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## Utilizing an Electronic-Based Scaffolding Strategy to Develop Primary School Pupils' EFL Speaking Skills

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The study aimed at investigating the effect of using an electronic-based scaffolding strategy on enhancing EFL primary school pupils' speaking skills. The participants of the study were forty (40) fourth-year primary school pupils. They were selected from Al-Gomhuria Primary School, Abu Hammed in the school year 2023-2024. The study adopted the quasi-experimental research design, consisting of two groups: an experimental group (n= 20) and a control one (n= 20). To collect data, the researcher used three instruments: a speaking skills checklist, a pre-post speaking skills test, and a rubric. The experimental group was taught through using an electronic-based scaffolding strategy while

the control group was taught through the regular teaching method. The results of the study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the speaking skills test in favor of the experimental group.

**Keywords:** electronic-based scaffolding, speaking skills.

استخدام استراتيجيات الدعائم اللغوية الإلكترونية لتنمية مهارات التحدث باللغة  
الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية لدى تلاميذ المرحلة الابتدائية

#### الملخص:

هدفت الدراسة الحالية الى تنمية مهارات التحدث باللغة الانجليزية كلفة أجنبية لدى تلاميذ المرحلة الابتدائية باستخدام استراتيجيات الدعائم اللغوية الالكترونية . طبقت الدراسة الحالية على عينة من تلاميذ الصف الرابع الابتدائي تم اختيارهم من مدرسة الجمهورية الابتدائية بأبوحمام للعام الدراسي ٢٠٢٣-٢٠٢٤: تتكون العينة من أربعين تلميذا تم تقسيمهم الى مجموعتين (٢٠ تلميذا للمجموعة الضابطة ودرست وفقا للطريقة التقليدية و ٢٠ تلميذا للمجموعة التجريبية ودرست وفقا للدعائم اللغوية الالكترونية ) . قامت الباحثة بتصميم اختبار لقياس مهارات التحدث وتم تطبيقه على كلا المجموعتين قبلها وبعديا و مفتاح تصحيح . اوضحت نتائج الدراسة وجود فرق ذي دلالة إحصائية بين متوسط درجات المجموعة التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة في اختبار مهارات التحدث لصالح المجموعة التجريبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : مهارات التحدث ، الدعائم الالكترونية .

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## Introduction

Speaking is an activity performed by a person to communicate with others to negotiate thoughts, emotions, opinions, etc. It is also used to share information among people, resolve problems, and foster social relationships and friendships. Therefore, it is a fundamental skill for EFL learners. Madiyoh (2019) and Al Hosni (2014) asserted that speaking English provides numerous benefits in education or career. Moreover, the evaluation of EFL learners' language skills is largely based on their ability to speak fluently. If they can speak correctly and fluently, it indicates that their language abilities are good, but if they cannot, it means they lack foreign language proficiency.

However, primary school pupils in Egypt face difficulties in developing their speaking abilities. This can be attributed to the fact that EFL speaking is a neglected skill; these pupils lack language practice. The is on explaining grammar rules rather than promoting effective communication skills. As a result, pupils are struggling to articulate their ideas, feelings, and opinions. This was revealed by Ezz,( 2017) and Gaid (2020), found that in Egypt, English language teaching who does not prioritize techniques that enhance pupils' speaking skills. Instead, the primary focus is on traditional methods that focus on parroting and memorizing in isolation not in context and language use. Moreover, recent studies suggest that pupils lack confidence while practicing English as a foreign language with their peers and tutors. This lack of

confidence is frequently attributed to the influence of their native language on their speaking skills.

To document the problem of this study , the researcher reviewed the previous studies (e.g., Ezz, 2017; Duran2021; Ismaili,2016; and Ristianisa, 2020).

Besides, the researcher conducted a pilot study in which an EFL speaking skills test was administered to 20 pupils at Al-Gomhuria Primary School. Pupils were asked to answer some questions orally. They were assessed in the following speaking sub-skills (Fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary).

Table (1) The pilot study results of the EFL oracy skills test

| speaking skills         | Frequency of errors |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| fluency                 | 80%                 |
| Pronunciation           | 70%                 |
| vocabulary              | 60%                 |
| Grammar                 | 70%                 |
| Nonverbal communication | 70%                 |

The pupils' weakness in EFL speaking shown in table (1) may be attributed to the following factors:

- a) Fear of making mistakes so they avoid speaking in front of others.
- b) Lack of motivation to participate in speaking activities.

