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Stanislava KOSINOVÁ 1995















Abstract

Kosvelli, Stanislava. Listening Materials for Future Shop Managers. In: Service III. Janice Moore, MSc, PHDr. Marcela Malá. June 15, 1995.

Cílem této práce je ověřit možnou cestu rozvoje této dovednosti, jak ústně, tak i textu, která je nezbytná pro budoucí obchodování. Tyto texty pocházejí z Cambridge English Course-One.

Abstract: Not enough attention was devoted to the development of teaching listening comprehension although understanding English-speaking people is a skill which our students need.

The aim of this paper is to illustrate a possible way of developing this skill by using texts from the Cambridge English Course-One.

## Listening Materials for Future Shop Managers

## Poslechové materiály pro budoucí vedoucí obchodů

Stanislava Kosinová

In - Service III

Janice Moore, MSc  
PHDr. Marcela Malá

June 15, 1995







## Anotace

Rozvoji poslechu s porozuměním nebyla věnována dostatečná pozornost, ačkoliv porozumění anglicky mluvícím lidem je dovednost, kterou budoucí vedoucí obchodů, vzhledem ke svému zaměření, velmi potřebují.

Cílem této práce je ověřit možnou cestu rozvoje této dovednosti stupňováním náročnosti, jak úkolů tak i textů, které jsou blízké oblasti obchodování. Tyto texty rozšiřují obsah učebnice The Cambridge English Course-One.

### Abstract

In past years not enough attention was devoted to the development of teaching listening comprehension although understanding English-speaking people is a skill which our students--future shop managers--owing to their jobs, need most.

The aim of this paper is to illustrate a possible way of developing this skill by graded tasks as well as graded texts from the shop-management area. These materials extend the content of the textbook The Cambridge English Course-One.

## II. Lesson plans using graded listening materials

A. A telephone message

B. Spelling

C. Flat agency

D. Flat owner

E. The answering machine

## III. Summary of experiences and suggestions for future

A. A good input is a good output

B. Questions while listening

C. Graded tasks







## Thesis:

Comprehension and listening skills of our students-future shop managers-can be effectively developed if we use graded listening materials chosen from the shop-management area.

## Outline

### I. Listening - an important skill in real-life situation

A. Four skills of learning language

B. A study among students

C. Listening - the hardest skill?

D. Suggestions for an improvement

E. Principles of listening lesson

F. A principle of grading

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## I. LISTENING - AN IMPORTANT SKILL IN REAL - LIFE SITUATIONS

After the Velvet Revolution in our country we can observe situations such as the following ones: an English customer asks a young pretty shop assistant at a supermarket: "Excuse me, please, where is footwear?" "Oh, yes," the shop assistant says, "food is available on the ground floor ... " or an Italian customer, speaking poor English, is asking a shop assistant at a sportswear department: "Please, I am look for ..." "Co ?" (What?) a young shop assistant quickly reacts, turns red and escapes from an Italian customer ...

Learning a foreign language can change these pictures. Our students and pupils learn mainly the English, German, French and Russian languages. Learning a foreign language covers four main skills: receptive skills are listening and reading, and productive ones are speaking and writing. There is interdependence among these skills. We cannot say which one is more important than the others. Our teachers try to develop all four skills in our students.

Before the Velvet Revolution, teaching languages was based especially on writing and reading, while speaking and listening were a bit neglected. The main reasons were, no contacts with native speakers and no possibility to go to Western countries. So, speaking and listening skills seem to be difficult for our students.







I have done a study among the students of the third and fourth forms of secondary school. They were given a set of questions: Which of the four skills seems the hardest to you?

we want our students to be able to do, what they need to practice:

- reading (texts, books, newspaper)

- writing (letters, tests, essays)

- speaking (conversation, topics)

- listening (to native speakers)

Why is this skill the most difficult for you?

Give some suggestions for an improvement.

Forty-five students responded to these questions. The majority of them regarded listening as the most difficult for them, while the rest of students consider speaking and writing to be most demanding.

Why is listening to native speakers hard for our students? They listed several reasons: fast speed of speaking, less possibility of contacts with native speakers. Rixon (1991) states another reason: "Many students are worried by the fact that they do not catch enough words to be confident about overall meaning." (Rixon, 1991: 37)

What did the students suggest for an improvement?

