

Master Your Listening Skills

Academic listening workshop with Lubov Zavarykina



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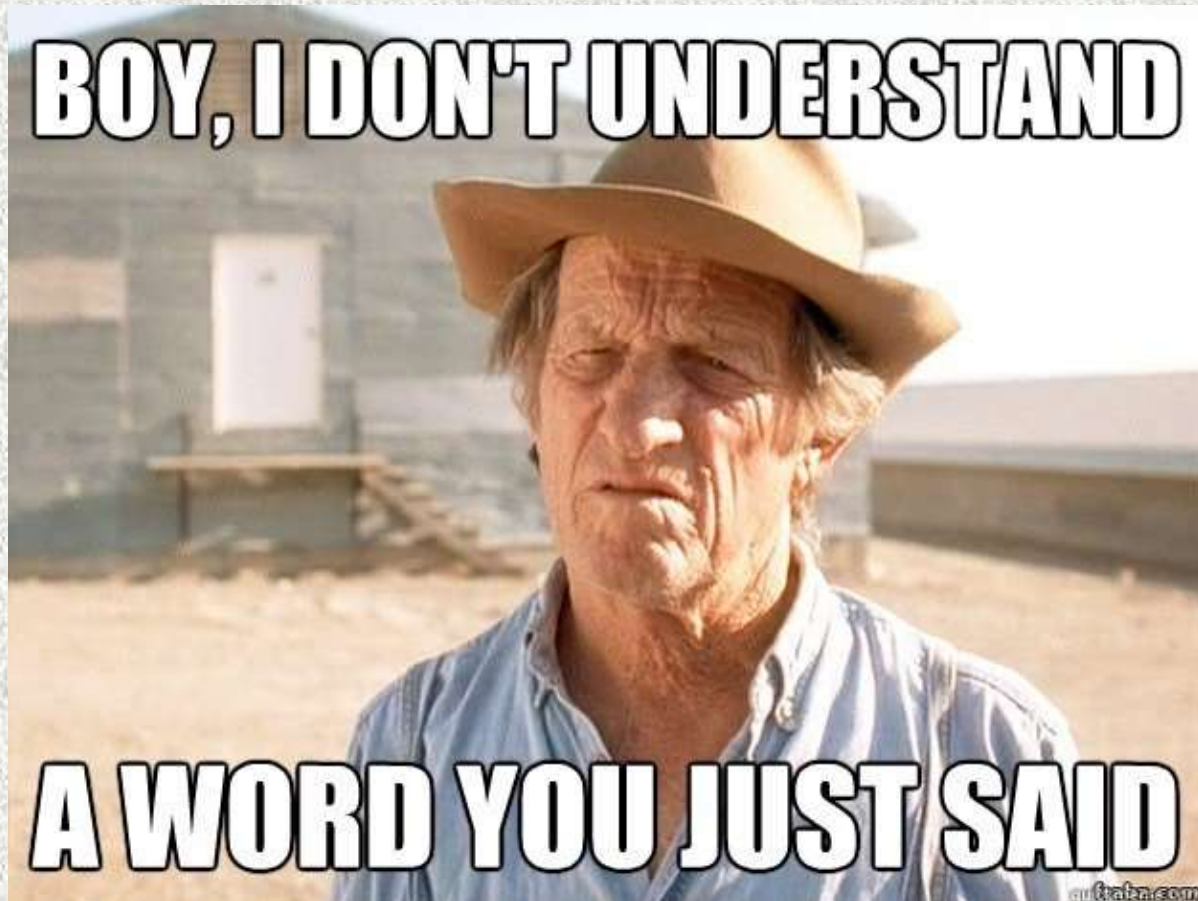
WORKSHOP GOALS

- ▶ Discuss listening macro and micro strategies
- ▶ Discuss features of the oral communication
- ▶ Practise to develop listening skills



DIFFICULTIES

1. Discuss with your partner: What difficulties have you had listening to lectures/presentations in English?



CONNECTED SPEECH BOUNDARY SOUNDS

Linked words: Consonant + vowel

When a word ends in a consonant sound and the next word begins with a vowel sound, the words may seem to be linked, e.g.:

add_up

What_are these?

the main_objective

Inserted sounds: Vowel + vowel

When a word ends with a vowel sound and the next word begins with a vowel sound, a /w/, /j/ or /r/ sound is inserted, e.g.:

do /w/ anything

try /j/ out

no /w/ idea /r/ of it

CONNECTED SPEECH BOUNDARY SOUNDS

Disappearing/changing sounds: Consonant + consonant

When a word ends with a /d/ or /t/ sound and the next word begins with a consonant, the /d/ or /t/ sound often disappears, e.g.:

next day

rapid growth



CONNECTED SPEECH

2. Listen and complete the text with two to five words in each space. The missing expressions include examples of word boundaries that may cause you difficulties

