

Effect of Using Dialogic Teaching Method on Seventh-grade Students' Performance in Speaking Skill

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Abstract: This study investigated the effect of implementing dialogic teaching on Jordanian seventh-grade EFL students' speaking skill. Two seventh-grade classrooms from Yarmouk University Model School were chosen randomly through a random sampling technique during the second semester of the academic year 2018/2019. Section A had 31 students and was assigned as the experimental group, while section b with 33 students was assigned as the control group. The experimental group was taught the speaking skill through dialogic-based instructional program, whereas the control group was taught using the conventional way as prescribed in the teacher's book. To carry out this study, an instructional program based on the speaking activities, as well as a pre-/post speaking test and an observation checklist were used after establishing their validity and reliability. The results of the study indicated that dialogic teaching contributed significantly to improving the speaking skill under study.

(Keywords: Dialogic Teaching, EFL Students, Speaking Skill)

Introduction

Speaking, among the four basic English language skills, has always been of central interest of foreign-and second-language researchers, as it is a means of human communication and interaction. In addition, speaking skill represents a tool to ensure the learners' productivity of the target language in an appropriate and meaningful manner (Kayi, 2006) and is the most demanding of the four basic language skills (Boonkit, 2010). Moreover, speaking fluency and accuracy are highlighted to maintain oral communication. According to Richards (2006), speaking fluency entails using a language naturally whenever an individual gets engaged in a continued meaningful and comprehensible interaction regardless of the speaker's communicative competence. The mastery of the speaking skill is a necessity for second-language learners and interaction, transaction and performance are only achieved through speaking (Richards, 2008).

أثر استخدام أسلوب التدريس الحواري على أداء طلبة الصف السابع في مهارة التحدث

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ملخص: بحثت هذه الدراسة في أثر تطبيق التدريس الحواري على مهارة التحدث لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة اجنبية للصف السابع الأساسي. وقد تم اختيار شعبتين صفتين من مدرسة جامعة اليرموك النموذجية بطريقة عشوائية باستخدام أسلوب اختيار العينات العشوائي، وذلك خلال الفصل الثاني من العام الدراسي 2019/2018. حيث تم اختيار الشعبة الصفية (أ) وفيها (31) طالبًا لتشكيل المجموعة التجريبية، فيما كانت الشعبة الصفية (ب) وفيها (33) طالبًا هي المجموعة الضابطة. وقد تم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية مهارة التحدث من خلال برنامج قائم على التدريس الحواري، بينما تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة بالطريقة الاعتيادية على النحو المنصوص عليه في دليل المعلم. ولتنفيذ هذه الدراسة، تم استخدام برنامج تدريسي يعتمد على أنشطة التحدث في المقرر الدراسي إضافة إلى اختبار قبلي واختبار بعدي و بطاقة ملاحظة بعد التأكد من الصدق والثبات. وأشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن التدريس الحواري ساهم بشكل كبير في تحسين قدرات الطلاب في مهارة التحدث.

(الكلمات المفتاحية: التدريس الحواري، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية، مهارة التحدث)

Despite its importance, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. However, today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve the communicative skills of students so that they can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance (Alexander, 2008).

In Jordan, the Ministry of Education has put much efforts on teaching and learning English with emphasis on the importance of developing students' speaking skill. Alhabahba (2016) stated that the Ministry of Education in Jordan plays an increasing role in delivering English language education to students from Kindergarten to 12th Grade.

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Consequently, to succeed in using speaking skill, students should integrate and use this skill with other language skills efficiently, interactively and appropriately, so that they can develop an acceptable level of proficiency which includes semantic, pragmatic as well as grammatical rules

Moreover, the Jordanian EFL classes are almost teacher-centered; the students have a very restricted range of speaking practices in the classroom and almost no opportunity to practice speaking activities. Teachers tend to pace students in a drilling class, where speaking is learnt by memorizing a number of words and sentences which are often not used in the suitable social context (Khweireh, 2017).

