



# **The Effectiveness of Some Communicative Strategies for Developing Speaking Skills among ESRI Postgraduate Students at the University of Sadat City**

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### **Abstract**

Despite the unparalleled importance of speaking skills and their crucial role in the EFL learning process, particularly for postgraduate students, these skills often do not receive the attention they deserve due to limited opportunities for everyday communication. The aim of the present study is to develop speaking skills among postgraduate students at the Environmental Studies and Research Institute (ESRI) at the University of Sadat City.

To achieve the study's objectives, the experimental group was exposed to various communicative strategies, such as transactional strategies, contextualization strategies, scaffolding, modeling, and sharing strategies, while the control group engaged in conventional classroom activities. The findings revealed a significant difference between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the pre- and post-speaking tests, with the experimental group showing more improvement. It was concluded that there were positive improvements in the students' speaking performance after implementing the training program based on selected communicative strategies. The researcher recommends further studies using different communicative strategies to develop speaking skills.

**Key words:** *communicative strategies, speaking skills, ESRI post graduate students*

**المخلص**

على الرغم من الخصائص الفريدة لمهارة التحدث ودورها الحيوي في عملية تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، خصوصًا بالنسبة لطلاب الدراسات العليا، إلا أنها لا تحظى بالاهتمام الكافي نتيجة قلة استخدامها في التواصل اليومي. لذا، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تنمية مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب الدراسات العليا في معهد الدراسات والبحوث البيئية بجامعة مدينة السادات.

اختارت الباحثة عينة عشوائية مكونة من ٦٠ طالبًا من طلاب الدراسات العليا بمعهد الدراسات والبحوث البيئية، وقسمتهم إلى مجموعتين: مجموعة تجريبية وأخرى ضابطة. تمثلت أدوات الدراسة في اختبار التحدث القبلي والبعدي، وقائمة مرجعية لمهارات التحدث، ونموذج تقييم لمهارات التحدث.

ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تعرضت المجموعة التجريبية لاستراتيجيات تواصلية متنوعة مثل: استراتيجيات المعاملات، استراتيجيات السياق، استراتيجيات السقالات، استراتيجيات النمذجة والمشاركة، بينما خضعت المجموعة الضابطة للأنشطة التقليدية في الفصل الدراسي. أظهرت النتائج وجود فرق كبير في متوسط درجات الاختبار القبلي والبعدي بين المجموعتين لصالح المجموعة التجريبية.

وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن هناك تحسنًا إيجابيًا في أداء الطلاب في مهارات التحدث بعد تطبيق البرنامج التدريبي المعتمد على بعض الاستراتيجيات التواصلية. وأوصت الباحثة بإجراء مزيد من الدراسات باستخدام استراتيجيات تواصلية مختلفة أخرى لتطوير مهارات التحدث.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** استراتيجيات التواصل ، مهارات التحدث، عينة الدراسة "طلاب الدراسات العليا بمعهد الدراسات والبحوث البيئية"

**introduction**

The English language is the international medium of communication, used across various fields such as science, economics, and more. It has become the most critical tool for keeping pace with the modern world and its technological and scientific advancements. Consequently, the English curriculum in both schools and universities should be developed to equip learners with the ability to speak the language fluently, both inside and outside the classroom. Speaking in the target language enables learners to exchange thoughts and ideas, express their feelings, and build strong relationships with others.

Learning a language, whether it is a foreign or native one, implies the ability to speak it fluently (Luoma, 2005). Success in learning a foreign language is often measured by one's ability to engage in conversation in that language. Speaking is an essential tool for thinking, communication, and learning, as it helps to expand and organize our thoughts. Speaking skills serve two key functions: interactional and transactional, also referred to as "social and intellectual" (Gebhard, 2000; Shumin, 2002). Learning and speaking a foreign language requires the integration of three crucial skills: language skills, cognitive skills, and social skills Casteleyn, J. (2019).

Speaking is an interactive, social and contextualized communicative event in which people use language actively to make sense of what they say. speaking skill involve micro-skills that include grammar, syntax, morphology, semantics, pragmatics, phonology and social skills Rodriques (2000). is the ability to convey thoughts and ideas orally. It's based mainly on two important interactive process for constructing meaning which are; producing and processing information. The speaking form and meaning are influenced by its context, participants, physical environment and purpose.

Many researchers have conducted studies to identify the most effective approaches and theories for learning and teaching a foreign language. They have found that the most effective approach in the contemporary language teaching profession is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Savignon, 1987; Savignon, 2002). This approach primarily aims to address the diverse needs of learners across various geographic regions.

