



Utilizing Elaboration Strategy for Developing EFL Speaking Skills of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The current research aimed at developing some EFL speaking skills among first-year secondary school students through using elaboration strategy. Thirty participants were drawn from a secondary school in Menoufia. Participants of the study were exposed to pre/post-tests design. Three main instruments were utilized: an EFL speaking skills checklist, an EFL pre/post speaking skills test and a rubric for scoring the EFL speaking skills. For the statistical analysis, t-test for paired samples has been used to compare the mean scores of the obtained data. The program based on using the elaboration strategy for developing EFL speaking strategy was applied to the participants during the first semester of the academic year 2023/2024. Results of the qualities and quantities analysis revealed that the participants demonstrated improvement in EFL speaking skills. Their speaking level has been developed significantly as a result of using the study program. Therefore, it can be concluded that using elaboration strategy has a positive effect on developing EFL speaking skills among secondary school students. The present research may draw the attention of the EFL teachers to use the elaboration strategy in the EFL classroom.

Keywords: Elaboration strategy, speaking skills, Secondary school students.

استخدام استراتيجيات التوضيح لتنمية مهارات التحدث للغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية

الملخص

استهدف البحث الحالي التعرف على فاعلية استخدام استراتيجيات التجزئة فى تنمية مهارة الاستماع للغة الانجليزية كلفة أجنبية لدى طلاب الصف الأول الثانوى من مدرسة بابل الثانوية بمحافظة المنوفية. وقد تم استخدام التصميم شبه التجريبي من خلال مجموعة تجريبية (قبلية وبعدي) . وبلغ عدد أفراد العينة (٣٠) طالب مقيد بالصف الأول الثانوى . واشتملت أدوات الدراسة على قائمة مهارات الاستماع للغة الانجليزية كلفة أجنبية اللازمة لطلاب الصف الأول الثانوى، واختبار مهارات الاستماع فى اللغة الانجليزية لطلاب الصف الأول الثانوى. وتم تطبيق اختبار الاستماع قبليا على أفراد العينة , ثم التدريس لهم باستخدام استراتيجيات التجزئة، وتم إجراء الدراسة فى الفصل الدراسى الأول من العام الدراسى ٢٠٢٣/٢٠٢٤ . ثم تم إجراء التطبيق البعدى لاختبار الاستماع. وكشفت نتائج الدراسة عن وجود فروق دالة احصائيا بين متوسطات درجات الطلاب فى القياس القبلى والقياس البعدى على كل المهارات الأساسية والدرجة الكلية للاختبار الاستماع للغة الانجليزية، مما يدل على فاعلية استخدام استراتيجيات التجزئة فى تنمية مهارات الاستماع للغة الانجليزية كلفة أجنبية لدى طلاب الصف الأول الثانوى. وبناء على النتائج يوصى الباحث باستخدام استراتيجيات التجزئة لتنمية مهارات الاستماع فى اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات مفتاحية : استراتيجيات التجزئة , مهارة الاستماع للغة الانجليزية , طلاب المرحلة الثانوية

Introduction

The purpose of learning English is to communicate in the real world. The principal goal of teaching a foreign language is to enable learners to use it for authentic communication inside and outside classroom. Communication is a two-way process that consists of receiving information and responding to it. Receiving information covers listening and reading, whereas speaking and writing are productive skills. A person is considered to have a good command of language when he speaks fluently and writes effectively. Oral communication skills involve listening and speaking which are the vital needed skills for EFL learners. Thus, the mastery of speaking skills should be a priority for the majority of foreign language learners and teachers. English speaking as a foreign language is not an easy task because speakers should be aware of many components including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Speaking is an oral communication skill. Speaking skills refer to the ability to communicate with others, achieve a certain goal, convey a message or express opinions and hopes. According to Yousef (2016) speaking, as a productive skill, is an essential tool for communication and learning. It is the target skill in both first and foreign languages. Speaking is the ability to carry out conversations. It shapes and organizes thought. Through speaking, students learn concepts, develop vocabulary and perceive the structure and the essential component of the target language. Speaking is not only a fundamental language skill. Also, Sayin (2015) indicated that speaking is an important activity for one's success in life. And students who possess an oral language base most probably have an academic success.

