



## ABSTRACT

This work has been developed to help students to improve their listening skill. The idea to make oral communication effective

In chapter one there are some details about the Direct Method: definition, objectives, background, principles, and key features.

In chapter two we talk about how to teach listening skill. This is because acquiring a successful listening skill takes time and lots of practice. It's frustrating for students because there are no rules for developing this skill as there are as in grammar. In this chapter we also talk about the importance of listening and, what is involved in listening comprehension. The principles of teaching listening, the learning objectives to improve listening comprehension, the process of listening, and how to become a better listener are also studied here.

In Chapter three we deal with some techniques and activities based on the Direct Method, which teachers can use in their classes for improving the listening skill. In this chapter we talk about the creation of listening activities for the unit 11 of the book “Our World Through English”

**Key Words:** Techniques, Listening comprehension, teaching-learning process, principles, direct method.

## “TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING LISTENING COMPREHENSION IN TEENAGERS BASED ON THE DIRECT METHOD”



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BASED ON THE DIRECT METHOD”

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## INTRODUCTION

This work has been developed for people who want to improve their listening skills. Listening is considered to be one of the most important parts of oral communication. The term is used in order to make oral communication effective. A poor listening skill of an individual may affect him/her very badly, especially in an organization where that person spends a lot of time communicating his/her ideas to others.

This tesina has been organized by chapters. In chapter one there are some details of the direct method: definition, objective, background, principles, and key features.

In chapter two we talk about teaching the listening skill as one of the most difficult tasks for any ESL teacher. This is because a successful listening skill is acquired over time and with lots of practice. It's frustrating for students because there are no rules as there are rules in grammar. In this chapter we also talk about the importance of listening, and what is involved in listening comprehension?. The principles for teaching listening, learning objectives to improve listening comprehension, the process of listening, how to become a better listener.

In Chapter three we expose some techniques and activities based on the Direct Method; teachers can use these suggestions in their classes for



improving their students' listening skills. In this chapter we also talk about the creation of listening activities to be used in the unit 11 of the book “Our World Through English”



## CHAPTER ONE

### 3. Constructivism and Learning based on Piaget’s ideas

The main idea of Piaget’s constructivism is that human learning is built up, and the minds of people create new knowledge based on their previous learning. Students’ learning has to be active; they must participate in the different kinds of activities instead of behaving passively and listening to what the teacher is explaining to them. Constructivism does not agree with other authors’ points of view which say that learning is transmitted from one person to another, in this case from the teacher to the student. If it were so, the most important thing would be to receive rather than to build.

In constructivism learning is active, not passive. A basic supposition is that people learn when they are able to control their own learning, and they are frequently controlling what they have learnt. This is a learning theory, and it is not a description of how to teach. Students can build up their own knowledge by themselves. Each one of them builds up meanings as they learn. People don’t understand, nor do they use the given information immediately.

On the other hand, a person feels the necessity of “contributing” with his/her own knowledge. Knowledge is built up through experience. Experience leads to the creation of schemes. Schemes are mind models that we store in our minds. These schemes change, growing larger and more sophisticated through two complementary processes: assimilation and accommodation (J. Piaget, 1955).





- **ASSIMILATION:** Assimilation refers to the way an organism behaves before a stimulus from the environment in terms of actual organization. “The mental assimilation consists in the incorporation of the objects in the schemes of the behavior” (J. Piaget, 1955).
- **ACCOMMODATION:** Accommodation implies a modification of actual *organization* as a response to the demands of the environment. It is the process through which the subject adapts to the external conditions. Besides, accommodation does not only appear as a necessity people have of submitting to the environment, but it also makes them coordinate the different schemes of assimilation (J. Piaget, 1955).

## **1.2 Piaget’s Basic Concepts:**

### **1.2.1 Organization**

It is an attribute that intelligence possesses and it is formed by the stages of knowledge that lead to different behaviors in specific situations. For Jean Piaget, an object can be neither perceived nor learned in itself but through the organization of the actions of the subject in matter.

### **1.2.2 Equilibrium**

Equilibrium is the unity of organization, and it is the responsible for the construction of the whole intellectual and cognitive system. Besides, it regulates the subject’s integration with reality, since they serve as the assimilators’ frame, and the new information is incorporated into the person through them.



### 1.3 PRINCIPLES OF THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

According to Piaget's' constructivism theory, there are two principles in the teaching-learning process: learning as an active process and learning as something complete, authentic and real (J. Piaget, 1978).

#### 1.3.1 Learning as an active process

In the process of accommodation and assimilation of information, the student's direct experience is very important, as well as his/her mistakes and the search for solutions. The way how the information is presented is very important, too. When information is introduced as a way of an answer to solve a problem, it works as a tool, not as an arbitrary and isolated situation.

#### 1.3.2 Learning: complete, authentic and real

Meaning is build up in a way that a person may interact in a meaningful way with the world around him/her. It means the activities should be worked on in a low level when teaching a lesson; the students who are in a classroom organized this way will surely learn and will show better results since learning will be easier for them if at the same time they feel committed to work with meaningful activities which give examples of what the teacher wants to teach.

