

# **Research on Listening Dialogue Authenticity Factors and User Preference for Pedagogical Purposes**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

There has been much discussion over the question of authenticity of recorded dialogues in language textbooks. Typical textbook listening dialogues are often characterized as oral readings of written material articulated in precise acting style, usually slow and uniform in its pace of speech, with no background noise (Porter & Roberts, 1981; Ur, 1984). Carter (1998:69) points out that textbook dialogues often “represent a ‘can do’ society in which interaction is generally smooth and trouble-free, the speakers cooperate with each other politely; the conversation is neat, tidy and predictable; utterances are almost as complete as sentences and no-one interrupts anyone else”.

Today vast accumulation of real life language has come to be available through the corpus and a number of features of natural conversations have been identified through the research in conversational analysis in terms of spoken grammar, sociolinguistic perspective, frequency of word forms and their typical pattern and uses. Although many listening textbooks have indeed begun to incorporate these features of spontaneous conversation, several researches point out the discrepancies yet to be found between samples of real-life language use and the textbook dialogues (Scotton & Bernsten 1988; Boxer & Pickering 1995). Teachers are still faced with the problem of selecting listening dialogues that adequately enable learners to cope with listening in the real world.

In contrast to these commercially made materials, authentic materials, or those materials that are not made specifically for language learning, have widely made their way into language classrooms. Yet, despite all the spontaneity which they provide for real life listening, an authentic language, with its grammatically incorrect slips, false starts, hesitations, fast speech, overlapping and so on, may seem ‘chaotic’ to many learners. A careful selection must be made here for an appropriate material which can serve learners of different levels.

From these points, it can be said that there is a need to find out the criteria to how far listening dialogues should represent or even misrepresent the real language model which will most benefit learners to become good listeners.

## 2. THE PRESENT STUDY

This study aims to explore degrees and the factors that may determine authenticity of recorded listening dialogues. Ur (1984:23) has said that in order to prepare learners to listen in the real world, learners should listen to 'speech which, while not entirely authentic, is an approximation to the real thing'. However, it seems that there has been very few research done to establish what exactly is considered to be a good 'approximation' of a spontaneous conversation that is tailored for different leveled learners' needs. As Tomlinson (1998:342) suggests, 'We need to find out to what extent exposure to reality is more or less valuable to learners than exposure to simplified samples illustrating idealised norms.'

The terms 'authentic', and 'natural' used in this study will be referred to as those features and qualities of 'language samples-both oral and written-that reflect a naturalness of form, and an appropriateness of cultural and situational context that would be found in the language as used by native speakers' (Roger and Medley, 1988:467). The perception of a text being 'authentic' or 'natural' may be seen as somewhat abstract based on an intuition of each individual. However, this study will in fact first attempt to examine what factors exactly constitute the perception of one's 'authenticity' of a recorded material and whether this authenticity is perceived similarly among individuals. It will then try to identify listening dialogues with different degrees of authenticity which teachers as well as learners feel appropriate in order to enhance listening skills. The study aims to put forward a more concrete image of a listening dialogue that is a good reflection of the real language *and* is perceived positively by learners as well as teachers for pedagogical purposes.

This study will address the following questions:

1. Do learners and teachers have a similar perception of 'authenticity' of recorded listening dialogues?
2. What are the factors which determine their perception of 'authenticity' ?
3. How does authenticity affect teachers' and students' preference of listening dialogues?

## 3. STUDY METHOD

### 3.1 Subjects

This study was conducted from June through July, 1999. A total of 430 subjects from various educational institutions in Japan took part in the study. Among them, 398 are EFL students at eight colleges and universities: Chuo University, Mejiro Women's Junior College, Rikkyo University, Saitama University, Tsuda College, Tokyo Jogakkan Junior College, Waseda University, and Yokohama National University. Not all of them are English majors, and their proficiency levels therefore vary. However, they had taken more than six years of formal English courses prior to this study.

In addition to the students, 32 English teachers also participated in the present study. Sixteen of them are native speakers of English teaching in Japan, and the remainder are non-native speakers with many years of English teaching experience.

## 3.2 Materials

### 3.2.1 Sources

Four dialogues taken from various Japanese high school listening textbooks used in Oral Communication B<sup>1</sup> classes (*Progressive, Listen, Sailing*) are selected for this study. Dialogues 3 and 4 share the same script. Dialogue 4 is a recording of a spontaneous discussion, while Dialogue 3 is an acted out version (see Appendix 1).

In each dialogue, three participants (senior high school students) discuss environmental issues. The type of discourse is unplanned and may include examples of the kinds of false starts, hesitations, incomplete sentences or overlapping which are often found in unplanned discussions.

### 3.2.2 Sound Features

As shown in Table 1, the overall length of the four dialogues ranges from 70 to 90 seconds. Previous studies (Blau, 1990; Griffiths, 1991) show that it is not the speech rate

**Table 1 Dialogue Characteristics**

	Dialogue 1	Dialogue 2	Dialogue 3	Dialogue 4
Topic	Environmental issues			
Type of Discourse	Unplanned discourse (student discussion)			
Number of Speakers	Three			
Sound Features				
Duration (seconds)	90	70	86	80
Pause (seconds)	18.3 (19.9%)	15.1 (22.2%)	18.5 (20.1%)	13.5 (18.7%)
Speech Rate (wpm)	204.2	206.6	196.4	199.4
Overlapping&Interruption	0	0	0	9
Vocabulary				
Total number of words	244	189	221	221
Listed Words <sup>1</sup>	81.3%	85.2%	77.8%	77.8%
Non-listed Words	16.0%	14.8%	18.9%	18.9%
Proper nouns	3.7%	0.0%	3.3%	3.3%
Top 20 Spoken Words <sup>2</sup>	13.1%	18.5%	35.3%	35.3%
Top 20 Written Words <sup>2</sup>	15.2%	19.6%	26.2%	26.2%
No. of words/sentence	6.0	12.6	4.8	4.8
Discourse				
Turn-taking	26 turns	5 turns	27 turns	27 turns
A	10 turns	1 turn	14 turns	14 turns
B	7 turns	2 turns	4 turns	4 turns
C	9 turns	1 turn	9 turns	9 turns
A & B		1 turn		
Average	8.6 turns	2 turns	9 turns	9 turns
Seconds/turn	3.5 seconds	14.0 seconds	3.2 seconds	3.0 seconds
Incomplete sentences	0	0	6	6

