

高等学校学术英语（EAP）系列教材



Listening

English for Academic Study

学术英语听力

(英) Colin Campbell (英) Jonathan Smith 著

外语教学与研究出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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Introduction

Aims of the course

The purpose of this book is to help you better understand spoken English, particularly the spoken English of academic lectures, as well as to help you develop your note-taking skills while listening.

Structure of the course

- **Unit structure:** Apart from the first unit, all the units are divided into two sections: macroskills and microskills.

Macroskills include such things as:

- making use of lecture introductions
- note-taking
- recognizing the structure of lectures

Microskills focus on understanding linguistic features of spoken English such as:

- recognizing words that are spoken quickly and are not stressed
- recognizing where one spoken word ends and the next begins
- word stress and sentence stress

In these units you will also find the following items:

- **Sound advice:** These either summarize key points from the unit or present advice on listening strategies.
- **Study tips:** These have been included for ease of reference when you are revising what you have studied. They either summarize the outcome of a series of activities or are a summary of other information contained in the unit.
- **Unit summaries:** Each unit is followed by a unit summary, giving you the opportunity to reflect on what you have learnt.

Additional materials

Glossary: Key words or phrases in the text are explained in the glossary on pages 84-86.

Transcripts: At the end of the book you will find the transcripts of all the lectures. Your teacher will sometimes give you the opportunity to listen to the recordings and follow the transcript at the same time, once you have completed the main listening tasks.

Working with the course

It can be particularly challenging to listen to long stretches of speech in a foreign language, particularly when you are not aware of the general structure of academic lectures given in English. This book will provide you with:

- guided instruction on how to follow a lecture.
- the opportunity to practise listening to similar lectures to the ones you will meet in your future studies.


What you put into the course will determine how much you get out of it. Obviously, if you want to improve your skills in listening to lectures and taking notes, it is essential to practise this skill. You should therefore prepare well for the sessions, as well as participating actively in them.

Listening materials

Many of the lecture extracts in this book are based on transcripts of authentic lectures given at the University of Reading. These lectures were given to audiences of British and international students as part of their normal degree programmes. Although the extracts have been re-recorded to ensure clarity, the language and content of these lectures have been maintained, to ensure that you are provided with listening practice that closely simulates listening to, and note-taking from, real academic lectures.

The lecture extracts are taken from a range of academic fields, including investment banking, development economics, marketing, psychology and linguistics. Although the original lectures were intended for students doing degrees in these subjects, we have chosen extracts that should be accessible to students of all subjects.

Other extracts have been written specially for this book, but have been designed to reflect features of authentic academic lectures.

The  symbol indicates that the recordings are available on DVD-ROM.

Vocabulary

Although the recordings in the book may not be related to your particular subject, you will find a lot of useful vocabulary in this book.

There are different types of vocabulary that you may find useful:

- **Academic words:** These are words that occur frequently in many different academic subjects, so whatever your degree subject, it is important to learn how to use them.

- **Non-technical topic words:** Many of the recordings use sets of topic vocabulary which will be useful to students on almost all degree courses; for example, the text on market research contains many words connected with surveys, questionnaires and statistics.
- **Subject-specific words:** Some of the recordings contain words which will be of particular interest to students of specific subjects; for example, there is an extract on social learning which will be of particular interest to students planning to study psychology.

Listening outside the classroom

Your listening will improve more quickly if you practise outside the classroom. You can do this in a variety of ways; for example, talking with English-speaking friends, listening to the radio or watching TV, or working with independent study materials (see further below).

You will find *Sound advice* sections in most units in this book, and these contain useful advice for improving your listening. Here are some more ideas.

- There are a number of good websites which provide practice in listening to academic lectures. If you go to the EAS website (enter through www.englishforacademicstudy.com) you will find links to some of these sites.
- A wide range of vocabulary is part of the key to success in listening. You should keep a record of new words or phrases that you learn, and make sure you note down the pronunciation, particularly if it does not fit in with pronunciation patterns you are familiar with. Ask your teacher to model the pronunciation if you are not sure of it.
- There are several dictionaries on CD-ROM where you can hear the pronunciation and see the meaning of a word on screen, either by moving the mouse pointer over a word or by clicking on it. The *Macmillan English Dictionary* and *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* both have good CD-ROM versions. Think about buying one of these because it will be useful, not just on this course, but in your later studies.

Listening to longer talks, and talks about your own subject, will help prepare you for listening to lectures, so you will need to do more independent listening in your own time.

Additional audio-visual resources

To help improve your extended listening, you can access highly relevant lectures and talks on two websites – the University of Reading’s SACLL site, and TED Talks.

