (Bartlett in Long&Richards, 1987). ‘Schema theory suggests that the knowledge we carry around in our heads is organized into interrelated patterns. These are constructed from all our previous experiences and they enable us to make predictions about future experience.

Given the fact that making sense of discourse is a process of using both our linguistic knowledge and also our content knowledge, these schemata or ‘mental film scripts’ are extremely important’ (Nunan,1993:71).

According to Rost (1994:59) a **schema** is an organizational system for the topical knowledge that is needed in order to make inferences. For example, schemata referring to a job, family, burglary. Anderson and Lynch (1988:13) define a schema ‘as a mental structure, consisting of relevant individual knowledge, memory, and experience, which allows us to incorporate what we learn into what we know.’ People have countless schemata accessible to them in memory. For each schema they have stereotypical knowledge, based on their experience and imagination which helps to fill the missing parts of the story. Cook explains that “schemata are mental representations of typical situations and they are used in discourse processing to predict the contents of the particular situation which the discourse describes. The idea is that the mind, stimulated by key words or phrases in the text, or by the context, activates a knowledge schema, and uses it to make sense of the discourse” (Cook, 1990: 69). For example, in a restaurant if you see a waiter and a couple talking at the table, you will assume that the waiter is taking an order for lunch - rather than listening to the latest rumours about some celebrities. These expectations are generated from our knowledge about procedure taking place in public catering places and typical conversations between waiters and customers.

Related to the schema theory is the script theory of Shank and Abelson (1977). According to Shank and Abelson’s (1977: 41) theory, a script is a structure that describes sequences of events that are common to the way people behave in particular contexts. A script is made up of slots and requirements about what can fill those slots. The structure is an interconnected unity, the slots of which affect one another. Scripts contain “stylized” everyday situations. Scripts are not subject to much change and they do not handle situations that are totally novel for the readers or listeners. The **script** thus “is a predetermined, stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well-known situation” (Shank and Abelson’s, 1977: 41). People have scripts for eating in a restaurant, shopping, learning in the classroom, and they are based on their experience about such events, therefore every script has associations with a number of roles: a waitress and a customer in the restaurant or a salesperson and a customer in the superstore.

Researchers investigating the process of listening comprehension (Anderson and Lynch, Flowerdue, Hedge, Nunan, Richards, Rost et al) have drawn on the script theory of Shank and Abelson and applied the notion of the script to processing spoken discourse. Anderson and Lynch (1988:13) define the script as the term meant ‘to describe a set of knowledge of probable sequences of events in familiar situations’. They claim that the mental script can be compared to a film script. Similarly to a film or theatre script, a mental script specifies the roles played by certain actors and the expected procedure of their actions. The difference is that mental script does not specify the exact words that each actor is going to use. For example, in ‘a job interview’ script, an imaginary applicant and an employer would participate and the events (entering the office, questioning, excitement) would take place. There are certain associations about such occasions. Some details of this script can be universal, but people with different cultural background will have different expectations about the length of such an interview, about the kind of clothes one should wear and so on. Native speakers, when listening, can refer to their knowledge of the culture and background of the speaker and the situation and will know from previous experience more or less what to expect. They take into account the types of people (sex, age) and the fact that they will express different ideas in different ways. They expect certain kinds of language in particular situations (in a classroom, in the police station, on board a plane). They know that relations among people influence the way people speak to each other (a teacher to a pupil, a policeman to a suspect, a flight attendant to a traveller). Obviously, listeners are not passive participants of the conversation. Much of listening comprehension is the process of reasoning combining the new information with previous knowledge and experience.

Researchers (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983, Long and Richards, 1987, Celce-Murcia, 1995, Hedge, 2000, Buck, 2002) distinguish between formal schemata and content schemata. **Formal schemata** involve background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts. For example, the knowledge about the structure of the lecture, news programme, some speech events that have a highly ritualized sequence. The second category of schemata is that of **content schemata**. It is the background knowledge about the content area of a text, such as general world knowledge, sociocultural knowledge, and topic knowledge. Local knowledge might be necessary to infer the meaning. For example, listening to texts about environmental issues of the Baltic region, Christmas time in the family, taxi services in the local town etc. The failure to activate an appropriate schema might lead to misunderstandings or various degrees of non-comprehension

(Long&Richards, 1987). In foreign language learning/teaching one of the most obvious reasons of such failure might be that the schema is culturally specific and is not part of the listeners' cultural background. Top-down processing is sometimes referred to as **contextual** (Field, 1999; Celce-Murcia, 2000). Contextual information can come from many different sources: from the knowledge of the speaker or from knowledge of the world, from analogy with the previous situation or from the meaning that has been built up so far. It can be derived from a schema, an expectation set up before listening. Field (1999: 338) suggests that "it can take the form of spreading activation, where one word sparks off associations with others, or it can be based upon the probability of one word following another". To put it differently, during the processing of the spoken discourse, listeners apply not only linguistic knowledge of the language, but also formal and content schemata to comprehend the meaning. For language learners, it is not only the knowledge of the forms, structures, vocabulary and the real-life knowledge, but also culturally and historically specific information.

Richards (1990: 56) combines the interactional and transactional functions of the language and top-down and bottom-up comprehension processes into the four-part classification that could be presented in the following chart (Fig.3).

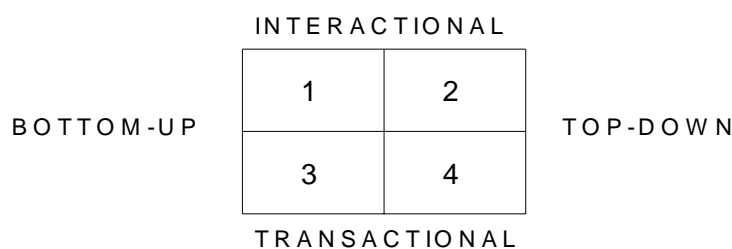


Fig. 3. Richards' model (1990: 56) of interactional/transactional functions and top-down/bottom-up comprehension processes.

Richards gives an example for each of the four cells as follows:

- “Cell 1: Listening closely to a joke (interactional) in order to know when to laugh.
- Cell 3: Listening closely to instructions (transactional) during a first driving lesson.
- Cell 2: Listening casually to cocktail party talk (interactional).
- Cell 4: Experienced air traveler listening casually to verbal air safety instructions (transactional) which have been heard many times before. (1990: 56)“

In applying this prior knowledge about people and events to a particular situation comprehension proceeds from top down. When listening people confirm their expectations and fill out the specific details. Richards (1990:50) suggests that examples of top-down processing in listening include: 1. assigning an interaction to a part of a particular event, such as story telling, joking, praying, complaining; 2. assigning places, persons, or things to categories; 3. inferring cause-and-effect relationships; 4. anticipating outcomes; 5. inferring the topic of a discourse; 6. inferring the sequence between events; 7. inferring missing details.

Listening in a foreign language requires the development of certain subskills. Anderson and Lynch (1988:42) consider that three main skills are necessary for successful listening:

- the ability to recognize the topic of the conversation from the native speaker's initial remarks,
- the ability to make predictions about likely developments of the topic to which he will have to respond,
- the ability to recognize and signal he has not understood enough of the input to make a prediction or a response.

The technique of prediction is especially useful when applying the top-down approach in developing listening skills.

In recent years in the theory of learning/teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) there is an ongoing discussion which of the two processing processes, top-down or bottom-up, is a superior strategy in the comprehension of the spoken discourse in a foreign language. Different studies have produced different findings. Thus there are studies that claim that skilled listeners are better able to use top-down processes whereas less skilled listeners tend to rely on bottom-up processes. For example, Shohamy and Inbar (1991: 29), in the research of the effects of text and question type on listening comprehension found that less-skilled listeners performed much better on local questions, which required the listener to identify details and facts, than on "global questions" which required the listener to synthesize information, draw conclusions and so on. They posit that high-level listeners seemed to process the text in a knowledge-based manner, the low-level listeners seemed to process the text in a data driven manner. Another study has proved that less-skilled foreign language learners rely on guessing from contextual or prior knowledge to compensate for the lack of automatized linguistic decoding skill (Tsui and Fullilove, 1998). Wilson (2003: 335) argues that in many published English language textbooks word recognition has

generally been neglected in favour of using the context to work out meaning; listening tasks have tended to rely on practicing comprehension or simply testing it rather than teaching something that might improve students' performance. Wilson concludes that numerous small perceptual errors of the lower-level components of incoming speech slow down learners' ability to do top-down processing of the spoken text.

It is generally accepted that both types of processing function simultaneously and are mutually dependent. Fluent listening depends on the use of both top-down and bottom-up processing. Some researchers (Flowerdew, 2005) argue for completely interactive models of listening. In this parallel processing, phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information interact.

Summary

In the light of the present paper, discourse is defined as the meaningful language used in complete spoken texts for a certain purpose in a context. Transactional discourse communicates information and it is primarily concerned with transmitting and receiving information. In addition, it is "message" oriented rather than "listener" oriented. Examples of language being used for a transactional purpose comprise news programs, lectures, descriptions and instructions, types of expository texts that are a typical feature of a foreign language teaching/learning. Summing up the description of the features of the spoken discourse, a conclusion can be drawn that **the spoken transactional discourse** recorded on the tape or disc by a native speaker for the application in learning/teaching a foreign language is *planned, non-collaborative monologue either scripted or unscripted*; discourse types include: public announcements and instructions, public speeches, lectures, presentations, sermons, rituals, entertainment, sport commentaries, news broadcasts.

Analyzing foreign language listening comprehension researchers (Anderson & Lynch, Brown, Cook, Nunan, Richards, Rost et al) mention two models of comprehension processes: bottom-up and top-down. Top-down comprehension strategies involve the knowledge that a listener brings to a text called the previous knowledge or the knowledge of the world. The role of background knowledge in the spoken language comprehension has been formalized as the Schema theory (Bartlett, 1932, Rumelhart, 1980). A schema is an organizational system for the topical knowledge that is needed in order to make

inferences (Rost, 1994). People have countless schemata in their memory. Related to the schema theory is the script theory of Shank and Abelson (1977). According to Shank and Abelson's (1977: 41) theory, a script is a structure that describes sequences of events that are common to the way people behave in particular contexts. People have scripts for eating in a restaurant, shopping, learning in the classroom, and they are based on their experience about such events.

Researchers investigating the process of listening comprehension (Anderson and Lynch, Hedge, Field, Flowerdue, Nunan, Richards, Rost et al) have drawn on the Schema theory and the script theory and applied the notions of "schema" and "script" to processing spoken discourse. They claim that non-native listeners, when they have partial linguistic knowledge, are in the situation when they have to use their knowledge of the world and prior knowledge in the form of schemata and scripts to arrive at the meaning of the spoken discourse. Thus the activation of the background knowledge helps to compensate for the lack of the linguistic knowledge in a foreign language that is necessary to understand the meaning of the transactional spoken discourse. Researchers admit that both types of discourse processing, bottom-up and top-down, function simultaneously and are complementary.

Chapter 2

Linguistic Pre-conditions of Processing Spoken Transactional Discourse

Organization of this chapter

As the present study is concerned with the performance of lexical and semantic processing of the transactional spoken discourse using top-down strategies, it is necessary to describe the linguistic sources of knowledge listeners need to make sense of the speech in a foreign language. The literature overview in this chapter is narrowed down to the issues concerning the perception of the spoken text in the English language as a foreign language and explores the theoretical assumptions concerned with the foreign language teaching/learning. Phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic and discourse knowledge is used in order to understand the spoken message.

This chapter focuses on the listener's knowledge of the language system, namely,

- Phonological knowledge
- Words and Lexical Items
- Syntactic knowledge
- Discourse meaning and structure

2.1. Phonological Processing

The focus of the present paper is listening comprehension in a foreign language, thus phonological processing will be looked upon from the point of view of a listener. To understand speech, learners have to perceive sounds, recognize word boundaries, perceive rhythmic groupings, tone placements, intonation rise and falls. There are two phonological levels distinguished by phoneticians: segmental and suprasegmental (Roach, 1996). The units of segmental level are presented by phonemes and their modifications in connected speech; suprasegmental level deals with intonation and stress as well as with their role in the process of communicating information. As the present study investigates the lexical and semantic processing of the spoken discourse, the above mentioned linguistic aspects will be mentioned, but not explored in detail.

Taking into account the fact that the English language is spoken with wide range of regional accents, it is worthwhile to determine that the accent that is the preferred form of pronunciation for reading BBC news bulletins and for teaching English as a foreign

language is an accent called RP (Received Pronunciation). Cassettes or CDs supplied together with English text books contain recorded speech of native speakers in RP accent.

2.1.1. Segmental Level

An acoustic signal is the first to process from the stream of sound or noise. The acoustic signal represents the meaningful sound of the language, the phoneme (Brown, 1977, Rivers and Temperley, 1978, Rost, 1990). The listener's knowledge of the articulatory causes of sounds influences the speech perception. The sounds of a foreign language must be learned in order to understand the speech. However, single sounds separated from the words do not cause the most comprehension problems, but the way they vary in the flow of the speech. The process that takes place in rapid speech when adjacent sounds influence each other is called modification (Buck, 2002) or sound variation (Rost, 2002). Researchers of listening comprehension (Brown, 1977, Rost, 1990, Roach, 1996) describe phonological modification in English and its relevance for foreign language education in the following way:

Assimilation, when sounds influence the pronunciation of adjacent sounds. For example, 'won't you' is generally pronounced as something like 'wonchoo'.

Elision, when sounds are dropped in rapid speech. For example, 'next day' is usually pronounced something like 'nexday'.

Reduction, centering of vowels, weakening of consonants that result from phoneme being in an unstressed syllable.

Intrusion, when a new sound is introduced between other sounds. For example, in standard British English the sound /r/ at the end of the word 'far' is not normally pronounced, but if the word is immediately followed by a vowel, as in 'far away', then it is inserted between the two words.

These phonological processes occur in connected fast speech. Learners should become aware of what happens to a word in the fluent speech. The stream of sounds they hear should become meaningful, therefore sound perceptive skills should be trained and the English language pronunciation peculiarities close attention paid to.

2.1.2. Suprasegmental Level

Understanding the sound system of language involves far more than just knowing the pronunciation of individual sounds and how they change in rapid speech. Linguistic

features of the suprasegmental level: stress, rhythm and intonation, also plays an important role in listening comprehension.

2.1.2.1. Rhythm and Stress

Natural speech is highly rhythmic, it tends to have a regular beat. Halliday (1986: 271) states that there are two kinds of rhythm in a language: (1) syllabic rhythm or syllable-timing and (2) pedalian rhythm or foot-timing or stress-timing. In the first type of rhythm the tempo depends on the syllable, so that all syllables tend to be of roughly the same length. In the second type of rhythm tempo depends on the foot (a unit consisting of one or more syllables), so that all feet tend to be approximately of the same length. The English language is considered to be foot-timed language. The foot is one of the rhythmic units of English phonological structure. As many phoneticians have noted, speakers of English speak with accented syllables at roughly equal time intervals. That means that stress in a sentence occurs at more or less regular intervals of time in English. The unstressed syllables interchange with stressed ones. The unstressed words are pronounced more quickly between stressed words in order to follow the overall rhythm pattern. Stressed items tend to be content words in the utterance (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs), function words are generally unstressed. Brown (1977: 58) states that unstressed syllables are squeezed between stressed syllables. The number of unstressed syllables intervening between two stressed may be up to seven. As a result of such “squeezes” there are different types of phonological changes as mentioned above that occur in connected speech. In addition, as Brown (1977: 53) states, the rhythmic structure of English together with the “principle of least effort and naturalness” means that many syllables are reduced and disappear completely in the stream of speech. Consequently, stress is very important in identifying content words for the comprehension of the spoken text.

The rhythmic units of the connected speech often cause problems for language learners. It takes time to get used to recognizing words and their boundaries and requires a lot of training and practicing. The Latvian language is considered to be syllable-timed language, consequently the learners have to know not only the spoken form of the word but also have to get used to the rhythmic pattern of the fluent speech so as to be able to recognize the spoken form of the word in the speech.

2.1.2.2. Intonation

English phoneticians (Jones, 1969, O'Connor, 1977) consider intonation as pitch variations. O'Connor's (1977: 190) definition of intonation is as follows: "The use of pitch to distinguish whole utterances without interfering with the shape of the component words is known as intonation." Brown (1977: 89) associates the variation in pitch of the voice of the speaker and pause with the intonation, but loudness, tempo, voice quality with the paralinguistic features. The term intonation can be viewed in the broad sense including voice pitch or speech melody, the prominence of words or their accent, the tempo, rate and pausation of the utterance, the voice tember (Vassilyev, 1970). Roach (1996: 133) notes that the pitch is described in terms of low and high and the **tone group** is the unit of intonation. The words can be said with a level tone or moving tone: falling or rising. The pitch of the voice fluctuates rising and falling on vowels and consonants. These falls and rises form definite patterns, typical of English. Each tone group will have one syllable that is more heavily stressed and is accompanied by a pitch movement (the tonic syllable). The tonic points to new and important information, the other part of the tone group contains information that is not so crucial for understanding the message. Katamba (1989: 242) claims that tonic stress, also called sentence stress, is the most basic function of intonation. In addition, the pitch fluctuation serves several other linguistic purposes. Crystal (1997: 12) suggests the following functions of intonation:

1. Emotional: the intonation is used to express the speaker's attitudinal meaning, such as enthusiasm, doubt, or distaste for the topic.
2. Grammatical: the intonation can be used to mark grammatical structure of an utterance, like punctuation in written language.
3. Informational: the intonation indicates the salient parts of an utterance like sentence stress, so a higher pitch marks the important information.
4. Textual: the intonation is used to help large chunks of discourse contrast or cohere, rather like paragraphs in written language,
5. Psychological: the intonation is used to chunk information into units which are easier to deal with,
6. Indexical: the intonation is used by certain people as a sort of identifier. For example, preachers and newscasters often use recognizable intonation patterns.

In relation to discourse, intonation is used to indicate the new information as opposed to the given information (Katamba, 1989, Kreidler, 1997). One of the words conveying new information is singled out by making one of its syllables the tonic syllable, whereas the

given information is not in the focus. Likewise, Roach suggests (1996: 176) that intonation in the connected speech draws the listener's attention to the aspects of the message that are most important, thus the tonic stress tends to be placed on words with high information content.

2.2. Words and Lexical Items

Recognizing words in fluent speech is the basis of spoken discourse comprehension. Because a normal speaking rate has about eight words per every two-to-three second run of speech, word recognition must occur very quickly in the listening process (Brazil, 1995). The two main tasks of the listener in word recognition are the identification of words and activating knowledge of word meanings.

2.2.1. Lexical Segmentation

One of the indicators of the word recognition is marking word boundaries. In spoken discourse words are not separated by pauses the same way as words are separated by white spaces in written texts. The pauses in natural speech occur every 12 syllables or so, which means that, unlike readers, listeners do not have a regular indications of where words begin and end. The lexical stress often fulfils the role of showing word boundaries. Thus using the corpus of spoken English, Cutler and Carter (1987: 137) calculated that some 85.6% of all content words in running speech are either monosyllabic or stressed on the first syllable. Nevertheless, Brown (1977: 77), Rost (2002: 20), Field (2003: 329) suggest that spoken discourse cause three major problems for non-native listeners in lexical segmentation:

- 1) the lack of between-word pauses,
- 2) the phonological modification of words when they occur in connected speech (reduction, assimilation, elision),
- 3) limited knowledge of word meanings.

In terms of vocabulary knowledge, Nation (2005: 584) suggests that knowing a word in a foreign language fits into three groups: knowing the form of a word (its spelling, sound and word parts); knowing the meaning of a word (linking its form and meaning, knowing a concept for the word and what it can refer to, and knowing what other words of related meaning it can be associated with); and knowing how a word is used (the grammar of the word including the part of speech and the sentence patterns it fits into, collocates of the

words, and whether the word is formal or informal, polite or rude, used mainly by children, and so on, or has no restrictions on its use (See Table 1).

Table 1. The knowledge involved in knowing a word (Nation, 2003: p.27)

Form	Spoken	R	What does the word sound like?
		P	How is the word pronounced?
	Written	R	What does the word look like?
		P	How is the word written and spelled?
	Word parts	R	What parts are recognizable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express the meaning?
Meaning	Form and meaning	R	What does this word form signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	Concept and referents	R	What is included into this concept?
		P	What items can the concept refer to?
	Associations	R	What other words does this make us think of?
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	Grammatical functions	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what patterns must we use this word?
	Collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this one?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	Constraints on use (register, frequency, etc)	R	Where, when, and how often would we expect to see this word?
		P	Where, when, and how often can we use this word?

In column 3, R=receptive knowledge, P=productive knowledge

For successful comprehension learners need 95% coverage of vocabulary that means 1 unknown word in every 20 running words (Nation, 2003: 134). However, even this number of unknown words could cause difficulties to the language learners. The densities of known words against unknown words in the text should be: 1 in 50 words (98%). In his comprehensive book on the teaching and researching listening Rost (2002) analyzes different models of word recognition and concludes that if a listener possesses the adequate knowledge of the vocabulary of a foreign language, there are several simultaneous processes in the way words are recognized. They are as follows: “1) Words are recognized through the interaction of the perceived sound and knowledge of the likelihood of a word being uttered in a given context. 2) Speech is processed primarily in a sequential fashion, word by word. Recognition of a word achieves two goals: it locates the onset of the immediately following word, b) it provides syntactic and semantic constraints that are used to recognize the immediately following words. 3) Words are accessed by various clues: a) the sounds that begin the word, b) the word stress. 4) Speech is processed in part retrospectively, by the listener holding unrecognized words in a “phonological loop” of a few seconds duration (Baddeley, 1986) while subsequent cues are being processed. 5) A

word is recognized when the analysis of its acoustic structure eliminates all candidates for the meaning but one” (Rost 2002:20). To put it differently, in lexical segmentation learners use such clues as the first sounds of the word and the word stress, the speech is processed word by word retrospectively, that is, holding unrecognized words in the phonological loop while subsequent cues are processed or the analysis of its acoustic structure eliminates all candidates but one in the given context. In addition, the listeners can compensate for the words, the meaning of which they do not know by guessing from the context by means of lexical inferencing. The issue of lexical inferencing will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

2.2.2. Characteristics of Words and Lexical Items

It is necessary to characterize the vocabulary the language learners have to master in order to become proficient language users. The vocabulary size of the learner influences the comprehension of the spoken text. Moreover, the vocabulary acquisition is not only learning single words, but raising awareness of the learners of different kinds of lexical items such as phrasal verbs (e.g., turn on/off), collocations (e.g., to pay attention), idiomatic expressions (e.g., to be up in arms).

The idea that each language has the basic vocabulary of more **frequent words** is widely used in foreign language teaching. Linguists (Rozenbergs, 1995, Nation, 2003, Schmitt, 2005) consider that the awareness of how frequently a particular word occurs is important for the enrichment of vocabulary. In terms of their frequency, words could be divided into four groups: 1) high-frequency words, 2) academic words 3) technical words, 4) low-frequency words. The **high-frequency** words account for a small group. As a result of various studies, there is general agreement that 2,000 most frequently used words of English account for about 75 percent of the lexis in general reading (Nation, 2003, Lynch, 2004). The most frequent words in English tend to be grammatical words or function words. Out of this amount approximately 165 word families are function words such as “a, some, two, because, to”. The other part includes content words, i.e., nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. **Academic words** are characterized as specialized vocabulary used in academic texts. In relation to academic vocabulary, Coxhead of the University of Wellington has developed the Academic Word List (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000: 234). This word list comprises the 670 word families occurring most frequently in a 3.5 million-word corpus of academic English from four broad groupings, namely the Arts, Science, Law and

Commerce. Coxhead found that the first 1,000 most frequent words, the second 1,000 most frequent words and the 570 AWL keywords accounted for more than 85 per cent of the academic texts analyzed. Accordingly, to read/ listen effectively, language learners need to know at least the most frequent 2,000 words and the AWL basic words.

The next group, **technical words**, contains a variety of types that are typical of particular subject areas (economics, chemistry, applied linguistics). Lastly, there is a very large group of **low-frequency words** that occur very rarely. Nation (2003: 19) proposes four groups of low-frequency words in the English language. They are the following: 1) the words that are moderately frequent but are not included into the high-frequency list, b) proper nouns, c) technical vocabulary, d) old-fashioned, very formal words, words belonging to a particular dialect, vulgar words.

The notion of frequency is used to determine the difficulty level of the listening texts. The most difficult texts for the language learners are the texts with big number of technical words and low frequency words. Besides, the spoken and written language differ because written texts have greater number of content words; besides numerous function words, spoken texts abound in single-word organizational markers (Schmitt, 2005).

Lexical density is the ration of the number of content words against the total number of words in the text. **Content words** include nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. **Function words** include (as suggested by Nation, 2003) adverbial particles (e.g., again, often), auxiliary verbs (e.g., are, would), Prepositions/ conjunctions (e.g., above, during), determiners/ pronouns (e.g., a, both, that, we) and also numbers (e.g., billion, twenty).

Spoken language is characterized by less lexical density than written language.

To illustrate the word frequency and the lexical density of the recorded transactional spoken discourse from the English course book, the text “**Stonehenge**” (“Matrix, Upper-Intermediate”, 2001) will be analyzed by means of *VocabProfile* computer programme. *VocabProfile* performs lexical text analysis. It is developed by Batia Laufer and Paul Nation, and it is available on the Internet (www.lextutor.ca). The procedure is as follows: the spoken discourse is transformed into the written form and pasted into the *VocabProfile* programme that performs lexical analysis of the English language texts, i.e., counts the number of word families, types, tokens, lexical density of the discourse; groups words

according to their etymology; in addition, the programme divides lexical items into four categories by frequency: 1) the most frequent 1000 words of English, 2) the second most frequent thousand words of English, 3) the academic words of English (AWL), 4) the rest which is not found on the other lists.

(key: / = pause)

As you may / or may not know, / Stonehenge / is the most famous / and most frequently visited monument in Britain. / What you probably don't know / is that the name comes from an old English word / "hengen", / which means / "hanging / stones". / According to experts, / Stonehenge / must have been built between 2500 / and 2000 BC. / It was originally thought / that the Druids, / priests of the Celtic people / who lived in England, / might have constructed the building. / But it's now agreed / that the Druids couldn't have done so, / as they didn't arrive in the country / until many years later. / In addition, / such fine stonework / dating to that period / has not been found anywhere else in north-west Europe, / so people think / that the construction may have been in the hands / either of a man from Greece / or from Crete, / or someone / who knew a lot about stone monuments in those countries. / Where the stones came from / is also a bit of a mystery. / They could have come from South Wales /, over a hundred miles away, / but it must have taken a tremendous effort in those days / to drag the stones all that way! / There have been many disagreements / about what the purpose of the building was / but various possibilities emerge. / It could have been a religious building / or it might have been a place / where people studied the stars.

According to the VocabProfile programme the spoken text above consists of 229 tokens, 130 types and 99 word families. 199 tokens are represented in the first 1,000 most frequent word list, 8 tokens are among the second most frequent words, there are only 5 words from the AWL, and 17 tokens are not included in any of the above. The lexical density or content words versus the total amount the words account for 0.45. Content words (nouns, verbs and adjectives) make up 31% of the first 1,000 most frequent words (tokens). The lexical density determines the difficulty level and the formality level of the listening texts and the VocabProfile programme can be used to illustrate the lexical characteristics of the listening texts included in the foreign language course books.

The vocabulary size of the learner determines the success or failure of comprehension of the incoming speech in a foreign language. It is common to distinguish between the active and passive vocabulary. The passive vocabulary items are recognized when the listeners hears them in the discourse, but cannot easily produce in speech as active vocabulary. Lewis (1993: 102) states that, in addition to verbs (with their collocations), adjectives and

adverbs, traditionally associated with vocabulary teaching and content, at least five parts of speech traditionally associated with grammar and function words are needed. These are connectors, prepositions, intensifiers, auxiliaries, determiners. The last three parts of speech are characteristic of language at the level of discourse rather than individual sentence.

Language learners should be aware of the whole richness of the foreign language. The English language often has a range of words that focus around the same area of meaning. There are historical reasons for this. Numerous invasions left an immeasurable impact on the richness of the vocabulary. The word stock is wide and varied, speakers can express an opinion by choosing a synonym that is loaded in a negative or positive way. Learners are often puzzled by the idiomatic structure of the language. Mastering idiomatic expressions and reproducing them is one of the most difficult aspects of learning a foreign language.

In addition, the English language contains the so-called “multi-word items” (Lewis, 1992: 92). A **multi-word item** is a string of words but corresponds to a single semantic unit. Phrasal verbs, idioms and collocations can be considered multi-word items.

- A **phrasal verb** is a monosyllabic verb plus a preposition or adverb, for example, *turn on/off*, *get away with*. Phrasal verbs may have a direct or non-idiomatic e.g., (*carry down*) and indirect or idiomatic meaning (e.g., *carry off*). Concerning the structure (Seidl: 1993) of phrasal verbs there are four types:
 - 1) verb+adverb (no object), e.g., The *car* broke *down*.
 - 2) verb+adverb+ object or verb+object+adverb, e.g., We must *put off* the meeting. We must *put* the meeting *off*.
 - 3) verb+preposition+object, e.g., He *takes after* his mother.
 - 4) verb+adverb+preposition+object, e.g., I can't *put up with* your behaviour.
- **Idioms** are vocabulary units or expressions whose meaning cannot be accounted for as a compositional function of the meanings the words that make them up have when they are not parts of idioms. Cruse (1997: 37) considers that an idiom is lexically complex and is a single minimal semantic constituent. For example, *to pull someone's leg* means to fool somebody. Most idioms have a fixed form, and cannot be changed or varied. Researchers (Schmit, Nation) of foreign language learning mostly focus on the correct use of idioms in speech. As regards listening, learners

that are not aware of the semantic meaning of the idiom, either do not comprehend the phrase at all, or try to arrive at the meaning using contextual clues.

- **Collocations** (Lewis, 1993: 93) describe the way individual words co-occur with others. From the listeners' view, if they hear and understand the semantic meaning of one word of the pair, they can infer the meaning of the other word. For example, "*perpetrate atrocities*". There are many different types of collocations. The most typical collocations are word partners that consist of adjectives and nouns (e.g., heavy metal), nouns and verbs (e.g., to set up a company), nouns and nouns (e.g., the turn of the century).

Homonyms are different words (lexemes) with the same form (Lyons, 1999). There are two types of homonyms: homographs are different meanings of the same written word (e.g., a Pole is a Polish person; a pole is a long rod of wood or metal) and homophones are meanings of the same spoken word (e.g., a pear – a pair).

One of the typical features of the English language is the **polysemy**. Polysemy is an endless linguistic resource. The lexico-semantic variants of one word are not equal in their quantitative use. Mostly the principal or main meaning of a word is more frequently used and therefore known to the language learners. Less frequently used meanings might be unknown to learners. The feature of polysemy of words causes problems for language learners especially when they are listening to the connected speech at high speed.

Linguists (Cruse, 1997, Rozenbergs, 1995, Hedge, 2000) describe the syntagmatic relations and the paradigmatic relations of the meanings of words in the sentence. The syntagmatic relations are relations between words as they occur in sequence. Hedge (2000) states that collocations of the English language reflect the syntagmatic relations. The paradigmatic relations denote complex vertical relationship existing between vocabulary items in the whole lexical system. Most often paradigmatic relationships describe synonyms and antonyms.

To sum up, word recognition or lexical segmentation is the process that can be hampered by the lack of the ability to identify the word boundaries in the connected speech, idiomatic meaning of the word or the multi-word item, the learner's insufficient size of the

vocabulary in the target language, the lack of skill to differentiate the orthographic form of a word from its spoken form.

2.3. Syntactic Knowledge

The knowledge of syntax establishes the relationship between words in the sentence. Singer (1990: 63) claims that “the goal of parsing a sentence is the identification of its linguistic constituents”. Clark and Clark, 1977, Singer, 1990, describing parsing processes state that the following factors influence the parsing processes: syntactic factors (parts of speech, the word order, affixes, the agreement among the words of a sentence) and semantic factors (word meaning, word order). As listeners are restricted in time, they have to process the spoken text very quickly. The part of speech of each next word guides parsing by generating expectations about the structure of the sentence. The listener determines the parts of speech, function words and content words and assigns structural and semantic relations between them. Thus parsing would allow the listener to create a complete propositional model of incoming speech. The absence of inflections in English is compensated by rather strict word order in the sentence. The word order functions as a semantic parsing clue as well.

Rost in his in-depth analysis of the listening processes of language learners suggests that “syntactic context plays a very limited role in constraining word recognition (Rost, 1993: 49)”, except that syntactic structure can predict the suffix of the poly-morphemic words. He gives the word “justification” as an example; as soon as the stem /justi-/ is heard, a listener is able to identify the whole word.

To sum up, the awareness of syntactic rules by language learners is important for the sentence parsing. Such factors as the parts of speech, the word order, the content words and function words, inflections and the rules of agreement among words in the sentences form the basis of the syntactic knowledge.

2. 4. Discourse meaning

As the present paper explores the processing of the transactional non-collaborative oral discourse, the discussion in this sub-chapter will be narrowed down to the semantic meaning of transactional discourse and discourse organization aspects.

2.4.1. Semantic meaning of the discourse

By discourse semantic meaning linguist Van Dijk (1997) means abstract, conceptual meanings of words, sequences of sentences and whole discourse, called semantic representations. Discourse semantics concentrate on the meaning of a whole clause or sentence, namely a proposition. Coherence is important notion in the study of the relations of propositions in a discourse. According to Van Dijk, the studies of the discourse at the micro level explore the role of coherence conditions in the meaning relations between propositions. These relations could be of functional nature, for example, specification, generalization, illustration or contrast. Besides coherence, Van Dijk (ibid) mentions discourse focus and referents as the features of micro level of the discourse. In contrast, the macro level of discourse meaning analyzes such notions as topics or themes. Discourse topics are the main idea or the global meanings of the discourse, of which the overall (macro) coherence is defined.

Linguists (Halliday, 1970, Rozenbergs, 1989) consider discourse semantics from the point of view of new information that is also called “rheme” and given information that is called “theme”. The theme carries the least significance in the content while the rheme carries the most important semantic information referring to new information. Wales (2001) states that regarding the English language, the theme is usually positioned at the beginning of the discourse, but the rheme occurs towards the end of the discourse.

2.4.2. Discourse organization knowledge

In addition to phonological, lexical and grammatical knowledge listeners to the target language should be aware of discourse level characteristics: the types of discourse or genre, its register, and cohesive devices. The listeners’ initial task is to determine the **genre and the register** of the spoken discourse. Knowledge of the “genre” allows the listener to focus on the essential information. The following discourse genres have been suggested by Rost (2002, 127) in Table 2:

Table 2. Genres of spoken discourse. (Rost: 2002: 127)

No.	Type	Information organization	Purpose for listening	Speaker focus
1.	Narrative	Temporal sequence	To find out what happened	Events, actions, causes, reasons, enablements, purposes, time, proximity
2.	Description	Spatial/sensory sequence and	To experience what something looked or	Objects, situations, states, attributes (definitions)

		coherence	sounded or felt alike	
3.	Comparison/ contrast	Point-by-point organization, leading to single conclusion	To discover how two things are alike and unlike	Instance, specifications, equivalences
4.	Causal/ evaluation	Syllogistic/ logical explication	To understand the causes and effects of certain actions	Value, significance reason
5.	Problem/ solution	Problem/ proposal/ effect of proposed action	To hypothesise on the effects of proposed solutions	Cognition, volition

When a language style is defined socially and situationally, the term **register** is used.

The choice of vocabulary is one of the main determiners of register. As it was mentioned above the richness of the English language permits to use the most appropriate synonym. The choice of vocabulary in a particular discourse points to different registers, those styles of language, colloquial, formal, literary etc. that belong to different situations. Not only the use of vocabulary determines the register but also syntactic and phonological choices are relevant. Thus the pitch, volume and intonation may vary depending on the register. The social context is one of the dimensions that influences the choice of register.

Another important notion of the discourse is **cohesion**. Cohesion is a semantic relation between one element in a text and another element that has to be understood (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 8). They mention five linguistic devices: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. One important type of cohesive devices regards the use of pronouns (reference). It is necessary for the listeners to determine what pronoun refers back to. E.g. *“But the brains of London taxi drivers grew to accommodate the layout of the whole city. They are excellent group to study.”* The listener has to understand that ‘they’ refer to ‘taxi drivers’. Further, the pronoun ‘one’ often substitutes the noun, ellipsis is used in order to avoid the repetition of the noun mentioned before, conjunctions ‘*however, therefore, despite*’ indicate important semantic relations between the idea units they connect, lexical cohesion might involve repetition of lexical items and lexical collocations.

The use of specific **vocabulary items** is another important issue of organizing discourse. McCarthy and Carter (1994: 105), Nation (2003: 221) suggest that there are numerous patterns whose parts may be signalled by the use of certain vocabulary.

These include:

- the various topic types, i.e., the description of physical structure and characteristics, instructions, state/situation (what happened) and process (what happens),
- various genres: narratives, arguments, instructions, information reports, recounts and explanations.
- classical rhetoric classifications, such as argument, narrative, exposition and description.
- various clause or conjunction relations (also Halliday and Hassan, 1990), such as cause and effect, contrast exemplification and inclusion.

Summary

The present study focuses on the processing of transactional spoken discourse thus the discussion highlights those aspects of discourse processing that refer to transactional non-collaborative discourse. The listeners need to have necessary linguistic knowledge to process the incoming speech. The phonological knowledge is described from the segmental and suprasegmental level. The units of segmental level are presented by phonemes and their modifications in connected speech; the suprasegmental level deals with intonation and stress as well as with their role in the process of communicating information. Recognizing words in the fluent speech is the basis of spoken discourse comprehension. Word frequency and lexical density characterize the spoken discourse from the lexical point of view. As regards language learners, the size of the vocabulary of language learners influences the processing of the text. Phrasal verbs, idioms, collocations, homonyms and polysemy have to be mastered by language learners. The knowledge of syntax establishes the relationship between words in the sentence. When the listening process takes place, in the full parsing of incoming speech, listeners determine parts of speech, the function words and content words and assigns structural and semantic relations between them creating a complete propositional model. By discourse semantic meaning linguist Van Dijk (1997) means abstract, conceptual meanings of words, sequences of sentences and whole discourse, called semantic representations. The discourse at the micro level explores the role of coherence conditions in the meaning relations between propositions; the macro level of discourse meaning analyzes such notions as topics or themes. Linguists (Halliday, 1970, Rozenbergs, 1989) consider discourse semantics from the point of view of new information that is also called “rheme” and given information that is called “theme”. The genre and the

register of the spoken discourse determine the choice of the vocabulary and the discourse organizing vocabulary.

Chapter 3

The Pragmatic Interpretation of Meaning

Organization of this chapter

The previous chapter focused on the linguistic sources of knowledge necessary to process the spoken discourse in a foreign language. However, the assumption in a pragmatic view of communication is that the foreign language learner's linguistic knowledge of phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis cannot be used until the listener does not draw on pragmatic knowledge. The aim of the present chapter is to explore those pragmatic concepts that refer to the interpretation of the meaning of the spoken transactional non-collaborative discourse in educational settings.

From the micro-pragmatic perspective the present chapter focuses on:

- The Role of the Situational Context
- Deixis and References
- Cooperative Principle
- Presupposition and implicature
- Principle of Relevance

3.1. The Role of the Situational Context

Pragmatics is the study of how the language is used by language users and of the impact of context on the language. In Levinson's (1983: 9) words, "Pragmatics is the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized, or encoded in the structure of a language". Likewise, Mey's opinion is that "pragmatics is the study of the conditions of human language uses as these are determined by the context of society" (Mey, 1998:42). Crystal proposes that pragmatics is "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication"(Crystal, 1997:301). Mey (1998:30) adds that pragmatics is interested in the language users, the existence of language in the real world, a world of real users.

Researchers of pragmatics (Levinson, Mey) highlight the importance of the context in the interpretation of the meaning of the discourse. Mey (1998, 38) states that the difference

between a “grammatical” and a “user-oriented” point of view is in the context: in the first variant, linguistic elements are considered in isolation, as syntactic structures or parts of a grammatical paradigm, such as case, tense, etc., whereas in the other variant, the language users have to decide, how these linguistic elements are used in concrete setting, i.e., the context. In other words, in order to arrive at the meaning, it is necessary to understand not only linguistic information such as lexis and syntax, but also pragmatic information that is provided by the context. Within the framework of the present study the further analysis of the literature will be narrowed down to those pragmatic principles that refer to the way the context influences and interacts with linguistic meaning of the transactional spoken discourse.

According to Rost (2002: 40), pragmatic view of listening to a spoken discourse “addresses the context of language use first”, because actual people use the language in real settings and meaning is generated by and for participants within those settings. From a pragmatic perspective, listening is an intention to complete a communication process. “Linguistic action is always embedded in a context. Physical, social and mental world is within the vision of both the speaker (utterer) or the interpreter (hearer) in the course of producing or interpreting a piece of communication” (Verschuerer, 2001: 85).

Many expressions are linguistically ambiguous, thus often resulting in various misunderstandings. The listener must determine which of the possible meanings of an expression is the one that the speaker intends in the specific occasion. To overcome ambiguity, the listener presumes the speaker's remarks to be contextually appropriate. Linguistic communication works because the speaker and the listener share a system of inferential strategies leading the hearer to recognize the speaker's communicative intention. Thomas states that “when in interaction we have resolved all the ambiguities of sense, reference and structure – when we have moved from abstract meaning (what a particular sentence could mean in theory) to what the speaker actually does mean by these words on this particular occasion – we have arrived at contextual meaning or utterance meaning” Thomas (1995: 16).

Linguistic communication happens in the following way: the speaker faces the problem of getting the listener to recognize the speaker's communicative intentions. The listener's task

is to recognize successfully the speaker's communicative intention. The speaker is to choose an expression according to the context of utterance, and the listener is to understand the speaker on the basis of the words the speaker has chosen. "If the speaker intends the listener to arrive at the interpretation, then there is a need for an **inference** or a certain amount of interpretive "work" on the listener's part" (Brown and Yule, 1991: 57).

There are cases, when the meaning of the message is indirect. The speakers use irony and sarcasm. Moreover, various stylistic devices (e.g., metaphors, metonymies, similes, hyperboles, personification) are widely used in the communication. The metaphors are very important. According to Mey (1998: 62), metaphorical awareness usually is embedded in content: the meaning of a particular metaphor, its importance in a particular context. Mey considers that "metaphors represent certain ways of thinking that are rooted in a common social practice, that they are conceptual means of dealing with the world which have become accepted within a given linguistic and cultural community" (Mey, 1998: 62). Native speakers use metaphors extensively in their speech, but for foreign language learners the use of metaphors in the speech could hamper the perception of the meaning of the whole discourse. Other troublesome issues are the polysemy and homonymy of the English language. In the fast stream of speech the listener has to decide which meaning of a polysemantic word is relevant in the given context. Native speakers do not have to seek for the contextual meaning of a word, phrase or sentence.

The term "the context of situation" was first coined by anthropologist Malinowsky in 1923. There are two sorts of contextual information: semantically, the context of situation (Halliday, 1991: 46) is the immediate environment in which a text is actually functioning. It is restricted to the identity of the speaker and the hearer, and the time and place of the utterance. The other sort of contextual information in the broad or pragmatic sense includes wide range of variables that characterize participants of the speech event, physical environment and general facts about the world people live in.

3.1.1. Features of the Situational Context

As it was mentioned above, the meaning of the spoken discourse depends on the linguistic features and on the context of situation. Brown and Yule (1991: 63) focus on the following features of the context of situation in most face-to-face interactions: speaker, listener, place,

time, genre, topic, co-text. They claim that in interpreting the spoken discourse a listener additionally operates with two basic principles: a) **principle of analogy** and b) **the principle of minimal change**. The first principle according to Brown and Yule is a principle which people assume in our normal conduct of life. Most of people's everyday behaviour is predicted by the expectation that all their habitual movements, actions, language, will operate as usual. The second principle informs people what to expect when they are forced to admit that the first principle is not applying. The principle of minimal change instructs them to assume that things are as like as possible to how they were before. This principle leads people to assume that there is a logical explanation for things and events not being in the expected order. People operate with these two fundamental principles in the processing of the language. The context of situation accounts for the fact that expectations of what may be said in a particular context by a particular speaker are narrowed down by the previous experience of listeners. Participants come to a particular speech event in the context of situation with expectations which limit their interpretations.

