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The Effect of Cognitive Factors of Rhetorically Different Listening Tasks on L2 Listening Quality of Iranian Advanced EFL Learners*

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of two different authentic topic-familiar rhetorical L2 listening tasks (expository and argumentative) differing in reasoning demand on the listening comprehension scores of a number of Iranian EFL advanced learners. Sixty homogeneous advanced learners were recruited based on their performance on an English Language Proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). Then they took a researcher-made test of the two rhetorical listening tasks. The results showed statistically insignificant effect of topic-familiar rhetorical listening tasks on the participants listening scores. However, learners performance on familiar expository tasks was statistically, though not meaningfully, better than their counterparts performance on the argumentative tasks. It was also shown that general, vague topic familiarity cannot exclusively help affect listening quality, but it seems different rhetorical listening tasks would expose more cognitive and linguistic complexity demands on the participants performance. The main implication would be that Iranian advanced language learners need more precise instruction on different rhetorical tasks in conjunction with elaborated social and cultural background knowledge of topics. In addition, participants general proficiency level should be cautiously construed as their proficiency in listening skill, too.

Key Words: Cognitive Complexity; Authenticity; Rhetorical Tasks; Topic Familiarity; EFL Context.

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Introduction

Listening is a key skill in second or foreign languages; it plays a crucial role in communication and in language acquisition (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Nunan, 1998). Regarding the fundamental role of listening in second language acquisition, Rost (1994) pointed out that listening is a vital skill in learning language since it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the suitable level, any language learning attempt simply cannot begin. Nation and Newton (2009, p. 38) also asserted that listening gives the learner information from which to build up the knowledge necessary for using the language; and when this knowledge is built up, the learner can begin to speak .

On the other hand, listening without successful comprehension is of a scanty value. This is actually achieved as a result of interaction of a myriad of cognitive factors that can differently affect any learners language achievement. Some of these factors such as working memory and topic familiarity relate to language learners, while other factors like cognitive demand, linguistic complexity, and authenticity level of language learning tasks belong to the language texts and/or tasks (Long, 1989; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994).

Cognitive approaches in language learning focus on determining the cognitive factors and processes that help the individual learners acquire a language. Bachman and Palmer (1996) model of language ability, for example, has taken a cognitive perspective to present communicative language use. Many researchers have investigated these cognitive dimensions influencing learning language skills such as writing and reading (Daneman & Carpenter, 1980; Reynolds, 2002; Yang, 2009; Waters & Caplan, 1996; Yun, 2005), but the listening area is among the most under-researched areas in which the central issue is try to find and define a more comprehensive blueprint of listening, that is, what individual cognitive factors are involved in comprehending spoken language (Bloomfield, et al., 2010). Other approaches concentrate on language listening in developing listening expertise (Skehan, 1998; Vandergrift, 2004-2007). From among the many cognitive factors, the cognitive demands of topic familiarity and language test/task have always been of great interest in language learning.

On the cognitive complexity of topic familiarity, Robinson s Cognition Hypothesis (Robinson, 2010) and Skehan s Trade-off Hypothesis (Skehan, 1998; Skehan & Foster, 2001) have the same predictions for its effects on language production in the task-based language teaching (TBLT), with higher familiarity leading to higher accuracy, complexity, and fluency. Skehan predicts some types of trade-off among the three performance areas, and lower familiarity resulting in lower accuracy, complexity, and fluency. Needless to mention that the existing empirical studies on the role of topic familiarity on a learner s L2 have yielded controversial results (Long, 1990; Bacon, 1992). Schema-based models of comprehension (e.g., Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Rumelhart, 1980) are most often used in SLA research to describe the role that learners background knowledge plays in facilitating listening comprehension. Many studies (Cumming, 1989; Mueller, 1980) have found evidence for the positive effect of topic familiarity on the quality of language learning skill (like writing and reading), whereas, other studies (e.g., Bacon, 1992; Long, 1990; Yun, 2005) did not find a clear relationship in their investigations of L2 learners performance. However, the extent to which the predictions made are correct for listening skill can probably be best tested in empirical studies. Studies examining the role of topic familiarity on L2 listening comprehension have found a facilitative effect (Bodie, et.al., 2008; Burns, Dean & Foley, 2004; Kobeleva, 2012; Long, 1990; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994; Vandergrift, 2007). Aidinlou et al., (2012), however, showed measures of background knowledge can vary and, as a result, may confound the results.

