

## LISTENING AS AN ETHICAL PRACTICE: ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON ATTENTIVE LEARNING

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**Abstract:** *In second and foreign language instruction, listening is typically viewed as a receptive skill whose main purpose is to facilitate the growth of productive skills, especially speaking. Listening is marginalized in instructional practice and assessment because it is frequently reduced to a technical process of decoding language input and responding to comprehension questions within this prevailing framework. However, the intricate cognitive, affective, social, and ethical aspects of listening as an active human behavior are not taken into consideration by such an instrumental viewpoint. From an ethical and educational perspective, listening serves as a fundamental practice that significantly influences communication competence, oral engagement, and the caliber of spoken expression rather than only serving as a preliminary skill. This essay explores listening's function in improving speaking abilities in language learning environments and rethinks it as an ethical activity based on Islamic educational philosophy. The study places listening beyond surface-level comprehension toward deeper moral, cognitive, and affective engagement by drawing on fundamental Islamic ethical concepts like *adab al-istima'* (the ethics of listening), *khushu'* (attentive humility and presence), *ikhlas* (sincerity of intention), and *amanah* (responsibility and trust in communication). According to this theory, listening is a deliberate, morally charged act that necessitates respect for the speaker, focused attention to meaning, receptivity to understanding, and moral responsibility in speaking in response. In terms of methodology, the study uses a qualitative descriptive research approach that is bolstered by semi-structured interviews, reflective learner journals, and classroom observations from an English-speaking course at an Islamic university. With this method, students' life experiences, listening habits, ethical consciousness, and perceptions of how listening affects their speaking development can all be thoroughly examined. The analysis focuses on how ethically oriented listening practices influence patterns of attentiveness, interactional behavior, emotional engagement, and oral performance. The results show that learners significantly improve in several aspects of speaking ability when listening is clearly defined and practiced as an ethical duty rather than a passive receptive activity. These include improved pragmatic appropriateness, more coherence in spoken conversation, improved pronunciation and lexical choice, higher fluency, and crisper articulation. Additionally, affective effects like greater self-assurance, less speaking anxiety, and a greater sense of communicative duty are all facilitated by ethically grounded listening. Interpersonally, these methods create a classroom atmosphere that is marked by respect for one another, empathy, orderly turn-taking, and meaningful conversation. By providing a value-based reconceptualization of listening that incorporates Islamic ethical principles with communicative language instruction, the study advances the field of language education. It emphasizes listening as a moral, educational, and transforming activity that fosters ethical communication and character development in addition to improving speaking ability. This study presents a different paradigm for comprehending the development of oral skills and practical consequences for language pedagogy, especially in*

*Islamic and values-oriented educational contexts, by emphasizing the ethical aspects of listening.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking abilities, Islamic education, attentive learning, ethical listening, and language instruction*

## Introduction

As the main means of receiving, processing, and internalizing linguistic input, listening plays a crucial role in human communication and language learning. By exposing students to phonological patterns, lexical items, grammatical structures, and pragmatic norms, listening precedes and shapes speaking ability in both first and second language development. Despite its fundamental significance, listening has often been viewed as a passive or secondary ability in second-language instruction, regarded primarily for its position as a prelude to speaking rather than as an autonomous and transformational practice.

The many cognitive, social, and ethical aspects of listening are overlooked by this reductionist interpretation of it as only auditory receipt. Effective listening needs active mental involvement, interpretative effort, and contextual awareness, according to recent applied linguistics research. In addition to decoding sounds, learners must also create meaning, assess purpose, and react correctly. Therefore, listening is an active process that develops communication efficacy and interactional competence. However, the moral and ethical ramifications of listening are still not well understood, even within current cognitive theories.

From an Islamic standpoint, listening goes beyond technical understanding and into the domain of ethical obligation. Human abilities like hearing, sight, and speech are seen by Islamic epistemology as entrusted talents (*amanah*) for which people are responsible. Thus, listening (*sam'*) is a deliberate activity including intention (*niyyah*), contemplation (*tafakkur*), and ethical discernment rather than a neutral or automated act. According to this concept, hearing becomes a formative act that affects not just what is understood but also how one reacts, communicates, and engages with others.

