

英语听力指南

雷衍春 编著

A GUIDE TO LISTENING COMPREHENSION



天津人民出版社

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前 言

听能是人们语言交际能力的重要方面。听,和读一样,是人们学习、吸收语言的重要途径。美国著名语言学家 L.G. 亚力山大说:“我认为,掌握一种语言,听懂的比重占百分之九十。”

然而,对外语学习者来说,提高听能并不是一件容易的事情。它是一个不断发展听力技巧、丰富文化知识并同时锻炼分析、推理等能力的综合训练和实践的过程。编写本书的目的,就是从听力训练实践的角度出发,向正在从事英语学习的众多的读者介绍几类最常见、最有用的听力材料(故事、会话、短文、新闻、讲座)的听力理解方法,帮助他们掌握一定的听力技巧,克服听力训练中可能遇到的困难,迅速提高听力水平。

本书内容精当,实用性强,应用面广。可供高等院校各年级学生、高中学生、英语自学者、英语爱好者及部分英语教学工作阅读参考。

限于编者水平与经验,书中错误、缺点在所难免。热诚欢迎读者、专家批评指正。

编 者

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一、怎样听故事

在所有类型的听力材料中,对英语初学者最有吸引力的恐怕要数故事了。特别是那些有情节、有文采、生动活泼、幽默风趣的小故事,更能引起初学者强烈的学习兴趣,例如低年级同学对诸如《Elementary Stories for Reproduction》、《Question and Answer》和《Practice and Progress》等书的兴趣经久不衰,就是一个明证。由于这类故事大多数都文字浅易,语法简单,语速不高,易于入门,最适合初学者进行听力训练,因此很多都被选做教材,在听力测试中也屡见不鲜。当然听力材料中也还有许多别的来源的故事,其难易程度各不相同。但不论何种来源,毕竟都是进口的洋故事,原版原声,对于我们刚开始进行听力训练的中学生和大学英语一二级学生来说,或多或少还存在一定的困难:有的抓不住故事的大意;有的辨音能力欠缺;有的被生词卡住;有的则首尾不能相顾;因而影响测试成绩。造成这些困难的原因,听音实践少自不待说,缺乏听力技巧实是一大通病。我们在这里就打算从听力实践的角度,给初学者谈谈后一个问题——听故事的若干技巧。

(一)

经过听力训练或者听力测试的同学都知道,听故事的要求多数是这么几种:判断真假命题;多项选择;回答有关问题和复述故事大意。而要求从头至尾一字不漏地听写故事全文的情况是十分罕见的,即使有些填充题,也不过是要求填上某些关键词语而已。由此可见,不论是听力训练还是听力测试,听力理解都不是一字不漏的百分之百的理解。即使在真实语言环境中,好的信息接受者也不能、也并不需要听见并接受语音传递的所有信息,听不清或听不懂一些声音是听话过程中的正常现象。明白了这个道理,我们在听音过程中才能克服这样一种普遍的心理障碍:不管听什么都全神贯注,企图听见并接受一切声音所传递的信息,每当听见不熟悉的声音时就紧张。这种企图抓住一切、见生词就害怕的心理障碍,大大降低了接受信息的效果。因为,注意力高度集中在具体的辨音上,其他分析活动必然随着放慢,其结果必然使理解发生困难,甚至无法跟上语流速度。有些同学听故事之所以抓不住要点,常常顾此失彼,听完了仍然不知所云,究其原因,就在于他们企图追求一字不漏的全理解,一当出现生词就卡壳听不下去。因此,这种严重的心理障碍必须坚决克服;否则,不单是听故事,听其他任何类型的材料,都收不到预期的效果。

(二)

在听力训练中,听故事的最起码的要求是什么呢?是听

懂故事的大意。这是做是非题、选择题、回答问题和复述故事的基础。因此，如何抓故事的大意，就成为听故事最重要的一种技巧。

在听力训练中，抓故事大意是通过抓关键词来实现的。

我们知道，由于知识的作用，人们往往可以根据若干词义线索来确定句子语义，而不需要听清每一个词或音节。例如听到“vase”、“dropped”和“broke”三个实词时，人们一般都能确定话语含有“花瓶掉落而碎”之意，其他的音和词是否感知已经无关紧要。这三个词就是传达这个句子主要信息的关键词。

