

## EU write the script!

Youth reporting on Europe

### Listeners attention: how to reach it?

**Selective attention** is the process of focusing on a particular object in the environment for a certain period of time: as attention is a limited resource, selective attention allows us to tune out unimportant details and focus on what really matters.

### How does it work?

Human beings are almost always being bombarded with images, sounds, and experiences through much of their daily lives, it is impossible for our brains to adequately process and make sense of every bit of these things.

Instead, brain tend decide which of the sensory experiences you feel will be processed and what will be left out.

(experiments on auditory attention are those performed by psychologist Colin Cherry) Cherry investigated how people are able to track certain conversations while tuning others out, a phenomenon he referred to as the "cocktail party" effect

If the content (while switching for example from male to female) is swapped with a 400-Hz tone, the participants always notices the change.

### Keep the attention high: how it works!

A conversation has peaks and valleys in inflection, speed, and emphasis. Often, a broadcast voice sounds flat, especially when you are reading from a script.

The opposite extreme is a vocal delivery with a repetitive punch, which sounds sing-songy because the pitch goes up and down at the same rate in each sentence.

### How To Talk On The Radio?

**1) Keep it short.** Some people have a tendency to ramble when they get on the air and they end up giving really long answers. Short answers are almost always better. Make your point and stop.

**2) Slow it down.** Most people who haven't been on the air a lot tend to talk way too fast. Slow it down, take a little more time when you speak, and enunciate.

**3) Vary your tone.** It doesn't matter what you say if you can't say it in a way that interests people. Vary your tone, toss in some pauses, speed up a bit, and slow down.

**4) Preparation is 90% of the game.** Having some basic idea of what you want to say can improve your performance tremendously.

**6) From the stomach, not the throat.** Try to bring your voice all the way up from your stomach, through your chest instead of speaking from your throat. It'll give your voice a deeper, heartier timbre that sounds better on the air.

**7) Don't be hypercritical and overreact to small mistakes.**

**8) Record it, listen to it and then fix it.** Record your appearances, listen to them, pick out specific things you're doing wrong and then correct it.

**5) Be Yourself.** Be conversational, be authentic and smile at the mic.

**PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!** The more radio you do, the more practice you get, the better you'll perform if you keep working at it.

## PART 1:

**TONGUE TWISTERS** (sentence or series of words that is hard to say) are a fun way to work on one or two sounds at a time to get the pronunciation just right. Start by saying the tongue twister slowly, then try to speed up. A great way to practice and improve pronunciation and fluency. They also help to improve accents by using alliteration, which is the repetition of one sound. Below, some of the most popular English tongue twisters.

Tongue twisters	Sounds/words emphasized	Difficulty (for a native speaker)
How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?	wood & chuck (means: throw)	Easy
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. How many pickled peppers did Peter Piper pick?	p	Easy
Can you can a can as a canner can can a can?	can	Easy
Frivolously fanciful Fannie fried fresh fish furiously	f	Easy
To begin to toboggan first buy a toboggan, but don't buy too big a toboggan. Too big a toboggan is too big a toboggan to buy to begin to toboggan.	b & t	Easy
She saw Sharif's shoes on the sofa. But was she so sure those were Sharif's shoes she saw?	s & sh	Easy
Give papa a cup of proper coffe in a copper coffe cup.	c & p	Medium
Black background, brown background	b	Medium
Seventy-seven benevolent elephants	l & v	Medium

The chic Sikh's sixty-sixth sheep is sick	s & k	Medium
A loyal warrior will rarely worry why we rule.	l & r	Medium
A pessemistic pest exists amidst us.	s & st	Medium
Drew Dodd's dad's dog's dead.	d	Medium
Which witch switched the Swiss wristwatches?	w, s & ch	Hard

## PART 2:

**RADIO SCRIPT** (practice samples) Each script is written for one or two presenters to read out. It might help to think of a news script like the lines of a play. The structure is the following: PRESENTER: at the beginning; then the point at which a sound clip is played, and the presenter stops reading, is marked by **Audio insert NAME**; the words at the beginning (**IN WORDS**) and end of each clip (**OUT WORDS**) and the length in minutes and seconds (**DURATION**) of the clip are shown so the presenter knows when to start reading again.

A) Tony Blair has said remarkable progress is being made in Afghanistan - and Britain is committed to supporting the country. He was talking after meeting the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, in the capital, Kabul. Mr Blair said the people of Afghanistan deserved to live in a proper democratic state.

Audio insert NAME: AFGHAN BLAIR  
IN WORDS: Our commitment...  
OUT WORDS: ...challenges with you.  
DURATION: 0'11"

The Iraqi government has rejected claims from an international human rights group that the trial of Saddam Hussein was unfair. Human Rights Watch said, among other things, key evidence hadn't been disclosed to the defence in advance.

Dozens of Palestinians have converged on a house which they believe is under threat from Israeli warplanes. This is the second time in recent days civilians have been urged to act as human shields at the homes of militants in Gaza. On Saturday, Israel called off a planned air strike.

The American technical stock exchange, Nasdaq, has launched a takeover bid for the London Stock Exchange. Nasdaq is trying to challenge the dominance of its main rival, the New York Stock Exchange.

