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Date: April 28, 2017
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Graduate School of Education (GSE)

**A strategy based on role playing to improve elementary stage students
speaking skills**

A Thesis Submitted by

Hania Mahmoud Ezz

Submitted to the Department of International & Comparative Education

September 2017

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
The degree of Master of Arts
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Graduate School of Education

**A Strategy to Improve Egyptian Elementary Stage ESOL Student's Speaking
Skills
Using Role-play**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of International & Comparative Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in Educational Leadership

by

Hania Ezz

under the supervision of

Dr. Heba EL-Deghaidy

December, 2017

Abstract

The aim of the present study was to develop the English-speaking skills of elementary stage, ESOL students through designing a strategy based on role-playing. The speaking skills test included the sub-skills such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. The participants of the study were 24 students. The two-group research design was adopted where the control group (12 students) followed the regular class technique and the experimental group (12 students) followed the role-playing strategy. A pre- and post-test of speaking skills was administered to the participants of both groups to measure the effectiveness of the strategy on students' speaking skills. Analysis of data obtained revealed significance in favor of the experimental group, in the overall speaking skills post-test. Also, it revealed significance in favor of the experimental group, in each speaking sub-skill post-test. Finally, it was concluded that the strategy provided some evidence for the positive effect that role-playing might have in developing the speaking skills of elementary stage ESOL students in Egypt. Based on the results of the study, the researcher provided some recommendations that may help curricula designers in developing means of teaching speaking skills and incorporating role-playing procedures in the students' text books and teachers' guides.

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Chapter One

1.1. Introduction

At the modern day, English has spread far and wide across the world for several reasons. Firstly, the British Empire played a major role in the spread of English; in addition, the pre-eminence of North American impact on the world contributed to this phenomenon as well (Segura Alonso, 2012). English language has quickly seized the position of the international means of communication; therefore, the English language has become the first foreign language in most countries. In Egypt, English is taught from the first year of the elementary stage in all public schools and most private schools, because of its importance in the era of globalization.

Language scientists divide language into two primary aspects, which consist of the receptive skills and productive skills. The first group of skills includes reading and listening, at the same time as the second group of skills includes speaking and writing (Javed, Juan, & Nazli, 2013). Speaking a common language is a necessary ability that is needed for practical communication between people with different linguistic background, as it enhances communication achievement not only among the native speakers but among other individuals from all over the world as well. Zaremba (2006) stated that the ability to make a conversation is frequently valued by the employers more than the previous working experience, enthusiasm of the workers, and their academic achievements. Furthermore, those students who choose to take up English as a foreign language (EFL) in their studies typically do not have adequate chances of practicing their speaking skills outside of the education process. Moreover, these students usually do not have close relations with the native speakers of English and the citizens from various other countries backgrounds. Al Ghussain (2000) realized that in Egypt, English language teaching methodology does not follow techniques that aim at improving learners' speaking skills; rather, the dominant teaching strategy depends on traditional methods that focus on speaking practice which emphasizes the production of single and isolated sounds, Furthermore, recent research demonstrates that the students are not self-confident enough to practice English as a foreign language with their tutors and other students. This unwillingness to practice is usually explained by the influence of their native language on their speaking skills (Zhang, 20009). In addition, there is an insufficient amount of chances

for the students to practice their school language in their day-to-day routine, resulting in many Egyptians students not using English skills effectively (Abdel-Halim, 2004)

The findings of the recent research demonstrate the neglect of the speaking skills both teachers and students, in spite of their significance in the process of learning. For example, Lochana and Deb (2006) claim in their research that the tutors of the English as a foreign language usually use lectures and concentration on the grammatical rules as the primary focus of their teachings rather than the language practice. This approach has proven to be not effective as it is more practical to teach the language with the help of the contextual and meaning approach (Ellis, 2003). Furthermore, the tutors usually offer inadequate prospects for their students for the practice of their second language. There is one more aspect that reduces the opportunities of the learners to practice English. The teachers along with the students usually speak Arabic all the way through the English classes (Ibrahim, 2015). All these negative aspects of English teaching in Egypt seem to help in making the learning process ineffective, with learners and even graduates unable to communicate effectively within contexts that need spoken communication in English.

In his article, Rababah (2003) describes the dilemma faced by native speakers of Arabic who are learning English, by asserting that “Arab English learners find difficulties in using English for communication, when engaged in authentic communicative situations, they often lack some of the vocabulary or language items they need to get their meaning across” (p. 19). In fact, Egyptian students, similar to learners from other countries, usually face certain challenges in improving their speaking skills. For instance, Al Ghussain (2000) claims that the vast majority of the criticisms come from the tutors with regard to the low level of English speaking skills of their learners. For this reason, there is a need among students to practice the second language more and utilized it for communication not only during their learning process but outside of the language classroom as well.

