

# The Effect of Applying the Discussion Strategy on Improving the Listening Comprehension Skills in the English Language among Students of Shoubak University College

Waddah Mahmmoud AlBdour

Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article History</b></p> <p>Received: March 10, 2020</p> <p>Accepted: May 30, 2020</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords</b> discussion strategy, listening comprehension skills, English language, Shoubak University College.</p> <p><b>DOI:</b> 10.5281/zenodo.3866219</p>	<p><i>The study aimed at identifying the effect of applying the discussion strategy on improving the listening comprehension skills in the English language among students of Shoubak University College in Jordan. The study adopted the quasi-experimental approach, and the study tool, prepared by the researcher himself, was set to test the listening comprehension skills. This tool was applied on a random sample of students of Shoubak University College during the academic year 2019-2020, and their number reached (60) male and female students. These students were divided into two groups, an experimental group consisting of (30) male and female students studied according to the discussion strategy and the control group consisting of (30) male and female students studied in the usual way. The findings of the study showed that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups on the listening skills test due to the variable method of teaching, and in favour of the experimental group. In light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommended both training teachers on using the discussion strategy in teaching the English language for its effectiveness in teaching and conducting studies dealing with introducing other teaching methods.</i></p>

## 1. Introduction

The English language has a distinguished position among the languages of the world nowadays. Being the most prevalent language in the world, we hardly see a country that does not teach English to its students in schools and universities for its status as a global language. Besides, English is the official language for many types of university fields of study such as science, medicine, engineering, economics, business administration, and other educational fields that many undergraduate students seek to study; therefore, if we want to keep pace with the scientific progress, then we must pay attention to teaching this language and learning its four skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening.

Listening is one of the most important language arts. Since our childhood, we have been learning how to communicate with others through multimedia: speaking, writing, and reading because people use listening more than they use other language arts, and it is a necessary factor in the communication process (Al-Naqah and Al-Eid, 2009).

Listening is one of the linguistic skills that affect an individual's contact with the outside world surrounding them. Individuals can acquire a number of vocabulary, patterns, structures, ideas, concepts, and develop language skills related to speaking, reading and writing. A person who distinguishes linguistic voices and who knows the main and secondary ideas of the topics he/she listen to, will be able to communicate with others, understand their opinions, and deal with them in a way that enables them to progress and continue in his/her scientific and practical life (Abu Al-Daba'at, 2007).

The reading skill is related to the listening skill, which means that listening to a well-read text improves the level of reading skills for students. As a result, when students get to know their listening style, they can straighten themselves in listening and in other language arts. In addition, the teacher's use of reading clearly and loudly shows good results in the students' reading as a result of their good listening to their teacher's reading (Kaplan & Tracey, 2007).

Therefore, the listening skill is a complex skill in its nature. It includes the awareness of the spoken language symbols through auditory distinction and understanding of the meaning of these symbols, the awareness of the communicative function or "message" included in symbols or spoken speech, the interaction of the experiences carried in this message with the listener's experiences, values and standards, the criticism and evaluation of these experiences, and their judgment (Madkour, 2007).

Success in teaching the listening comprehension skills depends on the teachers' knowledge of the listening skills and their operations, their ability to design relevant and appropriate activities and trainings to employ these processes in learning situations, and their ability to design supportive language activities that are based on the

transmission of the impact of the training and the integration of the skills with each other (Al-Hashemi and Al-Azzawi, 2005).

It is worth noting that there should be some attention paid to the listening comprehension skill among students because it is extremely important in building the learners' mental capabilities, enabling them to simulate the proper pronunciation of vocabulary, acquiring advanced linguistic forms, mastering their grammar and structures, understanding the audible material, and expressing themselves freely, in addition to being a link between other language skills. The ability to hear well and understand is followed by the ability to speak and the ability to read and write (Al-Juhni, 2015).