A significant theory regarding the role of the context has been developed by Halliday (1991). Halliday treats the text from different aspects: text as a meaning, text as a semantic unit, as a product and process, and as a social exchange of meanings. Drawing upon these aspects of the text Halliday proposes, as he calls it, "a simple conceptual framework of three headings: the field, the tenor and the mode (Halliday, 1991: 10)". The **field** of discourse refers to what is happening, to the nature of the social action that is taking place. The field refers to spheres of activity, e.g., law, science, religion. The field is reflected in the choice of vocabulary. The **tenor** of discourse refers to who is taking part, nature of participants, their statuses and roles. It determines the relationship between the language users, e.g., an employer/an employee, Professor/a student, a doctor/ a patient. **The mode** of discourse refers to what part of language is playing, what it is that the participants are expecting the language to do for them in that situation. It includes the channel, e.g., spoken or written. Besides the mode covers the symbolic organization of the text, the status it has, its function in the context, including the channel (spoken or written, or both), rhetorical mode (persuasive, expository, didactic, performative, etc).

Besides the features of context mentioned above by Brown and Yule, other features of the context of situation have been added by other authors. Having analyzed various sources, the author of the present paper proposes the following list of the features of the context of

the real-life spoken discourse (based on Brown and Yule, 1992, Mey, 1998, Halliday, 1989, Verdonk, 2002, Cutting, 2002, Allan, 1986):

- 1) **The speaker and the listener** as the participants of the speech event. Such social factors as the participants' age, sex, education, occupation, the place of origin play a certain role in the interpretation of the talk.
- 2) **The physical and temporary setting** is defined on the spatio-temporal location of the utterance, i.e., on the particular time and particular place at which speaker utters an utterance and the particular time and place at which hearer hears the utterance (Allan, 1986: 123). The place determines what sort of language can be produced, for instance, in law courts, at talk-shows, in the classrooms. The time determines how the time of speaking relates to the time that is being spoken of: the past, present or the future.
- 3) **The genre** is a culturally specific text-type (Rost, 2002: 127, Verdonk, 2002: 118), for example, the church service, the weather forecast, a lecture.
- 4) **The topic** of the spoken discourse determines the choice of vocabulary.
- 5) **Mutual knowledge and beliefs**, emotions, abilities and assumptions of the participants (the speaker and listener).
- 6) **Co-text** is a linguistic environment in which a word is used (Yule, 1996: 128). Keith Allan (1986: 123) calls it textual environment and defines it as the set of utterances which together constitute a cohesive semantic unit that is not static.
- 7) **Knowledge of the world** contains general facts about the world we live in.
- 8) **Cultural context** (Halliday: 1991: 46) contains the established knowledge of the native community and society about the traditions, beliefs, behavior in different life situations.
- 9) **Intertextuality** (Halliday, 1991: 47), that is, the relation of a text with other texts, assumptions and expectations that arise from the associations about similar texts.

3.1.2. Features of the Situational Context in Educational Settings

The language learners are exposed to listening passages in a foreign language. The focus of the present study is how a learner in the educational environment listening to a cassette or disk can process the meaning of the spoken discourse. Kramsch (1993: 39) considers that in the language classroom "the simple notion of speaker and hearer" should be differentiated. According to Kramsch, there are three types of listeners: an addressee, bystanders and

eavesdroppers. Likewise, Brown and Yule (1991: 74) suggest that listener in the language learning/teaching classroom is an overhearer who listens to the speech on the tape.

A proper procedure for a listening session should include (Harmer, 1987; Rixon, 1991; Underwood, 1990): pre-listening stage or warm-up, while-listening stage, post-listening stage. The teacher is supposed to carry out the pre-listening activities, play the recording, implement while-listening and post-listening tasks. Brown and Yule (1991: 60) state that the learner in a foreign language classroom is asked to listen to the fairly long speech which is not addressed to him/her and that the listener keeps on trying to work out after the speech event what the speaker was saying without the opportunity to ask clarifying questions.

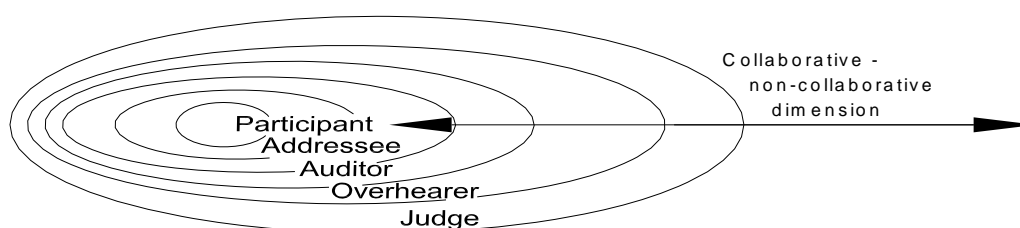


Fig. 4. A schematic representation of listener roles in discourse (Rost, 1990: 5)

Rost has reflected the listener roles in the following (Fig.4) diagram, giving the following characteristics to the listeners of the speech event that are applicable to classroom environment: “1) *Participant* is a person who is being spoken to directly, and who has speaking rights equal to others, 2) *Addressee* is a person in a discussion who is directly spoken to and who has limited right to respond, 3) *Auditor* is a person in an discourse who is a member of an audience that is being addressed directly and who has very limited rights to respond, and is not expected to respond. 4) *Overhearer* is a person who is not being addressed, but who is near the speaker, and who has no rights or expectations to respond” (Rost, 1990: 5).

The author of the present paper characterizes the classroom listening session in terms of communication in the following way:

- The communication is not reciprocal (there is no possibility to ask questions and take turns),
- The listener has either the role of an *overhearer or auditor* (Rost, 1990:5) of the interactional collaborative discourse (e.g., the conversation between a customer and salesperson) or the transactional non-collaborative discourse (e.g., the instruction how to use the alarm system) that are recorded on the tape, or the role of an *addressee* (Kramsch, 1993: 39) if the recording of extended transactional discourse is, for example, a part of a lecture or the news programme.
- There is no opportunity to control the speaker's speed.
- The participants lack mutual knowledge.
- The information is often culture-based.
- The listeners do not see the speakers, the body language and paralinguistic measures cannot assist in the interpretation of the spoken discourse.

The language learning classroom itself could be considered as the context of situation. The learners behave according to the expectations based on their “scripts” of educational environments. They are aware of the teacher always being somewhere near the blackboard, switching on and off the audio equipment.

The following analysis of the features of the context of situation in the English language classroom and the role of the learners as the language users in it is suggested. The text “**Stonehenge**” (see tapescript on p.31) is used as a sample for the analysis. The recording lasts one minute. The listening passage is preceded by the task conditions that introduce the topic of the recorded passage.

1) *The speaker and the listener as the participants.*

The **speaker** in the recording is a male English native speaker. The speaker is not introduced to the listener. The **listener** is an *auditor* listening to an extended transactional non-collaborative discourse that is, in this case, an informative text or a part of radio news about the famous ancient monument. The speaker is an unknown person to the listener. (In the case of the recorded dialogue, the listener has the role of an overhearer.)

2) *The physical and temporary setting.* The listener and the speaker do not share the same place and time. The listener is in the classroom and he/she works out the time and place of speech event while listening to the discourse in the recording or after the event.

3) The genre.

a) The listener is informed about the type of the listening text in the task conditions before listening: “You are going to hear a news item”, b) the listener can go on working out the genre while listening to the discourse or after the event.

4) The topic, purpose, function.

a) The listener is informed about the topic of the listening text in the task conditions before listening: “You are going to hear a news item about the ancient monument Stonehenge, which is in the south of England”.

b) The topic is stated at the beginning of the oral discourse thus creating certain expectation regarding its topic, purpose and function. However, the topical sentence might be misleading, and the listeners might be distracted by it thus causing misunderstanding. c) The listeners are not informed about the purpose and function. Thus they can work them out while listening to the discourse or after the event.

5) Mutual knowledge and beliefs, emotions, abilities and assumptions of the participants (the speaker and listener).

Participants: the speaker (a native person) and listener (a non-native person) are strangers to each other, they do not have mutual knowledge, they are not aware of each other beliefs, emotions, abilities and assumptions.

6) Co-text or textual environment.

The co-text limits the range of possible interpretations. The broader notion of “ancient monuments” in the first sentences is limited to “frequently visited monument in Britain”.

7) Knowledge of the world

The text is quite culture-specific, it requires the knowledge of British history, geography, the knowledge of the first inhabitants of the British Isles. It seems doubtful that many learners possess such information. The listeners do not have the opportunity to take turns and clarify the information they do not know, thus it is a difficult task to comprehend the spoken text without additional contextualizing.

8) Cultural knowledge

Participants: the speaker (a native person) and the listener (a non-native person) are strangers, they do not have mutual culture knowledge. It is of great importance in the passage under the discussion due to the fact that the text contains culture information.

9) Intertextuality.

The listeners might have the association with other similar news programmes that describe famous monuments.

The analysis above shows that foreign language learners as the participants in the activity, when they are listening to the recorded extended transactional non-collaborative discourse, have the role of an auditor (or an overhearer). The listeners are informed about the genre and topic of the discourse in the task conditions but they are not aware of the place and time of the speech event. Listeners are supposed to work them out while listening to the discourse or after the event. The speaker and listeners do not have mutual knowledge and culture knowledge as they are strangers representing two different cultures; on the other hand, the co-text limits the range of possible interpretations, and the listeners can use the knowledge from the associations with similar news programmes. Thus the conclusion could be drawn that in the classroom environment when learners listen to recorded texts in a foreign language, there is a limited range of features of context or the listening activity is partly de-contextualized (the term is used by Thornbury, 2005).

3.1.3. Culture Knowledge as Context

The general knowledge of target language culture and history is a significant issue for language learners. It is impossible to understand simple texts without the knowledge of proper nouns of place names, historic facts, literature and art. The participants of the speech event will assume that they have mutual knowledge about the fact that, for example, the prototype of Darcy in “Bridget Jones’ Diary” is Mr. Darcy played by Colin Firth in BBC mini series “Pride and Prejudice”, TV version of Austin’s novel that was great success in the middle of the 90-ties in the UK.

Halliday (1991: 46) mentions the importance of context of culture, a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted. Moreover, the assumption within the group of people of the shared knowledge of cultural context shows also the shared attitude towards that cultural context. Therefore it is very important for language learners to broaden the knowledge in all aspects of the foreign language they learn.

The recorded texts, containing too much geographical or historic information that is unknown to the listener, might hamper successful interpretation. The abundant use of, for instance, geographic place names or the names of the artists and the titles of their creative work might become a real minefield for the language learners. On the other hand, learning a foreign language entails storing information about the culture heritage of the target language users. The diagram (see Fig.5) shows the important issues regarding cultural

awareness of the target language. The cross-cultural issues cover a vast range of areas of people's life. The knowledge of geographical, historic and culture information of the foreign language is of utmost importance in order to comprehend the spoken discourse. Foreign language learners have to be aware of basic historic and geographic facts, most popular traditions, the differences in behavior and social etiquette.

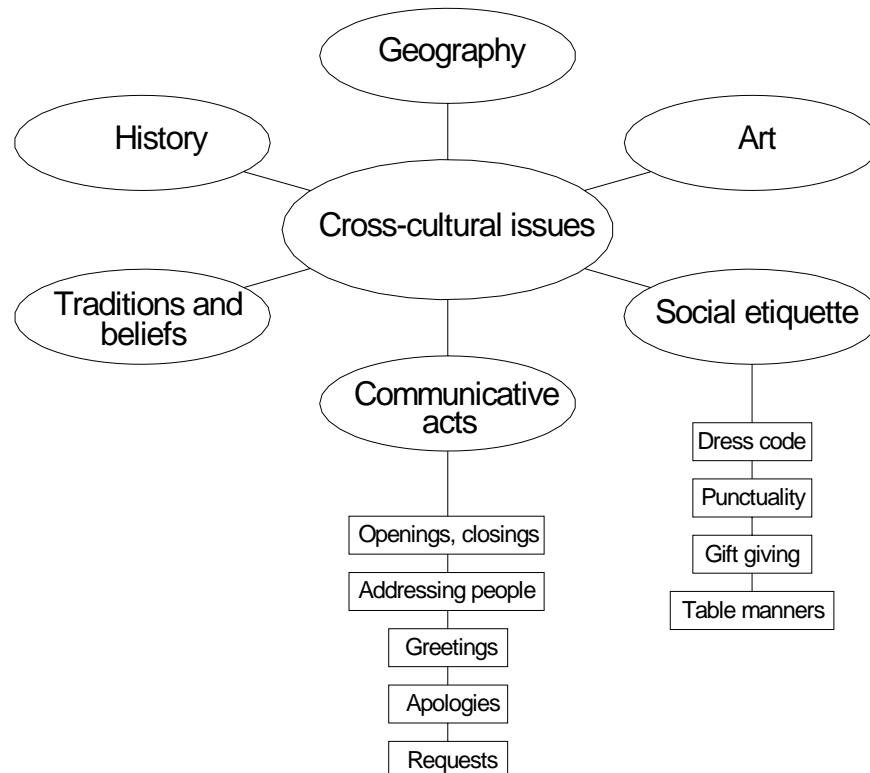


Fig. 5. Cross-cultural issues (based on Breiger, 1997:34)

Not to appear uncooperative, awkward or even rude, language learners need to observe relevant strategies for communicative acts characteristic to the community of the language users.

Pragmaticians (Yule, Mey) consider that people have culture based schemata that are activated. These culture schemata serve to activate expectation about the procedures of certain events in people's lives. Yule (1996: 87) claims that people's background knowledge structures, schemata for making sense of the world, are culturally determined. People develop cultural schemata in the contexts of their basic experiences. Linguistically,

the culture schemata determine what phrases are to be used in communicative acts, such as conversation openings and closings, for example.

3.2. Deixis and Reference

The context is of importance when such pragmatic phenomena as deixis, references and presuppositions are analyzed. It was Levinson (1983) who claimed that “a context is a set of pragmatic indices, coordinates or reference points for speakers, addressees, times of utterances, places of utterance, indicated objects; sentences can therefore express different propositions on different occasions of use” (Levinson, 1983:58).

3.2.1. Deixis

Deixis is a term of a linguistic form that is used to describe “pointing” to oneself or other people or different objects in the environment (Levinson, 1983, Yule, 1996, Mey, 1998). Deictic expressions or indexicals are used to locate actions in the time in relation to the present. Hatch (1992: 212) claims that they show social relationships – the social location of individuals in relation to others. They are used to locate parts of a text in relation to other parts. “Deixis is clearly a form of referring that is tied to the speaker’s context, with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being “near speaker” versus “away from speaker” (Yule: 1996, 9) Levinson (1983: 59) identified five major types of deictic markers:

- 1) person deixis refers to grammatical markers of participant roles in a speech event,
- 2) place or spatial deixis refers to the relationship between space and location of the participants in the discourse. Most languages make a distinction between close to speaker (proximal) and away from the speaker (distal). In English the relation between close to speaker and away from the speaker is realized in, e.g., demonstratives (this and that) or in adverbs (here and there), (Hatch: 1992: 214).
- 3) time or temporal deixis refers to time relative to the time of speaking. English, for example, uses “now” versus “ then”, “yesterday”, “today” and tomorrow” (Hatch, 1992: 214).
- 4) discourse deixis, according to Levinson (1983: 59) keep track of reference in the unfolding discourse. The phrases “in the following chapter” or pointers such as “this/that” refer to large chunks of the discourse that are located within the discourse itself.

- 5) Social deixis is used to code social relationships between speakers and an addressee or audience. Honorifics, titles of address, vocatives, and pronouns are included in this category. There are two kinds of social deixis: relational and absolute. Absolute deictics refer to social roles, e.g., Your Honour, Mr. President. Relational deictics in English according to Hatch, (1992: 221) may be lexical items (e.g., my husband, cousin teacher), pronouns (you, her) or particles. Social deixis is important because it concerns the coding of specific social relationships.

It seems evident that the English language is rich in the deictic markers. They are applied to link the speech to the context of time and space thus assisting in the determination of the reference.

3.2.2.Reference

Yule (1996: 17) states that reference is an act in which a speaker uses linguistic forms to enable a listener to identify something. It is clearly tied to the speaker's goals (e.g., to identify something) and the speaker's beliefs (i.e., can the listener be expected to know that particular something?) in the use of language. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 31) claim that in English certain personals, demonstratives and comparatives do not have semantic meaning of their own, but they make reference to something else for their interpretation. "In the case of reference the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, the identity of the particular thing or class of things that is being referred to; and the cohesion lies in the continuity of reference, whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time", Halliday and Hasan (1976: 31). Hatch (1992: 224) states that in addition to lexical items, the English language uses pronouns, demonstratives, and comparatives for grammatical reference. To sum up, pragmatic knowledge assists in determining the reference of deictics, deictic usage without it could result in misunderstandings and vagueness.

To illustrate the above said regarding deixis and reference, the tape-script of the recorded speech of the researcher about her findings (from the English course book "Matrix, Upper-Intermediate", 2001) will be analyzed (full version see Appendix 2): the discourse consisting of 239 words contains 21 deictic expressions, namely, 21 pronouns. The personal pronoun "we" is used to denote "people" (1,2,3,4) as well as "researchers"(16,19), the personal pronoun "they" denotes "ordinary mortals"(6) and "London taxi drivers"(8,9). The possessive pronouns "its (5), their (7,18)" are used. The demonstrative pronoun in the singular "this" in "this city (11)" and "this time (15)" has two references. In (11) "this"

refers to London, in (15) “*this*” is a proximal expression meaning near the speaker as opposed to some time period in the past expressed by “previously”. Besides, the tape-script

(key: / = pause)
The hippocampus / is where we (1) store the things / we (2) consciously remember. / As part of that / we (3) could include navigation. / We (4) know / that in animals / navigation and the hippocampus / are intimately linked. / So it would seem now / is the human hippocampus. / Tests showed / that if any part of a creature’s hippocampus was damaged, / the animal could no longer find its (5) way around. / Ordinary mortals, too, / have shown that they (6) use hippocampus / to find their (7) way around. / But the brains of London taxi drivers / grew to accommodate the layout of the whole city. / They (8) are excellent group to study. / (9)..... This (15) time / we (16) simply invited them (17) / to lie back / silently / and have their (18) grey matter measured / by two different techniques. / What we (19) did / was look at the amount of time / spent as a taxi driver / and then looked at the brain measurements. / We (20) found a significant correlation, / in that the back part of the hippocampus / increased in size. / The longer you (21) have been a taxi driver, / the bigger the brain got.

presents an example of the shift of deictic markers. At the beginning of the speech the personal pronoun 1st person “we” (1,2,3,4) and later on the personal pronoun 2nd person “you” (10, 20) serve to express reference to human beings. Deixis and referential phrases are used abundantly, in some cases they do not help the interpretation.

Consequently, the following conclusion has been drawn from the analysis above: the pragmatic interpretation can be differentiated from the linguistic processing of the spoken discourse since it requires the listener to understand not only linguistic information, such as vocabulary and sentence structure, but also contextual information.

3.3. The Cooperative Principle

The present subchapter focuses on the Cooperative Principle in terms of the way listeners comprehend the meaning in transactional spoken discourse in a foreign language. In 1967 the philosopher of language H. P. Grice gave a series of lectures entitled “Logic and Conversation” at Harvard University. Grice (1975/1989) argued that conversational participants take into account what he called the Cooperative Principle which states that conversation participants have an unspoken agreement to talk cooperatively with each contributing to the conversation and speaking on the topic. The point is that communication is not always a matter of logic or truth, but of cooperation; not what the person says, but what he/she can say given the circumstances, and of what he/she must say, given by partner’s expectations. Grice drew people’s attention to the idea that utterance interpretation was not just a matter of decoding, but also a matter of inference. People not

only infer the meaning of the discourse, but also intentions of those who have uttered the discourse. There are four sub-principles of the Cooperative Principle, termed conversational maxims. They are the following (after Grice, in Yule 1996:43):

The maxim of quantity:

1. Make your contributions as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. do not make your contribution more informative than required.

The maxim of quality:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The maxim of relation:

Be relevant.

The maxim of manner:

1. avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

These maxims are necessary to observe otherwise communication would be very difficult and cause misunderstanding. Communication participants assume that partners are normally going to provide an appropriate amount of information; they assume that partners are telling the truth, being relevant and trying to be as clear as they can. Because communication is cooperative, speakers behave in certain predictable ways. Pragmatic interpretation means that when a listener is trying to work out what a speaker means, he/she can assume that a speaker is obeying certain standards—basically a listener can assume that what a speaker is saying is going to meet his/her expectations in some way. Grice's fundamental insight is that speakers tend to behave in certain predictable cooperative ways; and that listeners can use the assumption that speakers are behaving cooperatively as a key part of the process of utterance interpretation; they can use it, in other words, as a premise in the process of logical reasoning or inference. Grice posits that speakers will make sure that each conversational contribution complies, at least at some level with the Cooperative Principle and the maxims are the guiding principles of communication. Further, because speakers comply with the cooperative principle and maxims, listeners can use them as part of their strategy for interpreting utterances. Listeners, in their turn, put the linguistic meaning of what has been said, the assumption that the speaker is being cooperative and

any other necessary world knowledge together and come up with an interpretation of the utterance in question.

Grice recognized that whilst people could choose not to follow a maxim, such a choice would be conscious and consequential. A speaker can choose to:

1. violate a maxim, and be intentionally misleading.
2. flout a maxim and be intentionally ironic, but still be cooperative.
3. opt out of a maxim and refuse to co-operate
4. deal with a “clash” of a maxim, for instance, between saying enough and saying all that we know to be true.
5. infringe a maxim. The speaker may fail to observe a maxim without intention because of person’s incomplete command of language or due to some kind of temporary impairment (e.g., nervousness), Rost (2002:44).

There are various conditions under which these maxims might be violated or infringed upon. It is difficult to observe the maxims if there is no common background knowledge of the participants of the communication. It is especially true in educational environments. If the speaker’s experience is different from the listener’s then the listener will infer something that was not intended by the speaker.

Schiffrin (1998: 226) in her analysis of the maxims of quantity and relation in narratives, states that the quantity maxim leads hearers to search for the certain amount of information in a text, whereas the maxim of relation leads hearers to use information in a certain way, i.e., to find its relevance to the rest of the text and to the context in which it is situated. In other words, the listener expects cooperation on the part of the speaker and expects that the maxims of quantity and relation will be observed.

3.4. Implicature and Presupposition

As the present study focuses on the meaning of the utterance, its semantic aspect, the discussion will further move onto the implicature and presuppositions that convey implicit meaning of the spoken discourse. What Grice called **implicature** occurs when language users communicate indirect meaning or implied meaning. A listener, assuming that a speaker still intends being cooperative, looks for the meaning other than that which is said. The intended meaning will be arrived at through a hearer working out the pragmatic force

of the discourse rather than its semantic sense. Grice distinguished two different sorts of implicature: **conventional** implicature and **conversational** implicature. Thomas, comparing the two types of implicatures, concludes: “They have in common the property that they both convey an additional level of meaning, beyond the semantic meaning of the words uttered. They differ in that in the case of conventional implicature the same implication is always conveyed regardless of context, whereas in the case of conversational implicature, what is implied varies according to the context of utterance” Thomas (1995: 57). Levinson (1983: 127) lists words that will point to conventional implicatures: *but, even, therefore and yet*. For example, the word “but“ always carries the implicature that what follows will be opposite the expectations regardless the context in which it is used. In the case of conversational implicature, the implied meaning depends on the particular context of the speech event.

The pragmatic interest in the implicit meaning of the utterances includes meanings which are suggested by the use of a particular structure. **Presuppositions** are implicit meanings. Yule (1996: 25) states that a presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making utterances and an entailment is something that logically follows from what is asserted in the utterance. Pragmatic presuppositions depend on the context and, on a practical level, are used for interaction/transaction purposes. Seemingly, meanings of words in extended transactional spoken discourse could be best attended to as the source of lexical presupposition. Yule (1996: 28) claims that in lexical presupposition, the use of one form with its asserted meaning is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that another (non-asserted) meaning is understood. To put it differently, presuppositions concern the knowledge which the speaker presumes as part of the background knowledge already known to the listener. Language learners appear in another language environment with the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of their native language. This knowledge is not sufficient for the successful communication. The presuppositions of the language use and the background knowledge that communication participants have are different in different cultures, and the communication is not always successful.

3.5. The Principle of Relevance

Relevance Theory was developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986), at least in part as a reaction to Gricean Pragmatics. The theory is based on “the principle of relation”, one of

the four Gricean maxims. Sperber and Wilson argue that the relevance principle is more explicit than Grice's cooperative principle and maxims (1995:161). The Principle of Relevance is the following: "Every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance" (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995:158). The term "ostensive communication" describes a situation where there is interaction between the communicator and the hearer. Sperber and Wilson claim that such relevance is grounded in human cognition. For Sperber and Wilson, relevance is conceived as relative or subjective, as it depends upon the state of knowledge of a hearer at the moment of the communication. The hearer perceives that the speaker will communicate only relevant information, in other words, the speaker will be as economical as possible communicating the message. In a nutshell, hearers processing the incoming information will be perplexed if too much unnecessary information is included in the utterance. Thus, while listening, people focus on the information which seems relevant. The essential claim of relevance theory is that in any given context, the addressee assumes that what the speaker is saying is relevant.

Cook (1990) suggests that Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory is very closely related to schema theory since "information is relevant when it has a significant effect on our assumptions: in other words, when it will allow us to alter our knowledge structures to give us a more accurate representation of the world" Cook (1990: 73). Moreover, schemata allow human communication to be economical. People in their communication assume that there exists some sort of mutually shared knowledge, otherwise people would start every communication with long introductions.

The present paper focuses on the processing of the transactional spoken discourse by target language learners in the educational environment. The author has set the aim to explore how the pragmatic rules and Cooperative Principle can be applied to transactional non-collaborative discourse in a target language recorded on the tape. Consequently, the tape-script (full version see Appendix 1) of the recorded spoken discourse "The London Eye" (from the English study book "Matrix, Upper-Intermediate", 2001) used in the empirical experiment, in terms of observing the Cooperative Principle, is analyzed below. The spoken discourse is a recording of a tourist guide's story of the London Eye.

(1) First I'd just like to give you a little information about London itself.

The speaker starts with stating in the sentence (1) what the passage will be about.

(2) The London Eye stands on the river Thames. ...

The knowledge of geography is required in (2) to know that London lies on the river Thames.

(3) The Romans settled in Londinium at the beginning of the first millennium.

The knowledge of history is required in (3) to understand that the Roman Empire once occupied big territories in Europe.

(4) The city grew but the river was always at its heart - importing and exporting goods for around the world and providing a safer alternative to travelling by road.

a) The sentence (4) requires the historic knowledge to understand that not only roads but also rivers were used for transporting goods. Besides, here the Maxim of Relation is violated since the speaker has promised to tell about London but decided to describe the role of the river Thames thus not saying what is relevant to the topic.

b) The metaphorical language is used in (4). The noun “heart” denotes the centre of the city.

(5) Flooding and freezing were frequent, and pollution was to be expected...

The sentence (5) requires the general knowledge of what problems are caused by rivers to the residential areas around them.

(6) However, conditions have greatly improved on the river.....

(7) The relationship of the Thames to London changed profoundly.....

The sentences in (6 and 7) **presuppose** that the guide thinks that the listeners know about the conditions caused by the river earlier. The speaker does not explain what the conditions were like and what relationship had to be changed.

(8) Thames Barrier is now London's first defence against floods.

In real life the speaker probably points at the Thames Barrier while speaking (8), and tourists listening to the guide have the visual picture of the Thames Barrier. The learners as overhearers in a classroom, however, need to have either the geographic knowledge of such structure in London or the general knowledge of the technical solutions in the case of flood threat. It seems that at this point the Maxim of Quantity is violated as the discourse is more informative than required. In addition to the information about the river as the cause of various troubles, the speaker has included the information about the structure “Thames Barrier”.

(9) ... big container ships of the 20th century could no longer navigate the river and elsewhere.

The sentence (9) contains implicit meaning. The words “no longer” carry the **presupposition** that there was the time when big container ships navigated the river.

(10) Since then, the Thames has become a source of pleasure to Londoners with its river developments.

a) This sentence (10) requires the general knowledge of what types of entertainment people can enjoy due to the river. Moreover, the cultural knowledge is necessary to be aware of the favourite pastime activities of Englishmen on the river Thames.

b) the words “since then” carry the reference, denoting that “then” refers to the period when container ships stopped the navigation.

The sentence (10) seems completely off the point since the guide neither explains what she means by “a source of pleasure” nor gives a more detailed account of its types of activities therefore the Maxim of Relation is violated.

(11) many of the *city's* most famous landmarks are nearby.... (12) settled *in Londinium*, was called.... (13) The *city* grew but the river was always at its heart. ... (14) .now *Lon* first defence against floods. (15) relationship of the Thames to *London* cha profoundly...

The group of utterances above (11-15) contains the information about London from different places of the discourse under the analysis. Only these five clauses refer to London even though the guide promised to tell about London in the first topic sentence. Besides, the information is quite superficial and not very thorough.

(16) As for the Eye itself...

The sentence (16) contains a discourse marker “as for” that clearly indicates the change of the subject. The last third of the speech is devoted to a very short description of the London Eye.

(17) the main structure... the centre part.... the cables.... the capsules

The description of the London Eye contains the names of its different parts. Thus the sentence (17) requires the technical knowledge of the structure of an observation wheel.

To summarize the analysis above, the following can be concluded. In order to interpret the spoken discourse “The London Eye” in the educational setting of the target language learning, the listeners need to have relevant geographic, historic and general knowledge. It is packed with the information. The learners have to process this information very quickly as they cannot control the speed of the speaker, they cannot take turns and they cannot use paralinguistic cues as it is not a face-to-face communication. According to the Cooperative Principle, the listeners would assume that the speaker observes all four maxims and tries to pass the necessary information in the most comprehensible way for the hearer. However, as it can be concluded from the analysis of the transactional non-collaborative spoken discourse above, the speaker has violated at least one maxim, the Maxim of Relation, including the information that does not relate to the main sentence. The speaker stated that

before going to the London Eye, she will give a little information about London itself. However, the passage contained only five clauses regarding London, but a significant part of information was about the river Thames. The Maxim of Quantity is violated as well, as the spoken discourse is more informative than it was suggested in the introductory sentence of the story on the London Eye. The discourse includes the information about the role of the river Thames, the problems it causes to the city and the opportunities for the entertainment. Apart from that, there is too little information about the London Eye itself, thus the expectations of the listeners are not satisfied. The text contains several presuppositions.

Summary

According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics is the study of the relationship between language and context that are encoded in the grammatical structures. Likewise, Mey's (1998) opinion is that pragmatics studies the use of the language that is determined by the context of society, and pragmatics is interested in the language users in real life.

Pragmatics investigates the relation of the language to the contextual background features. Further, the features of situational context offered by various linguists are analyzed. For instance, Brown and Yule (1991: 63) focus on the following features of the context of situation in most face-to-face interactions: speaker, listener, place, time, genre, topic, context. A significant theory regarding the role of the context has been developed by Halliday (1991). He proposes three aspects that characterizes the situational context: mode, tenor and field. They determine the choice of words in discourse. Besides, Halliday (1991: 46) mentions the importance of context of culture, a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted. Moreover, the assumption within the group of people of the shared knowledge of cultural context shows also the shared attitude towards that cultural context. The general knowledge of target language culture and history is a significant issue for language learners. It is impossible to understand simple texts without the knowledge of proper nouns of place names, historic facts, literature and art.

Features of the situational context in the educational settings are the following: foreign language learners as the participants have the role of an **auditor or overhearer**, the listeners are informed about the genre and topic of the discourse in the task conditions but

they are not aware of the place and time of the speech event therefore listeners are supposed to work them out while listening to the discourse or after the event. The speaker and listeners do not have mutual knowledge and culture knowledge as they are strangers representing two different cultures; on the other hand, the co-text limits the range of possible interpretations, and the listeners can use the knowledge from the associations with similar news programmes. Thus the conclusion could be drawn that in the classroom environment when learners listen to recorded texts in a foreign language there is *a limited range of features of context or the listening activity is partly de-contextualized.*

The context is of importance when such pragmatic phenomena as deixis, references and presuppositions are analyzed. The recorded texts used in the educational setting might contain implied meaning in the form of presuppositions and implicature. Presuppositions are implicit meanings. According to Yule (1996), presuppositions concern knowledge which the speaker presumes as part of the background knowledge already known to the listener. Language learners appear in another language environment with the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of their native language. This knowledge is not always relevant to the background knowledge of the speaker in a target language. Implicature occurs when language users communicate indirect meaning or implied meaning. Grice distinguished two different sorts of implicature: conventional implicature and conversational implicature.

According to the Cooperative Principle, the listeners would assume that the speaker observes all four maxims and tries to pass the necessary information in the most comprehensible way for the hearer. The Cooperative Principle by H.P. Grice (1975/1989) include four sub-principles: the maxim of quantity requires being informative without including additional unnecessary information; the maxim of quality requires information that is true and has adequate evidence; the maxim of relation expects participants to be relevant; the maxim of manner presupposes that the speaker will avoid ambiguity and be brief and orderly. However, as it can be concluded from the analysis of the transactional non-collaborative spoken discourse, the speaker might violate the Maxim of Relation and The Maxim of Quantity.

The essential claim of the Relevance Principle is that in any given context, the addressee assumes that what the speaker is saying is relevant. Cook (1990) suggests that Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory is very closely related to schema theory since the information

perceived during communication is relevant if it coincides with the assumptions and background knowledge of the listeners.

To sum up, the pragmatic interpretation can be differentiated from the linguistic processing of the spoken discourse since it requires the listener to understand not only linguistic information, such as vocabulary and sentence structure, but also contextual information and implied meaning.

Chapter 4

Lexical Inferencing

Organization of this chapter

The aim of the present chapter is to explore the processing of the spoken discourse in terms of lexical inference or, in other words, the way learners of the target language guess the meaning of unknown words in the flow of incoming speech. For this purpose it is important to describe the difficulties learners face while listening to a foreign speech in the educational environment, outline Krashen' theory of the Comprehensible Input, explore the notion of lexical inferencing and the use of verbal protocols for collecting data for the analysis of the learners' performance of getting at the meaning.

This chapter focuses on

- Identification of the target language listeners' difficulties
- Lexical inferencing
- Knowledge sources used in lexical inferences

4.1. Identification of the Target Language Listeners' Difficulties

The result of the listening comprehension can be influenced by linguistic factors, pragmatic factors, affective factors and learner differences. The author suggests the following explanations for the difficulties learners encounter while listening to authentic speech (based on Rixon, 1991: 38, Hedge, 2000: 236, Ur, 2002: 112, Ozola, 1999: 34, Rost, 2002: 99).

Linguistic factors:

1. The limited vocabulary in a foreign language.

As it was mentioned before, learners need at least 95% coverage of the running words from the spoken text to have "reasonable success at guessing from context" (Nation, 2003: 114). Besides, the presence of proper nouns, geographic place names, issues related to culture heritage and history may hamper the comprehension.

2. The speech is too fast and listeners cannot distinguish word boundaries.

One of the major difficulty for learners is their feeling that they cannot control the speed at which speakers speak. The majority of learners complain that the speakers in authentic

texts speak too fast. In the stream of words listeners cannot manage to distinguish word boundaries.

3. Various accents of the native speakers.

The huge number of the English language users now causes the problem for learners who have acquired the language only from the tapes in the classroom.

Pragmatic factors

4. The listening texts are overloaded with incoming information.

When learners have to listen to the recordings that are more than two minutes long, crowded with information that is not to the point, or that does not meet the listeners' expectations, they lose concentration and cannot follow the speech. Besides, the topic of the discourse during the speech might shift several times, and the speaker might include additional information which is off the point thus not observing the Cooperative principle of communication.

5. Differences in culture and educational background.

Problems of interpretation occur when the listener and the speaker are from different cultural and educational background. The learners might not have relevant background knowledge of the target language culture. There are words, the so-called "false friends of learners" that might be misleading, for example, "public schools". In the UK public schools are private educational institutions while non-native speakers very often interpret them as "state schools".

Affective factors

6. Individual learner characteristics.

This variable is very important and, according to the majority of the second language researchers, has a noticeable influence on the target language learners' performance. Rost (2002: 99) suggests that there are four groups of factors: 1) cognitive factors (intelligence, language aptitude, language learning strategies), 2) affective factors (language attitudes, motivation, language anxiety), 3) environmental factors (availability of opportunities and resources, time and timing of instruction, teaching methods) and genetic factors (a critical period for language acquisition).

7. Learners have the desire to understand every word.

For many adult students in this country the fact that they do not understand every word of the listening text becomes the obstacle that they cannot overcome for a long time period. At

schools there are cases when the teacher does not use recordings enough or pays more attention to grammar structures and the pronunciation of separate words during the lessons. The accuracy of the speech is more important than fluency. This style of teaching leads students to focus on language word by word and then to decide the meaning. Therefore when listening to the text in a foreign language, an unknown word makes learners stop in the listening process and think about its meaning in the native language thus missing the next part of speech. There is no doubt that the vocabulary plays an important part but an unknown word could be guessed from the context. It happens so in mother-tongue when the word is not heard clearly.

8. When listening learners feel a strong urge to have the listening passage in front of them in writing.

This difficulty is connected with the pronunciation of the English language. Spoken words do not stay on the paper to be examined, as do written words. The pronunciation of English differs greatly from its written form. “There are four main sources of difficulty for learners: a) the weak relationship between English sounds and the way they are spelt in the written language; b) changes in sounds when they occur in rapid, connected speech; c) the rhythm pattern of English speech; d) different ways of pronouncing the ‘same’ word” (Rixon,1991: 38). The author of the present paper holds the view that developing reading and writing skills in schools still prevail over developing listening skills, thus learners have got used to referring to written text. This habit of seeing the written text in front of them prevents students from improving their listening skills rapidly.

9. Learners are discouraged when they cannot grasp the meaning the first time they listen to the text.

Not so few students hold the view that if they fail to understand the spoken text the first time they hear it, they have no talent for languages and they will never achieve good results. Learners’ anxiety might be caused by negative previous experiences of their ability as listeners.

The author agrees with Rost (2002: 91) who claims that in EFL acquisition the processes of comprehending the input are not identical with the processes of acquiring the EFL through oral input. The process of comprehending input refers to getting the meaning from the

input. The process of acquiring the target language through oral input refers to processing input in order to learn the language.

It is impossible to describe the listening processes in a foreign language without mentioning Stephen Krashen and his Input Hypothesis, the influential theory of a foreign language acquisition research. Krashen claims that an important “condition for language acquisition to occur is that the acquirer understand (via hearing or reading) input language that contains structure “a bit beyond” his or her current level of competence. If an acquirer is at stage or level i the input he or she understands should contain “ $i + 1$ ” (1982: 15) In other words, the language which learners are exposed to should be just beyond their current competence that they can understand most of it but still be challenged to make progress. Consequently, input should neither be so far beyond learners’ reach that they are depressed (for example $i=2$), nor so close to their current stage that learners are not challenged at all ($i = 0$). Krashen insisted that comprehension is necessary in order or input to become “intake” – language data that is assimilated and used to promote further development. And “the ability to understand new language is made possible by speech adjustments made to learners, in addition to the learners’ use of shared knowledge of the context” (Krashen, 1982: 32).

4.2. Lexical Inferencing

The foreign language listeners are exposed to the speech of the native speaker that mainly recorded on the disc or tape, in other words, the input. They have not mastered the linguistic system of the target language, and it is probable that their vocabulary knowledge is restricted, therefore the number of unknown words in the spoken discourse might hinder the comprehension of the meaning of the spoken discourse. As the present study focuses on the processing of the extended transactional non-collaborative discourse, the focus is on the lexical inferencing or guessing of the unknown words from the context.

According to Haastrup (1991), lexical inferencing “involves making informed guesses as to the meaning of a word in light of all available linguistic cues in combination with the learner’s general knowledge of the world, her/his awareness of context and her relevant linguistic knowledge” (Haastrup, 1991: 40). If successful, it can serve briefly for purposes

of immediate comprehension in listening, interaction, or reading activities. Under favourable conditions, it may lead to the retention of the word form as well as other lexical information (Paribakht and Wesche, 1999: 209). Bengueleil and Paribakht (2004: 225) state that lexical inferencing “which involves guessing the meaning of an unfamiliar word using available linguistic and other cues”, is an important lexical processing strategy used by language learners in initial comprehension of unknown words in context. However, the wrong meaning can be inferred in case of a polysemantic word, an idiom or a word which looks or sounds similar to another word but with a different meaning. Another mediating factor, according to Bengueleil and Paribakht (*ibidem*) is lexical density, or the ration of unknown to known words.

The present study explores the linguistic and pragmatic preconditions of the processing of the spoken discourse by the target language learners therefore inferencing at text level through top-down processing of the oral speech is looked upon from the view of learners’ ability to notice words in the flow of speech and infer the meaning of unknown words. Inferencing, as the reception process, is applied in real-life situations and in the educational settings. Learners engage in the lexical inferencing when they are involved in the listening activity, when they listen to the recorded spoken discourse.

Nation in his fundamental study on the foreign language vocabulary issues claims that five factors influence the research of lexical inferencing. According to Nation (2003: 233), firstly, the learners’ vocabulary size influences successful guessing, since it affects the density of unknown words in the text. He states that densities like one word in 50 words (98% coverage) are optimal, but 95% coverage is acceptable. Secondly, the estimates of guessing need to be based on the actual words not known by each learner. Thirdly, learner skill is a critical factor in guessing since the abilities vary. Fourthly, learners must be given credit for guesses that are not 100% correct but which make a small but positive contribution to knowledge of the meaning of the word. Finally, it is important to distinguish between natural contexts and specially constructed or chosen contexts.

When using contextual cues (also called extralingual or pragmatic cues), learners draw on background knowledge and the knowledge of the world. According to schema theory (Rumelhart, 1980), word inference can be seen as a process of search for, and use of, relevant schemata to identify unfamiliar verbal stimuli. Schemata can be seen as frames of reference which provide a basis for prediction and allow for the organization of information

in long-term memory. In other words, word inferences comprise the search for and use of relevant schemata to understand the messages conveyed in the unknown verbal stimuli. Li (1988: 403) claims that “to infer the meaning of an unfamiliar word in context, the text-receiver (listener) has to acquire something new by means of (1) what one has experienced in, and known of, the real world as well as (2) what is conveyed in the text that aims at depicting the real world”.

The research on lexical inferencing in the foreign and second language reading and listening have used think-aloud or verbal protocols (Brown and Rodgers, 2002), a version of verbal report to find out inference processes. The term introspective research is used for this type of study. The participants state their thoughts while performing a given task (reading) or as a retrospective activity (listening). The participants’ thoughts that they pronounce are recorded on the tape.

One of the models has been proposed by Ericsson and Simon (1993). Based on widely accepted theoretical assumptions about human information processing, this model specifies the amounts and kinds of mental information that can be retained for accessing and reporting this information. Two ways of collecting verbal protocols are distinguished: one is concurrent verbalization and refers to introspection of cognitive processes at the time they are being attended to. The second is retrospective verbalization and refers to reporting about cognitive processes occurred earlier. Goh (2002: 189) suggests that verbal data on listening processes can be collected mainly by retrospective activity. As it was mentioned in the present paper before, the listeners cannot control the speed of the talk. The procedure of the introspective study is as follows: firstly, the listeners process the information input, then they report through retrospective verbalization.

It is important to note that researchers interested in listening comprehension (Nunan, Rost, Richards, Flowerdew, Field), often had drawn on the findings discovered by scholars studying reading comprehension. Vandergrift’s (2006: 9) statement could explain this tendency. He claims that as a process of comprehension, listening shares many important characteristics with reading. Both require receptive language processing, which involves decoding and comprehension. Thus, according to him, both processes use two basic knowledge sources, the language knowledge and the world knowledge (e.g., topic, text structure, schema, and culture) for the purposes of comprehension. Like reading, listening

also entails two major processes, top-down and bottom-up, in applying such knowledge to the input during comprehension. Both listening and reading refer to flexible and adaptable cognitive processes, and the listener, like the reader, constructs, in memory, mental representation of what has been comprehended.

