



Investigating the Strategies for Teaching English Communicative Skills to Sudanese Secondary Schools Students in the locality of Khartoum

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ABSTRACT:

This study aimed to investigate the strategies used in teaching English communicative skills (listening and speaking) for secondary schools students in Khartoum locality. Sudan. The researcher used the descriptive method. A random sample of 70 teachers and 50 students participated in the study. Data was collected through a questionnaire (for teachers) and written test (for students). Both questionnaire and test were standardized. Data analysis was accomplished through description and non-parametric analysis method using the SPSS statistical package program. Results revealed that teachers don't used modern methods in teaching (Computers, Videos and Internet). Results also revealed the unsuitability of some parts of the English language curriculums to improve the skill under study. , teachers were also noticed a dearth in the usage of oral test's key. The study recommended the use of effective technological means in teaching of communication skills besides reviewing and modernizing text books and providing enough time for teaching the communicative skills and training the teachers on how to teach it.

Keywords: Listening, Speaking, Activities

المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة الي البحث في استراتيجيات تدريس مهارات التواصل في اللغة الانجليزية, (الاستماع و الحديث) لطلاب المرحلة الثانوية بمدينة الخرطوم. اعتمدت الدراسة علي النهج الوصفي المسحي. تكونت عينة الدراسة من 70 معلما 50 طالبا اختبروا بالطريقة العشوائية. تم جمع البيانات عبر وسيلتين. الاولى "الاستبانة" استخدمت مع المعلمين والثانية اختبار شفهيء استخدم مع الطلاب. وقد تم تقنين الاداتين من حيث الصدق والثبات. تمت معالجة البيانات عبر احصاء وصفي (المتوسطات الحسابية ونسبها المئوية) واحصاء لابارامتري تضمن (احصاء مربع كاي). اشارت النتائج الي ان المعلمين لا يستخدمون الوسائل الحديثة في تدريس المنهج (الحاسب الالي واشرطة الفيديو و الانترنت) لتحسين مهارات الطلاب. كما اتضح ايضا ان اجزاء من منهج اللغة الانجليزية لاتناسب تطوير المهارات قيد الدراسة كذلك لوحظ عدم استخدام المعلمين للاختبارات الشفهية. اوصت الدراسة بوجوب تدريس استراتيجيات التواصل عبر الوسائل التقنية الفعالة ومراجعة وتحديث الكتب المدرسية والاهتمام بتوفير الوقت الكافي لتدريس استراتيجيات التواصل الضمنية في المنهج المقرر وكذلك الاهتمام بتدريب المعلمين علي تدريس تلك التقنيات وعلي استخدام التقنية في تدريسها. . تمثلت اهم النتائج في: .المعلمون لا يقدمون نشاطات كافية لطلاب اثناء العام الدراسي من اجل التواصل الفعال, المعلمون لا يستخدمون المنهج الحديث لتشجيع الطلاب علي التواصل, المعلمون لا يركزون علي نشاطات الاستماع و التحدث لتعزيز النواصل الشفهية. قدمت الدراسة بعض النوصيات منها: يجب ان يدرس التواصل الشفهي في المدارس الثانوية من خلال

الوسائل الحديثة الفعالة بدلا من المناهج القديمة، مراجعة الكتب المدرسية و تحديثها وفقا للتطور الحالي، اهمية تكريس فراغ معقول وجزء كبير من الزمن لتشجيع التواصل الشفهي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستماع والتحدث والانشطة

INTRODUCTION:

English today is believed to be the most influential medium in bridging the global communication. A large proportion of learners in the world study English hard in order to communicate with native speakers or speakers of other languages. Learning a new language involves skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among the 4 skills, speaking is said to be the most direct way to talk to people. As Yunzhong (1985, cited in Hughes, 2002, 133) states, many language teachers consider speaking as the most effective mean of gaining a fluent reading knowledge and correct speech as the foundation for good writing. Those teachers also argued that during all one's life one shall probably talk more than one shall write. Therefore, to a language teacher, teaching speaking well is often a valued issue in the field of ESL/ EFL. In most cases English is not the medium of teaching and learning, and is not widely used outside the classroom. Most English teachers concentrate on improving reading and writing skills and do not take into account the importance of speaking and listening skills. In other words, teaching the oral skills at Sudanese schools is mostly ignored. There are many problems and difficulties associated with teaching English as a foreign or second language. These problems are generally concerned with accuracy and fluency, and most learners are not satisfied with their speaking and listening skills. The present study attempts to investigate the causes of weakness in listening and speaking English as a foreign language at secondary schools in Sudan. It focuses on determining the significant factors that contribute to the inability of secondary school students to speak English. In addition, the study tries to present the most important speaking difficulties that face secondary school students. Finally, the study provides recommendations aimed at improving students' oral skills.

