Learn from Listening

**Use** theories of effective listening  
**applied by** listening researchers  
**during** studies of how humans listen to other humans  
**for** improving requirements elicitation skills.

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Listening is a complex activity with multiple dimensions (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996).

- **Discriminative**: Sensitive to both verbal and nonverbal cues
- **Comprehensive**: Paying close attention to comprehend concepts and connections
- **Therapeutic**: Focused on empathy, speaker’s emotions
- **Critical**: Deciding to accept or reject a given message
- **Appreciative**: Enjoying a high-quality speech or speaker

Listening researchers study how these dimensions interact and how they can be used effectively in specific settings.
Anecdotally, students doing requirements elicitation miss many client requests
  - May be overruled, unheard, or biased by a need for affirmation (Kastman Breuch, 2001)
  - ... despite feeling that they’re “on the same page” as the client (Gunning, 2017)

The tacit knowledge problem in RE (Gervasi et al., 2013): caused partly by unheard needs?

My argument:
Requirements elicitation is a specialized form of listening. We can work with listening researchers to help us identify listening skills and techniques that are especially effective for requirements elicitation.