



# The Psychology of Listening: A Concurrent Approach towards Real Perception and Understanding of the Listening Skill from an Organizational Perspective

Sunita Mohapatra 

Assistant Professor in English, Department of Basic Science and Humanities, Nalanda Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar, India.

**Type of Work:** Peer Reviewed.


DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jems.v21.n3.p5>

**Review history:** Submitted: June 17, 2025; Revised: August 08, 2025; Accepted: August 20, 2025

#### How to cite this paper:

Mohapatra, S. (2025). The Psychology of Listening: A Concurrent Approach towards Real Perception and Understanding of the Listening Skill from an Organizational Perspective. *IRA-International Journal of Education & Multidisciplinary Studies* (ISSN 2455-2526), 21(3), 132-140. <https://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jems.v21.n3.p5>

© IRA Academico Research.

 This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), subject to a proper citation to the publication source of the work.

**Disclaimer:** The scholarly papers as reviewed and published by IRA Academico Research are the views and opinions of their respective authors and are not the views or opinions of IRA Academico Research. IRA Academico Research disclaims any harm or loss caused due to the published content to any party.

IRA Academico Research is an institutional publisher member of *Publishers International Linking Association Inc. (PILA-CrossRef)*, USA. Being an institutional signatory to the *Budapest Open Access Initiative, Hungary*, the content published by IRA Academico Research is available under Open Access. IRA Academico Research is also a registered content provider under *Open Access Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH)*.

This paper is peer-reviewed following IRA Academico Research's [Peer Review Program](#) .

Sunita Mohapatra  [/0009-0000-5416-3065](https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5416-3065)

## ABSTRACT

Listening is the most common and imperative type of on-the-job communication. According to Mendelson (1994), "Of the total time spent on communicating, listening takes up 40-50 %; speaking 25-30 %; reading 11-16 %; and writing about 9 %". Communication skills consist of four skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW). This is a common assumption that we are efficient listeners and understand everything that we listen to at once. But truly, we perceive 50% of what a person says. So, listening is the most critical skill among the rest three skills of communication skills. Considerably, listening skill takes a longer time to acquire. One can learn new skills, build strong connections, and well analyze information effectively with the aid of effective listening. It is the author's profound study on listening skills that results in understanding the four important factors of listening: Need, Concern, Mental ability, and Hushed environment (NCMH Factors). The paper aims to elucidate the fact that these four factors (NCMH) are interrelated in the process of active listening. The study tries to highlight the psychological factors essential to studying listening skills.

**Keywords:** listening skills, contemporary research, NCMH factors, active listening.

## 1. Introduction

The study enables us to understand what really 'listening' means. It is not just getting the spoken sounds of the receiver. But listening is the ability to receive and interpret messages accurately in the process of communication. The very concept of 'communication' involves two persons, like the sender and the receiver. So, to make an accurate listening, are these two participants responsible or anything more? There are still some questions that need to be thought of carefully in order to understand what exactly the Listening Skill is and what it demands. The advanced skills of listening are summarizing, answering questions, interpreting information, filling gaps, rephrasing, problem solving, etc., as told by Dr. Kottacheruvu Nagendra (April 2014). Listening is very important in the sense that many top employers offer listening skills training for their employees. In the corporate world, this is not surprising that good listening skills are able to direct to superior customer satisfaction with great productivity and fewer mistakes, improved exchange of information that leads to brilliant and novel work. Since the skilled employees are the need of the day, listening skill is a core skill that all of us should acquire. The leaders and entrepreneurs who are successful acknowledge their success to effective listening skills.

## 2. Literature Review

There are various qualitative studies conducted on the skill of listening. Brown (1987) states: "Listening ability lies at the very heart of all growth, from birth through the years of formal education. The better those learning skills are developed, the more productive our learning efforts." (1987:10). The art of *listening* is not the submissive act of hearing. It is the "conscious processing of the auditory stimuli that have been perceived through hearing" (West & Turner, 2010). It is more an act of connection than the art of conversation. We feel connected if we hear someone's voice, even if we never see or touch him/her. According to Ferrari (2012), "Most people focus on learning how to communicate and how to present their own views more effectively; this

