

Promoting EFL Young Learners' Cooperative Listening: A Focus on the Management of Affective-Cognitive Processes in Group Dynamics

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Abstract

EFL young learners have a number of practices that inhibit their effective listening. Some of these practices are: a tremendous drive to be more kinesthetic rather than auditory, having a dominating inner self-talk distracting their attention and getting engaged with many attractions around them which usually results in losing focus. However, EFL current listening instruction erroneously places more emphasis on testing EFL young learners' listening comprehension rather than teaching them how to listen properly. Therefore, EFL young learners need to be made fully aware of the nature of listening as it is the skill with which they construct meaning in any communication process. The interaction between participants represents a kind of cooperation that results in a fuller picture of meaning. Therefore, this study aimed at promoting EFL young learners' cooperative listening and finding out its effect on their listening comprehension, listening behaviors and the management of affective-cognitive processes they practice when listening. The participants of the study were fifty-seven students enrolled in the fifth grade in the first semester of the academic year 2006/2007 at an international school in Riyadh, K.S.A. They belonged to two classes; one of them consisted of 29 students and the other 28. The experimental group (N=29) was instructed to listen cooperatively. The control group (N=28) followed the traditional instruction. The participants of both groups were exposed to the same questions after listening for checking their comprehension. The experiment lasted for twelve weeks and the participants' listening comprehension and behaviors were pre- and post-tested using two Listening Comprehension Tests provided in two

English Language Proficiency Tests, a Listening Behaviors Self-Assessment Checklist and an Affective-Cognitive Processes Management Questionnaire successively. These last two tools were designed by the researcher. Findings showed that the participants of the treatment group outperformed those of the control group in listening comprehension and listening behaviors indicating a significant effect of the program in this regard. The treatment group participants also exhibited more effective management of the affective-cognitive processes they practiced when listening. The study presented some recommendations and topics for further research.