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ENHANCING LISTENING COMPREHENSION COMPETENCE: THEORETICAL PREMISES AND PROCEDURE

The article seeks to understand the intricate nature of listening comprehension, which largely depends on the specific features of spoken language. It proves that the effective listening process requires definite listening skills (recog-?ition, identification, and selection), and different types of knowledge. The obtained results indicate that the ways of processing incoming information fall into two broad categories: bottom-up and top-down. The former implies using knowledge about sounds and word meanings, which helps to assemble the understanding of what the learner hears. The latter derives from utilizing the listener's prior knowledge and their own experiences to comprehend the received input. The paper also reveals that a combination of live listening as well as extensive and intensive types of listening may appear fruitful in fostering oral comprehension competence. With the intention to demonstrate the practical validity of the exposed theoretical grounds, a corresponding methodology of shaping listening comprehension competence among students has been devised. The methodology encompasses three coherent stages (pre-listening, in-while listening, and after-listening), each of which is realized with a set of relevant activities that aim at simulating efficacious real-life communication. The proposed activities comprise semi-communicative and communicative tasks, which are elucidated and exemplified in the study.

Keywords*: alien auditory competence; listening skills; methodology of developing auditory competence; system of activities.*

Introduction. It is increasingly recognized that being one of the most crucial aspects of foreign language (FL) acquisition listening comprehension (LC) yet remains deficient in support; on the other hand, it is at the core of many debated issues in the areas of bilingual education and FL pedagogy. This can be accounted for by constant accumulating the data that prove the significance of LC. The evidence seems to be cogent that LC should be prioritized in the process of FL acquisition. Consequently, it will be plausible to premise that a considerable amount of research needs to be undertaken in this domain, since the generating interest in the subject under investigation still raises a sufficient number of controversies.

Purpose. This paper explores the general features of alien auditory competence–a key axis around which this study is formed. It also synopsizes the basic strategies of LC, which may promote gradual development of this integrated ability. Furthermore, the article demonstrates the succession of acquiring listening comprehension competence (LCC) by students of bilingual pedagogy and provides a system of diversified communicative and cognitive activities, devised specifically for this purpose. Next, it exhibits the results of the pedagogical experiment aimed at validating the efficacy of the constructed methodology and proposes implications for further research in this field.

Theoretical background. A number of scholars address the issue of LC and consider it from various angles and perspective. Specifically, O. Bigich, S. Brown, and G. Buck highlight the role of LC in FL acquisition; J. Field, K. Lems, N. Osada, and P. Ur generalize the basic features of LC as a complex automatic activity, which involves a set of skills (perception, recognition, comprehension, and processing); J. Gary, J. Miller, and O. Vovk establish the fundamentals of listening (auditory capacity, memory, attention, information analysis, probabilistic anticipation, and terminal synthesis); R. Blair, A. Case, T. Derwing, and O. Matsnyeva identify difficulties of LC (complexity of the input, conditions of listening, speaker's individual characteristics, the content of a message); M. Bingol, J. Rubin, and M. Wilt single out the strategies of enhancing LCC (metacognitive, socio-affective, and cognitive); J. Harmer, W. Rivers, L. Vandergift devise specific tasks and activities aimed at fostering LCC.

Statement of the Problem. Despite a substantial interest in the issue under discussion, most of the research in this field is aimed at solving one particular problem, which opens a perspective for a systematic investigation in the area. One way to solve this problem involves employing the communicative and cognitive approach, which implies developing not only receptive and productive skills and abilities of students but also their mental capacities. The basic principles of this approach are realized via corresponding methodology and activities proposed in this study.

Methods. The efficiency of the proposed framework and methodology was proven in a pedagogical experiment adapted for the students majoring in bilingual pedagogy (they were split up into experimental and control groups). The experiment was meant to expose how the designed methodology can promote achieving the high level of LCC. In the course of preparation for the experiment, it was hypothesized that obtaining a sought-for level of LCC was possible provided that the process of teaching English communication were built in accordance with the basic premises of the communicative and cognitive approach, and incorporated a system of corresponding activities specifically designed for this purpose.

