

Eugenia N. Abiodun-Eniayekan & Maryam Tar. «Effective Listening», *Communication in English: A Course Text for General Studies*, Covenant University Press - In Press

INTRODUCTION

The art of listening is more complex than meets the eye. The process of listening involves more than just receiving messages. Listening is not only hearing but a process of receiving, interpreting and reacting to the messages received from the communication sender. **Effective listening** is an art of communication, which is often taken for granted and ignored. Like any other art, listening requires to be cultivated consciously and carefully. Poor listening can become a barrier to communication, because listening is fundamental to all communication. Listening requires conscious effort of interpreting the sounds, grasping the meanings of the words and reacting to the message. Interpreting the sound signals is a cognitive act, which depends on the listener's knowledge of the code signals and on its attitude towards the communication sender. The active **listening process** begins when the listener pays attention to some audible sound signals, and permits himself to interpret those sounds cognitively. It is a conscious process. Every human being possesses the ability to select from the sounds around him. But the selective listening is not an automatic process like that of hearing. An individual may hear many sounds but he may listen to none of them.

No matter one's age, background, or experience, effective communication is a skill one can learn. The greatest leaders of all time are also fantastic communicators and orators. With a little self-confidence and knowledge of the basics, one is able to get his point across effectively.