Out – of – class listening and reading strategies of foreign language learners

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Abstract:

Teaching EFL remains a great challenge because performance in exams is considered more important than for other purposes. It requires not only courageous, well-determined, and committed teachers but also creative and innovative teaching techniques. EFL lecturers have to find practical ways to motivate the students to learn and appreciate the language, and at the same time, sustain students' interest in the language learning process.So, This study discusses out – of - class learning strategies of 30 students from the Faculty of Specific Education , Zagazig University, English Department. It focuses on the role of functional practice and attempts to identify and quantify the out – of - class learning activities employed by these learners during their study of English. This study dealt with listening and reading skills due to the accessibility of materials. Through the use of questionnaires and interviews, the study explores the individual motivations of the sample in their choice of activities and highlights a wide range of individual activity choices and motivations.

Introduction :

The famous proverb "don't give your students fish, but teach them how to fish" is perhaps true in language teaching .but how do we go about teaching them

the language skills so that they become more interested in learning the language? Also how do we maintain their interest in language learning when English is not seen as important for their immediate needs other than to pass the examinations ?

The researcher interviewed samples of students from the Faculty of Specific Education, English Department. They were asked about the materials in use out – of - class to enhance their language proficiency. Most of them stated that they depend mainly on what is taught on the course. The researcher also noticed that the students in the English Department have been characterized as passive and dependent, They are little incentive to undertake learning outside their studies, such an attitude is of no benefit to learning foreign language when success so much depends on the individual's opportunities for language use outside the class.

Jeremy (1995) claims that most successful learning takes place outside the class, and (Nunan, 1988:3) states that not every thing a learner needs to know can be taught in class

Language learning, as Thomson (1996 : 78) puts it, is a life long endeavor. It is therefore important to help students become aware of the value of independent learning outside the class, so that they acquire the habit of learning continuously, and maintain it after they have completed their formal studies.

Background of the study :

Krashen and Terrell argue that the purpose of language instruction is to allow the learner to "understand language outside the classroom", so that ultimately he or she can "utilize the real world, as well as the classroom, for progress" (Krashen & Terrell 1983: 1).

Virtual Realia:

The use of realia is commonplace in the ESL/EFL classroom and is widely considered to have great value in fostering an active teaching-learning environment. By presenting information through diverse media, realia helps to make English language input as comprehensible as possible and to build "an associative bridge between the classroom and the world" (Heaton, 1979). As Berwald (1987) notes, realia "are not only a series of artifacts that describe the customs and traditions of a culture, but they are also a set of teaching aids that facilitate the simulation of experience in the target culture" . Realia provides language learners with multi-sensorary impressions of the language which, as Rivers (1983) notes is "learned partly at least through seeing, hearing, touching, and manipulating" items. And interaction with authentic materials aids in contextually grounding instruction by bringing students into contact with language as it is used in the target culture in order to meet actual communication needs. The use of realia, then, can enhance linguistic and cultural comprehensibility, which are both prerequisites for real language learning.

As Hess & Sklarew (1994) note, learners can explore aspects of American culture which are expressed in everyday realia items such as a Big Mac wrapper or the cover of People Magazine. And realia like greeting cards can provide great vocabulary in the form of puns, idioms, and slang. They can also serve as a springboard for a discussion of underlying cultural values, beliefs, and behavior as well as provide an often non-language-dependent means of introducing students to the lesson topic (Short, 1991). Further, there is evidence that through the use of realia teachers may increase the number of student responses (Waltz, 1986) and, therefore, overall participation and interest in learning activities.

With the increasing integration of computers into language instruction and the phenomenal growth of the Internet, the idea of digitizing realia and organizing it into a web site is a logical further development in language teaching in the digital age. If we accept Tanguay's (1997) assertion which states "that which can be digitized, will be digitized," then why not realia? Whereas traditional realia is linear in nature, when transferred to a more interactive and flexible medium, Virtual Realia merges an established technique with the new educational technologies in bringing culturally-based authentic materials into EFL classrooms worldwide.

Virtual Realia web site was developed at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg in Germany. Almost all of the teachers in-service training seminars

are from eastern Germany, and most have never been to the United States. The teachers are faced, however, with a curriculum which requires them to teach American culture. In addition, many of the English teachers in the program are former Russian teachers who have undergone or are presently undergoing extensive requalification in English due to the increased demand for English instruction at the expense of Russian which occurred following the political changes in East Germany. As computer-based instruction is a key component of the teacher-training curriculum in Germany at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. The aim of this programme is to find a way to combine the new educational technologies with successful EFL teaching practices and techniques while addressing the specific needs and challenges of teachers. The result was the Virtual Realia web site.

