



MANSOURA UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF Education

—



**Using a Program Based on Community Language Learning
(CLL) for Remediating Some Speaking Difficulties of EFL
First- grade Secondary Stage Students**

By

Reem Mahmoud Hamed Al-hawary

EFL Teacher

Supervisors

Dr. El-Sayed Mohamad Dadour

Professor of Curriculum
& Instruction(EFL)
Faculty of Education
President of Damietta University

Dr. Aly AbdelSamea Qoura

Professor of Curriculum
& Instruction(EFL)
Faculty of Education
Mansoura University

Journal Of The Faculty Of Education- Mansoura University

No. 111 – July. 2020

Using a Program Based on Community Language Learning (CLL) for Remediating Some Speaking Difficulties of EFL First-grade Secondary Stage Students

Abstract

The study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using a proposed program based on Community Language Learning (CLL) for remediating some speaking difficulties of EFL First-grade secondary stage students. The participants of the study were Sixty (60) first year secondary stage students from Om Al-Momneen secondary school, Damietta, Egypt. The study adopted the quasi-experimental research design. So, there were two groups: an experimental group (n= 30) and a control one (n= 30). Instruments designed and used in the study were EFL speaking difficulties test and observation checklist. The experimental treatment was conducted during the second semester in the academic year 2018/2019. Results showed that there were statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups on both instruments (EFL speaking difficulties test and observation checklist) in favor of the experimental group. In addition, there were statistically significant differences between pre- and post-levels of the experimental group on both instruments in favor of the post level. These results indicated that the program based on Community Language Learning (CLL) contributed in remediating the essential EFL speaking difficulties

Keywords : EFL Speaking, Speaking difficulties, language Learning, Community

Introduction

According to the experience of the researcher as an English language instructor, EFL Learners obviously lack a lot of oral competence and the sufficient language function; thus learners face many difficulties in communication using the English language. Learners of English in Egypt often do not have enough opportunities to speak English outside the classroom, and for many of them, the course book is the only place where they meet English (Al Zedjali, 2009). Although speaking is considered a main language skill that students should improve, it has been widely noticed that they face many difficulties in speaking English.

In a classroom community, students feel that they are free to work with others and that they have something to contribute to the whole (Tchudi & Mitchell, 1999). Active involvement of the students in decision-making and collaborative interaction requires a major shift from the traditional roles of teacher and student. Both become learners as well as teachers. Larsen-Freeman (2003) asserts that CLL methodologists have identified five stages

in this movement from dependency to mutual interdependency with the teacher. In the first three stages, the teacher focuses not only on the language but also on being supportive of learners in their learning process. In later stages, because of the students' greater security in the language and readiness to benefit from corrections, the teacher can focus more on accuracy. Accuracy is always a focus even in the first stages of the community learning process; yet it is subordinate to fluency and provided as long as it serves the purposes of communication. More community-based and communicative language teaching approaches have become a real necessity for bridging the gap between language knowledge and use encountering the most common frequent speaking difficulties which hinder the spontaneous delivery to the right message of the various speeches in different contexts. Thus, the present study seeks to investigate how far a proposed CLL-based program could contribute to remedying speaking difficulties of the first grade secondary stage students by engaging them in a community language learning under the supervision of their teacher who could be able to enhance their points of strength and remedy their points of weakness simultaneously.

Review of literature

Related Studies

Studies Related to speaking difficulties

Speaking is a very essential skill without which people cannot accomplish their work or reflect their needs. Gillis (2013) stated that mastering speaking skills help in enhancing both personal and academic life. EFL students need to communicate with their peers and teachers, they need to discuss, make conversations, negotiate, construct a meaningful discourse, and stand in front of others and speak fluently. At advanced stage of the learner's academic life, they may need to give oral speeches and be exposed to interviews or verbal tests.

Roger (2006) presented a paper to identify the reasons behind Japanese students' low level in English. This paper identifies the reasons behind this underperformance and lays the foundations of an English speaking skills course for Japanese high school students that will contribute to raising their overall speaking ability. The findings of this study are in line with current theories on speaking constructs. Learners need to be aware of and acquire the following linguistic, socio-linguistic and discourse competencies:

-
- Knowledge of the nature/ characteristics of spoken language.
 - Knowledge of and ability to use situation and genre specific language and discourse patterns.
 - Knowledge of and ability to use fluency skills and sub-skills such as coping strategies, interaction management, negotiation of meaning etc.

