

The Theory and Practice of Teaching Listening in Korea

Walter Foreman
Korea National University of Education

Introduction

This paper is divided into five parts. The first part includes a brief overview of current listening comprehension theory and the author's own philosophy concerning listening. The second part features an in-depth look at several practical listening-focused activities, procedures, and materials for the Korean classroom. Part three shows several different techniques for measuring listeners' understanding of texts. Part four lists ways for teachers to ensure that they generate 'comprehensible input' in the classroom. Finally, the paper closes with a list of techniques and procedures related to teaching in general. All the information presented in this paper as well as supplementary materials and resources can be downloaded from: www.walterforeman.com/epik The author can be reached for questions or comment via email at: walter@walterforeman.com

1. Listening Theory

1.1 KNOWLEDGES USED IN LISTENING

According to Flowerdew and Miller (2005), there are five main types of knowledge that a listener uses when listening to a spoken message: phonological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and kinesic. As it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss all five of these elements, I will focus on just one: phonological knowledge. At its most basic, phonological knowledge is an understanding of the sound system of a language.

1.2 PHONOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

This type of knowledge can be divided into four distinct categories: *phonemes*, *stress*, *tone groups*, and *modifications*.

1.2.1 PHONEMES

Phonemes are the smallest unit of sound in a language. Take for example the words *big* and *pig*. These two words differ only in their initial phoneme and are known as a minimal pair. Buck (2006) lists some ways of testing phonemes and other types of phonological knowledge (some of which will be covered in more detail later in this paper):

Techniques for testing knowledge of the sound system

Minimal pairs with decontextualised words

- Test-takers listen to two (or three) words and indicate whether they are the same or different.
- Test-takers listen to two (or three) words and indicate whether they rhyme.
- Test-takers listen to one word first, followed by a number of other words, and indicate which of these is the same as the first word.
- Test-takers listen to a number of words, some in the target language and some not, and indicate how many words are in the target language.
- Test-takers listen to two (or three) words and indicate which has the meaning expressed in a picture.

Minimal pairs with words in an utterance

- Test-takers listen to a sentence and choose which of two (or three) pictures indicates a word in the sentence.
- Test-takers listen to a statement, followed by two possible responses (which differ in only one word), and choose which response is appropriate.

Recognising grammatical structures

- Test-takers listen to a sentence and indicate whether the verb (or noun) was singular or plural.
- Test-takers listen to a sentence and indicate whether a particular word was masculine, feminine or neuter.
- Test-takers listen to a sentence and indicate whether the verb was in the past, present or future tense.

Recognising intonation patterns

- Test-takers listen to an utterance and choose one of three curved lines to indicate the intonation curve of the utterance.

Recognising stress

- Test-takers listen to an utterance, and then read three transcriptions of it in which capital letters indicate heavy stress; they choose the one which indicates the stress of the utterance they listen to.

Adapted from Valette (1977)

1.2.2 STRESS

Stress, which can occur at both the word and sentence level, refers to the application of greater force to a syllable. Stress plays an important role in speech, and thereby listening. One such role is to distinguish between verbs and nouns with the same spelling. For example, 'import (noun) and im'port (verb). As Buck (2006:5) says, "One of the most important aspects of listening comprehension is paying attention to stress."

1.2.3 TONE GROUPS

Tone groups, which rely on intonation, which itself relies on stress, represent the basic units of information a speaker wishes to convey. As such, the intonation patterns in speech provide important meaning over and above what is contained in the actual words of an utterance. Take for example the question, "Did you take my red hat?" This question can take on several different meanings depending on its intonation. Compare, "Did YOU take my red hat?" (No, I didn't but HE did) and "Did you take my RED hat?" (No, I took your blue hat). Flowerdew and Miller (2005:33) point out that, "L2 learners who are not sensitive to [intonation]... may misunderstand utterances that depend on intonation for their meaning."

1.2.4 MODIFICATIONS

One of the most challenging aspects of second language listening comprehension is not the actual phonological system itself, but rather the way sounds change in everyday speech. Often, language learners who have a good understanding of a language's phonological system are frustrated when listening to authentic 'real-world' speech.

