

### Developing Listening Comprehension Strategies of Students at Secondary Schools

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#### ABSTRACT

*Listening is an inseparable skill of any language, and those, who try to learn any foreign language, cannot master it without listening. Due to its significance, teaching listening along with opting an appropriate material to assist learners to enhance listening skills and to have better adaptation to not only those ESL/EFL curriculum materials set by the government, but also to the natural English outside the classroom, is equally pivotal. This research work discusses first the listening itself both as a subject and a communicative skill, as well as strategies and factors need to be considered whilst selecting proper listening material for creating a better communicative atmosphere during the classes, and provides several relevant examples.*

We begin to engage with the listening process long before we engage in any recognizable verbal or nonverbal communication. It is only after listening for months as infants that we begin to consciously practice our own forms of expression. In this section we will learn more about each stage of the listening process, the main types of listening, and the main listening styles.

Listening is a process and as such doesn't have a defined start and finish. Like the communication process, listening has cognitive, behavioral, and relational elements and doesn't unfold in a linear, step-by-step fashion. Models of processes are informative in that they help us visualize specific components, but keep in mind that they do not capture the speed, overlapping nature, or overall complexity of the actual process in action. The stages of the listening process are receiving, interpreting, recalling, evaluating, and responding.

Before we can engage other steps in the listening process, we must take in stimuli through our senses. In any given communication encounter, it is likely that we will return to the receiving stage many times as we process incoming feedback and new messages. This part of the listening process is more physiological than other parts, which include cognitive and relational elements. We primarily take in information needed for listening through auditory and visual channels.

Although we don't often think about visual cues as a part of listening, they influence how we interpret messages. For example, seeing a person's face when we hear their voice allows us to take in nonverbal cues from facial expressions and eye contact. The fact that these visual cues are missing in e-mail, text, and phone interactions presents some difficulties for reading contextual clues into meaning received through only auditory channels.

It is important to consider noise as a factor that influences how we receive messages. Some noise interferes primarily with hearing, which is the physical process of receiving stimuli through

internal and external components of the ears and eyes, and some interferes with listening, which is the cognitive process of processing the stimuli taken in during hearing. While hearing leads to listening, they are not the same thing. Environmental noise such as other people talking, the sounds of traffic, and music interfere with the physiological aspects of hearing. Psychological noise like stress and anger interfere primarily with the cognitive processes of listening. We can enhance our ability to receive, and in turn listen, by trying to minimize noise.

Furthermore, listening has an important place in learning as it is one of the four major skills in language acquisition. Even though the other skills such as reading, speaking and writing are essential to develop language proficiency, listening contributes primarily for language expertise. Listening awakens awareness of the language as it is a receptive skill that first develops in a human being. Learning to listen to the target language improves language ability. The sound, rhythm, intonation, and stress of the language can only be perfectly adapted through listening. To understand the nuances in a particular language, one must be able to listen. As we get to understand spoken language by listening it is easier to improve the other skills and gain confidence.

Other than being the primary form of communication, listening helps the language learner to understand the beauty of the language. Especially in terms of communicative language teaching it is said that the basis for communicative competence is listening as it provides the aural input and enables learners to interact in spoken communication and hence language learning largely depends on listening. Thus listening forms the concrete basis for the complete language proficiency.

### **The importance of listening in communicative language teaching**

Listening is the most significant part of communication as it is pivotal in providing a substantial and meaningful response. Especially in learning a language for communicative purpose, listening plays a vital role, as it helps the language learner to acquire pronunciation, word stress, vocabulary, and syntax and the comprehension of messages conveyed can be based solely on tone of voice, pitch and accent; and it is only possible when we listen. Without understanding input appropriately, learning simply cannot get any improvement. In addition, without listening skill, no communication can be achieved [1].

Among the tasks that the school faces in connection with the teaching of foreign language, also includes the task of teaching schoolchildren to listen and understand foreign language speech. This skill is called the term "Listening" [5].

Teaching students to understand sounding speech is one of the most important goals of learning. In real communication, one has to deal with listening as a completely independent type of speech activity. This happens in the following situations:

- ✓ various announcements;
- ✓ radio and television news;
- ✓ various instructions and assignments;
- ✓ lectures;
- ✓ stories of interlocutors;
- ✓ performances of actors;
- ✓ talking on the phone, etc. [6].

Other, equally important goals of teaching listening are:

- a) understanding the statements of the interlocutor in various situations of communication, including in the presence of unfamiliar language means;

b) understanding of educational and authentic texts with varying degrees and deep penetration into their content.

According to the degree and depth of understanding of audio texts in the teaching methodology of foreign languages, there are several classifications of listening according to its types. We adhere to the classification proposed by I.L. Bim.

Bim I.L. distinguishes the following three types of listening:

- with full understanding (the speech of the teacher and fellow students, not containing non-familiar phenomena)
- understanding the main content (listening to authentic functional texts in order to determine what they are talking about);
- with selective comprehension (for example, listening to an announcement about weather to find out if it will rain) [2].

