The Teaching of Academic Listening Comprehension and the Question of Authenticity

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Abstract—This paper shows a range of insights that can be gained for EAP listening comprehension pedagogy from the analysis of a representative authentic lecture. Based on a small survey of academic listening textbooks the salient features identified in the lecture are found to be absent from the textbooks. EAP listening instructors, it is argued, need to supplement their commercial texts by exposing their students to authentic lectures. Only in this way can they prepare them effectively for authentic academic listening.

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1. Introduction

Because of the ever-increasing number of foreign students taking courses in English speaking countries and the growing numbers of countries where English is not the first language that are adopting English-medium university level instruction, more and more non-native-speaking students (NNS) are attending lectures delivered in English. NNS often undertake intensive English language courses as a way of preparing for lectures in English. As part of these courses students usually receive listening skills practice, with a textbook used as the core practice material.

Five English for Academic Purposes (EAP) listening textbooks which the researchers have used themselves or are being currently used by colleagues were reviewed to examine which skills these textbooks encouraged students to develop. The aims of these books, according to their authors, are:

"... [to] enable the non-native speaker of English who wishes to follow a course in the medium of English at tertiary level to follow a lecture ..." (James, Jordan & Matthews 1979).
Each of these course books thus claims to prepare second or foreign language students for listening to lectures. When we examine these texts we find that they mostly concentrate on note-taking exercises. A typical unit includes: establish the topic, vocabulary preview, listen to a short (3–4 min) scripted lecture, complete a guided note-taking exercise, use the information from the note-taking exercise for a follow-up activity.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that there is a range of academic listening skills that listening textbooks generally fail to deal with adequately, if at all, and that consequently these books do not prepare NNS well for listening to authentic lectures in English. By describing a lecture observation, analysing a lecture transcript, and reporting a discussion with the lecturer and his students, we highlight some of the skills students need to develop when listening to lectures in a second language, but which are neglected or not dealt with satisfactorily in the commercially available course books.

The paper is organised as follows. First, the data concerning the lecture which is the focus of the study and how it was collected are described. Next, information is given about the lecturer, followed by comments he made concerning his lecturing and by his students. Then, in the main part of the paper, we outline a range of features observed in the lecture or commented on by the lecturer and/or students which are important for effective lecture understanding, but which are not dealt with adequately in the commercially available textbooks. In the conclusion we make some recommendations concerning the preparation of NNS for lecture listening, based on the findings of the study.

2. Data for the Study

The data-set we used for our study relates to one lecture given by a native English-speaking economics lecturer to a class of some 120 Cantonese-speaking students at a university in Hong Kong. This data-set is drawn, however, from a much larger body of data collected over several years, and with a large range of lecturers and students at the same research site, City University of Hong Kong (Flowerdew and Miller 1992, 1995, 1996, in press). The particular lecture we focus on here was selected because it exhibited those features found in most of the other lectures and did not exhibit any features which would have made it stand out as unusual. Also, we had developed a particular rapport with the lecturer and his students which enabled us to go back to them many times to obtain their comments about
what had happened in the lecture event and about our on-going interpretation.

Prior to beginning the lecture series from which the lecture we focus on here was drawn, the lecturer was invited to a pre-course interview with the researchers. In this semi-structured interview he gave his impressions about working at the university, the students he taught and how he felt about his lecturing skills. He then kept a log based upon one lecture course. In this log he recorded such things as length of the lecture, use of visual aids, style of presentation, and his feelings about how well the lecture went and any problems he encountered. He also reported to the researchers on an ongoing, informal basis, both during the lecture course and during the preparation of this paper.

The two researchers attended five of the lectures given by this lecturer. Their purpose was to act as observers both of the lecturer's style of presentation and of the students' behaviour. The lectures were also recorded and transcribed. Data were collected from the students who attended the lectures in two ways: first, after two of the lectures the students were asked to give some immediate written feedback on how well they felt that they had understood the lecture, what problems they had, and how they would try to overcome them; secondly, six students were randomly selected from the class halfway through their course, and interviewed in more depth about the lecturer and the course they were taking.

3. The Lecturer

The lecturer reported on here teaches in the Department of Economics and Finance at City University of Hong Kong. He has over 20 years of lecturing experience—five of which have been teaching Hong Kong Chinese students. From his log he reports that he used a lot of transparencies and sometimes gave additional handouts to the class. The students received a set of copies of the transparencies the lecturer used during his lectures. In one of his interviews, the lecturer stated that he did not think the students had enough time to both copy the transparencies and make notes of what he was saying, which is why he gave them the transparencies beforehand. His students were required to do pre-reading from a prescribed text and most of the lectures were followed by a tutorial on the topic of the lecture. The style of presentation used could be described as talk-and-chalk, with little or no intervention on the part of the students. The lecturer had taught the course several times before.