Take for example the question, "What do think that you are going to have to tell them?" In 'classroom' language, most L2 listeners should have little, if any, difficulty understanding the question. However, when spoken in a 'real-world' way the question often becomes an incomprehensible stream of sounds: *Whaddaya think thatcher gonna hafta tellum?* (Norris, 1994). Gillian Brown (1990) refers to this as the "acoustic blur" of real-world English.

1.3 TOP-DOWN VERSUS BOTTOM-UP LISTENING

Top-down listening activities allow learners to use their prior knowledge to understand what they hear in a given text. Such activities will generally have learners listening for gist. In bottom-up listening activities learners rely on their linguistic knowledge to recognize specific linguistic elements: vowels, consonants, words, phrases, or sentences. Bottom-up activities are an excellent way to pre-teach specific vocabulary and will reduce what Meyer (2000) calls the “language load” of the lesson.

For a simple but effective demonstration of the difference between top-down and bottom-up processing, consider the following paragraph:

When you process English slowly, one word at a time, as you are doing now, it is easy to catch the meaning of each individual word. However, it can be difficult to understand the overall meaning of the passage.

Few L1 English speakers (or fluent L2 speakers of English) would actually process the above paragraph one word at a time in a bottom-up fashion and would have little difficulty understanding the passage. However, if the same paragraph is shown again, only this time in a slightly modified format, the effects of bottom-up processing can be simulated:

you as ,time a at word one ,slowly English process you When
each of meaning the catch to easy is it ,now doing are
understand to difficult be can it ,However .word individual
.passage the of meaning overall the

When planning materials and lessons for a listening class it is important to include a mix of both top-down and bottom-up listening activities as both are important in developing the ability to understand a second language.

1.4 PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY ON LISTENING

My approach to teaching listening centers on the idea that all meaning is negotiated. That is to say that words themselves do not carry any meaning. The meaning of a word is imparted by the listener of that word. As such, the teaching of listening should focus on collaborative tasks that allow students to

build an understanding of what they have heard in relation to what others in the class have heard.

2. Practical In-class Activities, Procedures, and Materials

2.1 SETTING THE STAGE

"A good teacher is an entertainer and I mean that in a positive sense, not a negative sense."

Harmer (2005) quotes a response to the question, "What makes a good teacher?" Teaching, of any subject, requires some degree of showmanship and public speaking ability. According to the well-known public speaking organization Toastmasters, one important tenet of public speaking is, "Know the room".

One issue with which most English teachers in Korea will need to contend is the lack of a permanent classroom. Instead of students moving from room to room for their various classes, teachers move from room to room. The upside to this method is that there is less chance of students being late as they do not have to move during the day. The downside is that in not having a permanent classroom, it is difficult to establish a sense of identity for you and for the students in the classroom.

Current research suggests that students are motivated by classroom environments that are rich in visual stimuli (Ur, 1996). With this thought in mind, it is desirable to do whatever can be done to add a touch of personality and a sense of identity to the classroom for both the teacher and the students.

2.2 A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

"A good teacher is ... someone who knows our names."

One technique that is useful in establishing both a sense of identity and a touch of personality in the classroom is to have the students create nametags. After a couple of weeks of students displaying their nametags on their desks, the nametags are collected and put onto posters. When students see their English names (or Korean names written in English) on their desks and later on their class poster, it helps to reinforce their English identity. These nametags also

help the teacher to remember the students' names.

This nametag activity is an extension of the traditional first-day-of-class partner interview and introduction activity. Students are put into pairs and given a few minutes to interview their partner. Depending on the linguistic proficiency of the class, interview questions may need to be pre-taught. After interviewing their partners, students then spend the remainder of the class making a nametag for their partners based on the information learned during the interviews. It is a good idea to have sample nametags in the classroom so that students can see what they will be making. Ideally, the students' nametags will display their names, and at least four other pieces of information such as hobbies, favorites (numbers, colors, foods, movies, sports, etc.), family information, travel experience, birthday, or any other information relevant to the students.

This activity is much more tangible and long-lasting (not to mention less stressful) than just interviewing a classmate and then standing up to introduce that classmate to the rest of the class. When done as a first day (or first week) activity, making nametags gives students opportunities to use English in a non-threatening, yet productive way.

