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D.M. MAKHMETOVA¹, E.I. LUGOVSKAIYA¹, Z.S. NESSIPBAYEVA¹,
B.K. ISSABAYEVA¹¹Al-Farabi Kazakh National University**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF STAGED LISTENING COMPREHENSION
TRAINING**

The article describes a staged listening comprehension training scheme. The scheme was tested on students of natural science specialties with a Pre-Intermediate level of English. The scheme includes three stages. The first is called foreign-speech adaptation and develops students' adaptive skills while listening to adapted texts read by the teacher and doing phonetic exercises. The second stage is called purposeful listening and develops the concentration skills of students. At the second stage, intermediate level audio texts are presented without speed and pronunciation attunements. At the last stage, which is the improvement stage, authentic texts are read faster. This stage develops the skill of understanding authentic texts and promotes the skill to guess the meaning of new words using the context.

Keywords: foreign-speech adaptation, purposeful listening, improvement stage, understanding.

Introduction

Listening comprehension is an important skill that a student should possess to communicate with foreign speakers and understand lectures, movies, music, monologues in other languages [1]. In the settings of widening international relations in science, art, education, culture, and economics, listening comprehension becomes very important. The success in communication is determined by the listener's ability to understand oral messages in other languages well and precisely.

Listening comprehension encompasses multiple processes involved in understanding and making sense of a spoken speech¹. A speaker and a listener are the main participants in this process. The speaker reproduces information, and the listener should grasp and process it. In a native language, this process goes easily and quickly. However, in a foreign language, it can take some time or not occur if the listener fails to grasp the meaning of what is said. Many students of non-linguistic specialties face this problem when listening to a foreign speech. They are unable to understand the information

delivered. These difficulties are often caused by the speed, the voice characteristics, the subject of the message, and poor vocabulary and grammar knowledge. While listening, students often start to panic. This is common when an audio message has many unfamiliar words, or the speech rate is too high. When doing listening tasks, a student spends much time to grasp and understand each word spoken. This happens especially when the listener cannot see the speaker, as recording and transmitting devices can degrade the sound quality. Foreign speech is easier perceived in live communication when the communicants see each other, and there are no sound disturbances in the communication process.

However, live communication in a foreign language can also be difficult, for example, during an ever first communication with a foreigner or listening to a lecture or another text in a foreign language. In such cases, the listeners often feel lost and experience a psychological shock. Such a communicative failure is often associated with linguistic uncertainty, which scatters our attention and does not focus on what is said in the message.

¹Encyclopedia of autism spectrum disorders // https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-1-4419-1698-3_349

Communication is based on the meaning of the original message, which is a key factor in communication success. The studies show that not all listeners can grasp this meaning. While listening, most students of non-linguistic specialties try to grasp separate words and sounds. They focus on the words ignoring the main idea of the message, and this complicates their listening task. This approach often hinders the fulfillment of after-listening tasks and results in low listening abilities.

This article discusses a staged listening comprehension training scheme based on a simple-to-complex principle. This scheme was tested while teaching English to students of physical, chemical, and biological specialties. Their initial level of English was pre-intermediate. We involved students of the same level to show the effect of our scheme at each stage.

Experiment

Listening has long been recognized as a challenging skill for teachers, students, and researchers working in the English as a Second Language (ESL)/English as Foreign Language (EFL) contexts [2]. There are many views on the listening comprehension training process. Some researchers view listening comprehension as an active process that requires interpretive and interactive mental operations [3]. The listeners should concentrate on the speech they hear in a foreign language and learn to recognize the vocabulary and grammar to construct the meaning [2]. This approach assumes that the student should possess extensive knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to render the message in the source language into a target language or his/her native language. However, in reality, not all students meet this requirement. Other researchers accentuate the role of the vocabulary [4]. This article focuses on the gradual development of listening comprehension skills in a three-stages' scheme. The proposed scheme promotes the development of phonetic skills, vocabulary enlargement, the skill to identify the meaning of new words based on the context, the skill to single out necessary

information from the stream of sentences in the oral message paraphrasing skills. All these skills are developed at different levels depending on the complexity of each level.

The first stage is a preparatory step and implies a foreign-speech adaptation. At this stage, the student's ear adapts to oral foreign speech, the student learns to distinguish English sounds in an oral message and improves the skill of remembering short pieces of the text.

