



The Impact of Poor Listening Skills on Everyday Communication

¹ Rahul Kumar Yadav, ² Yogita Thakur

¹Independent Researcher, Rajnandgaon, India

²Guest Lecturer, Department of English, Naveen Govt. College Arjuni, Rajnandgaon, India

Email – ¹ry93590@gmail.com, ²yogita0521@gmail.com

Abstract: Communication is an important part of human life. People communicate with one another at home, in educational institutions, workplaces, public places, and through digital platforms. Although communication is often associated with speaking, writing, and expressing ideas, listening is equally important. In fact, communication cannot be successful when people speak but do not properly listen to one another. Listening is not simply hearing sounds. It involves paying attention, understanding the message, interpreting its meaning, remembering important information, and responding appropriately. The International Listening Association defines listening as a process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and non-verbal messages.

Poor listening is a common problem in everyday communication. People may appear to be listening while thinking about something else, checking their phones, preparing their own response, judging the speaker, or making assumptions about what the speaker is going to say. Such habits can create misunderstandings and unnecessary conflicts. Poor listening can also make people feel ignored, disrespected, or unimportant. Over time, this may weaken personal, educational, professional, and social relationships.

The present paper examines the impact of poor listening skills on everyday communication. It discusses the meaning and importance of listening, major causes of poor listening, and its effects on family relationships, friendships, education, workplaces, and digital communication. The paper also discusses the connection between poor listening and misunderstanding, conflict, emotional distance, reduced productivity, and loss of trust. Finally, it suggests practical ways to improve listening skills in everyday life. The paper argues that effective communication requires not only the ability to express ideas clearly but also the willingness and ability to listen carefully to others.

Key Words: listening, poor listening, communication, misunderstanding, interpersonal communication, active listening, communication barriers, relationships

1. INTRODUCTION:

Communication is one of the most basic activities of human life. From the moment people wake up until they go to sleep, they communicate in different ways. A person may talk to family members, attend classes, speak to colleagues, answer a phone call, send messages, participate in meetings, or have a short conversation with a stranger. Almost every part of daily life involves some form of communication.

Communication is generally understood as the process through which people exchange information, thoughts, feelings, opinions, and ideas. It may take place through spoken language, written language, gestures, facial expressions, body language, or digital messages. Good communication helps people understand each other and work together. Poor communication, on the other hand, can create confusion, disagreement, frustration, and conflict. When people discuss communication, they often give greater attention to speaking. A person who speaks clearly, uses appropriate words, and expresses ideas confidently is usually considered a good communicator. However, communication is not only about speaking. Listening is equally important. A person may speak very clearly, but if the other person is not listening carefully, the communication may still fail. Listening is more complex than simply hearing. Hearing is a physical process in which the ears receive sound. Listening requires attention and mental involvement. The listener has to understand what the speaker is saying and interpret the message in its proper context. Earlier research on listening has also described



it as involving processes such as receiving, interpreting, evaluating, remembering, and responding. The difference between hearing and listening can be understood through a simple everyday example. Imagine that a mother tells her son, "Please buy some medicine while coming home." The son hears the words but is thinking about his phone or an upcoming examination. Later, he returns home without the medicine. Technically, he may have heard his mother's voice, but he did not listen properly. The result is a communication failure. Poor listening occurs in many situations. A student may fail to understand an instruction because he was distracted during a lecture. An employee may make a mistake because he did not listen carefully to the manager. Friends may argue because one person misunderstood what the other was trying to say. Family members may become emotionally distant because they feel that nobody listens to them. Even small failures of listening can become serious problems when they happen repeatedly.

Modern life has created additional challenges for effective listening. People are surrounded by smartphones, social media, notifications, entertainment, and constant information. During conversations, it is common to see people checking their phones, reading messages, or thinking about something unrelated. Although technology has made communication faster, it has also made sustained attention more difficult.

