**Lecture 2 Speech communication process & listening barrier**

**Task1 Case study Interference in public communication process**

Read the following example identify the various components of the speech communication process. **Speaker/Context/Interference/Message/Feedback**

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| Context | It was 5:15 pm and the international sales conference of computer giant Lexstar had been going in Shenzhen all day. A series of new produce presentations to buyers from the company’s largest customers had taken much longer than expected |
| Speaker | Cindy Chen was worried. As a marketing manager for the T-series of laptops, she was the last speaker of the day. When she rose to address the audience, she knew she faced a difficult situation. she had been given 45 minutes for her presentation, and the meeting was scheduled to end in 15 minutes. What’s more, sales of her product line depend in large part on this presentation. |
| Speaker | Cindy stepped to the microphone and began to speak. She could see her audience looking at their watches; she knew they were eager to get to dinner after a long day of speeches |
| Adaptation to Interference | “Good afternoon”, Cindy said, “and thanks for your attention. I know everyone is ready for dinner---I certainly am. I was given 45 minutes for my pre, but with your kind cooperation, I will do my best to finish in half an hour. I think you’ll find the time worthwhile, because the computers I’m going to tell you about are priced right to increase your customer base.” Cindy was relieved to see several people smiling as they settled back in their seats. |
| Message | Now that she had the audience’s attention, Cindy presented each new computer as briefly as possible. She reduced her planned presentation to emphasize the features that would be most attractive to buyers from different countries. She ended by promising to contact anyone who needed more information. She quickly added her email address to her PPT slides and was encouraged to see some audience write it down. |
| Feedback | As promised, Cindy finished her presentation under half an hour. “And that’s it!” she concluded. “Let’s eat!”. Later, the marketing director complimented her on dealing so well with a tough situation. ”You did a great job”, the director said, “Next year, we will try to make all the presentations as efficient as yours.” |

***Question:***

1. ***What kind of interference do you recognize in the above communication context? How did Cindy handle that interference? What can you learn from her case?***

**Q1:** audience wanted to have dinner after a long day of speeches.

**Q2:** By saying that she would keep it short and understood the audience’s mood to show her empathy. And she did it.

**Q3:** taking your audience into account and always present your empathy.

**Task 2 Case study Cultural Context of Speech communication**

Read the following report about the conflict in a press conference and identify the possible reasons which cause the conflict.

[Chinese reporter at G20 steals show and slammed - The Korea Times](https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2010/11/116_76594.html#:~:text=Chinese%20reporter%20at%20G20%20steals%20show%20and%20slammed,%2F%20Courtesy%20of%20China%20Daily%20By%20Sunny%20Lee)

BEIJING ― Rui Chenggang, a reporter with China’s state-controlled CCTV, went to Seoul to cover the G20 summit and became a news story himself due to his controversial remarks.

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By Sunny Lee

*“I think I get to represent all of Asia,” Rui told President Barak Obama during a press conference last week, in an exchange with the American head of state, who said he would answer a final question from the press of Korea, the host.*

*Rui raised his hand and Obama thought he was Korean. “Unfortunately, I hate to disappoint you, President Obama, I'm actually Chinese,” Rui said.*

*Obama clarified: “In fairness, though, I did say that I was going to let the Korean press ask the last question.”*

*Rui was unwavering: “Will my Korean friends allow me to ask a question on your behalf? Yes or no?*”  
  
After a round of exchanges, Obama relented.

The episode soon became an attention-grabber on the Chinese Internet, outstripping the popularity of the currently unfolding Asian Games in the southern city of Guangzhou.  
  
Michael Anti, a Chinese journalist and a former Nieman fellow at Harvard University, felt so embarrassed by the episode that he posted an apology on Facebook on behalf of Rui. “Sorry, Obama and Korean journalists,” he wrote.“It was an impolite move. I thought Obama and the Korean journalists deserved an apology,” he later said in an interview.  
  
“Watching it, I felt very awkward. It almost seemed like he was trying to push confrontation,” said Mark MacKinnon, a Beijing-based correspondent for Canadian newspaper, the Globe and Mail, in an interview. “It put Obama in a very uncomfortable spot for having to accept the premise that China could speak on behalf of, or Chinese reporters could speak on behalf of the Asian press corps.”  
  