According to this theory, the teacher must emphasize on the complete classroom activities and reduce the individual skill exercises; authentic



activities that can result intrinsically interesting and meaningful to the student will be carried out. The given real activities result better than tests.

## **2. Direct Method**

The only rule for the use of the Direct Method is that translation is not allowed to teach a second language.

### **2.1 Background**

The Direct Method appears as a reaction against the Grammar Translation Method. It was a revolution in the language teaching philosophy at the end of the 1800s; it was taken as the dawn of modern foreign language teaching. Teachers felt frustrated because they saw that the Grammar Translation Method limited them to create communicative competence in students, so they began to look for more and new ways to teach a foreign language. Mainly, teachers tried to teach a second language like the first language is taught, that is, in a “natural way”; therefore, they added techniques to practice the skills that the Grammar Translation Method did not emphasize; these skills included speaking, the spontaneous use of language, as well as help students think in the target language. The Direct Method implies that the students have to be exposed directly to the foreign language; besides, the Direct Method deletes translations and memorization of conjunctions, declensions, and other grammar rules.



## 2.2 Definition

The Direct Method is used to teach a second or foreign language. This method says the target language needs to be used in the classroom without using the mother tongue. The new vocabulary must be introduced directly with the help of some didactic material, like for example pictures, mime, gestures, realia, actions, etc. Furthermore, it emphasizes that oral communication is very important in the teaching- learning process; it insists on the fact that reading and writing should be taught after students have acquired the speaking skill. The direct method states that a second language can be learned naturally and that grammar must be taught inductively.

## 2.3 Objectives

The main objective of the Direct Method is to help students communicate in the target language, beginning with the learning of how to think in that language, without using the mother tongue. Another objective is to try to help students use the target language spontaneously in oral communication. The Direct Method uses association of the meanings of words with realia, pictures, pantomime, dramatizations, etc, instead of translation. There must be a direct connection between concepts and the foreign language.

## 2.4 Key features

Palmer's Direct Method is based on the discoveries of the British linguists Henry Sweet & Otto Jespersen. Palmer chose the use of an "oral method" where the new language is acquired by the students through oral exercises and language immersion instead of using "book -work and writing, with a minimum



of oral work.” Palmer advocated “a rational technique and a systematic and graded program” to help students not to get confused by the complexity in the learning of English as a second language.

## **2.4.1 Description of Palmer's principles**

### **2.4.1.1 Auditory imitation (observation)**

For students who have some kind of difficulty at listening, it is a good idea to guide them with a “look method” which will help students understand what the teacher is speaking; for example, helping them to look for a written form or pictures, or make a dramatization, etc. The material designed to be used for speaking needs to be memorized by students. In the listening skill, students must listen to someone attentively to learn how to pronounce a word, and then they must imitate that pronunciation while students must not depend in the written language only.

### **2.4.1.2 Catenizing**

It involves students making successive movements. Students must recognize and produce a sequence of different sounds or syllables, but without taking meaning into account.

### **2.4.1.3 Semanticizing**

Students must associate the word with its respective meaning. They fuse the word and its meaning or interpret a whole sentence with the help of pictures, REALIA, pantomime, etc.



#### **2.4.1.4 Composition by analogy**

Students repeat words, sentences, forms, and answer questions in order to learn grammatical patterns. This way they practice grammatical exercises. Grammar is taught through speaking and listening activities. The target language is the only means of communication between the teacher and students in the classroom.

#### **2.4.1.5 Other principles of the Direct Method**

- The Reading skill must be taught at the beginning of the language teaching process, although it will be developed while the speaking skill is also being practiced.
- Students must learn how to make a question and also how to answer it.
- The teacher must teach the correct pronunciation from the very beginning of the teaching process.
- By using the “Self-correction” technique, students learning will increase.
- The teacher must use conversational activities since they would increase the opportunities students have to practice the foreign language in real-life situations.

### **2.5 Characteristics of the teaching-learning process**

A teacher never translates the meaning of a word into the student’s first language, but he/she helps students by associating the meaning with REALIA, pictures, pantomime, etc. Students are allowed to use only the target language in class while thinking as if they were communicating with each other in a real



situation. The teacher may give them the vocabulary and then students would imagine what they may say if they were in a store, in the movies, in the park, giving directions, etc. We have to remember that grammatical structures and rules have to be taught in an inductive way. It means that the teacher gives examples while the students try to identify what it is being taught, and then they can make their own rules and generalize from the given examples. The new vocabulary can be practiced by asking students to use it in complete sentences.



## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. - TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Teaching the listening skill is one of the most difficult tasks for any ESL teacher. This is because a successful listening skill is acquired over time and with lots of practice. It's frustrating for students because there are no rules, as they have rules in grammar teaching, so it is necessary to turn to native language research for some insights.

One of the largest restrictions for students is often mental block. While listening, a student suddenly decides that he or she does not understand what is being said. At this point, many students just tune out or get caught up in an internal dialogue trying to translate a specific word. Some students convince themselves that they are not able to understand spoken English well and create problems for themselves.

The key to helping students improve their listening skills is to convince them that not understanding is OK. This is more of an attitude change than anything else, and it is easier for some students to accept it than others. Another important point is that students need to listen to English as often as possible, but for short periods of time.