4.3. Knowledge Sources Used in Lexical Inferences

The researchers studying lexical inferences (Carton, 1971; Haastrup, 1991; Paribakht and Wesche, 1999; Bengeleil and Paribakht, 2004) suggest that there are three types of cues available to learners for making lexical references. Haastrup (1991: 205) classified the knowledge sources using Carton's (1971) three categories (which are not mutually exclusive): **interlingual**: cues based on L1 (native language), loan words, in L1 or knowledge of other languages; **intralingual**: cues based on knowledge of English; **contextual**: cues based on the text or informants' knowledge of the world.

Recently researchers have examined lexical inferencing procedures in a target language reading using think-aloud protocols. Morison's (1994) study was concerned with two proficiency groups of university-level French as the second language learners. The result showed that there was a clear and significant difference between the high-proficiency (HP) and low-proficiency (LP) groups in that the HP group used intralingual sources much more frequently than the LP groups. The same results applied with regard to the number of knowledge sources activated and the possible combinations. HP learners used more knowledge sources and more combined sources.

Paribakht and Wesche (1999) introspective study of intermediate second language learners in a university ESL class demonstrated that the part of speech interacted with strategy use. Learners used more inferencing for verbs in the question task than in the summary task. Besides, learners used varied kinds of previous knowledge as well as textual cues and they often used several knowledge sources together. Sentence-level grammatical knowledge for adjectives was used frequently. Next more important sources of knowledge were word morphology, punctuation and world knowledge. The study gave evidence that there were notable individual differences in the knowledge sources used, and they could be referred to learners' previous language learning experience, their first language and their familiarity with the topic.

Another study carried out by Bangeleil and Paribakht (2004) examined the effect of the English foreign language learners reading proficiency on their lexical inferencing while reading an English expository text. On the basis of this study they developed the following taxonomy (see Table 3) that analyzed the sources of knowledge used in lexical inferencing in a target language.

Table 3. The sources of knowledge used in lexical inferencing

<p>I Linguistic sources</p> <p>A. Intralingual sources</p> <p>1. <u>Target word level</u>: a) word morphology, b) homonymy, c) word association</p> <p>2. <u>Sentence level</u>: a) sentence meaning, b) syntagmatic relations, c) paradigm relations, d) grammar, e) punctuation.</p> <p>3. <u>Discourse level</u>: a) discourse meaning, b) formal schemata</p> <p>B. Interlingual sources</p> <p>1. Lexical knowledge</p> <p>2. Word collocation</p>
<p>II Non-linguistic sources</p> <p>A. Knowledge of topic</p> <p>B. Knowledge of medical terms</p>

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The results of the above mention study showed that in inferring the meanings of unfamiliar words, participants used a variety of knowledge sources and drew on their knowledge of the TL as well as on several other sources, such as their L1 and their background knowledge of the world. This indicates that in the process of lexical inferencing L2 readers' prior linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge sources interact with contextual cues in the text to help them arrive at a meaning of the unfamiliar lexical items. It is interesting to note that both proficiency groups generally had a similar pattern of the use of knowledge sources. Sentence-level meaning was the source used predominantly by both groups. However, the intermediate group relied more often than the advanced group on discourse-level meaning.

Bengeleil and Paribakht taxonomy of knowledge sources will partly serve as the analysis tool for the present study to examine the knowledge sources used by the target language learners while listening to the extended transactional non-collaborative spoken discourse.

Summary

The chapter starts with the characteristics of the problems that influence the listening process. They are the following: linguistic factors (the limited vocabulary in a foreign language, the speech is too fast and listeners cannot distinguish word boundaries, various accents of the native speakers), pragmatic factors (the listening texts are overloaded with incoming information, differences in culture and educational background, affective factors), individual learner characteristics (learners have the desire to understand every word, when listening learners feel a strong urge to have the listening passage in front of them in writing, learners are discouraged when they cannot grasp the meaning the first time they listen to the text). However, according to Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, the language, which learners are exposed to, should be just beyond their current competence that they can understand most of it but still be challenged to make progress. The new lexical material should contain " $i + 1$ " where " i " is language learners' current knowledge, and new material corresponds to " $i+1$ ". Consequently, input should not exceed their knowledge so much that they are depressed (for example " $i=2$ "), nor to be so close to their current stage that learners are not challenged at all (" $i = 0$ ").

Inferencing, as a reception process, is applied in real-life situations and in the educational settings. Learners engage in the lexical inferencing when they are involved in the listening activity, when they listen to the recorded spoken discourse. According to Haastrup (1991: 40), lexical inferencing "involves making informed guesses as to the meaning of a word in light of all available linguistic cues in combination with the learner's general knowledge of the world, her/his awareness of context and her relevant linguistic knowledge". It is important to note that researchers interested in listening comprehension (Nunan, Rost, Richards, Flowerdew, Field), often had drawn on the findings discovered by scholars studying reading comprehension. According to Vandergrift (2006: 9), as a process of comprehension, listening shares many important characteristics with reading. Both require receptive language processing, which involves decoding and comprehension.

The research on lexical inferencing in the foreign and second language reading and listening have used introspective research (Paribakht and Wesche, 1999; Goh, 2002; Bengelil and Paribakht, 2004). The method involves think-aloud or verbal protocols with the participants of the study. The participants state their thoughts while performing a given task (reading) or as a retrospective activity (listening). The participants' thoughts that they pronounce are recorded on the tape thus obtaining information about their cognitive processes (Ericsson and Simon, 1993; Brown and Rodgers, 2002). The results of such studies indicate that in the process of lexical inferencing L2 readers' prior linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge sources interact with contextual cues in the text to help them arrive at a meaning of the unfamiliar lexical items.

Chapter 5

Empirical Study of the Listeners' Performance Result in Transactional Discourse

The goal of the empirical study was to verify the hypothesis of the present research and to study the role of the activation of the background knowledge and pragmatic information in the pre-listening stage in the processing of the spoken transactional discourse. The present chapter describes the participants, procedure and the findings of the empirical study. It is structured into four sections:

- Characteristics of the empirical study (general considerations regarding the research of listening comprehension in a foreign language, participants, materials and the procedure of the present study).
- Description of the quazi-experiment (Phase 1).
- Description of the results of the participants' questionnaires (Phase 2).
- Description of the introspective study (Phase 3).

5.1. Characteristics of the Empirical Study

5.1.1. Introduction

The present study focuses on the result of the listener performance in transactional discourse. It analyses those aspects of understanding of spoken discourse in a foreign language that can be deduced from the result of the listeners' performance on the task that has tangible outcomes (Rost, 1990: 119). The present study refers to the extended listening text or transactional oral discourse, such as pre-recorded text in which participants are expected to listen continuously for up to one minute at a time. The study explores the processing of listening texts in the conditions similar to language learning conditions in the educational environment where listening sessions are an integral part of language teaching/learning. It is especially important for the learners in the age group of 18-19, since they have to prepare for the National Form 12 English Exam.

Listening is the skill that has caused difficulties for the researchers (Rost, 1993, Flowerdue, 1994) because of restrictions in obtaining process data since the skill operates in real time. The access to the data of the listener's comprehension of the spoken discourse is restricted in time. Thus, the analysis of the result of the listener's performance should be based on

what he/she has recalled about the listening event. Rost (1990:123) suggests that the data of the listening process depend on either listeners' accounts of their listening process (either on-line commentary or "after-the-fact" recollections) or task performances which reveal specific aspects of text understanding. Accordingly, the research should be implemented retrospectively, i.e. after the actual listening process has taken place. Retrospective tasks are those that require responses formulated after listening to a text (Rost, 1990: 128). In addition, the research in applied linguistics of processing the spoken discourse by language learners involves not only listening but also other aspects of language learning. Besides, affective factors, such as motivation and learner differences influence the result as well.

Retrospective tasks have been applied in the research of different aspects of the listening comprehension. For instance, Karina Vidal (2003: 56) investigated the acquisition of EFL vocabulary through academic listening and the effect of EFL proficiency and lecture comprehension on vocabulary acquisition. Vidal's study was performed on a sample of 116 (n=116) students. They were asked to view the lecture and immediately afterwards the subjects were asked to answer ten true-false questions, and complete a listening cloze test. The findings of the study showed that vocabulary knowledge has increased as the result of the listening to the lectures, in addition, the EFL proficiency influenced the vocabulary acquisition significantly.

Larry Vandergrift (2006: 6) reported on the study exploring the relationship between the first language and the second language listening comprehension ability, and the impact of the second language proficiency on the second language listening comprehension ability. The participants were 75 (n=75) English speaking students learning French from two different schools in large Canadian urban setting. They represented 14 – 15 year old adolescents of two language proficiency levels. As the retrospective task, the participants were asked to complete two multiple-choice comprehension tests in French and in English, respectively. The study reported that both L2 proficiency and L1 listening ability contribute substantially to L2 listening comprehension ability.

Consequently, two retrospective tasks were selected, when designing the procedures for the present empirical study. It was planned to ask the participants 1) to record the retrospective oral summaries of the spoken transactional discourse they have listened to; 2) to do the listening comprehension post-test.

5.1.2. Participants

Sixty-four EFL 1st and 2nd year undergraduate students from University of Latvia and forty-four 1st and 2nd year ESP students from Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture, were language learning groups randomly selected for the quasi-experiment (n=108). They were instructed how to record the post-listening oral summary. The quasi-experiment was carried out in EFL classes at the Faculty of Modern Languages, University of Latvia, and Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture. They were grouped into three different groups of participants (see Table 4).

Table 4. Groups of participants

Groups	Participants	Time period
1. EFL students	N=36	2005, April
2. ESP students	N=44	2005, April-May
3. EFL students	N=28	2005, September
Total	N=108	

All in all 20 listening sessions were organized, the length of each session - 60 minutes. The classes were observed and some of them video-taped. The foreign language proficiency level was estimated as upper-intermediate or intermediate since they had levels A, B, and C at National Form 12 English Language Exam (See Table 5).

Table 5. The participants' level at the National Form 12 English Exam

Level	Participant	%
A	N=19	18%
B	N=48	44%
C	N=41	38%

The majority of students had levels B and C that accounted for 44% and 38% from the whole target audience, respectively. 18% of the participants had Level A (see Fig.6).

5.1.3. Materials and Characteristics of Words in the Texts

Two audio taped spoken transactional discourses in the English language were selected from popular in Latvia English text book "Matrix. Upper-Intermediate." (2001) by Gude, K. with Wildman, published by Oxford University Press. One was based on socio-cultural information about the river Thames and the London Eye (The London Eye). The other

reported on the research regarding the part of the brain called hippocampus (Hippocampus).

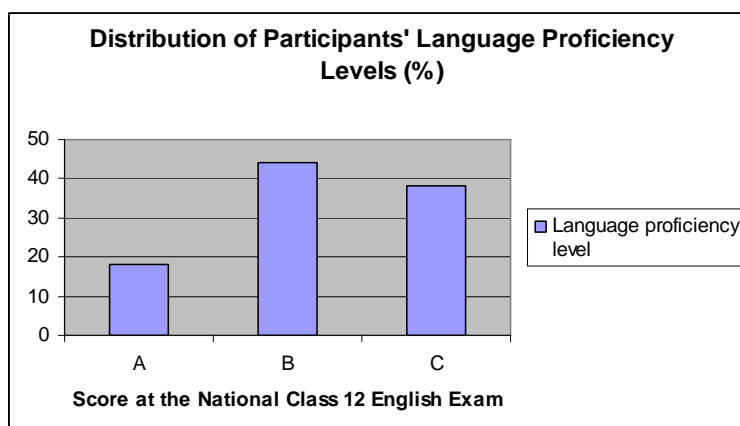


Fig.6. Distribution of participants' language proficiency levels (%)

The two passages were selected according to the following criteria: the length of the recording 1 minute, authentic text, “information report” text type, interesting information. The spoken texts could be categorized as *planned, non-collaborative monologues*. After scrutinizing them more closely, it was possible to conclude that they could be categorized as *scripted* monologues since there were no marked pauses, backchanneling, hesitations, repetitions, elliptical sentences.

Text 1. The London Eye

The text (The London Eye) consists of 282 words (tokens) and 159 types that were counted by VocabProfile programme. The lexical density is estimated 0.50. Content words (nouns, verbs and adjectives) make up 43% of the total number of words in the text (tokens). Of the content words, nouns were the most frequently occurring category (38% of the word types), followed by verbs (14% of the types) and adjectives (8% of the types). The remaining part includes mainly function words (e.g., articles, adverbial particles, auxiliary verbs, prepositions and determiners, numbers, according to Nation, 2003) and a few adverbs, and they comprise 60% of the types. The text contains the following group of words from the Academic Word List: alternative, coincidence, constructed, designed, exporting, founded, project, source, structure. Besides, the text contains a group of low-frequency words such as; *barrier, cables, capsules, celebrate, importing, landmarks, millennium, navigate, pollution, profoundly, riverbank vital, waterway*, and the proper nouns: e.g., *Londinium, Thames Barrier*.

Text 2. The Hippocampus

The text (The Hippocampus) consists of 223 words (tokens), 128 types that were counted by VocabProfile programme. The lexical density is estimated 0.51. Content words make up 38% of the total number of words in the text (tokens). Of the content words, nouns (23%) and verbs (22%) were the most frequently occurring category and adjectives (11% of the types). The remaining part includes mainly function words and a few adverbs comprising 44% of the types. Besides, the text contains a group of words from the Academic Word List: *accommodate, acquired, licensed, linked, previously, significant, techniques, volunteer, and some low-frequency words such as correlation, hippocampus, intimately, layout, mortals, navigation, quizzed, routs, scanners, spatial, vast.*

5.1.4. The Procedure of the Empirical Study

The analysis of the data consisted of three phases:

1. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained during the quasi-experiment. After listening to the spoken transactional discourse 1) with pre-listening treatment and 2) without pre-listening treatment, participants were asked to record retrospective oral summaries and complete the post-test. The research object is the linguistic material in the form of transcribed learners' oral summaries and results of the post-test, acquired after the subjects had been exposed to two types of listening sessions. The total number of words in the student summaries amounted to 18,534 words. Pre-listening treatment involved the activation of the background knowledge; the other listening session, without a pre-listening treatment, was implemented without the activation of the background knowledge.
2. The analysis of the results of the students' questionnaires obtained after the quasi-experiment regarding their attitude to the processing of the spoken transactional discourse.
3. An introspective study of the selected group of twenty participants in order to identify the sources of knowledge the learners use to process the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language.

5.2. PHASE 1

The Analysis of the Results of the Quazi-experiment

5.2.1. Methods of the Research

Quasi-experimental design was chosen as the method of the research. One hundred and eight (n= 108) participants representing upper-intermediate and intermediate undergraduate students from random groups were selected for the study. The following “*time series design*” method suggested by Hatch and Farhady (1982: 25) was applied: after the pre-test, the treatment or the approach was implemented and it was followed by the post-test. Then after the second pre-test, an alternative treatment (non-treatment) was implemented and that was followed by the post-test. The results of both approaches were compared and the experimental data were analyzed with SPSS-13.0 Pearson Chi-Square Test and Exact Test.

The students were exposed to two different treatments or approaches in the form of time-series design: firstly, the participants listened to the recorded oral discourse (Text 1) **with the activation** of the background knowledge or the exposure to pre-listening stage, and, secondly, the participants listened to another recorded oral discourse (Text 2) **without the activation** of the background knowledge or pre-listening stage. Both samples of the spoken transactional discourse represented texts recorded on the tape from the English language text book used in the secondary schools (Gude, K. with Wildman, J. Matrix. Upper-Intermediate. OUP) published in 2001. Immediately afterwards, the participants were asked to record their oral summaries (the necessary equipment was provided). Next, the participants completed the post-test in the form of the comprehension questions. The type of the task was retrospective and could be characterized in the following way (according to Rost, 1990: 125):

- open (oral summarizing task and post-test in the form of comprehension questions),
- delayed (in terms of time between hearing and task response),
- requiring verbatim formulation (in terms of verbal requirement of the task).

Accordingly, the **dependent variables** are 1) *the number of content words recognized in the spoken discourse and used in the oral summaries*, and 2) *the results of the post-test*. The **independent variable** is *the type of the approach*. In addition, the *influence of the foreign language proficiency level on the task results* was measured. As the follow-up of the listening session the questionnaires were administered among the participants to find

out the personal information and their attitudes to the listening process. The analysis of the questionnaires will be presented in the next section.

5.2.2. Procedure

In 2005 the quasi-experimental study was carried out involving the following stages:

Stage 1. 108 undergraduate students from universities in Latvia aged 18-20 were selected in random academic groups for the quasi-experiment.

Stage 2. Selection of the listening texts: transactional discourse consisting of approximately 240 words recorded on the tape.

Stage 3. Design of the students' questionnaires and post-test comprehension questions.

Stage 4. Preparation of the listening session:

4.1. Development of pre-listening exercises;

4.2. Supply of the necessary equipment for recording oral summaries (Computers with multi-media function at the Faculty of Modern Languages, University of Latvia, and tape recorders at the Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture).

4.3. Vocabulary pre-tests of sample groups of students in each of the universities.

Stage 5. Quasi-experiment:

5.1. Listening sessions that were carried out by activating the background knowledge, i.e. implementing pre-listening activities,

5.2. Listening sessions that were carried out without activating background knowledge, i.e. without pre-listening activities.

5.3. After each of the listening sessions the participants were asked to record oral summaries on the disc (EFL students) or on the tape (ESP students).

5.5. The participants were asked to complete the post-test in the form of open comprehension questions.

5.4. The questionnaires were administered regarding participants' personal information and attitude to the listening process during the quasi-experiment.

Stage 6. Transcribing the participants' oral summaries or discourse.

Stage 7. Statistic analysis of the data obtained from the participants' oral summaries or discourse.

Stage 8. Statistic analysis of the data obtained from the participants' questionnaires (the description of the analysis of the questionnaires will be presented in the next sub-chapter.

5.2.3. The Quazi-experiment and Data Collection

As it was mentioned above, the participants represented two universities. Taking into account the existing technical facilities in each of the universities, the quazi-experiment was organized in two different ways.

EFL students. The faculty has been equipped with very good computer facilities. The computer room is equipped with ten computers that have ear-phones and microphones. Accordingly, from 8 to 10 students participated in the experiment at a time. The subjects participated in the quasi-experiment during their EFL classes. Before the experiment they were informed about the theories underlying the study, they were instructed how to use the equipment. Each group of participants was exposed to two different approaches of processing of the spoken discourse: Approach 1: without activating background knowledge, i.e. without pre-listening activities, Approach 2: by activating the background knowledge, i.e. implementing pre-listening activities, so each participant took part in two sessions. Graphically it could be represented in the following way (based on Hatch and Farhady, 1982: 25):

T1 X(Text 1) OS1+T 2	7 times
T3 O(Text2) OS2+T4	7 times

Where “T1 and T3” is the pre-test, “X” is the treatment or pre-listening stage, “O” is no treatment or without pre-listening stage, OS1 and OS2 are retrospective oral summaries, T2 and T4 are post-tests. The **pre-test** was administered several weeks before the quasi-experiment. It showed that the text *The London Eye* in average contained 8 unknown words. They were: “*coincidence, providing, frequent, profoundly, observation, wheel, defence, cables*”. The text *Hippocampus* in average contained 8 unknown words: “*to store, creature, consciously, acquire, spatial, measurements, mortals, correlation*”.

ESP students. This faculty is not provided with the computer facilities that could be used for this purpose. Thus another type of equipment was arranged: seven cassette recorders. Seven students participated in the listening session at a time, and they were asked to record in the quasi-experiment during their ESP classes. Before the quazi-experiment they were informed about the theories underlying the study, they were instructed how to use the equipment. Each group of participants was exposed to two different approaches of processing of the spoken discourse: Approach 1: without activating background knowledge, i.e. without pre-listening activities, Approach 2: by activating the background knowledge, i.e. implementing pre-listening activities.

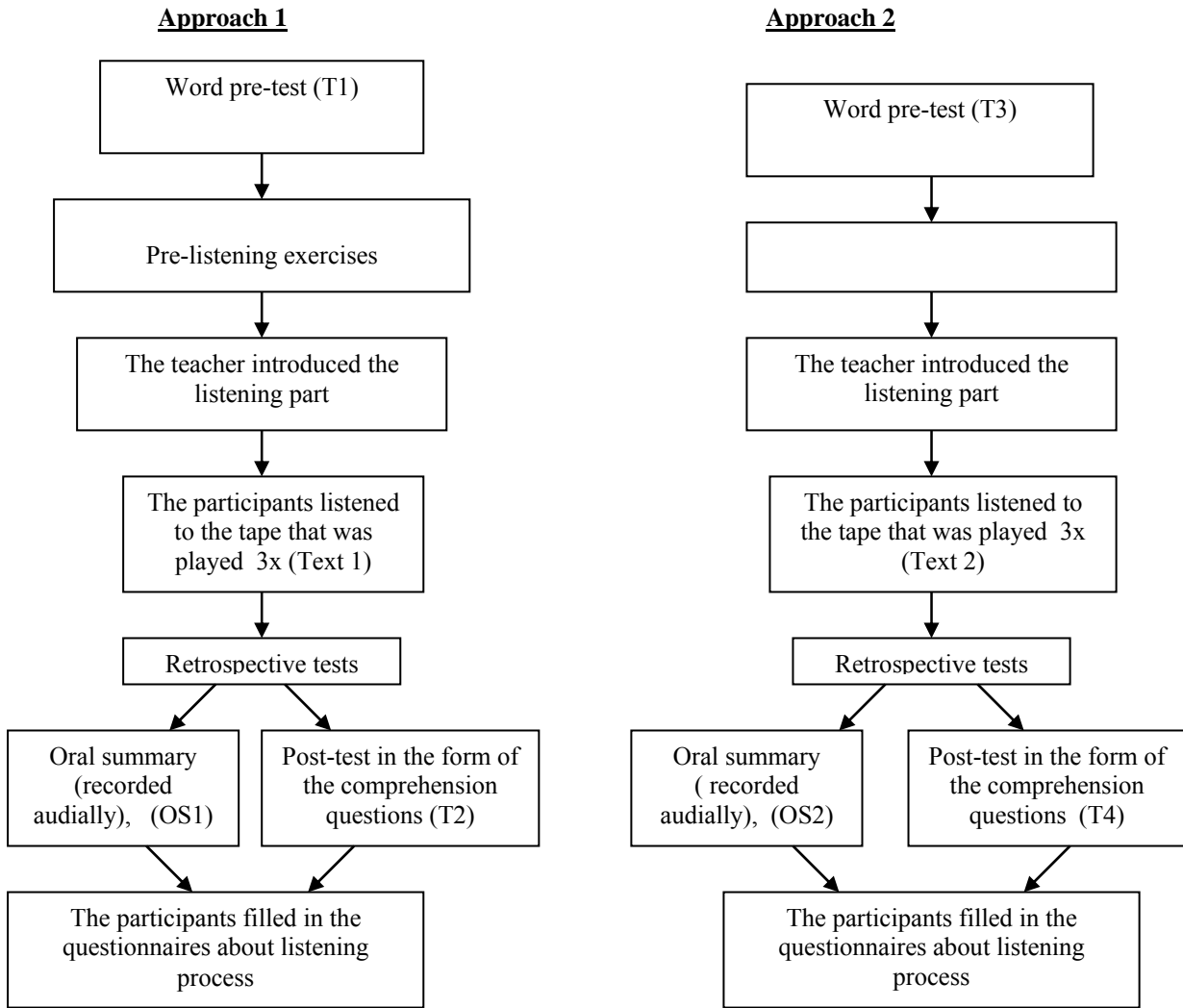


Fig. 7. The design of the listening sessions of the participants.

Graphically it could be represented in the following way (based on Hatch and Farhady, 1982: 25):

T1 X(Text 1) OS1+T 2	6 times
T3 O(Text2) OS2+T4	6 times

Where “T1 and T3” is the pre-test, “X” is the treatment or pre-listening stage, “O” is no treatment or without pre-listening stage, OS1 and OS2 are retrospective oral summaries, T2 and T4 are post-tests. The **pre-test** was administered several weeks before the quasi-experiment. It showed that the text *The London Eye* in average contained 14 unknown words. They were: “*landmark, nearby, elsewhere, coincidence, providing, frequent, profoundly, observation, wheel, defence, cables, Londinuim, Romans, flooding*”. The text *Hippocampus* in average contained 16 unknown words: “*to store, creature, consciously,*

acquire, spatial, measurements, mortals, correlation, accommodate, vast, amount, elsewhere, routs, techniques, significant, size". Fig. 7 reflects the design of listening sessions of the participants.

The activities designed previously for the pre-listening stage were the following:

The task sheet of the text "The London Eye" consisted of three tasks: Task 1 contained factual information about the London Eye (its description, the place, its purpose), Task 2 asked the participants to describe the picture of the Eye, naming its different parts, Task 3 asked them to read six questions before listening to the text. The participants could find answers to the questions in the while-listening stage. The pre-listening activities provided the students with the information of the situational context (the place, the theme) and activated their background knowledge about such observation wheels. The task sheet of the text "The Hippocampus" consisted of three tasks: Task 1 contained a picture of a taxi and the students were asked to describe the picture, Task 2 contained the tapescript of the recording that told about the research of London taxi drivers' brain, the participants were asked to listen to the recording. Task 3 asked the participants to read the statements before listening to the text and guess which ones would be mentioned during the recording. The pre-listening activities provided the students with the information of the situational context (participants, genre: similar news programmes, co-text), and activated their background knowledge about the professional needs of taxi drivers and the similar research.

Participants' recordings with their oral summaries were later on collected in the file in order to transcribe them in written form for the analysis. Table 6 presents a sample of two transcribed oral summaries (Text 1 and Text 2) of the same participant.

Table 6. The sample of two transcribed oral summaries

The sample of the transcribed student's oral summary (with pre-listening treatment) Text 1 (London Eye)	The sample of the transcribed student's oral summary (without pre-listening treatment). Text 2 (Hippocampus)
London is situated on the river Thames, / and it is of the biggest cities in the world. / Romans settled in Londinium / as London was called that time / at the beginning of the first millennium. / They settled there because of the river, / because the river was trading / and travelling centre. / Such big river / had also problems, / because there were flooding and freezing frequently / and also big pollution. / Now / in the 20 century there are made changes on the river, /and this river is / no longer used for big ship navigation. / It took seven years / to	Hippocampus is the part of our brain / where we store the things / we remember. / One of its parts is also navigation. / In animals navigation / and hippocampus are linked / and it is proved that / if hippocampus is damaged, / so animals can no find way around. / There was also one test done / with London taxi drivers. / They were asked to lie back. / They were silently watched, / so their brains were silently watched. / It could be done only in City / because London taxi drivers / have specialized licences. /There were used two techniques. / So, / it was proved/ that in

<p>build the London Eye construction, / and it was built to celebrate / new millennium. There <u>were</u> <u>no such big place</u> / where to <i>constrain</i> all this construction, / so many countries took part in building / this construction. / Main structure was built in Holland, / central part in Check Republic, / cables in Italy and / capsules in France.</p>	<p>back part of hippocampus, / it increased in size / and if taxi driver was working longer time, / then also the bigger was the brain.</p>
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After the listening sessions the author of the present paper had to work with the obtained linguistic material. Firstly, the participants' oral summaries were collected 1) on two discs, 2) in three audio cassettes. Secondly, the author listened to them and transcribed them. It involved working through each of the recording, pausing the recording and putting down the speech word by word. Then the transcribed summaries were typed into a computer file for the further analysis. Thirdly, the post-test answers to the comprehension questions were examined and prepared for the analysis.

5.2.4. Measurement and the Analysis of the Linguistic Data

As it was mentioned above the participants' oral summaries or discourses were listened to and transcribed. The subsequent analysis was based on these written transcripts. The study involved the identification of content words repeated in the oral summaries in each of the approaches. Number of content words in the oral summaries of Text 1 and 2 that the participants had used in their oral summaries was identified. Further, the results of the post-test or answers to the comprehension questions were analyzed. The number of right questions was referred to the total number of questions and turned into the percentage of the right answers. The obtained data do not have normal distribution, since the study is based on the qualitative data, therefore non-parametrical test should be applied. Thus to measure the validity of the hypothesis, Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied to both task types (using SSPS-13.0).

5.2.4.1. Results of Retrospective Oral Summaries

The mean of the recognized and repeated words in participants' oral summaries was calculated. The result of means showed that those learners that were exposed to pre-listening stage could recognize and repeat much higher number of content words (see Table 7). To answer the research question, if the activation of schemata and the additional pragmatic information in the pre-listening stage had any impact on the recognition of words during the while-listening stage, SPSS statistical analysis was conducted. The linguistic

data: content words recognized and used in the participants' summaries, were classified in groups: the number of participants that have used less than 15, the number of participants

Table 7. The mean of the recognized and used words in participants' retrospective oral summaries

Discourse	Approach 1 (mean)	Approach 2 (mean)
The London Eye	27 content words	23 content words
The Hippocampus	21 content words	18 content words

that have used 16-20 content words, 21-25 content words, 26-30 content words, more than 30 content words in each of the approaches. The mean of the recognized and used words in participants' oral summaries was calculated. The result of means showed that participants when they were exposed to pre-listening stage could recognize and use much higher number of content words. From Table 8 below it is apparent that 24% of those who were exposed to pre-listening activities could recognize and use more than 31 words, while only 8% of those who were not exposed to pre-listening activities could recognize and use more than 31 words. (See Table 8).

Table 8. Number of content words in participants' oral summaries in each of the approaches.

Oral discourse	Approach	Content words used in oral summaries <15 (No participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries 16 – 20 (No participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries 21- 25 (No participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries 26-30 (No participants and %)	Content words in oral summaries >31 (No Participants and %)
Both texts	1	11 10%	22 20%	29 27%	20 19%	26 24%
	2	16 15%	40 37%	26 24%	17 16%	9 8%
Text 1	1	6 11%	4 7%	8 14%	15 27%	23 41%
	2	5 10%	11 21%	14 27%	14 27%	8 15%
Text 2	1	5 11%	17 32%	21 40%	6 11%	3 6%
	2	11 20%	29 52%	12 21%	3 5%	1 2%

To prove the validity of the hypothesis, Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The variable *number of content words* in the participants' oral summaries was measured in each of the applied *approaches* (with pre-listening stage and without pre-listening stage) during the

listening sessions listening to Text 1 and Text 2. The analysis shows that the differences between means of words (the average number of content words used in retrospective oral summaries in each of the applied approaches) are significant since $p < .05$ thus indicating that the model performed well. Test reports:

(Text 1) $p = 0.015$ that is less than 0.05,

(Text 2) $p = 0.040$ that is less than 0.05,

(both texts) $p = 0.005$ that is less than 0.05.

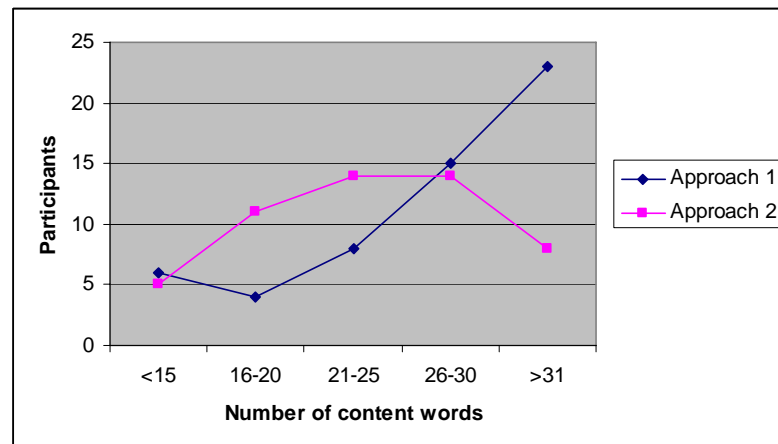


Fig.8. Number of content words used in participants' oral summaries in each of the approaches („The London Eye”).

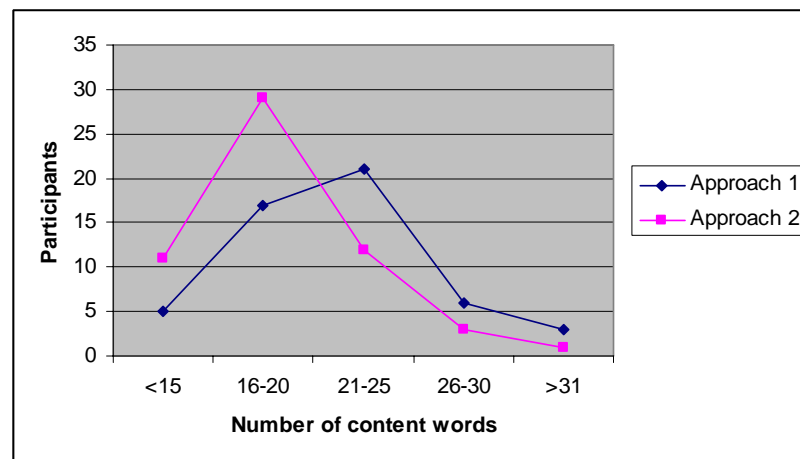


Fig.9. Number of content words used in participants' oral summaries in each of the approaches („The Hippocampus”).

It means that the activation of the background knowledge and pragmatic information in the pre-listening stage influenced the recognition of words during processing of the spoken discourse in the quazi-experiment. Figure 8 shows that regarding the text „The London Eye”, the biggest number of the participants (41%) with pre-listening treatment could recognize and use more than 31 content words, however, only 8% of the participants

without pre-listening treatment could use more than 31 content words. Regarding the text „The Hippocampus”, (see Fig. 9) the biggest number of the participants (40%) with pre-listening treatment could recognize and use from 21 to 25 content words, but the majority of participants (52%) without pre-listening treatment could recognize and use from 16 to 20 content words.

5.2.4.2. The Results of the Retrospective Post-tests

The score or the number of right answers of the retrospective post-tests was calculated.

Table 10. The results of the post-test.

Oral disco	Approach	Score 2 (No of Participants and %)	Score 3 (No of Participants and %)	Score 4 (No of Participants and %)	Score 5 (No of participants and %)	Score 6 (No of Participants and %)	Score 7 (No of Participants and %)
Both texts	1	4 4%	7 6%	24 22%	21 20%	35 32%	17 16%
	2	19 17%	32 30%	16 15%	17 16%	13 12%	11 10%
Text 1	1	0 0%	0 0%	11 20%	11 20%	20 35%	14 25%
	2	4 8%	14 27%	10 19%	7 14%	9 17%	8 15%
Text 2	1	4 7%	7 13%	13 25%	10 19%	15 30%	3 6%
	2	15 27%	18 32%	6 11%	10 18%	4 7%	3 5%

Table 10 shows that the participants performed much better in answering comprehension questions when they were exposed to pre-listening activities. Taking into account both texts, 17 or 16% from them could answer all seven questions and 35 participants or 32% could answer 6 questions. In contrast, 11 or 10% from the participants in the listening session without pre-listening input could answer all seven questions and 13 or 12% answered 6 questions.

The mean of the right answers to the comprehension questions was calculated in each of the approaches of Texts 1 and 2. The right answers in each of cases were referred to the total amount of questions and turned into the decimal numbers. The obtained figures show the percentage of right answers expressed in decimal numbers. As the next step the Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The variable *post-test results* checking the participants' understanding of the listening text was measured in each of the applied approaches (with pre-listening stage and without pre-listening stage). The analysis shows that the differences

between means of right answers are significant since p is less than 0.05 thus indicating that the model performed well. Pearson Chi-Square Test reports:

(Text 1) $p= 0.001$ that is less than 0.05,

(Text 2) $p= 0.0001$ that is less than 0.05,

(both texts) $p= 0.000$ that is less than 0.05.

It means that the activation of the background knowledge in the pre-listening stage influenced the comprehension of the spoken discourse.

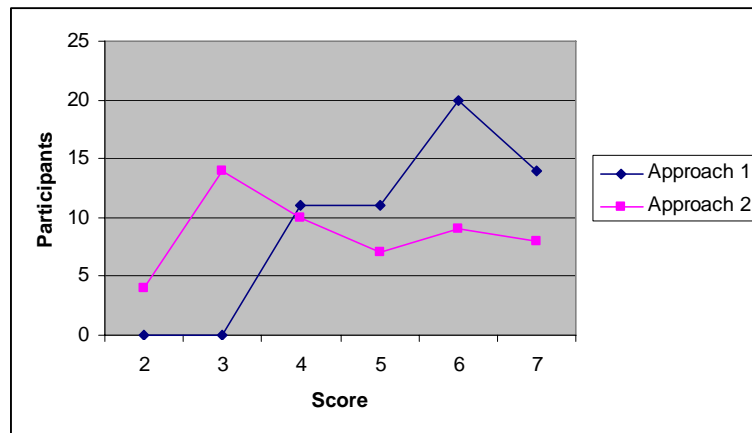


Figure 10. The result of the post-tests (The London Eye).

Figure 10 shows the number of right answers in each of the approaches. Regarding the text „The London Eye”, 35% and 25% from participants with pre-listening treatment could give right answers to six and seven questions, respectively, while only 17% and 15% from the participants without pre-listening treatment could do the same. Regarding the text „The Hippocampus” (see Fig. 11), 30% and 6% from participants with pre-listening treatment could give right answers to six and seven questions, respectively, while only 7% and 5% from the participants without pre-listening treatment could do the same.

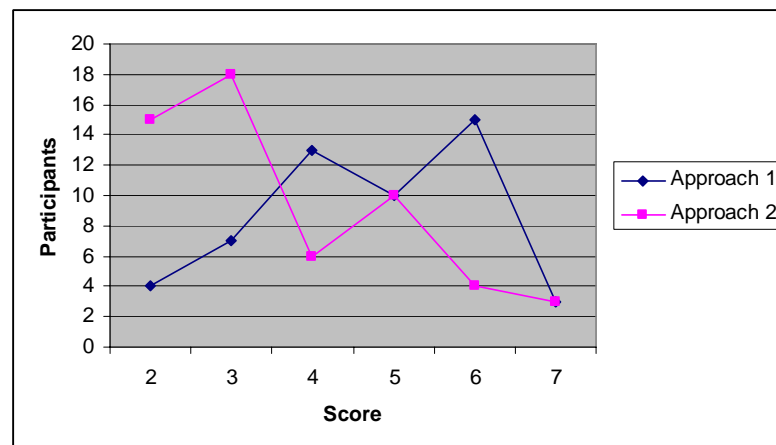


Figure 11. The result of the post-tests (The Hippocampus).

The results of the retrospective tests differ in both texts. The participants have better results in the post-test that followed the text “The London Eye”. The analysis of the answers to the each of the questions will be carried out further.

The next step of the analysis was the results of the retrospective post-test or listening cloze test. The comprehension questions were literal questions, the participants had to show their understanding of the semantic meaning of the discourse. Table 11 shows the relationship between the post-test and the approach in text “The London Eye”. It is apparent that the noticeable differences in the percentage of the right answers are encountered in Questions 2, 4, 5, 7. Two questions (4 and 5) had not been answered properly in both approaches. Both questions regard the information that was given about the river Thames. It could be explained by the fact that the speaker on the tape violated Maxim of Quantity since the discourse is more informative than it was announced in the topic sentence. In addition to

Table 11. Answers to the comprehension questions of “The London Eye”

Questions	Result Approach 1	Result Approach 2
Question 1 Where does the London Eye stand?	100%	96%
Question 2 Why did the Romans settle in Londinium?	92%	75%
Question 3 What problems did the river Thames bring?	100%	96%
Question 4 What has been done to protect London against floods?	82%	63%
Question 5 Why did London stop being a major port?	80%	58%
Question 6 How much time did it take to build the London eye?	100%	94%
Question 7 Why wasn't it built in the single place?	100%	77%

the information about the river, the speaker has included the information about the structure “Thames Barrier”. What is more, these questions required the cultural, geographic and historic knowledge about the river Thames from the participants.

Secondly, the post-test results of the text “The Hippocampus” are presented. The comprehension questions were literal questions, the participants had to show their understanding of the semantic meaning of the discourse. Table 12 shows the relationship

between the post-test and the approach in the text “The Hippocampus”. The noticeable differences in the percentage of the right answers are encountered in Questions 3, 5, 6, 7. It means that pre-listening activities had significantly influenced the understanding of the semantic meaning of the discourse. Three questions (4, 5, 6) had not been answered properly in both approaches. Several explanations could be

Table 12. Answers to the comprehension questions of “Hippocampus”

Questions	Result Approach 1	Result Approach 2
Question 1 Is there any connection between navigation and hippocampus in animals?	94%	83%
Question 2 What happened if any part of animals' hippocampus was damaged?	94%	93%
Question 3 Why are the taxi drivers an excellent group for studying the hippocampus?	84%	52%
Question 4 What research was done previously with volunteer taxi drivers?	38%	37%
Question 5 What did the research do this time?	31%	20%
Question 6 What were the two techniques by which their grey matter was measured?	37%	23%
Question 7 What significant correlation was found?	84%	72%

suggested. Firstly, that the speaker in Text 2 “Hippocampus” violates Maxim of Quantity since the discourse is more informative than it is announced in the topic sentence. The topic sentence introduces the text by saying the text will be about the part of brain, however, later on, extra information is introduced about the taxi drivers who are excellent group for the research. Secondly, this discourse presents an example of the shift of deictic markers. One more reason could be the speed of the speaker, the lack of hesitations, repetitions, silence fill-up that is characteristic to the spoken *scripted* discourse. The perception of the spoken text has been deceived since the listeners had been prepared to perceive the text with all its qualities, with emotions, pauses, repetitions.

Thus in both spoken discourses analyzed above, apparently, without activating the background knowledge the participants faced more difficulties in the processing the information than those who were exposed to the pre-listening stage.

5.2.4.3. The Impact of the Foreign Language Proficiency

It seemed worthwhile to determine if the level at the National Form 12 English Language Exam had any impact on the participants' performance in both task types during the listening experiment. The variable *number of content words* in the participants' oral summaries of Text 1 and Text 2 was taken and measured against the level of the target language proficiency. Again the Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The variable *number of content words* in oral summaries was taken and measured against the level of the target language proficiency. The analysis shows that the differences are significant since $p < .05$ thus stating that the language proficiency level influenced the outcomes of this task. Test reports $p = 0.000$ that is less than 0.05. The conclusion can be drawn that the participants' level at the National Foreign Language Exam plays the role in the word recognition while listening.

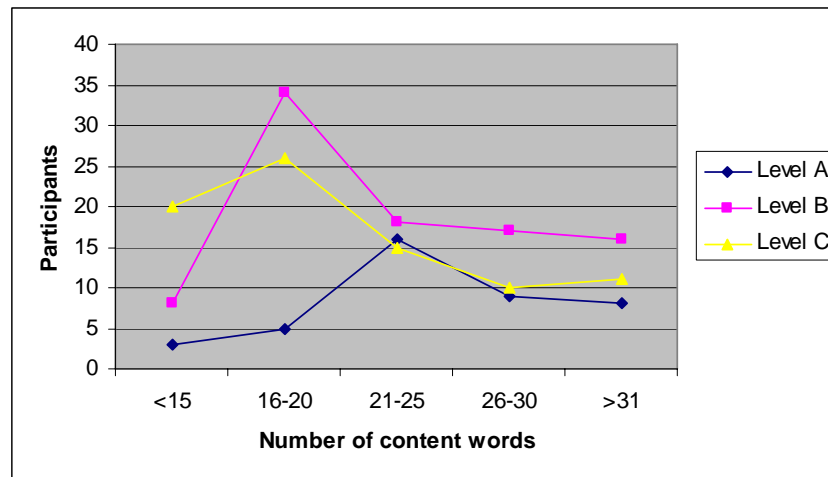


Fig 12. The distribution of content words in oral summaries according to language levels.

As Fig. 12 shows, participants with Level B performed much better. However, it is interesting to note that participants with level A have very different result. It might be assumed that the majority of the learners with good foreign language proficiency level will perform well. However, it was not the case. There are great differences in the amount of the content words the participants used in their oral summaries. As it is clear from Fig. 13, the participants' result in each target language proficiency level has great dispersion. It must be noted that the quasi-experiment was carried out in the time of the regular EFL classes therefore not all of the participants were motivated to do well.

