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**STRATEGIES FOR BOOSTING LERANERS' LISTENING COMPETENCE**

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**Dildora Ismailova**

*Teacher of Central Asian Medical University,  
Fergana, Uzbekistan.*

**ANNOTATION**

The main purpose of this article is to represent an interactive methods and strategies to boost learners' listening skills, get acquaint with miscellaneous obstacles which encumber learners' progress and prioritize top-down and bottom-up listening practice.

**Key words**

bility, competence, practice, boost, strategy, critical thinking, miscellaneous obstacles, comprehension.

**АННОТАЦИЯ**

Основная цель этой статьи – представить интерактивные методы и стратегии для улучшения навыков слушания у учащихся, познакомиться с различными препятствиями, которые мешают прогрессу учащихся, и отдать приоритет практике аудирования сверху вниз и снизу вверх.

**Ключевые слова**

способности, компетентность, практика, стимул, стратегия, критическое мышление, различные препятствия, понимание.

Listening is the ability, the ability to distinguish by ear and understand what others are saying. When applied to language learning, this is the ability to understand English as it is pronounced. That is, in a few seconds, during which a phrase is spoken in English, it is necessary to understand the speaker's accent, to recognize the grammatical structures used by him and the vocabulary that he owns. Listening plays a significant role in learning process. It helps learners broaden their horizon, effortlessly get acquaint with foreign language, develop comprehension and critical thinking since it makes force brain to work strenuously.

Listening is a functioning, deliberate cycle of figuring out what we hear (Helgesen, 2003). Listening understanding is an exceptionally mind boggling critical thinking movement that can be separated into a bunch of unmistakable subaptitudes (Byrnes, 1984).



Over a century back, as a predominant technique for language educating, sentence structure interpretation gave no significance to listening ability, in light of the fact that the point was to peruse and interpret logical writings from target language (generally Latin) to local language.

At that point, there was a change in outlook from composed language to oral abilities with the arise of the Direct Method. In the second 50% of the twentieth century, Audio Lingual Method underscored the significance of listening ability and offered need to oral capability. There were plentiful utilization of language labs, tapes and tapes to accomplish local like articulation. During 70s, elective techniques were proposed by different analysts, listening expertise was given noticeable quality as the basic attributes of these strategies.

What is a difference between hearing and listening? The ability to hear is just a biological function that does not require a lot of effort on the part of the brain, whereas listening involves intellectual tension, since we have to interpret and evaluate what we hear, and also respond to the message.

Recent research has shown that we typically use only 25% of our listening skills. A study by Larry Barker found that if the communication was at a very good level, then in two months the person will remember 25% of what he heard.

Various studies have shown that the speed of our thought processes is four times faster than the speed of speaking words. Think about how your brain is idle when you listen to someone speaking. It takes the speaker one minute to speak what we can understand in fifteen seconds. This means that we waste forty-five seconds deviating from what the speaker is saying. Therefore, we often get bored and stop listening to what is being said. This difference in the speed of thought and word may explain why people in general enjoy speaking much more than hearing.

Even the simple fact that most of our knowledge comes from listening to other people justifies a focus on listening better. Research by S. Moss and S. Tubbs shows what we spend awake time on: 17% go to reading, 16% to talking, 14% to writing, and 53% to listening.

However, while listening learners coincide with miscellaneous obstacles which encumber learners' progress. Listening traditionally remains one of the hardest and least loved aspects of learning English. Learning to understand a foreign language is often more difficult than learning to speak. When the first difficulties arise, many students lose their intrinsic motivation to learn a language. Barriers that cause listening problems:

**1. Speech is spontaneous and fleeting.** Unlike written texts, students are frightened by the very thought that if they do not understand something the first time, they will not have the opportunity to reread and figure it out.



**2. Speech is interactive.** When we look at the interlocutor, gestures and facial expressions help to facilitate understanding of the meaning of what we hear. If something is not clear, you can always ask again. But what about the notification at the airport, with the task for the exam? In these situations, it is impossible to control the incoming information, and such listening is the most difficult.

**3. Written speech is structured and literate.** Conversational speech, on the contrary, is replete with mistakes, reservations, thoughts often get confused, jump from one to another. It's hard enough to follow such a stream of consciousness.

Richards (2005) prescribes that listening materials should be established on a wide range of genuine messages, including the two talks and talked. Accordingly, reality listening materials help crowd individuals to be prodded significantly to go to the instructive focuses, since language is a social wonder and validness is an critical bit of that total. In this particular circumstance, today by methods for association based sight and sound, for instance, online sound and video, YouTube, computerized accounts and destinations present a wide reach of opportunities to serve handy destinations.

