

## Evaluation of Suitability of a Listening Textbook for English Majors in Universities of China

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### ABSTRACT

Textbooks occurring in diverse social settings points to the need to make textbook evaluation in its social context. Many researchers have highlighted the significance of evaluating textbooks in local practices. The present study aims at exploring the suitability of a listening textbook---A Listening Course(I) published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press in terms of content analysis. The analysis of the textbook finds that the general organization of the book, text types, listening tasks and activities are mostly suitable for first-grade English majors, but it still needs improvement on theme interests, authenticity, task options and assessment. Although ALC is a localized textbook, it still mirrors the macrocosm of English language teaching. The findings of this study will shed light on developing listening materials for textbook developers in order to avoid some pitfalls, and enlighten teachers on selecting suitable listening textbooks.

### INTRODUCTION

Listening is the basic course of English major and the course that students generally think is difficult, especially in countries where English is a second or foreign language. Listening, the process of acquiring or comprehending spoken discourse is recognized as an important skill in EFL learning, but it is “the most unnoticed of the four skills in EFL contexts” (Nunan, 2002). Listening is not only the basis of other language skills, but also an effective means of efficient communication. Some people believe that language learning is not just learning to speak, but also learning to build a cognitive map which is built through listening not speaking. Moreover, listening is the integral part of several examinations in the institutes at home and abroad. Listening skill is becoming the concern and the difficult one of the exams. In China, university entrance exams, exit exams, CET4, CET6, TEM4, TEM8, TOEFL, IELTS, and other examinations often include a listening component, acknowledging that listening skills are a core component of second-language proficiency.

Recent years have seen researches of listening shifting from the mastery of micro skills (product-oriented) to cognitive interpretation of listening materials to current process-oriented listening. These studies might cover some concerned investigation around this field. But concerns to materials used in the teaching of listening are relatively scarce. Rost (2011) asserted that teaching materials for listening consist of some form of input and some form of a task or a sequence of tasks. They are very important in language pedagogy. Tasks are usually designed to comprehend and to learn as classroom activities. Richards (2001: p251) accentuated that instructional materials generally serve as the basis of much of the language input that learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. However, the research of listening textbooks has received little attention. Developing listening materials has been marginally dealt with in instructional materials (Maftoon, et, 2016: p75). And evaluation of listening textbook is extremely scarce. As an essential ingredient in English language teaching, English listening textbooks play a pivotal role in non-English environment. For students, they rely heavily on the textbook that constitutes a learning

resource and device while for teachers, they systematically deliver the contents of the textbook that provides them tasks and activities. Textbooks frame the teaching-learning process, provide models for correct and appropriate language use, so it is important for researchers to investigate, to design, and to research into listening materials in EFL teaching.

The need of analyzing and evaluating the listening textbook was imposed by the fact that it was widely used in China, it was recently developed and its merits and demerits would have a great impact on students learning of English. The present study aims at exploring the suitability of a listening textbook--- A Listening Course (I) published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press in terms of content analysis. The analysis of the textbook involves the organization of the unit, text types, listening tasks and activities and integration of language skills, in order to see what merits and demerits are in the book, and provide insights into its suitability whether it fits to the syllabus and help attain its goals that the Syllabus defines, and whether it is sufficient to teach students listening ability and listening comprehension? Although ALC is a localized textbook, it still mirrors the macrocosm of English language teaching. The findings of this study will shed light on developing appropriate listening materials in listening textbooks and help teachers decide what kind of listening materials are suitable for students.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Role of Textbooks

English textbooks have been considered to be the most fundamental components (Nunan, 1988) and the most supportive materials in teaching and learning process (Brown, 2001), which bring conveniences in the classroom by providing teachers with guidelines comprised of syllabus, methodologies, as well as materials for teaching and learning (Hanifa, 2018). They provide a ground for learners and instructors in an institution, not only the contents they generally dictate but also the order, the density and the pace of teaching, as well as how to test. For most teachers and learners, they are labor-saving and irreplaceable (Cunningsworth, 1995; Sheldon, 1988).

