Enhancing EFL Speaking Skills of Secondary School Students through a Constructivist Learning Activities (CLAs) Program

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine whether a suggested program based on constructivist learning activities (CLAs) has any impact on the development of English-speaking skills among secondary school EFL students. The CLAs were implemented in a collaborative learning environment, where learners were encouraged to work together to complete tasks and solve problems. To achieve this objective, a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design was employed. A single intact class of 30 students served as the sole participant group. To assess learners' speaking proficiency, a pre-post speaking test was developed and administered before and after the program's implementation. A paired-sample t-test was used to analyze the data statistically, and the effect size was calculated using Eta Squared $\eta2$. Results showed a positive effect of the suggested program on enhancing English-speaking skills among secondary school EFL students. The findings of the current study have important implications for EFL teachers. They suggest that teachers should use CLAs to develop learners' speaking skills. CLAs provide learners with chances to practice speaking in a wide range of contexts and to receive feedback from their peers and teachers. This can be beneficial for learners to develop their speaking fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

Keywords:
Constructivist Learning Activities (CLAs), Speaking Skills, EFL Students

Introduction

The ability to speak effectively is a crucial skill that enables individuals to communicate their thoughts and ideas, enhance communications, and facilitate participation in various aspects of life. Cameron (2001) defined speaking as the process of using language to convey meaning to others. Richards (2008) stressed the importance of assessing speaking proficiency as a measure of overall success in language learning. Likewise, Hasibuan and Ansyari (2007) highlighted that speaking ability serves as an indicator of a person's language proficiency.

In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), speaking proficiency is particularly important because it enables learners to express themselves confidently and participate actively in academic and social environments. However, despite its importance, EFL learners often face challenges in developing strong speaking skills (Al-Jamal & Al-Jamal, 2014; Al Hosni, 2014; Tuan & Mai, 2015).

The current study seeks to address the prevalent problem of poor English speaking skills among EFL learners. This weakness stems from a combination of factors, including the lack of sufficient opportunities for speaking practice and the prevalence of traditional teaching methods that prioritize rote memorization and limit oral interaction. Observations of EFL learners and teachers reveal an overreliance on the mother tongue in the classroom, which further hinders the development of speaking proficiency. In addition, the lack of appropriate teaching materials exacerbates the challenges faced by EFL learners.

To address these concerns, this study proposes a comprehensive program based on constructivist learning activities (CLAs) to enhance EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Constructivism emphasizes the active participation of learners in constructing their own knowledge through practical and collaborative activities. Cooperative learning assistants have proven effective in promoting cooperative learning, critical thinking, and

communication skills among learners of all ages (Dell'Olio and Donk, 2007).

The proposed program includes two main strategies; the Jigsaw method and Fishbowl Debate. The Jigsaw method, developed by Elliot Aronson in 1970, involves dividing students into small groups to explore specific aspects of a topic. Learners then share their new knowledge with their peers, fostering a collaborative learning environment. This method is compatible with developing speaking skills because it encourages learners to participate in discussions, express their understanding, and provide feedback to their peers (Sahin, 2011).

Fishbowl Debate, characterized by a circular seating arrangement, promotes active participation, note-taking, and oral responses (Kennedy, 2007). Discussions provide opportunities for learners to practice fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary while engaging in meaningful discussions. This strategy complements the Jigsaw Method by offering learners a structured platform to apply their acquired knowledge and engage in critical thinking (Ban et al., 2023). By implementing this constructivism-based program, this study aims to address the speaking weaknesses of EFL learners and provide them with the tools and opportunities to develop their speaking skills.

Study Problem

Despite ongoing efforts to enhance speaking skills in EFL teaching-learning processes, researchers have observed that these skills remain underdeveloped or entirely neglected. Furthermore, traditional teacher-centered approaches continue to dominate Egyptian EFL classrooms. This study aims to address the shortcomings of prevalent speech teaching programs and strategies by developing a proposed program based on CLAs (Constructivist Learning Activities) to be a valuable resource for those working in the field of education to develop speaking skills. The researcher seeks, through the use of this program, to enhance

EFL learners' development of their speaking skills, as speaking is an essential skill for effective communication in English.