[References]

Dialogue 1 : *Progressive Oral Communication B* (Shogakutosho) L17

Dialogue 2: *ORAL COMMUNICATION COURSE B Listen* (Kiriharashoten) L17

Dialogues 3 & 4 : *Sailing Oral Communication B* (Keirinkan) L18

[Notes]

<sup>1</sup>) 984 most frequent words used in 6 junior high school English textbooks

<sup>2</sup>) 20 most frequent word forms from million-word spoken and written samples of CANCODE corpora (M. McCarthy)

itself but the frequency and length of pauses that have more effect on listening comprehension as they provide processing time. Taking this into consideration, Table 1 compares the amount of pauses in each dialogue. Dialogue 2 has the highest percentage (22.2%) and Dialogue 4 the lowest (18.7%).

The speech rate shown in Table 1 indicates the number of words per minute (wpm) excluding pauses. The fastest is Dialogue 2 (206.6 wpm) followed by Dialogue 1 (204.2 wpm), Dialogue 4 (199.4 wpm) and Dialogue 3 (196.4 wpm).

Overlapping and interruption, which occur frequently in unprepared conversations, are observed only in Dialogue 4 (9 times).

### 3.2.3 Vocabulary

Listed Words and Non-listed Words in Table 1 require some explanation. Listed Words here indicate the 984 most frequent words used in six junior high school English textbooks in Japan (*Columbus*, *Everyday English*, *Horizon*, *New Crown*, *Sunshine*, and *Total*). The 984 words consist of 507 basic words designated by the Ministry of Education, and 477 words which appear in more than three of the textbooks listed above (Ishii, Ito, & Kawaguchi, 1999). Table 1 shows that about 80 % of the words used in the dialogues belong to the group of 984 basic words (Listed Words). No significant difference among the dialogues is observed.

The next column, Top 20 Spoken Words, shifts the focus to a spoken discourse-based approach. The number indicates the percentage of words which belong to the group of 20 most frequent word forms. These are taken from million-word spoken samples of CANCODE (Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English) corpora (McCarthy, 1998). All the samples of the CANCODE corpus are based on informal conversations in a variety of settings, such as people's homes, shops, restaurants, offices, and university tutorial groups. It becomes clear that the script of Dialogues 3 and 4 has an outstandingly high percentage of these words (35.3%) in contrast to the other two dialogues (13.1% and 18.5%). In other words, it contains much more speaking-oriented words than the other dialogues.

It is also noteworthy that there is a great difference between the number of words per sentence in the dialogues. At 12.6 words per sentence Dialogue 2 has by far the most, followed by Dialogue 1 with 6.0.

### 3.2.4 Discourse

With regard to the number of turns taken by each speaker, Dialogue 2 again stands out, for it has only five turns, unlike the other dialogues which have 26-27 turns.

Incomplete sentences which are one of the characteristics of spoken discourse can be seen only in Dialogues 3 and 4.

## 3.3 Authenticity Levels

In addition to the factors listed in Table 1, there are several other factors which are taken into consideration when determining the authenticity levels of the dialogues. They

are Articulation, Discourse Markers, Emotion, Talk Length, and Topic Development. Based on all the factors mentioned above, the following is a list of the dialogues from the most authentic to the least authentic according to the four authors' ratings: Dialogue 4, Dialogue 3, Dialogue 1, and Dialogue 2.

### 3.4 Procedure

#### 3.4.1 Teachers

In the experiment, 32 teachers (16 native and 16 non-native) are asked to listen to a tape recording of the four dialogues and answer a series of questions, such as their overall impressions, the main factors which affect their answers, the appropriateness of each dialogue for different levels of learners, etc. (see Appendix 2).

#### 3.4.2 Students

After having the terms "natural" or "unnatural" explained, the students are asked to listen to four dialogues and answer the questions, such as whether the dialogues sound natural or not, which elements they think make the dialogue sound natural or unnatural, which dialogue they would like to study in class, and so on (see Appendix 2). In this study, "natural" is explained to the students to mean what they feel is natural in a native speaker conversation, not what they think native speakers would find natural.

## 4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

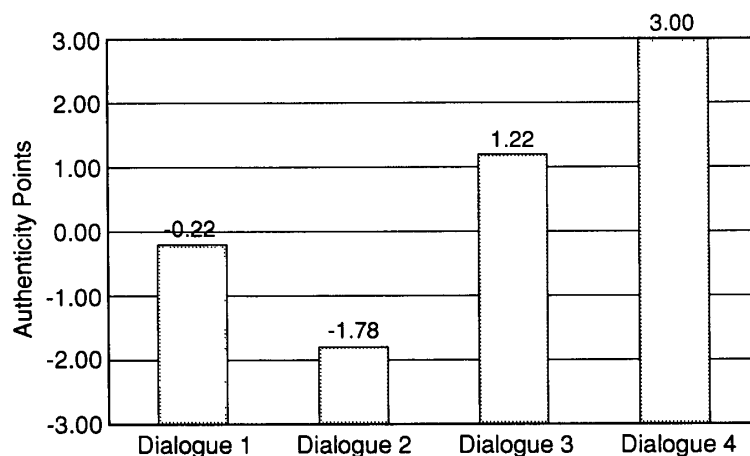
### 4.1 Teacher Questionnaire

In the teachers' questionnaire (Appendix 2), the teachers are asked about their opinions regarding the four textbook dialogues they listen to, which are the same ones as those the learners listen to for the students' questionnaire.

#### 4.1.1 Authenticity Levels

In Question #1 of the Teacher Questionnaire, the study focuses on how teachers rate the four tape-recorded dialogues in regards to authenticity.

**Figure 1 Teacher Questionnaire: Authenticity Levels**



The teachers are asked to evaluate the four dialogues they hear on a scale of 4 from Natural (+3 points), Somewhat Natural (+1 point), Somewhat Unnatural (−1 point), and Unnatural (−3 points). The graph in Figure 1 shows the average points of each dialogue. The teachers rate Dialogue 4 as the most authentic with a full 3 points, followed by Dialogue 3 (1.22 points), Dialogue 1 (−0.22 points), and Dialogue 2 as the least authentic (−1.78 points).