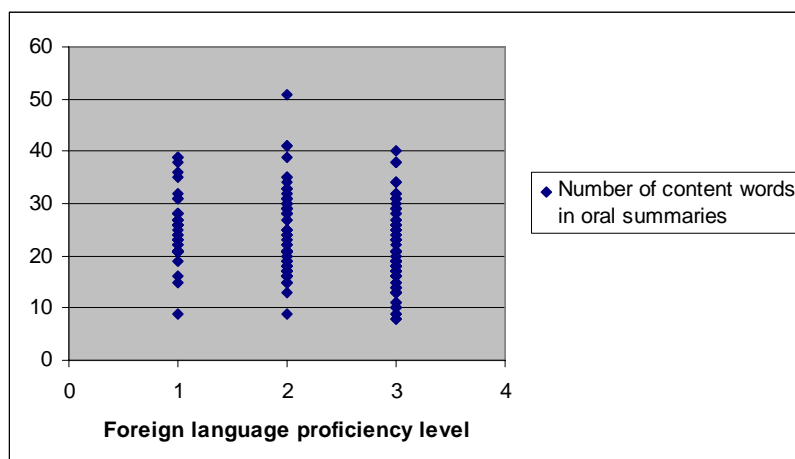


Figure 13. Content words among language levels (“1” is level A, “2” is level B, “3” is C)

Participants showed very different result in each of the levels. The students of levels A and B performed not only according to their knowledge, but also they had very poor result. And just the opposite, there were students with C level who did very well in both types of the retrospective task. This might be explained by learner differences, affective factors, task conditions, the lack or the presence of concentration. Task conditions constrain the listeners’ performance and the result and thereby introduce distortion in interpreting the listener’s response. For example, Rost (1990: 124) argues that there are three sources of distortion. First, the amount of veridical verbal representation of the input that is required by the task, second, the amount of time between listening and task performance, and third, the amount of original production that is required in the task performance by participants. The participants’ feelings and attitude might influence the result. The affective factors will be analyzed in Phase 2.

It was worthwhile to determine if the language level had a significant influence on the outcome of the comprehension questions. Again the Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The variable “*the results of post-test (right answers to question)*” was taken and measured against the level of the target language proficiency. The analysis shows that the differences between right answers (the average number of right answers in each of the applied approaches) are significant since $p < .05$ thus stating that the language proficiency level influenced the outcomes of this task. Test reports $p = 0.001$ that is less than 0.05.

To sum up, the results of the analysis of the variables of content words in the oral summaries and post-test show that the differences are significant thus proving the

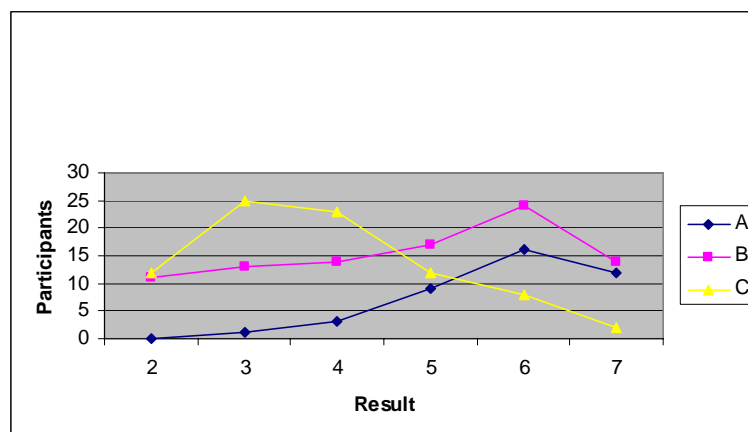


Fig. 14. Distribution of results of post-tests among language levels.

hypothesis that the treatment with the pre-listening stage or the activation of the background knowledge and relevant pragmatic knowledge facilitate the listening comprehension of the text in a foreign language.

Table 13. The result of SSPS analysis of the variables: content words and post-test results.

No	Item	Amount of p (No of content words in participants' oral summaries)	Amount of p (post-test results)	Conclusion
1	Approach	0.005	0.000	P<0.05 differences are significant
2	Language level at Form 12 Exam	0.000	0.001	P<0.05 differences are significant

5.2.4.4. Analysis of the Word Frequency in Participants' Retrospective Oral Summaries with Pre-listening Treatment

The aim of the present sub-chapter is to carry out the comparative lexical analysis of the spoken transactional discourses (input) and the participants' transcribed retrospective oral summaries (output) with the pre-listening treatment. The participants' oral summaries were statistically analyzed by means of *VocabProfile* computer programme. *VocabProfile* performs lexical text analysis. It was developed by Batia Laufer and Paul Nation, and it is available on the Internet (www.lextutor.ca). The procedure is as follows: the spoken discourse is transformed into the written form and pasted into the *VocabProfile* programme

that performs lexical analysis of the English language texts, i.e., counts the number of word families, types, tokens, lexical density of the discourse; groups words according to their etymology; in addition, the programme divides lexical items into four categories by frequency: 1) the most frequent 1000 words of English, 2) the second most frequent thousand words of English, 3) the academic words of English (AWL), 4) the rest which is not found on the other lists. The rest of the lexical analysis was done by the author and presented below.

5.2.4.4.1. Word Frequency in the Participants' Oral Summaries of "The London Eye"

The present sub-chapter contains the analysis of the retrospective oral summaries of the listening text "The London Eye". The analysis refers to the *types* of the content words recognized and used in the participants' oral summaries.

Table 14. The Distribution of Content words in Participants' Oral Summaries Regarding their Frequency with pre-listening Treatment

	Content words not used in oral summaries*	Content words used in more than 40% of oral summaries
1 st 1000 (55 content words)	17 content words or 30% from the group	14 content words or 25% from the group
2 nd 1000 (9 content words)	4 content words or 44% from the group	2 content words or 22% from the group
AWL (9 content words)	5 content words or 55% from the group	3 content words or 33% from the group
Off-list (14 content words)	6 content words or 42% from the group	5 content words or 36% from the group
Proper nouns (5 content words)	0 content words or 0 %	4 content words or 80% from the group
	Nouns 29% Verbs 30% Adjectives 36% Adverbs with the suffix -ly 100% Total 35%	Nouns 39% Verbs 26% Adjectives 9% Adverbs with the suffix -ly - Total 30%

* if content word was not used or used less than in 5 oral summaries

Table 15. Content words* **not** used by the participants

Freq.	No	Part of speech	Words
1 st 1000	7	nouns	conditions, developments, container, heart, pleasure, relationship, sale,
	5	verbs	become, expected, last, providing, grew
	2	adjectives	famous, single
	2	adverbs with the suffix -ly	greatly, truly
	1	numeral	twenty
2 nd 1000	1	nouns	defense
	1	verbs	improved

	1	adjectives	busy
	1	adverbs with the suffix -ly	especially
AWL	2	nouns	Coincidence, source
	2	verbs	Designed, founded
	1	adjectives	alternative
	-	adverbs with the suffix -ly	
Off-list	4	nouns	Barrier, landmarks, riverbank, waterway
	-	verbs	-
	-	adjectives	-
	1	adverbs with the suffix -ly	profoundly

* if content word was not used or used less than in 5 oral summaries

The analysis of the participants' oral summaries shows the following findings:

1) Participants did not use 30% of content words from the spoken discourse included in the group of 1st 1000 most frequent words, 44% of content words included in the group of 2nd 1000, 55% of the words from the Academic Word List, and 42% of the words from lower frequency group. Consequently, it could be concluded that the participants performed only slightly better recognizing and using words from the high frequency group.

2) In terms of the parts of speech, more than 40% of the oral summaries contained approximately 39% of the nouns, 26% of the verbs and 9% of the adjectives encountered in the spoken discourse they listened to; as regards the adverbs with the suffix -ly, they were not used by the participants at all.

3) The list of words **not** used by the participants contains six words mentioned by the participants as unknown in the pre-test (*coincidence, providing, frequent, profoundly, defence, landmark*).

4) Content words (*cables, Londinium, Romans, flooding*) identified as unknown in the pre-test have been used more than in 40% of all oral summaries. The word *wheel* was used less (15%). Thus it is possible to conclude that the pre-listening input assisted learners in recognizing words while listening to the spoken discourse.

5) The presence of the word "*heart*" in the list of words not used by the participants could be explained by the metaphoric use of it in the text. In the listening passage it means "the centre" of London.

6) The linguistic material of the retrospective oral summaries gave the opportunity to analyse the choice of the words. The analysis shows that the participants used another word or a phrase if she/he could remember the exact word used in the spoken text. Table 16 reflects the most typical cases of the word substitution.

Table 16. The comparison of the content words used in the spoken text and the participants' retrospective summaries

The participants' oral summaries	The spoken discourse in the recording
entertainment	source of pleasure
used for trading, or benefits for trade	the river was vital to trade and travel
the importance of the river was very great	because of the river that London was founded
frequent use	busy waterway
safer route or safer by water, not by land	safer alternative to travelling by road
the London Eye is situated on the river	The London Eye stands on the river
time taken for the construction	it took seven years to complete
navigation on the river was forbidden	ships could no longer navigate

5.2.4.4.2. Word Frequency in the Participants' Oral Summaries of "The Hippocampus"

The present sub-chapter contains the analysis of the retrospective oral summaries of the listening text "The Hippocampus".

Table 17. The Distribution of Content words in Participants' Oral Summaries Regarding their Frequency with pre-listening Treatment

	Content words <u>not</u> used in oral summaries*	Content words used in more than 40% of oral summaries
1 st 1000 (44 content words)	12 content words or 27% from the group	10 content words or 22% from the group
2 nd 1000 (9 content words)	1 content words or 11% from the group	2 content words or 22% from the group
AWL (9 content words)	6 content words or 75% from the group	0 content words or 0% from the group
Off-list (14 content words)	7 content words or 64% from the group	2 content words or 14% from the group
	Nouns 28% Verbs 31% Adjectives 36% Adverbs with the suffix -ly 80% Total 35%	Nouns 45% Verbs 5% Adjectives 0% Adverbs with the suffix -ly - Total 20%

- if content word was not used or used less than 5 times in oral summaries

Table 18. Content words not used by the participants

Freq.	Amount	Part of speech	Words
1 st 1000	2	nouns	kind, matter, measurements
	5	verbs	include, lie, seem, fire, grew,
	2	adjectives	best, ordinary
	2	adverbs with the suffix -ly	silently, simply

2 nd 1000	1	adjectives	grey
AWL	1 3 1 1	Nouns verbs adjectives adverbs with the suffix -ly	volunteer accommodate, acquired, licensed significant previously
Off-list	5 1 1	Nouns adjectives adverbs with the suffix -ly	Correlation, layout, mortals, routs, scanners vast intimately

The analysis of the participants' oral summaries show the following findings:

1) Participants did not use 27% of content words included in the group of 1st 1000 most frequent words, 11% of content words included in the group of 2nd 1000, 75% of the words from the Academic Word List, and 64% of the words from lower frequency group. Consequently, it could be concluded that the participants recognized and used more words from the groups of 1st 1000 and 2nd 1000 most frequent words.

Table 19. The comparison of the content words used in the spoken text and the participants' retrospective summaries.

The participants' oral summaries	The spoken discourse in the recording
undergo a knowledge test examined taxi drivers' brain experienced taxi drivers closely linked research or experiment showed to find out about the brain methods increasing orientate keeps its maps testing cabbies science project learn and remember information connection between hippocampus navigation	quizzed the drivers have their grey matter measured the longer you have been a taxi driver intimately linked tests showed watched their brain fire up techniques the bigger the brain got find the way around grew to accommodate the layout of the city taxi drivers to study acquired a vast amount of special information hippocampus and navigation are intimately inked

2) In terms of the parts of speech, more than 40 % of the oral summaries contained approximately 45% of the nouns, 5% of the verbs and no adjectives encountered in the spoken discourse they listened to. Participants used only one adverb (*consciously*) out 5 adverbs with the suffix -ly in their oral summaries.

3) The list of words **not** used by the participants contained 5 words mentioned by the participants as unknown in the pre-test (*accommodate, acquired, correlation, mortals, routs*).

- 5) The content word (*store*) identified as unknown in the pre-test has been used more than in 40% of all oral summaries. However, words (*consciously, creature, measure, techniques, size*) have been used, but less than 40% of all oral summaries. Thus it is possible to conclude that the spoken discourse “The Hippocampus” turned out to be more difficult for the learners in terms of recognizing and using words in the retrospective task.
- 6) The linguistic material of the retrospective oral summaries gave the opportunity to analyse the participants’ choice of the words. The analysis shows that the participants used another word or a phrase if she/he could remember the exact word used in the spoken text. Table 19 presents the most typical examples of the cases when the participants used another word or phrase instead of the word used in the spoken text.

5.2.4.4.3. Conclusions of the Lexical Analysis of the Participants’ Oral Summaries

Analysing the obtained statistic data regarding word frequency in the participants’ oral summaries, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- 1) The number of content words **not** used in the oral summaries in both texts account for 35%.
- 2) Oral summaries of “The London Eye” and “Hippocampus” contain content words that were mentioned as unknown in the pre-test, thus the activation of the background knowledge has assisted in recognizing words in the connected speech.
- 3) Participants have used more nouns and verbs, less adjectives in their oral summaries. However, their oral summaries did not contain the adverbs derived with the suffix –ly (*intimately, previously, silently, simply, greatly, truly, profoundly*).
- 4) The result of the analysis of the lexical frequency of the participants’ oral summaries show that learners use words from all frequency groups. The distribution of the content words is even across all four word frequency groups. Thus it could be concluded that learners recognize and use words from all frequency groups.
- 5) The analysis of the participants’ retrospective oral summaries shows that the words verbatim do not stay in the memory. That means that the listeners create mental representations and not always remember the exact word.
- 6) The spoken discourse “The Hippocampus” turned out to be more difficult for the listeners. There are various explanations. Firstly, the theme could be strange for the learners, since it was connected with human anatomy, therefore the text abounded in many academic and technical words. Secondly, the Maxim of Quantity was violated by the

speaker since the text contained extra information that was not stated in the topic sentence. For example, the speaker added information about the navigation of animals, about the way taxi drivers were licensed in London. Thirdly, the text was an example of the shift of deictic markers. Besides, It is interesting to note that the share of the nouns in this listening text was quite small. Thus all above mentioned could be the cause of the smaller amount of content words in participants' oral summaries.

Summary

The quazi-experiment described provides evidence that the activation of schemata or the listener's previous knowledge in the pre-listening stage has a noticeable impact on processing of the spoken discourse. The findings of the present quazi-experiment prove the significance of the different levels of knowledge in the perception of the spoken transactional discourse. In applying this prior knowledge about the world, about people and events to a particular situation comprehension proceeds from top down if the knowledge is activated in the pre-listening stage. When listening, students confirm their expectations and fill out the specific details. The learners of a foreign language have to compensate for the gaps of the knowledge of culture and historical facts and for insufficient phonological, lexical and syntactic knowledge of the target language. Listening happens in real time, learners listen and have to comprehend what they hear immediately. There is no time to go back and review, look up unknown words, etc. Thus they have to apply pragmatic rules i.e., try to infer the meanings of words in context. In the case of the text on the London Eye, pre-listening activities were aimed at creating the situational context and the background knowledge context. The participants were introduced with the visual image of the London Eye, some facts of its construction and the geographical location. It turned out that still there were some words which did not ring a bell to the students, e.g., Roman, Londinium, Thames Barrier. In the case of the text "The Hippocampus", the pre-listening activities informed about the participants of the discourse, provided with the information of the similar research. The acquired information about what the listeners are going to hear assisted in making inferences and the listeners could guess the meaning from the context even though they either did not know the meaning of the word or did not grasp each word in the flow of the speech. So it can be concluded that the activation of the background knowledge before the listening to a foreign language transactional discourse can increase

the number of the recognized words and make the text more understandable. The creation of the context for the foreign language learners significantly help to notice the word boundaries in the spoken flow of the speech. Thus it is very important in the learning process to pay attention to 1) activating the background knowledge, 2) giving information about the context of situation, 3) creating the specific cultural knowledge for the listeners to enhance the comprehension process of a spoken discourse in the target language.

5.3.

Phase 2. Analysis of the Participants' Questionnaires

The questionnaires were designed to find out the students attitude regarding the listening session. They contained 21 questions. Six questions were aimed to characterize the target population of the study, 15 questions examined the students' feelings during the experiment and opinion regarding the tasks in the listening session. Nineteen questions were open, and two questions were closed in which students were asked to choose from a limited range of possible answers. The questionnaires were administered at the end of the listening session to examine the students' attitude towards listening to the spoken discourse.

The first group of questions focused on the profile of the participants involved in the quazi-experiment. As it was mentioned before, 108 students took part in the series of listening sessions. 64 were students of the Faculty of Modern Languages, 44 participants represented Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture. 18% were males, and 82% female respondents. It was interesting to find out that 38% of the target population represented Riga school-leavers, and 62% of school-leavers were from regional towns of Latvia. Regarding the participants' opinion about the information which foreign language is English for them, 64 participants considered that English is their 1st foreign language, 39 respondents considered it as their second foreign language and 5 students considered that English is their 3rd foreign language (see Table 20)

Table 20 The demographic characteristics of the participants elicited from the questionnaires.

	Participants
Gender	89 (82%) females and 19 (18%) males

Age	Average age 19.53 years 17 years old: 1 (1%) participant, 18 years old: 10 (9%) participants, 19 years old: 55 (52%) participants, 20 years old: 34 (30%) participants, 21 years old: 4 (4%) participants, More than 23 years old: 4 (4%) participants.
Institution	ESP students 44 (40%) EFL students 64 (60%)
Place of residence	Riga school-leavers 40 (38%) School-leavers from regional towns 68 (62%)
Is English the 1st or 2nd foreign language of the participant	English is 1 st foreign language: 64 (60%) learners English is 2 st foreign language: 39 (36%) learners English is 3 st foreign language: 5 (2%) learners

The second group of questions referred to the participants' opinion about the listening session. It was important to find out the participants' attitude regarding the conditions of the listening sessions, namely, if the conditions during the listening task satisfied the learners' needs. Thus the question: "What were the sources of distortion while listening to the recorded text?" was asked. It was a closed question and the respondents were asked to choose more than one answer from the limited range of the possible answers.

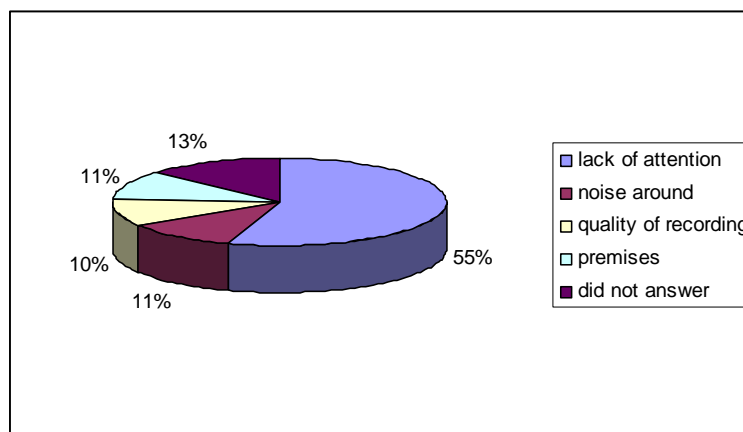


Fig.15. Respondents' opinion of sources of distortion while listening to the recorded text (n=108).

Fifty-nine respondents (55%) answered that they lacked attention and concentration, twelve respondents (11%) considered that they were distracted by the noise around, eleven persons (10%) complained about the quality of recording and twelve (11%) were not satisfied with the premises. Fourteen participants (13%) did not give any answer. The answers to the

question above reveal a very big number of students who consider that they were not attentive and did not concentrate enough while listening to the spoken discourse. See Fig. 15.

Another question that was aimed at finding out the participants' mood and feelings during the experiment sounded as follows: "What sources of distortion did you have while recording your oral summary?" It was a closed question, and the following answers were received (see Fig. 16). The lack of attention and concentration was mentioned 50 times or 47%, verbal intelligence at the moment of recording was mentioned 24 times or 22%, the noise around was mentioned 12 times or 11 %, motivation to perform well was mentioned 5 times or 4%. 17 students (16%) did not tick any answer.

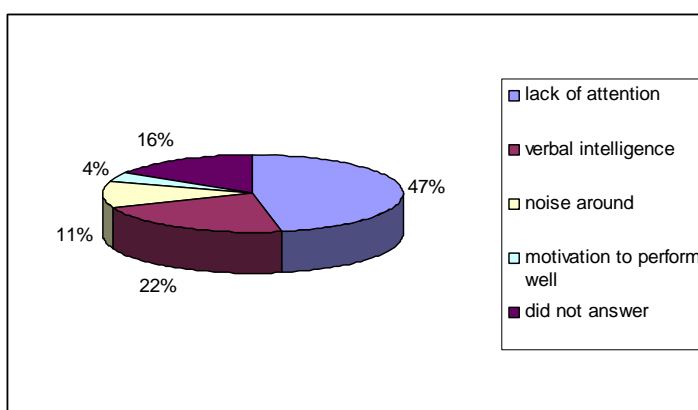


Fig.16. Respondents' opinion of the sources of distortion while recording the oral summary (%)

As the study concentrated on the measurement of the result of the listeners' performance during the listening session, it was important to find out the respondents' opinion regarding the difficulties they faced while listening to the recorded text. It was an open question and the learners themselves had the opportunity to put their considerations in words. All in all 25 problem areas were suggested and twelve are presented in the order of times mentioned in the table below. Fig. 17 shows the distribution of the percentage of the problem areas that influenced the listeners' result in the listening session. It could be concluded from the respondents' answers that the difficulties are caused not only by linguistic factors (unknown words, problems in word recognition, fast speed of speech), but also pragmatic factors (too much information, the lack of previous knowledge) and affective factors (the lack of concentration, not enough time, nervous and excited). Only 13.7% of the participants answered that they did not have any difficulties.

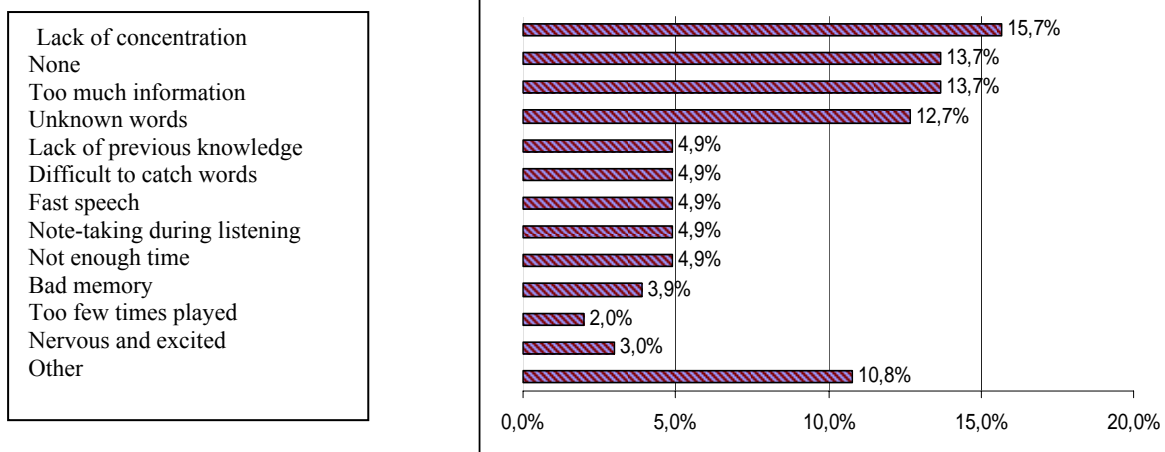


Fig. 17. The respondents' opinion of the difficulties during listening to the spoken discourse.

The next question was meant to find out if the participants were motivated enough to perform well. The question had two parts. The first part inquired if they were motivated, to which 58% gave a positive answer and 18% gave a negative answer, but 24% said that they were partly motivated (See Fig.18). The second part of the question inquired if respondents would be more motivated if they had to do the tasks for a mark. Fifty-five participants (51%) answered that they would be more motivated to do it for a mark and the majority of those who would be more motivated for a mark were ESP students from The Faculty of Economics.

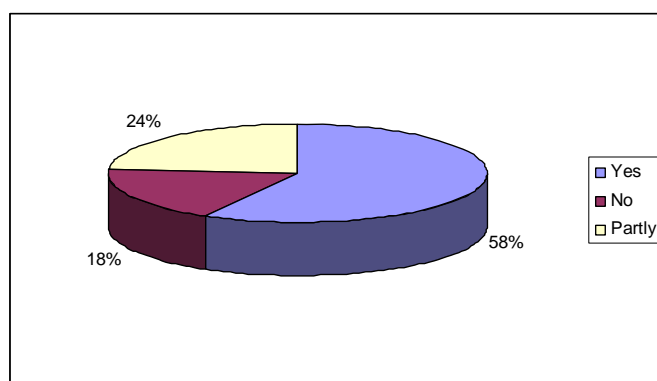


Fig. 18. The respondents' motivation to perform well in the listening session.

The next question was "How many times should the tape be played?" The respondents gave very different numbers that ranged from one to seven. The average number was calculated and it was 3.2 times. That meant that the respondents considered that the recording should be played three times in average. The next group of questions regarded the listening process. The question "Were you able to work out (guess) any words that you

missed?” was asked. Sixty-two (58%) participants gave a positive answer and twenty-two (20%) participants gave a negative answer, but twenty-four (22%) did not answer. The result showed that the participants thought they had managed to guess the meanings of the words even though the listening text contained the words they did not know. The next question was meant to find out how they had guessed the meaning. It was an open question, and, unfortunately, many participants did not answer this question. However, the answers that were given helped later on in the analysis of the results of the introspective study.

The author of the present study was interested to find out the participants’ opinion about the two comprehension processes: reading comprehension and listening comprehension. What do learners think about their comprehension processes? Have they compared and analyzed the two processes of speech perception? Thus, firstly, the following question was asked: “In your own language, which do you remember better – what you have heard or what you have read?” The result was the following: those who answered that in their native language they remember better what they have heard accounted only for 18% of all respondents. 66% said that they remembered better what they had read, and 16% admitted that they were good in both ways (See Fig. 19).

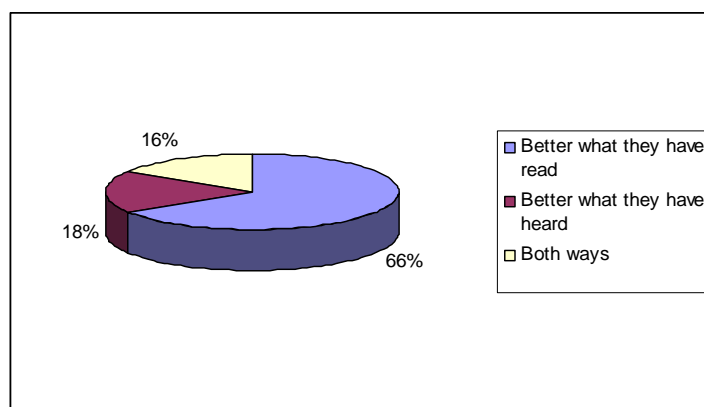


Fig.19. The respondents’ opinion regarding their sensory preferences in the native tongue.

The next question was: “In English, which do you remember better – what you have heard or what you have read?” The majority of respondents’ (70%) admitted that in English they remembered better what they had read, and only 17% said that they remembered better what they had heard, and 13% said that they were good in both ways (see Fig. 20). Thus the answers to these questions showed that the dominating number of young people considered that they were much better at perceiving information via reading not listening. The answers showed the tendency regarding sensory preferences, namely, the participants more relied

on visual rather than auditory clues. The author considers that one of the reasons might be the learning styles in the secondary schools of Latvia where the focus is still on developing reading and writing skills instead of speaking and listening skills.

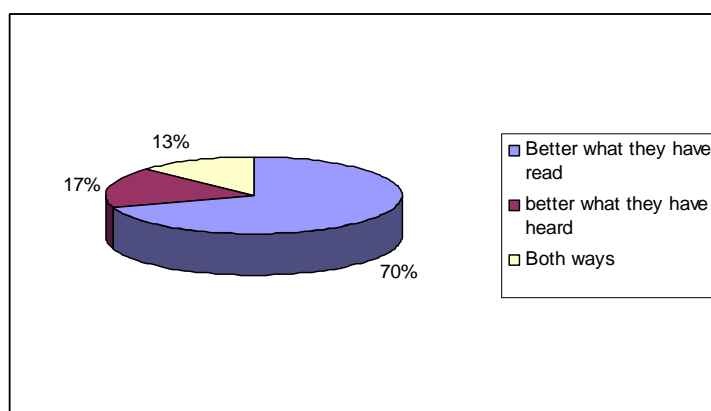


Fig.20. The respondents' opinion regarding their sensory preferences in English.

Finally, one of the most important questions concerning the comprehension of the spoken texts is if the listeners could determine the theme of the discourse or listening text. The participants had to state the theme of the listening text after they had listened to the spoken discourse. It was an open question. The interesting thing is that three versions were put forward by the participants in case of the text "The London Eye" and three versions were put forward in case of the text "Hippocampus". The result is given in the table below:

Table 21. Participants' opinion regarding the main theme of the texts.

The London Eye	% Participants	Hippocampus	% Participants
Theme		Theme	
The London Eye	86%	Hippocampus	81%
London and The London Eye	13%	London cabbies and the brain	17%
The London Eye, the river	1%	Brain research	2%

As it can be seen from Table 21, the participants' opinion regarding the theme differs. About 80% of the listeners of both texts named the theme that had been stated by the speaker in the introductory sentence. However, the speakers in both texts added the extra information that had not been stated in the topic sentence. Therefore 14% of the listeners to the text "The London Eye" included the themes of the extra information, and 19% of the listeners to the text "The Hippocampus" mentioned the theme that had not been named in the topic sentence. The fact that the Maxims of Quantity and Relation were violated could

have an impact on the participants’ opinion regarding the theme of the spoken discourse. The result clearly indicated that the topic of the text might not be explicitly stated in spoken texts or oral language and listeners might be misled.

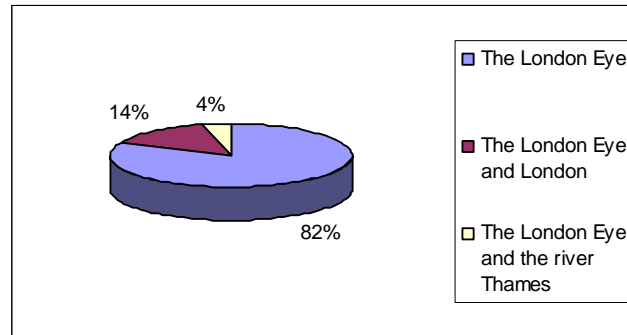


Figure 21. Respondents’ opinion regarding the theme of the spoken discourse “The London Eye”.

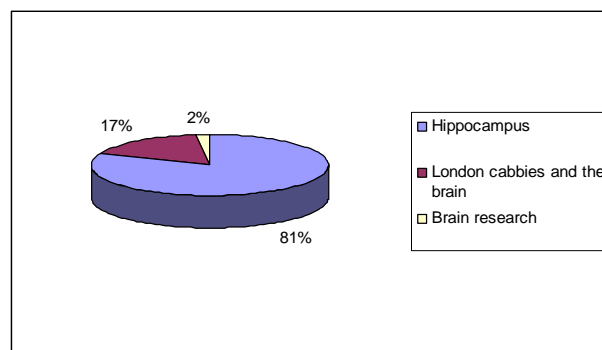


Figure 22. Respondents’ opinion regarding the theme of the spoken discourse “The Hippocampus”.

The above described information that was collected from the participants’ questionnaires regarding their demographic characteristics and attitude during the experiment was measured and analyzed using the Pearson Chi-Square Test and Exact Test of SPSS-13.0 to see if the participants’ gender, age, the place of residence, and motivation influenced the result of the quazi-experiment. The variable 1) “*number of content words*” in the participants’ oral summaries of Text 1 and Text 2, and the variable 2) “*the results of post-test*” were taken and measured against the *demographic factors and motivation*. The results are given in Table 22 and Table 23.

Table 22 shows that differences are not significant since $p > 0.05$ in each of the items. Table 23 shows that differences are not significant with one exception: the type of institution. The

Table 22. The impact of personal data and affective factors on the listeners' results in retrospective oral summaries

No	Item	Amount of p (No of content words in participants' oral summaries)	Conclusion
1	Participants' gender	0.96	p>0.05 differences are not significant
2	Age	0.558	p>0.05 differences are not significant
3	Place of residence	0.102	p>0.05 differences are not significant
4	Type of Institution	0.255	p>0.05 differences are not significant
5	Is English first or second foreign language?	0.224	p>0.05 differences are not significant
6	Motivation	0.543	p>0.05 differences are not significant

Table 23. The impact of personal data and affective factors on the listeners' results in retrospective post-test.

No	Item	Amount of p (result of the post-test)	Conclusion
1	Participants' gender	0.451	P>0.05 differences are not significant
2	Age	0.887	p>0.05 differences are not significant
3	Place of residence	0.233	p>0.05 differences are not significant
4	Type of Institution	0.000	p<0.05 differences are significant
5	Is English first or second foreign language?	0.274	p>0.05 differences are not significant
6	Motivation	0.570	p>0.05 differences are not significant

explanation is that the majority of the participants from the Faculty of Economics had Level C (31 participants out of 44), and as it was found out previously, the language proficiency level influenced the result of the experiment. It can be concluded that **neither personal data** (gender, age, place of residence, participants' opinion about English as a foreign language) **nor affective factors** (motivation) influenced the result in the listening session significantly since in each case $p > 0.05$. Even though in single cases it seemed that there might be a certain impact of the profile of the learner, the present experiment does not give proof for such a claim.

Summary

The questionnaire was designed for the purpose of finding out the sources of the distortion while listening and while recording the retrospective tasks, and if affective factors influenced the result of the performance, what were the participants' sensory preferences, what difficulties the learners faced while listening to the spoken discourse in the educational settings.

The results of the questionnaire regarding the participants attitudes show that participants had various sources of distortion while listening to the tape: firstly, a big number of respondents (55%) answered that they lacked attention and concentration. The students complained about the lack of concentration, noise around and the quality of the recording. The question regarding the problem areas or difficulties they faced, the most often mentioned in the order of priority were: 1) the lack of concentration (15.7%), 2) too much information (13.7%), unknown words (12.7%), 3) the lack of previous knowledge (4.9%), 4) the difficulty to catch words (4.9%), 5) fast speech (4.9%). 13.7% of the participants did not face any difficulties. It could be concluded from the respondents' answers that the difficulties are caused not only by linguistic factors (unknown words, word recognition, fast speed of the speech), but also pragmatic factors (too much information, the lack of previous knowledge) and affective factors (the lack of concentration, not enough time, nervous and excited). The answers of the respondents reveal that the texts were crowded with information and it was not easy to comprehend the discourse fully. This opinion shows that listeners are worried about the whole range of different issues that could hamper the perception of the spoken discourse.

As the participants were asked to participate in the quasi-experiment during their regular class time, it was valuable to find out if they were motivated to perform well. The answers showed that more than half (58%) tried to do best, 24% were partly motivated and 18% were not motivated. The conclusion can be drawn that the attitude of the part of the participants, namely, their lack of motivation and attention, mood and feelings might influence the performance and could explain very huge fluctuations in the recognized and used number of words within one foreign language proficiency level. The author of the present research was interested in the sensory preferences of the students. The analysis of the answers shows that the students perceive better what they have read than what they

have heard. Almost three fourths of all respondents consider that in English they rely more on visual than auditory cues. One of the reasons might be the learning styles in the schools in Latvia that practice reading and writing more than listening and speaking.

The analysis of the participants' questionnaires shows that personal data (gender, age, place of residence, participants' opinion about English as a foreign language) and affective factors (motivation) did not influence the result of both retrospective tests.

5.4.

Phase 3. The Introspective Study

The author of the present study sought to identify the **sources of knowledge** the learners use to process the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language. Data were collected through verbal reports by using the information processing model proposed by Ericsson and Simon (1993: 43). Based on widely accepted theoretical assumptions about human information processing, this model specifies the amounts and kinds of mental information that can be retained for accessing and reporting this information. It identifies two kinds of verbalization that are possible. One is concurrent verbalization and refers to introspection of cognitive processes at the time they are being attended to. The second is retrospective verbalization and refers to reporting about cognitive processes occurred earlier.

The present study used immediate retrospective verbalizations or think aloud sessions, i. e., the informants listened to the chunks on the tape and discussed what they understood while listening. The informants did not have any special training sessions. Instead they were given a familiarization practice to ensure that they knew the kind of information they should report. The participants' think-aloud protocols and interviews were recorded on the tape and transcribed.

The study involved the analysis of forty think-aloud protocols of twenty randomly chosen learners listening to forty texts whom the author met individually, two persons or one person at a time for about 70 minutes in the classroom. The listening texts were the same as the texts used in the quasi-experiment "The London Eye" and "The Hippocampus". They

spoke mainly in English but switched to their native language whenever they had difficulty finding the right word to use. The author explained that the participants would hear a short passage with pauses and that after listening to each segment they should say what knowledge they used to understand the word.

The procedure of the introspective study was the following: 1) the participants were exposed to the pre-listening activities before starting the introspective study, 2) participants listened to the recording, 3) the recording was played with pauses after each phrase, 4) the participants expressed their thoughts after each phrase, 5) the sessions were tape recorded 6) the recordings were transcribed and analyzed. The interviews showed what knowledge students used for guessing the meaning of the unknown words. As a basis for the analysis the author used Bengeleil and Paribakht (2004: 231) chart in which they have developed the taxonomy of the knowledge sources used in L2 lexical inferencing while reading.

The author made an attempt to see if the participants of the present study used the similar sources of knowledge while listening to the spoken transactional discourse. The following text contains examples from the introspective study grouped according to the knowledge sources.

Table 22. The knowledge sources used by the participants in lexical inferencing.

I Linguistic sources of knowledge.

A. Intralingual sources are based on the knowledge of the target language:

	Examples from the participants' interviews
word morphology	<i>“landmarks” consists of “land” and “marks”, “land” means „zeme”, “mark” means “marķieris”, “profoundly” is an adverb that ends with –ly, “intimately” is an adverb that ends with –ly, “waterway” consists of “water” and “way”, it means “ūdens ceļš”, “riverbank” consists of “river” and “bank”.</i>
word homonymy	<i>“quizzed” is the verb from the noun „a quiz”.</i>
word associations	<i>“layout” is from the icon in the computer, “mortal” is from the film “Mortal Combat”, “defence” is from sport games “defender”, “piece by piece” reminded “step by step” which means one after another.</i>

Sentence level meaning	“quizzed them on best rou ts round London” “ <i>routes</i> ” was not known, but could mean „places”.
Syntagmatic relations	“ called Londinium”, only some title or name can follow after „called”.
Paradigmatic relations	“Romans settled in Londinium”, I understood „settled” as „lived”, “grey matter was measured by two different techniques”, I did not know the word „measured”, but understood that it is „checked”.
Sentence level grammar	“ intimately ”, the place of this word in the sentence states that it is an adverb, “ vast ”, it is the adjective, because stands before the nouns, so it could mean “huge”.
Discourse level meaning	“ amount ” is the size because London is a big city, it was mentioned before that the drivers must remember the layout of the city. “ this time ” means that there were two studies.

B. Interlingual sources are based on the knowledge of the native language.

Lexical knowledge	“ alternative ” is “ <i>alternatīva</i> ”, “ intimately ” is “ <i>intīmi, cieši</i> ”, “ source ” is “ <i>resursi</i> ”, “ correlation ” is “ <i>matemātiska darbība</i> ”, “ vital ” is “ <i>vitāli</i> ”, “ cables ” is “ <i>kabeļi</i> ”, “ licenced ” is from licence, “ designed ” means “ <i>dizainēts</i> ” or “ <i>projektēts</i> ”.
Word collocation in their native language	„ observation wheel” in Latvian is “ <i>novērojumu vai panorāmas rats</i> ”, it consists of two words.

II Pragmatic Sources of Knowledge

Knowledge of situational context	” accomodate ” could mean “ <i>zin, pārvalda</i> ” because the text tells about taxi drivers and they know the map of the town, “ container ” could mean “ <i>kuģi</i> ”, because London is situated on the river Thames, “ capsules, cables ” could be the names of the parts of the structure of the London Eye which we saw in the picture,. ” navigate ” means “ <i>kuģot</i> ” because it was said that the London Eye is on the river.
Knowledge of the theme	“ capsules ” could mean something like „ <i>kabīnes vai vagoniņi</i> ”, because the London Eye consists of such capsules, “ damaged ” is “ <i>bojāts</i> ” because the text is about the brain, if one cannot find the way, the brain is damaged.

Knowledge of culture, historic and geographic facts	<i>“Romans” could be “romieši”, because they were mentioned in the pre-listening activity, “Londinium” is a name of some town before London, it was mentioned in the pre-listening task.</i>
Background knowledge	<i>“flooding” could be “plūdi”, the story is about the river, so the problems in the city could be because of the floods or freezing, “Barrier” is “barjera”, because rivers can have barriers.</i>

The results of this study show that the participants in inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words while listening used different knowledge sources, and drew on their knowledge of the target language (intralingual), their native language (interlingual) and pragmatic knowledge.

1) Intralingual sources included: word morphology, word homonymy, word associations, sentence level meaning syntagmatic relations, paradigmatic relations, sentence level grammar, discourse level meaning.

2) Interlingual sources included lexical knowledge, and word collocation in their native language. The most often mentioned sources were: word associations, the lexical knowledge of the native language. The most seldom mentioned sources were: word homonymy, syntagmatic relations and collocations in the native language.

3) Pragmatic sources included the knowledge of the situational context, the theme, culture, historic and geographic facts and the background knowledge or the knowledge of the world.

Summary

The introspective study was designed to find out what sources of knowledge language learners use to guess the meaning of the unknown words in the spoken discourse. The study involved the analysis of 40 think-aloud protocols of 20 randomly chosen learners whom the author met individually, two persons or one person at a time for about 70 minutes in the classroom. The results of the think-aloud protocols show that participants used intralingual, interlingual and pragmatic sources of knowledge in lexical inferencing. These knowledge sources interact with the linguistic knowledge in a foreign language to facilitate the comprehension of the meaning of the transactional spoken discourse.

Chapter 6

Implications for Foreign Language Teaching/Learning

Organisation of the chapter

As it was found out in the introspective study of the present paper regarding the processing of the transactional spoken discourse, besides linguistic sources of knowledge, listeners rely upon the following pragmatic sources of knowledge as they perform different tasks in the processing the spoken discourse: features of the situational context, knowledge of the topic, culture knowledge, background knowledge or the knowledge of the world. The present chapter suggests the techniques that could be used for implementing the findings of the present study in the language learning/teaching and describes pre-listening and while-listening activities for additional tasks.

6. 1. Recommendations for Foreign Language Learning/Teaching

The activation of the previous knowledge and pragmatic sources of knowledge implementing the top-down approach plays a very important role in the contextualization of the teaching texts in the listening lesson. However, very often the listening texts that are supplied together with the foreign language text books for language learning are de-contextualized, that is, the contextual cues are not clear, the learners have to listen to complete strangers in strange settings. In real life any oral discourse has its context of situation and its structure reflects its purpose. Therefore within the thematic unit being taught the teacher should present activities that activate students' background knowledge about the theme and provides context knowledge. The students are involved in listening, their expectations and interest are aroused and they have definite purpose for listening.

The present research points to the following implications for developing listening skills in a foreign language:

1) Pre-listening stage is the most crucial parts of the listening session. Learners need pre-listening activities that prepare them for the listening task. Their purpose is to activate the current background knowledge, arouse expectations of what learners are going to listen to,

contextualize the spoken discourse and generate interest thus motivating them to take an active part in the activity. Several techniques could be recommended:

- Activation of background knowledge and relevant schema.
- Setting the context by means of providing students with the information in terms of the features of the context of situation (participants, the physical and temporary setting, co-text, culture information).
- Arranging pre-listening activities that give contexts or contextualize.
- Arranging activities that inform about the history, culture heritage, geographical facts.
- Arranging activities that require to predicting content by using background knowledge: general knowledge of the world and specific subject knowledge.
- Connecting vocabulary to genre of the text, learners' interest, and background knowledge.
- Personalization activities. Linking the task with the learners' personal experience.
- Checking the understanding of the listening task.

2) Learners' comprehension may increase if they are trained to use strategies such as guessing or inferencing or making hypotheses when they are not sure of something, such as the meaning of an unfamiliar word or expression in the while-listening stage “

3) Defining mode, tenor and field of the spoken recorded discourse as a while-listening task in order to identify the context of situation and its purpose.