In light of the indications pointing to the students' low level in the listening comprehension skills and due to the status of listening as one of the most prominent outputs of the learning and educational processes in general and of the language education in particular, the need has emerged to search for modern teaching methods dealing with these skills in order to raise the students' listening comprehension level, taking into consideration: the student's positive participation in the educational situation, the student being the centre of the learning process, and contributing to providing students with the listening comprehension skills and developing them. It is worthy of mentioning here that the discussion strategy is among these strategies.

The dialogue and discussion method is among the active learning strategies that teachers adopt in order to achieve their educational goal in a lesson. Perhaps it is among the most important educational methods that create an atmosphere of positive educational interaction between the students and their teacher through engaging them in the lesson, especially if it is adopted in an interesting way away from the stereotypes (Mohammed, 2018).

Learning is characterised by discussion with several features. First, the integration of students in educational activities that bring them more listening, which is perhaps the most prominent feature. Second, the focus on information transfer and compensation is reduced by developing students' skills. Third, students are integrated in higher thinking of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Fourth, the high concentration of students is directed towards discovering their views and their values (Ibrahim, 2004).

Dialogue and discussion have significance in developing students' higher thinking skills because they require understanding, analysis, evaluation, conclusion, and synthesis of ideas. Moreover, it is concerned with developing the students' ability to listen to others, understand, analyse, and evaluate what they say in light of what they have of expertise or information, along with rendering judgments and making relevant decisions (Al-Helah, 2001).

The teacher can invest these advantages and employ them in teaching the English language by asking questions to students, searching for answers to these questions by getting the students participate in dialogue with each other, and reviewing other views on the same subject, which leads to building knowledge actively with others.

Hence the need to adopt a strategy that works to develop the listening comprehension skills in the English language for Shoubak University College students has emerged.

### **1.1. Statement of the problem**

In light of developing curricula in Jordan, the ministry of education concerned itself with teaching listening as a skill independent of other language skills in order to improve this skill for students. However, there is still little interest in it when compared to its importance in the learning and teaching process, as many teachers do not devote enough time neither to teach nor to train students on the listening skills until the desired goals are achieved (Da'mas, 2008).

The problem of this study lies in any of the following reasons. First, the weakness of most of the students of Shoubak University College in the listening comprehension skills and the limitations of the teaching methods used in teaching the listening texts about achieving the set goals. Second, the type of the assessment tools and methods used in the teaching learning process. Third, the inadequacy of these methods and the educational methods to the content of the curricula, which depends on the method of memorisation and direct instruction on the part of teachers and the negativity on the part of students, which in turn reduces their academic achievement. Through the experience of the researcher as a teacher of English language at Shoubak University College, he noticed that there is a lack of skills for the students necessary to comprehend what they hear. Their weakness becomes clear in the poor extraction of ideas from audible texts, their inability to summarise the audible texts, or evaluate them, or make judgments on them, and the lack of answer on some questions related to the audible text. This is confirmed by the studies of Al-Khazaleh (2006), Al-Omouh (2008), Abu Ghazleh (2002), and Shang (2005) claiming that students do not master the listening comprehension skills.

The reasons behind the students' weakness in listening are also attributed to the use of traditional teaching methods, which are based on instruction. These teaching methods are also described by their rigidity, their concentration at the literal level, and the weakness of programs for preparing language teachers. To equip students with these skills, researchers were eager to employ modern strategies that focus on the students and make them the center of the teaching learning process (Salter & Horstman, 2002).

Accordingly, it became necessary to search for a method that is based on a new approach to teaching the listening texts to improve the students' listening comprehension skills. The researcher sees the discussion

strategy one these strategies that may contribute to developing the listening comprehension skills and to improving academic achievement. The problem of study is determined by the following main question: What is the effect of applying the discussion strategy on improving the listening comprehension skills in the English language for students of Shobak University College?

### **1.2. Study hypothesis**

There are statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) between the mean scores of the students of the experimental group studying (How's the Neighbourhood?) unit using the discussion strategy and those of the control group that studies the same unit in the usual way in the post application of the test of listening comprehension skills in English, which was in favour of the experimental group.