We utilized specially compiled short dialogues and texts. The students were tasked to understand these easy texts read aloud. We also used the materials from English textbooks of elementary and pre-intermediate levels, sometimes also the adapted professional texts. Before listening to professional texts related to their specialty, the students were given the lists of words they had to study. At the first stage, the texts were 5-10 sentences long. The students also had to write out familiar English words during listening. After listening, the students received printed versions of the texts to look through and translate the texts. If the students did not know the translation of a certain word, we wrote the translation down on the whiteboard. After analyzing the lexical composition of the listened text, we read it out for the second time and asked the students to reproduce three or four phrases from the text using the new words. At that stage, the students were able to reproduce at least two or three new words. Sometimes they could reproduce a whole sentence containing unfamiliar words. For example, they could reproduce the following sentences and phrases: "It is a sunny day, it is very dark at the bottom of the ocean. This picture shows heat escapes, climate change. She did not answer him back. Could you tell me the time, please? What can I do for you?" During the analysis, the students were able to expand their vocabulary significantly. At this and subsequent stages, the students had to keep a dictionary notebook, where they had to write down all new words they learned during the lessons.

At the first stage, we used the “simulated live listening” method [6] when the text was reproduced by the teacher, not a recorded native speaker’s voice.

We elaborated a set of requirements for the first stage:

- volume – 10-15 sentences;
- the text should include the studied

vocabulary and grammar;

– there should be two or three questions on the content of the text;

– the sentences in the message should be very simple. Table 1 shows the results of the first stage, which involved a total of 100 students.

Table 1 – The results of foreign-speech-adaptation stage

Number of students	Foreign-language-speech listening comprehension level	Number of sentences grasped
20 students	30 %	3 sentences
40 students	50 %	5 -10 sentences
40 students	100 %	10–15 sentences (maximum number)

The table shows the students’ ability to grasp passages 5 to 15 sentences long at the first stage. The number of sentences grasped varied from a minimum of three to an average of 5-10, and a maximum of 10-15. Twenty students showed poor results, while 40 students had average listening skills, and 40 students had good skills.

The first stage also included phonetic exercises to teach students to discern English sounds while listening. The phonetic exercises included word quizzes where the students had to reproduce the teacher’s words in a written form. All 100 students demonstrated good results in phonetic quizzes, with a maximum of 2-3 mistakes. The phonetic tasks taught students to grasp and identify separate words rapidly from oral foreign speech. Knowing English phonetics rules developed the students’ ability to recognize familiar words while listening, especially at the later stages.

The first stage was the easiest since it involved simple listening materials, and the teacher spoke with perfect pronunciation and at an average speed. The foreign-speech adaptation period accustomed the students to English oral speech. The students mastered the technique of discerning English sounds in oral messages and acquired the skills to remember short pieces of information. The initial stage of the scheme proposed by the

authors provided pre-intermediate students with a good vocabulary, which significantly facilitated English speech understanding at the next subsequent stages.

At the second stage, called purposeful listening, the students listen to popular scientific intermediate level audio texts of 15 to 20 sentences reproduced by native speakers. At this stage, the students can develop their skill of grasping certain information from the listened text. This skill is needed to pass such international English tests as IELTS, TOEFL, and TOEIC. At the first stage, the students are to write out only familiar words and translate 3-4 sentences, while at the second stage, they have to learn to grasp the necessary information to complete the listening task.

The second stage is divided into two substages. The first substage is called the right-word-grasping substage, and the students have to grasp certain words from the audio record. This substage utilizes the results of gap-filling exercises fulfilled during listening. Before listening, the students are given some time to study and analyze the lexical text composition. The speech rate at the second stage is medium.

Performing this task substantially improves the students’ focusing skills, which are vital during listening. The students are fully focused on the texts. They have to

follow each sentence to grasp the correct word from the record. This substage involves no grammar or lexical changes to the text.

The students have shown quite good right-word-grasping skills at the end of this

substage. The total number of gaps was 13. The number of words filled in varied from less than five to an average of 5-7 and a maximum of 8-13 words. Table 2 shows the results of this substage.

Table 2 – The results of the right-word-grasping substage (task 1: fill in the gaps in the text)

Number of students	Number of words grasped
43 students	8-13 words
37 students	7-5 words
20 students	Less than 5 words

According to Table 2, 43 students showed good results, 37 students showed average results, and 20 students had poor results. Thus, 43 students completed the task successfully. This was a little better than after the first foreign-speech adaptation stage, where only 40 students have shown maximum results. The main difference between the foreign-speech adaptation stage and the word grasping substage was that at the first stage, the students were listening to live speech what made their task easier. In

contrast, at the right-word-grasping substage, they listened to an audio record pre-recorded by a native speaker without adaptation and a wordlist.