Poor listening is therefore not a small communication problem. It can influence the quality of relationships and everyday interactions. Research has increasingly connected listening with relationship quality, trust, workplace outcomes, and well-being. A major meta-analysis published in the *Journal of Business and Psychology* examined hundreds of effect sizes and found that perceived listening was positively associated with work outcomes, with the strongest relationship found between listening and relationship quality.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how poor listening affects every day communication. The paper focuses particularly on ordinary communication rather than listening only in formal professional settings. It considers how listening problems appear in families, friendships, classrooms, workplaces, and digital environments.

2. UNDERSTANDING LISTENING:

Listening is an active communication process. It begins when a person receives a message but does not end there. The listener must pay attention, understand the meaning, process the information, and respond appropriately.

The International Listening Association describes listening as "the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages." This definition is important because it shows that listening is not passive. The listener has an active role in creating meaning from communication.

For example, suppose a friend says, "I am fine," but speaks in a very low voice and avoids eye contact. If the listener only pays attention to the words, the message appears positive. However, if the listener notices the tone and body language, the meaning may be different. Effective listening therefore involves both verbal and non-verbal information. Listening generally involves several connected activities.

First, the listener receives the message. Second, attention is directed toward the speaker. Third, the listener interprets the information. Fourth, the listener connects the information with previous knowledge or experience. Fifth, the listener evaluates the message. Finally, the listener responds.

This process can happen very quickly during an ordinary conversation. However, failure at any stage can create communication problems.

Listening is also different from waiting for one's turn to speak. Sometimes people appear to listen, but they are actually preparing their own response. They may be thinking, "What should I say next?" or "How can I prove that I am right?" In such cases, their attention is not completely focused on the speaker.

Active listening requires greater involvement. The listener gives attention to the speaker, avoids unnecessary interruption, asks relevant questions, and provides suitable responses. Research comparing different listening responses found that people who received active listening responses felt more understood than people who received simple acknowledgements.

This demonstrates an important point: simply saying "yes," "okay," or "hmm" does not always mean that a person has listened effectively

3. LISTENING AS A PART OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:

Communication is a two-way process. One person sends a message and another person receives and interprets it. The quality of the communication depends not only on the speaker but also on the listener.

A speaker may choose appropriate words, but the listener may misunderstand them. A listener may also interpret the message according to personal experiences, emotions, expectations, or assumptions. Therefore, communication can fail even when the speaker's original message was clear.



Listening provides feedback to the speaker. When a person listens carefully, the speaker receives signs that the message has been understood. These signs may include eye contact, appropriate facial expressions, questions, verbal responses, or a relevant reply.

Poor listening removes or weakens this feedback.

For example, consider a conversation between two friends. One friend explains that he is worried about an examination. The other friend keeps looking at the phone and simply says, "Don't worry." The response may be intended to help, but it may make the first friend feel that his concern has not been taken seriously.

Good listening does not necessarily mean agreeing with everything the speaker says. Listening and agreement are different. Recent research has shown that people sometimes mistake disagreement for poor listening, even when objective listening behavior is good. Therefore, an effective listener can understand another person's opinion without necessarily accepting it.

This distinction is especially important in everyday disagreements. The goal of listening should first be to understand the other person's position. Agreement may or may not follow.

4. WHAT IS POOR LISTENING?

Poor listening can be described as a failure to give appropriate attention to, understand, interpret, remember, or respond to another person's message.

Poor listening does not always mean that a person deliberately ignores another person. Sometimes it happens because of distraction, tiredness, stress, lack of interest, emotional problems, environmental noise, or information overload.

There are several common forms of poor listening.

Selective Listening:

Selective listening occurs when a person pays attention only to information that is interesting or useful to them. They ignore other parts of the message.

For example, a student may listen carefully when the teacher announces examination dates but ignore the instructions about preparation. Later, the student may complain that the teacher never explained the requirements.

