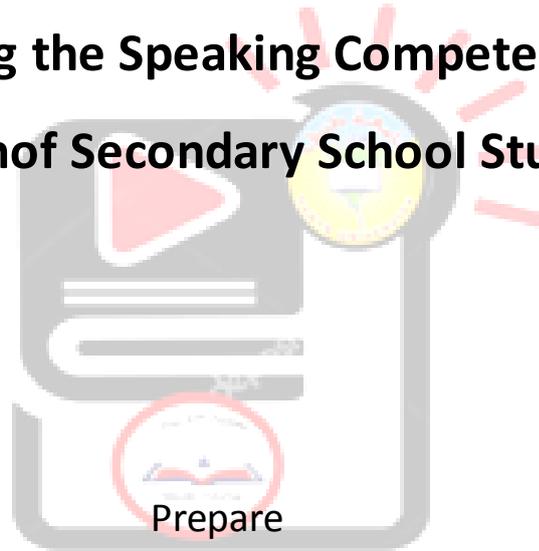




# The Effect of Interactive Fiction-Based Activities on Enhancing the Speaking Competence and Motivation of Secondary School Students



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## Introduction

English includes four main skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) which are closely interrelated with each other. Speaking is one of these four skills that we should be working on while teaching English. It is obviously essential for everyday life communication. Though important for daily communication, speaking is not an easy skill and many Egyptian students encounter various difficulties to get their meaning across. Here are some of the main difficulties that students' encounter while speaking English. Students can not communicate beyond short segments besides having frequent communication breakdowns. They lack the necessary vocabulary that can help them keep going in such communicative situations. Moreover, they speak slowly and take much time to put words together to produce a meaningful utterance. Furthermore, poor grammar leads them not to be able to produce correct sentences. Even when speaking, they do not sound natural for their limited knowledge and practice of pronunciation rules.

Hence, the main focus of this study was to tackle these problems through integrating interactive fiction-based activities into students' textbook material not only for enhancing their speaking competence, but also for increasing their motivation. Interactive fiction (IF) is a form of literature which depends on providing students with a fictitious world. According to Seegert (2009), IF is typically all about possibility – the realm of which is 'What if? It takes learners into the future to start handling a certain situation or solve a problem beyond what they have and do in such circumstances nowadays. Besides, interactive fiction



helps to develop students' problem solving skills. Moreover, it stimulates and demands critical and creative thinking. Furthermore, it permits greater expressiveness of internal mental states (Whitehead, 2008).

To be more specific, this study used interactive fiction as a teaching strategy including various activities which involved students working individually, in pairs, or groups. These activities were particularly designed to help students be actively engaged in their learning process and included, for example, debate, oral description, small group discussion, group graphics, concept mapping, role play, think-pair-share, etc. The current study offered interactive fiction instruction to students to help them overcome their speaking problems and also increase their motivation.

### **Study Problem**

Obviously, many Egyptian students have serious problems when they try speaking in English. This has been emphasized by many Egyptian researchers. For example, Aliweh (1989) pointed out that teachers dedicate most of class time to the teaching of language structures rather than helping students to use language in actual speaking situations. Al-Ashri (2011) explained that students have few chances in the classroom to practice speaking because they are listening much of the time and this consequently results in the habit of using their ears and eyes instead of their mouths. Meanwhile, El-Sakka (2016) described Egyptian students by stating that "after years of studying English either in primary, preparatory or secondary as well as university settings, are neither fluent nor confident English speakers" (p.22). Shehata (2008) found out that when students speak, the majority of them hardly provide



meaningful utterances with real communicative goal for thirty seconds or less. According to Hashim (2016), devoting most of the classroom time to teaching reading and writing to students leads to the fact that speaking does not receive the required attention in Egyptian schools.