The Qur'an regularly pairs the ability to hear with intelligence and moral consciousness, emphasizing the interdependence of listening, understanding, and guiding. While selective or inattentive listening is linked to miscommunication and unethical behavior, listening is portrayed as a route to wisdom and knowledge. According to this conception, communication is the result of careful listening and introspection rather than a stand-alone ability. Speaking without listening is frequently condemned in Islamic teachings because it might result in misunderstandings, unfair treatment, or injury.

These ideas have significant effects on language instruction and learning in educational settings. The improvement of speaking abilities cannot be restricted to performance-based evaluations or repeated oral exercises if listening is viewed as an ethical practice. Rather, pedagogical settings that promote patience, attentiveness, respect for others' voices, and thoughtful responding should foster speaking proficiency. Students who get ethical listening instruction are more likely to participate in meaningful conversations, show context awareness, and deliver appropriate and accurate speech.

Effective oral communication also requires a learning environment based on mutual respect and trust, which is fostered by ethical listening. Pupils are more inclined to engage in speaking exercises, take linguistic chances, and boldly voice their opinions when they feel heard and appreciated. This is consistent with Islamic educational philosophy, which places equal emphasis on academic growth and character development (*akhlaq*). Therefore, speaking abilities are reflections of learners' moral and communicative attitudes rather than just linguistic results.

Islamic viewpoints on hearing have not gotten much attention in the field of language education, especially when it comes to speaking skill development, despite the significance of these findings. Studies that have already been conducted frequently concentrate on the technical aspects of listening comprehension or the broad integration of Islamic principles, without looking at the specific ways that ethical listening practices can influence oral ability. This disparity emphasizes the need for a more comprehensive educational approach that combines communicative proficiency and spiritual ideals.

In order to improve speaking abilities in second-language learners, this study explores how Islamic ethical viewpoints on listening might inform and enhance instructional techniques. It makes the case that including ethical listening into language training improves students' communicative qualities, such as empathy, accountability, and respect in social situations, in addition to their linguistic performance, such as fluency, correctness, and coherence. This work aims to support a more comprehensive and morally sound approach to language instruction by redefining listening as a pedagogical and moral practice.

## Literature Review

### Listening in Language Learning

Since listening gives students the linguistic input required to develop speaking and other useful skills, it has long been acknowledged as a fundamental ability in language acquisition. Theoretical stances like input-based and interactionist models stress that learning vocabulary, grammatical structures, phonological patterns, and discourse conventions requires exposure to understandable and meaningful spoken language.

Applied linguistics research shows that listening promotes speaking development in a variety of ways. First, listening helps students become familiar with proper pronunciation, emphasis, intonation, and rhythm—all of which are necessary for speech that is understandable. Second, it introduces students to formulaic expressions, collocations, and lexical patterns that improve fluency. Third, listening enables students to use language effectively in a variety of communicative contexts by helping them comprehend pragmatic rules and discourse structuring.

Active listening techniques have been demonstrated to enhance students' oral performance and interactional competency. These techniques include anticipating information, drawing conclusions, keeping an eye on comprehension, and responding thoughtfully. Coherent, pertinent, and contextually appropriate speech is more likely to be produced by learners who actively interact with spoken input.

Nonetheless, a large portion of the literature now in publication views listening mainly as a cognitive activity that is concerned with accuracy in comprehension and the application of strategies. Although these methods are useful, they frequently overlook the ethical, emotive, and interpersonal aspects of listening, especially in face-to-face communication situations when meaning is jointly created.

#### 1. Listening's Ethical Aspects

Respect for speakers, receptivity to meaning, patience in interpretation, and accountability in response are all components of ethical listening from an educational standpoint. In order to listen ethically, students must pay close attention, put aside their preconceived notions, and actively participate in the speaker's message. It acknowledges listening as a relational act that influences communication and comprehension.

Academics contend that ethical listening is essential to dialogic learning because it fosters thoughtful speech, cooperative knowledge production, and mutual comprehension. When it comes to speaking development, students who listen morally are better equipped to produce communication that is pertinent, cohesive, and context-sensitive. Additionally, they are more

likely to answer appropriately, obey turn-taking conventions, and modify their discourse to suit the demands of their interlocutors.