For helping students develop their listening skill, a teacher should encourage them to get a film, or listen to an English radio station, but not to watch an entire film or listen for two hours. Students should often listen, but they should listen for short periods - five to ten minutes. This should happen four or





five times a week. Even if they don't understand anything, five to ten minutes is a minor frustration. However, for this strategy to work, students must not expect improved understanding too quickly. The brain is capable of amazing things if given time; students must have the serenity to wait for results. If a student continues this exercise over two to three months, his/her listening comprehension skill will improve significantly.

## ***2.1 The Importance of Listening***

Listening is the most common communicative activity in daily life: “We can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write.”<sup>1</sup> Also, it is important for obtaining comprehensible input that is necessary for language development.

### ***2.1.2 What is involved in listening comprehension?***

Some factors are involved in listening comprehension; we can mention the following:

- a. **Speech perception** (e.g., sound discrimination, recognition of stress patterns, intonation, pauses, etc.)
- b. **Word recognition** (e.g., recognition of the sound pattern as a word, locating the word in the lexicon, retrieving lexical, grammatical and semantic information about the word, etc.)
- c. **Sentence processing** (parsing; e.g., detecting sentence constituents, building a structure frame, etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> MORLEY, 1991, p82.



- d. **Constructing the literal meaning of the sentence** (selecting the relevant meaning in case of ambiguous words)
- e. **Holding the information in short-term memory**
- f. **Recognizing cohesive devices in discourse**
- g. **Inferring the implied meaning and intention** (speech act)
- h. **Predicting what is to be said**
- i. **Deciding how to respond**

### ***2.1.3 Principles of Teaching Listening***

Listening should receive primary attention in the early stages of the teaching-learning process of English as a second language. Here is a list of some of the principles of teaching Listening:

- Maximize the use of material that is relevant to students' real life.
- Maximize the use of authentic language.
- Vary the materials in terms of speakers' gender, age, dialect, accent, topic, speed, noise level.
- Always ask students to listen with a purpose and allow them to show their comprehension in a task.
- Language material intended to be used for training listening comprehension should never be presented visually first.

## **2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES TO IMPROVE LISTENING COMPREHENSION**

*Why use learning objectives?*

An informal survey of information architecture syllabi indicates most teachers use topics and goals. Topics and goals are good starting points, but well-formed



learning objectives go a step beyond and offer several advantages for both the instructor and students.

Learning objectives are about curriculum, not instruction. This is a key point. Many tend to confuse learning objectives with objectives a teacher may have that relate to student conduct or behavior in a classroom. Correctly constructed learning objectives are about the evidence of learning; they specify what behavior a student must demonstrate or perform in order for a teacher to infer that learning took place. Since learning cannot be seen directly, teachers must make inferences about learning from evidence they can see and measure. Learning objectives, if constructed properly, provide an ideal vehicle for making those inferences.

### 2.3 The main purpose of learning is to communicate

Consequently, a well-constructed learning objective should leave little room for doubt about what is intended. A well constructed learning objective describes an intended learning outcome and contains three parts, each of which alone means nothing, but when combined into a sentence or two, communicates the conditions under which the behavior is performed, a verb that defines the behavior itself, and the degree (criteria) to which a student must perform the behavior. If any one of these three components is missing, the objective cannot communicate accurately.

Therefore, the parts of a learning objective are:



1. Conditions (a statement that describes the conditions under which the behavior is to be performed).
2. Behavioral Verb (an action word that connotes an observable student behavior).
3. Criteria (a statement that specifies how well the student must perform the behavior).

A learning objective is the focal point of a lesson plan. It is a description of an intended learning outcome and is the basis for the rest of the lesson. It provides criteria for constructing an assessment for the lesson, as well as for the instructional procedures the teacher designs to implement the lesson. A learning objective determines the criteria for any assessment rubric. As you will see, without an objective that clearly communicates specific student behavior or performance, it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine exactly what a particular lesson is supposed to accomplish.

The teacher establishes a specific objective for each one of the circumstances, commands, materials, directions, etc.; these are given to students to initiate the behavior. All behavior relevant to intended student learning outcomes can best be understood within a context of the conditions under which the behavior is to be performed or demonstrated.

We all learned in elementary school that a verb is an action word. In a learning objective, the verb is also an action word, but it is also a special kind of action word. The verb in a learning objective is an action word that connotes



observable actions. For example, although we as teachers all want our students to appreciate one thing or another, it is impossible to see when a student "appreciates" something. Understanding is another noble word that connotes something we want our students to do, but we cannot see "understanding." The best we can do is make inferences that a student appreciates or understands something based on what the student does or says in a controlled situation.

The criteria part of a learning objective is a declarative statement that describes how well the behavior must be performed to satisfy the intent of the behavioral verb. Usually, criteria are expressed in some minimum number, or as what must be, as a minimum, included in a student response.

The formula S-S-S helps your listeners retain important information and prompt them to act.

- State: state your main points clearly and concisely.
- Support: provide enough supporting information to address your listeners' needs adequately.
- Summarize: summarize each main point of your message.

## 2.4 THE PROCESS OF LISTENING

We said earlier that the first step in listening effectively is to recognize certain fallacies or false notions. The next step is to understand the process. Listening is a complex process—an integral part of the total communication process, although a part often ignored. This forgets results largely from two factors.



