

The background of the slide features a close-up of a person's ear being cupped by a hand on the left side. On the right side, there is a cluster of colorful, semi-transparent social media icons, including a RSS feed, a video camera, a thumbs-up, an envelope, a Twitter bird, a person silhouette, a heart, and a speech bubble with a person icon. The text is overlaid on the lower part of the hand and the icons.

# *The effects of a self-paced listening test*

Welcome!



# Introduction

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- Teacher educator, Driestar University
- Teacher of English, Further Education
- The Netherlands
- Research for my dissertation



# Let's do a listening test

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And compare:

- ❑ An administrator controlled
- ❑ with a self-paced listening test



# Administrator controlled

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- Listening passage: 1 minute
- 20 seconds to answer



# Listen & answer



What is said about the protection of badgers?

- A. Badgers are protected by general animal welfare legislation.
- B. There is special legislation to protect badgers.
- C. There is a special police force to protect badgers.



# And now, a self-paced

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- Listening passage: 30 seconds
- You may pause, replay as often as you want
- Within total length of test



# Listen & answer



## **Question 10:**

At number 10, the JVC HAFX 1X is discussed.

**Why are these earbuds at the bottom of the list?**

Because they

- a. are expensive but not of a great quality
- b. are inexpensive but do not meet all demands
- c. sound good but they are uncomfortable



# Questions

□ Which one is easier?

A. Administrator  
controlled

B. Self-paced

□ Which one do you  
prefer?

A. Administrator  
controlled

B. Self-paced



# Introduction



- ❑ Increase of computer based language tests (Chapelle & Douglas, 2006)
- ❑ Challenge: why digitise to collect same information? (Buck, 2001)
- ❑ This study: effects of repetition and test-taking strategies in a self-paced listening test.



# Rationale (1)

- ▣ What are problems in L2 listening?
  - Halting – limited lexical knowledge (Field, 2013)
  - Speed – not recognising or missing several words (Goh, 2000)
- ▣ What are methods to support L2 listening?
  - Instruction of (meta)cognitive strategies
  - Repetition of audio
  - Sufficient time (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012)



# Rationale (2)

- ▣ What are test-taking strategies?
- ▣ A combination of language learning, test management and test-wiseness strategies (Cohen, 2006; Cohen & Upton, 2007)
  - Cognitive listening strategies
  - Metacognitive: planning, monitoring and evaluating



# Rationale (3)

- ▣ What happens when the listening passage is repeated?
  - Questions about authenticity (Buck vs Field)
  - Overall: improving test scores (Field, 2017; Ruhm et al., 2016; etc)



# Rationale (4)

## ■ What is self-paced listening?

A level of learner control to play, stop and replay  
(Scheiter & Gerjets, 2007)

- Scores improve (Roussel, 2011; Goodwin, 2017)
- Number of repetition is unknown
- Preference: lowers anxiety (Goodwin)
- Increases agency (Robin, 2007)
- Global, interrupted pattern most successful (Roussel)



# Research Questions

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1. Does a self-paced condition **improve test scores**?
2. **How many times do candidates repeat** the audio?
3. Do candidates **follow certain patterns or strategies**?
4. Do candidates **prefer** self-paced listening tests?



# Method - participants

- ▣ 19 Dutch students
- ▣ Attending various vocational courses (Economics, IT, Welfare)
- ▣ Average age: 18
- ▣ 12 female, 7 male
- ▣ Average L2 English B1 +



***Students' test-taking strategies and success on two types of listening tests.***



# Method

- ▣ Participants took two listening tests: AC and SP
- ▣ Both school leaving tests, B1 level.
- ▣ Participants verbalised their thoughts (Ericsson & Simon, 1993)
- ▣ The sessions are video-recorded to triangulate the think-alouds (Koon, 2017)
- ▣ A short questionnaire after the test



