

# The Effectiveness of Multicultural Approach in Developing Al-Azhar Secondary Experimental Institutes Students' Oral Communication Skills in English



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## Abstract

The aim of the present study was to investigate the effectiveness of multicultural approach in developing oral communication skills in English of Al-Azhar Experimental Secondary Institute Students. The participants of the study were (64) female students who were selected at random from Al-Zohor Experimental Secondary Institute for Girls at Port-Said. They were divided into two groups ; control and experimental. To identify the most required oral communication skills to be developed, a questionnaire containing list of oral communication skills were designed for validation by TEFL specialists. Based on the selected skills, the researcher designed a pre-post test oral communication skills test validated by the jury members. Both groups were pre-tested. Then, the experimental group students were taught using multicultural approach whereas the control group students received regular instruction. Again, both groups were post tested. The results of administering the oral communication pre-post test showed that that a multicultural approach proved to be effective in developing oral communication skills in English of Al-Azhar Experimental Secondary Institute Students.

**Keywords:** Multicultural approach, oral communication skills, verbal communication and non-verbal communication.

## المخلص

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى قياس مدى فاعلية المدخل متعدد الثقافات في تنمية مهارات المناظرة و الإقناع باللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلبة المعاهد الثانوية الأزهرية التجريبية. تم تحديد مشكلة الدراسة في ضعف مستوى بعض مهارات المناظرة و الإقناع باللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب الصف الثاني الثانوي. شملت عينة الدراسة (٦٤) طالبة بمعهد الزهور النموذجي فتيات ع/ث. تم اختيارهن و تقسيمهن لمجموعتين بشكل عشوائي الأولى مجموعة ضابطة درست المنهج بالطريقة التقليدية و الثانية المجموعة التجريبية درست المنهج عن طريق التعلم باستخدام المدخل متعدد الثقافات. تم تحديد المهارات الفرعية لمهارات المناظرة و الإقناع اللازم تنميتها من خلال استبيان تم عرضه على المختصين في اللغة الإنجليزية و بناء عليه قامت الباحثة بتصميم اختبار (قبلي/ بعدي) و البرنامج المقترح تطبيقه. أوضحت الدراسة فروق احصائية بين متوسطي المجموعتين لصالح المجموعة التجريبية في المهارات جميعا و في كل مهارة على حدى. مما أدى إلى اثبات التأثير الإيجابي للتعلم باستخدام المدخل متعدد الثقافات في تنمية مهارات المناظرة و الإقناع باللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب المرحلة الثانوية الأزهرية التجريبية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** المدخل متعدد الثقافات ، مهارات المناظرة ، مهارات الإقناع

## 1.1 Introduction

Language is the translation of what an individual has in his / her mind and is a way to communicate with other people. English is one of the most important languages. The language is the tool which used to communicate and it is the storage of thoughts, history and literature. Through language personality and identity could be formed. The proficiency of English is a type of intelligence which is called “linguistic intelligence” which can be used to log in other cultures and come over the boundaries of globalization age.

## 1.2 Multicultural approach

Bennet (2007:4) defines that multicultural education is an approach for teaching and learning that is based on democratic values and beliefs and affirms cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies in an interdependent world. Abdullah (2009:159) assures multicultural education as the learning of appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills related to the respect and appreciation of different cultures and other differences which include race, ethnicity and religion.

According to DeMarco (2006), the development of multicultural education began in the 1960's and 1970's. Adding multicultural education into schools was an integral part of the diversity movement. Educators sought to increase tolerance by increasing awareness of the very diverse populations in our school systems. By integrating multicultural education into the curriculum, educators can ensure that a quality, meaningful and relevant education is given to all learners.

