

Language and its four basic skills with the description of various types, levels, and breakdowns OD student's listening skills

Prakash S. Chauhan

Saurashtra University Department of English Literature and Comparative
Literature and Studies (c.l.s.) Rajkot, Gujarat

India.

Abstract: Listening skill is a very important skill and fundamental to the development of all other skills since, language itself is basically sound. Language learning is developing language skills in the target language. The four fundamental skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. (***L.S.R.W***) out of the four there are two primary skills namely, listening is one of them; it is the most neglected skill in our classroom. It is neglected not because we do not recognize the improvement of listening but because we take it for granted that learners automatically acquire the skill to develop linguistic competence in the language. Further more in this world of information and technology is concerned we have plenty of opportunities to listen to through Radio, T.V (idiot box), speeches in platform and in other places including class rooms. Hence, developing of this skill is concerned learner should be more focused.

What is Language?

Before we start going to discuss on listening skills it is very necessary to give simple as well as sober concept about *language*. The defecto and dejure definition of language is that....

“Human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communication.”

After all getting sense of language; there are trillions of languages in our homosapiens planet earth and all human languages are different kinds of languages all these different language change when people of country, State, and City change and when place change; that’s why in Gujarati we heard that.....

“GAMME GAMME BOLI BADLAAY”

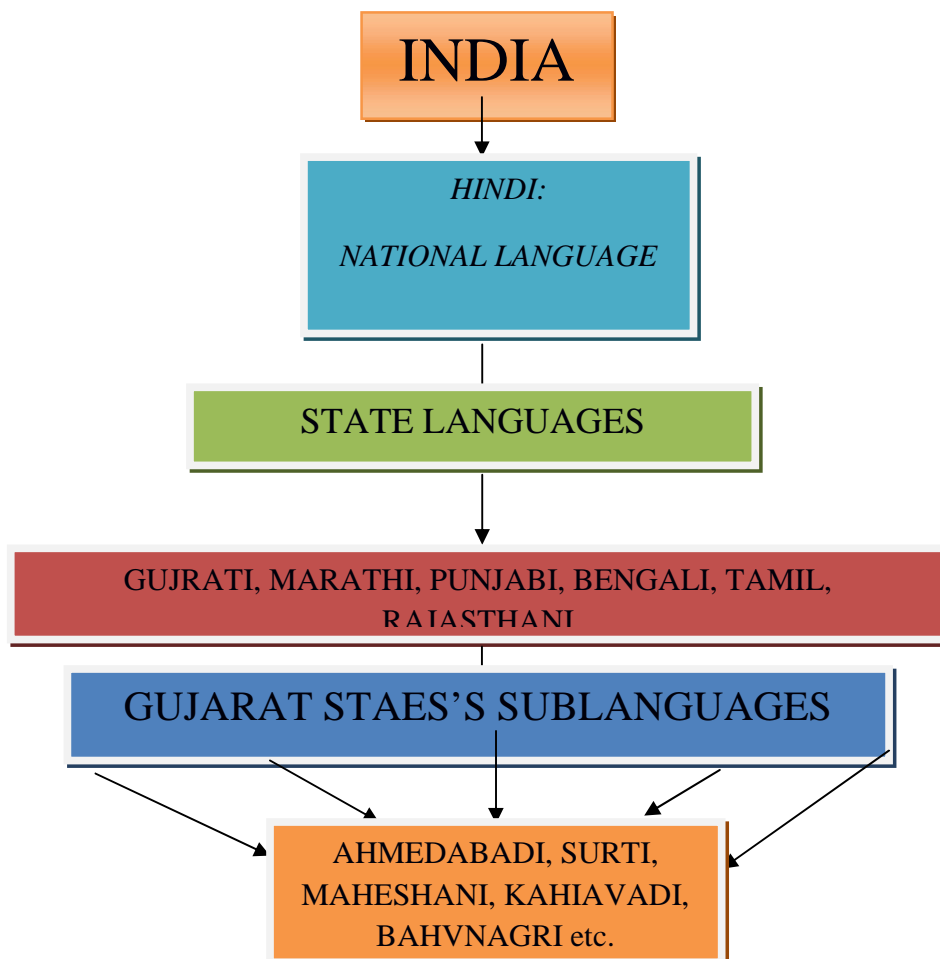
Translation (In Indian Village Languages change)

According to my concern.....

“It is like Tain’s formula which is only focused on time place and moment”

it is truly understandable because language is like a flexible like bubble gum. When we have to use it we can use it everywhere and we can also flex it. Every country and people speaks different languages and different sublanguage.