However, Researchers hold different opinions about the role of textbooks in the language classroom. Some maintain that textbooks provide a framework for teachers and students and they are in the center of any English language teaching program (Sheldon, 1988: 237) to improve learners' linguistic and communicative capabilities. They embody the aims, values and methods of the particular teaching learning context (Hutchinson, 1987: 37), and provide consistency, systematicity, cohesion, continuation and progression (Tomlinson, 2001). They are recognized as an influential learning resource for learner autonomy in language education, or a useful guide for inexperienced instructors.

In contrast, others argue that textbooks may be a deskiller (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). They argue that textbooks demotivate teachers and students in that they tend to confine teacher's creativity and preempt their exploration in the teaching (Prabhu, 1987). Over-dependency on textbooks may disempower teacher and learner's freedom, "stifle their innova-

tion and limit flexibility" (Cunningsworth, 1995: 10), thus justifying Cunningsworth's cautionary note about textbooks being good servants but bad masters.

As is expounded that textbooks control the teacher and students, they are the essential components in the dynamics of the language classroom. Despite the benefits and drawbacks, they are to be explored.

### The Need of Textbook Evaluation

Thanks to a diverse range of English teaching materials commercially available, it is challenging for teachers to evaluate and select a quality textbook that is suitable for the learning context. Altay (2013) suggests teachers not to choose a textbook without evaluating it thoroughly as neglecting important criteria of textbook results in decreasing the success of EFL learners. A casually-compiled textbook may demotivate learners and lead to learners' failure in acquiring the language while a well-developed textbook may lead to better accomplishment of language, so evaluating a textbook can be of great significance.

There is a plethora of literature emphasizing the prominence of EFL teaching materials and the urge to evaluate such textbooks. In practice, evaluation is implemented depending on the intended objectives. Some evaluated textbooks to find out how the exercises can cater for the syllabus and learners' needs (McDough & Shaw 1993; Cunningsworth, 1995), to identify merits and demerits in certain textbooks being in use (Cunningsworth, 1995), and to conduct an action research (Tomlinson, 1996); Some evaluated textbooks to detect whether they accomplish the aim of conveying the knowledge (Najafi Sarem et al., 2013), to identify textbooks productivity and value as regards the aims, principles or norms (Salehi, Khadivar, Babae, & Singh, 2015); Some examined the suitability regarding students' needs, teaching objectives and teachers' methodology in a given context (Hanifa, 2018). After all, any kind of evaluation should serve the betterment of learning outcome (Gholami et al. 2017).

A number of evaluations have been made previously regarding the evaluation of textbooks in English language teaching. However, Tomlinson (2008) argues that many ELT materials failed to acquire competence and to develop the ability to use it successfully for they focused on linguistic items rather than on the provision of opportunities for acquisition and development. As for a listening textbook, of course, it has two main objectives: one is to develop learners' listening skills and strategies, the other is to broaden their knowledge and their understanding towards society and life, as well as to develop their international vision and improve their humanistic literacy.

Usually, language instructions have many components but the most important one is the textbooks that are often used by language instructors. In China, most of universities use institutional materials based on the curriculum and syllabuses, designed and developed by the Ministry of Education and under the supervision of this organization. Since a variety of textbooks on the market poses great challenges for teachers to adopt new textbooks, scrutinizing and evaluating textbooks in EFL context is of significance.

In China, detailed researches on evaluation of some textbooks such as intensive reading, literature, extensive reading

are abundant, but evaluation of listening textbooks are rare, the reason may be that listening course is underrepresented and neglected in English teaching and listening textbooks are relatively sparse. In this case, analyzing and evaluating listening textbook is urgent.

