



## Practicing Aural Comprehension Skills at Department of English, GSTU on the basis of John Morley's Listening 'Comprehension Instructional Models-Matching Theory and Practice': Classroom Implementation, Benefits and Challenges

Sumya Alam

Assistant Professor, Gopalganj Science and Technology University

### ABSTRACT

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This study aims to investigate the implementation of practice models of Listening Comprehension proposed by John Morley in his article "Listening Comprehension Instructional Models-Matching Theory and Practice" (Morley, 1995). Morley has suggested four types of models of aural comprehension for all types of students and all four models are outlined for the foreign language learners. This paper will discuss how these models can be followed inside class sessions of English Language Learning. What are the advantages and problems of applying these models in classroom. The classroom environment is different from outside and that is why some syllabus-oriented materials should be modified according to the needs of the students. In this case, Hilda Taba's (Taba, 1967) inductive approach is followed to identify and talk about students' needs. From model numbers 1 to 4 of Morley, the procedures and techniques have been followed in English Masters of Arts (MA) in Applied Linguistics and English language Teaching (ALELT) classroom to investigate which model is the best one to be followed. The adults 17 learners are the targeted group. The course title assigned is "Teaching Different Areas and Skills of Language". The students were asked to listen to two songs- "Secret Love Song" and "Don't Cry Joni". Then they were asked to do several activities based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Eclectic approach. The effects of implementation and some positive and negative outcomes will be critically analyzed and discussed in this article. The method of the data collection is a case study of students' performances, classroom observation, note taking and video-recording from pair and group discussion sessions of student's collaborative tasks given by the teacher. The data is then organized by the researcher and discussed in findings. How theory and models of instruction can be effectively practiced in real classroom and what results are found.

### KEYWORDS:

Listening comprehension, instructional models (Morley's model), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Eclectic approach, English Language Teaching (ELT), classroom-based case study

### INTRODUCTION

Listening, without any doubt is a key receptive language skill as it helps to boost language learning and communication by aural comprehension. Morley (1992) suggests that there are various models of listening instruction that should be used in

*Corresponding Author: Sumya Alam*

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different ways in language classroom, depending on the purpose of the lesson plans constructed by language practitioners. These models should be illustrated in different relevant courses by the teacher through a number of classroom activities. The activities are not to be designed to make the learners better listeners, but to help them to understand how to teach listening skills to future students. The classroom demonstrations of all four models are necessary to apply because each of Morley's teaching models has a different function in the teaching of listening. They show the benefits and the difficulties of teaching and learning listening in the language classroom.

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## Aim of the study

- To figure out, to some extent, whether learners can learn and develop both receptive and productive skills especially speaking and listening by the use of audio-visual materials
- To portray, if possible, some classroom activities and the outcome found from their accomplishment of the tasks suggested by Morley's (1992) instructional models
- To discuss some constraints and limitations of applying Morley's models in classroom

## Hypotheses

The three hypotheses examined from the study are that:

- Adult students can learn better by the use of multimedia and audio-visual clips shown.

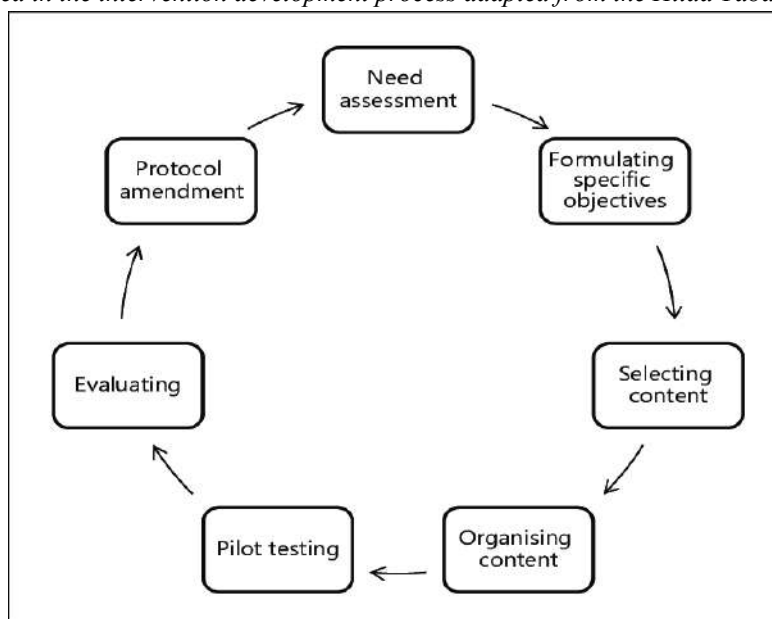
- Adults will develop by the model no. 3 and 4 of Morley's Instructional Models more than pen and paper worksheet and teachers shouting aloud for students.
- Repeat drill sometimes works but some other times are not authentic and real type communicative, so interactive sessions are more effective than sentence by sentence repetition as suggested in model no. 1.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