Pretend Listening:

Pretend listening occurs when a person acts as though they are listening but their mind is somewhere else. They may nod their head or say "yes" while thinking about another subject.

This can be especially harmful in personal relationships because the speaker may eventually notice that the listener is not genuinely engaged.

Interrupting:

Frequent interruption is another form of poor listening. Some people interrupt because they are impatient, while others interrupt because they believe they already know what the speaker is going to say.

Interruptions can make the speaker feel that their thoughts are not important.

Listening Only to Respond:

Some people listen mainly to prepare their own answer. Instead of trying to understand the speaker, they are thinking about how to defend themselves or what they will say next.

This becomes particularly problematic during arguments.

Judgmental Listening:

A listener may form an opinion about the speaker before fully understanding the message. For example, if someone has previously made mistakes, others may assume that anything they say is wrong.

Such assumptions prevent fair listening.

Distracted Listening:

Phones, television, social media, background conversations, noise, and personal thoughts can distract people from listening.

Digital distraction is particularly common today. A person may be physically present in a conversation while mentally concentrating on a phone.

Defensive Listening:

A defensive listener interprets ordinary comments as personal attacks. For example, if a colleague says, "This report needs some changes," the listener may interpret it as "You are not good at your job."

The listener reacts emotionally instead of understanding the actual message.

5. CAUSES OF POOR LISTENING:

Poor listening can have many causes. It is usually not the result of one single problem.

**Lack of Attention:**

Attention is the foundation of listening. When a person is not attentive, even a clear message may not be understood. Modern life makes attention difficult because people often deal with several tasks at the same time.

Mobile Phones and Digital Distractions:

Smartphones have become an important part of everyday life. They are useful for communication, education, work, and entertainment. However, frequent checking of notifications can interrupt conversations.

A person may believe that checking a message for a few seconds does not matter, but repeated interruptions can reduce the quality of the interaction.

Stress and Mental Pressure:

People who are stressed may find it difficult to concentrate on another person's words. Their mind may be occupied with money, examinations, work, family problems, or future worries.

In such situations, poor listening may not be intentional.

Lack of Interest:

People naturally pay more attention to topics that interest them. When they find a conversation boring, they may mentally withdraw.

However, everyday communication often requires listening even when the subject is not personally interesting.

Prejudice and Assumptions:

Previous experiences influence how people interpret messages. If a listener already has a negative opinion of the speaker, they may interpret even neutral statements negatively.

For example, if a manager believes that an employee is careless, the manager may interpret an innocent mistake as evidence of irresponsibility.

Emotional State:

Anger, sadness, jealousy, fear, and excitement can affect listening. During an argument, people often focus on defending themselves rather than understanding the other person.

Information Overload:

People receive a large amount of information every day through television, social media, messaging applications, email, news, and conversations. Too much information can make sustained attention difficult.

Lack of Listening Training:

Many people are taught how to speak, write, and read, but listening receives less formal attention. As a result, people may not realize that listening is a skill that can be improved through practice.

6. POOR LISTENING AND MISUNDERSTANDING:

One of the most common effects of poor listening is misunderstanding.

Misunderstanding occurs when the listener receives a message but interprets it differently from what the speaker intended.

For example:

A teacher says, "Submit the assignment by Monday morning."

A student hears the instruction but assumes that submitting it Monday evening will be acceptable.

The teacher may consider the student late, while the student may genuinely believe that he followed the instruction.

Sometimes misunderstanding is caused by unclear language, but poor listening can make the problem worse.

Misunderstanding can also occur in ordinary conversations.

A person may say, "I am a little upset today," while the listener assumes, "You are angry with me." The listener then becomes defensive, and a small emotional statement develops into an unnecessary argument.

This shows why listening requires interpretation as well as hearing.

Good listeners do not immediately assume what a speaker means. When something is unclear, they ask questions.

For example:

"Do you mean that you are upset with me, or are you having a difficult day generally?"

A simple question can prevent a major misunderstanding.