Considering the necessity of textbook evaluation, and current researches, it is essential to carry out analysis in attempt to fully understand the content of a book, its strengths and weaknesses, whether it fits the course objectives, students' needs and teaching philosophy. A number of researchers proposed a variety of evaluation instruments, impressionistic, checklist and in-depth methods (Cunningsworth, 1995; McGrath, 2002), predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation (Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997), macro-evaluation and micro-evaluation (Ellis, 1997, Prabhu 1987; Nunan 1988); pre-use, in-use, post-use evaluation (Cunningsworth 1997; Tomlinson 1998). Whatever methods they are, what they aim is to find out the most suitable textbook in a given context. They provide a framework to evaluate textbooks that involve comprehensive language skills, and they are not appropriate to evaluate a textbook that specializes in a language skill. However, they can offer some ideas for this study.

### The Specification of this Study and Research Questions

It seems that very few researches have been done on evaluation of a listening textbook. While the significance of listening materials is being increasingly recognized, the evaluation is not exercised yet. The analysis and evaluation of the listening materials will obviously provide better insights into the book's suitability. Therefore, the suitability of the listening book would be detected through content analysis of the book. The aim of this listening course was to develop learner's listening skills and language competence and motivate learner's involvement and confidence, as well as promote their understanding of a variety of texts containing features of authentic or semi-authentic native-speaker speech. Listening course is essential for language learning, it is an integral part of learner's comprehensive skills, subject literacy and creativity.

The present study adopted Cunningsworth's checklist for listening. It covered text types of listening materials, activity design and sequencing, authenticity and meaningfulness in a given context, quality of audio and video. The study was expected to make contribution to other researchers who are interested in evaluating English listening textbook based on curriculum and syllabuses, as well as material design and development in language pedagogy. It can also enlighten teachers on selecting the suitable textbooks to facilitate teachers and students to fulfill the curriculum objectives. Byrd (2001: p416) states that when evaluating a textbook, the first area that should be assessed is its fitness with the curriculum. The fitness of the textbook to the existing syllabus/curriculum affects the general quality of the teaching material. That is, the syllabus is important criteria to check student's academic performance and evaluate teacher's teaching.

The National English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors (Syllabus hereafter) issued by the Ministry of

Education in April, 2000 states the curriculum objectives and the course design requirements for English majors. It declares clearly that the Syllabus is the basis of organizing teaching, compiling materials, and evaluating teaching. Of course, whether a textbook meets its requirements or not is one of the criteria of evaluation. As for the listening course, all the first-semester English majors (freshmen) are expected to fulfill the following objectives and requirements after a semester's learning: to understand the contents about daily life or the knowledge they are familiar with; to understand the lectures given by people from English-speaking countries that is no more difficult than the language knowledge they have learned, get the main idea, know about supporting details and discriminate the attitude and tones of the speakers; to understand VOA special news and culture program, get the main idea; to dictate the recording materials ( about 150 words, read four times and at a speed of 100 words per minute) compiled or selected according to the knowledge they have learned within 15 minutes, with an error rate of no more than 10%.

Cunningsworth (1995) states that textbooks should correspond to learners' needs, help students to use the language effectively, facilitate their learning process, and show a support for learning. Therefore, the study was to evaluate the suitability of the textbook based on the following aspects such as its layout and design, subjects and contents, language skills, and activities, and fitness to the existing syllabus or/and curriculum. In order to achieve this objective, the following research questions were formulated.

What are the merits and demerits of the textbook?

Does this listening textbook fit to the Syllabus and help to attain its goals?

Is it suitable for English majors in China to improve their listening ability and their listening comprehension?

## METHOD

### Aim

The present study was a descriptive qualitative research due to the fact that the aim of it is to analyze a listening textbook used for first-year English majors in order to tap into the strengths and weaknesses, as well as its suitability in terms of the National English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors and its suitability for English majors to improve their listening ability and comprehension in Chinese context.

### Design of Textbook Evaluation

The textbook under scope was A listening course (I) used by English major in the universities of China. The study employed descriptive design through content analysis that focused on characteristics of listening materials. All the information taken from the textbook would be analyzed closely to make deductions. Although there are miscellaneous proposed approaches and methods, approaches for evaluating listening coursebook are extremely scarce. Since each context is unique it is mandatory to customize the evaluation process for each specific context (Işik, 2018: p798).

