

Course IV

Unit II - Listening - Meaning And Definition

A wise person said, "Listening is the hardest thing in the world". According to "Jiddu Krishnamurthi" (1895 - 1986) — "When you are listening to somebody completely and attentively, then you are listening not only to the words, but also to the feeling of what is being conveyed, so the whole of it, and not part of it!" In fact listening is the act of hearing attentively. It is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from and responding to a spoken and ~~for~~ or non-verbal message. Listening is not just hearing sounds, but also requires attending to the sounds of the language and trying to infer the message.

Listening is an art, and language ability. It is the basis of whole process of language-development. The first language skill that a child encounters is the listening experience. This is followed with acquisition of other language skills. Example - speaking, reading and writing.

Wolvin and Cookley (1996) stated, "Listening

is one of the most used and one of the most important communication skills in personal, academic, and professional settings."

Listening is always an active process as the listener has to concentrate on the message to be able to decode it. The difference between hearing and listening can be made clear through the following table: -

Hearing

Listening

1. Hearing is easy.	Listening is hard.
2. Hearing is passive.	Listening is active.
3. Hearing is a physical function of Biology.	Listening is mental function of internal behaviour.
	Listening is beyond beyond words, more than hearing.