Main Peculiarities of Good Listening and Reading Tasks: Focusing on Balancing Authenticity, Validity and Reliability

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Abstract: The following article denotes one of the significant aspects of the L2 acquisition process, highlighting the importance of selecting and designing appropriate reading and listening materials according to their validity, reliability, and authenticity.

Key words: importance of activities, selecting materials according to the age , test's face validity, significant techniques, diagnostic tool, critical thinking skills, efficient scoring

Introduction: Choosing a textbook, as well as regularly researching and selecting materials, is a crucial component of organizing an academic program. Some materials are included with the purchase. The teacher creates additional activities and exercises, handouts, charts, review sheets, and other resources. Personalizing a curriculum in this way is strongly advised because it allows material to be particularly suited to the intended audience and works as a motivator for both teachers and students. It is strongly encouraged to personalize a curriculum in this manner in order to exactly examine the content. Several elements must be considered when constructing a reading activity to assess learners' reading comprehension. First of all, a good reading task should be as relevant and meaningful as possible, including authenticity, content validity, and reliability. To be more specific, in terms of authenticity, reading tests should be authentic to fit their design and purpose. For example, if the

topic includes information about how to cook spaghetti, the students should be given a similar context as it is done in real life. Furthermore, the text should be appropriate for the level of students and long enough to contain enough specified details. It is also important to choose the context according to the age of the test takers. For example, it is difficult to comprehend texts about politics or psychology for those who are in their early teens. Because their critical thinking skills will not have been developed enough to comprehend such texts. It is important that selected text should require validity, authenticity and it also includes reading techniques, such as top-down and, bottom-up.

In addition to this, Bachman (1990) stated some characteristics of reading task such as text, content, task feature and called them 'test methods facets'. Moreover, the test task characteristics must be considered carefully for selecting or designing a test because these tasks are the optimal source to assess test takers' performance. while administering reading tests, teachers should include the age of the students into consideration. To develop a valid and successful reading test, test takers need to check carefully whether the task is provided with clear instructions, no ambiguous questions, sufficient time to do all the relevant tasks, and valid and efficient scoring.

According to Brown (2019) The value of authentic language should be obvious by now. One point of contention in reading instruction is the use of "simplified texts," in which an otherwise legitimate text is modified to maintain language within the skill level of a group of pupils. To make an informed decision on this matter, you must first distinguish between (a) simple texts and (b) simplified texts, as well as grasp the sources of complexity in reading material.

Authentic simple reading materials can be created or found in the real world. Texts that are grammatically and lexically basic are accessible for everything from advertisements to labels to reports to essays. It's possible that simplifying an existing potential reading list isn't essential. However, if simplification is required, it is critical to retain the original material's natural redundancy, humor, wit, and other compelling aspects.

As for listening, the first test type we can use while administering a listening test is partial dictation. This type of assessment is simpler than traditional dictation because parts of what the candidates hear are already written down. This type of assessment requires you to pay close attention to fill in only the gaps in a passage. It has some advantages and disadvantages, just like any other task. According to A. Hughes(2003), this type of task can be used as a diagnostic tool to assess students' ability to deal with specific challenges (such as weak forms of English). Furthermore, writing such dictations can compensate for memory constraints and improve the test's face validity. In terms of disadvantages, it is difficult to score as in these types of tasks, the correct spelling is not required, which makes the scoring process less straightforward.

The second test type is **short answer questions**. this type of listening test is considered rather difficult as it requires writing no more than three words or a number. If we discuss its advantages there is always a hint to find the answers. the question words such as who, what where, when, etc. give the test taker an idea about what is the right answer. for example, if the question starts with Why? so the test taker should only pay attention to finding the reason for something. furthermore, the questions are short and straightforward. However, if in the listening track there is a decision between several options, the answers will be distracting. Another advantage of utilizing such a question type is that it is easy to administer, yet scoring cannot be valid if two of the answers are correct and one of them incorrect.

Another listening activity is **Gap-filling** that is used to test a wide range of skills, like vocabulary and grammar. It is also a great way to test how well someone can listen for certain words. This kind of listening task is simple to grade, and it is also not too difficult to create. However, depending on the circumstances, there may be more than one answer. I discovered various drawbacks to the practice of gap filling. If the answer is more than one word, it might be difficult for learners to write what is required because of missing terms that make it difficult to understand the meaning of the sentence for them.

Note-taking is also for students who want to improve their language abilities in order to further their education. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of taking notes when it comes to evaluating one's performance. Students listen to a lecture and try to write down what they think is essential from the lecture. The process of grading a student's notes is very subjective. However, the authenticity of note-taking may make it a beneficial learning experience even if providing a mark is challenging from the students' notes. Disadvantages of note-taking: taking organized notes takes longer than simply writing down ideas as they occur to you. There is a concern that you may overlook key information because of your attention to form rather than substance, making it difficult to keep up with a speaker.

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