The textbook evaluation instrument was adopted from Alan Cunningsworth's checklist for listening (1995: p68), and was slightly adapted in this study in a given context in order to reach a decision concerning the suitability of the listening textbook.

### A Modified Checklist for Listening

In fact, concerning research on task types and activities in listening textbooks, the existing literature is extremely scarce. And Cunningsworth's checklist for listening was used in evaluating four skills in general coursebooks, it had some limitations. The current study focused on a listening textbook, its emphasis was not only on tasks and activities of listening materials, but also on listening skills. The checklist needed to be supplemented in order to check the suitability of the listening textbook. The following aspects should be considered such as the apparent aims of the listening materials, how the listening skills and strategies were selected and sequenced, whether listening materials contributed to accomplishing the objectives of syllabus.

Therefore, combining Cunningsworth's checklist of textbook evaluation, a modified checklist was proposed to address these issues during the evaluation of a listening textbook.

- 1). What kind of listening material is contained in the course? What are their aims?
- 2). What kinds of activities are based on listening materials, comprehension questions, extracting specific information, blank-filling, True-false questions etc.?
- 3). Is the listening material set in a meaningful context?
- 4). Are there pre-, while-, and post-listening tasks, questions etc.?
- 5). What is the recorded material on audio files like in terms of:
  - (a) Sound quality;      (b) Speed of delivery;
  - (c) Accent;              (d) Authenticity?
- 6). Is there any video material for listening?
- 7). If so, is good use made of the visual medium to provide a meaningful context and how facial expression, gesture, etc.?
- 8). Are there any listening skills and strategies selected and practiced?
- 9). If so, how are they sequenced?
- 10). Does listening materials contribute to the actualization of the syllabus?

Next part would analyze the textbook based on this checklist to see whether it fit the syllabus and suitable for English majors to meet their needs and fulfill their goals.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### General Organization of the Book

The textbook under study was A listening course (I) (ALC) developed by Shi Xinyuan (施心远), which was first published in 2008, second revised edition in 2013, and now it was the third edition, revised and completed in September, 2017. English majors in most of universities in China adopt the book which belongs to a textbook package, containing a student's book, a teacher's book on which tape scripts and keys are presented, a website where learners can download the MP3 files and an APP for learners to avail themselves. In this study, we collected data from the Student's Book I.

Book I contains 15 units and 180 pages. Each unit has four sections. In each unit, there are tactics for listening (pre-listening activities), listening comprehension (while-listening tasks and activities), oral work (post-listening tasks), and supplementary exercises (post-listening tasks and activities). See Table 1.

As can be seen from Table 1, the most prominent feature of this book is that tactics for listening is listed in the table of contents as part of the units and are carefully arranged in logic sequence embedded in activities dedicated to skills and strategies inside the units. It not only focuses on micro listening skills but also macro listening strategies providing tips for learners. This implies that learning to listen is the first step for learners, which is consistent with the writer's claims, validating the reliability of the book, and then next step listening to learn new knowledge. Such arrangements reflect a underlying teaching philosophy: skills should be developed with knowledge; input is prior to output, output push input forward; listening competence is developed by speaking, reading and writing, although they are different facets of communication, they are interrelated and interacted rather than isolated.

Section two includes four parts. Part 1 works as pre-listening activities to reduce or break the language barriers of listening comprehension, preparing learners to listening. The other three parts focus on listening comprehension which practises macro listening skills such as discriminating, predicting, selective listening, inferring, guessing unknown words from the context, monitoring their listening comprehension, paraphrasing, summarizing, note-taking, meta-cognitive control over performative skill and knowledge learning. This justifies the writer's claim that listening should integrate learning to listen with listening to learn and be part of language learning (Shi, 2006: p58).

