

A Listening Comprehension Course;

An Intermediate to Advanced Level

**A Self-Study Edition
(with Two CDs and Answer Keys)**

CD 1 ⇒ *Audio Files including:
Special and Normal English Reports*

CD 2 ⇒ *Video Files containing:
Normal English (Documentary Episodes)*

**By:
Masoud Moshayedi**

*Dedicated to
My Wife*

Preface:

Listening comprehension is one of the most important and fundamental of the four skills in language learning and also the most complicated one. Primarily, verbal communication is feasible only when the two interlocutors involved in a speech event are able to comprehend each other's speech. The major difficulty in verbal communication is normally that of understanding what one hears; while the speaker can control what he wants to say, the listener can not control what is said to him. Moreover, although the elements that comprise listening and speaking are the same, the former precedes the latter and is a prerequisite for it. Only after competence in listening comprehension has been established, will one be able to take on performance and develop it towards communicative fluency. That is, unless one has the ability to understand a message, he certainly can not produce it. The greatest difficulty for travelers in foreign countries is not primarily that they can not make themselves understood; this can be frequently done by gestures, writing, pointing to something, etc. Their major difficulty and one that leads to considerable emotional embarrassment, is that they can not understand what is being said to them and around them.

Teaching and learning the comprehension of spoken language is of primary importance if the communication aim is to be achieved. As a frequently neglected area in English classes at schools and also in general courses at universities, listening comprehension has its own peculiar problems which arise from the level of difficulty of the target texts, fleeting nature of the spoken utterances and the complicated ways we process what we hear. In natural listening comprehension, essentially the opportunity to regress or mediate is not possible. The stream of speech continues without waiting for the listener to catch up. In addition, the human brain's limited capacity for storing a huge body of information all at once doesn't allow absorbing the whole of the oral stimuli.

It was the recognition of this critical point on the importance and necessity of listening comprehension that led the author to embark on a type of self study book providing students with authentic audio and

video materials with the relevant scripts accompanied with some blanks to be filled. I hope the book with the accompanied CDs meet some of the pedagogical needs of the students in listening and consequently speaking.

How to use this book?

The book in access includes seven parts and two CDs (authentic audio and video files). In the first CD, at first 60 SPECIAL ENGLISH audio reports are presented. Since the beginners in their early stages of language learning can not normally understand the natural spontaneous speech of native speakers, the prolonged exposure to the slow, distinct and overly precise speech (characteristics of Special English reports) can be helpful. In order not to be boring, the contents of the reports are chosen to be different including: news, views, science, agriculture, environmental issues, etc. For the purpose of audio familiarity, in the first part of the book, the relevant full texts of three reports with no missing words are provided. They work as a warming up activity in which the beginner is expected to attentively listen to the utterances and follow them in his book. In the second part, in each report, there are some missing words, the number of which gradually increases as the texts go ahead. By means of context and also careful listening, the learner can guess the intended words. The third part of the book contains some texts with some missing sentences so that the learner is to fill them. In the fourth part, no text is given and it is the learner who is to complete the whole text.

After getting primary familiarity with the sounds, pronunciations and also some new vocabulary items, the learner is to be exposed to some normal listening parts. To fulfill this goal, in the second part of the first CD, 23 audio files including NORMAL ENGLISH (BREAKING NEWS) are presented. In the fifth part of the book, as the previous parts, the learner will see the incomplete texts in his book and he is to fill in the blanks based on what he hears. In part six, listening comprehension is practiced through some questions; the student listens to the reports and tries to answer the questions.

To arouse learner's interest and enhance his listening ability, 19 video clips (documentary episodes in normal English with normal speed, rising, and falling) are included in the second CD but only 12 have been incompletely scripted in the seventh part of the book. The rest has been left to the learner to listen and script if s/he wishes. Some beautiful SONGS are placed in different parts of the book as refreshment and their relevant audio files can be found on CD.

At the end of the book an Answer Key is also provided to ensure the learner about his guesses.

Attempts have been made to consider the level of difficulty and lexical density of the texts as the book proceeds but sometimes because of the nature of the reports it has not been fully achieved.


Although the primary goal of the book is to elevate the learner's listening skill, since the language learner in this process will be actively involved in comprehension activities, his vocabulary will also be developed. The teachers, in addition to working on listening, can practice the words and their parts of speech. Asking students to analyze the sentences and provide synonyms, antonyms, definitions,... can help them enhance their vocabulary and grammar as well as listening comprehension.