The pivotal tasks of the experiment were: to single out the criteria for evaluating the initial and acquired levels of students' LCC; to devise pre-experimental and post-experimental tasks in order to objectively assess the acquired level of LCC; to conduct pre-experimental testing aiming at establishing the initial level of students' LCC. The level of acquired LCC was assessed pursuant to the worked out criteria (eliciting the meanings of the unfamiliar lexical units, performing the information analysis, identifying the logical sequence of the events in the text, anticipating the content of the text, elucidating the main idea of the input, briefing the gist of the perceived message). The criteria corresponded to the syllabus of the English language for universities and the relevant curriculum. The materials for pre- and post-experimental testing were analyzed and assessed according to the singled out criteria. That enabled objectivity in determining a level of students' LCC before and after the training. The activities that comprised pre- and post-experimental testing were communicative and cognitive in nature and devised on authentic teaching materials.

The results of the experimental training in LC revealed positive dynamics of advancing students' FL proficiency in general and their LCC in particular. The positive results of the pedagogical experiment exposed a sufficient progress in acquiring the sought-for level of LCC and displayed a considerable rise of communicative and cognitive skills and abilities of the learners. The level of their LCC increased from 72 to 94 points. The increase in the qualitative index of acquired LCC in experimental groups on average amounted 22 points.

The experimental training demonstrated the efficiency of the constructed methodology. The results were obtained through numerous communication activities, quizzes, the viva voce and written examination taken by the students of experimental groups, and through questionnaires filled out by the learners who attended the training course and participated in the experiment.

Results and Discussion. This section of an article examines the complex nature of auditory comprehension. It defines LC as a receptive and cognitive process and singles out the main characteristic features of this specific activity.

According to current research on oral comprehension, adults spend 40–50% of communication time listening. It means that students are involved in this activity more often than in other forms of oral communication inside and outside the classroom [1, p. 3]. However, in most of the previous studies LC has frequently been viewed as a secondary skill necessary for FL acquisition. Anyway, due to the results of the investigations carried out recently, LC is now recognized as the most important aspect of the process of learning a FL.

Authoritative scholars J. Asher, J. Brown, H. Byrnes, R. Carver, B. Goss, S. Graham, R. Lund, J. Morley, J. Richards, R. Steinberg, L. Vandergrift et alt. provided an integrated view and a diversified definition of auditory comprehension, identifying it as a complex, active process of interpretation, in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know [2], the ability of one individual perceiving another individual via sense, aural organs, assigning a meaning to the message and comprehending it [3, p. 54], and a highly complex problem-solving activity [4, p. 2].

To better penetrate into the nature of LC, it is essential to singularize the specific features of spoken language. This should be done in order to avoid the potential difficulties, which may arise during oral language comprehension. Firstly, speech is time-bound, dynamic and transient: the spontaneity, real-time nature of spoken language and its speed may hinder the process of understanding, since it is not always possible to listen to the text several times in order to better comprehend it. Moreover, the participants are likely to rely on such extralinguistic clues as a facial expression and a gesture. Secondly, perception and comprehension of aural speech requires its automatic processing: it means that the listening procedure must be almost entirely automatic, which enables speech understanding [2]. Finally, spoken language differs from written language by its stylistic coloring and the usage of particular elements, such as slang, dialects, contracted forms and the like [3, p. 59]. On balance, the above mentioned factors may complicate the process of LC.

Though it might seem self-evident, the ability of LC which is acquired more or less unconsciously in the native language (just by being around and interacting with people who speak it) encompasses a number of complex skills that are mastered without considerable attention to it. Thus, among high level skills of LC the following may be distinguished [5, pp. 49–51]: the ability to indicate which spoken sounds are meaningful parts of language and which are not; the phonological awareness (the ability to recognize the sounds of speech); the ability to detect key words, such as those identifying topics and ideas as well as sentence constituents: the subject, the predicate, the object, prepositions, and the like; the recognition of the reduced forms of words, typical word-order patterns, vocabulary, grammatical word classes, basic syntactic patterns and cohesive devices; the ability to recognize the stress and intonation patterns of English words.

Once LC skills are identified and LC is defined as an active process, it is relevant to consider the types of knowledge used in listening. Analyzing how the language comprehension system works, researchers indicate that in this process both linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge is involved. The former may be of different types, but among the most important ones are phonology, lexis, syntax, semantics and discourse structure. The latter is knowledge about the world and how it works [6, p. 18].