Despite the importance of speaking skills at the secondary level, learners often struggle to speak effectively. The researcher attributes this to the prevalence of traditional teaching methods, which rarely require learners to speak more than a few words in response to display questions from the teacher. Moreover, these methods seldom provide learners with clear explanations or instructions regarding the nature of speaking and the characteristics of native-speaker speech. Additionally, speaking does not receive enough time or attention in English instruction for first-year secondary school students. This may result from the evaluation system implemented, which prioritizes reading and writing and ignores listening and speaking skills.

To gain a deeper understanding of the problem, an EFL Speaking Test was administered before the study to 30 secondary-stage students to assess their speaking proficiency. The test consisted of a series of structured tasks designed to evaluate the students' fluency and accuracy. The results of the test revealed that a significant majority of the students demonstrated a low level of speaking proficiency.

The current study was supported by a comprehensive review of relevant literature, confirming the effectiveness of constructivist approaches in the learning process (Eldreeny, 2022; Erdem & Erdem, 2022; Ullah et al., 2020; Chitanana, 2012; Jin, 2011; Sharma, 2011). Consequently, the study endeavors to enhance the essential speaking skills of first-year secondary students using a constructivist-designed program, offering a promising way to improve their speaking proficiency.

In light of the previous findings, this study aims to address learners' speaking weaknesses by applying a constructivist-based program.

Study Questions

What impact does the proposed CLA-based program have on the enhancement of speaking skills in secondary school EFL students?

Three sub-questions were derived from this question as follows:

1. How effective is the suggested program in developing first-year secondary school learners' speaking fluency sub-skills, including pausing, hesitation, and the flow of speech?

2. How effective is the suggested program in developing first-year secondary school students' speaking accuracy sub-skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation of vowels, consonants, sentence stress, and intonation?

Study Hypotheses

The study makes the following hypotheses:

1. There are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level in the average scores of the students on the Fluency Skills (Pausing, Hesitation, and Flow of Speech) between the pre-test and post-test, with superior performance observed in the post-test.

2. There are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level in the average scores of the students on the Accuracy Skills (Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation in Vowels, Consonants, Sentence Stress and Intonation) of the test between the pre-test and post-tests, with superior performance observed in the post-test.

The delimitations of the study are as follows:

- The study was conducted with only one intact first-year secondary class in El Gharbeya Governorate.

- The study was limited to one school term (a school term, i.e., nearly three months)

- The study focused only on the speaking sub-skills of accuracy and fluency that are appropriate for EFL first-year secondary students. These sub-skills are:
  o Accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of (vowels, consonants, sentence stress and intonation)
  o Fluency in (pausing, hesitation, and flow of speech).

Literature Review & Related Studies

Speaking Skills

Speaking is a critical component of language proficiency, as it allows individuals to effectively convey their thoughts and ideas (Larsen-Freeman, 2013). In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL), speaking presents a unique challenge due to the complex interplay of comprehension, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and intonation (Palmer, 2018). This complexity often results in learners having difficulties expressing themselves confidently in English (Wongsa & Son, 2020). One of the primary factors contributing to these challenges is the influence of learners' native languages (Marzuki & Nurpahmi, 2020; Suwastini et al., 2020). Transferring linguistic patterns from the native language to the target language can cause interference, which hinders the production of accurate and fluent English speech.

Numerous experts have proposed various definitions of speaking. Speaking is the active use of language to express meanings in a way that enables other people to comprehend them (Cameron, 2001, p. 40). It is a complex skill that involves the processes of conceptualizing, formulating, articulating, and self-monitoring in our speech (Bygate, 2001). Many attempts have been made to categorize the functions of speaking in human interaction. For instance, Richards (2008) outlined three primary functions of speaking: talk as interaction, talk as transaction, and talk as performance.

Richards (2008) outlines the key characteristics of talk as interaction. This form of communication serves various functions, reflecting the speaker's identity and the relationship dynamics at play. It may adopt a formal or informal style, adhering to conversational norms and varying levels of politeness. Interactional talk primarily focuses on facilitating social interaction, making it a crucial aspect of language communication. In brief, Interactional talk refers to communication that mainly serves the purpose of social interaction.

Burns (1998) classifies talk as transaction into two distinct groups: Transactional talk involves giving and receiving information, while the second category centers on obtaining goods or services, such as the process of checking into a hotel. Therefore, it is vital for learners to acquire proficiency in both forms of conversation in order to excel in their speaking skills.