Masoud Moshayedi
Winter 2010

Table of Contents

PART I:Audio Files


(Special English, complete texts)

- 1: The terrorist attacks on the United States and their aftermath
 - 2: The new president of the International Olympic Committee.....
 - 3: European Union and China trade agreements.....
-  **Enjoy Listening:** *In Love Forever*

PART II:Audio Files

(Special English, texts with missing words)

- 4: Iran Rejects appeal to stop enriching uranium.....
- 5: The completion of repairs to the Leaning Tower of Pisa...
- 6: Population of the world may stop growing.....
- 7: A man's race and where he lives affect his chances of dying.
- 8: The Group of Eight leaders' conference.....
- 9: Dust clouds; a threat to the environment and human health ..
- 10: A One-pill answer to treating H.I.V.....

 **Enjoy Listening:** *Every Drop of Rain*

- 11: Farmers financial difficulties in the United States.....
- 12: Street foods.....
- 13: Chemical DDT and its risk for pregnant women.....
- 14: Falling space rocks to Earth.....
- 15: Children's care.....
- 16: The use of robotic technology to get milk from cows.....
- 17: Forgetfulness.....
- 18: Brain diseases in developing countries.....
- 19: Young people are subject of world population day.....
- 20: Medical publications on Internet for developing

 **Enjoy Listening:** *Love of my Life*

- 21: The death of a woman as a result of taking part in a ...
- 22: Developing effective new antibiotic

- 23: Mad Cow Disease.....
- 24: Genetically-engineered crops.....
- 25: The disappearance of a young woman.....
- 26: Aid and economic growth fail to cut poverty in poorest....
- 27: A Mobile Internet Unit.....
- 28: The cause of death for a man who died.....
- 29: Metals in the soil and in our diet.....
- 30: Wildfires in forests.....

♪ Enjoy Listening: *Broken Wings*

- 31: The use of sport supplements.....
- 32: Different species of elephants in forests and grasslands...
- 33: Many images of dinosaurs may be wrong.....
- 34: Future for terrorism suspects depends on congress.....
- 35: A huge earthquake in the future.....
- 36: The first detailed study of the human gene map.....
- 37: The effect of testing new drugs on people in medical.....
- 38: A plan to improve the environment.....
- 39: World Food Prize.....
- 40: The protection of animals and plants that are in danger of.

♪ Enjoy Listening: *Waiting for the Hurricane*


- 41: Light pollution.....
- 42: The World Health Organization and its campaign to.....
- 43: Warnings about the use of a pain-killing medicine.....
- 44: Areas of future flooding.....
- 45: A new medical device that lets doctors see detailed images.
- 46: The competition of cars and crops for land.....
- 47: Food policies and hunger among children.....
- 48: New debates about genetic engineering.....
- 49: The appearance of the first plants on Earth.....
- 50: Stem cells and government support

♪ Enjoy Listening: *Talk to Me*

 **PART III:Audio Files**

(Special English, texts with missing sentences)


- 51: Securing large buildings against terrorist attacks....
- 52: The effect of vitamins and minerals on eye sight.....
- 53: The growing population of the world is harming
- 54: Producing life-saving drugs during health emergencies..
- 55: The largest complete remains of a cockroach ever found.

 **Enjoy Listening: *Always On My Mind***

 **PART IV:Audio Files**

(Special English without texts)

- 56: Hunger in developing countries.....
- 57: An international treaty to control global warming.....
- 58: Americans thanksgiving celebration.....
- 59: A weaker vaccine for protecting people against smallpox.
- 60: Elephant population in South Africa.....

 **Enjoy Listening: *In Dreams***

 **PART V:Audio Files**

(Normal English, incomplete texts)


- 1: US, Iranian officials will discuss Iraq issues.
- 2: European Union opens its market to 80 countries.....
- 3: UN says central Asia Countries violate human rights.
- 4: US commander apologizes for killing of innocent Afghans.
- 5: Violence and Political Crisis Deepen in Gaza Strip....
- 6: Egypt, Jordan, Israel discuss Arab peace initiatives....
- 7: Hollywood's images of smoking encourage teens to light up...

 **Enjoy Listening: *Discovery***

- 8: Inspectors say Iran is enriching uranium on larger scale...
- 9: Testimony Begins in US Terrorism Trial.....
- 10: House approves new Iraq war funding measures.
- 11: Los Angeles leaders see progress, challenges 15 years ...


- 12: Debate continues on holding terror suspects at.....
- 13: Global population boom puts mega pressure on cities in .