I'm going to go through the theory of real options, and then I'm going to show you how they can be used to _____, particularly on property assets. Real options are a term which was coined ten or 15 years ago, when people began to realize that _____ isn't the only thing you should look at in valuing assets, that a number of assets in companies have _____ option value. And so the option theory that you've been looking at can also be applied to _____ instead of just _____. And that, in raising money, companies particularly have _____ from an option pricing perspective than they first thought. The idea on real options is that management is not just a passive participant, that management can take _____ in making and revising decisions that can lead on from unexpected market developments, such as, for example, the _____ has gone up from £10 a barrel to £30 a barrel over the last year. So if you were an oil producer this time last year you would be taking a very different view on the _____. So the increase in oil prices has uncovered a stream of options which make oil producers a lot more valuable and now you can bring oil fields _____ that were not necessarily economic. So this is the kind of idea that when we're looking at a project we're not just looking _____, we're actually looking at a cash flow that can be subject to a lot of optionality in it.

MACROSTRATEGIES

3. Work with a partner and define the following strategies:

- PREDICTING
- INFERRING
- EVALUATING
- CLARIFYING



PREDICTING

Predicting – a declaration that something will happen in the future (Merriam Webster Dictionary)

Two types of information help us to predict

- ***Background knowledge***

(general knowledge, subject knowledge, knowledge of a foreign culture)

- ***Context***

(the situation, the co-text)



PREDICTING

4. Predict: the title of the talk; the logical order of the slides

Concerns over the HDI Index

- exclusion of important factors in determining quality of life
- differences in the quality and availability of the international data
- meaningfulness of the index as an indicator of global human development

Slide 1

UN Human Development Report Most Livable Countries, 2018

- Norway
- Switzerland
- Germany
- Australia
- Ireland

Slide 2

UN Human Development Index Definition

“Simple summary measure of three dimensions of the human development concept: living a long and healthy life, being educated and having a decent standard of living” (HDI, 2002)

Slide 3

Dimensions Measured in the UN Human Development Index

- life expectancy
- education
- standard of living

Slide 4

PREDICTING

5. PREDICT WHO IS WHO AND WHAT THEY ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT

5 ways to listen better



Julian Treasure -
an entrepreneur and
a coach

The importance of
listening to international
students



Tony Lynch –
a professor of
Linguistics at
Edinburgh University

LISTENING TASK

6. LISTEN TO THE TALK AND WRITE DOWN 5 WAYS TO LISTEN BETTER

Source:

https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_5_ways_to_listen_better

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



INFRENCING



Inferencing - the act of passing from one proposition, statement, or judgment considered as true to another whose truth is believed to follow from that of the former (Merriam Webster Dictionary)

This strategy is helpful when:

- ▶ The information the speaker gives is incomplete
 - ▶ You do not know the expressions the speaker is using
 - ▶ You hear a familiar word, but used in an unfamiliar way
 - ▶ You can't hear what the speaker is saying
-



INFRENCING - GENRE

7. LISTEN TO THE EXTRACTS AND DECIDE WHAT THEIR GENRE IS:

- ▶ Tutorial?
- ▶ Weather forecast?
- ▶ Sport event?
- ▶ Poetry?
- ▶ Advertisement?



INFERENCE - CONTEXT

8. Discuss with a partner:

What is the speaker going to talk about in the introduction?

Comment on
the theory
they've just
described

Preview the
content or
structure of the
current lecture

Explain
researcher's
own interest in
the subject

Introduce
different
approaches to
the subject

Refer back to
the previous
lectures



INFRENCING - THE MEANING OF THE PHRASES/WORDS

9. Infer the meaning of the underlined phrases from:

- ▶ context
 - ▶ word form
 - ▶ sentence structure
-
- ▶ Are you crazy? You cannot just mosey on in here two hours late for work. You're just taking the mickey.
 - ▶ When I married my wife, I promised her I would listen to her every day as if for the first time. Now that's something I fall short of on a daily basis.
 - ▶ We're becoming impatient. We don't want oratory anymore; we want sound bites. And the art of conversation is being replaced -- dangerously, I think -- by personal broadcasting. I don't know how much listening there is in this conversation, which is sadly very common, especially in the UK. We're becoming desensitized. Our media have to scream at us with these kinds of headlines in order to get our attention. And that means it's harder for us to pay attention to the quiet, the subtle, the understated.
-