The first substage included a multiple-choice task, which was much easier than the gap-filling task. Table 3 presents the results of fulfilling the multiple-choice tasks at the first substage (the right-word-grasping substage). The maximum number of questions in the task was 14.

Table 3 – The results of the right-word-grasping substage (task 2: multiple choice)

Number of students	Number of correct answers
50 students	12-13 out of 14
30 students	8-11 out of 14
20 students	7 out of 14

Table 3 shows much better results than Table 2. Fifty out of 100 students were excellent and gave correct answers to 12–13 questions out of 14 questions; 30 students delivered 8-11 correct answers, and only 20 students showed average results (7 out of 14 correct answers).

The second substage of the second stage is called the phrase-grasping substage. At this substage, the students have to grasp

Table 4 – The results of the phrase-grasping substage

Number of students	Number of phrases grasped
60 students	5 phrases
30 students	3 phrases
10 students	1 phrase

not separate words but a whole phrase. This substage involves an alternative-choosing exercise where the students have to choose the right phrase. At this substage, the students receive printed versions of five sentences, which are slightly different from the version in the record. This subphase includes lexical and grammatical transformations based on the principles of synonymy.

Table 4 gives the results of the second substage. The number of phrases grasped varied from the minimum of one phrase to an average of three and a maximum of five phrases. Only ten students out of 100 demonstrated lower results than in the first substage (the right-word-grasping substage). Sixty students have shown high results.

The success of most students at this substage could be explained by the brevity of sentences used in the tasks. The students had to grasp the same sentences as those they could find in the print-out. They did not have to follow the whole text; their attention was only focused on certain pieces of the text. The second stage was easier for the students than the first one (the right-word-grasping). The students' attention was focused only on one sentence, not the whole text. Their task was to grasp the sentence similar to the sentence in the print-out.

Thus, the second stage (purposeful listening) aims to develop the students' skills of grasping a certain type of information as a word or a phrase. The students have to identify the correct word or phrase from the stream of sentences to complete the task. Gap-filling and multiple-choice tasks at the second stage support the transition to more complex exercises with larger texts. Such texts contain difficult grammatical structures and many unfamiliar words, which meaning is to be derived from the context. Purposeful listening is a preparatory step for TOEFL ITP and IELTS. The second stage gradually immerses the students into an English-speaking environment. It develops the listening skills of students to the high level required to pass international English language tests.

In the authors' scheme, the last stage is called the final stage or the improvement stage. In this stage, the students listen to authentic audio materials of academic content, 20-30 sentences long. In the third stage, the speakers speak a little faster than in the second stage.

The third stage included paraphrasing

tasks. For example, we used an audio lecture about whales and dolphins¹ to select a sentence "Many toxins, as you are aware, originate from plants" and paraphrased it as follows "Many toxins, as you know, come from plants." We asked students to paraphrase this sentence using a dictionary and received the following four variants:

Student 1: Many toxins, as you are aware, come from plants (1 part paraphrased).

Student 2: Many bad substances, as you are informed, originate from plants (3 words paraphrased).

Student 3: Many toxins originate from plants, as you are aware (1 word paraphrased and the word order changed).

Student 4: Many toxins, as you are aware, originate from plants.

As you can see, only student #4 could reproduce the original sentence correctly. The other three have reproduced some lexical elements of the original variant. The main criterion in this task was the students' ability to find in the dictionary the right synonyms for the original words and grammatical structures synonymous with the original text. We used a simple sentence to show how paraphrasing works. The main purpose of this task was to enlarge the students' vocabulary and prepare them for IELTS and TOEFL listening tasks based on synonyms. For instance, we gave them positive statements like "Whales were found poisoned after eating tuna" [8, 135]. Some students have paraphrased it like "Whales were poisoned by tuna," or "Tuna poisoned the whales," or "Whales were found poisoned after eating tuna."

Visual-image-based tasks are also employed at this stage. The students perform such tasks before listening. In these tasks, the students have to answer the questions based on visual images specially selected to enrich their vocabulary on the audio topic. The authors also call this task "informative" since it aims to introduce the students to the audio topic. The following task could serve as an example. The topic of the audio text from IELTS materials: Mass stranding of whales

¹IELTS 9. Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 176.

and dolphins:

Example 4: Answer the following questions using the following pictures.