Complementary to the aforementioned there has been much debate about how knowledge can be applied to the incoming sound, and in the forefront of the polemic two most authoritative views can be traced: the bottom-up view and the top-down view, elaborated by L. Vandergrift [2, p. 170]. Specifically, **bottom-up** processing means that using the information about sounds and word meanings helps to assemble the understanding of what the learner hears. However, there are some serious problems with the suggested view, since processing different types of knowledge does not occur in a fixed sequence, but rather simultaneously, in any convenient order. In **top-down** processing it is assumed that the learner utilizes his prior knowledge and his own experiences to understand new information. In fact, these types of knowledge are capable of interacting and influencing each other. The point is that LC is the result of an interaction between a number of information sources, which include the acoustic input, different types of linguistic knowledge, details of the context, and general world knowledge. It is apparent, that it is most appropriate to consider the

process of listening as interactions between top-down and bottom-up processing.

It is worthwhile to examine the kinds of listening, which assist students to gain valuable language input. Turning to J. Harmer, one finds out that LC is the combination of extensive and intensive listening material. These both types are especially important since they provide the perfect opportunity to hear voices other than the teacher's, enable students to acquire strong speech habits as a result of spoken English they absorb, and help to improve their own pronunciation [7, p. 228].

Commonly, ***extensive listening*** (where a teacher encourages students to choose for themselves what they are going to listen to and do so for pleasure and general language improvement) can have a dramatic effect on a student's FL learning. The data indicate that the motivational power of such an activity increases drastically, and this fact should not be underestimated. The material for extensive listening can be found from a number of sources: audio versions of books, recordings of authentic materials (such as songs, short videos or films), and audio course books. In order to foster extensive listening, teachers can have students perform various tasks, for instance: *to fill in the report forms listing the topic, to summarize the content of the recording, to write comments on cards or a student web site*, in other words–to give students more reasons to listen [7, p. 229].

Another type of listening which is prevalent in the classroom–***intensive listening***–usually requires employing taped materials. The issue that needs to be addressed here is the number of times the listening material can be replayed. This remains a perennial problem and scholars view the question differently. So, if the students are to get the maximum benefit from a listening, then the text should be replayed two or more times [8, p. 305]. J. Field suggests that students profit more from a lot of listening rather than from a long pre-listening phase followed by only one or two exposures to the listening text [9, p. 58]. Nevertheless, multiple listening is beneficial when teaching only writing or speaking, but proves harmful when it comes to the development of LC. P. Ur rightfully points out that in real life discourse is rarely repeated, and suggests, therefore, that one of the tasks is to encourage students to get as much information as it is possible from a single hearing [10, p. 108]. However, a popular way of ensuring genuine communication is ***live listening*** where the teacher and/or the visitors talk to the students. Live listening can take the following forms [7, p. 231] (1) the teacher's reading aloud (it allows to

hear the spoken version of written text, and can be extremely enjoyable if the teacher does it with conviction and style); (2) story-telling (at any stage of the story students can be requested to predict what is coming next, or be asked to describe people in the story, or pass comment on it in some other way); (3) interviews (quite a motivating activity since students themselves think up the clarification questions and, consequently, are eager to listen for answers); (4) conversations (inviting colleagues to come to one's class and hold a conversation with them–about English or any other subject; students then have a chance to watch the interaction as well as listen to it).

Besides audio materials students can also listen while watching film clips on video, DVD or online. Especially fruitful may appear news bulletins, since they provide learners with both social experience and authentic language. In the first place, while watching, students see 'language in use' with the whole lot of paralinguistic behavior. In the second place, students associate the process of watching something with watching a film at home. This brings relaxation, so English instructors should provide students with enough viewing and listening tasks so that they give their full attention to what they are hearing and seeing. Finally, it is worth remembering that students can watch a huge range of film clips on the Internet, finding something up to their age and taste [8, p. 308]. The indications are therefore that the combination of the described above types of listening is likely to turn out to be the most appropriate way to encourage students to listen.