There are some speaking main skills and sub-skills involved in the speaking ability. These speaking main skills include pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, accuracy and comprehension. Pronunciation is the way language sounds are produced in the form of clear oral words and sentences. Vocabulary is the total number of words which a learner of language uses to express his/her ideas. Grammar knowledge include the ability to understand how words are used to form sentences. That is, grammar competence is the ability to function a certain language structures in a situation. Fluency is the ability to produce oral language in an understandable and perfect way without

undue hesitations or pausing. Accuracy is the ability to produce error-free speech that involves the correct use of pronunciation, vocabulary and structure. Comprehension is the process of understanding of the speech uttered by other speakers (Wang, 2014 ; Sayin, 2015 & Gad, 2018).

The most difficult challenge in learning English is speaking fluently with certain features of having clear connection of ideas (Brown, 2001 and Zubizarreta, 2017). The limited speaking skills in the Egyptian schools are due to shyness, lack of appropriate language (vocabulary and structures), lack of confidence and having nothing to say (Mostafa, 2002). Another reason that makes it difficult for Egyptian students to learn is that students do not take the appropriate chances to speak in class. Teachers in many Egyptian EFL classes do most of the activities, so learners have few opportunities to communicate and practice the oral language (Abdelhalim, 2004).

Speaking is essential for communication regardless of the different forms of communication that may exist. To learn language, teachers should expose students to the target language, teach them to understand its meaning, understand its form, and the most essential of all practice it. Students should be exposed to the target language in a natural manner so they can develop it in a real situation. Withdrawal from this interaction as a result of high level of English language anxiety has the most harmful effect of English language speaking ability. Activities to enhance speaking skills should include: talking sharing in conversations, giving a speech or a lecture, telling a story, and telling someone how to do something (Harmer, 2013).

According to Derakhshan (2016), speaking can be improved by games and role play, Evidence showed that speaking should incorporate activities in group work. Role play is one of the methods that enable learners to improve a range of real-life spoken language in the classroom. For example, the teacher chooses a conversation from a book and after repeating aloud with students, teacher asked some students to be volunteers in role play. This activity can help students to overcome their shyness, fear, and anxiety. Learners can listen and practice phrases that are used in speech acts. Speakers should be familiar with the culture of the native speakers to be enabled to use target language which is socially and culturally acceptable by native users. To achieve this goal, it

is imperative to figure out the sociolinguistic side of language which enables learners to distinguish appropriate comments and hints in the target language.

Elaboration is a cognitive strategy which individuals use in processing information to be well encoded and stored in the long-term memory. Therefore, elaboration is a memory strategy that involves some components such as sequencing, summarizing, synthesis, analogy, activation, note-taking, inferring and transference. There are some stages involved in elaborating strategy. These stages are setting the goals, presenting the new materials, framing the content, reading and creating questions, explaining parts and summarizing. Efficient EFL learners use elaborating strategy for better encoding and storage in the memory for better recall later (Tay, 2013 & Ashri, 2018).

Bagheri and Fazel (2010) mentioned that memory strategies are to be recommended to teachers in EFL classes include elaboration, mental imagery, mnemonics, organization and rehearsal. Elaboration assists encoding and retrieval of new information because it links new information to older information. Ways to elaborate include generally self-reference examples and constructing meaningful sentences, for example, to remember how to spell the word 'yacht' students can use elaboration to make a meaningful sentence using such a word.

Bridges (2013) pointed out that there are some types of elaboration as follows:

1. Processing elaboration: Previously multiple examples should be given when introducing new concepts which helps students encode and later recall information.
2. Interrogative elaboration: Learning is improved when readers are asked to answer questions about intended or specified information. In doing so, they read/learn, they interrogate new information with prior knowledge in order to reconstruct more meaningful knowledge.
3. Rehearsal elaboration: Learning is improved when rehearsal techniques such as mnemonics are used to elaborate information. It leads to deepen and more varied encoding activities.