### **1.3. Purpose of the study**

The present study aims at revealing the effect of applying the discussion strategy on improving the listening comprehension skills in the English language for students of Shoubak University College.

### **1.4. The importance of the study**

The importance of the study can be highlighted in the following points:

1. The discussion strategy is employed by English teachers, which helps them to generate new knowledge for their students and to improve their listening comprehension skills.
2. This study can be a reference framework for future researchers in the educational literature and for the teachers themselves who are studying the English language or other subjects.
3. Researchers may benefit from this study to conduct more studies and experimental research on new strategies.
4. This study may open the way for researchers to conduct subsequent studies in order to develop the method of dialogue and discussion in the various educational stages.
5. It is in line with the recent calls and the modern educational trends that adhere to the need to use modern teaching strategies.

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### **1.5. Limitations of the study**

- 1- Human limitations: this study was limited to a sample of students from Shoubak University College, and it consisted of two groups (an experimental group) and (a control group).
- 2- Spatial limitations: Shoubak University College, affiliated to Ma'an Governorate
- 3- Time limitations: this study was applied in the first semester of the academic year 2019-2020.
- 4- Data limitations: this study was limited to the topics mentioned in the "How's the neighbourhood?" unit of the English Language 101 course.

### **1.6. Operational definitions**

Discussion strategy: a process by which opinions are exchanged between the teacher and his/her students, and between the students themselves to discuss an issue in order to arrive at logical solutions.

Listening comprehension: a mental activity that enables students to listen carefully, pay attention, focus, and follow-up to what is being heard during their studies of the eighth unit "How's the neighbourhood?" of the units of English Language (101) using the discussion strategy. It is measured by the degree which students obtain in the listening comprehension skills test prepared in this study.

English Language Course: A study course bearing the number (020000101) that is taught to all disciplines at Shoubak University College. It aims at developing the four language skills in addition to providing students with training on proper grammar use to communicate with others inside and outside the classroom proficiently.

## **2. Theoretical framework and previous studies**

### **2.1. The discussion strategy**

The method of discussion is one of the most common and used teaching methods in the various stages of education, and it is an organized dialogue between the teacher and the students in which the positive role of students appears. It aims at achieving specific goals and objectives that can only be achieved with active participation between the parties, and the discussion may appear in a clear and basic manner in the survey.

The discussion strategy aims at instilling a spirit of cooperation, harmony, and understanding in which students collaborate intellectually and take responsibilities. As the nature of the discussion strategy requires collective collaborative effort, it generates collective awareness, work, and devotion to the group, and develops creativity and innovation by developing solutions and proposals towards problems facing society. It therefore encourages students to think critically because it includes skills such as: linking, deduction, and awareness of relationships between elements and parts. In addition, it is a strategy that pushes students to think, research, and learn about different points of view on the subject to be researched or discussed, besides stimulating the process of thinking and linking between data. It also works on exchanging ideas and information and comparing them with each other to reach new interconnections, as it is more stable and permanent and has an effective impact on students' inductive thinking, which leads them to a better understanding and achievement of the components of the subject matter (Al-Hhusari, 2003).

The role of the teacher in the discussion is highlighted by setting the goals, facilitating learning between the participants, preparing appropriate teaching aids, giving an opportunity for the participation of all students,

maintaining the course of the discussion towards the goals to be achieved, and managing the discussion and asking questions (Omar, 2010).

The method of discussion in teaching is characterised by some features. First, it motivates learners to participate. Second, it triggers their motivations. Third, it provokes their interest. Fourth, it accustoms students to thinking and discovering, analysing and criticising instead of negativity in accepting or rejecting opinions without any logical explanation. Fifth, it provides feedback. Sixth, it spreads the spirit of democracy, love of organization and ability to plan and gain communication skills, especially the listening and speaking skills. Seventh, it gains the learner the methods of discussion and etiquette. Eighth, it accustoms the learner to the system and respect for opinions (Al-Husari, 2003).