Question #2 of the Teacher Questionnaire concentrates on the factors that influence the teachers' decisions on evaluating authenticity.

**Figure 2 Teacher Questionnaire: Authenticity Factors**

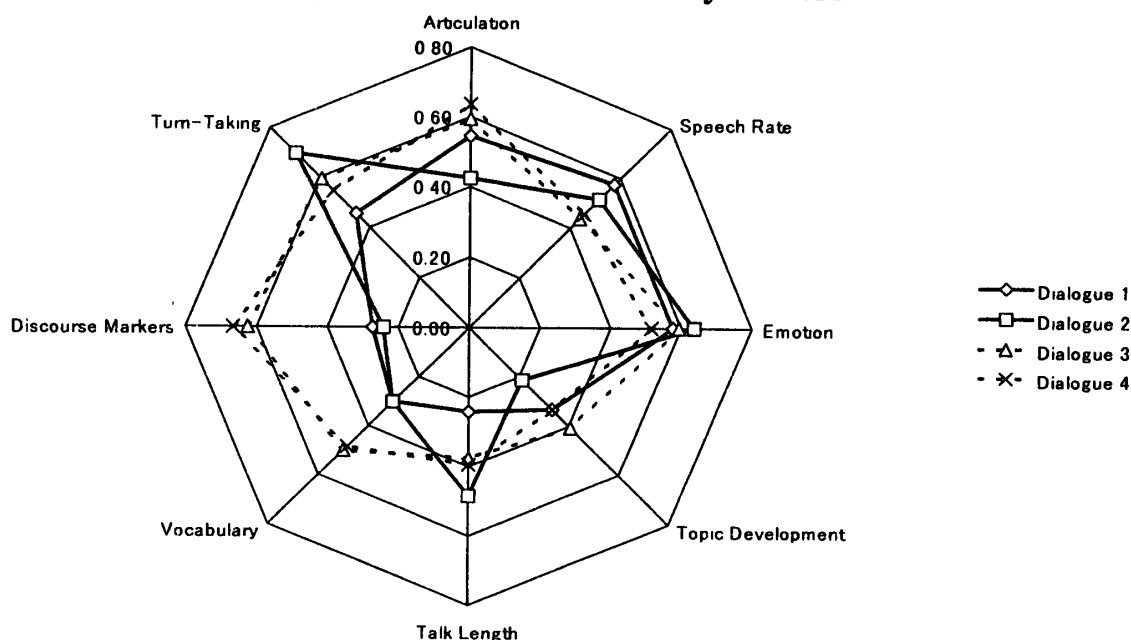


Figure 2 shows what factors lead to the teachers' evaluation of dialogues as authentic or inauthentic. The factors which call for attention in each dialogue are analyzed below, much in reference to Table 1: Dialogue Characteristics. (See Appendix 3 for specific percentages.)

In the most authentic Dialogue 4, Discourse Markers (67%) and Articulation (64%) are the factors which stand out. Discourse markers are a new factor, as they hardly exist in dialogues #1 and #2. As this dialogue is a recording of a real conversation among native speakers, the sound of the recording and thus the speech, to some extent, is muffled and therefore more difficult to listen and comprehend than the other three clearly recorded, acted out dialogues.

In Dialogue 3, the second authentic dialogue, Discourse Markers collects more attention (63%) than the other factors. As have been mentioned above for Dialogue 4, discourse markers rarely exist in the first two recordings. As the script for this dialogue—which is shared with Dialogue 4 as well—has back-channeling, the teachers may have reacted to this new factor.

In Dialogue 1, Emotion (58%), Speech Rate (58%), and Articulation (55%) are stressing points for the teachers' decision making as it being third authentic out of the four

dialogues. The teachers comment in notes that the dialogue seems too smooth, clear, and fast speeched, giving the impression of it being read straight from the script.

In Dialogue 2, the least authentic dialogue, Turn-taking (70%) and Emotion (64%) stand out in its effect of evaluation. The dialogue has the least turns of speaking among the speakers (5 turns among three people during a 70-second conversation—See Table 1) and thus gives the listeners the impression of the speakers presenting prepared short speeches rather than having an interactive discussion.

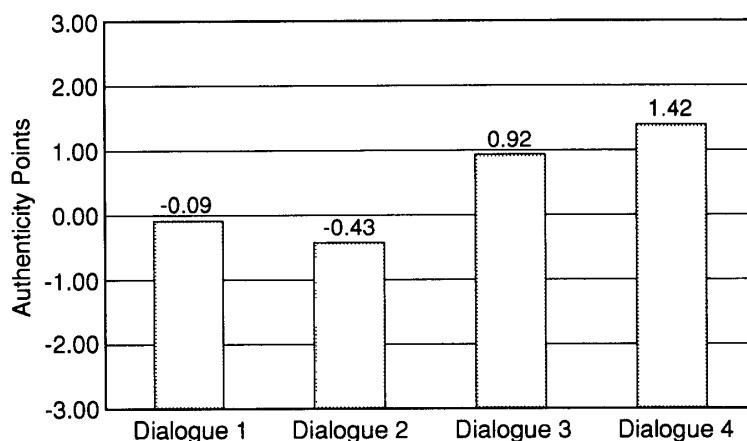
## 4.2 Student Questionnaire

In the students' questionnaire (Appendix 2), the students give their opinions regarding the four textbook dialogues they listen to; the same recordings used for the teachers' questionnaire.

### 4.2.1 Authenticity

In Question #1 of the Student Questionnaire, the study focuses on how much the students are capable of distinguishing authentic from inauthentic materials.

**Figure 3 Student Questionnaire: Authenticity Levels**



The students are asked to evaluate the four dialogues they hear on a scale of 4 from Natural (+3 points), Somewhat Natural (+1 point), Somewhat Unnatural (−1 point), and Unnatural (−3 points). The graph in Figure 3 shows the average points of each dialogue. The students rate Dialogue 4 as the most authentic (1.42 points), followed by Dialogue 3 (0.93 points), Dialogue 1 (−0.09 points), and Dialogue 2 as the least authentic (−0.43 points).