# Method - instruments

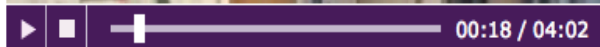
- AC test
  - ▣ Audio interrupted for 20 seconds to select item answer
  - ▣ Total 16 MC items
  - ▣ Audio, video
  - ▣ Aimed level B1



# Method – Self-paced test

Passage	Title	Medium	Length (mm:ss)	No. questions
Passage 1	IT person	Audio	03:06	4 MC
Passage 2	Future of fashion	Video	04:02	5 MC
Passage 3a	Earbuds 10	Video	00:37	1 MC
Passage 3b	Earbuds 9	Video	00:32	1 TF
Passage 3c	Earbuds 8	Video	00:25	1 MC
Passage 3d	Earbuds 1	Video	00:43	1 MC
Passage 3e	Earbuds 10,9,8,3,2,1	Video	03:18	1 MC
Total			<b>12:45</b>	





Bij dit fragment horen 5 vragen.

**What is typical of the material and clothes Suzanne Lee makes?**

- ☐ They are produced by a living organism.
- ☐ They are very expensive.
- ☐ They have to be produced in a factory.

&lt; Vorige

...

i

17

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Overzicht

Volgende &gt;



# Method

- Participants took the test individually
- Instruction and practice of think alouds
- Item analysis
- Transcription of recorded test session
- Add precise time indication of passages participants listened to



# Results - repetition

- Average listening time: 19:59 (n=12)
- Range: 13:42 to 29:07
- Which is 1.57 times ( $SD = 0.47$ ) the passage length

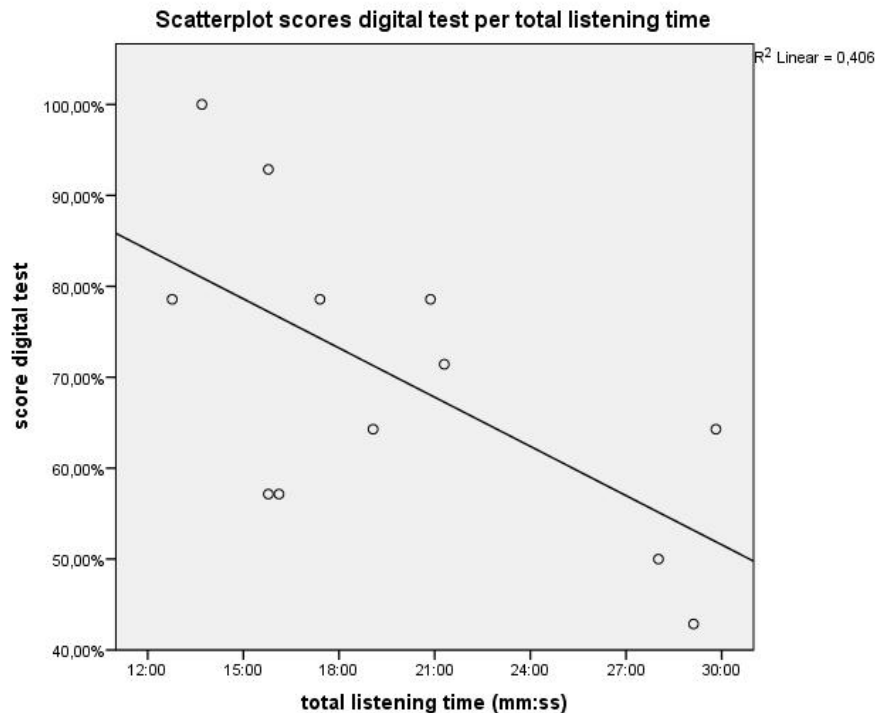
!! Without passage 3e:

- Recalculation: 1.95 times ( $SD = 0.61$ )



