

# Teaching Listening

# Issues for discussion:

1. Why is listening so difficult for students?
2. What do we listen to in everyday life?
3. What are the characteristics of the listening process?
4. What are the principles of teaching listening?
5. What are the common activities in teaching listening?

# Teaching Receptive Skills

- What are the receptive skills?
- *Listening*
- *Reading*

*What is the goal of a receptive skill lesson?*

- **COMPREHENSION**

# ***WHY LISTEN?***

- to exchange information
- to share feelings
- to enjoy yourself

# **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST COMMON LISTENING SITUATIONS?**

- listening to live conversations
- listening to announcements (at airports, railway stations, bus stations, etc)
- listening to/watching the news, the weather forecast on the radio/TV
- listening to the radio/watching TV for entertainment watching a play/movie
- listening to records (songs, etc)
- following a lesson (at school)
- attending a lecture
- listening on the telephone
- following instructions
- listening to someone giving a speech/a public address

# Typical materials used for listening

## *Authentic:*

- radio broadcasts, recordings (e.g. of movie times, airport announcements), videos of TV shows or movies, lectures, phone conversations

## *Semi-authentic:*

- unrehearsed tapes; role plays with native speakers who speak at normal speed

## *Prepared:*

- commercially prepared tapes and videos

# Top-down processing

- Listener gets a “*general understanding*” or “*overall view*” of the listening text.
- This is greatly helped if the listener’s schema allows them to have appropriate expectations of what they might hear.
- For example, if I am listening to a doctor talk to a patient, I expect to hear about a medical problem. I expect that the doctor will give some advice, maybe a prescription for some medicine. I also know many of the vocabulary they will use.



# Bottom-up processing

- The listener focuses on individual words or phrases and gains an understanding of the whole passage by linking these together.

# Listening skills

- Identifying the topic
- Predicting and guessing
- Listening for general understanding
- Listening for specific or detailed information
- Interpreting a text/making inferences

# Extensive and Intensive Listening

**Extensive** □ listening for pleasure (listening on your own; because you *want* to)

**Intensive** □ listening for a purpose (often done with the teacher's help; because you *have* to)

*What are some examples of why you might engage in extensive and intensive listening activities?*

## WHAT SHOULD TEACHER'S OBJECTIVES INCLUDE IN A LISTENING LESSON?

- exposing students to a *range* of listening experiences
- making listening *purposeful* for the students (provide students with a **REASON** to listen)
- building up students' confidence in their own listening ability

# The “PDP” Framework

- *What is “PDP”?*
- PDP is a framework that can be used to teach the receptive skills (reading and listening) and to help develop learners’ comprehension.
- Activities in the PDP framework are sequenced and scaffolded in such a manner that learners are provided with the support they need to fully understand a given text.

# PDP Framework

P = *Pre*-listening

D = *During* listening

P = *Post* listening

***What kind of activities do you think happen in each stage?***

# Typical PRE Listening Activities

- Discuss a relevant picture to activate background knowledge
- Discuss relevant experiences - brainstorming what students know about the topic with a word map
- Associate ideas with the topic
- Associate vocabulary with the topic
- Predict information about the topic
- Write questions about the topic
- Show realia related to the topic (ex: a menu or a movie schedule)
- Pre-teach vocabulary (with pictures, realia, examples in context...)

# Typical DURING Listening Activities

- listening for gist
- listen to background noise to establish setting and topic
- identify specific words
- figure out relationship by listening to tone of voice
- listen for specific intonation (statement or question)
- raise hand when hearing certain words
- true/false questions
- marking stress or intonation
- matching
- multiple choice questions
- Strip story - ordering/numbering items (sequencing activity)
- detecting mistakes
- writing short answers
- doing a task such as filling out a form, following a map or taking an order
- making a decision based on the information
- note-taking from a lecture
- Agree or disagree (with explanation)
- Create Venn diagrams
- List characteristics, qualities, or features
- Match speech to visuals
- Compare and contrast to another speech or text



## **No specific responses**

- For stories, or anything that is interesting, humourous, or dramatic, we just have the students listen and enjoy it.

# Listen and tick

**Directions:** You are going to listen to three students talking about their school subjects. Listen carefully and decide if they like or dislike the subjects. Put a "✓" for "like" and "✗" for "dislike".

Subjects	Justin	Lynn	Ben
History			
Maths			
English			
Chinese			
Science			
Music			
Art			
Physical education			

# Listen and sequence

**Directions:** Listen to an announcement of the order of the games at a sports meeting. Mark the following games with numbers 1–6 according to the order they are played.



# Listen and act

## Total Physical Response:

- for beginners “Stand up”,  
“Point to the ...”;
- for intermediate learners  
“Pretend you’re ...(doing something)”

- **Listen and draw**
- **Listen and fill**
- **Listen and guess**

# Typical POST listening activities

- interviewing native speakers
- calling for information (e.g. travel agency, movie theatre, car rental agency, restaurant)
- perform a role play
- reading and/or writing about the topic
- discussing the topic
- listening to another example
- making a poster
- Compare and contrast to your own experience
- Create your own version of the missing section
- Plan a solution to the problem
- Share reactions
- Debate a topic
- Write a letter to newspaper or radio station

## *What do you think the goals of each stage are?*

### **PRE:**

- To motivate learners by giving them a reason for listening
- To prepare students for listening by contextualizing and/or personalizing to make it more accessible and more realistic.
- Pre-teach key vocabulary
- To introduce the topic, and arouse learners interest in it, to involve students in the specific topic.
- To activate prior knowledge.
- To provide a *purpose* for listening.