Rui became a celebrity figure in China in 2007 when his blog ignited a grass-roots patriotic movement that helped push Starbucks, an American coffee brand, out of Beijing’s historic Forbidden City. Now, Chinese tea is served there.  
  
Naturally, in some pockets of China, Rui is very popular as a symbol of patriotism and as a hero who stands against the West, which they think is trying to undermine China’s rise.“Rui Chenggang is China’s pride. Can’t you realize that?” A reader on the website Caixin said.  
  
Some supporters of Rui pointed out that journalism by nature is a competitive profession and argued that he simply did his job, adding that what he did was very much acceptable in Western practice.  
  
MacKinnon, the Canadian journalist, doesn’t think so. “There is a difference. If you’re in a scrum, then it’s sort of free for all journalists. You sometimes shout over each other. But there is a different protocol. In a formalized press conference, especially in an international press conference where Obama was giving a question to the host country, to jump up and insist to ask a question and also claim to represent the entire continent, was inappropriate.  
  
“The G20 was hosted by Canada earlier this year. And if a president gave the question to a Canadian reporter, then an American stood up and say, ‘you know I speak on behalf of the North American continent,’ that would be very offensive,” MacKinnon said.

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***Question 2***

***Do you think Mr. Rui’s behavior is offensive in a public speaking context? Do you understand why Obama might be uncomfortable with Rui’s question? Please explain the case study in terms of cultural difference.***

Q1: yes, absolutely. Because Obama was asking a Korean reporter and he was too arrogant to ‘represent the Asia’. He was making everyone in that room embarrassed.

Q2: Because it’s unexpected. If I were Obama, I will feel offended. On the other hand, I don’t know what his purpose is to rob the chance to question. I would be alert.

**Task 3 Listening Style and Barrier**

**Active Listening**

Considerable evidence suggests that your own listening skills could be improved. Within 24 hours after listening to a lecture or speech, you will most likely recall only about 50 percent of the message. Forty-eight hours later, you are above average if you remember more than 25 percent of the message. Learning about listening can help you increase your listening skills so you can gain more benefits from the speeches you hear.

1. **Listening Components**

Listening is a complex process of selecting, attending to, understanding, remembering, and responding to verbal and nonverbal messages. Being able to describe these listening components can help you retain more and become a better speaker and listener.

**Selecting**. To select a sound, the first stage of listening, is to *single out* a message from several competing messages. As a public speaker, your job is to develop a presentation that motivates your listeners to select your message.

**Attending**. The *sequel* to selecting is attending. To attend to a sound is to focus on it. One of your key challenges as ***a public speaker is to capture and then hold your audience’s attention.***

**Understanding**. *Boiled down to its essence*, communication is the process of understanding, or making sense of our experiences and sharing that sense with others. We understand something when we create meaning out of what we experience. ***The challenge of being understood comes back to a focus on the audience***.

**Remembering**. The next stage in the listening process is remembering. To remember is to recall ideas and information. You hear more than one billion words each year, but how much information do you *retain*? It depends on how well you listen. Ask yourself what is the take-away message?

**Responding**. The final stage in the listening process is to respond. When listeners respond, they react to what they have heard with their behavior. For example, it could be that you want them simply to remember and restate your key ideas. Or you may want them to vote for someone, buy something, or enroll in a course. That’s why it’s useful ***for public speakers to develop specific purposes for their talks.***

1. **Barriers to Effective Listening**
2. **Listener Fatigue**

We spend a large part of each day listening. That’s both good news and bad news. The good news is that because we listen a lot, we have the potential to become effective listeners. The bad news is that instead of getting better at it, we often *tune out* because we hear so much information that we get tired of listening and reduce our concentration on the message. Listening researchers have developed what they call the **working memory theory of listening,** which explains why we sometimes just don’t listen well.（内存爆了，没有外存可以交换） The theory suggests that when **a listener’s capacity** is reached (when our working memory is full), then it’s harder to concentrate and remember what we hear. (internal difficulties)

1. **Personal Concern**

You are sitting in your English class on a Friday afternoon. It’s a beautiful day. You slump into your seat, open your notebook, and prepare to take notes on the lecture. As the professor talks about an upcoming assignment, you begin to think about how you are going to spend your Saturday. One thought leads to another as you mentally plan your weekend. Suddenly you hear your professor say, “For Monday’s test, you will be expected to know the principles I’ve just reviewed.” What principles?

