

GA LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE IN ESOL INTERNATIONAL LISTENING RECORDING TRANSCRIPTS Sample 1

Listening Task 1:

| SPEAKER | MALE / FEMALE | ACCENT |
|---------|---------------|------------------|
| Steve | Male | Standard English |
| Kathy | Female | Standard English |

Steve: Wow, that was an interesting lecture on grammar... So, what do you reckon about what the professor said?

Kathy: Well, I can't quite make my mind up here.... I can see what he means about the dangers of teaching grammatical rules, sort of, but don't people need to know them to learn how to speak a new language?

S: Well, yes, sure, I guess... But surely, if you consider language to be a living thing, which it is, why should you constrict its growth with rules and stipulations?

K: Well, I sort of agree with your point, but...I mean, the professor said that formally teaching the grammatical rules to language students actually impedes learning. But how else can you teach them how to form meaningful sentences correctly?

S: I know what you mean. We are native speakers, and we were taught prescriptive rules at school, remember?

K: Of course I do! All that 'I before E', avoiding double negatives, and split infinitives... I still think twice before I say 'between you and I', because my English teacher shouted at me each time I said 'you and me'... (laughter)

S: See, in this sense perhaps he's got a point – you are a native speaker, and you found the experience of learning grammar of your own language stressful. Imagine someone constantly correcting and criticising you when you are trying to learn another language. It could be quite demotivating. Or, like professor Johnson said 'it impedes language acquisition'...

K: Ok, maybe it was a little stressful, but we learnt, yeah? And now we can use the language properly.

S: So what do you mean by properly?

K: Well, correctly. Like an educated person (pause...) don't look at me like that, we both know that it's important. No one is going to give you a good job if your CV is full of spelling mistakes! Accuracy is important, it makes clear communication possible! Grammar mistakes undermine the professional image we want to project to prospective employers.... business partners...

S: Well, I am not exactly advocating mistakes, am I? ...Listen to this. What if I said to you: 'Do you like to get a coffee with me?'

K: I'd say I am dying for a cup of coffee! ... (laughter)

S: So am I, actually. But my point is, my question wasn't quite grammatically correct, but you still understood me, right?

K: I guess I did.

S: So we communicated successfully. In that sense, I agree with Professor Johnson that being too strict about grammatical correctness is not a good thing. If you fill lessons with rules, if your students are always worrying about being "right" or "wrong" instead of relaxing and just focussing on communication, then those rules really get in the way of the learning process. Isn't the aim of the game to make them speak, to make them communicate?

K: So what are you saying? We should just ignore all the rules?

S: Not really. I think what the professor meant is that we should use the rules to teach, but we shouldn't be too strict about correcting students, because it damages their confidence. I mean, you might be the most amazing grammar teacher out there, but you don't want your students to just sit there in silence for fear of making a mistake...I think we should be more subtle in the way we correct them...and also more selective...I mean, not every single mistake warrants a correction, right?

K: OK, Mr Teacher, so I say to you: 'Do you like to have a coffee with me?' and what do you say?

S: I'd say: 'Of course, Kathy, I would like to do that.' I'd stress the correct part of my response and hope that you'll notice. If I pointed out your mistake straight away, you'd feel embarrassed, I bet...

K: I think I'm starting to see where you're coming from.... There's a time and a place for teaching students grammar...And a lot of it is to do with how we approach the grammatical errors our students make...

S: Exactly! How about that coffee now then?

Listening Task 2:

| SPEAKER | MALE / FEMALE | ACCENT |
|-----------|---------------|------------------|
| Scientist | Female | Standard English |

Today, we're going to examine the role of communication in the marine world - and look at some new findings in our area of research. Bottlenose dolphins have been observed chattering whilst cooperating to solve a tricky puzzle - a feat that suggests they have a type of vocalisation dedicated to cooperating on problem solving.

Although many species have proven capable of cooperating to achieve common goals, the role of communication in cooperation has received relatively little attention. Analysis of communication between partners is vital in determining whether actions are truly cooperative, rather than just lucky - or learned via trial and error.

Wild cetaceans - that is, dolphins and whales - often produce sounds during cooperative foraging, playing, and mating, but the role of these sounds in cooperative events is largely unknown. Here, we investigated acoustic communication between two male bottlenose dolphins while they cooperatively opened a sealed container.