Virtual Realia is a collection of linguistic and non-linguistic authentic materials which have been compiled, scanned, and posted on WWW server. The site offers a new perspective to using authentic materials by allowing EFL teachers instant access to American cultural realia. It benefits especially those international teachers who are less mobile or unable to collect their own materials.

Like more traditional realia, virtual realia is motivating and meaningful in that it brings an authentic piece of the target culture into the language classroom. The added advantage with this new medium

is that realia-based lessons need not be bound to cities and places that the teacher has physically been to but, rather, can be based on materials from a variety of places collected from a variety of people with various interests. Further, students interact directly with these materials rather than with someone else's interpretation and analysis of them and thus may find virtual realia even more appropriate for their interests than traditional authentic materials collected by the teacher. Another benefit of virtual realia is that the materials are truly interactive and more flexible than traditional ones in that they can be easily adapted and up dated. For example, a page from a brochure can easily be digitally altered for use in an information gap activity without damaging the "original." Further, teachers can choose which pages of the document to use in class rather than being forced to use the entire item. Also, the computer-savvy instructor can juxtapose the digital items when developing virtual realia-based communicative activities, or create documents which contain only certain types of virtual realia. These images and activities can be stored on a disk and easily accessed or printed out. Moreover, these materials can serve as the basis for various computer-based collaborative projects, as supplemental materials, or as on-line assignments and tests.

The contents of the Virtual Realia site are arranged by topic rather than by difficulty level. The reasoning is that teachers are often discouraged from using an attractive piece of realia because it appears to be too

difficult. By not assigning a "level" to the items, teachers are more likely to select pieces which will compel their students to "reach" a bit. Also, rather than judging the apparent difficulty of the realia item itself, one should ensure that the accompanying tasks reflect the appropriate ability level for the students concerned. Traditionally, authentic materials have been reserved for intermediate to advanced levels. However, as Adams (1995) notes, "students at lower levels stand to gain at least as much by exposure to well-selected authentic texts appropriate to their needs and abilities." With this in mind, special attention has been given to items rich in context and graphics and modest to moderate in text.

The Virtual Realia items are intended to serve as "raw materials" for teachers designing lessons focusing on American cultural studies, content-based lessons, and skill area units. The sample activities included with many of the items suggest ideas that teachers can use when designing their own exercises. The high-beginner/low-intermediate-level Ellis Island brochure contains two pages of pictures and text and gives an immigrant's account of his ordeal on Ellis Island at the beginning of this century. Sample activities and exercises were designed to accompany this page include guided, short answer and vocabulary exercises as well as more open-ended, expressive activities like a role-play and "letter home" writing assignment. Student-generated drawings were included which give

a pictorial account of the immigrant's experience in a sequential ordering activity.

Virtual Realia items were also selected to provide insights into American culture which delve below the surface and explore lesser known aspects of the United States and the American people. The Plain People, for example, takes a look at the Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Their history, daily life, and beliefs are examined in a brochure from the Lancaster County Tourism Office with photographs and sample exercises provided. An entire unit on Martin Luther King has been provided which demonstrates how teachers can take multiple pieces of Virtual Realia and combine these items with other on-line materials and teacher-produced activities into an integrative American cultural unit which can be easily adapted to any proficiency level. This unit includes a brochure about the Selma Movement with a map of important sites, a brochure about Dr. King's birthplace in Atlanta as well as a post card with a C-test -like writing activity based on facts mentioned in the birthplace brochure. The text of Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech is included with a link to the audio version. And finally, there is a link to a special Martin Luther King site maintained by the Seattle Times which allows students to further research Dr. King's life and achievements. While the units provided suggest a starting point for teachers interested in designing their own Virtual Realia-based lessons, the activities themselves can serve as a downloadable

template for future on-line exercises the teacher may wish to develop.

Both the adoption of authentic materials in the classroom and Internet access appear to be on the rise (Adams, 1995; Cerf, 1997). Thus it will be easier for international teachers to take advantage of the benefits and "cultural experience" that Virtual Realia can provide. The Internet explosion has allowed teachers (and students) to travel through cyberspace anywhere in the world. And through the use of carefully selected virtual realia gathered during these journeys, teachers can expose students to many if not most of the printed materials they could expect to encounter during an actual stay in the target country/culture. Indeed, the hypertextual nature of Virtual Realia "removes the limitations of the printed page and breaks down (the) geographical boundaries" (Negroponte, 1995) which once served as obstacles to procuring authentic materials. It allows the teacher to stop at a small café off the beaten path, pop into the train station to check departures for the weekend, or clip some coupons and check over a shopping receipt from the local supermarket just like a native of that town might do and then bring this collection back to class to use in lessons without ever having left their home or school.