Brown and Yule (1983) proposed that learners should develop proficiency in both transactional language, used for conveying factual or propositional information, and interactional language, used for fostering and maintaining social connections. This division has remained a useful framework for examining the elements of speaking proficiency.

Public speaking, also known as talk as performance, is the art of delivering an effective speech to a live audience, which can include morning presentations, public announcements, and various types of speeches. The nature of talk as performance often leans

toward monologues rather than dialogues, as seen in activities like presenting a class report on a school trip, participating in a class debate, or delivering a lecture. Consequently, talk as performance typically requires thorough preparation in the form of a written script (Richards, 2008). Therefore, when English teachers are providing instruction, it is essential to emphasize the incorporation of these functions. Each of these spoken tasks possesses its own unique characteristics in both structure and purpose, necessitating distinct teaching methodologies.

Harmer (2007) emphasizes that speaking encompasses two major categories: accuracy, which involves vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation and is improved through controlled activities, and fluency, which pertains to the ability to speak spontaneously. The challenge in teaching English lies in choosing whether to focus on fluency or accuracy. Scholars and educators have engaged in countless debates, making it challenging to prioritize one over the other. The researcher acknowledges the value of both aspects and aims to strike a balance, recognizing that neglecting either can hinder learners' progress. Thus, the study will address both fluency and accuracy in English language instruction. Speaking English as a foreign language represents a multifaceted challenge for learners, requiring a combination of linguistic proficiency and communicative confidence. By understanding the underlying factors contributing to these challenges, teachers can implement effective teaching strategies and provide supportive learning environments to enhance EFL learners' speaking skills and enable them to communicate effectively in English.

Constructivism

The constructivist theory is founded on the idea that individuals create their own understanding by drawing from their personal experiences. Constructivism's effectiveness lies in organizing learners for problem-solving in different environments (Bada & Olusegun,

2015). According to Mogashoa (2014), knowledge builds on learners' prior experiences, involving interpretation and understanding. This ongoing and dynamic process evolves through active interaction with experiential encounters. Knowledge development primarily occurs through collaborative discussions, the sharing of diverse perspectives, and the transformation of learners' intellectual representations. Importantly, learning is most effective when grounded in practical models, and evaluation and assessment should be seamlessly integrated into projects or tasks rather than being isolated activities.

Gagnon et al. (2006) introduce a model of six elements for constructing lessons based on constructivist principles, emphasizing activities that promote critical thinking and learner engagement. This model is a very useful contribution that instructors can use because it provides a structured format for assisting teachers in designing constructivist learning opportunities.

Ullah et al. (2020) provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of constructivist teaching methods in enhancing English speaking proficiency among 358 Pakistani high school and college learners. The findings suggest that constructivist strategies, which emphasize active learner engagement and real-world language use, can lead to significant gains in speaking proficiency compared to traditional lecture-based instruction. These findings have implications for English language teaching (ELT) pedagogy worldwide, suggesting that constructivist approaches should be more widely adopted to promote effective language learning.

Erdem and Erdem (2022) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of the Constructivist Blended Learning Environment (CBLE) in enhancing the listening and speaking skills of fourth-grade primary school students. Their study used experimental research design and focused on the listening and listening comprehension dimensions of listening skills and the speaking and oral expression dimensions of speaking skills. The

intervention involved a hybrid teaching approach combining face-to-face and online teaching. Data were collected during the activities using self-evaluation forms and teacher evaluations with specific criteria. The results revealed that CBLE significantly improved students' listening, listening comprehension, speaking, and oral expression skills. These findings suggest that CBLE is a promising approach for enhancing primary school students' listening and speaking skills and that teachers should consider incorporating constructivist blended learning strategies into their classrooms to promote effective language learning.

Strategies in the proposed program

In the proposed program designed to enhance the speaking skills of first-year secondary school EFL students, two prominent strategies were employed: Jigsaw and Fishbowl Debate. These strategies rely on cooperative learning principles and structured debate formats to encourage teamwork, critical thinking, and active learner involvement.