While on the subject of names, English teachers have to decide if they want their students to adopt English names. There is much literature both for and against this practice and the choice, unless there is a policy in your placement school, is yours. If you do choose to have students adopt English names, provide them with a handout of common and/or popular English names and their meanings. Several of these lists are available free-of-charge on the Internet.

2.3 WHO GOES THERE?

"[A good teacher] has his own personality and doesn't hide it from the students"

Without a doubt, your students will be very curious about you and very excited to meet you. You will almost certainly be the only native English speaker in your school, and, although this is becoming less common, you may be the first native English speaker your students have ever met. You can use this excitement and curiosity to give your first listening activity; have your students

listen to you introducing yourself and then answer questions based on that introduction. This activity can be combined with the nametag activity or even serve as an introduction to it.

The procedure for this activity is quite basic, although it may require some computer skills. Whenever I do this activity I make a recording of my introduction so that it can be repeated several times if necessary without me having to read each time. There are several good recording programs available online but one of my favorites is Audacity. It is available free-of-charge from: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net> After installing Audacity, record a one to two minute introduction of yourself. Give your students a sheet of questions related to the content in your introduction. Play the introduction once and give the students some time to answer the questions. Play the introduction a second time and allow the students to answer any questions they missed from the first listening. Finally, give the students a fill-in-the-blank activity based on the script of your introduction. Before playing the introduction a third time, give the students some time to read through the script to recall any information that they may remember from the previous two listenings. Play the introduction a third time and have the students fill in the blanks.

To incorporate this activity with the nametag activity, have the students make a nametag for you based on the information in your introduction. This can be done individually, in partners, or in small groups, however the latter is probably most desirable as it requires the students to use the target language to share their information and to determine how they will graphically represent this information.

2.4 THE OLDER I GET, THE BETTER I WAS

Despite being a very old-fashioned instructional method, there are some good arguments for the use of dictation in the English classroom. First among these arguments is its immediacy. Giving dictation will allow you to see immediately what the students do and do not understand. You can then tailor your lessons (and even your speech patterns) based on this information. In addition, if done in groups, dictation can help to bring students closer together and to reduce

anxiety as they have to determine and negotiate meaning collectively rather than individually. Finally, dictation can expose students to 'authentic material' and authentic material itself has a host of instructional advantages, not the least of which is motivation.

I start each listening class with dictation. The procedure is very simple. I read four sentences at a normal pace and each sentence is read twice. Students listen and write down as much as they hear. After listening to the dictation, the students are asked to "share and compare" their sentences with their neighbors. After a few minutes of discussion between students, four groups are chosen to write one sentence each on the whiteboard. I allow a few moments for the other groups to compare their sentences with those on the whiteboard before finally reading each sentence once more. At this point, I ask the class to identify if what is written on the whiteboard is the same or different compared with what they hear in the third listening. I then invite students to make any necessary corrections to the whiteboard sentences.

The content for your dictation can serve as an introduction to the day's main lesson, a review of a previous lesson, an expansion of a previous lesson, or can be unrelated to any of your lessons. If unrelated to any previous or future lessons, the sentences themselves should have a common theme (tense, structure, usage, vocabulary, meaning, etc.), but this is not essential. As you progress through the semester you can gradually increase the length of the sentences, but it is best to start with short simple sentences. Also, as you near the end of the semester, you can ask the students themselves to submit possible dictation sentences that you can use in class, on evaluations, or on assignments. Sometimes students may be more motivated to listen if they know that the material comes from them.

2.5 HEY MR. DJ, PUT A RECORD ON!

The repetition and rhythm of songs makes them an effective tool for teaching listening. Naturally you will have to choose a song that is appropriate for your students both in terms of its level of difficulty and its content. The problem with most lessons using songs is that while the songs themselves are interesting,

the listening tasks tend to be boring. Most listening tasks involving songs are simple fill-in-the-blank (cloze) activities. A more interesting activity is to have the students reconstruct the song using lyric cards that the teacher has prepared in advance.

As a warm-up task, have students listen to the song once with no other task than to listen, enjoy, and try to think of a title for the song. Some students may already know the song and will know the actual title and that is fine. Many students will not, and will have to think about what they have heard in order to come up with a good title. After sharing the students' titles, you may want to give them the actual title as this will help maintain their interest in the song and in the lesson.