Language texts (written or spoken), the second cognitive factor in our study, as an important medium for the acquisition of new knowledge in instructional settings have received a large amount of attention (Wineburg, 1996 in Vidal-Abarca, et. al., 2002). This variable has differently been defined in literature such as text types (Hatim & Mason, 1997), rhetoric tasks (Brooks & Warren, 1979), discourse mode (Weigle, 2002) genre (Carroll, 2008; Swales, 1990). Carroll (2008) defines it as any form of discourse that has a characteristic recurrent structure. Genres are important because they provide us with general expectations regarding the way information in a discourse will be arranged and unfolded. The linguistic and schematic organization

and arrangement of the information embedded in these genres can have different influence on the readers and listeners (Hartman & Hartman, 1993). Alongside their key role in providing input and their unique characteristic structures, different rhetorical tasks require varying degrees of attention and cognitive processing. Rhetoric theories (e.g. Bain, 1967; Brooks & Warren, 1979; Yang, 2014), taxonomies of educational objectives (e.g., Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001), and human cognitive development trajectories (e.g., Kuhn & Franklin, 2006; Piaget, 1972) all lend support for the different levels of cognitive demands inherent in the rhetorical tasks. Preferring the term rhetorical task for this study, we need to say rhetorical task is one of the most studied cognitive dimensions in L1 and L2 studies that have dealt with reading and writing, since it seems that tracing learners performance in reading and writing is easier than assessing listening. For this reason, it is ultimately plausible to find more reliable, theoretical, and practical models in those skills.

In general, it was found that understanding rhetorical tasks have significant effects on the development of language skills (Andrews, 2010; Sadeghi, Hassani & Noory, 2014). However, Freedle and Kostin (1996) and Ying-hui (2006) concur that it is difficult to conclude exactly how, if at all, L2 listening comprehension is affected by different rhetorical tasks. In addition, these tasks differ in terms of types of thinking involved and thus inherently different levels of cognitive demands (Weigle, 2002), as well as whether reasoning is required and the degree of reasoning called for (Bain, 1967; Brooks & Warren, 1979). Most studies in writing and reading showed that learners will produce language of higher accuracy and linguistic complexity but lower fluency when performing on the more complex rhetorical tasks such as argumentative or expository ones compared with narrative and descriptive (Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Yang, 2014). It is believed that this challenge is rooted in the different cognitive and linguistic complexity of these tasks (Ellis, 2003). Interestingly, however, Ying-hui (2006) examined passages with description, comparison, and causation structures, but did not find any relationship between rhetorical structure and difficulty in L2 listening comprehension. When it comes to instruction, Sadeghi, Hassani & Noory (2014) found that genre-based instruction of listening does have

positive impact on listening comprehension of Iranian male intermediate students.

By taking the effect of topic familiarity on learning language skills into account, it is observed that the picture of rhetorical tasks is not near complete without a consideration of the learners topic knowledge of different rhetorical tasks which are associated with different types of schemata (Carroll, 2008). Studies of comprehension and recall of stories, for example, provide support for specific types of schema such as story grammar (Carroll, 2008), or any students familiarity with different issues in the story telling (Haberlandt, Berian, & Sandson, 1980). It is believed that just as much as rhetorical task, different topics make difference in task performance even for topics of the same rhetorical task, in terms of scores (e.g., Hamp- Lyons & Mathias, 1994; Gabrielson, Gordon, & Engelhard, 1995) and language production features (Yang, Lu, & Weigle, 2012). On the other hand, listeners with rich background knowledge use it to compensate for misunderstandings, unclear speech, and a lack of local or specific context from earlier parts of the text (Goh, 2000). This use of background knowledge can also be detrimental, though. That is because listeners rely too heavily on prior knowledge, prior conversational units, and relational history with the speaker which may be unduly biased (Bodie et al., 2008). That said, the advantages likely outweigh the disadvantages; using background knowledge to help understand a passage frees up attentional resources to be devoted to other aspects of the listening task (Goh, 2000).