Jigsaw, a cooperative learning method developed by Elliot Aronson and widely endorsed by researchers such as Dell'Olio and Donk (2007), centers around five crucial elements: positive interdependence, which is mutual reliance for a common goal; face-to-face interaction, or direct communication in person; individual accountability, which pertains to personal responsibility for outcomes; social skills development, involving the enhancement of interpersonal abilities; and group processing opportunities, providing instances for collective assessment. In the Jigsaw classroom, learners are organized into varied groups where each member holds equal significance. The process involves breaking down material into parts, having learners study their designated sections, forming expert groups for discussion and learning, and then returning to their original groups to teach their peers. Moreover, the Jigsaw technique has gained significant recognition for its role in enhancing learner self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic success. It is acknowledged for its

contribution to dismantling perceived barriers among learners, encompassing issues of race and diversity. Thus, the method goes beyond aiding learners in content understanding and knowledge formation, actively participating in the creation of a more inclusive society (Aronson, 2000-2019).

Fish Bowl Debate (Inner Circle-Outside Circle Debate), is a structured debate format that engages both an inner circle and an outer circle of learners. It takes its name from the seating arrangement, which consists of an inner circle and an outer circle. According to Kennedy (2007), debates can be classified into four distinct types, with fishbowl debate being one of these. In this method, the instructor divides the class into two groups, where each group formulates arguments supporting their assigned viewpoint. Then, after both sides have presented their arguments, they engage in a reciprocal rebuttal process. In another variation of the fishbowl debate, learners are categorized into three groups: one group consists of experts representing each side of the issue, while the remaining learners act as the audience. The fishbowl technique involves arranging participants in circular seating formations, fostering increased learner participation, close observation, note-taking, and verbal responses (Reski Amalia, 2017).

In brief, these strategies create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that aligns with the objective of enhancing the speaking abilities of secondary school EFL students. Through these approaches, learners not only enhance their speaking abilities but also learn the art of constructive discourse and cooperation, preparing them for effective communication in various contexts (Dell'Olio & Donk, 2007; Aronson, 2000-2019; Kennedy, 2007).

Studies Related to Constructivism

Several studies related to constructivism, Fishbowl Debate, Jigsaw, and developing speaking skills have provided valuable insights that informed the design of the proposed program for enhancing speaking skills among secondary school students.

In the realm of constructivism, Eldreeny (2022), Erdem and Erdem (2022), Ullah et al. (2020), Chitanana (2012), Jin (2011), and Sharma (2011) have collectively demonstrated the effectiveness of constructivism in supporting language skills, serving as a foundational principle for the proposed program.

Regarding the fishbowl debate, research by Reski Amalia (2017), Hasanah (2012), and Junaidi (2011) highlight its effectiveness in improving learners' speaking skills, influencing the choice of Fishbowl Debate in the program.

In the context of Jigsaw, research conducted by Alamri (2018) and Keshta (2016) confirm its effectiveness in teaching speaking skills, and increasing learner engagement when compared to traditional teaching methods. These research findings support the researcher's selection of constructivist strategies, specifically Fishbowl and Jigsaw, as essential components of the suggested program.

Methodology

Design of the Study

The researcher employed both descriptive analytical and quasi-experimental research designs. The descriptive approach was utilized to recognize the speaking skills, the proposed program rooted in constructivist activities, theoretical framework of the study, data collection and interpretation, instrument preparation, literature related to the study and the relationships between the different variables of the research. The quasi-experimental design involved a single group of research participants or subjects who were pretested, given some treatment, as

the group was taught speaking skills according to the techniques of the suggested program or independent variable manipulation, and then post-tested.

Population

The study population consists of all secondary school first-year learners in El-Gharbia governorate.

Participants

The study was administrated in Meet Haway Preparatory & Secondary Institute for Boys in the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. An intact class consisting of first-year secondary school students (N=30) was randomly selected and designated as the experimental group. The average age of the sample ranged from 15 to 16 years. Furthermore, the students in this group shared similar economic, cultural, and social backgrounds.

Instruments of the study

Two instruments were employed in this study: The Speaking Skill Test and The Speaking Skill Rubric.

The EFL Speaking Skills Test, a pre/post-speaking test was created and conducted by the researcher. It was used to assess the impact of the suggested program rooted in (CLAs) in enhancing the chosen speaking skills.

The test was constructed through the following steps:

- Recognizing the skills assessed by the test through the results of the pilot study, involving informal discussions and consultations with English teachers and supervisors.

- Determining the suitable genres for test tasks in accordance with the Ministry of

Education's goals and views from a panel of experts.

