



## TEACHING LISTENING AND ITS BASIC PRINCIPLES

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes issues related to issues on improving and designing listening tasks in English classes and suggests effective methods which can deal with the forthcoming problems. The author analyzed the research on how to create listening tasks based on improving listening skills of learners while studying foreign languages and presented them in this article.

**Key words:** communication, speech activity, listening comprehension, listening skill, efficiency of teaching, listening tasks, listening activities, systematic approach.

As we know, the process of communication in a foreign language is possible thanks to two types of speech activity - speaking and listening.

Despite the fact that listening is a receptive type of speech activity and proceeds without external manifestations, this is an active process during which the listener performs complex mental operations aimed at perceiving, understanding and processing the heard information.

Listening comprehension has received considerable attention in the fields of applied linguistics, psycholinguistics and second language pedagogy during the last two decades (Anderson & Lynch<sup>1</sup>, Flowerdew,<sup>2</sup> Rost,<sup>3</sup> Underwood,<sup>4</sup> Ur<sup>5</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, A., & Lynch, T. (1988). Listening. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Flowerdew, J. (Ed.). (1994). Academic listening: Research perspectives. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Rost, M. (1994). Introducing listening. Harmondsworth: Penguin

<sup>4</sup> Underwood, M. (1989). Teaching listening. London: Longman.

<sup>5</sup> Ur, P. (1984). Teaching listening comprehension. London: Longman.



In addition, listening skills, formed in the process of mastering the native language, are not transferred to a foreign language, so listening in a foreign language has its own specific features.

The difficulty of mastering this type of speech activity in a foreign language is associated with subjective (associated with the personal characteristics of the hearer) and objective difficulties. These difficulties include:

1. Language (the presence of unfamiliar words, new grammatical material, colloquial forms, features of pronunciation, pace of speech, etc.)
2. Psychological (fear not to understand the interlocutor or listening to the material).
3. Contextual awareness (ignorance of context or background information).

Thus, the special importance of listening for the process of communication and receiving information on the one hand and the objective difficulties of mastering this type of speech activity on the other, indicate the relevance of this issue in modern methods of teaching foreign languages. The underestimation of listening extremely negatively affects the language training of schoolchildren, since unformed auditory skills may cause the impossibility of the process of communication. Therefore, the understanding of foreign language speech needs to be taught specifically, and the ability to understand speech at a different pace, different intonation design, a different level of correctness.

As we design listening tasks, we should keep in mind that complete recall of all the information in an aural text is an unrealistic expectation to which even native speakers are not usually held. Each activity should have as its goal the improvement of one or more specific listening skills. Listening exercises that are meant to train should be success-oriented and build up students' confidence in their



listening ability. According to J. Harmer<sup>6</sup> the importance of tasks lies in the fact that they create a purpose, motivation and expectations in learners, which are all characteristics of listening in real life.

Listening skills are an essential part of any language. There are several things one can do for English listening practice. One of the most common ways to do this is to watch movies. Whether they are dubbed in your native language or not, it is useful to hear the natural speed in which native English speakers speak. In addition, there are many sites you can find around the Internet to help. Segments for free listening English can easily be found on YouTube or any other video site, such as video.about.com. Look for segments in which the speaker speaks clearly at a natural speed. For beginner ESL listening, the speed will seem difficult, but in time it becomes very easy. To increase the challenge and difficulty of your listening, start listening to a wide variety of songs in English.

Without the video in the background, the speed changes, or even the music in the background, this makes for very challenging English listening.

If these are not available there are more innovative ways to get ESL listening skills in. Download short stories off the Internet and read them out loud to yourself or a partner. A tricky thing that comes up often in English listening practice is a homonym. These are words that are pronounced or spelt the same, but have different meanings. A good English listening exercise will have several of these, which you should be able to figure out from the context of the narrative. For ESL listening, these should be practiced often until the meanings of context are understood.

### References:

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<sup>6</sup> Harmer, J. The practice of English language teaching. London: Longman. 1985



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