Question #2 of the Student Questionnaire concentrates on the factors that influence the students' decisions on evaluating authenticity.

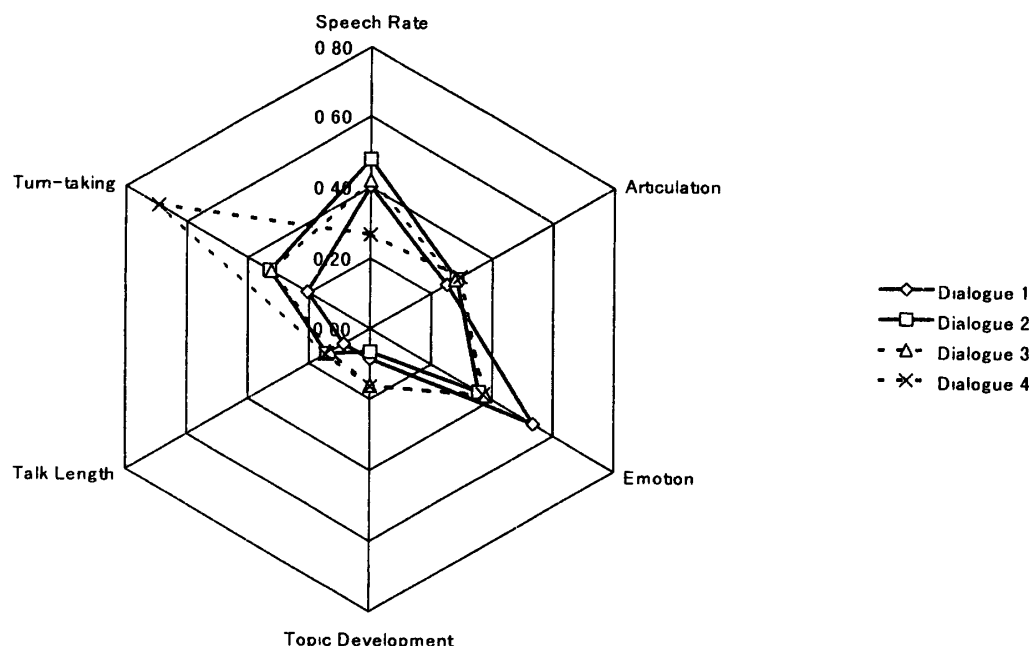
**Figure 4 Student Questionnaire: Authenticity Factors**

Figure 4 shows what factors lead to the students' evaluation of dialogues as authentic or inauthentic. Each factor that stands out per dialogue is analyzed below, much in reference to Table 1: Dialogue Characteristics. (See Appendix 4 for specific percentages.) Two factors, Vocabulary and Discourse Markers which are in the Teacher Questionnaire, have been excluded from the Student Questionnaire as the authors consider them difficult for the students to reflect on.

For the most authentic Dialogue 4, Turn-taking (69%) calls for much attention. Although its script is the same as Dialogue 3, the discourse factor differences seen in Table 1 indicate constant change of speakers with 27 turns in 80 seconds of the dialogue and the shortest pause length (18.7%; 13.5 seconds / 80 seconds) which affect the impact of the dialogue as exchanging speaking turns in a high pace.

Speech Rate gains the highest interest (42%) for Dialogue 3, the second authentic recording. Although this dialogue has the second longest pause length (20.1%; 18.5 seconds / 86 seconds), its average talk length per turn is 3.2 seconds which is the second shortest, and the conversation may have been taken as fast pitched and vigorous.

In Dialogue 1, Emotion (53%) is the key point for the students' decision making as it being the third authentic dialogue out of the four. The students comment in notes that a particular female speaker has an extremely high-pitched voice which gives the impression that the dialogue is read aloud from a script, exaggerated and overacted by actors.

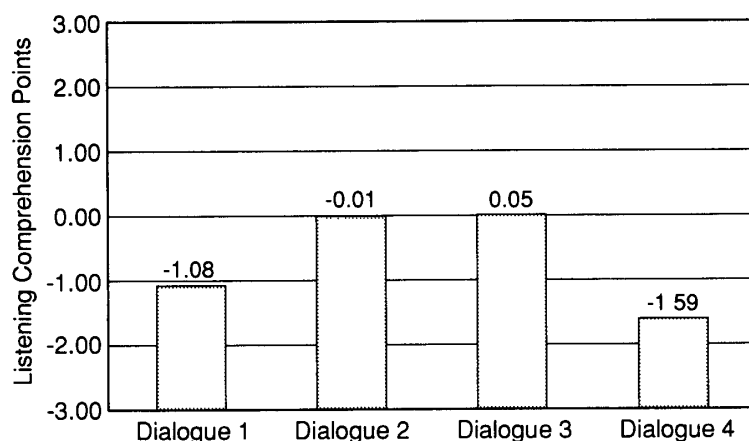
In Dialogue 2, the least authentic dialogue, Speech Rate (48%) stands out in its effect of evaluation. According to Table 1, the dialogue has the fastest speech rate but also the longest pause rate of the four (22.2%; 15.1 seconds out of the 70-second conversation) and thus gives the listeners the impression of a slow-speeched talk.



### 4.2.3 Listening Comprehension

In Question #3 of the Student Questionnaire, the study centralizes on how much the students feel the materials they are given are comprehensible for them as language learners.

**Figure 5 Student Questionnaire: Listening Comprehension Levels**



The students are asked to evaluate the four dialogues they hear on a scale of 4 from Comprehensible (+3 points), Somewhat Comprehensible (+1 point), Somewhat Incomprehensible (–1 point), and Incomprehensible (–3 points). The graph in Figure 5 shows the average points of each dialogue. The students rate Dialogue 3 as the most comprehensible (0.05 points), followed by Dialogue 2 (–0.01 points), Dialogue 1 (–1.08), and Dialogue 4 as the least comprehensible (–1.59 points).

The main interest of Question #4 of the Student Questionnaire is the factors influencing the students' evaluation of how comprehensible the dialogues are.