- Evaluating prior research concerning developing speaking tests in EFL such as those by Fulcher and Reiter (2003), and Bernstein and Cheng (2007).

Test Description:

The final version of the pre-/post-speaking test, adapted following the pilot study, included a warm-up stage and three sections involving interactive tasks that aligned with the material covered in the programs. The warm-up stage aimed to ease the examinee into the examination, establish a welcoming atmosphere, and elicit typical greeting expressions (e.g., "hello, how are you?", "how is everything?", etc.). This was achieved through some compliments from the examiner as well as through a series of uncomplicated questions focusing on invoking "small talk." During this phase, short responses were more common at this stage, usually more spontaneous phrases, rather than well-structured sentences.

The EFL Speaking Skills Test consists of three main sections. The first involves conducting interviews between teachers and learners and encouraging learners to freely discuss personal information through open-ended and yes/no questions. The second section evaluates learners' responses to different situations, focusing on language functions such as expressing routines and searching for information. In the third section, learners describe pictures depicting common events in detail, focusing on sentence structure, vocabulary choice, and pronunciation. The test concludes with a phase that promotes a relaxed atmosphere and the use of vacation expressions. These sections have been carefully designed to align with the program's lessons and objectives, and to serve as a comprehensive assessment of learners' speaking skills before and after the program is implemented.

Table 1

Specification for the Pre-Post Test, indicating the test sections and the scores assigned to each skill

Speaking Skills	Main sub-skills									
Sub-Skills	Fluency			Accuracy						Total score on the test/ Sections
	Pausing	Hesitation	Flow of Speech	Grammar	Vocabulary	Pronunciation				
Sections						vowels	Consonants	Sentence Stress	Intonation	
Warm-up & Section (1) (Tell Me about yourself)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45
Section (2) (What would you say in a different situation?)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45
Section (3) (Describing)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45
Total of each skill	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	135
The mean score for each skill.	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	**Overall test score = 45**

Validity of the Speaking Skills Test:

Before implementing the test, it was subjected to evaluation by five EFL jury members. They assessed the test in terms of accuracy and fluency, question arrangement and quantity, task complexity, and its suitability for the proficiency level of first-year secondary school EFL students. One of the main modifications was replacing the third task, changing it from "describing your city to your friend" to "picture description" due to its higher level of challenge for learners. Other feedback received was also considered when finalizing the test.

The construct validity of the English-Speaking Skills Test was determined by measuring correlation coefficients for the two dimensions of the test: Fluency and Accuracy.

Table 2

The construct validity assessment of the EFL Speaking Skills Test (sample size N=20)

Dimension	Correlation Coefficients	Level of Significance
Fluency	0.920	0.01
Accuracy	0.974	0.01

As indicated in table 2, the construct validity assessment of the EFL Speaking Skills Test, conducted with a sample size of N=20, reveals strong positive relationships for the assessed dimensions. Specifically, the correlation coefficient for Fluency is 0.920, and for Accuracy, it is 0.974. Both correlation coefficients are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, suggesting a highly significant association between Fluency and Accuracy in the EFL Speaking Skills Test.

Reliability of the EFL Speaking Skills Test:

The reliability of the created EFL Speaking Skills Test was determined by calculating the consistency of the ratings provided by a second rater who evaluated the test (inter-rater reliability). This method, in line with the recommendations of previous scholars as (Baker, 1989, P.60), was chosen to evaluate the reliability of speaking tests due to practical constraints. The degree of inter-rater reliability was established by comparing the scores assigned to students by rater "A" with those assigned by rater "B."

First: The reliability of the corrections was confirmed as follows: the researcher corrected the EFL Speaking Skills Test and then had another researcher correct it using the same conditions and criteria. The correlation coefficients are depicted in the table below.

Table 3

Correlation coefficients between the first and second raters to the EFL Speaking Skills Test

Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance
Fluency	0.923	0.01
Accuracy	0.912	0.01
Total Test	0.956	0.01

As indicated in Table 3, the correlation coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) between the first and second raters for all aspects of the EFL Speaking Skills Test demonstrate a strong positive relationship. The significance levels for the correlation between Fluency and Accuracy, as well as the overall test, are both 0.01, indicating the reliability of the scoring process. Therefore, because the table above reveals statistically significant and strong correlations between the two raters, the scores were combined to calculate an average score for each speaking skill.