More significantly, speaking problems are not only due to the setting, teaching practices, ineffective materials, and assessment, but they are also caused by lack of necessary motivation. Motivation is an important element that not only helps students to learn but more importantly to be interested to learn. Dörnyei (2001) indicated that students' motivation is in constant change as it will not remain the same over time. Most researchers assert that motivation has a vital role in learners' achievement. For example, Lightbrown and Spada (2001) explained that success or failure in second language learning is largely dependent on motivation. Besides, Abda (2017) stated that "Motivation in language-learning plays a vital role. It is motivation that produces effective second-language communicators by planting in them the seeds of self-confidence. It also successfully creates learners who continuously engage themselves in learning even after they complete a targeted goal" (p.290). Also, Desilets (1999) indicated in his study that the majority of students liked interactive fiction mainly because it is motivating, provides an exciting way of learning, and makes students more involved and active. Further, Brewer and Burgess (2005) considered motivation as an essential part of the language learning process. However, most teaching practices at Egyptian schools today are not helping students to be more motivated to speak in the foreign language.



So, teaching students using interactive fiction-based activities was the main focus of this study for enhancing not only their speaking competence but also increasing their motivation. Through IF, students had a new world to explore every day which made it an interesting strategy to use.

### Research Questions

The present study investigated the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing first year secondary school students' speaking competence and motivation. It sought answers to the following questions:

- 1- What is the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing the speaking competence of secondary school students?

#### Sub-questions:

- 1.a ) What is the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing students' speaking fluency?
- 1.b) What is the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing students' speaking accuracy?
- 1.c) What is the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing students' speaking comprehensibility?
- 1.d) What is the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing students' speaking pragmatic competence?
- 2- How does interactive fiction affect secondary school students' speaking competence?
- 3- What is the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on secondary school students' motivation?



## Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the above questions the following hypotheses were examined:

- 1- There is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' mean scores of the overall speaking competence on the post test in favor of the experimental group.
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' fluency mean scores on the post test in favor of the experimental group.
- 3- There is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' accuracy mean scores on the post test in favor of the experimental group.
- 4- There is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' comprehensibility mean scores on the post test in favor of the experimental group.
- 5- There is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' pragmatic competence mean scores on the post test in favor of the experimental group.
- 6- There is a statistically significant difference in favor of the post-administration of the motivation inventory to members of the experimental group.

## Definition of Terms

### Fiction:

According to Farner (2014), fiction is a narrative that is derived from imagination rather than from history or fact. The context of fiction is generally open to interpretation, due to the presented freedom from any explicit embedding in the real world.



### **Interactive Fiction:**

For the purpose of this study, interactive fiction refers to in-class oral activities that focus on imaginary situations and put students within a new world. IF places learners into fictitious environments wherein they make choices and move forward through the results of those choices, (Haunstetter, 2008). Thus, Interactive fiction enables the learner to handle unreal situations the realm of which is "What if?" (Seegert, 2009).

### **Speaking Competence:**

According to Al-Tamimi (2014), speaking competence is the act of speaking naturally, fluently and effectively in a variety of public speaking settings. Thus, it refers not only to "the ability to express opinions, thoughts, and ideas orally, but also to the right patterns, and process of constructing meaning by using words, concepts, strategies, and other discourse features, Rahayu (2011).

### **Speaking Fluency:**

Speaking fluency refers to the ability to speak smoothly, continuously and at an effective speed when the speaker does not always have to stop to think of the right word while at the same time expressing oneself in an intelligible, reasonable and accurate manner without too much hesitation (Castaneda & Roderquez-Gonzalez, 2011; Hughes, 2002). To be fluent is to be able to use language freely, speak smoothly and spontaneously.

**Speaking Accuracy:** Speaking accuracy indicates "the extent to which the language produced conforms to target language norms" (Yuan & Ellis,



2003, p. 2), which involves the correct use of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

### **Speaking Comprehensibility:**

Comprehensibility was defined by Derwing and Munro (2009) as “the listener’s perception of how easy or difficult it is to understand a given speech sample” (p.478). It had also been pointed out that the comprehensibility of a speech sample corresponded with the amount of time and effort spent in interpreting the utterance for the term itself typically refers to listeners' realization of the amount of effort involved in understanding a particular non-native speakers' (NNS) utterance (Derwing & Munro, 2009; Warren, Elgort & Crabbe, 2009).