在自然的语流中，关键词往往也是提供新信息的词。在语音上，它是重读词，有的词甚至有特殊重音，或拉长元音以示其在意义上的重要性。而非重读词或音节常常在语流中一带而过，含糊不清，由这些词或音节所传递的信息往往是冗余信息（人们在交际时为保证主要信息传达无误而给出的比实际需要多得多的信息）。从语调上也可判断主、次信息，调核则往往是信息的中心。肯定、怀疑、询问、幽默、讽刺等含意都可以通过不同的语调表现出来。由于英语重音、语调、节奏变化很大，我们应该更着重于从内容方面去分析主、次及冗余信息。我们听故事的时候，必须学会全面听，在语流中抓住主要内容，舍弃无关的词句。例如著名的童话故事《Cinderella》（灰姑娘），在狄斯尼的动画片中解说词长达千余字，但我们只要抓住下面为数不多的这些关键词语，就可以了解故事的大致内容：

kingdom / Cinderella / stepmother / stepsisters /

jealous / work / friends / never complain / believe /
dreams / come true

invitation / royal ball / Prince / maid / attend /
Cinderella / can go / finish / chores / busy / not
dressed / tears / garden

fairy godmother / pumpkin / mice / magic wand /
sing / coach / horses / coachman / gown / slippers

delighted / dreams / can't last / midnight / spell /
break / promise / ballroom / Cinderella / love /
Prince / fall in love / dance / all evening

tower clock / begin / cry / run / lose / slipper /
clock / twelfth time / magic / end

Prince / marry / girl / wear / slipper / Grand
Duke / look for / not / girl / fit

lock / mice / key / fit / dream / come true

我们不妨再看一个完整的例子,仔细观察故事后面列出
的关键词语,看这些词语是如何体现故事的大意的,以及其他
传递次要信息和冗余信息的词句是如何被舍弃的:

Musical Half Notes

A musician who played pop music in a club lived in a
boarding house in the centre of London. He always used to
get back to his room very late at night and sometimes in the
early hours of the morning. He was so tired when he got
back that he would sit on the edge of his bed, take off his

shoes and throw them on the floor, and say, "Thank goodness, another day is over." He would then get into bed and fall fast asleep.

But the poor lodger who had the room under the musician's was woken up each night or early in the morning by the two thuds that the two shoes made as they landed on his ceiling. Finally, he could not stand it any more and went and complained to the musician. Naturally, the musician was very upset and promised that in future after taking off his shoes he would put them down as quietly as possible on the carpet.

The next day, he got back from his club at about one o'clock in the morning, went up to his room, sat on the edge of his bed, took off one shoe and threw it on the floor. He was just about to do the same with the other when he suddenly remembered the promise he had made the day before. So with great care, he put the second shoe down silently on the carpet. Then he got into bed and fell fast asleep.

An hour later, he was woken up by a violent knocking on his door. It was the lodger who slept in the room just under his. "Please! Please! Please!" the lodger pleaded, "drop the other shoe. I've been waiting for a whole hour for you to drop it. As soon as you do, I can go to sleep."

Key Words:

musician / live / boarding house / get back / late
/ tired / take off / shoes / throw / floor / fall /
asleep

lodger / under / wake up / two thuds / complain
/ promise / put / quietly

next day / take off / one / throw / remember /
put / second / silently

wake / knock / plead / drop / other / wait /
hour / as soon as / do / sleep

(三)

辨音困难是初学者听故事时的另一大障碍。影响辨音的因素很多,但主要的是快速连读、音的同化、音的弱化和鼻腔爆破等现象。要突破这些障碍,既要有这方面的语音理论知识,又要有大量的听音实践。

1. 当连读发生在同一个意群之内的时候,我们一般不会发生什么困难,比如:

put them on, soon after dinner, five-year-old brother,
waiting for an important telephone call, while it was with us.