Figure 6 shows what factors lead to the students' evaluation of dialogues as comprehensible or incomprehensible. Analysis for each factor that stands out per dialogue is referred in many cases to Table 1. (See Appendix 5 for specific percentages.)

Dialogue 3 is chosen as the most comprehensible, and Speech Rate gains the highest attention (64%). Its longer pause rate (20.1%) and shorter length of speech per turn (3.2 seconds per turn) may have helped the students to feel comfortable in listening and understanding the material, as 45% of that 64% answer in the positive; Comprehensible or Somewhat Comprehensible (Appendix 5).

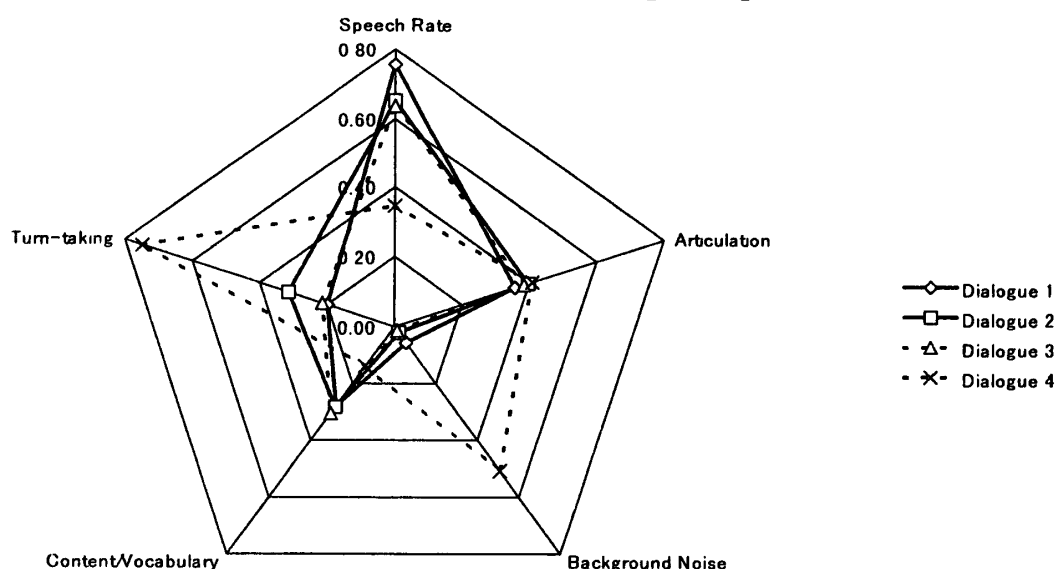
In Dialogue 2, the second comprehensible dialogue, Speech Rate (65%) also stands out in its effect of evaluation. As the dialogue has the longest pause rate of the four (22.2%—15.1 seconds / 70-second conversation), the impression of a slow-speeched talk makes the dialogue easy to listen to and understand.

In Dialogue 1, Speech Rate (76%) makes a clear influence on the students' decision making as it being third comprehensible out of the four dialogues. This dialogue is the longest of the four—90 seconds—and has the biggest total in number of words; 244 words. In addition, the pause length is the second shortest (19.9%—18.3 seconds / 90 seconds)

following authentic Dialogue 4. There are also no incomplete sentences in this dialogue. These characteristics may give the impression of the dialogue as fast-speeched and agitating for the listener.

Sharing the same script as most comprehensible Dialogue 3, Dialogue 4 marks as the most incomprehensible, with Turn-taking (75%) and Background Noise (51%) standing out as those reasons. Having the shortest pause rate (18.7%) with the shortest length of speech per turn (3.0 sec) in 27 turns may give the students an impression of fast-talk conversation. Furthermore, it being the only dialogue with any background noise whatsoever, the muffled recording gives negative influence on the students' comprehension, as all 75% for Turn-taking mark in the negative; Incomprehensible or Somewhat Incomprehensible (Appendix 5).

**Figure 6 Student Questionnaire: Listening Comprehension Factors**



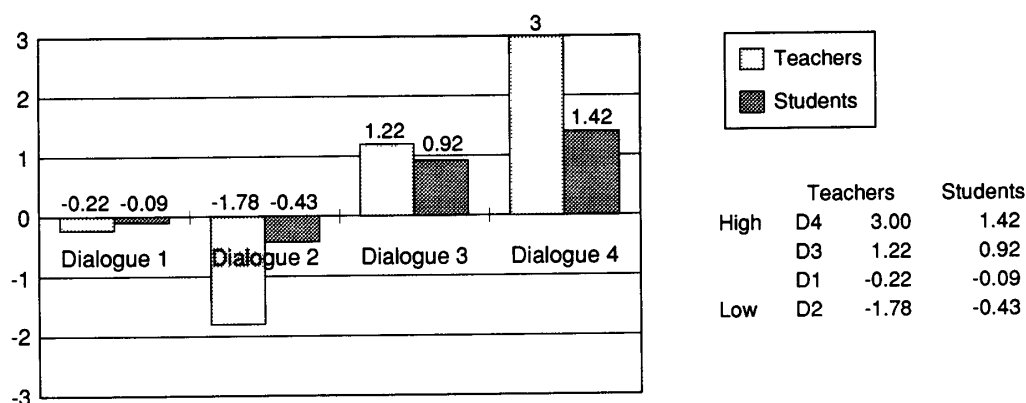
## 5. DISCUSSION

In this section, the three research questions mentioned in Chapter 2 will be discussed.

