

DEVELOPING A LISTENING LESSON BASED ON COMMUNICATIVE PRINCIPLES

(1) PRE-LISTENING ACTIVITIES

- activate appropriate background knowledge for the upcoming listening experience through one or more of the following (the list is not exhaustive; you should develop what works best for a given recording and your students):
 - questions
 - discussion (whole class or in pairs/groups)
 - generating hypotheses about the topic
 - reading about related information

NOTE: *don't preview too much of the actual content!!*

- set up a realistic purpose for the listening task
 - motivation

[STUDENTS LISTEN TO TAPE]

(2) FIRST LISTENING: GETTING THE MAIN IDEA

- Similar to skimming in reading
- students should listen to the recorded text in its entirety
- check for understanding of the general/main idea/s: students should be able to identify what they have been listening to:
 - guessing situation, setting, speaker/s, topic (e.g. whether or not the recording is a conversation [between friends], a news broadcast [about a medical topic, an announcement [at the airport], a lecture [about American History], etc.)

[STUDENTS LISTEN TO TAPE AGAIN]

(3) SECOND LISTENING: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION/ DETAILS

- Similar to scanning in reading
- Text can be listened to multiple times
- Do this with recordings that would encourage native speakers to do the same, e.g.
 - listening to a traffic report
 - listening to the weather forecast
 - listening to pre-recorded phone messages
- set up a realistic context which requires students to listen selectively to filter out specific info
- set up realistic purposes for the students' repeated listening to the tape
- enable students to retrieve more from the listening task than the main idea
- consider replaying the tape in segments rather than all at once: look for natural breaks to determine segment length (e.g. each story of a news broadcast, each new aspect of a longer speech, etc.)

- check for comprehension:
 - pose a variety of question types
 - literal (lower level)
 - global (higher order)
 - inference (higher order)
 - in different formats
 - true/false
 - multiple choice
 - open ended
 - different tasks
 - completing a chart/figure/ table
 - arranging visual info in the correct sequence
 - predicting subsequent info

Note: make sure that the activity cannot be completed without having listened to the recording!

Note: allow ss to listen to the tape as often as necessary!

(4) VOCABULARY

- anticipate vocabulary that might be unfamiliar/ troublesome for your students
- design activities that help students infer meaning
 - clues from background knowledge
 - context clues
 - clues from word roots and affixes (only after the words have been written down)
- you might have students listen intensively for specific vocabulary items and surrounding context
 - filling gaps with missing words (where you provide a partial transcript)
 - writing down an exact sequence of words
 - writing down numbers

(5) EXPLOITING THE LISTENING TASK: TEXTUAL DISCOVERY PROCEDURES

- rhetorical/organizational aspects
- linguistic/grammatical aspects

Note: Be careful to exploit what's in the recording; do not superimpose your own agenda (in other words, let the text suggest which rhetorical/organizational or linguistic/grammatical features to explore)

(6) DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES

- speaking activity that centers around the content material, e.g. role play, information gap, opinion gap
- discussion/exploitation of content material
- relate content material to students' personal experience

(7) Desirable: RELATED "TEXT"

- present a second text (either a recording or a reading passage), related in content but from a different source

(8) EVALUATION

How can you determine whether or not your lesson objectives have been accomplished?

(9) TRANSCRIPT OF THE RECORDING

- transcribe the recording
- parts of the transcript (even the entire transcript) may be used for confirmation of comprehension checks and textual discovery procedures
- BUT: make sure that your lesson remains predominantly a LISTENING lesson and does not turn into a READING lesson