The advantages of out-of–class activities:

Building bridges between the classroom and the outside world, and facilitating students' entry into that

world, has many benefits -- not only for lower-level students -- including:

- whatever language students encounter in the outside world is authentic language

- by engaging in real transactions involving relatively limited areas, and with sufficient preparation, students are exposing themselves to input which is largely comprehensible because they themselves are initiating the transactions and have some idea of what kinds of responses to expect

- when well-prepared, students can gain a lot of fruitful listening practice and vocabulary reinforcement from television shows, films, lectures, etc.

- a knowledge of how to execute everyday linguistic transactions has obvious survival value for students newly arrived in a country where they may not speak or understand very much of the language, which can be a disorienting and even frightening experience

- students may also gain practical information, such as how to find their way around, where to purchase certain products or even how much it costs to send letters to their own countries.

- students may gain a great deal of cultural knowledge and insight

- once initiated into the international anglophone cyberspace community -- whether through net surfing, emailing or web page building -- they will be able to participate in it long after having finished their studies, and continue to refresh and develop their language skills in this way

- the early development of a degree of competence in dealing with everyday linguistic transactions is inherently motivating, partly because of their necessity, but also because students rapidly see their own progress as they extend their ability to deal with one area after another, and thus develop the confidence to begin to explore on their own

- this puts them on track to becoming independent learners, who can make use of the English-speaking environment to learn in their own time.

Problems with Using the Outside World as a Resource:

A number of potential problems, largely connected with preparation or practical details, must be kept in mind when using the outside world as a resource. Pegrum (2000).states that the following are amongst the most significant:

- there are, as Allwright argues, no "'teacher-proof' teaching materials" (Allwright 1990: 136) or resources; the best resources in the world will yield no linguistic profit unless they are coupled

with carefully thought-out activities appropriate to the level, and it is all too easy to design enjoyable activities from which the students learn little or nothing

- if not properly prepared, learners may be daunted by and fail in the set task, which would be very demotivating .

- some activities -- treasure hunts are a case in point -- require considerable preparation, while others -- such as surveys composed and conducted by students, or student websites -- require extensive teacher support while the activities are running

- the answers to set quizzes may alter over time -- as prices rise or websites change -- so that these may need to be checked out each time such an activity is conducted .

- activities involving the internet or email can only be conducted at an institution with sufficient resources, and the teacher must be computer-literate; also, while many younger students are relatively familiar with computers nowadays, some others may require additional help.

The role of EFL lecturers at Faculties of Specific Education:

EFL lecturers at Faculties of Specific Education need to find creative ways to teach the language and

increase the student's motivation to learn the language, and to eventually appreciate the language suitable for a given group of learners. The problem for ESL lecturers at Faculties of Specific Education, is how to encourage genuine interest among students to continue to learn and use the English language once the examinations are over. The question that needs to be addressed is how do EFL lecturers create a healthy balance between preparing students for the standardized examinations and for life-long language skills?

EFL lecturers at Faculties of Specific Education must make use of materials and resources which help to bring the outside world into the classroom. These may range from non-linguistic items, such as simple visuals or realia, through to authentic texts including newspaper articles, audio recordings of conversations or videos of recent TV programmes. Exposing students to "pieces" of the outside world has an important function in respect of providing realistic language input, establishing a dynamic and meaningful context for learning, and increasing student motivation. We are thus able to construct "an associative bridge between the classroom and the world" (J. Heaton cited in Smith 1997) and "prepare the learners for post-classroom experience" (Dickens et al. 1995).

Motivation:

Gardener and Lambert (1972) introduced the notions of instrumental and integrative motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to the learner's desire to

learn a language for utilitarian purposes (such as employment or travel or exam purposes) in the context of language learning . On the other hand, integrative motivation refers to the desire to learn a language to integrate successfully into the target language community . In later research studies, Crookes and Schmidt (1991), and Gardner and Tremblay (1994) explored four other motivational orientations: (a) reason for learning ,(b) desire to attain the learning goal , (c)positive attitude toward the learning situation, and effortful behavior.