### **Pragmatic Competence:**

According to Deda (2013), pragmatic competence refers to communicators' capability of understanding, constructing, and transferring meanings with regard to the social and cultural circumstances where communication occurs. Coming as one of the elements of communicative competence, pragmatic competence is a part of illocutionary competence which combines speech acts and speech functions as well as the use of appropriate language in context, Blackman (cited in Barron, 2003, p.173).

### **Motivation:**

The desire to learn is often referred to as motivation. As the term itself indicates, it is a “motive force”, something that prompts, incites or stimulates action. Motivation refers to “the reasons underlying behavior” (Guay et al., 2010, p. 712).



It is classified into "internal" and "external" factors that stimulate desire and energy in students to be continually interested and committed. Intrinsic motivation occurs when students are internally motivated to do something because it either brings them pleasure, they think it is important, or they feel that what they are learning is significant. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation comes into play when a student does something or act in a certain way because of factors external to him or her (like money or good grades).

### **Significance of the Study**

Basically, the current study is significant to EFL students for it provides them with an interesting approach that would help them enhance their speaking competence and increase their motivation. As for teachers, this study presents an exciting strategy for teaching speaking that would help students to freely express their thoughts and ideas and explore new possibilities far beyond locked situations they have always been put within. Moreover, curriculum developers can use interactive fiction as a new way of presenting oral activities to students that would lead to enhancing students' overall speaking competence and motivation. Hopefully, the results of this study will be advantageous to Egyptian students, teachers and curriculum developers.

### **Review of Literature and Previous Studies**

This section focuses on presenting the literature of previous studies relevant to the three variables which are the speaking skill, interactive fiction, and motivation.



## First: Speaking Skill

Speaking is the process of orally transmitting information by using verbal or non-verbal symbols within various situations while considering social and cultural contexts. It is a very crucial tool for judging language users as Hedge (2000) stated that speaking is "a skill by which people are judged while first impressions are being formed" (p.261). However, becoming a competent language speaker is far beyond just being able to speak using random words and correct grammatical rules. Speaking competence refers to the act of speaking naturally and effectively in various speaking settings (McCroskey & McCroskey, 1988). It has four major dimensions; fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility, and pragmatic competence. According to Derakhshan, Khalili, and Beheshti (2016), three main factors influence students' speaking competence: Cognitive factors, linguistic factors, and affective factors.

The significance of the speaking skill is reflected in its aim to promote communicative competence. The ability to speak a foreign language for most people is considered as synonymous with knowing that language and this is because speech is regarded as the basic tool for human communication (Kuśnierek, 2015). Regarding aspects of speaking skill, Torky (2006) presented three main aspects including speaking is face to face, speaking is interactive, and speaking happens in real time. Nunan (1989) distinguished between two main types of spoken language namely, monologue and dialogue speaking. He indicated that monologue speaking is all about providing interrupted oral presentation while dialogue speaking concentrates on interacting with other speakers. For assessing speaking skill, various ways had been presented



by many researchers. Hughes (2003) suggested three general formats for assessing students' speaking. These formats were: interviews, interaction with peers, and responses to tape recordings. However, Thornbury (2007) identified five central more detailed formats for assessing speaking. These formats included interviews conducted with students, live monologues, recorded monologues, role plays, and collaborative tasks and discussions.

Many studies addressed the speaking skill and how it could be enhanced. For example, Farag (2017) explored how an interactive multimedia program could be effective in developing oral communication skills (listening & speaking) of secondary school students. Results of the study showed that there was a noticed development in the experimental groups' listening comprehension and speaking skills. The development in students' speaking skill was reflected in their ability to speak fluently, produce accurate sentences with correct grammatical structure, and their interaction skill. Besides, Abdel Aal (2016) investigated the effect of a problem-based learning program (PBLP) on developing English speaking skills of secondary school students. In the post-test of speaking, the experimental group outperformed the control group in some speaking skills including pronunciation, structure, and fluency. Moreover, El-Shourbagy (2012) conducted a study for developing the speaking skills of first year secondary school students through the use of global education approach. Findings of the study showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in some speaking skills in favor of the experimental group. These skills



were pronunciation, grammatical use, fluency, and content. However, there was not a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of both groups in vocabulary.

