CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

Language can be taught giving importance to the four skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and speaking always go together. Speaking involves articulating and hence active and productive while listening involves responding and discriminating and hence passive and receptive. Listening involves attending to and interpreting theoretical form of language. Listening and speaking are the aural skills. But writing and reading are visual skills. Comprehension of speech is an active, knowledge guided process. This involves decoding the message systematically and hence it takes into consideration factors, attention and memory. We receive linguistic and extra linguistic input while we listen and extract message from the stream of sound and situation in which the stream of sound is produced.

1.2 The Language

According to the first defining statement in Webster's third new international dictionary, language is "audible, articulate human speech as and adjacent vocal organs". A second statement defines language as "any means, vocal or other, of expressing or communicating feeling or thought". While the first definition limits language to a human activity and to vocal sound, the second is more inclusive, implying that the waving of an arm or the raising of eye brows is language. An involuntary cry of pain or fear, the bark of a dog, or the wail of a bird may be heard and attract the attention of a human being within hearing range, but these sounds may be considered as means for communicating and a kind of language according to the dictionary definition.
Linguistics has certain assumptions concerning language. The most important is "the fundamental forms of language activity or the sequences of sounds made by human lips, tongues and vocal cords". Linguists say that language is speech, and point out that speech is as old as human society but writing is only about seven thousand years old. While the statement of the relative ages is a fact, and writing is a derivative of speech, teachers and curriculum authorities should not make a fetish of saying that language is speech too.

There are certain characteristics of oral nature of language.

1. Language is Symbolic  
2. Language is systematic  
3. Language is Human  
4. Language is a social instrument  
5. Language is non-instinctive

Most linguists stress that language is a system of human communication originating in the sound stream produced by the organs of speech. Noam Chomsky and his followers claim that language acquisition is a process in which child formulates a theory or system as to the structure of his language and that the development of this theory is intuitive. Skinner’s theory gives importance to imitation in language acquisition. The language acquisition is based upon rewarding children as they imitate and try to imitate language. Imitation is a major factor in language acquisition. A large number of linguists believe that language development is biologically determined. There are really some universal properties of language, which make linguists adopt the innateness involved in language acquisition.

No one and teachers especially should overlook the non-verbal or ‘silent’ language. We often communicate a great deal by what we do not say, but by our actions, by our behaviour .(Edward T. Hall ,1959). As Fodor has pointed out, it is conceivable that a “child” is born with a very
general capacity to learn. The child while learning or acquiring a language brings forth or constructs certain principles which not only facilitate learning but also brings problems while learning. (Jerry A. Fodor, 1966:106).

1.3 **English as a second language**

The teaching of second and foreign languages is a major international enterprise. The status of English has changed recently to a significant level. The widespread need for English as a second or foreign language puts a considerable pressure on the educational resources of many countries.

The language, which is not the mother-tongue of a majority of the population in a country, may act as an official language with regards to law, government, education, business and media. In countries, where English has these functions, it is usually referred to as a second language. In India, English is used along with other languages as a second language (SL). In India English is commonly used in all fields. Consequently it is spoken with local status. English also serves as vehicles for the expression of literature and its creative writing. In written form Indian English is close to standard British or American English, but its spoken form may be quite distinctive.

1.4 **Analysis of four skills**

The purpose of learning a language is to enable the students to communicate in that language. It is essential to equip the students with the language skills they really need. The four main skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are generally classified as receptive and productive skills. Listening and reading fall under receptive skills and speaking and writing fall under productive skills, which determine
the way students need to form or react to language. The secondary skills have the communicative function of the language.

Linguists say, "Speaking is language". Speaking is a language skill that develops early in the child's life, preceded only by listening and there is a great deal of evidence to indicate that language development depends largely upon the speech experiences. Vocabulary development is closely related to speech, which can be attained only through listening and reading. Speaking skill is essential for effective communication. (Jon Eisenson and Mardel Ogilive, 1963).