Despite the paucity of cognitively-initiated studies in EFL context, both academic and non-academic people, especially language learners need to experience various listening rhetorical tasks in the course of language acquisition/learning (Martos, 2004). Even though researchers have identified a number of different types of rhetorical structures (Meyer & Freedle, 1984), few studies have been devoted to determining whether one type is easier for listeners to comprehend than another. Studies examining the relationship between rhetorical structure and L2 listening comprehension do not provide strong evidence that particular rhetorical tasks are easier to comprehend than others for non-native listeners.

On the other hand, most studies mainly have focused on the effect or relationship of topic familiarity with learners factors, like culture knowledge (Hayati, 2009), gender (Martínez, 2013), vocabulary (Pulido, 2007), proficiency level (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992), and contextually-related factors, like languages other than English, its impact in L1 setting, and ESL contexts (e.g., Bacon, 1992; Cecilia Chang, 2006; Mueller, 1980). In fact, the existing body of research has little, if any, dealt with L2 listening quality attained by the interaction of topic familiarity and different rhetorical tasks with regard to the amount of cognitive demands imposed on the L2 listeners performance in EFL context. Accordingly, in this study, it is hypothesized that when rhetorical tasks are used with familiar topics, this process would affect L2 listening quality.

Theoretically and empirically encouraged by TBLT, this study aims at exploring the effect of two factors, topic familiarity and authentic listening rhetorical tasks, involved in L2 listening from a cognitive perspective on the learners listening quality. The expository and argumentative rhetorical tasks were selected as listening input for a number of Iranian EFL advanced participants in one-shot experimental study where no treatment was given. To this end, the following research questions are formulated:

1. Are there any differences in terms of listening comprehension mean scores of the participants who are exposed to different topically-familiar listening rhetorical tasks?
2. If so, which rhetorical task affects listening quality more significantly?

Based on these two questions the following null hypothesis was generated:

There is no statistically significant difference in participants mean scores of topic-familiar rhetorical listening tasks, at $p< 0.05$.

Methodology

Participants

Based on a systematic random sampling, 60 male and female language learners (age range 20-33) were chosen from 117 learners (registered in 8 language centers) in Abadan and Khorramshahr, two cities in the south west of Iran. Through their performance on a sample Nelson

English Language Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976), it was found the participants were at advanced level. They were then randomly divided into two 30-subject experimental groups; one took a researcher-made test of topic-familiar expository listening tasks and the other was given a test of topic-familiar argumentative listening tasks. To secure proficiency homogeneity of the groups, a *t*-test was applied (t_o =1.200 $t_{critical}$ = 2.000, at p = .95). This means the groups were about equal in terms of proficiency level (see Table 1). The selected participants were mainly motivated to take part in this study because they had already intended to partake in advanced examinations such as TOEFL and IELTS.

Table 1 Group means and standard deviations for the homogeneity test.

Groups	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t_o
Experimental group (arg)	30	13.25	10.29	1.200
Experimental group (exp)	30	13.85	9.79	
p-value=0.05	n=60	df=59	t-critical=2.000	

Instruments

Three testing instruments were utilized in this study. Nelson Battery ˚ section 300A (Fowler & Coe, 1976) was applied to ensure groups equality with reference to their EFL proficiency. Though Fowler and Coe (1976) claim that all their test items have been pretested and so their tests seem to be reliable for the purpose of testing the language proficiency of students, still the reliability of this test was computed through the application of Kudar and Richardson (KR- 21) correlation (r = .75) because no solid score of reliability measure is offered in their book. This test had been used because: (1) it was the one of available ones, and (2) its use does not require permission from the authors. Then, two simulated forty-item tests of listening tasks; topic-familiar argumentative listening tasks and topic-familiar expository listening tasks were administered. The listening tasks were chosen from two authentic listening sites (TED.COM and Englishlistening.com) and from relevant IELTS and TOEFL listening ones. The validity of materials was judged by three TEFL experts and their inter-rater

reliability was measured by KR-21 formula. An acceptable reliability was obtained.

To standardize the tests, the researchers administered the tests to two pilot groups of 10 students who had roughly about the same language proficiency level as the participants of the study, but they were not selected for the study. Once the tests papers were corrected, the item discrimination (between .45 and .65 in this study) for each tests item was calculated and some items were discarded while some were modified. The revised versions were used for the next stage of the study. The revised forms of these tests were administered to other pilot groups of eight students. Here, again the item difficulty and item discrimination of all the tests items were estimated. All the items of the tests had an acceptable level of difficulty and suitable power of discrimination. According to Kudar and Richardson (KR-21) formula, the reliability indices of the tests were estimated (*r* Argu = .73 and *r* Expo = 75).