MICROSTRATEGY - DEALING WITH UNKNOWN VOCABULARY

10. Discuss with a partner which of these strategies are helpful and which are not:

- ▶ Make sure you are aware of common abbreviations
- ▶ Ask the person who is next to you to spell the word and tell you the meaning
- ▶ If you think the word sounds the same as a word on a slide, highlight it and check the meaning after the talk
- ▶ Guess the sense of the word (positive, negative, feeling, size) rather than trying to work out the exact meaning
- ▶ Try to guess the spelling of the word and check it after the talk
- ▶ Ask for translation of the word
- ▶ Use signposting language to help you guess the meaning
- ▶ Forget it and move on
- ▶ Listen out for explanations and definitions that lecturers give
- ▶ Write down what you hear and pay attention in case the lecturer repeats the word

11. Discuss with a partner other strategies that you use in real life



DEALING WITH UNKNOWN VOCABULARY - TERMINOLOGY

Terminology

A lecturer

- Gives a definition
- Provides a number of extended examples
- Explains how the concept works
- Contrasts the new concept with a concept that is already familiar



DEALING WITH UNKNOWN VOCABULARY - TERMINOLOGY

12. Listen to the following extract and make notes on the extended example
13. Check your notes with a partner. How would you define 'embedded words'?
14. Think of at least one more example of embedded words

Source: Campbell, C. and Smith, J. (2009) *English for Academic Study: Listening* Garnet Publishing, pp.38-39



DEALING WITH UNKNOWN VOCABULARY - TERMINOLOGY

15. Listen to the extract and complete the table

	Matters they deal with	Who issues them	When they become legally binding
Regulations			
Directives			

Source: Campbell, C. and Smith, J. (2009) *English for Academic Study: Listening* Garnet Publishing, pp.38-39



SIGNPOST PHRASES

Functions	Expressions
Starting	I'll start by...
Clarifying	...by this, I mean
Finishing a point	That's all for X...
Adding	In addition...
Starting a new point	Now, let's turn to look at Y...
Sequencing	So, firstly we'll look at X, and after that at Y...
Introducing contrast	On the other hand though..
Showing importance	At the heart of this problem is...
Giving examples	We can see this illustrated in
Summarizing	Let's recap
Concluding	To conclude...
Digressing	By the way....
Returning to the topic	Returning to my main point...

SIGNPOST PHRASES

16. Put the sentences in a logical order. Then listen to check your answers

- a) Then we'll consider the implications of poor time management in a little more detail by considering a specific case study.
- b) So turning now to the first part of my talk - poor time management.
- c) Let me begin by outlining the main areas of my talk today.
- d) So as I was saying, there will be a chance at the end of my talk for any questions you might have.
- e) By the way, there are leaflets being passed round with details of these strategies - please take a copy away with you.
- f) Firstly, I'll briefly discuss how poor time management can affect us in the workplace and at home.
- g) Finally, we'll look at some simple techniques that I hope will help you organize your time more effectively, before question time.
- h) In addition, I have a number of information packs and posters which you are welcome to take if you're interested.

Source: Preshous, J. (2014) *Improve your Skills. Listening and Speaking for IELTS* Macmillan, p. 80

EVALUATING

Evaluating - determining the significance, worth, or condition of usually by careful appraisal and study
(Merriam Webster Dictionary)



EVALUATING

content

- Do I accept that these facts are true?
- Do the speaker's claims match what I know?
- Do I think that the speaker's views are reasonable?

My listening
performance

- Are main points clear?
- Have I been able to follow the argument and the examples?

Speaker's
attitude

- Does a speaker's intonation show their attitude?



EVALUATING

17. Read the comments about the TED talk. Which of them reflects your ideas about the talk?

idcguitar

I struggled to listen because I just kept thinking how poorly those trousers fit him

Mandy

Out of ALL the ted talks I have listened to (psychology, technology, society, etc.) Julian Treasure is my MOST favorite. He knows how to speak eloquently by not making habitual sounds like "ummm" or "like". The way he speaks is like coursing through a river: his way of talking creates an easy flow which makes it easy for the listeners to follow.

Doha

After watching this video, I really felt that I am losing my sense of hearing. Because nowadays, the surround of us is full of noise. And even, we filter out what people said, which means the listener only hear what they would like to listen. It means that they don't use 100 percentage of ability of hearing.