 **Enjoy Listening:** *Some Things Never Change*

 **PART VI:Audio Files**
(Normal English, comprehension questions)

- 14: Deadly clashes continue between rival Palestinian
- 15: Hamas rejects American proposal for easing.....
- 16: Search under way in Iraq for three missing coalition.
- 17: Korea prepare for train link amid hopeful signs on
- 18: Pentagon Says Appropriate Force Used in Afghan .
- 19: US Troops Continue search for missing soldiers.....
- 20: US Commander in Northern Iraq Asks for More Troops.
- 21: Millions Affected by Cluster Bombs.....
- 22: Popular Support Key to Security in Northern Iraqi City.
- 23: Diamond trade.....

 **Enjoy Listening:** *Here In My Heart*

 **PART VII: Video Files**
(Documentary episodes, incomplete texts)

- 1: Matter.....
- 2: Stars.....
- 3: Animals
- 4: Volcanoes.....
- 5: Glaciers.....
- 6: Ecosystem
- 7: Mammals
- 8: Elephants.....
- 9: Fossils.....
- 10: Sharks.....
- 11: Fungus farmers.....
- 12: Reptiles.....
- Answer Key**.....

PART I
Audio Files
(Special English, complete texts)

In the following three texts, there are no missing words. Just listen to the utterances on your CD and follow them in the book.

Unit 1

The terrorist attacks on the United States and their aftermath.

Since the terrorist attacks on the United States in September, Americans have given millions of dollars to help thousands of victims and their families. A lot of that money was given to the American Red Cross. The American Red Cross collected more than five-hundred-million dollars for this purpose in what it called the Liberty Fund. Recently, Red Cross officials admitted that they were not giving the families all the money that was collected. They said the Liberty Fund was created to help the victims of the September attacks, and also to help victims of future attacks. The officials said they regretted that the American public did not understand this. Last week, Red Cross officials announced a major change in policy. They said all the money given to the Liberty Fund would be used only to help the victims of the September Eleventh attacks and their families. The money will help families pay costs of daily living such as housing and food for up to one year. Immediately after the terrorist attacks, the Red Cross provided money for three months of living costs to more than two-thousand families of people who were killed. Red Cross officials say the organization also provided support to

about twenty-three-thousand other families who were affected by the terrorist attacks. These included rescue workers and people who could not go back to their homes near the World Trade Center in New York City. Business people who lost their workplaces also received help. However, the Red Cross planned to use about half the money given to the Liberty Fund for future programs. It wanted the money to increase blood supplies, improve communications and expand services for families of people serving in the military forces. Individuals who had given money to the Liberty Fund reacted strongly to this news. They expected their money to be used immediately to help victims of the attacks. Red Cross officials now say the Liberty Fund will be repaid for any money already used for other projects. The American Red Cross has been active for more than one hundred years. Its policy has been to keep some of the money given after a tragedy to prepare for future emergencies. Officials say the organization's appeals are supposed to tell people that the money will be used to help victims of the current emergency or similar ones. They have promised to investigate to see if the message is clear enough to the people who give their money. Red Cross officials say any relief organization needs to build up an amount of money to help victims of smaller emergencies. The American Red Cross says it provides aid services in about sixty-thousand emergency situations each year such as fires, floods, storms and accidents.

Unit 2

The new president of the International Olympic Committee

The International Olympic Committee this week chose a doctor from Belgium as its president. Jacques Rogge will serve at least eight years. He replaced Juan Antonio Samaranch of Spain who served as president for twenty-one years. Doctor Rogge received support from more than half the delegates in a second vote during a meeting in Moscow. He has worked for many years with the International Olympic Committee, known as the I-O-C. He is fifty-nine years old. Kim Un-yong of South Korea placed second in the secret voting for president of the committee. Other candidates were Dick Pound of Canada, Pal Schmitt of Hungary and Anita DeFrantz of the United States. Last week, the I-O-C chose Beijing, China, to hold the summer Olympic Games of Two-Thousand-Eight. Doctor Rogge will be the chief advisor to Beijing officials as they prepare for Olympic events. The city received more than two times as many votes as Toronto, Canada, its closest opponent. Paris, France, Istanbul, Turkey, and Osaka, Japan also were competing to hold the Olympic Games in Two-Thousand-Eight. Committee delegates said they hope the Chinese government will become more open as it prepares for the games. The delegates said they also hoped China's human-rights and environmental policies will improve. China plans to begin its most important building project for the Olympics since the Great Wall was built. It has also announced plans for a costly program to reduce pollution. Observers called the election of Doctor Rogge a move to reform the worldwide sports organization. The new president says he will place great importance on preventing Olympic competitors from using banned drugs. Experts say his long record of honesty may help the Olympics recover from charges of illegal actions. The