The main objective of the CLT approach is to enhance learners' language proficiency, enabling them to use the language communicatively both

inside and outside the classroom (Savignon, 1987; Savignon, 2002). Consequently, this approach allows teachers to implement a variety of classroom activities and tools such as discussions (Dos Santos, 2019), group sharing (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), and problem-based learning (Da Silva Cintra, 2015; Johnson, 2018).

The primary focus of CLT is not exclusively on grammar; rather, it seeks to extend the systematic treatment of language issues beyond grammar to the explicit development of other areas of knowledge and skills necessary for effective communication. This approach emphasizes the improvement of both fluency and accuracy in language use.

CLT has been a pivotal factor in the reform of EFL curricula (British Council, 2015). In this approach, interaction and communication take precedence over the memorization of language structures. Learners are engaged in communicative situations where they interact with one another, such as through problem-solving activities and group presentations. Moreover, CLT encourages the use of materials and tools from learners' immediate environments and societies (Dos Santos, 2019a; Dos Santos, 2019b), which increases their motivation to speak the target language rather than their mother tongue, allowing for fuller participation in the learning environment.

Le Page (2006) investigated the role of oral proficiency, social interaction, and a supportive environment in successfully learning to read. The study's findings reveal that:

- Students' oral skills should be developed prior to learning reading and writing.
- Interaction between learners and teachers, along with a quiet, conducive environment, is essential for improving oral skills.

Despite the traditional focus of curricula on reading and writing, speaking is the foundation of learning. Therefore, students should be exposed to and practice various patterns of oral language (Alexander, 2004).

### **The Importance of Developing Speaking Skills for Post Graduate students**

Developing ESP post graduate students' speaking skills will enhance their cognitive and learning outcomes both collaboratively and independently (Littelton & Mercer, 2013). It also ensures the development of reasoning skills, which are essential for success in the

classroom and in the wider world (Xie & Dong, 2017). Furthermore, improving speaking skills helps students solve problems and better understand their surroundings (Littleton & Mercer, 2013).

Hartshorne (2011) asserts that both educational institutions and workplaces require individuals with strong communication skills, as these are fundamental to social, emotional, and cognitive development. Learners not only need to speak to learn and comprehend the world around them, but they also need to talk to explain, discuss, justify, reason, and imagine (Alexander, 2012). English fluency holds a significant position at the international level (Richards, 2008). These skills can be developed and refined by engaging learners in structured classroom discussions where they are encouraged to speak up and analyze complex concepts.

### **Speaking Skills Required for EFL Learners**

#### **1-language skills**

EFL learners need to apply various types of knowledge and skills simultaneously to communicate effectively.

- the phonological level; students must understand how to pronounce speech sounds ,divide words into various syllables and sounds and use stress and intonation to convey meaning and ideas

- Morphological level: Learners need to develop the ability to recall and store words and phrases in long-term memory and apply them correctly in grammatical structures.

#### **2. Cognitive Skills:**

These skills facilitate the communication process. Speakers must possess the competence to speak the target language, have knowledge of the world around them, understand the roles and purposes of individuals in different communicative situations, and be aware of the social and cultural factors required in various contexts.

#### **3. Social Skills:**

Social skills refer to the learner's ability to maintain communication, resolve communication problems, and address breakdowns in interaction.

**Speaking as a Cognitive Process**

According to Levelt (1989; 1995), speaking as a cognitive process involves four main stages:

1. Conceptualization: This refers to the speaker's ability to clarify their ideas based on their knowledge of the topic, situation, and discourse. In this process, the teacher encourages the speaker to self-correct their expression, grammar, and pronunciation.
2. Formulation: This stage involves the speaker's ability to transform their ideas into spoken words, selecting appropriate lexical items to express and convey the intended meaning.
3. Articulation: This refers to the speaker's control over the speech organs to physically produce the utterances.
4. Self-monitoring: In this stage, the language user identifies and corrects their own mistakes, making necessary adjustments to ensure accuracy.

**Features of Spoken Language**

There are two important features of spoken language:

**1-use of voice**

Pauses and intonation are the main patterns of spoken which help learners to express language meaning and attitude.

Volume: it depends on the need of the situation, purpose and audience. there are contexts require loud voice and other contexts require quiet voices.

Intonation: the pattern of changes in speech.

Pitch: it is used to indicate emotions.

Pronunciation: the way by which learners pronounce words.

**2-non-verbal behavior**

They are non-verbal features that accompany speaking and listening and used to enhance meaning and convey emotions.