I also realize that without hearing sense, the world will be stuffy and we can't do the things just like normally. So among what the speaker suggested to us which is the way to improve your own conscious listening exercise, I would like to practice the 3rd one which is enjoy the sound that daily happening around us. By doing this kind of practice, I would like to improve my life as well. And consider the sense of hearing as a valuable things. Also would like to find the real beauty of hearing around me.

Mouldy CPU

He has British accent, so everything he said must be true.

18. Write down your own thoughts on the talk and discuss them with your partner

MAIN AND SUPPORTING IDEAS

19. Listen to the extract from the talk. Discuss with a partner: What are the main and supporting ideas in this extract?

This is a serious problem that we're losing our listening. This is not trivial, because listening is our access to understanding. Conscious listening always creates understanding, and only without conscious listening can these things happen. A world where we don't listen to each other at all is a very scary place indeed. So I'd like to share with you five simple exercises, tools you can take away with you, to improve your own conscious listening. Would you like that?

Good. The first one is silence. Just three minutes a day of silence is a wonderful exercise to reset your ears and to recalibrate, so that you can hear the quiet again. If you can't get absolute silence, go for quiet, that's absolutely fine.

Second, I call this "the mixer." (Noise) So even if you're in a noisy environment like this -- and we all spend a lot of time in places like this -- listen in the coffee bar to how many channels of sound can I hear? How many individual channels in that mix am I listening to? You can do it in a beautiful place as well, like in a lake. How many birds am I hearing? Where are they? Where are those ripples? It's a great exercise for improving the quality of your listening.

Third, this exercise I call "savoring," and this is a beautiful exercise. It's about enjoying mundane sounds. This, for example, is my tumble dryer.

FACT AND OPINION

FACT	OPINION
Use of the Present Simple	Phrases “in my view”; “according to”
Verbs: “show”; “demonstrate”; “establish”	Verbs: “think”; “believe”; “claim”
Research findings	Evaluation of research
Theories which have been proven	Discussion of research



FACT AND OPINION

20. Read the following extract from a lecture on corporation tax and identify the factual information and the lecturer's opinion

In the UK, the tax rate for corporations is 20% of profits. There are number of ways in which corporations can reduce their tax bill but all companies pay corporation tax unless they make a loss in any given tax year. However, the way in which the system works has been heavily criticized by Taylor. According to Taylor we need to think more carefully about how the taxation rules work in practice, especially related to growth in small businesses overall. Although Sachs's theory can apply here, certain economists believe that Sachs has overlooked some fundamental calculations. The interpretations from other economists suggest that small businesses should expect slower growth in all economic climates but to my mind this is an incomplete picture and needs further clarification.

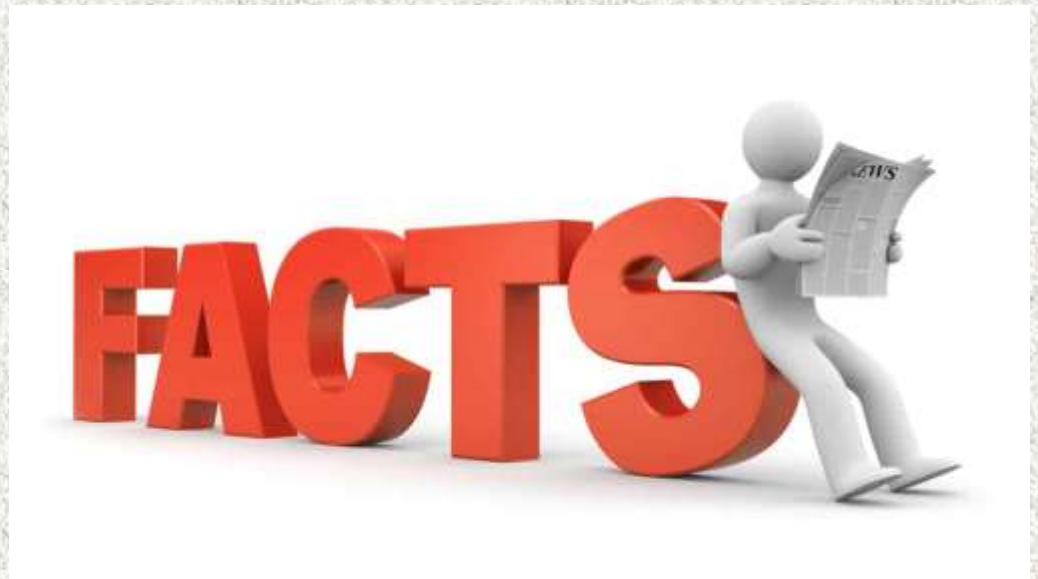
Source: Aish F., Tomlinson J. (2014) *Lectures. Learn listening and note-taking skills* Collins EAP, p. 67