7. IMPACT ON FAMILY COMMUNICATION:

Family communication is one of the most important areas affected by listening.

Family members communicate about responsibilities, money, education, health, household matters, emotions, and personal problems. Because family members spend a great deal of time together, they may sometimes become overconfident about understanding one another.

This can create a dangerous habit: assuming instead of listening.



Parents may assume they already know what their children are thinking. Children may assume that parents will not understand them. Spouses may assume that they know what their partners mean.

These assumptions reduce genuine communication.

For example, a child may say, "I don't want to go to college today," but the parent may immediately respond, "You are just being lazy." Perhaps the child is actually worried about a problem with a teacher or another student.

If the parent listens first, the real problem may become clear.

Similarly, parents may talk about responsibilities, but children may feel that they are being criticized rather than guided. Poor listening can therefore create emotional distance within families.

A family member who repeatedly feels ignored may stop sharing personal problems. This is particularly serious when a person needs emotional support.

Listening does not always require solving the problem. Sometimes people simply need someone to hear them.

8. IMPACT ON FRIENDSHIPS:

Friendships depend heavily on communication and mutual understanding.

Friends share personal experiences, problems, achievements, fears, and opinions. Good listening strengthens friendship because it communicates attention and respect.

Poor listening can have the opposite effect.

Suppose one friend regularly talks about personal problems while the other friend changes the subject, checks the phone, or gives unwanted advice without listening. Over time, the first friend may stop sharing.

This can weaken the friendship.

Another common problem occurs when friends misunderstand messages. A short text message may be interpreted differently because digital communication does not always show tone or facial expression.

For example:

"Fine."

Depending on the situation, this could mean "I am okay," "I am angry," or "I do not want to discuss this."

A person who does not listen carefully during earlier conversations may interpret the message incorrectly.

Good listening helps friends understand not only words but also feelings and context

9. IMPACT ON EDUCATION:

Listening is extremely important in education.

Teachers explain concepts, instructions, examples, questions, and assignments through spoken communication. Students who do not listen carefully may miss important information.

Poor listening can lead to:

- misunderstanding instructions;
- incomplete assignments;
- poor examination preparation;
- repeated questions;
- classroom confusion;
- lower participation;
- reduced academic performance.

For example, a teacher may explain that an assignment requires three sections and five references. If a student is talking to a friend during the explanation, the student may later submit an incomplete assignment.

Poor listening can also affect teachers.

When students do not listen, teachers may need to repeat the same instructions. This consumes classroom time and may create frustration.

Listening is therefore not simply a student responsibility. Teachers also need to listen to students.

A student may ask a question because they do not understand something. If the teacher immediately dismisses the question, the student may hesitate to ask again.

Effective educational communication requires listening on both sides.



10. IMPACT ON WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION:

The workplace is another important area where poor listening can create serious problems.

Employees receive instructions, feedback, deadlines, and information through communication. If they do not listen properly, mistakes can occur.

For example, an employee may misunderstand a deadline or fail to notice an important requirement. This can affect the entire team.

Research has found a strong connection between perceived listening and workplace outcomes. A large systematic review and meta-analysis found positive associations between listening and outcomes including relationship quality and job performance.

Listening is also important for managers.

An employee may have a useful suggestion or may want to report a problem. If the manager does not listen, employees may become reluctant to speak.

Research on workplace listening has shown that feeling heard is an important part of employees' communication experiences. Interviews with bank employees found that people's experiences of being heard or unheard were not always explained simply by visible conversational behaviours.

This means that workplace listening is not just about saying "I understand." Employees need to feel that their concerns have been taken seriously.

Poor listening may therefore affect:

- productivity
- teamwork
- employee satisfaction
- trust
- leadership
- decision-making
- problem-solving
- Workplace relationships.

11. POOR LISTENING AND CONFLICT:

Conflict is a natural part of human relationships. People have different opinions, needs, experiences, and expectations. However, poor listening can make ordinary disagreement much worse.

