Deanship of Scientific Research

The Impact of a Developed Instructional Program Based on Sociolinguistic Principles on Improving the Speaking Skills of Tenth Grade EFL Female Students in Jordan

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed at investigating the impact of a developed instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles on improving the speaking skills of tenth grade EFL female students in Jordan.

Methods: The study used the quasi-experimental approach. The sample of the study consisted of (50) tenth-grade students in two sections; one of these was randomly selected to be the control group (25 students) and the other was the experimental group (25 students). A speaking test was developed by the researchers to test students orally based on a rubric that covered eight sub-skills of speaking. Data were analyzed using (SPSS) package to find means and standard deviations, ANCOVA and MANCOVA.

Results: The results showed that there are differences between the mean score of the experimental group and that of the control group on the post-test of speaking skills, which was statistically significant. This difference was in favour of the students of the experimental group since the adjusted mean score was (30.261), which was significantly higher than the adjusted mean score of the students of the control group (20.339).

Conclusions: The developed instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles was significantly better than the conventional method in developing students' speaking skills. The study recommends that sociolinguistic principles be incorporated into developing EFL curricula to enhance students' speaking skills.

Keywords: Instructional program, sociolinguistic principles, speaking skills, EFL, tenth grade, Jordan.

أثر برنامج تعليمي مطور يستند إلى مبادئ علم اللغة الاجتماعي في تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى طالبات الصف العاشر الأساسي في الأردن

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ملخّص

الأهداف: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء أثر برنامج تعليمي يستند إلى مبادئ علم اللغة الاجتماعي في تحسين مهارات التحدث في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طالبات الصف العاشر الأساسي في الأردن.

المنهجية: استخدمت الدراسة المنهج شبه التجريبي. تكونت عينة الدراسة من 50 طالبة في الصف العاشر في شعبتين، اختيرت إحداهما عشوائيا كمجموعة ضابطة (25) طالبة، والأخرى كانت المجموعة التجريبية (25) طالبة. جرى استخدام اختبار تحدث لفحص الطالبات شفويا من خلال سلم تقدير يقيس ثمان مهارات فرعية للتحدث. جرى تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج التحليل الإحصائي SPSS لإيجاد المتوسطات الحسابية والانحرافات المعيارية، إضافة إلى تحليل التباين الأحادي المصاحب (MANCOVA) و(ANCOVA).

النتائج: أظهرت النتائج وجود فروق بين متوسط درجات المجموعة التجريبية ودرجة المجموعة الضابطة على الاختبار البعدي لمهارات التحدث التي كانت ذات دلالة إحصائية. كان هذا الاختلاف لصالح طلاب المجموعة التجريبية، بوسط حسابي (30.261) وهو أعلى من الوسط الحسابي لطلبة المجموعة الضابطة.(20.339)

الخلاصة: البرنامج التعليمي المطور المستند إلى مبادئ علم اللغة الاجتماعي أدى إلى تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى الطالبات بدرجة أعلى من الطريقة الاعتيادية. توصي الدراسة بتضمين مبادئ علم اللغة الاجتماعي في تطوير مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لتعزيز مهارات التحدث لدى الطلبة في الأردن.

الكلمات الدالة: البرنامج التعليمي، مبادئ علم اللغة الاجتماعي، مهارات التحدث، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الصف العاشر الأساسي، الأردن.

1.1 Introduction

Nowadays, English language has become an effective means of communication because of its great status as a lingua franca. English language is the most spoken second/foreign language in the world; thus, it plays a crucial function in managing academic, professional and social matters. Speaking skills are one of the most important skills which enable interlocutors to communicate, express their thoughts and feelings and achieve their purposeful desires.

Richards (2008) stated that many second or foreign-language learners strive to have a gratifying level of speaking skills. Additionally, speaking seems intuitively the most important language competence (Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018). Therefore, spoken language proficiency is often used as a crucial measure to determine one's success in language learning. However, language learners lack the opportunities to communicate normally with native speakers and learn with a high degree of motivation and a low degree of tension. Short, Becker, Cloud & Hellman (2018) claimed that the learner's mastery of speaking skills is affected by getting sufficient opportunities for language use and interaction, as well as effective teaching methods. This imposes the need for implementing effective learning principles which are derived from well-researched theories and practices to address the lack of speaking proficiency.

Moreover, many scholars of sociolinguistics recommended incorporating sociolinguistic principles in EFL classrooms (Goffman; 1967; Labov, 1972; Lakoff, 1977; Norton, 1997; Schumann, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978). They highlighted the principles that are focused on various variables and aspects of teaching and learning in EFL instruction such as learners' sociolinguistic variables [age, gender, social class]; the cultural aspects of a specific language; learners' psychological factors; learners' attitudes towards learning languages; linguistic variation which refers to regional, social, or contextual differences of a particular language; the devices and strategies which constitute politeness in a particular language, i.e., intonation, irony, address forms and discourse strategies; learners' identities; and learners' zone of proximal development.