### **Second: Interactive fiction**

Today, students learn the foreign language without being restricted to the knowledge of the present world but through being involved in their own imagined world. This helps students to mold ideas, images, and even an entire situation in their mind without having any previous input to rely on. The term "Interactive Fiction" was first used in the magazine *Byte* in 1981 (as cited in Aarseth, 1997). It refers to the process of recreating mental images that depict an unreal or imagined time and space. Montfort (2003) pointed out that the core characteristic of interactive fiction is the simulation of an imagined world. On the other hand, teachers play a significant role in carrying out this teaching strategy through designing and integrating interactive fiction-based activities into students' textbook material. Teachers' roles include guiding, motivating, inspiring, prompting, and empowering students who are passionate to learn in new ways. By doing this, the learning environment inside the classroom will go beyond the barriers and boundaries of the present to reach imaginary possible worlds of the future. The main feature of this teaching strategy is the use of activities that are based on fiction while focusing on students' interaction with each other. Through these activities, students will be working individually, in pairs, small groups, or large groups. Various activities can be used in IF such as decision making, role play, group graphics, oral description, concept mapping, debate, small group discussion, etc.



Douglass (2007) described the overall learning experience within IF as an exploration of new worlds and possibilities. More significantly, Pereira (2013) emphasized the significance of interactive fiction by stating that "IF can provide an extremely motivating, engaging and creative language learning experience, implementing all four language skills and many cognitive processes – both in and beyond the classroom" (p.19). Besides, interactive fiction engages students within cognitive challenges to find out solutions to various problems that they may encounter in these unreal worlds. Interactive fiction has several instructional advantages which encourage teachers to adopt it for teaching in their classrooms. First of all, it helps to motivate students. Also, it has unique qualities as a problem-solving tool. In addition, it stimulates and demands critical and creative thinking. Furthermore, it is useful in enhancing students' fluency by providing them with opportunities to express their own expectations, opinions, and views without any error correction on the part of the teacher.

In the Egyptian context, studies related to the potential of using interactive fiction in FL teaching/learning seem to be very rare. However, other international studies tackled this issue. In some way or another, Manuaba (2017) examined how interactive fiction text-based games represented a potential media for improving reading behaviors of Indonesian university students. He developed a text-based interactive fiction game that had the potential to motivate students' reading behavior. Results successfully revealed that text-based interactive fiction games improved university students' reading behavior. Al-Sha'r (2017) conducted a study to investigate the effect of teaching fiction short



stories on developing EFL learners' communicative competence at the primary stage in Jordan. The aim of the study was to examine if language productive skills (speaking & writing) were improved due to discussing elements of fiction stories (orally or in writing). Results of the study showed that using discussion sessions and activities (oral and written) about fiction short stories had a positive impact on learners' communicative competence. Furthermore, Al Alami (2013) studied the effectiveness of utilizing a fiction course in enhancing the communicative critical language competence of United Arab Emirates EFL undergraduate students. Findings of the study showed that the experimental group students' performance on the communicative critical reading competence and the communicative critical writing competence post-tests was significantly better than their counterparts of the control group.

### **Third: Motivation**

Gardner (1985) defined motivation as a combination of effort and desire to achieve a particular language learning goal, in addition to, favorable attitudes towards language learning. Consequently, motivation is related to the reasons that accompany a particular behavior (Guay, Chantal, Ratelle, Marsh, Larose, & Boivin, 2010). Lightbrown and Spada (2001) pointed out that success or failure in second language learning is largely dependent on motivation. Besides, motivation boosts some of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking. The component skills of critical thinking include for example, making decisions, analyzing arguments, making inferences using deductive or inductive reasoning, problem solving, etc. Motivation has been classified into integrative and



instrumental motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) and into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Finally, motivation can be assessed using rating scales, self-report measures, or behavioral indicators.

Interactive fiction helps motivate students to gain new experiences and points of view through interacting with each other. Pereira (2013) maintained that students see interactive fiction educational activities and games to be so engaging and fun. This teaching strategy provides students with a more relaxing and motivating learning environment. According to Desilets (1999), students are motivated through IF for it challenges them to recognize and solve different problems in a way that no textbook is able to match.

