



Advanced

Listening

Comprehension

055

Colin Black

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Introduction

Using This Course

If you are beginning this course of advanced listening or if you are thinking of doing so, there are some things you should know about it.

Firstly, it is meant for people who can read better than they can listen (this means most people who learn English, if they learn it from textbooks). Secondly, it assumes that you know quite a lot of words (enough, for example, to read all this introduction without a dictionary and still understand nearly all of it). Lastly, it is meant for people who are prepared to spend quite a lot of time and concentration on improving their ability to comprehend spoken English. Like language learning generally, learning to listen is hard work; the way to do it is to keep listening to the same passages until you can understand all that is said every time. This is where the time and concentration come in.

The programmes are graded. This means that the first ones are rather easy and the last ones are rather difficult. However, it may be that you will find the first ones rather difficult. If that's how it is, don't despair, but you will need to spend time on these first programmes (Programmes 1-3) before you go on. By 'spending time' I mean listening to each tape 10 or 12 times, or as many times as you need to get the message from the programme—or as many times as you can bear to hear it!

There are exercises on each of the programmes, but you don't need to do them. The important thing is to listen to the programmes until you understand everything. The exercises are just meant to help you concentrate on some points and to give you information about how well you have understood the programme; the right moment to do them is when you've listened to the programme and think you understand it pretty well. The idea is to get nearly all the exercises right (this is an indication that you've understood nearly all the programme). The answers are given in the book just after the text of each programme. If you don't agree with an answer, listen to that part of the programme again. If you still don't agree, talk about it with a friend. If you still don't agree, you are probably right, and my answer is wrong.

The texts of the programmes are printed in this book so that you can check up on things you just can't get from the tape. You can use the texts in two ways, a sensible way and a silly way. The silly way is to read the text while you listen to the tape. This is silly because you can

read English anyway and you are only taking in the message through your eyes. The sensible way is to consult the text to check on what you've been hearing. After you've looked at the text, listen again without looking. *Listening means getting the message without looking.*

There are also word lists for every programme. These are meant to help you, so use them. When you hear a word or expression (or somebody's name or a place name) that puzzles you, stop the tape, look at the word list and check in a dictionary if necessary. (You could even write what the dictionary says on to the word list.) Words have many meanings, of course; make sure you've got a meaning from your dictionary that really fits the programme.

The programmes represent different kinds of spoken English. Some of the speakers are trying to make themselves clear and are trying to help you understand (Programmes 1 and 2). Other speakers don't really care whether you understand or not (for instance, Programmes 6 and 10)—they speak quickly, they mutter and mumble—and you will have to concentrate hard in order to follow them. Most people speak like that, so it's good practice.

Two of the programmes are full of difficult words and ideas (Programmes 7 and 9). Most people don't speak like this, but if anybody you meet does, it's very important to be able to understand him. The way to work with these particular programmes is to study the word list and use a good dictionary (like the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary*). The purpose of these programmes is to help you understand what you hear on the radio, or in a lecture, or when you meet thoughtful people (if you ever do).

Some of the speakers in the programmes are Americans. This is because it may be embarrassing for you to say to someone you meet, 'You'll have to stop talking, I'm afraid. I can only listen to British English.' And because a lot of people who use English are neither British nor American, there is a programme with someone who speaks European English (whatever that is).

The last programme is also a test. If you don't like testing yourself, just treat it as another programme. If you do want to test yourself, listen to the programme three or four times, looking up words in the word list if you like, but *not* looking at the text, and see what you score. If you score about 80% (8 multiple-choice questions right, 8 words right), you can tell yourself that you can understand spoken English well in most situations you are likely to be in. If you score less than 80%, maybe you ought to go through this course again sometime.

Word Lists and Exercises

Programme 1

The Growth of Conscience

cross
custard
delinquent
enormous
a fit of temper
guardian
miserable
naughty
notion

on purpose
pitiful
relate
ridiculous
supermarket
take some notice
training
unconscious
unfeelingly

Note

'True or false' and 'yes or no' in the exercises mean only 'Was this what was said on the tape or not?'

Exercise 1

Mark these statements as true (T) or false (F):

1. A person's general notions of good and bad are thought to constitute his conscience.
2. The child's ideas of good and bad grow out of his desire to please people.
3. A child of two already sees the difference between 'bad' things that he does by accident and 'bad' things that he does on purpose.
4. The child learns general ideas of good and bad in the first few years of his life.
5. From the young child's thought, 'It's naughty to throw custard at Granny', he passes to the general notion that it is bad to waste food.

Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks:

1. It is senseless to say that a three-year-old child is
2. Bullying and lying are examples of actions that are of.
3. Childhood training has an influence on the making of in later life.
4. He will have difficulty in the usual notions of good and bad.
5. It should be possible for us to develop our conscience in cases where we perceive that our conscience is at

Exercise 3

1. Is a child of six likely to say, 'It's good to help people?'
2. Is it certain, according to this passage, that delinquents mostly come from loveless homes?
3. Do most delinquents break society's rules because they are uncertain about what is good and bad?
4. Does one of the examples in this passage speak of a person who believes that it is good to kill Africans?
5. Is it said here that it is the very first years of a child's life that have the greatest effect on the growth of his conscience?