The scholars of sociolinguistics also asserted that the implementation of sociolinguistic principles in teaching languages can enhance learners' sociolinguistic competence and communicative competence which are necessary to develop English language skills (Goffman; 1967; Labov, 1972; Lakoff, 1977; Norton, 1997; Schumann, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978). Sociolinguistic competence refers to a learner's ability to internalize the social meaning of different utterances; learners must be able to realize information about the appropriateness of an utterance and the intended meaning of the speaker, even if the intended meaning is not identical to the literal one. In addition, communicative competence includes an ability called strategic competence, which refers to the ways that learners compensate when there are breakdowns in communication (Hornberger & McKay, 2009).

Moreover, teachers need to provide students with real communication situations, like negotiating before making a decision and exchanging opinions before different tasks. In this regard, scholars who work in the field of sociolinguistics conducted studies on how language is used in different social contexts and on the appropriateness of language used in a particular context, taking into account etiquette, interpersonal relations and regional dialects (Bayyurt, 2013). Therefore, it is essential to consider that communication has a social dimension given by the use of language in social interactions. Since society is governed by rules and conventions, certain rules define how we use language in different contexts with different people. In other words, what is appropriate to say to whom, when and where (Negoescu, Boștină-Bratu, & Morar, 2019).

In Jordan, English speaking skills play a significant role in EFL instruction because English language has been increasingly a prerequisite requirement for the job market and enrolling in universities (Hamdan & Hatab, 2009). Thus, the first core subject outcome for the English language curriculum for elementary stages is "to communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings effectively for a variety of purposes in written, spoken and visual forms to interact and collaborate with others to accomplish goals". (Ministry of Education, 2013:9). However, EFL students' speaking abilities are insufficient to communicate. It was concluded that they had little motivation, little proficiency, negative attitudes towards speaking English, less confidence and an inability to respond to spontaneous questions. Consequently, EFL students avoid taking part in oral activities because of English speaking anxiety; they feel that their peers would criticize their performance (Batiha, Noor & Mustaffa, 2016). Furthermore, EFL learners concentrate on memorizing grammar, sentence structure and

vocabulary, but they find difficulty using English language in everyday interactions (Shdefat, 2022).

Consequently, the researchers of the present study explored the effectiveness of a program based on sociolinguistic principles on improving tenth graders' speaking skills in Jordan.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Many studies revealed that most language programs need to develop learners' automaticity of various social speech conversations. Having reviewed different articles about sociolinguistic principles (e.g., Geeslin, 2014; Norton, 1997; Schumann, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978), the researchers realized the significance of implementing such principles in teaching speaking to tenth grade EFL students in Jordan. In particular, these principles cater for learners' social and cultural needs, encouraging them to use English functionally and communicatively.

Being instructors of EFL in Jordan for more than 10 years, the researchers have realized that sociolinguistic principles are not sufficiently addressed in the EFL curriculum in Jordan. On the other hand, elementary-stage students are reluctant to communicate orally in speaking classes. Some of them cannot also use socially or culturally appropriate vocabularies and structures, which are necessary for communicating in authentic situations. Therefore, the researchers assumed that a developed instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles might enhance tenth graders' speaking skills.

1.3. Purpose and Question of the Study

This study aims at investigating the impact of a proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles on developing the speaking skills of tenth-grade EFL female students in Jordan. Therefore, this study is intended to answer the following question:

To what extent does a program based on sociolinguistic principles compared to the conventional teaching method affect tenth-grade female students in Jordan regarding their speaking skills?

1.4. Significance of the Study

Improving English language speaking skills can create many opportunities for EFL learners to own effective conversations, career boosts and better education (Mirzaee & Maftoon, 2016 & Tahmasebi, 2011). It is hoped that the findings of the present study will give curricula developers more insights into incorporating the principles, techniques, assessment tools and activities that are based on sociolinguistic principles to enhance EFL learning. Furthermore, the present study, as far as the researchers know, is the first study which aims at investigating the impact of a program based on sociolinguistic principles on tenth graders' speaking skills in Jordan. In addition, applying instructional programs based on sociolinguistic principles might guide teachers to reflect on their pedagogies as teachers of speaking. Other researchers may also benefit from the findings of this study to conduct more studies on the effectiveness of sociocultural factors in teaching different language skills at different grade levels.

1.5. Limitations of the study

The study was conducted on two tenth–grade sections (25 students in each) at Maymoona Om Al- Mu'mineen School for Girls in Marka Directorate of Education during the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022. This school was selected purposefully because it contains several sections with a sufficient number of students to apply the treatment. The school staff also agreed to cooperate with the researchers to apply for the instructional program.

2. Related Studies

Abdullateef & Muhammedzein (2021) conducted a study aimed at examining the effect of Dynamic Assessment, which is based on Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and advocates mediation through a good social setting and practice, on enhancing EFL students` language learning. The sample of the study consisted of 25 EFLs from Prince Satam bin Abdulaziz University representing the experimental group and 43 teachers from the same university. The researchers used two tests as pre-test and post-test: a writing task and a reading task. Furthermore, an online questionnaire was distributed to the 43 university teachers. Findings showed that using proper mediation, in identifying learning gaps and treatment via intervention and interaction as classroom assessment, enhanced the students` language learning. Furthermore, the results of the questionnaire revealed that most teachers prefer giving clues as guidance to control the thoughts of the learners, especially in the EFL context.