Many theorists and researchers have found that it is important to recognize the construct of motivation not as a single entity but as a multi-factorial one . Oxford and Shearin (1994) analyzed a total of 12 motivational theories or models, including those from socio-psychology, cognitive development, and socio-cultural psychology, and identified six factors that impact motivation in language learning:

- Attitudes (i.e., sentiments toward the learning community and the target language)

- Beliefs about self (i.e., expectancies about one's attitudes to succeed, self-efficacy, and anxiety)

- Goals (perceived clarity and relevance of learning goals as reasons for learning)

- Involvement (i.e., extent to which the learner actively and consciously participate in the language learning process)

- Environmental support (i.e., extent of teacher and peer support, and the integration of cultural and outside-of –class support into learning experience)

- Personal attributes (i.e., aptitude, age, sex, and previous language experience)

Based on this brief discussion, the researcher believes that teachers are able to drive the students to learn the language and to sustain students' interest in language learning if they can provide activities that are:

- . interrelated between in-class and out-of class language activities

- . communicative(game type)

- .integrative (short/small activities from larger activities)

- . pleasant, safe and non-threatening

- . enthusiastic

- .group-based

- .meaningful or relevant

- .challenging

These activities help promote:

- self-confidence

- experiences of success

- learning satisfaction

- good relationships among learners and
  between teacher and students

Research has shown that factors such as positive learner and teacher attitudes, which are interrelated to motivation, must be sustained for successful of language learning (Finocchiaro, 1982; Ngeow,1998). To foster positive attitudes and to motivate learning ,in particular, the learner of English as a Foreign Language , an environment conducive to learning must be created. Factors that help create such an environment include:

- a learning situation that has a "low affective filter"(Krashen,1987) whereby the learners learn to use the language in a non-threatening and fun environment. Otherwise, learners will feel uncomfortable and insecure which will induce a "psychological barrier" to communication and learning (Littlewood, 1995)

- providing various types of input which are auditory,visual, sensory,verbal and non-verbal in nature and input which is comprehensible or little beyond the level of the learner .

- providing a continuous and consistent exposure to the language being learned

- an environment where the teachers and students are supportive and encouraging

- having access to situations wherein students are able to use the language as a" natural means of communication"(Littlewood, p58,1995)

These factors should be present in any language learning program. The curriculum must encompass these factors which encourage successful transfer and learning of the language. Therefore, what occurs in the language classrooms must be extended beyond the walls of the classrooms so that a link is created between what is learned in the classrooms with what occurs outside of the classrooms .A healthy balance has to be created between the immediate need of examination and the long- term needs of communicative competence .Furthermore, other interrelated factors such as the teachers' philosophy, theories, and experience of the language; the contemporary climate of the teaching situation (which is affected by such factors as the political, economic, and technological advances of the country);the available teaching aids and materials; and the constant demand to prepare students for the standardized exams all play interconnected roles within the school language curriculum . Within such a program, various activities and tasks are prepared which require active

participation of the learners . Some examples of such activities include:

- A reading program with such tasks as writing a synopsis ,journal, and compiling vocabulary lists

- Language immersion projects such as language camps and visits

- A specific day or week or month or time and space devoted to the use of the language such as an English zone, spelling bee competition, story –telling corner, read –to-me corner, essay and drama competition, poetry reading at the general assembly, etc.

- A network of people who could provide the constant input of the language such as pen pals, teacher mentors, conversation partners and so forth.

These activities are supported by classroom or school environments that provide simple strategies to encourage the use of the language such as murals, labels in and around the school ,consistent exposure to language competitions (choral speaking, scrabble, etc.)and English notice board (interactive in that learners can pose questions or reply to questions)(.All these need to be given acknowledgment and recognition in the form of rewards and encouragement,e.g.prizes,

public mention, etc.)to motivate and sustain interest in the use of the language.

Researchers into the areas of language learning strategies often mention out – of – class strategies in passing , Such et al (1999) investigated the out – of – class learning experiences of non – native speakers of English , and the impact of the experiences on the individuals' second – language conversation skills. Results indicate that most of the subjects relied heavily on independent leisure activities to improve their English conversional skills, and thought some of the activities had a positive effect on their conversation skills, particularly listening comprehension. Maxwell (1982) recognized that students spend more time before the television set than in school , so it can be used as a source of teaching English. He suggested that rather than being a liability , television , if intelligently used , can serve as a highly motivating tool in teaching both critical thinking skills and literature. Naiman et al. (1978) identified "the active task approach" whereby learners involve themselves actively in the language learning task in a number of different ways. These include adding related language learning activities to their regular classroom input, such as reading in the foreign language , listening to tapes in the car, listening to the news, reading novels in L2, and writing to pen – friends.

Rubin (1975) identified seven general characteristics of the good language learners , which

include such out – of – class strategies as seeking out opportunities to use the language by looking for native speakers and going to the cinema or to other cultural events.

