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The Effect of Using Professional Learning Community (PLC) to Enhance the Faculty of Education English Department Student- Teachers' Oral Performance

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Abstract
The study aimed to examine the effect of using professional learning community (PLC) to enhance the faculty of education English department student-teachers' oral performance. The study reviewed literature and previous studies dealing with professional learning community (PLC) and oral performance. The researcher prepared a list of oral performance components as a guide for the design of instruments. The researcher also designed a pre/post oral performance test and a rubric for assessing student-teachers' oral performance. The researcher designed the proposed program for enhancing the student-teachers' oral performance. EFL student -teachers (n=60) were nominated and then divided into two groups. The control group consisted of 30 student-teachers and the experimental group included other 30 of the second-year English Department student-teachers in the faculty of education, to get involved in PLC activities. The researcher adopted the quasi-experimental design. Participants were assessed throughout a pre and posttest. Then, results were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group and indicated that professional community of learning (PLC) was highly effective in enhancing EFL student-teachers' oral performance.
Keywords: *Professional Learning Community (PLC), oral performance.*

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Background and Problem

<center>**Chapter one**</center>

<center>**Background and Problem**</center>

1.1 Introduction

English language is a fundamental requirement for global communication. The English language teaching and learning has gained special focus in recent years. English language teaching approaches have changed through the years. Starting from the grammar translation method in the 17th century and reaching to the communicative approach to language teaching, educational systems started to deal with the English language as a means of communication rather than as a set of grammatical rules.

Teachers of English language should be able to communicate meaning with their students by using the target language in different meaningful contexts. Moreover, Hammond (2006) clarified some roles that English language teachers should know and be able to perform in their classrooms. They are also supposed to acquire various language components, especially oral performance.

Oral performance is very crucial to all English teachers who teach a global language of almost all the world's countries. The English language teachers who are skillful at oral performance create an interactive and a communicative learning environment. In addition, oral performance is important for a teacher in delivery of education to students (McCarthy and Carter, 2015). A teacher with good oral performance always makes teaching and learning easier and understandable. Good communication abilities of teachers are the essential requirements of academic success of students, and professional success in general.

Teachers communicate more instructions orally in classroom to students. Teachers with poor communication abilities may cause failure of students to learn and develop their academics. Students need to understand that what is right, and what is

wrong while it is totally depended upon the communication skills of teachers which s/he adopts in classroom (Sherwyn ,Morreale, Michael ,Osborn and Pearson, 2014). Good communications decrease the idea of unkind feeling during the process of teaching. learners should be attentive and focused on their teacher during the lecture. Loss (2016) recommended that teachers have to communicate and interact in obvious and understandable way.

Communication is a dynamic and interactive process. Good oral performance is considered an effective tool in the teaching profession. Besides, Performance of teachers in classroom totally depends upon the oral performance. Maes, Weldy and Icenogle (2008) stated that if the teacher has good oral performance abilities, then s/he can easily convey massages or deliver the lecture in an understandable manner.

Danielson (2007) asserted that some approaches and programs concerned with enhancing the oral performance of English teachers as well as improving their academic preparation. As long as the academic preparation occupies an important place in the teacher education programs in Egypt, some projects which focused on teachers' professional development are theoretical and cannot be applied practically, and their impact is limited.

English language teacher preparation and professional development are important issues. Good preparation is reflected on EFL students in different stages. Thus, preparation and professional development should adopt current trends. Professional Learning Community (PLC) is one of the most successful trends. As a result, this study was based on using the Professional Learning Community (PLC) which has real positive effect on performances. It is also an ongoing approach, and it would help the student-teachers enhance their oral performance. It depends on exchanging and sharing experience and discussion. All these processes would enhance their oral performance in meaningful and authentic contexts.

PLC is a panel of practitioners working together using an organized process of inquiry to focus on a specific area of their teaching to improve learning outcomes and so increase school standards. Besides, the study illustrated the importance of interdependent learning and collaboration as the cornerstone of school development and effective professional improvement. PLC depends on teachers who work collectively to investigate methods of coping with barriers to their students' learning. Working in this way, as PLC, can bring many benefits but most importantly, if done well, PLC can result in improved learner outcomes (Verscio et al, 2008; Saunders et al, 2009). In addition, PLC enables the groups to widen their experiences and to share their most effective practices.

Lewis and Andrews (2004) declared that teachers who are part of the PLC tend to be more effective in the classroom and achieve better student outcomes. Jones and Harris (2014) pointed out that PLC can also improve teachers' professional learning and secure improved school performance, irrespective of the school context and its socio-economic profile. Moreover, Dufour (2009) illustrated that PLC engages teachers in collaborative enquiry about a specific issue or a problem, with the prime purpose of changing professional practice so that improved teaching and learning follow. Harris and Jones (2010) stated that the purpose of PLC can be summed up in three words which are "improved learner outcomes ".

Moreover, DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many (2006, p. 217) defined PLC as a group of educators who work collaboratively in ongoing and sustainable processes of action research to accomplish better results for the students Besides, Hord (2009) suggested that PLC implements open inquiry, and establish improvement communities where students or members can form the questions, identify what their required needs, collect and analyze the data, suggest findings, share the results, and assess the research. It also encourages teachers to develop trust, relationships, and collaboration in order to have the expertise of all members of the PLC. According to Joyce and Showers (2002) teachers in learning communities are researchers.

PLC supports the collaborative learning approach. Johnson (2014) clarified that the process of learning in a collaborative situation makes students have higher knowledge acquisition, and greater problem-solving skills than students working individually. There are several reasons for these positive differences. Students' interaction and discussion with others give the group a chance to construct new knowledge and use their prior knowledge, conceptualize it in an authentic framework of existing knowledge. Then, they can refine and evaluate what they know and do not know. This group dialogue helps them identify what they are learning and what they still need to learn (Ambrose et al. 2010; Eberlein et al. 2008). In addition, Kuh (2007) declared that groups can tackle more complex problems than individuals can and thus have the potential to gain more expertise and become more engaged in a discipline. Working in group provides more chances for critical thinking and supports student learning and achievement.

Generally, PLC is mainly based on reflection and collaboration to have an outstanding performance and effective outcomes. Thus, student-teachers or school members of PLC can reflect on others' different kinds of performances. Hence, they can work in groups to suggest new methods and find out many solutions which would participate in improving their teaching and learning process and oral performance abilities.

Oral performance is one of the most important concerns of PLC. The relationship between PLC and oral performance is concerned with how to present, perform, share, produce, construct, and speak in the atmosphere of professional learning community. PLC is supposed to play a vital role in enhancing student-teachers' oral performance through sharing and critically exchanging their practices in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented and growth-promoting way. As a result, PLC would give the student-teachers opportunities of speaking practices that may positively affect their future students' oral performance.