4) Students should be taught to interact with the text through the use of both bottom-up and top-down processes.

Recent language learning text books are supplied with very good cassettes and discs, but not always enough exercises are tailored for the activation of the background knowledge. Teachers can use additional video recordings or radio news programmes, besides, different Internet websites offer listening texts. Even though additional exercises add extra work for teachers, listening activities with specially tailored pre-listening or while-listening tasks are more suitable for successful listening comprehension. Students are motivated to listen to the tapes, they have the purpose to participate in the communication in the classroom settings. The following section suggests the possible activities for additional tasks.

6.2. Possible Activities for Additional Tasks

6.2.1. Pre-listening Activities

Activity 1

Brainstorming

The teacher tells the students the topic of the listening passage, for example, 'Environmental problems'. The teacher splits students into groups or pairs and asks them to brainstorm all possible ideas concerning environmental issues and write their ideas down on the paper. Every person has his/her own experience about pollution and nature protection. Students are encouraged to ask the teacher for help if they do not know the translation of certain words. The students in pairs or groups make the lists with their ideas. After 10 minutes the teacher invites students to read what they have got on their lists. The teacher accepts all suggestions and writes them on the blackboard in the form of mind-map and together with students discuss the vocabulary. It is an interesting pair or group activity because there are no right or wrong answers. Besides, it is useful revision of the vocabulary, and some students may have suggested words that were new to others. This activity activates background knowledge of the topic and listening becomes more effective.

Commentary

This activity will require learners to access theme-related words that are likely to come up in the text. Such activity has the advantage of simply pre-teaching words in that the words are chosen by the learners themselves, so they are likely to have greater significance. Besides, brainstorming activates relevant schemata and the students are engaged in listening activity.

Activity 2

Predicting

The task is to predict the content of a text on the basis of the pictures. Students are asked to look at the pictures. The teacher asks to identify the items which will be mentioned in the listening text. This can be done in different ways, for example, by questions and answers or by general discussion. The teacher's task is to guide the discussion so that finally the variant which is going to be heard in the dialogue appears.

Commentary

Predicting means thinking about the possible content of the listening text before you listen to it. Predicting will activate two levels: 1) background knowledge and relevant schemata; 2) context level: the situation (who is speaking, where and when). The content of the listening text can be predicted on the basis of the non-verbal clues, such as accompanying illustrations or diagrams. Learners can work together suggesting various possible scenarios for the text and reporting these to the class. Besides activating the background knowledge, this activity will draw learners attention to the relevant vocabulary thus vocabulary pre-teaching is not necessary.

Activity 3

Building-up culture, geographical and historic knowledge

The teacher asks the students to consult the encyclopaedia or find the information on the Internet as the home task in the previous class.

Commentary

In cases where students do not have background knowledge of the target language culture appropriate for the understanding a passage, it is advisable to find ways of providing the students with relevant historic or culture information. The proper nouns of the geographical place names, historic persons and historic data, the events of culture life and art, names of famous artists, actors and politicians form the background knowledge.

Activity 4

Pre-listening discussions

The teacher arranges the discussions concerning the theme of the listening text. The discussion could be done as the pair work or group work. This activity requires a serious preparation since the teacher has to prepare various task sheets with questions necessary information about the topic. This type of activity is more relevant for the advanced level classes.

Commentary

Pre-listening discuss involves learners in the listening activity, provides expectations of what they are going listen to. However, it must be taken into account that large numbers of

words not relevant to the listening passage might be misleading and might activate irrelevant schemata. Therefore the vocabulary items for the discussion should be selected carefully.

Activity 5

Reading a text before listening

1. Reading through questions or (T/F statements) to be answered while listening.
2. Reading additional information.

Before listening the teacher asks students to read something additional about the topic that they are going to listen to.

Commentary

1. It is important that the reading text contains some of the vocabulary that will occur in the listening text. This type of activity is useful for those students who would like to see the printed text in front of them and it is a helpful way to present new vocabulary. In this activity students get acquainted with the vocabulary they are going to hear in the listening text, weaker students can learn new words.

2. Many listening activities require students to answer questions based on information they hear. It is advisable to see the questions before they listen. The questions give hints of the information students are going to hear. Besides, weaker students find it helpful to see the written text so they know what they have to seek in the text.

6.2.2. While-listening Activities

Activity 6

Listening and inferring the topic of conversation

Initial playing of the recording

Students are asked to listen to the half of the passage and as they listen they have to infer the topic of text.

Commentary

Inferring the topic of the listening text activates background and schematic knowledge. In such type of exercises the processing of the spoken discourse proceeds from top-down. The

students start from the general idea beforehand and try to fill in missing information later on while listening to the recording.

Activity 7

Establishing the context

Initial playing of the listening text.

Students are asked to listen to the recording once and to decide about the setting, participants, and other features of the context.

Commentary

Playing a few lines at the beginning can help establish the context. Contextual cues are very important for activating the background knowledge and giving the purpose for listening. The initial playing requires very general information, afterwards the recording should be played again with careful listening and detailed analysis of the spoken text.

Activity 8

Predicting while listening to a dialogue

Students are asked to predict the exact words of the dialogue. The teacher stops the pushing the button 'Pause' after each question in the dialogue so that students can predict the possible answer.

Commentary

As it was mentioned above, predicting can be used at the pre-listening stage. Then students are given the "opportunity to speculate on what they might expect to hear in any given situation" (Underwood, 1990:69). In the while-listening activity students are asked to predict the exact words. This activity is quite complicated as it requires certain training. It is advisable to use a dialogue for this purpose. Students usually enjoy this type of activity, but it is hard work for the teacher as he/she should be a kind of a facilitator and lead the discussion of the alternatives which are supplied by the students. During the activity the teacher stops the tape after each question, students suggest possible answers, the teacher plays the answer on the tape, in this way they proceed through the whole dialogue together.

Activity 9

Identifying references

The teacher invites students to listen to the passage for several times and to identify what words (the persons or things) the pronouns are referred to in the recording.

Commentary

Such type of exercise raises the awareness of the learners of how articles and pronouns function to achieve the cohesion in the text. The referent can be in the listening text or outside it. This type of listening activity is good for all levels, however, weaker students need very slow pace of the recording. The other variant is that the teacher pauses the tape now and then so as the students can follow the text.

Activity 10

Mode, tenor and field

The students are asked to listen to two or three different passages. While listening they have to state field, mode, tenor of each of them. As the post-listening activity students are supposed to write down the characteristic features of the field, tenor and mode of the spoken discourses they have listened to and in the follow-up discussion explain their choice (e.g., the recordings could include: one from the children's English text book, one recording from the class cassette of the students' text book, and one radio news recording).

Commentary

This activity is aimed at raising students' awareness of the role of context in the choice of the vocabulary in producing the spoken discourse. The three contextual dimensions, field, tenor, mode, determine the register of the listening text in terms of grammar structures and vocabulary. Such type of activity draws learners' attention to the richness of English vocabulary and its choice depending on the social situations.

Activity 11

Was everything said to the point?

The students are asked to listen to the tape carefully and state the, firstly, the theme of the listening passage, secondly, decide, if all information mentioned in the text, is to the point.

Commentary

Students practice to identify the main theme of the text and information relevant to this theme. The Maxim of Relation is violated if extra information is added in the discourse, and it is worthwhile to draw learners' attention to the fact that not always speakers observe the Cooperative Principle. As follow-up activity students should suggest what extra information was mentioned in the text.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The results of the analysis of linguistic theories have enabled the author to conclude that the processing of the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language requires linguistic knowledge of phonology, lexis, syntax, discourse structure and pragmatic knowledge of the situational context, culture, history and geography of the target language.
2. Listeners with their partial linguistic knowledge of a foreign language have to use their knowledge of the world and prior knowledge in the form of schemata and scripts to understand the meaning of the spoken discourse. In applying the top-down approach, the activation of the background knowledge helps to compensate for the lack of the linguistic knowledge.
3. Listeners use the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of their native language for the processing oral transactional discourse in a foreign language. This knowledge is not sufficient for the complete understanding of the semantic meaning. The presuppositions of the language use and the background knowledge that communication participants have, are different in different cultures, therefore the communication is not always successful. In addition, in the educational settings, when language learners listen to recorded texts in a foreign language, there is a limited range of features of context or the listening activity is partly de-contextualized.
4. The findings of the present study prove that the activation of the background knowledge of the listeners and added pragmatic knowledge facilitate the processing of the spoken discourse in a foreign language, since the results of the quazi-experiment and the SSPS analysis of the variables of content words in the retrospective oral summaries and post-test results show that the differences are statistically significant (< 0.05). The participants of the quazi-experiment that were exposed to the pre-listening treatment had better results in both retrospective listening tests.
5. The language proficiency level influenced the result of the retrospective tasks. The students with better language knowledge had better overall results in retrospective listening tests. However, the participants' result in the retrospective oral summaries in each target

language proficiency level had great dispersion that could be explained by the affective factors and learner differences.

6. The analysis of the participants' questionnaires shows that personal data (gender, age, place of residence, participants' opinion about English as a foreign language) and affective factors (motivation) did not influence the result in the listening session significantly. That means that those factors did not influence the result of the retrospective tasks. Even though in single cases it seemed that there might be a certain impact of the profile of the learner, the present empirical study does not give proof for such a claim.

7. The lexical analysis of the transcribed students' oral summaries show that the participants have recognized and used in their oral summaries 30% of the content words encountered in the text "The London Eye" and 20% of the content words from the text "Hippocampus". The number of content words **not** used in the oral summaries in both texts account for 35%. Oral summaries of "The London Eye" and "Hippocampus" contain content words that were mentioned as unknown in the pre-test, thus the activation of the background knowledge and relevant pragmatic information has assisted in recognizing words in the connected speech. The participants have used more nouns and verbs, less adjectives in their oral summaries. However, their oral summaries do not contain the adverbs derived with the suffix *-ly* (*intimately, previously, silently, simply, greatly, truly, profoundly*). The result of the analysis of the lexical frequency of the participants' oral summaries show that learners use words from all frequency groups. The analysis of the participants' retrospective oral summaries shows that the words verbatim do not stay in the memory. That means that the listeners create mental representations and not always remember the exact word.

8. The results of the introspective study show that the participants in inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words while listening used linguistic (intralingual and interlingual) sources of knowledge and pragmatic sources of knowledge. Intralingual sources included: word morphology, word homonymy, word associations, sentence level meaning, syntagmatic relations, paradigmatic relations, sentence level grammar, discourse level meaning. Interlingual sources included lexical knowledge, and word collocation in their native language. Pragmatic sources of knowledge included: 1) features of the situational context,

2) knowledge of the topic, 3) culture knowledge, 4) background knowledge or the knowledge of the world.

9. The present research points to the implications that pre-listening stage is the most crucial part of the listening session. Learners need pre-listening activities that prepare them for the listening task. In the learning process it is very important to pay attention to 1) activating the background knowledge, 2) giving information about the situational context, 3) creating the specific cultural knowledge for the listeners to enhance the comprehension process of a spoken discourse in the target language.

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Glossary

Bottom-up approach	induktīva teksta uztveres metode	A form of language processing that starts with the individual elements that constitute language: sounds, then words and phrases, then sentences and finally whole texts.
The Cooperative Principle	Saziņas princips	The theory developed by H. Grice that states that the conversation participants have an unspoken agreement to talk cooperatively with each contributing to the conversation and speaking on topic.
Discourse	diskurss	(In the light of the present study) The meaningful language used in complete spoken texts for a certain purpose in a context.
Interactional discourse	interaktīvs diskurss	Two-way interactional discourse
Lexical inferencing	nepazīstamu vārdu nozīmes izsecināšana	“involves making informed guesses as to the meaning of a word in light of all available linguistic cues in combination with the learner’s general knowledge of the world, her/his awareness of context and her relevant linguistic knowledge” Haastrup (1991: 40).
The Maxim of Manner	kodolīguma norma	A Gricean conversational maxim that presupposes that the speaker will avoid ambiguity and be brief and orderly.
The Maxim of Quality	precizitātes norma	A Gricean conversational maxim that requires information that is true and has adequate evidence.
The Maxim of Quantity	informācijas daudzuma norma	A Gricean conversational maxim that requires being informative without including additional unnecessary information.
The Maxim of Relation	būtiskuma norma	A Gricean conversational maxim that expects participants to be relevant.
Relevance Theory	Būtiskuma teorija	The theory developed by Sperber and Wilson that states that the hearer perceives that speaker will communicate only rele

		information, in other words, the speaker will be as economical as possible communicating the message.
Schema (<i>pl.schemata</i>)	tēlu shematiskie atveidojumu	Mental structure, consisting of relevant individual knowledge, memory, and experience that is needed to make inferences when processing discourse
Schema theory	shēmu teorija	The theory suggests that the knowledge is organized into interrelated patterns that are constructed from the previous experience enabling people to make predictions about the future experiences.
Script	zināšanas par notikumu secību	The knowledge of probable sequence of events in familiar situations.
Scripted spoken text	iepriekš sagatavota, pierakstīta un lasīta runa	Oral discourse that is written down and read
Top-down approach	deduktīva teksta uztveres metode	A form of language processing that begins with the whole texts and is based on previous knowledge of discourse structure subject matter in understanding the meaning of the whole message
Transactional discourse	transakcionāls diskurss	One-way message oriented discourse that communicates information and is concerned with transmitting and receiving information
Triangulation	triangulācija	The application of different research methods in the study
Unscripted spoken text	Iepriekš nesagatavota, spontāna runa	Oral spontaneous discourse

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1	Transactional Oral Discourse “The London Eye”
ANNEX 2	Transactional Oral Discourse “The Hippocampus”
ANNEX 3	Questionnaire 1
ANNEX 4	Questionnaire 2
ANNEX 5	Word Frequency in Students’ Oral Summaries (Text 1)
ANNEX 6	Word Frequency in Students’ Oral Summaries (Text 2)

THE LONDON EYE

First I'd just like to give you a little information about London itself. The London Eye stands on the river Thames and many of the city's most famous landmarks are nearby. This is no coincidence. It is because of the river that London was founded here in the first place. The Romans settled in Londinium, as it was called, at the beginning of the first millennium because the river was vital to trade and travel. The city grew but the river was always at its heart - importing and exporting goods for sale around the world and providing a safer alternative to travelling by road. But the river brought problems, too. Flooding and freezing were frequent, and pollution was to be expected in such a busy waterway. However, conditions have greatly improved on the river, especially in the last twenty years or so - and the Thames Barrier is now London's first defence against floods. The relationship of the Thames to London changed profoundly when the big container ships of the 20th century could no longer navigate the river and went elsewhere. Since then, the Thames has become a source of pleasure to Londoners with its riverbank developments. As for the Eye itself ... it took seven years to complete. It was built to celebrate the New Millennium and the interesting thing is that it was constructed piece by piece throughout Europe. It was the biggest observation wheel ever designed, there was no single place where it could be built. The main structure was built in Holland, the centre part was built in the Czech Republic, the cables were made in Italy and the capsules in France. So it is a truly European project!

THE HIPPOCAMPUS

The hippocampus is where we store the things we consciously remember. As part of that we could include navigation. We know that in animals navigation and the hippocampus are intimately linked. So it would seem now is the human hippocampus. Tests showed that if any part of a creature's hippocampus was damaged, the animal could no longer find its way around. Ordinary mortals, too, have shown that they use hippocampus to find their way around. But the brains of London taxi drivers grew to accommodate the layout of the whole city. They are excellent group to study. They've acquired a vast amount of spatial information. It's the kind of thing you can only do in this city, because taxi drivers elsewhere aren't licensed in the same way. We had previously placed volunteer drivers in scanners, quizzed them on the best routes round London and watched their brains fire up. This time, we simply invited them to lie back – silently – and have their grey matter measured by two different techniques. What we did was look at the amount of time spent as a taxi driver and then looked at the brain measurements. We found a significant correlation, in that the back part of the hippocampus increased in size. The longer you have been a taxi driver, the bigger the brain got.

Questionnaire 1

Please, fill in the questionnaire:

1. Name _____ 2. University and Faculty _____

3. Age _____ 4. Gender _____ 5. Score at the National Year 12 Exam _____

6. Which foreign language is English for you? (tick) ___ 1st, ___ 2nd, ___ 3rd

7. The theme of the listening text _____

8. Type of activity:

8.1. With pre-listening input _____ 8.2. Without pre-listening input _____

9. Sources of distortion while listening to the recorded text (tick you choice):

- _____ Noise around
- _____ Quality of recording
- _____ Appropriateness of premises
- _____ Lack of attention and concentration

10. Sources of distortion while recording your oral summary (tick you choice):

- _____ Attention and concentration
- _____ Your verbal intelligence at the moment of recording
- _____ Noise around
- _____ Motivation to perform well

11. What made it difficult to recognize and use the words from the spoken text?

12. How many times should the tape be played in order to remember more? _____

13. If you were to self-evaluate yourself, how much (give percentage) from the passage did you record? _____

14. Were you motivated to do your best in this exercise? _____

15. Would you be more motivated if you were to do it for a mark? _____

THANK YOU!

Questionnaire 2

Please fill in the questionnaire:

1.Name, surname _____ 2.University and faculty _____

3.Name of the file _____ 4.The theme of the listening text. _____

5.Type of activity:

5.1. With pre-listening input _____ 5.2. Without pre-listening input _____

6.Characterize the spoken text.

6.1. Were there words you have never heard before? _____

6.2. Did you hear a word but think it was a different word?

7. Were you able to work out (guess) any words that you missed _____

8. If answer to 6 is "yes", how did you work them out? _____

9. How much experience have you had of listening to English?

10. What are your feelings about listening to English at your secondary school?

11. In your own language, which do you remember better – what you have heard or what you have read? Can you say why?

12. In English, which do you remember better – what you have heard or what you have read? Can you say why?

Thank you!

Word Frequency in Students' Oral Summaries in Text 1 (The London Eye)

(List of recognized and used content words,
analysed by VocabProfile website)

Content Word	Part of Speech		With Pre-listening (words)	Without Pre-listening (words)
		1 st 1000:		
		1 st 500		
1. become	V		4	7
2. begin	V		40	30
3. big	A		30	24
4. brought	V		13	14
5. built	V		56	52
6. called	V		10	16
7. centre	N		50	21
8. changed	V		23	14
9. city	N		7	15
10. conditions	N		1	7
11. could	V		8	9
12. developments	N		2	3
13. expected	V		2	0
14. eye	N		56	52
15. famous	A		5	11
16. give	V		6	9
17. greatly	Adv		0	0
18. interesting	A		7	4
19. last	V		1	9
20. longer	A		35	17
21. made	V		40	26
22. main	A		55	44
23. new	A		34	19
24. number	N		56	52
25. part	N		56	52
26. place	N		24	33
27. problems	N		56	47
28. providing	V		0	2
29. road	N		7	10
30. stands	V		6	20
31. thing	N		6	10
32. took	V		52	29
33. went	V		6	10
34. world	N		19	9
35. years	N		56	52
-----			-----	
		2 ND 500		
36. complete	V		6	0
37. container	N		0	0
38. first	Num		53	44
39. grew	V		0	0
40. heart	N		1	0
41. observation	N		6	0
42. piece	N		7	2
43. pleasure	N		0	0
44. relationship	N		1	0
45. river	N		56	52
46. safer	A		7	0
47. sale	N		3	3

48. settled	V		47	27
49. seven	Num		25	0
50. ships	N		18	17
51. single	A		2	3
52. trade	N		18	19
53. travel	V		32	29
54. truly	Adv		5	0
55. twenty	Num		2	0
56. busy	A	2 nd 1000	0	1
57. century	N		33	19
58. defense	N		0	3
59. especially	Adv		2	3
60. flood	N		51	44
61. freezing	N		49	32
62. frequent	A		14	2
63. improved	V		2	11
64. wheel	N		16	2
65. alternative	A	Academic Word List	2	4
66. coincidence	N		0	4
67. constructed	V		56	52
68. designed	V		0	0
69. export	N		47	34
70. founded	V		2	6
71. project	N		20	17
72. source	N		4	7
73. structure	N		48	27
74. barrier	N	OFF LIST	4	7
75. cables	N		48	25
76. capsules	N		56	18
77. celebrate	V		39	29
78. goods	N		33	17
79. import	N		44	25
80. landmarks	N		3	8
81. millennium	N		56	52
82. navigate	V		25	13
83. pollution	N		51	37
84. profoundly	Adv		0	0
85. riverbank	N		0	0
86. vital	A		1	3
87. waterway	N		0	0
88. Europe	N	Proper Nouns	40	41
89. Londinium	N		35	31
90. London	N		56	52
91. Romans	N		46	41
92. Thames	N		56	52

Word Frequency in Students' Oral Summaries in Text 2 (Hippocampus)

(List of recognized and used content words,
analysed by VocabProfile website)

Content word	Part of speech		With Pre-listening	Without Pre-listening
		1 st 1000: 1 ST 500		
1. best	A		2	6
2. bigger	A		49	50
3. city	N		18	8
4. could	V		11	9
5. different	A		20	15
6. find	V		67	33
7. got	V		20	11
8. group	N		14	10
9. include	V		3	0
10. increased	V		6	8
11. kind	N		0	2
12. know	V		23	16
13. lie	V		1	3
14. longer	A		33	21
15. look	V		11	2
16. matter	N		4	6
17. part	N		56	35
18. placed	V		13	5
19. remember	V		53	23
20. same	A		9	0
21. seem	V		0	0
22. showed	V		25	7
23. spent	V		6	4
24. study	V		21	12
25. thing	N		47	9
26. time	N		24	17
27. use	N		20	5
28. way	N		49	30

29. amount	N	2 ND 500	7	2
30. animals	N		56	45
31. driver	N		56	52
32. fire	V		1	2
33. grew	V		3	1
34. human	N		31	17
35. measured	V		14	8
36. measurements	N		0	0
37. ordinary	A		4	3
38. silently	Adv		0	0
39. simply	Adv		5	0
40. size	N		13	7
41. store	V		50	11
42. tests	N		49	23
43. two	Num.		26	18
44. watched	V		6	6
		2 nd 1000		

44. brain	N		56	52
45. consciously	Adv		28	7
46. creature	N		13	4
47. damaged	V		33	19
48. excellent	A		13	10
49. grey	A		2	6
50. information	N		17	13
51. invited	V		8	1
52. taxi	N		56	52
53. accommodate	V	Academic Word List	2	2
54. acquired	V		2	0
55. licenced	V		5	1
56. linked	V		7	6
57. previously	Adv		1	1
58. significant	A		3	3
59. techniques	N		11	9
60. volunteer	N		4	0
61. correlation	N	OFF LIST	4	5
62. hippocampus	N		56	52
63. intimately	Adv		2	0
64. layout	N		4	2
65. mortals	N		3	2
66. navigation	N		56	50
67. quizzed	V		6	0
68. routs	N		0	0
69. scanners	N		1	5
70. spatial	A		7	6
71. vast	A		2	0

Latvijas Universitāte
Moderno valodu fakultāte

INESE OZOLA

**Lingvistiskie un pragmatiskie priekšnoteikumi
mutvārdu diskursa uztverei svešvalodā**

**LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC PRECONDITIONS TO
PROCESSING SPOKEN DISCOURSE IN A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE**

Promocijas darba kopsavilkums filoloģijas doktora grāda iegūšanai
valodniecības zinātņu nozares lietišķās valodniecības apakšnozarē

Darba zinātniskā vadītāja
Dr. habil. philol. **I.Kramaņa**

Rīga 2007

Darba zinātniskā vadītāja:
Dr.habil.philol. Ingrīda Kramiņa

Recenzenti:
Dr.philol. Jānis Sīlis
Dr.philol. Juris Baldunčičs
Dr.philol. Maija Brēde

Promocijas darba aizstāvēšana notiks

Latvijas Universitātes Valodniecības zinātņu nozares promocijas padomes atklātā
sēdē 2007. gada 4. decembrī plkst. 14.00

Latvijas Universitātes Moderno valodu fakultātē Rīgā, Visvalža ielā 4a, 402. telpā.

Ar promocijas darbu un tā kopsavilkumu var iepazīties Latvijas Universitātes
Zinātniskajā bibliotēkā Rīgā, Kalpaka bulvārī 4.

Valodniecības zinātņu nozares
Promocijas padomes priekšsēdētāja

Dr. Habil.philol. Dace Markus

Padomes sekretāre

Dr.philol. Maija Brēde

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Lingvistiskie un pragmatiskie priekšnoteikumi mutvārdu diskursa uztverei svešvalodā

Promocijas darba vispārīgs raksturojums un pētījuma aktualitāte

Tā kā svešvalodas ir saziņas līdzeklis starpvalstu kontaktos dažādos līmeņos, līdz ar Latvijas valstiskās neatkarības atgūšanu un iestāšanos Eiropas Savienībā ir aktualizējušies valodu apguves teorētiskie un praktiskie aspekti. Latvijas apstākļos svešvalodu zināšanas dod iespēju sekmīgi konkurēt darba tirgū, iesaistīties dažādos Eiropas Savienības projektos, piedalīties studentu apmaiņas programmās ārvalstu augstskolās. Klausīšanās kā receptīva prasme un viena no četrām valodas pamatprasmēm (lasīšana, rakstīšana, runāšana un klausīšanās), ir valodas apguves procesa sastāvdaļa. Klausīšanās veido svarīgu saziņas procesa sastāvdaļu.

Latvijā 70. un 80. gados svešvalodas stundās galvenā nozīme bija gramatikas likumu un vārdu krājuma apgūšanai, runas uztveres prasmju attīstīšanai svešvalodā netika veltīta pienācīga uzmanība. Pastāvēja pieņēmums, ka spēju saprast klausāmu tekstu studējošie automātiski iegūst, mācoties jaunus vārdus, klausoties skolotāja runā, mehāniski atkārtojot audio variantā ierakstītus izrunas vingrinājumus. Uzmanība tika pievērsta pareizām gramatikas formām pašām par sevi, nevis vēstījuma izpratnei vai saziņas mērķim. Kopš 90. gadu vidus situācija ir ievērojami uzlabojusies. Stundās Latvijas skolās klausīšanās prasmju attīstīšana svešvalodas mācīšanas/apgūšanas procesā ir kļuvusi par neatņemamu sastāvdaļu. LR IZM 2002. gadā ieviesa 12. klases Valsts eksāmenu angļu valodā, kurā ietverta arī klausīšanās daļa.

Tomēr klausīšanās prasmes rezultāti testos un eksāmenos nav vērtējami viennozīmīgi. Piemēram, 2005. gada Valsts 12. klases angļu valodas eksāmena rezultāti klausīšanās daļā bija sliktāki nekā pārējās trīs daļās, vidējais sekmības rezultāts: runa 59%, lasīšana 53%, rakstīšana 43,75 %, klausīšanās 43,43% (www.isec.gov.lv).

Klausīšanās procesa pētnieki svešvalodā uzskata (Dž. Brauna 1986, M. Rosts 2002, Dž. Flauverdju *Flowerdue*, 1994, G. Baks 2002), ka klausīšanās ir sarežģīts koordinēts process, kurā mijiedarbojas klausītāja fonoloģijas, semantikas, sintakses, leksikas un pragmatikas zināšanas. Mutvārdu diskursa uztveres procesa izpēte nepieciešama, lai analizētu, kā klausītāji izprot klausāmu tekstu un izstrādātu ieteikumus mācīšanas metožu pilnveidošanai. Promocijas darbā autore analizē, kā valodas apguvēji (jaunieši vecumā no

18 līdz 20 gadiem) uztver mutvārdu diskursu svešvalodā audio formātā. Klausītāju vecuma grupas izvēli noteica fakts, ka Valsts eksāmenam angļu valodā gatavojas tieši šī vecuma pārstāvji.

Promocijas darba mērķis ir izpētīt transakcionāla mutvārdu diskursa uztveres rezultātu svešvalodā, izmantojot teksta uztveres deduktīvo metodi klausītāju iepriekšējo zināšanu kopuma aktivizēšanai, un noteikt lingvistiskās un pragmatiskās zināšanas, kas nepieciešamas klausāma teksta izpratnei.

Pētījuma hipotēze

Transakcionāla diskursa audiāli uztvertais leksiskais materiāls paliek klausītāja aktīvajā vārdu krājumā un mutvārdu diskursa satura izpratne tiek veicināta, ja ir radīti atbilstoši pragmatiskie un lingvistiskie priekšnoteikumi.

Pētījuma uzdevumi

1. Analizēt pētījumam nozīmīgās valodniecības teorijas par mutvārdu transakcionālā diskursa uztveres deduktīvo metodi, un lingvistiskajām un pragmatikas zināšanām, kas nepieciešamas klausāma teksta satura izpratnei.
2. Noskaidrot iepriekšējo zināšanu un shematisko tēlu atveidojumu aktivizēšanas un pragmatiskas informācijas lomu pirms mutvārdu diskursa uztveres.
3. Izveidot un pielietot pētniecisko instrumentāriju: anketas, interviju plānus, klausīšanās vingrinājumu plānus.
4. Lai pārbaudītu hipotēzes validitāti, veikt kvalitatīvu un kvantitatīvu pētījumu.
5. Sniegt pragmatiski pamatotus, uz valodas teorijām balstītus ieteikumus klausīšanās prasmju attīstīšanai mācību procesā.

Promocijas darba metodoloģiskais pamats

Promocijas darba teorētiskais pamats ir 20. un 21. gadsimta valodniecības un lietišķās valodniecības teorijas. Teorētisko bāzi veido Dž. Braunas, Dž. Jūla, A. Andersona un T. Linča, Dž. Fīlda, M. Rosta, Dž. Ričardsa, T. Hedžas, G. Baka atziņas par mutvārdu diskursa uztveri un klausīšanos svešvalodā, T. Van Deika, G. Kuka, D. Šifrinas, Dž. Braunas, Dž. Jūla, J. Rozenberga atziņas diskursa teorijā, M.A.K. Halideja, R. Hasanas, S. Levinsona, Dž. Meija, H. Graisa atziņas pragmatikā, R. Šenka, R. Abelsona un D. Rumelharta atziņas Shēmu teorijā.

Empīriskās pētījuma metodes

Kvaziekspieriments kā kvalitatīva pētniecības metode laika posmā no 2005. gada marta līdz septembrim, pētījuma dati tika analizēti ar SSPS-13,0 versijas Pīrsona H2 testu. Dati pārbaudīti ar SSPS Exact testu.

Introspektīvs pētījums interviju veidā.

Datu triangulācija jeb vairāku pētniecisku instrumentu lietošana iegūto datu validātes un drošuma garantijai.

Pētījuma datu objektivitātes un validitātes nodrošināšanai promocijas darbā ir veikta šāda valodas materiāla un dokumentu analīze:

- kvaziekspierimenta dalībnieku atšifrētu mutvārdu kopsavilkumu leksikas pētījums, kopumā 18534 vārdu;
- teksta izpratnes kontroltesta atbildes, kopumā 1512 atbildes;
- 216 aptaujas anketas par dalībnieku attieksmi pret klausīšanās procesu;
- atšifrētas dalībnieku intervijas par izmantotām zināšanām vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanā.

Promocijas darba novitāte un aprobācija

1. Mutvārdu diskursa uztveres procesa svešvalodā izpēte un analīze Latvijas augstskolās (LU un LLU).
2. Studentu mutvārdu kopsavilkumu kā klausāma diskursa izpratnes retrospektīva testa leksikas analīze.
3. Lingvistisko un pragmatisko zināšanu apzināšana audiāli uztverto svešvalodas vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanā mutvārdu diskursa svešvalodā uztveres procesā.
4. Ieteikumu izstrāde klausīšanās vingrinājumu efektivitātes veicināšanai svešvalodas apguves procesā.

Promocijas darbs ir aprobēts Latvijas Republikas un ārvalstu 10 starptautiskās konferencēs un 8 starptautisku konferenču publikācijās laika periodā no 1999. gada līdz 2006. gadam.

Īss promocijas darba satura izklāsts

1. nodaļa

Mutvārdu transakcionāla diskursa uztveres metodes

Tā kā promocijas darbs pēta mutvārdu diskursa uztveres lingvistiskos un pragmatiskos priekšnoteikumus, 1.nodaļā tiek definēts pētāmā mutvārdu diskursa veids, aplūkotas mutvārdu diskursa lingvistiskās pazīmes un raksturotas tā uztveres metodes.

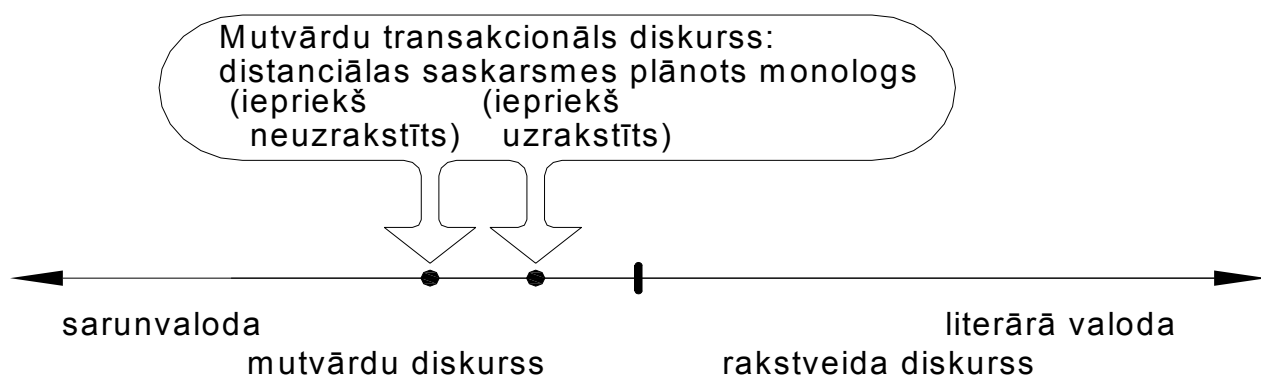
Nodaļas sākumā tiek pētīts diskursa jēdziens funkcionālistu skatījumā. Dž. Brauna un Dž. Jūls (*Brown and Yule* 1983) traktē diskursu kā valodu lietojumā. Diskurss tiek aplūkots kā process, bet teksts kā produkts. G. Kuks (*Cook* 1990) definē diskursu kā vienotu paplašinātu tekstu, kam ir nozīme un mērķis. M. Selse-Mērša un Olštaina (*Celce-Murcia and Olshtain*, 2005) uzskata, ka diskurss ir aprakstāma valodas izpausmes formas un nozīmes saistība, kas attiecas uz ārējo komunikatīvo funkciju, mērķi un auditoriju vai komunikācijas partneri; diskursa ārējo funkciju var noteikt tikai ņemot vērā tā kontekstu un dalībniekus. Promocijas darbā diskurss tiek definēts kā valoda mutvārdu tekstā, kam ir sava noteikta nozīme un mērķis kontekstā.

Komunikatīvā saskarsme var īstenoties vairākos veidos, un mutvārdu diskursu var klasificēt pēc dažādiem principiem. Pirmkārt, valoda pilda divas būtiskas funkcijas: informatīvo un sociālās saziņas funkciju. Atbilstoši diskursa funkcijām zinātnieki Dž. Brauna un Dž. Jūls, 1983, Dž. Ričards (1990), M. Rosts (1990) un Dž. Flauverdju (*Flowerdew* 2005) diskursu iedala **transakcionālā** un **interaktīvā** diskursā, kur ar transakcionālo diskursu tiek saprasts vienpusējs vēstījums, bet ar interaktīvo diskursu – runātāju divpusēja mijiedarbība. Līdzīgi diskursu traktē arī zinātnieks M.A.K. Halidejs (*Halliday* 1970): transakcionālo diskursu kā atbilstošu idejas izpratnei (*ideational*) un interaktīvo diskursu kā atbilstošu abpusējai saskarsmei (*interpersonal*). Transakcionālais diskurss sniedz informāciju un tas galvenokārt ir saistīts ar informācijas nodošanu un uztveršanu, t.i., „klausītāja orientēts” vēstījums. Atkarībā no dalībnieku skaita transakcionāls diskurss var būt var būt **monologs** vai **dialogs**, ja klausītājam ir pasīva vai adresāta loma. Transakcionālā dialogā informācijas apmaiņas runas vienības ir salīdzinoši garas.

Svarīga loma ir mijiedarbības pakāpei starp klausītāju un runātāju, kur diskursu var iedalīt 1) kontaktsaskarsmes diskursā, kur saruna notiek tiešā nepastarpinātā veidā, un 2) distanciālās saskarsmes diskursā, kur klausītājam nav iespējas mijiedarboties ar runātāju un sarunas partneri ir nodalīti laikā vai telpā, piemēram, lekcijas un prezentācijas (M. Rosts, 1990; I. Urbanoviča, 2001). Diskursu var iedalīt plānotā un neplānotā (G. Kuks *Cook*, 1990; G. Baks *Buck*, 2002). Mutvārdu diskurss var būt lasīta (iepriekš pierakstīta) vai brīvi runāta runa (T. Hedža, 2002, Veisbergs, 2005). Iepriekš pierakstīts teksts pārsvarā ir monologs, ko runātājs var nolasīt, bet brīvi runāta runa var būt gan monologs, gan dialogs. Mutvārdu diskursu lielā mērā ietekmē runātāja emocionalitāte un intonācija, kas var būt gan neitrāla, gan emocionāli izteiksmīga (J. Rozenbergs, 2004).

Mutvārdu diskursu raksturo sekojošas lingvistiskas pazīmes: 1) palīgvārdu saīsinātās formas, 2) bieža saikļu *bet, tad, un, tā tad /but, then, and so/* lietošana, 3) vilcināšanās, pauzes, 4) intonācija kalpo kā teikuma uzbūves funkcija, jo teikuma vai frāzes robežas iezīmē pauzes, 5) mutvārdu tekstā bieža lietojuma vārdi dominē pār reti lietojamiem vārdiem, 6) liels ir palīgvārdu īpatsvars attiecībā pret patstāvīgajiem vārdiem, 7) diskursa makro-struktūra netiek neplānota, 8) daudz lieko vārdu, 9) pamatā izmanto pirmās un otrās personas vietniekvārdus, 10) vārdu bieža atkārtošana, 11) dažāds runātāju ātrums un akcents, 12) paralingvistiskās pazīmes un žesti. M.A.K. Halidejs (1990) uzskata, salīdzinājumā ar rakstveida diskursu, mutvārdu diskursā leksiskais blīvums ir zemāks.

Autores pētījums skar svešvalodas mācību vidi, kur vērība tiek pievērsta klausītāja spējai uztvert audio/video ierakstā atskaņotu tekstu. Analizējot angļu valodas mācību grāmatās ietvertos klausāmos tekstus, iespējams secināt, ka svešvalodu apgūvē sastopamais transakcionālais mutvārdu diskurss ir plānots (iepriekš uzrakstīts vai neuzrakstīts), distanciālas saskarsmes monologs. Svešvalodu apgūvē transakcionālais diskurss nav abpusējs (*reciprocal*). Shematiski attēlojot mutvārdu transakcionālā diskursa vietu diagrammā pēc diskursu lingvistiskajām pazīmēm attiecībā pret sarunvalodas tekstu un literārās valodas tekstu, transakcionālais mutvārdu diskurss vairāk līdzinās rakstveida valodai (1. att.)



1. attēls. Transakcionāla mutvārdu diskursa novietojums attiecībā pret literārās valodas normām “sarunvalodas teksts - literārās valodas teksts”, (pēc Tannen, 1982)

„Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes valodu apgūvē: mācīšanās, mācīšana, novērtēšana” („The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”) ir

akceptējusi dažādu transakcionālo diskursu veidu lietošanu svešvalodu apgūvē. Tie ir publiski paziņojumi un informācija, publiska uzstāšanās, lekcijas, prezentācijas, sprediķi, rituāli, sarīkojumi, sporta komentāri, radiopārraides, publiskas debates un diskusijas.

Zinātniskajā literatūrā (A. Andersone un T. Linčs, Dž. Brauna, G. Kuks, D. Nunans, Dž. Ričards, M. Rosts, Dž. Fīlds u.c.) apraksta divas atšķirīgas metodes mutvārdu diskursa uztverē svešvalodā: induktīvā (*bottom-up*) un deduktīvā (*top-down*). Pielietojot induktīvo metodi, tekstu uztvert sāk no skaņas, kas veido zilbi, tad vārdu un teikumu, nonākot līdz visa diskursa izpratnei. Valodnieki H. Klarks un Ī. Klarka (1977) un Dž. Andersons (1995) ir aprakstījuši runas uztveri no skaņas līdz teikumam. Savukārt, deduktīvā metode paredz veidot diskursa izpratni, izmantojot kopsakarības. Deduktīvi uztverot tekstu, klausītājs pielieto iepriekšējo zināšanu kopumu, kas tiek saistīts ar kontekstu. Kontekstu veido zināšanas par konkrēto situāciju, par sarunas dalībniekiem, par vietu un laiku, tēmu, mērķi un tas, kas ir pateikts iepriekš.

Iepriekšējo zināšanu lomu mutvārdu diskursa izpratnē ir pētījis psihologs Bartlets (1932), kas ir izveidojis Shēmu teoriju, ko papildināja lingvists D. Rumelharts (1980). Saskaņā ar Shēmu teoriju, zināšanas ir savstarpēji saistīti tēlu shematiskie atveidojumi (shēmas), kas ir mūsu iepriekšējā pieredze un zināšanas. Iepriekšējo zināšanu nozīmi ir pētījuši R. Šenks and R. Abelsons 1997, R. de Begrāns un V. Dresslers 1981; G. Kuks 1990, Dž. Ričards 1987, D. Nunans 1993, M. Rosts 1993. Iepriekšējā pieredze sevī ietver ne tikai tēlu shematiskos atveidojumus, bet arī notikumu secību, ko pētījuši R. Šenks un R. Abelsons (1977) un aprakstījuši Scenāriju teorijā. Savukārt valodnieki (P. Karela un Dž. Eisterholds, 1983, M. Longs un Dž. Ričards, 1987, M. Selse-Mērša, 1995, T. Hedža, 2000, Baks, 2002) izšķir divu veidu atmiņā uzglabātās zināšanas: saturiskās (*content*) shēmas, kas attiecas uz teksta tēmu, ar to saistīto zināšanu kopumu, un formālās (*formal*) shēmas, kas attiecas uz teksta kompozīciju.

Balstoties uz Shēmu un Scenāriju teorijām, klausīšanās prasmju pētnieki (A. Andersone un T. Linčs, 1991, T. Hedža, 2000, D. Nunans, 1993, Dž. Ričards, 1990, M. Rosts, 2002, Dž. Flauverdju, 2005) ir aprakstījuši mutvārdu diskursa uztveres deduktīvo metodi. Pielietojot deduktīvo metodi, svešvalodas klausāma teksta uztveres laikā tiek aktivizētas iepriekšējās zināšanas, lingvistiskās zināšanas un satura izpratne mijiedarbojas ar tēlu shematiskiem atveidojumiem, tādējādi tiek kompensēts lingvistisko zināšanu trūkums. Jāpiezīmē, ka mutvārdu diskursa semantiskās jēgas uztverē vienlaicīgi tiek izmantotas gan deduktīvā metode, gan induktīvā metode, kas teksta izpratnes procesā mijiedarbojas un ir komplementāras.

2. nodaļa

Lingvistiskie priekšnoteikumi mutvārdu transakcionāla diskursa uztverei

2. nodaļa raksturo valodas strukturālos elementus, kas nepieciešami mutvārdu diskursa uztverei svešvalodā. Klausītājs uztver valodu tās visos līmeņos: fonoloģijas, semantiski leksiskajā, sintakses, un diskursa satura un kompozīcijas līmenī. Lingvistikas teorijas līmeņus valodu pētnieki visaptveroši pētījuši daudzās valstīs. Tie veido lingvistisko zināšanu kopumu klausāma teksta uztverei svešvalodā. Autore mērķis ir sniegt angļu valodas strukturālo elementu pārskatu no klausītāju, Latvijas studentu, viedokļa. J. Rozenbergs (1995) uzskata, ka lingvistisko analīzi var veikt līmeņos.