### 5.1 Perception of Authenticity

*Question 1: Do learners and teachers have a similar perception of 'authenticity' of recorded listening dialogues?*

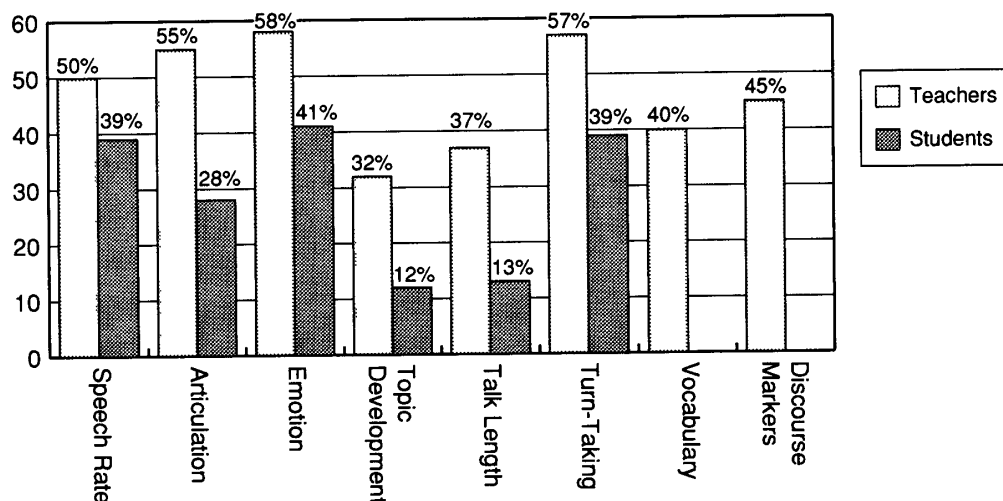
The teachers' perception of authenticity has corresponded with the four authors' assumption on the degree of authenticity. Based on this result, the point of interest here is to find out if the students, who are in their stages of learning, could in fact acknowledge the difference of authenticity. Figure 7 indicates that although the students cannot distinguish the differences as clearly as the teachers, they can indeed perceive the differences of authenticity levels in the same order as the teachers.

**Figure 7 Comparison of Perception of Authenticity**

## 5.2 Authenticity Factors

*Question 2: What are the factors which determine learners' and teachers' perceptions of 'authenticity'?*

Figure 8 shows that factors which both the teachers and the students base their authenticity levels correspond to one another. Here also, the students in their stages of learning cannot perceive the factors as clearly as the teachers. Yet the result shows that both the teachers and the students base their authenticity level mainly on Speech Rate, Emotion, and Turn-taking. In other words, these are the main factors on which teachers as well as students base their impression when they listen to a recorded dialogue and either feel it as authentic or inauthentic. The students are not asked on Discourse Markers and Vocabulary, since these two factors are considered by the authors difficult for them to analyze.

**Figure 8 Authentic Factors**

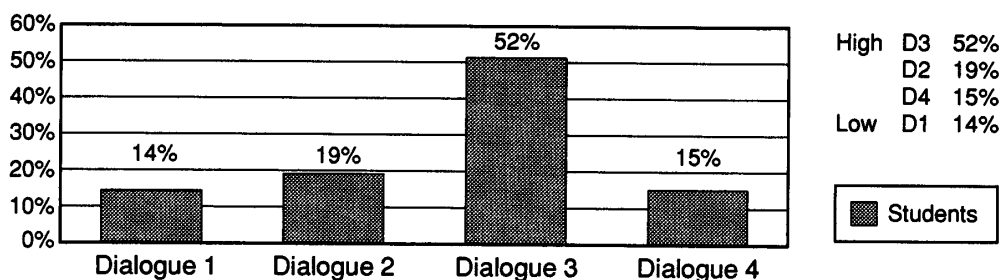
## 5.3 Preferences for Listening Dialogues

*Question 3: How does authenticity affect teachers' and students' preference of listening dialogues?*

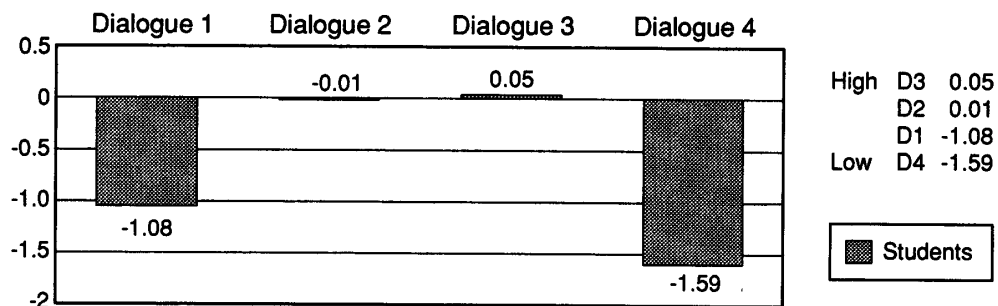
### 5.3.1 Students' Preference

The students are asked to choose one out of four dialogues with which they prefer to study in listening class. Figures 9 and 10 show that the students prefer dialogues with higher listening comprehension over authentic dialogues for learning as they choose Dialogues 2 and 3 over Dialogue 4. However, they also prefer the more authentic Dialogue 3 strongly over the similar leveled, inauthentic Dialogue 2 as shown in Figure 10 by 52% over 19%. Therefore, it can be said that the students in this survey prefer materials which they feel to be comprehensible and authentic.

**Figure 9 Students' Preference**



**Figure 10 Impression of Listening Comprehension**



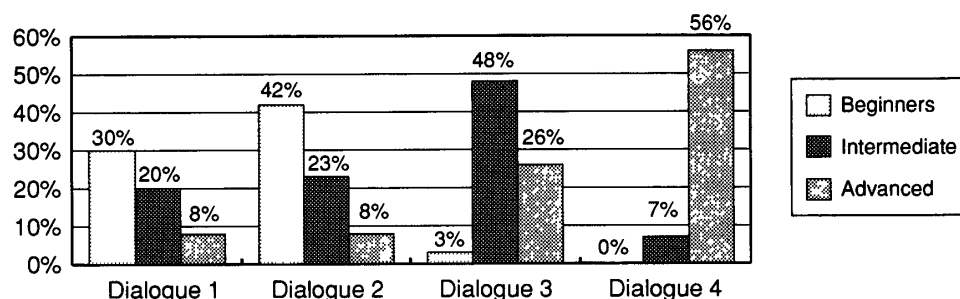
### 5.3.2 Teachers' Preference

The teachers are asked to choose one dialogue out of the four which they prefer to use in class for beginners, intermediate, and advanced levels. Figure 11 shows that the teachers prefer Dialogue 2 most (42%) for beginners, 3 (48%) for intermediate, 4 (56%) for advanced level. The teachers have chosen the least authentic Dialogue 2 for beginners, and the most authentic Dialogue 4 for advanced levels. The teachers feel that authenticity is not the prime requirement for all the levels; they have a distinctive preference for each level. In selecting listening materials, the teachers prefer to give higher listening comprehension materials with lower authenticity to beginners, and the ones with high authenticity to advanced level students.