For example:



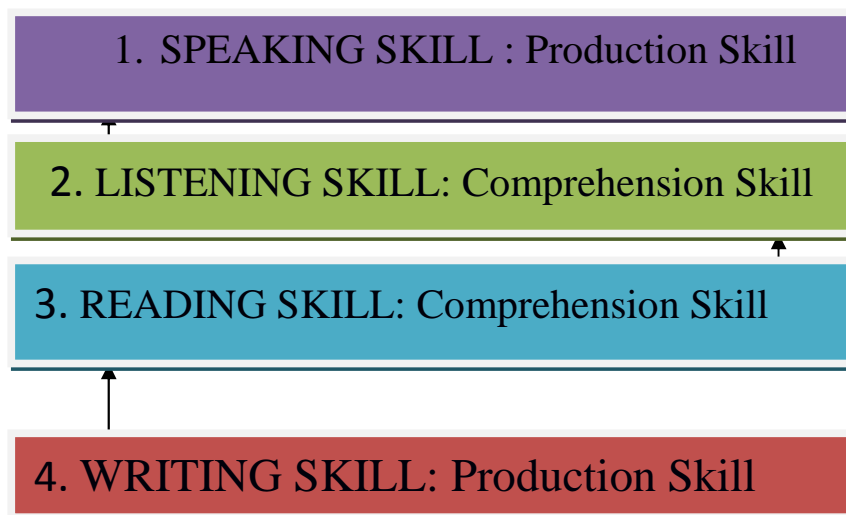
So, Language plays very vital as well as pivotal pivot role to make communication to sharing musings. Basically in the world Indian people are known as multilingual because entire nation is treasure of languages as well as religion only.

For example: - When Indian baby born he/she got *mother language or native language* and *national language* as well as *regional language* also and when he she try to learn other language that language know as *target language or second language*. Here, I want to one my personal example that my friend asked me that *what is our father language* ? I replied her *target language* may be our “*father language*”.

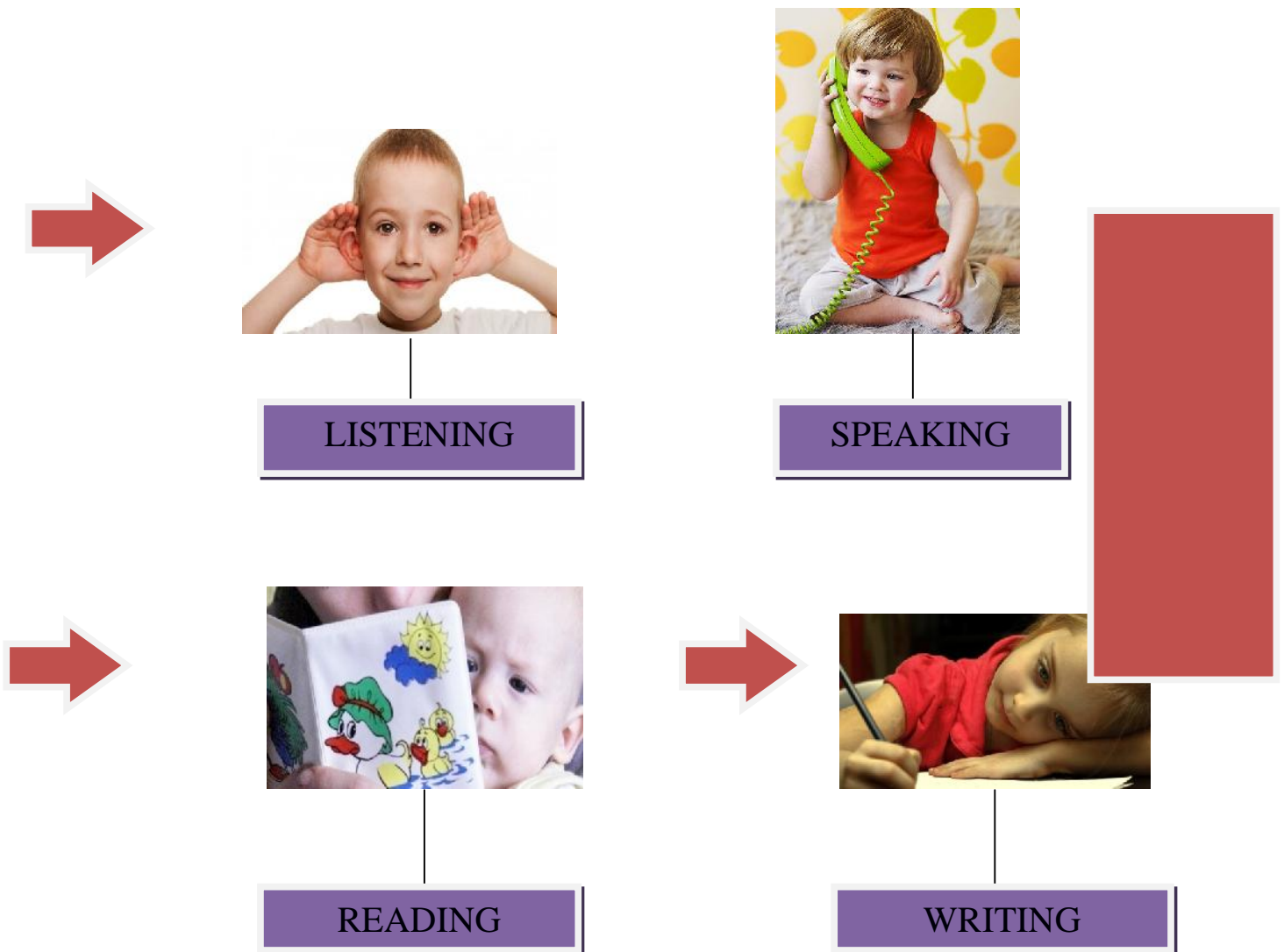
So, at last we come to know that language plays very important role because look, we recently, talked about language and *if, there is not existence of listener and his/her listening skill how we made this much kind of conversation?* So, Basic four skills are very important in perfect, understandable communication.