In conclusion, it is evident that LC is predominant in the process of FL acquisition. Even though LC was not recognized as a sufficient facet of language learning in the past, now its relevance is taken into account by many scholars. It is true, that listening is vital in language learning since it provides input for the learner. Yet, despite a gradually increasing acceptance of it, LC remains the field, where much work remains to be done.

The comprehensive methodology, which encompasses definite interrelated stages and a well-rounded system of specialized activities for enhancing LCC is discussed in the second section of this study.

In order to develop LCC students are supposed to progress through definite stages. O. Vovk provides a lucid division of activities to be accomplished at different phases of work with an audio text. Commonly, this procedure encompasses three coherent **stages** [11, p. 203]: 1) pre-listening: listening with a purpose, brain storming, and preparing for fur-

ther activities; 2) in-while listening: the actual process of listening; 3) after-listening: checking the understanding of the received information and preparing for speaking. Before describing the specificity of mental and communicative operations of each stage, it is pertinent to emphasize that the teacher should first assess the students' listening skills and then provide them with appropriate assignments. To evaluate students' skills, after listening to the text the suggested tests might be congruous:

– *Name some facts you remember from the text.*

– *Summarize the main ideas of the information.*

– *Formulate the thesis of the received message.*

– *Brief the gist of the text.*

– *You will hear the radio interview about high-achieving teenagers. For questions 1-10 complete the given sentences.*

– *You will hear five different people talking about their jobs. Do the multiple choice test.*

Now it would be logical to go on to specify in a cursory way the stages of developing LCC. The first–**pre-listening**–stage implies equipping the students with preliminary instructions as to the text perception, identifying the subject matter of the text, overcoming difficulties that teacher-trainees may encounter while receiving the incoming information (e.g. checking the understanding of sentences containing polysemantic words, idioms, and tricky phrases; explaining unknown grammatical structures used in the text; listening to and translating the isolated fragments of the text, etc.).

It is relevant to highlight at this phase the importance of the introductory pre-listening instructions aimed at providing students with motivational and organizational setting for a certain activity. C. Paulston maintains that motivation before listening is of primary significance [12, p. 67]. Among others, the instructions that motivate the students may include the complete or partial understanding of the received information, listening to and memorizing certain chunks of the text, inferring the meanings of the words and phrases from the context et alt. The most typical tasks for the pre-listening stage may encompass the following:

– *introducing new vocabulary with its further explanation and illustrative exemp-?ification;*

– *practicing unknown or complicated grammatical structures used in the text;*

– *drilling phonetically complicated phrases from the audio text;*

– *thematic and structural grouping the lexical stuff contained in the text (root-words, derivatives, compounds, etc.);*

– putting different types of questions to the most intricate sentences, hard in linguistic respect;

– entitling the received text;

– elucidating the content of the text by the title, key words or pictures

At this stage the learners may also use KWL charts (K stands for *know*, W–*want to know*, and L–*learn*). Students have to fill in these charts before listening marking the facts they already know about the topic under discussion, their expectations after listening, and the acquired information [13]. Before listening to the text students should be informed as to the ways their answers will be checked and assessed. These ways may incorporate multiple-choice tests, cloze-tests (reproducing or contributing the information); making up the plan of the text, providing key words to the text etc. In either case, the variety of pre-listening assignments and tasks to monitor the understanding of the received message is rather ample. Consequently, their choice depends to a great extent on the purpose of listening.

As demonstrated by the recent study, a significant effect on how successfully cognizing subjects listen is reached due to the background knowledge they are given. Overwhelmingly, whether students are 'high- or low-proficiency' listeners, their academic performance is more effective in case they get some topic which helps them in making the sense of listening. Complementary to this, some scholars believe that activating students' schemata proves even better than either letting them preview questions or teaching them some key vocabulary before they listen [14, p. 383].

The next–***in-while listening***–stage is the actual process of listening to the alien audio message. Here either the whole text or separate blocks of it are listened to. The number of deliveries may vary, but in order to maintain students' interest in the message, diversified activities should be implemented. The assignments to them may comprise:

– listening to the text and completing the sentences;

– listening to the text and singling out without any alterations the word combi-?ations, which were used in it;

– listening to the audio and providing equivalents for some words or phrases;

– entitling the heard parts of the text;

– reconstructing the text with the help of key words or phrases;

– paraphrasing the received information;

– following the given instructions (e.g. to add the details; to pinpoint the direction on the map; to complete the chart or scheme; to specify the key points in the text);

– finding the discrepancy between the written and the audio texts;

– identifying the peculiar features of characters, conditions, speaker's attitudes etc.;

– completing/reproducing/amplifying the statements;

– filling in the gaps.