First, speaking and writing (the sending parts of the communication process) are highly visible, and are more easily assessed than listening and reading (the receiving parts). And reading behavior is assessed much more frequently than listening behavior; that is, we are more often experienced on what we read than on what we hear. And when we are tested on material presented in a lecture, generally the lecture has been supplemented by readings.

Second, many of us aren't willing to improve our listening skills. Much of this opposition results from our incomplete understanding of the process—and understanding the process could help show us how to improve. To understand the listening process, we must first define it.

Through the years, numerous definitions of listening have been proposed. Perhaps the most useful one defines listening as the process of receiving, attending, and understanding auditory messages; that is, messages transmitted through the medium of sound. Often, the steps of responding and remembering are also included.

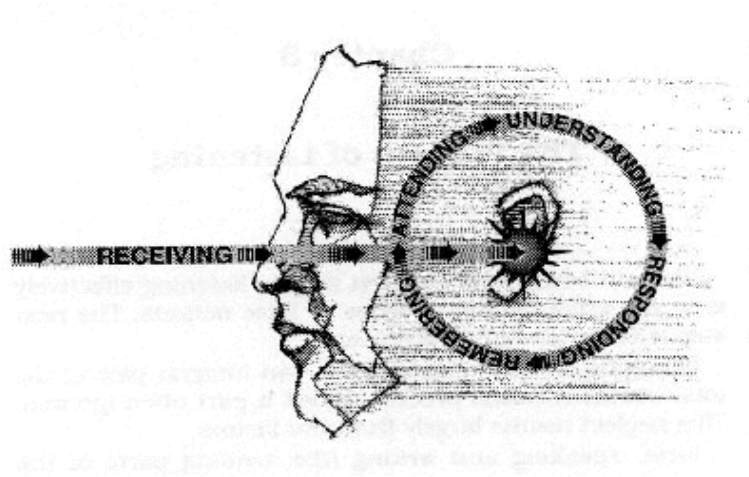
The process moves through the first three steps—receiving, attending, and understanding—in sequence. Responding and/or remembering may or may not follow. For example, it may be desirable for the listener to respond immediately or to remember the message in order to respond at a later time.

At times, of course, no response (at least no verbal response) is required. And the act of remembering may or may not be necessary. For example, if someone

tells you to “watch your step,” you have no need to remember the message after you have completed that step.

## Listening

### Process<sup>2</sup>



Listening is a seven-stage process of:

1. Hearing
2. Selecting
3. Attending
4. Understanding
5. Evaluating
6. Remembering
7. Responding actively with feedback

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<sup>2</sup> Available in Google; <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/kline-listen/b10ch3.htm>



### ***2. 4.1 Becoming a Better Listener***

When it comes to listening, many of us are culpable of at least some bad habits.

For example:

- Instead of listening, do you think about what you're going to say next while the other person is still talking? Engineers, thinking we know the answers and that managers do not, often tune out what non-technical speakers are saying.
- Are you easily distracted by the speaker's mannerisms or by what is going on around you?
- Do you frequently interrupt people before they have finished talking? Engineers, who value facts rather than feelings, often interrupt to set the listener straight, not realizing that the listener has a need to express himself fully, whether he is right or wrong.





- Do you fall asleep into daydreams because you are sure you know what the speaker is going to say? Engineers have a low tolerance level for people they assume have less knowledge than they do.

All of these habits can hinder our listening ability. Contrary to popular notion, listening is not a passive activity. It requires full concentration and active involvement and is, in fact, hard work.



## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. CREATION OF LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Listening is not easy to develop. According to some teachers, listening skills must be acquired in a natural way. Nowadays, it is very important that teachers put more emphasis on the teaching of listening skill actively and systematically. To move this goal it is necessary that teachers have more teaching material available; this will make the students' task easier and they will use language in real-life situations more freely. If teachers apply different kinds of techniques, it will be easier for students to practice their listening skills more.

You can learn a lot by just listening; more than forty percent of our daily communication time is spent on listening, thirty-five percent on speaking, sixteen percent on reading, and only nine percent on writing. Although listening has been a relatively ignored skill in terms of research and how it is introduced to language learners, it is now beginning to receive more attention.

One of the main advancements to come out of research into listening strategies was the understanding that listening exercises could be divided into three main parts:

- ❖ Pre-listening,
- ❖ While-listening,
- ❖ Post-listening activities.

This system has proved useful in taking the attention off continually testing listening and has allowed learners to do other things with the information that



they listen to. For instance, a teacher can begin a short discussion with the learners in the pre-listening stage as to what they think of the topic before they listen to the text (activating world and personal knowledge). Then the learners can be asked to use whatever information they gathered from a text to have an extended discussion in a post-listening stage (allowing for more individualization and critical comments to be developed). In between these two stages, learners can be helped to focus on their listening by careful selection of tasks that are meaningful and that cater to developing specific listening skills rather than on constantly measuring performance through test-like exercises.