This study investigates the strategies for teaching communicative skills effectively at secondary school. The cultural differences among the students, weakness in vocabulary and lack of grammatical and socio-linguistic competence are factors of the weakness of communication. However, the problems communication aggravates gradually and it comes to existence as a real problem. Some English language teachers participate in these problems especially those who lack experiences in teaching English through English and instead they teach English through Arabic, therefore, they play a passive role. Also the techniques of teaching listening and speaking effectively at secondary school may need tackling. Beside all that the cultural differences among the students, weakness in vocabulary, lack of grammatical and socio-linguistic competence are other factors. However, the problems of listening and speaking are appear gradually and they come to existence as a real problem.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study focuses on investigating the strategies for teaching listening and speaking among Sudanese English Language students at secondary schools. Evidently, secondary schools students find many difficulties when they try to talk to their classmates or to their teachers in English orally inside the classroom. Sometimes they lack confidence to do that. Other times, they feel afraid and anxious in addition to the absence of motivation to do that. This investigation will focus on the real and major problems practicing of these skills. It aims of specifying studying tasks and communicative activities to be undertaken during the course as well as seeking the

best ways for teaching listening and speaking according to students' realities society' actual demands.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

This study aims to give greater interest to the strategies of teaching listening and speaking activities. Thus the research specifies the following goal:

To find out the strategies for teaching listening and speaking effectively

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

In order to investigate problem raised by the study, the following hypothesis will be tested.

Practical strategies can improve the teaching of Listening and speaking.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

English language is an official language now in Sudan. In addition it was regarded as a foreign language in the country many years ago or even decades. This research is significant for Sudanese students at secondary schools because it may help them to overcome their oral communication problems. Also it is important for the Sudanese ministry of education because this research may assist in changing policies of English language learning at both basic and secondary schools. It is also important for teachers as a guidance hoped to help teachers to teach effectively. The study is also important for every learner interested in learning English.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research is limited to investigating the practical strategies for the teaching listening and speaking at secondary schools in the year (2017.2018) in Khartoum locality.

SCIENTIFIC TERMS

Strategy: A plan or action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aims

Skill: The ability for using one' knowledge effectively and readily in performance.

Communication: the process of using words, sound, signs or behaviors to express or exchange information or ideas, thought, feelings etc.

Skill: The ability to use ones' knowledge effectively and readily in performance.

THEORETICAL FRAME

Characteristics of listening and speaking

Courses in listening and speaking skills have a prominent place in language programs around the world today. Ever-growing needs for fluency in English around the world because of the role of English as the world's international language have given priority to finding more effective ways to teach English. It is therefore timely to review what our current assumptions and practices are regarding the teaching of these crucial language skills. Our understanding of the nature of listening and speaking has undergone considerable changes in recent years, and in this part of the study I want to explore some of those changes and their implications for classroom teaching and materials design. The teaching of listening has attracted a greater level of interest in recent years than it did in the past. Now, university entrance exams, exit exams, and other examinations often include a listening component, acknowledging that listening skills are a core component of second-language proficiency, and also reflecting the assumption that if listening isn't tested, teachers won't teach it. Earlier views of listening showed it as the mastery of discrete skills or micro skills, such as recognizing reduced forms of words, recognizing cohesive devices in texts, and identifying key words in a text, and that these skills should form the focus of teaching. Later views of listening drew on the field of cognitive psychology, which introduced the notions of bottom-up and top-down processing and brought attention to the role of prior knowledge and schema in comprehension. Listening came to be seen as an

interpretive process. At the same time, the fields of discourse analysis and conversational analysis revealed a great deal about the nature and organization of spoken discourse and led to a realization that reading written texts aloud could not provide a suitable basis for developing the abilities needed to process real-time authentic discourse. Hence, current views of listening emphasize the role of the listener, who is seen as an active participant in listening, employing strategies to facilitate, monitor, and evaluate his or her listening. In recent years, listening has also been examined in relation not only to comprehension but also to language learning. Since listening can provide much of the input and data that learners receive in language learning, an important question is: How can attention to the language the listener hears facilitate second language learning? This raises the issue of the role “noticing” and conscious awareness of language form play, and how noticing can be part of the process by which learners can incorporate new word forms and structures into their developing communicative competence.

