

Listening Skills: A Comprehensive Review

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ABSTRACT

The art of listening is considered as the ability to understand and recall the spoken word (Santos, 2006). This process is a skill and when treated as such, listening can be improved by training. According to Darnell (2007) developing listening skill is a neglected area in the teaching of English towards communicative competence. This is lamented considering that of the total twenty four hours daily available to every human being sixteen are allotted to walking and eight are allotted to sleeping time, of the sixteen hours at least eleven are dedicated to communicating and of these eleven hours normally the greatest portion is spent in listening whereas only three are spent in speaking, two in reading and one in writing. There is so much to be gained by listening yet why do most people not listen well?

KEYWORDS

Listening Skills, Teaching Listening, Comprehensive Ways in Teaching Listening Skills

INTRODUCTION

The student of English who is intent on pursuing his course to its conclusion will have to face the fact as early as now that listening is an important communication skill he has to cultivate. It is important to realize now that in all field of endeavor "communication depends more on the spoken word that it does on the written and hinges not so much on how people talk as on how they listen. But as they say "people do not know how to listen". They have ears that hear very well but seldom have they acquired the necessary overall skills, which would allow those ears to be used effectively for what is called listening.

In the word of education, the problem of non-listening or turning out is considered to be widespread hurtful to employee morale and poor practice. It is poor human relation. In fact the American Management Association

(2006) has had to adopt a program devoted to the skill of listening for school manager to overcome such barriers to communication. In America it was theorized that the widespread failure of listening is due to the increased mobility of families that results in less time for them to relate thoughtfully to one another, the onslaught of television with its lack of conversational feedback and the less of porch talk among families. A thesis in all relationship where communication has broken down the use of listening as a means of acceptance is the key element that can shore up the weakened relationship.

REVIEW AND REACTION

In modern life, listening depends largely upon one's ability to interpret the printed page accurately and fully. According to Adele and Lionel (2006) "inability to listen is the fundamental cause of failure among students. The



teaching of listening therefore is a continuing challenge to parents and teachers. There is always a need to increase efforts in effective literacy which requires reflection, even more so during today's rapidly changing times. It is not surprising that there is always been great concern over whether the students, is learning to listen.

In general, listening disability severely restricts the adolescent's development and has the most pervasive influence on the student's success in school and adjustment is living. In like manner, listening disability or severe retardation in listening has the same profound influence on educational growth as a severe emotional involvement (Samonte, 2000). Thus, it involves the whole personality promising countless personal and social values on the adolescent develop his listening skills.

One of the most crucial skills that have developed in the individual's initial stage of formal education is listening. The nature of present day life is such that a person can hardly exist without being able to listen. Everybody knows that listening is the primary avenue in order to learn more and reason more. It is the most important task of learning and all lessons in schools need listening. A student who loves to listen well becomes independent, well informed, and eventually becomes a better citizen. Success in listening therefore is success in school, and in future life.

Moreover, the failure in mathematics, language, science and history may be traced quite as often to an inability to listen. Indeed, success in these matters may make a contribution to personal development. The student who learns to listen skillfully not only pleases his parents but also contributes to positive self-concept. The converse is even

clearer. The student who has listening difficulties may have emotional and personality problems associated with his listening skills.

Today, the society places a high value on education as to the recognition that education is based on listening skill (Hellmann, 2006). Although radio, TV films, public address systems and periodicals have assured increasing importance in life, oral and visual modes of communication cannot substitute for and supplement the written word.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Listening in a foreign language is essentially a thought getting process, just as it is in the native language. There is a felt need to regard listening as the development of skills and abilities to insure the continuous progress of the student in the area of listening proficiency as he advances through the years. At the same time to consider its potency to enable learners to perform better in their scientific and technical environment.

On the bases of time allotted and of relation to school process, listening is the most important area and a part of the curriculum. With the increasing stress of multi-sensory learning in most educational materials, it can be concluded, therefore, that there is the need for high reliance on speech or recognition of the school of the inter relatedness of a well-developed speaking and listening vocabulary in learning to recognize words and in understanding what is read and being listen.