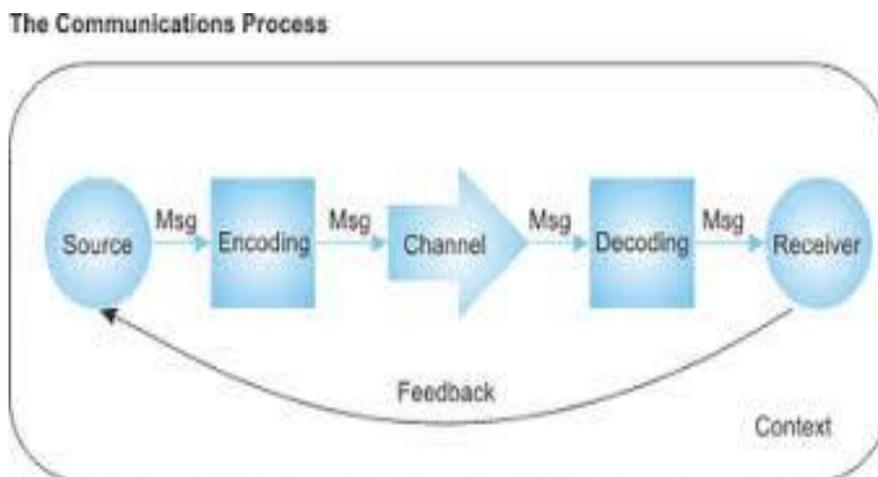
Gollnick and Chinn (1990) recommend five goals for multicultural education. These goals also emphasize issues beyond the boundaries of ethnic or racial issues. They include:

1. The promotion of strength and value of cultural diversity.
2. An emphasis on human rights and respect for those who are different from oneself.
3. The acceptance of alternative life choices for people.
4. The promotion of social justice and equality for all people.
5. An emphasis on equal distribution of power and income among groups.

## 1.3 Communication Skills

McPheat, (2010) emphasized that communication skills are the tools that we use to remove the barriers to effective communication. The communication process involves multiple parts and stages. These are: source, message, encoding, channel, decoding, receiver, feedback, and context.

Figure (1) The communication process (McPheat,2010)



Seferoglu and Uzakgöre (2004:223) assured that whether the students realize or not, they have spent listening almost every time of the day. If they are not talking or reading, they are probably listening to something or someone. On the other hand, Davies and Pearse (2000:99) confirm the importance of communicative activities and say that the real success in English teaching and learning is when the learners can actually communicate in English inside and outside the classroom.

One of the challenges that teachers meet in the classroom is motivating the students to speak in the target language. Active and confident students always participate, but the others who are less confident are not willing to speak. As Lightbown and Spada (2006:39) suggested that speaking in the target language requires more than one mental task at one time like choosing words, pronouncing them, and stringing them together with the appropriate grammatical markers.

Staab (1992:7) emphasized that listening is a receptive and a meaningful process. Listening is an active process of constructing meaning and for this to happen, listeners need active mental involvement. While good instructions and lots of practice can help improve listening skills, this will not happen without meaningful talk in the classroom. Carter and Nunan (2001) assured that in the process of developing oral proficiency, speaking comes later. It is a productive skill which comes after receptive skill i.e. listening. In English as Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, speaking is perhaps the most important of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Celce-Murcia (2001) showed that speaking is a linguistic activity which, like language itself, consists of several elements: pronunciation (sounds), morphology and lexis (words and their parts), grammar and syntax (structure), semantics, discourse (conversation and utterances),

pragmatics (usage and its rules), fluency (ease of speech, confidence, coherence, and speed), in addition to topicality (themes and ideas). Hedge (2000:261) assured that it is a complex process because learners need to develop at the same time knowledge of grammar, vocabulary functional language and communicative skills. Attention to the systems of language is crucial, but the development of fluency and contextual accuracy are equally important goals.

Woodcock (2016) confirmed that persuading involves being able to convince others to take appropriate action. Negotiating involves being able to discuss and reach a mutually satisfactory agreement. Influencing encompasses both of these. Persuasion skills can be learnt just like any others, and they are a key part of being able to influence others to achieve goals and objectives. Successful persuasion research shows that there are a number of things that people like about successful persuaders. They include being reliable and taking responsibility, being sincere, genuine, and honest, building rapport, as well as not arguing and providing solutions that work.

Vijayalakshmi (2016) stated that soft skills include one's ability to listen well, communicate effectively, approach positively, handle conflict, take responsibility, show respect, build trust, work well with others, manage time effectively, accept criticism, work under pressure, amiable to others and demonstrate good manners

#### 1.4 Background of the Problem

The problem of the present study is supported by reviewing previous studies handling the students' weakness in English language oral communication skills such as: (Gorski and Covert , 2000; DeMarco , 2006; kendall , 2007 ;Kemilka, 2011; Banks, 2013; Uddin, 2013; Dunbar & Brooks, 2006) in proving that the multicultural approach is recommended to improve the oral communication skills in English .