Various studies had been conducted to find out more effective and practical ways for enhancing learners' motivation. For example, Ali (2016) investigated the effect of a proposed CALL program in developing EFL vocabulary, grammar learning, and motivation of second year preparatory school students. The study concluded that the proposed CALL program (Hot Potatoes) was effective in developing preparatory school students' vocabulary, grammar learning, and motivation. Besides, Ochoa, Cabrera, Quiñónez, Castillo, and González (2016) conducted a study to investigate the impact of communicative activities on students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. Findings of their study revealed that students were highly motivated when participated in communicative activities because they enhanced students' fluency, pronunciation, and performance through using English in a realistic and enjoyable way. Further, Mahmoud (2010) examined the effect of a



suggested technotainment program to be used for enhancing the communication skills of primary school students and their motivation towards learning English. The results showed that the suggested technotainment program succeeded on enhancing primary school students' communicative skills and EFL learning motivation.

### **Method**

This study adopted a mixed research method. A quasi-experimental research design including an experimental group and a control group was used. Besides, the researcher used some qualitative research techniques to explore how interactive fiction affected students' speaking competence. These included oral interviews and speaking portfolios.

#### **- Participants**

In the present study, participants were first year secondary school students who were randomly selected from a governmental secondary school namely "Om El Moemenin Secondary School for Girls" in El-Gharbia Governorate, in the school year 2018/2019. The number of students in each group (experimental & control groups) was forty.

#### **- Instruments**

Five main instruments were used in this study in order to examine the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on students' speaking competence and motivation. These instruments were speaking tests, a rating scale for the speaking tests, a motivation inventory, a speaking portfolio, and oral interviews.

Two forms of the speaking test, one as a pre-test and the other as a post-test, were administered to both the experimental and control groups. Each speaking test included a warm-up stage and three main



sections/tasks. At the beginning of the test, the warm-up stage was used to create a friendly atmosphere and get students to begin speaking English. The following test tasks were: responding to questions, picture description, and extended situation (expressing what the student would do in a certain situation).

In the rating scale, four main speaking components were included: fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility, and pragmatic competence. Students' performance on each speaking component was scored out of five points wherein (1) stands for "very poor", (2) "poor", (3) "average", (4) "good", and (5) "very good". Students' total score for the four speaking components ranged from 4 to 20. For each point, a set of indicators or descriptors were used for scoring students' utterances.

The motivation inventory included 20 items distributed into two main categories: intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation (items 1-13) and instrumental vs. integrative motivation (items 14-20). It was designed in the form of 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" with values 1-5 assigned to each option. In the inventory, (1) stands for "strongly disagree", (2) "disagree", (3) "undecided", (4) "agree", and 5 "strongly agree". It was administered to participants of the experimental group both before and after the implementation of the study.

The aim of the speaking portfolio was to track down the impact of interactive fiction on students' speaking competence with respect to fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility, and pragmatic competence. The rubric used for assessing students' utterances in the speaking portfolio depended on four grading levels (A "Highly outstanding performance",



B+ "Outstanding performance", B "Average performance", and C "Unacceptable performance"). Each grading level included some criteria for assessing students' utterances.

Regarding oral interviews, the researcher developed seven questions to examine students' opinions, feelings, preferences, and attitudes towards using IF as a teaching strategy in the classroom.

The two forms of the speaking test, the rating scale, the purpose and guidelines of the speaking portfolio as well as the rubric for assessing students' utterances, and the oral interview questions were submitted to five EFL staff members to judge them in terms of content appropriateness. Besides, the jury members were asked to modify, add, or omit any item when needed. However, the motivation inventory was translated into Arabic and submitted to two psychology professors who were asked to judge the inventory items in light of the context in which it was used. The jury members were also required to evaluate the appropriateness and clearness of the items and to modify, add, or omit any item when needed. Finally, all suggestions and modifications were carefully taken into consideration.