Next, divide the song up into stanzas and listen to each stanza one by one. Give each group of students a set of about 18 cards that contains words and phrases from that stanza. Include some cards with words and phrases that do not occur in that stanza but that sound similar to ones that do. This will force students to discriminate between individual words and sounds. Tell the students to choose any nine of the cards randomly without looking at the rest. The students then listen and try to reconstruct the stanza using the cards. Each time you listen to the stanza again, tell the students to choose three more cards. Continue this procedure until all the cards have been selected and used. For added support, give each group an empty grid that they can use to organize their cards or to jot down words and/or phrases as they listen. Further, you can tell the groups how many of the total number of cards they will need to use to complete the task. At the end of the lesson, provide the students with the full lyrics to the song as well as some background information about the song and/or the band and a link to where they can learn more.

2.6 CARROTS ARE MY FAVORITE FRUIT

This is an exceptional activity as it combines listening, speaking (pronunciation), reading, and even writing. The basic premise of the activity is that the students will identify and then correct incorrect information.

The students are given a set of cards. The cards are placed faced down

in the center of the table. Each card is divided in half. The upper half is black with white text and the lower half is white with black text. The top half of the card contains information that is factually or contextually wrong. The bottom half of the card contains a suggested answer. One student picks a card from the top of the deck and reads the upper portion to the rest of the group. The rest of the group have to listen closely and identify the incorrect information and formulate a correction. The first person who can correctly identify and correct the misinformation is awarded the card. The person who has the most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

For example: Student A chooses a card and reads it to her group, "Carrots are my favorite fruit." Student D recognizes that the word fruit should be replaced by the word vegetable and answers, "Don't you mean carrots are your favorite *vegetable*?" Student A would then give that card to Student D. Next Student B chooses a new card from the deck and reads it to the group and the process continues. In the event that one student dominates the group and constantly answers first, simply have the readers choose, in advance, who they would like to answer the question. Or, have the person to the reader's right always answer. As the turn to read moves clockwise, this will ensure that everyone gets a chance to answer.

The main pronunciation component of this activity comes from the word stress needed on the changed word (vegetable in the above example). There are also a few secondary pronunciation components related to certain phonemes in English that have no equivalent in Korean. In addition, there is a focus on pronouns in this activity as some responses require the pronoun to be changed from first person to second person.

To expand this activity to include writing, have students write their own cards. Collect the students' cards and use them in subsequent lessons. You can have students make cards on any topic(s) of their choosing, or have them write review cards based on the content of a particular lesson or unit from the textbook.

This lesson is best started with the teacher reading a few cards to the

whole class as a large group before giving the cards to individual smaller groups. Doing this helps ensure that learners will know what is expected of them when they start working in their groups.

2.7 WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SAN DIEGO?

At times it is necessary to move away from collaborative listening tasks to focus more on structure and content. One such time is when teaching directions and prepositions.

An effective listening activity that deals with directions and prepositions involves students listening to descriptions of simple geometric images and replicating these images themselves based on what they have heard. These images are on a set of cards numbered one through nine. As with *Carrots are my favorite fruit*, this activity is best started with the teacher giving descriptions to the class as a whole before allowing the students to work in small groups.

To start this activity, students are each given a handout that has been divided into nine sections. Each section, one through nine, has at least one geometric figure already drawn in the section to be used as a starting point. The teacher draws a card at random from the nine cards and tells the students the number of that card. The teacher then goes on to describe the image shown on the card. Students listen to the teacher's description, following his or her directions, and try to replicate the original image card. If you notice that there is one particular area where a majority of the students made the same mistake, then you should take the time to explain your description in detail so that students can understand exactly what they have misunderstood.

After the teacher has described all (or most) of the cards, the students can then be given the chance to describe in their small groups. The teacher has the option of having the student groups describe exactly the same cards or describe a set of slightly different cards. After the students have described all (or most) of their cards, the teacher can have the students make their own cards that can later be exchanged with other groups and the process can be repeated.

