

засобами мистецьких дисциплін, теорія і практика естетичного виховання, історія вітчизняної та зарубіжної педагогіки.

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### THE ROLE OF LISTENING IN TEACHING DIFFERENT SPEECH ACTIVITIES

**Defining of the problem and the analysis of the last researches and publications.** Listening skills are essential for learning since they enable students to acquire insights and information, and to achieve success in communicating with others [7, p. 15].

Recognition of oral speech, or listening, in terms of teaching this type of speech activity, is a complicated problem that determines the further success or failure of all the practical language teaching [20, p. 2010]. Despite this, we often take importance of listening for granted, and it is the most overlooked skill among the others. In learning any language, listening stands at first rank whereas without any reception we can not produce anything [4, p. 27].

Listening happens in the context of interactions such as conversations and meetings, where both the participants act as speakers and listeners, and have the opportunity to give feedback to the speaker, or to interrupt the speaker to signal understanding, lack of understanding, need for repetition or reformulation, etc [6, p. 410].

Communication is a social process in which there is an exchange of experience, skills and abilities, and the results of activity. The communication is always a rational and emotional interaction of people, in the process of which the thoughts are revealed and the way of life is formed. This is the most important condition for the formation of consciousness and self-awareness of the individual [18, p. 195].

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The phenomenon of communication can not be reduced to pragmatics while a number of programs of teaching a foreign language are based precisely on this understanding of communication. This is an independent activity.

The goal of communication is always to change relationships [11, p. 22].

Helping students learn to perceive and understand sounding speech is the main purpose of listening [5, p. 3]. It is a receptive activity, because understanding subsequently passes into the reproduction of unexpressed material. Another feature of listening is its reactionary nature, which manifests itself as a response to the speech of the interlocutor [8, p. 75].

The development of listening skills which has been neglected in language acquisition whereas listening was considered as an ability that would develop without assistance [14, p. 360]. Since the role of language input came into the focus in language learning, more attention has been given to listening skills. It is generally recognized that language development without listening leaves little space for speech production [11, p. 10].

Many methodologists in the field of teaching foreign languages consider listening to be a fundamental skill in learning a foreign language, believing that it is the basis for teaching speaking and correct pronunciation. Recognizing the priority of listening among the four types of communication activities, scientists are trying to find the best methods of teaching it. Thus, some scientists studied listening defining it as a passive skill [10, p. 26]. If the listener takes part actively in the process of listening linguistically and uses non-linguistic knowledge to follow up the message it is an active listening [10, p. 38].

Listening is an important component of language learning. The comprehension and comprehensible production are essential to language acquisition. Cultural accessibility is also a decisive factor in successful listening. To acquire the knowledge of a new culture is beneficial for

improving intercultural competence. This is a good activity for selective listening. Researchers agree that metacognition improves thinking and understanding. As a result, students who plan, monitor, and evaluate their listening process are listeners or language learners who perform better than those who do not. In the new trend, students' metacognitive awareness should be increased which can also improve students' motivation to succeed [8, p. 75].

**The purpose of the article** is to demonstrate the importance of teaching listening skills.

This goal implies the solution of the following tasks:

- to reveal the features of the listening process in the system of teaching a foreign language;
- to show the connection between listening and other types of speech activity according to the scientific experiment.

The students of linguistic and non-linguistic specialties were taken as the respondents, half of whom received listening assignments at every lesson, and the other half – every four lessons. The duration of the experiment was one month.

The experiment involved 100 students of non-linguistic specialties of higher educational institutions and 100 – students of linguistic specialties. For the study, tasks of appropriate complexity were prepared, which included a general understanding of the audio material, a description of some details and answers to questions about the content.

The main hypothesis of the study is to show the connection between listening and other types of speech activity and to prove that the development of the process of understanding and perception of speech affects the improvement of communication, reading and writing.

**The main material of the study.** Listening is a receptive type of speech activity, which consists of the perception and understanding of the oral message.

Recordings are particularly suitable for practicing the kind of listening where the listener has no opportunity to interact with the speaker: listening to the radio, listening to public announcements at airports, stations, or eavesdropping of strangers' conversations [14, p. 360].

The modern effective methods of teaching listening skills include everything from interactive exercises to multimedia resources. Listening skills can be learnt or improved through simple and engaging activities that focus more on the learning process instead of the final product [1, p. 503].