Self-Access Centre for Language Learning website (University of Reading)

This has more than 30 lectures given to international students on pre-sessional courses at the university's International Study and Language Centre on academic and general topics; many of these are by distinguished lecturers in disciplines such as construction management, food science, investment, psychology, finance and management. Each lecture is 35–50 minutes long and comes with transcripts and tasks, both of which can help your listening.

Here is a guide to using the material effectively.

- Find the website by typing in the URL www.sacll.co.uk or entering “SACLL lectures Reading” into Google or another search engine.
- Check through the lecture list, read the brief descriptions and choose one that interests you.
- Click the task button for your chosen lecture to get a list of open questions about the lecture.
- Read the questions and check any unknown vocabulary – reading and understanding the questions will help you anticipate the lecture's content.
- If necessary, do a quick Google search on the lecture topic to gain some more background knowledge. On degree courses, doing background reading before lectures is essential to full understanding.
- Listen to Part 1 of the lecture. Here, the speakers typically a) introduce the topic, b) say why it is important and c) explain how they will organize the lecture. Understanding this is essential to understanding the whole lecture (see Unit 2 on lecture introductions).
- As you listen to Part 1, answer the questions in the task.
- Check your answers to the questions on Part 1. If you have answered these correctly you will be well placed to understand the rest of the lecture. Otherwise, it is a good idea to listen again with the answers in front of you.
- Listen to the rest of the lecture. You could do this in parts, but it may be better to listen to the whole lecture without pausing, as you will need to develop the stamina needed for listening to long talks, rather than the shorter extracts that appear in this book.
- If you found parts of the lecture particularly hard to understand, or had problems answering the questions correctly, it is worth a) looking at the answers and listening again or b) reading the transcript while listening. This can help you understand why you have misheard or misunderstood.

- Spoken English can be harder to understand than written English, due to things like word and sentence stress (Units 2 and 4), word boundaries (Unit 5) and weak forms of words (Unit 6). One way to practise is to listen to a very short extract of a lecture, then try to write down exactly what the speaker says. Listen several times to do this. Then check the transcript and see if you have heard correctly. This may show you why you are having problems following spoken English.

TED Talks

Speakers on this interesting site include world-famous academics, writers, thinkers, medical researchers, politicians, investors, cooks, businesspeople and artists. The talks are informative, up to date and thought-provoking. They vary from three minutes to more than an hour in length. You will hear different accents that will help you prepare for study at a culturally diverse university.

Here are some suggestions on using this website effectively.

- The URL is www.ted.com, or just enter “ted talks” into a search engine.
- You can access the talks in different ways. The top of the homepage has a menu including “Themes”, “Speakers”, “Talks”. You can search for a particular speaker, e.g., Bill Gates, or the “Themes” button may offer a more interesting way to access talks – giving you a choice of talks on related topics.
- Each screen has a thumbnail picture of the speaker next to the title of their talk. Click on a photo for a talk you think might be interesting.
- You will find brief information about the talk and the speaker accompanying the video.
- To find out more before you listen, try entering the speaker’s name and some key words from the title into a search engine. Reading before attending lectures is key to successful understanding.
- TED Talks also provides transcripts of the talks, which you can keep open on-screen together with the video, plus translations and subtitles in various languages. However, for your first listening we recommend that you initially just listen to the introduction and perhaps pause to check the transcript, then open the transcripts or subtitles later.
- Listen to the rest of the lecture and make notes. If anything is unclear, listen again. If it is still unclear, look at that part of the transcript and listen again.
Why did you not understand?
Were there unknown words?
Perhaps you did not recognize the pronunciation of a word you know in written form – remember, in connected speech, pronunciation can also be affected by the

sounds in words before or after. Perhaps it was hard to recognize word boundaries (see Unit 5) – e.g., you might not hear the unstressed first syllable in *attempt* and hear “tempt” instead. Perhaps you heard a word you knew but that seemed to have a different meaning, e.g., you might hear *fair* and recognize it as meaning “light-coloured” (as in *fair hair*), but not know it can also mean “just” (as in *justice*). Or, was the idea not clearly expressed or hard to understand even though you knew all the words? Understanding why you have had problems can help you listen more effectively next time.

- Finally, you may want to listen to the talk again, or part of it, with the transcript open, paying attention to the way words are pronounced in connected speech.

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Listening and Lectures

In this unit you will:

- 1 discuss the different situations in which you have to listen
- 2 identify what factors influence your ability to understand
- 3 learn about features of lectures in different academic cultures

Task 1 Listening in different languages

1.1 Discuss the following questions with another student.

1. Which of these types of listening do you think is more difficult or requires more attention in your own language? Why?
 - a. Listening to friends as part of your conversation with them.
 - b. Listening to the radio.
 - c. Listening to announcements at a crowded railway station.
 - d. Listening to an academic lecture.
2. What type of listening in English do you find more demanding/less demanding?
3. What experiences have you had of listening to spoken English?