Literature and previous studies revealed that the students have difficulty in communicating orally in English. Hence the current study attempted to use the multicultural approach to develop English language oral communication skills. Unfortunately, to the researcher knowledge little research has been conducted on using multicultural approach at the secondary stage especially measuring the effectiveness of multicultural approach in developing oral communication skills in English of Al-Azhar Experimental Secondary Institute Students. Thus, the lack of research in this field justifies the need for further approaches in order to develop English language oral communication skills.

The researcher observed during her work as an English language teacher the students' weakness in English language oral communication skills through monthly tests, observation in the classroom and also the oral

assignments. The students also depend on storing and recalling the information during exams. They consider English as a school subject not as language of communication and search for information. They seldom use it to communicate or interact with each other inside the classroom. The students only concentrate on written namely; reading and writing that are evaluated in the exams.

Accordingly, the present study tried to investigate the effectiveness of multicultural approach in developing oral communication skills in English of Al-Azhar Experimental Secondary Institute.

### 1.5 Statement of the Problem

The problem of the present study stems from the weak level of Al Azhar secondary experimental institutes students' oral communication skills in English.

The current study attempted to investigate the effectiveness of multicultural approach in developing Al-Azhar Secondary Experimental Institutes Students' oral communication skills in English .

### 1.6 Questions of the Study

The problem of the present study can be restated in the following main question:

*How effective is the multicultural approach in developing English oral communication skills of second grade secondary stage students?*

More specifically, the study tried to answer the following sub-questions:

- What are the English oral communication skills required by the second grade secondary students?
- What is the level of English oral communication skills of the second grade secondary stage students?
- How far is the multicultural approach effective in developing some English oral communication skills of second grade secondary stage students?

### 1.7 The Hypotheses of the Study

The researcher posited the following hypotheses:

- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in the English language oral communication skills pre-post test in favour of the post test.
- There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the English language oral communication skills post test in favour of the experimental.

### 1.8 Aims of the Study

The present study was intended to:

- a) Help Al-Azhar Secondary Experimental Institutes Students to develop oral communication skills in English using the multicultural approach.
- b) Assess the effectiveness of multicultural approach in developing English oral communication skills of Al-Azhar Secondary Experimental Institutes Students second grade.

### 1.9 Delimitations of the Study

This study was confined to:

- The scope of the study is restricted to a group of second grade students of Al-Azhar experimental secondary institute.
- A group of (64) second year secondary grade female students in Al-Zohor experimental secondary institute for girls at Port-Said.
- The content of the curriculum included in the students' book (Enterprise4, Spotlights on Islam, extra-curricular unit).
- The time frame for this study is 8 weeks , 5 lessons per week, 45-50 minutes for each lesson (6 hours per week)
- The second term of the academic school year (2017/2018)

### 2.0 Methodology

#### 2.1 Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were 64 female second year secondary who were selected at random from second year secondary stage students of Al-Zohor experimental prep/secondary institute for girls at Port Said city of the academic year 2017/2018. They were randomly divided into an experimental group (n=32) and a control group (n=32). They had five English lessons per week. Each lesson's was approximately took (45-50 minutes).

#### 2.2 Instruments of the Study

The present study used the following instruments:

- An English oral communication skills questionnaire
- An English oral communication skills pre-post test
- A rubric for scoring the test

#### 2.3 Learning and teaching materials

The proposed treatment was based on using the multicultural approach in developing English oral communication skills of Al-Azhar Experimental Secondary Institute Students.

#### 2.4 Procedures of the Study

The proposed study proceeded went through the following steps:

- Reviewing the related literature and previous studies with special reference to multi-cultural learning approach and oral communication skills in English.