**Table 1.** The contents of A Listening Course (I)

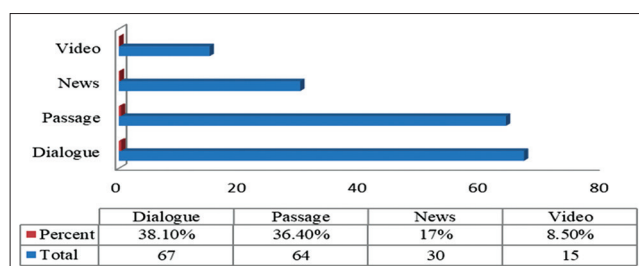
Sections	Section 1 tactics for listening	Section 2 listening comprehension	Section 3 oral work	Section 4 supplementary
Unit 1	phonetics	A. Listen and repeat	Words or message (similar words or homonyms)	Questions and answers
-----		B. practice		Listening comprehension
Unit 15	Listening and note-taking	Key words	2 dialogues	retelling
		Supporting details	1 passage	Oral work
			2 news items	video

The textbook designs supplementary exercises for learner's independent learning that indicates learner autonomy. Jacobs and Renandya (2016) maintain that learner autonomy enables students become more independent and responsible for their learning. These tasks and activities focus on listening comprehension, oral work and video in order to practise listening strategies and speaking with live TV clips. Most of the contents are related with the title of each unit in order to deepen their understanding of the topics. And the tasks and activities reflect new methodology of integration of listening, speaking and viewing which would to some degree improve learning.

Apart from sections dedicated to skills, the textbook also contains pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, language focus and background information. Those phonetic, phonological, orthographic, and semantic-syntactic knowledge are interconnected, forming the foundation of listening skills and comprehension. As it can be seen from Table 1, they are distributed evenly, except background information, which are presented if necessary. Particularly, grammar seems to be given more attention than vocabulary. And it also includes a vocabulary list at the end of the book which lists the phonetic symbols of the words, phrases and Chinese explanations. On the whole, it seems that the listening materials of each unit have been arranged in sequence in terms of the difficulty from simple phonetic variations to listening skills and strategies to more challenging listening tasks. The textbook is organized in a pattern that has recurring features, from which learners would easily become accustomed to what has been expected from each unit, just as McGrath (2002) assumes textbooks were to set the direction and content while determining how the lesson should be taught. Moreover, the organization of the textbook reflects the writer's teaching principles which is in congruence with the overall goal of listening course, it is actualization of teaching theories (Ur, 1996).

### Text Types of Listening Materials

Text types were overall suitable for the learners with average of the requirements at level 2 of the National English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors (2000) which is corresponding level for first-semester English majors. Graph 1 illustrates the text types of listening materials throughout the book. As it can be observed, most texts are dialogues (38.1%), and passages (36.4%), news and videos occupy 17%, 8.5% respectively. It expounds that dialogues and passages are the major genres in the textbook, while news and videos are the minor part of the textbook. For the learners who have just passed the National College Entrance Examination (NEMT),



Graph 1. Text Type of Listening Materials

they have certain knowledge of reading and grammar, but lack sufficient practice in English listening. They are just beginners in listening, so listening materials should not be too difficult or too simple. Listening materials at this level are defined in the requirements of the Syllabus as contents relevant to their needs, VOA special news and cultural programs, lectures given by people from English speaking countries that are no more difficult than the language knowledge they have learned. From this very general Syllabus, text types of listening materials may be monologues, dialogues, interviews, conversations, stories, shopping lists, descriptive texts, procedure, weather forecast, lectures, news, videos and so on. And in this textbook, dialogues, interviews, conversations are categorized as dialogues, and monologues, stories; shopping lists, descriptive texts, procedure, weather forecast, lectures are categorized as passages. They reflect the colloquial usage of daily English, and they are the major genres in the textbook, and also the most common text types in the listening tests. While news and videos involving listening to live broadcasts and TV clips that are a little more difficult for beginners are the minor part of the textbook, they provide authentic natural input for learners to be aware of speaker's attitudes, facial expressions and postures, and motivate them. For the learners at this level, it can be inferred that text types are suitable, and are largely aligned with the Syllabus, and to some degree, the textbook also contains some hints on examination technique, which is line with Chinese context.

