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# **The Effectiveness of Using Reciprocal Teaching Strategies for Developing Secondary Students' Listening Comprehension Skills.**

A Thesis Submitted to Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master Degree in Curricula & English Teaching Methods

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## **Abstract**

### **The Effectiveness of Using Reciprocal Teaching Strategies for Developing Secondary Students' Listening Comprehension Skills.**

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This study aimed at investigating the effect of using reciprocal teaching strategies for developing secondary students' listening comprehension skills. For achieving this aim, the researcher adopted the quasi-experimental method. Participants of the study consisted of (45) in 1<sup>st</sup> year secondary stage female students, (Thanawya Banat secondary school for girls in a Senblawin educational zone). A program based on reciprocal teaching strategies for developing listening comprehension skills was designed. A listening comprehension test was designed to use as a pre / post test for participants. The effect of using reciprocal teaching strategies for developing listening comprehension skills was measured by using the effect size technique (Eta square). Results proved that there were statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre /post test in the overall and each listening comprehension sub skill in favor of the post/test scores. There was statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group related to reciprocal teaching strategy training in the pre-test and the posttest in overall listening in favor of the post-test. There were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group related to reciprocal teaching strategy program in the pre-test and the post -test in each listening sub-skill in favor of the post-test. In the light of those findings, the researcher suggested some recommendations that can help syllabus designers, supervisors and English language teachers in developing teaching listening comprehension skills.

**keywords:** reciprocal teaching- listening comprehension skills.

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# **Chapter one**

## **Background and Problem**

# Chapter One

## Background and Problem

### Introduction

Listening comprehension has become more critical and authoritative in our global village as a result of advanced engineering sciences. Many scholars emphasized the importance of listening comprehension in today's communication. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000:P25) said that we listen two times as much language as we speak, four times as much language as we read; five times as much language as we write.

Significance of listening is now shown in second and foreign language research (see, Hassan, 2000; Abo-Ghoneim, 2001; Chen, 2002; Abo Essa, 2004; Radwan, 2010; Hana, 2010; Amin's et al, 2011). These studies assured that listening comprehension has an important role in acquiring and learning a foreign language (Abdel Latif, 2002; Al-Hariree, 2004). Besides, they show several reasons for poor listening comprehension skills in foreign and second language in general and in the secondary stage in particular (Al-Baal y, 2005; Helal, 2006;). The most important features can be concluded as follows:

- learners are poorly equipped with effective listening strategies, skills and activities to help them improve their listening comprehension.
- even though, listening is the most frequently used communication skill, it is also the skill in which persons have had the least training if compared with writing, speaking or reading.
- listening comprehension exercises and activities do not receive adequate time and effort from both teachers and students.

- most of listening materials (like audio tapes and computers, CDs presented in the Ministry of Education (MOE) textbooks) are either not used at all or not used properly in classes, and even when teachers play the tapes and CDs for their students, they replay them over and over because of students' low level of listening, which makes listening comprehension activity meaningless.
- most of not all teacher considers playing audio tapes waste of time and have nonsense.

In our Egyptian secondary stage, listening comprehension has been neglected for some reasons. It may be difficult, and less attractive skill. Teaching English in Egypt concentrates on the skills needed for exams with a little attention for listening. Beare (2004) & Schilling (2002) stated that "listening was rarely taught in school because educators- along with almost everyone else had supposed that listening was learned automatically; it was developed naturally and skill like any other skill needed to be developed".

Attia (2002:25) demonstrated many reasons for neglecting listening comprehension in our Egyptian context as "the importance of listening was not recognized owing to a number of mythical false conceptions about what entails and whether it should be developed. One of these misconceptions is the belief that listening is a passive skill. Other misconceptions are regarding listening as a synonym of hearing and thinking of it as a natural gift that needs no training."

In the past decades, listening comprehension was regarded as an unassertive skill that was learned spontaneously. Now, the concept of listening comprehension has changed from a receptive skill into an interactive one. This current concept of the listening comprehension has

forced second language instructors to reexamine their listening approach and to seek out alternative ways to engage students in the target language. (Greenleaf, 2011:2).

One of the most important teaching methods for teacher's professional success, improving their performance and promoting their motivation, is reciprocal teaching. It may be an effective tool for developing listening comprehension skills for 1<sup>st</sup> year secondary stage students. It was designed and developed during eighties as a set of learning strategies that focus on comprehension monitoring and fostering. Reciprocal teaching is a kind of dialogue between students themselves or teacher and students through using four main strategies questioning, summarizing, predicting, and clarifying. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of a dialogue leader. These strategies can be summarized as:

### **1. Predicting**

Pinnell and Fountas (2011) explain that predicting can help students better understand the text because they must use background knowledge to make predictions.

### **2. Clarifying**

“It enables learners to identify any unfamiliar, unnecessary, or ambiguous information in the text (Yoosabai, 2009).

### **3. Questioning**

Yan (2006) sees that “questioning reinforces the learner one more step in the comprehension activity when students generate questions, they first identify the kind of information that is significant enough to provide the substance for a question. They then pose this information in question form and self-text to ascertain that they can indeed answer their own

question.”(P: 25)

#### **4. Summarizing**

Hashey and Connors (2003:229) state that “summarizing is an effective strategy for comprehension because it requires students to focus on key points, not to restate everything”.

By the same token, the significance of reciprocal teaching approach now appears in the second and foreign language researches as an effective model (see El- Marsafy, 2004; Helmy, 2007; Abdel Hack, 2004; Al-Attar, 2008).

Thus, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching in different language areas is an effective strategy in the following points:

- (1) it encourages students to participate effectively, to engage in role-play and to assume responsibility for their learning.
- (2) it can be an effective procedure in the secondary stage.
- (3) it helps to develop students' comprehension and their self-confidence in their abilities to improve language skills.
- (4) it helps low-achievers who take part in learning activities to develop their skills and acquire language.

The aim of reciprocal teaching is to direct students' attention to instruction with specific strategies that can apply to different contexts. Palincsar and Brown (1984) cited in Yoosabai (2009:P.8) characterized three main features of reciprocal teaching in the following points:

- a) “Scaffolding and explicit instruction which a teacher uses and, which include guided practice and modeling of comprehension – fostering strategies,

- b) The four main strategies of predicting, generating questions, clarifying and summarizing; and,
- c) Social interaction which provides opportunities for learners to improve their cognitive, metacognitive and effective strategies and offers them chances to share ideas, increase confidence, and learn from their more competent friends.

Greenway (2002) cited in Al-Attar (2008.P:11) concludes the following benefits of reciprocal teaching:

- (1) It can be both comprehension fostering and comprehension monitoring. Both are prerequisites for communication.
- (2) It incorporates cognitive and metacognitive strategies.
- (3) It makes explicit metacognitive strategies by focusing students on the main idea, asking them about their understanding, summarizing information and relating students' prior learning of new information.
- (4) It is easily understood and mastered by teachers and students, the two ends of any communication process.
- (5) It provides a useful vehicle for alternating control of the activity between the teacher and students in a systematic and purposeful manner. Students' participation provides the teacher with rich opportunities to make a significant diagnosis of their strengths and weakness, especially in the process of communication.

### **Context of the Problem**

Based on interviews with teachers at the secondary stage school, the researcher found that they are not keen on teaching listening activities in the classroom. They consider using these audio materials in their classes