

On the Teaching Method Based on Listening Skill Training for College Japanese Majors

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Abstract: The learning of any foreign language requires mastering four kinds of skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills are independent but interact with each other. Among them, “reading” and “listening” belong to the skills of receiving language information, and “speaking” and “writing” belong to the skills of producing language information. Since Japanese also uses Chinese characters, it is more difficult for Japanese learners whose native language is Chinese to master listening and speaking skills than reading and writing skills. This paper analyzes the process of language comprehension and the mode of listening training, and explores and analyzes the teaching methods of college Japanese majors based on listening skills training.

Keywords: second foreign language, comprehension, listening and speaking skills, instruction model

Introduction

Human languages can be divided into “mother tongue”, “first language” and “second language” in the order of acquisition. Mother tongue is the language that is acquired naturally in the family after the child is born, and the first language is the language that is used first among the acquired plural languages. A consciously learned language in addition to a first language is widely referred to as a “second foreign language.” Although “second language” is often used in the same sense as “second foreign language”, there is still a difference between the two. Use the language you have learned in daily life and other environments, which can be regarded as the “second language”. For example, international students studying in Japan use Japanese in daily life, learning and communication. In the case that the language learned in a country or region is not being used and is only a subject, it is a “second foreign language”. For example, Japanese is learned in universities, high schools and other educational institutions in China. It can be seen that the definition of a language learned depends on whether there is an environment in which the language is spoken.

1. The process of language understanding

The learning and mastering of “second foreign language” consists of four skills --listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four kinds of skills can be divided into two categories according to morphological characteristics, vocal language skills (listening and speaking) and verbal language skills (reading and writing). According to the functional classification, they can be divided into language receiving skills (listening, reading) and language output skills (speaking, writing). From acquisition to application, the brain “processes” language in a variety of ways: acquiring language information through sight and hearing (input); processing acquired information (understanding and storing); and then expressing their feelings and thoughts as language (output). The process of acquiring language information,

understanding language content and using language is inseparable from memory. For example, from “listening” to “understanding” to “remembering”, and finally to “speaking” accurately, this process is the transformation of language information from short-term memory to long-term memory, and then the brain retrieves, integrates and outputs the information stored in long-term memory (Figure 1).

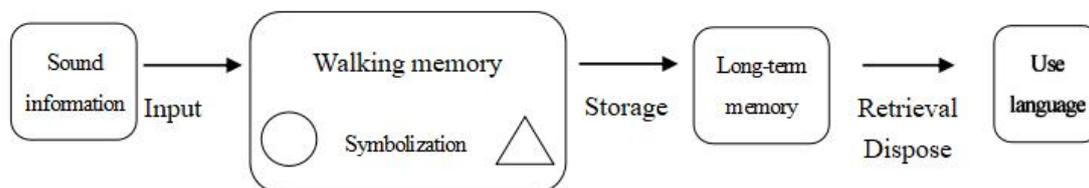


Figure 1 Process of language memory and comprehension^[1]

Walking memory (working memory), shown above, is a short-term working memory that is an important link between acquiring information and storing it. In order to process a certain memory process, “working memory” needs to simultaneously maintain short-term memory (information just input) and process information (long-term memory information). It is a high-level cognitive operation of information analysis and integration (understanding, speculating, etc.) ^[2]. For example, when reading an article, the working memory maintains the memory of new vocabulary and grammar, while retrieving the background knowledge stored in the long-term memory to understand the sentence. And “working memory” has a “capacity” limit. If you spend too much working memory to understand new vocabulary and grammar in an article, you will not have enough working memory to understand the content of the article. Similarly, when doing listening exercises, students cannot quickly understand the language information they hear, because they cannot quickly and accurately retrieve the information stored in long-term memory, which occupies a lot of “working memory” capacity; When students cannot easily say what they want to say in a conversation, too much of their working memory is used to maintain the Japanese expressions they want to use. It can be seen that how to effectively symbolize, transmit and store captured sound information in long-term memory, and how to quickly retrieve useful information for rapid processing is an important basis for language output.

2. Comprehensive skill practice method based on dictation practice

There are four reasons why you can’t understand Japanese: a. lack of grammar knowledge; b. not used to Japanese pronunciation; c. not used to the speed of Japanese. d. Not used to Japanese sentence order. Although relying on “more listening” can improve the ability to understand, but it is not the most effective way. The following dictation based training methods can not only improve listening skills, “speaking, reading, writing” several skills training have a better effect.