What test? You were present in class, and you did hear the professor’s lecture, but you’re not sure what was said. **Your own thoughts are among the biggest competitors** for your attention when you are a member of an audience. Most of us would rather l**isten to our own inner speech** than to a public speaker’s message.（internal difficulties）

1. **Outside Distractions**

While sitting in class, you notice the person in front of you checking Weibo on her tablet computer. Two classmates behind you are discussing their favorite game episodes. You feel your phone vibrate in your pocket, which means someone just sent you a text. Looking out the window you see a varsity football hero struggling to break into his car to retrieve the keys he left in the ignition.

As your English professor drones on about the principle of public speaking, you find it difficult to focus on his lecture. Most of us don’t listen well when physical distractions compete with the speaker. And, with lives immersed in technology, the next distraction is only a text, phone call, or tweet away. Research has found that merely the visible presence of a smartphone can be a communication distraction and reduce our listening effectiveness. We can’t resist checking to see if

someone wants to communicate with us.(external difficulties)

1. **Prejudice**

Sometimes we make snap judgments about a speaker based on his or her appearance and then fail to listen because we have already dismissed the speaker’s ideas as inconsequential or irrelevant. For example, if we know someone backs a different political party, practices a different religion, or supports causes we don’t, we may be tempted to dismiss their ideas even before we hear them.

On the flip side, some people too readily accept what someone says just because they like the way the person looks, sounds, or dresses. For example, we tend to believe that Asian Americans are much better in math. Such positive prejudices can also inhibit your ability to listen accurately to a message. We may have a favorable bias because we think the speaker shares our beliefs. We may also prejudge a message because we are biased for or against the message and messenger.(internal difficulties)

1. **Difference between thought rate and speech rate**

Ralph Nichols, a pioneer in listening research and training, has identified a listening problem that centers on the way you process the words you hear.12 Most people talk at a rate of 125 words a minute. But you have the ability to listen seven to ten times faster, to as many as 700 to 1,200 words a minute! The difference between your ability to process words and the speed at which a speaker can produce them gives you time to ignore a speaker periodically. Eventually, you stop listening; the extra time allows you to daydream and drift away from the message.

Nichols suggests that the different rates of speech and thought need not be a listening liability. Instead of drifting away from the speech, you can enhance your listening effectiveness by mentally summarizing what the speaker has said from time to time.(internal difficulties)

1. **Listening type**

New research suggests that not everyone listens to information in the same way. There are at least four different listening styles—preferred ways of making sense out of spoken messages. Listening researchers have discovered that many listeners have one of the following listening styles: relational, analytical, critical, or task-oriented. Understanding your listening style can help you become a better and more flexible listener. **About 40 percent of listeners have one primary listening style; another 40 percent use more than one style; and about 20 percent don’t have a listening style preference.** There is evidence that you adapt your style to fit your listening goal. The best listeners are flexible listeners who can adapt their style to fit the occasion and the person speaking.

