



Professional Research Thesis

Titled

**Using Situated Language Theory(SLT)
for Developing (EFL) Speaking Skill
among Preparatory School Pupils in
Egypt.**

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*Under the supervision of the Committee for
Research and Studies.*

2024.

Thanks and Gifts

I present my sincere love and thanks to my mother, father, my two children, and my two brothers for supporting me and helping me in my difficult days. I also present my gratitude to all supervision staff especially to Dr. Hagar, Dr. Marwa and Dr. Heba who helps me without any boredom. They were working all the day not only in the working hours.

Thank you all and thanks for the circumstance that gathers me with all of you as persons and your institution. You gave me more than hope. You gave me hard work, hard monitoring and a lot of encouragement.

And thank for God whose gifts covers us all.

Abstract

This study aims at describing most of the problems that pupils face in EFL speaking skill and the effectiveness of using situated language theory (SLT) in developing EFL speaking skill and overcoming pupils problems as EFL speaker in the preparatory stage. In this thesis, there are numbers of previous studies, most of them searched how different researcher studied various methods and models to develop speaking skill, and only seven studies talked about situated language theory and its techniques. The study approach here is descriptive analytic. EFL Speaking skill is described and its importance, types, division and speaking subskill. It also shows how speaking taught, practiced, measured and assessed. Then, the situated language theory is explained and revealed its forms, premises, component, limitations, characteristics and techniques (storytelling, collaboration, modeling and scaffolding and judging). Finally, it was concluded that there is a strong relationship between speaking skill and teaching method. And that Situated Language theory affects positively on EFL speaking skill for preparatory school pupils. It was recommended that situated language theory need to be taught in faculty of education within methodology course.

Introduction:

In the age of globalization, English has become the most common foreign language in the world. Everyone needs to learn English to be connected to the world for the sake of trading, advertising and transmitting information. In Egypt, English has found a considerable role in the popular culture of Egypt, as in advertising, television, clothing and music. Moreover, English has become a main requirement in business, industry and technology. As a result of all these facts, Teaching English become a must in all public and private schools. The aim of teaching English in preparatory stage is to develop pupils in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing and to enable pupils to effectively communicate in English, understand spoken and written texts, and express their thought and ideas accurately. (Marwa, 2019)

Speaking is a two-way process between speaker and listener and it involves the productive skill of understanding. It means that in speaking process, people try to communicate with each other and use their language to send their message to the second person. In this case, the speaking process requires at least two people, one as a speaker who produces information and other as a listener who receives information. (Muklus, 2017). He also describes speaking as an ability to converse or to express a sequence of idea fluently. Speaking is the main skill in communication.

It's assured that speaking is “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts.” Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching, it is an art of communications and one of the productive skills, that must mastered in learning foreign language. Good speaking skills are the act of generating words that can be understood by listeners. (Ponomarenko & Malyuga , 2012).

Many educators and researchers in language learning and teaching like (Shin & Yang, 2008), (Yang, 2011) and (Abdallah, 2011) strongly believe that successful learning is anchored in collaboration, cognitive apprenticeship, and situated cognition. It is assumed that situated, contextualized practice always leads to deep understanding and meaningful learning. Thus, the most effective way to learn a language is to participate in a community in which the target language is used to communicate in a real context.

All that facts leads us to situated learning which, in general refers to that type of learning which takes place in the same context in which it is applied. It employs the social aspect of human nature to help learners feel relaxed and at ease while learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning should not be viewed as simply the transmission of abstract and decontextualized knowledge from one individual to another, but a social process whereby knowledge is co-constructed; they suggest that such learning is situated in a specific context and embedded within a particular and physical environment. (Mahmoud Abdallah, 2015).

The Study Problem:

Speaking as one of the language skills become an important topic to discuss in language teaching. Students suffer weaknesses in their speaking performance. As Student most of the time is rarely required to say no more than a few words in response to some display questions raised by the teacher which means that speaking skill is not taught enough in the classrooms. This can be related to the instructional techniques, the instructional materials, the instructional media, the teachers' language, the learners' language, and even the speaking components.

The instructional techniques hold an important role to motivate and activate learners. The instructional materials play the role to contextualize the language usage and to meet language learners' needs; instructional media bring the teaching in to real life situations.