Health unions have criticised proposals for NHS hospitals to be able to advertise for patients. The Department of Health has warned trusts not to spend too much on marketing their services. Doctor Laurence Buckman, from the British Medical Association, rejected the idea.

Audio insert NAME: NHS BUCKMAN  
IN WORDS: Patients want...  
OUT WORDS: ...care for patients.  
DURATION: 0'09"

Environmental protesters are blockading a big Shell petrol station in Birmingham. They say they're angry that the impact of the oil giant's work on the environment - and also the way they believe it treats people in third world countries.

B) Tony Blair has said remarkable progress is being made in Afghanistan - and Britain is committed to supporting the country. He was talking after meeting the Afghan President, Hamid Karzai, in the capital, Kabul. At a news conference, Mr Blair said the people of Afghanistan deserved to live in a proper democratic state. He gave this pledge:

Audio insert NAME: AFGHAN BLAIR

IN WORDS: I want to

OUT WORDS: with you

DURATION: 0'23"

A former Russian security agent remains in a serious condition in hospital in London, where he's being treated, under police guard, for the effects of poisoning. Alexander Litvinenko, an outspoken critic of President Putin, was taken ill after meeting a contact at a sushi bar. The Sunday Times reporter, David Leppard, told Five Live Mr Litvinenko was keen to tell his story even though he was seriously ill.

Audio insert NAME: RUSSIA LEPPARD ACT

IN WORDS: I was told....

OUT WORDS: .....my interview with him.

DURATION: 0'20"

A police officer who was seriously injured when his patrol car overturned in Leeds on Saturday morning has died. The 36 year old officer was responding to a call when the accident happened. Dozens of Palestinians have converged on a house which they believe is under threat from Israeli warplanes. This is the second time in recent days civilians have been urged to act as human shields at the homes of militants in Gaza. From the town of Beit Lahiya, here's Alan Johnston.

Audio insert NAME: GAZA JOHNSTON

IN WORDS: The owner...

OUT WORDS: ...Saturday night.

DURATION: 0'35"

Rescue teams searching for two ice climbers missing in the Cairngorms overnight say they may have been caught in an avalanche. The pair, both from the Aberdeen area, had been climbing in the Coire an t Sneachda (PRON: CORRY AN SNECHDA) area yesterday. The alarm was raised when they failed to turn up at a meeting point.

Environmental protesters are blockading one of the main Shell petrol stations in Birmingham. They say they're angry that the impact of the oil giant's work on the environment - and also the way it treats people in third world countries.

C) A former Russian secret agent's critically ill after claims he was poisoned. An ex-Russian spy's under police guard in hospital after claims his government's tried to kill him in a London restaurant. It's thought Alexander Litvinenko's was poisoned with a chemical called thalium. He'd met a contact to try and expose who murdered a reporter who'd heavily criticised the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Alexander Goldfarb's his friend.

GOTO AUDIO NAME: r1 mon Russian Spy Goldfarb

OUT WORDS: can hardly talk

DURATION:0'11"

Tony Blair's thanked British troops in Afghanistan for the courage they've shown fighting the Taliban. He spent an hour and a half talking to soldiers at the main British camp in Helmand province. The government's putting more money into a pupil mentoring scheme in schools to try to stop bullying. It comes as a new report says 20-thousand children are skipping classes every day because of bullying...

GOTO AUDIO NAME: 0800 bullying

OUT WORDS: their responsibility to

DURATION:0'09"

Mountain rescue teams are searching for two ice climbers who've gone missing in the Cairngorms. It's thought may have been caught in an avalanche. Michael Mulford's from RAF Kinloss...

GOTO AUDIO NAME: 1030 climbers

OUT WORDS: sudden unanticipated avalanches

DURATION:0'07"

Blackburn and Spurs both ended up with ten men in a 1 all draw at Ewood Park. Red cards for Tugay (too-guy) and Hossam Ghaly and Martin Jol got in to an argument with the ref.

And more problems for Hearts in the SPL - after a 1-0 defeat at home to Rangers there was a fans protest calling for captain Steven Press-ly to be recalled and owner Vladimir Romanov to go.

## TIPS:

**1) SPEAK CLEARLY AND SLOWLY.** Enunciate your words, pause between sentences, and try to think before speaking.

**2) LISTEN TO YOURSELF AND ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.** Try to pitch your voice (9 times out of 10, when you hear someone speaking, they've pitched their voice lower than it actually is. When you listen to yourself on the radio you can also learn what filler words you tend to use most frequently, or if you have any bad speaking habits. Once you identify them, you'll be that much closer to changing those habits!

**3) CREATE A SCRIPT FOR YOURSELF.** You might do better with bullet points or just speaking off the top of your head, but if you struggle with that sort of thing, a script might be the way to go.

**4) PERSONALITY WITHOUT PERSONALIZING.** One of the two questions you have to ask yourself when expressing your personality on the radio is, "Who cares?" ( the listener cares or he would not be listening.

**5) ALWAYS PRE READ THE SCRIPT.** Do the speeches you're not as if you're reading it.

**6) NEVER BE RACIST, SEXIST OR XENOFOBIC.** It's always worth noting as a presenter you should be courteous and polite to make your audience feel welcome.