Listening can be viewed both as an activity and as a skill. As one of the types of speech activity, listening is closely related to other types. First of all, this concerns speaking because without

the practice of listening, it is impossible to learn active speaking [3, p. 198]. With the same reason, it is possible to establish an inverse relationship, since listening and speaking are two sides of the same phenomenon, which is called speaking. Therefore, the development of listening was a by-product of teaching speaking, and listening did not stand out as a completely independent product [12, p. 135].

Listening training involves working on two functional types of this speech activity: listening in the process of direct (dialogical) communication (face-to-face communication) and listening to coherent texts in conditions of mediated communication [8, p. 78].

Many researches suggest that the activities should allow students to perform an active part in their learning [15, p. 87].

It should be noted that listening sub-skills are typically integrated proficiency in the sense that they are combined with one or more other language skills. For example, in the academic settings listening to lectures is usually accompanied with notes-taking, and during the business meetings listeners must be able not only to listen critically, but also respond quickly and accurately [8, p. 75].

Listening as a process is based on certain psychophysiological mechanisms: perception, recognition and understanding.

The mechanisms of perception include the rules of internal pronunciation, operative and long-term memory, identification (comparison), anticipation (probabilistic forecasting). The success of listening is associated with the mechanisms of the so-called auditory memory and depends on the size of the operational unit of perception, the ability to retain segments of speech in memory. The process of understanding audio text, the possibility of its subsequent interpretation, depends on the ability to retain the perceived segments of speech in memory.

The listening material should be based on a variety of authentic texts. In other words, the listening material used in real life makes listeners be motivated to achieve communication goals because language is a social phenomenon and authenticity is an important factor of it.

It has been established that even before the beginning of perception, as soon as the listening attitude appears, the articulatory organs show minimal activity.

In modern foreign language programs, the main goal is the development of students' abilities:

- in the conditions of direct communication in various situations, to understand the statements of the interlocutor, including the unfamiliar language means;
- to understand (educational and authentic) audio texts with varying degrees and depth of

penetration into their content (within the framework of program requirements): understanding the main content; the most significant facts (these levels of penetration into the text are determined by the communicative task, the type of audio text and the conditions for its perception).

Compensating skills allow students to successfully understand the sounding text provided they have limited language and speech experience:

- linguistic and contextual guess about the meaning of unfamiliar language means;

- reliance on information preceding the audio text, on various paralinguistic means (gestures, facial expressions, clarity, etc.), on the plan, keywords of the text, its structure and storyline, on own speech and life experience in the native language, on knowledge of the subject of the message, etc [11, p. 19].

The researchers have found that the four language skill areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated and contribute to people’s understanding of the world around them [2, p. 60]. Reading and listening are receptive skills; writing and speaking are productive skills. There are substantial correlations among these four language processes. So when students listen, they also advance their language skills.

Reading comprehension involves both decoding print and understanding language. The students can decode text, so their comprehension depends on understanding language.

Speaking about the relationship of listening with other aspects, it can be noted that, listening and speaking are closely interrelated with each other, since the result of both types of speech activity is the expression of thoughts using the target language.

We can say that listening as a form an utterance is speaking, while it helps to perceive speech better [4, p. 33].

Many students often encounter trouble in listening to foreign people even though they do well at the English classes.

The study has found that students who did the listening exercises at each class have improved their communication skills in English.

If the educational achievements are grouped into the levels of the communicative aspects of language proficiency, we get the following results (Table 1,2).

According to the table, the English speaking rate has grown by 2-5 percent in a month. Listening is a key to the effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated. Good communication requires good listening as well as talking.

Table 1. The communication skills of the students of non-linguistic specialities.

Skill level	Before the experiment			After the experiment		
	Elementary	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Elementary	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate
Number of students, %	32	48	20	27	50	23

Table 2. The communication skills of the students of linguistic specialities.

Skill level	Before the experiment			After the experiment		
	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced
Number of students, %	10	57	33	7	58	35

The students of the linguistic specialities have improved their communication skills by 1-3 percent.

Listening is the most fundamental component of interpersonal communication [7, p. 6]. Listening and speaking are highly interrelated and work simultaneously in real life situations. The integration of the two aims of effective oral communication is evident. This integration will assure real-life and purposeful communication [5, p. 3].

We should not underestimate the connection between listening and writing, because this speech activity develops on the basis of sounding speech for the fixation, preservation and transmission of information. Speech units appeared much earlier than written ones: writing is only a way of graphic design of speech. The person first speaks and then writes down, or first writes down and then speaks, or performs these two actions simultaneously [9, p. 35].

