



شبكة المعلومات الجامعية
التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



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شبكة المعلومات الجامعية التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم



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جامعة عين شمس

التوثيق الإلكتروني والميكروفيلم

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The Effectiveness of Using Fables in Developing EFL Elementary Students' Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of using fables in developing EFL elementary students' speaking skills. This study used mixed method research, where one class (N=17) in the first term of the academic year 2020/ 2021 was randomly nominated from El-Massria Integrated Schools, 10th of Ramadan City. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a speaking pre-posttest, a teacher log, speaking rubrics, and a satisfaction questionnaire. A proposed program was conducted to develop the students' speaking skills. The results indicated that the program has a large effect on promoting EFL grade six elementary students' speaking skill in general and the speaking sub-skills in particular. All students of the study participants showed an increase in their performance during the oral post-test. In addition, there was a high level of student satisfaction which indicates the extent of students' satisfaction and engagement with the proposed program. As for the qualitative data, it was found that the students were involved, enthusiastic, motivated, and interested in the program. It can be concluded that students' speaking skills through using fables were improved. Based on the results of the study, the researcher provided some recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

Key words: fables, speaking skills, storytelling, elementary schools, Egypt

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Chapter One

Background and Problem

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Introduction

Language is a means of communication. People can transfer information or messages and express their ideas and emotions with language. In education, English has become the primary language of communication. It is spoken by millions of people all over the world. Nowadays, almost all majors and fields use English, such as engineering, economics, education, health, and social life. Graddol (2006) argued that “the growth of the use of English as the world’s primary language for international communication has obviously been continuing for several decades.” English is the language which connects and helps people communicate from different regions, cultures, religions, and nations. English is widely used more than any other language in the world. Brown and Lee (2015) claim that “English is increasingly being used as a tool for interaction among nonnative speakers” (p. 163).

To be able to communicate fluently, either orally or in writing, language Macro skills are considered very essential, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among those skills, speaking skills are naturally difficult to be mastered by the students starting from elementary school. This is true because speaking skills include many complex aspects, such as (1.) **fluency** (smoothness of flow which sounds, syllables, words, and phrases are joined together when speaking), (2.) **pronunciation** (the way students produce clearer language when they speak), (3.) **grammar** (the rule of study of language inflection), (4.) **vocabulary** (the words used in language), and (5.) **comprehension** (the ability of understanding the speaker’s intention and general meaning). Speaking is considered the basis for verbal communication.

Oral fluency is an important skill, “accepted by all as a necessary language communication skill” (Burns & Goh, 2012.p, 15), because it is the highest skill people use to express their ideas and interact with others. The need for speaking mastery in English has increased due to the strengthening position of English as a language for international communication. Teaching speaking skills has become increasingly important in English as a foreign language due to the large number of learners who want to

use English spontaneously and freely for communicative purposes. Speaking has usually been compared to writing, both being considered "productive skills", as opposed to the "receptive skills" of reading and listening. Speaking also is closely related to listening as two interrelated ways of accomplishing communication.

Moreover, Richards & Renandya (2002) pointed out that speaking is an essential element of language ability that provides a good foundation for learners' ability to listen, write and read. Shabani (2013) as well as Bailey and Savage (1994) agree that speaking has always been the most demanding skill compared to the other skills such as listening, reading and writing. Many studies highlight the importance of communication and the strategies for the development of the students' communication skills. One of the most significant current discussions in speaking is developing speaking proficiency and researchers have investigated problems in all aspects of the speaking process (Derakhshan & Shirmohammadli, 2015).

Being an important skill, the need for new strategies of teaching speaking is necessary. Most Egyptian students suffer from lack of oral fluency, pronunciation defects, and stage fright. This might be due to their lack of exposure to real life situations, resulting in lack of opportunities to practice and master their speaking skill. They also suffer from other problems such as insufficient amount of vocabulary, grammatical and structural mistakes. Hadijah (2014:1) found that the students' reasons in facing the problems of English speaking were not only having limited knowledge on the components of speaking skills including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, but also they have their own personal reasons, such as being shy to perform speaking, lack of self-confidence, lack of speaking practice, time management, speaking material, and exposure problems. According to Sayed (2008), English is taught as a foreign language not as a means of communication. This takes a very traditional form which does not help the students to develop their verbal or oral skills.

It has been proven that the use of short stories is useful in teaching speaking. Stories allow instructors to teach the four skills to all levels of language proficiency. Murdoch, (2002) indicates that "short stories

can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT (English Language Teaching) courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency” (p. 9).

Erkaya (2005) notes four benefits of using short stories to teach ESL/EFL, i.e. motivational, literary, cultural and higher-order thinking benefits. Reading short stories can be an input to practice other language skills. Firstly, short stories can be an input to oral skill practice. After finishing reading, students can be asked to narrate the story in their own words, to give chronological sequences of events in the story, to paraphrase or to give a summary of the story. Besides, students can do role play, act out some parts of the story, or dramatize the characters in the story (Khorashadyzadeh, 2014, p. 10). Similarly, Short stories allow instructors to teach the four skills to all levels of language proficiency.

Fables represent a particular kind of story with their own structure and lessons to be learned. They are short and interesting; the child has the pleasure of reading an entire story at one sitting. They use animals as the main topics because they are the natural companions of the child. Fables were initially collected and orally conveyed to teach a lesson and to guide people to live a morally honest life (Tomasula and Pawelski, 2012). When a child listens to a story, the absence of visual cues helps them imagine the story and process the tale. Fables support the development of imagination and creative thinking. When they learn to tell tales, they take their speaking skills to a whole new level - they learn to speak clearly, with intention and care for their audience. And when they work in small groups, they learn to support each other with attentive listening.

Context of the problem

The status of English on the international level is a major factor that contributes to the increase in the importance of English in Egypt. Most of the Egyptian learners complain about teaching speaking. They spend a lot of time in schools, but they cannot speak English. Al-Khuli (2000:16) noticed that speaking is generally discouraged in the Egyptian EFL classes. He also noticed that speaking in class is used only when students are called upon to repeat or recall an answer, and that silence is one of the characteristics of the English language classroom. Abdullah (2008:46-47) stated that there are various