

## Organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters

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**Abstract.** The article examines the process of organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters. A systemic and systematic principle, a communicative principle, a principle of interconnection of the types of speech activities, and a principle of realization of the strategic actions, typical for the research, are analyzed. A list of prerequisites for purposeful application of the listening comprehension strategies by future interpreters is specified. Distribution of hours for teaching listening comprehension at initial, basic and advanced stages is given.

**Keywords:** distance education, listening comprehension course, future interpreters, genres of audio texts, types of listening.

**Introduction.** Effective usage of the exercises aimed at successful listening comprehension development of future interpreters is possible due to accurate and precise organization of distance listening comprehension course for the students. We consider such organization as a scientifically based scheme that implies consistent educational actions logically connected with the final result [2]. Using different teaching material, lecturers can easily adapt the listening comprehension model according to the curriculum and implement it into practice with the students during the educational process.

**Analysis** of modern methodological and pedagogical research works on the topic has proved that the problem of the organization of distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters has not been solved yet.

**Purpose.** The purpose of the article is to characterize the process of organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters.

**Methods.** Study of the scientific publications, empirical research, analysis of the topics, functions and listening skills of the Curriculum for English language development in universities and institutes, study of the basic materials for the Translators/Interpreters' Department for "English as First Foreign Language", mass survey of the future interpreters of the second course were used to outline and describe the process of organization of distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters.

**Results.** Organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters is based on the factors that guarantee the effective outcome. Following the results of the researchers investigating listening comprehension [1, 2, 3], we define such components of the process as principles, an object, an aim, a subject, a discipline, means of realization, and the stages of the organization in the frame of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Taking into account that any organization of the educational process requires certain principles to be based on [5], we offer to keep to the following principles while making a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters: a systemic and systematic principle, a communicative principle, a principle of interconnection of the types of speech activities, and a principle of realization of the strategic actions which is typical of our research.

Considering a systemic and systematic principle of the process of organization of a distance listening compre-

hension course for the students, it should be noted that all the groups exercises focused on the development of the students' listening comprehension skills are interrelated and thoroughly compiled; the sequence of the listening exercises is methodically planned making the educational process systemic. In addition, usage of Moodle (modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment) as an educational platform for improving listening skills of the students and learning listening comprehension strategies, characterizes the process of organization as systemic and manageable. By setting the final dates for the tasks to be accomplished, a teacher manages the process of listening to the audio texts, watching the video messages and accomplishing the exercises online. This way a lecturer can easily keep track of the students' attendance at the virtual listening comprehension course. In turn, the students themselves can plan their listening comprehension preparation in accordance with the teacher's date limits.

A communicative principle is realized via individualization of the educational process, including situational and functional parameters. Individual and personal characteristics of the future interpreters, appropriate selection of the listening comprehension strategies typical for a specific genre (interview, announcement, lecture, the news) are features of individualization of the communicative principle. Situational characteristics of this principle are expressed by the possibility of the distance listening comprehension course to reconstruct the communicative reality. Owing to this fact, the students feel higher motivation for improving their listening skills as they understand the link between the educational exercises and the real necessity they are going to face with being professional interpreters. Besides, every other audio or video message the students hear, will cause less stress and worry but better performance instead. Functional parameters of communicative principle in the organization of distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters means compatibility between the curriculum and the spheres of communication and selection of the essential vocabulary.

It is interrelation between teaching listening comprehension and oral and written ways of expressing thoughts that defines a principle of interconnection of the types of speech activities. Written answers prepared by the students and sent online to the teacher suppose that future interpreters are able to express their thoughts freely on the topic of the listening, to select necessary words and word

combinations to complete the answer, to use appropriate grammar rules in order to put their ideas in a written form.

A principle of realization of the strategic actions has been singled out as specific for our research. For future interpreters, it is important to know how to apply listening comprehension strategies correctly while understanding texts of different genres. To specify the sense of this principle, we have distinguished a list of prerequisites for purposeful application of the listening comprehension strategies by future interpreters. Among them there are heuristic conversations about listening comprehension strategies and strategic actions with the students and their teachers, educational guides on strategic use aimed at understanding interviews, lectures, announcements, and the news, analysis of the theoretical material conducted by the students themselves, establishing correlation between listening comprehension strategies and the relevant strategic actions, completing a self-evaluation listening comprehension form.

We highlight the idea of being guided by a socially-affective strategy in the process of organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters. The point of the strategy is to motivate and support listening comprehension efforts of the students due to their successful understanding of any previous audio or video texts. The object of the education is a process of teaching future correspondence-course interpreters listening to interviews, lectures, announcements, the news. The

aim of the education is to make students acquire competence in listening comprehension.

