

THE ROLE OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILLS IN FORMATION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS OF NON-LINGUAL FACULTIES

Natalia ROZHKOVA (Kirovohrad, Ukraine)

У статті обговорюються проблеми та підходи до формування комунікативної компетенції студентів немовних факультетів у процесі вивчення іноземної мови. Одне з найважливіших місць у навчанні посідає аудіювання, оскільки воно тісно пов'язане із читанням і письмом, підготовлює усне мовлення, допомагає формуванню сприйняття мовлення на слух.

Ключові слова: студенти немовних факультетів, слухання, спілкування, мовлення, мовленнєва діяльність, комунікативні вправи, комунікативна компетенція.

The main issues and approaches to formation of communicative competence of students of non-lingual faculties during study of foreign language have been discussed in the article. Listening comprehension is one of the most important components of training because it is linked with reading and writing, prepares speaking and helps formation of perception of speech aurally. Various aspects of formation of listening skills of students are examined in the works of foreign and domestic scientists. But it needs further profound consideration and research to make the process of formation of communicative competence effective as it is required by modern world.

Keywords: students of non-lingual faculties, listening comprehension, communication, speaking, speaking activity, communicative exercises and communicative competence.

Statement of the issue. The main purpose of foreign language as a subject area of training in a pedagogical university at non-lingual faculties seems in mastering of the skill to communicate in foreign language by the students. It concerns formation of communicative competence, i.e. the ability and the readiness to carry out direct communication (speaking, understanding) as well as indirect communication (reading with understanding of foreign language texts, writing). The program on foreign languages for students of non-lingual faculties says, being one of the learning disciplines, foreign language must provide, first of all, communicative competence formation, i.e. ability and readiness to carry out communication by means of foreign language.

Experience confirms that the person experiences the greatest difficulties during foreign language communication, taking speech aurally. But oral communication, the role of which became particularly significant nowadays, is impossible without understanding of an interlocutor's speech as far as everyone acts in the role of a speaker as well as in the role of a listener during the speech interaction.

Communication skills, representing the result of mastering of language on every segment and period of training, are one of five components of training content. Formation of these skills is impossible without mastering of the language means, with the help of which the message is formed and perceived. But knowledge of words, grammatical forms, constructions does not provide formation of communicative skills. It is necessary to possess the skill of transferring or recognition of information. Therefore language knowledge and skills of using it are the components representing a part of more complex skills including listening comprehension.

Analysis of the studies and publications. This term in the native methodology means the process of perception and understanding of a speech aurally. Sometimes it is substituted by the term

"audition". Admittedly, in English this term is not used. In the opinion of foreign specialists, the essence of this independent kind of speaking activity (perception and understanding aurally) is the most exactly transferred by the term "listening comprehension". Various aspects of formation of listening skills in a second language of students are examined in the works of foreign researchers such as G. Brown, J. Burgess, Sh. Rixon, M. Rost, M. Underwood. Fundamental studies of various aspects of foreign language methodology have been held by the researchers, among which are E. Passov, I. Zymniaya, O. Solovyova, G. Rogova, I. Vereshchaghina.

The wording of the purpose of the article. Understanding of speech aurally is closely connected with speaking – as an expression of thoughts by means of the language which is studied. Speaking and listening comprehension are two interconnected sides of oral speech. The phases of listening and speech cross in communication. Listening comprehension is not only the means of receiving of the message but preparation in an internal speech of the reaction answer to what was heard. Thus listening comprehension prepares speaking, and, in its turn, speaking helps formation of speech perception aurally. Listening comprehension is related even to reading. Belonging to receptive types of speaking activity unites them. While reading aloud or to himself, a person as if hears the text that is being perceived.

Summary of the basic material of the study. Listening comprehension serves as a powerful instrument of foreign language training. It gives a possibility to command an audio side of the language which is studied, its phonemic composition and intonation: rhythm, emphasis, tune. Mastering of a vocabulary composition of the language and its grammatical structure comes through listening comprehension. At the same time listening comprehension facilitates speaking, reading and writing mastering.

At a small number of learning hours for foreign language training, it is important to intensify the learning process itself, thus having provided the most soon achievement of such a level of the language which would allow to use it as a means of communication. At the same time training must have clear communicative orientation. The specificity of training lies in one's duty to embed the base of all the types of speaking activity, form hearing-articulation skills, speech hearing, minimally necessary resource of language material in a short run of time.