1. **Relational-Oriented Listeners** If you are comfortable listening to people express feelings and emotions, most likely you are a relational-oriented listener. This type of listener is highly empathic and attempts to seek common ground with the person he or she is listening to. Relational-oriented listeners are also easily moved by *poignant* illustrations and anecdotes. They enjoy hearing stories about people and personal relationships. When speaking with others in interpersonal and group situations, they are generally less apprehensive than other types of listeners.
2. **Task-Oriented Listeners** Task-oriented listeners want to know what to do with the information they hear. They listen for the verbs—the action words that indicate what task should be completed after listening to the information. The task-oriented listener wants people to get to the point and listens for actions that need to be taken. To a task-oriented listener, a long story or a lengthy personal example without some direction is less satisfying than a call for action. Task-oriented listeners also seem to be more *skeptical* than people with other listening styles. They prefer to be given evidence to support the recommendations for action.
3. **Analytical Listeners** Analytical listeners prefer to listen to complex information laced with facts and details. They often *withhold* judgment before reaching a specific conclusion. You’re an analytical listener if you reject messages because they don’t have adequate evidence to support their conclusions. In addition, analytical listeners don’t like *rambling* stories that don’t seem to have a point; they want to know what the key facts are rather than listen to a long narrative. Analytical listeners make good judges or lawyers because they enjoy listening to debates and hearing arguments for and against ideas.
4. **Critical Listeners** You’re a critical listener if you spend time evaluating the messages you hear. Critical listeners are comfortable listening to detailed, complex information. yet can focus on contradictions and inconsistencies in the information presented. Critical listeners are also likely to catch errors in the overall reasoning and evidence that are used to reach a conclusion. Knowing your listening style can help you better adapt to a speaker whose style is different from your own. The best listeners adapt their style to fit the situation and the listening goal.

***Q3: Among the five components of listening process, which one isn’t familiar to you? How does that knowledge help you communicate effectively as a public speaker?***

**Answer:**

**Q1:**Analytical Listeners, definitely. Actually, when someone is giving a speech, I prefer to follow his/her thoughts instead of considering the rationale of his/her words.

Q2: be more analytical? I dunno.

***Q4: What can you do to overcome those listening barriers as either a listener or a public speaker? Write down your suggestion in the following table.***

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| Listening Barriers | What can listeners do? | What can speakers do? |
| Listening fatigue | Maybe they can optimize their working memory usage. | Use good news to start the speech, avoid mentioning bad news |
| Personal Concern | Practice concentration, try to go into the ‘flow’ state. | Make jokes/puns to catch audience’s attention  People would like to hear funny stories |
| Outside distraction | Try to be isolated  Cut all the distraction, like muting your phone, closing your eyes etc. | Let it go, there’s not much a speaker can do |
| Prejudice | Try to be unbiased and practice to look at things critically. Consider both the pros and cons | Let it go, there’s not much a speaker can do to alter other’s belief |
| Difference between speech rate and thought rate | Use the extra time to do something else like playing some gadgets in your hands | Speak at a decent rate for listeners to understand. Fasten or slow speak rate based on the content. |

***Q5: Identify your preferred listening styles and also explain why that style might be most effective for a particular communication occasion. Be specific with detailed context.***

Task-oriented listeners; in ielts listening test, you can see the question before you hear the recording so it’s naturally task-oriented.

First, to start with, I'd like to emphasize that I think Mr. Rui’s behavior is absolutely offensive, especially his words—“\*I think I get to represent all of Asia\*”.  
Second, as for the question about \*\*\_why Obama might be uncomfortable with Rui’s question\_\*\*, it's easy to answer. The most straightforward point is that Rui broke the rules. Obama had already stated the last question would go to a Korean reporter. By insisting, Rui forced Obama into a lose-lose situation:  - If Obama ignored Rui, it might seem disrespectful to China.  - If Obama answered, it violated the rules and disrespected South Korea, the host country.  Meanwhile, Rui’s claim to “represent Asia” also sounded terrible and arrogant. No single person can speak for an entire continent.    
Third,  I'd like to talk about Cultural Differences.Some say Western cultures value rules more than Eastern cultures. \*\*I disagree.\*\* Both value rules. Rui’s behavior was rude even in Chinese culture.  The real cultural difference lies in \*\*population and competition\*\*:  - China has 1.4 billion people. Collective action is valued more which is necessary to solve problems efficiently. This might explain why Rui claimed to “represent Asia”—a misguided attempt to show unity.  - Besides, China’s huge population also creates fierce competition. I think, as a journalist, Rui’s action may be less about patriotism but more about grabbing attention.   
Forth, I'd like to say that his action is not proper patriotism.China promotes “a community with a shared future for humanity,” not dominance. Rui’s words, however, made China seem aggressive. As a journalist representing China, his statement contradicted our national values.