Uztosun, (2021) conducted a study to explore the extent to which variables related to self-regulated speaking motivation

contribute to the prediction of foreign language speaking competence. The sample of the study was 84 Turkish university students using self-regulated motivation. The researcher used Multiple regression analyses and the Pearson correlation coefficient. The findings revealed that self-regulated speaking motivation may be one of the predictors of improved speaking competence; individuals, with high self-regulated motivation, can develop positive task value perceptions which is an essential feature for developing EFL speaking skills. Self-regulated students also created opportunities to practice English outside the class and motivate themselves to engage in classroom activities.

Al-Khazaali & Mohammed (2021) attempted at identifying the strategies that increase interactive classroom management including the students talking time instead of the teacher's talking time. The instrument of the study was the Teachers Classroom Management Proficiency Questionnaire which was distributed to private schools in Misan, Iraq. Findings revealed that teachers believe that interactive classroom management is the process of creating and upholding a positive learning atmosphere which can direct learners to flourish in the classroom and their characters in class to students' educational achievement.

Mirzaee & Maftoon. (2016) aimed at examining the impact of higher-order thinking enhancing techniques of Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory on the learners' speech production. In addition, they investigated the relationship between the learners' private speech production and their reasoning power. The researchers followed the quasi-experimental design. The sample included (30) participants in each control and experimental group attending an English RC course, an English Language Teaching major at a university in Iran. The findings revealed that techniques based on Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory have a positive and significant influence on the learners' speech production and subsequently on their reasoning.

Tahaineh, & Daana (2013) aimed at investigating the two most important social psychological variables: The motivation orientations (instrumental & integrative) of the Jordanian EFL female undergraduates and their attitudes towards learning the target language and its community. The sample of the study consisted of 184 students majoring in English language and literature at Al Balqa' Applied University. The instrument of the study was Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery. The domains used to achieve the purpose of the study were: interest in foreign languages, attitudes towards learning English, attitudes toward English-speaking people and desire to learn English and others. The findings revealed that Jordanian undergraduates majoring in English as a foreign language had positive attitudes towards English language, English-speaking people and their culture. The results also revealed that the instrumental motivation of the students outperformed their integrative one.

Tahmasebi (2011) examined instruction based on the principles of Sociocultural Theory (SCT) on English language skills. The principles included mediation by others, mediation by self, scaffolding and private speech. The participants were engaged in social or interpersonal activities. The study was conducted on fifty-four participants who were divided randomly into experimental and control groups and tested by using the TOEFL test of reading comprehension and oral presentation. The findings showed that there is no difference between the two groups in reading comprehension. However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in an oral presentation. The friendly and active atmosphere prevailing in the experimental group provided the students with sufficient opportunities to participate more voluntarily in class discussions. Furthermore, they were no longer afraid of taking part in a conversation because their peers helped them to overcome the problems that they faced in managing oral presentations.

Watson (2007) attempted to test the effectiveness of an enhanced learning process based on the principles of Sociocultural Theory on students' learning of English language. The participants were five Russian students at Bryn Mawr College who received the experimental treatment over two semesters. The enhanced learning process contains interaction, and collaborative problem-solving to make students autonomous and conscious of their learning preferences. It also aimed at promoting multidimensional language awareness. The researcher collected data through pre-and post-tests, video-taped participant observation, structured interviews and structured journal entries. The findings revealed that the enhanced learning process based on SCT principles developed the students` learning of English language.

Bani Abdel-Rahman (2005) conducted a study to explore the effect of a proposed instructional program based on some cultural strategies on the learning of cultural content among tenth- grade students in Jordan. The subjects of this study consisted of 105 male and female tenth grade students allocated to four classes. Two male classes constituted a control

group, an experimental one and two female classes formed a control group and an experimental one. The participants of the study were pretested and post-tested using the cultural- achievement test. The findings of the study showed that there were statistically significant differences in favour of the experimental group who was taught according to the instructional programme based on some cultural teaching strategies such as the cultural capsules and cultural assimilator, which were superior to the other two cultural strategies. Moreover, the results revealed that there were no statistically significant differences attributed to the interaction between gender and the instructional programme.

Inspection of the previous literature related to the effectiveness of constructing an instruction based on sociolinguistic principles on enhancing students' mastering of language skills in general and on speaking skills in specific, sociolinguistic principles can be integrated into curricula to enhance students' speaking skills. Consequently, the present study was conducted to build an instructional program as recommended in the previous studies. As mentioned above, the researchers constructed their program based on the principles found in one or two sociolinguistic approaches. The present study integrated multi principles derived from various sociolinguistic approaches as explained in the instructional program below.

3. Method and Procedure

This section includes a description of the study design, participants of the study, the research instruments, the validity and reliability of the instruments, and data analysis.

