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## THE MAIN FEATURES OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

**Abstract:** *In the process of learning English language, learners often encounter with difficulties appearing in listening comprehension via spoken context such as a multimedia or native-speakers in the dialogue. Furthermore, there is some needs of how to improve listening comprehension and how to cope with the issues connected with listening skills in classes. We need some methods/strategies those help us to enhance our listening skills. This paper highlights the main features of listening comprehension and its effects on the needs of listeners in learning English.*

**Key words:** *listening comprehension, errors, multimedia.*

**Language:** *English*

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### Introduction

The research project highlights the main features of listening comprehension and a variety of methods, and lots of research issues which were deeply investigated by increasing number of linguists in FL (English as a Foreign Language). Furthermore, enhancing listening comprehension is foremost in FL acquisition as it enables learners to increase their vocabulary knowledge, and improves their speaking skills as well (Kh. Abdinazarov, Z. Aminova, O. Khalilova, 2020). What's more, listening requires good memory and strong attention, and choice of strategies (Brown, 2011). Listening comprehension strategies play an important role in the development of related language skills and process of language acquisition and also hold a vital position in foreign language attainment research. Additionally, listening comprehension needs involvement of individuals in an assortment of activities ranging between complete comprehension and discrimination of sounds of the speaker's message. Consequently, successful listening can also be observed on the basis of strategies/methods used by the listener after being

taught effective ways of approaching and controlling the listening comprehension.

### The main features of listening comprehension

Language learning is a long, painful and complex process which requires knowledge on fundamental grammar, vocabulary, phonological elements, and communicative functions along with the four basic language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which will be used to meet the communicative needs of learners. One of four skills, listening integrated with speaking is, perhaps, the most frequently used one for different functions of language (Izzettin Kok. 2013). Consequently, listening comprehension is anything but a passive activity as it is a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, comprehend vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger sociocultural context of the utterance” (Vandergrift, 2006). Besides, listening comprehension is a vital skill in language acquisition process and its development is of

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prime concern to language teacher (Dunkel, 1991). Furthermore, the process of listening entails decoding and constructing essence from the verbal and nonverbal messages (Goh and Hu, 2014) as well as listening practices are deemed to help in recognizing the characteristic differences among sounds and comprehending the grammatical structures (Chien and Hsu, 2013). Additionally, in teaching English as a second language, communication and listening activities are being considered to be main objectives of language classes and requires learners demonstrate their performance orally and written. However, learners are able to get sufficient knowledge on their expertise from the documentaries. While listening to someone, we do not only try to understand her/his speech but also receive needful information limitless.

Additionally, Hamouda (2013) suggests that unfamiliar words, the length and speed of speech, accent, pronunciation, and inability in concentration as issues which language learners encounter during listening. Boyle (1984) claimed that listener, speaker and environmental factors are the chief factors that affect listening. Teng (2002) stated that there exist four items defined as listener factors, speaker factors, stimulus factors, and context factors which influence students' listening comprehension. In addition to hearing or perceiving a stream of sounds; listening also requires a comprehension of the speakers' intended message (Habib Gowhary, 2015:206) as well as it has been a cornerstone of many theories of foreign language acquisition (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Yagang (1994) categorized four sources for listening comprehension problems which are the message, the speaker, the listener, and the physical environment. According to Buck (2001), several challenges are encountered in listening exercises, such as unknown vocabulary, new topics, fast speech rates, and unfamiliar accents (Chang & Read, 2008). Taking different aspects of listening, Underwood (1989) recognizes seven main listening issues that have a huge impact on efficient listening. As a result, it has always been overlooked in language teaching. Hamouda (2013) indicated that understanding the speech is a very demanding activity for learners who confront many problems during listening the speech. Goh (2000) figured out that because of the target language, complications that stem from social and cultural experiences, structure and personal factors such as lack of enthusiasm and inspiration can be obstacles in listening. Moreover, second language learners often encounter with vocabulary deficiency to guess or be able to understand what they hear or listen. Therefore, vocabulary acquisition is also essential in listening comprehension.

### Necessity of vocabulary in listening

In listening comprehension, a learner must have fundamental vocabulary knowledge in any sphere of life. Underwood (1989) stated that listeners whose vocabulary knowledge is not high enough may still

encounter to an obstacle to understand listening successfully. Vocabulary knowledge plays a key role in listening, since it forms 50% of success in listening (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Learners think that lack of vocabulary is the biggest hindrance in listening (Goh, 2000). Vandergrift (2006) emphasized the role of a wide vocabulary knowledge in the development of listening. Mercatty (2000) claimed that vocabulary knowledge plays a key role in comprehending listening. Van Patten (1990) revealed that learners, particularly beginner level learners have difficulties in understanding both form and content in listening. Field (2008) stated that function words were not got attention when learners hear. Function words are more relevant to grammar, but content words are more relevant to lexical meaning. Chang (2008) carried out a research on those issues that listening supports with different variables of participants which vocabulary instruction was the least effective. Providing topical background and repeated input help the most to enhance the use of metacognitive knowledge but vocabulary input is the least effective as it enables listeners to focus on bottom-up processing too much (Chang, 2008). **One more problem is that many words have more than one meaning and if they are used in their less common meaning learners may get confused.** Underwood stated that listeners often encounter with an unknown word which may cause them to pause and think about the notion of that word which causes them to miss the next part of the message (Underwood, 1989. P. 17). What's more, much of the research for multimedia language learning has focused on vocabulary acquisition. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) revealed that the value of captions for vocabulary development and overall comprehension is very needful, especially, for beginner who has insufficient vocabulary knowledge in order to understand the elements of episode or spoken language.

### Issues concerning listening comprehension

According to the statement of Barker (1971) listening can help students build vocabulary, develop language proficiency and improve language usage but Underwood (1989) organizes the major problems in listening comprehension as follows:

- ✓ lack of control over the speed at which speakers speak;
- ✓ not being able to get things repeated;
- ✓ the listener's limited vocabulary;
- ✓ failure to recognize the "signals";
- ✓ problems of interpretation;
- ✓ inability to concentrate;
- ✓ established learning habits.

Field (2003) stated some problems learners encounter are those: they know the word, but get the wrong sense and phonetic variation of a word misleads them. Besides, second language learners

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may know the words in written form but may be able to not comprehend spoken language.

### Enhancing listening skill via multimedia supply

In enhancing listening comprehension, new technologies such as movies, audio-video materials are very important and helpful. Furthermore, movies are motivating media due to presenting different episodes of domains of life, those give learners great stimuli to understand each element appearing on the screen. The learners know the films as a look into a variety of tradition that can promote them to accomplish their aims and understand the value of listening to different dialects, voices and pronunciations. Watching films in English is one of the richest ways of presenting authentic input because it is the combination of three mediums named; aural, visual and textual (Ogasawara, 1994).

### Conclusion

There are four linguistic skills in any language to obtain in order to be proficient in target language. One of the most needful skill is listening comprehension which enables second language learners to understand the known and unknown words pronounced or spoken by speaker. Furthermore, learners sometimes, find listening skill difficult to enhance because of insufficient vocabulary knowledge in different topics they listen to. Additionally, we have to deal with the issues connected with listening comprehension. Two major steps are entailed in the listening comprehension. The first approach allows listeners to explain the context of the message to other listeners; whereas the second approach entails receiving, memorizing and repeating the sounds (Asma F. T. Al-Azzemy, Dina A. H. Al-Jama. 2018:5). Moreover, innovative technology at present, help language learners to learn a language more faster than before.

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