Developing speaking skill is of vital importance in EFL classes. Therefore, much research has focused on developing EFL learners' speaking skill by implementing various approaches (e.g. Alzboun et al., 2017; Baradeyah & Farrah, 2017; Delliou & Zafiri, 2016; Derakhshan et al., 2016; Manurung, 2015; Saeed et al., 2016).

However, dialogic teaching is a strategy with a potential to improve EFL learners' speaking skill through high levels of teacher-student interaction and meaningful classroom talk (Alexander, 2008). It also aims to stimulate students to speak 'complex utterances' that reflect their thinking with reasoning and to participate productively (Alexander, 2008). EFL students need to learn how to build interpretations rather than acquiring knowledge of specific tests and vocabulary, as dialogic teaching has the potential to increase cognitive demand and learning opportunities (Resnick et al., 2015). Moreover, to the researchers' best knowledge, no study on dialogic teaching was found in Jordan; thus, this study is an attempt to introduce this strategy to the Jordanian EFL classes.

Alexander (2005) stated that dialogic teaching has five key principles; namely, *collectivity*, where learning tasks are addressed by teachers and students as a group or as a whole class; *reciprocity*, where teachers and students listen to each other and share different ideas and viewpoints; *support*, where students speak out their ideas freely and without fear of embarrassment over incorrect answers; *cumulation*, where teachers and students build on their own ideas and each other ideas; and *purposefulness*, where teachers direct the classroom talk with definite educational goals.

Besides, dialogic teaching is a pedagogy that seeks to shift classroom talk away from rote learning toward a productive interaction between teachers and their students. Implementing dialogic teaching in nine British schools in 2003, Alexander (2005) reported a positive impact on planning practice, classroom talk, children's motivation and learning outcomes. Alexander (2008) argued that dialogic teaching does not include the common forms of learning by rote, accumulation of knowledge by recitation or teacher instruction. It does, however, include discussion, sharing information and dialogue to achieve common understanding through structured and cumulative questioning.

Dialogic teaching has its own specific indicators as well as methods. The indicators of dialogic teaching are as follows: *authentic questions*, where students express their thoughts with reasoning, as the dialogic teaching questions are structured to provoke thoughtful answers which, in turn, are supposed to provoke further new questions; *uptake*, where the speaker builds on what has been said; *higher-order teacher feedback*; and *open discussion* which includes at least three participants who respond to each other in a sequence for more than thirty seconds, while its methods are: *collaborative reasoning*, *Paideia Seminar and Philosophy for Children* (Sedova et al., 2016). A substantial body of research has highlighted the potential of dialogic teaching in improving students' speaking skill.

Dialogic talk is foundational to dialogic teaching and learning and is grounded in a social constructivist approach (Alexander, 2006; Hardman, 2008; Lyle, 2008; Mercer & Dawes, 2008; Skidmore, 2006; Wells & Ball, 2008). The term dialogic teaching believes in the idea that knowledge and understanding come from evidence, idea analysis and value exploration through the use of talk, rather than blindly submitting to others' certainties (Alexander, 2006).

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Dialogic teaching is not a program, like spelling or math, but a framework of teacher understanding and beliefs about the use and importance of talk within a collaborative learning environment (Alexander, 2006). Underlying dialogic teaching is a philosophical belief about how children can learn through oral language (Vygotsky, 1978). Recognizing the social nature of cognition, dialogic approaches to teaching and learning involve a shift in thinking about the role of teacher and student talk in the classroom.

Dialogic learning involves students' extended and supported use of talk (involving both teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions) that includes open-ended questions, reflections, extended exchanges of dialogue, authentic feedback and uptake/building on the ideas of others to collaboratively engage in knowledge construction within a safe learning environment.

Despite its name, dialogic teaching does not imply exclusive use of a dialogue in a classroom. Instead, it entails having a broad pedagogical repertoire of language patterns (Alexander, 2008; O'Connor & Michaels, 2007). Depending on specific instructional goals, teachers should be able to flexibly use different kinds of talk, including recitation, exposition or discussion. At the same time, theory and research suggest that dialogic inquiry into complex questions is a type of classroom interaction that is well suited to support the development of higher-order thinking skills, such as argument literacy (Nystrand et al., 2003; Reznitskaya et al., 2009; Soter et al., 2008; Wells, 1999). Dialogic teaching favors a different pattern of interaction which is characterized by the use of authentic questions on the part of the teacher and the pupils, where answers are not pre-specified, but incorporated into subsequent dialogue, so that pupil responses modify the topic of discourse (Nystrand et al., 1997).