Some students feel they need the help of a native teacher or a stay in an English-speaking country. More than thirty students would like to change conditions while listening in class: better audio-equipment, specially equipped classroom and frequent listening during lessons.







So, there is a question what really helps the students to improve their listening skills. First, we have to clarify ideas: what sort of listening activities occur in real life; what we want our students to be able to do, what they need to practise and, how listening should be practised.

Our students-future shop managers-will need English for their job. They will come across these situations:

- make arrangements over the telephone
- meet English-speaking business partners
- travel around the world
- listen to the news (on the radio, TV)
- hear announcements over the loudspeaker (at railway stations, airports)
- give or receive advice
- attend social gatherings
- discuss work/current problems
- be interviewed/to interview others.

In real-life situations that are usually short and communicative they need to understand and immediately react. Future shop managers should especially practise communication to learn vocabulary, phrases and skills from the shop management area as well as they should develop listening to real-life conversations, even though they are only given over a cassette-recorder.

The way to improve these skills provides the subject of this paper and will be illustrated by specific lesson plans in







the second part of the paper. A. Anderson and T. Lynch (1989) state: "Effective listeners actively engage in the process of comprehension: they apply the relevant internal information available to them in order to construct their own interpretation of what has been said. They do not passively receive and record."

(A. Anderson and T. Lynch, 1989:6)

This process happens in a listening lesson that is prepared according to certain principles. It is obvious that any programme intended to teach must involve the principled selection and ordering of materials or activities. Every listening lesson has three phases; none of them can be omitted if we are to achieve good effects.

1. Pre-listening phase. This may be an important phase in building successful listening comprehension. This phase activates expectations, purpose, motivation and background knowledge. Students practise similar conversations with vocabulary and phrases that they are expected to hear. They use and extend their background knowledge. A teacher gives the students some information about the content, situation and speakers. Students get the tasks that they deal with while listening. This phase is based on communication.

2. While-listening phase. Students listen to recorded materials spoken especially by native speakers. They immediately do their work based on comprehension exercises;







they make required responses to the text while listening, not after listening (ticking items, drawing, crossing, filling in gaps, columns). Listeners learn to ignore unimportant items, to listen selectively, to understand the main message. Although these lessons are to prepare students for real-life situations, we use taped recordings that can show native accents, different voices, moods, background effects rather than speaking by a teacher or students.

3. Follow-up phase is based on feedback and performance of the tasks. Students often want to know the correct answer immediately, and this information can increase the motivation for and value of listening. Then students do various activities related to the content of the passage they listened to.

These are basic principles of teaching listening. The other principle in teaching listening is to encourage learners by achieving success on less complex tasks before moving to the more complex. Presenting learners with a gradual increase in difficulty is likely to raise their motivation and comprehension. Anderson and Lynch (1989) say that if a listener has experienced success in simple comprehension tasks he or she becomes more self-confident to adopt active listening tactics. (A. Anderson and T. Lynch, 1989:44).



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A principle of grading seems to be important. Comprehension and listening skills of our students-future shops managers-can be effectively developed if we use graded listening materials chosen from the shop-management area.

girls and 6 boys. At the beginning of the school year their Using graded listening materials is presented in the next part of this paper, and section III will summarise my experiences. The Cambridge English Course-One, for the first time. After several months they achieved an lower-intermediate level and were prepared to continue learning general English as well as special English for their future job.

The girls are nearly all quite passive in comparison to the boys. Boys especially like games, talking, conversations, rule-playing, competitions and songs. They are interested in politics, geography, talking about people and about the world's problems. They have a good drive to learn, especially practical English for their job. From the beginning of their studies they seem to be good future shop managers. On the other hand, the boys do not like writing and reading or dealing with one subject too long, while the girls do. That is why in this class the teacher has to prepare short, quite difficult and interesting topics to keep students' attention during the whole lesson.

Conditions: a simple cassette-recorder, recorded materials. There is not a special room with audio-equipment in the school. These problems are that our students have complained







## II.LESSON PLANS USING GRADED LISTENING MATERIALS

Class profile: A class of 18 students of the first form of secondary school with an average age of 15 is formed of 12 girls and 6 boys. At the beginning of the school year their level of English varied. They had to reach the required level of English. Some of them began to use the foreign textbook, The Cambridge English Course-One, for the first time. After several months they achieved an lower-intermediate level and were prepared to continue learning general English as well as special English for their future job.