In accordance with K. McCaughey, special emphasis should be placed on active listening, which definitely will increase the effectiveness of LC. This type of listening may encompass: correlating ideas, events, people, and places; paying attention to the equivocal and ambiguous words, and vague ideas; making anticipations and confirming or dismissing them; listening "between the lines", making conclusions concerning the implied information; forming personal judgments as to the received message [15, p. 10]. Similarly, the idea is postulated that students' note-taking skills might be developed during the listening process. Naturally, note-taking strategies are not universal since they strongly depend on the individual psychophysiologic features of a student. Still, three key rules of note-taking can be put forward: a) to select the core information; b) to make short notes using the common acronyms, abbreviations and symbols; c) to define the relations between the events, their main actors and objects [11, p. 195; 15].

The final–***after-listening***–stage is aimed at examining the understanding of the text. The exercises to check the comprehension of the received information may incorporate three groups of assignments according to the level of their specification. These assignments are oriented at: 1) evaluating the depth of comprehension of the audio message; 2) the creative processing of the text; 3) employing the received information in various kinds of communication activities.

In its turn, the activities designed for monitoring students' understanding of the audio text may comprise such tasks as:

– accomplish true/false tasks;

– complete a multiple-choice test;

– do an alternative test (Yes/No);

– answer the questions;

– divide the text into the semantic parts;

– in brief reproduce the heard text;

– provide one's own opinion as to the problem raised in the text;

– continue, expand or amplify the text.

After the work with the audio text it is advisable to switch to other activities like speaking, reading, and writing. Equally essential is that the monitoring of text comprehension should enclasp every student of the group. It should start from simple forms and gradually proceed to more complicated ones

which require personal judgments, for example: *Characterize...; Explain why...; Account for...; Suggest your rationale as far as...; Speak PRO and CONTRA... .*

On balance, the process of listening as such incorporates three main stages: instruction, audio material presentation, and comprehension control. The thoroughness of preparation for listening stipulates the increase of effectiveness of perceiving the message. Therefore, it is apposite to take a closer look at the activities, which are to be implemented at each of the stages mentioned above.

A System of Activities for Developing Listening Comprehension Competence. According to J. Wilson, no language skill should be taught in isolation. That is why LC activities have to be related to the material being studied as oral practice or reading; it can also give an impetus for writing activities [16, p. 148]. Hence, the devised system of LC exercises is to provide: the correspondence between psychological and linguistic difficulties of LC; the possibility to combine listening with other kinds of activities (specifically, with speaking); managing and monitoring the development of students' listening skills; the successful fulfillment of the practical goal. Anyway, before the teacher can elaborate a sequence of activities which will train students in LC, he must penetrate into the nature of the developed skill. Listening to an alien message may be viewed as involving two levels of the activity, both of which must be taught [17, p. 142–143]. They require some specification. The first–**recognition**–level, involves identifying words and phrases in their structural interrelationships; time sequences; logical and modifying terms; and redundant phrases. Subsequently, it is only after the recognition of these general features has become automatic that students can be expected to reproduce or respond to what they have heard in a long sequence. At the second–**selection**–level, the listener is drawing out from the communication the elements which seem to express the purposes of the speaker or those which suit his own purposes. To be able to listen eventually with ease to a FL in natural situations, the student needs thorough training at the recognition level and much practice in selecting from a stream of sounds specific details of the message.