As teachers are the closest to the students, they should create a new model of curriculum and syllabus so that the needs of students can be fulfilled. The curriculum should be created following a cyclic and sequential order suggested by Hilda Taba (Taba, 1902-1967). Taba's (1962) model can be formulated into figure which is given below:

Figure 1

*The seven basic steps involved in the intervention development process adapted from the Hilda Taba's model*



The seven steps of the whole sequence are discussed first to diagnose students' needs. And then the main objective of the study is to implement the models suggested by John Morley (Morley, 1995). From Taba's point of view, it should be the teachers who design curriculum, not the higher authority (Oliva, 1992). In developing curriculum, she follows the grass-roots approach.

The seven steps are further discussed in detail before we can formulate a combinatory and probable eclectic model out of these two models which can be incorporated in the classroom setting.

Firstly, diagnosis of learners' needs is important to consider as here teachers of a classroom setting will identify the specific gaps, interests, and readiness levels of their students. Secondly, formulation of objectives is mandatory task to

establish a clear, actionable learning goals based on the identified needs. Thirdly, selection of content is necessary because any subject matter is chosen to align with the objectives and directly address student interests. Next, organization of content is the fourth step where content is sequenced logically and sequentially, accounting for the maturity and capability of the learners. Then, the step is related to the selection of learning experiences in which activities are chosen that allow students to actively interact with the content. After that, organization of learning activities is one of the core steps when the activities need to be structured into a logical instructional sequence. The very last step is evaluating and assessing both student outcomes and the overall effectiveness of the curriculum against the established objectives by teachers themselves.

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**Significance of the study:** Nunan (2002) interestingly describes Listening skill as the most “unnoticed” skill and the “Cinderella skill” as it is ignored by her elder sister Speaking skill in the second language and foreign language context. The course that I am taking is very relevant to the title of my article. In post-modern era, different techniques are being used in language learning. Most of them are related to teaching Speaking, Writing etc. None of the researchers is concerned about the skill development of listening comprehension. Mostly, it is being taught for the purpose of speaking skill. So, it is the time to be more careful about Listening as a separate skill. We should consider this particular skill as a prominent skill for the basic improvement of all other skills. In this respect, developing instructional listening materials is a crucial need on the basis of Taba's (1962) curriculum development and needs analysis through inductive approach.

### METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methods used and followed in the study. There were three different sets of data collected. The very first consisted of learners' feedback and responses from listening texts, the second sets of close tests asking learners to tell which one out of four models are more applicable and more effective. The third procedure is to observe and record students' performance on each of the listening models and analysis of the recorded data.

The learners in the study were all Bangladeshi Masters students on an Applied Linguistics and ELT degree from department of English, Gopalganj Science and Technology University (GSTU). All advanced learners (17 students) completed audio-visual recording and language-related interactive tasks following all four models. All of them answer quiz questions. They were given an assignment on benefits and challenges of using Morley's Models in the classroom session. The answers of this topic were scrutinized and analyzed.

Another semi-structured interview was conducted for systematic investigation of their comments. They gave their feedback on the classroom practices, whether they were benefited, what were their obstacles in catching the essence of materials set for them. There is also a statistical data analysis of counting how many of them accomplished the task well and submitted individual tasks. So, it is a mixed method of data analysis-both qualitative and quantitative. Both inductive and deductive procedures are followed to analyze data to calculate and critically judge the comprehensive findings.

