



## Specific Features of Teaching Listening at Higher Educational Institution

*Khamrayeva Shaxlo Shuxratovna*

*Tashkent Institute of Finance*

*E-mail: [shahloshkxamrayeva@mail.ru](mailto:shahloshkxamrayeva@mail.ru)*

**Abstract:** Since listening is a very complex type of speech activity, it is still difficult for students to perceive foreign speech by ear, despite the fact that most of the words they hear are familiar to them from learning to read. That is why a special system of exercises is needed to teach students listening. This article examines the importance of listening in language learning and provides several techniques of teaching and learning listening and gives the list of exercises to improve learners' listening skills during foreign language lessons.

**Keywords:** listening skills, speech activity, speech by ear, predicting, linguistic patterns, learning objectives, sequence of exercises, complexity of communicative tasks, audio texts.

### INTRODUCTION

Among the other four skills, listening is the one that has been most forgotten and neglected in second language classrooms. So teachers don't pay much attention to this skill and teach it carelessly. In the field of language teaching and learning proficiency has tended to be viewed as the ability of speaking and writing in language in question. Listening and reading skills are in the second position. One reason for this situation might be the demanding characteristic of the listening skill. Listening has gained a new importance in language classrooms after spreading IT technology based information in society. Moreover it should be mentioned that most of the students' class time is devoted to the listening. Despite this, we often take importance of listening for granted, and it is the most overlooked skill among other skills. In natural order of learning any language, listening stands at first rank. Without any reception one cannot produce anything. Though, if a teacher wants to have fluent and productive students, he/she should pay much and necessary attention to teaching listening skills. The modern effective methods of teaching listening skills include everything from interactive exercise to multimedia resources. Listening skills can best learn or improved through simple and engaging activities that focus more on the learning process instead of the final product. Since listening is a very complex type of speech activity, it is still difficult for students to perceive foreign speech by ear, despite the fact that most of the words they hear are familiar to them from learning to read. That is why a special system of exercises is needed to be taught to improve students listening skills.

The system of exercises for teaching listening should provide :

➤ compliance of exercises with psychological and linguistic difficulties of audibly perceived messages;

- the possibility of interaction of listening with other types of speech activity, and first of all listening and speaking as two forms of oral communication;
- management of the process of formation of listening skills;
- successful implementation of the ultimate practical goal and intermediate learning objectives;
- a gradual increase in difficulties, which will guarantee the feasibility of performing exercises at different stages of training.

The system of exercises is understood as the organization of interrelated actions arranged in order of increasing language and operational difficulties, taking into account the sequence of formation of speech skills and other skills in various types of speech activity.

The constituent components of the exercise system are, as is known, groups (exercises to relieve linguistic difficulties of listening, exercises to eliminate psychological difficulties of listening), types of exercises and their arrangement corresponding to the sequence of formation of skills and abilities, the number of exercises, the form and place of their performance. Of these components, only the reasoned sequence of exercises remains constant, the other components will change depending on the nature of the audio texts, the language training of students, the complexity of communicative tasks and other factors. For example, when listening to a light text, there is no need for elementary operations, to which we refer imitation, distinguishing oppositions of phonemes or close intonation models, identifying synonyms, splitting the text into smaller semantic pieces, etc. A well-trained student does not need, as is known, exercises that develop a perceptual-sensory base, since he has technical listening skills, including phonemic and intonation hearing, instant receptive combination of words and sentences, predictive skills, and etc.

The methodology distinguishes two subsystems:

1. preparatory/training
2. speech/communicative.

The subsystem of preparatory / training exercises is an extremely important link in the general system of exercises, although this is not yet a speech activity, but the creation of the basis and means for its implementation. The purpose of the preparatory exercises is to remove linguistic or psychological difficulties beforehand (before listening to the text), to develop the skills of logical and semantic processing of lower-level signs – from words to passages, which will allow the auditor to focus his attention on the perception of the content .

Preparatory exercises contribute to the development of:

- predictive skills;
- the volume of short-term and verbal-logical memory;
- the mechanism of equivalent replacements;
- speech hearing;
- the ability to curtail (reduce) internal speech, etc.

In general, the following requirements can be made to this subsystem of exercises:

- combinations of elementary operations with complex mental actions that develop the creative abilities of students and allow them to combine mnemonic activity with logical and semantic already at this stage;
- strict management of the process of preparing for listening due to the creation of supports and guidelines for perception, partial removal of "unprogrammed" difficulties, twofold presentation, etc.;
- gradual increase in language difficulties;

- concentration of attention on one difficulty or on a group of similar difficulties;
- a combination of known and unknown material in exercises;
- focus on form and content

And preparatory exercises may include following types:

- Listen and repeat several pairs of words
- identify rhyming words by ear, mark them with numbers.
- listen to a number of adjectives (verbs), name the nouns that are most often used with them.

• listen to a number of speech formulas, name (in your native or foreign language) situations in which they can be used;

- listen to the text from the phonogram ,fill in the gaps.
- listen to two or three short phrases, combine them into one sentence;
- determine the meaning of international words by context and their sound form;
- determine the meaning of unfamiliar words using definitions (descriptions) in a foreign language;
- review the keywords and name the topic that the audio text is dedicated to.

The perception of coherent oral speech is accompanied by complex mental activity and proceeds in special conditions determined by a number of acoustic factors. Hence, there is a need for exercises that direct attention to comprehending the content of perceived speech and overcoming difficulties associated with perception. Such exercises are called speech exercises. The subsystem of speech/communication exercises contributes to the development of skills to perceive speech messages in conditions approaching natural speech

communication (contact and distant), without supports, hints and prior acquaintance with the situation and topic. It is recommended to perform speech exercises on listened texts that have significant potential in terms of solving communicative and cognitive tasks. When they are perceived, the language form should be realized at the level of involuntary perception, if we are talking about the most perfect, so-called critical level of understanding.

The effectiveness of the exercise for partial guided listening training depends on the repeatability of individual techniques, which is extremely important for the initial stage, the involvement of other analyzers along with auditory, especially visual, sustained attention and the presence of creative, predictive mental activity. As a result of the exercises of this group, there is a certain "habituation" to the conditions of presentation of texts, adjustment to a given listening mode, stable performance. As for visual supports, their use should be considered not only as a control element, but also as a means of individualizing learning .

The exercises are associated with the attraction of new facts and information, are characterized by a critical orientation and an attitude towards selective memorization of the most interesting information. All above mentioned techniques and exercises will help learners to improve their listening skills as well as they will help teachers to make their lessons fruitful and efficient.

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