According to Levin (1988), elaboration is the process of encoding the original content in a different, but related way. There are two kinds of elaboration, verbal and nonverbal. Wood et al., (1990) indicated that elaboration strategy is where students use elements of what is to be learned with existing information and expands them. Students expand the target information by relating it to other information, such as creating, phrasing, summarizing, and so on. Also, Richard (1997) mentioned that elaboration strategy refers the process of moving the material from short-term memory into long-term memory by linking new material with material that has been known before.

Also, Kalyuga (2009) stated that elaboration refers to the process of expanding on new information based on what one already knows. This is often beneficent in enhancing learning and remembering something more efficiently. In this context, Tay (2013) pointed out that elaboration means to tell the reader to expand on the evidence, give more details, and explain the reasoning behind the evidence since information can be processed at different levels of elaboration. Moreover, Bridges (2016) defined elaboration as a cognitive strategy that involves enhancement of information that clarifies or specifies the relationship between information to be learned and related information. Examples of elaboration are analogy, identifying details, imagery, summary or any other mental construction.

Thus, elaboration is not just repeating information over and over, but searching for deeper meanings. Some sort of memory is to recall attached information to a term or a piece of storage information. Through this process the storage of information is much more efficient in acquiring much more information than with elaborative rehearsal. Examples of elaboration include such activities like writing, summaries, concept mapping, self-questioning and other instructional procedures. Learners should compose new words, sentences, beliefs and experience as well as topics presented in the passage (Willoughby et al., 2017).

Broadly speaking, elaboration strategy is where students use elements of what is to be learned and expands them. There are seven components of elaboration suggested by Reigeluth (1993). These components are elaboration sequence, ordering of prerequisite learning, synthesis, paraphrasing, inferring, analogy, activation of cognitive strategy. Also, Bridges (2016) indicated that there are some sub skills of elaboration

including: Interpreting, summarizing, making analogies, taking notes, paraphrasing, inferring, transferring, asking and answering, and writing questions. Students expands the target information by relating other information to it (e.g. creating a phrase or making an analogy).

Elaboration strategy assists encoding and retrieval of new information because it links new information to older one, for example, to remember the word "rendezvous", it is better to use it in a meaningful sentence. Elaboration strategy processing can help an individual anticipate future situation and work out solution to current problems. This connection can support their learning of new information. Also, elaboration strategy creates connection, or bridge to information to be learned. Another way to elaborate is to ask questions and to find answers to the posed questions. Here, students relate what they already know to the new information. Thus, Elaboration strategy can be a powerful instrumental tool in the EFL classrooms (Bridges, 2016).

Tay (2013) pointed out that there are seven principles included in using elaboration strategy:

1. Presenting of the content framework.
2. Executing elaboration gradually.
3. The most important part is to be first presented.
4. Optimal coverage of elaboration.
5. Presentation of the syntheses gradually.
6. Presenting type synthesize.
7. Stages of granting summary.

In this context, Willoughby et al. (2017) mentioned that there are some of elaboration strategies including:

1. Setting the goal.
2. Presenting new material.
3. Framing the content.
4. Reading and creating questions.

5. Explaining parts and summarizing.

Based on the above information, the current study will function elaboration steps as elaborated. The steps which were suggested by Willoughby et al. (2017) are most commonly used in the study program. Such steps explain what are exactly required from the learner and the teacher to do. The activities included in other elaboration steps are also of great usefulness and importance when performing the sessions of the program. Such activities are to help student practice and improve their speaking skills.