During an argument, people often listen defensively. They may focus on finding weaknesses in the other person's argument instead of understanding it.

For example:

Person A: "I was hurt because you did not call me."

Person B: "You always complain. I was busy."

The second person may be responding to the accusation they think they heard rather than the feeling expressed by the first person.

A better response might be:

"I understand that you felt ignored. I was busy, but I understand why you were upset."

This does not mean that Person B agrees with everything. It simply acknowledges the other person's experience.

Research also suggests that disagreement itself can sometimes be interpreted as poor listening. In a series of studies, people sometimes judged listeners who disagreed with them as worse listeners even when listening behaviours were held constant.

This is important because effective listening does not require agreement.

A mature communicator can say:

"I understand your point, but I see the situation differently."

Such communication is healthier than:

"You are wrong, so I am not listening."

12. POOR LISTENING AND TRUST:

Trust develops when people feel that others are honest, respectful, and attentive.

Listening plays an important role in developing this trust.

When someone shares something personal, they usually expect the other person to pay attention. If the listener repeatedly ignores them, the speaker may begin to believe that their thoughts are not valued.



For example, if an employee repeatedly reports a workplace problem but the manager never listens, the employee may eventually stop reporting problems.

Similarly, if a child repeatedly tries to talk to a parent but is dismissed, the child may stop sharing personal matters.

The problem is not only that information is lost. The relationship itself may be damaged.

Research on listening has consistently connected listening with relationship quality. A major review of workplace listening found that listening is associated with relationships, trust, leadership, job attitudes, and well-being.

Therefore, listening can be understood as a way of showing respect and building trust.

13. POOR LISTENING AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING:

Human beings have a basic need to be understood and accepted.

When people talk about personal difficulties, they often do not expect immediate solutions. Sometimes they simply want another person to listen.

Poor listening can make a person feel lonely even when other people are physically present.

For example, someone may tell a friend about a difficult day. If the friend immediately changes the subject or starts talking about their own problems, the speaker may feel that their experience does not matter.

On the other hand, attentive listening can provide emotional support.

The listener can say:

"That sounds difficult."

"Tell me more about what happened."

"I understand why you feel that way."

Such responses show attention without necessarily giving advice.

Research on listening also suggests that listening can contribute to well-being and positive relationships.

This is one reason listening should not be considered merely a technical communication skill. It is also a social and emotional skill.

14. POOR LISTENING IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION:

Digital communication has changed the way people interact.

People communicate through WhatsApp, email, social media, video calls, online meetings, and other platforms. These technologies make communication convenient, but they also create new listening problems.

In a face-to-face conversation, people can observe facial expressions, gestures, tone, and pauses. In text communication, much of this information disappears.

A short message can therefore be misunderstood.

For example:

"Okay."

This word may be interpreted as agreement, anger, disappointment, or indifference depending on the context.

Digital communication also encourages multitasking. A person may attend an online meeting while checking social media or responding to messages.

This creates the appearance of participation without complete attention.

Video calls have another problem. People may become distracted by their own image, other windows, notifications, or background activity.

Therefore, digital communication requires conscious listening habits.

People need to close unnecessary applications, put phones away when possible, and focus on the conversation.

15. POOR LISTENING AS A COMMUNICATION BARRIER:

Communication barriers are factors that prevent a message from being understood correctly.

Poor listening is an important internal communication barrier.

Unlike physical noise, which comes from the environment, poor listening comes from the listener's behaviour or mental state.

The major listening barriers include:

Physical barriers:

Noise, distance, poor audio quality, and interruptions can make listening difficult.

Psychological barriers:

Stress, anger, fear, anxiety, and emotional pressure can reduce attention.

Semantic barriers:

Difficult words, unfamiliar expressions, or language differences can create misunderstanding.



Cultural barriers:

Different cultures may have different communication styles, meanings, and expectations.