*Distinguishing the errors performed by a native speaker over*

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*of English Language Teaching (Harmer, J. 1991:184) -audio-cassette.*

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of most, as was mentioned in the first part of this paper.

The set of lesson plans is connected with the 13th Unit of The Cambridge English Course-One-telephone arrangements. Students started with telephone conversations in Unit 5. They learnt some phrases but it seemed not to have been enough, because of their failure during listening comprehension of Telemessage of Unit 13, when they were to catch and correct mistakes in Telemesage given over the telephone. The majority of students managed to correct only three or four words from the amount of fourteen mistakes (q.v., Appendix, p. 27) although they knew these words. Distinguishing the errors performed by a native speaker over the telephone has appeared to be most confusing.

The following lesson plans present using graded listening materials and are planned to improve the skills of making telephone arrangements, taking messages, giving messages and receiving advice over the telephone.

#### Lesson Plan 1

Aim: take a message heard during a longer telephone conversation

Material: A Telephone Message from The Practice of English Language Teaching (Harmer, J. 1991:184) -audio-cassette.

Stages: 1. pre-listening activities

a. The teacher spells names or words, says numbers-students have to write them down. They practise spelling and writing







numbers which are often given in shopping conversations

b. Students form a circle, the teacher sits in the middle. Students pass a telephone receiver; the teacher stops the passing and immediately starts a conversation to practise the phrases over the telephone. Students response. They practise phrases such as: Could I speak to ... , please? Could you take a message? What is your phone number? Could you tell her/him that..called? Can I take a message? One moment, please. I'll just see. You're welcome. Speaking. Who's that? as well as spelling names or words.

c. Two groups of students. Each group has a telephone receiver and passes it. The teacher stops their passing and two students have to create a conversation over the telephone. They use phrases, spelling; they give messages that they have prepared in exercise-book.

## 2. While listening

Students are given a small table to write names of both business partners and a message. They can ask for information if it is unclear. They listen to the conversation twice and fill in the table.

### A telephone message

Listen to a telephone conversation at Weston Aeronautics. Lynne Thomas, a secretary, answers the phone and takes a message. Listen and write down the message.

#### TELEPHONE MESSAGE

To:

From:

Message:







This is what the students hear:

### Exercise 7 Listening

(Internal phone rings)

LYNNE: Hello. Lynne Thomas speaking.

MIKE: Oh. This is Mike Landon here. Is Jack Cooper there by any chance?

LYNNE: I'm afraid not. He's away for a day or two. Back on ... let's see ... Monday morning.

MIKE: Blast! Oh, well, perhaps I can leave a message for him.

LYNNE: Yes, of course. Just a minute. (rustle of paper)  
Now let's see ... *to Jack Cooper from Mike Landon.*

MIKE: No, Landon ... L A N D O N.

LYNNE: Sorry. Yes, got that. And what's the message?

MIKE: Well, it's just this: *Could he come to a meeting on Monday afternoon at 5 p.m.?*

LYNNE: That's this Monday coming, *October 12th?*

MIKE: Right. It's to discuss *the new factory in France.*

LYNNE: Fine. I've got that ... I'll see that he gets it as soon as he comes in on Monday.

MIKE: Good. Goodbye.

*To: Jack Cooper From: Mike Landon Message: meeting Monday 5 p.m. - discuss new factory in France*

### 3. Follow-up

They can see the solution on the blackboard and check their answers.

Reflection: Students did not write the correct names of business partners from the telephone conversation, although it was not a complicated text. They practised spelling but they had spelled mainly known words and names. They were allowed to ask for information but they did not take this possibility. The oral activities helped them to fix the phrases, and so they could concentrate only on specific







items. Spelling was still confusing. I decided to practise spelling in the following lesson.

### Lesson Plan 2

Aim: spelling practice using the cassette-recorder.

Material: A Dictation of Names and Places from Headway-Upper-intermediate (J. and L. Soars, 1987:126)

audio-cassette

Stages: 1. Pre-listening

a. Short oral activities: the teacher spells short known words or names, students write them down.

b. Pair-work: students spell, for example, names of shops to each other.

c. Students prepare names of the capitals or countries. Each of them spells one name, while the other students compete who will guess the name first.

2. While listening

Students are going to listen to a spelling dictation. They have to write as many words as they are able to hear and can ask for information. Students listen twice to a dictation.

