



# Dictogloss - Teaching Integrated Chinese Listening in Cooperative Interaction

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**Abstract.** The lack of cooperation and interaction between teachers and students and the low level of learning engagement in Chinese listening classrooms for international students is a predicament faced by most universities teaching Chinese. Dictogloss, as an excellent teaching model widely used in teaching English as a second language (TESOL), has been proven by scholars to increase the frequency of cooperative interaction in the classroom. In order to solve the current teaching problems in the listening classroom of international students and to further promote the integration and diversification of classroom models in the field of teaching Chinese as a second Language(TCSOL), This paper reviews the main research results of Dictogloss in the field of second language teaching, demonstrates the applicability of the model in the Chinese listening classroom, and discusses Further study directions of Dictogloss in Chinese language teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Dictogloss · Chinese listening teaching · cooperative interaction · TCSOL

## 1 Introduction

Dictogloss can be explained by dividing the word into two parts. The root ‘Dicto’ means ‘dictation’ and ‘gloss’ means exegesis and interpretation. It is widely believed that the essence of this model was first proposed by Wajnryb [1] in his book Grammar Dictation, developed by Kowal and Swain [2] as a listening training method to activate learners’ attention, and then introduced as a new listening teaching model by Gao Xiaofang [3] for the first time in China. Dictogloss is a task-oriented and student-led listening teaching model based on teaching materials and students’ needs, and it has the relevant features of both task-based and constructivist teaching. The four main steps of the model are preparation, dictation or listening input, reconstruction, analysis and correction. Through these four main steps, second language learners could actively and naturally achieve the basic conditions for language acquisition.

## 2 Steps of Dictogloss

The practical steps of Dictogloss can be divided into the following four stages:

**Preparation:** The teacher first briefly introduces the listening material and also clarifies the tasks and objectives of this listening exercise so that students know exactly what they need to do during and after the listening process.

**Dictation or Listening input:** generally speaking the listening content will be played three times, the first time is expected to enable learners to get a sense of the overall meaning, and the second and third times is to memorise and record the key content in their own way.

**Reconstruction:** Students work in small groups to piece together what they have memorised or recorded and try to reconstruct the listening content. Fidelity to the text, grammatical correctness and semantic coherence are required.

**Analysis and correction:** The teacher leads the students in comparing the original listening content with the groups' listening content and encourages them to discuss the correct expressions and correct their versions themselves.

### 2.1 Characteristics and Advantages

This model differs from most listening teaching models in four ways. Firstly, Dictogloss emphasises student collaboration and interaction in the classroom, with group discussion and cooperation driven by the task, and with the teacher intervening only when necessary. Secondly, Dictogloss is a comprehensive listening training (text-based) based on textual material, where students do not hear individual words or phrases, but a coherent text with a certain contextual meaning, and students need to mobilise their full range of linguistic knowledge, such as phonetics, vocabulary and grammar, from their own memory and notes, combined with the information absorbed in the discussion. They need to pay attention not only to meaning but also to form (correct vocabulary and grammatical expressions). Furthermore, Dictogloss is a natural communicative process based on the students' skills of listening, speaking and writing, which allows for a great deal of cooperation and interaction between the language learners, enriching the classroom and making it more engaging. Students work in small groups to reconstruct and output content that is faithful to the text, logical, grammatically correct and semantically coherent, based on their own note-taking and short-term memory of what they have heard. The teacher's role in this process is to design and construct the sessions before the class and intervene when necessary, and to analyse and correct the results of the group work after the reconstruction is completed.

Finally, Dictogloss makes full use of the information gap to mobilise students' memory and linguistic knowledge. The process of reconstruction is in fact a way of mobilising the information gap that exists between the accurate content of the listening text and the incomplete information gathered by the learners, which creates a desire for group communication, motivates learners, increases their engagement and naturally mobilises their existing language knowledge, such as phonetics, vocabulary and grammar, and reconstructs the text in relation to the incomplete information they have heard. According to Jacobs[4], Dictogloss is a completely different model from traditional listening instruction. Firstly, students use multiple language skills (e.g. listening, speaking and writing)

in the process of reconstruction, and secondly, the group format is more conducive to inter-group and intra-group debates, and students are the main actors in the whole model, so they actively mobilise their own language knowledge and fill in the information gaps.

### **3 Literature Review of Dictogloss**

#### **3.1 Research in the Field of Teaching English as a Second Language**

After Gao Xiaofang introduced Dictogloss into China, the model has attracted the attention of many scholars in the field of English teaching in China. Liang Hongmei [5] studied Dictogloss model in the context of tense and corpuscles in English and discussed specific measures to create favourable conditions for English learning using this teaching model. He Xiangping [6] applied Dictogloss model to university English teaching activities and found that the method was superior for adult second language learners and that students' participation in class was significantly increased. Jiang Manzhen [7] describes the process of Dictogloss within a collaborative framework and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of this teaching model. Lu Zhiguo [8] conducted an empirical study of this model in a listening course and found that it did help English learners to improve their English listening skills and helped them to acquire English grammar and develop second language thinking. Dai [9] conducted an experimental study on the jigsaw listening method, a specific application of Dictogloss, and found that the model was effective in improving students' listening skills.