Basic Skills of Language:

In English Language Teaching (E.L.T) is concerned there are basic four skills which play very significant role in English as well as in communication in English language. When we have all these skills we can make possible as well as correct and understandable communications and all these skills are come step by step.



Let's we understand above Four Basic Skills with the help of Following clockwise faces Images.....



These four skills of language are interlinked with each other in two ways namely the *direction of communication* and *other method of communication*. (**Spoken or Written**). In language skills “Input” is something calls *reception* and “Output” called as *Production*. *Spoken* known as *Oral*. These four language skills are called sometimes “*Micro-Skills*” in *Micro-Skills* that are *Grammar, pronunciation; spellings, vocabulary etc.* are included.

This above four skills of the language are used mainly and large segmently, in the language classroom.

Listening Skills:

“*Listening is very important skills and fundamental to the development of all other skills, since language exist. Language itself is basically ‘sound’. Language Learning is developing language skills in the target language. Above we seen four skills out of two are primary skills and other remaining two are secondary skills.*”

What is listening? :

Listening is an active process of communication. It can be depicted as follows.

<http://jrsdjournal.wixsite.com/humanities-cultural>

(*Input.....Processing.....Output*)

By input we mean the word spoken by the speaker. Output means the listener's response. The listener processed the input before coming out with output. The input could be processing in the following ways.....

1. Bottom up processing - In the bottom up processing, the listener depends solely on the incoming input for the meaning of message.
2. Top down processing – In the top down processing, listener rely on their background knowledge for understanding the message. So, input is not the only source of meaning.

However, good listeners know when to use which type of processing and when to use both type of processing. Usually the choice depends on the listener's purpose of listening, their familiarity with the topic and their background knowledge.

Types of Listening:

According to *Adrian Doff (1998:199)* talked about the following two types of listening.

- I. Active Listening
- II. Empathic Listening
- III. Critical Listening
- IV. Casual Listening
- V. V. Focused Listening

Active Listening: - Active Listening is a communication technique that needs the listener to feed back what he hears to the speaker by re-stating or paraphrasing what he has heard in his own words to confirm what he has heard to confirm the understanding of both parties. Active listening comprises interpreting body language or focusing on something other than words. The Active Listening are two types which are as follows...

1. Listening with Comprehension
2. Listening with a Purpose

Empathic Listening: - Empathic listening is also called active or reflective listening. It is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding and trust. It is essential skill for third parties and disputants enables the listener to receive and accurately response. The response is an integral part of the listening process and can be critical to the success of a negotiation/meditation

Critical Listening: - The Ability to listen critically is essential in a democracy. There is practically no place you can go where critical listening is unimportant whether on the job, in the community, at service clubs, in the place of worship or in the family. Politicians, the media, salesman, advocates of policies and procedures and our own financial, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual do require us to place a premium on critical listening and the thinking that accompanies it.

Casual Listening: - Many times we listen to someone or something without any particular purpose. At such times, we often do not listen to them with much concentration, unless we hear something which interests us. This type of listening is often found in social context when we interact with others.

Focused Listening: - It is '*Intensive Listening*' for information or for transacting business. The listener is attentive and concentrates on what the speaker is saying.

Listener as Critic: - True criticism is evaluation which shows the speaker's is faithful image and to compare it with the ideal he might attain.