1. Fonoloģijas līmenis

Mutvārdu diskursa uztveres fonoloģiskie aspekti tiek raksturoti no segmentālā (fonēmas un to modifikācijas runas plūdu) un supersegmentālā dalījuma viedokļa (intonācija, vārdu un teikuma uzsvars, to semantiskās funkcijas). Izmantojot valodnieku Dž. Braunas 1977, M. Rosta 1990, P. Rouča *Roach* 1996 atziņas, darba autore raksturo angļu valodai raksturīgās fonētiskās parādības: asimilāciju, elīziju, redukciju, intruziju. Supersegmentālās parādības ietver runas ritmu, vārdu un teikumu uzsvaru, runas intonāciju. Angļu valodu raksturo ritmisks uzsvērtu zilbju biežums. Runas intonācija tiek raksturota, vairāk pievēršoties intonācijas funkcijām (F. Katamba, 1989, Kreidlers, 1997, D. Kristals, 1997, P. Roučs, 1996) diskursa satura izpratnē.

2. Leksikas līmenis

Vārda robežu atpazīšana runas plūdu ir mutvārdu teksta uztveres svarīgākais elements. D. Brazils (1995) apgalvo, ka vidējais runas ātrums angļu valodā ir astoņi vārdi katras 2 līdz 3 sekundes. I. Neišnzs (*Nation* 2005) zināšanas par vārdu svešvalodā iedala trīs grupās: zināšanas par 1) vārda rakstveida formu, izrunu, morfoloģiju, 2) vārda nozīmi, 3) vārda lietošanu (vārda šķira, vārda gramatiskais noformējums teikumā, tā veidojamie savienojumi, vārda valodas stils). Lai sekmīgi izprastu tekstu, klausītājam ir nepieciešams zināt 95% no diskursa leksikas, tas nozīmē vienu nezināmu vārdu no 20 (Neišnzs, 2003). Valodnieks M. Rosts (2002) uzskata, ka vārdu atpazīšanai valodas apguvēji lieto vārda pirmo skaņu un vārda uzsvaru; runu uztver retrospektīvi vārdu pa vārdam, atstājot neatpazītos vārdus tā saucamajā fonoloģiskajā cilpā (A. Badeleijs, 1986), kamēr tiek

apsvērtas norādes tekstā par vārda nozīmi vai arī akustiskās struktūras analīze izslēdz visus iespējamus vārdu kandidātus dotajā kontekstā.

Tālāk tiek sniegta vārdu un leksikas vienību raksturojums. Pēc lietojuma biežuma vārdus iedala četrās grupas: 1) bieža lietojuma vārdi vai vispārlietojamā leksika, 2) zinātniskā leksika, 3) tehniska rakstura vārdi, 4) neliela biežuma vārdi. Vārdus tekstā var analizēt pēc leksiskā blīvuma, t.i., patstāvīgo vārdu attiecību pret palīgvārdiem. Vārdu lietojuma kvantitatīvo aspektu raksturo aktīvā un pasīvā leksika. Valodas apguvējiem svarīgas ir zināšanas par frazeoloģismiem, vārdu savienojumiem (*collocations and phrasal verbs*), homonīmiem un polisēmiju.

3. Sintakses līmenis

Tā kā mutvārdu diskursa uztvere salīdzinājumā ar rakstveida diskursa uztveri ir laikā ierobežota, klausītājam dots neilgs laika sprīdis uztvert un izprast vārdus, noteikt vārdu funkcijas teikumā, noskaidrot pakārtojuma sakaru vārdu sintaktiskajā savienojumā. Autore apraksta H. Klarka un Ī. Klarkas, 1977, M. Singera, 1990, M. Rosta, 2002, atziņas, ka klausītāji runas plūdu nosaka vārdu uzdevumu teikumā (patstāvīgie vārdi vai palīgvārdi), vārdu nozīmes un funkcijas, vārdu šķiras, veidojot vārdu savienojuma sintakses modeli jeb propozīciju (*propositional model*), vienlaicīgi uztverot teikuma semantisko nozīmi.

4. Diskursa saturs un kompozīcija

Diskursa semantika aplūko vārdu un teikumu abstrakto nozīmi. Saskaņā ar T. Van Deiku (1997), diskurss mikro-līmenī noskaidro saistību starp vārdu savienojuma sintakses modeli jeb propozīciju. Makro-līmenī diskurss attiecas uz tā kopējo tēmu. Diskursā ietvertu informāciju var aplūkot no esošās un jaunās informācijas viedokļa. Valodnieki M.A.K. Halidejs (1970), J. Rozenbergs (1989) raksturo to kā tēmu, kas ir teikuma tematiskais struktūrelements, kuras otrs elements ir rēma. Tēma ir informācija, kas izsecināma no teksta jeb dotā informācija. Rēma ir jaunā informācija. Diskursa kompozīciju nosaka tā žanrs, tēma, faktu cēloņsakarība. Savukārt leksikas izvēle nosaka valodas stilu (*register*).

3. nodaļa

Pragmatikas loma mutvārdu transakcionālā diskursa nozīmes interpretācijā

Ne tikai lingvistiskajām zināšanām ir svarīga loma mutvārdu diskursu uztverē. Pēdējās desmitgadēs valodniecībā izveidojies uzskats, ka teksta (rakstīta vai runāta)

izpratnei nepieciešama ekstralingvistiskā vai pragmatiskā informācija. Pragmatika ir zinātnes virziens, kas pēta valodas lietošanu kontekstā, t.i. konteksta nozīmi diskursa semantiskās jēgas izpratnē. Saskaņā ar S. Levinsonu (1983) pragmatika pēta tās attiecības starp valodu un kontekstu, kas ir kodētas valodas gramatiskajās formās. Līdzīgi, Dž. Meijs (1998) uzsver, ka pragmatika pēta valodas lietošanas apstākļus, ko nosaka sabiedrības konteksts un piebilst, ka pragmatikas interešu objekts ir valodas lietotāji reālajā dzīvē.

Aplūkojot valodas lietojumu mikropragmatiskajā aspektā, šajā nodaļā tiek analizēti situācijas konteksta, deiktisko izteicienu, references, iepriekšminējumu un implikatūras, H.P. Graisa saziņas principa (*The Cooperative principle*) un būtiskuma teorijas (*The Principle of Relevance*) loma mutvārdu diskursa uztverē. Dž. Meijs (1998), M. Rosts (2002) un J. Veršuerens *Verschueren* (2001) uzsver atšķirību starp „gramatisko” un „lietotāja orientēto” teksta uztveri. Pirmajā variantā valodas vienības tiek vērtētas izolācijā, kā gramatikas sintaktiskās daļas, bet otrajā variantā valodas lietotājiem jānolemj, kā šīs valodas vienības lietot konkrētajā kontekstā. Pragmatikas informācija ir komplementāra diskursa semantiskajai nozīmei, jo konteksts mijiedarbojas ar to. Terminu „situācijas konteksts” pirmais ieviesa antropologs B. Maļinovskis 1923. gadā. M.A.K. Halidejs (1991) izvirzīja ideju, ka ir divi situācijas konteksta informācijas avoti: no semantikas viedokļa tas ir lingvistiskais konteksts (*co-text*), no pragmatikas viedokļa situācijas konteksts ietver plašu apstākļu kopumu, kas raksturo komunikācijas dalībniekus, saziņas vidi, kā arī pamatzināšanas par procesiem pasaulē.

Tālāk autore analizē vairāku lingvistu teorētiskās atziņas par situācijas konteksta pazīmēm. Piemēram, Dž. Brauna un Dž. Jūls (1991) uzskata, ka situācijas kontekstu raksturo dati par runātāju un klausītāju, sarunas vietu un laiku, kā arī diskursa žanrs, tēma un lingvistiskais konteksts. M.A.K. Halidejs (1991) izvirza sekojošus trīs diskursa situācijas konteksta raksturojošus lielumus: formālā realizācija (*mode*), subjektīvā attieksme (*tenor*), objektīvais saturs (*field*), kuri nosaka leksikas izvēli tekstā. Arī kultūras kontekstam ir svarīga loma komunikācijā, un zināšanas par mērķa valodas kultūras mantojumu, ģeogrāfiju un vēsturi veido pamatzināšanu kopumu, kas veicina izteikuma nozīmes izpratni mutvārdu saziņā.

Balstoties uz vairāku autoru (Dž. Brauna un Dž. Jūls 1991, Dž. Meijs 1998, M.A.K. Halidejs 1989, P. Verdonks 2002, Dž. Katinga 2002, K. Alans 1986) atziņām par situācijas konteksta pazīmēm, darba autore izvirza sekojošas mutvārdu diskursa situācijas konteksta pazīmes: 1) runātāja un klausītāja raksturojums (vecums, dzimums, izglītība, nodarbošanās, izcelsme); 2) laiks un vieta, 3) žanrs, 4) diskursa tēma, 5) dalībnieku kopīgās zināšanas un

uzskati, 6) lingvistiskais konteksts, 7) pamatzināšanu kopums, 8) kultūras konteksts, 9) asociācijas ar līdzīgiem tekstiem.

Raksturojot klausīšanās praksi svešvalodas mācīšanas/mācīšanās procesā, var secināt, ka klausītāji ir studenti, kuriem klausoties audio ierakstu, ir *adresāta* vai *pasīva klausītāja* loma; komunikācijas vietu un laiku, diskursa žanru, tēmu klausītāji uzzina īsi pirms klausāmā teksta iedevuma (*input*) vai izsecina klausīšanās laikā. Komunikācijas dalībnieki ir savstarpēji nepazīstami, viņi pārstāv dažādas kultūras, tādēļ viņiem nav kopīgu zināšanu, uzskatu, kultūras mantojuma. Saziņa nav abpusēja (*reciprocal*), klausītājiem nav iespējas kontrolēt runas ātrumu un uzdot jautājumus neskaidras informācijas noskaidrošanai, nav pieejami paralingvistiskie līdzekļi. No otras puses, lingvistiskais konteksts ierobežo satura interpretācijas variantu skaitu, un asociācijas ar līdzīgiem tekstiem varētu norādīt uz mutvārdu diskursa kompozīciju. Tātad mutvārdu teksta uztvere mācību vidē ir uzskatāma par daļēji dekontekstualizētu komunikatīvu saziņu vai saziņu ar ierobežotu informāciju par situācijas kontekstu.

Saziņas dalībnieki ievēro noteikumus, ko H.P. Graiss (1975) nosauca par saziņas principu (*The Cooperative Principle*). To veido četras normas: informācijas daudzuma norma (*the maxim of quantity*) paredz maksimāli atbilstoša vēstījuma nodrošināšanu bez nevajadzīgas papildus informācijas; precizitātes norma (*the maxim of quality*) paredz maksimāli objektīva vēstījuma nodrošinājumu; kodolīguma norma (*the maxim of manner*) paredz maksimāli kodolīgu un objektīvu satura ievērošanu; būtiskuma norma (*the maxim of relation*) paredz, ka vēstījums atbilst tā mērķim un ir par tēmu. Pragmatiskā skatījumā mutvārdu diskursa uztveres gaitā klausītājs uzskata, ka runātājs ievēro šīs četras normas, un tādēļ rēķinās ar sadarbību informācijas apmaiņā. Saziņas principu var pārkāpt 1) ar nodomu, 2) lietojot runā ironiju, 3) atsakoties saziņā sadarboties, 4) runājot nepatiesību 5) bez nodoma, lingvistisku zināšanu trūkuma dēļ (M. Rosts, 2002). Darba autore piekrīt D. Šifrinās (1998) apgalvojumam, ka saskaņā ar informācijas daudzuma normu, klausītājs tieksies garākā transakcionālā izteikumā uztvert kādu konkrētu informāciju, savukārt, saskaņā ar būtiskuma normu, klausītājs gaidīs, ka informācija atbilst lingvistiskajam un situācijas kontekstam. Saziņas konteksts ietver arī saziņas dalībnieku kopīgo zināšanu kopumu par kultūras mantojumu, vēsturi un ģeogrāfiju.

Mutvārdu transakcionāla diskursa nozīmes izpratnē svarīga loma ir iepriekšminējumiem un implikatūrām. Dž. Jūls (1996) uzskata, ka iepriekšminējumi attiecas uz zināšanu kopumu, kas, kā uzskata runātājs, ir zināms arī klausītājam. Studenti ar savas dzimtās valodas lingvistiskajām zināšanām un doto pragmatikas informāciju ne

vienmēr spēj veiksmīgi piedalīties saziņas procesā, jo viņu iepriekšminējumi neatbilst mērķa valodas runātāja iepriekšējo zināšanu kopumam un izteiktajam nodomam. Implikatūras ir netiešas nozīmes izteikumi, kurus iedala divās grupās: tradicionālās (*conventional*) un sarunu (*conversational*) implikatūras. S. Levinsons (1983) uzskaita vārdus, kuru lietošana norāda uz netiešu nozīmi tradicionālajās implikatūrās: *bet, pat, tāpēc, tomēr*. Nodaļā tiek aplūkoti deiktiskie izteicieni un references un to ietekme runāta teksta uztverē. Lietvārdi, personu un norādāmie vietniekvārdi, artikuli gan formāli, gan semantiski var veicināt un arī traucēt klausāma teksta uztverei.

Būtiskuma teorija, ko izstrādāja D. Sperbera un D. Vilsona paredz, ka ikviena saziņa ietver optimālu atbilstību tās mērķim un tēmai. Šīs teorijas pamats ir pieņēmums, ka saziņas adresāts diskursā ietverto informāciju uztvers par atbilstošu un būtisku. Kuks (1990) izvirzīja tēzi, ka Sperberas un Vilsonas būtiskuma teorija sasauca ar Shēmu teoriju, jo saziņā uztvertā informācija ir būtiska, ja tā atbilst klausītāja pieņēmumiem un pamatzināšanām par pasaules procesiem.

Pragmatikas teoriju analīzes rezultātā iespējams secināt, ka mutvārdu diskursa satura interpretācijā nepieciešamas ne tikai lingvistiskās zināšanas, bet arī pragmatiska informācija. Klausītājs izmanto zināšanas par situācijas kontekstu, mērķa valodas kultūras mantojumu, deiktiskiem izteicieniem un referencēm, un ievēro saziņas principa četras normas, saistot to ar būtiskuma principu.

4. nodaļa

Nepazīstamu vārdu nozīmju izsecināšana mutvārdu transakcionāla diskursa klausīšanās procesā

4. nodaļā autore apskata teorētiskās atziņas saistībā ar nepazīstamu vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanu klausīšanās procesa laikā.

Nodaļas sākumā ir sniegts problēmu kopums, kas raksturo klausīšanos svešvalodā. Klausīšanās prasmju svešvalodā pētnieku (S. Riksone *Rixon*, 1991, T. Hedža *Hedge*, 2000, P. Ēra *Ur*, 2002, I. Ozola, 1999, M. Rosts 2002) norādītās problēmas varētu grupēt trīs jomās: lingvistikas joma (klausītāju pārāk šaurais vārdu krājums svešvalodā, ātrs runas temps, dažādi runātāju akcenti), pragmatikas joma (klausāmie teksti piesātināti ar dažādu informāciju, runātāju un klausītāju atšķirīga kultūra un ar to saistīto jautājumu izpratne, dažāda izglītības pieredze), afektīvā joma (individuālās studentu atšķirības, klausītāju vēlme saprast katru teksta vārdu, vēlme redzēt klausāmo tekstu rakstiskā formā, klausītāju nomāktība, ja pirmajā klausīšanās reizē nespēj saprast vārdu nozīmes).

Tomēr saskaņā ar valodnieka Stīvena Krašena ietekmīgo lingvistiskās ievadinformācijas (Input Hypothesis) teoriju, sekmīgai valodas apguvei klausāmam vai lasāmam valodas materiālam svešvalodā jāietver lingvistiskā informācija, kas pārsniedz klausītāja vai lasītāja esošo valodas zināšanu līmeni. S. Krašens (1982:15) ieviesa formulu „i+1”, kur izglītojamā esošās zināšanas apzīmētas ar „i”, bet jaunapgūstamais valodas materiāls atbilst „i+1”, skaidrojot, ka apgūstamai vielai nevajadzētu atbilst ne” i+2”, ne „i+0”. Pirmajā gadījumā pārāk lielais svešo vārdu skaits radītu nevēlamas psiholoģiskas sekas, savukārt otrajā gadījumā valodas apguve šķīstu pārāk vienkāršota.

Tā kā mācību iestādēs klausīšanās prasmju pilnveidošanā visbiežāk izmanto audio un video ierakstus, var uzskatīt, ka valodas materiāla iedevums (input) ietver vairāk leksisko vienību nekā to pieļauj studenta vārdu krājums, tādējādi viena no klausīšanās stratēģijām sveša teksta uztverē ir nepazīstamu vārdu nozīmju izsecināšana (*lexical inferencing*) balstoties uz kontekstu. K. Hastrups (1991) apgalvo, ka nepazīstamu vārdu nozīmju izsecināšana ietver vārda nozīmes minēšanu, izmantojot visas pieejamās lingvistiskās norādes apvienojumā ar studenta vispārējo zināšanu kopumu, konteksta izpratni un viņa/viņas atbilstošām svešvalodas zināšanām. Vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanas stratēģijas pētījumi ir atrodami arī T. Paribaktas *Paribakht* un M. Vešes *Wesche*, 1999; N. Bengeleilas *Bengeleil*, 2004) darbos.

Līdz šim vārda nozīmes izsecināšana ir vairāk pētīta saistībā ar lasīšanas prasmju pilnveidošanu svešvalodā. Kopumā vērojama tendence, ka lasīšanas prasmju zinātnieku atklājumus izmanto klausīšanās procesa pētniecībā. Piemēram, viens no pirmajiem Shēmu teorijas atziņas pielietoja D. Rumelharts (Rumalhart, 1980) lasīšanas procesa pētīšanai svešvalodā. Darba autore piekrīt Vandergrifta (2006) skaidrojumam, ka klausīšanās un lasīšanas procesam ir daudz kopīgu iezīmju: receptīva valodas uztvere; lingvistisko un pragmatisko zināšanu izmantošana; induktīvā un deduktīvā tekstu uztvere, kognitīvi elastīga teksta satura uztvere, veidojot atmiņā domu attēlus par dzirdēto un izlasīto.

Pētot rakstveida un mutvārdu diskursa izpratnes procesus, zinātnieki izmanto introspektīvo (introspective) pētījumu metodi (T. Paribakta and M. Veše, 1999; K. Goha, 2002; N. Bengeleila un T. Paribakta, 2004). Šī metode ietver intervijas ar lasīšanas vai klausīšanās eksperimenta dalībniekiem, kuru laikā dalībnieki lasa vai klausās tekstu, un skaļi izsaka domas par lasītā vai saklausītā vārda nozīmi, pareizrakstību, asociācijām. Šāda eksperimenta laikā dalībnieku izteiktās domas pētnieks ieraksta audio vai video formātā, iegūstot informāciju par domāšanas procesa rezultātiem (K. Eriksons un H. Saimons, 1993; Dž. Brauna un T. Ričards, 2002).

Introspektīvo pētījumu vai domu protokolu metode izmantota, pētot vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanu diskursa uztveres procesā svešvalodā. K. Hastrups (1991) izveidoja zināšanu taksonomiju, izmantojot A. Kartona (1971) trīs zināšanu grupas, kuras izmanto vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanai: 1) interlingvistiskā kategorija, kas balstās uz dzimtās valodas zināšanām, aizgūtiem vārdiem (loan words) vai citu svešvalodu zināšanām; 2) intralingvistiskā kategorija, kas balstās uz mērķa valodas (šeit, angļu valodas) zināšanām; 3) konteksta norādēm tekstā, kuru uztvere ir atkarīga skolēnu zināšanu kopuma. Kanādas zinātnieces N. Bengeleila un T. Paribakta konkretizēja zināšanu avotu grupas vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanai lasāma teksta uztverei, izveidojot matrici, kas tiks izmantota par pamatu autores introspektīvajam pētījumam, noskaidrojot klausītāju zināšanu avotus nezināmu vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanai uztverot mutvārdu diskursu.

5. nodaļa

Empīriskais pētījums un tā metodoloģija

Metodoloģija

Lai sasniegtu promocijas darbā izvirzīto mērķi, eksperimentālā daļa tika iedalīta trīs posmos.

Pirmajā posmā tika veikts „kvaziekspieriments”, kas tālāk tekstā tiks lietots kā „eksperiments”. Tā gaitā tika salīdzināta pētījuma dalībnieku teksta izpratne, noklausoties mutvārdu transakcionālu diskursu, izmantojot divas mutvārdu diskursa uztveres metodes: neaktivizējot un aktivizējot iepriekšējās zināšanas. Lai novērtētu teksta izpratni, eksperimenta dalībnieki 1) veica klausītā teksta mutvārdu kopsavilkumu, kas tika audioierakstīts un 2) veica testu, kas saturēja kontroljautājumus par klausītā teksta izpratni.

Pētījuma objekts ir lingvistiskais materiāls dalībnieku diskursa veidā, kas satur 18 534 vārdus.

Rezultāts - atšifrēts dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkums un kontroltesta rezultāti.

Otrajā posmā tika noskaidrots dalībnieku viedoklis par veikto eksperimentu, kā arī iegūti papildus dati par pašiem eksperimenta veicējiem, lai noskaidrotu, kādi afektīvie faktori ietekmēja dalībnieku rezultātu.

Trešajā posmā tika veikts introspektīvais pētījums, kura gaitā tika iegūta informācija par eksperimenta dalībnieku domāšanas procesu, minot vai izsecinot vārdu nozīmes klausīšanās laikā.

Eksperimenta dalībnieku raksturojums

Eksperimentā piedalījās 108 studenti vecumā no 18 – 20 gadiem, kuri studē angļu valodu (AVS) un kuri apgūst angļu valodu profesionāliem mērķiem (APS). Respondenti tika sadalīti trīs grupās: 1) studenti, kuri studē angļu valodu (AVS) un kuri piedalījās eksperimentā aprīlī; 2) studenti, kuri studē angļu valodu (AVS) un kuri piedalījās eksperimentā septembrī; 3) studenti, kuri apgūst angļu valodu profesionāliem mērķiem (APS).

1.tabula. Respondentu grupas.

Dalībnieku grupas	Dalībnieku skaits	Laika periods
1. AVS studenti	N=36	2005, aprīlis
2. APS studenti	N=44	2005, aprīlis - maijs
3. AVS studenti	N=28	2005, septembris
Kopā	N=108	

Dalībnieku demogrāfiskais raksturojums bija sekojošs: dalībnieku vidējais vecums 19,53 gadi; dzimums: 89 (82%) sievietes, 19 (18%) vīrieši; dzīves vieta pirms iestāšanās augstskolā: Rīgas skolu absolventi 40 (38%), rajonu pilsētu absolventi 68 (62%). Kā informācija par dalībnieku valodas zināšanu līmeni tika izmantots 12.klases Valsts eksāmena rezultāts angļu valodā (skat. 2. tabulu).

2. tabula Dalībnieku angļu valodas zināšanu līmenis (12. klases Valsts angļu valodas eksāmens)

Rezultāts	Dalībnieki	%
A	N=19	18%
B	N=48	44%
C	N=41	38%

Mutvārdu diskursu raksturojums

Analizējot Latvijā pieejamās angļu valodas mācību grāmatas (Matrix, Opportunities, Headway), tika atlasīti vairāki mutvārdu diskursi angļu valodā no “Matrix. Upper-Intermediate.” (Gude, Wildman, 2001). Studentiem tika piedāvāti divi transakcionāli mutvārdu diskursi. Pirmais diskurss ietvēra kultūras informāciju un ģeogrāfiskus faktus par Temzas upi un Londonas panorāmas ratu „Londonas Acs”. Otrs diskurss informēja par cilvēku smadzeņu darbības zinātniskiem pētījumiem. Tos varēja

raksturot kā plānotus distanciālās saskarsmes autentiskus diskursus (ilgums apmēram 1 minūte). Audiomateriāla analīze ļauj secināt, ka materiāls bija iepriekš pierakstīts un tika lasīts, jo runa nesaturēja pauzes, vilcināšanos, liekvārdību, atkārtosanos, un gramatiski nepabeigtus teikumus.

Vārdu raksturojums mutvārdu diskursos ir sekojošs: 1. teksts (The London Eye) sastāv no 282 vārdiem, kurus saskaitīja programmatūra VocabProfile programme (www.lexutor.ca). Leksiskais blīvums tekstā ir 0.50. Patstāvīgie vārdi sastāda 43% no kopējā vārdu daudzuma. 2. teksts (The Hippocampus) sastāv no 223 vārdiem. Leksiskais blīvums tekstā ir 0.51. Patstāvīgie vārdi sastāda 38% no kopējā vārdu daudzuma.

1. posms

Eksperimenta apraksts

Pirmajā posmā tika izmantota eksperimentālā metode „*time series design*” (sērijveida testēšana), kas adaptēta no Hatčas un Farhadi (1982).

Eksperiments tika īstenots, izmantojot divus tehniskus risinājumus: studenti, kuri studē angļu valodu (AVS), klausāmā teksta mutvārdu kopsavilkumus veica, izmantojot datortehniku, bet studenti, kuri apgūst angļu valodu profesionāliem mērķiem (APS), ierakstīja mutvārdu kopsavilkumus magnetefona kasetē. Eksperiments tika īstenots nodarbību laikā, un tas tika veikts divās kārtās.

Pirmajā kārtā pirms mutvārdu diskursa tika veikti aktivizējoši vingrinājumi (Metode 1), t.i., tika aktivizētas iepriekšējās zināšanas. Otrajā kārtā mutvārdu diskurss tika noklausīts neaktivizējot iepriekšējās zināšanas, t.i. pirms klausīšanās neveicot aktivizējošus vingrinājumus (Metode 2). Eksperiments tika realizēts saskaņā ar Hačas un Farhadi izstrādāto pētījumu metodi lietišķajā valodniecībā (Hača un Farhadi Hatch and Farhady, 1982):

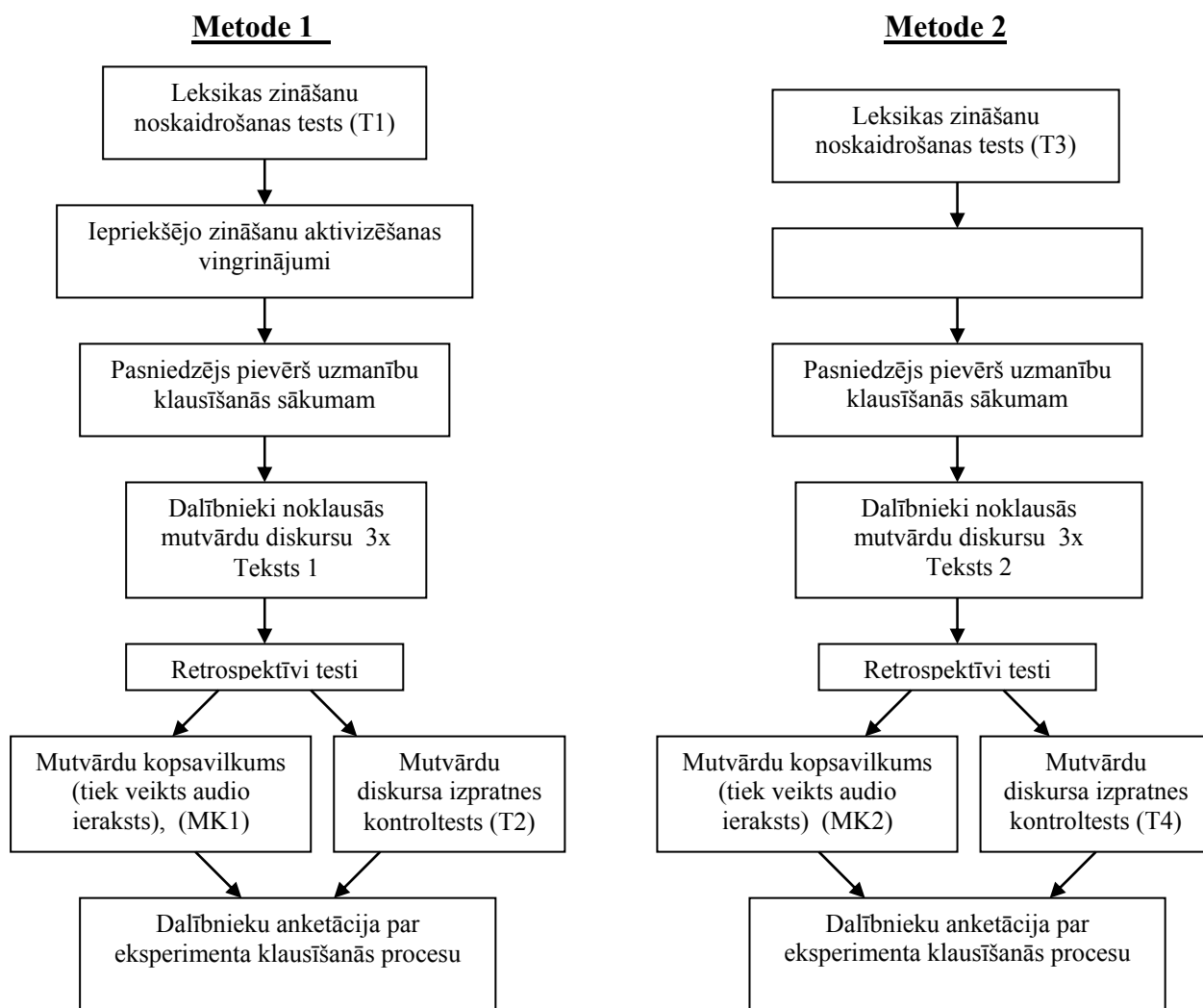
AVS studenti: T1 X (Teksts 1) MK1+T2, T3 O (Teksts 2) MK2+T4 7 reizes

APS studenti: T1 X (Teksts 1) MK1+T2, T3 O (Teksts 2) MK2+T4 6 reizes

kur “T1” un “T3” ir leksikas zināšanu noskaidrošanas tests „X”- metode ar iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšanu, „O”- metode ar iepriekšējo zināšanu neaktivizēšanu, „MK1” un „MK2” ir dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumi, “T2” un “T4” ir kontroltesti.

Leksikas zināšanu noskaidrošanas tests tika veikts vairākas nedēļas pirms eksperimenta. AVS studenti tekstā *The London Eye*, kā arī tekstā *Hippocampus* vidēji nezināja 8 vārdus,

turpretim APS studenti nezināja vidēji 15 vārdus abos tekstos. Katrs dalībnieks piedalījās eksperimentā, kas notika pēc divām metodēm (skat. 2.attēlu). Klausīšanos pēc Metodes 1 ievadīja vingrinājumi, kuri sniedza papildus informāciju par situācijas kontekstu (vietu un dalībniekiem), Lielbritānijas vēstures jautājumiem, līdzīgiem ziņu tekstiem, aktivizēja iepriekšējās zināšanas par doto tēmu.



2.attēls. Eksperimenta norise pēc 2 metodēm

Retrospektīvo testu rezultātā iegūtais lingvistiskais materiāls ir 1) dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkuma audioieraksti, kuri tika atšifrēti un sastādīja 18534 vārdus, 2) atbildes uz kontroltesta jautājumiem, kopā 1512 atbildes. Tā kā iegūtie dati ir kvalitatīvi, tad analīzei tika izmantots Pīrsona H2 tests un pārbaudīts ar Exact Testu.

Eksperimentā iegūto lingvistisko datu analīze

Retrospektīvais tests 1. Pēc eksperimenta tika analizēti dalībnieku atšifrētie mutiskie kopsavilkumi un aprēķināts atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu vidējais skaits. Iegūtais rezultāts rādīja, ka vidējais patstāvīgo vārdu skaits eksperimenta daļā, kurā tika aktivizētas iepriekšējās zināšanas (Metode 1), pārsniedz vārdu skaitu daļā, kurā netika aktivizētas iepriekšējās zināšanas (Metode 2), skat. 3. tabulu.

Statistiskās analīzes veikšanai ar SPSS Pīrsona H2 Testu un Exact Testu, bija nepieciešams analizējamus vārdus sagrupēt lielākās grupās. 4. tabulā ir dots studentu skaits (skaitliski un procentuāli) atbilstoši atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu skaitam dalībnieku mutiskajos kopsavilkumos katrā no metodēm.

3. tabula. Vidējais skaits atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumos katrā no metodēm.

Teksts	Metode 1 (vidējais skaits)	Metode 2 (vidējais skaits)
The London Eye	27 patstāvīgie vārdi	23 patstāvīgie vārdi
The Hippocampus	21 patstāvīgie vārdi	18 patstāvīgie vārdi

Aktivizējot iepriekšējās zināšanas, dalībnieku skaits, kas atpazina un lietoja vairāk patstāvīgo vārdu, bija lielāks, savukārt, neaktivizējot iepriekšējās zināšanas, dalībnieku skaits bija mazāks. Vislielākais dalībnieku skaits (41%) pēc pirmās metodes tekstā „The London Eye” atpazina un lietoja vairāk par 31 vārdu, savukārt pēc 2. metodes tikai 8% dalībnieku atpazina un lietoja vairāk par 31 vārdu. Tekstā „Hippocampus” vislielākais dalībnieku skaits (40%) pēc pirmās metodes atpazina un lietoja no 21 līdz 25 vārdiem, taču pēc 2. metodes vislielākais skaits dalībnieku atpazina un lietoja 16-20 vārdus.

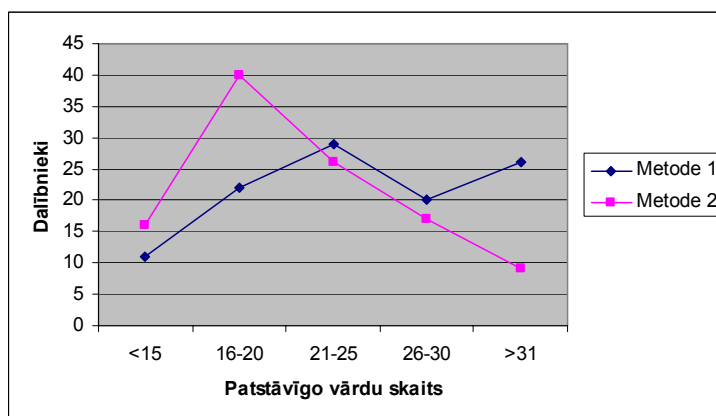
Lai noskaidrotu, vai pastāv saistība starp izvēlēto metodi un klausāmajos tekstos atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu skaitu, ar SPSS programmu tika aprēķināts Pīrsona H kvadrāts. Rezultātā iegūtā p vērtība $p = 0,005$, tā ir mazāk kā 0,05. Var secināt, ka pastāv statistiski ticama sakarība starp šiem faktoriem. Iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšana un pragmatiska informācija (Metode1) ietekmēja vārdu atpazīšanu eksperimenta gaitā (skat. 3. attēlu).

Retrospektīvais tests 2. Pēc eksperimenta tika uzskaitītas pareizās atbildes uz abu mutvārdu diskursa izpratnes kontroltesta jautājumiem. Iegūtais rezultāts redzams 5. tabulā.

4. tabula. Patstāvīgo vārdu skaitu dalībnieku retrospektīvajos mutvārdu kopsavilkumos katrā no metodēm.

Mutvārdu diskurs	Metode	Patstāvīgo vārdu skaits mutvārdu kopsavilkumos <16 Dalībnieki, %	Patstāvīgo vārdu skaits mutvārdu kopsavilkumos 16 – 20 Dalībnieki, %	Patstāvīgo vārdu skaits mutvārdu kopsavilkumos 21- 25 Dalībnieki, %	Patstāvīgo vārdu skaits mutvārdu kopsavilkumos 26-30 Dalībnieki, %	Patstāvīgo vārdu skaits mutvārdu kopsavilkumos >31 Dalībnieki, %
Kopā	Metode 1	11 10%	22 20%	29 27%	20 19%	26 24%
	Metode 2	16 15%	40 37%	26 24%	17 16%	9 8%
1. teksts	Metode 1	6 11%	4 7%	8 14%	15 27%	23 41%
	Metode 2	5 10%	11 21%	14 27%	14 27%	8 15%
2. teksts	Metode 1	5 11%	17 32%	21 40%	6 11%	3 6%
	Metode 2	11 20%	29 52%	12 21%	3 5%	1 2%

Aktivizējot iepriekšējās zināšanas (Metode 1), dalībnieki sniedza vairāk pareizu atbilžu. Tā, 17 dalībniekiem jeb 16% visas septiņas atbildes bija pareizas, 35 dalībnieki jeb 32% sniedza sešas pareizas atbildes. Klausīšanās bez iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšanas (Metode 2) rezultāts bija attiecīgi: 11 (10%) un 13 dalībnieki (12%). Lai noskaidrotu, vai



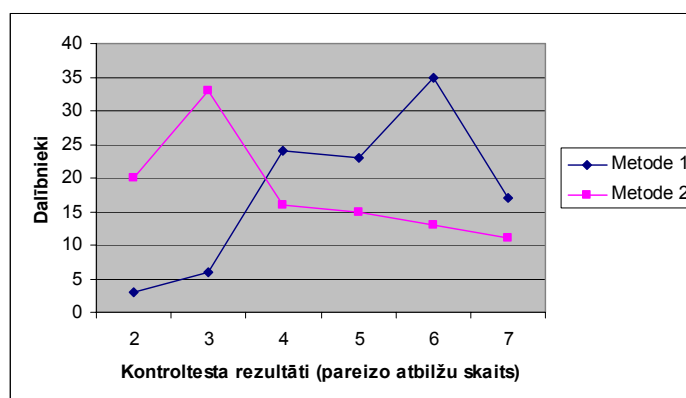
3. attēls. Patstāvīgo vārdu skaits abu tekstu mutvārdu kopsavilkumos (1. un 2. teksts kopā).

pastāv saistība starp *izvēlēto metodi* un klausāmajos tekstos *pareizajām atbildēm kontroltestā*, ar SPSS programmu tika aprēķināts Pīrsona Hi kvadrāts (χ^2). Rezultātā iegūtā p vērtība ir 0,000, t.i. mazāka kā 0,05. Var secināt, ka pastāv statistiski ticama sakarība starp faktoriem, un iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšana (Metode 1) ietekmēja tekstu saturu izpratni (Skat. 4. attēlu).

5. tabula. Kontroltesta rezultāti katrā no metodēm.

Mutvārdu diskurs	Approach	Atzīme 2	Atzīme 3	Atzīme 4	Atzīme 5	Atzīme 6	Atzīme 7
		Dalībnieki, %	Dalībnieki, %	Dalībnieki, %	Dalībnieki, %	Dalībnieki, %	Dalībnieki, %
Kopā	Metode 1	4 4%	7 6%	24 22%	21 20%	35 32%	17 16%
	Metode 2	19 17%	32 30%	16 15%	17 16%	13 12%	11 10%
1. teksts	Metode 1	0 0%	0 0%	11 20%	11 20%	20 35%	14 25%
	Metode 2	4 8%	14 27%	10 19%	7 14%	9 17%	8 15%
2. teksts	Metode 1	4 7%	7 13%	13 25%	10 19%	15 30%	3 6%
	Metode 2	15 27%	18 32%	6 11%	10 18%	4 7%	3 5%

Tālāk autore detalizēti analizē atbildes uz kontroltesta jautājumiem. Interessants bija fakts, ka visvairāk nepareizo atbilžu bija uz 4. un 5. jautājumu 1. tekstā un 3., 5., 6. jautājumu 2. tekstā (skatīt promocijas darbā 86. lpp). Mutvārdu diskursu analīze norāda uz sekojošiem iemesliem: pirmkārt, teksta tematikas maiņa, jo runātājs pārkāpa Graisa saziņas



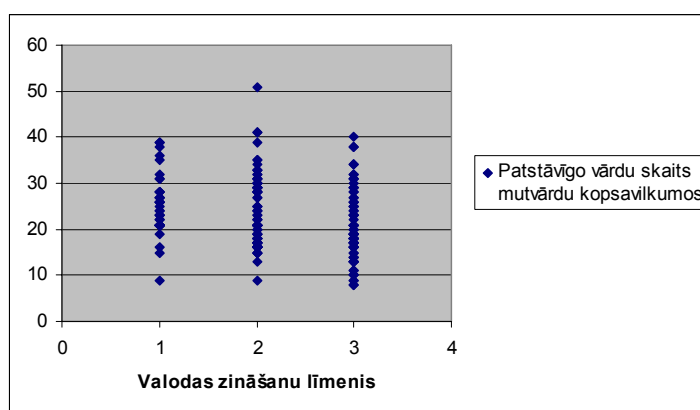
4. attēls. Kontroltesta rezultāti (1. un 2. teksts kopā).

informācijas daudzuma normu, otrkārt, runātāja ātrums lasot *iepriekš uzrakstīto tekstu*, kā rezultātā klausītāji nespēja sekot teksta saturam.

Pētījumā tika noteikts, vai angļu valodas zināšanu līmenis ietekmēja rezultātu abos retrospektīvajos testos. Lai noskaidrotu, vai pastāv saistība starp *angļu valodas zināšanu līmeni* un 1) *atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu skaitu* un 2) *pareizajām atbildēm kontroltestā*, ar SPSS programmu tika aprēķināts Pīrsona Hi kvadrāts. Rezultātā iegūtās p vērtības 1) $p=0,000$ un 2) $p=0,001$ ir mazākas kā 0,05. Var secināt, ka faktori ir būtiski, jo

starp tiem ir ļoti ciešas sakarības. Tātad valodas zināšanu līmenis ietekmēja valodas pielietojumu konkrētā saziņas situācijā. Tomēr šis statistiskās analīzes rezultāts nav vērtējams viennozīmīgi, jo pastāv lielas atšķirības dalībnieku sniegtajā, sevišķi tas attiecināms uz mutvārdu kopsavilkumiem. Viena valodas līmeņa robežās novērojama liela lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu amplitūda, piemēram, tekstā „The London Eye” 1. metodē iegūtie mutiskie kopsavilkumi atklāja, ka dalībnieki ar „B” zināšanu līmeni ir atpazīnuši un lietojuši gan 8, gan 51 patstāvīgo vārdu.

Kā redzams 5. attēlā, katrā no valodu līmeņiem rezultātos vērojama liela izkliede, kuru var izskaidrot ar individuālām studentu atšķirībām, afektīviem faktoriem, uzdevuma pildīšanas apstākļiem un nepietiekamu koncentrēšanos. Šie jautājumi tiks vairāk iztirzāti, analizējot studentu atbildes uz anketas jautājumiem.



5. attēls. Patstāvīgo vārdu dažāda skaits dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumos, kur 1 ir A līmenis, 2 ir B līmenis, 3 ir C līmenis.

Patstāvīgo vārdu biežuma analīze dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumos (salīdzinājumā ar patstāvīgajiem vārdiem dotajā mutvārdu diskursā, (iegūti pēc Metodes 1))

Iegūtie studentu mutvārdu kopsavilkumu atšifrējumi deva iespēju analizēt mutvārdu diskursa uztveres procesu no leksikas viedokļa: vārdu lietojuma biežuma, vārdu šķiru lietošanu, kā arī leksikas zināšanu testa rezultātu salīdzinājumu ar mutvārdu kopsavilkumos lietotajiem vārdiem. Lingvistisko datu analīzei tika izmantota VocabProfile (Laufers un Neišnzs, 2003) programmatūra, kas pieejama internetā (www.lexutor.ca). Salīdzinot patstāvīgos vārdus dotajos klausāmajos tekstos („input”) un dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumos („output”), tika iegūti sekojoši atzinumi:

- Dalībnieki mutvārdu kopsavilkumos vispār nelietoja 35% no abu klausāmo tekstu patstāvīgajiem vārdiem.
- Dalībnieki praktiski nelietoja apstākļa vārdus ar piedēkli „-ly”.
- Dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumos bija pārstāvēti vārdi no visām lietoto vārdu biežuma grupām (izņēmums bija nepārstāvētā zinātniskās leksikas grupa tekstā „Hippocampus”, ko var izskaidrot ar specifisko un tikai šauram cilvēku lokam labi pārzināmo tēmu).
- Analizējot vārdu šķiru (lietvārdu, darbības vārdu, īpašības vārdu) skaitu, dalībnieki atpazīna un lietoja vairāk lietvārdus un darbības vārdus, mazāk īpašības vārdus.
- Vairāk kā trešdaļā mutvārdu kopsavilkumos bija ietverti patstāvīgie vārdi, kas leksikas zināšanu testā tika atzīti par nezināmiem /*wheel, cables, Londinium, Romans, flooding*/ no teksta „The London Eye”, un /*store, consciously*/ no teksta „Hippocampus”.
- mutvārdu diskursā („*input*”) ietvertie patstāvīgie vārdi mutvārdu kopsavilkumos („*output*”), bieži tika aizvietoti ar sinonīmiem, kas liecina par to, ka klausoties atmiņā nepaliek paši vārdi, bet to domu tēli (*mental representations*).

