

## Chapter 6: Listening

### Importance of Listening Activity

Listening is an important activity to which we don't pay attention. Listening is one of the skills of language. Listening and speaking are inter-related. They are complementary elements in the communication process. Listening is not a passive activity. There is a difference between hearing and listening. Hearing is merely being aware of some sound on our ears, "listening" is a conscious effort involving mental activity to make sense of, and interpret the message. Language is a responsibility.

We spend 9% time in Writing, 16% time in Reading, 30% time in speaking and 45% time in Listening. Still Listening is a skill which is ignored. Many people are not good at listening. Because in our culture listening is not cultivated as a skill. We intake only 25% of what is said and we forget half of that within 48 hours. We jumble up information, if called upon to produce it.

In Second Language Acquisition also Listening is essential to learn new language. Because we learn many concepts by listening. The process or act of listening encourages a person to use his discretion and judgment and thus make a sensible decision, rather than passively accept of what is said.

The result of poor listening is loss of time and money and at the same time strife, conflict and misunderstanding in interpersonal relationships are often due to faulty listening practices.

The Practice of attentive listening brings with a wealth of potential material that can be helpful at the same time. A good listener is an asset to an organization. At the managerial level, being a good listener is even more important, since managers need to understand the emotional impact of a situation as much as the technical details. For smooth functioning of the organization and good personal life, good listening is essential.

### THE PROCESS OF LISTENING

**RECEIVING-----INTERPRETING-----REMEMBERING----EVALUATING---RESPONDING**

**What are the problems in Listening process?**

#### Problems or Barriers to the Listening

1] **Distractions** : can be of the three types.

A: **Semantic** : when the listener is not sure about the exact meaning of the word used in the conversation.

**B:Physical distraction:**noise of surroundings,noise of machines,ac, of microphone etc.

**c.Mental Distractions:**Daydreaming.

2.Some people fake or pretend to listen.This happens when listener is not interested about the message.

3. **Defensive listening:**This happens when the listener challenges the speaker's views.

4. **Prejudice:**The listeners bias,negative attitude,preconceived notions,fears pf stress affect listening.

5. Constant focus on self

6. Information overload

7. The thinking-speaking rate is not same.The speaking rate is 125-150word per minute,whereas the thinking rate is 400 words per minute.So the listener's mind moves faster than the speaker is able to speak.The intervening time before the speaker spends at his next point is spent in day-dreaming .

8.The natural attention span of human beings is short.

**Question :What the styles of Listening?**

### **STYLES OF LISTENING**

**1.Empathic Listening:** In this case we empathise with the speaker,and understand things from his or her point of view.

**2.Informational Listening:**The listener pays attention to the content ,message and take note of non-verbal clues.

**3.Evaluative listening:**While listening we keep on evaluating the speaker and note only certain points that are of interest or use to us.

4. **Appreciative listening:**When we listen to our favourite music or watch an enjoyable programme,we do appreciative listening.

5.**Critical Listening:**This is when we critically and analytically,carefully,considering the topic of the argument,the intentions of the speaker,his omissions,his point of view,his credibility and so on.

WE can be better listener by preparing ourselves for listening.We must focus on the speaker's matter than manner.We must listen with complete concentration.We must not comment or

interrupt while the speaker complete his dialogue. We must listen for vocal or non-verbal cues. Thus we can conclude that effective listening is a positive, intellectual, emotional and active process. Poor listening habits can be changed through conscious effort, hard work, self discipline, attention, a positive attitude and determination.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD LISTENER**

- 1. Have positive attitude.**
- 2. Have integrity, self discipline**
- 3. Plan ahead, be prepared.**
- 4. Do not interrupt the speaker**
- 5. Do not get distracted or prejudiced**
- 6. Are motivated and attentive**
- 7. Have positive attitude**

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