To ensure the reliability of the speaking tests and the rating scale, the two forms of the test were administered to a sample of 10 first year secondary school students. This sample was not included in the study. Results of the Cronbachs' Alpha method indicated a high correlation coefficient (0.9) which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. On the other hand, the motivation inventory was administered to 20 students. Then, Cronbachs' Alpha method was used to estimate its



reliability. The correlation coefficient was 0.7, which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

## Implementation of interactive fiction-based

### Activities

These activities aimed to enhance the speaking competence and motivation of first year secondary school students. Twenty-one lessons which focused on ten types of activities were used for teaching students using interactive fiction strategy. The activities were as follows: 1) Think-pair-share, 2) Group graphics, 3) Concept mapping, 4) Role play, 5) Decision making, 6) Small group discussion, 7) Short talk, 8) Dialogues, 9) Oral description, and 10) Debate. Pictures, short videos, concept maps, posters, tables, and graphs were used in some lessons to enrich students' learning experience. By the end of the study, students should be able to:

- Speak fluently using appropriate speech speed.
- Use language structures correctly.
- Share opinions, ideas, and thoughts with other students.
- Understand questions, interact with each other, and provide elaborate answers.
- Use rich and appropriate vocabulary and pronounce words correctly.

The experiment lasted for 29 sessions (forty-five minutes each). Each lesson plan was taught in one session. The remaining eight sessions were devoted to the recordings of the speaking portfolio. During the study, the researcher acted as organizer, facilitator, prompter, and motivator while students acted as interactors as they interacted with the teacher



as well as other students to share their views, opinions, feelings, and ideas.

Regarding teaching procedures, three main phases were used for implementing the experiment: 1) Brainstorming which took place at the beginning of each lesson. During brainstorming, the teacher presented a question to students in order to help them generate ideas on the given topic. The aim of the brainstorming question was to focus students' attention on a particular topic, encourage students to speak, and generate various ideas. Then, students had few minutes to think of the question on their own. Finally, the teacher started a whole-class discussion to enable students to express their own points of view.

2) Using interactive fiction-based activities to boost students' speaking competence and increase their motivation. Throughout these activities, students worked individually (short talk), in pairs (dialogues), or in groups (group graphics, concept mapping, role play, decision making, small group discussion, oral description, and debate). In think-pair-share activity, students started by working individually then in pairs and finally worked in groups to discuss and exchange their ideas.

3) The assessment process: Both formative and summative assessment were used throughout the study. The formative assessment took place through the speaking portfolio which was used after each lesson to assess the gradual enhancement of students' speaking competence and provide them with necessary feedback. At the beginning of the first session for assessing students using speaking portfolios, the teacher informed students about the role of these speaking portfolios as part of their assessment and provided them with the guidelines and rubric of



portfolio assessment criteria. The class was then divided into small groups and the teacher asked students to search for ideas about the topic discussed, organize their ideas into specific points, and finally each student spoke on one or two points at most. The teacher recorded students' speeches in the classroom (with their permission) as part of their speaking portfolios. Finally, the teacher encouraged other students in the classroom to comment on their peers' presentation while the teacher provided necessary feedback. Moreover, the teacher interviewed students on the topic discussed during the session. These interviews were also audio recorded as part of students' speaking portfolio.

On the other hand, summative assessment took place at the end of the study through the administration of the speaking post-test and the post-motivation inventory. The speaking post-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups while the post-motivation inventory was administered to only members of the experimental group.

### Results

The current study investigated the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing first year secondary school students' speaking competence and motivation. After the implementation of the experiment, the researcher administered the post-test to the experimental and control groups. Besides, speaking portfolios were used to track down the impact of IF on students' speaking competence through audio-taping students' utterances on eight different topics. The motivation inventory was pre-post administered to members of the experimental group to examine the effect of IF on students' speaking.



Finally, the SPSS statistics program was used to analyze the data. Results of the study revealed the following:

1. There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between the experimental and control groups' mean scores of the overall speaking competence on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. Table (1) includes relevant data to students' overall speaking competence.

**Table (1): Descriptive statistics of students' overall speaking competence on the post-test**

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	Effect size
Exp.	40	14.80	2.21	78	4.51	0.01	0.45
Con.	40	12.48	2.40				

2. There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between the experimental and control groups' fluency mean scores on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. Results related to comparing the fluency mean scores of the post-test for the experimental and control groups are presented in table (2).