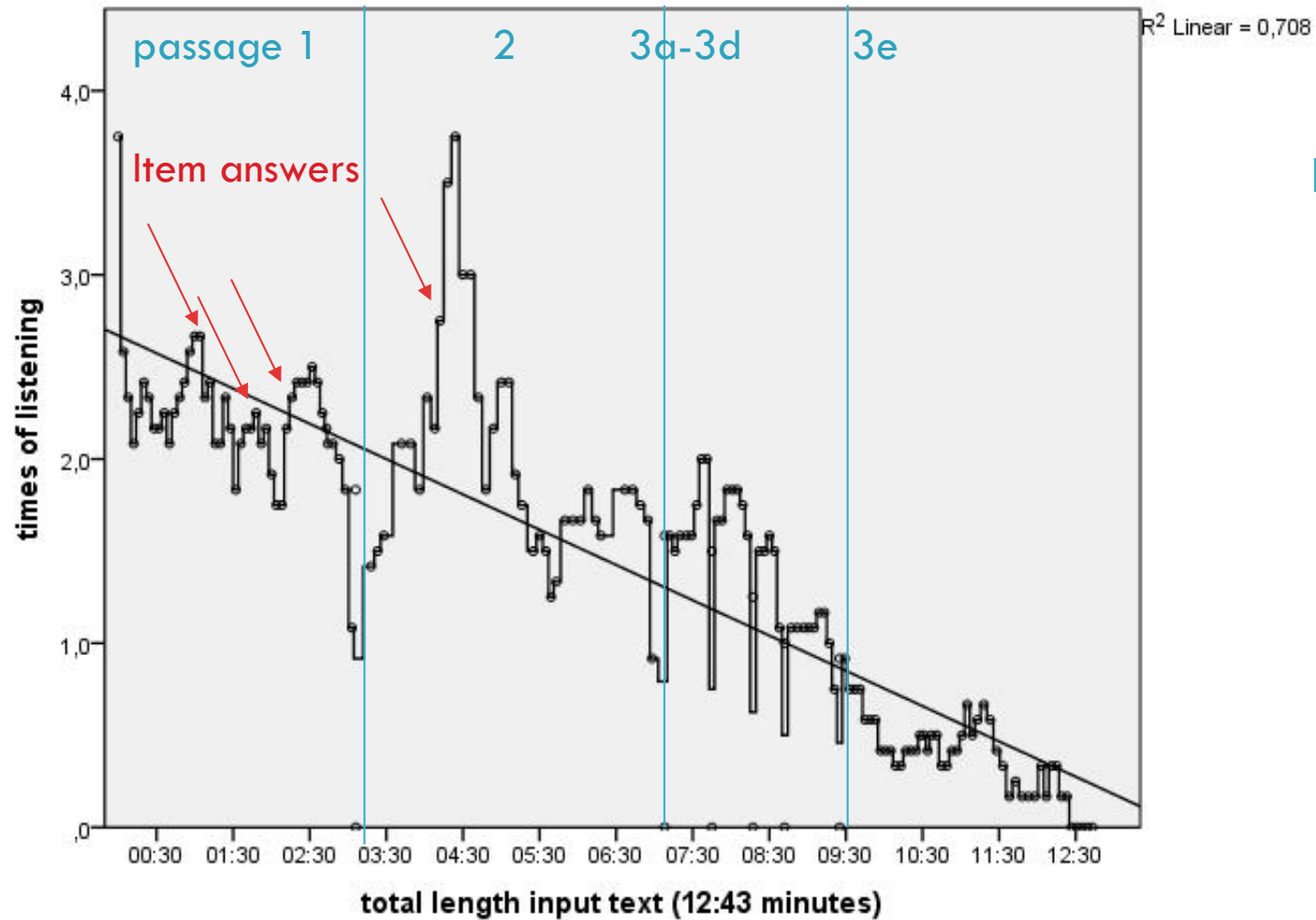
# So, the longer you listen...

