DESIGNING EFFECTIVE LISTENING TASKS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Abstract: *This paper examines the design of listening activities in English. It emphasizes the essential role of listening in language acquisition and outlines principles for creating effective listening exercises. Key types of activities include pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening tasks, accompanied by practical classroom examples. Additionally.advices for teachers that should do duties such as motivatin,feedback and others.*

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Listening may be one of the passive skills in language teaching and learning but it should not be considered as passive at all. The listening process should be viewed as an active process that is not only engaging for our students but also fosters their communicative skills. We need to carefully examine and detect the various listening strategies and skills that we want to focus on when giving out a listening task to our language classroom. [1] Listening comprehension exercises are considered to be most effective when they are supplemented by prelistening and postlistening activities. Each of these stages has a speciàc purpose that contributes to building listening skills. Prelistening activities are designed to set the stage for listening by activating students' vocabulary and background knowledge on a particular topic. In real-life listening people usually can guess with some degree of certainty what they are about to hear based on their knowledge of the situation, the topic, and the speaker. They also have a reason for listening, which determines how they are going to listen. Therefore, it would only be fair to prepare students for what they are going to hear in the classroom. The purposes of prelistening work are to improve comprehension, increase conàdence, and

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[1] https://ioannanifli.wordpress.com/2021/10/28/listening-skills-and-strategies-for-the-foreign-language-classroom/

arouse students'curiosity and motivation for further listening of the passage. Some examples of prelistening activities include

- providing the title of the text or playing the first few sentences to predict the content
- brainstorming key words or creating a semantic map associated with the topic of the text
- previewing vocabulary
- previewing comprehension questions
- reading and discussing a relevant text on the topic
- providing background information on the text
- discussing images related to the text or the topic

Postlistening activities serve as an extension of listening and make students apply the content of the listening text to a different context. These activities may be independent tasks that continue extending the topic of the text and help students remember the vocabulary, or they may be continuations of the pre- and while-listening activities. Postlistening activities allow learners to reàne comprehension and learn more about the topic. As students engage in an active interaction with the language, teachers can use this stage of the lesson to integrate listening with other language skills,

develop oral and written fluency, and evaluate the use of listening skills and strategies. After listening to a text, students could

- role-play and act out simulations
- create stories with different endings
- analyze the tone of the text and the emotions conveyed by the speaker(s)
- respond to the content of the text
- discuss the language of the text
- paraphrase of summarize the text
- discuss their use of strategies
- work on vocabulary from the text

As you plan your listening lesson, think about the following: First, does your activity match the type of text? Each listening situation requires à distinctive listening focus and specific tasks to support it. For example, the purpose for listening to a casual conversation could be to note topic shifts of the inood the speakers are in, whereas listen- ing to a short lective entails distinguishing main ideas and support- ing details. Different texts lead to development of different skills, and teachers need to select listening purposes and activities accordingly.

Second, how challenging is this activity for your students? The overall level of listering difficulty could be modified throughout the task by changing the parpose for listering or the type of response required. Providing extensive previewing and visual support as well as shortening the text make listeung wore accessible too. Varying the speed of talk, the number of speakers, and the choice of more or less familiar topics and vocabulary are other ways of making a text easier.

Third, can you recycle your oraterial? Most texts can be played several times with a different purpose for each listening to improve com- prehension and build confidence.

Fourth, are you using a variety of tasks to target listening subskills? Include activities that focus on the word level, main idea, details, and prediction. Incorporate some extensive listening into your curriculum, and encourage students to listen outside of class

Finally, even if the course you are teaching does not have listen- ing as its mam instructional goal, aural work coull be integrated with speaking, reading, and writing so that different language skills reinforce one another. A listening text could serve as a context for grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation practice or a warm-up for a reading activity, it could lead to a speaking or writing task in which students discuss a certain topic. By including a variety of skills in the lesson plan, teachers provide variety, balance, and an opportunity for students to develop a wide range of language abilities.[2]

To create effective listening tasks, consider the following steps: set clear objectives, choose appropriate material, provide feedback ,vary task types Teachers should consider students' motivation for language learning when planning tasks .Of course, different things may motivate different students, but planners are advised not to ignore the importance of making activities interested, fun, and cognitively engaging- -puzzle-solving and game-like features can be enjoyable for learners of all ages. Part of the purpose of using a task is to give students a purpose in the artificial environment of the language classroom--knowing that a response is required makes listening more focused and helps guide expectations about what kind of information to listen for. In speaking and listening tasks, teachers should aim to make feedback as immediate as possible. Long delays may inhibit recollection of the error: the best time to correct is while the given response is still in mind and corrections and mistakes can be gone through in detail and worked out when their is a breakdown in understanding. The wanting to know the answer will likely diminish with time. hers should consider students' motivation for language learning when planning tasks.[3] Much real-life listening includes some kind of immediate response by the listener (often a spoken reply), but many listening activities in classrooms include responses that occur well after the text has been listened to and also, involve extensive reading and writing aspects. Also, it can be hard for a teacher to check the individual spoken responses of an entire class. When focusing on aural skills primarily (without involving others) and to facilitate the monitoring of the success of an entire class, recommends the use of tasks that allow for ongoing, immediate responses that are simple and quick. The use

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[2] How to tech listening skills

[3] Lund, R. J. (1990) A taxonomy for teaching second language listening.

of simple visuals (diagrams, grids, maps) and physical movement responses are examples of this.[4]

In conculusion: Designing effective listening activities for classes is essential for developing communicative skills. By incorporating authenticity, variety, interactivity, and appropriate technological tools, educators can create engaging and impactful listening experiences. These activities not only enhance listening comprehension but also prepare learners for real-life communicative situations. As EFL education continues to evolve, innovative listening activities will remain a cornerstone of successful language learning.

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