In conclusion, speaking skills are the most important skills in the foreign or second language learning; however, these skills are most often neglected in the Egyptian schools in spite of the recent curricula orientations that focus the attention towards the significance of oral communication skills. Besides, most of the previous related studies indicate the effectiveness of using elaboration strategies in developing various EFL skills, especially speaking. The essence of the suggested program is stemmed from the theory of the information processing. It is the theory that emphasizes the use of cognitive strategies for enhancing the memory pathways as a foundation to apply effective and profitable learning. The current study intends to develop EFL speaking skills among first-year secondary school students through the use of elaboration strategy.

Context of the problem

Out of the researcher's experience in the field of EFL teaching and supervision, he observed the low level of students in speaking skills. In addition, students lack motivation towards achieving progress in speaking; instead, they do their best to excel in reading and writing. Most of the teachers in secondary schools do not give oral skills the due attention, because these skills are not parts of the school examinations. Rarely are students given opportunities to listen to native speakers of English or express themselves freely in classroom.

Despite the importance of EFL speaking skills for secondary school students as elaborated above, many studies revealed that there is a problem in acquiring these skills because these skills are not given the enough concern at school. Such studies include (Yousef, 2001; Ali,

2010; Elsiedy, 2011; Abedelhady, 2013; Syomwene, 2013; Mansy, 2014 & Youssef, 2019). Most recommendations of these studies indicate that students should be given more attention to the EFL speaking skills in class.

To document the problem, a pilot study was conducted. An EFL speaking skills test by Saleem (2015) was administered to a sample of 16 EFL first-year secondary school students. The students' performance was recorded by using a speaking rubric. The results of applying the test revealed that the EFL students' scores on the sub skills of the test were 35.93 % for grammar, 14.06 % for pronunciation, 43.75 % for vocabulary, 17.18 % for fluency, and 24.7 for comprehension. The average score for the whole test was 27.73 %. To conclude, first-year secondary school students demonstrated a low level of performance on the EFL speaking skills.

Statement of the problem

The problem of the study lies in the low level of EFL speaking skills among first-year secondary school students. Therefore, the present study attempted to investigate the effectiveness of using elaboration strategy to develop EFL speaking skills among first-year secondary school students.

Questions of the study

To address the problem, the current study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the EFL speaking skills required for the first-year secondary school students?
2. What is the effectiveness of using elaboration strategy in developing EFL speaking skills among the first-year secondary school students ?

Study Hypothesis

1. There is a statically significant differences at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in "grammar skill" on the pre and post-test in favour of the post-test.
2. There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in

"pronunciation skill" on the pre and post-test in favour of the post-test.

3. There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in "vocabulary skill" on the pre and post-test in favour of the post-test.
4. There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in "fluency skill" on the pre and post-test in favour of the post-test.
5. There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in "comprehension skill" on the pre and post-test in favour of the post-test.
6. There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post EFL overall speaking test in favor of the post-test.

Method

Participants

Participants of the study were drawn from secondary school students. They consisted of thirty first-year secondary school students enrolled at Babel secondary school in Menoufia at the first semester of the scholastic year 2023/2024.

Design

The present study combined both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data. To conduct the quantitative analysis, pre and post experimental group design was used. The study sample were exposed to tests before and after conducting the study program. And then, qualitative analyses of their performances were provided.

Instruments and materials

1. An EFL speaking skills checklists for first-year secondary school students. by the researcher
2. An EFL speaking skills pre-posttest test, by the researcher

3. A rubric for scoring the EFL speaking performance, by the researcher
4. A teacher's guide for implementing elaboration strategy for developing EFL speaking skills.

The EFL speaking skills checklist.

The EFL speaking skills checklist was designed for identifying the EFL speaking skills required for the first-year secondary school students. Thus, the EFL speaking skills have been reviewed in the related literature and previous studies, such as Jin (2002), Rost (2002), Kim & Kang (2015) Sayin (2015), Seleem (2015) and Bao (2017).