Examples of nonverbal behavior:

Eye contact: the use of eyes or gazes in face to face communication.

Kinesics: they are gestures that are the same as words or phrases and may replace them. Tahiriri, (2015).

**Oral Proficiency in English as a New Language**

Oral proficiency is a primary goal for English Language Learners (ELLs) as it enhances their ability to acquire speaking skills and provides opportunities for self-expression (August, Calderon, & Carlo, 2002;



Geva, 2007). Oral proficiency can be improved through two types of conversations:

1. Instructional Conversation:

This is a planned discussion on academic topics between a teacher and a small group of students (Thar et al., 2003). These conversations help learners acquire skills such as conveying information, discussing, analyzing, inferring, evaluating, and expanding vocabulary related to the subject matter.

2. Interactive Conversation:

Also known as “collaborative dialogue”, this type of conversation includes both instructional and social interactions. It helps improve learners’ critical thinking, content knowledge, as well as their personal development and belief systems (Swain, 2000).

### **Procedures of Teaching Speaking**

Alexander, (2008) determined five procedures for teaching speaking;

1. The rote: refers to the knowledge and information about facts, ideas and routines that are transferred to students by repeating them.
2. Recitation: it means that the teacher asks questions to check learners’ comprehension
3. Instruction: the teacher gives students the principles and instructions of what they should do.
4. Discussion : encourage students to exchange and share their knowledge and information with each other.
5. Dialogue: asking questions and discussions are the main strategies that enable students to understand concepts, principles and process.
- 6.

### **Challenges That Make Speaking Difficult**

Several challenges hinder the development of speaking skills among learners. These challenges can be categorized into two main factors:

1. Factors Related to the Message:

- Awareness of Connected Speech: Learners often lack awareness of the features of connected speech, such as contraction, elision, and assimilation. To speak the target language fluently, students must acquire suprasegmental features of spoken language, including stress, rhythm, and intonation.

- Interaction with Peers: The effectiveness of spoken communication relies heavily on interaction with other speakers. Learners benefit from evaluating their peers' contributions, which provides opportunities to understand body language and improve their own speaking skills.

- Time Pressure: Time constraints can increase the difficulty of spoken language. Speakers may feel compelled to communicate their messages quickly without taking sufficient time to organize their thoughts or check their language.

## 2. Factors Related to Learners:

Learners often find speaking challenging due to several reasons:

- Fear of Making Mistakes: Many students experience anxiety about making mistakes and facing criticism from their audience when they begin to speak.

- Focus on Literacy Skills: In many classrooms, the emphasis is placed on acquiring literacy skills, such as reading and writing, rather than on speaking skills.

- Limited Practice Opportunities: Teachers may not provide adequate time for students to practice the target language, hindering their development in speaking.

- Language Form Over Meaning: There is often a focus on language form rather than on the learners' ability to use the language meaningfully.

- Preference for Mother Tongue: In classrooms where all students share the same native language, there is a tendency to communicate in their mother tongue rather than the target language. There are some challenges which make speaking skill difficult.

## Context of the Problem

English language contains four main skills “listening, speaking , reading and writing”. In the past teachers thought that learning English language is comprehend vocabulary and grammar to improve reading and writing skills neglecting speaking skills although speaking in the target language helps learners exchange their thoughts , ideas, and express about their feelings and also they can establish strong relationships with each other. (Irmawati, 2012) teachers don't give students opportunities to practice the target language with a partner in the classroom to improve their speaking skills. As a result of that learners' level at English vocabulary and grammar is high and they can answer any question related to them

comparing to language performance in which their level is low as they can't use English language to communicate whether inside or outside the classroom.

According to the results obtained by the British Council (2015), English learners show more confidence in reading and writing but they don't have much confidence in speaking. English learners consider speaking harder than reading and writing and the only contact they have with language is in classes, besides that, they don't depend on teachers who use appropriate strategies to encourage them to speak the target language.

Despite the importance of speaking skills and oral communication, Studies such as Johnson et al; (2015) support the argument for involving speaking skill and its sub- skills in higher education curriculum, but they neglect the articulation of what they mean by speaking and communication skills , they don't clarify and explain speaking skill and its sub skills in details and also they fail to highlight their importance for post graduate students and how they can be involved in post graduate curriculum.