- Designing the oral communication skills pre-post test.
- Validating of oral communication skills pre-post test by jurors.
- Refining of oral communication skills pre-post test in the light of jurors' comments.
- Designing the proposed program based on multi-cultural learning approach to develop oral communication skills.
- Validating of the proposed program based on multi-cultural learning approach by specialist jurors.
- Refining of the proposed program based on multi-cultural learning approach in the light of jurors' comments.
- Pre-testing assessment of oral communication skills of the two research groups.
- Implementing and teaching the multicultural based program to the experimental group.
- Post-testing both groups of oral communication skills .
- Recording and statistically processing of data.
- Analyzing, interpreting and discussing of the results.
- Providing conclusions, recommendations and suggestions.

### 3.0 Results

#### 3.1 The First Hypothesis

The results of the study are analyzed in the light of the research hypotheses as illustrated below:

- *There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in the English language oral communication skills pre-post test in favour of the post test.*

In order to verify this hypothesis, paired samples t-test was conducted on both the pre and post tests scores of the experimental group to determine the relative extent of change achieved by the experimental group after implementing the program.

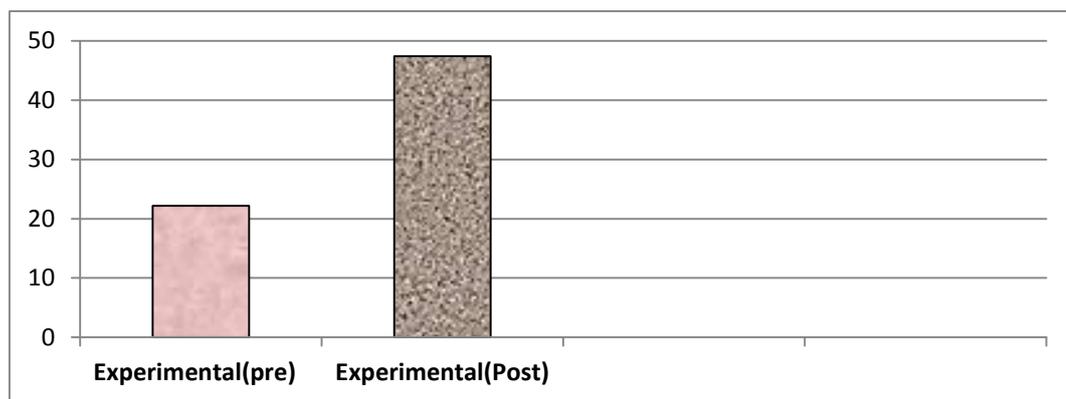
Table (1) Comparisons of the experimental group pre and post scores on English oral communication skills

Test	Group	N	Mean	S.D	D.F	T	Significance	In favour of
English oral communication skills (total)	Experimental (pre)	32	22.16	8.63	31	29.95	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Experimental (post)	32	47.38	11.10	31			

Results in table (1) shows that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of pre- post Oral Communication Skills in English of the experimental group in favour of post-test. This indicates that the experimental group scored higher on the oral communication skills post-

test, on the total scores than the scores on the oral communication skills pre-test. The t-test results show that this difference is considered to be statistically significant at (0.01) level as the two-tailed P value is < 0.01. The interpretation of this difference proves that the oral communication skills of the students who participated in the program have been improved. This reflects the effectiveness of multicultural approach in developing oral communication Skills in English. Therefore, the first hypothesis is supported.

Figure (2) The experimental group's mean scores on pre and post oral communication skills Test



Also, the researcher made use of Eta squared formula in order to calculate the effect size of the multicultural approach in developing the oral communication skills of the experimental group.

$$\text{Eta}^2 = \frac{T^2}{T^2 + D.F}$$

Table (2) The effect size of the proposed program on the oral communication skills of the experimental group.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	T	$\eta^2$	Effect size
Multicultural approach	Oral Communication Skills	29.95	1	large