### Critical Discussion and Analysis of the models proposed by John Morley:

After teachers assess the needs of the targeted students, he/she can apply the listening comprehension instructional

models in classroom. The models are outlined very exclusive. Each model has different learners' goals, instructional materials, procedures and values on its own. Although being different in features, each of them is useful for aural comprehension, skill development and teaching foreign language. Model number 1 is pattern matching which is listening and repeating. Learning speaking is not just skill, it is a physical skill, so is listening. The mouth and brain both need training. So, copying first language users' speeches can give you the training automatically. Second model is processing discrete-point information. It is listening to oral text and answering comprehension questions. The third one is on tasks of listening and information processing. It indicates a very connotative and cognitive rehearsal of language use and language analysis. This type number model is confined to the uses of functional English language. The discourse is processed for functional purposes. Here, the language use tasks and language analysis tasks help students get meaning from input and make them conscious about active intellectual involvement of learning. If they engage in active task completion, they can use language in different context. They can know discourse structure and function of communication orally and aurally. The speed and accuracy are two crucial aspects of aural communication skill.

Model number four is associated with critical listening, critical thinking and formulating instant speeches by participating in real-time conversation. Here, these three-part cognitive patterns help students learn to listen and comprehend better than previous models. It is so much relevant to communicative competence. The goal is to enhance learners' communicative skills which has four component areas: linguistic, discourse, socio-linguistic and strategic competences (Canale and Swain, 1980).

### Findings from the class study of classroom implementation:

#### Model number 1

Model 1 works as 'Shadowing' or copying the listening audio clips or what the instructor or teacher says by the learners. The main purpose is to activate the brain function, mouth practice of pronunciation and sentences used in real-life conversation. English pronunciation and words can come naturally if the students repeat many times after the instructor or teacher. No fast and over emphasis of speed is needed, they need to be more relaxed and calmer while using the sentences and copying them by following the master. Nervousness and shyness can make them getting stuck. I practiced some easy conversational dialogues with my assigned classroom for the course "Teaching Different Ares and Skills of English Language". I gave them the written dialogue as clues and they practiced it as if they were in real time. But among all seven pair groups, only three of them did the drill and shadow practice spontaneously. Other got stuck and became nervous

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even after seeing the dialogues as text. I feel, the problem is - their lack of confidence and shyness made them so nervous. Another finding I got from my classroom practice is- the boys

of Masters of Arts (MA) in Applied Linguistics and ELT (ALELT) did much better than the girls.

Below are the dialogues of model no 1 practiced by the pair groups in the class:

Image 1: Classroom Practice of Morley's Model No-1

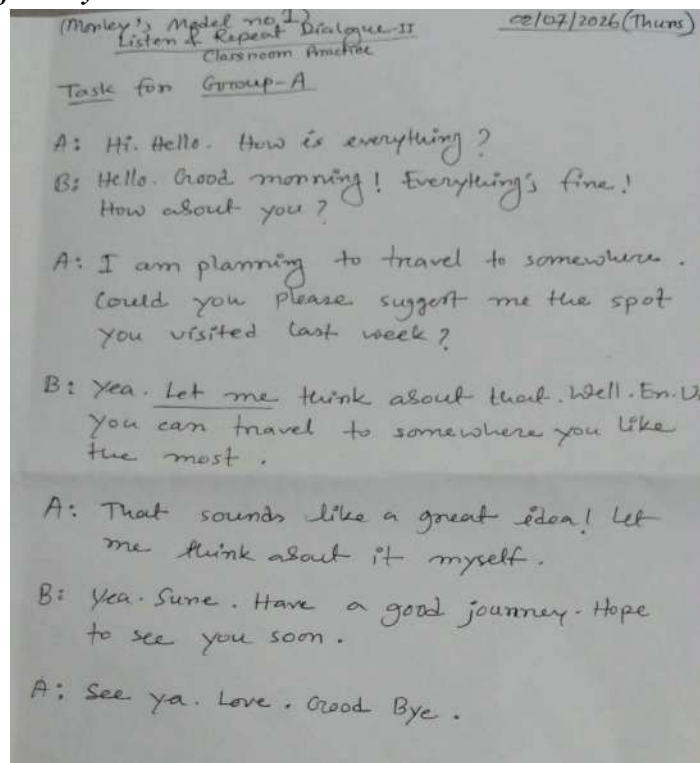
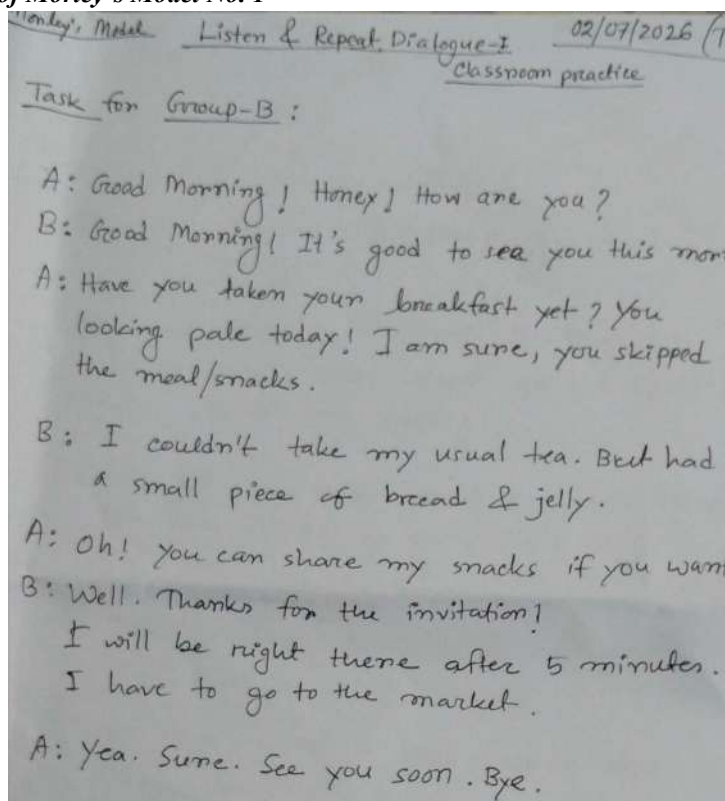


Image 2: Classroom Practice of Morley's Model No. 1



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Students of M.A (ALELT) class practiced model no. 1. They start reading from the above practice sheet instantly made by the classroom teacher without any preparation. They repeat after each sentence of the dialogues and after that each pair conversed for the second time using the same practice sheet. Two practice scripts were given for two sessions. There were 8 groups for this special listening and repeat session. The boys did much better than the girls because the girls missed some words, fillers, informal expression for the first time. But boys did extraordinarily good while speaking to their partners, they seemed very spontaneous and natural. It seemed; they were in real life situations. But girls were mostly shy, nervous and not natural.

From students' perspective, the first model, Pattern Matching, was illustrated for the second time by shadowing activity which was based on a YouTube video and the Listen and Repeat dialogue activities. The teacher played the audio and then asked us to repeat the words, sentences and short conversations as accurately as possible in these activities. This demonstrated the ability of the model to assist students in achieving correct pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. It is particularly beneficial for beginner learners, as they learn the sound patterns of English before speaking independently. The activity also revealed, however, that the learners do not use the language creatively, rather they copy what they hear. This model cannot develop communicative ability because there is not much emphasis on meaning and interaction. It is therefore best suited as a basis for pronunciation and not as a total listening lesson.

The feature of Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) and direct method can be compared to this particular drill and situational dialogue memorization exercises. It mostly depends on pattern matching and behavioral habit formation (Skinner, 1974).

### Model no. 2:

On day 2, another type of task is given to accomplish following the second model of Morley.

The real English sentences and communicative speeches are given to students for aural practice. Students' job is to copy them with teacher. Listening to no grammar rule, no translation but to the real-life pronunciation, accent, tonal variety of each sentence is mandatory. The goal is to feel the rhythm, move mouth and being more natural in every single moment of practicing. The technique is called 'shadowing', like all other professionals, I used the same technique for my students. Generally, what is followed, after I say the sentence, I will pause and students will repeat after me. But I modified the technique and made the pair groups do it for themselves. From each pair, one said sentences, paused for a while and another repeated, by this way, they observed them, corrected them sometimes and became more natural in the 3<sup>rd</sup> time. So, the students could hear the same rules and sentences each

time. For repeating several times, they could hear and observed what others are doing and thus heard the similar dialogues at least for  $7 \times 2 = 14$  times in one session. It became their habit (Skinner, 1992). Some small powerful discrete-point phrases/sentences are practiced to make them more confident without hesitation in an awkward situation. These are useful in every context when someone needs to talk and reply and listen carefully. Actually, listening and speaking are two inter-related skills. One cannot skip one and develop another. According to Morley's model, students will answer some questions. It is like a quiz show format of teaching.