Seeking to identify the effect of dialogic teaching methods (group discussion and Socratic dialogue) on university students' critical thinking disposition and social interaction, Hajhosseiny

(2012) indicated the effectiveness of dialogic teaching methods in improving six elements of critical thinking dispositions (analyticity, cognitive maturity, CT self-confidence, self-evaluation, open-mindedness and truth-seeking) and seven elements of social interaction (knowing each other, friendship and intimacy, tendency to dialogue, responsibility, class dynamism, interaction with teacher and intimacy with the instructor).

Barekat and Mohammadi (2014) investigated the dialogic teaching pattern of teachers' discourse as opposed to monologic one. Rules of dialogic pattern were implemented on thirty-eight Iranian high-school students. The students' speaking was pre- and post-tested by implementing a placement conversation. The results indicated that the use of the dialogic discourse pattern could significantly contribute to the students' speaking ability.

Moreover, Simpson (2015) examined the pedagogic value of dialogue on a group of pre-service teachers' reflective practices and their knowledge about the power of talk for learning. A mixed-method of a unit of study, where the dialogic teaching was applied, was implemented. An analytical framework based on Alexander's principles of dialogic teaching and blended learning, as well as focus group interviews were used to collect data. The results illustrated a positive effect of dialogue when implemented as a pedagogic tool.

Muhonen et al. (2016) examined types of dialogic teaching patterns that can be identified in the early school years and how teachers scaffold children's participation and shared understanding through dialogic teaching. Thirty recorded lessons from preschool to grade 2 in Finnish classrooms were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Results indicated that the quality of scaffolding may be highly linked with shared understanding of content and scaffolding activeness when the children actively participate in class.

Besides, Veen et al. (2016) investigated the potential of "productive classroom dialogue" on the development of young children's oral communicative competence. After video recordings, the teachers were subjected to a professional development program, a workshop on productive classroom dialogue and reflection sessions. As for children, an oral communicative competence test was carried out. The results revealed that productive classroom dialogue had a

significant and moderate to large effect on young children's oral communicative competence.

Zayed (2016) aimed to highlight Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogism in relation to the objectives of teacher education in the KSA. A qualitative design and a questionnaire administered to 20 Saudi students were used to collect data. The researcher considered the ways in which students, texts and the instructor interact – enter into dialogue – in order to generate meaning and understanding. Results showed that students realized the significance of dialogic teaching in their professional development as well as their development as learners.

The impact of dialogic teaching on learners' speaking skill and thinking skills was investigated by Elhassan and Adam (2017) by using a questionnaire, an interview and an observation checklist for data collection. The participants were students at the tertiary level. Data analysis showed that dialogic teaching enabled students to develop the skills of argumentation, questioning and debate which contribute to the development of their critical thinking and speaking skill.

Alexander (2018) examined the development of a dialogic teaching intervention designed to maximize the power of classroom talk to enhance students' engagement and learning. The intervention entailed teacher induction and training followed by a cyclic program of planning, target-setting and review using mentoring and video/audio analysis. Nearly 5000 (4th-grade) students and 208 teachers participated in the study. The results showed that after twenty weeks, students in the intervention group were two months ahead of their control group peers in English, mathematics and science tests.

Nouri et al. (2018) investigated the impact of dialogic learning on students' attention and academic achievement. The participants were 28 (12 year-old) Iranian male students. Data was collected by conducting academic performance tests and semi-structured interviews. Results of Analysis indicated that dialogic teaching has significantly greater and more positive changes on some aspects of attention and academic performance.

Shaari et al. (2018) examined the practice of dialogic method in a Malaysian tertiary education context. A qualitative approach and a classroom observation were used for data collection. An

educator and forty-one learners were directly involved in the dialogic teaching and learning. Classes were recorded and narrated. It was reported that openness was obviously noticed which helped the learners voluntarily involve in the in-depth discussion and actively participate in the dialogues.

