Listener Response Taxonomy

Summary of the taxonomy developed by Lund (1990).
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Retrieved from https://tesolidarity.wikispaces.com/listener+response

As teachers, how can we know the extent to which learners have been successful at accomplishing some listening purpose (a listener function)? Success at listening is invisible unless the listener gives some kind of response that reflects accomplishment of the goal: “comprehension itself is not externally observable” (Brown, 2007, p. 311). In planning listening exercises, it is important to consider both the listener’s function AND the type of response that will best demonstrate success. Lund’s (1990) list of possible response types is a useful guide for task planning and exceeds some earlier lists in comprehensiveness (pp. 110-111).

Listener response taxonomy (Lund, 1990, pp. 110-111)

1. *Doing* activities - require a physical response of some kind, rather than a spoken one. *Total Physical Response* (TPR) activities are examples of this.
2. *Choosing* activities - requires selection from among alternatives (could be pictures, objects, graphics, texts, or actions). Examples would include matching or placing choices in order.
3. *Transferring* activities - taking information in one form and transferring it into another. Most listening activities that involve this response include drawing a picture or graphic of some kind. Examples: making a map, tracing a route, completing a chart or table
4. *Answering* activities - answering questions about a message. NOTE: Many listening activities take this type and are done at the end of the listening. In the absence of immediate response, it often seems that memory as well as listening is being tested. Teachers should be aware of this in designing activities that aim to target listening skills exclusively.
5. *Condensing* activities - The listener represents the message in a reduced form. Examples: outlines and notes
7. *Duplicating* activities - replicating the message, either verbatim in the L2 or as a translation in the L1
8. *Modeling* activities - using something found in the original as a model for another action. Could focus on a discrete formal feature or could address the text as a whole. Examples: using a text as a model for intonation; ordering a meal (in a way similar to that found in the text)
9. *Conversing* activities - engaging in some kind of interactive exchange with the text or the producer of the text. This conversation will indicate success at processing the message.
References