Reading is a receptive aspect of language. Reading performance varies significantly with proficiency in oral language. Strickland's study of oral language development and reading achievement showed that children ranking high on measures of comprehension in silent reading make greater use of adverbials or adverbial phrases and elements of subordination in their oral language than those ranking low. (Ruth G. Strickland, 1969, p.130 - 133).

1.5 Listening and aspects of listening

English course has been devoted to oral and written communication. The communication skills are referred to as listening, speaking, reading and writing. We spend on the average about 45% of our communicative time in listening. Improved listening habits can help us in our work and in our speaking. Good citizenship, success and happiness may depend on good listening. The world is made-up of the instruments of oral communication. The radio, television, telephone and movies are within an easy reach or hearing distance. We listen for appreciation, information and to make critical discrimination or selection. Listening is an effective way to learn. Depending, of course, on the listening habits one can generally stay awake and learn something worthwhile from the
speaker’s remarks. A good listener is mentally active, not passive. His mind is manipulating the ideas that he hears, sorting them, comparing them and giving his own mental emphasis to those that are constructive and meaningful to him.

More carefully specified listening means attending to and interpreting the oral language. The listener of English hears the oral speech, segments the stream of sounds, groups them into lexical and syntactic units (words, phrases and sentences), and understands the message they convey. The approaches of listening are interactive and non-interactive. There are four steps in listening process: 1. Hearing 2. Understanding 3. Evaluating 4. Responding.

Listening skills are concerned with the following:
1. Perception of sounds 2. Accuracy of reception and sequencing
3. Gaining of meaning 4. Utilizing the meaning

Anderson (1964) has identified three stages of the listening process: perception, parsing, utilization. He explains that these three phases are inter-related and recursive.

1.6 Listening

The ground work for the recognition of listening as a field of “inquiry was laid primarily in the late 1940s by the pioneering works of” James Brown, Rolf Nichols and Carl Weaver. Roberts points out that listening is the most frequently used mode of human communication. Listening research focused mainly on comprehension (listening for understanding).
Rhodes advocates that listening can be studied, "as a relational concept within the total context of the communication process". Brown points out, "upto about sixth grade, listening is the most efficient learning mode, and sixty percent of elementary students' classroom time is spent in listening". Listening is a primary activity of college-age students.

Among the four skills, listening and reading are receptive skills. Speaking and writing are productive skills. While listening, we understand the spoken language. We understand the written language while reading.

Listening and speaking are the two skills which play a vital role in oral communication. Speaker and listener are involved in communication which is a two way process. Speech comprehension or listening is an active, knowledge guided process. Stored knowledge is necessary for segmentation and interpretation of utterances. Comprehension of speech involves decoding the utterances. Hence it implies that listening is a process, which involves perceiving a systematic message in a continuous stream of sound and then apprehending and identifying the stream bounded elements. Each segment has a distinctive structure and combines with other segments within a more extensively organised system. Listeners are involved in a continuous cognitive process, in which factors of attention and memory are vitally involved. Listening is far from being a passive skill. It involves cognitive processing in the construction of a message from phonic material. Sensing or segmenting, interrelating, rehearsing and a recording are some stages of listening.

Listening is a creative process. We are receiving linguistic and extra linguistic input as we listen, but what we extract from the situation, is a message. The speaker has a meaning to convey that is expressed in a
certain arrangement of words uttered with an intentional intensity and rise and fall of the voice. The listener understands the meaning influenced by some factors.

As much as listening is the foundation of formal education, it is also the foundation of language acquisition. The four related activities of listening already mentioned in this extract are sensing, interpreting, evaluating and responding. Sensing means taking in messages verbally and non-verbally. Interpreting refers to the process and understanding. Evaluating involves sorting fact from opinion and agreeing or disagreeing with the speaker. Responding refers to the use of verbal and non-verbal cues as a reaction to a message.

Dunkel (1986) indicates that “the goal (the development of communicative competence, and oral fluency) is achieved by putting the horse (listening comprehension) before the cart (oral production). In other words the key to achieving proficiency in speaking is developing proficiency in listening comprehension.