Holli Smith of Dolphins Plus research institute in Florida and my colleagues at the University of Southern Texas presented a group of six captive dolphins with a locked canister filled with food. The canister could only be opened by simultaneously pulling on a rope at either end. The team conducted 24 canister trials, during which all six dolphins were present. Only two of the dolphins ever managed to crack the puzzle and get to the food.

However, the successful pair were very prolific: in 20 of the trials, the same two adult males worked together to open the food canister in a matter of 30 seconds. In the other four trials, one of the dolphins acting alone failed to open the canister because it was too tricky and they lacked the ability to pull from both ends simultaneously.

But the real surprise came from recordings of the vocalisations the dolphins made during the experiment. The team found that when the dolphins worked together to open the canister, they made more vocalisations than they did while trying to open the canister on their own or when there was either no canister present or no interaction with the canister in the pool.

Importantly, the researchers were able to show that the increase in chatter was directly related to the canister-opening task, as opposed to social interactions between the dolphins.

During the trials, when one dolphin attempted to open the canister unaided, one or more of the other dolphins was present nearby, watching the task. On these occasions, there was no increase in chatter. The team concluded that the increased chatter during the joint canister opening was related to the task itself, and not to the presence of another dolphin.

From this, it is evident that this is the first time that we can say conclusively that dolphin vocalisations were used to solve a cooperative task.

Unlike most dolphin vocalisations, the so-called "burst pulses" the dolphins made during the problem solving are audible to humans as a squawking sound. We already knew that dolphins

use burst pulses during social interaction and echolocation. But according to Leigh Torres, a marine ecologist at Oregon State University, these new findings suggest that burst pulses may have another sophisticated purpose and his study clearly shows that dolphins use vocal communication to jointly solve problems.

So to conclude this short presentation, it would appear that the results point towards the possibility of a dolphin language that enables team problem-solving. Though we have long suspected that this might be possible, it is amazing to finally get some hard evidence to support our theory.

Our next focus will be on raising the necessary funds to expand our field of research to involve other institutions around the world and also increase the level of complexity of the tasks our marine subjects are exposed to. We'll be broadcasting the first documentary on TV later this year to further raise awareness of our cause; in the meantime, donations are much appreciated and can be made through our website...

SAMPLE

Listening Task 3:

| SPEAKER | MALE / FEMALE | ACCENT |
|-----------|---------------|------------------|
| Speaker 1 | Female | Standard English |
| Speaker 2 | Male | Standard English |
| Speaker 3 | Female | Standard English |

Speaker 1:

I used to wear a uniform at school...and you know what? All those arguments people put forward, about how it restricts one's individuality. It never crossed my mind once in the 10 years or so that I wore one. I marched to school every day in my navy blue outfit, identical to those of my thirty class mates. And I never once heard anyone complain about the fact that they were not given any 'choice' with regards to their outfit... or that it stifled their 'individuality'...The only time the uniform became a problem for one of us was when we got it dirty, and our mothers would tell us off... In my humble opinion, the poor uniform didn't do me any particular harm, and I turned out to be a pretty accomplished, happy human being...but that's just my opinion...

Speaker 2:

Well, I can't say I feel particularly strongly about it either way...There's the obvious argument about the uniform acting as a shield from differences in pupils', or more pertinently, their parents' financial status. And it is a strong one, without a doubt. But on the other hand, kids end up having two sets of clothes, one for school, and one for their time off, which also puts a financial strain on the parents who are not that well-off... And I wonder if anyone has ever considered what it must be like for the teachers to learn to differentiate between thirty pupils, all looking exactly the same but for their hair... 'cos that's fun! (*laughter*) But seriously, no, I don't really think it is that important a matter after all...

Speaker 3:

I think that a school uniform plays a vital role in teaching the kids some fundamental rules about the world. The first one being, you don't always get to do what you want. It's as simple as that. In life, you sometimes have to conform and to do as you're told... The second rule, and that's usually a tough one for the kids to get their heads around, is that you're not the centre of the universe, at least not outside of your house. People out there do not live their lives to contemplate and admire your carefully chosen outfit, or whatever it might be... So yeah, there's nothing wrong with uniforms; in fact their capacity to educate is, in my opinion, vastly underestimated.