The dialogue and discussion strategy is used to reach a truth from the facts. It depends on success in formulating questions, conducting meaningful discussion that is reliant on both active participation towards the task and arousing students' enthusiasm and pleasure. This dialogue strategy is branched into the discussion strategy towards the task, the discussion strategy centered around the survey, the free discussion strategy, the seminar strategy, the discussion panel and bilateral discussion strategy, and the mountain discussion (Al-Duleimi, 2009).

Teaching goes in several steps according to the discussion strategy, including: presenting the problem under discussion, which results in arousing the interest of learners in the topic of the discussion discussed and conducting the discussion. This is carried out by asking the main question, identifying sub-questions related to the problem, then discussing the learners in the sub-questions that have sequentially been agreed upon. Then follows the conclusion of the discussion in which the generalisations and solutions, which are the result of the discussion session and which were proposed to address the problem presented for the discussion, are confirmed. Finally, the discussion session assessment comes, in which the teacher conducts a comprehensive assessment of all the course of the discussion session. However, this is useful when planning a meaningful discussion session in order to avoid the negative aspects of the plan or that emerged during the discussion (Abdulraheem, 2017).

The researcher argues that the use of discussion in teaching may be a successful way both to increase the effectiveness of learning and teaching towards achieving the cognitive goals at their different levels and to make the learner in the position of confrontation, challenge and participation, which makes them feel their importance as an active individual and elevates them and the educational process for the better.

## **2.2. Listening Comprehension**

The listening skills are one of the most important tools of communication that learning a language could not be carried out without. In addition, these skills have an effective role in acquiring many life skills necessary for being one of the most powerful senses that helps in understanding and perception and being a means of interaction and communication between members of society and between societies (Khojah, 2015).

Kathy, Barbara, Demela, & Susan (2004, p. 230) argue that "listening is a dynamic, interactive process that connects the audience's appropriate viewpoints, their experiences, their knowledge, and their behaviours to achieve the goals intended by listening, for it is a process of reception, meaning building, and oral/written response"

The listening process consists of cognitive skills as follows (Ashour and Al-Hawamdeh, 2010):

1. Accuracy of listening and focused attention: it is based on realising the importance of listening, its meaning and benefits, and showing this interest through inquiring by questions, following the speaker in consideration, and not interrupting the speaker.

2. Understanding the topic comprehensively: this is through careful follow-up of the speaker, awareness of the main ideas of the topic that the speaker is talking about and the relationships that link its parts. This is achieved through:

Analysis: it is the linking of what learners hear with their previous experiences and the creation of relationships between them.

Interpretation: it searches for justifications for what is heard in order to be convinced of it through discussion and inquiry, which aims to remove ambiguities and contradictions about what is heard.

Comparison: it balances the learner's beliefs, ideas, and what was mentioned in the speech.

- Criticism and assessment: it shows this by presenting points of similarity and difference between what is heard and the learner's previous knowledge; it judges what is heard objectively and in a scientific way.

- Forming a trend: after the process of understanding, criticising, analysing, and the processes that the student undertook, they can form a direction about what they have heard whether positively or negatively by not being satisfied.

The listening comprehension skills are categorized into several levels. First, the literal level whose skills include: knowing the meaning of vocabulary, knowing the main ideas and their sequence, extracting the general idea of the audio, identifying key phrases, and knowing sub-ideas. Second, the level of critical listening whose skills include: identifying the causes of the phenomenon, and distinguishing between truth and imagination, characterising patterns of propaganda and bias, judging and expressing opinion on it, and making conclusions on the topic. Third, the level of creative listening whose skills include: presenting creative proposals to improve the meaning, giving as much of the expressive words as possible, providing innovative solutions to the problems

facing it, and linking between the audible text information and previous experience, predicting a certain ending of the text on previous introductions, adding new ideas to the topic, and rebuilding the text and changing its literary shape (Madkour, 2007).

Critical listening is one of the most important types of listening because it reflects the awareness of the listener and his ability to understand the audible message. Consequently, the listener cannot make judgments and criticize the audible message unless they have high skills in listening (Engraffia, Graff, Jezuit & Schall, 1999).