### 3.1 Techniques

Before searching for the techniques for teaching, we need to know some of the characteristics of the students we are going to work with and what previous knowledge they have. So here are some of the teenagers' characteristics aged 13 to 14; according to Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development, "Thought becomes more abstract, incorporating the principles of formal logic. The ability to generate abstract propositions, multiple hypotheses, and their possible outcomes is evident. Thinking becomes less tied to concrete reality. Formal logical systems can be acquired. They can handle proportions, algebraic manipulation, and other purely abstract processes."<sup>3</sup>

The main technique of the Direct Method used to help students to improve their listening comprehension ability is:

#### 3.2.1 Listening comprehension tasks

In the Direct Method it is very important to design listening comprehension

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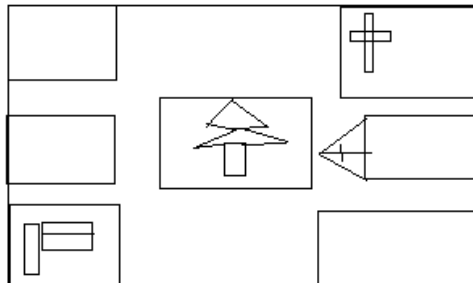
<sup>3</sup> Available in Google; <http://www.monografias.com/trabajos16/teorias-piaget/teorias-piaget.shtml/>

tasks because this way the teacher is creating a good and favorable classroom climate. The activities that are frequently used are listening with a non-linguistic response or listening with a short linguistic response. Some of these activities are listening with visuals (map drawing, identifying pictures, ordering or sequencing pictures, drawing sketches from a description, etc.), following instructions, detecting mistakes, listening and writing formats, and so on.

### 3.2.1.1 **Map drawing**

The teacher gives students a map containing a part of a no-real place, where there would be many places, such as houses, stores, parks, movies, etc. After the teacher has performed the pre-listening process to teach the vocabulary related to the map, he/she gives students many directions, to which students may follow in one of these two ways:

- a) Writing the names of the given places.
- b) Drawing a line by the places according to the teacher's instructions.



Vocabulary:

Park	Right
------	-------

Church	In front of
School	Behind
Hospital	Beside
Left	Market

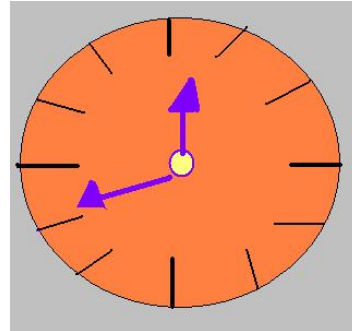
### 3.2.1.2 *Identifying pictures*

The teacher gives students a set of pictures which have some details in common. Then the teacher describes one of them while students choose the one which is being described. For example, the teacher may describe places.



### 3.2.1.3 *Ordering or sequencing pictures*

Students are given a group of pictures in disorder while the teacher reads the description of a short story or some information about the pictures the students have. Students have to listen to those descriptions and put the pictures in order by writing the corresponding number on them. For example, daily routines.



#### 3.2.1.4 *Description Sketches from Description*



The teacher may describe people, places, things, or actions three or more times while students draw everything they hear. The description should include the vocabulary students already know.

#### 3.2.1.5 ***Following instructions***

All the time students are following and performing instructions, so the teacher has to be clear at the moment of giving instructions. Instructions should go with the students' knowledge and vocabulary; for example, we are going to talk about:

- Commands in the classroom
- Daily instructions

#### 3.2.1.6 ***Listening and writing formats***

It is a combination of listening and writing skills. In this activity the teacher has to elaborate his own material by taking account the students' knowledge of vocabulary. This technique is mainly used to reinforce any kind of activity and also to prove what the students have learned in class. It is very important that students listen to and pay attention to what the teacher dictates, in order to avoid making mistakes.

Here we have some of the useful formats to practice this activity.



- a. *Dictation of Questions in the Target Language.* First, the teacher dictates questions and students write them. After that, students write the answers to those questions in the target language.
- b. *Partial, or Spot Dictations.* Students fill in gaps according to what they listen to.
- c. *Dictation of Sentences in Random Order All.* The teacher dictates sentences in disorder and then students have to put them in order. The sentences would be about a story or instructions in order to perform any kind of activity. For example, how to make a pie.
- d. *Dictation of Directions for Arriving at a Destination.* First of all, the teacher gives students a map. Then he/she gives some directions and students have to copy them and, finally, they follow the directions in the map.
- e. *Dictation of a Description.* The teacher dictates a description of many alternatives; students write the description and then they choose the correct picture of the given description.
- f. *Full dictation of a Passage.* The teacher dictates a complete passage while students perform the following activities:
  - Answer comprehension questions.
  - Circle specific items (adverbs, adjectives, simple past verbs, etc.)

### 3.2.1.7 **Question and Answer Exercise**





In this technique the teacher introduces the new language items by asking students questions and answering the students' ones. It becomes more meaningful if the answers are long. It creates an interactive class.

Where are you from?

What do you like to do?

What kind of music do you like to listen to?

What is your favorite movie?

Etc.

### **3.1.1.8 *Getting Students to Self-correct***

The teacher asks students to try not to make mistakes. If the students make mistakes, the teacher or their classmates are allowed to correct them immediately. To perform this activity, students must listen to attentively in order to understand what is right and what is wrong.