Concerning the Egyptian context, most current Egyptian English language teaching programs and curriculums do not give students opportunities to practice EFL speaking skills in communicative context and use it for specific purposes. The learners face obstacles in speaking comprehension, as they cannot get the required meaning of texts (Diab, 2018; Elsaid, 2019)

In addition, reviewing the related studies (e.g. Diab, 2018; Elsaid, 2019, Irmawati, 2012, Johnson et al; 2015) that focused on speaking and communication revealed that students' levels at speaking and listening skills is very low as they cannot use target language for communication whether inside or outside classroom in real life situations.

To documentate the problem of the present study, the researcher conducted a pilot study on speaking skills on ten students from Environmental Studies and Research Institute (ESRI) at University of Sadat City post graduate students , to find out the low level of speaking skills and among them. The researcher will evaluate students' levels at speaking skills according to speaking main skills and sub skills.

This pilot study is a test that evaluate ESRI post graduate students levels at speaking skills. This test involved some communicative questions that students will answer orally.

**The Statement of the problem:**

The problem of the current research is that ESRI post graduate students' level in speaking main and sub skills is very low and they cannot speak with each other in real life situations using English language and they cannot use it for specific purposes according to their different specializations. their level in English speaking skills doesn't qualify them to find a good job in the modern world in which English language becomes the international language by which people communicate with each other all over the world as proficiency in English language is required to find a good job in the modern world .this problem increases among ESRI post graduate students because ESRI doesn't introduce educational programs that teach its students English language and its skills specially, speaking skills.

1. There is a lack of clarity and specificity regarding what constitutes speaking skills and their sub-skills. More detailed definitions and frameworks could help in designing a curriculum that addresses these gaps.
2. Current curricula do not emphasize the integration of speaking skills with specific content areas relevant to students' specializations. This connection is crucial for practical language use.
3. There is insufficient focus on training teachers to adopt effective strategies that encourage speaking. Professional development programs that equip educators with the tools to foster speaking skills in the classroom could be beneficial.
4. A structured approach to assessing speaking skills, alongside providing constructive feedback, could enhance learning outcomes. Current evaluation methods may not adequately reflect students' capabilities in speaking.
5. There should be more initiatives to create real-life speaking opportunities, such as debates, discussions, and collaborative projects that require students to use English in meaningful contexts.

**Research Questions**

To face this problem, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the required speaking skills for ESRI post-graduate students?

- 2- What is the influence of using some communicative strategies for developing EFL speaking skills among ESRI post graduate students?
- 3- What is the effectiveness of a program based on communicative approach for developing speaking skills?
- 4- What are the characteristics of a program based on communicative language teaching approach for developing ESRI post graduate students speaking skills?

### **Research Aim**

The main objectives of this research are:

- 1- Developing speaking skills for ESRI post graduate students.
- 2- giving those students enough background of how to speak about authentic texts in there specialization.
- 3- Improve their ability to use English for specific purposes, use English language to talk about their specialization and find a job in the modern world in which English has become international language.
- 4- Enable them to use English language to communicate in real life situations outside the classroom.

### **Significance of the Study**

The recent study would hopefully:

- 1- Serving as a common basis for further research to develop EFL speaking skills and using it for specific purposes.
- 2- Encourage curriculum developers to shed light on EFL speaking skills and ESP and the importance of their development for ESRI post graduate students through using some communicative strategies
- 3- Providing post graduate students with speaking skills required for their study, social and professional life
- 4- Provide EFL teachers at post graduate stage with speaking activities based on some communicative strategies

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The present study was limited to:

- 1- 60 participants from ESRI post graduate students at university of Sadat city.
- 2- Five main speaking skills required for post graduate students assigned as; fluency, vocabulary, comprehensibility, pronunciation and grammar and their sub skills

3- Areas and aspects of speaking skills of English language as a foreign language required for ESRI post graduate students such as fluency, accuracy (grammar and pronunciation), and comprehension.

### **Communicative Strategies for Improving Speaking Skills**

In this research, the researcher used and applied some communicative strategies for improving ESP post graduate students speaking skills as follows(Toro et al., 2018);

#### **Contextualization**

This strategy assumes that communication is an interactive process that has different shapes such as; person can communicate with others in pairs or small group and gives public speeches to large groups of people. The context of speech influences on the participants' verbal and non-verbal behavior. As they sit, move, and stand differently depending on the context of speech, which is on the other hand influenced by the level of formality, the amount of preparation, the places where communication occurs, the topics which are appropriate, and the purposes it serves.

#### **The transactional strategy**

This strategy assumes that, speaking is a process of encoding and decoding and it concerns with clarifying the relationship between them as follows; Historically, the communication process was considered as an action. "An action perspective" that considered communication as a process that involves the speaker who send a message (encoded) and the listener who received it (decoded), A second and more recent view of communication considered communication as a "continuous interaction among participants" who are taking turns encoding and decoding messages and The final and the most recent perspective of communication is "communication is transactional". According to this perspective communicators are considered as receiver (decoding) and sender (encoding) messages. This perspective consider the participants as simultaneously senders and receivers.