After administrating the proficiency test, a questionnaire was given to the participants. The items in the questionnaire were mainly detecting their general topic knowledge. It is worth mentioning that in the main listening tests there were some test items that were about different aspects of a single topic. The reason behind this was to circumvent the number of topics to only a few common topics as investigated by the questionnaire. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were computed by Pearson Product (r = .88) and the experts judgment.

Procedure

In this one-shot experimental study, after administering the proficiency test, the participants were divided into two experimental groups (expository and argumentative). The rationale behind dividing the participants and not having a single group was to minimize the degree of the practice effect gained through taking two tests of familiar topics by one group (Mackey & Gass, 2005) and another is to enhance the chance of inter-group comparisons, whereby the effect of topic familiarity as a moderator variable would be diminished. Having identified the participants proficiency level, a questionnaire, described in instrument section above, was given to the participants. Next, each group took the researcher-made tests described above. In this study,

topic familiarity is defined as the amount of direct and explicit knowledge listeners presumably have developed about a topic through all kinds of experience, such as having direct personal experiences or observations, conversing or thinking about the topic, or obtaining information about the topic from other sources.

To determine the rhetorical task types, Michigan's Genre Project Clarifying criteria were used. The rhetorical listening inputs chosen for this study were selected from authentic sources, mentioned above, according to their different rhetorical purposes, functions, generic, and linguistic features (Askehave & Swales, 2001; Brooks & Warren, 1979; Smith, 2003). In general, it is believed that these tasks differ in terms of types of thinking involved, their different inherent levels of cognitive demands (Weigle, 2002), as well as the required reasoning and the necessary amount of reasoning (Bain, 1967; Brooks & Warren, 1979). The genre of argumentation and exposition were employed because, as hypothesized in our study, are less attended to in the language education in Iran. Another reason is the researchers' own experience with the issue which is the driving force for this study. Moreover, these tasks are common rhetorical tasks that EFL advanced learners may encounter in the listening module of high-stake standard tests.

Results

Once the data related to the experimental phase were gathered, they were subjected to the statistical analysis of ANOVA (One-Way) in order to see if the authentically topic-familiar rhetorical listening tasks affected participants' listening quality, and if so, whether the result was statistically significant. The results indicated expository group performed a little better though this performance was not statistically significant. The participants of the argumentative group had lower mean on the test. Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for the L2 listening scores on the two rhetorical tasks. The one-way ANOVA test revealed that there was no statistical difference between the group means, $F(3.243) = .360$, $p = .95$, $= 0.004$, with an achieved power of 0.85 for the statistical analysis. This confirms that the groups did not perform differently on the listening tasks. According to Cohen (1977), eta squared ( ) and partial eta squared (partial) of the value of .01 is considered as small, .06 as medium, and .14 as large. The

effect size observed for this comparison is negligible, particularly in view of the adequate power achieved, showing that even with a larger sample size, a difference is unlikely to be observed. The participants performed equally well on the different rhetorical tasks.

Table 2 *Means and Standard Deviations for L2 Listening Scores by Rhetorical Task*

Group	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Expository	30	10.94	3.11
Argumentative	30	10.00	2.76

* p< 0.05

Table 3 *One-way* ANOVA for *the Groups' Performances on Rhetorical Listening Test*

Group	sum of mean squares	*df*	*Mean square*	*F*	*Sig.*
Between group	65.48	2	30.74	3.243	.360
Within group	72	57	9.4		
Total		85	59	9.16	

* p < 0.05

Discussion

In this study, it was hypothesized that topic-familiar rhetorical listening tasks do not significantly affect the participants listening quality. The results of the One-way ANOVA analyses showed no significant effect on the L2 listening quality, even though the p rticipants performance in the expository group was a bit better than the performance of the argumentative group. Thus, the null hypothesis stated in this study earlier can be confirmed. It seems that listening quality is affected by factors related to different dimensions of rhetorical tasks as well as topic familiarity. The non-significant difference between the two groups was marginally related to topic familiarity, but more pertinent to rhetorical task characteristics.

