



## Enhancing Listening Skills through Task-Based Method using Strategies

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the efficacy of integrating explicit listening strategy instruction within a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) framework to enhance second language (L2) listening comprehension. While both strategy-based instruction and TBLT are established approaches for developing communicative competence, their combined potential for targeting the specific challenges of listening remains underexplored. A quasi-experimental design was employed with intermediate-level EFL learners, comparing an experimental group that received task-based lessons with embedded strategy instruction—following the pre-task, task cycle, and language focus stages—with a control group that completed tasks without explicit strategy guidance. Developing listening skills remains a significant challenge for second language (L2) learners, who often struggle with the real-time processing demands of spoken language. This paper examines the efficacy of explicit listening strategy instruction (LSI) as a pedagogical solution. Listening skills in second language is complex one. Learning second language is the hardest part. But, using the strategy difficult part comes as easiest part. This research is done by the researcher using the experimental group students. The Researcher taught about the strategies to the students. In this research Task-Based methods would be used by the researcher. Pre-task and Post-task were conducted for students. The students got improve on their listening at last (Willis, 1996).*

**Keywords:** Listening Skills, Task-Based Method, ELT, Casual listening, Communication Skills, Pre-task, Task Cycle, Post-task

ELT stands for English Language Teaching. ELT is the teaching of English to non-native speakers. It encompasses various methods, approaches, and techniques aimed at developing language proficiency in learners. Macaulay's English Education Act of 1835 did not mince matters and "English became the language of government, education and advancement, at once a symbol of imperial rule and of self-improvement". This act made certain that governmental assistance would not be provided to the printing of books in Indian Languages.

Communication skills are abilities we use while giving and receiving different kinds of information effectively. There are four basic communication skills called LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing). Listening is the first and foremost skill which is used to communicate effectively. Without Listening there is no communication. The four skills are connected with each other. If the one skill is missing, other three skills will not improve. Improving listening skills helps to improve speaking skills. "Reading with expression" trains students



in reading aloud and listening to spoken English. Listening skills helps to make a writing creatively in a clear and conscious way.

There is a difference between listening and hearing. Listening is an active process, it requires conscious effort, focus and attention. Meanwhile, Hearing is a passive process, it requires involuntary act, sound automatically reach your ears and your brain interprets them.

Listening and Reading are receptive skills or Passive skills which involve understanding and interpreting spoken or written language, meanwhile Speaking and Writing are Productive skills which involves producing new language to convey a message.

Adrian Doff-Cambridge English Empower Upper Intermediate Students Book. Adrian Doff talks about two kinds of listening namely “casual” and “focused” listening.

- Casual Listening is done in social contexts wherein we listen without any purpose and take note only when some matter catches our interest.
- Focused Listening is Intensive listening for information or for transacting business. The listener is attentive and concentrates on what the speaker is saying (AdrianDoff, 1988, p-199).
- Tony Ridgway feels that, “One process that could be called a strategy in listening is that of controlling the allocation of our attention to the parts that are most important for our purpose” (2000,181).

## Literature Review

Early models characterized listening as a passive, bottom-up process of decoding linguistic input (Richards, 1983). Contemporary models of comprehension have moved toward interactive models, where listeners actively construct meaning through simultaneous bottom-up processing and top-down use of background knowledge and context (Vandergrift, 2004; Field, 2008). This theoretical evolution established listening as a strategic skill rather than an innate ability, providing the foundation for strategic instruction.

The metacognitive pedagogical cycle (Vandergrift & Co., 2012) has emerged as a key framework that includes structured stages of planning, monitoring,

problem-solving, and evaluation. Research indicates that integrated, process-oriented approaches that combine strategic instruction with regular listening practice yield more significant results than product-focused approaches that test comprehension.

The theoretical foundation for strategy-based instruction lies in the rejection of listening as a passive skill. Early bottom-up models, which focused on decoding sounds and structures (Richards, 1983), have been replaced by interactive models. These contemporary views suggest that skilled listeners use both bottom-up and top-down processing simultaneously, drawing on prior knowledge and context to interpret input (Vandergrift, 2004; Field, 2008). This reconceptualization constructs the listener as an active participant who must strategically manage cognitive resources to make sense of volatile auditory information.

## Definition

“Listening is an active process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages.”

“Listening is a complex cognitive process that involves the simultaneous integration of decoding sounds, interpreting syntactic structures, and deriving literal and intended meanings from an auditory input.” (John Field, 2008).

“Listening is a receptive language skill which involves making sense of meaningful speech sounds. It requires the listener to understand the speaker’s accent or pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and to grasp the meaning of the utterance.” (Jack C. Richards, 1983).

“Listening is an interactive process in which listeners collaborate with speakers to co-create meaning. Listeners use both bottom-up processing (using the incoming sounds) and top-down processing (using background knowledge and context) to interpret the message.” (Larry Vandergrift, 2004 and Christine C.M. Goh, 2012).

“Listening skills involve not only the cognitive processes of comprehension but also the metacognitive processes of planning for, monitoring, and evaluating one’s understanding during and after a listening event.” (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).