3.1. Study Design

The design of this study is quasi-experimental. There was one independent variable (the instructional program) which has two levels: the developed instructional program and the conventional program. There was one dependent variable (students' English speaking skills). This design can be graphically represented as follows:

EG: O1   X   O2
CG: O1   ---   O2

EG stands for the experimental group; CG: stands for the control group; X: stands for treatment; O1: stands for speaking achievement pre-test, and O2 stands for speaking achievement post-test.

3.2. Participants of the study

This study was conducted on two tenth–grade sections (25 students in each) at Maymoona Om Al- Mu'mineen School for Girls in Marka Directorate of Education during the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022. The researchers conducted the study on tenth-grade students since they are mature enough to internalize the social and cultural aspects of English language. One of those sections was randomly assigned as the control group while the other section represents the experimental group. Students of the experimental group were taught by applying a program based on sociolinguistic principles, while students of the control group were taught using the conventional program. All students in both sections were pre and post-tested by the same speaking test using the same rubric.

3.3. Instruments of the study

The instruments of the study were a speaking test and an eight-domain rubric, which were used to measure the speaking achievement of tenth grade EFL students in Jordan. The speaking test was developed by the researchers as a pre-test and post-test for both groups. There were two topics on the pretest (social media and tourist attraction) and two topics on the posttest (fast food and architecture). The topics were chosen to match the thematic module that was presented to the students of both groups. Each student in the two groups was interviewed separately to talk about one topic on the pretest and one topic on the posttest of his choice. Each interview lasted for five minutes. First, students were asked three questions as introductory questions to prepare them for the interview. Then, students were asked four questions on the topic they chose.

To grade students on their speaking achievement, a speaking rubric was also developed by the two researchers based on related literature (Aboura, & Awad, 2017; Krajangjob & Yimwilai, 2021; Salem, 2016; Ta'amne, & Smadi, 2013). The rubric was used to grade students on eight sub-skills of speaking: vocabulary, functions, fluency, interaction, body language, pronunciation and sentence structure. Each of the speaking domains had five grades of performance indicators (1-5). The total score on the speaking test was (40).

Instructional Program

The instructional program was developed by the two researchers based on sociolinguistic principles. These principles included the principle of sociolinguistic variables (i.e., age, gender and social class), linguistic variations (i.e., regional, social and contextual) and the principle of sociolinguistic competence (the ability to communicate appropriately by using the right words, expressions and attitude towards a specific topic, setting and relationship (Labov, 1972). Other sociolinguistic principles were derived from the Sociocultural Theory which included the principle of intercultural competence (i.e., meaning, structure, and use of language are socially and culturally relative), the principle of self-regulation, the principle of the zone of proximal development [ZPD], the principle of autonomous learners, and the principle of the dynamic assessment (Vygotsky, 1978). Other principles also included the principles of the Identity Approach and the principle of the investment of students' background and experience in learning the target culture (Norton, 1997). Additionally, the principle of learners' attitudes towards the target language and culture, and the principle of learners' motivation towards learning the target language and culture were derived from the Acculturation Model (Schumann,1986). In the same vein, the principle of the interaction in the classroom (i.e., the opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency) and the principle of the time for learning the target culture were derived from Interactional Sociolinguistics (Goffman, 1967 and Lakoff, 1977). It is worth mentioning that the principles of the communicative approach introduced in Action pack 10 Teacher's Book were also utilized to develop this program (Johnson, 2013).

The sociolinguistic principles which were derived from related literature were used to develop the content, learning strategies and assessment measures of the instructional program. First, authentic sources of language data (i.e., news magazines, popular magazines, and fiction) were the sources of language data in the proposed program as recommended by (Hornberger& McKay, 2009). Videos of naturally occurring speech were also used to study the rhythmic organization of speech and nonverbal behaviour in interaction (Hornberger& McKay, 2009). The videos were chosen from YouTube such as a video about British Recycled Plastic Products.

Some culturally-based texts of English culture were also integrated into the EFL instruction to enhance student's understanding of English culture and promote their attitudes towards acquiring the target culture (i.e., The Palace of Westminster, the Utah National Park in the west of the United States, The statues of liberty, The Great Salt Lake in the United States). In addition, Some English values, English taboos, English food, English etiquette and so on were presented in the proposed program. Moreover, the devices and strategies which constitute politeness in a given culture and promote sociolinguistic competence and discourse strategies such as greetings, rhetorical devices (logos, pathos, ethos), the ways of asking for permission politely and analysing formal and informal conversations were included in the proposed program.

Second, the program consisted of many cultural strategies that arouse students' interest in learning the cultural content in the EFL classroom. The cultural learning strategies employed in the program were culture capsules, assimilators, culture clusters, critical incidents, cultural fact-based approach and research-based learning. Furthermore, several interactional strategies that ensure the student's participation in naturally occurring second language experiences were included in the present program such as Board Race, Taboo Games, Discussion, Role Play, Simulations, Information Gap, Think-pair-share (TPS), Story Completion, Picture Describing, Debates: agree or disagree politely, Bingo, Last Man Standing and Desert Island activity.