Description of the EFL speaking checklist

The EFL speaking checklist involved the main skills and subskills needed for the first-year secondary school students. The final version of the checklist includes these skills: grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

Validity of the checklists

The EFL speaking skills checklist was developed and submitted to a number of jury members specialized in EFL curriculum and instruction at the Menoufia, Benha and Zagazig faculties of education (n = 10). The jury determined the most important skills needed for the first-year secondary school student. The professors were requested to judge whether the EFL speaking main skills and subskills were suitable for the participants of the study, and to identify the importance of each skill. Jury members provided some recommendations and orientations which the researcher has taken into account, and changed as required, based on such orientations.

EFL speaking skills test

Purpose of the test

The EFL speaking skills test was designed to measure the secondary school students' main EFL skills speaking (grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension) before and after implementing the proposed program.

Sources of the test

The EFL pre and post speaking skills tests was developed in light of the national curriculum framework for English for secondary school (2023), in addition to the British Council speaking material available at englishonline.britishcouncil.org. Besides, the researcher made use of the review of literature related to speaking skills such as Richards (2008), Kim& Kang (2015), Seleem (2015), Bao (2017) and Gad (2018).

Description of the test

The test consists of five parts for measuring the main EFL speaking skills. These main skills are: grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The test is to be conducted individually. The oral production of the students should be recorded by the examiner, to be interpreted by the researcher and the co-rater. Each student come individually and sit in a comfortable place. The researcher asks him or her to talk about some certain topics related to their interests. Students talk freely and comfortably to express themselves. The students' speech is recorded and analyzed afterwards.

Validity of the test

To validate the EFL speaking test, it was submitted to a jury of ten staff members specialized in curriculum and EFL instruction. They were asked to judge the suitability of the test for the students' level in terms of difficulty and length, and decide whether each item measures the intended main skills. Besides, the jury members were requested to decide whether the EFL speaking skills are suitable for the participants of the study, and identify the importance of each skill. They were also requested to add remarks, comments and modifications or delete the inappropriate parts. Jury members gave some recommendations and orientations which the researcher has taken into account, and changed as required, based on such orientations.

Reliability of the test

The test-retest method was used to investigate the reliability of the EFL speaking skills test. The test was administered to 25 first-year secondary school students at Tala educational administration, Menoufia. Two weeks later, the same test was readministered to the same students. The

Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated and the correlation value was (0.724) for the whole EFL speaking test which is significant at (0.01) level.

Delimitations of the study

- The present study will be limited to:
- Thirty participants of first-year secondary school students.
- EFL speaking skills required for first-year secondary school students (grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency and coprehension .
- The elaboration strategy.

Definition of terms

Speaking skill

Kayi (2006) defines speaking skill as "the process of building and sharing of meaning through the use of verbal symbols. It is a crucial part of second language learning".

According to Wang (2019) "speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves receiving and producing information. It is an essential pillar to building up the communication and interaction competencies of foreign language learners".

Zubizarreta (2017) indicated that speaking is the process of sending and receiving messages through the use of verbal expression.

In the present study, speaking skill can be defined operationally as the ability of first-year secondary school students to express themselves in English, establish effective dialogue with others and convey oral messages with a degree of proficiency in pronunciation, fluency, use of words, grammar and comprehension".

Elaboration strategy

Kalyuga (2009) stated that elaboration refers to the process of expanding on new information based on what one already knows. This is often beneficent in enhancing learning and remembering something more efficiently.

According to Bridges (2016) elaboration is a cognitive strategy that involves enhancement of information that clarifies or specifies the relationship between information to be learned and related information. Examples of elaboration are analogy, identifying details, imagery, summary or any other mental construction.

Also, Tay (2013) defined elaboration as a cognitive strategy which refers to the process of moving information and material from working memory to long-term memory by linking new material with the material that has been known through some processes like sequencing, summarizing, synthesis, analogy, inferring and transferring.

In the present study elaboration can be defined as the ability of first-year secondary school students to express deeper understanding of what they learn through providing examples, adding details, taking notes, summarizing and paraphrasing. It is a cognitive process of expanding on new information based on what one already knows.

