PECULIARITIES OF TEACHING LISTENING USING AUTHENTIC ECOLOGICAL MATERIALS IN THE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

Purposes: This article discusses the problem of listening comprehension as an important and integral part of everyday communication. Despite its impact on the process of language learning, the listening skill was for a long time relegated to a marginal place in foreign language curricula.

Methodology: The authors describe a great educational value of authentic materials used in a foreign language classroom to motivate, develop and increase listening skills at the senior stage of teaching. They found it necessary to admit that with the advent of communicative language teaching and the focus on proficiency, the teaching of listening started to increase. Obvious attention is paid to the practical use of available Internet resources that deal with ecological problems which are acute and need the urgent solution in contemporary society.

Results: The authors made an attempt to prove that listening should be fully integrated into the foreign language curriculum and given considerable "prime time" in-class activities and homework preparation. In addition, the methodological recommendations on the organization of development of listening skills to improve the overall process of communication are presented.

Keywords: Listening, Foreign Language, Authentic Texts, Senior School, Intercultural Communication, English, Communicative Skills.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays there is a current awakening in education to the importance of listening comprehension. The modern school system is structured in such a way that the process of communication is predominantly composed of four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, less and less time is devoted to the problem of listening. Learning a foreign language is built more on the development of skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Meanwhile, mastering listening comprehension is one of the most important aspects of learning a foreign language. In addition, at the senior stage of learning a foreign language, a general educational institution should not only form a foreign language communicative competence of students but also prepare them for the Unified State Exam, of which listening is a part.

Initially, the aim of learning any foreign language is the ability to communicate with native speakers, to understand their traditions, realities, and culture. Communication in a foreign language is not only the process of speaking but also the perception of foreign speech by ear. In recent years, the problem of listening has been under the scrutiny of methodologists and psycholinguists. Despite the fact that a deep analysis of the theoretical basis in the study of this complex process has revealed the significance of listening comprehension, we have to admit that changes in teaching practice are not obvious.

Teachers are united in one belief that at the lessons of a foreign language authentic texts are not sufficiently used for the importance of listening. This is evidenced by two reasons. First of all, this is a significant discrepancy between modern tasks and learning objectives with most methodological developments and complexes, many of which can be considered obsolete. And secondly, the lack of practical exercises, as well as theoretical educational methods on this issue.

Thus, the relevance of our work is due to the fact that in the modern school system authentic texts are rarely used because of the insufficient development of teaching aids and practical material on this issue. Contemporary methods of teaching a foreign language are less focused on the development of communication skills, in particular, listening skills, although this skill is one of the most important in the process of learning a foreign language.

It should also be noted that authentic texts most fully reveal the cross-cultural aspect of a foreign language, and also serve as rich material for studying the culture of another country, its characteristic features, realities, traditions and culture in general.

The carrier of culture and language is always society, personality, and, therefore, they cannot exist outside society (Tulusina et al., 2017).

Mastering a foreign language as a means of intercultural communication is impossible without knowledge of the socio-cultural and sociolinguistic characteristics of the target language country.

Thus, in this context, it is important to use authentic materials (original publicists and literary texts, documentary and feature films, multimedia programs, Internet resources, and etc.) in educational process and during independent work; the basic criterion of material selection being its linguistic cultural and cross-cultural value (Ostroumova et al., 2014).
The object of our research is the formation of listening comprehension through listening to authentic texts.

The subject of our research is the usage of contemporary authentic texts as a means of formation listening skills among high school students.

We have put forward the following tasks:

1. To study and analyze contemporary scientific and methodical literature on the given research topic;
2. To consider the classification of authentic texts and the theoretical foundations of learning to listen to authentic text;
3. To analyze the problems of teaching listening comprehension in the modern education system;
4. To develop and experimentally test a set of exercises using authentic ecological texts in the senior grades of the Municipal Budget Educational Institution “Grammar school No. 2” named after Baki Urmanche.

The theoretical basis of our research is the works of Russian and foreign researchers who were engaged in the development of this issue. Russian researchers, among whom E. V. Kiseleva, N. B. Parayeva, Z. A. Kochkina, E. A. Kolesnikova consider in their works the listening process at the initial and continuing level of learning English. In these works, we studied the definitions of the concept of listening, as well as its role in the system of teaching a foreign language (Kiseleva, 2015; Parayeva, 2012; Kochkina, 2016; Kolesnikova, 2016).

Researchers E. N. Pisemskaya, O. N. Kiyan examine the possibility of introducing authentic texts in English classes at the primary level and among students of senior classes (Pisemskaya, 2015; Kiyan, 2014).

As part of our research, we also noted the work of the researcher N. N. Prussakov, who considers learning difficulties in listening and possible problems that all students face (Prussakov, 2014).

Among foreign researchers, we noted teachers and linguists Mansilla P., Riejos A., whose international experience helps us to deal with the process of teaching listening in another country (Mansilla & Riejos, 2008). We also studied the work of foreign methodologist Jeremy Harmer, who advocated using adapted texts in lessons than authentic ones. He argued that authentic material was useful, but often not available for students. That is why, in his opinion, it is possible for a teacher to use adapted texts than specially designed ones (Harmer, 2010; Pakdel & Talebbeydokhti, 2018).