Compared with Figure 9, Figure 11 shows that the teachers' preference for the intermediate level is fairly close to the students' choice. The students in this research are not grouped in levels, so their result shows an average of a mixed level group. It should be pointed out that Dialogue 3, which students prefer the most, and with the highest total

preference of 77% by the teachers, is a dialogue with an authentic script including incomplete sentences and many discourse markers. It has no overlapping or interruptions by the speakers, is clearly articulated, and has the longest pause in comparison with the other dialogues.

**Figure 11 Teachers' Preference**



## 6. CONCLUSION

This research began in order to find out the basic state of learners' and teachers' perception for authenticity, the factors to determine their perception, and how authenticity affects their preference. Questionnaires were given to students and teachers based on their impressions.

The results of the questionnaires show that although the students cannot distinguish the differences as clearly as the teachers, they are capable of perceiving differences of authenticity levels and their influential factors. In selecting materials, the teachers have a distinctive preference for each level, and the students basically prefer the materials with high listening comprehension and authenticity.

The implication of this study may help material writers to produce dialogues, or teachers to select dialogues which are good representations of real spontaneous speech, but at the same time help facilitate learners to systematically develop listening ability that can be used in real life listening.

There are two points which must be taken into consideration for further studies. First, the subject students should be grouped into language ability levels for the questionnaire. The present study gives the result of a mixed level group, and thus does not offer tendencies according to levels of language ability. Second, the students' listening comprehension for each dialogue should be tested. This research questions on the students' impression of how well they feel they understand the dialogues and therefore is limited in suggesting proper levels of comprehension.

This research paper is a revision of a presentation given by the same authors at the 12th World Congress of Applied Linguistics held at Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, in August, 1999.

## NOTE

1) Oral Communication B is one of the courses that was introduced into senior high schools in 1996. The objectives of the course are to develop students' abilities to understand a speaker's intentions, and to foster a positive attitude toward communicating in English. Language-use activities in listening and speaking include the following:

- a) to listen to what is spoken or read aloud naturally and understand the content
- b) to listen to passages and understand the outline and/or the main points
- c) to organize ideas about what has been listened to and express them effectively.

There were sixteen textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education for this course.

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## Appendix 1 Tape Scripts

### Dialogue 1

- Klaus : Would you like a cigarette?
- Maria : Thanks, Klaus. I think I will.
- Sachiko : Oh, that's a bad habit.
- Klaus : Don't be so critical, Sachiko. You eat plenty of chocolate!
- Sachiko : At least that doesn't trouble others.
- Maria : Stop arguing. There're more important things to worry about.
- Sachiko : What, for instance, Maria?
- Maria : Well, for instance the poor people in the world who cannot get enough food.
- Klaus : What about the poor in your own country? There's a large gap between the rich and the poor in Brazil.
- Maria : That's true, but we are trying to do something about it.
- Sachiko : Such as destroying the rain forests?
- Maria : That's not fair.
- Klaus : Why not? It's true, isn't it?
- Sachiko : How about the famous banks in Switzerland, Klaus?
- Klaus : Ah, but we are at least offering a service. We are not using up natural resources carelessly.
- Maria : Which is worse, destroying rain forests or killing whales? Or making lots of money without thinking of others?
- Klaus : They are equally bad. Surely we can exist without all this unnecessary destruction and greed.
- Sachiko : We don't kill whales for fun. We do catch whales for scientific research.
- Klaus : Come on, Sachiko. No one believes that.
- Sachiko : Are you certain? Why?
- Klaus : Because I've read about it.
- Sachiko : You mean, Klaus, you believe everything you read in the newspapers.
- Klaus : I didn't say newspapers. I'm thinking more of scientific and economic journals.
- Maria : Hey, you're all being much too serious. Well, then! Let's ask our teacher for a discussion about conservation issues in class.
- Sachiko : Good idea. What do you think, Klaus?
- Klaus : O.K.

### Dialogue 2

- Hiroshi : Every day we see lots of trash, plastic bags, empty bottles and cans thrown quite carelessly in public places. I'm afraid we are already too used to them and take them for granted. So I'd like to say that we've got to be more careful and stop throwing them away. I don't think this is so hard to do.
- Susan : In addition, we're too wasteful these days. We throw away huge amounts of food , for example, every day at home, at school, and in many other places. It's clearly a terrible waste of our natural resources. What's more, it pollutes our environment. I

think it's time we took practical action to think seriously enough about such wasteful lifestyles and do what we can today to protect nature.

Mariko : Well, all three ideas are very good and practical. I don't think we have to choose the best one because they can all be put into practice together today if we try.

S and H : I agree.

Susan : It seems we have agreed that all three suggestions are great. A little stitch in time saves nine. And our small action in time can save our environment.

### Dialogue 3 & 4

Jenny : Do you think the Japanese are wasteful?

Rajiv : Yeah.

Jenny : You think so.

Rajiv : Pretty much.

Jenny : Yeah. I agree with you.

Nancy : But in some ways... they're trying 'cause in some Japanese...

Jenny : Only recently they've begun to recycle...

Rajiv : I've seen one thing. Like, these people are so careful about things, right? And they pack something or something?

Jenny : Oh.

Rajiv : But they use such a lot of Styrofoams [Styrofoam] and stuff which is so polluting.

Jenny : Every time you buy something...

Nancy : Package!

Jenny : Packaged, wrapped, bag and I'd like to say, 'No, forget it.'

Nancy : Yeah.

Jenny : Just put it in a bag and just never mind but that's what they're doing in Australia. They're into this whole environmental [environmentally] conscious thing and McDonald's is not using Styrofoam and, uh, it's the same in the States. And the shopping centers are using biodegradable bags or something. I think they should start doing more of that here.

Nancy : Yeah.

Jenny : I think it's necessary.

Nancy : And there's [there are] tissue boxes which have brown tissues instead of white,

Jenny : ...white...