4. The Lecture

The topic of this first-year undergraduate lecture, which lasted for 48 minutes, was Economic Development in Asia. The lecture took place in a lecture theatre with, as already stated, around 120 first-year students attending.
The lecturer established the theme of the lecture right from the start: "How did the Asian drama of poverty turn into the Asian miracle of spectacular growth?" This reference to "Asian drama" and the "Asian miracle" was repeated throughout the lecture as a way of structuring the discourse, with extensive references to particular places within Asia: Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, China and Hong Kong. The use of rhetorical questions was another device used by the lecturer to signal lecture structure. The content of the lecture was considered by the observers to be somewhat difficult in that, by tracing the theme of economic development in Asia, the lecturer was required to give examples from many different countries. However, he usually signalled verbally when he was going to give an example or examples. Throughout the lecture there were quite frequent hesitations and false starts. After the lecture was transcribed and shown to the lecturer he was surprised at the number of occurrences of such features in his lecture.

The lecturer made extensive use of the overhead projector and it was noted that each time a new transparency was put up the students busily started making notes on their own copies with which they had been provided beforehand, as noted earlier. At one stage, however, when a transparency was not in the student manual and it was only displayed for a short time, there was considerable chatter after it was removed. The students appeared to be unhappy that they had not been given sufficient time to copy everything down.

The lecturer had a very clear and audible voice, although both he and his students commented that he speaks quite fast. It was not apparent to the researchers/observers that there was much modification of vocabulary for a second-language audience, and such words and phrases as converted, expansion, efficient inter-mediation, physical real-capital, accumulation, sustains, computer-assisted manufacturing, are found in a randomly selected two minute segment of the recorded lecture. With respect to vocabulary and technical terms, the lecturer mentioned the word endogenous at the beginning of the lecture as an important aspect of his talk, but did not explain the term until the end of the lecture.

The lecturer made several references to himself in the lecture as a way of establishing personal contact with his audience. At one point, for example, the lecturer said the reason he was in Hong Kong was related to the Asian economic "miracle" and also periodically used a checking device (Okay? Yeah?) to ensure that they were following him. He also periodically referred to the students, for example saying at one point, "You're in your second year now so you should know what I mean."

5. Analysis of the Lecture for Features not Dealt with in EAP Listening Texts

In this section we will highlight a range of features noted in the lecture or commented on by the lecturer and/or students which are important for effective lecture understanding, but which are not dealt with or are
inadequately dealt with in EAP listening course books. Before we look at these features in detail we provide an extract from one of the better EAP listening texts (Text 1) and an extract from our own lecture (Text 2). Each is accompanied by a brief commentary, in order to give a "feel" for some of the differences between a commercial listening passage and the text of an authentic lecture.

In Text 1, the commercial text, the lecturer begins by reminding the audience of the topic of the talk, which he introduced last time, babies. This is rather artificial, however, because there was in fact no previous lecture. The lecturer then explains how the talk is structured into two main parts. Next, he makes a light-hearted comment about not being able to speak with babies and explains how researchers have overcome this "problem". He then develops the first part of the talk, listing the skill areas of babies' development and giving clear examples. The overall impression created by this text (except for the reference to the non-existent previous lecture) is of a very clear exposition. At the end of this section the listening instructor is told to stop the tape and have students answer the questions, before going onto the next part of the lecture.

Text 1

OK, is everyone ready? As I told you last time, today's lecture is about babies. We'll start from birth—what new-born babies know and are capable of immediately after they are born—and then talk about how they develop during the first six months of their lives.

Until recently, it was difficult for researchers to know what babies were feeling or experiencing because, well, the researchers just didn't have any way to communicate with the babies. After all, it wasn't like the babies could just answer questions about what they knew or how they felt! Researchers pretty much had to guess what babies were experiencing. However, technology has made rapid progress in the last several years and scientists have utilised this new technology to understand far more about how babies develop.

A baby's development is divided into two basic skill areas for the purpose of observation and testing. These two areas are: motor skills, which involve physical development such as rolling over, sitting up, picking up objects, and drawing; and second, language-interaction skills, which involve comprehending others' language and interacting with others—how the baby socialises. OK, so today we will track a baby's development in these skill areas—motor development and language interaction. In addition to these two skill areas, we will also track the development of babies' vision.