The process of teaching listening goes through three general stages. First, the preparation stage where the teacher selects the topic of listening in advance, taking into account the students' tendencies and interests. The teacher also prepares the necessary means for the listening process, specifying the goal of the listening. Second, the implementation stage in which the teacher highlights the important points by recording and listening to them with the students, leaving the space for them to discuss focusing on the most important points. Third, the feedback stage through which we get to know the extent of the students' understanding of the audio. This is done through the teacher's discussion with students about what they heard, giving them the opportunity to ask questions and inquire about the audible material (Ashour and Al-Hawamdeh, 2010).

Among the teaching aids that an English language teacher can employ in teaching are the chalkboard, educational television, over-head projector, educational films, educational wallcharts, video device, posters, tape and sound tapes, flash cards, language lab, computer, real objects, samples, and models (Alhelah, 2003).

The English language teacher may seek the help of the educational means, especially technological ones, in teaching the listening skills to achieve several benefits. First, they help activating the learner's response, increasing their learning abilities, and providing them with good experiences. Second, they help the learner to provide quick and realistic feedback when dealing with the educational aid. Third, they also enrich the educational situation with developed sources of education that focus on the learner's senses and support the reference material. Fourth, they therefore support the learner's ability to link the previous information of a subject with the new information. Fifth, they additionally trigger learner's positive motivations such as the desire to learn and exclude the negative motives such as fear and punishment. Sixth, they trigger and excite the learner by enriching the educational aid by cognitive elements illustrating the key points of the topic (Al-Bukhari, 2008).

Based on the above, it can be said that there are a set of benefits for good listening that include achieving good academic achievement, increasing the ability to focus and pay attention to the teacher, avoiding distraction and passiveness, allowing everyone to express their opinion regularly, and encouraging others to participate and express their opinions.

### **3. Previous studies**

Hmeidan (2018) conducted a study aimed at revealing the impact of the dialogue and discussion strategy for teaching speaking in the English language on improving the academic listening for eleventh grade students in Jordan. The study was applied to (46) female students from the eleventh grade at Wadi Al-Seir Secondary School for Girls, where the respondents were chosen intentionally. Nonetheless, two divisions from the eleventh grade were chosen randomly; the first division classified as an experimental group consisting of (24) female students who studied according to the dialogue and discussion strategy and the second division classified as a control group consisting of (22) female students who studied in the usual way. The researcher used a tool prepared by herself that is the English listening skills test in, which is an essay test consisting of (15) listening written questions. The study results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the two arithmetic means for the performance of the study respondents on the academic listening skills in the English language combined, and on each of the six skills attributed to the teaching strategy, which was in favour of the experimental group.

Al-Zubaidi's, Al-Haddad's and Al-Wa'eli's (2012) study aimed at revealing the effect of an educational program based on the communicative approach in improving critical listening skills among students of the ninth grade. The study followed the quasi-experimental approach. To achieve the goal of the study, the educational program was built and a test in critical listening was developed after confirming its sincerity and reliability. The test was applied to a sample of (158) students, who were divided into two groups: an experimental group that which was studied according to the educational program and a control group which was studied according to the usual method. The results of the MANOVA test showed that there are statistically significant differences due to the effect of the educational program on all the critical listening skills and in favour of the experimental group.

Ma (2009) conducted a study that aimed at revealing the impact of the use of the communicative approach in developing the critical listening skills among learners of English as a second language. Ma's (2009) study followed the quasi-experimental approach. The sample of the study consisted of (89) male and female students in the intermediate stage. They were divided into two groups, a control group of (45) students studied in the usual way and an experimental group of (44) students studied according to the communicative approach. The results of the study showed statistically significant differences in the critical listening skills test in favour of the experimental group, which was studied according to the communicative approach.