Diskusija

Eksperimentā iegūtais rezultāts liecina, ka iepriekšējo zināšanu un tēlu shematisko atveidojumu aktivizēšana pirms klausīšanās ietekmē gan atpazīto vārdu skaitu, gan mutvārdu diskursa semantiskās jēgas izpratni tā uztveres laikā. Klausāmā teksta uztverē lieto ne tikai lingvistiskās zināšanas, bet arī iepriekšējās zināšanas par cilvēkiem, notikumu secību un to saistību ar konkrēto situāciju, tādejādi teksta uztvere notiek deduktīvi, no kopsakarībām uz detaļām. Ja iepriekšējās zināšanas tiek aktivizētas pirms klausīšanās, tad klausoties studenti gūst apstiprinājumu aktivizētajām zināšanām un shematiskajiem tēlu atveidojumiem, un tiek kompensētas nepietiekamās lingvistiskās zināšanas. Vingrinājumi pirms klausīšanās vienlaicīgi sniedz arī informāciju par situācijas kontekstu, kā arī informāciju par kultūras un ģeogrāfijas jautājumiem, tādejādi klausītājs pielieto ar pragmatiskas sakarības. Svarīga ir arī informācija par deiktiskajiem izteicieniem un referencēm.

Var izdarīt sekojošu secinājumu, ka mācību vidē, attīstot klausīšanās prasmes, svarīga loma ir vingrinājumiem pirms klausīšanās, kas: 1) aktivizē iepriekšējās zināšanas par tēmu 2) rosina tēlu shematiskos atveidojumus, 3) dod zināšanas par klausāmajā tekstā sastopamajiem kultūras, vēstures un ģeogrāfijas jautājumiem, 4) sniedz pragmatisku informāciju par situācijas kontekstu, deiktiskajiem izteicieniem un referencēm.

2. posms

Pētījuma 2. posmā tika noskaidrots dalībnieku viedoklis par klausīšanās procesu, kas varētu dot zināmu informāciju par faktoriem, kas ietekmēja eksperimenta rezultātu. Primārie dati tika iegūti ar anketēšanas palīdzību laikā no 2005. gada marta līdz septembrim. Dati tika apstrādāti ar SPSS 13.0 un Microsoft Excel 2000 programmām.

Pētījuma autore izstrādāja divas aptaujas anketas, kas sastāvēja no 21 jautājuma. Seši jautājumi noskaidroja dalībnieku demogrāfiskos datus (tie ir sniegti 14. lpp.), bet 15 jautājumi noskaidroja dalībnieku emocionālo pašsajūtu un viedokli par klausīšanās procesu, kā arī par klausīšanās prasmju pilnveidošanu. Par afektīvo faktoru ietekmi uz eksperimenta norisi var spriest pēc atbildēm uz sekojošiem anketas jautājumiem. Uz jautājumu „Kādi bija klausīšanās procesa traucējošie apstākļi?”, 55% atbildēja, ka viņiem pietrūka uzmanības un koncentrēšanās, 11% respondentu traucēja troksnis, 10% sūdzējās par ieraksta kvalitāti, un 11% nebija apmierināti ar telpām, 13% nesniedza atbildes. Uz jautājumu „Kas traucēja mutvārdu kopsavilkuma ieraksta laikā?”, atbildes bija sekojošas: 47% pietrūka uzmanības un koncentrēšanās, 22% atzīmēja nepietiekamas verbālās spējas, 11% atzīmēja troksni, un 4% trūka pietiekamas motivācijas, 15% dalībnieku nebija atzīmējuši nevienu atbildi. Nākošais bija brīva tipa jautājums, kur respondentiem vajadzēja nosaukt grūtības, kas traucējā uztvert un saprast mutvārdu diskursa saturu. Tika iegūtas atbildes, kas nosauca dažādas 25 problēmas. Apkopojot datus, tika izdalītas divpadsmit visbiežāk nosauktās:

Koncentrēšanās trūkums	15,7%
Nav problēmu	13,7%
Pārāk daudz informācijas klausāmajā tekstā	13,7%
Nepazīstami vārdi	12,7%
Iepriekšēju zināšanu trūkums	4,9%
Grūtības uztvert vārdus	4,9%
Ātra runa	4,9%
Pierakstu veikšana klausīšanās laikā	4,9%
Nav dots pietiekams laiks	4,9%
Slikta atmiņa	4,9%
Pārāk maz reižu spēlēts ieraksts	3,0%
Nervozitāte un uztraukums	2,0%

Atbildes uz šo jautājumu liecina, ka dalībnieki uzskata, ka grūtības radīja ne tikai lingvistisko zināšanu trūkums, bet arī pragmatiskie faktori (nepietiekamas iepriekšējās zināšanas), un afektīvie faktori (koncentrēšanās trūkums, nervozitāte).

Nākošais jautājums noskaidroja respondentu viedokli par to, vai viņi bija motivēti piedalīties eksperimentā. 58% atbildēja, ka viņi bija motivēti, 18% deva negatīvu atbildi, bet, 24% atbildēja, ka viņi bija daļēji motivēti. Turpinājumā tika jautāts, vai respondenti būtu vairāk motivēti iegūt labu rezultātu, ja klausīšanās vingrinājumu rezultāti tiktu novērtēti ar atzīmi. 51% respondentu atbildēja pozitīvi, un tie lielāko tiesu pārstāvēja APS studentus. Pētījumā tika noskaidrots respondentu viedoklis par to, kādu tekstu: lasītu vai rakstītu studenti uztver un atceras labāk gan dzimtajā, gan svešvalodā? Tika saņemtas sekojošas atbildes: tikai 18% respondentu atbildēja, ka dzimtajā valodā viņi uztver un atceras labāk dzirdēto informāciju, 66% atbildēja, ka lasītu informāciju un 16% atzina, ka abus veidus. Svešvalodā 17% respondentu uztver labāk klausāmu tekstu, 70% uztver lasītu tekstu un 13% atbildēja, ka labi uztver informāciju abos veidos.

Uz brīvā tipa jautājumu „Kāda ir klausāmo tekstu tēma?” tika saņemtas dažādas atbildes. Klausāmajā tekstā „The London Eye” tika ierosināti trīs tēmu varianti ar šādu procentu attiecību (1. tēma 82%, 2. tēma 14% un 3. tēma 4%). Arī klausāmajā tekstā „Hippocampus” tika nosauktas 3 tēmas (attiecīgi: 81%, 17% un 2%). Šāds rezultātu varētu izskaidrot ar to, ka vairums klausītāju sekoja ievada teikuma apgalvojumam par klausāmā teksta tēmu, taču, kā jau minēts iepriekš, abos tekstos notika tematikas maiņa, atkāpjoties no Graisa informācijas daudzuma normas un būtiskuma normas, kas arī atspoguļojas klausītāju tēmas noteikšanā.

Pētījumā bija nepieciešams noteikt, vai anketās iegūtā informācija par demogrāfiskajiem datiem un afektīvie faktori (dalībnieku motivācija) ietekmēja rezultātu abos retrospektīvajos testos. Lai noskaidrotu, vai pastāv saistība starp dalībnieku dzimumu, vecumu, dzīves vietu, kura svešvaloda ir angļu valoda, motivāciju klausīšanās procesa laikā un 1) atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu skaitu un 2) pareizajām atbildēm kontroltestā, ar SSPS programmu tika aprēķināts Pīrsona H kvadrāts un Exact tests. Rezultātā iegūtā p vērtības katrā no rādītājiem bija lielākas par $p=0,05$, tādēļ var apgalvot, ka nepastāv statistiska sakarība starp nosauktajiem faktoriem, un tie nav ietekmējuši eksperimenta rezultātu.

Anketācijas dati liecina, ka, lai gan demogrāfiskā informācija un afektīvie faktori būtiski neietekmēja mutvārdu diskursa uztveres procesa rezultātu, tomēr atklāja, ka liela daļa eksperimenta dalībnieku nebija pietiekami motivēti, viņiem bija grūti koncentrēties un trūka uzmanības, kas nepieciešama klausīšanās procesā. Šie faktori varētu izskaidrot lielās

atšķirības atpazīto un lietoto patstāvīgo vārdu skaitā dalībnieku mutiskajos kopsavilkumos viena angļu valodas zināšanu līmeņa ietvaros. Interesantas ir iegūtās atbildes uz jautājumu par dalībnieku vizuālo un audiālo teksta uztveri. Nospiedošais vairākums atbilžu liecina, ka teksta izpratnē dominē vizuālā uztvere t.i., lasīts teksts tiek vieglāk uztverts nekā klausāms, kas savukārt norāda par vispārēju tendenci labāk uztvert vizuālu, nevis audiālu informāciju.

3. posms

3. posma uzdevums bija apzināt zināšanu kopumu, ko studenti lieto, lai izsecinātu nezināmo vārdu nozīmi klausāmā tekstā svešvalodā. Dati tika iegūti ar introspektīvā pētījuma metodi, kura modeli izstrādāja K. Eriksons un H. Saimons (1993). Kopā introspektīvajā pētījumā notika 40 intervijas, tajās piedalījās 20 dalībnieki, kuri tika sadalīti pa pāriem. Katra intervija notika katram pārim atsevišķi ietvēra divu tekstu klausīšanos, un ilga apmēram 70 minūtes. Pētījums notika sekojoši: katram tekstam 1) iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšanas vingrinājumi par klausāmo tekstu, 2) ieraksta atskaņošana, 3) atkārtota ieraksta atskaņošana ar paūzi pēc katras frāzes un klausītāju intervēšana pasniedzējas vadībā, iztaujājot dalībniekus par zināšanām, kuras viņi izmanto nezināmu vārdu nozīmes izsecināšanā 4) dalībnieku skaļi izteikto domu ierakstīšana audio kasetē, 5) interviju atšifrēšana un analīze. Intervējamie runāja gan svešvalodā, gan dzimtajā valodā.

Intervijās iegūtā informācija tika grupēta izmantojot N. Bengeleilas un T. Paribaktas (2004) matrici vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanai *lasāma* teksta uztverei.

6. tabula. Introspektīvajā pētījumā noskaidrotie zināšanu avoti

I Lingvistiskie zināšanu avoti

A. **Intralingvistiskās** zināšanas balstās uz mērķa valodas zināšanām:

<u>Grupas nosaukums</u>	<u>Piemēri no intervijām ar studentiem</u>
Vārda morfoloģija	„landmarks” <i>sastāv no „land” un „marks”, „land” nozīmē „zeme”, „mark” - „marķieris”;</i>
Homonīmi	„quizzed” <i>ir darbības vārds no „a quiz”;</i>
Vārdu asociācijas	„layout” <i>no ikonas datora ekrānā, „defence” sporta spēlēs ir „defender”, tas ir aizsargs;</i>
Teikuma semantiskā jēga	„quizzed them on best routes round London” <i>routes nebija zināms vārds, bet tas varētu nozīmēt „places”;</i>

Sintagmātikas attiecības	„ called Londinium” aiz „ <i>called</i> ” var sekot tikai kāds nosaukums;
Paradigmātikas attiecības	„Romans settled in Londinium” „settled” es sapratu kā „ <i>lived</i> ”, „grey matter was measured by two different techniques”, es nezināju vārdu „ <i>measured</i> ”, bet sapratu, ka tas ir „ <i>checked</i> ”, pārbaudīt;
Vārdu šķiras teikumā	„ <i>vast</i> ” ir īpašības vārds, jo tas atrodas pirms lietvārda, varētu nozīmēt „ <i>milzīgs</i> ”;
Diskursa semantiskā jēga	„ <i>amount</i> ” ir lielums, jo Londona liela pilsēta, iepriekš bija minēts, ka šoferiem jāatceras Londonas karte;

B. Interlingvistiskās zināšanas balstās uz dzimtās valodas zināšanām

Salīdzinājums ar vārdiem dzimtajā valodā	„ <i>intimately</i> ” ir <i>intīmi, cieši</i> , „ <i>source</i> ” ir <i>resursi</i> , „ <i>cables</i> ” ir <i>kabeļi</i> ;
Vārdu savienojumi dzimtajā valodā	„ <i>observation wheel</i> ” <i>latviešu valodā ir novērojumu vai panorāmas rats</i>

II Pragmatiska informācija

Zināšanas par situācijas kontekstu	„ <i>accomodate</i> ” varētu nozīmēt „ <i>zin, pārvalda</i> ”, jo <i>taksometru šoferi zin pilsētas karti</i> , „ <i>container</i> ” varētu nozīmēt „ <i>kuģi</i> ”, jo <i>Londona atrodas uz Temzas</i> ;
Zināšanas par doto tēmu	„ <i>capsules</i> ” varētu nozīmēt kaut ko līdzīgu „ <i>kabīnēm</i> ”, jo <i>Londonas Acs konstrukcija sastāv no tādām kabīnēm</i> ;
Kultūras, vēstures un ģeogrāfijas faktu zināšanas	„ <i>Romans</i> ” varēt būt „ <i>romieši</i> ”, jo <i>pirms klausīšanās vingrinājumā viņi tika pieminēti</i> ;
Vispārējo zināšanu kopums	„ <i>flooding</i> ” varētu nozīmēt „ <i>plūdi</i> ”, <i>stāsts ir par upi, problēmas pilsētai varētu izraisīt aizsalšana vai plūdi</i> .

Introspektīvā pētījuma rezultāti dod iespēju izdarīt secinājumu, ka studenti izmanto dažādus zināšanu avotus, lai klausoties diskursu svešvalodā, izsecinātu nezināmu vārdu nozīmes. Intralingvistiskās zināšanas: vārda morfoloģiju, homonīmus, vārdu asociācijas,

teikuma semantisko jēgu, sintagmātikas attiecības, paradigmātikas attiecības, zināšanas par vārdu šķirām teikumā, diskursa semantisko jēgu; interlingvistiskās zināšanas: salīdzinājumus ar vārdiem dzimtajā valodā, līdzīgus vārdu savienojumus dzimtajā valodā; pragmatiskās zināšanas: zināšanas par situācijas kontekstu, zināšanas par doto tēmu, kultūras, vēstures un ģeogrāfijas faktu zināšanas, vispārējo zināšanu kopumu. Tātad klausītāji izmanto ne tikai lingvistiskās zināšanas, bet arī pragmatisku informāciju.

6. nodaļa

Rekomendācijas svešvalodas mācību procesam

Šajā nodaļā tiek uzsvērts, ka mācību vidē pirms klausīšanās vingrinājumiem ir svarīgi aktivizēt iepriekšējo zināšanu kopumu un pragmatikas zināšanu avotus, nodrošinot klausīšanos ar situācijas kontekstu, kas radītu apstākļus līdzīgu reālajai dzīvei. Promocijas darbā iegūtie rezultāti ir par pamatu sekojošiem ieteikumiem klausīšanās prasmju pilnveidošanai mācību procesā:

1) Vingrinājumiem pirms klausāma teksta atskaņošanas ir liela nozīme studentu sagatavošanai teksta uztverei. Var tikt izmantotas izmantotas sekojošas metodes:

- Atbilstošu iepriekšējo zināšanu un tēlo shematisko atveidojumu aktivizēšana.
- Vingrinājumu sagatavošana, kas pirms klausīšanās sniedz informāciju par konteksta pazīmēm (dalībniekiem, darbības laiku un vietu, lingvistisko kontekstu).
- Vingrinājumu sagatavošana, kas pirms klausīšanās sniedz informāciju par mērķa valodas kultūras, vēstures un ģeogrāfijas jautājumiem.
- Klausāmā teksta satura iepriekšnoteikšana, izmantojot iepriekšējās zināšanas, vai zināšanas par konkrēto tēmu.
- Leksikas saistīšana ar teksta tēmu, studentu interesēm un viņu iepriekšējo zināšanu kopumu.
- Vingrinājumu un klausāmā teksta sasaiste ar studentu personīgo pieredzi.
- Uzdevuma nosacījumu izpratnes pārbaude.

2) Studentu klausīšanās ar izpratni pilnveidojas, ja tiek praktizēta nezināmu vārdu vai to savienojumu minēšanas un izsecināšanas (*inferencing*) stratēģija.

3) Teksta dalībnieku subjektīvās attieksmes (*tenor*), objektīvā satura (*field*), saziņas situācijas (*mode*) noteikšana klausīšanās laikā rosinās studentus apzināties situācijas kontekstu un saziņas mērķi.

4) Valodas apguvējiem jāvingrinās uztvert tekstu gan ar induktīvo, gan deduktīvo metodi.

Tālāk autore piedāvā konkrētus uzdevumus kā papildinājumus svešvalodu mācību grāmatās atrodamajiem klausāmajiem tekstiem.

Secinājumi

1. Lingvistisko teoriju analīzes rezultātā var secināt, ka svešvalodas mutvārdu transakcionāla diskursa uztverē klausītājs lieto lingvistisko zināšanu kopumu, kas ietver fonoloģijas, leksisko, sintakses, semantisko, diskursa kompozīcijas līmeni, un pragmatisko informāciju par situācijas kontekstu, mērķa valodas kultūras, vēstures un ģeogrāfijas jautājumiem. Klausītāji piedalās saziņā ar domu, ka tās dalībnieki ievēros saziņas principu un informācijas būtiskuma principu.

2. Pielietojot deduktīvo metodi klausāma teksta svešvalodā uztveres laikā, klausītāji aktivizē iepriekšējās zināšanas, lingvistiskās zināšanas mijiedarbojas ar tēlu shematiskiem atveidojumiem un scenārijiem, tādējādi kompensējot lingvistisko zināšanu trūkumu diskursa semantiskās nozīmes izpratnē.

3. Saziņas dalībnieku iepriekšpieņēmumi par valodas lietojumu un viņu iepriekšējo zināšanu kopums dažādās kultūrās ir atšķirīgs, kas traucē mutvārdu teksta uztverē. Bez tam klausīšanās prakses svešvalodas mācīšanas/mācīšanās procesā analīze liecina, ka klausāma teksta uztvere mācību vidē ir uzskatāma par daļēji *dekontekstualizētu* komunikatīvu saziņu vai saziņu ar ierobežotu informāciju par situācijas kontekstu.

4. Eksperimenta rezultātā ir apstiprinājusies pētījuma sākumā izvirzītā hipotēze. Iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšana pirms klausīšanās procesa un vingrinājumos ietvertā pragmatiskā informācija veicināja gan mutvārdu transakcionālajā diskursā ietvertu atpazīto patstāvīgo vārdu skaitu, gan mutvārdu diskursa semantiskās jēgas izpratni tā uztveres laikā.

5. Dalībnieku angļu valodas zināšanu līmenim bija būtiska ietekme uz retrospektīvo testu rezultātiem, kuru rezultāts bija labāks dalībniekiem ar augstāku zināšanu līmeni. Tomēr mutvārdu retrospektīvie kopsavilkumi atklāja lielu izkliedi atpazīto vārdu rezultātos, ko var izskaidrot ar afektīviem faktoriem un dalībnieku atšķirīgo raksturojumu.

6. Savukārt, dalībnieku demogrāfiskie dati (vecums, dzimums, dzīves vieta un tas, kura svešvaloda ir angļu valoda) un afektīvie faktori (motivācija) būtiski neietekmēja klausīšanās procesa rezultātu. No otras puses, anketācijas dati liecina, ka kvaziekspertimanta dalībnieki ne vienmēr bija pietiekami motivēti, viņiem bija grūti koncentrēties un trūka uzmanības, kas nepieciešama klausīšanās procesā.

7. Analizējot dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumus, kas iegūti pēc 1. metodes, var secināt, ka tajos bija pārstāvēti vārdi no visām vārdu biežuma grupām (izņēmums bija nepārstāvētā zinātniskās leksikas grupa tekstā „The Hippocampus”, ko var izskaidrot ar specifisko un tikai šauram cilvēku lokam labi pārzināmo tēmu). Analizējot vārdu šķiru (lietvārdu, darbības vārdu, īpašības vārdu, apstākļa vārdu ar piedēkli –ly) lietojumu, dalībnieki atpazīna un lietoja vairāk lietvārdus un darbības vārdus, mazāk īpašības vārdus. Dalībnieki praktiski nelietoja apstākļa vārdus ar piedēkli –ly. Vairāk kā trešdaļā mutvārdu kopsavilkumos bija ietverti vairāki patstāvīgie vārdi, kas leksikas zināšanu testā tika atzīti par nezināmiem, tādejādi var uzskatīt, ka iepriekšējo zināšanu aktivizēšana pirms klausīšanās procesa un vingrinājumos ietvertā pragmatiskā informācija veicinājusi nepazīstamo vārdu nozīmju izsecināšanu klausīšanās laikā. Klausāmajā tekstā („input”) ietvertie patstāvīgie vārdi dalībnieku mutvārdu kopsavilkumos („output”) dažkārt tika aizvietoti ar sinonīmiem, kas liecina par to, ka klausoties atmiņā nepaliek paši vārdi, bet to domu tēli („mental representations”).

8. Introspektīvajā pētījumā noskaidrojās, ka nepazīstamu vārdu izsecināšanā klausītāji izmanto lingvistiskās (interlingvistiskās un intralingvistiskās) zināšanas, un pragmatisku informāciju: 1) par situācijas kontekstu, 2) zināšanas par tēmu, 3) mērķa valodas kultūras, vēstures un ģeogrāfijas zināšanas, 4) vispārējo zināšanu kopumu.

9. Pētījuma rezultāti liecina, ka vingrinājumiem pirms klausīšanās procesa svešvalodas mācīšanas/mācīšanās procesā ir būtiska loma vārdu atpazīšanas un teksta izpratnes veicināšanā. Vingrinājumos jāietver uzdevumi, kas 1) aktivizē atbilstošas iepriekšējās zināšanas par diskursā apskatāmo tēmu, 2) sniedz informāciju par situācijas kontekstu, 3) informē par mērķa valodas kultūras, ģeogrāfijas un vēstures jautājumiem. Saziņai svešvalodā nepieciešama lingvistiskā kompetence, taču kultūras, starpkultūras un komunikatīvā kompetence ir tikpat svarīga veiksmīgai mutvārdu diskursa uztverei svešvalodā.

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LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC PRECONDITIONS TO PROCESSING SPOKEN DISCOURSE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Synopsis of Doctoral Thesis

General Characteristics of the Dissertation and the Importance of the Problem

The significance of the theoretical and practical issues of the second and foreign language acquisition has increased in Latvia since its accession to the European Union. In the new European dimension the foreign language proficiency gives the opportunity to compete successfully in the labour market, get involved in various international programmes, participate in student exchange programmes in educational institutions abroad. Listening as a receptive skill and one of the four language skills is a significant element of the spoken communication.

The importance of preparing learners to understand authentic spoken English was not paid due attention to in the 1970s and 1980s in Latvia's schools. Students learned grammar rules and vocabulary and then later on practised them in communication. The focus on the spoken forms usually began with paying particular attention to correct forms without understanding the message itself. This gave rise to various kinds of mechanical drills. Since the middle of the 90s the situation has improved remarkably. The study programmes at the universities incorporated the latest findings of the foreign and second language acquisition research worldwide. The Communicative Language Teaching approach started to be increasingly employed in the classrooms. In 2002 the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia introduced The National Year 9 and Year 12 English Exams that contained the listening part as well.

However, the listening tests and exams cause difficulties for the language learners. According to the results published in the official website of ISEC (www.isec.gov.lv), the scores of the Year 12 English Exam in 2005 in Latvia show that the listening part had a quite poor overall result out of the four language skills (speaking: 59%, reading: 53%, writing: 43.75% and listening: 43.43%).

Researchers of listening comprehension in a foreign language (Brown, 1986, Buck, 2002, Flowerdue, 1994, Rost, 2002) claim that listening integrates phonological, syntactic, lexical, semantic and pragmatic knowledge. The research in listening comprehension is necessary in order to explore how foreign language learners cope with listening tasks and to suggest ways of improving teaching/learning foreign languages in the educational environment. The present study explores how language learners (youngsters at the age from 18 to 20) process spoken discourse that is recorded on the tape. The choice of the age group was determined by the fact that the young people of this age prepare for the Year 12 English exam.

The goal

The goal of the present study is to investigate the processing of the spoken transactional discourse in the target language applying the top-down approach that activates the background knowledge of the listeners, to carry out the empirical study to explore the processing of the spoken transactional discourse in the target language by means of the retrospective tasks and to determine the linguistic and pragmatic sources of knowledge necessary for the listening comprehension of the spoken discourse.

Hypothesis

Audially perceived lexical material enters the learners' active vocabulary and enhances the comprehension of the meaning of the transactional spoken discourse if relevant linguistic and pragmatic pre-conditions are observed.

Objectives:

- to analyze and investigate theories in linguistics and applied linguistics relevant to the study in order to provide sound theoretical basis for the research;
- to identify the efficiency of activating the prior knowledge and pragmatic knowledge before listening to the spoken transactional discourse;
- to design and administer research tools, questionnaires, interviews, observation check lists, in order to ensure reliability and validity of the study;
- to carry out qualitative and quantitative research methods to prove the validity of the hypothesis.

The **research methods** employed:

Theoretical: the study and contrastive analysis of the relevant theories of linguistics and applied linguistics.

The theoretical basis for the present research has been grounded in the linguistic theories of A. Anderson and T. Lynch, G. Brown, J. Field, M. Rost, J. Richards, T. Hedge, and G. Yule in listening comprehension theory; T. Van Dijk, G. Cook, D. Shiffrin, G. Brown and G. Yule, J. Rozenbergs in discourse theory; H. Grice, M.A.K. Halliday and R. Hasan, S. Levinson, J. Mey in the area of pragmatic theory; R. Shank and R. Abelson, D. Rummelhart in the Schema theory.

Practical:

1. the quasi-experiment as the qualitative research method carried out in the time period from March, 2005 till September, 2005 (based on Hatch and Farhady, 1982). The experimental data were analyzed with SPSS-13.0 Pearson Chi-Square Test and Exact Test.
2. Introspective study (according to Brown and Rodgers, 2002).
3. Triangulation was used in order to ensure validity and reliability of the study. Such research techniques as interviewing, administering and analyzing questionnaires, observations, documents relevant to the research were employed as the source of evidence.
4. In order to ensure the objectivity and validity of the research data, the following language material and documents were analyzed:
 - 216 transcribed oral summaries of the participants, total number of word units: 18,534;
 - the results of the post-tests: 1,512 answers to the post-test questions;
 - 216 questionnaires;
 - transcribed interviews of the introspective study.

Novelty and the approbation of the research:

- the design and implementation of the study of the processing of oral discourse in a foreign language,
- the lexical analysis of students' oral summaries as the retrospective post-test after the exposure to the spoken transactional discourse,
- the examination of linguistic and pragmatic knowledge sources used in the lexical inferencing while listening to the spoken discourse,

- recommendations for the facilitating the listening comprehension in a foreign language through listening tasks.

Target Audience

First and second year students from the Faculty of Modern Languages, University of Latvia, and the Faculty of Economics, Latvia University of Agriculture. Their age is from 19 to 20, the English Language Proficiency Level according to the results in The National Year 12 English Exam varies from Level A to C, accordingly, the proficiency level of the participants might be characterized as from the intermediate to upper-intermediate level.

The results of the research have been reported at 10 international conferences and in 8 publications in the Republic of Latvia and abroad from the year 1999 to 2006 (see “Publicēto darbu saraksts” and “Referāti par pētījuma rezultātiem”).

Summary of the Doctoral Thesis

Chapter 1 Top-down Processing of the Spoken Transactional Discourse

As the present study investigates the lexical processing of transactional oral discourse in a foreign language, the aim of this chapter is to state what is meant by transactional oral discourse, explore linguistic features of the transactional spoken discourse and characterize the two models of the comprehension process of the transactional spoken text. At the beginning of the chapter the concept of discourse is suggested from the functionalistic point of view. Brown and Yule (1983:13) consider discourse as language in use, describing discourse as a process, and text as a product. Cook defines discourse as stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive (Cook, 1990:156). Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2005:729) propose that discourse is an instance of spoken or written language that has describable internal relationship of form and meaning that relate coherently to an external communicative function or purpose and a given audience/interlocutor. Furthermore, the external function or purpose can only be determined if one takes into account the context and participants (i.e., all the relevant situational, social, and cultural factors) in which the piece of discourse occurs. In the light of the present paper, discourse is defined as the meaningful language used in complete spoken texts for a certain purpose in a context.

Oral discourse can be classified according to the various principles. Firstly, in terms of language functions, there can be two major divisions: language for transactional purposes and language for interactional purposes. Researchers (Brown and Yule, 1983, Richards, 1990, Rost, 1990, J. Flowerdew, 2005) define two-way interaction discourse as **interactional** and one-way message oriented discourse as **transactional**. Transactional language corresponds to Halliday's notion of ideational, while interactional language corresponds to his term interpersonal (M.A.K. Halliday, 1970: 143). Transactional discourse communicates information and it is primarily concerned with transmitting and receiving information. In addition, it is "message" oriented rather than "listener" oriented. It is usually characterized by the speaker having long turns; as it is "message" oriented, the turn that contains the message, is the extended one.

In relation to the structure of transactional discourse, the spoken texts are divided into **unplanned** discourse and **planned** discourse (Cook, 1990: 50, Buck, 2002: 5). Researchers (Hedge, 2002; Veisbergs, 2005) mention **unscripted** and **scripted** spoken texts. Scripted spoken texts are monologues that have been written on the paper and read by the speaker. They are similar to written prose with little repetition, rephrasing, hesitations, there are no grammatically incorrect constructions, the range of discourse markers is narrow. The speed is reasonable, the register is relatively formal. Unscripted spoken texts could be monologues and dialogues that are not written down on the paper for reading. They contain repetitions, rephrasings, reformulations, hesitations, contracted forms, variety of accents. As far as the number of participants is concerned, oral discourse could be in the form of a **monologue**, a **dialogue** or a polylogue (Rozenbergs, 2004: 278). The degree of interaction between the listener and the speaker plays an important role. Rost (1990: 92) and Urbanovica (2001: 34) distinguish between **collaborative** discourse and **non-collaborative** discourse. By collaborative discourse they mean a conversation in which all participating parties contribute verbally, even if their participation is asymmetrical, competitive, or presents conflict. Non-collaborative discourse means situations of language use such as lectures and distant presentations, such as TV viewing, in which listeners have few, if any rights or opportunities to contribute verbally to an interaction with the speaker. Spoken texts can be divided in relation to the tone or the emotional attitude of the speaker into **neutral** and **emotionally expressive** (Rozenbergs, 2004: 277). Emotionally expressive texts are official, solemn, humorous, ironic, satirical, etc.

The following linguistic features of the spoken text are suggested by the author of the present paper (based on Flowerdew, 2005: 48; Rost, 1990: 49 and 2002: 31; Brown, 1982:76; Buck, 2002: 14): 1) phonological contractions and assimilations; 2) frequent use of additive ordering *and, then, so, but*; 3) hesitations, false starts, and filled pauses; 4) units of speech are not dependent on syntax but rather they are structured according to tone units; 5) in general, more high-frequency words are used in the language, less words from academic vocabulary; 6) speech is marked by a high ratio of function words (particles, prepositions, articles, ‘be’ verbs, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions) to content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, question words); 7) undetermined (unplanned) macro-structure for discourse; 8) lots of fillers and interactive markers; 9) first and second person pronouns; 10) lots of repetitions; 11) speakers use variable speeds, accents; 12) paralinguistic features and gestures. Halliday (1990: 80) claims that spoken language tends to have a lower lexical density than written language suggesting that in English the lexical density of written language is likely to be of twice as high as that for speech.

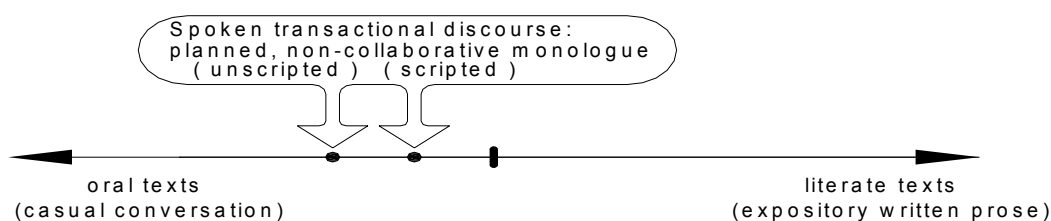


Fig. 1. The place of the spoken transactional discourse used in the educational settings on the continuum (modified from Tannen, 1982 cited in Buck, 2002).

The present study explores the performance of foreign language learners when processing the spoken discourse recorded on the tape for educational environment. The format of such spoken discourse is the text recorded in the form of a monologue or a dialogue by native speakers on the tape or disc. The analysis of the listening texts included in the English language text books available in Latvia shows that **the spoken transactional discourse** used in learning/teaching a foreign language is *planned, non-collaborative monologue*

either scripted or unscripted (see Fig. 1). The transactional discourse in classroom settings is not reciprocal.

Discourse types used in the foreign language classrooms are determined in “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”. Transactional spoken discourse types include the following: public announcements and instructions, public speeches, lectures, presentations, sermons, rituals (ceremonies, formal religious services), entertainment (drama, shows, readings, songs), sport commentaries (football, cricket, boxing, horse-racing, etc), news broadcasts, public debates and discussions.

In the second part of the chapter the author analyzes two models of comprehension processes of the spoken texts: bottom-up and top-down. The knowledge of bottom-up strategies comes from researchers, such as Clark and Clark (1977), Anderson (1995) among others, interested in speech perception. In bottom-up processing the listeners’ lexical and grammatical competence in a foreign language provides the basis for working out the meaning. Top-down comprehension strategies involve the knowledge that a listener brings to a text called the previous knowledge or the knowledge of the world. The role of background knowledge in the spoken language comprehension has been formalized as schema theory (Bartlett, 1932, Rumelhart, 1980). Related to the schema theory is the script theory of Shank and Abelson (1977).

Researchers investigating the process of listening comprehension (Anderson and Lynch, 1991, Hedge, 2000, Field, 1999, Flowerdue, 2005, Nunan, 1993, Richards, 1990, Rost, 2002 et al) have drawn on the Schema theory and script theory and applied the notions of “schema” and “script” to processing spoken discourse. They claim that non-native listeners, when they have partial linguistic knowledge, are in the situation when they have to use their knowledge of the world and prior knowledge in the form of schemata and scripts to arrive at the meaning of the spoken discourse. Thus the activation of the background knowledge helps to compensate for the lack of the linguistic knowledge in a foreign language that is necessary to understand the meaning of the transactional spoken discourse. Researchers admit that both types of discourse processing, bottom-up and top-down, function simultaneously and are complementary.

Chapter 2 Linguistic Pre-conditions of Processing Spoken Transactional Discourse

Chapter 2 describes the linguistic sources of knowledge listeners, students of Latvia, need to make sense of the speech in a foreign language. The literature overview in this chapter is narrowed down to the issues concerning the perception of the transactional non-collaborative discourse in the English language as a foreign language and explores the theoretical assumptions concerned with the foreign language teaching/learning. Phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic and discourse knowledge is used in order to understand the spoken message.

2.1. Phonological Processing

The phonological knowledge is described from the segmental and suprasegmental level. The units of segmental level are presented by phonemes and their modifications in connected speech, thus the author describes the phonological modifications in English: assimilation, elision, reduction, intrusion, using the theories of listening comprehension by the researchers (Brown, 1977, Rost, 1990, Roach, 1996). Suprasegmental level refers to intonation and stress. Their role in the process of communicating information is described. Halliday (1986: 271) states that there are two kinds of rhythm in a language: (1) syllabic rhythm or syllable-timing and (2) pedalian rhythm or foot-timing or stress-timing. The English language is considered to be foot-timed language. Intonation is characterized mostly from the point of view of its functions in relation to the semantic meaning of discourse (Katamba, 1989, Kreidlers, 1997, Crystal, 1997, Roach, 1990).

2.2. Words and Lexical Items

Recognizing words in the fluent speech is the basis of spoken discourse comprehension. Because a normal speaking rate has about eight words per every two-to-three second run of speech, word recognition must occur very quickly in the listening process (Brazil, 1995). In terms of vocabulary knowledge, Nation (2005: 584) suggests that knowing a word in a foreign language could be grouped into three groups: 1) knowing the form of a word (its spelling, sound and word parts); 2) knowing the meaning of a word (linking its form and meaning, knowing a concept for the word and what can it refer to, and knowing what other words of related meaning it can be associated with); and 3) knowing how a word is used (the grammar of the word including part of speech and the sentence patterns it fits into, collocates of the words, and whether the word is formal or informal, polite or rude, used

mainly by children, and so on, or has no restrictions on its use). For successful comprehension learners need 95% coverage of vocabulary that means 1 unknown word in every 20 running words (Nation, 2003: 134). Rost (2002) considers that in lexical segmentation learners use the following: the first sounds of the word and the word stress; the speech is processed word by word retrospectively, that is, holding unrecognized words in the phonological loop (Baddeley, 1986) while subsequent cues are processed or the analysis of its acoustic structure eliminates all candidates but one in the given context.

Further the author presents the characteristics of words and lexical items. Word frequency and lexical density characterize the spoken discourse from the lexical point of view. Having analyzed the English vocabulary necessary for the language learners, Nation (2003: 13), in terms of their frequency, has divided words into four groups: 1) high-frequency words, 2) academic words 3) technical words, 4) low-frequency words. As regards language learners, the size of vocabulary of language learners influences the processing of the text. Phrasal verbs, idioms, collocations, homonyms and polysemy have to be mastered by language learners.

2.3. Syntactic Knowledge

The knowledge of syntax establishes the relationship between words in the sentence. As listeners are restricted in time, they have to process the spoken text very quickly. The author describes the theoretical assumptions of Clark and Clark (1977), Singer (1990) and Rost (2002), regarding speech parsing processes. When the listening process takes place, in the full parsing of incoming speech, listeners determine the parts of speech, function words and content words and assigns structural and semantic relations between them creating a complete propositional model, simultaneously processing the semantic meaning of the sentence.

2. 4. Discourse meaning

At the level of discourse semantic meaning, linguist Van Dijk (1997) means abstract, conceptual meanings of words, sequences of sentences and whole discourse, called semantic representations. The discourse at the micro level explores the role of coherence conditions in the meaning relations between propositions; the macro level of discourse meaning analyzes such notions as topics or themes. Linguists (Halliday, 1970, Rozenbergs, 1989) consider discourse semantics from the point of view of new information that is also

called “rheme” and given information that is called “theme”. The genre and the register of the spoken discourse determine the choice of vocabulary and the discourse organizing vocabulary.

Chapter 3 The Pragmatic Interpretation of Meaning

Not only linguistic knowledge is significant in order to process the spoken discourse. In last decades the linguists have suggested that extralinguistic or pragmatic information helps to comprehend the meaning of the discourse. Pragmatics investigates the language use in context, that is, the way the context influences and interacts with linguistic meaning of the transactional spoken discourse. According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics is the study of the relationship between language and context that are encoded in the grammatical structures. Likewise, Mey’s (1998) opinion is that pragmatics studies the use of the language that is determined by the context of society, and pragmatics is interested in the language users in real life.

From the micropragmatic perspective, this chapter analyzes the role of the situational context, deictics, references, presuppositions and implicatures, the Cooperative Principle and Relevance Principle in the understanding of the semantic meaning of spoken discourse. Mey (1998), Rost (2002) and Verschueren (2001) differentiate between a “grammatical” and a “user-oriented” point of view: in the first variant, linguistic elements are considered in isolation, such as case, tense, etc., whereas in the other variant, the language users have to decide, how these linguistic elements are used in concrete setting, i.e., the context. Pragmatic information in the form of the situational context interacts with the semantic meaning of discourse. The term “the context of situation” was first coined by anthropologist Malinowsky in 1923. There are two sorts of contextual information: semantically, the context of situation (Halliday, 1991: 46) is the immediate environment in which a text is actually functioning. It is restricted to the identity of the speaker and the hearer, and the time and place of the utterance. The other sort of contextual information in the broad or pragmatic sense includes wide range of variables that characterize participants of the speech event, physical environment and general facts about the world people live in.

Further, the author analyzes features of the situational context offered by various linguists. For instance, Brown and Yule (1991: 63) focus on the following features of the context of

situation in most face-to-face interactions: speaker, listener, place, time, genre, topic, co-text. A significant theory regarding the role of the context has been developed by Halliday (1991). He proposes three features that characterize the situational context: mode, tenor and field. They determine the choice of words in discourse. Besides, Halliday (1991: 46) mentions the importance of context of culture, a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted. Moreover, the assumption within the group of people of the shared knowledge of cultural context shows also the shared attitude towards that cultural context. The general knowledge of target language culture and history is a significant issue for language learners. It is impossible to understand simple texts without the knowledge of proper nouns of place names, historic facts, literature and art.

Having analyzed various theoretical sources, the author of the present paper proposes the following list of the features of the context of the real-life spoken discourse (based on Brown and Yule, 1992, Mey, 1998, Halliday, 1989, Verdonk, 2002, Cutting, 2002, Allan, 1986): 1) the characteristics of the speaker and the listener as the participants of the speech event (age, sex, education, occupation, nationality); 2) the physical and temporary setting; 3) the genre; 4) the topic of the spoken discourse; 5) mutual knowledge and beliefs, emotions, abilities and assumptions of the participants (the speaker and listener); 6) co-text; 7) knowledge of the world; 8) cultural context; 9) intertextuality.

Features of the situational context in the educational settings are the following: foreign language learners as the participants have the role of an **auditor or overhearer**; the listeners are informed about the genre and topic of the discourse in the task conditions but they are not aware of the place and time of the speech event therefore listeners are supposed to work them out while listening to the discourse or after the event. The speaker and listeners do not have mutual knowledge and culture knowledge as they are strangers representing two different cultures; on the other hand, the co-text limits the range of possible interpretations, and the listeners can use the knowledge from the associations with similar news programmes. Thus the conclusion could be drawn that in the classroom environment, when learners listen to recorded texts in a foreign language, there is a *limited range of features of context or the listening activity is partly de-contextualized*.

Participants of a conversation have an unspoken agreement to talk cooperatively with each other, contributing to the conversation and speaking on the topic. H.P. Grice (1975/1989)

called it the Cooperative Principle, and included four sub-principles: the Maxim of Quantity requires being informative without including additional unnecessary information; the Maxim of Quality requires information that is true and has adequate evidence; the Maxim of Relation expects participants to be relevant; the Maxim of Manner presupposes that the speaker will avoid ambiguity and be brief and orderly. Pragmatic interpretation means that a listener assumes that a speaker is obeying these standards, expecting cooperation in exchange of information. The Cooperative Principle might not be observed: 1) intentionally, 2) using irony, 3) refusing to co-operate, 4) saying what is not true, 5) without intention because of person's incomplete command of a foreign language or due to some kind of temporary impairment (e.g., nervousness), Rost (2002:44). The author agrees with Schiffrin (1998) that the Quantity Maxim leads listeners to search for the certain amount of information in a text, whereas the Maxim of Relation leads listeners to use information in a certain way, i.e., to find its relevance to the rest of the text and to the context in which it is situated. In other words, the listener expects cooperation on the part of the speaker and expects that the Maxims of Quantity and Relation will be observed.

The context is of importance when such pragmatic phenomena as deixis, references and presuppositions are analyzed. The recorded texts used in the educational setting might contain implied meaning in the form of presuppositions and implicature. Presuppositions are implicit meanings. According to Yule (1996), presuppositions concern knowledge which the speaker presumes as part of the background knowledge already known to the listener. Language learners appear in another language environment with the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of their native language. This knowledge is not always relevant to the background knowledge of the speaker in a target language. Implicature occurs when language users communicate indirect meaning or implied meaning. Grice distinguished two different sorts of implicature: conventional implicature and conversational implicature. Levinson (1983: 127) lists words that will point to conventional implicatures: *but, even, therefore and yet*. The chapter describes the role of deixis and references in the interpretation of the spoken texts. Deictic expressions are used to locate actions, for example, in the time in relation to the present. The use of nouns, the personal and demonstrative pronouns, articles can either hamper or promote the comprehension of the spoken texts in a foreign language.

The author describes the Relevance Principle by D. Sperber and D. Wilson (1986). The essential claim of Relevance Theory is that in any given context, the addressee assumes that what the speaker is saying is relevant. Cook (1990) suggests that Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory is very closely related to Schema theory since the information perceived during communication is relevant if it coincides with the assumptions and background knowledge of the listeners.