To capitalize the effect of dialogic teaching on the power of talk to further students' thinking, learning and problem-solving in the United Kingdom, the United States, Continental Europe and elsewhere, Kim and Wilkinson (2019) worked to bring conceptual clarity to the term 'dialogic teaching'. The writers addressed three major points: the issue of discourse form and function, the role of classroom culture and whether dialogic teaching constitutes a general pedagogical approach or a specific discourse practice. Similarities and differences among the various approaches to dialogic teaching were examined and put within a network of related ideas on teaching and learning *through, for, and as* dialogue.

Based on the findings of the research works presented on the effect of dialogic teaching, it is evident that dialogic teaching when implemented in a good manner holds a genuine potential as an efficient tool of language instruction that affected positively the students' speaking skill. At the local level, no study was conducted on the implementation of dialogic teaching. As in the Arab world, one qualitative study was conducted in the KSA (Zayed, 2016). International studies (Alexander, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2008; Callander, 2013; Lyle, 2008; Sedova, 2017) came out with the same positive effect of dialogic teaching on speaking performance.

Statement of the Problem and Question of the Study

Based on the researchers' experience as professors or full-time lecturers at tertiary level, it was evident that many Jordanian students have a low level of speaking proficiency. Moreover, Jordanian EFL learners in general have recently shown apparent weakness in their English language skills in general and speaking skill in particular (Al-Jamal & Al-Jamal, 2014; Batiha et al., 2016). Besides, the majority of students in the Jordanian context who learn English as a foreign language are unable to speak English confidently. Rabab'ah (2005) relates the difficulties in speaking

to the learners themselves, the teaching strategies, the curriculum, and the environment.

This study aims at examining the effect of dialogic teaching on the Jordanian EFL seventh-grade learners' speaking skill. It addresses the following question: Is there a statistically significant difference (at $\alpha=0.05$) between the experimental and control groups' mean scores of speaking skill in the post oral test attributed to the implementation of the dialogic teaching compared with the conventional instruction?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study may derive from the novelty of its topic, dialogic teaching which, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, has not been attempted in the Jordanian EFL context. This study will be the first of its kind in Jordan that will examine the potential of dialogic teaching on the Jordanian EFL learners' speaking skill. Besides, the researchers aim to localize this study where dialogic teaching will be implemented in the Jordanian EFL classes. Thus, the current study will investigate the effect of dialogic teaching on the students' speaking skill as well as investigating their attitudes towards its implementation.

The results of the current study may motivate scholars, educators, teachers and students to move beyond the monologic dominance of recitation and develop patterns of classroom interactions that open up the EFL students' speaking and hence their thinking and strive to distribute the ownership of talk more equitably. Moreover, this study will contribute to the literature on dialogic teaching.

Participants

A total of 64 participants were selected through a random sampling technique from two intact sections; they were studying at Yarmouk University Model School in the Directorate of Education in Irbid during the second semester of the academic year 2018/2019. Section A had 31 students and was assigned as the experimental group, while section B with 33 students was assigned as the control group. The experimental group was taught the speaking skill through the dialogue strategy-based instructional program, whereas the control group was taught using the conventional way as prescribed in the teacher's book of Enterprise1 (Evans & Dooley, 2000).

Instrument

The researchers used three instruments to collect the data.

The Speaking Test

The test was constructed by the researchers themselves in light of the General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language Curriculum for the Basic and Secondary Stages (2006). In order to conduct the test, the researchers examined the speaking activities of Enterprise1 (2000) in the seven units to find out the way in which these speaking activities are presented and taught to ensure that the content of speaking test would be within the participants' competence and would include the speaking skill components (fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and content).

The same oral test was used as a pre-/post-test. The pre-test aimed at detecting the students' speaking ability before the treatment, while the post-test evaluated the effect of implementing dialogic teaching on the speaking ability of the same students in terms of its five components. The speaking test consisted of five questions with a total mark of 25. The questions needed open and personal answers based on the students' knowledge and reasoning. The time allotted for each question was about 3-5 minutes and each student was given 2-3 minutes to think about the answer. The tests were carried out and rated with the help of two teachers; the teachers of the experimental and control groups. The student's grade was the average of three grades given by the two teachers and one researcher.