- c) limited vocabulary, grammatical understanding, pronunciation problems, and an unsupportive classroom environment

Therefore, the researcher attempted to use an electronic-based scaffolding strategy to develop the pupils' EFL speaking skills.

Scaffolding refers to a teaching technique that offers temporary support and guidance to EFL pupils as they acquire language skills. It involves the teacher or peers providing assistance to help pupils complete tasks or acquire new skills successfully. Scaffolding in the EFL classroom involves helpful interactions between teachers and students, such as offering models, using visual aids, and providing feedback and guidance ( Samana, 2013).

**In this regard,** Hult( 2022) stated that scaffolding techniques are used to create a supportive learning environment that enables pupils to build on their prior knowledge and relate it to new information and language concepts. Through scaffolding, teachers can minimize the risk of failure and frustration for pupils, especially those learning a new language. Scaffolding helps pupils feel successful before they tackle unfamiliar topics, boosting their confidence and motivation.

Scaffolding research has proven its impact on students' speaking skills (Naibaho, 2019; Pishadast, 2022; Azir, 2019; Bao, 2022; Kinasih, 2022). The researcher utilized an electronic –based

scaffolding strategy to improve fourth-grade pupils' EFL speaking skills.

## **2. Statement of the problem**

The problem of the present study can be stated as follows:

“Primary school pupils have weaknesses in their EFL speaking skills”.

The nature of this stated problem urges EFL teachers to utilize various methods to facilitate learning speaking skills. The researcher proposed an electronic-based scaffolding strategy to develop the EFL speaking skills of primary school pupils .

## **3. Questions of the study**

The present study attempts to answer the following main question:

**“How can an electronic-based scaffolding strategy be used to develop some EFL speaking skills of primary stage pupils?”**

The main question branches out into the following sub-questions:

1. What are the EFL speaking skills targeted for EFL fourth-year primary school pupils?
2. What is the effect of an electronic-based scaffolding strategy on developing fourth-year primary school pupils' EFL speaking skills?

## **5. Aim of the study**

This study aims to develop fourth-year primary school pupils' EFL speaking skills.

## 6. Significance of the study

- a) Directing the focus of EFL teachers to the importance of using electronic-based scaffolding strategies to develop pupils' EFL speaking skills.
- b) Providing primary-stage pupils with an effective strategy to improve their EFL speaking skills.
- c) Providing curriculum designers with a new insight about how to adopt electronic-based scaffolding to develop EFL-speaking skills.

## 7. Hypotheses

1. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-administration of the EFL speaking skills test, in favor of the experimental group.
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the EFL speaking skills test results, in favor of the post-administration.

## 8. Definition of Terms

### Speaking skill

Astorga (2015) describes speaking skills as engaging in conversation, expressing ideas, and effectively using language for genuine communication. Saad (2020) and Ahmed (2020) see

speaking as the process of building and sharing meaning through verbal and non-verbal symbols in various contexts.

Speaking is used to mean fourth-year primary-stage pupils' ability to convert their thoughts and opinions into spoken language using correct grammar and vocabulary in a meaningful form.

### **Electronic based scaffolding**

According to Ji and Luo (2019), Scaffolding teaching refers to the way the teacher utilizes appropriate strategies or aids to guide instructions on how to complete the task. As such, it enables pupils to master, create, and internalize the knowledge and skills they have gained to perform higher-level cognitive processes.

In the present study, the electronic scaffolding strategy refers to the temporary assistance provided by electronic resources and tools to support and guide fourth-year primary-stage pupils during speaking activities.

### **9. Delimitations of the study:**

This study was delimited to the following:-

- a) A group of fourth-year primary school pupils from Al-Gomhuria Primary School.
- b) Some EFL speaking skills ( fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, nonverbal communication ) for the fourth-year primary school pupils.
- c) A duration of 2 months.

## **9. Method**

### **A. Research design and participants**

The research design was the quasi-experimental pre-posttest. The experiment was carried out at Al-Gomhuria Primary School, Abu

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المجلة الدولية للدراسات العليا (٢٠٢٤) العدد (١٢٥) الجزء الثاني

Hammad during the first term of the academic year 2023-2024. Participants of the study were assigned as experimental and control groups. Each group consisted of twenty pupils. The experimental group was taught by using electronic-based scaffolding for enhancing speaking skills while the control group was taught in a regular way.