Certain consistency of training of the kinds of communication activity "listening comprehension – speaking– reading – writing" speaks of the fact that listening comprehension is the basis in this serial circuit. Thus the quality of all the building of communication depends on what this basis will be. From this perspective the work on development of students' comprehension skills is very important.

Listening comprehension training helps achievement of such goals as communication, education, upbringing, development. For example, from a practical perspective, students should be taught to understand the speech in the bilateral act of communication. It also allows to teach students to listen attentively to a sounding speech, form skill of forecasting and anticipating the sense of an utterance and thus to educate culture of listening in not only foreign, but native language. Educational significance of formation of the skill to understand the speech aurally lies in its positive influence upon the development of memory and, above all, auditory memory, which is so important not only for study of foreign languages, but even of any other discipline.

Listening comprehension is one of four skills of mastering of English, and it is so multicomponent that inside it is divided into subskills, for example, listening for general idea (understanding of a basic thought), for specific information (search for the concrete information), for detail (understanding of the details), et cetera. Because of that different kinds of exercises are offered in English textbooks to work at listening comprehension. The comprehensive approach to the development of skills of understanding of oral speech from a perspective of a methodology includes work over:

1. Development of the skills of listening comprehension (listening subskills);
2. Vocabulary: set expressions (collocations), new words and expressions;
3. Grammar: typical constructions for a genre, new grammar;
4. Communicative tasks, functions;
5. Pragmatics of an utterance;
6. Organization of a text: how it is structured depending on a genre;

7. Coherence of a text: at the expense of what it becomes a single whole;
 8. Phonetics: pronunciation, rate, accent, behavior of sounds in a quick connected speech.

In the methodology they differentiate kinds of listening comprehension according to the goal (Interactional listening, Transactional listening, Instrumental listening, Pleasurable listening and Extensive listening) and style (Interactive listening, Non-interactive listening). Interactional listening envisages interaction with people not for the information and fact exchange, but for the establishment and maintenance of relations. During transactional listening a listener receives some information for decision-making or taking of some actions, in other words, communication has the definite purpose. During instrumental listening the clear goal is set: what is the purpose of listening? Pleasurable listening is just for pleasure (poetry, songs). Extensive listening takes place while watching films, talk shows and listening to any other texts, assuming selective understanding of them. For the most part intensive listening takes place at classes. We do not just listen to but somehow manipulate the text for the purposes of listening skills training: we do exercises, work with phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, communicative exercises, etc. In the case of interactive listening a listener takes part in a conversation, i.e. speaking skills are also required from him. It is obviously more complex task because one needs not only to understand, but even to react, shape one's thoughts and keep up the conversation. While non-interactive listening a listener is passive and any participation is not required from him. It is incredible to draw a clear division in all these concepts and this differentiation in types of listening comprehension mainly exists in the methodology of teaching for planning of the learning process. As a rule, Instrumental listening, Extensive and Intensive listening, Interactive listening are mainly used at English classes as effective tools for formation of speaking competence of students.

Enhancement of the effectiveness of listening comprehension training can have positive impact on productivity of foreign language training in general. At a small number of learning hours for this discipline it is necessary to work out and introduce methods of intensification of listening comprehension training process through communicative exercises, role-playing games, and various lexical-grammatical exercises in all the stages. Exercises remain the main component part of a lesson structure. They create necessary conditions for continuous practice in foreign language and formation of speaking competence.

Students master skills of listening comprehension simultaneously with speaking skills at foreign language classes. Explanations, formulation of the tasks are given only in the language, which is studied, without offering a possibility to turn to native language, if there is no need in it, which accustoms students to listen to and understand. From the perspective of development of speech hearing, speech warming-up is a very useful exercise which must be conducted in all the stages of training on the basis of mastered grammatical structures and lexical material. It is conducted in the form of an unprepared conversation of the whole group and builds on an improvisation, initiative of students. The most important thing is that all the students listen to each other because the question can be addressed to any of them. Students actively perform such tasks where it is required to listen to, understand and do some test tasks, fill in the table with gaps, find unknown details, describe pictures with reliance on the heard text. It is an important task to arouse and keep interest of all the students to the content and organization of the class. The ways of work on development of skills of listening comprehension, content of the materials for it play a large role in fulfillment of this task. Practice of work proves that students are lively interested in the materials which directly relate to them themselves, they listen to the messages more attentively if they are not upon any picture, but upon the photograph of their family, scheme or drawing of their own apartment.

