

UNIT II: EXPRESSING CASUAL RELATIONS IN SPEAKING AND WRITING

2.1 LISTENING: LISTENING TO LONGER TECHNICAL TALKS AND COMPLETING GAP FILLING EXERCISES

LISTENING TO LONGER TECHNICAL TALKS

- ▶ Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process.
- ▶ Listening is key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.

“The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.” ____

____Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen

10 Tips to be a good listener

- ▶ Try to be still as you are **listening**.
- ▶ Try to ignore distractions.
- ▶ Make eye contact with the speaker.
- ▶ Try to pinpoint the point of view of the speaker.
- ▶ Try not to daydream. ... Refocus when you catch yourself thinking about something else.
- ▶ Try not to think about what you are going to say next when another person is talking. Concentrate on the speaker.
- ▶ Observe body language (including your own).
- ▶ Learn how to paraphrase what you have heard.
- ▶ Learn how to ask for clarification if you don't understand. Don't pretend to understand.

- ▶ Avoid interrupting (unless you are practicing how to interrupt politely). Take notes if it is not distracting to the speaker.

Listening strategies

Here are some strategies for improving your listening skills:

- ▶ Practice listening for the gist or main purpose.
- ▶ Reduce listening barriers.
- ▶ Listen for specific details such as problems.
- ▶ Listen for speaker bias.
- ▶ Make assumptions and predictions.
- ▶ Listen to many different accents.
- ▶ Listen with noise in the background. Learn to “tune out” other sounds.
- ▶ If you ask a question, listen for the answer.
- ▶ Practice summarizing and paraphrasing.
- ▶ Ask questions you think you know the answer to.
- ▶ Recognize pauses and false starts.
- ▶ Create your own questions.
- ▶ Find English music that you enjoy listening to.

Listening barriers

- ▶ The speaker spoke too quickly.
- ▶ The speaker used informal language and idioms.
- ▶ The vocabulary level is too high.

- ▶ You assumed incorrectly that you knew what they were going to say.
- ▶ The speaker has an unfamiliar accent.
- ▶ The recording is not clear.
- ▶ The recording is not loud enough.
- ▶ You are not interested in the topic.
- ▶ You don't have any background knowledge.
- ▶ You had a strong emotional reaction to a word or point that you heard.
- ▶ You did not give the speaker (or recording) your undivided attention.
- ▶ Something is distracting you.
- ▶ You are tired.
- ▶ You are hungry.
- ▶ You are nervous.

Activity

▶ Plastic Panic

In the most places around the globe plastic bags are a big environmental worry. Many animals not just pets, but also small animals like squirrels, rats, birds, and stray animals foraging for food in our neighbourhood end up eating lightweight _____. Apart from causing terrible pain due to internal blocks, plastic has compounds, which can damage the _____ organs and also retard their ability to resist disease. In the food chain, these compounds are also passed on the predators.

Grazing cattle eat plastic wastes like lightweight plastic cups. Sometimes stray dogs put their heads into the small plastic bags with leftover food in the garbage and their heads get stuck in them, leading to _____. Plastic ropes and threads used for tying

parcels are also extremely dangerous _ they can cause entanglement, especially among birds.

When lightweight plastic ends up in our waterways, marine life, which includes fish, sea animals and water birds, feed in the rivers and seas and ends up as victims. A fine transparent plastic bags filled with water and debris looks a lot like a _____, the favourite food of sea turtles. The _____ association to save sea turtles (MEDASET) speaks of one sea turtle, which had ingested _____ such bags.

Having realized the seriousness of the issue, the Irish Government decided to do something about it. They imposed tax on using plastic bags. The practice has caught on in villages, towns and cities throughout Ireland. In just 17 months, there has been a stunning drop in the use of the _____ that choked the country's narrow lanes, quiet rivers and winding highways. The Irish Environment Department says that shoppers used around 1.2 billion plastic bags per year before the tax was imposed in _____. Since then, the use has dropped by around 95 percent. What the Government collects through the sale of bags goes for recycling programs. Plastic bags now form only 0.3 percent of the total garbage collected. It was five percent before the tax. It took _____ years of campaigning to persuade the Irish Government to impose the levy.

COMPLETING – GAP FILLING EXERCISES

A gap-fill is a practice exercise in which learners have to replace words missing from a text. Gap-fillers are often used to practice specific language points, for example items of grammar and vocabulary, features of written texts such as conjunctions. They are common in testing. The words to be filled in can be tenses, articles, prepositions.

Sample

Complete the following passage by writing one suitable word in each blank. Write the answers in the blanks provided.

The old man remained dreaming (a) the sun. His kite-shop (b) gone, the premises (c) been sold (d) years ago to (e) junk dealer. But the still (f). kites for (g). own assessment and (h) playthings for his grandson, Ali. Not (i) people bought kites (j) days.

Answers: a) in, b) had, c) having, d) many, e) a, f) made, g) his, h) as, i) many, j) these.

Exercise

1. Complete the following passage by choosing the appropriate options from the ones given below.

(a)----- man who works hard can never fail. Those who shirk work (b) ----- never succeed in life. Therefore, all of us (c)----- realize the importance of hard work in life.

a) i) some ii) A ii) The iv) An

b) i) could ii) can ii) may iv) would

c) i) should ii) would ii) need iv) used to

2. (a)----- one of you could help me easily but then (b) ----- one came to my help. I was (c) ----- and you own way.

a) i) many ii) some iii) any iv) most

b) i) some ii) no iii) any iv) the

c) i) cry ii) cried iii) crying iv) cries

3. On behalf of model house welfare association. I want to (a)----- (drew, draw, drawn) your kind attention to a serious (b)----- (problem/problems/ issue) faced by the residents (c) ----- (in, of, into) our locality, the locality here too many (d)----- (bad, stray, good) dogs, some of (e)----- (who, which, whose) are perhaps infected (f)----- (of, off, with) rabies.

4. Dear Sister

Let me describe to you a picnic party which we had last Sunday. We were (a) ----- party of six friends. We packed eatables (b) ----- some other items, took our bikes and drove (c)----- the lake, we selected a green spot (d) ----- a tree (e) ----- placed all our goods there. We spread a white sheet and sat (f) ----- a semicircle.

5. The Baisakhi fair is (a) ----- most popular fair in Punjab. It marks the beginning (b) ----- the harvest season. It falls (c) ----- the thirteenth of April. Farmers begin their harvest (d)-----praying to their gods.

6. We turned to look (a)----- the directions pointed out, (b) -----there was a

penguin (c)----- slowly along the shore with (d)----- egg under (e)----- tail.
There were several others we (f) -----doing the same thing.

a) i) at ii) in iii) on iv) into

b) i) but ii) and iii) so iv) or

c) i) walk ii) walks iii) walking iv) walked

d) i) an ii) a iii) the iv) some

e) i) his ii) its iii) her iv) there

f) i) observing ii) observes iii) observe iv) observed

7. The great national sports talent search consists (a)----- workshops and tournaments arranged in different parts of the country. The aim (b)----- to look out (c)----- local talent in (d)----- age range of eight to fifteen years.

8. Jean could not get (a)----- job as nobody would trust him. Consequently, his life became (b)-----hell. A Bishop was moved (c)----- seeing this pitiable condition. The Bishop let him into house (d)-----asked him the reason of being so dejected.

9. Few of us have lost our property (a) -----our travels. (b)-----forgetfulness. The ordinary man arrives (c)-----his destination with all his bags and trunks safe.

a) i) during ii) after ii) with iv) before

b) i) because ii) due to i) of iv) with

c) i) on ii) before i) at iv) after