### **B. Instruments**

To collect data, three instruments were designed and administered:

- a) A speaking skills checklist.
- b) A (pre-post) speaking skills test.
- c) A scoring rubric

### **C. Treatment**

After developing the test, establishing its validity, and developing the learning materials, two groups of pupils at Al-Gomhuria Primary School were chosen randomly. Each group consisted of twenty pupils. One group was assigned as the experimental group while the other group was assigned as the control group.

The experiment lasted for eight weeks with two sessions per week and each session lasted for about 45 minutes. The first session was introductory where pupils of

the experimental group were told about the aims and the importance of using the electronic-based scaffolding strategy. They were also told about the steps of each strategy. During the other sessions, the developed learning materials based on electronic-based scaffolding were taught to the experimental group. At the end of each session, the participants were evaluated to be sure that the session was successful. The two groups were pre-tested in order to make sure that their level is nearly the same. After applying the electronic-based scaffolding strategy to the experimental group, the researcher administered the speaking test which was previously employed for the pre-test with the same procedures for both the experimental and control groups.

## 9 . Results

### Hypothesis 1

It was hypothesized that "There would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post-test of EFL Speaking Skills and its sub-skills in favor of the experimental group".

Table (2)

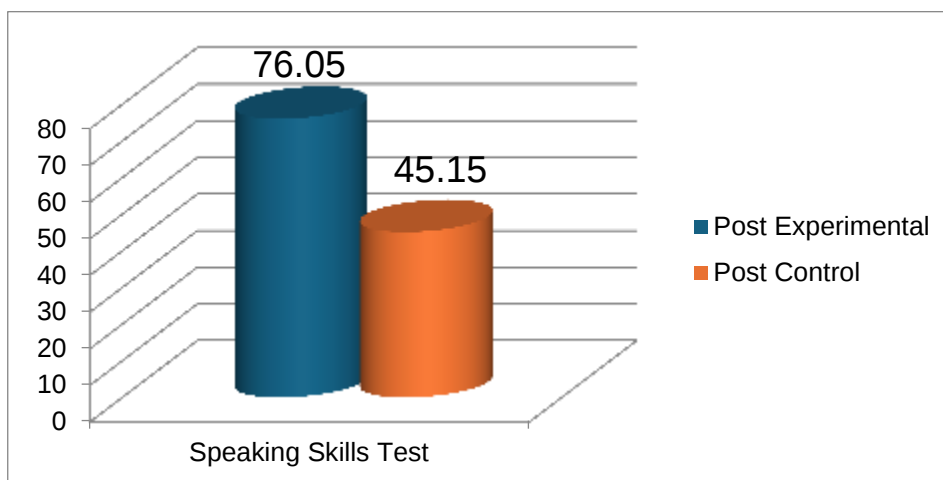
Independent samples test for the study groups of the post-EFL Speaking Skills Test.

| Group             | NO. | Mean  | SD    | df | T-value | Sig.    |
|-------------------|-----|-------|-------|----|---------|---------|
| Post Experimental | 20  | 76.05 | 31.36 | 38 | 4.021   | 0.000** |
| Post Control      | 20  | 45.15 | 14.07 |    |         |         |

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طالبة نورة بنسبة | جامعة البصرة | المجلد (٤٠) العدد (١٤٥) | الجزء الثاني | ٢٠٢٥

**\*\* significant at (0.01) level.**



**Fig. (1) Mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post-test of EFL Speaking Skills**

Table (2) and Figure (1) indicate that there is a statistically significant difference at (0.01) level between the attained mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control one in favor of the experimental group in the post-administration of the EFL Speaking Skills test.

The mean scores of the experimental group is (**M=76.05**) and that of the control group is (**M=45.15**), this means that the score of the experimental group's post-administration of the EFL Speaking Skills is better than that of the control group. The estimated **t-value is (4.021)**. It is significant at (0.01) level in favor of the experimental group.