Generally, for all babies, there are basic patterns of development for motor skills. They develop from gross movements—very large movements—to delicate movements—very small movements—and from trunk to outer limb and from head to toe. So, for example, a gross movement would be rapid moving the arm up and down; a delicate movement would be using the thumb and first finger to pinch something.

\[2\] This extract was previously cited by us in an earlier paper (Flowerdew & Miller 1996) in a different context. We have selected it again because we wanted to parallel the texts used in the EAP texts, most of which include the beginning of the lecture, which Text 2 is.
In Text 2, which is the extract from the authentic lecture, as in the commercial extract, the lecturer begins by reminding the students of his introduction of the topic in a previous lecture, although in this case students really do have something to refer back to, because this lecture did, in fact, take place. In the first 30 seconds of the lecture we also see how the lecturer pauses, to allow the audience to settle down as late-comers are still arriving. The lecturer next makes a digression, by informing the students about a handout, and asks them not to walk in front of the overhead projector screen. He then continues by establishing the main theme of the lecture. He takes the opportunity to relate what he is going to talk about to the local context and personalises his talk by referring to himself. He continues with the lecture by referring to a diagram on an overhead transparency. There are many hesitations in this extract, and many pauses and digressions:

Text 2

OK Let's get started//remember/er last time/a long time ago/er before the New Year//I stressed to you/ah/how dramatic the change had been (long pause)//how dramatic the change had been in our region//and ah how/only 20 years ago/ah ah/important er/international economists had visited the region (long pause 10 sec) //I tell you what guys/look ah any handout/that you want/will be on on the corner over there/people try not to walk across the movie screen alright//so one piece just one piece//OK thanks/OK so/that's set the stage ah/for us/How did the Asian How did the Asian drama of poverty turn into the Asian miracle of spectacular growth?/Ah the the most interesting question of economic development indeed social development/ah ah/of our time and here we are in HK right in the middle of it/in a in a privileged position to understand/ah and answer that question/its its the reason why I'm here in Hong Kong/ah These are some numbers I've just put them up/just, just, just to give you some feeling of//, a/a a structure of the regional/ah/I'm/I'm/you know ...

In comparing Text 1 and Text 2 the most striking difference is that the commercial text is very coherent, explicit and self-contained, whereas the authentic text is much more "messy". In the remainder of this section of the paper, we will examine in more detail some of the features which set these two texts apart — why one seems so coherent and the other rather disjointed — and which demonstrate why the EAP course books are not able to prepare students adequately for authentic lecture listening. These features will be examined under four headings: features of spoken language, the interpersonal strategies, discourse structuring and integration of listening with other media.

5.1. Features of Spoken Language

It is generally accepted that while different types of spoken language have much in common, they may also vary according to other contextual
parameters, such as the following: the degree to which they are planned or unplanned (Och 1979), whether they are informational or involved, and whether they are explicit or situationally dependent (Biber 1988). Lectures, as a spoken genre, share many distinctive features with other types of spoken language, such as conversation. However, as a planned and primarily informational type of language, lectures also share certain properties with various types of written text. Although, more recently, attempts have been made to make the language of academic listening comprehension texts more authentic and “speech-like”, it is nevertheless still more often than not the case that, because the listening texts which are used are scripted, the language found in them retains more features associated with written than with spoken text and makes them not typical of authentic lectures.

5.1.1. Micro-structuring. One important feature which differentiates authentic lecture discourse from written text or scripted lectures is the way they are structured at the micro-level. Lectures are structured according to tone groups, often in the form of incomplete clauses, and often signalled by filled or unfilled pauses or micro-level discourse markers such as “and”, “so”, “but”, “now”, and “okay” (Flowerdew 1994; Flowerdew & Tauroza 1995). Written text (and very often scripted lectures), on the other hand, is made up of complete clauses which are separated by punctuation and conjunctions such as “and”, “therefore”, and “however”. If we compare the extracts presented in Text 1 and Text 2 we see this difference quite clearly. In the extract from the authentic lecture, Text 2, the single slashes, indicating a short pause, and the double slashes, indicating a longer one, show how the text is broken up into clause fragments. Notice in this text the frequent filled pauses indicated by “ah” and “er”, and repetition of the micro-markers “okay” and “so”, which also help to divide up the text and indicate topic shift. In the scripted extract, Text 1, however, while there is an attempt to imitate an authentic style, with two uses of “okay”, one of “well” and one “so”, it doesn’t sound natural as a piece of lecture data, because the text is neatly divided up into complete clauses and sentences by punctuation, and the more “written” conjuncts “because”, “after all”, and “however”.