## Research Problem

- Time and Effort: It takes more time to do tasks and need more effort to improve the listening skills.
- Pronunciation: Speakers pronunciation should be very clear and conscious. Because, pronunciation is very important to improve listening skills.

## Research Method

The Research use “Task Based method” to improve listening skills.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a student-centered, communicative approach to language instruction where the primary focus is on the completion of meaningful, real-world tasks, rather than on the practice of specific linguistic structures.

TBLT is defined by its use of a “task” as the core element. A task is an activity in which meaning is primary; there is a communicative problem to solve; and the task is connected to real-world activities. The assessment of the task is in terms of task outcome (Ellis, 2003).

TBLT is the three-stage model proposed by Jane Willis (1996). According to Jane Willis, The Three-Stage Framework are, Pre-Task, Task Cycle and Post-Task (or) Language Focus.

### i. Pre-Task

It includes with most lesson introduction. This is a step or chance to introducing the topic, brainstorm ideas or to give instructions. It helps to pre-teach the topic and ask any questions to the students and also helps to give some inspiration ideas to complete the tasks. The researcher taught the difference between listening and hearing. The researcher gave true or false statement for Pre-listening task. The researcher read the passage twice and ask the question to the students. Then the students identified whether it is true or false.

### ii. Task Cycle

In this part, the task which the students do can be complex. This part contains three stages are, Task, Planning and Reporting.

- Task: In this stage, student works together in pairs or small groups and they are not corrected by the researcher. The researcher can only monitors the students and take notes while they were working.
- Planning: In this stage, the students plan their tasks and get ready to tell the ideas about their tasks to others. The researcher guides the language and reporting skills.
- Reporting: In this stage, the student presents their work in front of others in the classroom, like a presentation, a poster, a video, a report. Students can give feedback to another student. The researcher facilitate these discussions, provide advice on language and give feed back to the students.

### iii. Post-Task (or) Language Focus

This final stage contains the lesson its analysis and practice of the language. The researcher share some interesting examples of the language that the student used throughout the lesson. Meanwhile, the student also make suggestion on other language. Then they can use these words and phrases to their notebooks and practice them well. The researcher gave role playing based on the dialogue. In this the researcher played the dialogues twice and ask students to tell any 5 dialogues from this.

## Experimental Analysis

30 students were taken to experimental analysis.

### Strategy 1- Imaginative writing

#### Task 1- Fit the Headlines

This is the strategy to improve listening skills and creative thinking. The researcher read out the article from the newspaper and the students have to provide or create the headlines for the article. Three exercises were given by the teacher and done by the students.

### Strategy 2- Learner-centered

#### Task 2-Arrange the photos

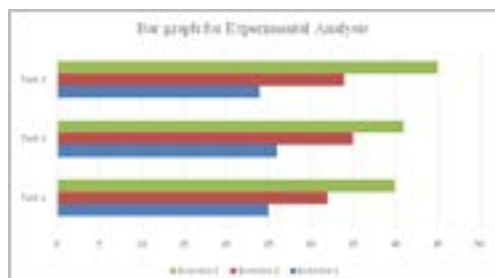
This strategy is used to improve problem solving, empathy, logical and critical thinking. The researcher should tell the story and give the photographs with descriptions to the students and ask students to arrange the photos where it describes.



### Strategy 3-Planning and setup

#### Task 3-Create a climax

This strategy is used to improve listening skills. While it helps to improve a writer's narrative development, character analysis, and emotional resonance skills. The researcher can tell the story to the student and ask them to create the climax. Students have to listen the story and their characters and guess the ending. Then the researcher read out the original ending and compared the imagination ending by the students.



It shows the Experimental analysis of the three tasks given above

### Findings

The above strategies help us to improve listening skills (mainly) and the other three skills. And it can also help us to improve communication, problem-solving, empathy, leadership and interpersonal relationship building, as well as the ability to make better decisions and retain information effectively.

Strategy 1- By this strategy, the students were improving their own listening skills by their creative thinking. The Researcher taught the student about creative thinking and how to create sentences.

Strategy 2-By this strategy, the students can improve problem solving skills, logical thinking and empathy. The Researcher taught students "How to describe the photos." The students were arranged the photos by describing it.

Strategy 3-By this strategy, the students can improve their writer's narrative development, emotional resonance skills. The Researcher taught the student to "write on their own and How to write creatively"

### Results

The Students can improve their listening skills and other skills step by step. Finally, the students got more listening ability. Simultaneously, the students can improve their other skills like, problem solving, writing skills, reading skills, speaking skills, logical thinking, creative thinking, critical thinking, empathy, leadership skills, interpersonal relationship building, etc.

The Merits of the research are, i) It can be Improve our listening skills easily, ii) It can also improve other skills, iii) It helps to write and thinking creatively.

The Demerits of the research are, i) It may require a longer time commitment, ii) It will cause misunderstandings.

### Conclusion

The 30 students were taken as a Research group. The researcher takes 40 days for the research. The Researcher took 5 days for analyse students listening skills by giving pilot questions. The Researcher took 30 days for three strategies (each strategy contains 10 days). Using 30 days the researcher improves student's listening using strategies. The last 5 days took for analyse the improvement of the student's listening skills. The students ultimately showed improvement in their listening skills.

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