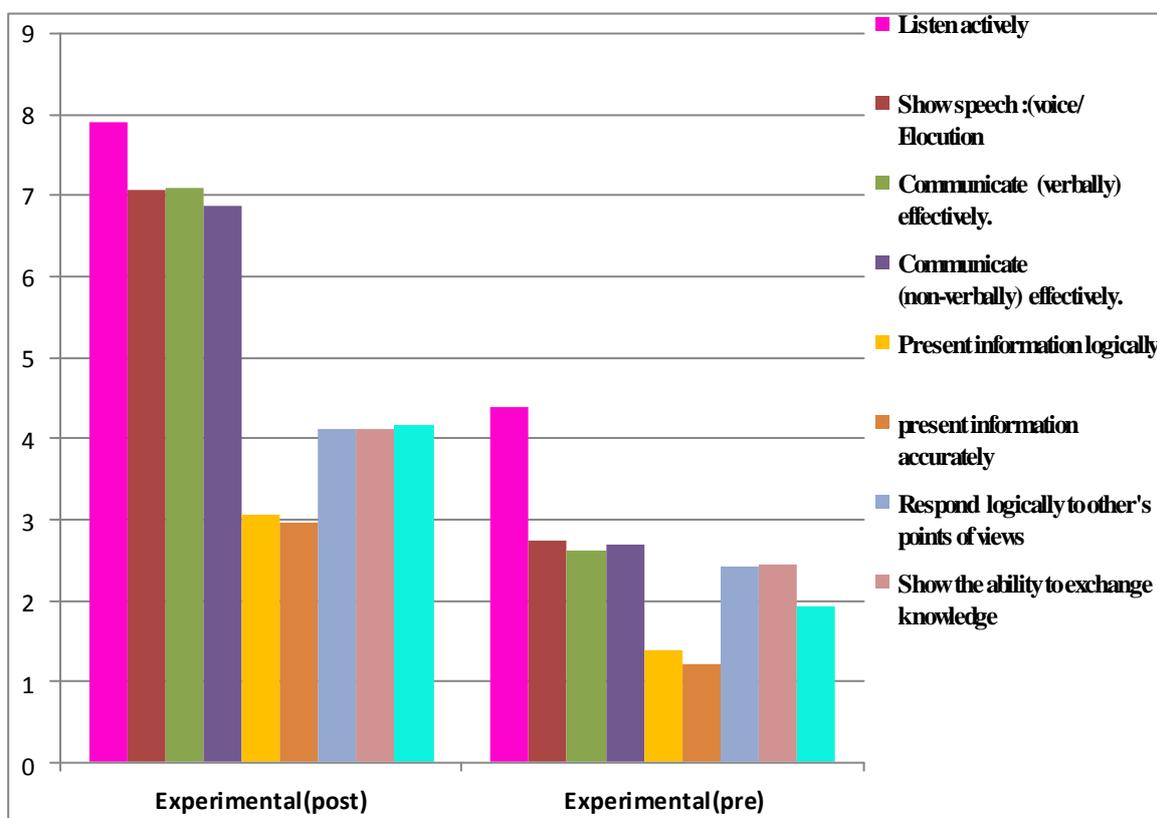
As shown in table (2), the effect size of the multicultural approach on developing the oral communication skills of the experimental group is large (1). This proves that the multicultural approach is effective on developing oral communication skills.

**Table (3) Comparisons of the experimental group pre-post test scores on oral communication skills**

Oral communication skills Test	Experimental group	N	Mean	S.D	D.F	T	Significance	In favour of
Listen actively	Pre	32	7.91	1.96	31	16.06	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		4.38	2.03				
Show speech :(voice/ Elocution) a)fluency. b) clarity c)audibility	Pre	32	7.06	2.11	31	13.39	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		2.75	1.30				
Communicate (verbally) effectively.	Pre	32	7.09	2.07	31	14.37	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		2.63	1.31				
Communicate (non-verbally) effectively.	Pre	32	6.88	2.47	31	10.81	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		2.69	1.28				
Present information logically	Pre	32	3.06	1.11	31	7.60	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		1.38	0.71				
Present information accurately	Pre	32	2.97	1.09	31	9.74	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		1.22	0.87				
Respond logically to other's points of views	Pre	32	4.13	0.98	31	9.50	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		2.41	1.07				
Show the ability to exchange knowledge	Pre	32	4.13	0.98	31	9	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		2.44	1.08				
Be able to persuade, convince ,argue and influence	Pre	32	4.16	1.08	31	9.94	Significance p<0.01	Post
	Post		1.94	0.84				

Results in table (3) shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post oral communication skills of the experimental group in favour of the post-test. This indicates that the experimental group scored higher on oral communication skills, on the post- test, than the scores on the oral communication skills, on the pre-test. The t-test results show that this difference is considered to be highly statistically significant at (0.01) level as the two-tailed P value is<0.01. The interpretation of this difference proves that the oral communication skills of the students who participated in the program have been improved. This confirms the effectiveness of the multicultural approach in developing oral communication skills in English. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this study is supported.

