**FEATURES OF TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS TO PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LESSONS**

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Abstract

This article focuses on the features of teaching listening skills to primary school students in English lessons. It explores key strategies and methods for effectively developing listening comprehension in young learners. Special attention is given to the importance of using age-appropriate materials, such as songs, stories, and games, and the necessity for teachers to speak clearly and slowly. The article emphasizes the role of visual aids and contextual clues in helping students better understand and process spoken language. Various interactive and engaging listening activities are described, which encourage active student participation in the learning process. In conclusion, the article highlights the significance of creating a positive classroom environment where mistakes are seen as a natural part of learning, fostering students' confidence and motivation. The author also offers recommendations for gradually increasing task difficulty and introducing active listening strategies, which will help students not only improve their listening skills but also gain confidence in using English in real-life contexts.

Teaching listening skills to young learners is a crucial component of language acquisition. In the context of teaching English to primary school students, listening is often one of the first skills that students develop, laying the foundation for other language skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. However, teaching listening at this level presents unique challenges and requires a tailored approach to engage young learners effectively. This article explores the key features and strategies for teaching listening skills to primary school students in English lessons.

**1. Age-appropriate Content and Materials**

One of the first considerations in teaching listening to primary school students is the age-appropriateness of the content. Young learners have shorter attention spans and require materials that are engaging and relatable to their everyday experiences. Teachers can use songs, stories, simple dialogues, and interactive games that feature familiar topics. For example, listening to a song about animals or a short story about a school day allows students to connect new vocabulary and structures to their own world, making the learning process enjoyable and relevant.

**2. Clear and Slow Pronunciation**

Primary school students are still in the early stages of language development, so it is essential for teachers to model clear and slow pronunciation. Teachers should speak at a controlled pace, enunciating each word carefully, to help students understand the spoken language more easily. It is also helpful to repeat key phrases or sentences several times and to use gestures or visual aids to reinforce meaning. Slow, clear pronunciation allows students to distinguish sounds, recognize words, and gradually build confidence in their listening skills.

**3. Listening for Specific Information**

At the primary school level, listening exercises should encourage students to focus on specific information rather than understanding everything they hear. Teachers can design activities where students listen for key details, such as identifying numbers, colors, or names. For example, after listening to a short dialogue between two characters, students could answer questions like, "What color is the cat?" or "Where are the children going?" These types of tasks help students develop the ability to filter important information from a larger stream of speech.

**4. Use of Visual Aids and Contextual Clues**

Visual aids such as pictures, flashcards, or storyboards are invaluable when teaching listening to young learners. These tools provide contextual clues that help students understand and interpret what they are hearing. For instance, a teacher might show a picture of a park and play a recording of a conversation about a picnic, allowing students to make connections between the audio and the visual context. This support helps young learners process new information more effectively and enhances their comprehension.

**5. Interactive and Engaging Listening Activities**

To maintain students' interest and motivate them to listen attentively, teachers should incorporate interactive and fun activities. These can include games like "Simon Says," where students listen for instructions and act accordingly, or "Listening Bingo," where they mark off pictures or words on a bingo card based on what they hear. Such activities create a dynamic and engaging environment where students practice listening while having fun, which helps reinforce their learning.

**6. Gradual Increase in Difficulty**

Listening tasks should be progressive, with increasing complexity as students’ skills improve. Initially, students can listen to simple words or sentences, then gradually move on to more complex dialogues or short stories. Teachers should also incorporate repetition and recycling of vocabulary to reinforce students' understanding and retention. By starting with basic listening tasks and slowly increasing the level of difficulty, teachers help build students' confidence and competence in listening.

**7. Encouraging Active Listening and Participation**

Active listening is a key component of language learning, and it is essential to encourage young students to be active participants in the listening process. Teachers should ask students to listen attentively and respond to questions or prompts, even if they do not fully understand every word. This helps students become more comfortable with the language and encourages them to practice their listening skills in real-life contexts. Activities that promote interaction, such as pair work or group discussions, provide opportunities for students to practice listening and speaking in a supportive environment.

**8. Developing Listening Comprehension Strategies**

While young learners are still developing their basic listening skills, it is important to begin introducing them to strategies that can help them understand spoken language more effectively. These might include listening for the main idea, predicting what will happen next in a story, or using context to infer the meaning of unknown words. Teachers can model these strategies during lessons and guide students through exercises that require them to apply these skills.

**9. Fostering a Positive Listening Environment**

Finally, it is crucial to create a positive and supportive listening environment. Young learners are still developing confidence in their language skills, and they may feel embarrassed if they do not understand everything they hear. Teachers should foster a classroom atmosphere where making mistakes is seen as a natural part of the learning process. Providing praise and encouragement when students make an effort to listen, even if they do not understand everything, can help build their confidence and motivation.

Teaching listening skills to primary school students in English lessons requires thoughtful planning and creative approaches. By using age-appropriate materials, clear pronunciation, interactive activities, and visual aids, teachers can engage young learners and help them develop essential listening skills. As students become more confident in their listening abilities, they will be better equipped to understand spoken English and participate more fully in communication. Ultimately, teaching listening at the primary school level lays a strong foundation for future language learning and enables students to develop a deeper connection with the English language.

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