

# CHAPTER 11

## Teaching English for IELTS Listening Preparation

**Hidayah Nor**

*Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari*

*hidayahnor@uin-antasari.ac.id*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a globally recognized assessment that evaluates proficiency in four core English language skills: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking (Peltekov, 2021; Read, 2022; Chairiyani & Agustin, 2025). Each skill is assessed through tasks designed to reflect authentic communicative contexts and academic requirements. The Listening component is especially important, as it measures candidates' ability to comprehend spoken English efficiently and accurately (Rezai, et al 2023; Kabir & Cunningham, 2023; Ghiasian et al. 2025).

The IELTS Listening section features recorded texts that represent common social and academic contexts (Phung & Ha, 2022). These recordings are delivered at natural conversational speed and incorporate a range of English accents encountered in international environments. Test-takers listen to each recording once and respond to various question types, including multiple-choice, form or note completion, sentence completion, and information matching (Effatpanah et al., 2025). These tasks assess the ability to identify main ideas, comprehend particular details, follow conversational structure, and recognize relationships between speakers and information (Brime, 2025).

## 2. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

### 2.1 Course Objective and Content

The IELTS Listening section in this course is designed to help students better understand spoken English in social, educational, and academic settings, as needed for the IELTS exam. The main goal is for students to identify main ideas, details, and hidden meanings in audio recordings and answer different question types within the given time. This part of the course is designed to enhance students' listening abilities in alignment with national English language standards. In a one-semester IELTS preparation course, the Listening module typically comprises 10 hours of sessions dedicated to comprehensive practice and skill development (Whitehouse, 2023). This setup matches the IELTS Listening test, which has four parts that get progressively harder. Each part features a different type of spoken interaction, ranging from daily conversations to academic lectures. Teaching methods are selected to help students build their skills step by step.

The first class covers the IELTS Listening test format, including its structure, types of listening texts and questions, and how it is scored. At this point, students work on basic listening skills such as predicting context, guessing word types, understanding form position and color, following map directions, thinking about the topic, noticing stress and intonation, focusing their listening, and using what they know about the topic. This introduction helps students understand what to expect on the test and become more comfortable with it (Jakeman, 2006).

The following class focuses on listening strategies for common IELTS question types, including forms, notes, tables, flowcharts, or summary completion, short-answer questions, sentence completion, diagram or map labeling, matching, and multiple-choice. Students practice understanding context, applying correct spelling, listening for specific details, interpreting numbers, identifying speakers and their roles, understanding categories, recognizing distractors, identifying paraphrases, and selecting correct options from a list (Jurascheck, 2006). Mastery of these skills is essential, as each recording is played only once during the test. There is extra class time; another session can be used for guided practice with real or practice IELTS Listening materials. In this session, students try out their listening strategies in a test-like setting, then get feedback and reflect on their performance

(Lougheed, 2016; May, 2006). This exercise helps students become more accurate listeners, stay focused, and check their own progress. The selection and sequencing of IELTS Listening content are guided by principles of progressive skill development and conformity with the IELTS examination requirements.

## 2.2 Teaching Method

The course uses communicative, strategy-based, and learner-centered methods to teach IELTS Listening. These approaches help students build listening skills and test strategies, while also encouraging independence and active participation (Sedhu et al., 2025). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) provides students with practice in real spoken English from both daily life and academic settings (Adem & Berkessa, 2022). Listening activities are interactive. After listening, students discuss what they heard, complete information-gap tasks, and give oral summaries to strengthen understanding and connect listening with speaking.

Strategy-based instruction is important for IELTS Listening because students need both language skills and good listening strategies to succeed (Qiu & Xu, 2022). Teachers show students how to predict content, find keywords, listen for important information, and notice discourse markers (Hasbi & 'Adhimah, 2020). Students first practice these strategies together, then use them on their own as they get better.

Additional techniques include scaffolded listening, where students begin with guided tasks and gradually move to working independently. Recordings are played several times, each time focusing on things like main ideas, details, or the speaker's attitude. Students also participate in peer discussions and group reviews to develop critical thinking and teamwork skills. Techniques ensure that IELTS Listening instruction is pedagogically robust, strategically oriented, and aligned with national qualification standards. (Yen, 2025) The selected methods support progressive skill development, measurable learning outcomes, and effective preparation for standardized international English proficiency assessments. (Yingyi & Jianfen, 2024)

## 2.3 Activity Types

### *Running Dictation*

Running dictation is a group listening activity that works well in IELTS Listening classes to help students improve their comprehension and listening strategies. In this activity, short texts similar to those found in IELTS listening tasks, like social conversations, service situations, or short academic talks, are placed around the classroom. Students work in pairs or small groups. One person listens to and memorizes the text, then tells it to a partner, who writes it down as accurately as possible.

Running dictation helps students practice important skills, such as finding specific details, hearing where words begin and end, remembering information for a short time, and writing details correctly. According to second-language research, these skills depend on focused attention and working memory, both of which are important for effective listening (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

By repeating the steps of listening, memorizing, and dictating, students practice basic listening skills like sounding out words, breaking sentences into words, and noticing grammar. These skills are important for IELTS tasks such as filling in forms, notes, or sentences. Combining practice with meaning and form helps students become more fluent listeners, which is important for doing well on the test (Field, 2008).

Beyond cognitive benefits, running dictation also addresses the affective dimension of listening. Besides helping with listening skills, running dictation also supports students' feelings about learning. Working together in this activity makes students more involved and less nervous about difficult listening tests. Research shows that a supportive classroom and working with classmates can boost students' confidence and make them more willing to try hard listening tasks (Graham, 2017). Working with peers also helps students notice where they struggle to understand, spell, or recognize different ways of saying the same thing e.g., by adjusting text length, lexical density, or speech rate. Post-activity feedback, particularly through comparison with the original text, offers valuable opportunities for learners to reflect on common IELTS listening challenges, including missed grammatical markers, spelling errors, and difficulty distinguishing similar-sounding words. These challenges have been consistently identified as sources of error in listening assessment contexts (Buck, 2001).