Qashoa (2006) conducted a study on secondary school students in Dubai. The study aimed at 1) examining the students' instrumental and integrative motivation for learning English, and 2) recognizing the factors affecting learners' motivation. Two research tools were used: questionnaire and interviews. The sample, for the questionnaire, consisted of 100 students. For the interviews, on the other hand, the sample included 20 students, 10 Arab English teachers and 3 supervisors. In addition, the findings indicated that difficulties with aspects such as vocabulary, structures and spelling were found to be the most demotivating factors for the students.

Furthermore, Al-Hosni (2014) conducted a study to find out what speaking difficulties are encountered by grade five students in basic education schools in Oman. She discovered that English is seen as an academic subject only, which means exposure to the English language is insufficient. The lack of a target language environment can be considered another problem, which of course results in a lack of involvement in real-life situations. Based on these observations, Al-Hosni concluded that learning and practising English are more difficult for Arab EFL learners. The development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have the motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and relate with the people around them. Some learners also lack the motivation to speak English. They do not see a real need to learn or speak English.

Another study was carried out by Mee (2006) to identify students' attitude and anxiety towards learning their core subject in English language. There are 37 respondents selected from the third year students from the Faculty of Management and Human Resource Development (FPPSM). Questionnaire that consists of YES –NO, likert scale and open ended questions that were distributed and collected. The data were analyzed and manually computed into percentage.

The findings showed that there were two types of attitudes found among the learners, which were divided into positive and negative attitudes towards the language used in their core subject. Anxiety level occurs in both high and low proficiency students. Besides it showed that using English in learning a core subject can create an impact on students' attitude and anxiety in learning. Moreover, students' language preferences are viewed as

one of their attitude towards English language which later affects their anxiety level in learning a core subject using English. The study suggested that further research should be carried out to identify whether students' level of English proficiency would affect their attitude and anxiety in learning a core subject in English Language.

Wang (2014) conducted a study on EFL chinese learners to investigate their EFL speaking difficulties in fluency and accuracy. The sample was sixty pupils. Qusetionnaire and a speaking observation checklist were instruments used in the study to collect data. He found that the learners could hardly put the receptive vocabulary knowledge into productive use as they did not have the sufficient ability to store a wealth of vocabulary in their long-term memory. In addition, the ability to quickly recall words from their minds may affected their speaking fluency. According to Wang, speaking processes included conceptualization, formulation and articulation. Conceptualization deals with what information can be selected to express the meaning. Formulation requires the speaker to find out what proper words to use in appropriate grammatical structures. Finally, articulation needs the speaker to produce the speech with his articulatory organs. Since all three processes take place on the spur of the time, learners make mistakes in face-to-face communication. Therefore, their speaking may be interrupted with hesitations, false-starts, grammatical inaccuracies and limited vocabulary. In this sense, both their speaking fluency and accuracy may be affected.

Studies Related to Community Language Learning approach

Community Language Learning (CLL) is the most responsive of the methods reviewed in terms of its sensitivity to learner communicative intent. CLL, developed by Curran, focuses mainly on counseling learning that redefines the roles of the teacher (the counselor) and learners (the clients) in the language classroom. The basic procedures of CLL are, thus, derived from the counselor–client relationship .Freeman (2003) points out that in a typical CLL classroom, groups of learners sit in circles with the teacher standing outside the circle; a student whispers a message in the native language (L1), and the teacher translates it into the foreign language (FL). Then the student repeats the message in the foreign language into a cassette; while other students compose further messages in the foreign language with the teacher's help. Finally, students reflect about their feelings during this learning experience. Learning is not viewed as an individual accomplishment but as a target that is achieved collaboratively. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) contend that in CLL, students are not viewed

as *learners* who are required to produce communication from the beginning, but as *clients* who become members of a community where they can interact with other members and learn by working collaboratively. Richards and Rodgers (2006) state that in CLL, at the beginning of the learning process, the students are very dependent upon the teacher; however, they have the right to decide what they want to learn. Parallel to the development of a sense of security and readiness for speaking, they become independent and start to take responsibility for their own learning. Aziza (2014) points out that the classroom design in CLL is different from the traditional language classrooms in that students are seated in a circle around a table that has a sound recorder on it.

