

Developing sustainable communication through an ecological approach to listening in the EFL classroom

Abstract:

The latest developments in electronic media have radically altered the language use landscape, such as by triggering long-term effects on users' interactive potential and communicative standards. Current communicative practices relying on the latest technologies, as well as learning through electronic devices in virtual spaces, have generated new strategies for language acquisition with unintended side effects. Therefore, taking pervasive digitalisation into account, socio-affective language teaching strategies should become active tools for promoting communication based on emotional intelligence (EI) in the case of students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). This study explores the opportunities afforded by AS (affective strategies) and SS (social strategies) with the aim to develop learners' language proficiency. It highlights listening competence, which I argue is a stepping-stone for achieving empathic awareness. Based on previous research, which suggested that both AS and SS represent an underutilised resource in the foreign language classroom, the need for more effective teaching methodologies is addressed with this target in mind (Arslan et al. 2012; Dragoescu 2014). The paper addresses the benefits of using listening and collaborative learning to enhance peer interaction and EI levels. Specifically, it emphasises the practicality of using these strategies to develop communicative and sociolinguistic competence and, ultimately, EFL proficiency. These types of language learning strategies (LLS) can be used as relevant resources in teaching, as they hold the key to propelling optimal education by means of learning to communicate in a foreign language. Thereby, educators are offered the opportunity to create a meaningful learning environment, as well as to enhance the personal growth potential of language learners.

Keywords: *EFL; Communicative competence; Active listening; Socio-affective strategies; EQ; Language proficiency.*