5.1.2. False Starts, Redundancies and Repetitions. Another important feature of authentic lecture discourse is the occurrence of many false starts, redundancies and repetitions, as the following extract from Text 2 shows:

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3 See Flowerdew (1994) for a comparison of the language of lectures and textbooks.
4 This point is made also by Mendelsohn (1994: 119). The situation is all the more remarkable given the fact that already in the late seventies and early eighties, listening comprehension specialists attributed problems in authentic listening comprehension to the absence of these features of spoken language in pedagogic materials (Voss 1984) and were arguing for more authentic, speech-like listening materials to replace the read-aloud written models in use at the time (Brown 1977; Geddes & White 1978; Porter & Roberts 1981).
These features are part of a normal style of lecturing for this lecturer. Such a style, which, to a greater or lesser extent, is typical of authentic lectures presented in an informal or "conversational" (Dudley-Evans & Johns 1981) style, can be attributed to the real time-processing constraints of presenting a spoken monologue. Speakers do not organise their thoughts and, at the same time, present what they want to say in complete grammatical sentences. One result of this phenomenon, from the comprehension point of view, is that not only does it give time for speakers to process what they want to say, but it also gives hearers more time to process what they need to understand. In this respect, asking learners to listen to a scripted lecture, such as that exemplified in Text 1, is actually asking them to perform a more demanding task than they would be confronted with in real life. What Text 2 shows is that learners need to become aware that lecturers do repeat isolated words and that false starts and redundancies do occur.

5.1.3. Body Language. Another feature of lecture discourse is that it is accompanied by a range of extra linguistic features created by body and facial movements, or kinesics. Whereas in Text 1 of our examples the students only listen to the lecture from an audio-tape recorder, in Text 2 the students were able to observe the lecturer and receive additional clues about the spoken text from non-linguistic features. Bodily or facial movements have been shown to be an integral part of the overall communicative message, correlating highly with the auditory channel and signalling phonological, semantic, discoursal and interactional meaning (Kellerman 1992). At the discoursal level, for example, shifts in position or posture of the speaker may signal change of topic, while increased body movement may be a way of indicating that speakers consider what they are saying to be important. At the interactional level, nodding of the head may indicate agreement of the listener, while a furrowed brow may show incomprehension. Kinesics are clearly important in the lecture context and yet they are absent from EAP listening texts, unless, of course such materials are accompanied by a video recording. Although it may be possible to decode a message at the linguistic level alone, as is the requirement with most EAP listening texts, such a process makes the listener’s task harder than it would normally be. As von Raffler-Eagel (1980, cited in Kellerman 1992: 250) states,
"Eliminating the visual modality creates an unnatural condition which strains the auditory receptors to capacity."

In our lecture, one important aspect of kinesics is the way the lecturer indicated by arm, face and body movement when he was referring to the overhead transparencies. Given that a lot of the language related to the transparencies would have been incomprehensible without this visual support, as mentioned earlier, such kinesic signals are clearly essential in indicating when listeners need to direct their attention to the visual dimension. Another important feature of the lecturer's body language is the way he moved his head when making the transition from one segment of the discourse to another. In another, as reported to us by his students, eye contact with the lecturer allowed him to know when students were not comprehending. This point demonstrates how kinesics can also affect the actual linguistic and discourse structure of a lecture, as indications of lack of understanding would lead the lecturer to reformulate and perhaps give more details or present the information more slowly.

5.2. Interpersonal Strategies

Another important difference between lecture extracts presented in ESL texts and authentic lectures concerns the interpersonal dimension. In a real lecture, course good lecturers develop rapport with their students (Rounds 1987). This rapport, which may be developed over the whole period of a lecture course or even longer, is instantiated in the language of an actual lecture. Recorded lecture extracts presented in ESL texts inevitably miss out on this interpersonal dimension. Here we will indicate just a few of the ways this feature of lecture discourse is manifested in actual data.

5.2.1. Empathising with Students and Trying to Make the Lecture Non-Threatening. In discussions with the researchers, the lecturer made the point that he was well aware that the students must have difficulties listening to a lecture in a second language, and that he tried to remind himself of this when delivering his lectures and make things as easy as possible for his second language audience. This attitude is put across to his students by reassuring them in various ways. In the following extract we can note how, through the use of rhetorical questions and the use of the personal pronoun "we", he creates an impression of a joint effort between lecturer and students in constructing the day's lecture:

/ but today I'd like to begin by/trying to/ah/in a very simple way/Ah think about the basic structure of growth what is growth/about?/What do we mean by/how does economic growth take place? Are there/are there some simple

7English (1985) showed how it is possible to train ESL learners to interpret kinesics cues, although a study to measure differences in the lecture comprehension of those who received training in kinesics and those who did not was inconclusive.
ideas that that we can develop that will be useful in understanding this problem?/(4 min 47 sec)

In this extract we can note also how the lecturer stresses how he is trying to make things simple in his use of the expressions “in a very simple way”, “basic structure” and “simple ideas”. An emphasis on making things simple is also evident in the following extracts:

/That is to say ah/how much output does each input unit of input produce?/as simple as that./(6 min 10 sec)

/I mean/ah ah we've we've divided we've divided the world into three possible cases/yeah?/it's it's not more sophisticated/eh than that/(11 min 22 sec)

/eh and eh it hasn't got difficult at all it won't get difficult/(11 min 45 sec)