## DURING:

- To comprehend the listening text (from general to specific, easy to difficult and concrete to abstract)



## POST:

- To enable Ss to consolidate or reflect upon what they have listened to.
- To relate the content of the text to learners' own knowledge, experience, interests, views
- To make practical use of, or expand on the listening text and/or lexis and grammar introduced in the text.
- To develop language by integrating listening with *other skills*.

# Activity staging in PDP

- Activities in the **DURING** listening stage should be staged from:
  - *EASY* □ *DIFFICULT* activities
  - *GENERAL* understanding (ex: main idea)
    - *SPECIFIC* and detailed understanding of the text
  - *CONCRETE* □ *ABSTRACT*

# SLO (Student Learning Outcome) and PDP

- Where is the SLO achieved in the PDP framework?
- The SLO is achieved at the ***END*** of the ***DURING*** stage.

# POST stage

- Is the POST stage necessary if the SLO is achieved at the end of the DURING stage?
- NO
- So, why have the POST stage?

# POST stage

## “Icing on the cake\*”

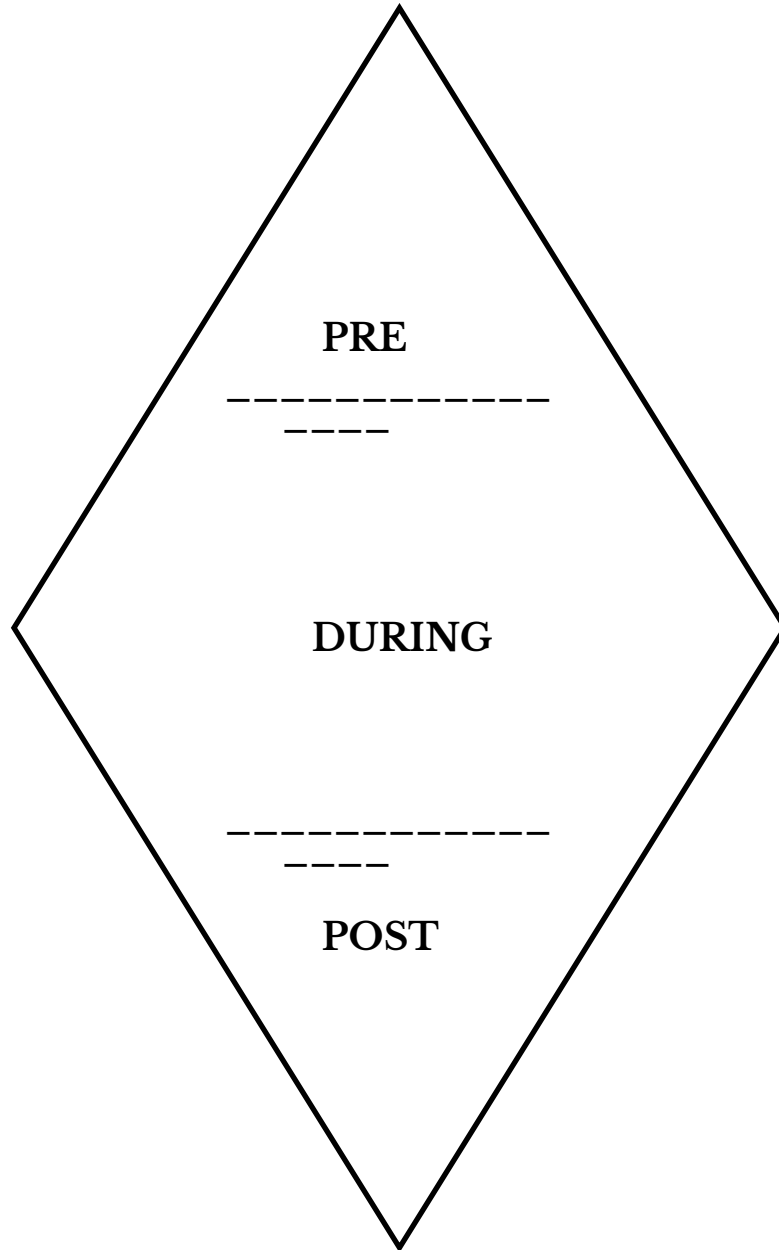
- To reinforce students’ understanding of the text by personalizing the topic by integrating other language skills areas (ex: speaking, writing)
- Allows Ss to reinforce the new vocabulary and/or language structures from the lesson by using other skills.
- Helps Ss to be creative and expand on or personalize the topic.

\*When one great thing happens, then another great thing happens on top of it, the second thing is the icing on the cake. Example: "Today I was promoted to head of the department! And they decided to raise my pay!" Answer: "Wow! Icing on the cake!" We all love to eat delicious cake, and sometimes the cake has an extra sweet layer of icing on the top; that is the icing on the cake. Example: "Your wife is beautiful to look at, and she is a wonderful person!" Answer: "True; it's icing on the cake." Example: "We

## ***How can we set our students up to be successful at listening?***

- Make sure ***instructions are clear***; students have to understand very clearly what they are expected to do.
- Make sure that each time a listening text is heard, even for the second or third time, the students have a specific ***purpose*** for listening; give them a task.
- Do plenty of ***pre-listening*** work.
- Encourage students ***not to worry*** if they don't understand every word; a task can be completed even when they miss some of the words

# PDP Framework



**P** □ PRE listening stage

**D** □ DURING listening stage

**P** □ POST listening stage

❖ *This shape represents the amount of time that should be allotted for each stage in the lesson.*