O. Vovk [11, p. 208–214] suggests the system of LC oriented e activities that can be used at both of the above-mentioned levels. In this system two subsystems can be singled out. **The first subsystem** encompasses preparatory activities for receiving and identifying sound and word combinations, intonation patterns of phrases, grammatical forms, etc. These activities are triple targeted, since they imply shaping phonetic, the lexical, and grammatical LC skills of students. The preparatory subsystem encompasses **non-communicative** and **semi-communicative** activities. Among them the following are to be distinguished:

1. Activities aimed at differentiating the sound or word forms. Commonly, such tasks train students in listening to the text carefully. Of great use here are the words which have a similar pronunciation, e.g.: *week–weak; meet–meat; hear–here; hair–hare; prey–pray; road–rode; plain–plane; pail–pale; herd–heard; no–know; write–right;* or where the pronunciation differs only in one sound e.g.: *write–ride; code–coat; now–no; wrote–road; leather–lather; hare–hear; coach–couch; must–mast; rid–read; Tim–team; glass–grass; bird–beard*. The tasks to the exercises may be as follows: *Listen to the pairs of words. When you hear the slightest difference in their pronunciation, raise up your hand.*

2. Activities focused on differentiating the meaning of a phrase/sentence according to the logical stress. The teacher reads aloud the same phrase several times, each time with a different logical stress; the students have to continue the phrase, adding a relevant element. Exercises of this kind train students to foresee the speech flow with the employment of prosodic means, e.g.:

– *Teacher: He didn't lose his new `hat. Students: He lost his gloves.*

– *Teacher: He didn't lose his `new hat. Students: He lost his old hat.*

– *Teacher: He didn't `lose his new hat. Students: He gave it to his father.*

– *Teacher: He didn't lose `his new hat. Students: He lost his father's new hat.*

3. Activities for differentiating the communicative types of sentences: 1) *Listen to the sentences and raise up your hand when you hear an interrogative / imperative / negative sentence.* 2) *Listen to the sentences and say how many interrogative, imperative and negative sentences you've heard.*

4. Activities for differentiating the paronyms. In such activities, paronymous pairs of words are to be selected, e.g.: *economical–economic; historical–historic; sensitive–sensible; envious–enviable; credible–credulous; judicial–judicious; genial–genius*. The tasks can be of such kind: 1) *Listen to the sentences and fill in the gaps in them with the appropriate words in the box.* 2) *Listen to the words and differentiate between homonyms and paronyms.*

5. Activities for eliciting the meanings of the derived and complex words. The tasks to these exercises may incorporate the

following: *Guess the positive or negative differences in meanings of the words by their morphological elements. Translate the given words. Fill in the gaps in the sentences using the most appropriate words:*

1) *understand–misunderstand–understandable; mistake–mistaken– unmistaken; establish–establishment; satisfaction–satisfactory–unsatisfactory; comprehend–comprehension–comprehensible–incomprehensible–incomprehensibility; sympathy–sympathetic–sympathetically–unsympathetic;*

2) *Disneyland; blacklist; daydream; babysitter; honeymoon; cowboy; spaceship; handicraft; tradesman; mother-of-pearl; playmate; pickpocket; mind-reader; spoon-feed; second-guess.*

6. *Activities for guessing or elucidating the meanings of the unfamiliar lexical units*. The possible tasks to be used here are as follows:

– *listen to the homonyms in the sentences and define their meaning;*

– *listen to the synonyms in the sentences and define their meaning;*

– *listen to the sentences with polysemantic words and define the shades of their meanings;*

– *listen to the sentences and define those which differ only in one word in the same position.*

7. *Activities for understanding the phrases with the unknown polysemantic lexical units*: *Listen to the sentences and translate them paying attention to the difference in the meanings of the word "break":*

– ***Break*** *in the weather surprised everyone.*

– *We didn't know we* ***were breaking*** *the law.*

– *I hate* ***to break*** *my promise.*

– *Mary* ***broke*** *into laughter.*

– *The FBI* ***broke*** *his alibi.*

– *She was once best friend to Mary, but* ***broke*** *with her last year.*

– *This winter* ***broke*** *the record for snowfall.*

8. *Activities for understanding the phrases with the multifunctional grammatical structures*: *Listen to the sentences and differentiate in which cases the verbs "would" and "have" are notional, modal or auxiliary.*

– *The boy promised he* ***would*** *come on time (Future-in-the-Past).*

– *I* ***would*** *not come if I were you (Mood auxiliary).*

– *Peter asked his friend about his plans for the future but he* ***wouldn't*** *answer (Modal verb).*