The Rubric for Assessing Speaking Skills:

A five-level rubric was created by the researcher after reviewing relevant literature and studies. This rubric was employed to assess the participants' responses to the tasks in the speaking skills test both before and after the treatment. Each level in the rubric was attributed an estimated value. The first level, representing very poor responses, was assigned a value of (1). The second level, representing poor responses, was assigned (2). The third level, representing good responses, was assigned (3). The fourth level, representing very good responses, was assigned (4). The fifth level, reflecting excellent responses, was assigned (5). The use of this rubric allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive profiles of the participants' performance in the test tasks.

The Validity of the EFL Speaking Rubric

Before utilizing the rubric, a panel of five experts with specializations in educational fields assessed it. Their feedback regarding the categories and analysis domains was carefully considered. As a result of their input, the sub-skill of language speaking was subdivided into two primary components: "fluency" and "accuracy." These expert opinions were taken into account during the development of the final version of the rubric.

Rubric Reliability:

The reliability of the rubric was determined by computing the correlation coefficient between the evaluations provided by two assessors for the speaking skills test of 20 first-year secondary school EFL students at Meet Haway Preparatory & Secondary Institute for Boys (who were not part of the primary treatment). The correlation coefficient between the assessors' scores was found to be 0.97. Subsequently, the rubric was applied to assess the responses of the participants in the pre-and post-speaking skills tests.

Using ADDIE Model for designing the program

The researcher has chosen to utilize the ADDIE model for several compelling reasons. Firstly, the ADDIE model stands as one of the most commonly employed frameworks in the field of instructional design, serving as a guiding tool for producing effective designs. This model has demonstrated its effectiveness in numerous previous studies (Spatioti et al., 2022), showing that it aids instructional designers, content developers, and educators in creating efficient and effective teaching designs through the implementation of ADDIE's processes on any instructional product. The components crafted by following the ADDIE model can be applied in various settings, whether online or in-person, as evident in the current research.

Validity of the program

The researcher implemented one speaking session in a pilot study, involving 20 students. This was done to investigate any operational problems and to assess the suitability of activities and the allocated time.

Study Results

The study is structured to provide an answer to the primary question: What impact does the proposed CLA-based program have on the enhancement of speaking skills in secondary school EFL students?

Results Related to the First Hypothesis

- This hypothesis was verified by employing a paired-sample t-test, which compared the pre- and post-application scores of the EFL Speaking Test on Fluency Skills (Pausing, Hesitation, and Flow of Speech). The analysis of the scores was conducted using the SPSS statistical software (version 21).

- There are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level in the average scores of students on the Fluency Skills (Pausing, Hesitation, and Flow of Speech) between the pre-test and post-test, with the post-test displaying superior performance.

Table 4

Comparing the Performance of the Experimental Group on the Post-Administration of the EFL Speaking Skills Test on Fluency Skills

Dependent variable	Application	N	Mean	St.D	T	df	Sig	Eta Square d η^2
Pausing	Pre-	30	2.93	0.94	10.80	29	0.05	0.80
	Post-	30	3.90	0.66				
Hesitation	Pre-	30	2.60	0.81	8.31	29	0.05	0.70
	Post-	30	3.46	0.68				
Flow of Speech	Pre-	30	2.86	1.01	10.81	29	0.05	0.01
	Post-	30	3.83	0.94				
Total Fluency Skills	Pre-	30	8.40	2.38	13.61	29	0.05	0.86
	Post-	30	11.20	1.91				

Note: "t" values and statistical significance (Sig) indicate the difference between pre- and post-application.

Table 4 indicates a statistically significant distinction at the 0.05 level between the mean scores of the experimental group students in the pre-and post-application of the EFL Speaking Skills on Fluency Skills (Pausing, Hesitation, and Flow of Speech), favoring the post-test. The table also reveals a substantial effect size (η^2) of the suggested program on Fluency skills. This confirms the first hypothesis, suggesting a noteworthy difference at the 0.01 significance level between the average scores of the experimental group students before and after the application of the EFL Speaking Skills Test, with post-application scores being in favor.

Results Related to the Second Hypothesis:

- This hypothesis was verified by employing a paired-sample t-test, which compared the pre- and post-application scores of the total Accuracy Skills (Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation in Vowels, Consonants, Sentence Stress and Intonation). The analysis of the scores was carried out using the SPSS statistical software (version 21).

