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The main importance of listening skills in foreign language learning.

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Abstract: This article focuses on importance of listening skills in learning English as a second language. Listening ability is considered to learn firstly than other skills of learning. It emphasizes clear research findings in second language learning and shows the relationship between listening comprehension and language learning. Research suggests that listening is important first step to other language skills, speaking, reading and writing. It is also mentioned below listening should be the primary skill to be acquired in learning a new language. There are given also mostly used and effective tools to develop listening skill and maximize usage of it in classes of English language.

Keywords: ESL, learning styles, input and output, spelling, online learning, technical devices.

Introduction

Before mentioned English is one of the largest speaking and learning, world language. Approximately out of 7.8 billion world's people, 1.35 billion speak in English. However, not all of them are native English speakers. About 360 million people speak English as their first mother tongue. The most prevalent language is Mandarin-Chinese, followed distantly by Spanish and then, in third, comes English. In addition to being widely spoken, English is by far the most crucial studied foreign language in the world, followed by French at a distant second.

English is commonly spread among the Americans, making it hard to calculate exactly, but it is about 350 million people use English as a mother tongue. The many of those native English speakers live in the United States — about 297.4 million of them. Another 30 million native English speakers are from Canada. Although, we can come across people who speak or understand this language from all over the world.

Moreover, the quantity of learners is increasing day by day. It is a cause of importance of English language in daily life: in business, in applying job, in traveling and in studying.

In the 21st century, called “Age of Information Technology”, in this new period the life is covered by communication technologies in many aspects. It increases our daily issues much

easier, faster and effective. The education system also has not missed this process. Using IT-technologies will be helpful in learning and teaching. The listening skills in English language learning mostly use such kind of communication tools.

Main body.

There are 3 basic types of learning styles according to Educational psychologist Walter Burke Barbe and his colleagues' theory: they distinguished “modalities of learning”- visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

Relying on this, interviewing scientific surveys and its results show that people learn information by hearing from someone than reading or seeing something without difficulty. Auditory learners can catch easily what speaker say about and analyzing heard information. It means language learners use listening skills more effective in getting information in learning process.

Anderson and Lynch (2003) state that “we only become aware of what remarkable feats of listening we achieve when we are in an unfamiliar listening environment, such as listening to a language in which we have limited proficiency” (p. 3). Most people think that being able to write and speak in a second language means that they know the language; however, if they do not have the efficient listening skills, it is not possible to communicate effectively. That is, listening is

the basic skill in language learning and over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a

foreign language will be devoted to listening (Nunan, 1998). Rost (1994) explains the importance of listening in language classroom as follows:

1. Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin.

2. Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Because learners must interact to achieve understanding. Access to speakers of the language is essential. Moreover, learners' failure to understand the language they hear is an impetus, not an obstacle, to interaction and learning.

3. Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to understand language as native speakers actually use it.

4. Listening exercises provide teachers with a means for drawing learners' attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, new interaction patterns) in the language (p. 141-142).

Before mentioned listening is benefit side of learning foreign language faster and more effectively. So that there are scheduled listening tasks or classes in schools or universities' timetable. It requires from teacher to maximize students listening abilities and comprehension. There is a list of interactive and most used methods to encourage students, develop listening skills:

1. Map It

In Map It, students listen to your directions and find their way along a map to a secret location. Start by making copies of a map for each of your students. It can be a real place, like this campus, or a simple diagram you put together yourself. Just make sure the streets are labeled and that you have several buildings marked on the map.

Give your students directions from a starting point, but don't tell them where you are directing them. They should run their fingers along the map according to your directions. Once you are finished, ask students where they ended up. Hopefully they are at the destination you were leading them to.

2. Hearing is Believing

Before listening to a dialogue, play some background noise that matches the location of your scene and have students make predictions about what will be in the dialogue.

For example, play a movie clip (without visual or dialogue) that occurs in a restaurant before playing a dialogue of people ordering food.

3. Sound Vocabulary

If you are doing a vocabulary unit on animals, modes of transportation or anything else that leads itself to specific noises, try having your students match sounds to words. Give them vocabulary words on index cards or in a numbered list.

4. Listening Walk

Have students go for a listening walk. As they walk, have them make notes about what they hear. Then come back together and work with a partner. Have students discuss what they heard. Did their partner hear the same things that they did?

Besides this profitable games, teachers also use post-cards, elementary music, classical songs according to theme and students' behavior, also age. For instance, postcards about daily issues: going to school, lessons, school life, sport or such kind of interesting topics are available for pupil of school generation.

Conclusion.

This article shows us the importance of teaching listening skills first, before speaking, reading, and writing. There are above major examples for applying the listening-first approach. First, listening comprehension designs the blueprint for future acquisition of

speaking. Second, it takes into consideration on aural comprehension training and relaxation of the requirement for oral production in the initial phase of instruction fosters increasing of linguistic competence and produces better results than those obtained through intensive oral practice.

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