Therefore, Hedge (2000) suggests that in order to achieve this goal, a conversion needs to be implemented from grammatical competence to communicative competence. As a reaction to these requirements new techniques are needed in order to grant the students with more opportunities for the improvement of their speaking, skills in the framework of the effective and “meaningful communication” (Luchini, 2004, p.5).

One of the suggested teaching/learning techniques is role-playing, which enhances students' natural spoken skills in a psychologically safe environment, especially for young learners (Nicholson, 2015). Nicholson defines role-play as the inclusion of activities that enable an individual to put him or herself in the shoes of another person. This type of activity allows an individual to put himself or herself in an imaginary ordeal, for example, the incorporation of role-playing in the classroom tends to add variety and pace changes for language production (Nicholson, 2015). Besides that, role-play, when incorporated in the classroom, is fun, thus encouraging a student to remember what has been taught in class (Fang-Chen & Ben, 2016). In most cases, it is considered as a central part of a class instead of a one-time occurrence. Fang-Chen and Ben (2016) state that in a case where a teacher believes that the activities will work and the required support is provided, it was claimed to have been successful. When a tutor is not convinced about the validity of a particular role-play, it is likely to fail in the class (Fang-Chen & Ben, 2016). In a learning institution, the joy of role-playing lies in the fact that the learners can take the roles of a person that they desire to become. Besides that, a student is likely to choose the characters that he/she wants to portray. Moreover, a learner can learn to take on the opinions of another person. As a result, the debates that may arise in the class may reflect differences of opinion such that those having a particular view will come together, raising potentially fruitful discussions in the classroom. In addition to that, the functional language, necessary to support multiple scenarios, is activated and practiced through the role-play. According to Davidson, (2016), role-play is critical in bringing up fun and motivation in the class. Consequently, the suggested learning methodology that stems from role-playing could benefit students, who are often quiet in class, by allowing them to have the chance to express themselves forthrightly (Davisdon, 2016). Role-play allows the classroom world to be widened into the outside world, offering a significant range of language learning opportunities (Fang-Chen & Ben, 2016).

Role-play may permit the incorporation of real-life situations into a classroom setting. For instance, learners can have the chance to travel with their imagination to the English-speaking nations to enhance their language skills. To further enhance the learning process, students should not be punished grievously while being engaged in role-playing, even if mistakes are committed by students while communicating, talking, or acting (Nicholson, 2015). In the elementary levels, role-play is possible

only in the case where a learner has been prepared adequately, meaning that students are ready and prepared to do it, which could be achieved through one or more preparatory introductory classes. Moreover, students require extra support; in other words, students need guidance in order to carry out other individual's roles. In role-play classes, the teacher acts as a facilitator, who has a significant role in directing the learners. Moreover, an instructor could also be a spectator in role-playing since the teacher may need to watch the activities and deliver their comments at the end of the process. In some cases, the teacher may get involved in a role-play to enhance comprehension amongst students. As such, in the elementary stage, role-play is most effective technique adopted by teachers in teaching language among the students (Nicholson, 2015).

In role-playing, the teacher should keep in mind the interests and needs of the students when choosing a situation. In addition to that, a role-play could be appealing to students, who would be able to be involved in real-life situations, while they are actually in their classes; as such, role-playing strategy would provide students with virtual experiences and social contexts that could attract each student individually and match their interests and hobbies. After selecting a context for the role-play activities, a tutor is supposed to come up with ideas to help develop a situation. An instructor plays the role of teaching the students various parts that students should adapt to the activity. The role-play should be designed in such a way that the learner is aware of his/her different role.

1.2. Context of the Problem

The oral interaction between language learners facilitates their language acquisition and comprehension. Besides, it can give them chances to express themselves freely and experience different life-like situations in meaningful contexts. However, at present, students do not have such opportunities to practice the spoken skills that help generate their ideas and express them properly.

The researcher of the present study encountered this problem in different sources:

First, through the researcher's personal experience as an English teacher in an elementary language school, she noticed the following:

- Students usually feel shy when asked to speak in front of their colleagues.

- Students feel embarrassed about committing mistakes, particularly, in pronunciation.
- Students' fluency is inhibited because of mother language interference as they think in Arabic first, and then translate their thoughts into English.
- Most of the researcher's colleagues who teach English use the traditional method of asking questions and eliciting answers from students, a method which appears to be an ineffective way of teaching speaking, in relation to the capacity of the students taught by this method to produce correct spoken English.

Second, the researcher conducted a pilot study where she conducted a 15-minute recorded interview with 10 third-grade elementary stage students, aged between seven and nine from an American language school in Cairo, Egypt. Each of the students was asked to answer individually to these questions:

- a) Present yourself and speak about your family.
- b) Who is your best friend? Describe him/her.
- c) How did you spend your mid-term vacation?