Results of the study

The results of the study were statistically analyzed in light of the hypotheses of the study. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 has been functioned in the statistical analysis. The paired sample t-test for one group was used. Six hypotheses are to be introduced as follows:

Verifying Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one states that "There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post-test of grammar skill in favor of the post-test".

The table below shows that the t-value was calculated for the paired samples of one group. The t-value indicates that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of students of the experimental group in pre and post-test in the grammar skill. The effect size (η^2) was calculated so as to find the effect size of the experimental group intervention on grammar skill.

Table (1): The t-value and significance difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group on the grammar skill.

	Group	N	Means	S.D	D.F	t-value	Sig.	η^2
Grammar	Pre	30	2.466	1.224	29	4.551	0.01	0.830
	Post	30	3.133	1.306				

The above table shows that there is a statistically significant different between the mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post administrations of "grammar skill" in favor of the post-test, since the t-value is (4.551) which is significant at the (0.01) level. In addition, the effect size of the experimental group treatment (η^2) amounted to (0.830) which is greater than (0.80). Thus, the first hypothesis is supported.

Verifying Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two states that "There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post-test of pronunciation skill in favor of the post-test".

The table below shows that the t-value was calculated for the paired samples for one group. The t-value indicates that there is a statistical significant difference between the mean scores of students of the experimental group in pre and post-test in the pronunciation skill. The effect size (η^2) was calculated so as to find the effect size of the experimental group treatment on vocabulary skill.

Table (2): The t-value and significance difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group on the pronunciation skill.

	Group	N	Means	S.D	D.F	t-value	Sig.	η^2
Pronunciation	Pre	30	2.566	1.456	29	4.475	0.01	0.817
	Post	30	3.400	1.162				

The above table shows that there is a statistically difference between the mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post administrations of the "pronunciation skill" in favor of the post-test, since the t-value is (4.575) which is significant at the (0.01) level. In addition, the effect size of the experimental group treatment (η^2) amounted to (0.817) which is greater than (0.80). Thus, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

Verifying Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three states that "There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post-test of vocabulary skill in favor of the post-test".

The table below shows that the t-value was calculated for the paired samples of one experimental group. The t-value indicates that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of students of the experimental group in pre and post-test in the "vocabulary skill". The effect size (η^2) was calculated so as to find the effect size of the experimental group treatment on vocabulary skill.

Table (3): The t-value and significance difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group on the vocabulary skill.

	Group	N	Means	S.D	D.F	t-value	Sig.	η^2
Vocabulary	Pre	30	2.766	1.278	29	4.626	0.01	0.844
	Post	30	3.500	1.224				

The above table shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post administrations of "vocabulary skill" in favor of the post-test since the t-value is (4.626) which is significant at the (0.01) level. In addition, the effect size of the experimental group treatment (η^2) amounted to (0.844) which is greater than (0.80). Thus, the third hypothesis is accepted.

Verifying Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis four states that "There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post-test of fluency skill in favor of the post-test".

The table below shows that the t-value was calculated for the paired samples for one group. The t-value indicates the difference between the mean scores of students of the experimental group in pre and post-test in the "fluency skill". The effect size (η^2) was calculated so as to find the effect size of the experimental group treatment on the fluency skill.

Table (4): The t-value and significance difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group on the fluency skill.

	Group	N	Means	S.D	D.F	t-value	Sig.	η^2
Fluency	Pre	30	2.133	1.282	29	4.558	0.01	0.832
	Post	30	2.933	1.460				

The above table shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post-test of "fluency skill" in favor of the post-test, since the t- value is (4.558) which is significance at the (0.01) level. In addition, the effect size (η^2) of the treatment amounted to (0.832) which is greater than (0.80). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed.

Verifying Hypothesis Five

Hypothesis three states that "There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post-test of comprehension skill in favor of the post-test".

The table below shows that the t- value was calculated for the paired samples for two groups. The t- value indicates the differences between the mean scores of students of the experimental group in pre and post in comprehension skill. The effect size (η^2) was calculated so as to find the effect size of the experimental group treatment on the comprehension skill.