Approaches to the teaching of speaking in ELT have been more strongly influenced by fads and fashions than the teaching of listening. “Speaking” in traditional methodologies usually meant repeating after the teacher, memorizing a dialog, or responding to drills, all of which reflect the sentence-based view of proficiency prevailing in the audio-lingual and other drill-based or repetition based methodologies of the 1970s. The emergence of communicative language teaching in the 1980s led to changed views of syllabuses and methodology, which are continuing to shape approaches to teaching speaking skills today. Grammar based syllabuses were replaced by communicative ones built around notions, functions, skills, tasks, and other non-grammatical units of organization. Fluency became a goal for speaking courses and this could be developed through the use of information-gap and other tasks that required learners to attempt real communication, despite limited proficiency in English. In so doing, learners would develop communication strategies and engage in negotiation of meaning, both of which were considered essential to the development of oral skills.

So, one may not find an ideal method, but should think about the design of those communication activities that work best for students according to their motivations and interests within a particular context. Oral communication makes it possible for students to develop their skills, express their needs, motivations, interests and aspirations in the communicative act, interacting in the social environment. This is so a social communicating being. Despite all the advance of the scientific and technological level, human beings continue express their aspiration to achieve their goals through the development of verbal communicative activity. This is so because any human action involves talking, trying to establish communication. (Freeman 2000) techniques and principles

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of (Anusu Omondi Maryslessor.2012) titled *Challenges teachers face in teaching listening and speaking*. Teachers face a number of challenges in teaching listening and speaking in languages. These include students’ lack of motivation for developing communicative competence; low English proficiency, and avoidance to class participation. In addition to these are: teachers’ misconceptions, lack of training, combined with deficiencies in sociolinguistic competence, little time for developing materials for communicative classes, and large classes. Other difficulties include grammar based examinations; insufficient funding; and lack of support. The study sought to find out the challenges faced in the use of the CLT approach for teaching Listening and Speaking lessons among teachers in Lugari District in Kenya. The

study was grounded on Dell Hymes' theory of communicative competence. The descriptive research design was adopted, with direct observation and interview methods of data collection being used. Note-taking and tape-recording were used to record class proceedings and interviews. A total of twelve secondary schools were selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Fourteen teachers of English were involved. A descriptive analysis of data was done. Frequency tables were used to highlight the data. This helped to establish the extent to which CLT was used. The study revealed that the major challenge lay on time, and wide syllabus. These, together with the large classes limited the teacher's ability to involve learners in meaningful participatory activities. The pressure for formal examinations made the teacher concentrate on training and drilling the learners on how to pass the exams at the expense of communicative competence. The teachers chose to teach the learners how to pass exams and not how to use English in different situations. The result of this is that the learner will not be able to speak English both in school and after school. A teacher whose aim is to cover the syllabus will be unwilling to follow an approach that does not recognize the second language learning in a classroom.

The study of **(Zekiye Müge 2010)** *Integrating listening and speaking skills to facilitate English language learners' communicative competence* Listening and speaking skills co-occur in real-life discourse and they are not mutually exclusive. Within this framework, this study is conducted to prove that teaching listening and speaking skills in integration to improve oral communicative competence of the students. In order to collect data for the study, a pre-posttest and various tasks were designed for 180 students from the preparatory school of Hacettepe University, Turkey. The collected data was analyzed through t-test. At the end of the study, the group practicing the skills in integration was found to be more successful than the group practicing the skills separately. People listen or speak in order to obtain the presented information or to learn about a content which is intellectual rather than factual as a way of developing their own intellectual skills so that ideas can be more effectively manipulated, possibly with the aim of influencing the behavior of others, or of determining the outcome of a series of operations. These reasons for listening and speaking are essentially practical. Thus, it can be said that listening is carried out for many purposes other than listening to the language itself. Just as messages are listened in order to be able to do something else, the student speaking a foreign language should be less concerned with the language than with the message sent to communicate. Therefore, students should develop not only listening but also speaking skills in order to communicate with others

METHODOLOGY

The method of this study is descriptive and analytic the aim of the present study is to investigate the strategies of teaching communicative skill to Sudanese secondary schools students in the locality of Khartoum. A random sample of 70 teachers and 50 students participated in the study. Data was collected through a questionnaire (for teachers) and written test (for students). Both questionnaire and test were standardized. Data analysis was accomplished through description and non-parametric analysis method using the SPSS statistical package program. The validity of the questionnaire and the oral test are evaluated by experts in the areas of educational research. To obtaining the same results if the same measurement is used more than one time under the same conditions. In addition, the reliability means when a certain test was applied on a number of individuals and the marks of every one were counted;

then the same test applied another time on the same group and the same marks were obtained; then we can describe this test as reliable.