#### A dictation of names and places

- 1 My name's Jameson. That's J-A-M-E-S-O-N.  
I'll spell it again for you. J-A-M-E-S-O-N.
- 2 Do you need my full name? My first name's Juliet. J-U-L-I-E-T. Yes, J-U-L-I-E-T. And my surname's Henderson. Hen-der-son - H-E-N-D-E-R-S-O-N.
- 3 A My Christian name is Stephen.  
B Now, there are different ways of spelling that, aren't there?  
A Yes. Mine's P-H.  
B Pardon?  
A You spell it S-T-E-P-H-E-N.  
B Thank you.
- 4 A Place of birth, please madam.  
B Loughborough. L-O-U-G-H-B-O-R-O-U-G-H. Would you like me to spell it again? L-O-U-G-H-B-O-R-O-U-G-H.

5 Hello, I'd like to order a book by Gerald Leary. Hello? It's not a very good line, is it? Gerald Leary. Gerald - G-E-R-A-L-D. Leary - L-E-A-R-Y. That's it. The title of the book is *The Secret Life of Plants*.

6 Hello, er - I have a reservation. The name's Mahoney - M-A-H-O-N-E-Y.

7 My surname's Bailey - B-A-I-L-E-Y.

8 A Where do you live?

B A suburb of London called Greenwich.

A G-R-E-N-

B No, no. G-R-double E-N-W-I-C-H. Greenwich.

9 A Hello. I have an appointment with Miss Jenkins.

B Your name please?

A Seabourne. S-E-A-B-O-U-R-N-E.

10 A I'm living in a place called Gloucester.

B How do you spell that?

A G-L-O-U-C-E-S-T-E-R. Gloucester.







### 3. Follow-up

The teacher calls students to spell and read names. They check their notes.

#### Stages: 1. Pre-listening

Reflection: This dictation was rather difficult but very interesting. The boys were better concentrated than the girls. They managed to write more names than the girls who switched off by the 4th or 5th name. The boys asked for repeating the stages of 4th, 5th, 7th and 10th names that appeared very difficult for them. They tried to spell Loughborough, Leary and Bailey names correctly. They made mistakes in spelling. The most difficult letters were vowels A, E, I and consonants H, G, J, C, S. The teacher should have students practise this microskill in future. Native speakers very often use spelling if the listener does not understand. Especially shop managers should be familiar with this skill because of their contacts with speakers who use English for their business. The boys wanted to know if the third name was formed of two names or one name. The teacher explained what a "Christian name" is. The other questions were: What's a suburb? Is Greenwich a town or a place? These reactions showed that students were engaged in the process of listening.

### Lesson Plan 3

Aim: to respond to questions on an application form, to spell names and numbers, to extract specific information, to test students.







Material: Town and Country Flat Agency from The Practice of English Language Teaching (J.Harmer, 1991:185)- item audio-cassette

Stages: 1. Pre-listening

Oral activity-students have to review questions and answers to the questionnaire which they know from Unit 3 of The Cambridge English Course-One. They work in pairs.

2. While listening

Students are given a form where they will fill in missing items while listening. They can ask for information. Students listen to this conversation twice and fill in columns.

Fill in this form while you listen

TOWN AND COUNTRY FLAT AGENCY		Application Form
Name .....	Mr/Mrs/Miss	Occupation .....
Address .....		Size of flat wanted .....
Tel.No. ....		Offer .....

This is the conversation the students hear:

### 3 LISTENING (1)

Listen and fill in the form on page 25.

MAN: Good morning! Can I help you?

WALTER: Yes, I'm looking for a flat.

MAN: Mmm. What size?

WALTER: Two bedrooms, I think.

MAN: Two bedrooms...mmm...just a minute please... where's the application form...ah...here...now, your name, please.

WALTER: Moaney. Walter Moaney.

MAN: Can you spell that?

WALTER: MOANEY.

MAN: NEY...Married?

WALTER: Yes, I am.

MAN: Address?

WALTER: 5 Station Road.

MAN: And your telephone number?

WALTER: 5423168.

MAN: Once again, please.

WALTER: 5423168.

MAN: Thank you. And what do you do, Mr Moaney? What's your occupation?

WALTER: I'm an engineer.

MAN: Right...well...let's see...two bedrooms...what about this...8 West Road...