The above-mentioned scholars have combined Dictogloss with English as a second language teaching in China and it has been widely accepted, but because the definition of "text based" in this model was defined by Gao Xiaofang as "chapter based" when it was first introduced, most of the related studies focus on "chapter" and consequently most of the research focused on intermediate and advanced learners of English, and because of this, the definition of "writing" in Dictogloss is mostly "recorded text in the target language" in the traditional sense, while less attention is paid to other forms of "writing" and recording such as recording in the mother tongue, phonetic spelling, symbolic recording, drawing diagrams, etc.

#### **3.2 Research in the Field of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language**

There are not sufficient studies in the domestic Chinese teaching community related to the influence of Dictogloss on students' interactive cooperation and learning engagement in listening classes. Gao Yinmei [10] discussed the use of Dictogloss in Chinese language teaching. She mainly selected intermediate level Chinese learners as the research subjects and conducts an empirical study with HSK4–5 listening part test questions, and concluded that Dictogloss is applicable to intermediate level Chinese listening teaching. -Dictogloss model has better positive utility for elementary level Chinese learners. Liu Jiaqi [11] studied the interaction between Chinese learners and teachers based on Dictogloss, focusing on the 'writing' part of the model for intermediate learners, and showed that Dictogloss had a better effect on learning, and students' knowledge was significantly improved.

Dictogloss has been recognised by many scholars in the field of English language teaching in China, and relevant studies have also confirmed that the model helps to increase students' interaction and engagement in the classroom in different lesson types. However, in the field of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, no scholars have designed and practised Dictogloss model in elementary Chinese listening classes. For elementary Chinese learners, the skill of writing (writing Chinese characters) has a lag compared to other language skills (listening, speaking and reading), but this does not prevent learners from recording relevant information in listening by means of pinyin, graphics or native language notation. Therefore, the author's focus is not on the skill of "writing", but on the impact of the model's integration of "listening, speaking and writing" on learners' information input process, and to explore the feasibility of Dictogloss teaching model in the elementary Chinese listening classroom. The study also explores the feasibility of Dictogloss in the elementary Chinese listening classroom and tries to improve the lack of interaction and cooperation in the listening classroom, to motivate students' engagement in Chinese listening learning and to stimulate their interest in listening.

Cui Yonghua [12] points out that research on teaching Chinese as a foreign language should pay full attention to the development of theory and practice at home and abroad and strengthen the application of relevant results. In this study, we attempt to extrapolate the relatively well-researched model of English as a second language teaching to primary Chinese listening teaching.

## **4 The Rationale for the Practice of Dictogloss in Chinese Listening Classes**

Combined with the characteristics of Chinese listening classes and the attribution analysis of problems existed in teaching, we find that there are three main reasons why Dictogloss can be used in Chinese listening classes.

### **4.1 It Fits with "I + 1" Theory**

Krashen [13] puts forward the key conclusions to be followed in language acquisition, in which the "i + 1" theory (comprehensible input theory) holds that the input knowledge of language learners should be slightly more difficult than the existing language level, but the difficulty must be increased under the premise of "understanding". Most of the Chinese learners in China have lived in China for one year or more, and have more opportunities to contact the Chinese language environment, these students have mastered the meaning of some words and phrases, and at the same time have accumulated a large number of real contexts, sentences and short segments are more in line with the difficulty level of "I + 1" in theory. This also provides theoretical support for the author's selection of classroom materials and Dictogloss's design, and uses the passages that strengthen listening comprehension practice in the textbook.

### **4.2 It Fits with Views of "Trinity Grammar"**

"Trinity grammar" is a language teaching theory proposed by Shi Chunhong et al. [14], which believes that "teaching grammar is teaching context", that is, the "grammar" in

“Trinity grammar” is a whole containing “structure, function, context”, which is also common to the main language element of teaching in the Dictogloss - “grammar”. This teaching mode is not limited to a certain level of teaching, but takes the overall grammar of “structure, function and context” as the main teaching object, encouraging students to fully perceive and speculate and use context for listening learning. Therefore, the author believes that the teaching concept of Dictogloss is very much in line with the definition of “grammar” in the “Trinity Grammar” theory.

### 4.3 It Fits with Humanism

Humanism is a psychological trend that emerged in the United States, which advocates viewing the research object as a whole, emphasizing attention to people’s advanced psychological activities and learners’ learning and development processes, and focusing on inspiration and guidance to let learners understand the learning content from their own perspective. Dictogloss is highly compatible with this school of psychology, and the teacher only acts as the “guide” rather than the “leader” in the entire teaching mode, fully respecting the autonomy of students, which may have a positive impact on students’ listening engagement.

## 5 Conclusion and Outlook

Starting from the common problems faced in the Chinese language classroom of foreign students in China, this paper sorts out the research status of Dictogloss in the field of second language teaching and demonstrates the feasibility of using Dictogloss in the elementary Chinese listening class. In the future, researchers could focus on the variables in the Chinese listening classroom, design the corresponding teaching mode steps and conduct empirical exploration, dynamically observing the impact of the model on students’ classroom behavior, emotion, learning engagement, etc., and further improve the teaching model. At the same time, after confirming the reliability and validity of this model in the classroom of Chinese as a foreign language, we can try to extrapolate it to other lesson types and discuss the specific role and teaching effect of this mode according to the characteristics of students in different countries and regions.

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