The results of the effect of listening on writing also have shown a positive aspect (Table 3.4).

Table 3. The writing skills of the students of non-linguistic specialities.

Skill level	Before the experiment			After the experiment		
	Elementary	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Elementary	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate
Number of students, %	21	43	36	19	42	39

The experiment results have shown 1-3 percent improvement in writing skills of the students of non-linguistic specialities.

Listening and writing form a strong relationship with each other. They are tools for the achievement of effective written communication [14, p. 360].

Table 4. The writing skills of the students of linguistic specialities.

Before the experiment			After the experiment			
Skill level	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced
Number of students, %	12	53	35	7	54	39

According to the results of the students of linguistic specialities their writing skills have been improved by 1-5 percent.

The research has shown that improving listening skills creates favorable conditions for the development of writing skills.

Reading and listening differ in the nature of reception and implementation. When providing foreign language information through the visual modality, the recipient of information relies on the mechanism of visual sensory processing, which makes it possible to keep the visual image in the recipient's field of attention for a longer time than with auditory perception [13]. Despite the fact that reading and listening are different types of speech activity, there are similarities between them. These include recognizing the form of a word, its meaning, and understanding the utterance [14, p. 361].

Reading test scores have been improved as students began to do more listening tasks (Table 5,6).

Table 5. The reading skills of the students of non-linguistic specialities.

Before the experiment			After the experiment			
Skill level	Elementary Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Elementary	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	
Number of students, %	15	32	53	11	25	59

Experiment results have shown 4-7 percent improvement in reading skills of the students of non-linguistic specialities.

Listening and reading comprehensions are highly related. Listening and reading are very complicated phenomena and play an important role

in individual and social life. To promote assessment literacy, the text attempts to provide a selective review of these central language skills.

Listening comprehension figures prominently as a component in theoretical models of reading [11, p. 22]. Moreover, listening comprehension level represents a potential for reading comprehension.

Table 6. The reading skills of the students of linguistic specialities.

Before the experiment			After the experiment			
Skill level	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced	Intermediate	Upper Intermediate	Advanced
Number of students, %	5	36	59	4	32	64

According to the results of the research the reading skills of the students of linguistic specialities have been improved by 1-5 percent.

Listening and reading, being both internal processes of verbal comprehension, share a number of factors/processes but listening and the testing/assessment of listening are commonly considered to pose specific challenges related to the characteristics of the input [8, p. 75]. As mentioned earlier, the product of listening and reading comprehension is gauged by eliciting externalised measures.

The results of the study have shown that listening is associated with various types of speech activity. Improving listening skills the students advance reading, speaking and writing skills. Therefore, teaching various types of activities is very important while teaching a foreign language.

Listening plays an important role in learning as it is one of the four major skills in language acquisition. Even though the other skills such as reading, speaking and writing are essential to develop language proficiency, listening contributes primarily for language expertise.

**Conclusions and prospects for further researches of directions.** Listening tasks are considered the most difficult in learning a foreign language, so their use is a prerequisite for learning any language.

It can be said that language learning is impossible without listening skills. This is because there is no communication where there is no human interaction [12, p. 134].

Auditory perception, as a multilevel hierarchical structure of thought activity, has a complex of analytical mechanisms for processing the incoming speech signal at different levels: acoustic, semantic-linguistic, and semantic. The

formation of this component of integrative competence entails active purposeful work of the teacher and students [7, p. 17], aimed at updating and developing the perceptual side of speech activity. It proves the fact that listening is closely related to verbal communication within the framework of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching.

Listening is the most significant part of communication as it is pivotal in providing a substantial and meaningful response.

Ideally, the formation of a foreign language intercultural competence should lead to the development of the ability of the owners of this competence to communicate with representatives of the different language societies in English in the professional field. The four skills are the pinnacles of language which will take the speakers to greater heights [3, p. 192].

When teaching in order to form a foreign language intercultural competence, the teacher needs to create special conditions for immersion in a communication situation based on an authentic discourse with the participation of speakers of a foreign language society in accordance with the goals of foreign language speech activity [8, p. 87]. Listening provides an excellent venue for learners to experience good language models. It provides input in the second language acquisition for coming to good terms with grammatical structures, lexical units, and phonological awareness [11, p. 382].

The ways of the subsequent study of the main aspects of teaching students various types of speech activity are connected with the identification of general trends in teaching speaking, reading, writing and listening.

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