Developing an online listening test of B2 proficiency for in-year pre-sessional

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 20th November, 2020

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Overview

- *Previous B2 listening tests on in-year PSE*
- *What is (online) academic listening?*
- *Ongoing questions*

Longstanding Qs relating to our in-year B2 listening test:

What listening processes should students at B2 be able to do?

How does the test affect teaching and learning? (washback)

Is it testing relevant abilities for university listening?

Problems with online testing of listening

Test security

- Listening back to the recording
- Use of captions
- Sharing answers

Technology

- Sound quality
- Connection issues

Environment

- Quiet space

What is (online) academic listening?

Interconnected cognitive processes involved in listening:

cognitive processes	proficiency levels	types of tasks (teaching and testing)	
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Conceptual processes • Meaning construction • Discourse construction			

Based on Field (2019) and Brunfaut (2016)

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Conceptual processes • Meaning construction • Discourse construction	B2+	focus on building overall meaning: • oral/written summary	

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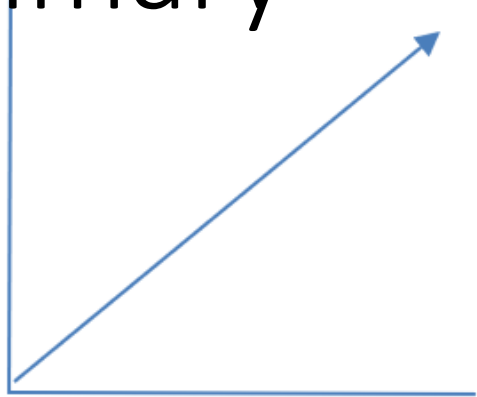*Based on Field (2019) and Brunfaut (2016)*

Conceptual processes:
an oral/written summary

This task creates demands that are *most representative* of what students need to do in (online) academic lectures.

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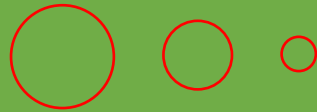
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authenticity

security

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"…the best way to measure academic listening proficiency is simply to ask students to make bullet pointed notes of what they hear and to check them on a second play, when they might also identify and underline major headings. Raters need to agree on the number of major and minor propositions in a text and match them against those that a candidate reports. **Clearly this introduces a note of subjectivity into the testing process, but positively, it avoids the need for a written presented question sheet and inevitable test wise strategies that ensue.**" (Field, 2019: 103)

Ongoing questions: developing a summary task

What input texts? (length, speaker, linguistic complexity...)

What online conditions? (captions, repeating listening...)

What performance = B2? (how many points, how organised, role of writing...)

What other opportunities to gather evidence about students' listening ability? (spoken interview, presentation Q&A)

References

- Brunfaut, Tineke. pp. 97-112 IN: Tsagari, Dina (ed. and introd.); Banerjee, Jayanti (ed. and introd.) Handbook of Second Language Assessment. Berlin, Germany: de Gruyter Mouton; 2016

- Field, J. (2019) *Rethinking the Second Language Listening Test*. Equinox.