

# Creating Learning Environment for Young Language Learners (Listening & Speaking)

Mirzakulova Feruza Mukhitdin kizi

Gulistan State University, a student  
+998949231140

Gmail: [mirzakulovaferuza113@gmail.com](mailto:mirzakulovaferuza113@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This article discusses how to establish the welcoming learning environment for young learners and encourage “Early childhood professionals” to do some leading activity in teaching listening and speaking. It also emphasises two of English skills: how to maximize Young Learner’s speaking. They describe some enjoyable activities to encourage early childhood get comprehension in listening and speaking.

**Keywords:** Component; learning environment, symbolic function, comprehensible input, Total Physical Response (TPR)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A caring environment in which children feel secure and valued will allow them to express their thoughts, feelings and understanding. The classroom environment should promote language as a tool for learning across the curriculum. Teachers need to provide an environment which promotes active listening and purposeful talking, well designed writing and comprehensive reading. Creating safe and caring environments for children from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds involves establishing a tone of respect. This means that children, parents and community members should feel as though they are welcomed members of the learning community and that their diverse identities are valued.

### Establish a welcoming early learning environment

Establish a welcoming environment by: reflecting the linguistic and cultural diversity of all children in such things as classroom posters, pictures, props, tabletop toys, games, storybooks, media resources, musical instruments and foods served in the classroom providing opportunities for family and community members to share experiences with children in the classroom in their home language as well as in English providing learning experiences such as field trips and other community outings to places where children and families can learn about the culture and history of themselves and others. Offering opportunities for children, assisted by their parents or other family and/or community members, to cook foods from a wide range of cultural backgrounds learning and using key words in the home languages of the children ensuring that all children are respected and valued, and that biases and discrimination are quickly and effectively dealt with when they arise.

### Encourage children to play

Play is the cornerstone activity for social, cognitive and language development in children from two-and-a-half to five-years-old. Early childhood professionals should promote play as the leading activity for children. The relationship between language development and play is two-way: Language makes it possible for children to adopt roles, and to negotiate the rules and goals of play. Dramatic or pretend play stimulates the development of language.

Play fuels development through imagination and *symbolic functions*. Symbolic functions are the ability to understand that objects, actions, words and people can stand for something else. Symbolic functions are at the core of pretend play and form the foundation for conceptual thinking, literacy and numeracy. For young children learning a new language, play provides a safe space to try out new words. Even if they do not know the exact word for something, children do not feel embarrassed by using a different name for it since, as in play, everything can become anything—a stick can be a horse or a pen.

### How to Maximize Young Learner’s Listening The nature of listening

Garvie (1999) stated that 'Listening is an active not a passive operation.' Arnold (2012 : 1) Furthermore Arnold emphasis three things the nature of listening: 1. The importance of understanding this concept of listening being an active engagement. That is, as a listener, the mind is actively searching for meaning. 2. The importance of what Krashen calls '*comprehensible input*' (CI) or that 'we acquire when we understand what people tell us or what we read, when we are absorbed in the message.' Individual progress is dependent on the input containing aspects of the target language that 'the acquirer has not yet acquired, but is developmentally ready to acquire.'

This seems to imply the importance of ensuring that the language level is matched to the learners, which means teachers must understand their learners' abilities.

Krashen advises that acquisition proceeds best when 'the acquirer's level of anxiety is low and self-confidence is high.' This seems to enforce the importance of making the learning environment in our classrooms nonthreatening.

Diyanti (2006) stated It is through listening that babies first learn the language. It is also believed that exposure to English should be first done through exposing students to verbal talks. Learners get many things through listening. When learners have the opportunity to listen to listening materials, then teachers should expose students to listening to English as much as possible. Therefore, listening skills become very crucial emphasis in the teaching of English to young learners.

**1. Teachers or tapes first?** One of the most frequently asked questions teachers have is whether their learners should listen to them or the tapes first. When teachers focus on classroom interaction teachers can use their talks to deliver the tasks and engage students to the designed activities. Teachers can ask What kind of food do you like?. When the students do not seem to understand what it means, we can encourage students to ask us the same questions then let them guess the meaning from our respond to the questions. If we answer by saying a certain food that they are familiar with, with a little smile or gesture to show that we like it, students can guess the meaning of the pattern from the context. Students can then start asking and answering the questions among themselves. On the other hand, in most listening activities, children simply listen carefully to the material. Activities and practices are postponed until students finish listening. Therefore when children listen to tapes first, they tend to guess and interact less. So it is better to do some kind of practice before listening. Students can arrange a set of jumbled pictures based on what is played on the recording. Listening activities can also be designed as an interactive activity in which students do what is stated in the recording, then listening to songs or chants, children can sing along or imitate what is played. Dictation exercise is always an important technique of teaching listening because it trains students' comprehension in differing English sounds.

**2. Dictation** doesn't have to be dull and boring in which teachers simply state the words and students write the words in their notebooks, it can be so much fun and interesting if we apply it in language games. Some of the listening games that involved the principles of dictation are Chopstick Spelling and Bingo.