1.7 What is listening?

Many researchers have resorted to give typical definitions of reading comprehension taking into account the listening process. Lundsteen (1979) defined listening as “the process by which spoken language is converted to meaning in the mind”. Listening is more than simply hearing or perceiving aural stimuli and more than mere comprehension.

Wolvin and Coakley (1982) defines the process of listening as “the process of receiving, attending to and assigning meaning to aural stimuli”. The first level of listening is sound recognition. Obviously a student will be unable to make any sense at all of what he hears if he cannot recognize the distinctive sounds and the different intonation
patterns. It is important that the students can only observe a certain amount of information content of words at any given time. Redundancy is also another factor, which is useful to remember the information content.

Anderson (1986) has identified three stages of listening process perception, parsing and utilization. During the perceptual phase, language learners focus on the sounds of language and store them in their echoic memory. Listeners almost immediately begin the process sounds for the meaning making use of contextual information.

During the parsing phase, listeners use words and phrases to construct meaningful representations. They recognize the information as meaningful units that can be stored in short-term memory. The size of the chunk that listeners retain depends on several factors, including knowledge of language, knowledge of topic and quality of the signal.

In the final phase or utilization phase the listeners probe long-term memory to connect what they hear with what they already know. Stored information is in the form of schemata. They must therefore rely on the quantity of their background knowledge.

Listening instruction should play an important role in oral communication curricula because high school and college students are expected to enroll in lecture-centered courses. Within most classroom settings, listening serves as a primary channel for learning. Listening process happens with due consideration even from simple conversation to academic debates. It has a primary role to play in the teaching of ESL oral communication. For advanced students, ESL listening instruction should incorporate curricular purposes presently advocated for L1 learners eg. listening in order to emphasize, to evaluate, to enjoy, to
analyze, to criticize and to take written notes ( Wolff, Marsinik, Tacey and Nichols, 1983).

Prior to the 1970s, it was common for listening to be characterised as a receptive language skill in which listeners were pictured as passively assimilating the messages presented to them by speakers (Morley, 1984).

As information transmission models of communication have superseded by interactional, cybernetic and transactional frames of reference, a new paradigm is emerging (Berko, Wolvin & Wolvin, 1981; Brown G., 1987). Effective L2 listeners better use inferencing, self-monitoring, and elaboration strategies than do less effective L2 listeners (Murphy, 1987; O’ Malley, Chamot & Kupper, 1989). Listening is thus a creative activity that can be analyzed and described.

1.8 Listener function

The first and most important task element is listener function. Because listening can be associated with speaking as a conversational skill, the speaking functions are sometimes associated with listening (Gunterman and Phillips, 1986 p.17).

Listener function may be defined as, “the aspect of the message listener attempts to process”. Six listener functions noted are: identification, orientation, main idea comprehension, detail comprehension, full comprehension and replication. These can give both the teacher and the learner a sense of clarity and direction in listening activities.
Identification:

This incorporates such terms as recognition and discrimination. But identification can be an appropriate function at the highest levels of proficiency if the focus is on form rather than content. Examples are: Recognizing familiar words, looking for categories of words such as personal names, place names, or fool words, discriminating between minimal phonemic pairs and intonation patterns, between singular, plural, between present and past tense.

Orientation:

This involves determining facts about the text, including such message externals as participants, their roles, the situation or context, the general topic, the emotional tone, the genre and perhaps even the speaker function. Orientation is essentially "turning in" to or preparing to process the message, some of the information may come from the visual context or non-linguistic acoustical context. Examples are: Determining news broadcast, argument between a man and a woman, conversation and radio ad. etc.

Main idea comprehension:

It typically distinguishes the intermediate listener from the novice. This function involves actual comprehension of the message. It depends mainly on recognizing vocabulary by means of live, filmed and videotaped texts. Eg: weather report, travelogue, directions to a place, summarize lecture and radio ad.