Third, the assessment tools and strategies of the present instructional program were drawn on the principles based on sociolinguists concerning authentic assessment. The authentic assessment assessed the student's ability to efficiently used a repertoire of knowledge and skills to negotiate a complex task. It requires judgment and innovation such as performance-based strategy (i.e., student's portfolio), self-assessment and online investigation. The dynamic assessment claimed by Vygotsky (1978) was also involved. Dynamic assessment helps the teacher in understanding where a student's ZPD is. The checklist and rubrics of the proposed program were derived from Action Pack 10 and then adapted based on sociolinguistic principles.

The Conventional Program

The conventional program refers to the teaching method that is described in the Teachers' Book of Action pack 10. This method is based on the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). These principles mainly include integrating English language skills and encouraging students to use English inside the classroom. It is based on the

proposition that successful language learning requires the knowledge of functions and purposes that a language serves in different communicative settings, besides the knowledge of the structures and forms of that language. This approach to teaching focuses on the communication of meaning in interaction rather than the manipulation of grammatical forms in isolation. Action Pack 10 deals with English language skills in an integrated way in terms of tasks and activities. It also "encourages students to use English in classroom exchanges to make them feel confident." (Johnson, 2013, 6).

On the other hand, the sociolinguistic principles and their implications are not well-emphasized in Action pack 10. For instance, English culture, represented in English symbols, language, norms, values, taboos, etc., is given less emphasis in the content of Action Pack 10. The content of the conventional method of this study covered several topics such as Alhambra Palace, buildings in Dubai and the Dead Sea.

Moreover, the learning strategies in Action Pack 10 focus on cognition strategies [e.g., predicting, problem-solving, organizational planning, taking notes, etc.] and meta-cognition strategies [e.g., self-management, self-evaluation and so on], whereas the cultural strategies, [e.g., cultural capsules and cultural assimilator], have been lacking so far. The socio-affective strategies weren't also covered sufficiently in action Pack 10. In addition, the project-based learning found in the present conventional method was limited to researching some facts about a tourist attraction on the Internet, in the school library or public library; Taj Mahal is given as an example.

Furthermore, the functions that are presented to the students in action Pack 10 are limited to giving information, expressing opinions, making suggestions, making predictions, explaining reasons, comparing and contrasting scientific facts and so on. Yet, the consideration of social variables which maintain sociolinguistic competence isn't well- addressed in Action Pack 10. Furthermore, linguistics variations aren't shown explicitly in action Pack 10. For example, the differences between the British accent and the American accent aren't utilized sufficiently in the activities of Action Pack 10.

In addition, the dynamic assessment of Vygotsky isn't mentioned in action Pack 10. Vygotsky (1978) recommended the use of flexible and humanistic assessment rather than the conventional and static modes that are found in many curricula. The assessments found in action Pack 10 are limited to peer review, observation, portfolio and so on.

3.4. Validation and reliability of the instruments

Validity of the research Instruments

To establish the content validity of the English-speaking test, the speaking rubric and the instructional program, a jury of 11 experts were consulted (three TEFL professors, four professors of linguistics, two professors of curriculum and instruction, and two professors of educational research). The main comments of the experts regarding the test were: the pre-test and the post-test should not be the same but identical; some probing questions should be added such as 'How' or 'Why'. Regarding the rubric, some items relating to self-confidence and interaction were added. The experts' comments regarding the instructional program were: adding more activities that can promote students' awareness of English taboos and politeness, and describing the interactional activities in the instructional material accurately.

Reliability of the research Instruments

The reliability of the speaking rubric was established by using Inter-rater reliability. Two experienced EFL instructors rated each student of the two groups independently based on the eighth domain rubric. Agreement between the two raters was established by applying the Holsty equation, which amounted to (96%).

3.5. Statistical Analysis

To analyze the data of the study, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used. This included calculating the means and standard deviations for both groups (i.e., experimental and control). One way- ANCOVA and MANCOVA tests were also used to answer the question of the study.

4. Findings and Discussion

This study aims at investigating the impact of a developed program based on sociolinguistic principles on developing the speaking skills of tenth grade EFL female students in Jordan. This section presents the results of the study and provides an analysis of data by using different measurements and tests such as mean scores, standard deviations, Analysis of

Covariance (ANCOVA) and Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA). One research question was addressed:

Are there any significant differences (α =0.05) between the mean scores of tenth-grade female students in Jordan regarding their speaking skills, which can be attributed to a program based on sociolinguistic principles compared to the conventional teaching method?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations of the students' speaking skills total mean scores were calculated. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Means and Standard deviations of tenth-grade students with regard to their speaking skills mean scores due to the method of teaching (conventional vs. the program based on sociolinguistic principles)

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	25	17.68	6.62	30.48	5.45
Control	25	17.08	5.19	20.12	5.13
Total	50	17.38	5.89	25.30	7.40

The results in Table 1 show that there are differences in the mean scores of students of both groups (experimental and control). The mean score of the experimental group on the pre-test was (17.68 out of 40) and on the post-test was (30.48 out of 40). The mean score of the control group on the pre-test was (17.08 out of 40) and the post-test was (20.12 out of 40).