The results of this interview were as follows:

- All of the students committed grammatical mistakes related to tense, subject-verb agreement, and the use of adjective and prepositions.
- All of the 10 students found difficulty in expressing their ideas and choosing the proper vocabulary.
- Fluency was the most recognizable problem faced as much hesitation and periods of silence occurred during their speech.

Third, the previous related studies that were reviewed illustrate the existence of the problem of English language speaking among elementary ESOL school students. For instance, Boonkit (2009) reports that lack of confidence is one of the speaking problems faced by learners during their elementary stage, and so he suggests that "building up confidence in speaking to audience is a main factor that strengthens speaking performance" (p.2). Moreover, Etomy (2015) notes that lack of a warm and friendly environment within the classroom is another major problem for language learners at the elementary level. She argues that "an environment in which students feel comfortable and accepted is also one where all students feel that their

participation is valued and that it is likely to lead to success” (p.20). In addition, Siegel (2016) refers to another English language speaking problem at the elementary stage, which is the inability of learners to develop a pragmatic experience that enables them to use language properly in different situations. In this context, Siegel (2016) argues that classroom activities may be “incorporated into speaking lessons to target pragmatic development and prepare students to interact with a range of interlocutors and within varying contextual factors” (p. 7). Therefore, it can be realized that there are many research studies that have exposed serious English language speaking problems among elementary school students.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Based on the researcher’s experience as a teacher, the previous studies, and the pilot study, the present study tackles a problem facing elementary stage language school students, that is, the elementary stage students’ incompetence in speaking English. The present study, thus, attempts to examine the effect of a role-playing teaching strategy in developing elementary stage students’ speaking skills.

1.4. Research Questions

In an attempt to solve this problem, the study seeks to provide answers for the following study questions:

- 1- What are the verbal ESOL speaking skills required for elementary stage school students in American-curriculum private schools in Cairo, Egypt?
- 2- What impact does role-play have on developing elementary Egyptian students’ speaking skills in American-curriculum private schools in Cairo, Egypt?

1.5. Hypotheses

1. The experimental and control groups are statistically significantly different in their mean ranks on the post speaking skill examinations, where the experimental group is at 0.01 level of significance.
2. The experimental and control groups are statistically significantly different in their mean ranks in each of the five sub skills of the post verbal speaking examinations, where the experimental group is at 0.01 level of significance.

1.6. Variables of the Study

Independent variable: role-playing strategy

Dependent variable: the students' performance on the speaking test

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The present study has a number of limitations:

- The current study is limited to third-grade elementary students in private American curriculum schools in Cairo, Egypt.
- Some verbal skills that will be identified by members in the field that suits the elementary stage students.
- Two units will be selected from the school's language book for third-grade students.
- The population of the study consisted of 24 enrolled school students, which is an implication of a relatively small sample size for generalization of results.
- Selection of participants in each group was done by the researcher assigning them for each group. Randomization did not take place, and hence generalization of findings cannot be considered.
- The study was carried out by the researcher as the experimenter; in other words, the researcher taught the experimental group which could have affected the study in which the results of the experiment may have been influenced by the Hawthorne effect, which causes a change of behavior by participants of the study due to their awareness of being observed.
- It is conducted encompassing the following sub-skills of speaking: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, while applying one educational technique: role-play.
- The study may have been influenced by the novelty effect, which means that improvements occurred because it is something new, not because of any actual improvement in learning or achievement but as a reaction of interest in a new way of learning.

1.8. Tools of the Study

The study used the following tools:

- A verbal speaking test developed by the researcher and implemented before and after the role-play lessons.
- A rubric developed by the researcher to score students' performance on the pre-and post-test.

1.9. Aims of the Study

There are several primary objectives of this study:

- Identify the important speaking skills necessary, which is suitable for the third-grade elementary stage students in one of the American language schools in Cairo, Egypt.
- Design and develop a strategy based on role-playing for developing English language speaking skills for third-grade elementary stage students in one of the private American language schools in Cairo, Egypt.

1.10. Significance of the Study

- Provide English teachers with insights about the importance of speaking skills to the learners of English language at the Egyptian elementary stage.
- Help students express themselves orally in fluent, correct English with ease and enjoyment.
- Attract English language teachers' attention to the importance of teaching methods, such as role-playing to increase the involvement and engagement of students in learning as a social and cultural process.

1.11. Concluding Remarks about Chapter One

This chapter gives an introductory background about the issue being investigated in this thesis, namely, the impact of the role-play strategy in developing the ESOL speaking skills of elementary Egyptian students. The aim, purpose, and importance of the study are clearly illustrated to establish the importance of the proposed strategy of role play for elementary students. In the following chapter, the researcher will review previous literature that has covered issues of speaking skills and role-play in order to establish a theoretical foundation for the thesis.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, the speaking skills are overview and a review of literature on the subject of the sub skills of speaking along with the verbal interaction in specific are provided. The second section deals with role-playing and the theoretical background that supports it.