Looking at the effect of topic familiarity and rhetorical tasks on listening in isolation, we can find mixing results, some being highly supportive (e.g., Mueller, 1980; Sadeghi, Hassani & Noory, 2014), while others quite unsupportive (e.g., Long, 1990; Yun, 2005; Ying-hui, 2006). But when their simultaneous interaction (topic familiarity and rhetorical dimensions of tasks) are traced, the picture is even

going to be more blurred, making the inference about their individual role(s) in the process of listening more difficult, as observed in this study. The reason(s) for these statistically non-significant results, as reported above, can be justified through the following possible answers:

First, there is a perceived difference between learning a language in ESL and EFL context in terms of the amount and quality of L2 input (Carroll, 1997; Huebner, 1995). In ESL context, learners are exposed to a variety of listening input with different qualities paving the way for them to get more familiar with diverse topics and rhetorical communicative tasks. In most EFL contexts, however, language learners have little, if any, chance to experience real listening tasks. In these contexts, listening comprises a trivial proportion of most language learning. Thus, learners are not exposed to fine-grained topic-familiar listening input, presented in different rhetorical tasks. It seems learners topic familiarity, as revealed in the questionnaire prior to the experimental phase, just tapped into their general familiarity. It can be contended being equipped with general familiarity per se does not guarantee learners success in listening performance. In addition to general topic familiarity, learners need detailed sociocultural, sociopolitical, and rhetorical knowledge of the topics (Lantoff, 1999; Leeser, 2007; Rost 2005; Vandergrift,). It is possible to suggest even if the participants in this study had supposedly had enough topic familiarity, according to Rubin (1994), this would not always result in improved language learning generally and listening comprehension, specifically, because topic familiarity highly interacts with other variables such as text types and related linguistic and cognitive structures.

The second major factor is the rhetorical knowledge that seems to play a paramount role in this insignificant result. In general, argumentative and expository tasks differ in terms of types of thinking involved and the linguistic structure (Bloomfield et al., 2010) and thus inherently different levels of cognitive demands (Weigle, 2002), as well as the degree of reasoning involved (Bain, 1967; Brooks & Warren, 1979). Exposition requires recalling and generalizing based on events and states (e.g., Bain, 1967; Smith, 2003), and argumentation involves recalling, generalizing, and reasoning, with

more reasoning demand in argumentation (e.g. Bain, 1967; Brooks & Warren, 1979). Argumentation is seen to demand greater reasoning in comparison to exposition, not only because of establishing an argument but also because of making a defendable and strong argument; alternative views often need to be addressed and tackled in some ways through reasoning (Genung, 1900, Cited in Yang, 2014). The expository texts are more formal than argumentative and less authentic, so it seems that their comprehension would be easier than argumentative texts. Nevertheless, the difficulty associated with argumentative tasks should be better attributed to the authentic interaction that makes comprehension more difficult. This is in line with the conclusion that authenticity is not always facilitative and sometimes blocks comprehension even for advanced learners (Rubin, 1994). Given these observations, our findings are in line with Yang s (2014) pointing to the fact that different factors including topic familiarity of texts, rhetorical knowledge, and text and interaction authenticity have levels of cognitive demands on listeners.

Another point to consider is that most studies measure proficiency with regard to age of acquisition, teacher judgment, course level, or performance on a non-standard test. In turn, the definition of high versus low proficiency can vary from study to study, even when the same variable is measured. Although in this study, the p rticipants entry level of proficiency was determined as advanced, their poor performance on the rhetorical listening tasks proved their weak rhetorical knowledge due to the delicacies and facets pertinent to each rhetorical tasks. In Iran, most participants taking a proficiency tests are normally familiar with test structures that include different components like vocabulary, structure, reading, and listening with general-interest topics, so they are cognitively ready to take such exams. In addition, the participants possible weak listening performance scores are overshadowed by their general score bands in general proficiency tests. However, taking an isolated listening test, including specified rhetorical tasks, might be a reason why they demonstrated weak performance in this study. Last but not least are the test format and the variety of test items of the listening test administered in this study. In comparison with the entry proficiency test which included only multiple choice items, the test given in the

experimental stage had a variety of test forms that participants have rarely encountered. This might be labeled as an imposing factor leading to this weak performance. Accordingly, the results raise the question of actual language proficiency level. It means that Iranian advanced level participants receive their advanced proficiency tokens through their performance on language proficiency tests in which all the language skills and sub-skills are tested and a general score is given. Learners listening quality has always been understated or overshadowed by other abilities.