但是,当连读出现在两个意群之间,或者突然出现某个新词随后又与别的词连读,这时候光理论上懂得什么是连读就不够了,还要有大量的听音实践。平时没有听惯这些连读

现象的话,就可能造成误解。例如在 but she had no bread in the house 这个句子中,很多同学就反映 bread 与 in 的连读很不容易听出来。他们问 ['bredin] 是什么意思?类似的情况还有 he slipped and fell 句中 slipped 与 and 的连读, One of them knelt on the ground 句中生词 knelt 与 on 的连读, gave them back to the shopkeeper and said 中 shopkeeper 与 and 的连读,等等。尤其是还有一些我们平常听得较少的连读,如 when 与 their 的连读, than 与 their 的连读, in 与 that 的连读,更不容易听出来。这类连读平素听音的时候要特别注意。

2. 音的同化也是困难之一。所谓音的同化,就是一个音因为受了另外一个邻音的影响而发成了这两个音之外的第三个音。最常见又明显的例子是[j]在和[t]相遇时变成[ɟ],和[t]在一起又变成了[tʃ];[j]在和[d]相遇时变成[ɟ],和[d]在一起又变成了[dʒ]。试朗读下面几个句子,特别注意划线部分,体会上述两种同化现象:

Why don't you get one big glass instead?

But you don't see anything.

You did not say, "Pots do not have babies," did you?

I'll think about you all the time and send you a present from every port.

You and your sister were ill... when my wife and I were here last year.

3. 对于我们中国学生来说,鼻腔爆破、舌侧爆破等语音现象更是一大困难,不懂得这些特殊的发音方法,就连最简单

的词语也不容易听出来。例如 a beautiful cotton dress 中的 cotton, a small garden 中的 garden, 录音里都是以鼻腔爆破的方法发音, 如果我们平素将这些词读成 ['kɒtən] 和 ['gɑ:dən] 而不是读 ['kɒtn] 和 [gɑ:dn] 的话, 就不容易辨别出来。这是一个不完全的语音知识导致某些辨音困难的生动例子。

4. 音的弱化也是影响我们辨音的一个因素。比如有的同学将 the neck's too small 听成了 the next tooth, 有的听成了 the next Tuesday, 就是因为他们不懂得 the neck is 弱化成了 the neck's 的缘故, 而这种弱化又是通过省略音节的方式来实现的。其他例子如 were not 的弱读 ['wə:nt], did not 的弱读 ['dɪdnt], 也值得注意; 因为对于这两个弱读形式一般同学的读法往往不正确, 他们往往将前者读成 ['weərənt], 将后者读成 ['dɪdənt] 因而影响辨音。

(四)

同听其他类型的材料一样, 听故事的另一个普遍问题是碰到生词怎么办。听力训练的实践经验告诉我们, 最有效的方法是根据上下文猜测和判断生词在该句中的意思。这是听力理解中的一种重要技巧。猜测词义的方法很多, 如利用上下文对某个词的解释; 利用同义词或近义词; 利用反义词或对比; 利用已有知识或常识对生词的词义进行猜测, 等等。请看若干例子:

(1) A: Mr Baker. Write it down. B-A-K-E-R.

B: How do you make a B?

上文的 write down 就是对下文 make 一词的解释。

(2) He would speak but often people couldn't understand what he was saying. He was almost incomprehensible.

第一句的 people couldn't understand what he was saying 就是对第二句 incomprehensible 一词的解释。

(3) One fine day recently he went for a stroll in the countryside...and he had no sooner set out for his walk than he became engrossed in reading.

上文的 stroll 与下文的 walk 同义。

(4) As soon as he had put them on, he realized his mistake...Then, after finding his glasses, he realized...that he had made a second blunder.

下文的 blunder 与上文的 mistake 同义。

(5) After a few minutes, the fisherman pulled his line in. There was a big, fat fish at the end of it. Then he put his hook and line in again. After a few more minutes he caught another big fish.

从上下文的对比中,我们至少可以知道 pull(his line)in 与 put(his line)in 这两个短语有相反的意思。

(6) A: I've swallowed a horse, doctor, and I feel very ill.