Detail comprehension:

It focuses on getting specific information, what one is listening for or the facts can be details in support of main idea. Examples are: Following instructions, departure times and the platform numbers for several trains, finding out the reason for what may happen after some time.
Full Comprehension:

This involves one's interest in the whole message, main idea plus the details. It has a higher proficiency than one is limited to main idea or facts. Understanding interview questions, note taking a lecture, flash news, story, radio ad etc., are some examples.

Replication:

Main objective of this is to reproduce the message in same or different modality as in oral repetition, dictation or transcription. The listener's attention is focused on fidelity, depth of comprehension and meaningful processing. It means a different way of attending tot the text. Examples: class room dictation, taking phone message, interpret role-playing and transcribing the script.

1.9 Listener response

Listener response is primarily of pedagogical importance. Listener response is defined as what the listener does to demonstrate successful listening. The listener response categories are the following:


1.10 Listening Comprehension

Some teachers believe that comprehension means understanding every word. This misunderstanding on the part of the teacher can percolate through the student. Listening comprehension, like reading, is an encoding operation and faced with the problem of comprehending oral texts, many learners turn to "aural reading" or applying the same strategy that they use while reading. Anticipation or expectation is an essential feature of the ultra-rapid aural-comprehension process.
Listening comprehension is not normally a major focus in language class. Gilman and Moody (1984) attribute foreign language educators, “Lack of ardour in embracing a comprehension approach” to one or more of the following reasons.

1. It is not a neat methodology with skills and plans outlined clearly in a text book
2. The “speaking” of target language, rather than “understanding” is considered to be the primary goal of L2 instruction.
3. Developing listening competence not only reduces precious time available for speaking, but goes against the common the commonsense notion of learning “from simple to difficult”
4. In first language instructions listening comprehension is considered to be a “given” something that will somehow develop “naturally”
5. Language teachers used to tend to teach what they have been taught. As students, they had grammar classes, conversation classes and literature classes but not classes for “understanding the spoken word”.

Omaggio(1986) states that whether or not Krashen’s assertions – that comprehensive input is the primary source of acquisition of the grammar and vocabulary of the target language. (Krashen 1985) is acceptable or not.

Listening comprehension materials should be authentic. They should be prepared with due care and attention. These materials are of the two types. 1. Unidirectional and 2. Bidirectional (Zorzi – Calo 1984). The first type refers to announcements, taped messages, radio programs, monologues and lectures. These texts are non-interactive texts. The second type reflects interactional activities like conversation or interviews.
1.11 Types of listening
Galvin (1985) identifies categories of listening, with due general purpose.

1. Transactional listening – learning new information (speeches, debates, political conventions)
2. Interactional listening – recognizing personal component of message (new piece of speech, report)
3. Critical listening – evaluating reasoning and evidence (news broadcast)
4. Recreational listening – appreciating random or integrated aspects of event
5. Listening for appreciation – information, making critical discrimination or selection
6. Selective listening – selecting certain features at a time (phonetic features)
7. Intensive listening – for details (vocabulary, grammar)
8. Extensive listening – general idea (stories, rhymes, songs)

Some of the types of listening may be illustrated here.

1.11.1 Listening for appreciation
It can increase our enjoyment through radio and TV programs. Listening to these will not help to decrease the tension in our daily life, but will also enlarge our experiences and expand the range of what we enjoy. Close attention will enable us to increase our own use of language.
1.11.2 Listening for information

The speeches of candidates for public office, political debates and proceedings at political conventions etc., presented on television practically carry information pertaining to national and world level affairs. Through informative listening we can find the answers to the problems, get directions, hear news of current interest and get the opinions of others. It provides food for conversation and examples for the expansion of ideas, speeches, letters and in other writings.

1.11.3 Critical listening

The critical listener must remain objective. He should not be moved by emotions or subjective feelings. He should judge on the basis of information and facts. Critical listening involves discriminatory facts from opinion; detecting prejudice and bias; sensing the speaker's purpose. The term "Critical listening" means a questioning attitude, analysis and judgment of spoken material equivalent to "critical reading" of written material.

