

USEFUL ADVICES FOR IMPROVING LISTENING SKILL

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Annotation: *This article provides steps to improve your listening style. We all know that listening is one of the main skills in learning language. Before learning to listen we should know how to learn successfully during short time. Listening comprehension is a crucial skill to master when learning a second language. It enables you to understand native speakers, engage in conversations, and develop a deeper appreciation for the language and culture. In this article, I will explore effective strategies for improving listening comprehension in a second language. By following these tips, you'll be well on your way to becoming a more proficient and confident listener.*

Key words: *Active listening, regular exposure to authentic material, note-taking and summarizing, practice listening for gist and details, improving vocabulary and grammar, using transcripts and subtitles, listening and repeating, engaging in conversations, being patient*

Active Listening

Active listening is an essential skill for improving listening comprehension. It involves focusing your full attention on the speaker, rather than merely hearing the words. This means tuning out distractions, such as your thoughts or background noises, and concentrating on the message being conveyed. To practice active listening:

- Maintain eye contact with the speaker, if possible
- Nod your head or use other gestures to show that you're engaged
- Summarize what you've heard in your own words to check your understanding

Note-taking and Summarizing

Taking notes while listening to spoken language can be an effective way to enhance your comprehension. Jot down key words, phrases, or main ideas as you listen. Afterward, use your notes to summarize what you heard in your own words. This exercise helps you to focus on the main points of the conversation and reinforces your understanding of the material.

Practice Listening for Gist and Details

Train yourself to listen for both the main idea (gist) and specific details of a conversation. Start by focusing on the general topic or theme, then move on to identifying

supporting details, opinions, or examples. Practicing this skill will help you to become more adept at understanding spoken language in various contexts.

Improve Vocabulary and Grammar

A strong foundation in vocabulary and grammar is essential for better listening comprehension. The more words you know, the easier it will be to understand spoken language. Make a habit of learning new vocabulary daily and review it regularly. Additionally, focus on grammar rules and patterns to help you accurately interpret spoken language.

Use Transcripts and Subtitles

When available, use transcripts or subtitles to aid your listening comprehension. This can be especially helpful when watching movies or videos in your target language. By reading along with the audio, you can reinforce your understanding of new vocabulary and sentence structures. As you become more confident in your listening skills, gradually reduce your reliance on transcripts and subtitles to challenge yourself further.

Listen and Repeat

Imitating native speakers is an excellent way to improve your listening and speaking skills. Listen to a sentence or phrase from an audio source, pause it, and then try to repeat it aloud. This exercise helps you to become more familiar with the pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation of the language. It also enables you to recognize and produce sounds that may not exist in your native language.

Be Patient and Persistent

Improving listening comprehension takes time and practice. Be patient with yourself and remember that progress may be gradual. Stay persistent and keep practicing, even when you encounter challenges or setbacks. Over time, your listening skills will improve, and you'll find it easier to understand spoken language in a variety of contexts.

In order to get prepared for the exam, you need to start practicing active listening on a regular basis. Fortunately, numerous listening activities can help you improve your skills.

For example, you can listen to songs and podcasts in English or watch YouTube videos and popular TV shows with English subtitles. However, these methods are mostly examples of passive listening.

On the other hand, in order to be able to speak English, you need to boost your active listening skills, which implies participating in an English conversation and paying attention while listening to the other person to understand, provide feedback, and answer.

However, speaking with a native speaker isn't always an option. Still, there are plenty of audio materials narrated by native English speakers available online, which you can use to practice listening skills.

Most audio materials come in the form of a short audio clip and a transcript attached to it. First, listen to just a few minutes of the audio at normal speed to check how much you understand without peeking into the transcript.

If you can't translate it word for word, don't worry - you don't have to understand every single word to understand the general meaning. It is recommended to repeat this step several times and take notes.

Now, read the transcript of the audio clip you've just listened to and highlight all the unfamiliar words and parts of the text you understood only from reading.

This will allow you to visualize how much of the text you actually understood from listening and identify individual words you deem hard to understand to pay careful attention to them during the next listening.

Next, you will listen to the audio back again and follow the transcript at the same time. First of all, this will allow you to determine the cause why you haven't understood the missed words. The most common reasons are the *speed of speech*, *diverse English accents*, connected speech, and *unfamiliar vocabulary*.

Secondly, looking at the words while listening to them will help you remember how certain words and phrases sound. It is recommended to repeat this step several times and write down all the new words to increase your learning vocabulary, and review it later.

Enhancing listening comprehension in a second language is an ongoing process that requires consistent effort and dedication. By employing the strategies outlined in this blog post, you'll be well-equipped to improve your listening skills and enjoy greater success in your language learning journey. Remember to stay patient, persistent, and open to new experiences. As you continue to practice and engage with native speakers and authentic materials, your listening comprehension will steadily improve, allowing you to communicate more effectively and deepen your understanding of the language and its culture.

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