### **3.1.1.9 Conversation Practice**

The teacher asks students and encourages them to participate in the conversation, but they have to use the same grammatical structures in order to practice it. These way students will listen to and try to comprehend what his/her classmate is asking him/her to answer the respective question.

Grammatical structure: Present Perfect

A: Have you ever seen a horror film?

B: Yes, I love watching this kind of movie.

A: Have you ever seen Dracula?

B: Yes, I have seen this movie. It is wonderful.



Etc.

### **3.1.1.10 Fill-in-the-blank Exercise**

In this kind of exercise, students must place the correct word in the blank spaces. Students listen for specific information. This activity may be supported by a CD or the teacher may read, so students may listen to and write.

## **3.2 ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE BOOK “OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH”**

We make a question of how to help learners develop effective listening skills taking in account the techniques we use and the type of materials we introduce our learners to. The aim of all listening lessons should be to allow learners a better degree of independence when confronted with listening to the foreign language in a real world context, and that means using authentic texts.

Authentic texts are any spoken texts which have not been specially prepared for language learners, and they are often delivered via technologies like radio, television/video, and the Internet or CD-ROM.

Teachers are able to explore more creative ways of teaching listening in and out of the class using authentic materials.

We think that if teachers use some materials that call the attention of the students, they can learn more about the second language, “English,” while improving their listening about the words and also learning many more words.

For example, we expose some activities that can be useful for the teachers based on the book “OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH 3” of tenth level of Basic Education. We are going to use this book and increase listening material in order to improve listening comprehension in students. Our textbook study contains twelve units and each the unit contains 5 lessons. Some of the lessons don’t teach all the four skills, especially they lack the practice of the listening skill. We have chosen unit 11 which is structured in the following way:



### 3.2.1 OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH

#### UNIT 11

#### “THE SUPERNATURAL”



## LESSON 1: STRANGE BELIEVES

### TECHNIQUE: LISTENING AND WRITING FORMATS

-The teacher gives scrambled sentences of a short story about vampires. Then he/she reads the story while students put them in order to make up the story.

#### Story:

One day, a boy called Tom was walking in the street. It was late. He was near his house. Suddenly, he saw a dark shadow behind him. It was very big. He came back to see it. He was terrified because it was a big man. His teeth were very big like a lion's teeth. Then he opened his mouth, and Tom began to cry. He went home running. When he was at home, he told his experience to his mom, but she didn't believe him.

#### Scramble Sentences

- ❖ It was very big. He came back to see it.
- ❖ It was late. He was near his house.
- ❖ One day, a boy called Tom was walking in the street.
- ❖ He was terrified because it was a big man.
- ❖ His teeth were very big like a lion's teeth.
- ❖ Then he opened his mouth, and,
- ❖ Suddenly, he saw a dark shadow behind him.
- ❖ Tom began to cry. He went home running.
- ❖ When he was at home, he told his experience to his mom,

but she didn't believe him.

## LESSON 2: HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A GHOST?

### TECHNIQUE: CONVERSATION PRACTICE

- The teacher reads the text from the book and asks the students to listen to it.
- The second time the teacher reads the text, he/she asks the students look for the main idea, and the information which is more interesting for them.
- The text is the following:

### *Have you ever seen a Ghost?*



I have never seen a ghost, but I have seen an elf! It was when I was about eight years old. It was about 6pm and I had been playing outside. I suddenly felt hungry, so I went to ask my mum for something to eat in the kitchen. The house was dark, but one room in the corridor was illuminated. There was a small man leaving this room. He was wearing a big hat. I asked my mother, “Who's that man?” and she said, “There is no such a man! You have seen an elf!”

Virginia, Peru



*I have had a strange experience. It happened when I was in kindergarten. I was about six years old and a friend and I asked to go to the restroom, so we could go outside and play! There were some holes for construction in the playground, so we went to play there. Suddenly we heard a noise. We looked up and we saw an elf. He said, "Hello!" Then he disappeared. We were very excited about our experience. Marco, Ecuador*

I have never seen a ghost, but I have smelt one! It happened when I was 15 years old and a week after my grandfather had died. I was alone in my bedroom doing homework, when I suddenly had the feeling that somebody was in the room. I could also smell the soap which my grandfather used. I wasn't scared. I was quite happy. I went downstairs and said to my mum "I think Grandad came into my room!" My mum said, "Yes. He has been here in the kitchen too."

Carol, England

In the past, I didn't believe in the supernatural, but now I have seen a ghost. It was about ten years ago and I was sitting in my living room at home with my youngest son on my knee. Suddenly my uncle (who was very sick in the hospital) was standing in front of me. I felt very calm. He said, "I've come to say goodbye, Liz." Then he disappeared. A few minutes later the telephone rang. It was my mother calling to tell me that my uncle had died.

Liz, USA

4

- After that the teacher has finished they reading, he/she asks to four students to read a paragraph each one of them and asks them the main idea of each paragraph.

The conversation that may arise is the following:

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<sup>4</sup> Our world Through English, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, p88.



The first text:

T: What is this text about?

S: it's about a boy who saw an elf.

T: Have you ever seen an elf?

S: No, we haven't.

T: Would you like to see one?

