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The effects of an expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension in intermediate college French

Tarr, Arthur-Geezai, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1987
THE EFFECTS OF AN EXPECTANCY MESSAGE
ON RECALL MEASURES OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION
IN INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE FRENCH

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Arthur-Geezai Tarr, B.S., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University

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Dedicated

To all Liberian Students

who are aware of their
potential, and who are seeking
to achieve it.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Keller (1960) states that "a look at research in comparable fields (e.g., reading, speaking) makes listening research look embryonic" (p. 29). Actually, interest in listening skills has indeed come a long way since the 1960s. During the mid-1970s, communicative competence has epitomized the practical, theoretical, and research preoccupations in all of the second language learning skills, namely, listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Recent emphasis on communicative competence, however, has sparked a new concern for the development of listening skills. Communicative competence focuses on the concept of the individual's ability to manage symbols in all their modes and contexts and therefore includes skills in speaking and listening as well as in reading and writing (Work, 1978).

For the intermediate-level learner, or the learner with only a limited amount of time at his/her disposal, listening comprehension is probably the most useful of the four skills in second-language learning (Rivers, 1968; Carroll, 1972; and Nord, 1980). The primacy of listening comprehension can be argued on theoretical and methodological grounds, rather than by speculations. Postovsky (1970, 1974) demonstrated
a two-fold advantage of delaying oral practice at the beginning of foreign language learning: foreign language listening comprehension is far better; also, and more interestingly, the other three skills benefit.

If foreign language students are to attain communicative competence, procedures must be found to improve their listening comprehension. One way to do so may be to engage students in listening activities that involve listening to taped radio recordings, composed of conversations, discussions, or narratives. For example, will foreknowledge (an extensive introduction) of speakers help students to recall effectively information from radio recordings? This study investigates the consequences of introducing a speaker prior to listening to a taped recording. Munley (1983) has advocated using cassettes of French radio broadcasts with intermediate students.

Several articles have appeared in the past 15 years on the use of radio broadcasts and recordings in teaching French and culture (Grigsby, 1970; Savignon, 1972; Seigneuret, 1972; Weiss, 1978; and Melpignano, 1980). All of these articles suggest practical ways of using radio in the language teaching-learning process. Students' comprehension of the spoken foreign language would be more accurate and complete if, for example, they could understand various speakers rather than just hear the instructional language of their instructors or the tapes that accompany most current textbooks.
If subjects receive an expectancy message about native French speech and French-speaking-American speech, before listening to a taped recording by both speakers in French, how well would the subjects recall information concerning the nature of the recording? In sum, if foreign language listeners receive or do not receive an expectancy message (a written description or introduction of the speaker), would that make a difference in their ability to understand a spoken text? If all students receive general linguistic and cultural information about a taped recording, how well would they recall information from the recording?

Rivers (1975) states that "we hear what we expect to hear" (p. 122). There is a grain of truth in this quotation, but it is a bit exaggerated. What we expect is often a function of context (a situation, time of day, interaction, persons, etc.). If this is true, what differences do students expect to hear from different speakers (Native French Speaker versus French-Speaking-American) of the target language? No human language is fixed, uniform, or unvarying: All languages show internal variation. Actual usages vary from group to group and speaker to speaker in terms of the dialectal variation (e.g., wide range of stresses, pauses, intonations, etc.) (Akmajian et al., 1984, p. 286).

Foreign language students need to be prepared carefully for listening experience with taped materials (Edgerton, 1969). The
preparation, according to him, could take the form of previewing new words and structures, describing the setting of the tape, listing characters, and making general statements about the speaker's language. In 1970, Jarvis advised instructors that in both listening and reading practice "students must be made explicitly aware of what is expected of them and what strategies should be employed" (p. 103).

Because language varies from speaker to speaker, the present study hopes to contribute to a better understanding of second-language listening comprehension by assessing the effectiveness of an expectancy message versus no expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension in intermediate college French. In conducting this study, the researcher hopes to provide the foreign language profession with information about the value of the use of taped radio recordings vis-à-vis an expectancy message based on research. More generally, to develop the ability to listen carefully to a spoken second language text in order to recall information.

Oller (1972) showed that if second-language students could anticipate a sequence of linguistic and cultural elements from a listening situation, they would more readily understand it.

Listening comprehension is a complex and dynamic interaction between the speaker, the listener, and the message. Because of this complexity, researchers should not focus entirely on the syntactic and semantic levels of listening, but the listener's beliefs,
perceptions, and expectations. Do French 104 students comprehend native French speakers versus French-speaking Americans (near-native speakers) differently? Would students' listening comprehension abilities improve if the context for interpreting a taped recording were manipulated? By varying instructions, would this treatment make a difference in French 104 students' ability to recall information from a taped radio recording?

The availability of an expectancy message—description or introduction of the speaker prior to the listening exercise—is a virtually untapped area for listening comprehension research. Using two different introductions for the same speaker, one describing the speaker as a sophomore English major, and the other describing the speaker as Dr. Robert E. Rayburn, King (1966, p. 24) reported significant differences in listener judgments of the speaker. Similarly, Kelman and Hovland (1953) found that subjects who heard a speaker with neutral prestige recalled significantly more factual material than those who heard speakers with negative or positive prestige.

Because little research has been conducted in this area of foreign language comprehension, the present study should be viewed as an attempt to gather data in this field, rather than as an attempt to confirm a specified theory of second-language listening comprehension. For this reason, the researcher proposes to investigate the effects of an expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension in intermediate college French.
According to Felker (1974), "every individual carries with him a ... set of expectancies which operate to determine how he is going to act. If he expects good experiences, he acts in ways which bring them about. If he expects bad experiences, he acts in ways which make these expectations come true and then says ... "see, I was right" (p. 11).

Instead of simply giving a tape to students with instructions to "listen and see what you get out of this tape," (Munley, 1983, p. 451), they should be taught how to recall information from the tape. The relationship between a speaker and a listener is very important, because, in general, the listener possesses the quality to focus or not to focus his/her attention on the speaker. The perception of the listener may be related to various factors. A large number of characteristics may be involved in a process of this kind. For example, the physical attractiveness of the speaker, the clothes, accent, rate of speech, loudness of voices, etc. may determine the effectiveness of the speaker (Triandis, 1971, p. 170).

When students are given expectations for achievement and comprehension, such as instructing them to listen for key words, word and idea repetitions and associations, or the manner of delivery noted on the taped recording (Munley, 1983, p. 452), would the availability of a written description or introduction of the speaker prior to listening to a taped recording make a difference in their comprehension? What role does an introduction of the speaker play in the foreign language comprehension process? How will subjects recall information
from a taped recording by a native French speaker, as opposed to
the identical taped recording produced by a French-speaking-
American if they received various written introductions of the
speakers before hearing the tape?

Nature of the Problem

Psycholinguistic investigations into speech perception and
comprehension have revealed listening comprehension to be a complex
process consisting of active procedures and strategies that enable
the listener to understand. Several studies have shown that an
individual's expectations, perceptions, and beliefs influence his/
her observation and comprehension of situations and events
(Anderson & Rosenthal, 1968; Anderson, 1981; and Brophy et al.,
1981). To date, however, there has been little research conducted
on the effects of an expectancy message on listening comprehension.

In the researcher's view, the way a foreign language student
feels about listening to different speakers of the target language
is crucial in determining whether or not he/she can be a good
listener. By exposing students to many different speech styles and
accents, they would not only comprehend recorded speech, but also
will be practicing real language use. For example, using different
speakers, students could practice listening intently to remember a
series of directions, determining main topics and details, and recall­
ing information in a meaningful way. To be considered good listeners,
French 104 students--students who are at the last stage of their foreign language requirement in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University--should be able to comprehend taped recordings of Native French Speakers or French-Speaking-Americans despite their speech variations.

**Problem Statement**

It is the purpose of this study:

1. To determine, through the use of a taped recording and simulated materials, the difference, if any, in the listening ability of French 104 students to understand native French speech vs. French-speaking-American (near-native speaker) speech.

2. To identify students' attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about the two kinds of speakers, a pre-experimental questionnaire (Listening Expectations Questionnaire)--hereafter called "LEQ"--will be used to provide descriptive information about students' expectations vis-à-vis the speakers' language.