Finally, working memory capacity (WMC) is another possible factor that might influence the participants poor performance on the rhetorical listening tasks given in this study. Even though the two rhetorical tasks selected differ cognitively, they both seem to have high demands on the participants WMC. The cognitive demands of the rhetorical tasks can even possibly affect the EFL advanced learners WMC since these learners are more concerned with lower level language processes like lexical decoding and sentential comprehension, but less concerned with higher order analyses of the rhetorical tasks (Bloomfield et al., 2010; Rubin, 1994). This claim is also supported by the evidence that the differences in WMC resources may be affected by features of input like various levels of topic familiarity and different rhetorical tasks. The difficulty of the task can determine how large a role WMC plays at the level of performance (Leeser, 2007). However, this effect can be moderated when deeper understanding of topics with cognitively-demanding processes are in question. Syntactic and lexical complexity of L2 linguistic input influences the amount of linguistic material that can be retained in WM memory (Cook, 1975), as well as the likelihood of recall (Loe, 1964). Another input factor that may lead to difficulty in listening quality is bias inherent in the task authenticity, which by nature resisted the researchers endeavor to mitigate its effect in the current study. According to Richards (2001) authentic materials may be too culturally biased, so unnecessarily difficult to understand outside the language community. The vocabulary might not be relevant to the student's immediate needs. Too many structures are mixed, so they need more time decoding the texts (Kaprova, 1999). High amount of redundancy and more discourse markers of authentic materials (esp.,

in argumentative rather than expository tasks) result in counter-productive outcomes that do not facilitate comprehension.

Therefore, looking across the current literature on WM processing capacity and L2 comprehension (both reading and listening), the pattern of results indicates that WM is likely to impact L2 listening comprehension, and that these effects will be particularly strong in conditions that impose additional demands on WM. Some research suggests passage organization or type may impact listening comprehension because of an effect on working memory load. Presenting information in a more organized fashion makes this information easier to encode and maintain in working memory (Anderson, 2004; Baddeley, Lewis, Eldridge, & Thompson, 1984). Findings such as these indicate that the role of working memory in listening comprehension is likely to be affected by the organization of the passage and its topic (Bloomfield et al., 2010; Leeser, 2007).

Conclusion

This study set out to examine the effect of topic-familiar rhetorical tasks (argumentative and expository) on the listening quality of Iranian advanced participants. The findings indicated an insignificant effect, with a trivial difficulty witnessed in processing argumentative tasks. The justification for this minor effect was elaborated under three main reasons. Perceived difference between ESL and EFL contexts in terms of the amount and quality of L2 input was observed as a critical factor. Participants rhetorical knowledge was another decisive factor, and still working memory capacity was seen as a key criterion in the participants poor performance on the rhetorical listening tasks given in this study.

It can be concluded that topic familiarity does not guarantee participants better performance on argumentative and expository listening tasks by itself. Language learners also need to become more familiar with the complex linguistic layers underlying each rhetorical task required to perceive and process them. Carrel (1985) argued that explicit teaching of various aspects of text structure and rhetorical organization of texts would significantly increase the amount of information ESL students could recall. It is possible to imply that introducing different topics with their typical rhetorical manifestations can make a difference in task performance when we consider the role

of rhetoric tasks in the language learners listening quality. Another implication is that conscious raising and direct teaching of rhetorical listening tasks even with advanced learners may improve their performance. For example, this might require including a number of different listening tasks, with different types of listening texts of varying lengths and of different genres that are representative of the types of spoken language the test taker is expected to be able to comprehend (Brown, 1995; Buck, 2001).

At the end, it is prudent to assert that this study is not without its limitations. It was carried out with a rather small sample, restricted context, and narrow scope of rhetorical tasks. These factors would make it hard to generalize the findings. Thus, it is recommended any generalizations be done tentatively, as this study is a part of a more comprehensive ongoing project detecting the effect of the instruction and conscious-raising of rhetorical tasks on listening quality.

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