Many studies assured that there are problems in EFL learners speaking skill in Egypt, like; (Eman, 2007; Eman, 2009; Eman, 2013; Reham, 2016; Gada, 2018; Nehal, 2018; Marwa, 2019; Nancy, 2021). The difficulty in speech may be because of the nature of the processes involved in speech production.

Reham (2016) mentioned in her study that learning speaking skills is considered one of the biggest challenges to language learners. Mastering EFL speaking skills requires a combination of language and cultural aspects. They include grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence.

Grammatical competence requires mastering the basic skills of language such as vocabulary, grammar and mechanics. Discourse competence refers to the relationship between sentences and structures to produce cohesive patterns of language. Sociolinguistic competence relates

language forms to cultural aspects. The speaker needs to know the appropriate register and timing with regard to social and cultural considerations. Strategic competence refers to how much the speaker manipulates the authentic functions of language.

Marwa (2019) concluded that learners face many difficulties such as fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence when speaking foreign language. These difficulties are related to various factors that can hinder the learners' fluency and accuracy.

Moreover, Success in studying a language is often measured by learners' ability to speak in the language being learned. The mastery of speaking skills in English is priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. (Richard, 2008:19).

Finally, when considering specific percentages can vary, studies indicate that a significant number of Egyptian pupils face challenges with EFL speaking skills. For instance, one study found that 77% of students tend to use their mother tongue in English classes, which can hinder their speaking proficiency. Additionally, common issue includes inappropriate sentence formation and mispronunciation. These difficulties are often exacerbated by factors such as shyness, anxiety, and the use of the first language in EFL classes. Addressing these challenges through methods like Situated Language Theory (SLT) can improve pupils speaking skills.

Therefore, the problem of this study can be stated in the weakness of the preparatory school pupils in EFL speaking skill. This study is trying to answer the following main question:

- *To what extent does using situated language theory affect EFL speaking skill for preparatory school pupils?*

The importance of the study:

The importance of the study lies in what it offers to the following groups:

- **To EFL pupils**

1. Develop students' EFL speaking skills.
2. Giving pupils the opportunity to overcome their speaking problems.
3. Creating different situations to develop speaking skills.

- **To EFL teacher:**

1. Provide teachers with complete knowledge and practical implementation of situated language theory.
2. Paying teachers attention to overcome students' difficulties in EFL speaking.

- **To language specialist:**

They may plan effective workshops, demonstration lesson, micro teaching sessions, and action research projects to implement situated language theory for developing EFL speaking skills. They also can use the speaking tests that is appended in this study to measure the speaking ability of their pupils.

- **To other researcher:**

1. They may study using situated language theory in teaching other language skills like; listening, reading and writing.
2. They may study using situated language theory in teaching students in other stages or other subjects.
3. They may get benefits by the suggestions and recommendations of the current study.

Objectives of the study:

This study aims to:

1. Overcome EFL speaking skill problems for preparatory school pupils.
2. Measure the effects of situated language approach on developing English speaking skills.
3. Developing English language speaking skills for preparatory school pupils.
4. Measure the effects of story technique in developing speaking skill for preparatory school pupils.
5. Measure the effects of collaboration technique in developing speaking skill for preparatory school pupils.
6. Measure the effects of modeling technique in developing speaking skill for preparatory school pupils.
7. Measure the effects of scaffolding and judging technique in developing speaking skill for preparatory school pupils.

Study hypotheses and questions:

This study designed to test the following hypothesis:

- 1- There is a relationship between students' speaking skill and the applied method of teaching.
- 2- There is a relationship between speaking skill and language context and application.
- 3- 3- There is a strong relationship between speaking skill and the situated language theory.

These hypotheses will answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the features of situated language theory?*
- 2- What are the specific techniques used in situated index suitable for preparatory stage?*
- 3- What is the effect of situated language theory on speaking skill?*

Study approach:

This study follows the descriptive analytical method as it describes the speaking skill and how is it taught, practiced, measured and assessed. It also describes EFL speaking problems according to previous studies. The explanation and definition of situated language theory (SLT) is included. And how to apply the techniques of situated language theory in the classroom. The researcher will analyze the results of the previous studies quantitatively and qualitatively to exclude real true results.

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The limits of the study:

The present study will be limited to:

- 1- Speaking skill.
- 2- Contextualized situational English related to
 - Speech acts.
 - Language functions.
- 3- Some situated language strategies:
 - Stories.
 - Modelling.
 - Collaboration.
 - Scaffolding and juggling.
- 4- Sample of preparatory governmental schools pupils.
- 5- Microsoft teams, sway, flip-gride, reading progress and text to speech applications.