The subjects of the education are the second-year future interpreters of English (III semester). Listening is a foreground speech activity [6, p. 5] which is intended to make students acquire listening skills according to such topics as "Mass Media", "Theatre", "Medicine and health". Future interpreters must know how to understand the gist and details of live or recorded interviews, lectures, announcements, the news. It should be noted that being aware of the peculiarities of the above-mentioned genres and regular listening practice help students comprehend the texts easier and quicker, analyze the messages in accordance with the genre, take into account structural, phonetic, lexical, and grammar phenomena while interpreting.

The means of realization of the organization are the authentic audio and video texts (interviews, lectures, announcements, the news) selected according to the primary and secondary criteria [4], and the system of exercises for development listening skills and strategies.

The distant listening comprehension course has been organized according to ECTS. For second-year distance interpreters of Department of English Language at Kyiv National Linguistic University (III semester) there are 48 hrs for lectures and 744 hrs for individual work as shown in Figure 1.

Introductory course	Winter exams		Total	Number of Modules	Test	Exam
Lectures	Lectures	Individual work				
18	30	744	792	3	1	1

Figure 1. Distribution of hours for distance interpreters, II year, III semester

To calculate the number of hours the distant listening comprehension course will take, it should be mentioned that listening, on a par with reading, writing and speaking, takes 1/4 (25%) of total educational hours. For organization of our model it constitutes: lectures – 48 hrs (24 classes) : 4 = 12 hrs and for individual studies – 744 hrs : 4 = 186 hrs. During the III semester future interpreters can listen to the audio texts of different genres the following number of hours: introductory course – 18 hrs (lectures) : 4 = 4.5 hrs, individual work – 744 hrs : 4 = 186 hrs, winter exams – 30 hrs : 4 = 7.5 hrs, where 1 hour is 45 minutes (Fig. 2).

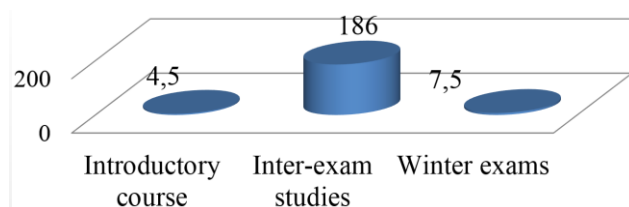


Figure 2. Distribution of hours according to the structure of the course

Organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters can be realized during three stages: initial, basic and advanced. Initial stage is focused on the students' ability to comprehend and understand audio and video messages of different genres (interviews, lectures, announcements, the news) placed in a open-source software learning management system Moodle. The future interpreters are given guidelines on the specific

features of listening to each of the genres. In addition, the students are taught how to take notes while listening, which is essential for their professional activity.

Concerning the hours, at the initial stage distance future interpreters can take a 4.5 hrs (202,5 min) listening comprehension course. On the whole, at this stage there are 18 hours (9 classes by 90 minutes) to work on all four types of speech activities (reading, writing, listening and speaking). To define how many minutes teaching listening will take at the initial stage at each class, 202,5 min divide by 9 classes: 202,5 : 9 = 22,5 min. Summing up, teaching future interpreters listening comprehension at the initial stage will take approximately 22,5 minutes at each class or 45 min every second class and 22,5 min more at the last one as shown in Figure 3.

It is worth giving a detailed characteristics of individual studies of the students during an inter-exam course. A basic stage of a distance listening comprehension course is most important for the development of listening skills and strategies. Accomplishing the exercises, analyzing the listening strategies, students develop their listening skills on such types of listening as identifying specific information, critical or understanding attitude, listening for details and listening for gist. Besides, the listening comprehension course offers thorough work on the language material, analysis and interpretation of parts of different audio texts, keeping a "Listening Comprehension Diary" applying strategies and strategic actions offered in the course.

1	2	3	45 min x 4 classes = 180 min – lectures 22,5 x 1 class = 22,5 min – lectures Total: 180 + 22,5 = 202,5 min. – listening comprehension of different genres
4	5	6	
7	8	9	

Figure 3. Distribution of hours for teaching listening comprehension at the initial stage

Basic stage of teaching listening is aimed at increasing the future interpreters' level of motivation concerning their individual listening to the texts and doing the exercises. At this stage students learn how to avoid misunderstanding of the messages and express their reaction to general or detailed information in the most appropriate way while listening to the interviews, lectures, the news and announcements. During the inter-exam course the distribution of the hours given for improving listening

skills and strategies according to the genres is as follows: 186 hrs : 4 (genres) = 46,5 hrs.

