
Задачи учителя – выявить и обобщить наиболее продуктивные на современном этапе развития образования пути и средства повышения мотивации к изучению русского языка; научить детей думать, уметь адекватно выражать свои мысли, отстаивать свою точку зрения; развивать самостоятельную личность, способную жить в динамично развивающемся современном обществе. Новые подходы к обучению требуют от учителя больших творческих затрат, непрерывного профессионального роста, изучения и актуализации на уроках педагогических инноваций, внедряемых в казахстанскую систему образования.

БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЕ ССЫЛКИ

PLANNING EFL LISTENING COMPREHENSION CLASSES

ПЛАНИРОВАНИЕ ЗАНЯТИЙ ПО ОБУЧЕНИЮ АУДИРОВАНИЮ

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Some basic principles for devising listening comprehension classes, for using appropriate methods and techniques as well as the criteria for selecting
teaching materials are considered in this article. The examples of various activities to motivate students to improve their listening comprehension skills are also given.

_Keywords:_ listening comprehension skills; learning objectives; controlled practice; communicative context; authentic listening materials.

Developing listening comprehension skills is very important for EFL students, especially in a communicative language environment where activities often include interactions between English language learners. According to Brown (2001), students with well-developed listening comprehension skills are able to participate more effectively in class work. Listening comprehension practice positively influences the second language learning, and lessons based on this skill are regularly taught in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom.

When teachers devise listening comprehension lessons, they should follow some basic principles that serve as useful guides for obtaining successful results. This article presents the rationale for some of these basic principles, including methods and techniques for 1) motivating students to focus on the learning objective, 2) maintaining the same topic and objective for consecutive activities, 3) applying appropriate teaching methods and techniques, 4) selecting materials for listening comprehension activities, and 5) using authentic materials. Let’s consider these principles in detail.

1. Motivating students to focus on the learning objective

When students clearly understand the purpose of a particular listening comprehension activity, they will be able to focus better on the essential vocabulary and grammar and listen for specific information. This will help them to reach the learning objectives in a shorter period of time. For example, if the teacher informs the students at the start of a lesson that the objective will be “understanding directions,” they can focus on listening for and remembering the vocabulary associated with giving directions. If students are unaware of the objective, they may be able to complete a simple task requiring “Yes” or “No” answers, but they may not remember the specific vocabulary used in
giving directions or may not be able to reiterate specific phrases in more open-ended activities.

2. Maintaining the same topic and objective for consecutive activities

Learning is more effective when different activities maintain the same topic and learning objective during the lesson, as opposed to a lesson being a series of unrelated activities with changing topics and objectives. When activities share the same topic and learning objective, students will reinforce their learning through repetition and continued association with a familiar topic. For example, if the topic is “celebrations,” and the objective is to understand the vocabulary used to describe different celebrations, teachers should maintain this topic and objective throughout several activities in one lesson.

The following example includes a warm-up activity, a listening comprehension activity, a controlled practice, and an open-ended listening/speaking activity.

1) Start with a warm-up question to the class, such as: “What’s your favorite celebration?” or “What are the favorite celebrations in your country?”

2) Then, introduce a listening comprehension activity in which two people have a conversation about their favorite celebration, and have students answer True or False questions based on the conversation.

3) Next, conduct a controlled practice activity, which could be a drill activity that models vocabulary or an important grammatical structure.

4) Finally, introduce an open-ended activity that allows students the freedom to practise listening comprehension and speaking, such as interviewing their partners about their favorite celebration and asking for further information.

In the above example, each activity builds on the preceding one using the same objective throughout. The idea is that communication and listening comprehension should expand the students’ knowledge by maintaining a topic throughout consecutive activities and reinforcing the same learning objective.

3. Applying appropriate teaching methods and techniques

When devising listening comprehension lessons, it is advisable that teachers should apply the following methods and techniques to make the lessons challenging, effective, and interesting to the students.

Use a variety of activities

If a teacher always uses the same activities, they will become boring for students. It is important to vary activities to stimulate the students’ interest and challenge them with something new. It is also important to consider the activities that involve group work and problem solving and that encourage communication and listening comprehension development.
A variation of the “Fill in the Missing Word” listening activity consists in using the same listening materials but to combine pair work with an information-gap activity. For example, give student A and student B worksheets containing the lyrics of the same song, but make sure that each student has different pieces of missing information. Without showing their worksheets to each other, the two students take turns asking questions about the missing information, and the answers supplied by their partner will complete the lyrics to the song. Using this technique, students have to practice effective communication by accurately forming the correct questions necessary to elicit the missing words from their partners. Finally, students can check their answers by listening to the song.

Another example for a lengthy listening activity is to assign students different comprehension questions about the text they are going to listen to. Together, the answers to the questions will render the story or the radio program or a sport report. After listening to the recording and taking notes to answer the assigned questions, students then ask one another questions about what each class member heard until they get enough information to complete the whole picture. The teacher can play the recording as many times as is needed, depending on the level of difficulty and the ability of the students. This way, the students try to find answers to the questions independently, rather than the teacher would prompt them.

Use effective questioning techniques

The teacher can also use effective questioning techniques to further develop students’ listening comprehension and to test their understanding of a particular grammatical structure. For instance, in an example from Richards, Hull, and Proctor (2001), a conversation about childhood memories occurs between two individuals and one of them says, “I used to collect shells when I was a kid.” Before listening to the conversation, the teacher introduces the focus question to help the students get the gist, or a general idea, before listening for specific information. An example focus question could be: “What did the speaker collect when he/she was a kid?”