accusations are linked to the winter games of Two-Thousand-Two. Ten Olympic Committee members reportedly accepted gifts and large amounts of money to choose Salt Lake City, Utah, to hold the events. The American government charged five people in connection with these gifts. Earlier this week, a federal judge dismissed four of fifteen charges against two men who led Salt Lake City's campaign to get the Olympics. The judge also postponed their trial. The new president of the International Olympic Committee has been active in the Olympics since he was a young man. Jacques Rogge is a champion sailor who competed in three Olympic sailing events, the last in Nineteen-Seventy-Six. He has been a member of the International Olympic Committee for ten years. Doctor Rogge had a major responsibility for plans for the Two-Thousand Olympics in Sydney, Australia. Those games were highly successful.

Unit 3

European Union and China trade agreements

Earlier this week, the European Union and China agreed on some important trade issues. China reached a similar agreement with the United States last week. These agreements have cleared the way for China to join the World Trade Organization. The process of admitting China is expected to begin at a WTO meeting Thursday in Geneva. One-hundred-forty-one nations are WTO members now. These countries are responsible for more than ninety percent of the world's trade. The main goal of the WTO is to keep world trade flowing as smoothly and freely as possible. The World Trade Organization was established in Nineteen-Ninety-Five. It developed out of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade or GATT. GATT was created in

Nineteen-Forty-Eight after the end of World War Two. It led to a series of international trade negotiations which established a world trading system. The WTO supervises and makes improvements to that system. The WTO organizes trade negotiations and settles trade disputes. It supervises trade agreements reached by member nations. It also provides developing countries with technical assistance and training programs in trade issues. And, it cooperates with other international organizations. The top decision-making group of the WTO is the Ministerial Conference. It meets at least once every two years in different cities around the world. WTO members reach agreements by debate and compromise. WTO agreements then go to the governments of each country for approval or rejection. At first the trade agreements among the countries dealt mainly with goods. GATT was designed to lower import taxes and remove other barriers to trade in goods. However, WTO members later agreed on trade rules for the service industry. This industry includes banks, communications companies, hotels and transport businesses. The WTO also supervises an agreement on what is called intellectual property. That agreement provides rules to protect trade and investment in ideas and creative activities. The WTO says its agreements permit buyers and producers more choices in the materials and services that they use. The organization also says exporters can feel secure about the openness of foreign markets. The WTO says the result is a world economy that is stronger and more cooperative. However, not everyone approves of the work of World Trade Organization. In the last few years, there have been major demonstrations at meetings of the WTO, World Bank and other similar organizations. Some of the protests have been violent. The protestors oppose opening world markets to increased trade. They say the WTO and its allies are making industrial nations rich by keeping developing nations poor.

In Love Forever

*There's an angel crying up in Heaven tonight,
And I've got the Devil in my heart,
Because I keep on saying things that I don't mean,
And it's tearing us apart;
There's a wild wind blowing in the desert tonight,
Oh how I long to feel the rain,
And let it wash away these lonely tears,
And bring us back again,
'Cos it's a different world when I look into your eyes,
You're the nearest thing that I have seen to Paradise,
And I know with you I will be in love forever;
There's a stranger waiting deep in every heart,
To say the crazy things we say,
But I promise you he won't be back,
To steal your dreams away;
So come up close and put your sweet hand in mine,
I'm going to hold you all night long,
And if you wake up I will be here,
To tell you that I love you;
'Cos it's a different world when I look into your eyes,
You're the nearest thing that I have seen to Paradise,
And I know with you I will be in love forever;
Yes, it's a different world when I look into your eyes,
You're the nearest thing that I have seen to Paradise,
And I know with you I will be in love forever,
Yes I know with you I will be in love forever,
In love forever.*

PART II

Audio Files

(Special English, texts with missing words)

Listen attentively to the following texts on your CD, then try to guess the missing words. (An answer key is also at the end of the book.)

Unit 4

Iran Rejects appeal to stop enriching uranium.

