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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Significance of Listening Skills in Enhancing the Communication Skills

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| ABSTRACT

The acquisition of any kind of knowledge is dependent on the learners' capacity to listen. Active listening is crucial for effective communication and achieving academic excellence. Students may improve their communication abilities by developing their listening skills. Despite its significance, hearing has been neglected in the realms of second language acquisition, research, instruction, and evaluation. This research aims to investigate the importance of listening skills in improving communication abilities. Learners who possess high listening skills have the potential to acquire proficient communication abilities. Engaging in activities such as listening to music, viewing English movies, and attending English language classes has been shown to enhance students' listening abilities. This research demonstrates the efficacy of Computer Assisted Language Learning in enhancing students' listening abilities. Acquiring listening skills enables pupils to enhance their communication abilities.

| KEYWORDS

Listening Skills, Enhancement, Communication Skills, Language.

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### 1. Introduction

Developing the ability to listen attentively is crucial for enhancing one's communication abilities. In order for learners to communicate effectively, it is essential that they listen to and fully comprehend the topic. Effective listening requires a resilient and perceptive mind to comprehend the situation. Acquiring language skills is a crucial aspect of both academic and social spheres. Multiple studies demonstrate that listening plays a vital role in the development of communication abilities. To foster the holistic growth of an individual, it is essential to engage in language acquisition, with English being widely recognized as the gateway to global knowledge and understanding. According to some research, English learners devote 45-55% of their time to practicing their listening skills, which are part of the LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) abilities of English. Despite the crucial role that listening plays in improving communication skills, many educational institutions neglect this talent and fail to teach it effectively (Mendelsohn, 1994, p. 9). Currently, hearing is seen as more important in both English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) studies.

Conventional research indicates that a significant portion of our working hours, ranging from 70 to 80 percent, is dedicated to various forms of communication. During that period, 9 percent of the time is allocated to writing, 16 percent of the time is dedicated to reading, and the remaining 45 percent of the time is devoted to listening. Research indicates that listening plays a crucial role in comprehending and assimilating spoken information, enhancing interpersonal connections, and improving cognitive abilities. An individual who has proficiency in the English language attains an esteemed status inside society. Proficiency in the English language enables individuals to stay abreast of global information. Given the significance of this matter, English was deemed an obligatory component of the curriculum. The instruction is designed with the objective of equipping learners with the ability to effectively communicate and acquire proficiency in all four language skills.

When discussing listening abilities, it is crucial to understand the distinction between listening and hearing. Many learners see hearing and listening as synonymous. Hearing refers to the act of perceiving sound, regardless of one's level of focus or attention. Listening, on the other hand, involves actively paying attention and concentrating on the sounds being perceived. Therefore, it is important for learners to sustain their engagement in the listening process when doing listening comprehension tasks. When instructing learners on listening skills, instructors must ensure that learners understand the distinction between hearing and listening so that learners do not overlook the act of actively processing auditory information.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952), NPE (1986), NCF (2005), and NPE (2020) have all said that English should be taught with consideration for its significance both nationally and internationally, with the aim of motivating learners to acquire the necessary abilities.

## 2. Definition of listening

According to Anderson and Lynch (1988), listeners do not have the ability to comprehend the message delivered by the speaker by hearing. Listening is a cognitive activity in which individuals actively engage in comprehending and interpreting the underlying significance of the information being conveyed (p.6). According to Underwood (1989), listening is the cognitive process of comprehending the meaning of the auditory information received by the listeners (p. 1). Mendelsohn (1994) defines hearing as the capacity to comprehend the spoken language used by individuals. O'Malley, Chamot, and Kupper (1989) provide a definition of listening as a cognitive process that involves comprehending the contextual significance via the interpretation of signals and prior knowledge (p.19).

