

Developing Self-Assessment of Listening Skills in Second Language Learners

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ABSTRACT: The learners of the digital era are distanced towards academic listening. It is challenging on the part of a teacher in order to grab attention on the academic listening by inculcating various tasks. The element of assessing learning abilities plays a vital role in language teaching and language learning. It is the role of the teacher to apply language framework which is language competence and strategic competence in order to assess the listening ability of the second language learners. The paper focuses on the ability to comprehend implied meaning and to make inferences.

KEYWORDS: Assessment, Language Competence, Strategic Competence, Academic Listening

I. INTRODUCTION

Listening Skills are important and quite neglected among the Indian classrooms. Awareness in improving listening skills can be inculcated through activities like scripted texts, semi-scripted texts, interviews, monologues, short conversations, pictures, cartoon movies and video clips for both small and large classrooms.

The ability to assess language teaching comprises of language competence and strategic competence. Language Competence comprises of grammatical knowledge, discourse knowledge, pragmatic knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. Strategic competence is divided into cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies consist of understanding and storing input. Metacognitive strategies consist of monitoring and assessing the situation, self-testing and self-evaluating. The teacher should consider language competence and strategic competence while framing the task.

Comprehension based approaches in language teaching inculcate the notion of learning to listen and listening to learn which play an important role in English for Second Language Learners. Guidance to learners on what they can expect from each listening exercise would enhance their understanding and retention.

II. BEGINNER LEVEL

The process of listening involves receiving the information, understanding the context, remembering the mainframe content of the information, evaluating the content and responding to the audio. Initially learners may face problem with the sounds. The tasks need to be designed in such manner that learners are taught minimal pairs which help them to identify sound patterns. Learners listen to context and are asked to identify whether they rhyme. Learners are shown pictures and are asked to listen to statements and indicate which statement represents which picture.

Learners are shown a complex picture with multiple things happening in it, they listen to audios with multiple statements about the picture and suggest if the statements are true or false about the picture. Learners listen to context and indicate if the verbs were singular or plural.

III. TASKS FOR INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

The tasks are designed in a manner what the learners comprehend from the given context. Various comprehension texts can be used to test the learner's skills and knowledge. Various tasks can be conducted based on comprehension tasks such as learners can listen to statements followed by responses and are asked to

assess if the responses are appropriate to the statements. Learners are given the activity of drawing or describing the instructions of the audio. Learners are given couple of pictures, listen to audios and are asked to match the audios that describe particular pictures.

Learners listen to series of sentences followed by five to six possible continuations and are asked to assess and select the one that would continue the conversation meaningfully and chronologically.

Tasks for Advanced Level:

The tasks for advanced level of learners are designed in a manner to test their understanding of literal words and pragmatic inference. For instance learners listen to short conversations followed by questions. Learners will have to choose the correct option or fill in the blanks with correct options. Learners listen to a monologue or dialogue and then read a review of it. Exercises like fill in the gaps can be conducted for such type of exercises. Learners listen to audios of a text or poem or paragraph and are instructed to suggest a suitable title upon completion of the task. Audio is played again and the learners are asked to assess their performance.

IV. ACTIVITY 1: LISTENING FOR DIFFERENCES

The students are assigned to listen to a lecture. They are asked to analyze the lecture in perspective of the following questions: Did they have difficulty in understanding the speaker? If so is the difficulty because of the learners' inability to comprehend the speaker or does the difficulty arise from the ideas or structure of the lecture. Questions like what efforts can be done from their end to increase the comprehension of the speaker's thoughts. Did the learner's observe rhetorical techniques such as previewing main points in the introduction, using connectives or avoiding language that is inappropriate for the audience.

Activity 2: Listening Behaviours for the Classroom

This activity is intended to assist students with thinking about whether communications between native and non-native speakers of English are equivalent to those that include just native speakers of English. It should assist students with seeing likenesses and contrasts between two kinds of communications. The conversation may likewise draw out students' biases about managing non-native speakers. A few students may feel dissatisfaction or outrage when managing non-native speakers, particularly if the speaker is an instructor or educating collaborator. Then again, non-native speakers may communicate nervousness about talking and tuning in such co-operations. On the off chance that non-native speakers don't communicate the purposes behind their tension, the educator can call attention to the fact that it is so hard to convey in another language.