1.11.4 Selective listening

The technique of selective listening consists fundamentally in listening only to certain features at a time. One should listen for only one feature or set of features at a time. Then one should listen successively to all the features of a language. It should be systematic. The features of selective listening are:

(a) Phonetic features (only vowel sounds are audible)
(b) Vocabulary (c) Grammar (i.e., morphology and syntax.)

1.11.5 Extensive listening

Stories, rhymes, songs and jingles, television advertisements, poems, fairy tales and legends are given for extensive listening. Through extensive listening, plenty of opportunity is given to develop
and exercise one's listening skill in a natural way. The listener will be following the meaning simply because he is interested in getting the information or getting enjoyment.

1.11.6 Intensive listening

If the teacher wants to train the listeners to have the ability for detailed comprehension of meaning and to get them to particular features of language such as vocabulary, grammar or pronunciation they must train the listeners in intensive listening practice.

1.12 Listening comprehension process

Jack C. Richards (1990) draws two way process of teaching listening comprehension, bottom-up and top-down processing. Bottom-up process is the use of incoming data as a source of information about the meaning of the message. Top-down process is the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message. The processing levels are as follows.

![Diagram of Top-down and Bottom-up processing]

Fig: 1 Interaction of Top-down and Bottom-up processing

INTERACTIONAL

TRANSACTIONAL
1.13 Listener Understanding:

The listener has to interpret the language and images in each news item and construct a representation of these items in memory.

The listener has to construct an interpretation of the 'task instructions" (the questions) which specify what kind of response is required.

The listener has to understand how to relate what is required by the task to the type of language input (i.e. how much information to include in the answer to the question about the new item, how much additional information to draw into each answer, how to present that information. The listener has to produce a task response verbalization of understanding is always 'targeted' at an audience.

Fig 2: Verbalization of text representation

1.14 Listening comprehension activities

1. Using games involving miming of words and phrases to be learned.
2. Listening to conversation facilitation dialogues, songs or poems already learned.
3. Listening to retelling of stories already read, reacting in some way to the variations to the original.
4. Listening to a conversation.
5. Listening to an anecdote based on reading materials studied.
6. Listening to some background information on a topic given by the teacher and then telling an anecdote or describing an experience.
7. Listening to aural discrimination of features of rapid spoken style, regional accents and levels of language, through listening to authentic tapes, films, radio broadcasts or plays.
8. Listening in social situations with friends, colleagues, strangers and telephone conversations face to face.
9. Listening to formal academic situational material-interactions what is said in tutorials, seminars and lectures.

1.15 Comprehension skill development

The development of listening comprehension involves making the students understand
1. Individual words and numbers through number discrimination. Bingo game and flash cards are stimulating ways for younger students though these they can easily improve their comprehension of numbers.
2. In order to improve the new vocabulary they can follow instructions, checking comprehension – true or false and identification. The teacher can also give minimal pairs (drawings of objects or events).
3. To identify and understand sentences the students can adopt the following
   (a) Giving physical response  (b) Executing orders (rapid commands to students) (c) Drawing pictures (d) Pantomime (audio-motor unit. A series of directions on tape played by teacher, the students act out the instructions). (e) Using the magnetic board. (f) Using flannel boards and games.
4. Charades-games played by boys against girls. Scorekeeper marks the point for each person who correctly acts.

5. Following longer instructions.
   (a) Using visual cards  (b) Dialog posters  (c) Cue cards (yes or no)
   (d) Wall charts  (e) Clock with movable hands (f) Picture sets.  (e) Sequence events- (Detective serial events are read)  (g) Giving native language equivalents.