To test if those differences were statistically significant (α=0.05), a one-way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was applied. The results are presented in Table 2:

Table 2. One-way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of the speaking skills mean score due to the method of teaching (conventional method vs. the program based on sociolinguistic principles)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre	902.41	1	902.42	95.86	.000	.671
Group	1227.45	1	1227.45	130.38	.000*	.735
Error	442.46	47	9.41			
Total	2686.50	49				

* Statistically significance (α = 0.05).

The results in Table 2 reveal that there are statistically significant differences in the mean scores of students of both groups regarding their speaking skills due to the teaching method. The (F) value (130.38) is statistically significant (α=0.05). The adjusted mean scores and standard errors were also calculated. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Adjusted mean scores and standard errors of students of both groups (experimental vs. control) of the speaking skills test due to the teaching program

	Group	Mean	Std. Error
speaking skills	Experimental	30.26	0.61
	Control	20.34	0.61

The results in Table 3 show that the adjusted mean of the experimental group (30.26 out of 40) was higher than the adjusted mean score of the control group (20.34 out of 40). This means that the differences were in favour of the students who were taught by using the program which was based on sociolinguistic principles. The Eta square obtained in Table 2 shows that the effect size was (0.735), which means that (73.5%) of the variance in the total scores is attributed to the program based on sociolinguistic principles.

As for the speaking sub-skills, means and standard deviations of tenth grade students' total scores and their scores on dimensions of speaking skills were also calculated. The results are shown in Table 4

Table 4. Mean and standard deviations of tenth grade students with regard to their speaking dimensions due to the instructional program (conventional vs. the program based on sociolinguistic principles)

Dimensions	Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Vocabulary	Experimental	25	2.36	0.91	3.96	0.84
	Control	25	2.24	0.78	3.04	0.79
	Total	50	2.30	0.84	3.50	0.93
Functional skills	Experimental	25	2.12	0.88	3.20	0.76
	Control	25	2.08	0.70	2.24	0.78
	Total	50	2.10	0.79	2.72	0.90
Fluency	Experimental	25	2.08	0.86	3.60	0.70
	Control	25	2.04	0.68	2.20	0.76
	Total	50	2.06	0.77	2.90	1.02
Interaction	Experimental	25	2.36	0.91	3.96	0.79
	Control	25	2.08	0.70	2.60	0.71
	Total	50	2.22	0.82	3.28	1.01
Body language	Experimental	25	2.32	1.10	4.12	0.88
	Control	25	2.32	0.90	2.48	0.77
	Total	50	2.32	1.00	3.30	1.17
Self-confidence	Experimental	25	2.16	0.94	4.20	0.82
	Control	25	2.40	0.96	2.60	0.76
	Total	50	2.28	0.95	3.40	1.13
Pronunciation	Experimental	25	2.20	0.82	3.52	0.71
	Control	25	2.04	0.89	2.40	0.82
	Total	50	2.12	0.85	2.96	0.95
Sentence Structure	Experimental	25	2.08	0.95	3.92	0.86
	Control	25	1.88	0.60	2.56	0.87
	Total	50	1.98	0.80	3.24	1.10

 * Mean score is out of 5

The results in Table 4 reveal that there are differences in the mean scores of the students of both groups (experimental and control) with regard to the eight dimensions of the speaking rubric.

The mean score of the experimental group with regard to the vocabulary post-test was (3.96) on the post-test compared with (2.20) for the control group. As for the functional skills, the mean score of the students of the experimental group was (3.20) compared with (2.24) for the control group.

Moreover, the mean score of the experimental group with regard to the fluency post-test was (3.60) on the post-test compared with (2.20) for the control group. As for the interaction, the mean score of the students of the experimental group was (3.96) compared with (2.60) for the control group.

In addition, the mean score of the experimental group with regard to the body language post-test was (4.12) on the post-test compared with (2.48) for the control group. As for self-confidence, the mean score of the students of the experimental group was (4.20) compared with (2.60) for the control group.

Furthermore, the mean score of the experimental group with regard to the pronunciation post-test was (3.52) on the post-test compared with (2.40) for the control group. As for the sentence structure, the mean score of the students of the experimental group was (3.92) compared with (2.56) for the control group.

To test whether the differences in Table 4 were statistically significant or not (α = 0.05), the Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) test was applied. Table 5 shows these results.

