Cairo University
Institute of Educational Studies
Adult Education Department

A Strategy Based On Eclectic Approach and Visual Stimuli to Develop English Speaking Skills of Workers' University Scholars

A thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master in Education
Curriculum & Instruction (EFL)

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Summary

Problem of the study

The problem of the study was identified in the low level of the workers' university scholars in speaking skills, so, the researcher suggested a strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to develop those skills among the workers' university scholars.

Questions of the study

The researcher identified the problem in the following main question:
What is the effectiveness of using the proposed strategy which is based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to develop English speaking skills of workers' university scholar?

The following sub-questions were derived from the main question:

Q1: What are the speaking skills required for workers' university scholars?

Q2: To what extent do they master the speaking skills?

Q3: What are the bases of the proposed strategy which is based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to improve English speaking skills?

Q4: What is the effectiveness of using the proposed strategy which is based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to improve English speaking skills?

Variables of the study

1- **Independent Variable:** A strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli.

2- **Dependent variables:** English speaking skills required for workers university scholars.

Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses were formulated:

1- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the post-tests of measuring Overall English speaking skill including Written and Oral tests in favour of experimental group.

2- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the overall written post-test in favour of experimental group.

3- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the overall of oral post-test in favour of experimental group.

4- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the components of the written post-test in favour of experimental group.

5- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the components of the oral post-test in favour of experimental group.

Aim of the study

This study aims at investigating the effectiveness of the proposed strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to develop English speaking skills of workers university scholars.

Instruments of the study

1- English speaking checklist
2- A questionnaire (used to determine the deficiency in the English speaking skills of workers' university scholars
3- The English speaking test (written and oral)
4- The rubric of the test

Instructional aids

1- Some of pictures, caricatures and nameplates.
2- Conversations and songs of English native speakers.

Participants of the study

The participants of the present study **(N=52)** were selected randomly from the first year scholars enrolled in the technology department at workers' university during the academic year (2012 – 2013). They were divided into two groups; the experimental group **(N=26),** and the control group **(N=26)** scholars.

Delimitations of the study

1- This study is delimited to a strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to improve English speaking skills of workers' university adults (Technology department).

2- Participants were selected from first year adults in workers' university (Technology department).

3- The study was conducted in workers' university; Alexandria branch, as it was the branch in which the researcher works, this enabled the researcher to perform the experimental procedures easily.

4- It was implemented during the academic year (2012-2013), (2) units, 90 minutes a week is allocated for teaching the English language**.**

Procedures of the study

1- Reviewing educational literature, studies and researches relevant to the study field especially eclectic approach, strategies and methods of teaching English as a second/foreign language and visual stimuli.

2- Constructing a strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli.

3- Determining topics that will be taught to experimental group adults (topics prescribed in English textbook for first year adults – technology department and the provided Topics), and processing it using appropriate visual stimuli.

4- Choosing random sample from first year adults in Workers' University (technology department – Alexandria branch - where the researcher works as English language instructress - then, dividing them into two equivalent groups ;(experimental and control).

5- Preparing and adjusting study's instruments (an English speaking check-list, a questionnaire for determining deficiencies in English speaking sub-skills, a speaking test to be administered as (pre- and post-test) containing the speaking sub-skills; test rubric of six levels {excellent- very good- good- fair – poor – No Response}).

6- Administering the pre-test (written and oral) on both groups to measure sub-skills of English speaking skill.

7- Teaching the experimental group using the proposed strategy and the control group using the regular method.

8- Administering the post-test (written and oral) on both groups.

9- Finding out results of the study and treating the data by appropriate statistical process and interpreting it.

10- Making recommendations and suggestions in the light of results of the study.

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Chapter I

Background of the problem

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Introduction

The illiteracy is not only the illiteracy of reading and writing, but also it is the illiteracy of the learners who are unable to assimilate the variables of the age in which they live; something which leads to retardation and deterioration of country. So; the strength of the trade union organizations and their effective role in social and economic development plans, made it necessary to establish prominent workers education system at the university level.

To achieve this goal; the Workers Education Association (WEA) organized its first workers education conference in Egypt in 1972. Amongst its outstanding recommendations was the establishment of a specialized workers education institution named "workers' university" to be responsible for preparing trade union leaderships to take upon themselves the development of the Egyptian society and the broad grassroots of workers. Then, it was established by virtue of a presidential decree No. 156/1985 (Workers' University guidebook, 2005:14-15). It is considered the specialized organization in the field of adult education, so that, the workers in WEA and the members of trade union can register in workers' university Technology or Social Affairs department (Al-Halamoshy, 2009:62).