According to Dolman (2005) listening is the most important areas of English to be learned by the students. The students will learn little in today's

world if they do not first learn to listen properly. Surveys show that students with poor listening skills become the delinquent, the unemployed, or the misfit in a society". It is an accepted fact there are some students who do not learn to listen along with their classmates. Their listening failures can be attributed not only to their inability to learn the rudiments of listening but also attribute to other factor.

According to Centime (2005) listening is considered as a student's preparation for living. It is in itself, an experience for him in living. In the classroom, there is a time to teach and a time to write but most of all, there must be a time to listen. One of the most important assets of a student is the listening habit. Students should listen habitually to further their growth; to enable themselves to qualify for any higher positions; to get additional information that shall enrich their listening skills. Teachers should listen to keep abreast of the times and to be informed of the current events.

Listening competence is important not only because it spells success in all areas of study in the high school but also because it is essential to personal enrichment and the development of intelligent citizenship. The awareness on the advantages of listening and seeking for self-improvement on how to improve the speed and comprehension in listening of the student's real life experiences provide the most direct type of learning, but they are difficult to supply in a traditional classroom.

Most experiences in the classroom occur through verbal symbolism-written and spoken words. These classroom experiences may be easier for the teachers to supply, but they may be more difficult for many students to understand. Verbal symbolism depends

on the ability to conceptualize and think in the abstract, while the impact of first hand experiences can enhance understanding, so they are an integral part of the learning activity. The ability to listen has long been recognized as essential to personal fulfillment.

Nowadays, the general attitude toward listening is largely pragmatic, seeing it as an avenue to financial and social statuses. There is no denying fact that listening is a tool for learning in any subject area. It becomes an entrance into almost all vocations. In relation to the dynamic nature of the concept of listening and essential educative values it contributes to the individual, it shall be the concern of every teacher that his students listen and understand well what they listen. Teachers should look at listening as more than mere sounding and giving meaning to visual symbols on a page. They should look at listening as a means to make students see that it involves listening into the printed page to draw unified thought out of it.

It is the intention of the study to propose a supplementary material for the development of listening comprehension of the fourth students in English. It is a fact that a number of supplementary materials can affect students in many ways such as: in motivating students; contributing to understanding; providing varied learning experiences; reinforce learning; allowing for different interest; encouraging participation; providing experiences and changing attitudes and feeling.

Regardless of the type of supplementary materials to be used a teacher must consider it in light of the purpose of the learning activity. The supplementary materials must be suited to the subject matter, mastery

skill improvement, valuing or inculcation of culture heritage.

All students have different interest and abilities that determine what they attend to and learn. Nevertheless, what they learn also depends on the ability of the teacher to capture their attention and spark their interest with appropriate instructional materials and media.

In the explanation of Raiser (2005) the needs of each learning situation determine the materials and media the teacher use. There are some general consideration, however, that can help in estimating their value and appropriateness such as: interest – is the extent of which the learner’s curiosity is aroused and sustained by the use of instructional activities, relevance – is the degree to which the experience provided by the aid is related to the learner’s personal needs or goals, expectancy is the degree to which the learner’s expects to succeed at learning and sees success as being under his or her control when using the aids, satisfaction – is the level of outcome and the learner’s satisfaction in performing the tasks.

All of these factors influence students’ subsequent performance with the supplementary materials. However, there are some basic guidelines for their use. Supplementary materials are made for situations in general, it is the teacher’s job to tailor them to the needs of the students such as: purpose-ask what can accomplish and why this instructional activities are important; define objectives - clearly defined objectives are essential for planning the lesson and selecting and using instructional activities; flexibility – the same instructional activities can satisfy many different purposes; diversity - use of variety of materials, media, and resources to develop and maintain pupils interest; development –

instructional activities must be related to the age, maturity, ability and interest of students; content – to determine how to use them and how to make the best use of them; guide learners – focus students attention on specific things to attend while viewing, listening, or reading the materials; evaluate results – check students reaction and consider their own reaction to the supplementary materials

.SUMMARY

Basically, to develop the listening abilities of the students particularly on their multiple intelligences in the thinking of Andean (2005) listening abilities of students with the aid of supplementary materials can help the students to know the relationship between English and other disciplines to increase the level of awareness of the role of listeners in a society.

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