1. Why do whales and dolphins die during high tides?



Students usually chose four to seven words to answer the last question. Below are the keywords proposed by five students out of 100:

Student 1: dolphin, whale, sea, dead.

Student 2: death, environment, marine, water, strand, die, whale.

Student 3: people, help, stranding, mass, tides, strand.

Student 4: fish, dead, sea, ocean, die, tides.

Student 5: strand, dolphin, whale, sea, shore, tides.

The informative tasks help the students orient and grasp information to complete the task while listening since they already know the topic of the text and the words it

2. What measures can people take to save these marine animals?

3. What keywords can you find for this text?

can contain. While listening, the students have to do multiple-choice tasks based on the information available in the text that they listen to. Afterward, they are asked ten questions about the text.

In the multiple-choice task «Mass strandings of whales and dolphins,» the students have answered 5 out of 10 questions correctly since they were familiar with 52% of the vocabulary. Besides, after listening, the students could reproduce in English about 50% of the terms from the text in a written form. This is a good result for students of natural science specialties. This was the second task the students did after listening.

Table 5 and Table 6 present the results of the improvement stage.

Table 5 – The results of the improvement stage

Number of students	Listening comprehension level	Number of questions answered correctly in the multiple-choice tasks (out of 10)
30 students	99 %	8-9
50 students	95 %	7
20 students	91 %	6

Therefore, the students of the pre-intermediate level were able to deliver good results at the improvement stage. Thirty students could answer 8-9 questions out of 10. Fifty students gave correct answers to seven questions out of 10; 20 students could answer six questions out of 10 correctly. The students managed to achieve high results due to the skills acquired at the previous two stages. At the first stage, the students enlarged their vocabulary. They learned to memorize short pieces of the text, so the foreign-speech adaptation period supported the development of their lexical and memorizing skills. At the

stage of purposeful listening, the students mastered the technique of identifying necessary information in the oral message. During the purposeful listening, the students were taught to recognize synonyms in an oral message, which was a useful skill at the improvement stage.

Results and Discussion

Thus, the staged listening comprehension training scheme assumes a gradual development of listening comprehension skills in students. At each stage, the students acquire certain skills useful for the next stages.

The first stage or foreign-speech adaptation develops students' adaptation skills. At this phase, the teacher creates a special linguistic environment for the students using adapted texts, phonetic exercises, and wordlists. During the adaptation period, the students have to reproduce short pieces of information and write out familiar words. At the end of the first stage, the students increase their vocabulary, can discern English sounds in the oral messages, and memorize short pieces of the listened text. So, the foreign-speech adaptation can be called a comfort zone for the students where all oral message characteristics are attuned to the students' level by the teacher. At this stage, the teacher performs three roles: a foreign-language speaker, a writer, and a designer. He writes new texts, reads these texts, and designs language environment.

After the first stage, the student moves to the second one, which is "purposeful listening." This stage offers more complicated tasks. It introduces slight changes in the comfortable learning conditions created during the adaptation period. Purposeful listening requires the use of concentration skills and the skills of grasping the necessary information. The listeners are immersed in a foreign-language environment created not by the teacher but by the recorded voices of native speakers. They do not listen to the live speech of a teacher. Here the student is immersed in an audio language environment. At this stage, the teacher acts as a monitor, an instructor, and checks the fulfillment of listening tasks giving some rare instructions.

The improvement stage fully removes the students from a comfort zone. It submerges them into a non-adapted language environment where they can use their concentration, memorizing, paraphrasing, and adaptive skills acquired during two previous stages. At this stage, the teacher acts as a guide that forms the students' language routes to help them orient in the authentic text environment. The context also helps to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Consequently, each stage is a small

brick that lays the foundation for students' perception of foreign speech.

Conclusion

The proposed listening comprehension training scheme is based on a simple-complex pedagogical principle, which assumes students' gradual immersion into a foreign-language environment. At each stage of the scheme, the students demonstrated various results. The difference in the results can be explained by the requirement of listening tasks fulfilled by the students. If at the first stage the students had difficulties in remembering and reproducing three sentences at the beginning at the second stage, they were able to show slightly better results due to multiple-choice tasks and alternative-choosing tasks as they were concentrated on one certain thing. Finally, the ability to concentrate on certain information gave them a significant advantage in the third stage when they were doing more complex tasks since the second stage partially prepared them for the third stage's multiple-choice tasks.