#### **Scaffolding**

It's the temporary support that teacher provides to help students do tasks alone which will help them to have new skills and new understanding that can be applied in new contexts. This strategy based mainly on

interactions between the students and the teacher which are the key to success in teaching and learning. The main feature of this strategy is its focusing on meaning and responding to it; this enable students to make meaning from grammar and structure from what was said (Gibons, 2002).

### **Modeling and sharing**

This strategy is based mainly on engaging students in real conversations about meaningful subjects. It provides opportunities for students to interact with each other about the ideas involved; these interactions are reciprocal and promote shared understandings, (Hammond, 2001). This strategy helps to develop students' technical vocabulary through repeating students' remarks and acknowledging a student's comment then modifying it to make it more appropriate.

### **Operational Definitions**

#### **Speaking**

Speaking is defined as the ability to orally convey thoughts, ideas, and information. It is an interactive process that involves the construction of meaning through the production and processing of spoken language. This ability is influenced by various contextual factors, including the participants involved, the physical environment, and the specific purpose of the communication. Effective speaking encompasses not only the articulation of words but also the ability to engage in meaningful dialogue, respond to interlocutors, and adapt language use according to situational demands Taguchi, N (2007).

### **Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT)**

In the context of the present study, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach will be employed as a pedagogical framework characterized by task-based activities designed to enhance both listening and speaking skills. CLT emphasizes interaction as a primary means of language learning, prioritizing the development of communicative competence over the mere acquisition of grammatical structures. Through collaborative tasks and real-life scenarios, learners will engage in authentic language use, fostering their ability to communicate effectively in diverse contexts. In the present study (CLT) approach will

be used as a group of task-based activities for developing listening and speaking.

### **Recent Research**

**(Maria C.R, 2021)** this study aims to probe into the use of communicative approach in teaching speaking competence for young learners through home based learning approach. improving speaking competence will improve young learners' English beyond grammar and words' functions, so they could express their opinions freely. This study revealed that the materials prepared by teacher has an impact in stimulating young learners to improve their communication skills in English.

**(Heron, 2019)** in this paper the author tried to embed speaking practices in curriculum through explicit teaching of speaking skills and shared common knowledge to describe these skills. Active learning and teaching approaches as well as growing expectations of graduate employ ability skills have resulted in greater requirements on students in in higher education in terms of their speaking skills

**(Toro et al., 2018)** this study aims to determine the use of communicative language teaching in the English classroom, strategies and resources used by teacher to improve students' speaking skills. The results of this study reveals that modeling, repetition, pair and group work are the main strategies used by the teacher to develop students' communicative competence.

**(Thamarana, 2015)** he defines communicative approach as one of the greatest and current approaches in teaching English as a foreign. This approach go beyond teaching grammatical rules of target language and assumes that, by using target language in a meaningful ways, learners will develop communicative competence. He asserts that CLT approach enable learners to communicate in real life situations using target language.

**(Barker, 2013)** this study was conducted to reveal the relation between management and communication. Management is no matter of command and control. Manager should be able to communicate with worker in a suitable way to be able to persuade them to do their jobs in a good way. our success depends more on other people so manager must acquire communicative skills and ability to talk with other people well and listen to them carefully.



### Study Hypotheses

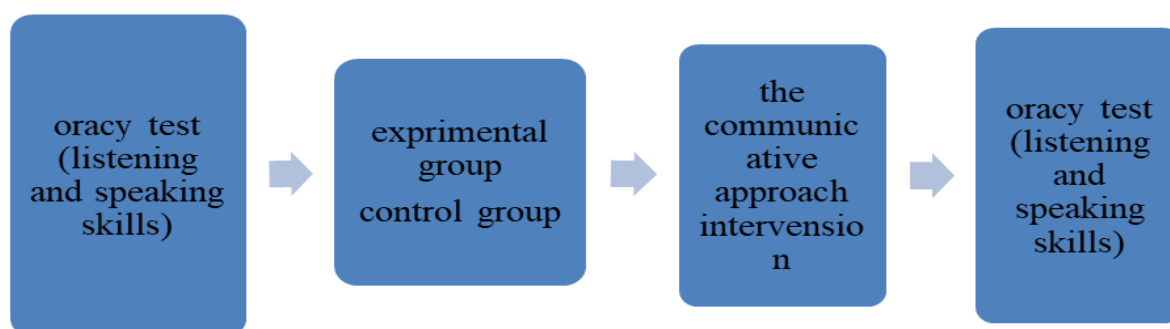
- 1- there would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the overall speaking skill post- test in favour of the scores of the experimental group.
- 2- there would be statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post test of the EFL speaking skill test in favour of the experimental group.
- 3- there would be a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and in the pre and post overall EFL speaking skills administration test in favour of the post administration test.
- 4- there would be statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in the main skills on the pre and post administration test.