Despite its significance, ethical listening is still not well studied in language instruction, especially when it comes to cultural and religious frameworks that place a strong emphasis on moral duty in communication.

## 2. Islamic Views on Learning and Listening

According to Islamic educational theory, listening is both a moral duty and the main route to knowledge ('ilm). Listening is framed as an act of ethical participation rather than passive receiving by concepts like *adab* (right conduct), *khushu'* (attentive humility), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *amanah* (trust and responsibility). Knowledge cannot be obtained without disciplined listening, patience, and respect for the teacher and other students, according to traditional Islamic scholars.

The idea that listening has ethical ramifications is reinforced by the Qur'an's frequent emphasis on hearing alongside comprehension and moral responsibility. Speech is seen as a trust that ought to be used carefully, wisely, and honestly. Therefore, in Islamic theology, speaking and listening ethics are inextricably linked.

Relatively little empirical study has looked at how Islamic concepts on listening might be incorporated into contemporary language courses, despite this rich ethical and pedagogical history. By investigating how Islamic ethical listening principles can improve speaking abilities in an English language learning setting, this study aims to close this gap.

## Method

### Design of Research

In order to investigate how morally grounded listening habits affect speaking development, this study used a qualitative descriptive research approach. This method was selected to record students' perceptions, experiences, and visible behaviors in a real-world classroom setting.

### Participants and Situation

Undergraduate students enrolled in English-speaking courses at an Islamic university made up the participants. The training emphasized both language proficiency and character development while integrating Islamic ethical beliefs with communicative language instruction.

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### Data Gathering

Several qualitative tools were used to get the data:

Observations in the classroom with an emphasis on speaking performance, interaction patterns, and listening habits

Students kept reflective notebooks in which they recorded their listening habits, difficulties, and perceived effects on speaking.

Semi-structured interviews with chosen individuals to investigate communication experiences and ethical consciousness

### Analysis of Data

Inductive coding was used to analyze the data thematically. The framework of Islamic ethics and language pedagogy was used to identify and interpret themes pertaining to attentiveness, ethical responsibility, learner confidence, and speaking development.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Ethical Attentiveness via Listening**

The results show that pupils showed greater levels of focus, respect, and involvement when listening was presented as an ethical duty rather than a mechanical activity. Students reduced interruptions, listened more intently, and deliberately tried to fully comprehend the message before answering. This ethical focus promoted a more encouraging and courteous speaking environment and enhanced classroom interaction.

### **Effect on Speaking Ability**

Students' verbal coherence, clarity, and fluency all significantly improved after practicing attentive listening. Focused listening improved pronunciation, vocabulary choice, and grammatical accuracy by exposing listeners to accurate language input. Additionally, ethical listening promoted contemplative and insightful answers, which led to more meaningful and contextually appropriate communication.

### **Confidence and Affective Factors**

Mutual respect, trust, and psychological safety were all present in the classroom thanks to ethically focused listening techniques. Because they felt acknowledged and appreciated, students reported feeling more confident when speaking. This conclusion is consistent with Islamic values that stress polite speech as a social and moral obligation.

### **Combining Language Pedagogy with Islamic Values**

The findings show that teaching communicative languages can successfully incorporate Islamic ethical ideas. Listening becomes a transforming tool that promotes linguistic proficiency, interpersonal sensitivity, and character development when it is taught as both a moral practice and a language skill.

## **Conclusion**

This study shows that listening is essential to enhancing speaking abilities when viewed as an ethical activity influenced by Islamic viewpoints. Linguistic accuracy, fluency, confidence, and overall communicative efficacy are all improved by ethically grounded attentive listening. Teachers can promote comprehensive language development that incorporates cognitive, social, and moral aspects by rethinking listening as more than just a passive receptive ability.

In order to promote sustainable, meaningful, and responsible speaking development, the study suggests integrating ethical listening principles into language curriculum, especially in Islamic educational contexts. Future studies might investigate this strategy in various cultural contexts or use quantitative techniques to look more closely at its educational effects.

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