Task 2 Understanding spoken English

2.1 Look at the following factors which make it difficult to listen to and understand spoken English. Add two or three more factors to this list and compare your ideas with your partner.

- The speed at which someone is speaking.
- Background noise.

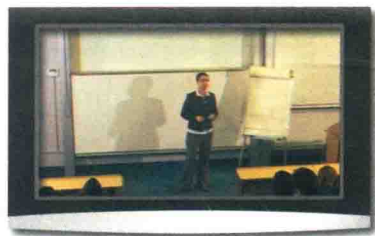
- _____
- _____
- _____

2.2



Listen to Part 1 of a talk in which a lecturer describes some of the problems of listening. Then answer the following questions.

1. Which of the factors listed in Ex 2.1 does she talk about?
2. Which other factors does she talk about?
3. After talking about the factors which affect listening, the lecturer discusses two additional problems that students may have. What are they?



2.3



Now listen to Part 2 of the talk. The lecturer asks you to write down a phrase. Do this as you listen.

Does this example make the points in Ex 2.2 Question 3 clearer?

2.4



Listen to Part 3 of the talk. Complete this excerpt by writing two to six words in each space.

So what is the solution to these two problems? Well, firstly, you need to get as much practice listening to natural speech as possible. Listen to _____ and try to develop your understanding of how words and phrases are really pronounced, not how you _____ pronounced. And secondly, you need to accept that when you listen you may misunderstand what is being said. So you need to be ready to _____ about your understanding of the meaning, if what you hear _____ compared to what you understood before. And this means taking a flexible, open-minded approach to listening.

2.5

Reflect on the talk you listened to in Ex 2.2–2.4. Answer the following questions.

1. Did you have any difficulties doing this activity?
2. If so, why do you think you had problems?
3. Were they the same problems the lecturer talked about?

Task 3 Listening to lectures

You are going to listen to a lecturer talking about the differences he perceives between lectures in the UK and in China.

3.1

Discuss with another student your experiences of lectures in your own country



and/or in the country where you are studying. Think about:

- what the lecturers did, e.g., read from notes, used visuals, asked questions, etc.
- what the students did, e.g., asked questions, took notes, etc.

3.2



In Part 1 of the talk, the lecturer describes the following:

1. what his main interest is
2. where he got his information about lectures in China
3. the survey he did and the students he talked to

Listen to Part 1 of the talk and make notes about points 1–3.

3.3

Compare your notes for Ex 3.2 with your partner. Then answer the following questions.

1. Did you record the same information?
2. Could you have recorded the information in different ways using fewer words/different words? How?

3.4



In Part 2 of the talk, the lecturer first talks about some of the characteristics of lectures in China and then compares these with lectures in the UK. Listen and make notes on the main points he makes.

China	UK

3.5

Compare your notes for Ex 3.4 with your partner. Then answer the following questions.

1. Did you record the same information?
2. Could you have recorded the information in different ways, using fewer words/different words? How?

3.6 Now respond to the talk. Look at the following questions in groups, and discuss your reactions to what the lecturer said in Ex 3.2 and 3.4.

1. Do you agree with what the speaker reported about lectures in China?
2. Have you listened to lectures in English before?
3. Did you take notes (in English or Chinese) during the lectures you attended?
4. Was it difficult to take notes? If so, why?
5. What did you do before and after your lectures to help you understand more fully and remember the content?



Unit summary

You have discussed different situations in which you have to listen. You have identified factors that influence your ability to understand, and learnt about features of lectures in different academic cultures.

1 Look at listening issues a–j and decide in which circumstances they could affect you. Choose one of the circumstances below and write F, L, R or A in the first box.

F – This affects me when I speak to English-speaking friends.

L – This affects me when I listen to lectures.

R – This affects me when I listen to the radio or watch TV.

A – This affects me if I listen to announcements.

- a. You are concentrating on something else at the same time as you are listening.
- b. You are nervous because missing something important will have a negative consequence.
- c. The speaker is using lots of words and phrases that you don't know.
- d. The speaker talks very quickly and runs words together. Even common words are difficult to catch.
- e. The speaker does not do or say things in the way that somebody in your country would.
- f. The speaker is talking about a topic you know nothing about.
- g. The speaker is using a lot of specialized vocabulary.
- h. Other people interrupt the speaker so you can't follow the flow.
- i. The speaker doesn't tell you when you should listen especially carefully.
- j. There is a lot of background noise.

2 Now look again at each issue and decide whether it is a problem for you or not. In the second box, write P if it is a problem and you need to practise, or N if it is not a problem.

3 Which of these issues did the lecturer in this unit offer solutions to?

For web resources relevant to this book, see:
www.englishforacademicstudy.com

This weblink will provide you with further practice in listening to lectures and information about issues concerning cultural differences.

