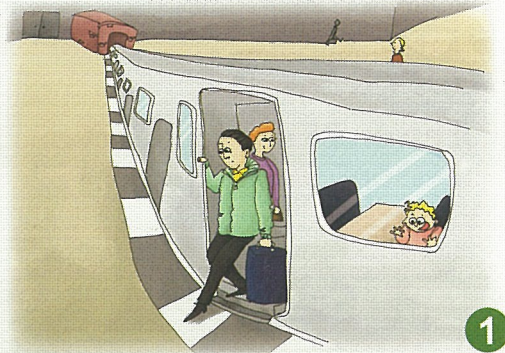


LESSON 49

Listening and Understanding

Listen to the recording, and then answer this question: Why does the writer not understand the porter?

I arrived in London at last. The railway station was big, black and dark.



I did not know the way to my hotel, so I asked a porter. I not only spoke English very carefully, but
5 very clearly as well. The porter, however, could not understand me. I repeated my question several times, and at last he understood.



He answered me, but he spoke neither slowly nor clearly. 'I am a foreigner,' I said. Then he
10 spoke slowly, but I could not understand him. My teacher never spoke English like that!



The porter and I looked at each other and smiled. Then he said something, and I understood it. 'You'll soon learn English!' he
15 said. I wonder. In England, each person speaks a different language. The English understand each other, but I don't understand *them*! Do they speak English?



Guided Conversation

1 Answer questions about the text.

Example: Did you arrive in London or Portsmouth? London.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1 What was the railway station like? | 7 Did you repeat your question? |
| 2 Did you know your way to your hotel? | 8 Did he answer you? |
| 3 Did you ask a porter the way? | 9 Did he speak quickly at first? |
| 4 What language did you speak to him in? | 10 What did you tell him? |
| 5 How did you speak? | 11 Why couldn't you understand him? |
| 6 Could the porter understand you? | 12 What did you and the porter do then? |

2 Ask questions about the text.

Example: It took me a long time to reach London. (How long?)

i) Did it take you a long time to reach London?

ii) How long did it take you to reach London?

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 I arrived by train. (How?) (Who?) | 6 I repeated my questions several times.
(How many times?) (What?) |
| 2 The railway station was big, black and dark.
(What?) (What like?) | 7 He understood at last. (When?) |
| 3 I spoke to a porter. (Who?) (Why?) (When?) | 8 He spoke to me very quickly. (How?) |
| 4 I asked him the way to my hotel. (What?) | 9 We looked at each other. (Who?) |
| 5 I spoke very carefully. (How?) | 10 We smiled. (What ... do?) |

3 Tell the story, using these key words.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 arrived — London — at last | 6 told him — I — foreigner |
| 2 didn't know — asked — porter | 7 Then — slowly — not understand |
| 3 not only — carefully — clearly | 8 teacher never — like that |
| 4 porter couldn't — and so — repeated | 9 soon learn — porter said |
| 5 answered — but — neither — nor | 10 English — each other — but I |

4 Guided summary. Write a complete sentence in answer to each question, to make a paragraph of not more than 70 words.

- Did you arrive at a railway station in London or not? Did you ask a porter the way to your hotel or not? Could he understand you or not? (*and ... but*)
- Did he understand you at last or not? Could you understand his answer? (*but*)
- Did your teacher ever speak English like that or not?
- What did the porter say to you?
- Does each person speak a different language in England or not?
- Do they understand each other or not? Do you understand them? (*but*)

5 Talk about you.

- Imagine: You are at the bus stop outside your school, and a foreign visitor asks you for directions to a bank or a cash machine. Can you help him?
- Have you ever visited a different part of China, where the local language sounds 'foreign' to you? If so, what was it like? What happened?
- Do you speak the same language, at school or among friends, as your parents or grandparents speak at home? If not, what kinds of differences are there, and why?
- 'Many Chinese people speak two or three dialects from an early age.' Explain to a foreign visitor about the different Chinese dialects that are spoken—sometimes in one family—in this country.