

“Another Couple Pennies” (<http://gisshop.com/isd/blog/acp1.mp3>) is a ten-minute podcast that aims to inform the learner about successful garage sale strategies. The podcast is designed to capture and sustain the learner’s attention through the use of novel sound clips, vocal intonation and a modified version of Gagne’s “Nine Events of Instruction”.

The intended listener or learner audience is expected to be those individuals who are planning an upcoming garage sale and who may have never organized one on their own. The content for the podcast was derived from personal experience and a quick review of a few websites offering tips to garage sale mavens (<http://www.yardsalequeen.com/yardsale.htm> and <http://www.tagaroom.com/garage.htm>).

The learning objectives were focused on presenting material that would enable the listener or learner to describe the three main points to successful garage sale execution: planning; preparation; and, participation. Alliteration was used in the development of these points as a device to help with transfer and retention since the instructional delivery mechanism had no visual expression.

As mentioned previously, the design of the podcast loosely followed Gagne’s “Nine Events of Instruction”, however, no performance, feedback or assessment were provided to the listener or learner as this was a one-sided, closed presentation of material. Listening to several podcasts that were instructional or related to education also helped divine the design for the podcast. One particular podcast called “Brainwave”, <http://brainwave.bibliotech.us/>, was the most influential in helping create the structure for the beginning presentation of the title and sound-clip that helps brand or identify the upcoming cast. Another device used by Brian Ferguson in his casts was a short intro clip that provided motivation and an introduction to the content. The same device was used in “Another Couple Pennies” by verbally scrolling through a list of potential garage sale items in the beginning of the clip. In hindsight, this may not be the most effective way of grabbing the learner’s attention. Some may find it a bit slow and annoying- perhaps a crowd clip followed by an anecdote of items found at great sales may have been a better use of the device.

Another device used in this podcast was the inclusion of an auditory cue before the presentation of each of the three main points. The audio clip was a short ding whose purpose was to alert the listener to the introduction of one of the main points and to serve as a transitional element. Using audio clips for organizing content is important so that long streams of talking can be broken up and made more stimulating. In retrospect, the content may be a bit long for this piece and more audio clips could have been included to perhaps increase the appeal and help sustain the learner’s attention. Crafting or engineering the addition of short, novel audio clips may also help with the retention and transfer of the material.

Overall, the design of the podcast was somewhat successful, but could have been tightened and improved by eliminating some verbal content and including more audio clips.