Another possible question to find out whether the students understand the function of the grammatical structure used to is: “Does the speaker collect shells now?” The answer should be “No,” to show the understanding of an activity that happened regularly in the past but does not occur anymore. If the students answer incorrectly, it indicates that they need a further explanation of the expression used to (Richards, Hull, and Proctor, 2001).

To extend the listening activity, the teacher could divide the class into groups and use open-ended questioning techniques to work further on the listening activity in a communicative context. This is done with questions about the students’ childhood memories, thereby giving them the opportunity
to use the grammatical form **used to** in a context that is directly related to their lives.

4. Selecting materials for listening comprehension activities

When selecting materials, the following criteria should be observed to make listening comprehension activities both productive and motivating.

Make material relevant to students

When selecting listening comprehension materials, it is important to decide how relevant they are to the learners’ everyday life and long-term learning goals. One way to find this out is to conduct an assessment of the learners’ needs: to identify their interests, language learning strengths and weaknesses, and the real-life situations they are likely to encounter. Then set appropriate learning objectives. This way, the content of the teaching material will be relevant and will appeal to the students.

If materials are not selected carefully, student performance will suffer. For example, not all students will be interested in developing listening comprehension skills by listening to a radio commentary about the game of cricket. Apart from not understanding the vocabulary involved, they will not be motivated to understand something that they cannot relate to. Consequently, the true level of their listening comprehension skills will be misleading because wrong answers could signify a lack of interest or knowledge of specific vocabulary, rather than the actual level of their listening comprehension skills.

Regarding long-term learning goals, students may be more interested in developing their listening skills through music or general interest topics. In contrast, an EFL class consisting of students specializing in the catering industry might be more interested in being able to comprehend conversations in a hotel or restaurant setting, in understanding how to take orders correctly, or in answering customers’ questions. Every student is different, and it is particularly important to identify the learning goals of each individual.

Focus on the clear design and layout of materials

The design and layout of the materials are another two factors to consider when developing listening comprehension activities. Teachers should avoid including too many activities that may cause the learner to feel overwhelmed and unable to focus on each listening comprehension task. When devising listening comprehension materials, give clear instructions at the beginning of each activity and one or two examples of the expected response. This ensures the expected outcome by students and prevents feelings of confusion and frustration.

Emphasize prediction in listening comprehension materials

Any activity worksheet used for listening comprehension should contain the correct clues to help students predict the type of language they will hear.
One technique is to use pictures that relate to the topic or situation in a listening activity. This will provide the correct outcome and help students’ comprehension ability. As the presentation of a worksheet might either assist or hinder the students’ ability to give correct indications of their actual listening comprehension skills, the teacher should take time to design a worksheet that is user-friendly.

Select materials appropriate for students’ level

When evaluating listening materials, it is necessary to carefully consider the level of difficulty and the language level of the students. The responses required should be appropriate for their level. For example, it would be unrealistic to use a listening activity in which beginner students listen to a conversation involving two friends discussing environmental problems and then expect the students to give their opinions on the environmental problems, based on the comments of the speakers in the listening activity.

It would be more appropriate to give beginner students a listening activity that requires them to give short answers that confirm or deny the information given in the listening activity or which asks them to directly transfer what they have heard in a gap-fill activity. These activities are more appropriate to help beginner students develop their linguistic knowledge, thus avoiding the danger of overestimating their comprehension and language ability.

5. Using authentic materials

The use of authentic texts helps students to further develop their communication skills (Porter and Roberts, 1987; Brown, 2001). When designing listening comprehension materials, the teacher should be aware that authentic materials give the learner the chance to develop skills that are needed in real-life situations.

Using authentic listening materials, students learn to comprehend challenging language elements such as a natural rate of speech and intonation, false starts, slang, reduced forms, abbreviations, and other characteristics of spoken language. This exposure helps students comprehend real-life, everyday language, deal with interruptions, and so on. Some textbooks are limited in the amount of authentic listening activities they provide, especially for the lower levels. It is therefore important to take the opportunity, wherever possible, to help students become communicatively competent by exposing them to examples of how language is actually used.

The use of authentic materials is beneficial for learners because the skills that are developed can be transferred beyond the classroom. Some examples are listening to a telephone message to understand a cancelled appointment, to a newscast to learn about current events, or to songs to relax and learn about the English lyrics and popular bands.
Summing up, it should be noted that the most important factor to bear in mind when designing classes to develop listening comprehension skills is that students need to be motivated and to remain motivated. The principles outlined in this article might help teachers design successful lessons that motivate their students to improve their listening skills and become more communicatively competent.

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**


**ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ ПРИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНОЙ РАБОТЫ НА ПРИМЕРЕ МЕТОДА “CASE STUDY”**

**THE USE OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGIES IN SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE “CASE STUDY” METHOD**

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В статье рассматривается вопрос использования социальных технологий при организации самостоятельной работы студентов, определяются цели самостоятельной работы, изучается метод кейс-технологии, его структура и этапы работы.

**Ключевые слова:** самостоятельная работа студентов; социальные технологии; метод кейс-технологии.

The issue under consideration is the use of social technologies in the students’ self-directed learning, its goals, the structure and stages of work with the case study method.

**Keywords:** students’ self-directed learning; social technologies; case study method.