**3. Stories** It is a wonderful technique to teach, English through stories. Paul, (2003: 74) argues that stories can be a supplementary material when teaching English to young learners particularly when the stories can be integrated to the course. Teachers can read it to children from storybooks, memorize the stories then tell it to children, or play it on a tape. There are some activities that teachers can involve

when they are telling stories. These activities are designed to engage students in the story telling time and to avoid a teacher-dominated classroom activity. The activities are:

- The children draw characters or scenes from the story.
- Teachers tell the story with puppets, children then retell the story with their own puppets.
- Children arrange pictures from the scene of the story, or touch/jump on the correct pictures as teachers tell the story. This activity can also be modified by asking students to guess what the story will be by arranging pictures from the scene before teachers tell them the story.
- Each child has a word card. When her word is mentioned in the story, she has to do something about it, like raising her card, make funny noise, or put up her hand.
- The teacher stops sometimes during the story to ask students what they think is going to happen next.

#### 4. Total Physical Response (TPR)

TPR is another technique that teachers often used in classroom. In this, teachers give instruction like stand up, sit down, walk slowly, point to the door, point to the windows, and so on and students do as instructed. However, many teachers question the effectiveness of TPR in an English classroom because the idea of TPR is students respond to what is instructed by doing an action without speaking. This tends to give students very little chance to speak in the class. To overcome this problem, some teachers modify the instruction with those instructions which require verbal respond like say hurray, say Good Morning, sing The Farmer in the Dell, and the like; or the combination of action and verbal responses like when the teachers say stand up then students stand up and say we're standing up.

#### 5. Songs

Paul, (2003: 58), states that children love songs. Children keep songs in their heads, sing them after class, hum them on the way home, and sing them at home. They like the singing activity and songs provide many opportunities to get new words and to acquire the model pronunciation. Paul, (2008: 58-59), suggests the following ways of how teachers can use songs (and chants) in class:

##### *Singing*

The children sing songs that have catchy melodies and useful language content.

##### *Activities*

The children combine actions with songs. This is usually the most effective way to use songs, especially with younger children. Any songs can be combined with actions.

##### *Chants*

Almost any sentence or expression can be put into a chant. If possible, chants should also be combined with actions.

##### *Background*

There are songs in the background when children play games. This can be an effective way for children to remember patterns without focusing on them too much, and to pick up chunks of language in songs.

#### *Between lesson*

We encourage parents to play English songs in the car and encourage both the parents and the children to play them at home between lessons. They acquire these advantages through these very enjoyable activities.

### **How to Maximize Young Learner's Speaking**

#### **a. Teacher's Preparation**

We began with the question, "Who is the most important person in the classroom?" and answered, "The student is the most important person, because the university and the teacher are there to serve the student's need to learn, just as the hospital is there to treat the patients, or the police to protect the security of the citizens."

Ironically, however, institutions can end up serving the purposes of those who run them so an imbalance is created that downplays the rights of those to be served. Teachers should always remember this and try to look at their classes from the student's point of view. In short, we need to do what the students need and not make them do what we need.

#### **b. Student's motivation**

Encourage students to spend time speaking to you. Be mindful of how much time you are speaking versus your student: keep tutor talk time to a minimum and increase student talk time. Focussing on speaking practice also offers an opportunity to build on cultural traditions of oral story telling which many students may be familiar with. Encouraging pride in this tradition can be a useful tool in providing students with the confidence needed for preparing class presentations or other formal speaking activities.

### **Strategies and Approaches Social Conventions In Speaking Skill**

Children will learn how to develop friendships, have conversations, give and receive information, share materials and ideas and show respect and consideration as they interact with others. The following experiences will assist children to develop appropriate and effective social conventions.

#### **1. Conversation**

Informal : Model social courtesies and conventions, for example, greetings, enquiries, turn-taking, responding, and non-verbal communication.

Structured : Involve children in purposeful conversation by introducing topics, displaying pictures, telling stories etc.

#### **2. Partner Work**

- Model appropriate interactions.
- Provide opportunities for children to complete tasks together:
  - shared jobs, for example, tidying the writing corner;
  - labelling, for example, own/jointly made constructions, pictures, classroom signs;

- puppet plays;
- brainstorming and list making; – role play;

#### **3. Talking Partners**

Another child with whom ideas are shared and answers rehearsed.

- Ensure children work with different partners.
- Model how to interact.
  - Provide opportunities to talk with a partner throughout the day, for example: to discuss response to the question during shared reading sessions; to solve a problem;

#### **4. Role-play**

- Base on real or imaginative experiences.
- Speak and behave in an appropriate manner, for example, doctor in hospital, taking a message using a telephone.
- Discuss class rules and role-play scenarios, for example, asking to join in a game and resolving conflict.

### **6. References**

1. [http://ocw.metu.edu.tr/file.php/79/WeekV\\_Listening\\_and\\_Speaking\\_in\\_Young\\_Learner\\_Classes.pdf](http://ocw.metu.edu.tr/file.php/79/WeekV_Listening_and_Speaking_in_Young_Learner_Classes.pdf)
2. Alberta Education. Early Learning Branch. (2009) Working with young children who are learning English as a new language. Alberta : Early Learning Branch.
3. Cameron, L. (2001). Teaching Languages to Young Learners. Cambridge University Press.
4. Linse, Northern Ireland Curriculum. *Talking and Listening Language and literacy In the Foundation Stage*
5. Garvie, E (1990) *Story as Vehicle*. England: Multilingual Matters Ltd
6. Krashen, S.D. (1997) *Foreign Language Education. The Easy Way*.
6. Wendy Arnold, Teacher, Trainer, Author, IATEFL YL SIG, <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/listening-young-learners>
7. Yuniar Diyanti (2006) Teaching Listening and Speaking <http://studylib.net/doc/12685454/teaching-listening-and-speaking-to-younglearners----by>