approach is misguided and represents missed opportunities”. So what does it take to become a good listener? In this regard, Ferrari writes, “The many great listeners I’ve encountered throughout my career as a surgeon, a corporate executive, and a business consultant have exhibited three kinds of behavior; Overt behavior, Covert behavior and Social behavior by recognizing—and practicing—them, one can begin improving one’s own listening skills and even those of one’s organization”. According to Clement (2007), most of us rely upon sound input in the listening factor. It is worth citing that Macaro, Vander Plank, and Graham (2005) stated that the use of previous knowledge by listeners can lead to incorrect perception when their interpretation requires confirmation later in the manuscript. Sometimes, prior knowledge of a particular topic filters the real meaning and gives inaccurate information to the listener in the process of communication.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study uses a mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative analysis to understand the NCMH Factors. The quantitative data was collected to study in-depth insights into all the possible factors that affect active listening.

The qualitative data was collected through interviews, by recording complex experiences and viewpoints. The quantitative data was collected through surveys and questionnaires.

#### **3.2 Population and Sample**

The study includes a sample size of 100 individuals from various settings, such as workplaces, educational settings, counseling sessions, and social frames, etc. Participants are selected from different levels of experience and expertise, including those who have sound knowledge in communication skills and those who need the active listening skill (e.g., educators, counselors, managers, students, etc.).

#### **3.3 Factors under Investigation**

Need (N): It is the requirement or urgency of getting knowledge by the listener; it can be understood as the motivation behind the person’s active listening.

Concern (C): The interpersonal or emotional worry for the speaker's message. This element obtains emotional investment, responsibility, or empathy into consideration when communicating with others.

Mental ability (M): It suggests how one’s cognitive aspects, like focus, memory, and intelligence, affect his/her capacity to listen and retain information.

Hushed environment (H): It describes the physical environment and surroundings in which listening takes place. It is thought that a quiet, distraction-free environment improves listening since it makes it easier to concentrate and reduce outside distractions.

#### **3.4 Data Collection Methods**

##### **a. Quantitative Data Collection (Surveys/Questionnaires)**

A structured questionnaire was developed to measure the influence of each factor through the Likert-scale method. The questions are asked to rate their level of agreement regarding the impact of each factor on their listening.

**Items included in the sample:**

**Need:** "I pay more attention to a speaker if the information is critical to my work or personal life."

**Concern:** "I find it easier to listen attentively when I care about the person speaking."

**Mental Ability:** "My ability to focus and understand the speaker is affected by how mentally alert I am."

**Hushed Environment:** "I find it easier to listen in quiet, distraction-free environments."

**b. Qualitative Data Collection (Interviews/Focus Groups)**

In addition to surveys, semi-structured interviews, and "focus group discussions are also conducted to see the participants' individual experiences with the NCMH variables."

The Need: "Describe a situation where your need for information influenced how well you listened?"

Concern: "How does your level of concern for a speaker affect your listening behavior?"

Mental Ability: "In what ways does mental fatigue or concentration affect your ability to listen effectively?"

The Hushed Environment: "Can you recall an instance where the environment impacted your ability to listen?"

The qualitative data provided deeper insights into the psychological and contextual factors that could not be fully captured through quantitative methods.

The responses are measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree) for easy statistical analysis.

**3.5. Data Analysis Methods**

Thematic analysis is used to examine the data. This includes:

- The data was first familiarized through reading and transcription.
- Then, Themes and key phrases that are associated with each NCMH factor were coded.
- Their relationships were studied for a profound understanding of the ways in which each element affects listening.
- Then the qualitative analysis is done with the quantitative data.
- Finally, after cross-checking the results, a comprehensive conclusion was drawn.

**4. Research Objectives**

In the presence of frequent observation and analysis, it is anticipated that Listening Skill is more of a psychological attainment than a physical act. Complete mental stability and needful interest

are requisites to listen effectively, and so forth, which can bring the right understanding of a said conversation. The following objectives are set:

- To recognize the listening skill as a major skill among Listening, Reading, Reading & Writing (LSRW)
- To show that need, interest, psychological balance, and a sound environment give effective listening
- To explore the different levels of listening that affect it

## 5. Discussion

Good listening is essential for each professional. One can improve one's listening skills by practicing "active listening." Someone's conscious effort to hear is the basis of it; it is not the words that someone is saying, but putting effort to understand the absolute message is essential. No doubt, being an active listener requires a great deal of focus and willpower. The author has conducted a vivid study on the listening skill and observed that listening is more of a science than an art. It goes through a process that refers to how we receive, interpret, and respond to auditory stimuli. It involves several stages:

**Sound Waves → Receiving → Understanding → Evaluation → Responding**

**A sound wave** is a stimulus upon which human beings react/respond.

**Receiving:** This is the initial stage where sound waves are detected by the ear and converted into nerve impulses that the brain can interpret.