2.8 FORTY-EIGHT THOUSAND MILLION

If you ask a Korean learner of English, even a high-level learner, "How many people are there in South Korea?" the answer you get will often be quite confusing. The reason for this confusion is that there is a fundamental difference between the way English describes numbers and the way Korean describes numbers larger than 9,999. Because of this difference, any lesson that focuses on large numbers is beneficial to both low-level and high-level students in terms of listening and speaking.

To give students practice listening to large numbers, make a set of population cards. Make an equal number of cards that show the population of cities and cards that show the population of countries. Give each student in the class one card. Also give the students a blank handout that is divided into two columns, one column for cities and one for countries. Then have the students move about the classroom filling in their handout by asking each other about their card. For example, "Do you have a city or a country?", "Which city/country do you have?", "How many people live in [place]?", "What's the population of [place]?". The object of the task is to complete the handout with the population of every city and country.

This lesson can also be used to introduce or review comparative and superlative adjectives. You can ask the students, "Which city has a larger/bigger/higher population, X or Y?", "Which city has a smaller/lower population, A or B?", "Which country has the highest population?", etc.

2.9 OH, YOU SAID, 'PING PONG' BALLS

As there are certain sounds in English that have no equivalent in Korean, I like to focus on these sounds in my listening classes to help learners become accustomed to them. While there are several of these sounds to choose from, one good example is the English /ɔɪ/ sound in words like law, ball, and bald. Korean L2 learners of English tend to pronounce this sound as /oʊ/ like low, bowl, and bold (a rather unfortunate linguistic phenomenon for my colleague Colin).

To give students practice in distinguishing between these two sounds, assign each particular sound a number: 1 for /ɔɪ/ (law) and 2 for /oʊ/ (low).

The teacher then calls out a set of three words, for example 'bald, saw, bold'. The students should write one, one, two, based on the sounds they hear. Later as they become more proficient at distinguishing between the sounds, you can have the students practice the same activity in pairs or small groups with the students themselves calling out the word sets; this extension gives the students an opportunity to listen to their fellow classmates and to practice their pronunciation.

To extend this activity further you can write a short text that incorporates several different sounds (see Figure 1). Students circle which of the words they hear as the teacher reads the text. This activity gives students the added benefit and challenge of having to listen for specific sounds in the context of a sentence. Again, once they have become more proficient at this activity students can practice in pairs or small groups with the same benefits as discussed above.

Alice asked her friend [A. John / B. Joan], “Would you please [A. wash / B. watch] my [A. cups / B. caps] for me?” Then Alice went home and saw her brothers playing with their [A. cards / B. cars]. Alice asked her brothers, “What did you do today?” They told her that they had seen some pretty [A. girls / B. gulls]. Later, Alice asked her brothers to [A. wash / B. watch] her [A. birds / B. buds] for her.

Figure 1. Minimal Pairs in Context

3. Measuring Listeners' Understanding

This section lists several different methods for measuring listeners' understanding of what they have heard. For the purpose of this paper, two different types of listening comprehension will be focused on. The first is literal understanding; that is identifying explicitly stated information from the listening text. The second type involves moving beyond literal understanding.

Tasks for testing understanding of literal meanings

Body movement tasks

- Test-takers are given commands to move various body parts (raise your right hand, go to the door etc.).
- Simon says: test-takers are given commands to move various body parts (e.g. raise your right hand, go to the door etc.) and only do so if the command is preceded by 'Simon says'.
- Test-takers are told to draw a certain object (e.g. draw a rose, draw a circle if you are a girl etc.).

Retention tasks

- Test-takers listen to two utterances and indicate whether they were the same or different.
- Test-takers listen to an utterance and write it down.

Picture tasks

- Test-takers listen to a statement, and then look at a number of pictures and indicate which represents the statement.
- Test-takers look at a picture and listen to a number of statements, and then choose which is relevant to the picture.
- Test-takers are given a pile of about ten pictures and listen to a series of utterances; they have to choose a picture of the object mentioned in each utterance.
- Test-takers are shown a complex picture with many things happening in it, they hear a series of statements about the picture and indicate whether these are true or false.
- Test-takers look at four pictures labelled A, B, C and D, and listen to a series of utterances (e.g. it is raining, the man is wearing a suit) and indicate which picture each utterance applies to.
- Test-takers look at five small pictures, listen to four short utterances, and select the picture being described in each utterance.
- Test-takers see a series of simple diagrams (e.g. lines, squares, rectangles, circles etc. arranged in a variety of patterns), listen to statements describing these, and indicate which diagram is being described.