WALTER: Sorry...where...what address?

MAN: 8 West Road. That's near the station and the shops.

WALTER: Mmm... Yes, I'll go and see it.







### 3. Follow-up

The teacher collects the forms to check them. Each item receives 2 points. A group of students plays the role of the agency and creates questions to fill in missing items on a form. The other group of students responds to them while checking with the teacher.

Reflection: Students were very successful. They all filled in the items correctly. Clarifying all the items before listening has helped them. Successful testing supported their feeling of confidence, necessary for the next, more difficult, listening texts. Students will frequently need this skill of completing application forms in their future jobs.

### Lesson Plan 4

Aim: to practise phrases of request and accommodation, to understand offers of accommodation, to extract specific information.

Materials: Phoning a Flat-Owner from Task Listening (Blundell and Stokes, 1991:12)-audio-cassette

Stages: 1. Pre-listening: oral activities.

a. Students have to imagine situations of renting a flat, a house or a room; they suggest necessary information they need for a rent. The teacher writes some terms on the blackboard. Students create questions for owner and practise them while using the following vocabulary: furnished flat, central heating, rent a room or a flat, rent per month,







landlord, landlady. Students are asked to describe a flat with a certain rent. Then the teacher plays the role of an owner and answers the questions. Students form questions with the help of the teacher. They have to write notes. Then each of the students can describe a flat from his or her notes.

## 2. While listening

Students are given a sheet of paper with columns to fill in missing information about accommodation. They clarify all the items on the sheet of paper before listening. They are allowed to ask during listening. (Tapescript, q.v., Appendix p.28)

### Phoning a flat-owner

Put a tick or a cross in the boxes.  
Fill in the missing information.

Ring Oxford 40414 about  
furnished flat

Find out: ☒ or ☐

Near City Centre ☐

Near Shops ☐

Garden ☐

Central heating ☐

Visit tomorrow 5 p.m. ☐

Rent per month .....

Number of rooms .....

Floor .....

Name of landlord/landlady

Address







### 3 .Follow-up e Answering Machine from Listening Plus (3)

Students ask the teacher similar questions to those they have heard and the teacher responds. Students check their notes and compare them between neighbours.

They give and take messages that were prepared before.

Reflection: At first students themselves thought about what was necessary to know before renting. They had to concentrate on the extracting of specific information which is always very difficult, to catch the correct numbers, names etc. During this listening students were successful although some of them did not write the correct address. They knew questions from preceding activity and so they could concentrate only on the specific information. They did not mind the longer conversation. Nobody complained about the speed of speaking or a bad audio-cassette, which they used to complain about. Nevertheless, they wanted to check numbers during listening. Other questions, to make it clear, were: What is "gas central heating" and a "bed-sitting room"? Are spellings Jones and North Parade correct? These questions showed not only the students' activity but also their engaging and comprehension in process of listening. The teacher and students both had the feedback immediately during listening not after it.

2. Who is being called: a colleague

an information agency

### Lesson Plan 5 e school

Why the person telephoned:

Aim: to simulate using answering machine, to understand and give messages over the answering machine.







Material: The Answering Machine from Listening Plus. (J. McDowell and Hart Ch., 1987:87-88)-audio- cassette

Stages: 1. Pre-listening: oral activities.

a. Students make telephone conversations between two groups. They give and take messages that were prepared before. Topics are from shopping area: prices of goods, delivery of goods, making appointments, applying for a job.

b. Students say their messages while recording over a cassette-recorder.

2. While listening

Students are given a set of tasks. Pairs of students have to respond while hearing four messages that have been left on different answering machines. They decide on the answers and can ask the teacher for help. They try to catch as much information as they are able to do.

Decide and write:

1. Who is being called: a colleague-nurse  
a nursing agency  
a travel agency

Why the person telephoned:

Name of the caller:

2. Who is being called: a colleague  
an information agency  
a language school

Why the person telephoned:

Name of the caller:



Material: The Answering Machine from Listening PWS-1.

McDowell and Hart Co., 1987; 87-88; audio-cassette

Stages: 1. Pre-listening: oral activities.

a. Students make telephone conversations between two groups.

They give and take messages that were prepared before.

Topics are from shopping areas: prices of goods, delivery of

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b. Students say their messages while recording over

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information as they are able to do.