## Hypothesis 2

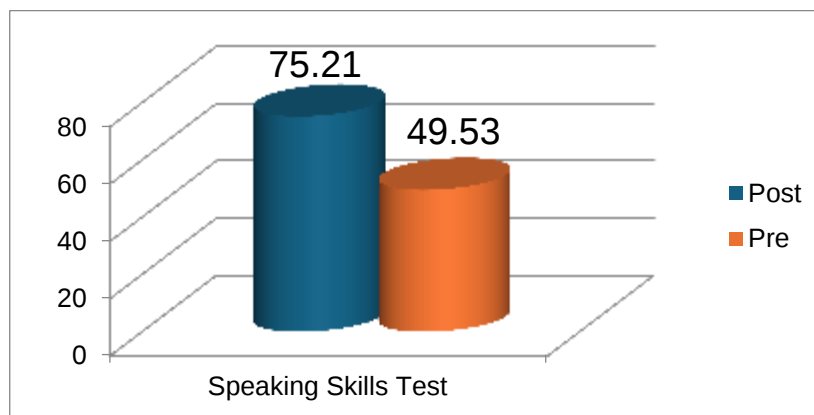
It was hypothesized that "There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the EFL speaking skills test results, in favor of the post-administration".

Table (3)

Paired samples T-test for the experimental group on pre and post EFL Speaking Skills Test.

| Application | NO. | Mean  | SD    | df | T-value | Sig.    |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------|----|---------|---------|
| Pre         | 20  | 49.53 | 12.01 | 19 | 3.938   | 0.001** |
| Post        | 20  | 75.21 | 31.99 |    |         |         |

**\*\* significant at (0.01) level.**



**Fig. (2) Mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post-test of EFL Speaking Skills**

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Table (3) and Figure (2) indicate that there is a statistically significant difference at (0.01) level between the attained mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the EFL speaking skills test results, in favor of the post-administration.

The mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-administration of the EFL speaking skills are ( $M=49.53$ ) and that of the post administration is ( $M=75.21$ ), this means that the score of the experimental group's post-administration of the EFL Speaking Skills is better than that of the pre-administration of the EFL speaking skills. The estimated **t- value is (3.938)**. It is significant at (0.01) level in favor of the post-administration. Therefore, it can be concluded that the electronic-based scaffolding strategy enhanced pupils' speaking skills.

### 10 . Discussion of the Results :

The study aimed to enhance EFL speaking skills among fourth-year primary school pupils using an electronic-based scaffolding strategy. The strategy included various techniques designed to improve speaking skills.

Key findings:

1. Significant improvements were observed in the experimental group's speaking skills from pre- to post-test.
2. The experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test for speaking skills.

3. The study supported previous findings that scaffolding strategy positively impact speaking skills, such as Sarmiento-Campos (2022), Rahmah (2022), Almeida (2022), Hidalgo (2022), and Alwahibee (2019).
4. The positive effects were attributed to the engaging and interactive learning environment created by electronic scaffolding, which facilitated active participation and idea-sharing.
5. Statistically significant differences were found between the experimental and control groups in post-test speaking skills , favoring the experimental group.

## **11. conclusion**

In light of the findings of the current study, it can be concluded that using an electronic-based scaffolding strategy was effective in enhancing the primary pupils' EFL speaking skills compared to the regular methods.

This may be because of the following:

1. Traditional teacher-centered EFL methods were replaced with an electronic-based strategy, showing its effectiveness on pupils' speaking skills.
2. The electronic-based scaffolding strategy improved some speaking skills such as participants' ability to accurately describe pictures, answer open-ended questions, discuss topics without hesitation, use correct pronunciation and a variety of words, apply grammatical rules correctly, and use nonverbal communication.
3. The strategy seems to be effective in developing grammar, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and nonverbal communication

- of the pupils.
4. Providing pupils with positive feedback through the speaking process.
  5. Teaching can be learner-centered, with the tutor acting as a supporter and facilitator while engaging in the electronic-based scaffolding
  6. Makes the learning process more enjoyable and interesting.

## 12. Recommendations of the Study:

Based on the results of the current study, the following recommendations should be considered when teaching EFL:

- Tutors should create an enjoyable atmosphere inside the EFL classroom in order to interact pupils with each other and motivate them to express their ideas, and positively engage in the classroom.
- Curriculum designers should adopt electronic-based scaffolding strategy procedures for teaching EFL speaking skills.
- Enrich the curriculum by incorporating technology.
- Education faculties should train teachers on using e-based scaffolding for teaching speaking skills.
- English teachers should be equipped with the necessary knowledge to incorporate electronic tools in teaching, which will enable pupils to better utilize them in their learning.
- Tutors should provide pupils with gradual support to

complete their speaking process

- Tutors should give pupils instant feedback during the speaking process.

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