Programme 2

Dreams

add up
adventurous
anxiety
archetype
bedclothes
behind your back
common stock
consciousness
essential
fulfilment
generous
glamorous

legend
myth
possessor
quarrel
recently
reproach
sentence to death
serpent
shocked
shyness
sort out
strangle

Exercise 1

Mark these statements as true (T) or false (F):

1. Just because your bedclothes are twisted round your neck you may dream that your best friend is attacking you.
2. If a person's friend appears in a dream as an enemy, it may mean that he is not a real friend.
3. It is possible to feel reproached by a dream that you do not understand.
4. Freud said that dreaming was good for us.
5. One of the theories mentioned says that people of different cultures have the same characters in their dreams.

Exercise 2

Supply the missing words:

1. Freud's theory is known as the-fulfilment theory.
2. A middle-aged man who dreams that he is James Bond may have covered up his anxiety.
3. 'Archetypes' are the people or that commonly occur in our dreams.
4. To dream that one is sentenced to death by one's friends is a distressing
5. Unpleasant knowledge is often retained only in the mind.

Exercise 3

Answer yes or no:

1. Can physical circumstances cause dreams?
2. Do we all, according to Freud, have desires and fears that we are not aware of?
3. Is Freud's theory more complex than the modern theory?
4. Are all these symbols mentioned in the account of Jung's theory: *ring, princess, witch, serpent*?
5. Do any of the examples mentioned concern a secret desire to have power and influence?

Programme 3

Dependence in the Infant

bosom
confront
cot
cosy
cuddle
deep-rooted
desertion
digest
displeasure
distress
doze
excrete
helplessness
nanny
nightmare
passivity
protection

quiescence
reassure
rock
security
sensuous
shawl
snuggle
stay put
suck
suffocation
swallow
thrust
transition
tuck up
tunnel
urge
womb

Exercise 1

Mark these statements as true (T) or false (F):

1. Tight bedclothes in infancy are thought to cause feelings of suffocation in later life.
2. The young infant does not like to be moved from the cot to its mother's arms.
3. Infants don't like movement of any kind.
4. Sensuous pleasure in contact with the mother's body is more primitive than the urge to contact another body.
5. The infant may sometimes regard its mother as an evil force.

Exercise 2

Supply the missing words:

1. In the early months, it has come out of the womb.
2. It wants to be left at
3. The presence of the mother is to reassure it.
4. This contact gives it a of protection.
5. It finds that crying makes things

Exercise 3

Answer yes or no:

1. Can a baby of a few months do anything for itself?
2. Does the infant of one month spend 99% of its time dozing?
3. Did the old-fashioned nannies distress infants by tucking them up tight in their cots?
4. Does an infant cry only when in trouble?
5. Does the infant become angry when its mother is irritated?

Programme 4

A Political Experience

accompany
anonymous
anxiety
assume
attitude
betray
cheat
choir
choke
complain
conference
convinced
corridor
cross-examine
debate
dedicated
deliberately
denounce
determine
energetically
enormous
enquiry
envious
episode
expel
expression
expulsion

flap
flash
full-scale
groan
hour of need
informer
injustice
innocent
majority
neutral
nudge
ominous
panic
punish
rebellious
solidarity
stare
stride
summon
supervisor
undecided
unjustly
victimize
wavering
wheel around
whisper
wink

Exercise 1

Mark these statements as true (T) or false (F):

1. The French teacher used to victimize a slow German pupil.
2. The class thought the low mark given was unjust.
3. A 'concert' meant singing rude words.
4. Those who denied taking part in the concert were allowed to go home.
5. The speaker was outside the classroom during all the enquiries.
6. He was accused of cheating in a test.
7. Some pupils accused him, others supported him, but most did nothing.
8. His parents were angry with him when they heard his story.
9. He was given the worst punishment.
10. He avoided contact with the pupils who had betrayed him.

Exercise 2

Can one *infer* all these things from the passage? Mark the following as correct (C) or incorrect (I) inferences*:

1. The speaker had not done any of the rebellious things he was accused of.
2. The class as a whole showed solidarity with the speaker.
3. One reason why some boys informed on the speaker was that he was the best pupil in the class.
4. The speaker received the news of his expulsion calmly.
5. The speaker had many other political experiences in later life.

* An inference is what you can judge to be true on the basis of what you have heard.

Programme 5

In White America

abolish
Arkansas
bayonet
bench
bitch
brutally
bullet
cheat
civil rights
Civil War
club
community
contract
co-operate
estimate
exceed
experience
get rid of
ghetto
illegal

incident
justice
Little Rock
loot
lynch
National Guardsmen
Newark
non-violence
overcrowded
perfume
poison
rebellion
riot
segregation
slavery
success
Supreme Court
troops
victory
yell