The analysis of the theories in pragmatics permits to conclude that both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge is necessary to interpret the meaning of the spoken transactional discourse. A listener uses the knowledge of the situational context, the culture context, deictic expressions and references, observes the Cooperative Principle and the Relevance Principle.

Chapter 4 Lexical Inferencing

Chapter 4 explores the processing of the spoken discourse in terms of lexical inference. At the beginning of the chapter the difficulties learners face while listening to a foreign speech in the educational environment are described. The problems identified by the researchers (Rixon, 1991; Hedge, 2000; Ur, 2002; Ozola, 1999; Rost, 2002) can be grouped into three groups: linguistic factors (the limited vocabulary in a foreign language, fast speech, various accents of the native speakers), pragmatic factors (listening texts are overloaded with incoming information, differences in culture and educational background), affective factors and learner differences (individual learner characteristics, learners' desire to understand every word, a strong urge to have the listening passage in front of them in writing, learners are discouraged when they cannot grasp the meaning the first time they listen to the text).

However, according to Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, the language, which learners are exposed to, should be just beyond their current competence that they can understand most of it but still be challenged to make progress. The new lexical material should contain " $i + 1$ " where " i " is language learners' current knowledge, and new material corresponds to " $i+1$ ". Consequently, input neither should exceed their knowledge so much that they are depressed (for example " $i=2$ "), nor to be so close to their current stage that learners are not challenged at all (" $i = 0$ ").

The foreign language listeners are exposed to the speech of a native speaker that mainly is recorded on the disc or tape, thus it could be assumed that the input includes more lexical units than the size of their vocabulary. As the present study focuses on the processing of the extended transactional non-collaborative discourse, the focus is on the lexical inferencing or guessing of the unknown words from the context.

According to Haastrup (1991), lexical inferencing means making guesses as to the meaning of a word taking into account all available linguistic cues in combination with the learner's background knowledge, her/his awareness of context and her relevant linguistic knowledge. The study of the strategies of lexical inferencing has been carried out by the researchers Paribakht, Wesche (1999) and Bengueleil (2004).

It is important to note that researchers interested in listening comprehension (Nunan, Rost, Richards, Flowerdew, Field) often had drawn on the findings discovered by scholars studying reading comprehension in a foreign language. Vandergrift's (2006) statement could explain this tendency. He claims that as a process of comprehension, listening shares many important characteristics with reading. Both processes use two basic knowledge sources, the language knowledge and the world knowledge (e.g., topic, text structure, schema and culture) for the purposes of comprehension. Like reading, listening also entails two major processes, top-down and bottom-up, in applying background knowledge to the input during comprehension; The listener, like the reader, constructs, in memory, mental representation of what has been comprehended.

As the present study explores the linguistic and pragmatic preconditions of the processing of the spoken discourse by the target language learners, inferencing at text level through top-down processing of the oral speech is looked upon from the view of learners' ability to notice words in the flow of speech and infer the meaning of unknown words. Inferencing, as the reception process, is applied both in real-life situations and in the educational settings. Learners engage in the lexical inferencing, when they are involved in the listening activity, when they listen to the recorded spoken discourse.

The research on lexical inferencing in the foreign and second language reading and listening have used introspective research (Paribakht and Wesche, 1999; Goh, 2002; Bengueleil and Paribakht, 2004). The method involves think-aloud or verbal protocols with

the participants of a study. The participants state their thoughts while performing a given task (reading) or as a retrospective activity (listening). The participants' thoughts that they pronounce are recorded on the tape thus obtaining information about their cognitive processes (Ericsson and Simon, 1993; Brown and Rodgers, 2002).

Haastrup (1991) classified the knowledge sources using Carton's (1971) three categories (which are not mutually exclusive): interlingual: cues based on L1 (native language), loan words in L1 or the knowledge of other languages; intralingual: cues based on knowledge of English; contextual: cues based on the text or informants' knowledge of the world. Canadian researchers Bengueleil and Paribakht developed Carton's categories, creating the taxonomy of the sources of knowledge necessary for lexical inferencing of unknown words while *reading*. Bengueleil and Paribakht's taxonomy of knowledge sources will partly serve as the analysis tool for the present study to examine the knowledge sources used by the target language learners while listening to the extended transactional non-collaborative spoken discourse.

Chapter 5 Empirical Study

Methodology

In order to achieve the goal of the present study, the empirical study was divided into three phases:

1. **Phase 1.** The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained during the quazi-experiment. After listening to the spoken transactional discourse 1) with pre-listening treatment and 2) without pre-listening treatment, participants were asked to record retrospective oral summaries and complete the comprehension post-test. The research object is the linguistic material in the form of transcribed learners' oral summaries and results of the post-test, acquired after the subjects had been exposed to two types of listening sessions. The total number of words in the student summaries amounted to 18,534 words. Pre-listening treatment involved the activation of the background knowledge; the other listening session, without a pre-listening treatment, was implemented without the activation of the background knowledge.
2. **Phase 2.** The analysis of the results of the students' questionnaires obtained after the quasi-experiment regarding their attitude to the processing of the spoken transactional discourse.

3. **Phase 3.** An introspective study of 40 think-aloud protocols of the selected group of twenty participants in order to identify the sources of knowledge the learners use to process the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language.

Participants

Sixty-four EFL 1st and 2nd year undergraduate students from the University of Latvia and forty-four 1st and 2nd year ESP students from the Faculty of Economics, the Latvia University of Agriculture, were language learning groups randomly selected for the quasi-experiment (n=108). They were instructed how to record the post-listening oral summary. The quasi-experiment was carried out in EFL classes at the Faculty of Modern Languages, University of Latvia, and the Faculty of Economics, the Latvia University of Agriculture. They were grouped into three different groups of participants (see Table 1).

Table 1. Groups of participants

Groups	Participants	Time period
1. EFL students	N=36	2005, April
2. ESP students	N=44	2005, April-May
3. EFL students	N=28	2005, September
Total	N=108	

All in all 20 listening sessions were organized, the length of each session - 60 minutes. The classes were observed and some of them video-taped. The foreign language proficiency level was estimated as upper-intermediate or intermediate since they had levels A, B, and C at National Form 12 English Language Exam (See Table 2).

Table 2. The participants' level at the National Form 12 English Exam

Level	Participants	%
A	N=19	18%
B	N=48	44%
C	N=41	38%

Materials and Characteristics of Words in the Texts

Two audio taped spoken transactional discourses in the English language were selected from popular in Latvia English text book "Matrix. Upper-Intermediate." (2001) by Gude, K. with Wildman, published by Oxford University Press. One was based on socio-cultural

information about the river Thames and the London Eye (The London Eye). The other reported on the research regarding the part of the brain called hippocampus (Hippocampus).

The two passages were selected according to the following criteria: the length of the recording 1 minute, authentic text, “information report” text type, interesting information. The spoken texts could be categorized as *planned, non-collaborative monologues*. After scrutinizing them more closely, it was possible to conclude that they could be categorized as *scripted* monologues since there were no marked pauses, backchanneling, hesitations, repetitions, elliptical sentences.

The words in both texts could be characterized as follows: Text 1 (The London Eye) consists of 282 words (tokens) and 159 types that were counted by VocabProfile programme. The lexical density is estimated 0.50. Content words (nouns, verbs and adjectives) make up 43% of the total number of words in the text (tokens). Of the content words, nouns were the most frequently occurring category (38% of the word types), followed by verbs (14% of the types) and adjectives (8% of the types). Text 2 (The Hippocampus) consists of 223 words (tokens), 128 types that were counted by VocabProfile programme. The lexical density is estimated 0.51. Content words make up 38% of the total number of words in the text (tokens).

Phase 1

Description of the Quazi-experiment

Quasi-experimental design was chosen as the method of the research. The method “*time series design*” suggested by Hatch and Farhady (1982: 25) was applied.

Taking into account the existing technical facilities in each of the universities, the quazi-experiment was organized in two different ways. EFL students recorded their oral summaries using computer multimedia facilities, but ESP students recorded their oral summaries on the tape of the recorder. The subjects participated in the quasi-experiment during their English classes, and each participant was exposed to two different approaches. Approach 1: without activating background knowledge, i.e. without pre-listening activities, Approach 2: by activating the background knowledge, i.e. implementing pre-listening activities. Graphically it could be represented in the following way (based on Hatch and Farhady, 1982):

EFL students: T1 X(Text 1) OS1+T 2, T3 O(Text2) OS2+T4 7 times

ESP students: T1 X(Text 1) OS1+T 2, T3 O(Text2) OS2+T4 6 times

Where “T1 and T3” is the pre-test, “X” is the treatment or pre-listening stage, “O” is no treatment or without pre-listening stage, OS1 and OS2 are retrospective oral summaries, T2 and T4 are post-tests. The **pre-test** was administered several weeks before the quasi-experiment. It showed that the text *The London Eye* in average contained 14 unknown words. The text *Hippocampus* in average contained 16 unknown words.

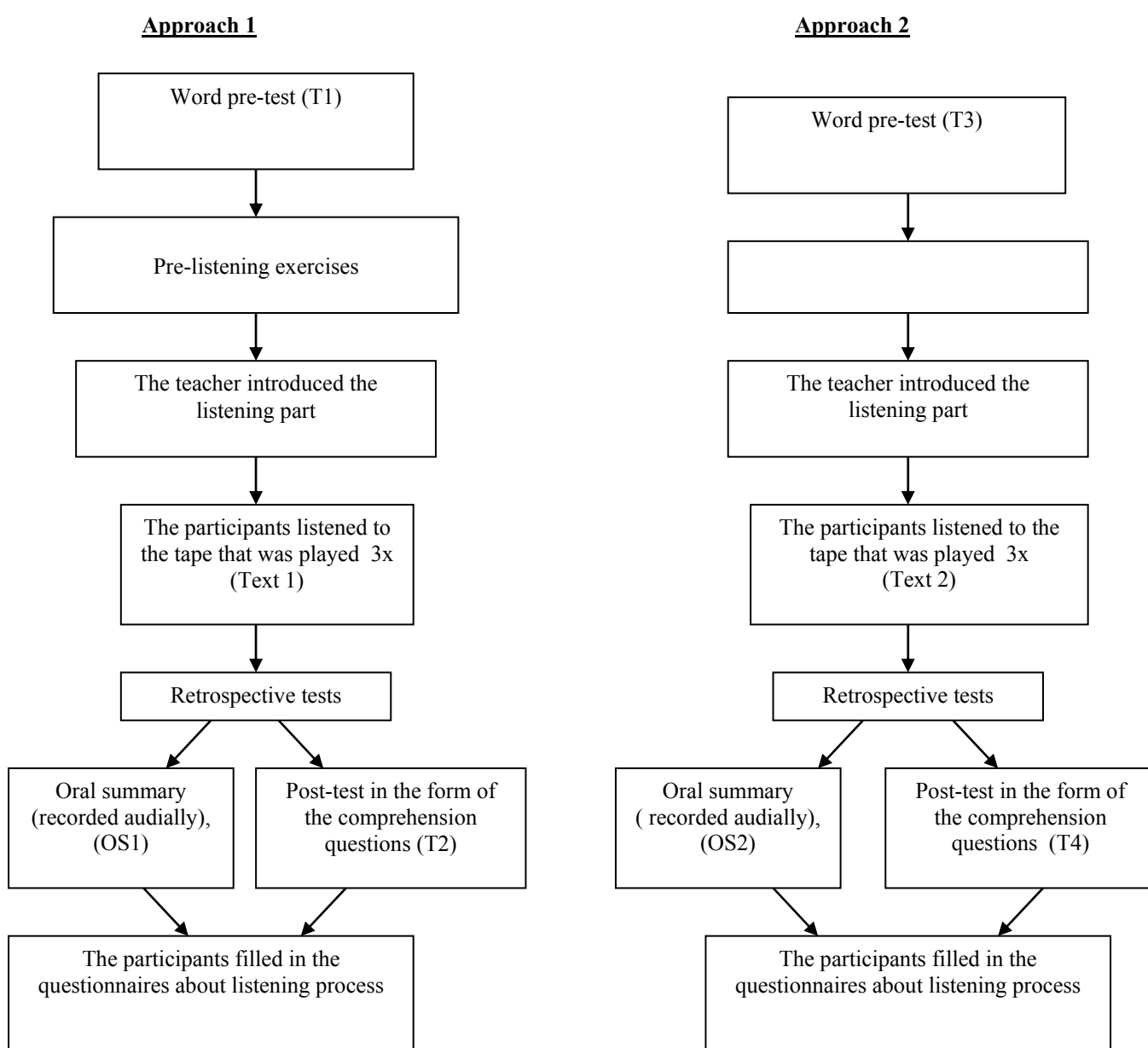


Fig. 2. The design of the quasi-experiment

Each participant took part in two approaches of the quasi-experiment: with pre-listening stage and without pre-listening stage (see Fig. 2). Approach 1 was introduced by the tasks

that contained additional information about the situational context (place and participants), factual information about the history of the United Kingdom and similar news programmes, activating the background knowledge about the given theme.

The linguistic material obtained during the quazi-experiment comprised 1) the recordings of the oral summaries that were transcribed and accounted for 18,534 words; 2) the answers to the post-test questions, total number 1,512. The obtained data do not have normal distribution, since the study is based on the qualitative data, therefore non-parametrical test should be applied. Thus to measure the validity of the hypothesis, Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied to both task types (using SSPS-13.0).

Analysis of the Linguistic Data

Results of Retrospective Post-test 1.

The mean of the recognized and repeated words in participants' oral summaries was calculated. The result of means showed that those learners that were exposed to pre-listening stage could recognize and repeat much higher number of content words (see Table 3).

Table 3. The mean of the recognized and used words in participants' retrospective oral summaries

Discourse	Approach 1 (mean)	Approach 2 (mean)
The London Eye	27 content words	23 content words
The Hippocampus	21 content words	18 content words

In order to conduct SPSS statistical analysis, the linguistic data: content words recognized and used in the participants' summaries, were classified in groups. The result of means showed that participants when they were exposed to pre-listening stage could recognize and use much higher number of content words. From Table 4 below it is apparent that 24% of those who were exposed to pre-listening activities could recognize and use more than 31 words, while only 8% of those who were not exposed to pre-listening activities could recognize and use more than 31 words. (See Table 4). Moreover, the biggest number of participants (41%) after the pre-listening activities in the text "The London Eye" recognized and used more than 31 words, however, without the pre-listening activities only 8% of the participants could do the same.

To prove the validity of the hypothesis, Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The variable *number of content words* in the participants' oral summaries was measured in each of the applied *approaches*. The analysis shows that the differences between means of words (the

Table 4. Number of content words in participants' oral summaries in each of the approaches

Oral discourse	Approach	Content words used in oral summaries <15 (No of participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries 16 – 20 (No of participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries 21- 25 (No of participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries 26-30 (No of participants and %)	Content words used in oral summaries >31 ((No of participants and %)
Both texts	1	11 10%	22 20%	29 27%	20 19%	26 24%
	2	16 15%	40 37%	26 24%	17 16%	9 8%
Text 1	1	6 11%	4 7%	8 14%	15 27%	23 41%
	2	5 10%	11 21%	14 27%	14 27%	8 15%
Text 2	1	5 11%	17 32%	21 40%	6 11%	3 6%
	2	11 20%	29 52%	12 21%	3 5%	1 2%

average number of content words used in retrospective oral summaries in each of the applied approaches) are significant since $p < .05$, thus indicating that the model performed well. It means that the activation of the background knowledge and pragmatic information in the pre-listening stage influenced the recognition of words during processing of the spoken discourse (See Fig. 3).

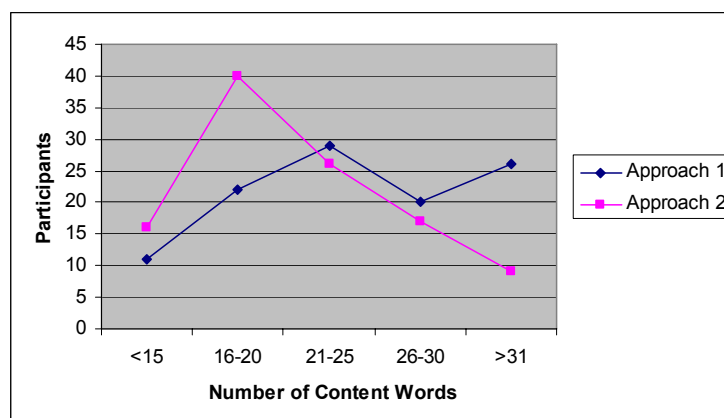


Fig. 3. The number of content words in students' oral summaries in both texts (Text 1 and Text 2)

The Results of the Retrospective Post-test 2.

After the quazi-experiment the number of right answers in Post-test 2 was calculated. The result is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The results of the post-test

Oral discourse	Approach	Score 2 (No of participants and %)	Score 3 (No of participants and %)	Score 4 (No of participants and %)	Score 5 (No of participants and %)	Score 6 (No of participants %)	Score 7 (No of participants and %)
Both texts	1	4 4%	7 6%	24 22%	21 20%	35 32%	17 16%
	2	19 17%	32 30%	16 15%	17 16%	13 12%	11 10%
Text 1	1	0 0%	0 0%	11 20%	11 20%	20 35%	14 25%
	2	4 8%	14 27%	10 19%	7 14%	9 17%	8 15%
Text 2	1	4 7%	7 13%	13 25%	10 19%	15 30%	3 6%
	2	15 27%	18 32%	6 11%	10 18%	4 7%	3 5%

Table 5 shows that the participants performed much better in answering comprehension questions when they were exposed to pre-listening activities. Taking into account both texts, 17 or 16% from them could answer all seven questions and 35 participants or 32% could answer 6 questions. In contrast, 11 or 10% from the participants in the listening session without pre-listening input could answer all seven questions and 13 or 12% answered 6 questions. As the next step the Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The variable *post-test results* checking the participants' understanding of the listening text was measured in each of the applied *approaches* (with pre-listening stage and without pre-listening stage). The analysis shows that the differences between means of right answers are significant since p is less than 0.05 thus indicating that the model performed well. It means that the activation of the background knowledge in the pre-listening stage influenced the comprehension of the spoken discourse (see Fig. 4).

Further the author analyzes the answers to the comprehension questions in more detail. It is necessary to note that that the biggest number of wrong answers were on Questions 4 and 5 in Text 1, and on Questions 3, 5 and 6 in Text 2. The analysis of the given spoken discourses point to the following reasons: firstly, the change of the theme since the speaker on the tape violated Maxim of Quantity; thus the discourse is more informative than it was announced in the topic sentence, secondly, the fast speed of the speaker, since it seems that

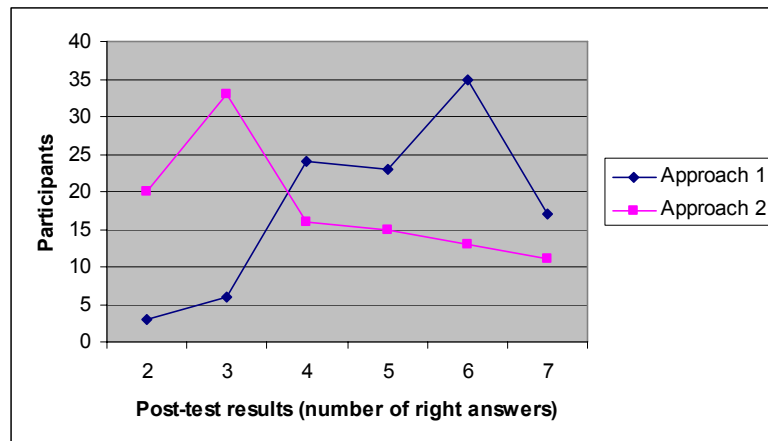


Fig. 4. The results of retrospective post-tests (Text 1 and Text 2)

the discourse was scripted, i.e., written on the paper beforehand. The lack of hesitations, repetitions, silence fill-up that is characteristic to the spoken *scripted* discourse. The perception of the spoken text has been deceived since the listeners had been prepared to perceive the text with all its qualities, with emotions, pauses, repetitions.

It was determined by the author if the level at the National Form 12 English Language Exam had any impact on the participants' performance in both task types during the listening experiment. The variable 1) "*number of content words*" in the participants' oral summaries of Text 1 and Text 2, and the variable 2) "*the results of post-test*" were taken and measured against the *level of the target language proficiency*. Again the Pearson Chi-Square Test was applied. The analysis shows that the differences are significant since $p < .05$ thus stating that the language proficiency level influenced the outcomes of this task. Test reports 1) $p = 0,000$ and 2) $p = 0.001$ that is less than 0.05. The participants' linguistic knowledge in a foreign language ensured the relevant language use in the communication.

However, there are great differences in the result of the students' performance, particularly regarding the amount of the content words the participants used in their oral summaries. As it is clear from Fig. 5, the participants' result in each target language proficiency level has great dispersion. This might be explained by learner differences, affective factors, task conditions, the lack or the presence of concentration. Task conditions constrain the listeners' performance and the result, and thereby introduce distortion in interpreting the listener's response. These issues will be discussed in Phase 2.

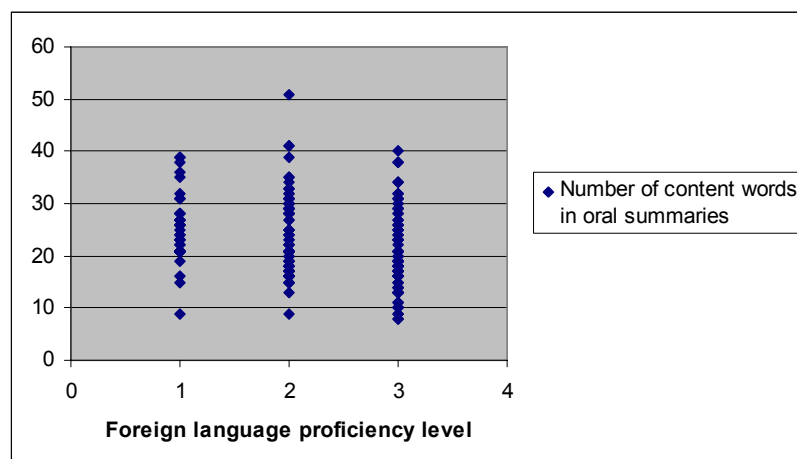


Fig. 5. Content words among language levels (“1” is level A, “2” is level B, “3” is C)

Analysis of the Word Frequency in Participants’ Retrospective Oral Summaries with Pre-listening Treatment

The aim of the present sub-chapter is to carry out the comparative lexical analysis of the spoken transactional discourses (input) and the participants’ transcribed retrospective oral summaries (output) with the pre-listening treatment. The participants’ oral summaries were statistically analyzed by means of *VocabProfile* (Laufer and Nation, 2003), the computer programme available on the Internet (www.lex Tutor.ca). Comparing the number of content words in the listening texts (input) with the number of word in the students’ oral summaries (output), the following conclusions were made:

- 1) The number of content words **not** used in the oral summaries in both texts account for 35%.
- 2) Oral summaries (output) did not contain the adverbs derived with the suffix *-ly* (*intimately, previously, silently, simply, greatly, truly, profoundly*).
- 3) Learners use words from all frequency groups. The distribution of the content words is even across all four word frequency groups (except academic words of the text “Hippocampus” that could be explained with the specific theme).
- 4) Participants have used more nouns and verbs, less adjectives in their oral summaries.
- 5) Oral summaries contain content words that were mentioned as unknown in the pre-test, */wheel, cables, Londinium, Romans, flooding/* from the text of “The London Eye” and */store, consciously/* from the text “Hippocampus”.
- 6) The analysis of the participants’ retrospective oral summaries shows that the words verbatim do not stay in the memory. The content words included in the spoken texts (input)

were often substituted by synonyms (output). That means that the listeners create mental representations and not always remember the exact word.

Discussion

The quazi-experiment described provides evidence that the activation of schemata or the listener's previous knowledge in the pre-listening stage has a noticeable impact on processing of the spoken discourse. The findings of the present quazi-experiment prove the significance of the different levels of knowledge in the perception of the spoken transactional discourse. In applying this prior knowledge about the world, about people and events to a particular situation comprehension proceeds from top down if the knowledge is activated in the pre-listening stage. When listening, students confirm their expectations and fill out the specific details. The learners of a foreign language have to compensate for the gaps of the knowledge of culture and historical facts and for insufficient phonological, lexical and syntactic knowledge of the target language. Listening happens in real time, learners listen and have to comprehend what they hear immediately. There is no time to go back and review, look up unknown words, etc. Thus they have to apply pragmatic rules i.e., try to infer the meanings of words in context.

In the case of the text on the London Eye, pre-listening activities were aimed at creating the situational context and the background knowledge context. The participants were introduced with the visual image of the London Eye, some facts of its construction and the geographical location. It turned out that still there were some words which did not ring a bell to the students, e.g., Roman, Londinium, Thames Barrier. In the case of the text "The Hippocampus", the pre-listening activities informed about the participants of the discourse, provided with the information of the similar research. The acquired information about what the listeners were going to hear assisted in making inferences and the listeners could guess the meaning from the context even though they either did not know the meaning of the word or did not grasp each word in the flow of the speech. So it can be concluded that the activation of the background knowledge before the listening to a transactional discourse in a foreign language can increase the number of the recognized words and make the text more understandable. The creation of the context for the foreign language learners significantly help to notice the word boundaries in the spoken flow of the speech. Thus it is very important in the learning process to pay attention to 1) activating the background knowledge, 2) giving information about the context of situation, 3) creating the specific

cultural knowledge for the listeners to enhance the comprehension process of a spoken discourse in the target language.

Phase 2.

Analysis of the Participants' Questionnaires

The 2nd phase of the study identified the participants' attitude regarding the listening process. The primary data were obtained in the time period from March till September, 2005. The author designed two questionnaires. The questionnaires contained 21 questions. Six questions were aimed to characterize the target population of the study, 15 questions examined the students' feelings during the experiment and opinion regarding the tasks in the listening session. Nineteen questions were open, and two questions were closed in which students were asked to choose from a limited range of possible answers. The questionnaires were administered at the end of the listening session.

Thus the question: "What were the sources of distortion while listening to the recorded text?" was asked. It was a closed question and the respondents were asked to choose more than one answer from the limited range of the possible answers. Fifty-nine respondents (55%) answered that they lacked attention and concentration, twelve respondents (11%) considered that they were distracted by the noise around, eleven persons (10%) complained about the quality of recording and twelve (11%) were not satisfied with the premises. Fourteen participants (13%) did not give any answer. Another question that was aimed at finding out the participants' mood and feelings during the experiment sounded as follows: "What sources of distortion did you have while recording your oral summary?" The lack of attention and concentration was mentioned 50 times or 47%, verbal intelligence at the moment of recording was mentioned 24 times or 22%, the noise around was mentioned 12 times or 11 %, motivation to perform well was mentioned 5 times or 4%. 17 students (16%) did not tick any answer.

Next was an open question, and the respondents had to mention difficulties. All in all 25 problem areas were suggested and twelve are presented in the order of times mentioned below:

Lack of concentration	15.7
None	13.7
Too much information	13.7
Unknown words	12.7

Lack of previous knowledge	4,9
Difficult to catch words	4,9
Fast speech	4,9
Note-taking during listening	4,9
Not enough time	4,9
Bad memory	4,9
Nervous and excited	3.0
Too few times played	2.0

It could be concluded from the respondents' answers that the difficulties are caused not only by linguistic factors (unknown words, problems in word recognition, fast speed of speech), but also pragmatic factors (too much information, the lack of previous knowledge) and affective factors (the lack of concentration, not enough time, nervous and excited). Only 13.7% of the participants answered that they did not have any difficulties.

The next question was meant to find out if the participants were motivated enough to perform well. The question had two parts. The first part inquired if they were motivated, to which 58% gave a positive answer and 18% gave a negative answer, but 24% said that they were partly motivated. The second part of the question inquired if the respondents would be more motivated if they had to do the tasks for a mark. Fifty-five participants (51%) answered that they would be more motivated to do it for a mark and the majority of those who would be more motivated for a mark were ESP students from the Faculty of Economics.

The author of the present study was interested to find out the participants' opinion about sensory preferences in their native language and in English. The result was the following: those who answered that in their native language they remember better what they have heard accounted only for 18% of all respondents. 66% said that they remembered better what they had read, and 16% admitted that they were good in both ways. The majority of respondents' (70%) admitted that in English they remembered better what they had read, and only 17% said that they remembered better what they had heard, and 13% said that they were good in both ways.

Finally, one of the most important questions concerning the comprehension of the spoken texts is if the listeners could determine the theme of the discourse or listening text. The participants had to state the theme of the listening text after they had listened to the spoken discourse. It was an open question. The interesting thing is that three versions were put

forward by the participants in the case of the text “The London Eye” and three versions were put forward in the case of the text “Hippocampus”. About 80% of the listeners of both texts named the theme that had been stated by the speaker in the introductory sentence. However, the speakers in both texts added a piece of extra information that had not been stated in the topic sentence. Therefore 14% of the listeners to the text “The London Eye” included the themes of the extra information, and 19% of the listeners to the text “The Hippocampus” mentioned the theme that had not been named in the topic sentence. The fact that the Maxims of Quantity and Relation were violated by the speakers, could have an impact on the participants’ opinion regarding the theme of the spoken discourse. The result clearly indicated that the topic of the text might not be explicitly stated in spoken texts or oral language and listeners might be misled.

To find out if demographic factors and attitude during the experiment influenced the result of the listening session, the statistic analysis was carried out. The obtained data were measured and analyzed using the Pearson Chi-Square Test and Exact Test of SPSS-13.0 to see if the participants’ gender, age, the place of residence, and motivation influenced the result of the quazi-experiment. The variable (1) “*number of content words*” in the participants’ oral summaries of Text 1 and Text 2, and the variable (2) “*the results of post-test*” were taken and measured against the *demographic factors and motivation*. It can be concluded that **neither personal data** (gender, age, place of residence, participants’ opinion about English as a foreign language) **nor affective factors** (motivation) influenced the result in the listening session significantly since in each case $p > 0.05$.

The results of the questionnaire regarding the participants’ attitudes show that participants were not motivated enough, it was difficult to concentrate and they lacked attention that is necessary in the listening process. These factors could explain big differences in the number of recognized and used words in students’ oral summaries within one language proficiency level. The author of the present research was interested in the sensory preferences of the students. The analysis of the answers shows that the students perceive better what they have read than what they have heard. Almost three fourths of all respondents consider that in English they rely more on visual than auditory cues. The result points to the general tendency among learners to perceive visual information better than audial information.

Phase 3. The Introspective Study

The author of the present study sought to identify the sources of knowledge the learners use to process the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language. Data were collected through verbal reports by using the information processing model proposed by Ericsson and Simon (1993). The study involved the analysis of forty think-aloud protocols of twenty randomly chosen learners whom the author met individually, two persons or one person at a time for about 70 minutes in the classroom.

The procedure of the introspective study was the following: 1) the participants were exposed to the pre-listening activities before starting the introspective study, 2) the participants listened to the recording, 3) the recording was played with pauses after each phrase, 4) the participants expressed their thoughts after each phrase, 5) the sessions were tape recorded 6) the recordings were transcribed and analyzed. The interviews showed what knowledge students used for guessing the meaning of the unknown words. As a basis for the analysis the author used Bengeleil and Paribakht (2004) chart in which they have developed the taxonomy of the knowledge sources used in L2 lexical inferencing while *reading*.

Table 6. The knowledge sources used by the participants in lexical inferencing.

I Linguistic sources of knowledge.

A. Intralingual sources are based on the knowledge of the target language:

	Examples from the participants' interviews
word morphology	<i>“landmarks” consists of “land” and “marks”, “land” means „zeme”, “mark” means “marķieris”, “profoundly” is an adverb that ends with –ly, “intimately” is an adverb that ends with –ly, “waterway” consists of “water” and “way”, it means “ūdens ceļš”, “riverbank” consists of “river” and “bank”.</i>
word homonymy	<i>“quizzed” is the verb from the noun „a quiz”.</i>
word associations	<i>“layout” is from the icon in the computer, “mortal” is from the film “Mortal Combat”, “defence” is from sport games “defender”, “piece by piece” reminded “step by step” which means one after another.</i>
Sentence level meaning	<i>“quizzed them on best routs round London” “routes” was not known, but could mean „places”.</i>

Syntagmatic relations	“called Londinium”, <i>only some title or name can follow after „called”</i> .
Paradigmatic relations	“Romans settled in Londinium”, <i>I understood „settled” as „lived”</i> , “grey matter was measured by two different techniques”, <i>I did not know the word „measured”, but understood that it is „checked”</i> .
Sentence level grammar	“intimately”, <i>the place of this word in the sentence states that it is an adverb</i> , “vast”, <i>it is the adjective, because stands before the nouns, so it could mean “huge”</i> .
Discourse level meaning	“amount” <i>is the size because London is a big city, it was mentioned before that the drivers must remember the layout of the city</i> . “this time” <i>means that there were two studies</i> .

B. Interlingual sources are based on the knowledge of the native language.

Lexical knowledge	“alternative” <i>is “alternatīva”</i> , “intimately” <i>is “intīmi, cieši”</i> , “source” <i>is “resursi”</i> , “correlation” <i>is “matemātiska darbība”</i> , “vital” <i>is “vitāli”</i> , “cables” <i>is “kabeļi”</i> , “licenced” <i>is from licence</i> , “designed” <i>means “dizainēts” or “projektēts”</i> .
Word collocation in native language	„observation wheel” <i>in Latvian is “novērojumu vai panorāmas rats”</i> , <i>it consists of two words</i> .

II Pragmatic Sources of Knowledge

Knowledge of situational context	”accomodate” <i>could mean “zin, pārvalda” because the text tells about taxi drivers and they know the map of the town</i> , “container” <i>could mean “kuģi”</i> , <i>because London is situated on the river Thames</i> , “capsules, cables” <i>could be the names of the parts of the structure of the London Eye which we saw in the picture</i> ,. “navigate” <i>means “kuģot” because it was said that the London Eye is on the river</i> .
Knowledge of the theme	“capsules” <i>could mean something like „kabīnes vai vagoniņi”</i> , <i>because the London Eye consists of such capsules</i> , “damaged” <i>is “bojāts” because the text is about the brain, if one cannot find the way, the brain is damaged</i> .
Knowledge of culture, history and geographic facts	“Romans” <i>could be “romieši”</i> , <i>because they were mentioned in the pre-listening activity</i> , “Londinium” <i>is a name of some town before London, it was mentioned in the pre-listening task</i> .
Background knowledge	“flooding” <i>could be “plūdi”</i> , <i>the story is about the river, so the problems in the city could be because of the floods or freezing</i> , “Barrier” <i>is “barjera”</i> , <i>because rivers can have barriers</i> .

The results of this study show that the participants used different knowledge sources in inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words while listening, and drew on their knowledge of the target language (intralingual), their native language (interlingual) and pragmatic knowledge. Intralingual sources included: word morphology, word homonymy, word associations, sentence level meaning, syntagmatic relations, paradigmatic relations, sentence level grammar, discourse level meaning. Interlingual sources included lexical knowledge, and word collocation in their native language. The most often mentioned sources were: word associations, the lexical knowledge of the native language. The most seldom mentioned sources were: word homonymy, syntagmatic relations and collocations in the native language. Pragmatic sources of knowledge included knowledge of the situational context, knowledge of the theme, knowledge of culture, historic and geographic facts, background knowledge or knowledge of the world.

Chapter 6 Implications for Foreign Language Teaching/Learning

In this chapter the author states that the pre-listening stage is a very important component in the listening process in the educational environment. The aim of the pre-listening tasks is to activate the background knowledge and supply language learners with the pragmatic information creating conditions similar to real life. The present research points to the following implications for developing listening skills in a foreign language:

1) Pre-listening stage is the most crucial parts of the listening session. Learners need pre-listening activities that prepare them for the listening task. Their purpose is to activate the current background knowledge, arouse expectations of what learners are going to listen to, contextualize the spoken discourse and generate interest thus motivating them to take an active part in the activity. Several techniques could be recommended:

- Activation of background knowledge and relevant schemata.
- Setting the context by means of providing students with the information in terms of the features of the context of situation (participants, the physical and temporary setting, co-text, culture information).
- Arranging pre-listening activities that give contexts or contextualize.
- Arranging activities that inform about the history, culture heritage, geographical facts.

- Arranging activities that require to predicting content by using background knowledge: general knowledge of the world and specific subject knowledge.
 - Connecting vocabulary to genre of the text, learners' interest, and background knowledge.
 - Personalization activities. Linking the task with the learners' personal experience.
 - Checking the understanding of the listening task requirements.
- 2) Learners' comprehension may increase if they are trained to use strategies such as guessing or inferencing or making hypotheses when they are not sure of something, such as the meaning of an unfamiliar word or expression in the while-listening stage “
- 3) Defining mode, tenor and field of the spoken recorded discourse as a while-listening task in order to identify the context of situation and its purpose.
- 4) Students should be taught to interact with the text through the use of both bottom-up and top-down processes.

Conclusions

1. The results of the analysis of linguistic theories have enabled the author to conclude that the processing of the spoken transactional discourse in a foreign language requires linguistic knowledge of phonology, lexis, syntax, discourse structure and pragmatic knowledge of the situational context, culture, history and geography of the target language.
2. Listeners with their partial linguistic knowledge of a foreign language have to use their knowledge of the world and prior knowledge in the form of schemata and scripts to understand the meaning of the spoken discourse. In applying the top-down approach, the activation of the background knowledge helps to compensate for the lack of the linguistic knowledge.
3. Listeners use the linguistic and pragmatic knowledge of their native language for the processing oral transactional discourse in a foreign language. This knowledge is not sufficient for the complete understanding of its semantic meaning. The presuppositions of the language use and the background knowledge that communication participants have, are different in different cultures, therefore the communication is not always successful. In addition, in the educational settings, when language learners listen to recorded texts in a

foreign language, there is a limited range of features of context or the listening activity is partly de-contextualized.

4. The findings of the present study prove that the activation of the background knowledge of the listeners and added pragmatic knowledge facilitate the processing of the spoken discourse in a foreign language, since the results of the quazi-experiment and the SSPS analysis of the variables of content words in the retrospective oral summaries and post-test results show that the differences are statistically significant (< 0.05). The participants of the quazi-experiment that were exposed to the pre-listening treatment had better results in both retrospective listening tests.

5. The language proficiency level influenced the result of the retrospective tasks. The students with better language knowledge had better overall results in retrospective listening tests denoting that linguistic knowledge facilitates the relevant language use. On the other hand, the participants' result in the retrospective oral summaries in within each language proficiency level had great dispersion that could be explained by the affective factors and learner differences.

6. The analysis of the participants' questionnaires shows that personal data (gender, age, place of residence, participants' opinion about English as a foreign language) and affective factors (motivation) did not influence the result in the listening session significantly. That means that those factors did not influence the result of the retrospective tasks. Even though in single cases it seemed that there might be a certain impact of the profile of the learner, the present empirical study does not give proof for such a claim.

7. The lexical analysis of the transcribed students' oral summaries show that the participants have used words from all frequency groups (except academic vocabulary of the text "Hippocampus" that could be explained with the specific theme). The participants have used more nouns and verbs, less adjectives. However, they have not used the adverbs derived with the suffix *-ly* (*intimately, previously, silently, simply, greatly, truly, profoundly*). The retrospective oral summaries of "The London Eye" and "Hippocampus" contain content words that were mentioned as unknown in the pre-test, thus the activation of the background knowledge and relevant pragmatic information has assisted in recognizing words in the connected speech. The analysis of the participants' retrospective

oral summaries shows that the words verbatim do not stay in the memory. That means that the listeners create mental representations and not always remember the exact word.

8. The results of the introspective study show that the participants used linguistic (intralingual and interlingual) sources of knowledge and pragmatic sources of knowledge in inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words while listening. Pragmatic sources of knowledge included: 1) features of the situational context, 2) knowledge of the topic, 3) culture knowledge, 4) background knowledge or the knowledge of the world.

9. The present research points to the implications that pre-listening stage is the most crucial part of the listening session. Learners need pre-listening activities that prepare them for the listening task. In the learning process it is very important to pay attention to 1) activating the background knowledge, 2) giving information about the situational context, 3) creating the specific cultural knowledge for the listeners to enhance the comprehension process of a spoken discourse in the target language.

Kopsavilkumā lietotā terminoloģija

Būtiskuma norma (the Maxim of Relation)	viena no H.Graisa saziņas principa normām, kas paredz, ka sarunā vēstījums atbilst tās mērķim un ir par tēmu
Būtiskuma teorija (The Relevance Principle)	teorija, ko izstrādāja D. Sperbera un D. Vilsona un tā paredz, ka ikviena saziņa ietver optimālu atbilstību tās mērķim un tēmai
Distanciālās saskarsmes diskurss (non-collaborative discourse)	valoda diskursā, kurā klausītājam nav iespējas mijiedarboties ar sarunas partneri vai runātāju, sarunas partneri ir nodalīti laikā un telpā
Deduktīva teksta uztveres metode (top-down approach)	deduktīvi uztverot tekstu klausītājs pielieto iepriekšējo zināšanu kopumu, kas tiek saistīts ar kontekstu
Iepriekšminējumi (presuppositions)	zināšanu kopums, kas, kā uzskata runātājs, ir zināms arī klausītājam
Implikatūras (implicatures)	netiešas nozīmes izteikumi vai netiešas norādes
Induktīva teksta uztveres metode (bottom-up approach)	pielietojot induktīvo metodi, klausāmu tekstu uztvert sāk no skaņas, kas veido zilbi, tad vārdu un teikumu, nonākot līdz visa diskursa izpratnei
Introspektīvais pētījums (introspective study)	valodniecībā pielietots pētījuma veids, kas notiek interviju veidā, ierakstot pētījuma dalībnieku skaļi izteiktās domas par pētāmo jautājumu
Informācijas daudzuma norma (the Maxim of Quantity)	viena no H.Graisa saziņas principa normām, kas paredz maksimāli atbilstoša vēstījuma nodrošināšanu bez nevajadzīgas papildus informācijas
Kontaktsaskarsmes diskurss (collaborative discourse)	valoda diskursā, kurā sarunas partneri piedalās tiešā nepastarpinātā veidā
Kodolīguma norma (the Maxim of Manner)	viena no H.Graisa saziņas principa normām, kas paredz maksimāli kodolīgu un objektīvu satura un stila atbilstības ievērošanu vēstījuma laikā

Mutvārdu diskurss (oral discourse)	(promocijas darbā) valoda mutvārdu tekstā, kam ir sava noteikta nozīme un mērķis kontekstā
Palīgvārdi (functional words)	vārdi, kas teikumā nevar būt par teikuma locekļiem (prievārdi, saikļi un partikulas)
Patstāvīgie vārdi (content words)	Patstāvīgie vārdi ietver lietvārdus, darbības vārdus, īpašības vārdus un apstākļa vārdus
Pragmatika (pragmatics)	valodniecības virziens, kas pēta valodas zīmju un to interpretētāju kopsakarības
Precizitātes norma (the Maxim of Quality)	viena no H.Graisa saziņas principa normām, kas paredz maksimāli objektīva vēstījuma nodrošinājumu
Receptīva valodas prasme (receptive)	prasme uztvert lingvistisko informāciju mutvārdu vai rakstveida formā
Retrospektīvais tests (retrospective)	tests ar laika distanci
Saziņas princips (the Cooperative Principle)	H.Graisa teorija, saskaņā ar kuru saziņas dalībnieki ievēro četras normas par sadarbību vēstījuma nodošanā un uztveršanā
Shēmu teorija (the Schema Theory)	saskaņā ar Shēmu teoriju, zināšanas ir savstarpēji saistīti tēlu shematiskie atveidojumi (shēmas), kas ir mūsu iepriekšējā pieredze un zināšanas
Transakcionāls diskurss (transactional discourse)	diskursa veids, kas ir vienpusējs vēstījums, kura laikā runātājs sniedz informāciju un ir „klausītāja orientēts” vēstījums; vēstījums ir monologa formā, bet var būt viena sarunas dalībnieka vienpusējs vēstījums dialogā, ja klausītājam ir pasīva adresāta loma. Tādā gadījumā informācijas piesātinātas runas vienības ir salīdzinoši garas
Triangulācija (triangulation)	dažādu pētniecības metožu lietošana vienlaicīgi