2.1 Section One: Speaking Skills

2.1.1 Definition of speaking. Speaking refers to the act of sending information through the expression of one's thoughts and feelings using spoken language. Speaking skills are amongst the important components of one's interpersonal skills. A person who cannot, and does not, know how to speak well is most likely someone who does not have essential interpersonal skills (Richard, 2016)

There are many factors that can affect the way a person develops his/her speaking skills (Gillis, 2013) In this paper, the researcher has identified role-playing-based strategies as one of the independent variables that can affect one's speaking skill development outcomes. It is worth noting that role-playing-based strategies are just one of the many teaching methods that language instructors can use to improve the outcome of their students.

In a study published in the *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Deguchi (2012) argued that there are different ways to dissect speaking skills and present speaking skill-related courses to students. He developed a model in which he proposed the creation of a clear distinction between sentence types and speech act distinctions, in order to more effectively improve the speaking skill improvement outcomes of students. Speaking is a continuously evolving concept, and this is why more and newer methods and approaches, of not only defining but also improving it, are being introduced from time to time. For example, Etomy (2015) introduces some innovative approaches in teaching speaking to young school students. One such approach is “based on metacognition and strategy use” (p. 8). Another approach is to “improve the teaching process through warm-up activities, such a brief discussion around the topic” (p. 9). A third approach utilized “computer-based programs” to improve speaking skills among students (p. 10). In the present study, the researcher

has used the second approach, which is based on using warm-up activities to start the session.

2.1.2 Nature of speaking. According to a study that was conducted by the University of Pittsburgh Library System, any type of speaking-related output can be referred to as a speech which can be informative, persuasive, or ceremonial (University of Pittsburgh, 2016). The common aspect of all these three types of speaking, whether informative, persuasive, or ceremonial, is that they are all verbal. Its counterpart, i.e. nonverbal types of communication (e.g., body language and eye movement, among other things) is not going to be covered in this study. In general, there are three natures of speaking. The following is a brief discussion of each one.

Informative speaking. The goal of informative speaking is to inform, that is, to deliver information from one person to another (or a group of people, depending on the setting of the conversation). It is important to note that there may be a fine line that sets the difference between informative speaking and ceremonial speaking (i.e. speaking for special occasions). This is because there can be numerous instances wherein the goal of the person speaking is both to inform and to celebrate or commemorate an event, a person, an institution, or an idea or place (Verderber, Sellnow, & Verderber, 2011).

Persuasive speaking. Persuasive speaking is by far the most common nature or type of speaking done by people regardless of their age. The goal of persuasive speaking is to prove a point, argue, and convince another person or a group of people. This is an inherently more advanced type of speaking because there are often two key objectives.

The first one is to inform and the second one is to persuade. In most, if not all, cases, there is no way one can convince another person to do or believe in something without first delivering and making him accept the information. In fact, whether the person being persuaded is going to be persuaded depends a lot on how effective the informative part of the speech was delivered by the speaker—i.e. how good the speaker's overall speaking skills are (Verderber, Sellnow, & Verderber, 2011).

Ceremonial speaking. Ceremonial speaking, otherwise known as speaking for special occasions, is a type of speech that is used to “pay tribute or praise a person, an institution, an event, an idea, or a place” (University of Pittsburgh, 2016, p. 1).

In the present study, the researcher made use of the informative speaking and persuasive speaking when the role-play strategy was applied. Informative speaking was used throughout the classes and when students discussed the stories, they were reading, to inform each other about certain facts, situations, and their roles. Also, it was used during role-playing when some situations include facts or information provided by the characters or the narrator. Persuasive speaking was used between students when discussing the roles, the settings, and the script to convince their classmates of their ideas in place. In this research, there was no room for ceremonial speaking, as it is rarely used in classroom settings.

2.1.3 Characteristics of speaking. There are numerous ways to describe a person with an above-average level, and/or quality, of speaking skills, in terms of what are his/her speaking characteristics. Despite the numerous studies that have been published about speaking and how deeply dissected this concept has been, this remains one of the still debatable issues in academia. As always, this implies that more research is needed for the academic community to arrive at the point where a standardized set of good-speaker characteristics can be published. Based on the publications that were reviewed in the present study, there are nine non-standardized key characteristics of effective or good speakers. These are as follows: confidence, excitement, authenticity, passion, genuineness, spontaneity, and ability to modulate one’s voice (Greene & Burleson, 2003).

Some of these may not necessarily be applied or highlighted among elementary school students who are being taught how to improve their speaking skills. Yet, students would have to learn how to master each of these speaking aspects, in order to emerge as a truly effective speaker both in class and within the outer society. Other (external) qualities of a good speaker may include excellent body posture, knowing how to dress well, and knowing how to present, which are considered, non-verbal communication skills (Verderber, Sellnow, & Verderber, 2011). In addition, a person who can master both verbal and non-verbal types of communication could call himself/herself a good speaker. From an objective point of view, however, anyone can

refer to himself/herself as an effective speaker as long as the objectives of the act of speaking are met (Verderber et al., 2011).