**Understanding:** Once received, the brain processes these signals to derive meaning from them. This stage involves not just hearing the words but also comprehending their context and implications.

**Evaluating:** During this stage, we assess the information received against our existing knowledge, beliefs, and experiences. We consider the speaker's credibility and the context in which the message is delivered.

**Responding:** After processing and evaluating the message, we formulate a response. This could involve asking questions, providing feedback, or taking action based on what we've heard.

### 5.1 NCMH Factors

It is to say that not all conversation requires the highest levels of listening. But primarily, the four factors (NCMH Factors) matter the most for active listening, which is discussed in detail in the lines following:

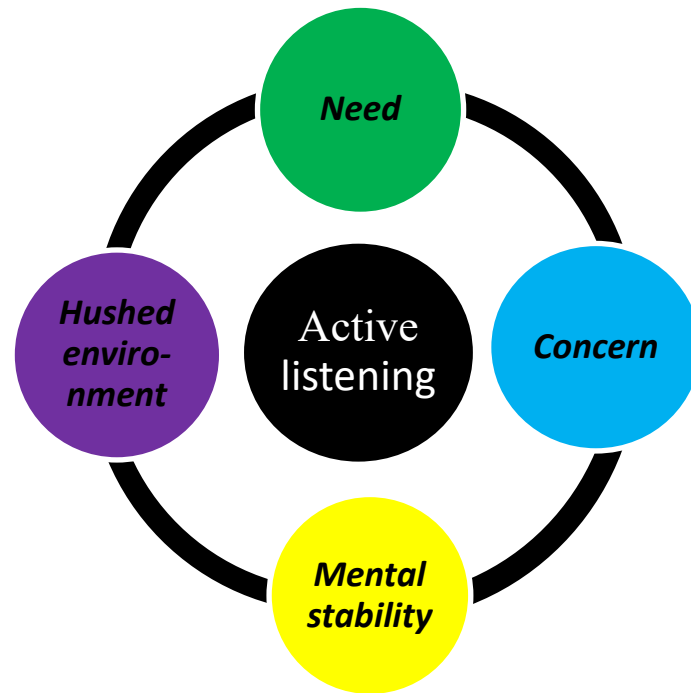


Figure 1: The interrelated factors of Active Listening:

#### 5.1.1 Need

“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say”, Bryant H McGill. Until and unless there is an adequate need to listen, we don’t listen actively. The reasons specified here, as we listen to

- Get information
- Learn
- Understand
- Enjoyment

The principle, “communication is purposeful,” demonstrates that there is a purpose behind each listening. The so-called active listening is focused and intentionally led by a definite purpose.

#### 5.1.2 Concern

Conversations are like learning opportunities for people who are naturally interested in them. As it is discussed above, “communication is purposeful”; a person with a need or concern is an active listener. Without a definite objective, we generally don’t give attention to the topic or the speaker while listening. Those who consistently seek out novel learning experiences and intellectual challenges to elevate their level of knowledge are truly exceptional. These people are recognized as smart ones who are seeking knowledge, taking courses/trainings, researching, and gaining experiences throughout their lives. For them, listening becomes an easy and accepted way to continue their journey of self-development.

### 5.1.3 Mental Stability

We all spend most of our time engaging ourselves in various conversations with friends, colleagues, and family members. But we don't listen to things carefully. We are sometimes sidetracked by other things in the environment, such as the Internet, cell phones, TV, or the like. We think we are listening to the person, but we don't give them our full attention. Since listening is hearing with understanding, it demands mental stability. Proper perception is the outcome of proper tackling of said words. To say, a better listener *hears* what the speaker is speaking, not just what we think or expect them to speak.

### 5.1.4 Hushed Environment

A hushed environment fosters better communication by allowing individuals to exchange information, understand each other more effectively, and maintain a respectful and focused interaction. A productive and happy work atmosphere requires effective communication. A hushed environment is crucial for effective communication for several reasons: Reduced Distractions, Enhanced Concentration, Non-verbal Cues, Respect and Comfort, Effective Information Transfer, and Privacy. But as we've all encountered at some point, interruptions, misunderstandings, and boring sessions with a boring speaker may frequently obstruct that effective flow of information. *We can apprehend that free flow of communication is the key to make us reach at these destinations.* It has been discovered that after a sound listening, listeners provide accurate feedback.