3. To provide data about how students are probably going to respond to taped recordings, and whether or not an expectancy message about the native language of a speaker can increase students' proficiency in an experimental condition.
Specifically, the study endeavors to answer the following questions:

1) What are the effects of an expectancy message about the native language of the speaker on recall measures of listening comprehension?

2) Do the effects of an expectancy message vary with the taped recording of native French speakers vs. French-speaking-Americans?

3) Is there a significant interaction between types of recording and availability of an expectancy message?

Operational Definitions

The terms used in this study are defined as follows:

An expectancy message - written and recorded instructions informing subjects that they are about to listen to an authentic radio-conversation by two native French speakers, or a taped recording by two French-speaking-Americans who are French Teaching Associates at The Ohio State University. All instructions were recorded on the experimental tapes by both a native French speaker or a French-speaking-American. The purpose of an expectancy message is to determine whether or not students' performance will improve if they have foreknowledge of the speaker prior to listening to taped recording. In addition, subjects were told that while taking notes on the recording, they should also jot down key words, and/or words and ideas that are repeated on the taped recording.
Native French speakers - This term designates native speakers of French who recorded the materials of this study. They teach intermediate French at The Ohio State University.

French-speaking-Americans - is defined as American Master's or Doctoral students who are French Graduate Teaching Associates in the Romance Languages Department of The Ohio State University, and who speak French fluently as determined by recordings of the tape script. The script was recorded several times, and the best was then selected for the experiment.

Before selecting the best version, the different recordings were replayed twice in the recording studio with all recorders of the tapes present. The tape that was considered to be distinctly articulate and audible was selected for the experiment.

Taped radio recording - A short radio talk (2 minutes, 10 secs.) by the "Radio France Internationale" Station, Paris, recorded on cassette, which has been modified for the purpose of the study. On the tape, two persons conversed on a given subject. For example, verb tenses, syntactical and structural changes were made in the original text so that it could reflect the 104 French curriculum. At The Ohio State University, the same materials, syllabus, and examinations are used in all Intermediate French classes.

Listener Expectations Questionnaire ("LEQ") - A 10-item Likert-Scale attitudinal questionnaire designed by the researcher
to identify the attitudes and beliefs of students with regard to
listening to native French speakers versus French-speaking-
Americans.

**Listening Comprehension** - This term is employed to designate
the competence with which auditorially presented French speech was
recalled from a tape by subjects in this study. As the title indi-
cates, only the recall dimension of listening comprehension is
being investigated. The subjects' ability to recall and produce
(in English) idea units from a taped radio recording was used as a
measure of listening comprehension recall. For the purpose of this
study, idea units are valid semantic propositions that are correctly
recalled from a taped recording. An increase in the number of
propositions produced was assumed to show a corresponding increase
in comprehension.

**Significance of the Study**

Because there has been little research in the area of second-
language listening comprehension, the experiment that follows must
be viewed as a step to explore the comprehensibility of a spoken
second language text. At present, a theory of listening comprehen-
sion does not exist, much less a theory of second-language listening compre-
hension. Exploring the process of second-language listening in light
of the variables under investigation might, however, help clarity
just what a theory of second-language listening comprehension should
include. People or students listen for a purpose and with certain expectations. Students need to practice listening so that they can tune their "language ears" to the rhythms, intonations, and sounds of the language by different speakers (Chastain, 1976, p. 284).

This study has potential value from two broad perspectives. First, the results of this study may help to define the possible link between listening performance and a written introduction of the speaker. On a different dimension, the data from such research can have implications for the planning of listening activities and the instructional methodology knowledge.

It is worth noting, however, that these lines of research are exploratory. In the researcher's view, students continuously form expectations of their instructors' speech through daily interactions. We believe that these expectations influence students' performance in the foreign language classroom.

Finally, based on the findings of this study, future research should explore the extent to which many aspects of vocalic communication--rate of speech, volume, characteristic and relative pitch, and vocal quality--affect listening comprehension. The results of the study should provide empirical data that will have implications for a better understanding of the process of second-language listening comprehension, as well as provide direction for further research into the role of expectations in language comprehension in general.
Theoretical Bases

The expectancy theory of learning provides the major theoretical underpinnings for this study. The theory advanced by Tolman (1932) and Woodworth (1947) states that cognitive learning involves acquired expectancies, and is defined by Tolman in terms of the previous experiences of the individual.

Defining expectancy further, Korman (1974) writes: "This simply meant that the more often an organism had engaged in a series of specific experiences, the more he built up a series of cognitive representations of what the world relating to those experiences was like" (p. 94).

Will the difference in the extrapolation of information from the recorded text relate to their prior experiences with regard to both kinds of speakers? The review of the literature (Chapter II) reveals that describing or introducing the speaker as native French or as a French-speaking-American will influence the way students recall information from a taped recording.

Until now, research on expectancy effects has shown that teachers form differential expectations for student performance and success. The researcher's main concern in this study is students' expectations before listening to native speakers versus near-native speakers. Furthermore, these expectations are often based on personal impressions such as attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge
about the speaker. The degree to which these personal impressions affect listening comprehension in the foreign language classroom remains unknown. Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) study on self-fulfilling prophecies demonstrated that students who were identified to teachers as having academic potential later made significant academic gains. These two researchers gained considerable attention with their attempt to test the self-fulfilling prophecy hypothesis in the classroom. The underlying basis for this study was to examine closely the efficacy of the above-mentioned phenomenon in a foreign language comprehension situation. In short, this study was designed to investigate the influence of a written introduction of speakers prior to listening to a taped recording. Based on the above theoretical arguments and related research, it was hypothesized that there will be a difference in the availability of an expectancy message among treatment conditions.

Ur (1984) asserts that "learners who have some experience in listening to and understanding a number of different accents are more likely to cope successfully with future ones than those who have only heard one..." (p. 20). He continues: "Many foreign-language learners who are used to the accent of their own teacher are surprised and dismayed when they find they have difficulty understanding someone else ..." (p. 20).
Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in order to conduct the present study:

1) that subjects who participated in the study have normal hearing. This assumption was based on self-report by subjects.

2) that a subject's ability to write a summary containing semantic propositions presented in a taped radio recording is a measure (not the only measure) of his ability to understand radio broadcasts.

3) that there is a relationship between a subject's ability to understand a taped radio recording and his/her ability to understand real people in a communicative setting.

4) that, in general, all subjects are in the classroom track section of French 104.

Because research in second-language listening is still at the rudimentary stage, this study can add only a small amount of knowledge to a particular aspect of the second-language listening process. Before more comprehensive theories can be formulated, more research on the various components of the listening process must be conducted. It is through replicating, synthesizing and building on past research that the profession would help to construct more complete models of second-language listening.
Value of the Study

Every piece of research hopes to fill some gap, theoretical or empirical, in our understanding of the phenomenon with which it deals. In doing so, it provides a justification for the undertaking. It is hoped that this study will reveal: (1) Whether or not an expectancy message affects the listening comprehension of French 104 students; (2) Whether or not different types of speakers will have similar effect on comprehension; and (3) Whether foreign language students have beliefs and perceptions about listening to the spoken language of native French versus French-speaking-Americans.

Understanding the language as it is spoken by different speakers of different backgrounds is essential to attain communicative competence in listening. If the results of the experiment are practically, and theoretically important, then the implication for the preparation of listening materials, teaching and testing listening comprehension will be considerable. They will, moreover, provide direction for further research in the area of second-language listening comprehension. This study can only be generalized to other situations using similar materials. Considerations such as spoken text length and difficulty level, along with the amount of information contained in the recording remain to be studied.

Finally, the present research represents an attempt to test some of the variables involved in the area of second-language
listening comprehension. It is hoped that this study will stimulate the interest of other researchers in the field.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Recently, there has been growing sentiment that foreign language teaching should not wait for its theoretical basis to be handed down from other fields, but that a more complete understanding of second-language learning would have to come from within the profession itself (Jarvis, 1983). This assertion by Jarvis was one of the reasons the researcher decided to undertake this study, on the one hand, and primarily, to examine the comprehensibility of French taped recordings under conditions of varying expectancy message, on the other. The existence and importance of expectancy effects are generally supported in the literature. There is, however, a marked absence of studies that compare the relative importance of an expectancy message and taped radio recording on listening comprehension.