The Rating Scale of the Speaking Test

It was a three-point analytical rubric to measure the levels of improvement of the five speaking skill components under study through using the Oral Proficiency Rubric for EFL/ESL suggested by Wu, Marek and Huang (2012). This oral rubric consisted of five criteria, which were the five components of the speaking skill. Each criterion has a three-point rating scale ranging from 1= poor, 3= good to 5= excellent. The students' responses were evaluated and judged by using this rubric; a final grade was recorded after adding the grades of the five components of the test.

The Instructional Program

The instructional program was divided into 11 speaking activities according to the units of Enterprise1 and were taught throughout the second semester according to the second semester plan which was prepared by the teacher and revised by the researchers to add, delete or modify any elements of the lesson plan. Based on this semester plan, the researchers created a timetable for the dialogic teaching speaking activities to be followed when planning and preparing the speaking activities.

The researchers studied meticulously all speaking activities in the second semester, then they read the instructional procedures for each activity as mentioned in the teacher's book and the teacher's plan which is written and used by the teacher for the speaking lessons and activities. Then, the researchers redesigned these speaking activities to be in the form of dialogue through asking authentic questions with an appropriate level of language difficulty.

The Observation Checklist

The third instrument was an observation checklist. The items of the checklist are adopted and modified from (Alexander, 2008; Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014; Reznitskaya, 2012) to ensure that the teacher of the experimental group is following the steps and procedures of dialogic teaching during the speaking lessons.

Procedure

In order to implement the dialogic teaching effectively in the class, the researchers read and content analyzed the speaking activities of Enterprise1 (Evans & Dooley, 2000) in units 8,9,10,11,12,13 and 14 in order to explore the main strategies and procedures that the teacher usually follows during teaching the speaking activities according to the teacher' book.

During the speaking activity, the researchers attended the class to fill in the observation checklist. There were three stages, each of which had a number of steps that were implemented within the allotted time as follows:

1- Before implementing dialogic teaching: It is the introductory stage that includes defining the instructional program in terms of how and why to apply it; the teacher states in this stage the outcomes of the instructional program as well as

the lesson's, followed by putting students into groups and instructing them on the speaking activity. This stage would take 10 minutes. The role of the teacher is minor, as she presents the program and instructs the students.

2- During implementing dialogic teaching: It is the implementing stage of the speaking activities. In this stage, the students in groups start interacting with the teacher and with each other where they give their opinions, build on each other's ideas as well as their teacher's and start negotiation, discussion and reflection based on the lesson's outcomes and the authentic questions posed by the teacher. The role of the teacher in this stage is vital, as she relates students' answers with appropriate feedback leading them to construct new meanings related to the authentic questions. In this stage, the teacher should reinforce her students' participation by praising and encouraging them. The allotted time is 35 minutes.

3- After implementing dialogic teaching: It is the stage of transcribing the recording and evaluating the role of the teacher in implementing the instructional program by using an observation checklist. The observation checklist is a three-point rating scale ranging from 1= poor, 3= good to 5= excellent. The researchers used this instrument in 15 visits through the semester to the experimental group during the semester.

Design of the Study

The researchers used the quasi-experimental design based on oral pre-/post-tests along with one experimental group and one control group. The location of the study was chosen purposefully. The setting was based on the purpose of the study and the researchers' aim. The study was conducted at Yarmouk University Model School, Irbid, Jordan.

Validity of the Instructional Program

To ensure the validity of the instructional program, it was handed out to a jury of ten professors and EFL supervisors who are specialists in English curriculum and instructions as well as the English language. They were eight professors of curriculum and instruction; all of them hold Ph.D. degree in different majors in English language and literature, English curriculum and instruction and Arabic language and two EFL supervisors; one holds a Ph.D. degree in English curriculum and instruction and the other holds an

M.A. degree in English language and literature. They were kindly requested to review the instructional program and state their comments regarding the accuracy of language, content, difficulty level, procedures and organization of the whole program.