### Types of Listening Tasks and Activities

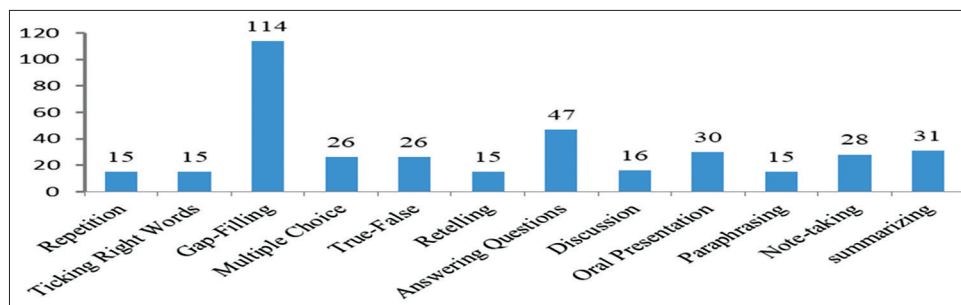
A variety of tasks and activities in the listening textbook encompass language components such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and so on and skills as a main source of assistance. They are designed not only to develop learner's listening skills but also to contribute to their overall language learning.

Graph 2 demonstrates the types of listening tasks and activities throughout the book. As it can be observed gap-filling ranked the first (114). This form of activity is widely used in the textbook and tests in order to decode the input information, which may be phonetic variations, vocabulary, language points, grammar, phrases, key words, names, places, dates, numbers and so on. It is selective listening designed for intended purposes.

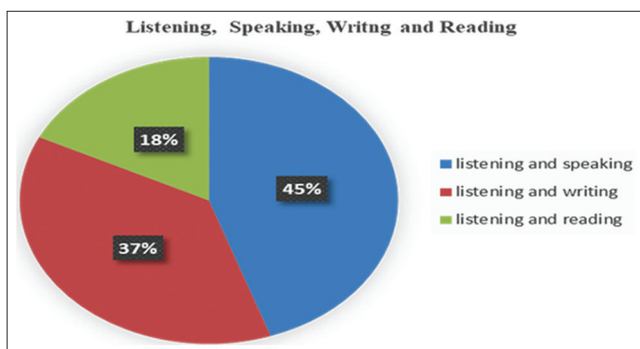
Next activity is answering the questions (47). It is a commonly-used form in the textbook. Such activity is to elicit learner's immediate response. Compared with gap-filling activity, it is a little more difficult. It may be selective listening, intensive listening, interactive or responsive listening. Learners need to make more effort to accomplish it.

Then, summarizing (31), oral presentation (30), note-taking (28) and paraphrasing (15) are strategies learners use to practise speaking and writing after listening so as to improve listening proficiency. They are listed and practised separately in order to extract important information from listening materials and reorganize them in a brief and reasonable way.

The others are multiple choice (26), true or false questions (26). These two activities used in the section required students to provide a selected response without long answers.



**Graph 2.** Types of listening tasks



**Graph 3.** Skills embedded in the activities and tasks

Then repetition (15), retelling (15) and discussion (16), are evenly distributed in each unit. They are presented from very simple activity to retelling to a more challenging task (discussion). Repetition in each unit is listening and repetition to practise phonetic variations (linkups, weak forms, sound plosives and phonetic assimilation) and the common stress patterns of multisyllable words, compound words and sentences correctly. It gets learners to be familiar with pronunciation and accents of native speakers. Retelling in each unit is practised as an oral task that can increase oral language abilities as well as fluency. It can encourage learners to be actively involved in learning, and it is developmentally appropriate for learners at this level. As for discussion, it requires learners to communicate with each other, express their opinions, negotiate meanings. It is a challenging task for learners, but it is an initial step to develop learner's critical thinking, creativity, collaborative skills that are learning goals in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Ticking the correct word (15) is an exercise to discriminate homophones, homographs or other similar words. It is presented just before listening comprehension in order for learners to clear the way. Besides all these activities embedded in listening comprehension, listening strategies are also practised, but the percentages of each task or activity are not the same.