Because the present study is an initial effort in investigating the role of an expectancy message in listening to a taped radio recording, this review of the literature will draw heavily from research on teachers' expectations effects. Several non-research articles on the usefulness of radio in the classroom will also be reviewed. In short, the studies and articles reviewed in this
chapter were selected because they were most relevant to one or more of the variables investigated in this study.

The following areas are relevant to the present study and will be discussed in this review of the literature: (1) The importance of listener behavior in language comprehension; (2) research on speaker variables; (3) the use of taped radio recordings in second-language listening comprehension; and (4) expectancy effects in the classroom.

The Importance of Listener Behavior in Language Comprehension

Second language acquisition researchers have placed considerable emphasis on learner variables. Taylor (1974) proposed that the principal difference between first language acquisition and adult second language acquisition lies in the complex affective makeup of the adult. Schumann (1976), Yorio (1976), and Strevens (1977) have presented schematizations of the interrelationships among important affective, cognitive, instructional, and other variables.

Listening ability is correlated in a range from 0.50 to 0.70 with at least four broad areas of aptitude: intelligence (Bonner, 1961; Crook, 1957; Palmer, 1966; Vineyard, 1960), linguistic aptitude (Blewett, 1949), and academic achievement (Palmer, 1966). Early attempts to link training in note-taking with listening comprehension failed to provide evidence of such a relationship (Crawford, 1925; Nichols, 1948; Petrie, 1961). Recently, Aitken (1979) demonstrated
that if students listened for about four minutes and then took notes (lecturer paused while students wrote), their listening comprehension was superior to students who took notes concurrently with the lecture or took no notes.

Other variables related to the listener's background and interests do not influence scores on listening tests. Listener-related variables which have been tested and shown not to influence listening comprehension are birth order (Nichols, 1948), sex (Ferris, 1964; Gruber & Gaeblin, 1979; Hedrich, 1967; Hopkins, 1966; Laurent, 1967; Rossiter, 1972), and expressed interest in the topic (Karraker, 1951; Nelson, 1947; Petrie & Carrel, 1976).

Research on Speaker Variables

Research results indicating desirable characteristics of the speaker for optimal comprehension are limited to the rate of speaking and the effects of the speaker on the listener. However, efforts to find an optimal rate of speech for comprehension present a gloomy, confused picture. Speaker rates ranging from 120 to 220 words per minute all seem to produce reasonably good listening comprehension rates (Asher, 1955; Ernest, 1968; Goldstein, 1940; Goodman-Malamuth, 1956; Nelson, 1948). With training, listeners can comprehend compressed speech (up to approximately 400 words per minute) (Goldstein, 1940). When the listener has an affinity for the speaker, listening comprehension apparently improves (Haiman, 1949).
Credibility of the speaker and several delivery variables apparently do not influence listening comprehension. Credibility assigned to the speaker by an experimenter does not elevate listening scores (Tompkins, 1964). Fluency (Kibler & Barker, 1968; Klinger, 1960; Utzinger, 1952) is not crucial to listening comprehension. Thus, very little direction is available to assist in the choice of speaker behaviors to maximize comprehension and retention by listeners. Learning anything at all from an utterance should allow the language learner "to construct a hypothesis about the sort of thing the speaker must have said" (Brown, 1977, p. 167). In the same vein, Brown and Yule (1983) propose that "the aim of a listening comprehension exercise should be for the student to arrive successfully at a reasonable interpretation" (p. 57) of the utterance.

The Use of Taped Radio Recordings in Second-Language Listening Comprehension

Radio broadcasts are a virtually untapped resource for listening comprehension in the foreign language classroom; however, the use of broadcast materials in the profession is at the level of reporting personal experiences. Stern (1983) comments on the state-of-affair in this manner:

Language teaching theory has had a strong preference for speculation, the expression of personal opinion, the explanation of practical experience, and participation in
controversy - all perfectly legitimate ways of finding directions provided they are balanced by systematic empirical procedure (p. 63).

A fair amount of personal opinions and speculations have been provided by several practitioners (Dyson, 1980; Escoffery, 1980; Chauvin, 1980; Lescure & Pothier, 1980; Forrest, 1980; and Melpignano, 1980) concerning radio recordings for language work. All of these writers do agree that radio broadcast is one of the many resources at the disposal of the second-language teacher and researcher and should not be ignored. With the research approach, the investigator hopes to inquire into the effects of an expectancy message when using a radio recording on college French students' listening abilities.

Dyson (1980) states that with radio broadcast materials, subjects are introduced "to a variety of voices, which the teacher cannot do in the classroom" (p. 67). Exposing the students to the maximum amount of language possible, the second-language teacher can train them to practice and to be accustomed to the French language "tel qu'on le parle" (Chauvin, 1980). In the same vein, Chauvin (1980) adds:

Toutes les formes du français parlé sont véhiculées par les ondes, depuis l'oralisation par simple lecture du français le plus soigneusement écrit jusqu'à l'improvisation orale la plus libre et la plus desordonnée des débats contradictoires à plusieurs voix,
The study employed the conversation format in which two speakers address each other. Beyond the scope of the present study is the question of whether or not the instructional use of radio recordings can lead to vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation and cultural enrichment.

Escoffey (1980) points out that "we cannot afford to ignore radio as one lively, authentic source of language and "background" (foreign culture which really ought to be in the foreground of our teaching), capable of increasing motivation and encouraging positive attitudes" (p. 77). Forrest (1980) reports that authentic listening materials can be particularly valuable to intermediate and upper level classes in college, because students will be exposed to a wide range of accents. They will at the time increase their knowledge of the French-speaking world and acquire the cultural background which is essential to reach advanced stages in their use of the target language.

If the purpose of using radio broadcasts is to improve listening skills, researchers in the profession should collect empirical data on how or whether students master these recordings, and what they expect to hear from them. Stern (1983) reminds us that "our
practical experience should be able to stand up to critical inquiry and empirical test" (p. 58). Fortunately, a limited amount of systematic research has been conducted in the field to support the usefulness of taped radio recordings in the foreign language classroom.

Garfinkel (1969) investigated the effects of a series of enrichment-oriented radio programs on measures of listening comprehension. He hypothesized that there would be significant differences between listening comprehension scores of classes listening to the program via taped recording, and classes listening to the programs via radio at broadcast time. Garfinkel (1972) reports "the results in listening comprehension favored the experimental groups, but the difference was not statistically significant" (p. 159). However, he did not mention specifically what the experimental group did.

Cook (1964) studied the use of radio for teaching foreign language. He employed two groups--both experimental and control groups had drill work in class and in the language laboratory. The experimental and control groups had drill work in class and in the language laboratory but the experimental group received additional practice via high-frequency AM radio. He concluded that learning of drills was significantly improved at the .01 level in the experimental group.
In Lumley's (1934) study, which investigated the effects of the French radio program on student pronunciation at The Ohio State University, students of three high school teachers were to listen to morning broadcasts at home. The experimental class listened to the broadcasts in class while the control class listened to the broadcasts at home. The post-test did indicate that the experimental group of that pair had improved more than had the control group, but Lumley neither made mention of the validity or reliability of his instrument nor statistically analyzed his scores.

These studies underscore how little the profession really knows about the use of taped radio recordings for language teaching. In this age of swiftly advancing technology in the schools, one wonders why radio tape recording has not been investigated as to its effectiveness on language learning.

Expectancy Effects in the Classroom

The concept of expectancy effects (Haynes & Johnson, 1983) is central to the present study. More specifically, Haynes and Johnson's postulation that "teachers, parents, and others who wish to influence students' academic achievement would more likely succeed if they would tell students directly what they can and are expected to achieve while at the same time providing them the necessary support for achieving what is expected" (p. 514). Moreover, Haynes and Johnson's observation of positive expectancy
messages as a source of direct and strong motivation, theoretically, supports using direct pre-listening statements, and is consistent with the definition of expectancy messages developed by this study.

Cooper (1979) writes that expectancy research has reached an impasse because expectancy manipulation has largely been confined to the teacher. Because the learner has been largely omitted from the expectancy research, this investigation made the learner in the foreign language classroom its focus. Several studies have been nevertheless conducted in which student expectations were directly manipulated. Using college subjects, it was found that the nature of teacher-student interactions differentially affected performance on an achievement test (Alexander, Elsom, Means & Means, 1971).