These bring us to the following recommendations:

- in the beginning, a teacher should employ simple texts and tasks, phonetic exercises;

- at each lesson, more attention should be paid to enlarging the students' vocabulary since the vocabulary knowledge has a significant impact on the successful understanding of foreign speech;

- not to drive students to panic at the adaptation foreign-language stage, a teacher should create an environment which excludes the use of fast-rate reproduced audio texts, complicated grammar structures, and word combinations difficult for understanding;

- each lesson should include paraphrasing tasks since they substantially assist in preparing students for IELTS or TOEFL.

These recommendations can guide a teacher working with students of the pre-intermediate level and ensure a 50 % understanding of the listened foreign-language text.

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МАХМЕТОВА Д.М., ЛУГОВСКАЯ Е.И., НЕСИПБАЕВА З.С., ИСАБАЕВА Б.К.
ТЫҢДАУ ДАҒДЫСЫНА ҮЙРЕТУ ҮДЕРІСІНДЕ САТЫЛЫ ЖҮЙЕНІҢ МАҢЫЗЫ

Бұл мақалада студенттерді тыңдау дағдысына үйрету үдерісінде пайдаланылатын қадамдық жүйенің негізі қарастырылады. Оқытудың осы сызбасы жаратылыстану ғылымы мамандығы саласындағы ағылшын тілін меңгеруі орта деңгейдегі студенттерге оқытылатын ағылшын тілі сабақтарында тексерілді. Ол үш кезенді

камтиды. Бірінші кезең шет тіліндегі мәтінді тыңдауға бейімделу деп аталады. Екінші кезең мақсатты түрде тыңдау деп аталады, бұл сатыда тыңдауға белгілі бір мамандық саласындағы арнайы мәтіндер беріледі. Бірінші кезеңмен салыстырғанда екінші кезеңде тыңдауға берілетін мәтіндер күрделірек, өйткені бұл сатыда тыңдауға орта деңгейдегі аудиомәтіндер беріледі, ал сөйлеу мен айтылу жылдамдығы тыңдаушының білім деңгейіне сәйкес жеңілдетілген мәтіндер емес. Екінші кезең екі жанама кезеңге бөлінеді. Тыңдау дағдысын жетілдіру кезеңі деп аталатын соңғы кезең жоғары жылдамдықпен оқылатын тұпнұсқадан алынған мәтіндерді қамтиды. Алдыңғы екі кезеңмен салыстырғанда, соңғы сатыда тұпнұсқадан алынған мәтіндерді тыңдау дағдылары дамытылады. Тыңдау дағдысын жақсарту кезеңі студенттердің контекске сүйене отырып, мәтінде кездесетін жаңа сөздердің мағынасын анықтау қабілеттерін дамытуға ықпал етеді.

Кілтті сөздер: шетел тіліндегі мәтіндерді тыңдауға бейімделу, мақсатты түрде тыңдау, түсіну, жетілдіру кезеңі.

МАХМЕТОВА Д.М., ЛУГОВСКАЯ Е.И., НЕСИПБАЕВА З.С., ИСАБАЕВА Б.К.
ВАЖНОСТЬ ПОШАГОВОЙ СИСТЕМЫ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ АУДИРОВАНИЮ

В данной статье рассматривается поэтапная схема, разработанная для процесса обучения аудированию. Схема была апробирована на занятиях по английскому языку со студентами естественнонаучных специальностей уровня Pre-Intermediate. Она включает в себя три этапа. Первый этап называется иноязычной адаптацией. Процесс аудирования на этом этапе развивает адаптивные навыки обучающихся посредством прослушивания адаптированных текстов, прочитанных преподавателем, и системой фонетических упражнений. Второй этап называется целенаправленным аудированием. По сравнению с первым этапом второй этап включает аудио тексты уровня Intermediate при этом скорость говорения и произношение не адаптируются под слушателя. Вторая стадия подразделяется на две подфазы. Последняя стадия, которая называется стадией совершенствования, включает в себя аутентичные тексты, которые читаются на высокой скорости. По сравнению с двумя предыдущими этапами последний развивает навык понимания аутентичных текстов на слух. Этап совершенствования способствует развитию у студентов умения определить значение нового слова, используя контекст.

Ключевые слова: иноязычная адаптация, целенаправленное аудирование, понимание, стадия совершенствования.