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New Interchange Listening Workbook

2

Muhammad Hossein Parvaz

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Press

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Muhammad Hossein Parvaz

Preface

Nowadays everyone is familiar with the significance of communication in the modern world. The term communication implies a minimum of two people, one to create a meaningful message and one to recreate that message. Communication may break down at the point of production or at the point of reception. The speaker may not create a meaningful message, or the listener may not be able to recreate the meaning sufficiently well to comprehend the message.

Thus, a conversation class can not be merely a speaking class. It must by definition include listening practice as well. Trying to develop a speaking class to the exclusion of listening would be unrealistic and unproductive. Without taking into consideration their intended receivers, the speakers could not produce meaningful messages.

Unfortunately listening and speaking skills are often underestimated or overlooked in EFL courses in our country because of the large sizes of our English classes and time shortage. Because of these two main reasons, some students can not benefit from EFL classes as much as they wish.

My colleagues and I have been experimenting and teaching the New Interchange series written by Jack C. Richards (2000) and published by Cambridge University Press for a couple of years in our conversation courses, and we have found it very useful at different levels of TEFL because of its systematic approach to the listening and speaking skills and authenticity of its listening. However, because of the two aforementioned reasons some students have serious problems with their listening and speaking. To overcome these shortcomings in our classes and to further customize the series to suit our educational needs, the author was prompted to prepare an ancillary product to the series.

The New Interchange Listening Workbook (Intro, 1, 2, and 3) has been prepared to encourage students to improve primarily their listening and speaking skills and secondarily their writing skill at the sentence level. The exam-type questions in each unit can be done either in class with the teacher's or other peer student's help or, if time is short, for homework. It also builds up and expands students' vocabulary. Furthermore, it reduces students' anxiety, but boosts self-confidence.

The three stages of pre-listening, listening, and post-listening provide language learners with ample practice to master the listening and speaking skills. The aim of pre-listening stage is to warm up students' schema by focusing their attention on the illustrations in their books and answering the related questions. The aim of the second stage is to listen to reciprocal listening (involving dialogs in which the role of an individual alternates between listener and speaker) and nonreciprocal listening (involving listening to monologs). The aim of the third stage is to help students' fluency and accuracy and to boost their self-confidence.

Not only can this series be used as a learning / teaching tool, the question-type exercises can be used both by teachers and test developers as a test pool and by students as a tool for self-assessment.

As the reader of this series, you are our most important critic and commentator. We value your opinion and want to know what we are doing right, what we could do better, and any other words of wisdom you are willing to pass our way. We welcome your comments. You can e-mail us to let us know what you did or did not like about this series — as well as what we can do to make our workbooks stronger.

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