For example, an elementary school student who wants to persuade a co-student to do or believe in something can consider himself a good speaker if he/she manages to successfully persuade the other student—because he managed to accomplish the objective of the speech act. This means that there are certain situations where one may not need to have or embody all of the characteristics of a good speaker that were enumerated earlier because the accomplishment of a certain speech's objective is what is the most important (Greene & Burlison, 2003).

2.1.4 Importance of speaking. There are four basic skills that are associated with language use: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Although this paper is only focuses on speaking, Gillis (2013) noted that a well-balanced level of proficiency across all the four language-related skills is necessary in order for the overall language usage skill to be viable. A person who has an above-average level of proficiency in using a certain language to listen (i.e. understand), read, and write, but performs poorly when it comes to speaking is still going to encounter a lot of problems. One's speaking skills reflects his/her ability to produce the most meaningful words possible in an effort to convey their feelings, thoughts, or opinions. Therefore, speaking serves as one of the most important catalysts of interpersonal communication (Gillis, 2013).

Speaking skills are important because they can amplify a person's ability to inform, direct, and persuade (Gillis, 2013). This is something that should be imbued in the minds of primary school students, even at their relatively young age. Students can use their effective speaking skills to be high performance business managers, military leaders, lawyers, politicians, and educators in the future. Most conventional jobs require a certain minimum level of speaking skill in order to carry out the job properly.

A future educator in a primary school institution, who is not proficient when it comes to speaking, may find it difficult to get his/her young students to follow his/her classroom management instructions. The point of this example is to show that speaking skills can be used and are in fact necessary in a lot of jobs in different

industries. Another reason why speaking skills are important is that someone who has good speaking skills stands out from other people. One common misconception about speaking skills is that everyone has them. In reality, anyone can speak but not everyone can do it confidently and clearly, in a way that will gain the target audience's attention. It takes skill and experience to send a message through speaking well (Richards, 2016).

Someone who has a great command of speaking can also take advantage of the secondary effects of good speaking skills. For example, people who are naturally good at speaking tend to be effective negotiators. When someone is good at negotiating, that person often tends to get better deals. That can translate into better job performance and, later on, career success. Good speaking skills open a lot of opportunities for someone who can make effective use of them—in work, in business, or in personal and social life.

2.1.5 Advantages of well-developed speaking skills. A businessman who has managed to develop a strong and positive relationship with his business partners because of his above-average speaking proficiency would most likely see that his business partners would be more than willing to cooperate with his business plans and strategies. The same principle can, in fact, be applied to typical work-related relationships and conversations. Being an effective speaker is almost always going to lead to more positive career, business, and social outcomes (Gillis, 2013).

The purpose of speaking is to initiate or participate in a conversation. The purpose of a conversation, on the other hand, is to deliver information for whatever purpose it may serve. In theory, the less proficient the person who is tasked to deliver the information is when it comes to speaking, the longer it would take for the information to be delivered and understood by the target audience. Time, from a strictly business sense, is a finite and precious resource. It can never be considered good when a business or an organization is losing a significant amount of time just because of communication-related inefficiencies (e.g., poor speaking skills).

There are also potential disadvantages that may be associated with speaking—as a form of communication. First, there is no purely technical and foolproof way to

trace the information that gets passed during a conversation between two or more people. This means that potentially private or confidential information may be transmitted (Deguchi, 2012)

This is in contrast to information technology-based means of sending information, the majority of which can be directly controlled and monitored. Another potential disadvantage of excessive proficiency in speaking is its complexity. Compared to more modern and information technology-based means of sending information, speaking is a more time-consuming and complex method (Richards, 2016).

2.1.6 Purpose of speaking. The primary objective of speaking is to convey information or express emotions. This, in general, refers to the informative types of speeches. As explained earlier, there are, generally, three purposes for speaking: informative, persuasive, and ceremonial. The purpose of each type of speaking is different. Informative speaking is the most basic one, since its purpose is only to transfer information from one person to another; in some cases, the recipient of the information being transferred may be a group or an audience.

Persuasive speaking is a little more advanced, because it requires a two-step process, which starts with the conveyance of information and finishes with persuading the recipient of the information to believe in or commit to something. Commemorative speaking also has a different purpose and that is to celebrate or praise a person, event, or institution, among other things (Richards, 2016).

2.1.7 Function of speaking. Speaking can have various functions as well. According to Richards (2016), one of the basic functions of speaking is to stimulate and facilitate a social type of interaction between two or more people. The social function of speaking is what one may commonly refer to as a conversation. When two or more people meet, for example, they can be expected to greet each other and get engaged in an actual conversation, regardless of the main topic.