Decide and write:

1. Who is being called: a colleague-nurse

a nursing agency

a travel agency

Why the person telephoned:

Name of the caller:

2. Who is being called: a colleague

an information agency

a language school

Why the person telephoned:

Name of the caller:



3. Who is being called: a concert hall

Students listen for a private home and check their

responses. They can add a school information about people.

Why the person telephoned:

Name of the caller:

4. Who is being called: applying to an advertisement for

Why the person telephoned: interested in a job anywhere

The place of caller's stay: caller wants information about

Students discuss their notes after the first listening and can put questions related to the text. Then they listen for the second time. The teacher stops the tape after each part of a text. Students have time to discuss notes but only in pairs. and were able to prepare short but interesting

### Tapescript

1

Hello, I'm phoning about the advert which I've seen in *Nursing Weekly* ... for an obstetric nurse in Saudi Arabia. I'm interested in this position or anywhere in the Gulf. The name is Jean ... Anderson ... and my address is sixteen Elkin Road, that's E.L.K.I.N., Elkin Road, Morecombe, Lancashire. Thanks a lot.

2

Hello. I would like some information on part-time afternoon courses at intermediate and advanced level. I'll be staying in London for the next three months ... and would like to use the opportunity to improve my English. Could you send a brochure and price list to the following address: Matteo Damiano, twelve Sidney Street, London SW3 ... Thank you.

3

Hello. I'd like to book two seats for the upper circle for tomorrow's eight o'clock performance. My Barclaycard number is 4929854296124. It expires at the end of 1987 and my name is N.A. Cameron. Thank you.

4

Hello. This is Christopher Caldwell. I'm calling on behalf of IJK International for Stephen Todd. Er, we'll be needing, er, er, a Japanese interpreter, er, some time in the next two or three weeks. I'm in London until the twenty-fourth. If Mr Todd could call me at the Grand Hotel some time between seven and nine, the number is 937-4085. Thank you.







### 3. Follow-up

Students listen for the third time and check their responses. They can add more information about people.

#### Key

- 1 A nursing agency: the caller is replying to an advertisement for a job in Saudi Arabia but would be interested in a job anywhere in the Gulf. *Jean Anderson*
- 2 An English language college: the caller wants information about part-time afternoon courses. *Matteo Damiano*
- 3 It is a theatre, cinema or concert hall (it is not clear which): the caller wants to book some seats. *Cameron*
- 4 A Japanese translation agency: the caller needs an interpreter. *Grand Hotel. 937 4085*

Reflection: The students were interested in this oral activity and were able to prepare short but interesting messages from the shop-management area. The teacher helped them a little. On the other hand they were a bit afraid of speaking to a cassette-recorder. Some students were nervous under the press of time and failed to leave a fluent message without breaks and mistakes. Speaking to an answering machine requires a clear caller's message in the right order: name, message, address. The students had to get used to this order that helped them to understand the messages over an answering machine. After the first listening they were quite confused. They complained about the length of the text and difficult tasks. After the second interrupted listening they were satisfied. They had a lot of time to discuss notes in pairs. In spite of this, some pairs had some questions: Is spelling "Jean Anderson" right? Is advert a short term for advertisement? What kind of nurse was she?







Is a Japanese interpreter the same as a Japanese translator? Though these questions were not necessary for their responses, they wanted to know much more to ensure themselves that they are able to understand more. Several pairs also added this information: address of a nurse-Elkin Road; Matteo Damiano wants a brochure and price list. His address is 12 Sidney Street, London. The fourth caller is Christopher. He will stay in London for two or three weeks and we can call him between seven and nine for such and such; his telephone number.

This listening comprehension exercise demonstrated students' improvement and ability to understand more than they were asked. On the other hand, the necessity to extend their general background knowledge of all spheres of human activity is needed, too.

If students are proficient in fixing terms and phrases, which they need to use, their listening comprehension will be better. Briefly, a good input produces a good output. In addition to this, the expectation and prediction what he or she will hear helps the listener to understand, too.

Reducing problems, students were given a lot of time to write required responses. They always made mistakes when pressed for time. There is a difference between the time taken to understand heard information and draw a conclusion from it, and that taken to write one's own paraphrase or longer response.







### III. SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE

My research among students of secondary management school indicated that comprehension when listening to native speakers is difficult for them. The students suggested several solutions that I used in my project which dealt with a possible way to develop listening skills for our students-future shop managers who need English in everyday life. The purpose of my project was to develop listening skills using graded listening texts and tasks.