### Model no. 3:

The words and sentences are necessary to copy for making students fluent. Morley has talked about the analysis of language and language uses. Students learn the language for functional uses. They are supposed to get connected with language process of spoken discourse. The main focus will be on listening and accomplishing real world tasks. It is a cognitive communicative "listening and using" model. Here the main task is to do language tasks and language analysis tasks. Krashen (1985) also emphasizes comprehensible input before language production.

### Model no. 4:

The most functional and task-based activities are suggested in model no. 4. It is designed to make students do communicative and interactive listening. The prescribed real communicative tasks are which are needed to accomplish in appropriate academic context. By students' engagement and active participation, activities are to be done by three-part cognitive pattern: "instant decoding, critical thinking and formulating an instant written or spoken response" (Morley, 1992). The instructional materials are designed such a way that will enhance the development of both oral and aural skills of learners of ESL and EFL.

The fourth model, Interactive Communicative Listening, was demonstrated through group discussions, role-plays, opinion sharing, and short presentations based on the songs. In these activities students were required to listen attentively to each other, answer questions, voice opinions and share ideas. In contrast to the previous models, listening and speaking occurred simultaneously in a natural manner. This demonstrated the model's ability to prepare students for real-life communication through confidence, critical thinking, and interaction skills. Meanwhile, there are also some difficulties in case of this type of classroom practice. Some students may become less confident in speaking in front of others or may need more time to organize their thoughts before responding. Therefore, teachers should establish a positive classroom atmosphere and motivate all learners to actively engage in learning.



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### **Benefits of these models practiced in classroom sessions along with some challenges:**

According to Morley, listening is not a passive skill. Learners should actively listen, understand the message, think about it, and respond appropriately. Listening activities should also be connected with speaking, reading, and writing so that students can develop their overall language ability. Different listening and speaking activities helped us use English in real - life and meaningful situations instead of only learning grammar or vocabulary.

There are many positive feedbacks which significantly contributed to enrich their learning atmosphere. From one of our student responses, it is found that they are getting benefits from this special technique of taking lesson. Because the activities are self-constructed and modified following the models, these are obviously helpful for the betterment of their learning.

The classroom activities revealed that each of the listening teaching models developed by Morley has a different function in language teaching. Pattern Matching can be used for pronunciation practice; Processing Discrete-Point Information for listening comprehension; Task Listening for meaningful language use; Interactive Communicative Listening for real communication. No single model is sufficient, each one has its advantages and disadvantages. One of my students commented,

"A good teacher should choose or combine these models based on the teaching objectives, students' needs, and classroom situation. In our course, we clearly illustrated how these models can be used in order to make listening lessons more meaningful and effective." (P1, Personal Communication, July 10, 2026) Another striking feedback from a student is that "an important benefit was that the activities were enjoyable and interesting. Learning through conversations and songs made me more active and increased my motivation to participate" (P4, Personal Communication, July 12, 2026).

From students' perspective, the first model, Pattern Matching, was illustrated for the second time by shadowing activity which was based on a YouTube video and the Listen and Repeat dialogue activities. The teacher played the audio and then asked us to repeat the words, sentences and short conversations as accurately as possible in these activities. "This demonstrated the ability of the model to assist students in achieving correct pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. It is particularly beneficial for beginner learners, as they learn the sound patterns of English before speaking independently" (P2, Personal Communication, July 11, 2026). The activity also revealed, however, that the learners do not use the language creatively, rather they copy what they hear. This model cannot develop communicative ability because there is not much emphasis on meaning and

interaction. It is therefore best suited as a basis for pronunciation and not as a total listening lesson.