For instance, ESL students must work to follow the discussion, however should likewise react in a fitting way. They may have restricted or no information on slang, or they may miss thoughts because of the speaker's pace of discourse. On the other hand they may take extra time to figure a reaction, which may prompt anxiety with respect to the native speaker. Students should focus on listening practices for circumstances in which students are members. Students ought to think about whether there are listening practices that may be unmistakable for collaborations between native speakers of English and ESL speakers. Assuming this is the case, students should attempt to distinguish those practices.

Activity 3:

Have one student step outside of the Classroom with you. The student is given a written message instructing "To get to Lou's place, turn left at the main traffic light and go two blocks until you see a yellow house". The student should leave the note, go back to the classroom and whisper the message to another learner in the following seat. This learner should in turn pass the message to the individual sitting close to that person, and so on until the message has been transferred through the whole class. The last student will have to record the message on a piece of paper and read it to the whole class. At that point the student to whom the first message was given will have to read the message to the entire class. There will quite often be a tremendous variety between the first message and the message read by the last student.

Explanation: This activity takes just a couple of moments to finish. It represents significantly and frequently miscommunication that can happen between what a speaker says and what an audience hears. The activity can be tried by substituting any message.

Task 4:

Lead a class conversation wherein students build up a code of listening conduct for their classroom. The last result of this conversation will be a list entitled "Tuning in Conduct for Our Speech Class". The learners will not only have to consent to the content of the list but will also have to take efforts to follow it throughout the term.

Explanation: This activity is particularly useful for relating general issues about listening in the classroom. As students make their listening code, they are urged to be distinct in their criteria. For instance rather than stating "Focus on what the speaker is stating", they should attempt to state exact proclamations such as "Record the speaker's primary concerns". The instructor ought to be mindful and intrigued while different students are talking and do not peruse the paper or work on other assignments during addresses. This activity functions admirably when the class is separated into groups of 4 to 5 students. Give each group 10 to 15 minutes to think of a list of 8 to 10 things to manage listening conduct in the class. At that point, working from the gathering records, direct a general conversation which eventuates in a listening code that is settled upon by the whole class. Another methodology is to have every student make her or his own list as a major aspect of a schoolwork task. You would then be able to move promptly to a general class conversation as opposed to first partitioning the class into little groups.

Task 5:

Carry two short articles to class. Peruse one of the publications to your students. Have them take notes and attempt to distinguish the central matters and proof of the article. Check the results in the classroom conversation, and points are given for tuning in and taking notes more adequately. At that point read the subsequent publication and allow students to apply those pointers. Once more, check the outcomes in a class conversation.

Explanation: Although this activity takes a very remarkable class meeting, it tends to be useful in light of the fact that it gets ready students for tuning in to addresses. Since numerous students do ineffectively on the principal article, the activity likewise serves the valuable capacity of outlining to students how inadequately they tune in and the amount they have to work to improve their note taking.

Task 6:

Show your class one of the determinations from the tapes of student discourses that go with the content. Have them take notes in which they attempt to outline where the presentation of the discourse closes, to list the central matters and sub-focuses in the body, and to recognize where the end starts. Check the outcomes in a class conversation and give pointers for tuning in and taking notes all the more successfully. At that point play another discourse and see in the event that students make a superior showing of note taking. Once more, check the outcomes in a class conversation.

Discussion: Because student discourses on the tapes are 6 to 8 minutes in length, this movement takes an entire class meeting, yet it is amazingly useful for learners. It very well may be made considerably increasingly supportive by choosing addresses for survey that are associated with whatever discourse task is coming up in class. That is, on the off chance that you utilize this activity as students are setting up the enlightening discourse, show two useful addresses. Not exclusively will this assist students with their listening aptitudes, yet it will give them extra introduction to the standards of useful talking.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Students of first year, second year and third year of Velalar College of Engineering and Technology are taken for the study.

Research Instrument

In order to improve self-assessment of listening skills among engineering students, they were given activities like phrases and expressions for active listening, listening for differences in communication strategies and listening behaviours for the Classroom. The tasks engage students to develop a listening pattern and comprehend speaking techniques.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

Activities described in the paper were conducted with all the participants. The activities centre on the importance of self-assessment amongst learners on the listening skills.

VII. CONCLUSION

The process of testing and performing on listening tasks require a range of knowledge, processing skills and strategies. The tasks enable the listeners to understand the purpose and scope, to comprehend meanings of words from context, to assess the attitude of the speaker towards the subject matter, to understand the role of stress and intonation of the context, to understand the role of non-verbal cues as markers of attitude and emphasis.

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