Conversation tasks

- Test-takers listen to a statement followed by a response, and indicate A if the response was appropriate, and B if it was not.
- Test-takers listen to a question followed by three possible responses, and indicate which was the most appropriate.
- Test-takers listen to a statement followed by three possible continuations, and select the one that would continue the conversation best.
- Test-takers listen to a short dialogue (usually persons A, B and A again), and then listen to a short question about it, to which they choose one of three (or four) options (usually written in a booklet).

Self-evident comprehension tasks

- Test-takers are given a series of statements and asked to indicate whether they are true or false (e.g. the snow is white, Paris is in Spain).
- Test-takers listen to statements made about some sort of visual (or object), and indicate whether they are true or false.
- Test-takers are given arithmetic calculations and indicate whether they are right or wrong (e.g. three plus three is seven).

Adapted from Valette (1977) and Heaton (1990)

Tasks for going beyond local literal meanings

Understanding gist

- Test-takers listen to recordings from the radio, and indicate what type of programme they are listening to (e.g. news, sports, weather, fashion etc.).
- Test-takers listen to a description of a person, place or thing they are all familiar with, and write down its name, or what it is (perhaps in their native language).

General passage comprehension

- Test-takers listen to a monologue or dialogue, and then answer a number of multiple-choice questions (either spoken or written questions).
- Test-takers listen to a monologue or dialogue, and then answer a number of short-answer comprehension questions on it.
- Test-takers listen to a short talk or lecture, read a number of statements and select which are correct given the talk.
- Test-takers listen to a short talk or lecture and answer comprehension questions on it.
- Test-takers listen to a short talk or lecture, and then read a short summary of it in which some words or phrases have been deleted and replaced with blanks; they fill in the blanks with content appropriate to the talk.

Information transfer tasks

- Test-takers are given a map and a starting point, they follow directions on the map, and then indicate the destination (the instructions can be extremely complex and as an example Heaton (1990) recommends listening to a description of a robbery and then following the police chase, periodically indicating where the robbers are).
- Test-takers listen to an announcement of some information (e.g. a timetable or result of a competition) and fill in the information in a grid.
- Test-takers are given a goal (e.g. arrive in Paris before midnight, solve a problem), they listen to an announcement or explanation, find the information necessary to complete their goal, and then do the task.
- Test-takers listen to a person on the telephone and take a message according to the speaker's instructions.
- Test-takers look at a picture (e.g. a street scene, a room) and draw in objects or other details according to instructions (draw a table and two chairs in front of the café; draw a vase of flowers on top of the table); this can be expanded into a narrative (or dialogue).
- Test-takers see a series of pictures and listen to a talk or discussion and then classify the pictures based on that (e.g. a set of children's drawings representing different developmental stages, which need to be put in order based on a talk about child development).

Adapted from Valette (1977) and Heaton (1990)

4. Generating Comprehensible Input

As discussed in Section 1.2.4, natural spoken English differs greatly from the typical language of the classroom. As such, teachers must be aware of this and ensure that learners can understand what the teacher is saying. The following are some practical tips to help generate comprehensible input in the classroom.

4.1 Slower speech: Teacher talk must be natural but sensitive to the level of the learners; it must be neither too fast nor too slow. When you speak to your class it is important that you enunciate clearly, speak loudly, and emphasize important words and structures. Instructors must also be cognizant of their use of reduced forms; while second nature for L1 speakers of English, to the L2 learner of English there is a world of difference between the expressions, "What did you have for lunch?" and "Whadja have fer lunch?". That is not to say that teachers should avoid using natural speech in the classroom, but if doing so, teachers should ensure that learners are ready to receive such input.

4.2 Repetition and Paraphrasing: Learners will need to hear key words many times before they can establish a connection between form and meaning. Repetition does not mean that you should repeat each new vocabulary item two or three times one after the other. Instead, the repetition needs to occur at different times throughout the lesson. Future lessons should recycle previously taught vocabulary and structures. When you first introduce a new word or expression (particularly if the learners look puzzled) find a way to paraphrase it, to restate the same idea using different words.