I chose a set of listening materials from the shop management area that I prepared according to principles of good listening lessons while using graded texts and tasks. I have to point out a pre-listening phase that appeared to be important in a lesson. If students are proficient in fixing terms and phrases, which they need to use, their listening comprehension will be better. Briefly, a good input produces a good output. In addition to this, the expectation and prediction what he or she will hear helps the listener to understand, too.

Reducing problems, students were given a lot of time to write required responses. They always made mistakes when pressed for time. There is a difference between the time taken to understand heard information and draw a conclusion from it, and that taken to write one's own paraphrase or longer response.







After the first and second listening the students were also given a challenge to ask questions if they were confused about the text. It may seem strange to ask during listening but that did not disturb the process. On the contrary, the questions helped the students as well as the teacher. They both had feedback on their performance. Students were allowed to give supplementary questions, not direct ones. An immediate positive or negative response motivated students for next work. This is an unusual but valuable activity that both students and teacher had to get used to. The teacher could observe if the students were engaged in the process or not. Being given enough time and being able to ask supplementary questions helped our students to respond to the tasks.

Arranging the tasks goes from less complex tasks to more complex tasks. If we want students to be more confident, we have to do success-oriented tasks which are not too difficult. If the task is too hard or time-consuming, the effect is small because it demotivates students. Tasks should be graded gradually and be based rather on visual material and quick responses than on writing one's own long responses.

The same is true about the content of a listening text. We have to count grammar, length and topic. In case of our students, it is better to use middle-long texts with the language aimed at real-life situations, which are usually simple and not too long. Long conversations are boring and







demotivating as are texts with difficult language construction. Students usually switch off. Students were engaged in the process much more if they had to cope with a bit difficult tasks rather than difficult and long texts.

part-in the whole process of language learning.

Another problem is: the conditions to simulate real-life situations. We used recordings that provided students with some valuable experiences such as: different voices and accents, moods, background effects. On the other hand, the speaker is actually visible to the listener in most real-life situations. Visibility of the speaker usually helps the listener in comprehension. Both recorded and live speech should be in balance. The teacher should seek possibilities to perform native speakers in classroom exercises.

There is also the problem connected with the future jobs of our students. It is necessary to develop the background knowledge of the topic. The more I know the subject matter, the more I can understand the text. In our case the point is not only to get a good knowledge of shopping vocabulary and phrases but also to gain experience of habits, culture, technical development and social behaviour of the country where future shop managers will travel and do business.

An improvement in ability to cope with the listening comprehension can be accomplished through these means: using the graded tasks rather than graded texts, giving enough time to students for responses, encouraging them to ask







while listening, and extending their background knowledge before on listening. All these means or could help our students-future shop managers - to develop comprehension that seems to play a central-and possibly predominant part-in the whole process of language learning.

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Tapescript of the listening material from Unit 33 D of The Cambridge English Course (q. v., p. 8)

Listen to the recording of a man dictating a telegram over the telephone, and correct the following text.

TELECOM

① Telemesssage

TO: JAMES POLLOCK  
FROM: JAMES POLLOCK  
SUBJECT: JAMES POLLOCK  
RE: JAMES POLLOCK  
JAMES POLLOCK

PLEASE SEND COMPLETE FIGURES FOR LOTUSSE IMPORTS  
TO JAMES POLLOCK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TELEPHONE  
ON WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 301 4152 TO BIRCHDALE GREEN  
WISIT WEST SUSSEX

REGARDS STEVE

Appendix

Correct teletext

Rebbit  
The Gofford  
Chilne  
Near Dilton  
Oxfordshire

Please give complete figures for Lotusse imports  
to James Pollock as soon as possible. Telephone  
on Wednesday morning at 301 4152 to Birchdale Green  
West Sussex  
Regards Steve

