



TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS: STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

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Abstract: *Listening is one of the fundamental skills in English language learning and plays a crucial role in effective communication. Developing learners' listening ability requires not only exposure to authentic input but also the use of appropriate strategies and techniques. This paper explores various methods for teaching listening skills, focusing on pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. Special attention is given to strategies such as prediction, note-taking, selective listening, and the use of multimedia resources. The study emphasizes that integrating interactive activities and modern technologies into the learning process enhances comprehension and learner engagement. Finally, it suggests practical classroom techniques that teachers can apply to improve students' listening proficiency in diverse contexts.*

Key words: *Listening skills; teaching strategies; language learning; comprehension; interactive activities; multimedia; classroom techniques.*

Listening is one of the most essential skills in language learning, as it provides the foundation for communication and understanding. Unlike speaking, reading, or writing, listening often requires learners to process language in real time, which makes it more challenging. In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, listening is not only a means of acquiring knowledge but also a vital component of interaction and comprehension. Many learners face difficulties in developing listening skills due to unfamiliar vocabulary, fast speech, different accents, or lack of concentration. Therefore, teachers need to apply effective strategies and techniques that can help learners improve their listening ability. By using pre-listening preparation, active while-listening activities, and meaningful post-listening tasks, educators can create a supportive environment where students gain confidence and enhance their overall language competence.

Listening in a foreign language is a complex cognitive process that requires learners to perceive, interpret, and respond to spoken input in real time. It involves not only hearing sounds but also connecting them to meaning, recognizing patterns, and inferring the speaker's intentions. Researchers emphasize that listening is the most frequently used communication skill in daily life, yet it is often the least taught in classrooms [1]. Therefore, teachers should design activities that build listening competence systematically through pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages.

1. Pre-listening Strategies

Pre-listening is the stage where learners are prepared mentally and linguistically for the upcoming input. The purpose is to activate background knowledge, reduce anxiety, and set clear objectives.



- Activating prior knowledge: For example, before playing an audio about “shopping in a supermarket,” the teacher can ask: *What phrases do cashiers usually use? What questions do customers ask?* Such brainstorming engages learners and makes listening more purposeful [2].

- Previewing vocabulary: Teachers may pre-teach critical words or phrases (e.g., “checkout,” “discount,” “receipt”). This reduces comprehension barriers and allows learners to focus on meaning rather than struggling with unknown terms.

- Prediction tasks: Learners can be shown a picture, a short video clip, or even the title of the listening passage. For instance, if the topic is “Weather Report,” students may predict: *Will it rain? What temperatures will be mentioned?* Anticipating information enhances top-down processing skills [3].

For example: Before listening to a podcast about healthy eating, the teacher writes key words like “balanced diet,” “vitamins,” and “fast food” on the board. Learners discuss what advice might be included. This not only builds context but also sparks curiosity.

2. While-listening Techniques

This is the most critical stage, as learners are exposed to the actual input. Teachers should provide clear tasks that guide attention and prevent passive listening.

- Selective listening: Students focus only on specific details, such as names, dates, or numbers. For example, when listening to a flight announcement, learners write down the gate number and departure time. This trains them to extract key information efficiently [4].

- Note-taking: Encouraging students to jot down main ideas or symbols helps them organize information while processing it. In academic contexts, note-taking is crucial for understanding lectures. For instance, learners may create a simple table with columns for *main idea, supporting detail, example*.

- Listening for gist vs detail: The first listening can be for gist (general meaning), while the second listening targets details. For example, when playing a news report, learners first identify the overall topic (e.g., “natural disaster”) and then listen again for details (location, causes, consequences).

- Multiple-choice or matching tasks: Teachers may prepare worksheets where learners match speakers with their opinions, or choose correct answers after hearing a dialogue. This encourages active participation.

For example: During a listening task about job interviews, the teacher gives students a chart with three categories: *skills, experience, future goals*. As they listen, learners fill in the chart with details about each speaker. This helps focus on relevant content rather than memorizing everything.

3. Post-listening Activities

The post-listening stage allows learners to consolidate comprehension, reflect on content, and connect listening to speaking or writing.

Summarizing: Learners retell the main points orally or in writing. This checks comprehension and develops productive skills. Discussion and opinion sharing: After





listening to a debate on environmental issues, students can express their own opinions: *Do you agree with the speaker? Why or why not?* This transforms passive listening into critical engagement [5]. Role-play: Learners act out a situation similar to the listening text. For example, after listening to a restaurant dialogue, students practice ordering food using phrases they heard. Project-based activities: Teachers may assign creative tasks such as making a poster, recording a short podcast, or preparing a group presentation related to the listening material.

For example: After listening to a short story about friendship, students work in groups to change the ending of the story and present it to the class. This activity develops imagination while reinforcing comprehension.

4. Integrating Technology and Authentic Materials

Modern classrooms offer new opportunities to improve listening through multimedia and digital tools.

- **Podcasts and YouTube** provide exposure to authentic speech with various accents and speeds.
- **Language apps** (e.g., Duolingo, BBC Learning English) allow learners to practice outside class.
- **Subtitled videos** help beginners connect spoken and written forms, gradually improving recognition.

Interactive platforms like Kahoot or Quizizz can be used for post-listening quizzes, making learning enjoyable



For instance, a teacher can play a TED Talk and ask learners to summarize the speaker's main message, then discuss it in pairs. Authentic resources not only improve comprehension but also raise cultural awareness.

Listening is a central component of language learning and effective communication, yet it often receives less attention than other skills in the classroom. A systematic approach that includes pre-listening preparation, guided while-listening tasks, and meaningful post-listening activities can significantly improve learners' comprehension and confidence. Pre-listening strategies activate prior knowledge and reduce anxiety, while while-listening techniques such as selective listening and note-taking focus learners' attention on key information. Post-listening activities, on the other hand, consolidate understanding and encourage critical engagement with the text. The integration of technology and authentic materials further enhances exposure to real-life language use and diverse accents. Overall, successful teaching of listening skills requires a balance between bottom-up and top-down processing, continuous practice, and the use of interactive methods that motivate learners. By applying these strategies, teachers can help students develop stronger listening competence and become more effective communicators in English.



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