Suggestions provided by the jury were taken into consideration to improve both the accuracy and quality of the instructional program: so that it becomes appropriate to the students' levels. One of these suggestions was to clarify the procedures, so that they correspond to the principles of dialogic teaching. Accordingly, the researchers rewrote these principles within the procedures, so that the teacher can easily implement the program. Another suggestion was to minimize the number of the pre-/post-oral test. Accordingly, and based on a pilot study, the researchers adopted five authentic questions to make this program more appropriate, useful and accurate.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

To ensure the validity of the speaking test and the observation checklist, they were submitted, in their initial forms, to the jury of ten who validated the instructional program. The jury members were requested to comment and evaluate the clarity of the instruments' instructions, the suitability of the program and the test to the level of students as well as clarity. The suggestions included: minimizing the number of the oral test questions and clarifying the procedures of the instructional program so that they correspond to the principles of dialogic teaching. Thus, the instruments were modified in

their final versions according to the jury members' comments and suggestion,

To establish the reliability of the test, the researchers chose twenty students from seventh-grade section (B) to pilot the oral test questions. The students were asked five authentic questions based on the topics covered in units 8,9,10,11,12,13 and 14 of Enterprise1 (Evans & Dooley, 2000). These questions were purposefully constructed by the researchers. The test took place in the video hall in Yarmouk University Model School to avoid noise and interruption. Each student took an average of five to ten minutes to answer the five questions according to the student's fluency. The students' responses were recorded. The session was held on 10th February 2019 and it was repeated two weeks later. The result of Pearson correlation coefficient value was 0.86.

Results

The question of the study was: Is there a statistically significant difference (at $\alpha = 0.05$) between the experimental and control groups' mean scores of speaking skill in the post oral test attributed to the implementation of dialogic teaching compared with the conventional instruction? To answer this question, the mean scores (M) and standard deviations (SD) of the speaking pre-/post-test scores in the five components for the experimental and control groups were calculated. Table 1 presents the results.

Table (1)

Means and Standard Deviations of the Speaking Pre- and Post- Tests on the Five Components of the Speaking Skill

Group	Control (N= 33)				Experimental (N= 31)			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Fluency	2.636	0.699	3.212	1.364	2.516	0.769	4.065	1.263
Pronunciation	2.788	0.650	3.303	1.380	2.806	0.543	4.226	1.055
Grammar	2.273	0.839	2.909	0.843	2.161	0.969	3.871	1.284
Vocabulary	2.667	1.190	3.182	1.467	2.516	0.769	4.226	1.309
Content	2.242	0.902	3.152	1.121	2.290	0.938	3.968	1.278
Total	12.606	2.487	15.758	5.031	12.290	2.466	20.355	5.168

The mean of pre-test scores of the experimental group was 12.290 with a standard deviation of 2.466 and the mean of pre-test scores of the control group was 12.606 with a standard deviations of 2.487. However, there is a noticeable difference between the mean scores of the

experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental group. Hence, to find out whether these differences are statistically significant, MANCOVA test was performed on the post-test scores. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table (2)*Results of MANCOVA Test on Post-Test Scores in the Five Components of the Speaking Skill*

Source	Dependent Variable	Sum of squares	Df	M Square	"F" value	Sig.
Group (Hotelling's=0.345) (F=3.654) (Sig. = 0.006)	Fluency	13.050	1	13.050	8.107	0.006*
	Pronunciation	15.247	1	15.247	12.139	0.001*
	Grammar	15.644	1	15.644	14.002	0.000*
	Vocabulary	19.251	1	19.251	10.763	0.002*
	Content	10.671	1	10.671	7.611	0.008*
Pre (Hotelling's=0.036) (F = 0.377) (Sig. = 0.862)	Fluency	0.000	1	0.000	0.000	0.988
	Pronunciation	2.224	1	2.224	1.771	0.189
	Grammar	3.046	1	3.046	2.726	0.104
	Vocabulary	3.201	1	3.201	1.790	0.186
	Content	0.806	1	0.806	0.575	0.451
Error	Fluency	91.755	57	1.610		
	Pronunciation	71.594	57	1.256		
	Grammar	63.686	57	1.117		
	Vocabulary	101.952	57	1.789		
	Content	79.920	57	1.402		
Corrected Total	Fluency	119.000	63			
	Pronunciation	108.000	63			
	Grammar	87.000	63			
	Vocabulary	137.750	63			
	Content	99.859	63			