- There are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level in the average scores of students on Accuracy Skills (Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation in Vowels, Consonants, Sentence Stress and Intonation) of the test between the pre-test and post-tests in favor of the post-test.

Table 5

Comparing the Performance of the Experimental Group on the Post-Administration of the EFL Speaking Skills Test on Accuracy Skills

Dependent variable	Application	N	Mean	St.D	T	df	Sig	Eta Square d η2
Grammar	Pre-	30	2.80	0.76	9.81	29	0.05	0.77
	Post-	30	3.73	0.69				
Vocabulary	Pre-	30	2.67	0.95	10.80	29	0.05	0.80
	Post-	30	3.63	0.92				
Pronunciation in Vowels	Pre-	30	2.60	0.96	8.76	29	0.05	0.73
	Post-	30	3.53	0.81				
Consonants	Pre-	30	2.63	0.93	8.31	29	0.05	0.70
	Post-	30	3.50	0.90				
Sentence Stress	Pre-	30	2.77	0.77	8.76	29	0.05	0.73
	Post-	30	3.70	070				
Intonation	Pre-	30	2.70	0.79	8.76	29	0.05	0.73
	Post-	30	3.63	0.76				
Total Accuracy Skills	Pre-	30	16.16	4.11	11.45	29	0.05	0.83
	Post-	30	21.73	3.62				

Note: "t" values and statistical significance (Sig) indicate the difference between pre- and post-application.

Table 5 indicates a statistically significant distinction at the 0.05 significance level between the average scores of the experimental group students before and after the application of the EFL Speaking Skills Test on Accuracy Skills (Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation in Vowels, Consonants, Sentence Stress, and Intonation). The table also reveals a substantial effect size (η^2) attributed to the suggested program's impact on the Accuracy Skills Test. Therefore, it confirms the second hypothesis, suggesting a significant difference at the 0.05 significance level between the average scores of the experimental group students before and after the application of the Accuracy Skills Test, covering areas such as Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation in Vowels, Consonants, Sentence Stress, and Intonation, in favor of the post-application of the EFL Speaking Skills Test.

Discussion of the Results

The program, based on CLAs, was introduced to students over nine units, demonstrating its effectiveness in enhancing the students' overall speaking skills. Each unit focused on a distinct genre or speaking macro-function, whether transactional or interactional. This approach ensured that learners not only learned the conventions and principles associated with each genre but also incorporated these norms into their speech. Furthermore, learners were exposed to tasks of varying complexity levels, significantly bolstering their confidence in speaking spontaneously and fluently, as evidenced by their performance in the posttest.

Furthermore, the explicit instruction provided during the pre-speaking stage played a crucial role in generating enthusiasm for the tasks, activating fluency skills related to the topic, such as pausing, hesitation, and speech flow, as well as accuracy skills encompassing grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in vowels, consonants, sentence stress, and intonation. This heightened learners' motivation, engagement, and eagerness to participate in speaking practice and complete the necessary activities.

In the speaking phase, learners had the opportunity to apply the instruction and planning they had received, enabling them to complete a genuine task without the teacher's direct involvement. This allowed them to utilize all the acquired speaking skills fluently and spontaneously.

Following the speaking phase, learners were provided with the opportunity to present in front of their peers. This public performance elevated learners' focus on accuracy, particularly in areas such as grammar and pronunciation, among other skills. These strategies were seamlessly integrated into the suggested program, with the teacher taking on the role of a facilitator, guiding learners to employ precise language while completing the task. This increased their involvement, sense of ownership, and willingness to practice speaking.

Constructivist educators advocate for the use of assessment as a tool to enrich learners' learning experiences.

The study's findings indicated that the implementation of the recommended program had a notable impact on enhancing learners' speaking skills. The introduction of meaningful real-life scenarios through pair work and collaborative activities, which are fundamental components of communicative language teaching, played a crucial role in the language classroom. Quantitative and qualitative data mutually supported the positive conclusions of the study and pointed out that a relatively substantial amount of improvement has occurred along different areas of the two main speaking sub-skills, namely, fluency and accuracy. Consequently, following the 18-session application of the proposed program in the speaking class, it can be concluded that:

1. The proposed program enhances learners' interaction with both the teacher and their peers when they engage in pair and group activities, ensuring active participation from all learners.