Zureiqat's (2009) study came to reveal the effect of the dialogue method on developing speaking and critical

thinking skills among tenth grade students in Jordan. The study followed the quasi-experimental approach. To achieve the goals of the study, the researcher prepared two tests: one to measure speaking skills and the other to measure critical thinking skills. These two tests were applied to a sample of (60) students who were divided into two groups equally; an experimental group studied according to the dialogue method and a control group studied in the usual way. The results showed that there is a difference between the mean scores of the two groups (control and experimental) in favour of the experimental group that was studied according to the dialogue method.

Al-Zoubi (2008) conducted a study that aimed at investigating the effectiveness of an educational program on developing listening and reading comprehension among non-Arabic speaking students of Arabic language in Jordan. The study followed the quasi-experimental approach. To achieve the goals of the study, the researcher prepared the educational program and two tests for listening comprehension and reading comprehension whose consistency and reliability were confirmed. These tests were then applied to a sample of (42) male and female students who were divided into two groups: an experimental group consisting of (21) male and female students and a control group consisting of (21) non-Arabic speaking male and female students with an advanced level at the University of Jordan. The results showed statistically significant differences in favour of the experimental group in both tests.

#### **4. Method and procedures**

##### **4.1. Methodology of the Study**

This study relied on the quasi-experimental approach with the aim of measuring the impact of the discussion strategy on developing the listening comprehension skills among students of Shoubak University College. This approach relied on designing two groups: an experimental group and a control group. While the experimental group was taught according to the discussion strategy, the control group was taught in the usual way. The methodology of the present study was applied in two phases: pre (before applying the study) and post (after applying the study), then the data were statistically analysed to validate the study hypothesis.

##### **4.2. Sample of the Study**

The sample of the study consisted of (60) male and female students who are studying the English language subject (101) at Shoubak University College, where they were chosen randomly. The participants were divided into two groups: a control group (taught in the usual way) consisting of (30) male and female students and an experimental group (taught according to the discussion strategy) consisting of (30) male and female students.

##### **4.3. Study tool**

###### **4.3.1. Listening comprehension test**

The researcher has prepared a listening comprehension skills test in "How's the neighbourhood" unit in the English language subject (101) for students of Shoubak University College. The researcher has followed some steps in making the test: reviewing the previous literature related to the study, identifying the purpose of the test, identifying and analyzing the scientific material, formulating the behavioural goals, and formulating the test instructions. Where the test consisted of (27) paragraphs in its initial form, these paragraphs were formulated as optional paragraphs with four alternatives, only one is correct. The test was therefore reviewed, checked, and revised in terms of formulation, language and scientific material.

###### **4.3.1.1 Reliability of the test**

To verify the reliability of the test, it was presented to (7) arbitrators who have experience and specialization in curricula and teaching methods and in measurement and evaluation in order to ensure the suitability of the purpose for which it was prepared, and the clarity of paragraphs, and the accuracy of language drafting. The test paragraphs were modified according to the opinions of the arbitrators in terms of language drafting and modifying alternatives whether to delete or add some words to the questions until the test is composed of (25) paragraphs in its final form.

###### **4.3.1.2 Stability of the test**

Two methods were used to verify the stability indicators; the first is using test-retest, where the test was applied to a sample of (20) students who were randomly chosen from the study community and from outside its sample and the test was applied to the students themselves again and with a time interval of two weeks. The students' answers were used in estimating the stability coefficient of the test (Pearson's correlation coefficient); it reached (0.77). The internal consistency of the paragraphs was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha equation; it reached (0.75). The difficulty coefficients were also calculated for each of the test paragraphs, and they ranged between (0.35) - (0.80). The discrimination coefficients were calculated, and they ranged between (0.25 - 0.78).

#### **5. Results**

Results related to the study hypothesis (i.e. there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the mean scores of the students of the experimental group studying the unit (How's the neighbourhood?) according to the discussion strategy and the control group that studies the same unit in the usual way in the post-application of the English listening comprehension skills test in favour of the experimental

group).

To answer the study hypothesis, the researcher calculated the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the students' responses to the listening comprehension skills pre- and post-tests in both study groups (experimental, control). Table (1) illustrates this.