Figure (3) The Experimental group's mean scores on oral communication Skills in English Pre-test and Post-test.



### 3.2 The Second Hypothesis

*There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the English language oral communication skills post test in favour of the experimental.*

In order to verify this hypothesis, unpaired samples t-test, was conducted on both the experimental and control groups' scores on post oral communication skills in English test to determine the relative extent of change achieved by the experimental group after implementing the program.

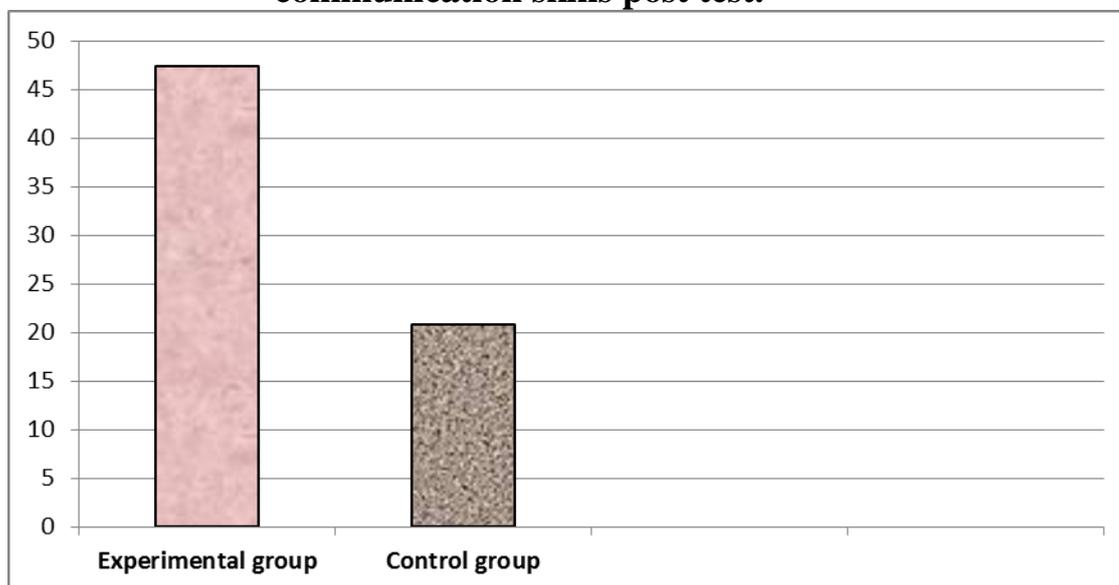
Table (4) Comparison of the experimental group and control groups' total scores on oral communication skills in English post test.

Test	Group	N	Mean	S.D	D.F	T	Significance	In favour of
Oral communication skills in English Post-test	Experimental (post)	32	47.38	11.10	62	12.86	Significance p<0.01	Experimental group
	Control (post)	32	20.75	3.75				

Results in table (4) shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups

on the post oral communication skills test in favour of the scores of the experimental group. This indicates that the experimental group scored higher on the oral communication skills post-test, on the total scores, than the scores of the control group. The t-test results show that this difference is considered to be highly statistically significant at (0.01) level as the two-tailed P value <0.01. The interpretation of this difference proves that the oral communication skills of the experimental group who implemented the program have been improved. This confirms the positive effect of the multicultural approach in developing their oral communication skills. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the study is supported.

Figure(4 )The experimental and control groups' mean scores on oral communication skills post test.



Also, the researcher made use of Eta squared formula in order to calculate the effect size of the multicultural in developing the oral communication skills of the experimental group comparing to the control group.

$$\text{Eta}^2 = \frac{T^2}{T^2 + D.F}$$

Table (5) The effect size of the multicultural approach on developing oral communication skills of the experimental group compared to the control group.