Basically, the first classroom activity that they did was pair dialogue practice. They worked in pairs and practiced conversations like two friends talking in English on several realistic issues. This activity helped them become more confident in speaking English. They learned how to start and continue a conversation naturally, use suitable expressions, and improve their pronunciation. It also reduced their fear of speaking English in front of others. It helped to lessen their affective filters.

The second model, Processing Discrete-Point Information, was made evident when the teacher played English songs and asked questions on the stories, characters, and relationships that were presented in the lyrics. "We had to listen carefully to find out specific information to answer the questions. This activity demonstrated the usefulness of the model as a means of checking learners' understanding and promoting careful listening" (P1, Personal Communication, July 10, 2026). As they commented that it also enables teachers to determine if students have grasped the central ideas and key information in a listening text. Meanwhile, a constraint was identified in the classroom. The interaction mostly took place between teacher and students in the form of questions and answers, and the learners were less likely to use the information for real communication. Consequently, the activity was more about understanding rather than meaningful language use.

In the second activity, they listened to selected English songs and they were asked to listen carefully, take notes, understand the stories, identify the characters, and discuss different questions in groups. This activity improved their listening comprehension because they had to understand the main ideas, take notes while listening. Writing notes during listening also improved their concentration and helped them remember important information. Moreover, discussing the songs with classmates developed their speaking ability and critical thinking. The students also learned different listening strategies, such as listening for the main idea, identifying important details, and talking about the story.

The third model, Task Listening and Processing Information, was manifested in a number of follow-up activities following the listening to songs. Rather than responding to questions. The learners explored characters, compared relationships, made predictions about the endings, the pair did grammar and writing activities. In these activities, they were asked to do meaningful tasks with the information they heard, from the listening texts. This illustrated one of the greatest assets of the model: listening is meaningful when learners listen to solve a problem, express ideas, or finish an activity. These activities also promote critical thinking and active learning in the classroom. This model, however, does need careful lesson planning. If the listening text or task is too challenging,

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learners might get confused and not be able to complete the task successfully. Thus, teachers should choose tasks that are appropriate for the learners' proficiency level.

The classroom experiences showed that Morley's model no. four which is listening practically is quite learner-friendly. Using songs made listening enjoyable and meaningful because the pupil did a lot many meaningful and practical tasks. The learning English through authentic materials instead of only textbook exercises is the core principle of the model. Although they might face challenges such as fast pronunciation, unfamiliar vocabulary, and diverse socio-cultural interpretations of the songs, these activities improved their listening ability, speaking confidence, and overall communication skills. Therefore, Morley's instructional models are very effective for teaching listening in the English language classroom.

### Challenges of Morley's Instructional Model

Although the students found the model very effective, they experienced some challenges during the activities. Sometimes it was difficult to understand the pronunciation, tone, stress, and speed of the English songs. They also found it challenging to understand the relationships between the characters and the deeper meanings of the songs because some expressions were unfamiliar.

Another challenge was the limited classroom time. "I think more time would have allowed us to listen to the songs again, discuss the stories more deeply, and complete the activities more confidently" was a response from a study participant. (P3, Personal Communication, July 13, 2026).

Among 8 groups, the female groups were more shy, intimidated and demotivated than the boys in the class. Boys did extraordinarily well but girl groups improved themselves a lot after all the model practices. The female group commented after review and interview that they couldn't quite catch the essence of dialogues. That's the basic reason of their failure doing tasks after instruction and after giving written dialogues.

Besides the classroom experience, Morley's model also has some limitations as well. It requires careful lesson planning, appropriate listening materials, and good classroom management. Beginners or students with lower English proficiency may struggle to understand authentic listening materials. In large classrooms, it is also difficult for teachers to manage time and finish all the tasks. To observe every student's progress and provide individual feedback is also time-consuming.

### CONCLUSION

To sum up, Morley's 'Listening Comprehension Instructional Model' is an effective approach for improving students' listening and communication skills. From my classroom experience, it is found that pair dialogue and song-based

listening activities helps them improve their listening comprehension, speaking ability, note-taking skill, and critical thinking. Although they might face some challenges, such as understanding the songs and managing the activities within a limited time can give the language learners more benefits than its limitations.

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