Sample of the Study

This part of the study included the sample which consisted of two groups. Sudanese English language teachers (70 teachers) represent the community of teachers and Sudanese secondary schools students (50 students) represent the community of the students the two groups of the study are in Khartoum locality.

Reliability Statistics for questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.85	18

Reliability Statistics for oral test

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of questions
0.85	10

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers introduce and discuss the results of the study according to its **hypothesis**. Practical strategies can improve teaching Listening and speaking. After tabulating and analyzing the data of hypothesis the results are shown in the following tables.

The responses of the teachers questionnaire of the hypothesis (Practical strategies can improve the teaching of Listening and speaking)

No.	Statement	Strongly agree	agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	SD	Chi square	mean
1	listening to the radio and watching TV can improve communication	40	25	2	3	0	0.4	25.6	2.7
2	technological aids can improve student's skills	20	29	10	10	1	0.7	27.5	3.0
3	number of English languages per week should be increased	40	28	0	1	1	0.6	24	2.7
4	modern teaching methods should be adopted by teachers	30	20	0	10	10	0.4	22	2.5
5	teachers should give priority to oral and aural languages tests	23	35	2	10	0	0.7	23	3.0
6	computer can help student improving oral communication	19	26	3	2	10	0.6	24	2.7

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the first statement was (25.6) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12.4). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "listening to the radio and watching TV can improve communication

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the second statement was (27.5) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12.4). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "technological aids can improve student's skills

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the third statement was (24) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12.4). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "number of English languages per week should be increased.

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the fourth statement was (24) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12.4). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "modern teaching methods should be adopted by teachers

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the fifth statement was (23) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12.4). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "teachers should give priority to oral and aural languages tests

The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the sixth statement was (24) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which was (12.4). this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondent who agreed with the statement "computer can help student improving oral communication.

According to the previous results we can say that the hypothesis of the study is accepted.

The responses of students of oral test for the hypothesis (Practical strategies can improve the teaching of Listening and speaking).

Questions	Correct		Wrong		Decision
	<i>frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	
1. How old is Afzal?	11	22%	39	88%	Accept
Where does he live?	13	26%	37	74%	Accept
3. What is his friend?	8	16%	42	84%	Accept
4. How old is Zack?	5	10%	45	90%	Accept
5. Why Dave used to think like a soldier?	13	26%	37	74%	Accept

6. Does Dave agree with Zack or not?	6	12%	42	88%	Accept
7 What are Afzal hobbies?	7	14%	43	86%	Accept
8. What food does Zach like?	7	14%	43	86%	Accept
9. What food does Zach like?	12	24%	38	76%	Accept
10. Who is Zach's teacher?	9	18%	41	82%	Accept

From this table It's shown the summery of the results. For the test it is clear that the number of students who are having the wrong answers is greater than the number of correct answers so we can say the hypothesis is accepted and the test will support these results.

CONCLUSIONS:

The researcher will present the results according to the hypothesis of the study (Practical strategies can improve the teaching of Listening and speaking)

1. Listening to the radio and watching T.V can improve the communicative skills.
2. Teachers don't use the modern method to encourage students to communicate.
3. Teachers don't focus on listening and speaking activities to enhance the communication.
4. English textbooks don't include listening and speaking activities.
5. Teachers don't increase their knowledge about teaching listening and speaking.
6. The techniques used in learning oral communication are not interesting and motivating.
7. Dialogues which are good techniques to practice the spoken language are not enough.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

According to the results of the study the researcher presents the following recommendations:

1. The strategies of communication at secondary schools should be taught through effective means of technology rather than the traditional methods of teaching
2. Textbooks should be revised to be updated so as to cope with the current deed of development. It is very important to devote reasonable spaces in the textbooks for oral communication side
3. Teachers should be well trained in how to teach the strategies of communication effectively as well as giving them chances to activate the techniques of teaching oral communication
4. The skills of learning oral communication in students' personality should be encouraged.
5. It is important to put confidence in English language students when they want to talk orally.
6. Teachers have to encourage their students to talk freely regardless of their mistakes.
7. Course of oral communication as series at the beginning of teaching English for all levels of education should be designed.

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