Bialystok (1978, 1981) highlighted the role of out – of – class strategies in language learning , and identified four types of language learning strategies : formal and functional practicing , monitoring , and inferencing. Functional practice occurs when the language learner increases his opportunity to use the language for communication , such as going to movies, reading books , or talking to native speakers (1981 : 25). The main aim of the activity is to achieve exposure to meaningful language. Bialystok (1981) carried out a research project regarding the role of conscious strategies in contributing to second language proficiency. It was found that functional practice , corresponding to the use of out – of – class activities , helped improve performance on all tasks accomplished by the subjects. Using Bialystok's model of second language learning. Huang and Naerssen (1987) undertook a research project in China into the role of functional strategies in the successful development of oral communicative abilities. They discovered that students who were more successful in oral communication reported employing functional practice strategies more frequently than the less successful ones' (ibid : 290). Examples of functional practice strategies mentioned in the study include activities such as speaking with other students and native

speakers , listening and reading for comprehension , attending lectures , watching films and TV programmes , and thinking or talking to oneself in English.

Elley and Mangubhai's study (1983) of the effect of extensive reading on the Fijian school children showed that students exposed to extensive reading had progressed in receptive skills, reading and listening , at twice the rate of the control group. Hafiz and Tudor's study (1989) of a group of second language learners of Pakistani origins in the UK showed that the experimental group , which had spent three months reading for pleasure one hour per day , had made significant levels of improvement on all seven language tests. According to Hafiz and Tudor the results would appear to indicate that the extensive reading programme undertaken had effect a substantial improvement in the subjects linguistic proficiency , and would thus appear to lend support to the hypothesis that an input – based and acquisition – oriented mode of learning can lead to an improvement in learner's linguistic skills in a second language , as regards reading and writing at least. (ibid.: 8)

State ne1t of the proble n :
This study was an attempt to answer the following questions :

1-What are out – of - class reading strategies that the students at the Faculty of Specific Education, Zagazig University employ?

2- What are out – of - class listening strategies that the students at the Faculty of Specific Education, Zagazig University of the English Department employ ?

3 - What is the role of these strategies in contributing to foreign language proficiency ?

Purpose of the study :

Much interest has been expressed in recent years in language learning strategies . Useful typologies of strategy use have been formulated by Rubin (1975), Naiman *et al* (1978). Maxwell (1982), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990), and Suh *et al* (1999): all highlight the importance of the out – of – class strategies employed voluntarily by learners outside the language classroom. These language learning strategies encompass student – initiated activity , such as listening to the radio , watching T.V and reading newspapers. In spite of the interest in this area , there is a paucity of data on the precise nature of language learning activities undertaken by learners outside the classroom. This study discusses some of the literature on language learning strategies, with special reference to out – of class strategies.

Methodology :

Subjects :

The subjects participating in this study consisted of 50 students of the English Department , second year , Faculty of Specific Education , Zagazig University. Their average age was 19 .

Limitation of the study :

This study concentrated on listening and reading skills due to the accessibility of materials . Speaking and writing skills were negligible as being limited in use out – of – class.

Instruments:

Two instruments were employed to collect data for this study:

1-A questionnaire on out – of – class listening and reading strategies (see Appendix 2)
2-An in –depth interview into out –of– class listening and reading strategies(see Appendix 3)

Description of the Instruments :

Data relating to reading and listening, activities was expressed in the questionnaire in terms of frequency of activities , viz ,"every day" , "several days a week" , "once a week" , "once or twice a month" , "rarely" or "never". In order to facilitate data processing , the response every day received the value 5 with the other response receiving 4,3,2,1, and 0 respectively in descending order of frequency of use. In order to ascertain frequency of activity across the sample , the median frequency was taken in each case. This method of quantitative analysis allowed frequency of activity to be calculated and expressed in figures, thus giving simplified insight into student's use of out – of – class strategies..

Of the thirty subjects who returned their completed questionnaires half were selected to be interviewed by the researcher. The criteria for selection were sex, half of the interviewees being male and the other half female, all of them gained a grade of good at the first year.

Out – of – class listening interview consisted of 11 questions All the questions demanded responses. These questions revealed the listening activities that the students involve themselves actively to enhance their listening skill out – of – class. Out of – class reading interview included 18 questions. The questions embedded in the reading activities interview were used to reveal the learners' reading activities in use out – of – class to improve their reading proficiency.

Validity of the instruments:

To determine the validity of the instruments. They were submitted to a group of EFL teaching specialists. Some items of both instruments were modified until they took their final shape.