S: Students' answers.

T: what is the most interesting that you found in this text?

S: Students' answers.

## PRESENT PERFECT

### **Technique: listening and writing format**

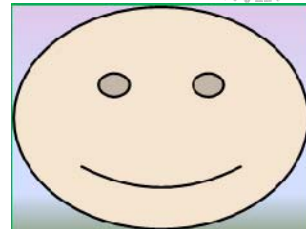
- The teacher gives students a short list of words.
- The teacher reads the list of words and students have to underline the word they hear.

- have	- met	- watch	- meet	- leave
- make	- left	- watched	- had	- made

This is the list that the teacher will read:

- ✓ Had
- ✓ Met
- ✓ Left
- ✓ Made
- ✓ Watched

Listen to with attention

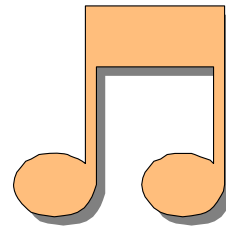


- After the teacher finishes reading the list of words, the students' final work would be like this:

- have	- <u>met</u>	- watch	- meet	- leave
- make	- <u>left</u>	- <u>watched</u>	- <u>had</u>	- <u>made</u>

**Technique: Fill in the blanks using the lyrics of a song**

- 
- The teacher gives students the lyrics of a song but there will be gaps where the students must fill in according to what they listen to (forms of the present perfect). Also, the teacher gives the following instructions to the students.



- “Now we are going to listen to the song. Only listen to it, OK?”
- When the students have finished listening to the song for the first time, the teacher asks them the following:
  - “Now we are going to listen to the song again but this time you have to fill in the blanks with the appropriate information.”

The students will have the material for practice shown below.





## WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

- Verse-1

(1) I've..... my dues, time after time;

(2) I've..... my sentence, but committed no crime

And bad mistakes,(3) I 've.....a few

(4) I've..... my share of sand kicked in my face,

But (5) I've..... through.

We are the champions, my friend

And we'll keep on fighting to the end.

We are the champions (x2)

No time for losers 'cos

We are the champions of the world.

### Verse-2

(6) I 've..... my bows and my curtain call

(7) You've..... me fame and everything that goes with it; I thank you  
all,

(8)But It's..... no bed of roses, no pleasure cruise.

I consider it a challenge before all

You might ever raise and I'd ever lose.

(Repeat Chorus x3)



- The teacher lets students listen to the song two or three times so they can get all the answers.
- When the students have filled in the blanks the teacher will ask every student in the class to read the sentences with their answers, while the rest of students have to listen if their classmate has made any mistake. If it were so, they will have to correct them.

Here we have a key chart with the missing verbs.

1. paid	5. come
2. done	6. taken
3. made	7. brought
4. had	8. been

### **LESSON THREE: FILMS**

#### **TECHNIQUE: IDENTIFYING PICTURES**

The teacher introduces a topic the students are going to work with in class.

The teacher puts four pictures on the blackboard and begins to describe them one by one while students have to identify which one is being described.



PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2



PICTURE 3



PICTURE 4

**Picture 1:**

**THE DESCRIPTION IS THE FOLLOWING:**

“It is a very famous film. Everybody likes it. There is a boy who has many extraordinary abilities: he can fly, cross through walls, and also he likes to have a lot of friends; however, many people don’t like him because he is not like them. He is very friendly, but his aunts are not. They enjoy frightening people and making fun of his nephew.”

**THE DIALOGUE MAY BE THE FOLLOWING:**

T: Have you ever seen this movie?

S: It is Gasper.

S: Yes, we have already seen this movie.

T: Ok, very good.

T: So what is the name of this movie?



## Picture 2

### DESCRIPTION:

“Many people love these kinds of films. They are very scary. People say that they are wonderful because there is a lot of fiction in them. However, some other people don't like them at all. They say they are really bad and too bloody. The characters that act in this type of movie live in a coffin. They don't like the sun light and enjoy feeding at night.”

### THE DIALOGUE MAY BE THE FOLLOWING:

T: Have you ever seen this movie?

S: Yes, we have already seen this movie.

T: So what is this movie about?

S: It is about vampires.

T: Ok, very good.



### Picture 3

#### DESCRIPTION

“It is a wonderful film. It has a lot of fiction. It is about a friend that comes from outside our world. He has many supernatural powers; for example, he is able to make his friends fly. He is very friendly. His best friend is a boy called Elliot. He returns to his house riding on a bike.”

#### DIALOGUE MAY BE THE FOLLOWING:

T: Have you ever seen this movie?

S: Yes, we have already seen this movie.

T: So what is the name of this movie?

S: It is E.T.

T: Excellent!



#### *THIS PICTURE IS LEFT OUT*





## **LESSON 4: UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS (UFOs)**

### **TECHNIQUE: LISTENING AND WRITING A FORMAT**

- The teacher describes an elf.
- Students listen to and draw it by following the description given by the teacher.

Elf's description.

“One day, I was in the beach when suddenly something like a plane arrived at it. Then a door opened and a rare man appeared. It was big. Its head was oval. It had three eyes, three noses, and two mouths. It had only one ear, and it had four hands, and five legs.”