Table (5): The t-value and significance difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group on the comprehension skill.

	Group	N	Means	S.D	D.F	t-value	Sig.	η^2
Comprehension	Pre	30	3.266	1.928	29	4.642	0.01	0.847
	Post	30	4.166	1.913				

The above table shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post administrations of "comprehension skill" in favor of the post-test, since the t-value is (4.642) which is significance at the (0.01) level. In

addition, the effect size (η^2) amounted to (0.847) which is greater than (0.80). Thus, the fifth hypothesis is accepted.

Verifying Hypothesis Six

The six hypothesis states that "There is a statically significant difference at the (0.05) level between the mean scores of the experimental group in pre and post-test overall EFL speaking test in favor of the post-test".

The table below shows that the t-value was calculated for the paired samples for one group. The t-value indicates the differences between the mean scores of students of the experimental group in pre and post-test of the overall EFL speaking skills. The effect size (η^2) was calculated so as to find the effect size of the experimental group treatment on speaking skills as a whole.

Table (6): The t-value and significance difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group on the EFL speaking skills test as a whole.

	Group	N	Means	S.D	D.F	t-value	Sig.	η^2
Overall EFL speaking skills test	Pre	30	13.4667	5.35456	29	4.725	0.01	0.862
	Post	30	16.7333	5.97081				

The above table shows that there is a statistically difference at the (0.01) level between the mean scores of experimental group in the pre and post administrations of the whole EFL speaking skills test in favor of the post administration as the t-value is (4.725) which is significant at the (0.01) level. In addition, the effect size (η^2) of the experimental group treatment on the speaking skills performance amounted to (0.862) which is greater than (0.80). Thus, the hypothesis (6) is supported.

The Qualitative analysis of the results

Qualitative analysis of the obtained data helps the researcher to get a deeper understanding and insight into the influence of the program on the students' EFL speaking skills. Qualitative analysis can be interpreted and used in many ways, both to be used as a measure of quality and as the bases for analysis. The researcher manipulated the results of the high

level of the students in the EFL speaking main skills and explained the main reasons for such improvement in the target skills.

The elaboration strategy focuses on changing the students' mentality by equipping them with activities that can be applied in a comfortable environment so as to make processing instructional presentations by teaching them how to be engaged in appropriate cognitive processing during learning. The elaboration strategy also supported the students and helped them overcome the barrier of acquiring the language fluency and distinguishing between the necessary and unnecessary information one part to another. In addition, the results are indicators and supportive of merging the learning strategies in the English class.

In addition, the analysis of the obtained findings helps the researcher grasp the apparent improvements in the experimental group performance. Thus, the results can be discussed in light of the hypothesis of the study and the related studies. Thus, the elaboration strategy is organized and represented the relationships between parts of the whole speaking skills. Speaking skills mainly include grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension skills.

Grammar skill

Teachers focus a lot on grammatical structures, however, some students at the secondary schools needed remedial work on grammar areas , especially, when speaking. Through mental elaboration strategy, students were asked to rephrase the oral sentences. After students follow the seven-step of elaboration strategy, it was noted that the students could understand the reasons for their grammar mistakes, which allowed them to maintain better attention in the classroom afterwards. Also, using elaboration strategy gave the students the opportunity to identify the types of mistakes they committed, and how to overcome such mistakes. Students are requested to change the activities, places and locations regularly so as to have the ability to link new information with their experience.

Gradually, the students began to maintain a high level of grammar-free utterance. In addition, they were able to share their ideas with their friends using think, pair and share strategy. Their answer became more accurate and they could explain more about their common mistakes in

grammar and structures. In the post administration, students could answer the questions and judge whether the evidence is strong or weak. Most of them no longer repeat the same errors. They could express their mind with error-free utterance to a great extent.

