

CHALLENGES OF IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS IN TEACHING ROMANIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. A CASE STUDY

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Abstract:

Efficient communication involves not only transmitting and receiving a message, but mainly the ability of properly decoding it, whether the message is written or spoken.

In case of decoding a spoken message, the listening skills become major. Listening is an important skill not only when learning a new language, but also when you have to face a daily and regular conversation. Speaking and listening are interrelated. When someone speaks, the auditory have to listen, also without listening, speaking cannot be normal; these are two sides of oral speech. (Rashidova 2019: 39) Furthermore, listening is the core for all the other communicative skills: speaking, reading or writing.

When teaching Romanian for foreign citizens we have observed many difficulties students encounter when they have to face listening tasks or tests of A1-A2 level in language acquisition and even more when they have to pass from this level to B1-B2 level. The need and the anxiety to know all the words at the first stage is replaced when reaching the B1-B2 level with the lack of attention in catching the subtleties of the language, even if the vocabulary and the grammar are well known. The best way to become a proficient Romanian speaker as second language is to listen to all sorts of materials, or to be exposed to different listening activities each day.

The aim of the paper is to highlight the challenges we have experienced and the solutions we have put into practice to improve the listening skills of our students. Among the challenges we can mention the students' fear to not understand the form or the meaning of all the words they hear, their heterogeneous and different levelled background information or their cultural shock which put them many times in the position to not be very attentive. As concerns the solutions, we have appealed to their prior knowledge, to bottom-up and top-down processing skills, to "pre", "while" and "post" activities, but we have also tried to develop students' awareness of necessity to mingle the instrumental motivation with the integrative motivation in order to improve the foreign students' abilities to become better listeners as well as better users of Romanian language.

Keywords: Communication; Listening; Difficulties; Challenges; Solutions.