### Research design

The present study followed the quasi-experimental design; the pre-post treatment. The following figure shows this;

**Figure ( 1 ): the experimental design of the study**

**Pre- test                  study participants                  the intervention                  post-test**



**Participants**

The study in hand was carried out at Environmental Studies and Research Institute (ESRI) at University of Sadat City, Egypt. The participants of this study were post graduate students from different specializations. Only 60 students participated in the study. They were divided into two groups: control (n=30) and experimental (n=30). The classroom meetings occurred twice a week, with each meeting lasting for about 45 minutes. The language of instruction in the classroom switched between English and Arabic (national language). The control group had the same amount of learning time, but they didn't receive any communicative strategies intervention. The control group students attended the regular classes using the same learning topics within the allowed time.

**Instrument of the Study**

To collect the required data before and after the experiment, the study followed these instruments: Speaking checklist, Speaking pre and post-test, and Rubric for correcting speaking skills

The major aim of the pre – post speaking test was to measure the level of post graduate students in speaking skills before and after the treatment. The test is prepared to measure five speaking main skills determined as follows; fluency, vocabulary, comprehensibility,, pronunciation and grammar.

To check the validity, and reliability of the EFL speaking test, it was submitted to a number of EFL specialists. They were asked to evaluate; the items of speaking test related to the purpose of study, the clarity of test items, the appropriacy of the test items to post graduate students, the content of the test is related to the skills measured, the scoring rubric covers the designed EFL speaking skills. Some modifications were made based on the opinions of the jury members.

The researcher estimated the reliability of the test using Alpha cornbach. It was found that the value of cronbach ranged from (0.805) to (0.913) and it is (0.930) for the overall test. This proves that the test is reliable and can be administrated as one of the study instruments . so these results are very high and valid to be applied. The time of the test was estimated by calculating the sum of the time taken by all students divided by the number of students as follows .

$$\frac{\text{sum of the time taken by all students}}{\text{number of students}} = \frac{1200}{20} = 60$$

Thus the time of the test is 60 minutes which would provide an appropriate time for the students to complete the test

### **The Speaking Skill Rubric**

The rubric was used to assess the scores of the speaking performance before and after the treatment. The EFL speaking rubric is a four point scoring rubric designed by the researcher according to Likert scale for the highest value and lowest value as follow: The highest value is excellent (4) , (3) for good, (2) for fair and The lowest value is (1) for poor,.

In order to check the validity of the rubric, it was submitted to a number of EFL specialists. They were asked to assess the rubric according to the following points: Are the rubric items appropriate to assess the target speaking skills?, Do the speaking indicators evaluate all the speaking sub-skills?, and Are the rubric items linguistically true?. Jurors were asked to give comments and modifications if needed. After receiving the jurors comments, the following modifications were made: Use four points scale instead of three points scale, and Use row scores instead of wording for describing the performance.

### **The EFL Speaking Checklists**

The purposes of checklist is to determine the EFL speaking skills required for the ESP students at Environmental Studies and Research Institute (ESRI). The researcher designed the checklist according to the following sources; the national curriculum framework for ESP students and review of literature related to speaking skills. It includes the main skills and sub skills required for the ESP post graduate students at ESRI. The initial form of speaking skill checklist consisted of fluency, vocabulary, comprehensibility, pronunciation, and grammar. There are some embedded skills in each main skill.