5.2.2. Personalisation. Another interpersonal strategy used by the lecturer was to portray his character to the audience, making several references to himself, and what he and his students may have in common and how they may differ:

/You may you may have been brought up/like I was/in the old fashioned way and and you'd call input factors of production/very sort of nineteenth century Victorian way of talking/but let's let's let's not call them factors of production let's just call them inputs much/more more more modern scientific kind of style/(9 min 30 sec)

I don't know ah/what traditions you've been brought up in/but ah, you know the the curse/god's curse in the ah/Bible tradition I come from/was that we must work/you know when when Adam and Eve are thrown out of the garden/the curse is that they must work/(10 min 23 sec)

Allusions such as these serve to remind students that the lecturer has a personality and that there are things which they may or may not have in common. There is also a down-side to this sort of personalisation, especially in a cross-cultural context, in that culturally based features may not be familiar to the audience. But this is another area students need to be prepared for in the cross-cultural lecture context, an area not prepared for, again, in second language listening texts.

5.2.3. Checking. Another interpersonal strategy the lecturer uses is one whereby he keeps in touch with his audience with the use of agreement markers:

... well labour grew and capital/yeah?/(13 min 50 sec)

... due to/the more efficient more effective more technically advanced or whatever/use of capital and labour//okay?/okay/(14 min 40 sec)

This checking function, while creating rapport with the audience, also has a discourse structuring role in so far as it often indicates the termination of
a topic, before the lecturer moves on to another. Because texts presented in EAP texts are not presented to a live audience, this checking function is usually absent from such materials.

5.3. Discourse Structuring

In an earlier study, we showed how students were able to identify various discourse strategies used by their lecturer as effective in promoting comprehension (Flowerdew & Miller 1992). While it is true that certain discourse strategies are focused upon in ESL texts, short extracts are not the most appropriate way of drawing students' attention to them, given that the main role of such devices is to establish cohesion and coherence at the macro level. A number of discourse strategies used in our sample lecture, but which are not effectively reflected in EAP texts, are as follows:

5.3.1. Use of a Narrative Thread to Hold the Lecture Together. Throughout the lecture, the lecturer uses a common theme of the “Asian miracle” and the “Asian drama”. In all, he mentions the term “Asian miracle” 13 times and “Asian drama” eight times. The whole lecture is developed around these two terms and by constantly referring to this theme the lecturer effectively keeps the students attention focused on it. At the same time, individual mentions serve to mark off sections of the discourse, indicating when one section is complete or another about to be presented. The following are sample utterances where the lecturer refers to the extended metaphor of the Asian miracle:

/How did Asia how did the Asian drama/of poverty/turn into the Asian miracle of spectacular growth?/(1 min 14 sec)
/I want to suggest to you that/the Asian miracle story/is about a special sort of productivity growth/(6 min 31 sec)
/and the Asian miracle/that sustained development is is is a case of C/(19 min)
/I've called this slide the Asian miracle/(37 min 19 sec)

Summarising a number of studies (Bligh 1972; Brown & Bakhtar 1983; Bhada & Brightman 1989), Chan (1995) cites six common ways lecturers may structure a lecture: the classical method, the problem-centred method, the sequential method, the comparative method, the thesis method, and the cause-and-effect method. The narrative thread structure which provides the framework for the lecture used in the present study, comes under the heading of the thesis method. Here the lecturer states a thesis at the beginning (the Asian drama of poverty developed into the Asian miracle of economic growth) and then goes on to provide a series of justifications to demonstrate the thesis, each justification being signalled by a reiteration,
sometimes in the form of a rhetorical question of the central metaphor. In the lecture analysed here, this method seems particularly effective in holding the concentration of the students and marking off individual sections.

Research is beginning to show how schematic knowledge of the different methods used to structure lectures is vital for the students to understand. Olsen and Huckin (1990), for example, show how in an engineering lecture which they based an experiment on, the lecturer used a problem-centred method. As Olsen and Huckin demonstrate, because some of the subjects failed to see how the lecture was structured, summaries they were asked to make following listening showed that they had not grasped the main points of the lecture. Similarly, Tauroza and Allison (1994) discovered that the comprehension levels of students who were familiar with a problem–solution structure declined significantly when they were presented with a more complex, problem–solution–“caveat” structure.

The lecturer in our study was aware that he used a narrative to deliver his lectures; in fact, he said it was the way he preferred giving lectures as he enjoyed telling stories. Lynch (1994) states that one of the most important contributions a lecturer may make is to give the students the “ground rules” for their particular lecture series. ESL texts which present students with intensive listening to short lecture extracts and which are consequently not able to present students with the different macro-structures of lectures are failing to prepare students, therefore, for an important aspect of lecture listening.