### Corporate Utility

It is observed that when workers want their voices to be heard, they frequently imply that their leaders will pay close attention to what they have to say and will comprehend what they mean. Leaders and managers pay more attention to employees as they seek greater focus, input, and assistance in order to improve the organization. In a true sense, leaders or managers who listen carefully can build reliable relationships with superiors, peers, and other employees of the organization too. Active listening is not just a communication skill but a fundamental tool for creating a positive and productive corporate environment where collaboration, understanding, and innovation thrive. Its utility extends across all levels of an organization, contributing to overall success and achievement of strategic goals.

### Conclusion

Communication skills have taken on the highest importance since the inception of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While talking about corporate fields, it has become more forceful. The literature review has focused on the previous studies of listening skills; their need, benefit, and concept as well. The following points try to elaborate on these needs, and the benefits of listening skills in general and for business organizations in particular.

There are some essential benefits of active listening in an organization, like:

- Enhanced Relationships
- Emotional Intelligence
- Conflict Resolution

- Personal Growth
- Therapeutic Benefits
- Cognitive Benefits
- Reduced Stress
- Improved Communication Skills

This study intends to further our knowledge of the psychological and environmental elements that influence active listening by examining the relationships among the four NCMH components. The results offer helpful suggestions for strengthening listening abilities in a range of social, professional, and educational settings, ultimately leading to better communication and comprehension. Listening is not simply a passive act but a dynamic skill with profound psychological implications. It empowers individuals to connect authentically with others, understand themselves more deeply, and navigate the complexities of human interaction with empathy and insight. Thus, in psychology, listening emerges as a cornerstone of emotional intelligence, personal growth, and meaningful relationships. The study can be further enhanced from the perspective of different age groups in different settings as well.

## References

- Nagendra, K. (2014). Listening as a basic skill of communication. *Journal of Business Management Social Science Research (JBM&SSR)*, 3(4), 31.
- Feyten, C. M. (1991). The power of listening ability: An overlooked dimension in language acquisition. *The modern language journal*, 75(2), 173-180.
- Turner, R. N., & West, K. (2012). Behavioural consequences of imagining intergroup contact with stigmatized outgroups. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 15(2), 193-202.
- Clement, J. (2007). The impact of teaching explicit listening strategies to adult intermediate-and advanced-level ESL university students.
- Graham, S., & Macaro, E. (2008). Strategy instruction in listening for lower-intermediate learners of French. *Language learning*, 58(4), 747-783.
- Guan, Y. (2014). The effects of explicit listening strategy instruction on the listening comprehension of English as second language (ESL) community college students. University of San Francisco.
- Berne, J. E. (2004). Listening comprehension strategies: A review of the literature. *Foreign language annals*, 37(4), 521-531
- Liu, T. Y. (2009). A context-aware ubiquitous learning environment for language listening and speaking. *Journal of Computer-Assisted Learning*, 25(6), 515-527.
- An, X., Shi, Z. (2004). Does Metacognitive Instruction Improve Listening Comprehension? Theory and Practice in Language Studies; London, Vol 3, Issue 4 2013, PP 631-636
- Field, J. (1998), Skills and strategies: towards a new methodology for listening. academic.oup.com
- Rosouli M, Mollakhan K (2013), "The effect of metacognitive listening strategy training on listening comprehension in Iranian EFL context- European online journal
- Chamot, A. U. (2004). Language learning strategy instruction: current issues and research- Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, Cambridge.org



O'Malley, J.M., and Chamot, A.U. (1990). *Language strategies in second language acquisitions*. The Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series.

Guan, Y. (2015). A Literature Review: Current Issues in Listening Strategy Research and Instruction on ESL Adult Learners. *International Journal of Teaching, Education and Language Learning*, vol.2, No.1, PP 32-70

**Web links:**

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills.html>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/resolution-not-conflict/201111/the-art-listening-how-open-are-your-ears>

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills.html>

<https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do>

<https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkll/ActiveListening.htm>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/glennllopis/2013/05/20/6-effective-ways-listening-can-make-you-a-better-leader/#702e6c9a1756>

---