Iran has rejected an appeal from the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency to suspend its uranium enrichment activities. (1)..... nuclear agency chief Mohamed Elbaradei met Thursday in Tehran with Iranian (2)..... Mister Elbaradei said Iran repeated its promise to answer questions about issues involving its nuclear program. He also said he could not confirm Iran's claim that it has enriched uranium to a level used in nuclear power centers. Mister Elbaradei said the only way to solve the issue is through (3)..... And he said there is enough time to negotiate a settlement. Earlier this week Iran announced that it can now enrich uranium to the level used in nuclear power centers. That would raise the possibility of making nuclear weapons. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that international pressure would not (4)..... his nation. Mister Ahmadinejad said that from now on, the world would have to deal with Iran as a nuclear power. Iranian officials say they plan to make fuel for a one thousand megawatt nuclear reactor. The officials say they plan to greatly increase the number of centrifuge (5)..... needed for the

process. They said they plan to expand the program to make three thousand centrifuges by the end of the year. They said they are currently using one hundred sixty four centrifuges. Iranian officials have said their nuclear activities are peaceful. But the United States and European nations believe the Iranians are operating a secret nuclear (6)..... program. In Washington, secretary of state Condoleezza Rice criticized Iran. Ms Rice said the nation could face increasing international punishment if it does not stop its nuclear work. A high level state department official, Nicholas Burns, spoke to a VOA reporter. Mister Burns said a large international coalition, including the United States, Russia, China and Europe, does not want Iran to develop nuclear weapons. He said these countries believe Iran has not told the truth about its secret nuclear weapons research program. Russia says it will hold more talks next week on the situation. (7)..... from the United States, the European Union and China are to attend the meeting Tuesday in Moscow. On Friday, a Chinese diplomat began a visit to Iran and Russia to discuss the issue. The United Nations (8)..... meets later this month to consider punishing Iran for its nuclear program. The Council had told Iran to stop all uranium enrichment activities before the end of this month. The Council will wait to hear from Mister Elbaradei before deciding on its next step. Mister Elbaradei reports to the Security Council on April twenty-eighth.

Unit 5

The completion of repairs to the Leaning Tower of Pisa

Engineers are celebrating the completion of repairs to the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Italian officials closed the Leaning Tower for (1)..... reasons eleven years ago. Experts now say the repairs will make the building safe for at least a few more (2)..... The Leaning Tower is famous around the world. Many visitors to Italy travel to the city of Pisa to see the unusual-looking structure. The round tower is more than eight-hundred years old. The Leaning Tower of Pisa is easy to (3)..... The white stone building is sinking, or leaning, on one side. The tower is about fifty-five meters high. Its south side is much lower than its north side. The Leaning Tower is leaning because it was built on (4)..... The soil cannot support its weight. The tower weighs about fourteen-thousand-five-hundred metric tons. The ground under the tower first started to sink soon after workers began building the structure in the year Eleven-Seventy-Three. In recent years, the Leaning Tower has continued to sink. Experts expressed concern that the tower might suddenly fall. In Nineteen-Eighty-Nine, a similar tower in the Italian city of Pavia fell. Four people were killed. The following year, Italian officials closed the Leaning Tower of Pisa. People were no longer (5)..... to walk up to the top. An international team of building experts began a project to make sure the Leaning Tower does not fall down. The project cost about twenty-five-million dollars. First, engineers placed eight-hundred-seventy metric tons of (6)..... on the north side of the tower. This helped stop additional movement. Also, workers tied strong steel cables around the structure. These wires were connected to large weights in the area. Next, engineers slowly removed tons of soil from under the tower. They used special

(7)..... to remove small amounts of soil over several months. Slowly the tower moved back to where it stood hundreds of years ago. It still (8)....., but not as much as before the repairs. Last month, the area around the Leaning Tower opened to the (9)..... However, visitors will have to wait until November before they are permitted to climb to the top. Italian officials say only about thirty visitors will be permitted to climb the tower at one time.

Unit 6

Population of the world may stop growing.

A new study has found that the population of the world may stop growing sooner than expected. The (1)..... now is more than six-thousand-million people. The new study (2)..... that the population could increase to about nine-thousand-million people during the next seventy years. The study also found there is an eighty-five percent chance that the world population will stop (3).....by the next century. It estimates the population could drop to eight-thousand-four-hundred-million by the year twenty one hundred. Researchers say the main reason is a decrease in (4)..... around the world. Nature magazine reported the findings. Research analysts with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Luxemburg, Austria organized the study. The researchers say they developed a computer program that produced the population estimates. They say they used the latest information about birth and death (5)....., and the movement of people from one area to another. The new study found that most of the population growth this (6).....will be in developing countries.