Attitudinal barriers:

Prejudice, impatience, arrogance, and lack of respect can prevent effective listening.

Technological barriers:

Poor internet connections, notifications, and multitasking can interfere with digital communication.

These barriers often work together.

For example, a student attending an online lecture from a noisy room may already face physical distraction. If the student is also checking social media, psychological and technological distractions are added.

16. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LISTENING AND AGREEMENT

An important issue in communication is the mistaken belief that listening means agreeing.

Listening means understanding another person's message. Agreement means accepting their opinion.

These are not the same.

For example:

"I understand why you think the policy is unfair, but I do not agree with your conclusion."

This is good communication.

The speaker's opinion has been acknowledged, but the listener has maintained an independent position.

This distinction is particularly important during political, social, family, and workplace discussions.

People may stop listening when they strongly disagree with another person. They may think:

"Why should I listen? They are wrong."

This attitude increases conflict.

A better approach is:

"I may disagree, but I want to understand why you think this way."

Listening does not require giving up one's beliefs. It requires giving the other person an opportunity to explain their position.

17. THE ROLE OF EMPATHY IN LISTENING:

Empathy means trying to understand another person's feelings and perspective.

Empathy and listening are closely connected.

A listener does not have to experience exactly the same situation to understand another person's emotions. For example, if a friend fails an examination, an empathetic listener may say:

"I know you worked hard, so I understand why you are disappointed."

This response shows that the listener has paid attention to both the situation and the emotion.

Without empathy, listening can become mechanical.

A person may hear every word but fail to understand why the conversation matters to the speaker.

Empathetic listening is especially important in family relationships, friendships, education, healthcare, and workplaces.

18. ACTIVE LISTENING AS A SOLUTION:

Active listening is one of the most effective ways to reduce the problems caused by poor listening.

Active listening involves giving full attention to the speaker and showing that the message has been understood.

Important elements include:

Giving Full Attention:

The listener should focus on the speaker rather than dividing attention between several activities.

Maintaining Appropriate Eye Contact:

Eye contact can communicate attention, although it should be natural rather than forced.

Avoiding Unnecessary Interruptions:

Allowing the speaker to finish gives them an opportunity to express the complete message.

Asking Questions:

Questions can clarify information.

For example:



"Do you mean that the problem started yesterday?"

Paraphrasing:

The listener can repeat the main idea in their own words.

For example:

"So, what you are saying is that the deadline was changed without informing you."

This gives the speaker an opportunity to correct misunderstandings.

Showing Appropriate Responses:

Simple responses such as "I understand," "I see," or "That makes sense" can show attention when used genuinely.

Avoiding Immediate Judgement:

A listener should allow the speaker to finish before deciding whether the message is right or wrong.

Research has found that active listening can make speakers feel more understood compared with simple acknowledgements.

19. HOW LISTENING CAN BE IMPROVED IN EVERYDAY LIFE:

Listening is a skill that can be developed through regular practice.

A person does not need special equipment or formal training to begin improving.

First, people should reduce distractions during important conversations.

Second, they should avoid interrupting unnecessarily.

Third, they should ask questions when something is unclear.

Fourth, they should avoid assuming that they already know what another person means.

Fifth, they should pay attention to tone and body language.

Sixth, they should give the speaker enough time to express the complete thought.

Seventh, they should separate understanding from agreement.

Finally, people should become comfortable with silence. A short pause does not mean that a conversation has failed.

Sometimes people need a moment to think before responding.

20. LISTENING IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS:

Listening skills can be improved through ordinary daily activities.

At home, family members can practice listening without phones or television distractions.

In classrooms, students can take notes and ask questions instead of simply trying to memorize information.

At work, employees can repeat important instructions to confirm their understanding.

With friends, people can listen without immediately giving advice.

During disagreements, people can allow the other person to finish before responding.

During digital conversations, people can avoid multitasking.