To check the validity of the EFL speaking checklists were developed and submitted to a number of jury members specialized in curriculum and instruction at Menoufia, Benha, and Zagazig Universities (No: 15) to determine the degree of importance as well as the appropriateness of each skill required for the ESP post graduate students. The jury members

were required to evaluate the checklists according to the following criteria: the degree of importance of each skill, the items which need to be modified, omitted or added to speaking skills, the suitability of the skills for post graduate students

The researcher calculated the relative weight of each skill according to the jury validation. The following table shows this;

Table ( 1 )  
Relative weight of speaking skills list

The main skills	The sub skills	Relative weight				
Fluency	- Use formal words	15	0	0	45\3=15	15=1.04
	- Use occupational or subject specific words					
	- Use casual words					
	- Use family words					
Vocabulary	- Use specific structures in specific situations	21	0	0	21\3=7	7=0.8
	- Use grammatical words and phrases in correct sentences					
	- Use new vocabulary in new situations					
	- Rearrange structures based on their positions					
	- Use different types of syntax while speaking					
Comprehensibility	- Awareness of	15	0	0	45\3=15	15=1.04

	different meanings while speaking - Use the spoken language in different voices and tones - Express their understanding clearly					
Pronunciation	- Pronounce words correctly	12	0	0	12\3=4	4=00.4
	- Distinguish between different levels of stress - Distinguish between different parts of speech - Explore the features of spoken language					
Grammar	- Using grammatical rules correctly - Expressing the different functions with good choices of grammar - Produce a majority of error free sentences - Choose the correct tenses to convey the exact meaning - Use appropriate kinds of sentences - Use a wide range of verbs and phrasal verbs	12	0	0	12\3=4	4=00.4

### Material of the Study

The researcher prepared a program of ten sessions based mainly on some communicative strategies for developing post graduate students' speaking skills. these sessions are; developing speaking skills via

communicative approach, language in action, substantive conversation, exploratory talk, investigating language in a communicative environment, scaffolding, small group inquiry, the functions of oral language, discussion and the management of speaking skills for its development. These sessions were followed by enrichments and follow up activities. each session followed by tasks and activities such as; interview, talk in pairs, group work and discussions. All these tasks helped to improve students' speaking skills.

### Results and Discussion

**Table ( 2 )**

T. value and the significance difference between the experimental group and the control group on the post test of the speaking skill as a whole.

Skill	Group	N	means	STD	Df	T.value	sig	$\eta^2$
Overall EFL speaking skills	Experimental	30	17.4333	5.8152	58	2.864	.006	.150
	Control	30	13.9333	3.31073				

It's clear from this table that, there is a statistically significant difference at the level (0.01) between the mean scores of the experimental group students who were exposed to the communicative approach strategies and those of the control group students on the overall post- test of the speaking skill in favour of the experimental group . since the T. value is (2.864) which is significant at the (0.10)level. In addition, the effect size is also high as ( $\eta^2$ ) is (0.150) which is greater than (0.140) thus the fifth hypothesis is supported.

**Table (3 )**

T. value and significant difference between the experimental group and control group on the main skills of the EFL speaking skill test.

Main skills	Group	N	Means	STD	Df	T.value	sig	$\eta^2$
Fluency	Experimental	30	3.2667	1.4125	58	3.277	.002	.152
	Control	30	2.2333	1.0400				
Vocabulary	Experimental	30	4.1000	1.2415	58	3.231	.002	.153
	Control	30	3.2000	.8866				

Comprehension	Experimental	30	4.4667	1.4558	58	3.234	.002	.153
	Control	30	3.4000	1.0699				
Pronunciation	Experimental	30	3.5667	1.1043	58	3.079	.003	.141
	Control	30	2.7667	.8976				
Grammar	Experimental	30	3.7000	1.2077	58	3.170	.002	.148
	Control	30	2.7000	1.2359				

It's clear from this table that, there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the mean scores of the control group in each main skill of the overall speaking skill test. The difference is in favour of the experimental group. The level of significance is (0.01) also the effect size is high since the ( $\eta^2$ ) is (0.153) which is greater than (0.140) therefore the sixth hypothesis is supported.

**Table ( 4 )**

T. value and the significant differences between the pre and post- test of the experimental group on the EFL speaking skills test as a whole.

Test	Group	N	Means	STD	Df	T.value	sig	$\eta^2$
Overall speaking skills	Pre	30	13.4667	5.35456	29	4.725	0.01	.8626
	Post	30	16.7333	5.97081				

This table shows that, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post administration of the overall EFL speaking skills test in favour of the post administration. The level of significance is (0.01) in addition, the effect size of ( $\eta^2$ ) on the overall speaking skills test performance amounted to (0.8626) which is greater than (0.80). thus the hypothesis seven is accepted.

**Table ( 5 )**

T. value and the significant difference between the pre and post- test of the experimental group on the main skills at the EFL speaking test.