Table 5. Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (One-way MANCOVA) regarding the difference in the mean scores of each of the eight dimensions of the speaking skills due to the teaching method

Source	Dimensions	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Vocabulary pre	Vocabulary	.13	1	.134	.52	.473	.013
Functional skills pre	Functional skills	1.06	1	1.06	2.91	.096	.068
Fluency pre	Fluency	.05	1	.05	.21	.651	.005
Interaction pre	Interaction	.33	1	.33	1.28	.263	.031
Body language pre	Body language	.35	1	.37	1.11	.297	.027
Self-confidence pre	Self-confidence	.27	1	.27	.86	.361	.021
Pronunciation pre	Pronunciation	.20	1	.20	.59	.447	.015
Sentence Structure pre	Sentence Structure	.27	1	.27	1.21	.277	.030
Group Hotelling's Trace= 4.803 Sig =0.000	Vocabulary	7.91	1	7.93	30.92	.000*	.436
	Functional skills	11.16	1	11.16	30.73	.000*	.434
	Fluency	19.35	1	19.35	75.92	.000*	.655
	Interaction	17.13	1	17.13	67.30	.000*	.627
	Body language	31.26	1	31.26	93.15	.000*	.700
	Self-confidence	28.81	1	28.80	90.62	.000*	.694
	Pronunciation	12.56	1	12.56	36.48	.000*	.477
	Sentence Structure	15.57	1	15.57	70.24	.000*	.637
Error	Vocabulary	10.26	40	.26			
	Functional skills	14.52	40	.36			
	Fluency	10.20	40	.26			
	Interaction	10.18	40	.26			
	Body language	13.42	40	.34			
	Self-confidence	12.72	40	.32			
	Pronunciation	13.77	40	.34			
	Sentence Structure	8.87	40	.22			
Total	Vocabulary	42.50	49				
	Functional skills	40.08	49				
	Fluency	50.50	49				
	Interaction	50.08	49				
	Body language	66.50	49				
	Self-confidence	62.00	49				
	Pronunciation	43.92	49				
	Sentence Structure	59.12	49				

* Statistically significance (α = 0.05).

The results in Table 5 show that (F) values for the eight dimensions of the rubric (Vocabulary, Functional skills, "Fluency, Interaction, Body language, Pronunciation, and Sentence Structure are: (30.92), (30.73), (75.92), (67.30), (93.15), (90.62), (36.48) and (70.24) respectively. This indicates that all the obtained F values were statistically significant (α =0.05). It can be noticed that all differences were in favour of the students of the experimental group as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. The adjusted mean scores and standard errors regarding each of the eight dimensions of the speaking skills due to the teaching method

Dimensions	Group	Mean	Std. Error
Vocabulary	Experimental	3.94	.107
	Control	3.06	.107
Functional skills	Experimental	3.25	.127
	Control	2.20	.127
Fluency	Experimental	3.59	.107
	Control	2.20	.107
Interaction	Experimental	3.93	.107
	Control	2.63	.107
Body language	Experimental	4.18	.122
	Control	2.42	.122
Self-confidence	Experimental	4.24	.119
	Control	2.56	.119
Pronunciation	Experimental	3.52	.124
	Control	2.40	.124
Sentence Structure	Experimental	3.86	.100
	Control	2.62	.100

The results in Table 6 reveal that the adjusted mean scores on the eight dimensions were in favour of the students of the experimental group. This means that students who were taught speaking by applying the sociolinguistic-based program achieved much better compared to those who were taught using the conventional teaching program.

On the other hand, Eta-square was calculated for the eight dimensions of the rubric. As shown in Table 5, the effect size of the program based on sociolinguistic principles regarding the vocabulary dimension was (0.436) which means that (43.6%) of the variance in the vocabulary dimension was due to this program. All the same, the effect size of the other seven domains was (.434) for the functional skills dimension; (.655) for the fluency dimension; (0.627) for the interaction dimension; (.700) for body language skills dimension; (0.694) for self-confidence dimension; (0.477) for pronunciation dimension; and (0.637) for sentence structure dimension. All these values indicate that variance was due to the program that was based on sociolinguistic principles.

The results in Table 1 showed that there are differences between the mean score of the experimental group and that of the control group on the post-test of speaking skills, which was statistically significant, as shown in Table 2. This difference was in favour of the students of the experimental group since the adjusted mean score was (30.261), which was significantly higher than the adjusted mean score of the students of the control group (20.339), as shown in Table 3.

In addition, the results in Table 5 also show that students of the experimental group outperformed those of the control group on all the eighth dimensions of speaking skills. Also, the adjusted mean scores on the eight dimensions were in favour of the students of the experimental group as shown in Table 6. This indicates that the instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles had a significant effect on developing the English language speaking skills of the treatment group. These findings are consistent with those of other researchers such Al-Khazaali & Mohammed (2021), Bani Abdel-Rahman

(2005), Mirzaee & Maftoon. (2016), Tahaineh, & Daana (2013), Tahmasebi (2011), Uztosun, (2021) and Watson (2007). All of these studies showed that incorporating sociolinguistic principles in EFL programs had positive effects on language skills in general and on speaking skills in particular.

The significant improvement of tenth graders in speaking skills may be attributed to many reasons. For example, incorporating sociolinguistic principles in the program seemed to have developed students' ability to speak and interact using certain strategies such as Board Race, Taboo Games, Discussion, Role Play, Simulations, Information Gap, Think-pair-share (TPS), Story Completion, Picture Describing, Debates: agree or disagree politely, Bingo, Last Man Standing, and Desert Island activity. In particular, those strategies helped students to ask for clarification, explain difficult words, and acquire a range of vocabulary related to the speaking genres and topics they had discussed. This seems to have improved students' ability to use appropriate words for the social context such as showing politeness and respecting their partners. It also encouraged them to become sensitive to purpose, context and register in which language is used and how this can affect the use of certain structures. For example, the students worked collaboratively to win a board race competition. Another example is practicing the taboo game; students practiced new words such as [dome, arch, courtyard and marble]. In this game, one student owns a card that contains a secret word. Another player has to say this word. In addition, tenth grade students worked in groups and used pictures to describe Utah National Park in the west of the United States. This was illustrated in the results of Table 6 which showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles enhanced the students' functional skills, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 3.25), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.20).