5.3.2. Use of Macro-Markers. At different stages in the lecture, the lecturer signposts what he is going to present or confirms what he has already stated, by the use of what Chaudron and Richards (1986) call macro-markers. At the beginning of the lecture, for example, the lecturer says, “Okay, let’s get started” (0 min 0 sec), and at the end, he says, “now here/we’ll put up our last slide/and come to the conclusions” (37 min 9 sec). He also uses macro-markers during the lecture, for example:

although there are a number of other issues that are raised but there are three things that I want to emphasise to you today/ah first of all/(40 min 32 sec)

The lecturer also makes use of macro-markers which refer outside the lecture, to previous or future lectures, courses or training. This acts to keep the students involved and remind them of how the information in this lecture can be linked to other aspects of their courses or knowledge, as well as creating rapport, through the lecturer indicating familiarity with what students have done or will do in the future, outside the confines of the immediate lecture.

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*aThis is referred to as “problem-centred” by Chan (1995), cited earlier.*
//remember/er last time/a long time ago/er before the New Year//I stressed to you/ah/how dramatic the change had been // how dramatic the change has been in our region//(0 min 3 sec)

/and so what I want to do today is fairly general/But it's a background for what we will do over the next few weeks/(5 min)

/and if you're you know you're doing/micro-economics or you remember last year/the average product of labour right?/the amount of output produced by a unit if labour on average/(12 min 16 sec)

/you have to sort of/if you're gonna do grow growth accounting/which which really is done/we have a tutorial question about it/(13 min 50 sec)

The use of macro-markers as a discourse strategy and the importance of these devices for both first and second language listening comprehension has been well documented in a number of studies (e.g. Chaudron and Richards 1986; Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992). Perhaps under the influence of these studies, a number of EAP listening textbooks do focus on the use of macro-markers. However, because the lecture fragments presented are only short, their function of signalling across long sections of text (sometimes of different lectures, or even courses) is not exploited.

If we look at Text 1, the extract from Beglar and Murray (1993), we indeed see macro-markers incorporated into the text, but necessarily, given the shortness of the extract, they either operate at a fairly local level or if they are more global, the listener is not given the opportunity to retrieve the section of discourse which they signal. In addition, the presentation of markers in this extract suffers from another problem: the idealised way in which they are used. If we look at the first paragraph of Text 1, we notice that the whole paragraph operates as a series of markers indicating the overall framework of the lecture (a framework which the listener, given the shortness of the extract, is not given the opportunity to follow). In the third paragraph, we again have a marker, indicating that two basic skill areas will be discussed. Another marker (a more local one, this time) is then used to signal the definition of each of these two areas. This is followed up by a further marker which reiterates what today's lecture will be about. (Again, the listener is not given the opportunity to recover the referent of this marker in the overall lecture.) It is probably safe to say that such a heavy use of markers in such a short stretch of text is unlikely to occur very often in authentic lectures. Certainly, the extract from our lecture reproduced as Text 2 does not have nearly so many.

More globally, in the lecture used in the present paper there was a mixed use of macro-markers. The lecturer started off by using them very

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9 Ironically, while we argue here that the treatment of macro-markers is problematic in ESL texts because the extracts are so short, elsewhere it has been argued (Flowerdew & Tauroza 1995) that emphasis on macro-markers in ESL texts has been at the expense of micro-markers (items such as and, so, now, then, well), which have been neglected. A focus on micro-markers, which operate at a more local level, we suggest, would be a more appropriate feature for short text extracts.
coherently, but he later lapsed into a less clear-cut (but perhaps more authentic) use of them, as the following extract shows. In this extract the lecturer indicates he will mention three things, and introduces the first of these by the marker, "and one is" and the last by "and finally". However, he fails to use a marker to indicate the second item, making it difficult to work out when he is still referring to the first point and when he has moved on to the second:

/there are three things/ah/that're worth mentioning/one is of course that individual workers and managers and so on learn the skills that are required/ah in order to undertake a particular kind of enterprise/ah the there is/ah/that/eh/that they learn about the situation they're in about markets/about the markets for their own products/ah/about the markets that they're in in buying labour in buying raw materials and so on/ah and/finally they learn about the management and administration of the kind of enterprises ah/that are involved in it/(31 min 30 sec)

As we see here, therefore, the lecturer used a marker to announce a series of points, but did not follow through as might have been anticipated. This appears to be a common problem for this lecturer, as in another lecture it was noted that he wound up the lecture by signing that he was on to his last point and that it would only take a few minutes. In this instance he even told the class that they would finish early, but then went on to talk for another 15 minutes, finishing the lecture only a few minutes from the normal time. It was obvious to the observer that the students had "switched off" long before the end of the lecture.