2. The recommended program optimizes the chances for learners to speak during English lessons and promotes valuable learner-to-learner interactions. To gather information and exchange opinions with their teacher and classmates, the learners needed to interact among them. They should spend most of the time working in pairs and groups.

3. The suggested program fosters increased opportunities for learners to practice and improve their receptive language skills by introducing a variety of tasks during lessons.

Moreover, the recommended program enhances the classroom environment by making it more authentic and reflective of everyday life. Learners become more engaged and

accountable for their learning. Well-built planned lessons ensure active learner participation in constructing their knowledge, aligning with constructivist principles, which have shown to lead to higher academic performance compared to conventional methods. Thus, the suggested program offers highly effective strategies for English learners to genuinely enhance their speaking skills.

However, the analysis of the posttest results in comparison to the pretest findings revealed statistically significant differences, which the researcher attributed to the following factors:

1. Learners apply language functions in the oral communication process. They master English communication competences such as: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and strategic competence.

2. Learners actively engage in using oral communication skills in their daily lives, feeling comfortable with speaking and being motivated to communicate in English even if they make errors.

3. Learners possess prior knowledge about the subject matter.

Conclusion

In light of the preceding discussion, it can be deduced that the integration of the suggested program into the EFL classroom has the potential to enhance speaking skills. The results of the current study indicated a significant enhancement in the speaking skills of the experimental group during speaking activities. The suggested program strategies that used in the program (i.e. Jigsaw and Fishbowl debate) used in the experimental treatment, gave the learners confidence to speak well and developed their overall speaking skills.

In addition, as we discussed above we can see that all of the participants had realized the importance of using the suggested program for improving speaking skills. This

consequently develops learners' speaking abilities. The participants recorded better attitudes toward improving their speaking skills after being involved in constructivist activities. Their responses show how these activities helped them develop their speaking ability. The study contributes to adding some guidance to those who are concerned with the development of learners' speaking ability.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on the research findings, the researcher suggests the following:

1. There is a need to apply modern cognitive theories and teaching models, such as constructivism theory, in teaching English.

2. Organizing continuous workshops and professional development sessions for English teachers and supervisors to apply constructivist techniques as effective models in teaching English and to emphasize their advantages and importance in the learning process and let them share their experience.

3. Educators should prioritize the enhancement of speaking skills and view learners' speaking errors as a natural phenomenon, because learners will learn from those errors. Moreover, provide learners with a guide that shows them the philosophy of the constructivist model and its steps, strategies, and how to deal with learners to help them master their speaking skills.

Additionally, one can also safely address the following recommendations for curricula or course designers, teachers of English as a foreign language, and TEFL researchers:

- Course designers in charge of designing EFL syllabi, including learner books,

workbooks, teacher's guide, and planning for accompanying activities should focus on such constructivist activities to be used by EFL teachers in real classroom situations.

- For the numerous advantages highlighted in this study, no excuse can be accepted for not utilizing cooperative and collaborative learning opportunities.

- They can maximize benefit by not only describing constructivist techniques for speaking purposes, but for other language skills as well depending on the reported objectives of teaching each skill at each educational stage.

- EFL teachers should first read about all possible constructivist techniques and recognize the philosophy behind them, the main principle underlying them, and how to implement them in language classes for different purposes. Secondly, they should seize all opportunities for applying adding variety depending on learners' needs, inclinations, and performance. They might find it difficult at the beginning, but using them more and more will make them easy to apply and the learners will be accustomed to such techniques.

- Prospective teachers of English in the faculties of education must utilize such (CLAs) in their programs.

Suggestions for Further Research

1. Further research is needed to assess the impact of constructivist strategies on enhancing learners' speaking skills across different grade levels.

2. Researchers should assess the impact of applying constructivist techniques to enhance EFL and other English language skills for pupils at various grade levels.

3. Researchers need to investigate constructivist strategies in teaching at all levels and grades, considering the favorable outcomes observed in this study regarding the

enhancement of learners' achievements and motivation.

4. Researchers should investigate the effects of other (CLAs), such as think-pair-share, pairs and peers, numbered heads together, etc., on developing speaking skills.

5. Research should investigate the effects of using (CLAs) within the same activities in an in-service teacher training program to develop their ability to teach speaking and other skills.

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