– *"You* ***have to have*** *an idea of what you are going to do, but it should be a vague idea"* (***Pablo Picasso).***

– *He* ***had*** *his watch repaired.*

– *Usually we* ***have*** *tea at 5 p.m.*

9. *Activities for identifying the communicative nucleus of a sentence*:

– *Listen to the sentences and identify the subject and the predicate in them:*

– *We expected Peter to come over for dinner tonight.*

– *Everybody enjoyed Baryshnikov's dancing.*

– *Have you ever been to the USA?*

– *But I am sure your father will believe that you were at school.*

– *We are having a party tomorrow night.*

– *She was giddy with a mixture of excitement and fear.*

– *Then we'll call you up for the recitation.*

– *Why didn't I escape when I could?*

10. *Activities for locating the parts of a sentence*: *Listen to the sentences and identify the border between the principal and subordinate clauses:*

– *After dripping mustard all over his chest, Charles who was wearing a red shirt wished that he had instead chosen ketchup for his hotdog.*

– *Mr. Brown looked as if he had not slept for many nights.*

– *The company did pay Mark's travel expenses, although he turned down the job.*

– *Because her teeth were chattering in fear Lynda clenched her jaw muscle while waiting for her turn to audition.*

11. *Activities for denoting the meanings of the elements in a syntagma*: *to .... the piano (play); to .... some guests (expect); to ...... for a bus (wait); to ...... the morning reading a newspaper (spend); to .... at one's watch (glance); to .... into the real world (go out); to .... one's money on trifles (waste).*

12. *Activities for developing the speech mechanisms of LC*. These may comprise several groups:

A.   To enhance auditory hearing:

– *listen to the sentences pronounced fluently and define whether they correspond to those written on the cards;*

– *listen to the sentences and mark those which do not correspond to the contents of the text;*

– *listen to the sentences, pronounced fluently; put them down into your notebooks; then listen to the same sentences pronounced slowly and check up whether you've written them correctly;*

– *listen to several coherent sentences: in the list of words tick off those which you will hear in the word combinations of these sentences;*

– *listen to the group of sentences and mark personal names you will hear;*

– *listen to the sentences and imitate the actions mentioned in them.*

B. <u>To foster aural memory and attention</u>:

– *listen to the dates and telephone numbers: reproduce them from memory;*

– *listen to the words and word combinat,-ons, and reproduce them in the original order;*

– *listen to the broken parts of a sentence, connect them to make a coherent whole, and reproduce the sentence;*

– *listen to two phrases and identify what is missing/new in the second phrase;*

– *listen to the announcement and fill in the gaps in the script of it;*

– *listen to a number of words and name those, which are related to the given topic;*

– *compare the sentences written on the card with those pronounced by the speaker, and identify lexical and grammatical differences in them.*

C. <u>To develop the ability of anticipation</u>:

– *listen to the beginnings of the words and finish them;*

– *match the attributes with the given nouns;*

– *make up possible word combinations using given nouns and adjectives, or verbs and adverbs;*

– *listen to the words from the text you are going to listen to and try to guess its title/theme;*

– *listen to the beginnings of the word combinations and finish them;*

– *listen to the riddle and try to guess it;*

– *listen to the description of a person and define his/her occupation;*

– *listen to the title and guess what the text is about;*

– *listen to the beginning of the story and guess what it is about;*

– *listen to the phrases and define in what situations they might be used.*

D. <u>To cultivate the ability to perform the information analysis</u>:

– *listen to the sentence and identify the key words in it;*

– *listen to the phrases and define how they are related to each other;*

– *listen to the passage and identify the key sentence in it;*

– *listen to the passage and define whether it was the beginning or the end of the text.*

It should be emphasized that the information analysis plays a significant role in developing LCC, since students are able to anticipate speaker's line of thought. Thus, it is expedient to acquaint them with the most frequently used phrases in a targeted FL. Also essential is the ability to differentiate between the indirect and literal meanings of the message, hence, exercises of such kind

should be included in the devised system as well.