- Negative correlation between test scores and repetition ( $r = -.637$ )





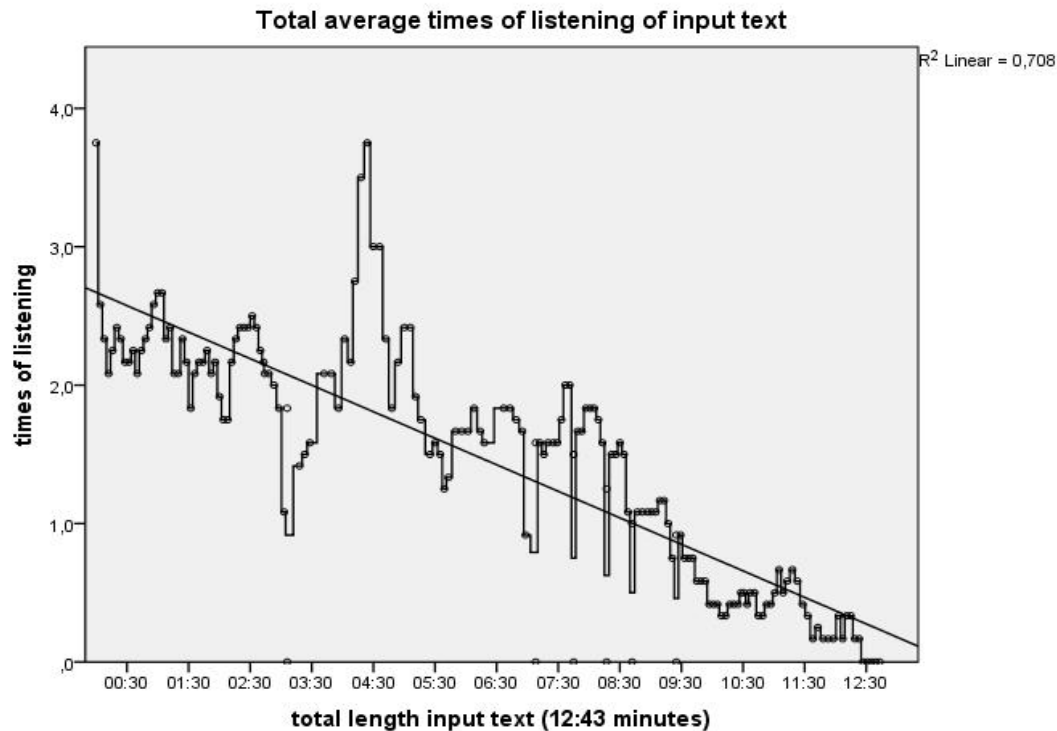
## Total average times of listening of input text





# The longer a test lasts....

- ❑ Negative correlation length of input vs time spent on input ( $r = -.841^*$ )
- ❑ The “Alice” effect!





# Results – what do students say?

- Test-taking behaviour in combination with verbalizations showed:
  - ▣ Effective and ineffective search. Effective: knowing where to listen for an answer ('I haven't heard the answer, so I will go back to...') or ineffective: excessive repetition without hearing the answer
  - ▣ Capability to evaluate listening comprehension (Now, I've heard them say', 'I heard the word, but I don't know its meaning)



# Discussion



- Effective repetition: improves the result  
(knowing where to search, deciding when it would help to overcome incomprehension)
- Ineffective repetition: does not improve the result  
(excessive repetition without overcoming incomprehension)