## 2.4 Materials and Media

Materials and media play a key role in effective IELTS Listening instruction. The main materials are audio recordings that follow the IELTS Listening test format, including both everyday conversations and academic talks. These recordings use natural speed and different accents so that learners can get comfortable with the variety of English they will hear on the test.

Along with audio, teachers use additional materials such as question sheets, forms, maps, and note templates to match the task types in the IELTS Listening test. These resources help students focus on key information and record their answers correctly during listening activities. Visual aids are mainly used to help students become familiar with task formats, not to make listening easier. Digital media also helps by letting students practice outside the classroom (Hasbi, 2025). Online listening exercises and learning platforms give students flexibility and chances to listen again and get feedback. Transcripts and captions are usually used only after listening, to keep practice as close as possible to real test conditions.

## 2.5 Vocabulary and Grammar Building

In IELTS Listening, vocabulary and grammar are taught as tools to help the students understand spoken English in real time, not just as separate language points. Important vocabulary includes everyday language used in social and service situations, words common in academic settings such as universities and lectures, and terms related to education, health, the environment, and technology (Smith, 2019). It is also important for learners to recognize different ways of saying the same thing, since IELTS Listening often tests the students' ability to spot similar meanings expressed with different words or phrases.

For grammar, focus on understanding tenses and aspects to follow timelines, as well as on complex sentences, such as those with relative clauses and passive forms. The students should also practice using modals, conditionals, and comparisons (Sawitri & Riyanto, 2022). To improve these skills, try listening to real or test-like recordings and doing activities before and after listening to help them notice and reflect on language use. Regular listening practice, along with exercises in

paraphrasing and recognizing different forms, will help them build confidence and awareness for the IELTS Listening test.

## 2.6 Targeted Language Skills

The IELTS Listening test evaluates the ability to comprehend spoken English at a natural pace and to identify specific information, main ideas, supporting details, and paraphrased expressions in both every day and academic contexts. The assessment focuses on skills such as sustained attention, short-term memory, recognition of discourse cues, and accurate spelling and word-form use. These competencies can be enhanced through targeted listening exercises and strategy-based instruction, including pre-listening prediction, single-exposure listening, and post-listening reflection using transcripts and error analysis. Consistent engagement with relevant listening materials, structured note-taking, and self-assessment fosters listening fluency, strategic awareness, and preparedness for the IELTS Listening test (Phakiti, 2016).

## 2.7 Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment in an IELTS Listening course should be continuous, incorporating four to six evaluations per semester that utilize both formative and summative methods. Formative assessments may consist of IELTS-style listening tasks and brief quizzes. Summative assessments typically include a mid-semester and a final examination designed to replicate authentic IELTS Listening exams. Key assessment criteria include listening accuracy, identification of key information and main ideas, recognition of paraphrased expressions, and correct spelling (Panahi & Mohebbi, 2022). Analysis of assessment outcomes facilitates the identification of learning challenges and informs the refinement of instructional strategies and materials (Hasbi et al., 2025).

Accurate self-assessment of comprehension is critical for effective test performance when time is limited (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). For example, choosing higher point values promotes more deliberate monitoring of understanding and the use of strategic listening methods. This approach improves confidence calibration and reduces the

negative impact of both overconfidence and underconfidence in high-stakes listening assessments (Pilcher & Richards, 2017; Chou, 2021).

### **3. FURTHER DISCUSSION**

The IELTS Listening module displays distinct challenges compared to the other skill assessments. In Reading, candidates may refer back to the text, and in Writing, they have time to plan and revise their responses. In contrast, Listening requires immediate comprehension, as recordings are played only once and clarification is not permitted (Teo, et al 2022). While the Speaking component evaluates interactive ability, the Listening component assesses the accuracy of real-time comprehension of spoken language. Success in IELTS Listening depends not only on familiarity with test formats but also on the systematic development of listening skills and strategies. This chapter explains a skills-based approach to IELTS Listening instruction, guiding both learners and teachers on the test's structure, the range of task types, and the essential listening competencies required for success. Integrating skill development with targeted exam practice enables learners to build the competence and assurance indispensable for effective performance in the IELTS Listening module.

Task-based learning (TBL) is used to match the format of the IELTS Listening test (Chou, 2017). Students do tasks like filling out forms, answering multiple-choice questions, and labeling maps, just as they do in the exam. Instructional techniques include activating prior knowledge, previewing questions, and predicting potential answers (Linh, 2021). During listening, students practice selective attention, note-taking, and real-time tracking of spoken information. Post-listening activities include answer verification, error analysis, and reflection (Movva et al., 2022).

## Author



**Hidayah Nor, M.Pd.** is an English Language Education Department lecturer at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. Her research interests are Teaching Listening, Academic Writing, and Curriculum Materials Development. She has participated in writing book chapter projects, *English Teaching Practices in Indonesia during the COVID-19 Crisis*, *Useful AI Tools for English Teachers*, *How to Teach English to Gen Z Students*, *Powerful*

*Vocabulary and Grammar Classroom Activities*, *Local-Based English Language Teaching Across Indonesia*, *Deep Learning: A Handbook for English Language Teachers*, *Teaching, Research, Community Service: A Tri Dharma Guide For English Educators*, and *Teaching University-Level English Courses: A Practical Guidebook*. Her Instagram account is @hidayahnor88.

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