6. Hearing structure signals,
   (a) Listening for number  (b) Noun markers  (c) Verb forms

7. Listening for genders (noun markers)

8. Pronouns (Personal pronouns, object, verb, tenses, identifying subject and object)

9. Listening to unfamiliar materials.
   (a) Identifying the language  (b) Using lesson tapes, radio broadcasts
   (c) Anticipating sentence completion  (d) Listening to stories-visuals-
      using an illustrated story book  (e) Using gestures, reading aloud and
      listening to news casts

    (a) Passages prepared by the teacher.
    (b) Pantomime, definitions, eavesdropping, providing titles and guiding listening.

11. Listening for communication to a recorded announcement commercially recorded passages.

12. Taking directions and questions, writing questions on board, True-False, multiple choice, dittoed work sheets.

13. Understanding colloquial speech.
1.16 Translation as a strategy:
The listeners always seek on-line translation (OLT) in their attempts to understand. Translation is a learning strategy in listening comprehension but it "is generally accepted as a highly inefficient strategy". (O'Malley et. al, 1985). However, complexity and length of oral texts force the eventual abandonment of this strategy.

OLT appears to be an obvious, natural and deliberate step to take. The listeners' need to understand is paramount and their knowledge is limited. The psychological and pedagogical factors are the reasons for adopting OLT.

As Nagle and Sanders (1986) point out "too much sub-division can overload the attention system, filtering out other items and causing a break-down in processing. This has been proved true in the text news broadcast. Inefficient teaching and learning and inefficient listening may cause faulty listening comprehension.

The All India Radio news broadcast is accessible to Indian students since they reflect the situations prevailing in India.

1.17 What is curriculum?
The curriculum provides content for the process and product. The content is the major factor which provides items of language that may be selected for the syllabus or curriculum design – topics included in reading, writing or speaking – the subject matter of linguistic interactions. Syllabus specification is the content and process of education (Bruner 1960).

"Facts, principles, laws and concepts are one kind of content; the process in which they can be used are another; the methods by which
these are learned are still another kind of content." (Parker and Rubin 1966:21) content specification has got form, meaning and use.


1.18 Listening comprehension in the L2 curriculum

In the present curriculum set up of the Tamilnadu Education Department, the higher secondary (plus one and plus two) text books are designed to impart the skill of listening comprehension through aural-oral and communication tasks. The textbook has been divided into three sections called prose, poetry and workbook.

In the third, workbook section, communication and other tasks are illustrated. In the preface of the course book, workbook is given for plus one section envisages a multi-skilled approach. Appropriacy and fluency in both oral and written expressions should be the ultimate goal of a language instructional course. A pioneering scheme has been suggested in the syllabus, another first again, to test the aural-oral and communicative skills of the learners.

It is also illustrated in the preface of the course book that the inevitable companion, the teacher's handbook, not only remains a compendium of suggestions in the matter of methodology and applicability but contains passages for listening comprehension, inclusion of which in this textbook would defeat its very purpose. So, the classroom teacher is requested to combine relevant and the skill-testing items in both the books during listening practice sessions.
The above passage explains the syllabus, which gives some importance to the listening skills. The curriculum should give more importance to impart the listening skill so that the students can develop their skill and memory.

The second paper of the E2 has got 80 marks for the writing skill and 20 marks for the testing of aural-oral communicative skill. Listening comprehension plays an important role but least consideration is given for the same by allotting only five marks.

The syllabus can chart the amount of skill to be imparted. Once the skill is developed, the teacher can look up the curriculum for the existing areas to be practiced. In the same way the teachers can collect files of "activities" to teach listening systematically.

The process of directly teaching listening skill along with practice throughout the curriculum provides a sound basis for the students to learn how to practice listening. When a listening area is identified as an ongoing part of the curriculum, listening becomes infused into the curriculum and the opportunities for regular practice are easily found (Weiss and clerico, 1981).

It is henceforth suggested that in future, more importance should be given for the development of listening comprehension skill, since it plays a major role in promoting all the other three skills.
1.19 Develop listening skill as a part of curriculum

It is suggested that the teacher should create his or her own listening curriculum based on the types of listening they actually do. They can also create their own “list of listening skills” by charting over a period of a week the variety of listening skills they use in their classroom. This list becomes the base for the curriculum.