2.1 Dictation

As mentioned above, although sound and text are both language information, different from reading, "sound" can be heard but not seen, and the information such as words and sentences heard will disappear immediately. Therefore, the process of language memory and understanding through sound can only be completely carried out in the “working memory”. In traditional listening guidance methods, students are often asked to read the original listening materials while listening to sound materials. This method with the help of text information can indeed provide help for understanding the content of listening materials. However, it is precisely because of the aid of text information that the ability of “understanding” can not be effectively improved. The purpose of understanding the whole sentence or the whole text can only be achieved by quickly understanding each heard language message without any auxiliary information. Dictation is the best way to train the process from slow to fast. Dictation is different from simply

understanding the content of listening materials. It is not only necessary to understand the listening content through the above three listening modes, but also to do more detailed and solid sound and language memory training. When doing the listening questions, students may make the right choice by mastering the vocabulary or using the method of speculation, and they can also roughly understand the content of the listening material, but not all the information heard may be accurately captured or understood.

The effective method is to write down what you need to hear word for word without relying on any auxiliary information. In the process of dictation, even if you do not understand the meaning of the part, you can accurately write the smallest language unit (kana) by imitating the pronunciation, and then check against the original text to find out which part is not understood but accurately write the pronunciation, and which part even the smallest phonetic unit is not accurately written, and then listen to this part again, confirm and imitate the pronunciation. Regarding the importance of listening notes, Takizawa also pointed out: "By taking notes, students themselves will pursue to 'listen to the main points'. That means taking notes where it's important. "Students will change as they continue to do this kind of training." Indeed, as Takizawa pointed out, the process of dictation is a process of carefully and precisely symbolizing and storing sound language information. Continuous repetition of this process can effectively store Japanese phonological features, pronunciation rules and laws in long-term memory. When the same sound information is heard again, the brain can quickly retrieve the information stored in long-term memory and match the input information with the retrieved information quickly and accurately, and then apply it to the understanding of the listening material. Training can change this process from slow to fast, reducing the burden on working memory and making it more useful for accurate processing of other information. At the same time, in order to accurately hear the original text, students can correct their pronunciation by comparing with the correct pronunciation. In this way, while listening skills are trained, speaking skills can also be trained and improved. The method of dictation is suitable for students at all levels.

2.2 Dicto-gloss

Dicto-gloss is a listening skill-based method of learning English original sentences proposed by Wajnryb. The specific training process can be summarized as follows:

- a. Read the passage with grammar at a normal speed (two or three times). (including learned and unlearned content)
- b. During the reading, students will make notes of the words and sentences they understand.
- c. In two people or in a study group, reconstruct the original passage according to the notes and memories of the different parts that each person heard.
- d. It is not necessary to be exactly consistent with the original text, but to pay attention to the correctness of grammar and the logic of content.
- e. Analyze and compare the recovered sentences. (If necessary, the teacher will explain relevant grammar items)

Although this method is originally applied to English learning, there is no process of students thinking and output language in dictation training, but as a supplement and development of dictation training, gloss can not only be applied to listening skills training. In the training process with dictation as the core activity, not only the listening ability and the ability to grasp the key points and write down the key words are exercised, but also the grammatical ability needed to reconstruct the original text based on the written notes. In addition, by learning in groups of two or more people, students can find out what grammar items they have not mastered in the communication and discussion with others, realize and correct their mistakes, and effectively improve the learning effect. Because Dicto-gloss needs to be restored after dictation, it is better suited for students at the beginning and later stages of their studies and higher levels.

2.3 Dicto-comp

Dicto-comp is also initially applied to English teaching. The form is that teachers first read the passage for several times (usually twice), so that students can concentrate on listening carefully. After reading the passage, students can try their best to recover the content similar to the original article by memory. It should be noted that no notes should be taken while the students are listening. Writing down the memorized content accurately is the practice of dictation skills, on the other hand, to write out the meaning of the article is the practice of writing skills. This type of exercise is more difficult than Dicto-gloss, requires students to master more knowledge, and needs a certain basis of dictation and Dicto-gloss practice. Both Dicto-gloss and Dicto-comp train students' listening skills and comprehension of sentences, but there are some differences between them.

Table 1 Differences between a Dicto-gloss and a Dicto-comp

	Dicto-gloss	Dicto-comp
notes	ok	no
project	grammar-based	writing-based
form	In groups of two or more	Complete independently

As Dicto-comp focuses on writing compositions after listening while training listening, it is relatively difficult, so it is suitable for intermediate and above level students in teaching.

3. Conclusion

Although several comprehensive skills teaching methods based on listening training are more effective in improving students' comprehensive language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, language ability also includes sociolinguistic ability, that is, choosing appropriate expressions according to different objects of dialogue, or choosing appropriate languages according to social habits for communication. For example, the use of honorifics in Japanese falls under the category of sociolinguistic competence. Teachers should not only guide students to improve simple language skills, but also design more natural and close to life communication situations in the teaching process to cultivate students' social language ability.

How to apply the teaching method based on the training of listening skills to the teaching of other skills and how to effectively cultivate students' sociolinguistic ability will be the subject that teachers need to explore more deeply.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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