

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES TO TEACH LISTENING

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ABSTRACT

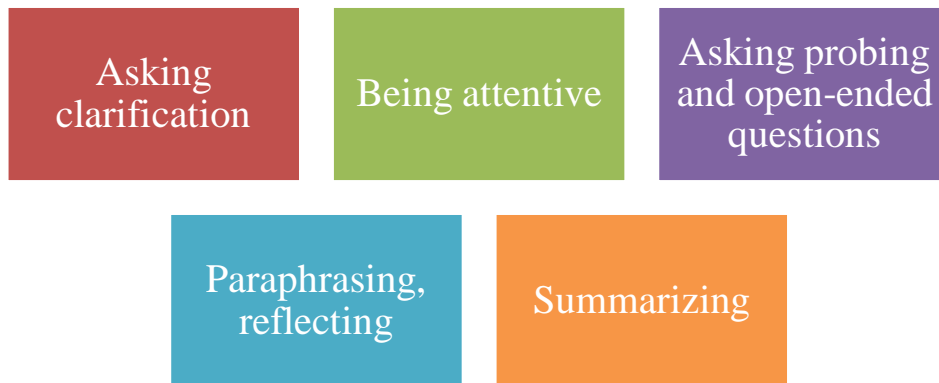
The following article is devoted to help English teachers to improve their instructional strategies to teach listening in English classrooms. It suggests several strategies to involve their students in classrooms.

Keywords: Listening, students, English, communication, attention.

Effective listening skills is one of the talents that a leader or manager must develop to be successful. Listening skills are also extremely important to an effective exchange between two individuals. Distractions can lead to the ineffective communication of information. Active Listening is a communication strategy where students give their full attention to the speaker and concentrate on what is being said. Students use body position, listening skills, and response techniques to maximize their understanding as well as convey that they are listening to the speaker. The act of listening involves complex affective, cognitive and behavioral processes [Halone, 1998]. Listening can be a useful skill for different problems, but it is essential to resolve conflict. Poor listening can lead to misinterpretations, thus causing conflict or a dispute. Other causes can be excessive interruptions, inattention, hearing what you want to hear, mentally composing a response, and having a closed mind [Bass, 1999].

Listening involves the perception of sounds made by the speaker, of intonation patterns that focus on the information, and of the relevance of the topic under discussion [Schmidt, 2020].

Active listening is a skill that can be acquired and developed with practice. However, active listening can be difficult to master and will, therefore, take time and patience to develop. Active listening involves giving the other person time to explore their thoughts and feelings, they should, therefore, be given adequate time for that. Active listening involves the following cognitive actions:



Traditional strategies to teach listening skills in learning foreign languages:

- Make eye contact and give your full attention
- Don't multitask.
- Don't just think about what you're going to say next.
- Let the speaker know that you're listening.
- If you're not clear on what the speaker is saying, ask for clarification.
- Paraphrase back to the speaker.
- If appropriate, identify the feelings being conveyed.
- Watch body language.
- Getting to know students
- Creating simple commands
- Listen more and talk Less
- Give students a listening task
- Listen for a purpose

Teaching students to listen is a challenging yet rewarding skill that all teachers need to know. Listening and retaining information are two of the most important facets of teaching. Learning tips and tricks for the classroom for the applicable age and grade level are vital for a successful teaching experience. Teachers learn a wealth of ideas from other teachers. Experiences, strengths, and background knowledge from fellow teachers are all effective in sharing techniques that work. Early childhood and elementary classrooms require constant decision-making and intense structure to employ effective teaching strategies. Strategies that help students listen are imperative in the lower grades. Middle school students often require different strategies for active and effective listening skills. High school students are motivated

by their interests in relation to listening and being involved in the learning process.

Early Childhood and Elementary

Teachers employ “Call and Response” strategies in their daily instruction. There are a myriad of call and response ideas, and teachers introduce these ideas to their students at the beginning of the year. This idea is effective in that students are called to attention without teachers raising their voices, and their attention is directed to the teacher. Students enjoy this method because they are usually very fun ideas, and they do not realize they are being called to attention. An example of call and response would be for the teacher to clap a specific way and have the students clap back to them when attention is needed. Other ideas include the teachers saying a “captivating” phrase, and the students respond back. Call and response strategies are popular in the lower grades and work well with promoting listening in class, in the hallways, and in various other settings. Repetition is so important for younger children, and call and response encourages this skill.

Using signals is a helpful approach to active listening in the classroom. Some teachers use sign language as a way for students to notify the teacher of a need without disrupting the entire class. Students use the sign language symbol for restroom, drink of water, or sharpen pencil instead of the traditional raising of hand to ask a question. This allows the classroom to flow better while the teacher is teaching. It is inevitable that there will be needs in any classroom while the teacher is teaching. Using signals is an effective way to encourage listening and engaging in instruction simultaneously. These must also be changed periodically throughout the year to retain students’ attention.

Using cues are another effective way to promote listening and deeper understanding. An example of this would be the teacher saying, “Alright Go,” when they are ready to allow students to begin working or writing their assignment. This helps students not to begin working too early and listening to the teacher instead of beginning their assignment. If students know their teacher will provide a cue for them, they will be more suitable to wait to begin working when it is time.

Tone of voice is imperative to activating listening and retaining students’ attention when teaching small children. Teachers often use animated voices to engage students, and they enjoy this type of tone because they are captivated. Teachers often say, “The quieter I talk, the more the students have to listen.” There are times all

teachers must project their tone of voice to allow students to understand the importance of what is being taught.

Middle School

Students in middle school are beginning to develop interests, and they will engage at a higher-level when listening to information that they enjoy. Examples of these listening strategies would be to assign students to listen to specific podcasts or other online recorded stories. Students enjoy listening to assignments with headphones on. An idea would be to have students bring their own headphones from home, and they will already be more invested in the assignment. Listening to audible books is another assignment that middle school students would enjoy.

A great listening strategy for this age group would be to allow students to research and record an audio or video of themselves presenting information. The sky is the limit with this type of assignment and can be adapted to most any subject area. As students present their research, all students are listening and engaged at a high level since they are listening to their peers' present information that is interesting to them. These types of assignments allow students to be continually exposed to vocabulary and experiences that add to their schema.

Lastly, students in middle school can utilize various listening strategies while answering questions regarding listening for the main idea, making predictions, and drawing conclusions. As students engage in these higher-level thinking skills, they are employing higher-level listening techniques to know the material.

High School

When students are in high school, they are taking specific classes in their course of study. Oftentimes, these courses are related to what they want to pursue after high school. In these courses, teachers may invite guest speakers to speak to students about the specific classwork they are taking. An example of this would be inviting a mechanic to speak to students in an automotive class. Students' listening strategies are increased when participating in these classroom activities because they are executing many skills while participating in this activity.

Another example would be to assign students to interview someone outside of school for an English, history, or related course. Listening is essential in this type of assignment and is memorable for all involved.

Lastly, an assignment that involves social media in a positive way would be an opportunity for higher-level listening skills. In today's classrooms, there are many ideas for debate, and social media can be a source of information on these topics. Students in high school spend a lot of time on social media, and they can use this as an effective listening strategy.

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