These simple behaviours can make a significant difference.

Listening does not always require a long conversation. Even a few minutes of genuine attention can improve an interaction.

21. IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING IN LEADERSHIP:

Leadership depends heavily on communication.

A leader who only gives instructions but never listens may lose the confidence of employees.

Good leaders listen to suggestions, complaints, concerns, and ideas.

Listening also helps leaders understand problems that may not be visible from their position.

For example, a manager may believe that a project is progressing well, while employees may know about a problem with resources or deadlines.

If the manager does not listen, the problem may become serious.

Research has connected listening with leadership and organizational outcomes.

Therefore, listening should not be seen as a sign of weakness in leadership. It can be a sign of confidence and openness.

22. LISTENING AND TEAMWORK:

Teamwork requires people to share information and understand one another.

Poor listening can create duplication of work, missed deadlines, and disagreements.

Suppose five people are working on a project. If one member fails to listen to the agreed plan, that person may complete the wrong task. The team then has to spend additional time correcting the mistake.



Good listening improves coordination.

Team members need to listen not only to instructions but also to ideas and concerns.

A person who listens to others can identify useful suggestions that may otherwise be ignored.

Thus, listening contributes to collective problem-solving.

23. LISTENING AND DECISION-MAKING:

Good decisions require good information.

If people do not listen to relevant information, their decisions may be based on incomplete understanding.

For example, a teacher deciding how to conduct a class may benefit from listening to students' difficulties.

A manager deciding how to organize work may benefit from listening to employees.

A family deciding about an important issue may need to listen to every member.

Poor listening can therefore reduce the quality of decision-making.

Listening does not mean accepting every suggestion. It means collecting and considering relevant information before making a decision.

24. LISTENING AND RESPECT:

Listening is one of the simplest ways to demonstrate respect.

When a person gives another person their full attention, the message is:

"Your words are important to me."

When a person repeatedly interrupts, checks their phone, or ignores the speaker, the message may be:

"I am more interested in something else."

This is why poor listening can hurt relationships even when no insulting words are spoken.

Respect is communicated not only through what people say but also through how they listen.

The International Listening Association emphasizes listening as a daily practice that strengthens connections and highlights respect and inclusiveness as important values.

25. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

The discussion in this paper indicates that poor listening has effects far beyond simple misunderstanding.

The first major finding is that listening is an essential part of communication. Hearing words is not enough. Effective communication requires attention, interpretation, and appropriate response.

The second finding is that poor listening is common in everyday situations. It may be caused by distraction, stress, technology, assumptions, emotional reactions, lack of interest, or insufficient listening habits.

The third finding is that poor listening can damage relationships. When people repeatedly feel ignored, they may stop sharing information or emotions.

The fourth finding is that poor listening can increase conflict. When people listen defensively or interrupt each other, disagreements can become personal.

The fifth finding is that poor listening can affect education and workplace performance. Misunderstood instructions can lead to mistakes and reduced productivity.

The sixth finding is that digital communication has created additional challenges. Smartphones and multitasking can reduce attention, while text messages can remove tone and other non-verbal cues.

The seventh finding is that active listening provides a practical solution. Paying attention, asking questions, paraphrasing, avoiding interruption, and responding appropriately can improve communication.

Research also supports the broader importance of listening. Studies of workplace communication have associated listening with relationship quality, performance, leadership, and well-being.

However, it is important not to oversimplify the issue. A person who appears to be a poor listener may be tired, stressed, distracted, or dealing with another difficulty. Similarly, a speaker may feel unheard even when the listener has genuinely listened. Recent research has demonstrated that people's perception of listening can sometimes be influenced by whether the listener agrees with them.

Therefore, effective communication requires effort from both sides.