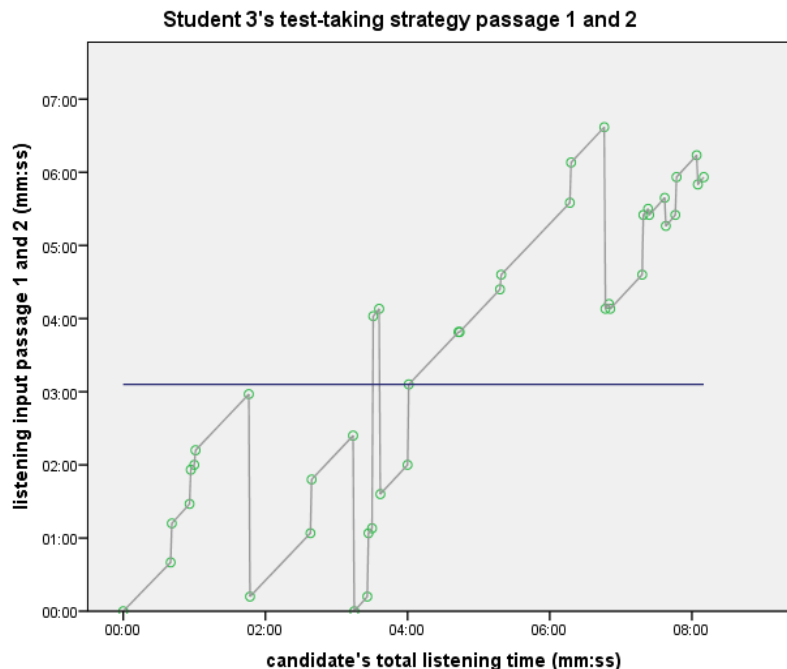


# Results – test taking strategies

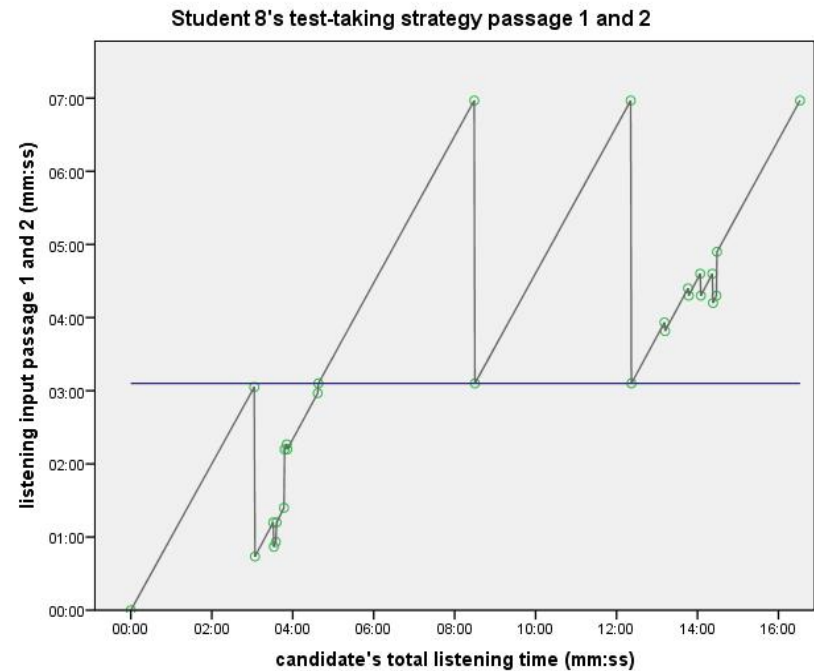
- How did an individual student take the test?

Type of pattern:

- Interrupted

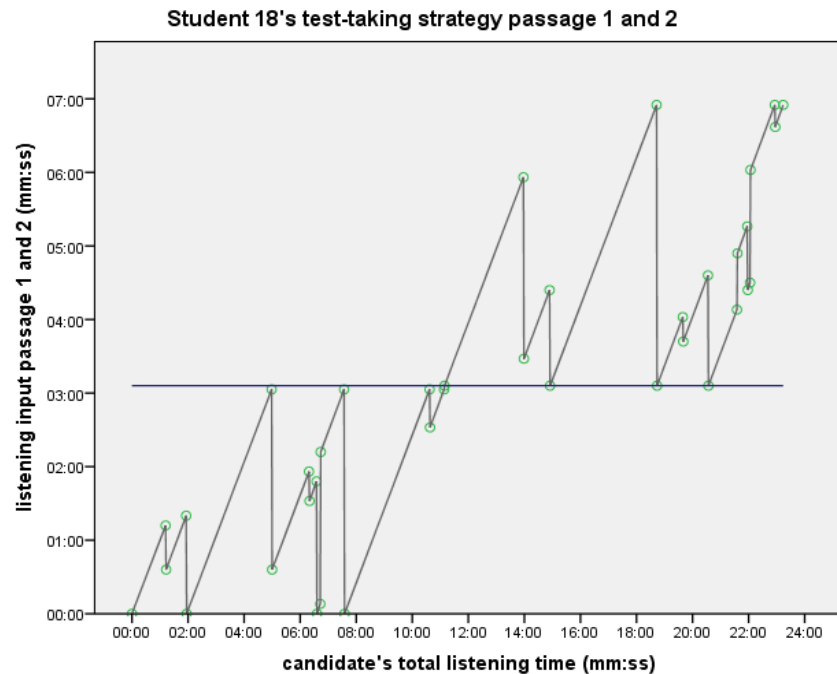






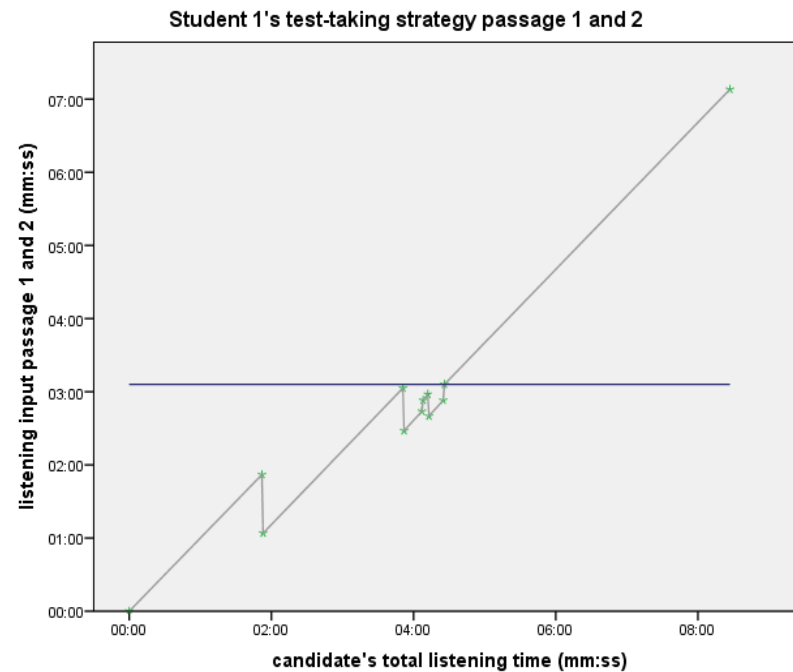


□ Interrupted, global





□ Global





# Which one do you think...

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☐ ...is the most successful?

A. Global, interrupted

B. Interrupted, global

C. Interrupted

D. Global



# Results - test-taking strategies

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- No significant relationship between test-taking patterns and test success
- Interrupted pattern was related to a search for item answers



# Results – test scores

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- Average score listening test
  - ▣ AC test: 71.38%
  - ▣ SP test: 68.80%



# Results - Questionnaire

- 47.37% regarded the AC test as the **most difficult**
- 52.63% **preferred** the Self-Paced listening test
- **73.68%** preferred to listen **more than once**
- **94.74%** preferred to **stop the audio**



# Limitations

- ❑ Small study
- ❑ The AC and SP tests varied too much: tests should only vary the self-paced condition
- ❑ Limited time





# Advice

- ❑ To prevent too interrupted listening & increase authenticity: force participants listen once
- ❑ To prevent excessive & ineffective repetition: limit total test time
- ❑ Learn participants strategies to search & evaluate
- ❑ Implement self-paced listening to lower anxiety levels & increase confidence



# Questions?

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- Comments or whatsoever...
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Thank you for your attention!