The second subsystem encompasses solely communicative activities, which [11, p. 213–214]: 1) provide listening practice based on the integrated overcoming of auditory difficulties; 2) imply the comprehension of the input in conditions, similar to those of natural communication; 3) are aimed at perfecting sense perception and achieving a definite level of understanding of the received message. The second subsystem of activities ensures developing listening skills. It embodies semi-communicative and communicative receptive exercises. ***Semi-communicative activities*** suggest listening to the messages like directions, weather forecast, advertisements, questions, airport information, commercials, sport news fragments, current news, etc. on the super-phrasal level, whereas communicative exercises function on the text level.

In its turn, ***communicative activities*** facilitate students' abilities to foresee the content of the message, specify the core information, find the secondary details, establish cause-consequence relations, focus on characters, their actions and specific features, follow the logical sequence of the events, and stick to it when reproducing the text. Another essential point here is the correlation of auditory comprehension with speaking (as they are both the types of aural speech), and LC with reading (for they are two types of receptive activity).

Among the group of communicative exercises the following may be differentiated:

*1. **Activities for identifying the logical sequence of the events in the text***:

– *listen to the text and define the actions of the main character in the logical fashion;*

– *listen to the story and report it in 4-5 sentences;*

– *listen to the story and make an outline of it;*

– *listen to the story and arrange the points of the given outline in the logical sequence.*

*2. **Activities for anticipating the content of the text and developing students' imagination***:

– *listen to the beginning of the story and think up your continuation of it;*

– *listen to the middle of the story and guess its beginning and continuation, then listen again and check where your guessing was right;*

– *listen to the end of the story and come up with the beginning of it.*

*3. **Activities for elucidating the main idea of the text or precise understanding of the text***:

– listen to the text and define the basic notional parts in it;

– listen to the story and entitle it;

– listen to the story and say whether the statements are true or false;

– listen to the story and answer the questions to it;

– listen to two similar stories and say what is different in them.

Conclusion and implications for further research

To summarize, this paper has addressed the issue of teaching LC to students majoring in bilingual pedagogy. It has emphasized that LC is a paramount aspect of FL acquisition. The obtained evidence seems to indicate that learners benefit greatly from listening that is why a considerable amount of FL instruction should be devoted to developing their aural skills.

The article also has exposed the conceptual framework of advancing LCC among learners. It has outlined the basic premises of LC, described its procedure and activities, and presented the positive results of the pedagogical experiment conducted within the framework of the communicative and cognitive approach, which promotes not only receptive and productive FL skills of students but also their mental capacities.

On balance, the suggested methodology and system of activities may be implemented in the process of FL acquisition within a University curriculum. Notwithstanding, the current study is far from being conclusive. It provides implications for further research of the issue under discussion employing the methods of conceptual modeling. Consequently, its role in the process of developing LCC might be explored and clarified.

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ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ АУДИТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЇ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ І МЕТОДИКА

Анотація. *Метою статті є з'ясувати особливості процесу аудіювання й розробити відповідну методику. Визначено, що природа аудіювання іншомовного тексту значною мірою залежить від мови, яка вивчається. Зазначається, що ефективність процесу аудіювання вимагає володіння не лише певними знаннями, а й такими вміннями, як ідентифікація й розпізнавання знайомих мовних елементів та їхній релевантний вибір. Отримані результати дослідження доводять, що під час аудіювання оброблення іншомовної інформації може відбуватись двома шляхами– знизу доверху, або індуктивно, і зверху донизу, або дедуктивно. Перший шлях передбачає розпізнавання звуків і розуміння значень окремих слів, що допомагає досягнути розуміння прослуханого. Другий шлях передбачає залучення фонових знань і комунікативно-когнітивного досвіду слухача, щоб зрозуміти смисл прослуханого тексту. У статті пропонується поєднувати інтенсивний та екстенсивний типи аудіювання, що значно підвищить ефективність і результативність сприйняття й розуміння іншомовної інформації. Для доведення практичної дієвості описаних теоретичних засад формування аудитивної компетенції була розроблена відповідна методика, яка передбачає три взаємозалежні етапи сприйняття й опрацювання іншомовного тексту. Кожен із етапів реалізується відповідними завданнями, які мають на меті підготувати студентів до реальної іншомовної комунікації.*

Ключові слова*: іншомовна аудитивна компетенція; вміння аудіювання; методика формування аудитивної компетенції; система завдань.*