## **LESON FIVE: ROLE PLAY**

### **TECHNIQUE: CONVERSATION PRACTICE**

Teacher makes groups of four students and asks them to perform a role play based on the topics of previous lessons (strange beliefs, have you ever seen a ghost?, films, and unidentified flying objects (UFOs).)

Students can choose one of them and perform it.



## CONCLUSIONS

It is very important that students have a direct contact with the target language; they have to add their own life experiences of what they learn everyday at school; this way, if a student is involved in these three strategies, it will be easier for him to learn. It is very important for a better development of listening comprehension in teenagers, since students must try to understand almost every word that is said by someone else. Some of the techniques based on the Direct Method will be very useful to improve listening comprehension in students. As we know, the teaching learning process needs the four skills to be successful. And one of these skills is listening. For a student it is very important to understand everything the teacher is speaking, or at least most of it, whether it is an order, question or whatever classroom instruction, or if his/her classmate is asking him/her a question, or if he/she has made a mistake. The idea is to make corrections.

Listening is a communication process and, to be successful, it has to be an active process. In other words, you must be an *active participant* in this communication process. In active listening, meaning and evaluation of a message must take place before a listener can respond to a speaker. Therefore, the listener is actively working while the speaker is talking.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

We had some problems in the elaboration of our tesina, like for example, the application of our material for improving listening comprehension. It was a little difficult because there were a lot of students in a class(33 students).

Another problem we faced occurred when we dealt with students who weren't motivated to learn English. Some of them even didn't like it. However, we tried to work with them by applying the material we are proposing for being used; students felt a little more confident and encouraged themselves to work with us.

That's way we want to recommend teachers to use extra listening materials to improve students' listening comprehension, considering that it will also avoid and distraction and lack of motivation, and will help fulfill both students and teacher want to reach.

We can recommend students to follow these tips which will help them become better listeners:

1. *Don't talk. Listen.* Studies show that job applicants are more likely to make a favorable impression and get a job offer when they let the interviewer do most of the talking. This demonstrates that people appreciate a good listener more than they do a good talker. People want a chance to get their own ideas and opinions across. A good listener lets them do it. If you interrupt the speaker or put limitations on your listening time, the speaker will get the impression that you're not interested in what he is saying -- even if you are. So



be courteous and give the speaker your full attention. This technique can help you win friends, supporters, and sales.

2. *Don't jump to conclusions.* Many people tune out a speaker when they think they have the idea of his conversation or know what he's trying to say next. Assumptions can be dangerous. Maybe the speaker is not following the same train of thought that you are, or is not planning to make the point you think he is. If you don't listen, you may miss the real point the speaker is trying to get across.

3. *Listen "between the lines."* Concentrate on what is not being said as well as what is being said. Remember, a lot of clues to meaning come from the speaker's tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures. People don't always say what they mean, but their body language is usually an accurate indication of their attitude and emotional state.

4. *Ask questions.* If you are not sure of what the speaker is saying, ask: "It's perfectly acceptable to say, 'Do you mean . . . ?' 'Did I understand you to say . . . ?' It's also a good idea to repeat what the speaker has said in your own words to confirm that you have understood him correctly.

5. *Do not be preoccupied by the environment, by the speaker's appearance, accent, mannerisms, and word use.* It's sometimes difficult to forget a strong accent, a contract, sexist language, a fly busy around the speaker's head, and similar distractions. But paying too much attention to these distributions can break your concentration and make you miss the point of the conversation.



- If outside commotion is a problem, try to position yourself away from it. Make eye contact with the speaker, and force yourself to focus on the message, not the environment.
- Keep an open mind. Don't just listen for statements that back up your own opinions and support your beliefs, or for certain parts that interest you. The point of listening, after all, is to gain new information.
- Be prepared to listen to someone else's point of view and ideas. A subject that may seem boring or trivial at first can turn out to be fascinating, if you listen with an open mind.
- Take advantage of your brain power. On the average, you can think four times faster than the listener can talk. So, when listening, use this extra brainpower to evaluate what has been said and summarize the central ideas in your own mind.

6. *Provide feedback.* Make eye contact with the speaker. Show him you understand his speech by moving your head, while maintaining a straight posture, and, if appropriate, interjecting an occasional comment, such as "I see" or "That's interesting" or "Really." The speaker will appreciate your interest and feel that you are really listening. Motivation is an essential key to becoming a good listener.



## ANNEXES

### THE FULL LYRICS OF THE SONG: “WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS”

#### Verse-1

I've paid my dues, time after time;  
I've done my sentence, but committed no crime  
And bad mistakes, I've made a few.  
I've had my share of sand kicked in my face,  
But I've come through

#### CHORUS

We are the champions, my friend  
And we'll keep on fighting to the end.  
We are the champions (x2)  
No time for losers 'cos  
We are the champions of the world.

#### Verse-2

I've taken my bows and my curtain call  
You've brought me fame and everything that goes with it; I thank you all,

But it's been no bed of roses, no pleasure cruise.

I consider it a challenge

Before the whole human race -

And I ain't gonna lose.

(Repeat Chorus x3)

### PICTURES OF THE CLASS APPLIED

“San Joaquin” High school 10<sup>th</sup> “A”









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