The teacher, as a counselor, stands behind the students so as to lower anxiety that learners might have; to assist learners during learning; and to foster interaction among students. Marshall and Baker (2000) contend that one important aspect of this method is that there is not a set syllabus for the course. Instead, students decide on the content of the lesson and select their own vocabulary with the help of the counselor. As the student tells what s/he wishes to say in L1, the teacher translates it into L2 while standing outside the circle. Then the student repeats this chunk after the teacher in the target language; thus, communication begins to occur. In this sense, the target language is used as a means of overcoming psychological barriers which most of the learners initially feel. Therefore, in the beginning stages, as the learners are highly dependent on the teacher and his/her knowledge of the target language, the native language is used much more than target language. However, in the later stages, after they have become independent and built mutual relationships with the teacher, the students begin to use target language more freely.

Fayed (2016) investigates the influence of community language learning approach on improving the students' English speaking skills at the Arab American University –Jenin. A pre-post-speaking test has been adopted to find out the differences between the experimental and the control group. The findings of his study show that the experimental group treated by CLL prove better results than the control group who was taught in the usual program. The results also reveal that diversity of CLL techniques helped learners in improving their speaking skills through creating a community like environment using discussions, transactional conversations and recording. In addition, peer correction and recording techniques have strongly positive influence on enhancing students English speaking abilities.

Also CLL proves beneficial for teachers in which they receive feedback about the students' feelings and progress.

Ulfa (2014) conducted a study for developing students' speaking skill using (CLL) techniques. The participants were sixty students of the elementary fifth grade students. Various data collection tools and techniques such as observations, questionnaires, and practical teaching were employed. The design of the research was an experimental design. The results indicated that applying CLL in teaching the EFL language is important to establish a mutual relationship between the learner and the teacher in order to create a safe learning environment; students tend to learn more effectively when they feel secure. Language is for communication. Therefore, students should be encouraged to communicate as frequently as possible during the lesson. The teacher is the mediator who is scaffolding the students' gaps in the EFL language as the learner can express any word in the native language (L1); the teacher translates it into the foreign language (L2). Students work in groups to feel a sense of community; thus, they can learn from each other as well as the teacher. Cooperation, rather than competition, is encouraged.

Nurhasanah (2015) conducted an action research to use the CLL to increase the students' speaking in the classroom in speaking class for the students of International Class Program State Institute of Islamic Studies and he the researcher conducts pretest and posttest within 2 cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The research shows that the students' participation increase not only their conversation but also their motivation. Based on the results and findings, the students could develop their participation which can be seen by the increasing average between pretest and posttest from the cycle 1 to the cycle 2. After analyzing the result of action in cycle 1, the researcher can assume that it is very important for the teacher to create a comfortable condition in the classroom. It might be an informal situation but students are serious to learn and they express their ideas naturally. According to Nurhasanah, there is no gap between teacher and students in the teaching learning process. The teacher must encourage the students before, during, and end of the class so that they are motivated to personalize the target language and express themselves using English language. The teacher should also appreciate what the students speak and give the students more assessment about the material and practice in speaking.

Statement of the problem

In light of the previous studies and the pilot study results, the problem of the study is that EFL first grade secondary stage students face some EFL speaking difficulties including grammatical, semantical, lexical and phonological difficulties. As a result, students do not have the sufficient ability to master the EFL speaking skills. This problem could be due to the absence of the EFL interactive classroom including the effective communicative EFL activities and variety of teaching approaches. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to solve this problem through using a proposed program based on CLL approach to remedy some EFL speaking difficulties of EFL first grade secondary stage students.

Questions of the study

In light of the pilot study results, pertinent literature and prior research, the current study attempts to investigate the following questions:

- 1-What are the EFL speaking difficulties most frequently encountered by the EFL first-grade secondary stage students?
- 2-What are the main factors which cause the EFL speaking difficulties?
- 3-What are the components of a CLL-based program suggested to remedy these difficulties?
- 4-What is the effectiveness of the proposed CLL-based program on remedying the speaking difficulties encountered by the EFL first-grade secondary stage students?