Although influences on student performance are multiple and complex, a synthesis or information leads to the conclusion that if subjects' expectations were raised, their performance would improve. In their early work on expectancy, Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) spoke of "feed-back loops," which suggested that it is both the teacher's and the learner's expectancies that influence one another and together yield a result that determines performance (p. 531). How are performance expectations communicated in the classroom?

From the review of the literature, the researcher observes that the impact of expectations has been measured on outcomes as
varied as swimming ability, job performance, and absenteeism. This variety of measures speaks favorably to the convergent validity of the expectation concept; that is, the evidence indicates that expectation effects are not tied to specific instruments used to measure them. With this in mind, new testing procedures of the listener's expectation about native French speakers or French-speaking Americans should be explored. However, the question remains whether assessing listening comprehension in second languages can ever be fully measured by the expectancy paradigm.

The fact that performance expectations vary for students is beyond argument (Rist, 1970). At this juncture, it is argued that these factors (verbal input, output and feed-back) may all be causally linked to performance expectations. There is also evidence indicating that the teacher's verbal input to students are dependent on performance expectations. Thus, the quantity and quality of teacher attempts at novel instruction seem associated with expectations (Cornbleth, Davis & Button, 1974; Jeter & Davis, 1973, as reported in Jeter, 1975). Finally, with regard to this variable, Rowe (1974) found that teachers allowed bright students longer time to respond before redirecting unanswered questions to other class members. Cooper (1979) concludes that a student given less time to respond will less often answer correctly. It is the student's intention to respond that is uncertain.
The final factor, feedback, involves the teachers' use of praise and criticism after an academic exchange. As with student initiations, Brophy and Good (1974) found a fairly consistent pattern of teacher use of reinforcement. Teachers tend to praise high-expectation students more for correct response, while low-expectation students are criticized more for incorrect response. This result is based on some studies which simply count positive and negative use of affect and some which, allowing for the greater opportunity available to be positive toward highs, adjust praise and criticism use by the number of correct and incorrect responses. Evidence since Brophy and Good (1974) remains consistent with this conclusion (e.g., Cooper & Baron, 1977; Firestone & Brody, 1975).

In summary, it can be said that very little definitive information regarding the effects of an expectancy message on listening comprehension exists. It can also be said, however, that as studies move towards specific investigation of students' expectations about the listening situation and effects of expectancy messages (pre-listening strategies) on comprehension, the chances of understanding this relationship better will increase substantially. The expectancy theory postulates that listeners have expectations about what they may be told, which may facilitate the understanding process. Many discourse theoreticians agree with this axiom. For example, Kintsch and Van Dijk (1983) write that when hearing a discourse,
"the hearer may have well-founded expectations about the possible facts that may be mentioned--although, naturally not about all facts, because then the discourse would be trivial" (p. 91).

Summary

The purpose of this review has been to report selected research related to expectancy effects, taped radio recordings on comprehension, and the effects of pre-listening strategies on listening comprehension. Theoretically, the concept of expectancy effect seems sound, and, under appropriate circumstances, this concept has been empirically shown to have facilitative effects on learning.

The genuine expectation phenomenon has yet to be investigated in the second-language classroom. It has been suggested that research on performance expectations may profit from certain re-directions, especially in methodological emphasis. In its broadest sense, if listening comprehension is the ability "to understand native speech at normal speed ..." (Chastain, 1971, p. 290), then research investigating what goes on in the listener's mind--his/her beliefs and perceptions--concerning different speakers, or various listening situations must be considered.
CHAPTER III
DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

Population and Sample

The population from which subjects for this study were drawn consisted of classroom-track French 104 students at The Ohio State University enrolled during the Autumn Quarter of 1986. Students who were enrolled in the individualized track for French 104 were not included in this sample. Only classroom-track French 104 students participated in the study. French 104 is the fourth in a series of four five-quarter-hour courses that serve both as an introduction to French and as fulfillment of the foreign language requirement for majors in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences.

This course, which is approximately the equivalent of the beginning of college intermediate-level (second-year, first-semester), is open to students who have completed French 103. Only one of the below-listed sub-divisions may be taken for credit:

FRENCH 104.01 -- Basic (Literary readings)

FRENCH 104.02 -- Conversation (An invitation to communicate meaningfully in French)

FRENCH 104.03 -- The French Now (Readings and discussions of contemporary issues)

FRENCH 104.04 -- Civilization (Readings and discussions of socio-historic issues)
French 104 students were selected as the population for this study for a number of reasons. First, this group of language learners was of the most immediate interest to the researcher, because they had had sufficient training in grammar and communication to understand a French tape recording. Second, this wide range of competence levels of students allowed the experimental taped recording to be a natural one recorded for intermediate French students. Krashen et al. (1984) theorize that people acquire language that is directed at the acquirer's current level of competence, but which includes some structures that are somewhat beyond that level as well. In short, Graduate Teaching Associates and Professors in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, who evaluated the pilot materials suggested that subjects would be able to understand the recording, because it was directed at their current level of competence.

Because this study was intentionally designed to be consistent with ongoing instruction in intermediate French at The Ohio State University, intact classes were randomly selected and assigned to experimental treatments. Six sections (intact classrooms) of students enrolled in French 104 were used for the study. The six classes were then nested within the first factor (the Expectancy Message variable).
**Design**

In order to maximize statistical efficiency and informational yield, this study utilizes a 3 x 2 factorial design with two levels of the speaker variable, and three levels of the expectancy message variable. The design layout is presented in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Research Design: Availability of an Expectancy Message](image)

This study has two independent variables:

1. Availability of an expectancy Message (A)
2. Types of speakers (B)

The first independent variable, availability of an expectancy message, is fixed, active, and crossed with the second independent variable. It has the following three levels:
No Expectancy Message ($A_1$): Subjects received no introduction of
speakers as to their manner of speech, nationality or background,
and then wrote simple English sentences of the taped recording.

Native French Speaker Message ($A_2$): Subjects received a fictitious
introduction of the two native speakers before listening to the
taped recording, and then wrote simple English sentences of the
taped recording.

French-Speaking-American Message ($A_3$): Subjects received a fictitious
introduction of two Americans, who are GTAs in the Romance Languages
Department, prior to listening to the experimental tape, and then
wrote simple English sentences of the recording.

The second independent variable is fixed, crossed and active
with two levels—a taped recording by two native French speakers—
NFS-(B₁), and the same transcript by two French-speaking Americans—
FSA-(B₂). See Figure 2 for a clear illustration of these factors.
This study has one dependent variable—a free-recall summary of the taped recording written during ten minutes immediately following the experimental conditions. Subjects were asked to write as many valid propositions as possible after hearing the taped recording, and simply to include as much information as time would permit. The dependent variable was scored on the basis of the number of valid semantic propositions they contained. An important unit of analysis in research on comprehension and discourse is the
proposition. Kintsch & Kozminsky (1977) theorize that some variation of subject-verb-object, for example, is typically considered a single proposition. This method was used as the unit of analysis for this study, because most theories agree on the subject-verb-object form of propositions. The free-recall protocol has several advantages over other more obtrusive measures of recall. Most importantly, this way of testing comprehension accurately reflects only what the learner has retained. In addition, in order to control the subjectivity inherent in scoring free-recall material, an a priori list of all possible propositions based upon the taped radio recording was developed before the experiment was conducted.

This list of propositions was validated by a jury of three French professors and two French instructors in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures to ensure that all possible propositions were included. The students' summaries were scored giving one point for each valid proposition in the summary for which a corresponding proposition appeared on the designed list. The number of valid propositions was then totalled into one score, which became the index of listening comprehension recall used as the criterion measure (dependent variable) for the data analysis.

In order to insure rater reliability, the researcher trained an intermediate French instructor to score a protocol. Scoring reliability was established as follows:
1) The researcher trained another person in scoring procedures for one hour, pointing out what constituted a valid proposition on the basis of the list of propositions. Some interpretation was necessary in this type of score because rarely are all propositions on the student papers worded exactly the same as those on the designated list.

2) The researcher and the second scorer then independently scored a randomly selected sample of papers and recorded these scores.

