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The Effect of Using Some Collaborative work Strategies on Developing the Third year English Department Students'critical Listening Skills

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Abstract

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Abstract: the purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of three strategies based on collaborative work on developing third year English department students' critical listening skills. To achieve this purpose, a quasi experimental design was adopted. Sixty 3rd year English Department students participated in the study which took place in the academic year 2014-2015. They were randomly assigned to three experimental groups. Each group received training through a specific strategy based on collaborative learning. A critical listening skills checklist was designed and a critical listening test was developed and used as a pre-post test. Three proposed strategies (Captions, Imagery, and Multimodal processing) were developed by the researcher to develop these critical listening skills. The three strategies were taught over a period of three months. By the end of the experiment, a post-test was administrated to the three experimental groups to find the effect of the three strategies on developing the participants' critical listening. Quantitative data was collected from the students' scores on the pre/post tests and was analyzed using the convenient statistical techniques. Findings of the study indicated the effectiveness of the three strategies based on collaborative work in developing the participants' critical listening skills. Findings of the study are discussed and recommendations and suggestions for further research are stated.

Key words: critical listening, collaborative learning Captions, Imagery, and Multimodal processing.

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List of abbreviations

Collaborative Work (CW)

Dual Coding Theory (DCT)

Critical listening (CL)

Listening Comprehension (LC)

Critical listening skills checklist (CLSC)

Chapter One

Background and Problem

Listening is one of the most fundamental language skills. It is a medium through which children, young people and adults gain a large portion of their knowledge. It is a means for understanding the world. It is the basis for all human relations. So, it is the art of communication and understanding what the others say and feel.

One of the increasingly globalized EFL trends is directing listening activities towards criticism; Wrench, Goding, Johnson & Attias (2012) defined critical listening as using careful, systematic thinking and reasoning to see whether a message makes sense in light of factual evidence. In critical listening, the learner not only comprehends what is said but also analyzes, evaluates, judges, justifies and draws conclusions.

Research revealed that critical listening has a great importance to both listening in general and second language learning in particular. Abo Essa (2005) indicates that listening as a critical element in language performance of second or foreign language learners, whether they are communicating at school, at work, or in community, enhances language acquisition. At the same time it supports the other language skills and provides the basis for developing them.

In spite of the importance of listening in communicative language learning, it is considered one of the most neglected areas in language teaching; it receives less attention in language teaching

than the other language areas. In this respect Al-Hariree (2004) revealed that listening is taught as a tool for learning other language skills, but not as an instructional objective. Miller (2003) pointed out that listening has been relegated to a secondary position in the English language-teaching classroom. The negligence of listening has continued for a long time, but recently a considerable attention has been given to the role of listening in second/foreign language acquisition. In this respect, Jun (2000) asserts that teachers should start taking tangible measures to reconsider the methodology they can apply in their listening courses, and try to improve their teaching styles of listening. He added they should use some effective and interesting techniques in teaching listening courses, with regard to the needs of students. Collaborative work could present such an effective and interesting environment which activates the learners performance by exchanging ideas and making corrections among them.

It is claimed that Collaborative Work (CW) is one of the best variables for students, because it emphasizes active interaction between students of diverse abilities and backgrounds, and demonstrates more positive students' outcomes in academic achievement, social behavior, and affective development (Gillies, Ashman & Terwel, 2008).

In CW, learners can assume an active role in their learning because it views learners as active constructors of knowledge where learning does not occur without social interaction with more knowledgeable peers. Each student in collaborative work has a role

to perform. This leads to better results since students scaffold each other and share insightful experience (Lantolf and Thorne , 2006). Whereas the individual work does not lead to the same results since students as individuals have the chance to assume complete responsibility.

The interaction that occurs during collaborative group work enhances students' language output while decreasing the amount of the teacher's talk, which confirms that successful language learning does not only require comprehensible input but also comprehensible output (Burdett, 2007; Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 2007; Main, 2010).

Since successful learning environments require the involvement of technology, new trends have been found effective in teaching listening and in improving critical listening skills as well. Technology is one of the influential devices that can enhance language learning. Researchers have indicated that multimedia learning materials are very useful in learning environments (Rose ,2003). Multimedia Technology becomes more accessible to teachers and learners of other languages, and it can be used as a tool to enhance listening(Rose ,2003; Wang, 2005; Danan, 2004; Feng-Hung,2010).

Imagery, Captions (same language subtitling) and Multimodal processing, which are adopted from Dual coding theory, and could be supported by multimedia technology, have also been found as teaching devices that can play an important role in teaching

listening and improving critical listening (Royce, 2002; Matos & Alejandro, 2003; Shahrokni, 2009; Chuang, 2010; Sleem, 2011). These devices help students feel interested, motivated for further learning and more involved in listening activities. They enhance comprehension process and improve critical listening proficiency.

For the importance of the Dual Coding Theory and collaborative work in teaching English in general and teaching listening in particular, the researcher is motivated to develop the English critical listening by activating these strategies in the teaching and learning process. Integrating these two methods, dual coding and collaborative work will have a combined effect on developing the critical listening of English Department Students-teachers, faculty of Education. This makes students more aware of their thinking; as they may be more knowledgeable and motivated to learn better. This idea can be translated into a self-directed learning style where the learner has the capability to participate in getting the information and transferring it through experiences to learning outcomes.

1.1. Context of the problem

Two trends in pedagogy are rising in relevance to higher education. One advocates the use of CW (Vrasidas & Mcisaac, 2001; Lantolf & Thorne 2006; Remedios, Clarke & Hawthorne, 2012), the other advocates the use of new technologies (Wang, 2005; Roblyer, 2006; Rosen, 2006). These pedagogies are often found diverging in opposite directions. Collaborative work focuses on learning with one another and from one another in small groups.