Purpose

The present study aimed to:

- 1-Identify the speaking difficulties that secondary stage students faced and hindered them from speaking appropriately.
- 2-Investigate the effectiveness of a proposed CLL-based program in remedying the speaking difficulties of the first-grade secondary stage students.
- 3-Provide EFL teachers with a CLL-based teacher's guide.

Significance of the Study

The study may be significant for EFL students, teachers, supervisors and curriculum designers.

1. Students:

Community language learning creates a supportive community to lower student's anxiety and help them overcome threatening factors, such as making errors or competing with peers. In addition, learners are not limited in their topics of conversation, regardless of their language proficiency.

2. Teacher and Supervisor:

The CLL program approached in this study rests on building a strong link between the teacher and the learner to facilitate the learning process. Therefore, the proposed treatment in this study could provide the English teacher and supervisors with a repertoire of supportive, non-threatening and interactive combination of techniques that would help students gradually move from dependence to independence in language learning and production.

The study could also provide teachers and supervisors with a checklist of main speaking difficulties for the students and guidelines as how to best approach them in class. Highlighting speaking difficulties in this way is necessary for teachers to be taken into consideration in planning and designing speaking activities for their students.

3. Curriculum designers:

This study could provide curriculum and syllabus designers with guiding principles on community language learning as an alternative approach to developing language skills in general and speaking in particular. It could also shed light on the dynamics of CLL and how it could be integrated in syllabus design in ways that are conducive to learning.

Participants of the Study

A group of 60 first year secondary school students were purposively selected from Om AL- Momneen secondary School in Damietta city in the academic year 2018/2019. Students' age ranged from 14 to 15 years old. The participants of this study constituted a homogeneous group considering their schooling and English language efficacy. This number of participants was divided equally into two groups. The first group of 30 students comprised the experimental group and received the program based on community language learning approach. The other group of 30 students served as the control group and received only the regular teaching methods.

Method

This study adopted the quasi- experimental design using two groups to investigate the effectiveness of using a program based on CLL to remedy some speaking difficulties of the first grade secondary stage students. The experimental group was taught using the program based on CLL and the control group was only taught with the regular way of teaching according to the teachers' book.

Hypotheses

The present study is attempted to test the following hypotheses:
The present study attempted to test the following hypotheses:

-
1. There is no statistically significant difference at the .05 level between the mean score of the experimental and control group students in the pre- measurement of speaking difficulties.
 2. There is a statistically significant difference at the ,05 level between the mean score of the experimental group students in the pre and post measurement of speaking difficulties in favor of the post measurement.
 3. There is a statistically significant difference in the post measurement of speaking difficulties at the ,05 level between the mean score of the experimental and control group students in favor of the experimental group.
 4. Applying the CLL-based program is effective in remedying the speaking difficulties of the EFL first-grade secondary stage students.

Instruments

The researcher made use of the following instruments: To fulfill the purposes of the study, the following instruments designed and used by the researcher:

An observation checklist to identify the first grade secondary-stage students' speaking difficulties.

An oral EFL speaking pre-posttest to assess students' speaking difficulties .

Delimitations

The current study is delimited to:

1. The participants of the study were sixty first grade secondary stage students from “Om Al-Momeneen” in Damietta city. The students were randomly selected for the experiment. The participants were divided into two groups (control and experimental group) each group consisted of 30 students.
2. A limited duration for implementing the proposed program based on CLL (A school semester, i.e., nearly 3 months).
3. Nine sessions of the syllabus of the course entitled, "*Hello! English for secondary Schools: Year One,*" designed by the researcher according to a program based on CLL.
4. Some EFL speaking difficulties encountered by the first grade secondary stage students including grammatical, lexical, semantic and phonological difficulties.

Treatment

The proposed program based on CLL approach is based on the following general steps:

lead-in / Warm-up

Students are given two or three questions to discuss them with each other and with their teacher or they watched videos and discuss questions about it, this stage is for attracting the students' attention, making them involved and interested in the target language. In this stage, each student was given the opportunity to express his/her response using his/her own language. Researcher wrote the precise language equivalent related to the target language words. Students copied what the researcher wrote after it was completely written up on the board, as well as, researcher prepared poster-sized papers to be stuck on the walls of the classroom for later reference and for the purpose of increasing student security.