4.3 Cognates: Use words that are similar in both languages. There are many of these between Korean and English and this is an excellent way to include your Korean co-teacher in the lesson. Cognates can be very useful in paraphrasing and can also be used in minimal pair distinction.

4.4 Body language: When talking to learners, point to objects and make appropriate gestures and facial expressions. Good actors make good teachers and especially good language teachers. Effective use of the classroom space is also an overlooked area of both comprehensible input and classroom management. Do not be reluctant to move about the classroom. Learners sitting at the back

of the classroom deserve to see and hear you just as much as those sitting in the front of the classroom. Your moving about the classroom will keep learners focused and attentive and help to make input comprehensible for all.

4.4 Pictures and Realia: During your lessons show pictures, make sketches or drawings, bring in real objects. Not only do pictures and realia help to make input comprehensible, but they will make your class more fun and interesting which will thereby lower anxiety and increase motivation.

5. General Teaching Tips

The following are some tips related to teaching in general, not necessary to teaching listening.

1. Develop structures and routines within your classroom so that learners know what to expect. Make sure to have some variety within your lessons however, so as to avoid monotony and boredom.
2. Know your audience. This tenet of public speaking also applies to teaching, especially to teaching in a foreign country. What do your students like? What do they dislike? What's going on in their world? Who are they as people? What are their (learning) needs?
3. Know your goal and let the students know too. When planning lessons make sure to have a clear learning objective and tell the students what it is. TWSBAT is a useful acronym when planning lessons. It stands for, "The Students Will Be Able To." Also, let the students know what you expect of them in the class. Tell them that you expect them to speak English and to participate actively and enthusiastically in class.
4. Let students work for you. Have students read instructions and/or examples. Make this a listening task. Have students close their books while they listen to the instructions being read by another student. Then ask another student to repeat, either word for word or paraphrase, what the first student said. Also, have a materials bank that has that day's handouts in it. As part of your routines, have a 'captain' from each group collect and distribute the materials, homework, notices, etc. Other roles that can be given to students include, checker, spokesperson, scorekeeper, etc.

5. Plan active and interactive lessons. Active lessons require that the students have tasks to complete. Interactive lessons give students opportunities to use the language from that day's lesson to communicate with each other.
6. Use the student book as a teacher's book. Start activities with books closed. This will help all students to focus on you or on the assigned task. Then after some discussion, students can open their books to see if their answers were correct.
7. Make materials fit you, your style, your environment, and your learners. I have yet to find a lesson or an activity that I can use directly without any modification. Make the material your own and you will feel much more confident when working with it.
8. Teach to your learners as if you were teaching to yourself. When you plan a lesson or an activity, ask yourself, "If I were a student in this class, would I enjoy this?" If the answer is "No", then perhaps re-think your lesson.
9. Whenever possible bring objects into the class. Real life objects can help students to make connections between the classroom environment and the real world. If real objects are not available, then provide pictures. (See 4.4)
10. Reach each you teach. Make an effort to learn something about all of your students. Make an effort to include all of your students in your lessons.

Conclusion

As an EPIK participant, you have an unsurpassed opportunity to affect English education here. The learners in your classroom today will become the English speakers, and perhaps even teachers, of tomorrow. It is my hope that you take full advantage of this wonderful opportunity and that in doing so you come to learn more about Korea, about education, about the English language, and about yourself.

References

- Brown, G. (1990). *Listening to Spoken English*. Second Edition. London: Longman.
- Buck, G. (2006). *Assessing Listening*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Flowerdew, J. & Miller, L. (2005). *Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harmer, J. (2005). *How to teach English*. London: Longman
- Meyer, L. (2000). *Barriers to meaningful instruction for English learners. Theory into Practice*, 39, 4, 228-236.
- Norris, R.W. (1994). Keeping up with Native Speaker Speed: An Investigation of Reduced Forms and Deletions in Informal Spoken English. In *Studies in Comparative Culture*, No. 25: 72-79
- Toastmasters. *10 Tips for Successful Public Speaking*.
[<http://www.toastmasters.org/pdfs/top10.pdf>] Accessed July 24, 2007
- Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.