Significance of the study :

Learners at the Faculty of Specific Education, English Department should involve themselves actively in the language learning task in a number of different ways. These add related language learning activities to their regular class input , such as reading in the foreign language , listening to tapes, listening to the news , reading novels in English , looking for native speakers and going to the cinema or to other cultural

events, as functional practice occurs when the language learner increases his opportunity to use the language for communication.

Definition of terms :

Out – of – class strategies :

1) Naiman et al. (1978) defined out – of – class strategies as the kind of activities that the students involve themselves actively in the language learning task. They include related language activities to their regular classroom input, such as listening to taps in the car, listening to the news, reading novels in foreign language, and writing to pen – friends.

2) Rubin (1975) referred to out – of – class strategies as seeking out opportunities to use the language by looking to the native speakers, and going to the cinema or to other cultural events.

For the purpose of this study The researcher adopted the above two definitions as Naiman et al (1978), and Rubin (1975) stated that out – of – class strategies are the kind of activities that the learners involve themselves actively out – of class to enhance their foreign language proficiency whether in listening or in reading, such as reading in the foreign language, listening to tapes, listening to the news, reading to novels looking for native speakers, and going to the cinema or other cultural events.

virtual realia:

Smith, B. (1997). states that (in language teaching) digitized objects and items from the target culture which are brought into the classroom as examples or aids and used to stimulate spoken or written language production.

realia: (in language teaching) actual objects and items which are brought into a classroom as examples or as aids to be talked or written about and used in teaching. (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics. Richards, Platt, & Platt. 1992. Essex.)

realia: anything which has a purpose outside of the ESL classroom and can be brought into the classroom. (Realia: Bringing the Real World into the Classroom [Online]. Dickens, Robertson, & Hofmann. http://www.wlc.com/oxus/realia.htm. 1995. Victoria, BC.)

realia: objects of any origin used to illustrate vocabulary and structure in the L2. (Celce-Murcia & Hilles, 1988)

realia: concrete objects and the paraphernalia of everyday life. (Zukowski-Faust, 1997)

If we accept a synthesis of these working definitions, concede that realia does not necessarily have to be something tangible (e.g. authentic audio clips), and further agree that something which is brought into the classroom digitally still counts as being brought into the classroom, then our answer is clearly, yes.

Data analysis and Results :

1) Reading activities : (see Appendix 2.A)

Newspapers : Reading newspapers , novels and plays attracted the largest numbers of reported users with median score of (1.63, 1.43, 1.33). The Egyptian Gazette, EL Ahram Weekly and News Week were the most cited source of current affairs material. None of the sample said that he had been a subscriber to a newspaper or magazine.

Almost without exception , subjects reported reading newspapers for leisure purposes rather than concentrating on the linguistic form of the text. Dictionary use was limited to unknown words which were crucial to the meaning of the text, and subjects appeared to guess for meaning from context. Various comments in the interviews shed light on their use of the dictionary.

One of the students states that:

" When I find difficult words or difficult expressions I try to guess their meaning , but when I find that these words hinder my understanding , I consult the dictionary. "

Most of the subjects suggest that the college library must include newspapers and magazines in English so that they can read them .

Novels and plays :

Reading novels and plays also featured relatively prominently in subjects' responses and regarding extensive reading activities. The types of novels chosen

for reading can be classified into two categories, novels and plays for leisure and those recommended by lecturers. Novels for leisure reading include works by Charles Dickens , Guy De Maupasent , Ernest Hemingway, John Tully , Jane Homeshow, Mark Twain, Catherine Gaskin,

The second category of novels read by subjects had generally been introduced at the college.

90% of the subjects expressed a rationale for reading in a foreign language in the interview.

Another students declares that:

"*I think reading novels widen and enrich my knowledge , they show me the different schools of novels and they enrich my vocabulary and grammar .*"

Another subject states the difficulties he faces in reading novels.

"*The difficulties I face in reading novels , I couldn': know all the words which I read, I face some difficulty in translating some phrases.* "

As for plays subjects mentioned Bernard Show and John Osborne (Arms and the Man and the Entertainer).

To sum up – subjects' comments on their extensive out – of – class reading , it is clear that the majority of them made a special effort to acquire extensive reading materials , visiting the libraries and buying personal copies of materials. Most of the subjects do not read poetry out of class except one of them who said that he liked reading romantic poetry. They recommended that newspapers and magazines

must be existed at the college library. Subjects chose reading materials for the most part on the basis of enjoyment , and they did not appreciate being obliged to read by outside authorities. Let us now turn our attention to the data collected from subjects on their listening activities.