Exposure

The students were exposed to the target language and clarified its meaning/use/function. In this stage, researcher activates the students' knowledge towards the content and familiarizes them with the target language by providing a model of production (reading or listening comprehension) with definite questions about it. Students were asked to check their answers together to enjoy community learning, sharing, helping each other with feedback. Researcher discussed the students' responses to these questions.

Useful language

The target language was highlighted and clarified by the researcher. In this stage, the researcher turns to be facilitator not a teacher. As she lets students elicit the target language as they are consistently given CCQs while the acquisition of the new target language. In addition, students are asked to reflect on the target language using their personal experiences by providing examples in their own language employing the target language. For preparing the students to the coming tasks, researcher modeled the coming task for them. The modelling step was implemented by make conversations with one or two students and this step is for ensuring a genuine communication and to personalize the listening process.

Free practice

The students were afforded enough time to prepare and rehearse their oral presentations, teacher helped them as needed, in this stage, researcher followed the student's lead, repeated the phrase as often as the student wanted to practice it. The teacher did not correct the student's mispronunciation in an explicit and direct way. It was through the teacher's recasting the word or phrase clearly that the student self-corrected as s/he tried to imitate the teacher's model.

Feedback and Error Correction

The teacher acted as an observer in the previous stage, watching and listening to students, then giving feedback afterwards. Thus in the feedback stage, based on the observations, the teacher was able to give proper feedback to the students on how well they had performed. Teacher wrote the common mistakes on the smart board, and clarified the mistakes noted that she noted during monitoring the students' group work. The teacher wrote examples of the mistakes that were made by more than one student, but without saying who made the mistake giving implicit feedback on students' spoken production and language components including grammar, pronunciation, lexis and appropriacy.

Outside-class speaking task

The teacher asked students to express their out-of-class experiences using EFL language. Students were asked to prepare talks describing their typical day, personal diaries and biographies, make a conversation with one of the classmate about definite topic, act a scene of one of the famous plays of the international literature, talk about one of the current events using their own language. Students were informed that they will come the next class to present their oral tasks in front of the whole class.

Results

Testing the first hypothesis

The first hypothesis stated that "There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students in the pre-administration of the EFL speaking test" To test this hypothesis, the researcher used the Independent samples t-test The results are shown in table (1)

Table (1) Comparing the performance of the experimental group and the control group in the pre-administration of the EFL speaking test.

Speaking difficulties	Study groups	Mean	SD	t-value	DF	P-value
Semantic difficulties	Experimental group	9.17	0.59	1.20	58	0.234
	Control group	8.90	1.06			
Lexical difficulties	Experimental group	8.93	0.64	0.65	58	0.518
	Control group	8.77	1.25			
Grammatical difficulties	Experimental group	8.97	0.85	0.28	58	0.777
	Control group	9.03	0.96			
Phonological difficulties	Experimental group	9.23	0.63	0.17	58	0.865
	Control group	9.27	0.87			
Total score	Experimental group	36.30	1.09	0.74	58	0.461
	Control group	35.97	2.20			

It is evident from table (1) that both groups had comparable results on the pre-EFL speaking test in its individual difficulties categories and in the total test score. The mean score was $m=9.17, 8.90, 8.93, 8.77, 8.97, 9.03; 9.23, 9.27$ respectively for the experimental and the control group. The total mean score was (36.30) and (35.97). t value was not significant. These results indicate that the two groups were almost equal in their speaking performance at the beginning of the study.