Independent variable	Dependent variable	T	$\eta^2$	Effect size
Multicultural approach	Oral communication skills	12.86	0.73	large

As shown in table (5), the multicultural approach in developing the oral communication skills is large (0.70). This proves that the multicultural

approach has large effect in developing the oral communication skills of the experimental group compared to the control group who was exposed to only the regular instruction.

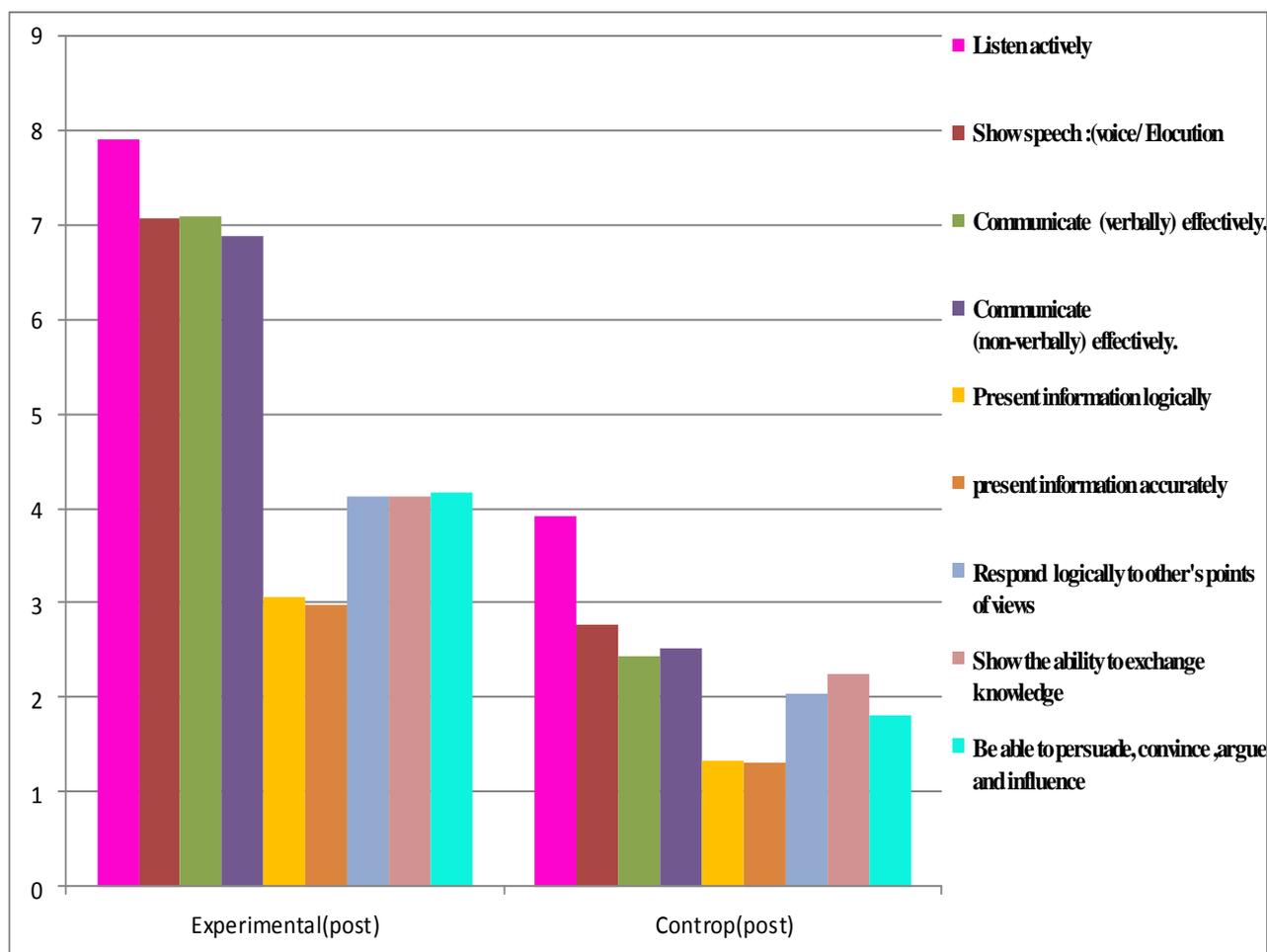
Table (6) Comparisons of the experimental and control groups' scores on oral communication skills in English post test