Listening : (see Appendix .B)

Within the section in the questionnaire dedicated to listening activities, subjects were asked to denote frequency of use relating to listening to the radio , watching TV in English, going to see films in the English language , attending talks and lectures and listening to tapes in English (see Appendix 2).

Lectures :

Attending lectures represented the most frequently activity with a median score of (4.96). Most subjects stated that they had to attend the lectures at the college as, if they did not do so they would not be able to understand their different subjects especially those in English.

Television : watching TV programmes in English had a median score of (3.76). This means that the majority of them prefer to watch the English programmes . 80% of the subjects stated that they are watching the Nile TV Channel. They indicated that the programmes on this channel help them so much improve their language skills. 20% of the subjects said that they prefer watching the Cinema Club on Channel 1 , films in English and Tele news on Channel 2.

One of the students declares that:

"I always watch the Nile TV Channel for an hour every day as this helps me improve my listening skills and my pronunciation . "

Another one states that:

" Watching films in English in the Cinema Club on Channel 1 and on Channel 2 give me a chance to get used to the different accents of the native speakers"

Radio : listening to the radio had a median score of (2.63). 68% of the subjects stated that they listen to the B.B.C and the Voice of America. They think that this helps them improve the listening skill and their pronunciation.

One of the students indicates that:

"I usually listen to the news in English in the B.B.C to improve my pronunciation . "

Another student states that:

"I like to listen to the Voice of America besides whatever I was doing but when they were talking about something really interesting I try to listen intensively. It's just to get used to the language ."

Discussion of Results :

The data analysis reveals a wide range of out – of – class strategies employed by the learners , and leads to one major conclusion : that every learner has his own learning style and personal notional for that style. It is clear that the majority of them made a special effort to acquire extensive reading materials , visiting the libraries and buying personal copies of materials. Most of the subjects do not read poetry out

of class except one of them who said that he liked reading romantic poetry. They recommended that newspapers and magazines must be existed at the college library. Subjects chose reading materials for the most part on the basis of enjoyment , and they did not appreciate being obliged to read by outside authorities.

The researcher has noticed that the most frequent activities reported by this sample from the Faculty of Specific Education , Zagazig University were watching TV and reading newspapers novels and plays. Results revealed that subjects made most use of the activities which they had chosen for their own needs. Activities imposed by lectures seemed to be given less consideration. The intrinsic interest value to the learner of the particular materials chosen for use was the prime motivating reason for exploitation of materials. Many of the subjects in the study recognized weakness in their linguistic proficiency and took measures to remedy them by compensatory activities. Opportunities for oral practice were limited , as going to the cinema , yet subjects reported making use of their opportunities to undertake these activities when they arose.

Recommendations:

1-In order to succeed in language learning , the learners must adopt what Bialystoke (1981) terms an active approach , by supplementing their classroom learning with a range of linguistic activities outside the classroom. They have to gain additional exposure to the language they are learning in

whichever mode possible, and to create practice opportunities.

2-If teachers are to become facilitators of out-of- class strategies,

then some input is required in teacher courses .

3-Using CAI software and approaches can be an exciting and rewarding experience for adult ESL literacy learners and their instructors, especially when these tools are used to facilitate interpersonal communication alongside language and literacy skills development. The use of computers can create a new social and instructional environment for language learning and literacy acquisition. The prospects for using computer-assisted instructional programs and other technological media with adult ESL literacy learners are excellent, provided that programs are designed or adapted especially for these learners and that instructors are willing to try new and innovative approaches.

4-EFL lecturers at Faculties of Specific Education need to find creative ways to teach the language and increase the student's motivation to learn the language, and to eventually appreciate the language suitable for a given group of learners. Jeremy (1995) claims that most successful learning takes place outside the class; as (Nunan, 1988:3) states that not every thing a learner needs to know can be taught in class.

5-Language learning, as Thomson (1996 : 78) puts it, is a life long endeavor. It is therefore important to

help students become aware of the value of independent learning outside the class, so that they acquire the habit of learning continuously, and maintain it after they have completed their formal studies.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Out – of – class listening and reading strategies

Name :

Year :

Please , show the degree of frequency for each of the following activities

Out – of – class reading activities

Frequency Degree	Every day	Several days a week	Once a week	Once or twice a month	Rarely	Never
Newspapers						
Novels						
Magazines						
plays						
Poetry						

Out – of – class listening activities

Frequency Degree	Every day	Several days a week	Once a week	Once or twice a month	Rarely	Never
Radio						
T. V						
Talks						
Lectures						
Taps						
Cinema						