Testing the second hypothesis

The second hypothesis stated "There is a statistically significant difference in the post-application of speaking difficulties between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students in favor of the experimental group". To test the verification of this hypothesis, the researcher used "Independent samples t-test". Results are reported in table (2)

Table (2) Comparing the speaking performance of the two groups on the post- administration for the EFL speaking difficulties test

Speaking difficulties	Study groups	Mean	SD	t-value	DF	P-value
Semantic difficulties	Experimental group	3.30	1.02	9.54	58	0.001
	Control group	6.47	1.50			
Lexical difficulties	Experimental group	3.03	0.85	8.94	58	0.001
	Control group	6.03	1.63			
Grammatical difficulties	Experimental group	3.57	0.94	12.92	58	0.001
	Control group	7.17	1.21			
Phonological difficulties	Experimental group	4.63	0.85	9.74	58	0.001
	Control group	7.97	1.67			
Total score	Experimental group	14.53	2.18	18.62	58	0.001
	Control group	27.63	3.18			

It is evident from table (2) that the mean score of the experimental group was less than that control group on the post-EFL speaking difficulties test in its individual difficulties categories and in the total test score. The mean score was $m=3.30, 6.47; 3.03; 6.03; 3.57; 7.17 ; 4.63 ; 7.97$ respectively for the experimental and the control group. The total mean was 14.53 and 27.63 respectively. The results show to that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.001 between the mean score of the experimental group and that of the control group in all EFL speaking difficulties in favor of the experimental group.

Testing the third hypothesis

The third hypothesis stated "There is a statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group students in the

pre and post administration of the EFL speaking test in favor of the post administration." To test this hypothesis, paired samples t-test was used to calculate the difference between the experimental group performance on the pre and on the post administration of the EFL speaking test.

Table (3) Comparing the performance of the experimental group on the pre-post administration of the EFL speaking difficulties test

Speaking difficulties	Test	Mean	SD	t-value	DF	P-value
Semantic difficulties	Pre-test	9.17	0.59	39.22	29	0.001
	Post-test	3.30	1.02			
Lexical difficulties	Pre-test	8.93	0.64	33.68	29	0.001
	Post-test	3.03	0.85			
Grammatical difficulties	Pre-test	8.97	0.85	33.07	29	0.001
	Post-test	3.57	0.94			
Phonological difficulties	Pre-test	9.23	0.63	28.17	29	0.001
	Post-test	4.63	0.85			
Total score	Pre-test	36.30	1.09	46.66	29	0.001
	Post-test	14.53	2.18			

It is evident from table (3) that the mean score of the experimental group for the post-administration was less than that of the pre-administration in its individual difficulties categories and in the total test score. The mean score was $m = 9.17 ; 3.30 ; 8.93 ; 3.03 ; 8.97 ; 3.57 ; 9.23 ; 4.63$ respectively for the experimental group on the pre-post EFL speaking difficulties test. The total mean was 36.30 and 14.53 respectively. These results indicate that the experimental group performance improved considerably. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.001 between the mean score of the pre-and the post-administration.

Testing the fourth hypothesis

The fourth hypothesis stated that "Applying the CLL-based program is effective in remedying the speaking difficulties of the EFL first-grade secondary stage students". To test this hypothesis, the researcher used the Mac Gujion's effectiveness ration equation, which determined the ratio 0.6 to judge the effectiveness, and the results were shown in table (4).

Table (4). The effect size of using the proposed program on remedying the EFL speaking difficulties test of the experimental group

Speaking difficulties	Test	Mean	High score	Effectiveness ratio
Semantic difficulties	Pre-test	9.17	10	0.87
	Post-test	3.30		
Lexical difficulties	Pre-test	8.93	10	0.84
	Post-test	3.03		
Grammatical difficulties	Pre-test	8.97	10	0.83
	Post-test	3.57		
Phonological difficulties	Pre-test	9.23	10	0.85
	Post-test	4.63		
Total score	Pre-test	36.30	40	0.85
	Post-test	14.53		

The results shown in table (4) reveal the effectiveness of the program based on the community language learning approach, the effect size ranged from 0.87 to 0.83 for the EFL speaking difficulties. The effectiveness ratio of the test as a whole was estimated at 0.85. These ratios are greater than 0.6 which is used by Mac Gujian to measure the effectiveness, it indicates that the program based on the community language learning approach used by the researcher was effective and contributed in remedying the EFL speaking difficulties for the experimental group.