Spatial Boundaries:

Egyptian Governmental Preparatory school pupils.

Time Limits:

2005- 2024.

Study Plan:

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Scientific

Concepts:

Speaking Skills:

Section one: Definition of speaking skill.

First: The nature of speaking.

- The nature of speaking
- The importance of EFL speaking skills.
- Types of speaking.
- Type of speaking situations.
- Division of speaking skills.
- Speaking subskills.

Second: Classification of speaking subskills:

- Some factors influence EFL speaking skills involved in successful communication.
- Three types of skills in order to speak naturally and spontaneously.

Third: Speaking, speaker and speaking teaching and assessment:

- Characteristic of a good speaker.
- Feature of spoken texts.
- 12 Categories of the purpose of speaking.
- The advantages of speaking skills.
- Three types of skills in order to speak naturally and spontaneously.
- Reason for teaching speaking.

- Education Authority of Education Quality and Accreditation (NARS, 2010) Standards for ESL teacher preparation program:
- What is ‘teaching speaking’?
- EFL Speaking activities.
- Modern technologies in developing speaking skill.
- Assessing EFL speaking skills.
- Measuring speaking skills.
- Examples of EFL speaking tests.
- The real judgment of teaching EFL speaking in Egypt.
- Problems of EFL speaking for preparatory school pupils

Second Chapter:

Situated Language Theory and its effects on EFL speaking skill:

First: The definition of situated language theory.

- Definition of situated language theory.
- Definition of context.
- The importance and significance of situated language learning

Second: The nature of situated language learning:

- Forms of situated language learning.
- Situated language premises.
- Component of situated language model.
- Key strategies of situated language Environment.
- Situated learning limitations:
- The critical characteristics of situated learning for instructional design.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the study has illuminated the profound influence of situated language theory and its applications on developing EFL speaking skill.

Situated language theory has various teaching techniques like; story, reflection, modeling, collaboration, scaffolding and judging, and articulation.

This study investigated the use and effect of only four techniques of situated language theory SLA which were; story, modeling, collaboration and scaffolding and judging.

There were a lot of studies that positively approved the benefits of using situated language theory techniques like (Njwe, 2016; Samah, 2017; Nehal, 2018; Abdel Razek, 2019; Rasha, 2020 & Nancy, 2021).

As a result of qualitative and quantitative analysis of these studies, it was found that using Situated Language Theory SLT has positive influence on developing EFL speaking skill for preparatory school pupils.

Results:

- 1- There is a strong relationship between pupils' speaking skill and the applied teaching method.
- 2- There is a positive relationship between speaking skills and language context and application.
- 3- There is a strong relationship between speaking skill and the situated language theory SLT.
- 4- Using Situated Language Theory SLT and its four chosen strategies; story, modeling, collaboration, scaffolding and judging have developed EFL speaking skill for preparatory , secondary, and faculty students as mentioned in the previous studies.
- 5- There is a positive relationship between story technique and EFL speaking skill for pupils in of preparatory stage.
- 6- There is a positive relationship between modeling technique and EFL speaking skill for pupils in of preparatory stage.
- 7- There is a positive relationship between collaboration technique and EFL speaking skill for pupils in of preparatory stage.
- 8- There is a positive relationship between scaffolding and judging technique and EFL speaking skill for pupils in of preparatory stage.

Recommendations:

In the light of the results of the study, the following recommendations have been formulated:

- 1- Situated Language Theory need to be taught in faculty of Education within methodology course.
- 2- Teachers should reconsider their methods of teaching speaking and should be familiarized with integrating more than one skill while teaching.
- 3- Storytelling, retelling and role play must be applied in the preparatory stage to practice narrative speaking skill.
- 4- Collaborative learning should be applied in English language classes and workshops.
- 5- Modeling is vital technique to teach speaking to young learners so it's better to be applied and used in preparatory stage English lessons.
- 6- Scaffolding and judging should be used as the second alternative to deal with weak and late pupils in all stages.
- 7- Teachers should be trained to use technology in the teaching/learning processes to overcome speaking difficulties and problems.
- 8- Technology is recommended with the four chosen techniques to practice EFL speaking skill.

9- Teacher should emphasize the development of the pupil's speaking skills in the early educational stages in order to develop in the following stages.

10-Curriculum designers should make use of the Situated Language activities when designing English language courses.

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