26. SUGGESTIONS:

The following suggestions can help improve listening in everyday communication:

1. Give full attention during important conversations.
2. Keep phones and unnecessary devices away when possible.



3. Do not interrupt unless it is necessary.
4. Ask questions when the message is unclear.
5. Avoid making quick assumptions.
6. Pay attention to tone and body language.
7. Try to understand feelings as well as information.
8. Do not confuse disagreement with failure to listen.
9. Repeat important information when necessary.
10. Give constructive feedback after listening.
11. Avoid judging the speaker before hearing the complete message.
12. Practice listening regularly in ordinary conversations.
13. Allow people enough time to express themselves.
14. Listen especially carefully when someone is discussing an important personal issue.
15. Teach listening skills in schools, colleges, and workplaces.

These suggestions are simple, but their regular use can improve communication considerably.

27. CONCLUSION:

Listening is one of the most important but often neglected parts of everyday communication. People usually focus on speaking clearly, choosing the right words, and expressing their opinions. However, communication cannot be successful if the listener is not paying attention.

Poor listening can create misunderstandings, arguments, emotional distance, mistakes, and loss of trust. Its effects can be seen in almost every area of life. At home, poor listening can create family tension. Among friends, it can weaken relationships. In education, it can result in misunderstanding and poor academic performance. At work, it can affect teamwork, productivity, leadership, and employee relationships. In digital communication, distractions and the absence of non-verbal information can make listening even more difficult.

The most important point is that listening is not the same as hearing. Hearing happens when sound reaches the ears. Listening requires attention, understanding, interpretation, and response. It is an active process.

Poor listening is not always intentional. People may fail to listen because they are stressed, tired, distracted, emotionally upset, or surrounded by too much information. Nevertheless, recognizing these barriers is the first step toward improving communication.

Active listening provides a practical way to deal with the problem. Giving attention, avoiding interruptions, asking questions, paraphrasing, showing empathy, and responding appropriately can make everyday conversations more meaningful.

Good listening also does not require agreement. A person can understand another person's opinion while still disagreeing with it. This is especially important in a world where people often have different political, social, cultural, and personal views.

Ultimately, listening is an act of attention and respect. When people listen carefully, they communicate that the other person's words and experiences matter. When people fail to listen repeatedly, even a close relationship can become distant.

Therefore, improving listening skills can improve communication as a whole. Effective communication is not simply about speaking well. It is about creating a meaningful exchange in which both people have the opportunity to speak, listen, understand, and respond. In everyday life, better listening can lead to fewer misunderstandings, healthier relationships, better cooperation, and greater mutual understanding.

REFERENCES:

1. Bodie, G. D., Janusik, L. A., & Välikoski, T. R. (2008). Listening competence. In W. F. Eadie (Ed.), *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook*. Sage Publications.
2. International Listening Association. (1996). *Listening definition*. International Listening Association.
3. Itzchakov, G., & Kluger, A. N. (2022). The power of listening at work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 9, 121–145.
4. Itzchakov, G., et al. (2023). Communicating for workplace connection: A longitudinal study of the outcomes of listening training on teachers' autonomy, psychological safety, and relational climate. *Psychology in the Schools*.



5. Kluger, A. N., Lehmann, M., Aguinis, H., Itzhakov, G., Gordoni, G., Zyberaj, J., Bakaç, C., et al. (2024). A meta-analytic systematic review and theory of the effects of perceived listening on work outcomes. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 39, 295–344.
6. Kriz, T. D., Kluger, A. N., & Lyddy, C. J. (2021). Feeling heard: Experiences of listening (or not) at work. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 659087.
7. Ren, Z. B., & Schaumberg, R. (2024). Disagreement gets mistaken for bad listening. *Psychological Science*, 35(5), 455–470.
8. Weger, H., Jr., Castle Bell, G., Minei, E. M., & Robinson, M. C. (2014). The relative effectiveness of active listening in initial interactions. *International Journal of Listening*, 28(1), 13–31.
9. Yip, J., & Fisher, C. M. (2022). Listening in organizations: A synthesis and future agenda. *Academy of Management Annals*.