3) The two independently obtained set of scores were then correlated to produce correlation coefficients of $r = .93$ and $.92$ respectively which were significant. After the pilot test, several protocols were randomly selected by the researcher and the French instructor, and in so doing, they were able to score them systematically and then establish the inter-rater reliability coefficient.

In order to collect badly needed descriptive data in this field, a Listener Expectations Questionnaire (LEQ), a five-point rating scale about the speakers, was administered as a pre-experimental questionnaire to identify the expectations of students with regards to listening to different speakers. This 10-item Likert scale was included in the research as a means of providing information about
subjects' attitudes and beliefs towards different speech, native or otherwise.

LEQ was subjected to the following procedures. First, Likert's (1932) method of using summated rating through item analysis was conducted on the pilot study data to determine if each item was discriminating adequately between overall favorable and overall unfavorable reactions towards the two kinds of speakers. Following Likert's design, the means of the individual items' responses from the top 25% of the subjects (most favorable) were compared to those from the bottom 25% (least favorable). Second, it was determined that on a five-point scale an item with a discrimination index of 1.3 or above would qualify for inclusion in this instrument.

Finally, to assure that the 1.3 - 2.4 discrimination - index range would yield adequately reliable results, Likert's method of split-half correlation of each subject's responses to attitude responses was used. Using the pilot study data, each subject's responses to the ten attitude items was correlated on an odd-even item basis.

Instrumentation and General Procedures

This study was conducted with the permission and cooperation of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at The Ohio State University. The researcher established preliminary contact
with the chairperson and language co-ordinators of the Department at which time the authorities were briefed on the general procedures and objectives of the experiment. At that time, it was decided that the researcher write an official letter to the chairperson, explaining the aims, the objectives, and target population of the study.

Six intact French 104 classes were used for the experiment. The six intact classes were nested within levels of the Availability of an Expectancy Message Variable (see Figure 2). Each class was divided into two sections with each section randomly receiving the tape by French-speaking Americans or by native French speakers. This decision was taken so as not to confound the classes within all variables.

All six classes were tested on November 10 and 11, 1986, during their regularly scheduled class time. All classes met in one of the language laboratories in the Dieter Cunz Hall of Languages at The Ohio State University. The researcher tested all of the classes so as to avoid contaminating the treatment by using different French 104 instructors, who would probably not administer the treatments in the same manner.

Testing Facilities and Materials

This study was conducted on two consecutive days in the Cunz Hall language laboratory. The recording systems in the laboratory
are designed to allow taped materials to be broadcast to each individual student via the headsets. The headset mode was used for the research so that sources of extraneous noise or distraction were minimized, and so that all students would be able to hear the experimental tape equally well with regards to loudness, room acoustics, and distance from the source (Mueller, 1979). Because all students heard the tape recording from one master source, there was a relatively high degree of control over extraneous variables, which, in turn, strengthened the internal validity of the study. But the question remains as to the external validity of the study because it was done in the laboratory. Can the findings be generalized to actual classroom situations?

This study was designed to be consistent with on-going instruction in Intermediate French at The Ohio State University. The test material—a taped recording by the "Radio France Internationale" Station in Paris—was modified for use in the study with the permission of Ms. Françoise Watts, producer of the French Radio Program at WOSU.

The criteria used to select the taped radio recording were as follows:

1) Auditory quality of tape
2) Material (content and language) rated appropriate for Intermediate French language practice by five French 104 Instructors.
After two taped recordings were selected by the researcher, they were then validated by a jury of three college French professors and two French instructors. The tapes were evaluated from several perspectives:

1) Difficulty level
2) Auditory quality
3) Comprehensible to French 104 students

It is important to point out that all five evaluators agreed that, despite various paralanguage idiosyncrasies of the speakers, the tapes were comprehensible to Intermediate French students.

The one experimental tape that was chosen was rated by all five raters as either four or five on a seven point scale of difficulty (see Appendix A). The mean difficulty for this tape "SIGNORET" was 4.5. In addition, the tape was characterized as "a good tape" by a rater, because it focuses on a French actress Signoret and Rock Hudson and his illness. During many second language listening-comprehension exercises students hear tape recordings twice. Therefore, this practice was not changed for the study. Care was taken to ensure that all students understood that they would hear the tape twice. The tape recordings were recorded at The Ohio State University prior to the study.

Two native French speakers and two French-speaking-Americans recorded the tape under the researcher's direction. The three
experimental tapes differed only in the instructions and introductions regarding the different speakers. The introductions were written. Students were told that instructions in the test booklet would be on the tape and that they were to raise their hands if they were unable to hear the instructions clearly. After five seconds, no subject raised his or her hand. Subjects were then told to put on their headsets, and the tape was started.

**Pilot Study**

A pilot study comprised of 30 subjects from four sections of French 104 classes was conducted at The Ohio State University during the Summer Quarter of 1986. In conducting the pilot study, the following procedures and time schedules were followed:

1) 5 minutes: Students received copy of LEQ and were told to fill out this questionnaire.

2) 7 minutes: Students handed in the questionnaire, and then received a written introduction of the speakers.

3) 6 minutes: (a) Test booklets were handed out and students were to read instructions and introductions. (b) Students were told to listen to a first run of the experimental tape.

4) 10 minutes: Students listened to a final run of the experimental tape, and wrote as many details as possible from the tape.
In addition, results from the pilot study were used in establishing reliability and validity. The responses from the pre-experimental questionnaire (LEQ) were subjected to an item analysis to establish their ability to discriminate between positive and negative reactions to native speech versus near-native speech.

The pilot study helped the researcher to test all parts of the experiment to determine if they were working appropriately. If a malfunction had been isolated, it could have been corrected without any resulting damage. Only one class of 10 students participated in the pilot study. The class does not constitute a representative cross section of all French 104 classes at The Ohio State University. Because this sample is biased, the results of the pilot study are not reported. The administrative procedures used seemed appropriate and were therefore not changed for the experiment.

Scoring

In the present study, recall was scored in terms of idea units (Meyer & McConkie, 1973). The experimental taped recordings were scored by identifying the idea units (words or phrases) corresponding to an a priori list of propositions as conceived by five instructors. Subjects written recall of the recording was compared to the idea units as reflected in an a priori list. A similar scoring method has been employed in other studies (e.g., Cofer, 1941; King, 1960). It is interesting to note that recent work (e.g., van Dijk) has been designed to capture the essential points of a text and not simply a
list of key words or of the most important points. In a researcher's view, such techniques have the potential of presenting researchers with a new set of variables for the investigation of second-language discourse comprehension.

In addition, the papers were scored on the basis of the number of valid propositions contained in the summary. Scoring validity was established by giving credit for only those propositions that corresponded to one of the propositions on the a priori designated list of propositions. The list of propositions (see Appendix D) was developed by the researcher and later validated by five French professors and instructors to ensure that all reasonable propositions had been included on the list. Real examples of subjects' responses were summarized in the "popular" summary sheet (see Appendix D). The researcher took the propositions most frequently used by subjects on the summary sheet, put them into right order, and constructed a "popular" summary sheet for the study. Forty-five most frequently recalled propositions (60% of the 75 total propositions) constitute this list. All unacceptable propositions were not reported on this "popular" summary sheet, because the list of these falsehoods was endless.

Statistical Analysis

The recall scores were obtained from the students' protocols which were subjected to a three-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA)
to test the null hypotheses of no differences between groups and no interactions between levels of different independent variables. The SAS (Statistical Analysis System) package was utilized on an IBM 3081-D computer by the Instruction and Research Computer Center at The Ohio State University. An analysis of variance appropriate for a factorial experiment was conducted on the data using the SAS General Linear Model (GLM) procedures.

The following null hypotheses were tested:

\( H_0^1 \): There will be no significant differences attributable to variation in the availability of an expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension.

\( H_0^2 \): There will be no significant differences attributable to the kinds of speakers variable on recall measures of listening comprehension.

\( H_0^3 \): There will be no significant interactions between levels of the availability of an expectancy message and levels of the speaker variable.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

A factorial design was selected primarily because this study used intact classrooms and allows the researcher to consider the effects of two independent variables: availability of an expectancy message and types of recorded speech. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of an expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension in intermediate college French.