Main skills	group	N	means	STD	Df	T.value	sig	$\eta^2$
Fluency	Pre	30	2.933	1.282	29	4.558	0.01	0.832
	Post	30	12.133	1.466				
Vocabulary	Pre	30	2.766	1.278				

					29	4.626	0.01	0.844
	Post	30	3.500	1.224				
<b>Comprehension</b>	Pre	30	3.266	1.928	29	4.642	0.01	0.847
	Post	30	4.166	1.913				
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Pre	30	2.566	1.456	29	4.475	0.01	0.817
	Post	30	3.400	1.162				
<b>Grammar</b>	Pre	30	2.466	1.224	29	4.551	0.01	0.830
	Post	30	3.133	1.306				

This table shows that, there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pre and post administration of the min skills of the EFL speaking skills test. The difference is in favour of the post administration. The level of significance is (0.01) also the effect size ( $\eta^2$ ) is greater than (0.80) . therefore hypothesis eight is accepted.

### Discussion of the Results

The main purpose of the current study is to demonstrate the impact of utilizing the some communicative strategies for developing speaking skills among ESRI post graduate students. The findings of the present study indicate that the communicative strategies used has a positive effect on the participants' oral performance The findings of the present study revealed an improvement speaking performance. This improvement may be attributed to the communicative strategies the students were exposed to during the treatment which included a number or a package of the role of communicative strategies as follow:

- Activities that involve real communication promoted learning
- Activities in which language used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning
- Language that's meaningful to the learning supports the learning process
- Collaborative creation of meaning
- Interaction between learners and language users



- Scaffolding knowledge by teacher or fellow learners which facilitate learning
- Negotiation of meaning to accomplish good levels of understanding

This result is consistent with Richard and Rodgers (2014) and Rambe (2017).

it's clear that from data analysis of the current study that the students' performance in the speaking skill is better in the post administration. This may be due to the fact that the present study program focused on teaching and training students' speaking skills on:

- Using words, sentences, stresses, intonation, patterns and rhythm of a foreign language
- Producing sounds and speech patterns
- Organizing thoughts in a meaningful logical sequence
- Using language as a mean of expressing values and judgments
- Using appropriate words and sentences according to the situation
- Using the language fluently without mistakes

At the same time, the program exposed students to different contexts for different speaking skill practices such as;

- **Fluency:** students start speaking with the logical view, flow without planning or rehearsal, and speaking without poses or hesitation
- **Accuracy:** students speak using correct words pronunciation and structure
- **Using functions:** students can use phrases for giving advice, requests and apologies
- **Appropriacy:** students are required to speak appropriately and choose the suitable vocabulary and grammar for a specific situation
- **Turn taking skills:** the students practice the way of interaction
- **Relevant length:** students' speaking should be at a length suitable for a situation
- **Responding and initiating:** students practice speaking by making answer or starting a new topic
- **Repair or repetition:** students practice rephrasing sentences when the speaker feels what he/she said and what was comprehended
- **Range of words and grammar:** students practice using grammar and vocabulary for speaking on a specific topic

- **Discourse markers:** students practice using words or phrases which organize speech a speech for example, “connectives” such as; (firstly, secondly, on the other hand)

As a result of the program intervention in speaking, the students were able to manage a combination of accuracy, fluency and complexity. This result is consistent with Harmer (2007) , Goh and Burn (2012).

### **Conclusion and Implications of the study**

Within the delimitations of the study as well as the results founded, the researcher concluded that the communicative strategies improved the speaking skills of EFL post graduate students. It gives an experimental certification for the effect of using some communicative strategies for developing EFL post graduate students’ speaking skills.

The study in hand has many educational implications as follows:

1. The program was effective in improving the participants’ speaking skill and its main and sub skills. It was also proved its’ effectiveness in enhancing their acquisition of speaking skills.
2. Students accepted the notion of self-learning through participating in the program. They become aware that the classroom time wasn’t enough for acquiring speaking skills, so they used additional sources outside the classroom to achieve that goal
3. The program open them the door to engage in using new technology and social media platforms
4. The program draw their attention to focus on the word and sentence stress and different communicative strategies while speaking about an authentic topic
5. It was evident from the students’ feedback that the program had a positive influence on time and enjoyed the whole experiences for practicing speaking skills

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Based on the results of the current study, the following suggestions can be presented for further researches:

1. Investigating the impact of oral communicative strategies on developing reading and writing skills
2. Investigating the impact of oral communication skills on enhancing proficiency aspects and oral production

3. Utilizing the communicative interaction strategies to develop phonics leading skills
4. Utilizing the communicative approach to ease students' engagement in the information processing strategies
5. Investigating the teachers' tendency to use the communicative approach in teaching
6. Investigating the effectiveness of communicative approach in developing oral and written competence

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