The assumption is that people do so because they have a social need to interact with other people, to befriend someone, or to simply establish a comfort zone within which people can modulate their interaction with another person. Although a truly meaningful conversation is the one where there is input and output from all the

participants, the person who receives the highest level of attention is almost always going to be the one who is doing the talking (i.e. speaker) (Greene & Burleson, 2003).

In this case, the people who are listening are going to notice how the speaker presents himself to his audience. The social function of speaking has various sub-functions. A social conversation, for example, may be casual or formal. For the reason that speaking is placed among the fundamental skills, which are related to language usage, it would therefore be safe to suggest that the functions of language may also be applied to speaking. According to Jakobson's (1960, cited in Hebert, 2004) model of language functions, there are six linguistic functions: referential function, poetic function, emotive or affective function, conative function, phatic function, and meta-linguistic function (Hebert, 2004). In order to conduct this research correctly, the author has drawn the attention towards the meta-linguistic function of speaking. The successful establishment and implementation of the set of these metalinguistic abilities into practice are critical in the "student's ability to be successful in creating enlightening conversations that will serve as foundations for further learning in their lives" (Hebert, 2004, p. 19). Therefore, it was used when analyzing the impact of role-play on elementary classroom students.

2.1.8 Speaking skills. The individuals' speaking ability is composed of four important components, constituting the widely-identified speaking skills that are related to grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Grammar refers to one's ability to correctly arrange and present words and use them in an actual conversation to deliver a message or information. Vocabulary refers to a language user's overall knowledge of words; it may also refer to how many words (of a certain language) the learner knows the meaning and usage of. Pronunciation refers to the learner's ability to produce the sound of the language's words in a way that would make it easy for the people hearing it to understand. Fluency is perhaps the most complex skill because it covers the overall ability of the language user to speak accurately and fluently; this means that he/she has to incorporate grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in order to come up with an appropriate phrase or sentence using the language being learned (e.g., English) (Richards, 2016)

This study made use of the five components to improve the speaking skills, which included the four main components, as well as another component ‘comprehension’ referring to the ability to understand (Richards, 2016) and make sense of what is said. Thus, the five components were the main measuring elements for the speaking skills scoring rubric to assess the students’ speaking skills before and after the role-play strategy was applied.

2.1.9 Teaching strategies and methodologies for developing speaking skills. There are many strategies and techniques that an educator can use to develop the speaking skills of their students. There are no limitations or restrictions when it comes to choosing the technique or strategy to use; the only limitation is the educator’s creativity in selecting what works with their students, to achieve the needed objectives of their lessons. Some examples of speaking-skill pedagogies and techniques include the following: Role-Playing Activities, Oral Discussions and Presentations, Spelling Activities, Storytelling, Interviewing and Picture Narration. While all these strategies may entail various positive aspects on the English language learning process for elementary students, role-playing activities are characterized by the involvement of communication interaction among all students, with each student taking the role of a certain character and developing the speech aspects and criteria of each role. As such, this study made use of the role-playing activities with stories from their original text books, so as to use all skills at once: fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The other techniques such as spelling activities, storytelling, and interviewing were not going to serve this study and to improve student’s speaking skills as they fail to engage the students in the actual settings and roles (Westrup & Planander, 2013)

Below are some examples of speaking-skill pedagogies and techniques.

- Role Playing Activities
- Dialogues
- Problem solving
- Storytelling

- Interviews
- Picture Narration

The following is a short discussion about each technique:

Role-playing. The teacher gives students a situation, and the students play the roles of the characters adopting their reactions and behaviors in the given situation.

Dialogues. The teacher initiates a topic and students write the dialogues and read them in turn.

Interviews. The teacher asks students to interview each other to speak about themselves, their feelings, and impressions concerning certain issues, among others.

Problem solving. The teacher divides the class into two groups, and then, he/she suggests a problem and gives different alternative solutions to both the groups. Students discuss the solutions and choose the most suitable one, giving a reasonable justification for their choice in English. Each group presents his/her choice and discusses as a whole group.

Picture narration. This is an activity that is based on numerous chronological images. The participants in the study are inquired to retell the narration that is demonstrated in the chronological images. This task can be completed by taking into account the conditions that are offered by the tutor, concerning grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, among others.

Storytelling. Students tell others about their feelings, opinions, ideas, or anything that happened in their lives. It is very simple to tell a story to others, as simple as expressing what is on your mind. It has many benefits, such as for indulgence, learning process, cultural conservation, and introduction of moral standards. In addition, it has elements that are worth noting, including plot, the main protagonist and antagonists, and narrative standpoints in the story.