This listening skill list may be organized into 3 categories.


These categories are not pre-developed but evolve simply from student activity. The teacher and the class, function as curriculum developers. They should find out which are to be given immediate attention and the time allotted to that area. The students' collected database is a source of information. Learners will become actively involved in a real decision making process. “Listening for directions” can be selected as the area that is in need of improvement. The development of the curriculum lies in the efficiency of language teaching program. The following phases of curriculum development enable the teacher to carry out the teaching-learning process. The phases are 1.Needs analysis 2.Goal setting 3. Syllabus design 4.Methodology and 5.Evaluation.

Acts of teaching are not simply directed acts, they are motivated acts. Content and methods are the salient features of a curriculum. The content consists of choice of objectives, both long-term and short-term. 'Methods' have to be related to the kinds of interaction we choose. The object of study is the adaptive power of teachers and learners observed in interaction with the forces. Methodology in curriculum is the
understanding and appropriate guidance of these adaptive powers, in relation to educational objectives.

1.20 Authentic listening materials

The listening texts should be authentic. In order to acquire a foreign language the learners should be motivated to use effective strategies to understand "authentic" aural input. The listening ability increases while they listen to authentic listening comprehension passages. Authentic listening materials are useful to all students and not just students whose level of English is advanced.

Authenticity of listening material leads to the type of student whose level of comprehension would be expected not far below the level of his or her linguistic skills. In terms of linguistic complexity authentic materials often go beyond the actual linguistic level, unless they feel difficult to accommodate them into the existing knowledge, lexical, syntactical and grammar and the syllabus chosen for their standard.

1.21 Using radio broadcasts

Radio offers a wide range of different types of materials that can be selectively exploited as part of a listening comprehension program.

The following are the advantages of using radio broadcasts:

1. They provide authentic material with topics often mark international relevance.
2. Provide opportunity for the selection of content that is most interesting and motivating.
3. Radio materials are "Current" involving the use of English to communicate in 'real' situations.
4. They are flexible with many possibilities for exploitation.

Disadvantages
1. Reception is difficult in particular areas.
2. Teacher's guidance-preparation is not time consuming.
3. The language may tend to differ. English stress and intonation may vary.
4. Broadcasts are non-interactional and listeners may avoid over response.

Anyhow, input material selected for LC practice may be of the following order:

- Creative – provoking the listener's capacity
- Interesting – both for cognitive and affective and for other activities.
- Fluency-focused -- bringing in accuracy of speech.
- Task-based -- no closed exercise activities.
- Problem-solving -- cognitive effort and meaningful interaction.
- Humanistic–Interrelate the informants with real people. Arouse interaction in their own experience.
- Learning-centred – Ensuring that the learning materials promote learning and help the students.

Our experience with regards to the use of audio materials drawn from radio broadcasts for listening comprehension shows that 80% of the students feel that such materials are useful though 20% feel that such materials are difficult. 20% of the students feel that radio materials are repetitive, dull and monotonous.
1.22 Previous studies on listening

1. The academic listening task a case study – Malcolm J. Benson (1989).
The findings lead to the idea that content based listening classes would be helpful in ESL preparatory programs and the guiding principles for the design of such courses are suggested.

2. Student perceptions, problems and strategies in second language lecture comprehension. - John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller (1992)

Some students were using appropriate strategies in trying to 'comprehend lectures. Learner should be encouraged to apply and develop these strategies further by means of some sort of learner strategy training.

3. Foreign Language Annals- Dec 1989
A Taxonomy for Teaching Second Language Listening.
- Randall J. Lund (1990)

This article describes taxonomy of real-world listening tasks as a conceptual framework for teaching listening. The key elements of the taxonomy are listener function and listener response. With regards to listening, the concept ‘function’ is defined as "the aspects of the message the listener attempts to process".