There were three conditions for the expectancy message variable: those subjects receiving no introduction of either native French speakers or French-speaking-Americans, those receiving a fictitious introduction of native French speakers before listening to the taped recording, and those receiving a fictitious introduction of French-speaking-Americans before listening to the experimental tapes. (See Chapter III for a complete discussion of the independent variables.)

The criterion measure used in this study consisted of one dependent variable—the total number of valid propositions students were able to recall from the taped recording and write into their summaries. Criteria for determining acceptability of valid propositions are found in Appendix A. The total number of
propositions was 75, and each valid proposition was assigned one point. The results of the data analysis and the findings as they relate to the three null hypotheses tested are presented in this chapter. Each null hypothesis was examined in the light of an unbalanced data set (G-80), using the SAS General Linear Model (GLM) procedures to derive the analysis of variance.

A summary of the means and standard deviations is presented below in Table 1 and the ANOVA Table in Appendix F.

**TABLE 1**

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF LISTENING SCORES BY EXPECTANCY MESSAGE AND SPEAKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Expectancy Message</th>
<th>Types of Speakers</th>
<th>No Expectancy Message ($A_1$)</th>
<th>Native French Message ($A_2$)</th>
<th>French-Speaking-American Message ($A_3$)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Speaker ($B_1$)</td>
<td>$\bar{x}$</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Speaker ($B_2$)</td>
<td>$\bar{x}$</td>
<td>8.90</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>7.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>$\bar{x}$</td>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference attributable to variation in the availability of an expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension.

Totals of expectancy means recorded in Table 1 were 6.98, 5.75 and 5.30 for the availability of expectancy message variable. From this finding, it appears that the difference between the means for the treatment main effect was less than two points apart, which suggest a weak main effect for the availability of expectancy message variable. On the basis of the data, this hypothesis must be retained. The analysis of variance did not yield statistically significant differences, $F(2,68) = 1.72$.

Hypothesis 2

There are no significant differences attributable to the kinds of speakers variable on recall measures of listening comprehension.

This hypothesis can be rejected on the basis of the data from the study. Table 1 provides means for classes that listened to the taped recording by native French speakers ($\bar{X} = 4.50$), while the mean score for classes that heard French-speaking-American speech was 7.52. In this case, the means differed by 3.02. The analysis of variance indicated a statistically significant types of speakers effect, $F(1,68) = 15.06$, $p \ll .01$. 

Hypothesis 3

There are no significant interactions between levels of the availability of an expectancy message and levels of the speaker variable.

In Table 1 the main effect for native French speaker in these data, the total average score for the native French speaker is $\bar{X} = 4.50$. The total average score for the French-speaking-American is $\bar{X} = 7.52$. This means that the French-speaking-American has a 3.02-point effect (from 4.50-7.52). Does this speaker effect (one factor) depend on expectancy message (the levels of the second factor?). A close look at Table 1 reveals that the speaker effect does not depend on expectancy message. This lack of interaction is depicted in Figure 3.

In short, the $F$ test proved to be nonsignificant, $F(3,68) = 1.21$. Therefore, this hypothesis must be retained. It can be concluded that there is not an interaction effect between treatment and levels.

Listener Expectations Questionnaire

Although the questionnaire-Listener Expectations Questionnaire (LEQ)—did not figure in the testing of the hypotheses, it is presented here to provide descriptive information about subjects' attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about native French speakers and
French-speaking-Americans. LEQ is a 10-item form with five response choices per item. Subjects answered this questionnaire before listening to the experimental tape (see Appendix C).

Granted that all ten items of the Listener Expectations Questionnaire have relevance to this research, items number three, five and eight relate specifically to the research question: Is
there a difference between comprehension of a French speaker versus a French-speaking-American? For this reason, the researcher will focus only on these three items in an effort to explain the beliefs and attitudes of subjects towards different speakers.

On the pre-experimental questionnaire, subjects responded, in a diverse manner, to these three items: "Generally, the language use by native speakers is too difficult for me to thoroughly comprehend it;" "I generally find it easier to comprehend French-speaking-Americans;" and "It is hard to listen or concentrate on what other people are saying unless I can identify with them in some ways." The mean scores of these items range from 2.8 to 3.3 with the standard deviation of 1.1 (see Table 2).

To assess the average class opinion about the two kinds of speakers, the standard deviation was calculated on each item. This is a measure of students agreement with the mean response item. Information and procedures on evaluation of teaching at The Ohio State University report that if the standard deviation has a value of 1.0 or less, then the mean provides a fair assessment of the average class opinion. Values greater than 1.0 indicate substantial diversity or disagreement of individual subject opinion with respect to the questionnaire item. The researcher used this same scoring method.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #</th>
<th>Subject Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I think native French speakers speak too rapidly.</td>
<td>SA 11 A 38 U 6 D 14 SD 2 X 2.4 σ 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. French-speaking-Americans speak at a slower pace than native French speakers.</td>
<td>20 36 A 8 U 6 D 1 SD 2 X 2.0 σ 0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Generally, the language use by native speakers is to difficult for me to thoroughly comprehend it.</td>
<td>7 27 A 11 U 23 D 3 SD 2.8 X 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I think French-speaking-Americans do not slur their French.</td>
<td>2 27 A 23 U 18 D 1 SD 2.8 X 0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I generally find it easier to comprehend French-speaking-Americans.</td>
<td>17 31 A 7 U 13 D 3 SD 2.3 X 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. It is often difficult for me to understand the accents of native French.</td>
<td>8 33 A 10 U 17 D 3 SD 2.6 X 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. When listening to French-speaking-Americans I find it easier to concentrate on what is being said.</td>
<td>9 25 A 15 U 21 D 1 SD 2.7 X 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. It is hard to listen or concentrate on what other people are saying unless I can identify with them in some way.</td>
<td>4 18 A 9 U 31 D 9 SD 3.3 X 1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #</th>
<th>Question Description</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>σ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I often become confused when listening to both native French and French-speaking-Americans.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I would comprehend equally both the native French speaker and the French-speaking American.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 provides subject percentages that include score distributions and simple summary statistics. The table also represents a quick visual inspection of the relative value of student opinion on a specific entry. However, nine subjects did not fill out LEQ. Since nine out of 80 represents 71 actual responses (more than 60%) made by subjects on returned forms; non-respondents were ignored.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter consists of three major parts and accompanying subdivisions. The summary of findings examines and interprets the research questions and as well as draws inferences from them. The limitations of the study highlights various conditions or restrictions that should be considered when looking at the results of this study. The recommendations involve suggestions that may be useful to those doing related research in the future.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of an expectancy message about native French speech and/or French-speaking-American speech on recall measures of listening comprehension. An expectancy message is an introduction designed to give subjects fore-knowledge of the speakers before listening to a taped recording. The effects of the expectancy message were studied in terms of the number of valid semantic propositions subjects were able to recall. Subjects were asked to list by writing all facts about the recording that they could remember. This encouraged a list-like organization of their protocols, and hence separate recall of the facts.

The study was conducted using Intermediate College French students. Six groups of subjects (N=80) participated in the
experiment. The six intact classes were randomly nested within the first independent variable (availability of expectancy message). Classes received no expectancy message, a native French-speaker, or a French-speaking-American message. Each class was then divided into two sections with each section hearing either a native speaker of French or a French-speaking-American. This decision was made so as to minimize confounding variables of time of experiment.

After subjects were told about the speakers on each tape, they listened to the recording twice for five minutes and then were instructed to write a summary of the recording (see instructions to students in Appendix E). The students' summaries were then scored on the basis of the number of valid propositions they contained (see Appendix D for the list of valid propositions). The set of data obtained were then submitted to two-way analyses of variance.

**Summary of Findings**

Analysis of the data revealed statistically significant differences between the native French and French-speaking-American conditions beyond the .01 level. Students listening to the recording by French-speaking-Americans scored higher on the recall measure (\( \bar{X} = 7.52 \)) than subjects listening to the recording by native French speakers (\( \bar{X} = 4.50 \)).

A summary of the findings with regards to the three research questions posited in Chapter I are as follows:
Question 1: What are the effects of an expectancy message on recall measures of listening comprehension? The data obtained from the experiment suggest that such an expectancy message does not enhance nor depress listening comprehension. In short, an expectancy message does not influence substantially subjects' ability to recall semantic propositions from the recording.