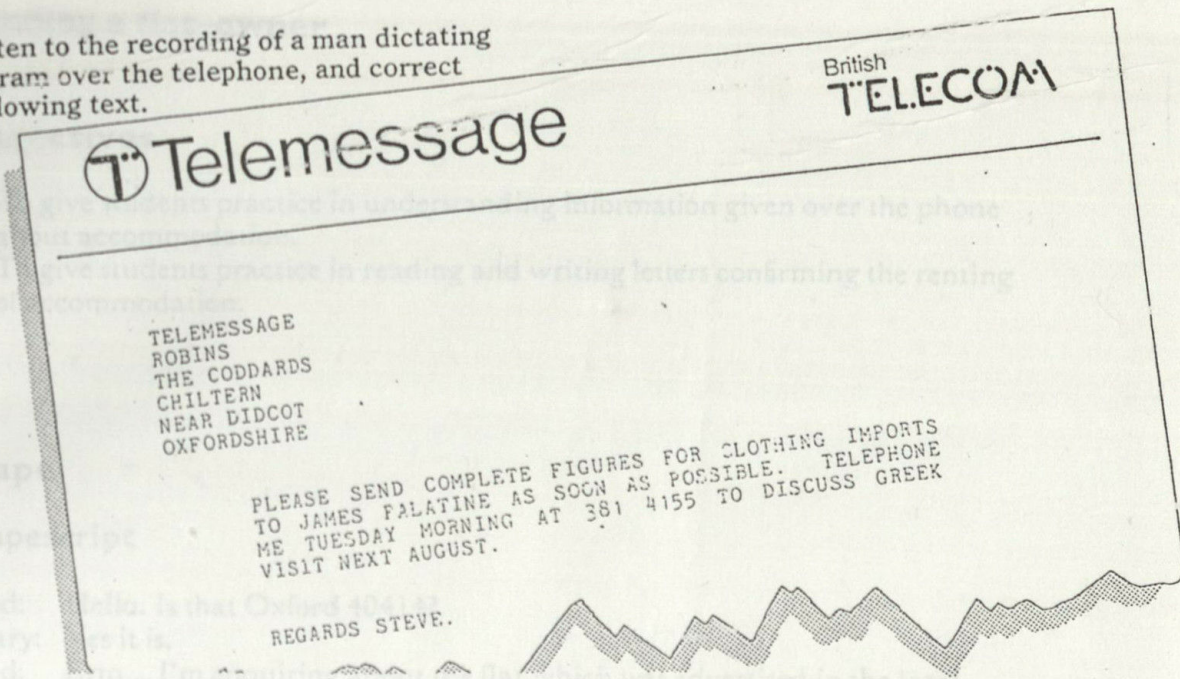






Tapescript of the listening material from Unit 13 D of The Cambridge English Course-One (q. v., p. 8)

Listen to the recording of a man dictating a telegram over the telephone, and correct the following text.



Correct telemessage:

Robbins  
The Goddards  
Chilton  
Near Didcot  
Oxfordshire

Please give complete figures for furniture imports 1968 to 1972  
to James Polixenes as soon as possible. Telephone me  
Thursday afternoon at 371 4199 to discuss German visit next  
April.

Regards Peter







### Phoning a flat-owner

#### Objectives

- 1 To give students practice in understanding information given over the phone about accommodation.
- 2 To give students practice in reading and writing letters confirming the renting of accommodation.

#### Tape

##### Tapescript

Rod: Hello. Is that Oxford 40414?

Mary: Yes it is.

Rod: Erm... I'm enquiring about the flat which was advertised in the local paper.

Mary: Oh yes?

Rod: Wonder if you could tell me, how much is the rent a month, please?

Mary: It's £112.

Rod: I see. Is it fairly near the city centre?

Mary: Yes, it's only about a kilometre away.

Rod: I see. Is it quite handy for the shops?

Mary: Yes, within a minute or two on foot.

Rod: Good. What about a garden?

Mary: Well you have the use of the garden.

Rod: I see. And central heating, is there?

Mary: Yes, yes. Gas central heating.

Rod: I see. Erm... how many rooms are there, please?

Mary: Well, there's one very large bed-sitting room, a kitchen and bathroom and a small hall.

Rod: I see. Erm... which floor is it on?

Mary: On the first floor.

Rod: Oh good. Erm... would it be possible for me to visit it tomorrow, say about 5 o'clock?

Mary: Yes, certainly.

Rod: Oh good. That's fine. Could you just give me your name, please?

Mary: Yes. The name is Mary Jones (Yes) and the address is 41 North Parade.

Rod: 41 North Parade. Fine. Thanks ever so much. I'll see you tomorrow at 5 o'clock then.

Mary: Yes. (OK?) Good.



