There are thousands of adults who are graduated every year in the different branches of workers' university in Egypt; (Cairo – Alexandria – Tanta – Kafr El Sheikh – Mansoura – Beni-Suef - Damietta – Ra's El Barr – Ismailia – Assuit – Aswan). In these branches there are adults who want to get only a scientific certificate, but this certificate does not represent the adults' real instructional levels, the ability of thinking and solving problems as the scores are the primary factor to join the workers' university (Mohammad, 2007) and no interviews are held to know adults' desire to consummate studying in workers' university (Mousa, 2010:180). Al-Halamoshy (2009: 23-63) asserted that workers' university became a haven for

those who wish to get high qualification for social prestige, and it became *"a certificate for sale"* This point of view conforms with Reineke's sight (1998: 19) that testing and grading practices often ignore adults' confidence and may actually lessen their sense of confidence. Grades or scores may or may not adequately reflect competent performance, but they clearly do not emphasize performance and learning.

Methods of teaching English - particularly in workers' university - are based on: memorization (stimulating memory) and in most cases are distant from assimilation and stimulation of thoughts; there is no innovation or creativity in teaching English for workers' university adults. This necessitated the need for focusing on untraditional instructional strategies, in order to improve instructional outcomes, which can be adapted with the variables of labor market and its requirements. The appropriate investment of human capacities in the community requires taking advantage of all innovations and educational trends. Many instructional aids should be compact with the instructional methods, commensurate with the content and the instructional goals.

To say that there is no an ideal method of teaching advised to be followed, leads to conclude that a skillful instructor who knows his/her lessons' objectives, and procedures, can choose the best method to be used during a lecture in support of instructional-aids to confirm the effectiveness of those methods, therefore; the instructional aids improve the quality of teaching and compensate the deficiencies of learners experiences.

The instructional-aids are inherently interesting; because through it the subject is presented in a new pattern that is different from the traditional verbal patterns which often rely on good lecturing, but good lecturing is a talent which may not be available to everyone. Going on lecturing – even if it is good – is a matter of distress and boredom (Ibrahim & AL Kelza, 2000:169-170). When these

instructional aids integrate with instructional methods in processing the English syllabus, it becomes of great importance in enriching learning process.

There are many instructional aids that can be used, but the visual stimuli are less expensive and most flexible; so that it is easy to get and keep. A conference held in Glasgow (2013) recommended that technology of computers and mobiles provide a 'light' material which means "short", "easy", and "requiring attention" and fun to Grammar or Vocabulary, etc. those technological devices integrated using audio-lingual method with any visual format (Kim, 2013:139). Besides; using English Central (EC) which combines speech recognition technology and a video bank system is effective in language learning (Kimura, 2013:141). Also, talking E-dictionaries on mobile can be used for language learning (Koyama, 2013:150). But, it is highly possible that adult language learners are still struggling to figure out how to use mobile devices and computers effectively in language learning (Kaya, 2013: 137).

This is what prompted the researcher to think of a strategy to improve the speaking skill of workers' university adults, using visual stimuli which increase the adults' understanding of meaning and lessen using Arabic language, and integrating them with eclectic approach in which many of teaching methods can be selected and synthesized, and by which English speaking skills can be improved.

Context of the problem

The sense of the problem came from several sources: *First*; the researcher works as an instructress of English language in workers' university (Alexandria branch). It should be noted that workers' university was established in 1985 by presidential decree No. 156 to enhance the culture level and labor education of workers and to support the scientific levels of trade union leaders in order to fulfill the requirements of the recent age.

Workers' university has two main departments: technology department of two specializations (electricity and mechanics); Industrial affairs' department. Both

departments consist of two levels; (1) Diploma level, which is equivalent to (technical – for technology department; commercial diploma - for industrial affairs department) (2) Bachelor's level, which is equivalent to (bachelor of quality control – for technology department; commerce, business administration - for industrial affairs department) given by Egyptian universities. Recently; a Hospitality department had been established in Cairo branch, and will be universalized later in other workers' university branches.

Workers' university graduates – in Technology Department – should master (listening - speaking – reading and writing) skills of English language, to serve their needs after graduation. The workers' university adults- in Technology Department, first year – study English language in the first and second semesters for two time units (equals half and an hour) a week. Mursi (1997) concluded that worker's university adults had low levels of achievement.

During teaching in workers' university, the researcher conforms with the conclusion of Mursi (1997) that the workers' university adults had low levels of achievement, and she noted that there is a deficiency of English speaking skills among adults in Technology Department, they are unable to communicate in English correctly and accurately, use English grammatical rules (even the simple tenses) or the simplest phonetic rules correctly, remember most of the simple words or use vocabulary appropriately, and express ideas or pictures in English. So; they are unable to speak English comprehensively.

