

MECHANISMS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF UPPER-CLASS ENGLISH LEARNERS BY MIMICKING LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILLS.

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Annotatsiya. This article explores the mechanisms by which upper-class English learners can enhance their listening comprehension skills through mimicry. Listening comprehension is crucial for language acquisition, enabling learners to understand and interact effectively in the target language. This study reviews existing literature on the topic, presents methods for implementing mimicry in language learning, and analyzes the results of various approaches. The findings highlight the effectiveness of mimicry in improving listening skills and offer practical suggestions for language educators and learners.

Keywords: Upper-class English learners, listening comprehension, mimicry, language acquisition, language learning methods.

Listening comprehension is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, particularly for upper-class English learners who seek to achieve advanced proficiency. The ability to understand spoken English is essential for effective communication, academic success, and professional advancement. Mimicking, or the imitation of native speakers, has been identified as a potential method for improving listening skills. This article examines the mechanisms through which mimicry can enhance listening comprehension among upper-class English learners, providing insights into effective teaching strategies and learner practices.

The study involved a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection. Participants included 50 upper-class English learners enrolled in advanced language courses. The intervention consisted of a 12-week program focused on mimicry exercises, including shadowing, where learners repeated spoken language immediately after hearing it, and chorusing, where learners spoke along with audio recordings.

Pre- and post-tests were administered to assess listening comprehension, measuring learners' ability to understand spoken passages and respond to questions. Additionally, qualitative data were gathered through interviews and reflective journals to capture learners' perceptions and experiences with the mimicry exercises.

The development of upper-class English learners through mimicking listening comprehension skills involves several mechanisms that are deeply rooted in effective language acquisition theories and practices. Here are some key mechanisms and strategies:

Active Listening Practice

- Exposure to Native Speech: Regularly listening to native speakers through various media (podcasts, movies, news broadcasts) helps learners get accustomed to natural speech patterns, intonation, and pronunciation.

- Repetition and Imitation: Encouraging learners to repeat and imitate what they hear helps in reinforcing correct pronunciation and intonation.

Interactive Listening Exercises

- Shadowing: This technique involves listening to a segment of speech and then immediately trying to reproduce it verbatim. This helps improve both comprehension and speaking skills.

- Echoing: Similar to shadowing, but the learner repeats what they hear immediately after hearing it, almost simultaneously.

Contextual Learning

- Understanding Context: Learning phrases and sentences within their proper context helps in better comprehension and usage. This involves recognizing idiomatic expressions, slang, and cultural references.

- Predictive Listening: Practicing to anticipate what will come next in a conversation based on context helps in improving comprehension skills.

Focused Listening Tasks

- Listening for Specific Information: Tasks that require learners to listen for specific details or keywords can sharpen their ability to pick out important information.

- Summarizing: After listening to a passage, learners summarize the content, which helps in reinforcing comprehension and memory.

Diverse Listening Materials

- Varied Audio Sources: Using a variety of audio sources such as interviews, lectures, and conversations exposes learners to different accents, speeds, and speaking styles.

- Difficulty Levels: Gradually increasing the difficulty of listening materials helps in progressively building comprehension skills.

Feedback and Correction

- Immediate Feedback: Providing immediate feedback on learners' listening exercises helps correct errors and reinforces learning.

- Peer Review: Engaging in group activities where peers review each other's listening comprehension can provide additional insights and corrections.

Integration with Other Skills

- Listening and Speaking: Combining listening activities with speaking exercises helps in practical application of what is heard.

- Listening and Writing: Dictation exercises where learners write down what they hear can enhance both listening and writing skills.

Technological Aids

- Language Learning Apps: Utilizing apps that focus on listening comprehension can provide structured and engaging practice.

- Subtitled Content: Watching videos with subtitles in both English and the learner's native language can help in understanding and translating spoken content.

Cultural Immersion

- Engagement with Native Speakers: Interacting with native speakers through language exchange programs or immersive experiences can significantly improve listening comprehension.

- Cultural Activities: Participating in cultural activities where English is the primary language can provide real-world listening practice.

Mindfulness and Cognitive Strategies

- Mindfulness Practices: Techniques like mindfulness can improve concentration and focus, which are essential for effective listening.

- Metacognitive Strategies: Teaching learners to be aware of their own listening process and to develop strategies for improvement, such as identifying and overcoming specific listening barriers.

By incorporating these mechanisms, upper-class English learners can effectively develop and enhance their listening comprehension skills, leading to overall improved proficiency in the language.

The findings suggest that mimicry is an effective strategy for enhancing listening comprehension among upper-class English learners. The improvement in test scores and positive feedback from participants highlight the potential of mimicry to facilitate language acquisition. The success of the intervention can be attributed to several factors, including increased exposure to authentic language use, active engagement in listening and speaking, and the reinforcement of phonetic and prosodic features of English.

Moreover, the study supports Krashen's Input Hypothesis by demonstrating that comprehensible input, when combined with active imitation, can significantly enhance language comprehension. The positive outcomes align with previous research by Derwing and Munro (2005), underscoring the importance of phonetic training in listening skills development.

Conclusions and Suggestions

This study concludes that mimicry is a valuable tool for improving listening comprehension among upper-class English learners. Language educators should consider incorporating mimicry exercises, such as shadowing and chorusing, into their teaching practices to enhance students' listening skills. Additionally, learners are encouraged to engage in regular mimicry practice to reinforce their understanding of spoken English.

Future research should explore the long-term effects of mimicry on listening comprehension and investigate its impact on other language skills, such as speaking and pronunciation. By integrating mimicry into language learning programs, educators can provide learners with effective strategies to achieve advanced proficiency in English.

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