### 2.1 Types of listening

- **Casual listening:** This kind of hearing entails listening without any specific objective or intention. In this kind of listening, the listeners lack earnestness. Casual listening encompasses activities such as listening to music and listening to tales.
- **Focused listening:** this is a type of listening in which the listeners maintain the seriousness in grasping the information. This is purposeful listening. It includes listening to lectures and listening to any serious information.
- **Appreciative listening:** In this kind of communication, the listener actively engages in the process of receiving and valuing the information conveyed by the speaker. Appreciative listening is often engaged in while listening to music only for the purpose of enjoying the auditory experience.
- **Gist listening:** This is a kind of attentive listening when the listener focuses on capturing the key points.

### 2.2 Present situation of listening and communication skills

It has been noted that learners continue to have difficulties in acquiring fundamental listening and communication skills. English, like other languages, is often not seen as a talent to be taught but rather as a topic in schools and universities (Himangani, 2017). The emphasis is often placed on completing the curriculum rather than enhancing language skills. In India, English is considered a secondary language and is taught with little emphasis on its value. The objective of English education in India is to provide learners with the necessary skills to effectively read, write, and comprehend English. Additionally, it strives to enable learners to communicate in English with clarity, accuracy, and appropriateness (Lakshmi, 2017). The instruction in English should emphasize the importance of listening skills in the development of communication abilities.

Furthermore, it is often seen that instructors prioritize the improvement of reading and writing abilities above the development of listening and speaking abilities. Research has shown that a significant number of instructors lack the necessary expertise to effectively teach listening skills. Furthermore, schools and colleges often lack the necessary technology to facilitate the teaching of listening skills. Due to the increased emphasis on writing and reading abilities in exams, learners tend to prioritize these skills above listening and speaking skills, which are not given as much weight in the testing process.

## 3. Review of related literature

Based on the gathered data, it has been determined that several researchers have undertaken efforts to explore further methods for enhancing listening abilities. This review has 25 scholars from Vietnam and 15 researchers from various other nations. Multiple researches have shown that listening is a crucial ability for enhancing communication abilities. Many research have discovered that listening enhances the cognitive development of learners. This review was extended by focusing on the following aspects:

- i. Challenges in obtaining proficiency in English listening and communication skills
- ii. Enhancing proficiency in English hearing and speaking abilities
- iii. Comprehending the terminology
- iv. Utilization of ICT to enhance listening and communication proficiency
- v. Difficulties encountered by learners in comprehending accents

### **3.1 Barriers to listening**

There is a noticeable lack of instruction on how to effectively exercise listening skills among most learners. While students learn to read, write, and communicate, they are not instructed in the art of listening. Despite the abundance of training programs aimed at improving students' listening abilities, many still struggle to overcome the challenges they face. Some of the things that may get in the way of proper listening are:

- Failure to pause and listen to others
- Multiple forms of noise and background noise
- Inattention when listening
- Difficulty in comprehending what others are saying
- Interruptions during conversations

### **3.2 Tips to develop effective listening skills:**

In order to fully absorb and comprehend what a speaker is saying, students of listening comprehension should adhere to the following guidelines. Learners should do the following when listening:

- Maintain eye contact with the speaker to ensure comprehension of their meaning.
- Keep an open mind and embrace new knowledge and ideas.
- Learning new terms and their definitions is essential.
- To get the speaker's point across, ask them to clarify.
- Make sure to jot down the key topics.
- Keep quiet and pay attention.

## **4. Conclusion**

Listening is an essential component of effective communication abilities. Engaging in active listening enhances one's communication abilities and improves the overall quality of communication. Active listening enhances learners' ability to make informed decisions in several domains. Listening is crucial for improving communication abilities; thus, learners should prioritize developing their listening skills and adhere to effective practice methods. It is recommended that instructors undergo thorough preparation in listening skills in order to properly educate pupils in this area. The learners must possess the capacity to comprehend both the language and the speaker's accent in order to effectively absorb the material. It is well acknowledged that by prioritizing the development of their listening skills, individuals may greatly enhance their overall communication abilities, leading to increased success in this area. It is crucial for the instructor to provide several chances for learners to develop their listening skills and actively participate in the process of listening.

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