Table 1. Arithmetic means and standard deviations for students' responses in the study groups (experimental and control) on the listening comprehension test

Group	Sample size	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Control	30	6.97	2.03	13.70	3.0
Experimental	30	7.40	2.03	18.77	3.65
Total	60	7.18	2.02	16.22	4.20

It is clear from Table (1) that there are apparent differences between the arithmetic means for students' responses to the listening comprehension skills pre- and post-tests in both study groups (experimental and control). Whereas the experimental group which was studied by the discussion strategy came with a mean of (18.77) and a standard deviation of (3.65), the control group which was studied in the usual way came with a mean of (13.70) and a standard deviation of (3.0).

In order to verify the significance of the differences between the arithmetic means, a One-Way Analysis of Covariance (ONE WAY ANCOVA) was performed for female students' responses to the listening comprehension skills test for both study groups according to the teaching method. Table 2. shows these results.

Table 2. Results of the ANCOVA for the responses of the study respondents on the listening comprehension skills test

Source of variance	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F Value	Significance level	Magnitude of effect
Method of Teaching	351.318	1	351.318	34.657	0.000*	0.378
Pre-test	68.220	1	68.220	6.730	0.012	
Error	577.813	57	10.137			
Total	60	16815.5000				

It is noted from the results shown in Table (2) that the value of (F) for the teaching method in teaching the experimental study group reached (34,657), as the level of significance of which was (0.000), indicating a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). What this indicates is that there are statistically significant differences between students' responses to the listening comprehension skills test due to the variable of the teaching method. The magnitude of effect of the program reached (0.378), which is a high magnitude of effect. This means an improvement in the students' level of listening comprehension skills and the effectiveness of the discussion strategy in developing listening comprehension skills.

Arithmetic means and standard deviations for students' responses in both study groups (control and experimental) were calculated on the dimensions of the listening comprehension skills test. Table (3) shows these results.

Table 3. Arithmetic averages and standard deviations for students' responses in both study groups (control and experimental) on the dimensions of the listening comprehension skills test.

Dimension	Group	Number	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Interpretation	Experimental	30	3.93	0.175
	Control	30	3.27	0.175
Analysis	Experimental	30	3.86	0.176
	Control	30	3.07	0.176
Deduction	Experimental	30	4.41	0.250
	Control	30	3.10	0.250
Assessment	Experimental	30	2.96	0.168
	Control	30	1.88	0.168
Comparison	Experimental	30	3.50	0.171
	Control	30	2.51	0.171

It is noted from the results in Table (3) that there are apparent differences in the arithmetic means for students' responses to the dimensions of the listening comprehension skills test. As the dimension of deduction showed the highest arithmetic mean of (4.41), the dimension of interpretation followed in the second place with an arithmetic mean of (3.93). Then, the dimension of analysis came in the third place with an arithmetic mean of

(3.86) followed by the dimension of comparison in the fourth place with an arithmetic mean of (3.50). Finally, the dimension of assessment came in the fifth place with the lowest arithmetic mean of (2.96).

A Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) was run for students' responses on the dimensions of the listening comprehension skills pre-test according to the method of teaching in both study groups. This was carried out to verify the effect of using the teaching strategies (discussion strategy and usual strategy) on the dimensions of the listening comprehension skills for the participants of the study sample. Table (4) shows the results of this analysis.

Table 4. Results of MANCOVA to test the effect of the method of teaching on the respondents' responses for each dimension of the listening comprehension skills dimensions.

Source of variance	Dimension	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F Value	Significance level
<b>Pre-test</b>	Interpretation	0.865	1	0.865	0.961	0.331
	Analysis	1.494	1	1.494	1.641	0.206
	Deduction	9.585	1	9.585	5.232	0.026
	Assessment	0.961	1	0.961	1.157	0.287
	Comparison	3.783	1	3.783	4.416	0.040
<b>Method of teaching</b>	Interpretation	6.155	1	6.155	6.837	*0.012
	Analysis	9.055	1	9.055	9.944	*0.003
	Deduction	25.142	1	25.142	13.725	*0.001
	Assessment	16.658	1	16.658	20.059	*0.000
	Comparison	13.194	1	13.194	15.404	*0.000
<b>Error</b>	Interpretation	47.714	53	0.900		
	Analysis	48.626	53	0.911		
	Deduction	97.083	53	1.832		
	Assessment	44.013	53	0.830		
	Comparison	45.398	53	0.857		
<b>Total</b>	Interpretation	58.400	59			
	Analysis	60.933	59			
	Deduction	153.250	59			
	Assessment	64.583	59			
	Comparison	72.983	59			

