Section Two closely parallels Section One in terms of topical organization but here the relationship between theory and practice is explored. That is, it attempts to look at the ways in which the concepts and principles presented in Section One have been applied in practice. Samples of syllabuses and course materials from a range of resources are presented to provide readers with the opportunity to analyse and assess them critically. In the end, the author implies that there is no perfect type of syllabus—that it is up to the individual teacher to decide what suits him/her best.

Section Three leads the readers to look critically at the curriculum and syllabus operating in their own teaching system, and they are encouraged to apply the ideas developed in Section One and Two to their own teaching situation. The tasks presented in this section are designed to suggest ways in which syllabuses might be modified, adapted or improved.

In general, *Syllabus Design* is a book well worth reading. The content is comprehensive and the central issues are discussed from many different angles. As stated before, the book does not give directives. Instead, it stimulates the readers to look closely into their teaching situation and to choose their own way to improve their syllabus. Enquiry and discussion are encouraged through relevant tasks; however, if there is a drawback to this book, it is that the numerous tasks presented in the body of the text occasionally distract the reader from the flow of the ideas being presented.

A glossary of key terms is provided and a list of further reading is given at the end of the book.

Teaching Listening Comprehension

Penny Ur: Cambridge University Press 1984, pp. 173

Reviewed by **Parichat Choochotkaew**

Chulalongkorn University Language Institute

This book contains a series of practical guides for teachers of English who are interested in teaching listening comprehension. It discusses what successful foreign language listening comprehension entails and also proposes types of practice that may be effective in the classroom.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part "Understanding Spoken English" is composed of three chapters which provide some essential background in teaching listening. In Chapter 1. "Real–life Listening", the author lists the types of listening which actually take place in everyday life by giving some examples of the types of listening we might expect reasonably educated people living in a developing country to be exposed to. Moreover, some useful suggestions about teaching listening in terms of purpose and expectation, response, visibility of the speaker, environmental clues, and so on are given in full detail. The author, by presenting passages and tasks with some interesting points as a guide for the readers to consider, tries to make the readers realize that classroom practice should incorporate these characteristics of real–life listening.

Chapter 2 "Listening to English as a Foreign Language" describes some of the main problems which are likely to be encountered by the learners, and lists these in order of importance. These are difficulties that foreign students are not likely to perceive immediately because they do not exist in their own language; stress, intonation patterns, redundancy and noise, even colloquial vocabulary, are dealt with at some length.

In Chapter 3, which is the last part of the first section, suggestions as to how to solve the above problems are put forward to the readers. Under the title "Planning Exercises", the author

makes some comments, pro and con, on the use of various listening materials such as recordings, and visual materials like pictures and diagrams. These are discussed in detail, especially in terms of authenticity and the learners' levels of ability.

The second part of the book comprises a large number of exercise-types for developing listening skills which can be easily adapted to a teacher's own class. The exercises are arranged from quicker and simpler ones to longer and more complex ones.

In Chapter 4, the author provides "Listening for Perception" exercises from wordlevel to sentence level, with detailed explanations and suggestions on employing them. The main purpose is to give the learner practice in correctly identifying different sounds, sound-combinations, and intonation.

Chapter 5, "Listening for Comprehension" is the longest chapter, and comprises more than half of the entire book. The chapter itself is divided into four parts starting with exercises where the learner simply listens without necessarily making any overt response. Then, exercises which require a minimal response to demonstrate understanding are presented. The third part provides exercises which need extensive response and may involve reading, writing and speaking and some thinking-out of problems. In the last part, "Listening as a basis for study and discussion", listening takes on the role of catalyst for subsequent study and discussion at an advanced level.

Most of the exercises from each chapter are presented with the author's comments on the advantages and limitations of the exercises, as well as with references for further study. The bibliography at the end of the book is arranged under headings which are very helpful to readers who are interested in pursuing related topics further.

Those who are involved in teaching listening skills at various levels will find that *Teaching Listening Comprehension* by Penny Ur can help them a great deal.