### Distribution of Language Skills

These tasks and activities involve integrated skills, besides listening. Skills are rarely used in isolation in real life, and one skill is very often used to support and complement another (McDonough and Shaw, 1993: p202). It can be observed that in the listening tasks, learners are required to employ two or more skills in tasks and activities.

Though the overall unit mostly is devoted to listening skills and strategies, speaking, writing and reading skills are still given importance with 15 sections throughout the book. It is evident that there is an imbalance between speaking and other skills (Graph 3). Speaking seems to be given more priority to reading and writing in the textbook, as listening and speaking are always intertwined. White (1998: p6) stresses that learning how to listen in a second (or indeed a first) language is inextricably linked with learning how to speak. Expected outcome from learners is mostly in the form of speaking (45%) that may encourage learners to attain fluency and self-confidence as well as readiness level for everyday oral communications.

Furthermore, by comparing the number of four skills, it could be inferred that output is given more attention, input (listening) is always integrated with output (speaking and writing), and they interact each other. Long (1996) claims that output will be mechanism to push language learners ahead in their development. The distribution of language skills verifies the writer's rationale that listening is not only part of language teaching, but also an effective way to acquire knowledge (Shi, 2006: p58).

From the above analyses, we know the listening materials in this textbook involve a variety of genres and topics that the syllabus prescribes. They serve to fulfill the learning objectives of language students. After listening these materials, kinds of tasks and activities are offered in a meaningful context such as individual work retelling, team work, discussion and comprehension exercises like questions, gap-filling, true-false questions and so on.

A listening unit usually involves 3 phases: pre-, while-, post-listening, and in this book, each unit contains these 3 phases, preparing learners with listening skills and warming-up exercises for while-listening, during which learners focus their attention on the listening text and develop their understanding of it. As for post-listening, learners may integrate what they have learnt from the text into their existing knowledge.

The audio files are clear, with an appropriate speed of about 100 words per minute to learner's ability and level, and with a few different accents suitable for beginners, but not authentic. And the clipped videos are all from live documentary or film, easy for them to follow.

In the book, exercises for listening skills and strategies are selected and sequenced according to the student's level, and students can practice in order to improve their language proficiency. To some extent, this listening textbook largely

complies with the teaching requirements set by the 2000 edition of Teaching Syllabus for English Majors.

From the analysis, we see that this listening textbook not only focuses on the linguistic items and skills but also attempts to provide opportunities for acquisition and development.

## CONCLUSION

As already mentioned, the study tried to find out the merits and demerits of this listening textbook and the suitability of it for English majors in universities of China. After a close examination of the components of the book, the findings suggested that the overall organization of the textbook, text types, tasks and activities included were suitable; four language skills explored in an integrated way was apparent and elements of differentiation of instruction were also found in the textbook.

However, some problematic areas were detected as to the practicality of the book, its contents, use of authentic language, the nature of the tasks, autonomy of learning and assessment practices. In order to develop our listening skills and strategies, the textbook should contain:

- Each unit has a theme for the organization of its sections.
- Authentic language should be provided for effective listening to develop phonetic awareness such as pronunciation, stress, intonation and accent. Speed of delivery should be appropriate to learner's ability.
- Tasks in the textbook need to be designed appropriately to improve their listening skills and confidence, such as discussion, or debate, or opinion about something that offer them opportunities to communicate with others, this way, they learn to negotiate meaning in the real-world context, and enhance learner's autonomy.
- Textbook may well provide assessment practices for students to reflect on their listening. Listening skills and strategies should be evaluated to aid students, which keep them motivated.

All in all, ALC is suitable in Chinese context. The content and activities in English textbooks are almost aligned with the objectives of the Syllabus for first-grade English majors, but it is lack of originality in its design.

This study only focused on the subjective analysis based on a teacher's perception, further research can be conducted to reveal in-depth analysis by combining the interviews with teachers and student users and questionnaires from them.

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