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THE POWER OF LISTENING IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: The article examines the importance of listening in both teaching and learning a language. As listening is one of four skills that influence the other three skills completely.

INTRODUCTION

Every person who is about to start learning a new language, firstly undoubtedly learns by heart the alphabet and then A1 level words. First of all, they start using simple words with simple pronunciation. But when they start learning more advanced words they struggle with the pronunciation, so they memorize the word's pronunciation in a way, which is convenient for them. Although, when they hear these words from a native speaker – their reaction will be 'shock'... Why!? Because the way that the native speaker spoke is not what they have learned. It is also can be said like: It's not what they have listened to... This means that at the beginning of learning any language listening activities should be started as a first matter.

MAIN PART

Nowadays teachers use lots of listening activities in teaching, which is very useful for learners. So in teaching a language listening takes a significant part.

As David Nuan mentions, if you are listening to new music of your favorite singer, here you should use a specific strategy; or if you are listening to a new podcast in a channel you should use another strategy

of listening with specific instructions. This means students should be flexible in every step of language learning [1; 239].

When you understand and get the information from the native speaker's videos, and movies, or can easily think like a native speaker you have opened an enormous opportunity to yourself. Because now you can find anything you want and watch, and listen to this without any language barrier.

Listening is a very important part of the 4 skills in English. All of them are important, however, listening is the one which will influence other ones. Because if your listening is great your speaking also will be great, because you listen to real English so you know how to sound and you have built your accent and fluency which is the basis of speaking skill.

In Writing you need to use your opinions from your viewpoint. If you can listen and fully understand English-speaking materials related to science/ geography/ architecture/ business/self-study or whatever you want, your viewpoint also broadens and you will be full of fresh and creative ideas, which is needed in Writing.

As Michael Rost points out listening is very important in verbal communication, because it is the thing that links various meanings of the text [2; 6-7].

Let's compare the two languages: our mother language and the new one, let's say English. When we were children we were surrounded by native speakers of our mother language, that's why we have learned it so fast and efficiently. Because our encirclement was full of native speakers. Our brain was settled in this language.

Learning a new language is a long way with lots of difficulties, it is another world and a new chapter in our life, though. So we all want to understand this new language and finally speak it. Usually, we all start learning by heart hundreds of words to know the meaning of the sentences in different activities; doing lots of grammar activities to build grammatically correct sentences; learning idioms/phrasal verbs to make our sentences more colorful. But what about listening to real English !? Our brain needs to get used to English and how this language sounds. Because of it, it's high time to surround ourselves with real English everywhere, every time.

Obviously, vocabulary is imprescriptible. You cannot understand even simple words without knowing the translation of them. Now then firstly if you want to be and live in real English you should know at least A2-level words.

How we can build an encirclement of the English language for ourselves?

- Watching TV shows, movies, cartoons
- Listening to English music/podcasts
- Keep a journal/ diary in English
- Sing songs in English
- Switch your phone/ laptop to the English language, etc.

These are some of the variants of how we can surround ourselves with English. But here the thing is about listening.

You can do it with the help of your own interests. For example, if you are interested in cooking, you can watch videos related to cooking. Or if you are interested in fantasy, you can find lots of thrilling movies on YouTube platform or another one, just what you are interested in, so it will not be boring – it's a new language after all. All of this should be in English.

In the beginning, it will be somehow strange because you don't know what they are talking about. But – practice makes perfect! If you watch TV shows in English every day your brain and ears will get used to this. And you will understand all of this without any problems.

Of course, it is not all about the surrounding but also about getting the necessary knowledge from this. In this kind of situation, useful strategies come to give a helping hand. There are a lot of strategies and techniques to improve listening skills but among them, MICRO LISTENING STRATEGY is the most useful one. It is a lot of work, but the result is worth it!

MICRO LISTENING

1. Choose something you enjoy listening to.

- Should be a native speaker's video/podcast, not an English learning video, because it's not real English.

2. Turn subtitles OFF.

- Listen until you don't understand. Pause where you don't understand and go back, listen again.
- You can listen again and again until you can understand what they are talking about and write it down.
- 3 sentences will be enough for the first time.

3. Listen as many times as you need. Because you should fully understand them.
4. After you have fully understood and have written what you listened now turn subtitles ON.
 - Turn subtitles ON only to check what you wrote.
5. Compare and check what you wrote and understood.
 - Compare the sentences from the subtitle and your own ones, it will show you your mistakes, and examine them.
6. Add new vocabulary to a vocabulary notebook.
 - If there are words that you didn't know, write them down and learn by heart, broaden your vocabulary treasure.

These are 6 steps of how to do micro listening. When you have done this whole work, do it again. This strategy is very useful because various types of language learning approaches are here.

CONCLUSION

Listening is not just about learning how to sound native with the help of it, but also about the knowledge that we get from it. For example, there is not only one strategy that helps us to boost our listening skills. As listening is considered a "Cinderella" skill in language learning, there are hundreds of strategies that we should know and finally use in our daily life.

To sum up, listening is a skill that is necessary not only in learning the English language but also in learning any new one.

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