Nancy : so...

Jenny : ...the dye.

Nancy : Yeah, the dye.

Jenny : Yeah. They bleach the tissues.

Nancy : But I don't see that in Japan that much ...

Jenny : It's... I guess it'll eventually start.

Nancy : Yeah. But some of the McDonald places in Japan... they still have Styrofoam.

Jenny : Um-hm. And even now the sh... the soap, the detergents, and everything... everything... the shampoos, they're all becoming biodegradable or... yeah.



## Appendix 2 Questionnaires

### Teacher Questionnaire

You will hear four dialogues taken from a lesson in different listening textbooks. The dialogues are student discussions on the topic of environment. First just listen to all four dialogues. Then you will hear them again. This time, for each dialogue, please choose the answer that most closely corresponds to your opinion.

			D1	D2	D3	D4	
1	As a whole, the recording of this dialogue sounds (your impression)	natural					
		somewhat natural					
		somewhat unnatural					
		unnatural					
2	Please choose the main factor(s) which made you decide your answer for Question 1.	intonation and rhythm					
		usage of discourse markers and back-channeling					
		turn-taking					
		speech rate					
		emotion shown in speakers' voice					
		discourse development of the topic					
		length of each speaker's talk					
		vocabulary used (colloquial or not so colloquial)					
		others					
3	Please write any other impression you may have of each recording below						
Dialogue 1		Dialogue 2		Dialogue 3		Dialogue 4	
4	If you were to choose from the four dialogues, which is the most appropriate to teach listening? Please check one for each level	beginners					
		intermediate					
		advanced					

### Student Questionnaire

You will hear four dialogues of student discussions on the topic of environment. Listen to each recording and choose the answer that most closely corresponds to your opinion.

			D1	D2	D3	D4
1	How did each of the four recordings sound? (Your impression)	Natural				
		Somewhat natural				
		Somewhat unnatural				
		Unnatural				
2	What is the main reason for your decision in answering Question 1? You may choose more than one answer	Pronunciation (Clear / Unclear)				
		Speech rate (Talks in a uniform speed / Fast and slow speech are mixed)				
		Speakers' emotion (Natural emotion / Unnatural emotion)				
		Topic development (Natural development / Unnatural development)				
		Talk length (Varies by turn / Uniform)				
		Turn-taking (Speakers talk overlap / Speakers talk in turns)				
		Other				
3	How comprehensible were the dialogues?	Comprehensible				
		Somewhat Comprehensible				
		Somewhat Incomprehensible				
		Incomprehensible				
4	What are the reasons for your decision in answering Question 3? You may choose as many answers as you like	Fast speech rate				
		Comfortable speech rate				
		Unclear pronunciation				
		Clear pronunciation				
		Background noise				
		Difficult content / vocabulary				
		Easy content / vocabulary				
		Overlap in speech				
		Speakers talk in turns				
		Other				
5	Which dialogue do you prefer to study listening with?		1	2	3	4

**Appendix 3 Authenticity Factors—Teachers**

	D1	D2	D3	D4	Average
Articulation	0.55	0.42	0.59	0.64	0.55
Speech Rate	0.58	0.52	0.44	0.45	0.50
Emotion	0.58	0.64	0.59	0.52	0.58
Topic Development	0.33	0.21	0.41	0.33	0.32
Talk Length	0.24	0.48	0.38	0.39	0.37
Vocabulary	0.30	0.30	0.50	0.48	0.40
Discourse Markers	0.27	0.24	0.63	0.67	0.45
Turn-Taking	0.45	0.70	0.59	0.55	0.57

**Appendix 4 Authenticity Factors—Students**

		D1	D2	D3	D4	Average
Total	Speech Rate	0.40	0.48	0.42	0.27	0.39
	Articulation	0.25	0.28	0.28	0.29	0.28
	Emotion	0.53	0.36	0.38	0.37	0.41
	Topic Development	0.09	0.07	0.16	0.16	0.12
	Talk Length	0.09	0.14	0.13	0.15	0.13
	Turn-Taking	0.21	0.33	0.32	0.69	0.39
	Other	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.05
Authentic (Natural / Somewhat Natural)	Speech Rate	0.20	0.19	0.33	0.21	0.23
	Articulation	0.14	0.18	0.23	0.20	0.19
	Emotion	0.18	0.09	0.28	0.29	0.21
	Topic Development	0.05	0.03	0.14	0.15	0.09
	Talk Length	0.03	0.06	0.11	0.11	0.08
	Turn-Taking	0.07	0.07	0.26	0.51	0.23
	Other	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02
Unauthentic (Unnatural / Somewhat Unnatural)	Speech Rate	0.20	0.29	0.09	0.05	0.16
	Articulation	0.11	0.10	0.04	0.09	0.09
	Emotion	0.36	0.27	0.10	0.08	0.20
	Topic Development	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.03
	Talk Length	0.06	0.08	0.02	0.04	0.05
	Turn-Taking	0.14	0.26	0.07	0.18	0.16
	Other	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03

**Appendix 5 Listening Comprehension Factors—Students**

		D1	D2	D3	D4	Average
Total	Speech Rate	0.76	0.65	0.64	0.35	0.60
	Articulation	0.36	0.40	0.38	0.41	0.39
	Background Noise	0.06	0.02	0.01	0.51	0.15
	Content / Vocabulary	0.28	0.28	0.30	0.14	0.25
	Turn-Taking	0.20	0.31	0.21	0.75	0.37
Positive (Comprehensible/ Somewhat Comprehensible)	Speech Rate	0.16	0.53	0.45	0.06	0.30
	Articulation	0.21	0.33	0.28	0.04	0.22
	Background Noise	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Content / Vocabulary	0.10	0.13	0.19	0.03	0.11
	Turn-Taking	0.15	0.31	0.11	0.00	0.14
Negative (Incomprehensible/ Somewhat Incomprehensible)	Speech Rate	0.59	0.12	0.18	0.29	0.30
	Articulation	0.15	0.06	0.10	0.37	0.17
	Background Noise	0.06	0.02	0.01	0.51	0.15
	Content / Vocabulary	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.11	0.14
	Turn-Taking	0.05	0.00	0.10	0.75	0.23