Appendix 2. A. Out − of − class reading activities

Name	Newspapers	Novels	Magazines	Plays	Poetry
N.H.S	1	0	1	0	0
S.M.H	0	1	0	0	0
R.H.R	0	0	0	3	1
S.S.A	0	1	0	1	0
A.M.S	4	3	0	3	0
S.H.T	0	1	0	0	0
M.K.T	5	3	2	1	4
A.E.H	3	1	2	1	1
N.L.S	4	2	3	1	0
N.S.M	1	1	1	1	1
H.S.L	1	1	1	1	1
S.A.A	0	3	0	3	1
W.A.S	5	2	4	3	1
N.K.M	1	1	0	0	1
R.M.H	0	1	0	0	1
N.H.S	1	0	1	0	0
E.M.S	5	3	4	1	1
E.S.M	5	2	3	1	1
M.M.M	0	3	0	3	2
R.A.S	0	1	0	1	1
A.A.A	0	1	0	1	1
W.M.M	3	1	2	2	1
R.H.S	0	2	0	1	1
S.A.K	0	1	0	3	1
N.H.S	4	2	2	1	0
R.S.A	0	2	0	2	1
A.A.F	3	0	0	1	1
A.M.A	0	2	0	3	0
A.S.A	3	1	1	1	1
A.A.A	0	1	0	1	1
Median	1.63	1.43	0.9	1.33	0.83

Appendix 2. B. Out — of — class reading activities

Names	Radio	T.V	Talks	Lectures	Tapes	Cinema
N.H.S	5	0	0	5	1	3
S.M.H	4	3	0	5	1	0
R.H.R	0	5	0	5	0	0
S.S.A	0	3	0	5	0	0
A.M.S	4	4	5	5	0	1
S.H.T	0	3	1	4	0	0
M.K.T	5	4	1	5	2	3
A.E.H	4	5	3	5	1	1
N.L.S	4	5	3	4	1	0
N.S.M	2	5	1	5	1	0
H.S.L	1	5	0	0	1	0
S.A.A	5	5	1	5	0	0
W.A.S	5	5	4	5	3	1
N.K.M	4	5	5	4	1	0
R.M.H	5	5	0	1	5	1
N.H.S	5	0	0	5	1	3
E.M.S	5	4	5	5	2	2
E.S.M	5	5	5	4	4	1
M.M.M	2	5	4	5	0	0
R.A.S	0	5	1	4	0	1
A.A.A	2	3	1	3	1	0
W.M.M	4	3	1	4	1	0
R.H.S	1	3	0	5	1	0
S.A.K	3	4	5	5	0	0
N.H.S	1	2	5	5	1	0
R.S.A	0	1	1	5	1	0
A.A.F	0	4	0	4	0	1
A.M.A	0	5	0	4	1	0
A.S.A	5	5	5	5	1	0
A.A.A	1	2	1	5	1	0
Median	2.63	3.76	1.93	4.96	1.06	0.7

Appendix 3:

Reading activities interview

1. Mention the names of the newspapers or magazines in English you like to read.
2. 2-Have you ever been a subscriber to a magazine or newspaper in English? What are they and why ?
3. Have you ever read some novels for leisure?

    Yes,   No,

-If yes, mention their titles , their authors and the benefit you gain from reading them.

4. what difficulties do you face in reading these novels?
5. How can you overcome these difficulties?
6. What novels do you study at your college ?
7. How can you acquire extensive reading materials in English ?
8.   Do you read them at home or with your lecturer?
9. What benefits do you gain from reading these novels?
10. Do you like to read poetry out – of – class ? where ?
11- Mention the names of some poets you like to read to out – of – class.
12- what kind of poetry do you like to read ?
13- Have you ever read some plays for leisure ?

    Yes,   No,

    < If yes, mention their titles , their authors and the benefit you gain from reading them.

14- what difficulties do you face in reading these plays?

15- How can you overcome these difficulties

16- what plays do you study at your college ?

17- Do you read them at home or with your lecturer ?

18- What benefits do you gain from reading these plays?

Listening activities interview

1- How often do you listen to radio stations in English ?

2- What is your favorite radio station ?

3- What benefits do you gain from listening to these stations ?

4- When do you listen to the radio extensively and intensively ?

5- What would you like to watch on T.V in English?   •

6- What are your favourite programs in English and how do you enhance your listening ?

7- Do you watch English – speaking programs on satellite ?

8- Would you like to go to the cinema to watch English films ?

9- What benefits do you gain from watching these films?

10- Do you like to listen to taps in English ? where ?

11- what benefits do you gain from listening to these taps?