The present study made use of the role-playing activities with stories from their original books, in order to use all the skills of fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation at once. Some of the other techniques were

used at times, as a pre-activity to train students on speaking, such as interviews. Storytelling was not used because of some restrictions (e.g., it was difficult to bring videos to class), but it was used in another manner when students were asked to tell their colleagues a story they liked, whether it was real or imaginary. It was also used to train students to speak freely, because this is the only method for the learners to express themselves and absorb the new ways of complying with the social and cultural instructions, which can be fitting for a vast majority of the communicative settings (Schaap, 2005).

For these reasons, the primary objectives of teaching speaking skills can be the following:

- a) Communicate with others to establish a relationship; and
- b) Deliver certain messages accurately.

Based on this discussion, the present study attempts to achieve these aims through developing the following speaking skills:

- Improving their Vocabulary;
- Improving their Grammar;
- Improving their Pronunciation;
- Improving their Fluency; and
- Improving Comprehension.

Based on the aims enumerated above, it can be assured that all of the five major components of speaking were covered. The next step was to choose a set of activities that were used in the study to develop the students' skills across all of the five components

2.2 Section Two: Role-Playing

2.2.1 Definition of role-playing. Within the realm of the field of education, role-playing, or simply role-play, can be defined as a term that “refers to activities where students simulate a scenario by assuming specific roles”

(Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign, 2016, p. 285).

What makes role-playing-based strategies so attractive to both the students and educators is the fact that these strategies can be fun to do and at the same time, they are effective in teaching the students the concept that they need to learn or a skill that they have to master.

2.2.2 Role playing in education. According to Doorn and Kroesen (2013), role-play is a pedagogy used in various contexts and content areas. They indicate that role-playing is a practice of having the learners take certain roles, especially those that they are not well conversant with, and later perform the activities that are founded on the basis of the primary objectives of learning. In the majority of cases, the procedures of the role-playing process are displayed in a representative and realistic manner. According to Alfes (2015), the practical nature of the role-play and its best practices can be traced back to the 1970s. However, in recent years, role-play, particularly in the elementary levels, has been touted as a tool that is more suitable for teaching, as compared to the traditional learning methods (Alfes, 2015). Besides, role-play is an effective way to enable an individual to reach learning outcomes in domains such as cognition, behavior, and affect. Making students take the roles of other people helps them practice empathy (Morales, 2008). This leads to self-reflection and awareness, since the learner can identify the various skills required in a particular class session. In the case where a student takes in the skills acquired in class and puts them into practice, it helps him/her to create a deeper cognitive link to the material being studied, and thus, making it easier for a student to learn (Evanes, 2007). Using the role-play approach to learning can play a significant role in helping students change their attitudes and use the best acquired practices in a real-world setting (Morales, 2008).

Davidson (2016) summarizes the needs and merits of incorporating role-play in the primary stage. She states that the approach plays a vital role in getting a learner to apply the knowledge acquired to a given situation. In addition, it enables a student to reflect on the various issues and views that have been proposed by other people. According to her, role-play helps a student illustrate the relevance of theoretical ideas, since a learner often gains the ability to place the ideas learned in a real-world setting, and hence, he/she demonstrates the complex nature of decision-making. Role-play has

been applied and incorporated in the study of various fields, such as medicine, business, history, psychology, and law, amongst others. Traditionally, the role-play method of learning has been used in the educational settings. Role-play enables a learner to emphasize the social learning dynamics, since it enhances teamwork among the students. In the medical field, for instance, role-play encourages experiential training. As a result, it often produces better results as compared to the one-way instruction that was carried out in the past. Moreover, the approach enhances second-language learning, and in relevant settings, it can lead to reduction in racial chauvinism. Besides that, it plays a role in increasing the engagement of students by increasing the retention of knowledge and ideas gathered (Morales, 2008).

According to Fang-Chen and Ben (2016), the teaching culture has been a significant part of foreign language tutorials for the past years. Fang-Chen and Ben highlight the various role-play activities incorporated at elementary stages to examine the cultural attitudes. For instance, while learning, a student can demonstrate an incident that caused a cross-culture misunderstanding leading to the development of tactics of communicating to overcome such troubles (McEwen, Stokes, Crowley, & Roberts, 2014). However, McEwen et al. (2014) caution that role-play may cause a learner to develop false generalizations and stereotypes that later may result in a misunderstanding of a particular concept. Therefore, the role-play learning approach requires expertise on the part of the instructor, who guides the students in performing the various roles that they undertake.

Pravianti (2012) presented another point of view against role playing, indicating that conducting the role-play in the class has two weaknesses that the educators have to take into account prior to making a decision of utilizing this approach. The first one is that it takes a long time to prepare the activity. The preparation might take one meeting among the teachers, which is about an hour or more. The preparation for having the role-play is long because there are a lot of aspects, like creating the dialogue, defining the part for each character, memorizing the dialogue, and practicing the play for some time. Therefore, teachers need to provide the time for students, so that they can have their own preparation. Sometimes, students may waste time joking or chatting around instead of preparing. Teachers need to be aware and plan for this possibility. For example, instead of using an hour to prepare the role-play, teachers can possibly explain the next chapter or conduct a quiz. Furthermore, even though conducting the role-play can improve students'

speaking ability, this activity is less effective for assessing the speaking aspect. Students might be so nervous or trembling that they would be unable to maximize their performance. At the same time, students may mispronounce or become stressed because of the nervousness, which could result in sub-standard performance. Thus, using the role play as the medium to measure the speaking aspect is not the best decision (Pravianti, 2012).