Second; the researcher conducted a pilot study on (150) adults who were randomly chosen from first year technology department in workers' university to investigate their deficiency in speaking skills using a questionnaire that was translated into Arabic.

The pilot study revealed that all the members of the sample had problems in the main English language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) in

proximate ratios, the descriptive statistics showed that the mean ratio which is less than (3) had a problem as shown in the following table:

Table (1): The Numbers and the Mean Ratio of the main English language skills

	N	Mean Ratio
Listening	150	2.4600
Speaking	150	2.2600
Reading	150	2.7800
Writing	150	2.7600

The previous table determined which skill of the four English skills is a problematic, and it showed that from the sample members' point of view; they had problems in all language skills in proximate ratios, but the speaking skill – as a problem - had the first rank after listening, then writing came in the third rank and finally Reading came in the last rank. The researcher interpreted their high appreciation of the speaking problem as - in the previous instructional stages - they study the English subject for answering the final exam. From their point of view, they feel that they learned how to read the English topics, and then they write these topics in the exam. The results of the pilot study accorded with many Egyptian researches which asserted that there was deficiency in EFL speaking and communication skills in the secondary stages such as Kassem (2006); Torky (2006); Ahmed (2007); Amin (2007); Shehata (2008); Hassan (2009); Ali (2010); Desouky (2012).

Third; what is included in cultural and educational conferences which were held to develop higher and technical education in Egypt, to move out of regular methods to modern pedagogical ones, and to improve the university education in light of international standards to achieve the total quality (Specialized National councils, 2001:2). The important conferences held in Cairo (2004-2005) recommended that deepening the technological thought of faculty members in universities of various specializations whether theoretical or practical.

Based on what the researcher perceived of the low level of workers university's first year adults – Technology Department – in English Speaking skills, the researcher identifies the study problem as follows:

Problem of the study

The problem of the study can be determined in the low level of workers university's adults in English speaking skills. Consequently; the researcher suggests a strategy – based on using eclectic approach and visual stimuli - to develop workers' university adults' low level in speaking skill.

Questions of the study

The researcher identified the problem in the following main question:

What is the effectiveness of using the proposed strategy which is based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to develop English speaking skills of workers' university adults?

The following sub-questions were derived from the main question:

Q1: What are the speaking skills required for workers' university adults?

Q2: To what extent do they master the speaking skills?

Q3: What are the bases of the proposed strategy which is based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to improve English speaking skills?

Q4: What is the effectiveness of using the proposed strategy which is based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to improve English speaking skills?

Significance of the study
This study is important because it:

1- Constructs a new strategy to help teaching staff at any level of education (school or university) to teach English in a way addressing the learners' tendencies and their educational needs and eliminate boredom.

2- Helps workers' university's adults to improve their English speaking skill, which is considered an urgent need for them, especially after graduation, because it is an essential skill for those who want to work in the governmental or private corporations, or for those who want to go to work abroad.

3- Helps instructors and lecturers in workers' university to improve their teaching performance.

4- Presents the English course in an interesting and attractive manner to stimulate the adults of workers' university for putting more forth to improve their levels of achievement in English language.

Variables of the study

1- **Independent Variable:** A strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli.

2- **Dependent variables:** English speaking skills required for workers university adults.

Delimitations of the study

1- This study is delimited to a strategy based on eclectic approach and visual stimuli to improve English speaking skills of workers' university adults (Technology department).

2- Participants were selected from first year adults in workers' university (Technology department).

3- The study was conducted in workers' university; Alexandria branch, as it was the branch in which the researcher works, this enabled the researcher to perform the experimental procedures easily.

4- It was implemented during the academic year (2012-2013), (2) units, 90 minutes a week is allocated for teaching the English language.

Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses were formulated:

1- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the post-tests of measuring Overall English speaking skill including Written and Oral tests in favour of experimental group.

2- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the overall written post-test in favour of experimental group.

3- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the overall of oral post-test in favour of experimental group.

4- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the components of the written post-test in favour of experimental group.

5- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups; (experimental and control) in the components of the oral post-test in favour of experimental group.

Terminology of the study

The strategy is systematic steps were designed to control the teaching and learning process including planning, application, and evaluation. **The proposed strategy** was a combination of instructional and learning strategies: which included a range of instructional methods and aids used by the researcher during teaching, in addition to a range of activities and skills carried out by the leaner to improve adults' English speaking skills.

Eclectic approach: the word **"Eclectic"** means *"choosing or consisting of what appears to be the best from diverse sources "(*the concise American heritage, electronic version), so; the term "Eclectic" is used to describe the extent to which instructors make choices from a wide range of educational traditions,