**Table (2): Descriptive statistics of students' fluency scores on the post-test**

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	Effect size
Exp.	40	4.15	0.74	78	4.81	0.01	0.47
Con.	40	3.25	0.93				

3. There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between the experimental and control groups' accuracy mean scores on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. Data



concerning students' scores on accuracy of speaking are provided in table (3).

**Table (3): Descriptive statistics of students' accuracy scores on the post-test**

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	Effect size
Exp.	40	3.38	0.63	78	3.89	0.01	0.40
Con.	40	2.85	0.58				

4. There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level between the experimental and control groups' comprehensibility mean scores on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. Results presented in table (4) focused on comparing the comprehensibility mean scores of the post-test for the experimental and control groups.

**Table (4): Descriptive statistics of students' comprehensibility scores on the post-test**

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	Effect size
Exp.	40	3.58	0.75	78	2.10	0.05	0.23
Con.	40	3.25	0.63				

5. There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between the experimental and control groups' pragmatic competence mean scores on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. Data relevant to the experimental and control groups' scores on pragmatic competence are included in table (5).



**Table (5): Descriptive statistics of students' pragmatic competence scores on the post-test**

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	Effect size
Exp.	40	3.70	0.687	78	3.75	0.01	0.38
Con.	40	3.13	0.686				

6. There was a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level in favor of the post-administration of the motivation inventory to members of the experimental group. Results of the paired-samples *t-test* of the scores on the overall speaking motivation and its factors are presented in table (6).

**Table (6): Results of the scores on the overall speaking motivation and its factors**

Motivational factor	Administration	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	Effect size
Overall speaking motivation	Pre	40	40.58	5.67	39	10.20	0.01	0.49
	Post	40	47.50	6.60				
Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation	Pre	40	12.98	3.18	39	30.01	0.01	0.94
	Post	40	32.68	3.92				
Instrumental vs. integrative motivation	Pre	40	27.60	4.58	39	20.41	0.01	0.84
	Post	40	14.83	3.54				



Results also showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level between students' scores of the speaking portfolios. This revealed a steady growth of students' speaking competence throughout the recordings of eight speaking portfolios. Data concerning students' scores on the speaking portfolio are presented in table (7).

**Table (7): Results of students' scores on the speaking portfolios**

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Intercept	1075.14	1	1075.14	323.78	0.01
Error	69.73	21	3.32		
Total	1144.87	22	1078.46	-	-

## Discussion

This section focuses on discussing the results obtained with reference to the overall speaking competence and its components (fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility, & pragmatic competence), speaking motivation and its factors (intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation, & instrumental vs. integrative motivation), and students' speaking portfolios.

First of all, results of the study showed that interactive fiction-based activities were effective in enhancing the experimental group students' overall speaking competence. This enhancement might be due to various factors such as using interesting and various activities provided students with good opportunities to express and exchange their opinions, ideas, and thoughts with each other. Further, asking students to make their own speaking portfolios on the topic discussed helped them to practice their speaking outside the classroom.



Results also revealed that interactive fiction-based activities were effective in enhancing the fluency of the experimental group. This development might be due to different reasons. For example, providing students with adequate time to prepare the content of their speeches for the speaking portfolios might have helped them to be more fluent during their presentations and overcome their anxiety of speaking English in front of others. Also, delaying error correction to the end of the session might have a positive effect on students' fluency because they were no longer afraid of being embarrassed in front of the whole class.

Besides, study results showed that using IF as a teaching strategy was effective in enhancing the experimental group students' accuracy of speaking. After implementing the experiment, there was a progress in students' accuracy that might be attributed to many factors. Peer and teacher feedback might have helped students to notice their common grammatical errors. Students also acquired and learned a range of vocabulary related to the topic discussed and had the chance to ask for clarification of difficult words.

As for comprehensibility, current results revealed that the treatment was effective in enhancing comprehensibility of the experimental group. This improvement might be due to several factors. More significantly, the improvement that students achieved in suprasegmental features (rhythm, word stress, and intonation), grammar, and fluency enabled them to convey more comprehensible messages. Besides, pictures and short videos presented to students in the oral description activities



helped them to better comprehend and imagine difficult concepts representing the future world like teleportation, body electronic codes, earth scrapers, idea networks, etc.