What are the precautions while listening to the verbal messages:

- 1) Avoid making fast assumptions.
- 2) Paying special attention to the intended meanings when the speaker use words describing strong feelings.
- 3) Be alert to the ways by language manipulation.
- 4) Hear with the speaker's ear interact of your.
- 5) Be alert to the impact of non-verbal messages.

How our behavior and gesture, posture is while Listening:

- Relaxing looks – relax physically.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Get the central idea.
- Take notes only on main points.
- Learn to see abbreviated forms you note.
- The listener should focus upon what is being said and not upon how it is said.

What are the levels of listening skill:

There are different types of listening that are typically presented as levels of listening

1. Passive/not listening
2. Pretend listening
3. Biased project listening
4. Misunderstood listening
5. Attentive listening
6. Active listening
7. Empathic listening
8. 8. Facilitative Listening

What are the barriers and breakdowns in listening Skill?

Physically barriers to efficient listening are disappearing but the psychological barriers still remain. We catch words. We take the sentence literary. We do not want to strain out minds to listen to what is not being said. Meanings are not in the language. Meaning are caring in itself and it are in the people. People need recognition, attention, caring and mutual trust.

Barriers and breakdowns in listening skill:

1. People need psychological space as well as quantitative and qualitative.
2. Short circuits in communication 3. Tendency to judge and evaluate.
4. Develop a sensitive ability to observer carefully.

What are bad listening habits:

- A. Calling the subject uninteresting.
- B. Criticizing the speaker's delivery.
- C. Getting over-stimulated by some point in the speech.
- D. Listening only for facts.
- E. Faking attention to the speaker.

- F. Trying to outline everything.
- G. Tolerating or creating distractions.
- H. Letting emotion- laden words throw us out of tune with the speaker.

Some specific suggestions for listening improvement:

- I. Be mentally and physically prepared to listen in the class
- II. Behave as your think good listeners should behave
- III. Concentrating all of your physical as well as mental energy on listening
- IV. Avoid interruption while speaker speaking in the class
- V. Be flexible in your views
- VI. Practice listening to difficult expository materials
- VII. Develop habits to good listening as well as difficult listening

What are Listening Materials:

There are three main kinds of listening materials that you can use for the listening lessons and during teaching students in the class.

1. Authentic listening materials
2. Recorded listening materials
3. Live listening materials

LISTENING MATERIALS	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
A. AUTHENTIC LISTENING MATERAILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real life listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be graded
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge for advanced learners • It is not artificial English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too difficult for certain level perhaps in middle school • Speech can be too rambling
B. RECORDED LISTENING MATERAILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner can stop reply, it many times • Learner can use it independently • More than one voice, accent • Learner concentrate on listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech can be too rambling • Technical problems occur • Quality of cassette recorder

C. LIVE LISTENING MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher can grade according to learner's level • Teacher can slow down or accelerate pace • It is closer to real life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be repeated
-----------------------------	---	--

Listening Task:

The listening tasks can be of two kinds- ***Extensive and Intensive.*** Let us examine these two kinds of tasks one by one.

1. Extensive listening:

During extensive listening the listener listens to an interesting story, radio program or anecdote, the listening material may be lengthy. The learner listens or for pleasure and is not expected to complete a worksheet or a task. Extensive listening may take place inside or outside the school.

2. Intensive listening:

During intensive listening listener listen very carefully. For example: - While, listening to directions the listener listens with full concentration. Such listening material is short and has a special task or worksheet designed on it. The intensive listening practice takes place in class and should be so designed that it is practical, easy to administer, and can be completed within the time limit of a lesson.

Use of ICT:

- A. The materials for the development of listening skill May be of three types.
- B. Audio materials given in audio cassettes or audio CDs Video clipping with audio
- C. Multimedia materials where text, voice, video/graphics, animation and Interactivities are available

Conclusion:

This research paper tried to give information regarding the importance of language and what are the main hurdles and breakdowns in listening skills and also give information about how this skill can be fruitfully developed. Furthermore, it has also suggested some activities to students how to tackle down problems which are difficult for them; during listening in the class and any other public place.

Bibliography:

1. Sasikumar, V.et al (2005): Listening and Speaking Level 1 and 2. Chennai: Foundation books.
2. Dutt, Kiranmani, Rajeevan, Geetha and CLN publication (2008). A Course in Communication Skills, New Delhi: Foundation Books.
3. Dutt M D Gayathri Devi (2001) Listening Materials in English for Secondary Schools. Bangalore: Regional Institute Of English, South India.
4. Halliday, M.A.K Strevence, P.D and McIntosh, A. The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching, Longman, 1964.
5. O'Donnel, W.R, applied Linguistics and the Teaching of English Longman.
6. Lado, R, Language Testing: The Construction and Use of Foreign Language Tests Longman, 1957.