The six functions significant to second language teaching are identification, orientation, main idea comprehension, detail comprehension, full comprehension and replication. Listener response is also a key feature of any listening task.

4. Develop listening skills as a part of the curriculum.
- Deanna D.Winn (1988)
Children do not need to listen more, they need to listen better. Children need to learn how to think about and react to what they hear. The process of directly teaching a listening skill along with practice throughout the curriculum provides a sound basis for the student to learn how to listen and experience non-contrived opportunities for practice.

5. Learning to listen and comprehend: The beginning stages.
   - J.K Eastman (1991)

Here it is suggested with reasons why beginning students try to translate into L1 as they listen, even though this strategy is recognized as problematical. This text proposes some teaching techniques to avoid their adopting it.

6. Lip service: The contribution of the visual modality to speech perception and its relevance to the teaching and testing of foreign language listening comprehension
   - Susan Kellerman (1990)

Recent research into speech perception has drawn attention to the role played by vision in the listening process. The investigations have shown that vision is an integral part of the normal listening process, even when the message is intact, the implication of these findings for the teaching and testing of foreign language listening skills are considered.

7. The relationship between gender, comprehension processing strategies, and cognitive and affective response in foreign language listening.
The findings indicate the following: men and women adjusted their strategies differentially to the difficulty of the passages. The students must be made aware that not all tasks are equal and that strategy use should be evaluated for its effectiveness. Men and women judge their level of comprehension differently. Men are generally more confident than women.

   -Bruce Morrison (1989)

   This article subscribes to the view that authentic listening materials are useful to all students and not just students whose level of English is advanced. The broadcasts expose students to 'real' spoken English. Radio materials have the great advantages of being flexible, highly motivating and widely exploitable.

9. Facilitating listening comprehension through Rate-Control.
   - Roger Griffiths (1989)

   This paper briefly describes L1 and L2 research on temporal variables relevant to facilitating listening comprehension. Rate-Control can become an extremely helpful technique.

10. The power of listening ability: An overloaded dimension in language acquisition.
    -Carine M.Feyton (1991)
This study suggests a positive relationship between listening ability and foreign language acquisition. Listening ability also contributed more to the predictability of FL proficiency than did identical variables such as sex, 'length of previous language exposure' and 'contact with the language'.

11. 'I see what you mean' the role of Kinesic Behaviour in listening and implications for foreign and second language learning.

   -Susan Kellerman (1992)

Kinesic behaviour (i.e. body movement) plays a significant role in communication, both in encoding and decoding. Evidence is reviewed and this demonstrates the importance of information derived from kinesic behaviour to the activity of listening in the mother tongue.

12. Listening comprehension and the development of socio-pragmatic competence: A proposal for Italian as a second language

   -Marina Frescura (1991)

Listener's materials aim at developing learner's socio-pragmatic competence, that is the ability to use the language not only accurately, but also in a way appropriate to the context and the situation.

13. A Critique of Listening Comprehension

   -Haifa Al – Bunain (1989)

Exposing the students to what the authors call “the notional language” in a variety of different learning activities which includes reading, writing, listening and speaking, can improve the proficiency of the students.

- J. Michael O’malley, Anna UHL Chamot.

This study focused on the mental processes the second language learners’ use in listening comprehension. The phases of the comprehension process are perceptual processing, parsing and utilization. Three predominant strategies, which differentiated effective listeners from ineffective listeners were self – monitoring, elaboration and inferencing.

15. Perceived strategy use during performance on Three Authentic Listening Comprehension Tasks.

- Anita Vogely (1995)

If learners are aware of what is needed to learn effectively, then it is possible for them to take steps to meet the challenge of a performance task. Although students display the required knowledge and skills to listen and learn effectively, they either do not know when to use them or do not know how to use them.

16. Lexical Ignorance: The main obstacle to listening comprehension with advanced foreign language learners.

- Peter Kelly (1991)

Lexical ignorance is the major obstacle to lack of auditory comprehension. Foreign language vocabulary learning is the first step in this direction.