In accordance with the requirements of the State Educational Curriculum, the development of these particular types of listening is the goal of teaching this type of speech activity in high school.

Let us consider in more detail the features of each type of listening.

### **Listening with understanding of the main content.**

This type of listening is the simplest and involves processing semantic information of the sounding text in order to separate the new from the known, essential from non-essential, to fix in memory the most important information. It is necessary to be able to determine the genre and theme of the text, to trace the main milestones of its development, highlight the main idea of the message, key words and main points, distinguish between essential information and non-essential information, omit minor details, fix attention on the main problem of the current teaching methodology and linguodidactics and not be distracted by retreats, and also ignore difficulties that are not influence the understanding of the main meaning of the text.

### **Listening with full understanding.**

With this type of listening, an accurate understanding of the entire information contained in the text. That is, at the same time as understanding the basic content which provides an understanding of the details of the message. Therefore this kind of listening is more difficult than the previous one. It requires high concentration, good development of the psychological mechanisms of listening, as well as the ability to eagerly seek attention. For this type of listening, it is important to be able to understand the structure of the text, trace the development of the topic of the message, while highlighting not only the main information, but also the secondary.

### **Listening with selective understanding of the content.**

The task of this type of listening is to isolate the necessary or interesting information, ignoring unnecessary. Such information can be important arguments, details, keywords, examples, or specific data: dates, numbers, proper names and place names. Specificity of this type of listening is the ability to carry out information search in accordance with the task.

Both in domestic and in Western methodological literature, the next type of listening is "international listening / conversational listening" conducting as a component of oral-speech communication. This type of listening is used during indirect (for example, a telephone conversation, listening to television and radio programs) or direct communication of two or more interlocutors, while each of them acts alternately in the role of speaker or listener roaming. This listening includes the ability to actively seek understanding, namely: to respond verbally to the

hindrances that arise in the process of hearing, ask again, ask to repeat, explain, ask clarifying questions, to express a thought differently, in other words, to paraphrase what was said.

It is important to note that in the educational process it is necessary to pay attention to development of all named types of listening. Students need to independently choose a text perception strategy depending on the communicative intention or communicative task, as well as features of the audio text.

One of the basic principles of teaching listening is lowercase selection of texts for auditing, taking into account certain requirements. Consider, what are the features of the text for teaching listening.

The text is a speech message that:

- is the total of the speech-thinking activity of the creator, embodying a special idea, and carries any information;
- represents a structural-semantic unity, the basic one of which is coherence (i.e., the text has a certain compositional, structural and semantic organization);
- has an addressee and is designed for a certain impact on him;
- is a product of discourse and needs to be taken into account for its understanding all social factors of its creation and existence;
- encourages cognitive activity aimed at understanding it.

The text can exist both in oral and written form, depending on bridges from the peculiarities of the communication situation. Along with the concept of "oral text" there is a term "audio text", which is used to teach listening research [1]. The peculiarity of this type of texts is that they combine linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic peculiarities.

Paralinguistic features of the sounding text include the following general group of elements:

- a) acoustic (interjections, raising / lowering the voice);
- b) visual (gestures, facial expressions, postures of speakers);
- c) tactile (repulsion, shaking hands, patting on the shoulder, etc.).

Paralinguistic features are of great importance for understanding message. They serve to express the emotional state of the interlocutor, filling gaps in verbal information, as they duplicate and fill it up.

Exercises for the development of speech hearing, phonetic listening skills, as well as internal pronunciation:

- ✓ listen and repeat a few pairs of words:

lose - loose; send - sent; pick-pig; sheep - ship; eat - it; scene-sin;

- ✓ listen to pairs of sentences, put them in a graphic key (on card) "+" or "-" if they are different;
- ✓ read aloud the text with phonetic marks;
- ✓ identify rhyming words by ear, mark them with numbers, for example:

sort-pot-part; – port

Exercises for the development of linguistic guessing and probabilistic forecasting values:

- ✓ listen to a few adjectives (verbs), name the existing nouns, which are most often used with them;

✓ name the meanings of words that are formed from known to you elements. For example:

hopeful, hopeless (hope)

to overpay (pay)

worker (work)

✓ listen to the beginning of the sentence and come up with a suitable meaning the ending;

✓ listen to the text from the phonogram (as presented by the teacher),

✓ fill in the gaps in the graphic version of the same text;

3. Exercises for the development of short-term and verbal-logical memory:

✓ listen to a few short phrases and try to put them together at once;

✓ listen to a number of isolated words, memorize and reproduce those that are relevant to the given topic.

Exercises in recognizing realities and abbreviations by ear:

➤ listen to phrases containing realities, translate them (write down realities in the process of perception);

➤ listen to phrases containing geographical names that are similar in sound, and explain the difference in your native or foreign language, example: Brazil - Brasilia, Ireland - Iceland.

The search for new techniques and exercises to make the learning process of listening to the most effective and exciting, is relevant at the moment, since mastering this type of speech activity is one of the most difficult tasks in learning a foreign language. It requires purposeful systematic work, a large amount of practice in perception listening and performing the exercises we have listed to improve skills and abilities in listening.

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