Pronunciation skill

When the students first were asked to speak fluently, they felt awkward and worried. They found it difficult to give the correct pronunciation of words and sentences at the real speed of native speakers. They often stop and repeat some words. They often pronounce incorrectly. They asked to repeat the audio more than once, and they wanted to listen to separate segments at a time. Instead of listening to the whole article one time. Most of them didn't feel comfortable with the normal speed of the audio. They needed it to be played much slower.

First, the researcher encouraged them to relax using elaboration strategy. The researcher explained the most prominent problems of language transference. The researcher highlighted the differences between the similar sounds of the Arabic and the English languages, and why Egyptian learners find it difficult to pronounce English sounds like voiceless sounds such as /p/, /v/, /k/, /t/. In addition, the various range of vowel sounds with elaborated examples to show the differences between the similar ones in words such as (put – pot), (mad – made), (bought – boat) and so forth. Then, there was an evident improvement in the students' performance in recognizing word stress and sentence stress through utilizing the elaboration strategy.

Vocabulary skill

In the beginning, student found it difficult to express their mind using the appropriate words in the appropriate place. They often misplaced words. When asked to speak fluently, they often stop and repeat some words. In the beginning, the researcher encouraged them to relax using relaxation technique. He explained the most prominent problems of language transference. The researcher highlighted the importance of selecting the appropriate vocabulary in giving the exact meaning and delivering the correct message. Gradually students began to be familiar with the different types of the English vocabulary. They began to feel less worried. Dividing the audio into meaningful segments helped the

students to grasp the meaning of every chunk separately, then combine chunks into a whole to rephrase the content verbally.

Fluency skill

The most common problem facing students is speaking fluency. In the beginning, it was noted that the students were not able to speak smoothly. They made mistakes in grammar and pronunciation. Most of them repeat some words and phrases. They pause a lot. They are often reluctant to speak up. In addition, many students could not provide examples, descriptions, reasons or facts easily. However, upon being taught how to speak smoothly using elaboration strategy, students could break the barriers of anxiety. The students were taught how to describe the surrounding scenes. It is evident that there is some sort of improvement in the performance of the students after they were exposed to the treatment.

Comprehension skill

Before implementing the proposed elaboration strategy, students could not communicate smoothly. They found it difficult to exchange the roles in the conversations. In responding to some given situations.

Such answers indicate that they did not fully understand the situation. Through using the elaboration strategy, students gradually began to understand the core situations. They were given some problems to solve, and they were asked then: "what would you do to the same child ? ". They began to understand the core questions. Attempting to activate the students' schemata was a key to help them how obtain full understanding of more complicated situations. The researcher used some short stories with evident situations or complicated scenes. They were given hints to deal with such situations or scenes.

Conclusion

The present study investigated the implementation of elaboration strategy to develop EFL speaking and among a sample of first-year secondary school students. The finding of the study guided the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the elaboration strategy provided for developing EFL speaking skills. Consequently, the significant differences that were found between the experimental in the

pre and post-test in favor of the post-test can be attributed to the implementation of the elaboration strategy program which has proved to be effective. Based on the above results, it can be stated that the first-year secondary school students' EFL speaking skills were improved as a result of the implementation of elaboration strategy.

Recommendations of the study

EFL speaking main skills should be given more attention in the EFL classes.

1. The EFL teachers should encourage their students to apply and utilize the elaboration strategy in their EFL classes.
2. Teacher should be provided with the main lists of the speaking skills required for secondary school students.
3. The present study may draw the attention of the EFL curriculum planners and designers to the importance of incorporating elaboration strategies in the EFL curricula.
4. Teachers should be provided with tools for assessing EFL speaking skills.
5. Drawing the EFL teachers' attention towards the importance of elaboration strategy in developing EFL speaking skills.

Suggestions for further research.

1. Some topics for further research are proposed:
2. Using elaboration strategy to developing EFL speaking skills with primary and preparatory students.
3. A program based on elaboration strategy for developing EFL speaking skills with university students.
4. Utilizing elaboration strategy program to enhance students' EFL reading skills.
5. A program based on elaboration strategy for developing students' EFL writing skills.

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