Working out the exercises supportive of perception of an audiotext, one can offer the students:

- to define a text type (for example, an interview);
- to define the main theme, idea of the text and formulate it;
- to answer the questions upon the general content of the text (Who? Where? When? Who ... with? What? How?);
- to correlate illustrations with the text, having established their sequence or having made a choice out of the number of the proposed ones.

All the worked out exercises on development of listening comprehension skills are subdivided into three groups:

- (Before-listening tasks) preparing for perception of the text;
- (While-listening tasks) supporting auditory perception of the text;
- (After-listening tasks) basing on the heard text.

Special importance is attached to the so called beforetext exercises. While doing these exercises, the target is to motivate students, take away difficulties of a linguistic and psychological plan, mobilize speech and life experience that students have in the field of the issues touched on in the text and give certain reference points for their memory improvement.

For these purposes it is desirable to inform students what text type they will listen to, familiarize them with new words and expressions which are important for text understanding and their meaning cannot be guessed from the context and derivation elements.

But one needs to ensure that the offered tasks do not reveal the content of the audiotext completely, for students not to lose interest in the text, which, naturally, will negatively affect the results of listening comprehension. We will examine several most typical sets and tasks for a beforetext stage of a text processing.

1. *Discussion of questions/statements before listening.* The exercises and questions do not only require information but they keep it as well. Getting acquainted with them and discussing possible answers, students hear the words which then will be used in the text, as far as the context has already been defined and even a semantic field has been defined together with it. Sense and linguistic prediction as well as auditory skills come into effect. Preliminary speaking of significant parts of information helps to form and master auditory skills of students.

2. *Guess upon the title, new words, possible illustrations.* A teacher can offer students to guess an approximate content of the text upon its title, illustrations, unfamiliar vocabulary which he has in advance explained.

In the course of the first listening students do the tasks which we have discussed above, but during skill formation of listening comprehension there can be several times of listening. In such a case it is very important not to lose the motivation, in which novelty of the tasks will help us. Written tasks to the audiotext, which are to be done during its listening, have a great effect in work from this perspective:

- filling in of the schemes, tables, gaps in sentences;
- choice from two options of the answer to the question;
- recording of keywords, phrases;
- writing of important arguments.

In this case students listen to the text selectively, i.e. they learn to find necessary information in the text during auditory perception and put it down.

1. *Listen to the text and insert omitted words in the following sentences.*

2. *Finish the following sentences (a) there is a beginning of the sentence when its ending is missed; b) the middle of the sentence is missed; c) the ending of the sentence) is missed.*

3. *Listen to the text and find Ukrainian/ English equivalents of the following words in the parallel column.*

Reading under a soundtrack promotes training of pronunciation and speaking, and first of all, utterance of sounds (in lexical units), as well as correct logical emphasizing, tune, intonation. Such a technique "listen, while reading" allows students to learn to see connections between a sound and image of a letter, facilitates their understanding of a content and provides the best memorizing and assimilation of a text. Reading under a soundtrack is carried out in different modes:

- a) a broadcaster reads a construction, a student reads after a pause;
- b) a broadcaster reads all the phrase, a student reads it during a broadcaster's pause;
- c) a student reads a construction, then hears it in a broadcaster's utterance;
- d) a student reads all the phrase, then synchronizes it with a broadcaster's reading;
- e) student reads after broadcaster almost simultaneously, but slightly off him;
- f) a student reads after a broadcaster at normal speed simultaneously.

Working on the heard text, students may be suggested the following exercises:

- retelling of the text in a chain;

- *continuation of the text (spoken or written form);*
- *comments upon interesting facts: what was (not) interesting, new, significant in the text;*
- *evaluation of the events, acts with reliance on keywords/sentences;*
- *answers to the questions with reliance on the schemes and tables filled in during the listening;*
- *making a headline of the text and reasoning for it with reliance on its content.*

Conclusions and prospects for further research. Generalizing the above spoken about listening comprehension training, one can make a conclusion that success depends on organization of a class, skills of a teacher to use special technical equipment, implementation of methodological recommendations of the authors of a learning complex, creative approach to work. Systematic planned work in this direction will give positive results in practical mastering of foreign language by students at non-lingual faculties.

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ВІДОМОСТІ ПРО АВТОРА

Наталія Рожкова – кандидат педагогічних наук, старший викладач кафедри лінгводидактики та іноземних мов Кіровоградського державного педагогічного університету імені Володимира Винниченка.

Наукові інтереси: навчання іноземній мови на немовних факультетах.