* $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 2 shows that there are significant differences between the experimental and control groups at $\alpha = 0.05$ of the five components of the speaking skill of the post-test. F values were (8.107, 12.139, 14.002, 10.763 and 7.611) of the five components (Fluency, Pronunciation, Grammar and Vocabulary, Content), respectively, in favor of the experimental group.

Discussion

The question of this study was about the effect of dialogic teaching on seventh-grade students' speaking skill. The scope of discussion covered the students' performance in the five components of the speaking skill: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and content.

The results revealed that there was a significant difference at $\alpha = 0.05$ in the students' speaking skill in favor of the experimental group as opposed to the control group. This difference was attributed to the treatment (dialogic teaching). The researchers believe that the difference in the students' speaking skill in the post-test could be ascribed to the implementation of dialogic teaching through which various pedagogical practices were cautiously and purposefully addressed. Some of

the characteristics of these practices were the easiness and the feasibility of implementing dialogic teaching inside the classroom; i.e., the redesigned speaking activities with the dialogue strategy were interestingly presented in an easy way using varied authentic questions that encouraged students to participate in dialogues, along with the use of an alternative assessment rating scale which encouraged students and fostered their performance in the five components of the speaking skill which in turn encouraged students to talk with a low level of anxiety.

To explain these characteristics, the researchers believe that dialogic teaching is supportive in creating an active, interactive and constructive learning environment for students to practice what they already learnt in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and content; the students were highly motivated to participate and interact with their colleagues. The researchers believe that the relaxing, comfortable and supportive learning environment might provide students with appropriate and feasible opportunities to communicate collaboratively.

Moreover, in dialogic teaching speaking activities, the students learned the necessary components of the speaking skill through meaningful exposure to dialogues and talk that were used in the speaking activities and were presented through the principles and rules of dialogic teaching. The teacher applied these principles and rules carefully during the speaking activities and according to the notes taken through the observation checklist, the researchers found that the teacher was successful in implementing these principles and rules. As a result, the students were able to be aware of their learning progression. The results of the observation checklist revealed that the teacher was able to teach the speaking activities according to dialogic teaching.

The instructional program included interesting and encouraging dialogues and talk that played a significant role in raising the students' motivation to participate in the speaking activities. This might have caused improvement in their entire performance in the post-test, as the students of the experimental group were asked to respond to the oral test questions which were open-ended and needed a high-order thinking level to utter appropriate sentences that expressed their ideas. Results of the experimental group were better than those of the control group in this case. For example, students were asked about their opinions concerning computers, travelling and doing exercise. These questions triggered the students to use the words and structures they have learnt with better level of fluency, pronunciation and grammar.

Moreover, dialogic teaching may provide students with specific learning opportunities of using new vocabulary and structures in their daily routines inside and outside the classroom and this might help them integrate the language skills. It was noticed that the students had a positive enthusiasm and participation to speak English, not only during the speaking class, but also during other English classes and lessons of different subjects. Speaking English inside and outside classroom was observed spontaneously by their teachers, other students and even parents. This might be an indication of the effectiveness and usefulness of dialogue strategy.

For more clarification, the results showed that dialogic teaching provided maximum opportunity to students by creating a different learning environment with collaborative work, relaxing

social relationships between the students and their teacher, authentic learning materials, such as pictures and shared knowledge between students.

Dialogic teaching minimized the time of teacher's talk and maximized the time allotted to students' talk and interaction. Therefore, dialogic teaching enables students to practice the oral part of the language regardless of their grammatical mistakes, choice of words or pronunciation. It was found that students could be motivated to perform better by addressing their needs, preferences, beliefs and inclinations.