It is readily apparent from the summary propositions that when most subjects listen to a taped recording, they rely upon their beliefs and world knowledge. For example, some subjects recalled that "Simone Signoret and Rock Hudson were lovers" and "Simone Signoret was lost in New York." What these subjects reported does not have any bearing on the taped recording. The findings agree with Kintsch and Kozminsky (1977) that subjects tended to "include a little more idiosyncratic details in their listening recall" (p. 491). In addition, several subjects recognized, at the end of the experiment, the voices on the recording. It was not clear whether or not they knew the Teaching Associates who recorded the experimental tapes.

Question 2: Is there a difference between comprehension of a native French speaker versus a French-speaking-American? This was the research question of greatest interest in the study. The data suggest strong main effects for this variable; however, the differences between class means did not yield significant results (see
Table 1). To summarize, the types of speakers variable was the most significant for the following reasons:

1) Listeners have expectations about listening to different speakers and may pay keen attention to the speakers with whom they have the most language learning experiences in common because of their shared knowledge.

2) Based on their language learning experience, subjects were better able to understand their fellow Americans speak French and were sometimes turned off obviously by the native speakers because of their style differences, that is, social strategies (possible speech acts that can be performed by different individuals on different occasions) employ in communicative situations. The strategic nature of the comprehension process may depend on assumptions whether we are communicating with people having more or less power or status than we, a man or a woman, a friend or a foreigner, and so on (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983).

In the researcher's view, a necessary condition of subjects using social strategies and making sound hypotheses about the wants and opinions of speakers, is subjects being familiar with phonological cues of these speakers. Subjects could relate to the speech of the French-speaking-American on the taped recording, so they pay greater attention to it. Whenever students pay keen attention to a speech act, they comprehend it.
**Question 3:** Are there any significant interactions between types of recording and availability of an expectancy message? Treatments and levels in this study are independent of each other. The findings in this study should be viewed as only preliminary research. Experiments involving larger subject populations and different testing situations should be considered. Replication of this study, using different materials and different listening assessment measures that would test students' ability to decode speech only may, however, provide a more complete answer to these questions.

**Limitations of the Study**

The following limitations should be considered when looking at the results of this study:

1) **Expectancy Message:** The operational definition of an expectancy message (Chapter I) was used as the basis for composing the expectancy message used in this study. Because messages vary widely with composition, length, and purpose, the findings should be generalized only to expectancy messages of a similar nature and difficulty level.

2) **Taped Recording:** Only one passage was used in this study. Because listening materials differ widely, the findings of this study can be generalized only to other recordings of similar nature and difficulty level. Moreover, the recording used was in a
journalistic format, and without further research, it is difficult to determine whether or not the format affects the outcome.

3) **Instrument:** Only the "recall" component of listening comprehension was measured in this study. Measuring other components of this complex construct may produce different results. The instrument used in this study (free-recall summary) also has some unique limitations. There are, for example, several factors besides listening comprehension being measured by a free-recall summary. Because comprehension remains an elusive construct in educational research, the extent to which the instruments actually measured facets of second language listening comprehension depends in part upon how the term is designed. The student's willingness and ability to express himself in writing is perhaps one of the most crucial factors. The second factor is the subject's ability to understand intonations of different variations of the target language. In short, while a proposition-filled summary is probably a good measure of comprehension, it is also a measure of other factors.

4) **Classroom language:** It would be desirable for the taped recordings used in the present study to be analyzed in terms of its deviation from outside-the-classroom speech. Because the recordings were made by instructors, it is possible that very slight, unconscious adjustments were made in their speech—adjustments that the speakers have learned will facilitate student comprehension. "Linguists also analyze classroom language as segments of discourse—sequences of
units of language arranged to produce interaction for particular functions" (Heath, 1978; p. 5). These functions were especially useful in this research. In addition, for the purpose of this study, grammatical and vocabulary modifications were made, allowing the researcher to use words and grammatical concepts for which subjects were prepared. The findings should be generalized only to a carefully enunciated speech.

Conclusions

An implication of this research is that teachers of French should encourage second-language learners to listen to and understand a number of different speakers. This statement implies that subjects need to be provided sufficient experience so that they can be able to anticipate and to expect "what is coming next." For students to comprehend spoken French, they should employ various strategies, that is, the best way to act in order to reach a goal.

The production and comprehension of natural language utterances require not only linguistic and grammatical rules but strategies—cultural, interactional, social or otherwise. Language comprehension is a complex task. Generally speaking, "the component tasks are not obvious: Information may be lacking or not readily available, and alternative routes (options) are possible" (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983, p. 72). Different styles, social contexts, and sequences of events and actions can help students to clearly understand spoken French, because these elements can make the communicative situation
more complete. If learners listen to and understand a number of different speakers, they will be more likely to cope successfully with other accents in the future which will provide a realistic experience for second-language learning. In order to achieve this goal, students need to practice listening to the target language as spoken by different speakers, native or non-native. In the researcher's view, if students learn to identify and understand intonations, stress, pitch, speed, etc. from various speakers, then this might minimize surprises and confusion by helping them recognize the essential verbal cues that distinguish a word beyond the variety of pronunciations it may receive from different speakers.

The researcher believes that the more familiar a listener is with an incoming message, the more he/she will be able to process it without difficulties. In the same light, Mueller (1978) suggests that "the listener's ability to construct a context from the linguistic cues seems to be a function of his degree of familiarity with the to-be-comprehended material" (p. 78). Second language listeners' familiarity with signals such as pitch, intonation, stress, etc. of a speaker could help them to better comprehend
oral material. Also, it is important that an acoustical analysis of the French language spoken by a native speaker and a non-native speaker should be undertaken. For example, indications of the following features of French: "voyelles, semi-consonnes, voyelles nasales, consonnes, etc." (Leon, 1966; p. 1) must be observed and recorded in order to determine whether different speakers can produce the sounds of the language.

Recommendations for Further Research

Four specific suggestions for research will be discussed here. First, research must be done on the nature of the listening process in the second language classroom before adequate measures of assessment can be developed or a thorough consideration of variables influencing the individual's ability to listen can be conducted. The lack of current knowledge based on recent research often leads to reiteration of information that may or may not be in today's second language learning context.

Second, more studies are needed to investigate the language use of other French-speaking peoples, namely, Africans, Asians, and Middle-easterners, who are serving as instructors of French across the United States. Dialectal variations from one speaker to the next should also be analyzed. For example, peculiarities in grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation of each speaker ought to be observed and recorded in order to systematically classify the differences in target language usage among various speakers. Samuels (1984) writes:
"the existence of such differences places additional demands on the listener's processing which can severely interfere with comprehension" (p. 185). This means that if students of second-language cannot follow these variations in the target language, their ability to understand the spoken language will be very limited.

Third, the question of how a listening text/recording is judged to be authentic should be investigated. The definition of authenticity is not simple (Davies, 1984). One or all of the following aspects with regards to authenticity could be researched: topic discussed, vocabulary used, syntax employed, pronunciation, intonation, gestures and many more.

Fourth, qualitative research projects utilizing retrospective interview techniques to assess familiarity with topics and speakers may be valuable because purely quantitative techniques do not necessarily reflect the internal thought process of subjects.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, research in second language students' understanding in higher level ways (paragraphs, logical implications and subtle degree of meanings, dialects and emotional reactions) should be undertaken. It is hoped that series of converging studies relating to second language listening will be conducted in the future.
APPENDIX A

RATING THE DIFFICULTY AND AUTHENTICITY
OF EXPERIMENTAL LISTENING TAPES
Instrument for Rating the Difficulty and
Authenticity of Experiment Listening Tapes

The four enclosed tapes, recorded by native French speakers
and French-speaking-Americans, are being considered for use in a
listening experiment with French 104 students this quarter.
Please rank each of the tape's difficulty level for the average
104 student by assigning it a score based on the scale below
(Pederson, 1985). Also indicate the authenticity of the tapes
by using the second scale for Taped Recordings.