Oral communication skills Test	Groups	N	Mean	S.D	D.F	T	Significance	In favour of
Listen actively	Experimental	32	7.91	1.96	62	9.06	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control		3.91	1.55				
Show speech : (voice/ Elocution) a) fluency. b) clarity c) audibility	Experimental	32	7.06	2.11	62	10.42	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control		2.78	0.97				
Communicate (verbally) effectively.	Experimental	32	7.09	2.07	62	11.65	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control		2.44	0.91				
Communicate (non-verbally) effectively.	Experimental	32	6.88	2.47	62	9.54	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control		2.53	0.72				
Present information logically	Experimental	32	3.06	1.12	62	7.50	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control	32	1.34	0.60				
Present information accurately	Experimental	32	2.97	1.09	62	7.39	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control	32	1.31	0.64				
Respond logically to other's points of views	Experimental	32	4.13	0.98	62	9.10	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control	32	2.03	0.86				
Show the ability to exchange knowledge	Experimental	32	4.13	0.98	62	8.57	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control	32	2.25	0.76				
Be able to persuade, convince ,argue and influence	Experimental	32	4.16	1.08	62	10.33	Significance p<0.01	Experimental
	Control	32	1.81	0.69				

Results in table (6) show that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post oral communication skills test in favour of the of the experimental group. This indicates that the experimental group scored higher on oral communication post test than the scores of the control group on the post-test. The t-test results show that this difference is considered to be highly statistically significant at (0.01) level as the two-tailed P value <0.01. The interpretation of this difference proves that the oral communication skills in

English of the experimental group who implemented the program have been improved. This confirms the positive effect of multicultural approach in developing oral communication skills in English. The lack of improvement in the control group scores on oral communication skills is due to the use of the regular instruction that was adopted in their classroom. Therefore, the second hypothesis of this study is supported.

Figure (5) The experimental and control groups' mean scores on oral communication skills post test.



#### 4.0 Discussion of the Results

The analysis of the results of the present study revealed the following main findings:

- There were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group trained by multicultural approach and the control group who trained by regular instruction in the overall English oral communication skills and in every skill in favour of the experimental group. This indicates that the experimental group achieved higher proficiency in terms of overall English oral communication skills and in

every skill than the control group. Similarly, the differences between the pre and post test were significant in overall English oral communication skills and every skill for the experimental group students.

- In the light of data analysis, the relation between the English oral communication skills and the use of multicultural approach was positive. It was proved that the use of multicultural approach in teaching leads to improve English oral communication skills .
- The results of the study are similar to those of (Gorski and Covert , 2000; DeMarco , 2006; kendall , 2007 ;Kemilka, 2011; Banks, 2013; Uddin, 2013; Dunbar & Brooks, 2006) in proving that the multicultural approach is recommended to improve the oral communication skills in English .

Based upon the results of the present study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Multicultural approach is recommended as an approach to develop oral communication skills in English of Al-Azhar experimental secondary institute students.
- The study draws the teachers' attention to the use of new methods and strategies in teaching English such as multicultural approach strategies to develop their students' EFL skills.
- There must be more co-operation between faculties of education and schools in order to provide integration between theory and practice to get the fruits of implementing the research findings.
- Secondary stage students should be studied in research programs as this stage is considered to be the base for directing the students to their professional studies.
- The development of the students' abilities to communicate effectively in English requires the students' co-operation and interaction in meaningful communicative situations.
- Students should be given opportunities to study the languages and cultures of larger ethnic communities, familiarize themselves with different religions, and gain exposure to the multiculturalism.
- Students should be taught to respect others' cultures and values.
- Schools must be active participants in ending oppression of all types, first by ending oppression within their own walls, then by producing socially and critically active and aware students.
- Students should be given a friendly and co-operative environment within the classroom where they are encouraged to interact and communicate in English which increase their self-confidence and can overcome their obstacles in learning English language.

- **Multicultural approach should be used as teaching approach in all stages to provide students with communication and social skills necessary for facing the rapid increase of information and hi-tech technology.**

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