FACT AND OPINION

21. Now listen to extracts 1-3 and decide if the lecturer is presenting fact or opinion. Write Fact or Opinion for each extract.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



INTONATION

- ▶ Most regular statements (those which just state facts or information; not statements which clarify or emphasize anything) use a **falling intonation** ↘ at the end of the sentence.
- ▶ Use **rising intonation** ↗ on specific words in a sentence to emphasize their importance
- ▶ High-energy emotions like happiness, excitement, fright and annoyance usually use a **rising intonation**.
- ▶ Boredom, sarcasm and disinterest often use a **falling intonation** ↘
- ▶ When speakers give a list they use **rising intonation** ↗ for each item in the list until the last item which has **falling intonation** ↘



INTONATION

22. Listen to the same sentence said three times. Notice the intonation of the speaker and match it to the feelings being expressed

Speaker 1:

Speaker 2:

Speaker 3:

A. he supports the idea

B. he is excited about the idea

C. he has doubts about the idea



FEATURES OF SPEECH - STRESS

Standard English is a stress-timed language, which means that the content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) are usually spoken with more emphasis.

In general the speaker does not stress:

- ▶ Modal verbs
- ▶ Auxiliary verbs
- ▶ Prepositions
- ▶ Articles
- ▶ Pronouns
- ▶ Quantifiers

The speaker will usually stress some words stronger or say them slower than other words to emphasize that what they are saying is an important point.



FEATURES OF SPEECH - STRESS

**23. Listen to two English phrases and time them.
How long is each phrase?**



FEATURES OF SPEECH - STRESS

24. Listen to the following sentences and mark the stressed and unstressed words used by the speaker

1. *'Last week I went to a really interesting lecture on space but I didn't understand that much of it because I hadn't prepared enough.'*
2. *'One of the most important aspects of university study which is totally different from school is being able to manage the workload.'*
3. *'What I don't like about studying biology is having to write up the lab reports after doing the experiment.'*
4. *'So, if you look at this slide, you'll notice how the concepts of philosophy as described by the Enlightenment interact with our everyday lives, even in the 21st century.'*

Source: Aish F., Tomlinson J. (2014) *Lectures. Learn listening and note-taking skills* Collins EAP, p. 14



CLARIFYING

Clarifying – an interactive strategy

When you ask a question, you can help the lecturer to give the information you need by making clear whether the problem was due to:

- ▶ not **hearing** what the lecturer said
- ▶ not **understanding** what the lecturer meant
- ▶ not **seeing the connection** between different parts of what was said

***To clarify* – to make understandable (Merriam Webster Dictionary)**

Clarification questions

I didn't catch what you said about...

I didn't understand...

I don't quite see how (X) relates to (Y)

25. What questions would you ask Julian Treasure?



FEATURES OF SPEECH - LANGUAGE CHUNCKS

When people speak, they use small pauses which are connected to the grammar and word stress of the language.

Speakers naturally group words together into phrases and these phrases are separated by small pauses. These small pauses help the listener work out how the words relate to each other and therefore understand the speaker's meaning.



FEATURES OF SPEECH - LANGUAGE CHUNCKS

26. Listen to two speakers read the same sentence and decide who is easier to understand, Speaker 1 or Speaker 2. Why?

Divide the sentence into chunks:

As a result of studying urban communities in large cities we are now just beginning to understand the effects of new building schemes on creating harmony.



EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

27. Discuss with your partner which strategies from this list are effective:

- Use your background knowledge to predict the content of a talk
- Examine the speaker's bio
- Translate while listening
- Infer the meaning of unknown words and phrases from the context
- Do not listen attentively to the introduction to a talk
- Listen only to talks/lectures that are of professional interest
- Make use of handouts
- Record the talk
- Always use the macrostrategies in the following order: predicting – inferencing – evaluating – clarifying
- Write down everything you have heard
- Clarify unclear points – ask questions
- Make use of: signpost markers, explanations of specialist terms, examples to illustrate ideas, strong stress on key words, pauses indicating a new topic or section



USEFUL REFERENCES

www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/english-at-university

www.englishforacademicstudy.com/student/listening/links

<http://www.uefap.com/listen/listfram.htm>

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/listening>

<https://ru.coursera.org/learn/note-taking>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/explore-english-language-culture>