Moreover, study results revealed that interactive fiction-based activities had a significant effect on the experimental group students' pragmatic competence. This enhancement could be attributed to various factors. During instruction, students were not only required to think of the vocabulary and grammar needed for the activity but also to know how to use appropriate expressions throughout the activity. Furthermore, role-play activities enabled students to adopt a variety of different social roles and provided them with opportunities to practice a wide range of pragmatic and sociolinguistic skills.

Also, results of the paired samples *t-test* showed that integrating interactive fiction-based activities into students' textbook material was effective in increasing their motivation. The environmental conditions that the teacher created inside the classroom played a crucial role in raising students' intrinsic motivation. These conditions included for example using various interactive fiction-based activities, showing students pictures, videos, graphs, and concept maps related to the topic, encouraging students to make their own speaking portfolios, etc. On the other hand, the decrease in the results of the instrumental vs. integrative motivation revealed that students were not learning the language in order to achieve a certain functional goal such as passing exams, travelling, etc. Finally, the increase in students' overall speaking motivation indicated that students were learning the foreign language



for personal interests and not in order to achieve a particular purpose or goal.

Thus, throughout the experiment there was a steady growth of students' speaking competence as revealed by students' speaking portfolios. Based on personal observation, students' utterances at the beginning of the recordings were characterized by slow and hesitant speech, grammatical mistakes, limited vocabulary, pronunciation problems, incomprehensible messages, and inappropriate pragmatic features. Teaching students using interactive fiction-based activities led to a steady improvement in the following recordings of the speaking portfolio. As a result, by the end of the recordings students were able to overcome most of these problems.

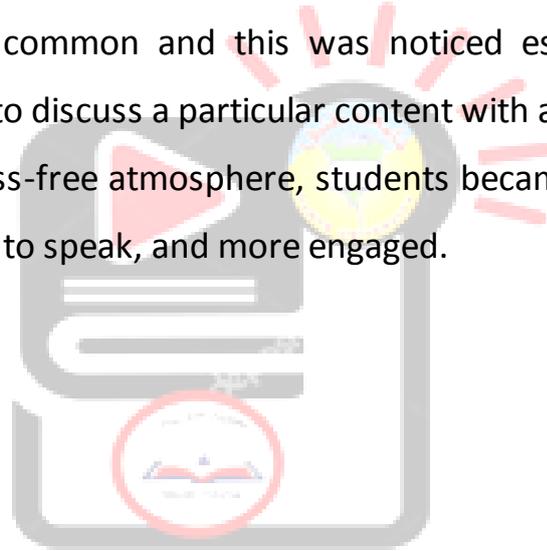
### **Conclusion**

The present study provided evidence for the effect of interactive fiction-based activities on enhancing first year secondary school students' speaking competence and motivation. Integrating various interactive fiction-based activities into students' textbook material helped to improve their fluency, accuracy, comprehensibility, and pragmatic competence. Through IF, students were no longer restricted to speaking about what is happening in the present time. In fact, speaking about future worlds and imagined situations provided students with a more exciting and interesting medium for expressing their ideas, feelings, and viewpoints.

Also, using speaking portfolios for assessing students' utterances showed steady growth that resulted from teaching students using IF. Throughout eight sessions of this study, students reported the



improvement in their speaking competence through allowing them to listen to their recordings by the end of the session. Besides, different roles played by the teacher throughout the experiment helped students to be more actively engaged rather than passive recipients. These roles were facilitator, organizer, prompter, and motivator. Moreover, using short videos, pictures, concept maps, and graphs about imagined worlds and situations could have helped to create a more enjoyable learning experience for students. More significantly, the reduction of mother tongue use took place during the implementation of the study. Before conducting the experiment, the use of the mother tongue inside the classroom was very common and this was noticed especially when students were asked to discuss a particular content with a partner. With this relaxing and stress-free atmosphere, students became more active learners, less hesitant to speak, and more engaged.





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