We intend to underline that learning to listen will be successful if we resort to the usage of authentic texts because they reveal cultural features of the studied language, which increase the motivation of students to learn the language itself. The course of a foreign language requires the use of active technologies that do not rely only on the processes of perception, attention, but, above all, on the creative, productive thinking, behavior and communication (Sadykova et al., 2014; Maksimović et al., 2016).

As we mentioned earlier, general education would benefit from the development of a set of exercises and fragments of foreign language lessons using authentic ecological texts for students of secondary school age.

METHODS

In the course of the research, we used the following methods: analysis of scientific and methodological literature on the research problem, scientific observation, generalization of the results of the study. The relationships between theoretical stance, pedagogical context and research approach are demonstrated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of scientific research are the theoretical and practical significance of listening comprehension.

The theoretical significance of the work is to systematize and generalize the theoretical material that can be the basis for further research.

The practical significance of the study is the possibility of introducing examples of exercises with the use of authentic texts during the English lessons in high school. Suggesting solutions that may help to limit or avoid inaccuracies is vital (Kayumova et al., 2017).

This study analyzes the problem of teaching listening in a modern education system. In addition, experimental work is carried out using authentic TED TALKS texts on the basis of the Baki Urmanche MBEI “Grammar school No. 2” in the Nizhnekamsk municipal district of the Republic of Tatarstan. The study involved 22 students in high school. At the first stage a control group and an experimental group were singled out.

We also identified the levels of development of listening skills, for which students of two classes were distributed according to test results, and at the end of the experiment – according to the results of control testing.

Listening is one of the four main language skills along with reading, writing and speaking. We must admit that in reading and writing we speak about sentences while in listening it is an utterance.
The question if listening can be taught has a positive answer. The majority of listening ability comes with practice and exercise.

Native speakers listen for two general reasons: 1. Specific information; 2. Gist. Listening activities in the classroom should involve the same motivation when a teacher sets a task and then runs the tape.

In order to increase students' listening skills and their confidence we should bear in mind the following basic principles:
- To limit the use of translation providing the students with context, pictures, action, and English synonyms and antonyms;
- To avoid confusing listening skills with literacy skills concentrating on listening without subtitles or written script;
- To use video materials providing students with an opportunity to watch the speaker's facial expressions and body language which can vary from culture to culture?

SUMMARY

Listening provides an excellent opportunity for the realization of communicative and educational purposes. For students, the process of listening allows one to develop the skills of active listening, to form the ability to predict the semantic content of the utterance, and thereby cultivate a listening culture in both a foreign and native language.

Speech activity is a specific activity, which may include other activities as well.

We concluded that listening is an understanding of perceived speech by ear. It is also important to note that this is a perceptual mental activity, which is the other side of oral speech of the concept of speaking. Therefore, normative speaking can not be without listening. However, as a type of speech activity, listening is an autonomous activity.

Features of listening include: integrated speech and mental activity, which is based on the natural ability to select and evaluate information, in accordance with the goals and objectives.

Listening is a rather complex type of speech activity. Applying this type of activity at different stages of learning, its success can be determined by both objective and subjective factors.

Having studied several definitions, we came to the conclusion that authentic texts are samples of monologue and dialogical speech, which are created by native speakers for native speakers. They reflect the features and facts of national culture.

While listening to authentic texts high school students can learn new values, as well as gain knowledge of speakers of the target language and develop cultural competence.

As part of our study, authentic texts were examined psychologically, methodologically, and linguistically. Studying the classification of authentic texts, various types of informational and functional authentic texts were identified. In the end, we conclude that it is the selection of authentic texts that make it possible to more effectively implement learning to listen because in the English language lessons there is an immersion in the natural speech environment.

Today, the three-stage model of teaching listening comprehension is generally accepted. All exercises related to listening can be divided into three groups:
1. Exercises that are done before listening (Pre-listening);
2. Exercises that students do while listening(Listening);
3. Exercises that are done after listening to the text (Post-listening).

Each stage in particular and all stages in general, solve a number of tasks aimed at the development of students' cognitive skills. Two sets of tasks are solved:
1. To highlight the main idea and idea of an audio text;
2. To highlight the main facts and details of the audio text, as well as set new learning goals.

After analyzing the difficulties and summarizing the theoretical material of the study, a set of exercises for high school students was developed, the purpose of which is to improve listening and speaking skills for high school students.

This complex is based on the main difficulties faced by senior students in the process of preparing for USE and when communicating with native speakers. This complex includes exercises with tasks designed to improve the grammatical, lexical and phonetic aspects of English. In addition, we have included exercises that can improve the fast and operational memory of children of senior school age.

CONCLUSIONS

So, by the way of conclusion, we would make the following recommendations:
1. The usage of authentic texts in a foreign language class contributes to the quick and easy assimilation of educational material, develops the memory of students, and adjusts to active work, which increases the interest of students in the subject. Consequently, the use of these teaching aids offers a great perspective to increase listening skills and the efficiency of the educational process as a whole.

2. "Live" listening with a natural speed, delivery and pronunciation are important in terms of content and linguistic complexity. Students should be given enough practice in "jumping in at the deep end" and listening without additional preparation.

3. The prospects of listening comprehension in high school should encourage teachers to focus their attention on the interests of students and take into account the current development trends. Students should be given enough practice in "jumping in at the deep end" and listening without additional preparation.

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