It should be mentioned that we have organized a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters depending on the genres and not the topics of modules. This approach makes it possible for any teacher relate any selection of topics to the given model of a distance listening comprehension course. The interrelation between genres of audio texts, types of listening and hours within the modules shown in Figure 4.

Modules	Genres	Type of listening	Total hrs
Mass Media	Announcement	Identifying specific information	46,5
	Theatre	Interview	Critical or understanding attitude
Medicine and Health	The news	For details	46,5
	Lectures	For gist	46,5

Figure 4. Interrelation between genres of audio texts, types of listening and hours in accordance with the modules

According to three modules and four genres, we have allocated 46,5 hrs of individual listening comprehension studies this way: 46,5 hrs : 3 = 15,5 hrs. To learn how much time is given for listening to each of the three modules which include announcements, interviews, the news and lectures, 15,5 hrs : 4 = 3,8 hrs. As the organization of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters is targeted at the correspondence-course students, it is the responsibility of the students to manage their studies and time during the basic stage of the course. Nevertheless, we do recommend to stick to the schedule in Figure 5.

The final, advanced stage of the course, is intended to carry out some improvements to the students' ability to listen to the texts of different genres and to do exercises based on different types of listening namely: identifying specific information, critical or understanding attitude, listening for details and listening for gist. In addition, the students can improve their specific interpreting skills by writing a summary or a report on the issue in their mother tongue. At this stage the future interpreters are offered to complete a post-experiment listening comprehension questionnaire, select the necessary audio and video material to listen to and to watch, define the listening strategies on their own, apply the strategic actions to overcome the

listening comprehension difficulties, improve the ability to use the strategies which are underdeveloped.

Modules	Genres	Hours	Terms
1. Mass Media	Announcements	3,8	September - October
	Interviews	3,8	
	The news	3,8	
	Lectures	3,8	
2. Theatre	Announcements	3,8	October - November
	Interviews	3,8	
	The news	3,8	
	Lectures	3,8	
3. Medicine and Health	Announcements	3,8	November - December
	Interviews	3,8	
	The news	3,8	
	Lectures	3,8	

Figure 5. Distribution of hours for teaching listening comprehension at the basic stage

To teach students listening at the advanced stage there are 7,5 hrs (337,5 min). Totally there are 30 hrs (15 classes). To determine the amount of time for teaching listening at each class 337,5 min : 15 classes = 22,5 min. Overall, teaching listening at the advanced stage will take approximately 22,5 minutes at every class or 45 min at every second class and 22,5 min at the last one as shown in Figure 6.

1	2	3	4	5	45 min x 7 classes = 315 min – lectures 22,5 min x 1 class = 22,5 min – lectures Total: 315 + 22,5 = 337,5 min – listening comprehension of different genres
6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	

Figure 6. Distribution of hours for teaching listening comprehension at the advanced stage

The structure and the contents of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters is shown in Figure 7.

Structure of educational process	Type of studies	Stage	Hours	The contents of the listening comprehension course
Introductory course	Lectures	Initial	4.5	Learning the peculiarities of the strategic actions targeted at successful comprehension of the announcements, the news, interviews and lectures, instructions on Moodle navigation.
Inter-exam course	Individual studies	Basic	186	Realization of the course aimed at developing listening skills of different genres of the texts, keeping to "Listening Comprehension Diary".
Winter exams	Lectures	Advanced	7.5	Usage of listening comprehension strategies of interviews, lectures, announcements, the news defined by the students on their own.

Figure 7. Structure and the contents of a distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters

**Conclusion.** To sum up, the listening comprehension course based in Moodle is worthwhile. The exercises aimed at developing and improving students' knowledge on listening strategies and peculiar features

of audio texts of different genres contribute to the teaching process of listening. However, the efficiency of the described distance listening comprehension course for future interpreters needs to be checked.

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#### Организация дистанционного курса по обучению аудирования будущих переводчиков

**Е. Е. Мартыненко**

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматривается процесс организации дистанционного курса обучения будущих переводчиков аудированию. Предложены и проанализированы принципы системности и систематичности, коммуникативности, взаимосвязанного обучения видов речевой деятельности, а также принцип реализации стратегических действий. Представлен список предпосылок сознательного применения будущими переводчиками стратегических действий на протяжении всего курса обучения аудированию. Обосновано распределение часов на обучение аудированию на начальном, основном и продвинутом этапах.

**Ключевые слова:** дистанционное обучение, курс по обучению аудирования, будущие переводчики, жанры аудио текстов, типы аудирования.