Table (4) shows that the value of (F) was (6.837, 9.944, 13.725, 20.059, 15.404) for the five test dimensions in a row and the level of significance was (0.012, 0.003, 0.001, 0.000, 0.000), indicating that there are statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). This is attributed to the teaching method on the five test dimension paragraphs with each paragraph separately, and it is in favour of the experimental study group with a higher arithmetic mean.

## 6. Discussion of the results

Discussion of the results related to the study hypothesis which states "there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the mean scores of the students of the experimental group studying the unit (How's the neighbourhood?) according to the discussion strategy and the control group studying the same unit in the usual way in the post-application of the test of the listening comprehension skills in the English language in favour of the experimental group."

The results showed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups in the post application of the listening comprehension skills test, which were in favour of the experimental group.

The researcher attributes this result to focusing the discussion strategy on the learner, developing their thinking skills, and providing opportunities for discussion and exchange of views, so the student searches and collects information, then discusses, interprets, applies, and participates with their colleagues in various activities. As a result, this leads to linking the previous experiences with the new learning experiences. Besides, it contributed to the development of the learner's ideas and to the development of the learner's skills of analysis, interpretation, assessment, and deduction. Also, the various activities and assessment methods that were employed in the discussion strategy helped to create an active learning environment within the classroom, to brainstorm and interact experiences between the learners themselves and the teacher, and to create various educational situations. All of this had a prominent role in refining the capabilities of the students of the experimental group,



which resulted in increasing their understanding and comprehension.

The results also showed the presence of statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) attributive to the method of teaching on the paragraphs of the five test dimensions with each paragraph separately, and in favour of the experimental group with a higher arithmetic mean.

The researcher attributes this result to the interactive technical tools and multimedia included in the strategy used in teaching the experimental group, as it brought together many stimulants such as written and read texts, sound effects, images, coloured graphics, and animations, in addition to links to video clips on YouTube, other links to enrichment sites on the internet, and other elements supporting the educational process. Consequently, students of this group were provided with opportunities to confront unfamiliar educational situations. Moreover, these aids contributed to providing educational material in an interactive way that worked on the students' interaction with attitudes and educational experiences. These aids also encouraged the students to participate in the educational process effectively, to practise activities, and to execute tasks, thus retaining, absorbing, and applying the scientific knowledge in new situations to a greater extent than what the students of the control group usually did.

The results of the study showed that the magnitude of effect for the independent variable (discussion strategy) on the listening comprehension skills test in the English language is great, as it reached (0.378), which indicates that teaching by using the discussion strategy has had positive results on improving the level of the students' acquisition of the listening comprehension skills.

This result is in line with those of Zureiqat (2009), Al-Zoubi (2008), and Hmeidan (2018), where the results of these studies showed a statistically significant effect of the discussion strategy in developing the listening comprehension skills and their sub-dimensions, and it was in favour of the students of the experimental group.

## 7. Recommendations

In light of the results of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Adopting the skills that were arrived at through the present study and starting from them when building curricula for the English language for the university level.
2. Including the discussion strategy in the English language curriculum for the benefit of teachers during the teaching process.
3. Conducting an analytical study of the content of the undergraduate English curriculum in light of the listening comprehension skills.
4. Conducting more research and studies aimed at investigating the impact of using the discussion strategy on other variables such as writing skills, reading comprehension skills, and creative thinking skills.

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### Author Information

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**Waddah Mahmmoud AlBdour**  
Al Balqaa Applied University, Jordan

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