There are at least two lessons to be learned here. First, students do pick up on the use of markers and therefore if used well, they can be beneficial. Second, this particular lecturer might do well to make his use of macro-markers more consistent. At the same time, however, students need to be prepared for "false signals", where a marker is used but then not followed up on. In ESL texts, understandably perhaps, idealised models are presented and students are thus not prepared for the false starts and changes of direction which are likely to occur in real lectures.

5.3.3. Use of Rhetorical Questions. Another discourse structuring device in our authentic lecture is the use of rhetorical questions. Rhetorical questions function as a means of introducing a new topic, as well as establishing rapport with the audience. The lecturer signalled the structure of the lecture several times by setting up important questions which he then went on to answer:

okay so that's set the stage ah/for us/how did the Asian/how did the Asian drama of poverty turn into the Asian miracle of spectacular growth?/(1 min 14 sec)

Well let's begin with a simple question what is economic growth? /(6 min 53 sec)
Although there are no rhetorical questions in our extract from the commercial EAP textbook, Text 1, rhetorical questions are dealt with in some of the EAP course books. Where we find a difference, however, in the treatment of rhetorical questions in the textbooks and their use in our authentic lecture is that, as noted with regard to other features of the EAP materials, they are presented in an idealised manner; the lecturer asks a straightforward question and then immediately gives the answer. In our authentic lecture, however, the use of rhetorical questions is sometimes much more complex. Sometimes the lecturer asks a rhetorical question, but then either does not answer it or answers it much later in the lecture. At other times he produces more than one question consecutively, but only answers one of them.

The use of rhetorical questions, as with other features of the EAP commercial materials appears to be more complex in the authentic lecture than it is in the EAP course books.

5.4. Integration with Other Media

The final area we will consider where there is a divergence between the EAP listening texts and our authentic lecture concerns the integration of the actual text of the lecture with other media. In an authentic lecture, use is likely to be made of visual aids, the message of which needs to be integrated with that of the acoustic signal. Another feature of the authentic lecture experience is that listeners do not usually come to a lecture “cold”. They will already have read something on the topic, often from the prescribed textbook, which they will integrate with what they hear in the lecture. After the lecture, for reinforcement, or if students have not fully comprehended the lecture, they are likely to return to the textbook. They may also have a follow-up discussion in a tutorial session.

5.4.1. Use of Visual Aids. Visual aids play an important part in our sample lecture and there was quite often a visual on display as the lecturer talked. Sometimes visuals were used in order to illustrate the concepts; at other times they were used to provide additional information. The following citations from the transcript illustrate the way transparencies were introduced:

/here's a simple version here [transparency is put up] let me let me hide this sophisticated version/(11 min 50 sec)

/but look we need perhaps a bit more sophisticated version after all we've got two inputs/perhaps we should take them into account/what about something like that/[new transparency put up] where we have the the growth in the labour force and we have the growth in the capital stock/(13 min 25 sec)
Olsen and Huckin (1990) mention the benefits students gain by the use of appropriate visual aids. According to these writers, the use of visuals orients the students to the current location in the discourse and aids them in understanding concepts or terms they may find difficult to understand if only delivered orally. The constant use of visuals in the lecture reported on in this paper is likely, therefore, to have aided students’ comprehension of the lecture. Indeed, a look at a more extensive lecture extract accompanying a visual shows how the visual is integral to the discourse; without the benefit of the visual support the linguistic message is incomprehensible:

but I I offer you three/ah alternatives,//I drew them for you/there’s there’s alternative A//where his Q over L Q over L is the amount of output per worker/Q is the total output/L is the total number of workers/so Q over L is the output per worker/and K over L/that’s the amount of equipment per worker/capital per worker so what happens?/as the capital per worker grows the output per worker grows/OKAY?//perhaps it’s linear like that [pointing to transparency] (16 min 50 sec)

Although visuals are designed to support spoken text, research has suggested that making notes on integrated spoken and visual information in a lecture may present a more complex challenge to comprehension than does note-taking based on a simple spoken delivery, especially for non-native speakers (King 1994; McKnight 1994). In the simultaneous task, students are required not only to make sense of the speech signal, but at the same time integrate the meaning of this spoken signal with a visual element. In a study conducted by McKnight (1994), second language students in Australia, when confronted with a simultaneous spoken and visual message, tended to concentrate on copying the visual; the challenge of simultaneously processing and integrating both spoken and visual messages was too great. It was because of this problem of simultaneous tasks, our lecturer told us, that he usually gave out copies of his transparencies before his lectures, so students would not have the dual burden of listening and copying at the same time. In EAP listening materials, listening passages are sometimes accompanied by a visual, often in the form of some sort of table or chart which students have to fill in. However, this is usually done after listening. The students in our study were lucky, in so far as their lecturer gave them the visual information before the lectures. Others are not so fortunate, however (e.g. those in McKnight's study) and therefore they need practice with the simultaneous tasks.

