

LIA International Conference 2010

Sanur Beach Hotel & Resort, Bali, Indonesia

April 28 – 30, 2010



Abstract for Parallel Session (Paper Presentation)

Teaching Listening for Acquisition: Can Non-Native Teachers of English Provide Comprehensible Language Input in an EFL Classroom?

By: Willy A. Renandya

EFL teachers normally rely heavily on the use of recorded materials by native speakers of English, believing that learners learn best if they are exposed early on to native speaker models of speech. Recent evidence however suggests that native speaker speech may not be ideal for EFL learners of English, in particular for those who are still in the lower proficiency levels. Many lower proficiency learners of English report that they have difficulty understanding listening materials used in the classroom. Their difficulties range from being unable to cope with the fast rate of the speech, to recognize words that they already know, and to comprehend the contents of spoken text. The question is whether non-native EFL teachers can serve as a reliable provider of comprehensible input and to what extent this helps the students improve their listening ability.

In this presentation, I will report on a study that looks at how an extensive listening practice conducted through teacher read-alouds helped lower proficiency EFL learners' in China develop their listening comprehension. Sixty middle school (Grade 7) students from China were randomly assigned to two conditions of 30 students each. Both groups followed their normal English language curriculum, but received a one-hour supplementary listening instruction for six weeks, for a total of 42 hours. During the supplementary lessons, the experimental group was given a lot of opportunity to listen and comprehend easy listening materials read aloud by their classroom teachers. The control group was taught a set of listening strategies (e.g., predicting, inferencing) that they then used to comprehend pre-recorded listening materials. At the end of the six-week period, the students in both groups were given a battery of tests designed to measure not only their listening comprehension skills but also their production skills (e.g., pronunciation and retelling skills). The results indicated that the students in the experimental group who listened to a lot more comprehensible listening materials through teacher read-alouds outperformed the control group in most of the measures.