Any comments you might have about why a given tape might be
difficult, easy, authentic or just right would be greatly
appreciated.
Rating Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>far too</td>
<td>too</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>just</td>
<td>difficult</td>
<td>too</td>
<td>far too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>easy</td>
<td>easy</td>
<td>just</td>
<td>right</td>
<td>difficulty</td>
<td>too</td>
<td>difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tape #1 (ENA): - rating ______
Tape #2 (ENA): - rating ______
Comments ________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

Tape #3 (SIGNORET): - rating ______
Tape #4 (SIGNORET): - rating ______
Comments ________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

Please return these ratings to the researcher soon.
And thank you for sharing your time and expertise.
Taped Recordings

Use numbers "1, 2, 3, or 4" to choose the statement that comes closest to the way you perceive these tapes.

1. Native French Speakers
   - fast speech
   - natural speech
   - slow speech

2. French-speaking-Americans
   - fast speech
   - natural speech
   - slow speech
Speaking about Rock Hudson and Simone Signoret, a French journalist comments. NOW, LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE TAPED RECORDING.

En 1958, Rock Hudson a présenté un Oscar à l'actrice française Simone Signoret pour son film "Le Chemin de la Ville Haute." L'automne dernier, ces deux grands acteurs sont morts à deux jours d'intervalle. En effet, les Français se souviennent que c'est à Paris que Rock Hudson a révélé tristement la maladie qui l'a tué.

Quant à Simone Signoret, il est certain qu'en France, elle ne laissait personne indifférent. Son engagement et sa lutte pour les causes perdues, émouvaient les uns et agaçaient les autres; mais tout le monde a admiré le courage avec lequel elle s'est battue contre le vieillissement, la perte de ses illusions politiques et mené un dernier dur combat contre la maladie. Malgré ces difficultés, Simone Signoret, dans les dernières années de sa vie, trouvait plaisir à écrire: elle a publié un roman Adieu, Volodia et un livre de souvenirs - "La nostalgie n'est plus ce qu'elle était."
Ici, Simone Signoret nous raconte comment elle a trouvé ce titre qui, en France, est presque devenu un proverbe:

Ce n'est pas de moi. C'est un titre qui était sur un mur. Ce n'est même pas moi qui l'ai lu. C'est mon ami Pierre Olav qui, un jour à New York, a lu ce graffiti. Je ne saurai jamais qui a écrit cette jolie phrase en anglais: "La nostalgie n'est plus ce qu'elle était." Peut-être, un jour je recevrai une lettre de celui ou de celle qui l'a gravé sur ce mur à New York.
APPENDIX C

LISTENER EXPECTATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (LEQ)
INSTRUCTIONS: Your cooperation in the completion of this questionnaire will provide the researcher with a clearer picture of student expectations. Respond frankly to all statements which apply to your language learning experience. Your name is not requested on this form to assure anonymity.

SAMPLE RESPONSES: If you strongly agree mark ............... (1)
If you agree mark .................. (2)
If undecided mark .................. (3)
If you disagree mark ............... (4)
If you strongly disagree mark ....... (5)

1. I think native French speakers speak too rapidly.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. French-speaking-Americans speak at a slower pace than native French speakers.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. Generally, the language use by native speakers is too difficult for me to thoroughly comprehend it.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I think French-speaking-Americans do not slur their French.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. I generally find it easier to comprehend French-speaking-Americans.
   1 2 3 4 5
   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree
6. It is often difficult for me to understand the accents of native French.

   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Agree  Agree  Undecided  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

7. When listening to French-speaking-Americans I find it easier to concentrate on what is being said.

   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Agree  Agree  Undecided  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

8. It is hard to listen or concentrate on what other people are saying unless I can identify with them in some way.

   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Agree  Agree  Undecided  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

9. I often become confused when listening to both native French and French-speaking-Americans.

   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Agree  Agree  Undecided  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

10. I would comprehend equally both the native French speaker and the French-speaking-Americans.

     1  2  3  4  5
     Strongly Agree  Agree  Undecided  Disagree  Strongly Disagree
Criterion Instrument: List of Acceptable Propositions

Step #1: Please read the attached tape script, and judge whether or not the following propositions (simple sentences or dependent clauses) are valid thoughts presented from the script. If for any reason you judge that a given proposition inaccurately reflects the content of this script, please indicate this by re-writing the unacceptable item.

Step #2: Next, using the blank lines at the end of the listing, please list any additional propositions that are presented in the script, but that are not included on the list.

Thank you for sharing your time and expertise.
Simone Signoret won an Oscar
(for) a film
in 1958
Rock Hudson Presented it
to her
The French remember
This moment with sorrow
Hudson and Signoret died
two days apart
It is early autumn
in France
Their death means more
than the loss of
two great actors
the French recalled
that Rock revealed
his illness
(in) Paris
The French were (very) touched
by this revelation
the disease took his life
She does not have
anyone
indifferent
She was (very) committed
to lost causes
some people
in France were moved (by this)
other were bother (by it)
She overcame aging
with courage
and the loss of
her political dream
many admired her (for that)
She led a final combat
against illness
with discretion
In the last years of life
she found refuge
in writing
She wrote a novel
Adieu, Volodia
It was published
(some month) before her death
She also published
her memoirs
She tells us about choosing
the title
The title has almost become
a proverb
"I didn't think up this phrase"
It (the title) is not
my original idea
The title was written
on a wall
"I didn't even read it myself"
my friend
Pierre Olav
read it
one day
in New York
my friend read
this graffiti
"Nostalgia is no longer what it used to be"
It doesn't mean anything
Yet, it says everything
I will never know
the lady or the gentleman
who wrote it
It was written in
a beautiful English phrase
Maybe one day
I'll get a letter
from the person
who wrote this phrase

(Total Number of Propositions = 75)
Simone Signoret won an Oscar
(for) a film
in 1958
Rock Hudson presented it
to her
The French remember
Hudson and Signoret died
two days apart
It is early autumn
in France
two great actors
the French recalled
that Rock revealed
his illness
(in) Paris
She does not leave
anyone
indifferent
She was (very) committed
to lost causes
some people
She overcame aging
with courage
She led a final combat against illness with discretion she found refuge in writing She wrote a novel

Adieu, Volodia

It was published her memoirs The title has almost become a proverb The title was written on a wall in New York my friend Pierre Olav read it this graffiti I will never know the lady or the gentleman who wrote it I'll get a letter
APPENDIX E

1. INSTRUCTIONS FOR NO EXPECTANCY MESSAGE GROUPS
2. INSTRUCTIONS FOR FRENCH SPEAKER MESSAGE GROUPS
3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR FRENCH-SPEAKING-AMERICAN MESSAGE GROUPS
4. SUMMARY SHEET
INSTRUCTIONS: This is an exercise in listening comprehension. Listen carefully to the tape and write down everything you can remember from the recording. The tape will be played twice. Please write in ENGLISH as many simple sentences or phrases as time will permit. While listening to the tape, feel free to jot down notes on the extra sheet provided.
INSTRUCTIONS: This is an exercise in listening comprehension. During this exercise you will listen to a taped recording by two native French speakers, a French journalist and a French actress.

Listen carefully to the tape and write down everything you can remember from the recording. While listening to the tape feel free to jot down key words, and repetitions of words and ideas on the extra sheet provided.

The tape will be played twice. Please write in ENGLISH as many sentences or phrases as time will permit.
INSTRUCTIONS: This is an exercise in listening comprehension.
During this exercise you will listen to a taped recording by two French-speaking-Americans who are graduate teaching associates in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures here at the Ohio State University.

Listen carefully to the tape and write down everything you can remember from the recording. While listening to the tape feel free to jot down key words, and repetitions of words and ideas on the extra sheet provided.

The tape will be played twice. Please write in ENGLISH as many simple sentences or phrases as time will permit.
SUMMARY SHEET

Write simple sentences or phrases in ENGLISH below:

Write down on this sheet everything you can remember from the taped recording.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.
17.
18.
19.
APPENDIX F
ANOVA TABLE
TABLE 3
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF DEVIATIONS SCORES
BY EXPECTANCY MESSAGE AND SPEAKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (Expectancy Message)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41.2732</td>
<td>20.6366</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (Types of Speakers)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>180.4512</td>
<td>180.4512</td>
<td>15.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (A)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>198.9213</td>
<td>66.3071</td>
<td>5.53**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A X B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36.1717</td>
<td>18.0859</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B X C (A)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>43.3899</td>
<td>14.4633</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (Within)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>814.6194</td>
<td>11.9796</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1314.8267</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .05
BIBLIOGRAPHY