5.4.2. Integration with Pre- and Post-Lecture Reading and Tutorial Discussion. When we interviewed students about their difficulties in comprehending their lectures, they mentioned pre-reading and post-reading of the set text as an important strategy for overcoming these difficulties. Students also said they

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10 See also Flowerdew and Miller (1992) where we report on another group of students mentioning the same strategies.
relied on follow-up tutorials for elucidating the lecture. The literature on listening comprehension often stresses that the auditory signal is ephemeral (e.g. Flowerdew 1994; Rost 1990); listeners only get one chance to hear what is said. It is probably for this reason that most of the EAP texts spend a lot of time practising note-taking skills. If students are good note-takers, the thinking is, then they will not miss out on important parts of the message. While we do not wish to suggest that note-taking is not a valuable skill, the strategies mentioned by our students are alternative ways of dealing with this problem of the need for real-time processing of the auditory signal. In EAP textbooks this integration of listening with reading and follow-up tutorial discussion is not really developed. At most, learners may read a short text to establish some sort of schema for the listening that will follow, but they are not required to really integrate what they listen to with what they read and they are not given the chance to fill in any gaps in their listening with further reading. Sometimes listening passages are accompanied by follow up discussion questions, but these are aimed at reinforcing the language of the listening extract rather than clarifying areas of real knowledge.

6. Summary and Pedagogical Implications

In the lecture which formed the basis for the analysis of this paper we see that the lecturer used many strategies in delivering his lecture. Those strategies we have highlighted are:

features of spoken language: micro-structuring; false starts, redundancies and repetitions; body language.
interpersonal strategies: empathising with students and trying to make the lecture less threatening; personalisation; checking.
discourse structuring: use of a narrative thread to hold the lecture together; use of macro-markers; use of rhetorical questions.
integration with other media: use of visual aids; integration with pre- and post-reading and tutorial discussion.

The way in which these strategies are used by the lecturer are rarely found in EAP textbooks, and students who rely on such texts are therefore ill-prepared in knowing how to handle such features of a lecture. Some of the inadequacies of the textbooks are inherent to the textbook as a genre. Lengthy lectures are not conducive to treatment in a course book that is divided up into short units. The "lectures" learners are presented with in the EAP texts consequently are short. The lecture analysed in our study lasted 45 minutes and the lecturer used over 7000 words.\textsuperscript{11} In the five textbooks reviewed the "lectures" were from 2 to 12 minutes, with short talks containing around 300 words and the longer talks 1500 words.

\textsuperscript{11} Our lecture may well have been on the short side. The lectures in a corpus of post-graduate lectures analysed by King (1994) contained between 7700 and 17,700 words.
However, even these longer talks were broken down into three or four sections of a few hundred words in each section.

How can these problems with EAP listening texts, which may be inherent to textbooks be dealt with? In conclusion, we would make two recommendations for EAP listening instructors. Our first recommendation is that where short extracts are used for developing EAP listening skills, as is the case in the EAP course books, it is important that students are exposed to lecture data which is delivered spontaneously, and has not been scripted or dressed up to look like spoken text when in fact it is really written language. To overcome this problem we would suggest that, where EAP texts are accompanied by recorded tapes and transcripts, language instructors would do better to reduce the text to note form and then present the lecture extract themselves (or have a colleague do it), speaking from these notes. In this way the result is likely to be at least a little more authentic; the text will be divided up into tone units rather than complete clauses, with false starts, hesitations, and so on, and it will be supported by the physical presence of the “lecturer”.

Our second recommendation is that, in addition to the short extracts, students need to be exposed to longer texts. By using longer, authentic texts students will be exposed to some of the features of a lecture described in this paper. They will not be limited to practising discrete bottom-up listening skills, as is the case with the current EAP listening texts. Longer lectures will contain some of the interpersonal strategies, discourse structuring and integration with other media described in this paper. At the same time students will develop strategies to deal with the “messiness” of real lectures, where in the textbooks they are presented with idealised, “cleaned-up”, short lecture extracts. Ideally, these lectures should not be “one-offs”, but should be part of a miniature lecture course, as described in the literature on content-based language instruction (Brinton, Snow and Wesche 1989). In this way there will be an opportunity for students to deal with those interpersonal, discourse structuring and integration strategies which only occur across a series of lectures, and will thereby be better prepared for authentic academic listening.

(Revised version received May 1996)

Acknowledgements—We would like to acknowledge the helpful comments of Graham Lock and Steve Tauroza on an earlier draft of this paper.

REFERENCES


12 This is a procedure recommended by Rost (1994) for the Beglar and Murray (1993) book, for which he is series editor.
13 See also Murphy (1996) on this.
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