Moreover, sociolinguistic principles incorporated in the developed program seem to have increased students' oral communication in English (Schumann, 1986). This may explain why students demonstrated a sustained ability to maintain a conversation without pauses and spoke English more confidently feeling they communicated in their comfort zone (Vygotsky, 1978). The results shown in Table 6 indicated that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles promoted the students' self-confidence, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 4.24), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.56). In addition, the results in Table 6 showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles improved the students' fluency, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean = 3.59), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.20). In this respect, Hornberger & McKay (2009) also argued that students could develop their fluency and self-confidence if they were given the chance to participate in naturally occurring second language contexts and learn to monitor their own experience. For example, the tenth-grade students were immersed naturally in different English cultural topics by using various learning cultural strategies such as culture capsules, assimilators, culture clusters, critical incidents, cultural fact-based approach, and so on.

Furthermore, the sense of achievement seemed to have helped students to manage their learning effectively inside and outside the classroom by making their own decisions about what to do rather than being influenced by someone. In a similar vein, the teacher's role as a scaffolder and a mediator seemed to have empowered students to critically analyze the ways they use language in their everyday lives. The quality feedback allowed students to monitor their learning to achieve self-regulation (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, students can demonstrate an ability to use a variety of structures properly. This was proved by the results in Table 6 which showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles developed the students' use of English structures, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 3.86), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.62). For example, tenth grade students used the present simple passive to compose general knowledge questions in authentic situations.

Moreover, using effective social strategies for communicating (Goffman 1967 and Lakoff 1977) might have helped students to apply their newly acquired skills to another interactional context. For example, they were able to ask questions taking into consideration when, where, to whom, in what manner, and under what specific circumstances. The results in Table 6 showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles enhanced the students' interaction, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 3.93), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.63).

Another Justification for the students' improvement in speaking may be due to the instructional material, which governed the appropriate use of body language in authentic situations of everyday life. Thus, learners mastered nonverbal communication such as using gestures, facial expressions and eye contact when they speak. The results in Table 6 showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles improved the students' use of body language, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 4.18), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.42). For instance, students used role play strategy to practice body language in different activities presented to them in the instructional material.

It is worth noting that authentic sources of language data such as news magazines, popular magazines and fiction were also helpful in enhancing students' speaking skills. Videos of naturally occurring speech were used to teach the rhythmic organization of speech. The student learned to pronounce utterances and use stress, intonation and rhythm appropriately. The results in Table 6 showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles promoted the students' pronunciation, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 3.52), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 2.40). In addition, the tenth-grade students used Collins Dictionary to check the stress of words and to differentiate between American English and British English. They also used the intonation rules presented to them in the program to practice intonation in various conversation activities.

The students of the treatment group also employed a wide range of vocabulary, idioms and expressions in their talk about the two topics of the posttest. The results in Table 6 showed that the proposed program based on sociolinguistic principles improved the students' vocabulary, as the adjusted mean score of the students of the experimental group, (mean: 3.94), was statistically significant compared to the control group, (mean: 3.06). For instance, the tenth-grade students participated in a discussion about British recycled plastic products and used various related vocabulary. Another example, the students were engaged in several activities to acquire some idioms about good behaviour and politeness [e.g., 'the done thing', 'mind your Ps and Qs', 'bowing and scraping']. They were also engaged in some activities to practice English slang [e.g., 'Gutted', Nosh', 'A cuppa', 'A fiver', 'Ta'].

All those speaking skills were emphasized in the sociolinguistic principles incorporated in the developed instructional program.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that using an instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles to teach English speaking skills to EFL students developed students' speaking skills such as vocabulary, functional skills, fluency, interaction, body language, pronunciation and sentence structure. The contributions of sociolinguistics in language teaching and learning are influenced by a broad range of factors including societal, political, cultural, psychological and interpersonal issues. Accordingly, implementing an instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles in EFL classes may help in using language taking into consideration the different cultural, social and political contexts. This can give teachers insight into helping students in improving their language proficiency when they communicate orally with different people in different situations by using different sociolinguistic strategies. Furthermore, using an instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles to teach English-speaking skills to EFL students can help the students to feel relaxed and willing to share their ideas.

Based on the results of the study, the researchers recommended that:

1. Sociolinguistic principles should be incorporated in the teaching of speaking skills to elementary stage students.
2. Teachers of English should devote more attention to developing speaking skills based on sociolinguistic principles.
3. Other researchers may conduct more studies on the effect of using an instructional program based on sociolinguistic principles on students' learning of other language skills at other grade levels.

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