B: I've taken it out of your stomach, and it won't give you any more trouble now.

从上下文 swallow 与 take it out of your stomach 的对比中,至少我们可以猜到 swallow 是“吃下”,“咽下”或“吞下”的

意思,而绝不会是如有的同学所误解的 stole 的意思。

(7) 上文: Mr Jones was very angry with his wife, and she was very angry with her husband.

下文: 'Mother. — Wake me up at 7 a.m. — Father.' ... 'Father. — Wake up. It is 7 a.m. — Mother.'

根据上文,可知下文的 Father 和 Mother 系指 husband 和 wife。根据常识,则可知 Father、Mother 是夫妻之间的称呼,相当于北方话“(孩子)他爸”、“(孩子)他妈”,而决非他们互相叫对方为“爸爸”或“妈妈”。

(8) Jack's first port was Freetown in Africa, and he sent Gloria a parrot from there. It spoke five languages.

从下文的 It spoke five languages, 我们至少可以断定 parrot 不是 carrot,而是一件有生命的东西。常识告诉我们,通常只有鹦鹉会学人说话,鹦鹉又原产于热带国家。因此,从礼物“会说五种语言”和寄自“非洲的弗里敦”,我们最后推断 parrot 是鹦鹉。

(五)

除了学会掌握辨音、猜测词义和通过关键词抓大意这些重要的技巧之外,听故事往往还需要一定的想象能力,才能领会其中的妙处。

例如这么一个故事:

Helen's eyes were not very good, so she usually wore

glasses. But when she was seventeen and she began to go out with a young man, she never wore her glasses when she was with him. When he came to the door to take her out, she took her glasses off, and when she came home again and he left, she put them on.

One day her mother said to her, 'But Helen, why do you never wear your glasses when you are with Jim? He takes you to beautiful places in his car, but you don't see anything.'

'Well, Mother,' said Helen, 'I look prettier to Jim when I am not wearing my glasses—and he looks better to me too!'

如果碰巧你也近视,当你与异性朋友约会的时候,也摘掉那副不甚雅观的近视眼镜,你当然会与 Helen 姑娘有同感。即使你不近视,只要运用你的想象力,也就不难体会其中之妙:不戴眼镜彼此都会觉得对方“漂亮”些。为什么?因为,一方面那副酒瓶底般的深度近视眼镜本来就难看,现在摘掉了,当然显得“好看”些;另一方面,你摘掉眼镜以后肯定视力模糊,看对方不就尤如雾里看花了么?兴许连对方脸上有雀斑都看不出来哩!此举真可谓两全其美,亏了 Helen 姑娘想得出来!

又比如这么一个故事:

Mr Jones was very angry with his wife, and she was very angry with her husband. For several days they did not speak to each other at all. One evening Mr Jones was very tired

when he came back from work, so he went to bed soon after dinner. Of course, he did not say anything to Mrs Jones before he went upstairs. Mrs Jones washed the dinner things and then did some sewing. When she went up to bed much later than her husband, she found a piece of paper on the small table near her bed. On it were the words, 'Mother.—Wake me up at 7 a.m. —Father.'

When Mr Jones woke up the next morning, it was nearly 8 a.m. —and on the small table near his bed he saw another piece of paper. He took it and read these words: 'Father. —Wake up. It is 7 a.m. —Mother.'

生活中夫妻拌嘴的事不乏其例,你是学生没有经历与体会,但只要想象一下,夫妻拌嘴后用无声的纸条来传递信息和协调关系的做法会产生多么滑稽可笑的结果,这个故事便不难理解了。

有时候,句子本身就足以引起联想。比如这么一个故事:

Jack was a young sailor. He lived in England, but he was often away with his ship.

One summer he came back from a long voyage and found new neighbours near his mother's house. They had a pretty daughter, and Jack soon loved her very much.

He said to her, 'My next voyage will begin in a few days' time, Gloria. I love you, and I'll marry you when I come back. I'll think about you all the time, and I'll write to you and send you a present from every port.'