*Providing Top-Down and Bottom-Up Listening Practice.*

The fact that listening is a complex multistep procedure that involves different types of processing implies that both top-down and bottom-up skills should be practiced in the classroom.

**Bottom-up** processing helps students recognize lexical and pronunciation features to understand the text. To develop bottom-up processing, students could be asked to

- distinguish individual sounds, word boundaries, and stressed syllables;
- identify thought group;
- listen for intonation patterns in utterances;
- identify grammatical forms and functions;
- recognize contractions and connected speech;
- recognize linking words.

**Top-down** processing relies on prior knowledge and experience to build the meaning of a listening text using the information provided by sounds and words. Top-down listening skills include

- listening for gist, main ideas, topic, and setting of the text;
- listening for specific information;
- sequencing the information;
- prediction;
- guessing;
- inferencing

**Teaching activities to improve listening proficiency**



### 1. Classroom meetings

Classroom meetings are great opportunity to model and practice listening skills. The class sits together in the circle and takes turns sharing their thoughts and feelings on the topic being discussed. Children are encouraged to look at the speaker and listen to what they say.

### 2. Partner Conversations

Pair children up and give them a general discussion topic. Each child takes turns being the speaker or the listener. When the speaker is finished speaking, have the listener repeat one of the speaker's main points, and offer them a compliment. Having "Think, Pair, Shares" during lessons and discussions is a great way to practice receiving and sharing what is heard.

### 3. Teach "Whole Body Listening"

A much-used concept in the early primary grades is "whole body listening." In whole body listening, a student practices keeping particular key parts of their body focused on the speaker. Their eyes are watching, ears are listening, brain is focused on the speaker's information, mouth is closed, shoulders are squared toward the speaker, heart is caring about the message, hands are folded or in lap, feet are still on the floor.

### 4. Daily Listening Activities

One way to see a marked improvement in your students' listening skills is to give them short, daily skills practice. Any daily practice should be fun, and practical. In this case, the skills should include encouraging kids to focus on oral instructions, visualizing the tasks given, and completing them accurately. Give them short instructions verbally for completing a task, or two or three tasks in succession (depending on their age/cognitive development), and have them practice listening and completing the tasks without repeating the instructions.

### 5. The Storytelling Listening Game

In this game, you start a story with a beginning phrase, and then each child in the classroom adds one word to the story in turn. Students must be active participants and follow the story closely so that when their time comes to add a word, the story will make sense. Another way to practice this is by playing a traditional game of Telephone where a message is passed around the room to see if it stays the same.

### **Strategies to improve listening skills**

#### 1. Getting the Main Idea from the Introduction.

Try to be extremely attentive during the first several minutes of the talk – this is when you will be able to get the main idea. Understanding the purpose and the main idea of the talk given in the introduction will help you stay focused as well as



pay closer attention to details that the speaker will provide to support the main ideas.

2. Using a tapescript. Tapescript is very useful to improve listening skills. By rewriting listened scripts word- for- word, learners can effortlessly be familiar with new words and boost their listening proficiency.

3. Using Graphic Organizers. As a variation of an outline, you can also draw a graphic organizer. Similar to outlines, graphic organizers will help you visualize the organization of the presentation and map out the main ideas and supporting details, as well as see connections between them.

4. Listening for definitions. When you listen to an academic lecture, you may hear specific terms that you are not familiar with. Speakers have different ways of giving definitions of new terms. That may use such words as: that is, it means, is.

5. Using Keywords to Take Notes. You can also practice taking notes, which will increase your ability to concentrate and pay attention to the details. When you are listening, do not try to write down everything you hear. It is impossible! Instead, listen for keywords from the presentation and take notes using those keywords. Keywords are usually nouns, verbs, and numbers. As you take notes, skip unimportant words such as be, a, the, and prepositions. Using keywords and leaving out unimportant words will allow you to take notes much faster and more effectively.

#### **Materials for practicing listening**

- A scene from a movie or tv show (+ the subtitles)
- A podcast episode you have a transcript for
- A video on Euronews or another news site
- A book in print and audiobook format
- Dialogues and their transcription
- An Assimil course
- Textbook audio and text

#### **Conclusion.**

All in all, there are many ways to improve listening skills and what demands from is a practice and purposefulness. Without desire nothing can be achieved and improved even if you have any type of devise that help you be profession in a certain field.

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