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## **DIFFICULTIES OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING CLASS**

For the students of beginner levels who are learning English, listening comprehension is difficult. The main reason is that there are too many new and unfamiliar words. However, this isn't the only problem EFL students face with and often it isn't the main one. Even students who have studied for many years and who know hundreds or thousands English words still find listening comprehension quite difficult. Why?

For students, the problem is often that "knowing" words means they recognize them when they read them, or can remember what they mean - if they have enough time to think. The problem with listening comprehension is that when you listen to an English speaker, you have not to recognize words only by hearing them instead of reading them. You also have to recognize the words very quickly. Unlike reading, where you can pause to think about what a word is, listening usually doesn't allow you to pause at all. You must be able to recognize and understand words very quickly because, if you pause to think, the English speaker will keep right on going and you will miss much of what he/she says [1,4].

So it is very important to build "listening fluency," in other words, the ability to recognize and understand English words and phrases very quickly when you hear them - without pausing to try to remember. Obviously, this is a skill that is built mainly through practice - lots and lots of practice.

What is the best kind of listening practice? There are many good ways to practice - listening to the radio, to tapes, to songs, to native English speakers, and even to non-native speakers of English. The most important thing is to find listening practice material that has the right level of difficulty. If you listen to something that

is very easy to understand, it will not challenge your listening skills to improve, and you will probably also become bored. But if you listen to material that is too difficult, you will not be able to understand it even if you listen many times, and you will become discouraged or frustrated.

Here are two suggestions for choosing material for listening practice: [2,140].

Choose material you can understand at least part of, but which also challenges you to listen hard. For example, if you practice by using English language tapes, try to find tapes that you can understand partly even the first time you listen. They should be easy enough that you can get the main ideas after listening two or three times.

If you can't find material that is at just the right level of difficulty, it is usually better to choose material that is a little bit too easy rather than too hard - but not so easy that you can't learn anything new from it.

One of the best opportunities for practicing English listening comprehension is through listening to radio news in English. However, the radio news is also often quite challenging to understand.

Dictation is one of the most common kinds of listening practice exercises. However, like any kind of activity, it is useful for teaching some things, and not so useful for teaching others.

Some students are weaker in listening than in speaking. For example, at English corners with native speakers of English, they can often ask questions more easily than they can understand the answers.

It is easier for students with relatively good listening skills to keep a conversation going. For example, at an English corner, a student who can understand what a foreigner says can stay in the conversation even if the student has trouble asking questions or expressing ideas. (If you can't say what you want to say, you can always say something else you know how to say.) In contrast, a student who can't understand what a foreigner said will often become embarrassed or frustrated, and is likely to leave the conversation.

In our country, there are simply more opportunities to listen to English than to speak. This means that students with relatively good listening skills can find more

opportunities to use their English - for example, by listening to the radio - so their English is more likely to keep getting better.

Last but not least, when students' listening skills are good, their speaking is likely to improve also. Listening is one of the main ways students learn more English and become comfortable with the language, so students who listen a lot generally find that their speaking also improves.

Focused listening activities are listening tasks in which you help students to predict what they might hear by first giving them clues. These clues can be in the form of 1) outlines; 2) questions to answer; or 3) forms or graphs to fill in. These clues help students focus their listening, and make listening practice easier (especially for lower level students).

Write the clues on the board, or give students a handout. Ask students to look this over so that they know what they should listen for. You might also ask them to predict what your talk will be about -- this enhances motivation and encourages active listening.

Tell students to listen to your talk and quickly note down information that will help them complete the task. (If you want them to write out full answers to your questions, tell them you will give them time to write after the talk.). [1,7].

Listening is important not only in language learning but also in daily communication. However, the students seem to have problems with listening. Many problems such as the time they spend on studying themselves are too little to improve the skill, the inappropriate strategies of learner, and also the listening material itself. The students should have much exposure to a variety of listening, and learn the tips or strategies through each of their learning.

#### References:

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