The results of the current study indicated the verification of the previous hypothesis and the noticeable effectiveness of the experimental treatment's effect size upon the EFL speaking difficulties. The researcher's own observations and notes proved the effectiveness of the proposed program based on CLL approach. For example, some students of the experimental group expressed their positive attitudes towards the activities based on CLL approach, as well as, the CLL techniques which provide for them an interactive classroom environment and grant for the supportive communication with their EFL teacher (counselor). Students' positive opinions can be summarized in the following points:

- The proposed program helped them to feel confident enough to meet the EFL speaking difficulties and attempt autonomous language use without much risk as the communicative classroom provided the supportive, dynamic and non-judgmental environment conducive to oral language learning. Moreover, the students were secured since the teacher acted as a counselor, who was always there to help the students when they needed help and encouraged free production and experimentation with the target language.

-
- The findings confirm that administering the CLL intervention to the experimental group increased the students' readiness to participate in different speaking activities without fearing of making mistakes or feeling of prohibition to speak in front of the class. As the proposed program exposed the students to authentic language use and gave more weight to communicative activities, such as group work, pair work, interviews and discussions, the students had more confidence to communicate with each other under the constant scaffolding of the consultant (teacher). Moreover, using CLL-based activities and strategies (counseling learning, interactional tasks, autonomous learning, scaffolding, live listening, group tasks) helped create an interesting, threat-free and cooperative environment.

The previous results are in line with those of Mee (2006); Al-Hosni (2014); Qashoa (2006); Nurussofa (2017); Pathan, (2014); Hago ,(2015); Abdulwahab, (2015); Luo, (2014) AL-Sobhani, (2012); Wang, (2014) which reported that learners face some EFL speaking difficulties including pronunciation, lexical, semantic and grammatical difficulties meanwhile, Azizah, (2014) ; Fayed ,(2016); Swift, (2007); Akai, (2011), Ulfa, (2014); Worde, (2003); Nurhasanah, (2015); Pujasari ,(2014); Lynch, (2009); Alfares, (2017) ; Rodrigues and Oxbrow, (2008) ; Lin, (2008) which reported the effectiveness of using CLL approach to remedy EFL speaking difficulties.

Absence of the EFL interactive classroom with its effective communicative EFL activities led to some EFL speaking difficulties including grammatical, semantical, lexical and phonological difficulties. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to solve this problem through using a proposed program based on CLL approach to remedy some EFL speaking difficulties of EFL first grade secondary stage students.

References

- Al-Zedjali, K. (2009). Students' beliefs about learning to speak English. *Researching English Language and Teacher Development in Oman*, 14, 122–131. ISBN 978-9948-15-243-9.
- Al Hosni, S.(2014). Speaking difficulties encountered by young EFL learners. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature, IJSELL*, 2(6), 22-30.
- Azizah, M. (2014). *The Use of Community Language Learning (CLL) to Improve Speaking Skill. An Unpublished MA Thesis, Banyubiru University. Indonesia.*

-
- Fayed, I. T. (2016). The influence of community language learning approach on improving the students' English speaking skills at the Arab American University Jenin. (Master), An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.
- Gillis, G. (2013). The importance of speaking. Retrieved from: <http://www.geraldgillis.com/>.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2003). Teaching language: From grammar to grammaring. Boston, MA: Heinle
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching (3rd edition)*. London, England: Oxford University Press.
- Mitchell, D. & Tchudi, S. (1999). Exploring and Teaching the English Language Arts (4th edition). New York: Longman
- Mee, S. (2006). An investigation on Students' Attitude and Anxiety Towards Learning A core Subject Using English Language Among FPPSM Students in UTM. Published Master's Thesis University Technology Malaysia
- Qashoa, S. (2006). *Motivation among learners of English in the secondary schools in the eastern coast of the UAE*. An Unpublished M.A thesis, British University in Dubai.
- Roger, A.E.M. (2006). Teaching the speaking skill to Japanese students. Part 1: Construct and Practice
- Nurhasanah, S. (2015). The use of community language learning method to increase the students' participation in classroom conversation. *Register Journal, Language & Language Teaching Journals*, 8(1), 81–98.
- Ulfa, M. (2014). Enhancing Speaking Skills using The Community Language Learning Approach. English Department, Faculty of Language and Literature, University of Wijaya Putra.
- Wang, Z. (2014). Developing accuracy and fluency in spoken English of Chinese EFL learners. *English Language Teaching*, 7(2), 110–118