More importantly, the researchers were very cautious from the outset to design an instructional program by redesigning the speaking activities in Enterprise1 to be more related to the students and compatible to their preferences as well as appropriate to their academic levels. Thus, dialogue strategy might help students be more attentive in speaking and familiar with using oral skill in their daily events and routines, where dialogue strategy encourages students to monitor the speaking tasks performed by other classmates in order to boost their speaking skill.

On the other hand, the results of the speaking post-test of the control group indicated that there was a little improvement in the speaking skill. The control group students' mean score of the post-test was 15.75 compared with their performance in the pre-test which was 12.60 of mean score. This result may be due to the fact that speaking activities were not taught appropriately to the students; the researchers noticed during their random visits to this group that there were no dedicated classes for learning the speaking skill during English lessons, where the teacher's book prescribed some speaking activities to be fulfilled within a short time in a normal class period.

Another possible reason for this could be the teaching method which is still teacher-centered, where the teacher's talk is dominant and less opportunities were given to students to practice what they learn, so the students seem to be passive learners in the learning process. The researchers noticed that the students of the control group were reluctant and shy to participate in the speaking activities inside the classroom, as they were not used to speaking English communicatively during English-class periods.

Finally, focusing on grammar and vocabulary and neglecting other speaking skill components is another factor that the results of the control group could be attributed to. The grammar-oriented instruction is very dominant inside EFL classrooms; this might be as a result of preparing students for the following grades, especially the second secondary stage (Tawjihi or GSCE), as most students, parents and teachers feel that the priority should be given to grammar.

The results of this study are consistent with findings of some related literature and research concerning the effect of dialogic teaching on the speaking skill. For instance, Barekat and Mohammadi (2014) found that the application of the rules and principles of a dialogic discourse pattern could successfully result in improvements of students' speaking ability. They also stated that the rules and principles in a dialogic discourse in any learning setting are not only applicable, but also advantageous and resulting in successful developments.

Lefstein and Snell (2014) found that the establishment of dialogic discourse benefits the class as a whole and students' participation in the classroom discourse leads to quality learning. Moreover, the implementation of dialogic teaching increased the amount of students' talk with thought and reasoning. In addition, the results are similar to Nouri, Seifpour, Esmaeilli and Talkhabi (2018) who found that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of students of the experimental and control groups on the academic achievement tests in favor of the experimental group in dialogic learning condition.

Creating a positive engaging classroom atmosphere is one of the main pedagogical concerns. EFL teachers, educators and curricula designers should be aware of this concern to guarantee more learning and prevent any undesirable learning behavior.

Conclusions

Based on the discussion of the results of the present study, the researchers have come up with the following conclusions:

1- The results revealed that the implementation of dialogic teaching was effective in improving the students' speaking skill as compared with the conventional methodology. Thus, the researchers

believe that this method of teaching is effective and useful in improving the EFL students' performance in the speaking skill.

2- This study presented evidence of the improvement in the five components (fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and content) of the speaking skill. This improvement could be attributed to the following factors:

A- The implementation of dialogic teaching does not require any special facilities.

B- Enhancing the students' intrinsic motivation through addressing their needs, preferences and proficiency levels.

C- Incorporating the five components of the speaking skill through providing the target students with ample meaningful exposure to the target language accompanied with adequate practice.

Recommendations

In light of the results of this study and in compliance with the General Guidelines and Specific Outcomes, the researchers present the following recommendations:

1- EFL textbook designers and curricula planners in the Ministry of Education should infuse dialogic teaching in the speaking activities in the English school textbooks.

2- More importantly, for the sake of improving the students' proficiency as a whole in English, there should be a serious orientation from the Ministry of Education towards the importance of the speaking skill. Such an attitude requires the integration of speaking in teaching, learning and testing, so that EFL students and teachers will recognize the significance of the speaking skill in learning English.

3- Other researchers are also called to replicate this study and to conduct other empirical studies in authentic classes to investigate the effect of dialogic teaching on the speaking skill over a longer period of time with other wider population among EFL students in Jordan and compare their results with the results of the present study.

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