Yide, Nicolson, and Nicholson (2015) organized the various role-play activities that should be undertaken in the elementary stage. Further, Yide (et al., 2015) highlighted three activities that can be integrated with role-playing, that include acting, task switching, and almost real-life situations. The acting role-playing enables a learner to develop the newly acquired skills through the stimulation of a scenario that requires an acquired dexterity. In task switching, a learner is required to take the responsibility of a different agent to comprehend the actions and motivations of a person. The almost real-life role-play is close to actual experiences. The real-life role-play enables a learner to apply different skills in a realistic and safe setting. In some cases, teachers ask students to act out their role-plays in class, and hence, the tutors plan enough to determine the roles to assign to the students. Besides that, the teacher can take certain roles and act it out to the learners as a model. According to Fang-Chen and Ben (2016), teachers can give their children role-plays tasks as assignments to carry out at home.

The incorporation of role-playing in the classroom tends to add variety and pace changes for language production. Besides that, role-play incorporated in the classroom is fun, thus encouraging a student to remember what has been taught in class. In most cases, it is considered as a recurrent, central part of a class instead of a one-time occurrence. In a case where a teacher believes that these activities will work and the required support is provided by the school, it has proven to be successful. When a tutor is not convinced about the validity of role-playing, it is likely to fail. In a learning institution, the joy of role-playing is to enable that the learners to take up the roles of a person they admire. Role-play may allow the incorporation of real-life situations in a classroom setting. For instance, learners can have the opportunity to travel to the English-speaking nations to enhance their language skills. Besides, mistakes can be made in role-playing but may have no grievous consequences or punishment. In the elementary levels, role-play is possible only in the case where a learner has been prepared adequately. Moreover, students require extra support while

carrying out other individual's roles. Teachers act as facilitators, playing a significant role in directing the learners. Moreover, a teacher could also be a spectator in role-playing, since the teacher may need to watch the activities and deliver their comments at the end of the process. In some cases, a teacher may get involved in a role-play to enhance comprehension amongst students.

In the elementary stage, role-play is most effective in teaching language among the students. This approach plays a vital role in getting a learner to apply the knowledge acquired to a given problem. In addition to that, it enables a student to reflect on the various issues and views that have been proposed by other people. Role-play helps a student illustrate the relevance of theoretical ideas, since a learner often gains the ability to place the ideas learned in a real-world setting, hence showing the complex nature of decision-making. Role-play has been applied and incorporated in the study of various fields, such as medicine, business, history, psychology, and law, amongst others. Traditionally, the role-play method of learning has been used in the education setting (Randi & Carvalho, 2013).

Additionally, many educators can attest to the argument that role-playing-based interventions allow the students to be more creative and resourceful. This forceful stimulation of their creativity and resourcefulness helps them absorb information faster and more effectively.

2.2.3 Importance of role playing. The importance of role-playing lies in the fact that more and more educators and policymakers in the field of education are starting to recognize it as an effective tool in improving the students' learning outcomes for a growing number of concepts and skills (Randi & Carvalho, 2013). Effective teaching strategies and interventions should not be thrown away or left hidden in a teacher's tool box. They should instead be used liberally and, if permitted, as often as possible. For instance, in his research, Ian Glover (2014) states the advantages of using the method of role-playing with students in a classroom. Role-playing exposes students to realistic situations in which each student can interact with another in an ordered technique. These situations grant the learners with an opportunity to grasp a better comprehension of the material on hand. Students can play a role that is close to their personality, or they can play a role that opposes their real personality. Other students take on the role of what they would like to be in the future. Surely, each role depends on the activity or lesson being taught. Therefore, as

mentioned earlier, role-playing is a flexible technique that doesn't require much effort nor does it require any specific rules or tools, such as technology. However, technology nowadays can be used to improve and record role-playing between students so that students could benefit more than once from the activity they had done (Glover, 2014). In a study by Baiti (2017), Indonesians were being taught English as a second language through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which encourages practice in which students or foreigners are trying to learn a second language. There are many difficulties that foreigners face when exposed to a new language. Baiti, in his study, confirms that role-playing was very useful when it came to developing the means of learning a new language. He states that role-play helps students develop a more creative and managed sense of what students has to say; therefore, it lessens their anxiety or fear of using the wrong words. This confidence comes from the role of the person that they are playing because they're not being themselves anymore and thus the tension fades.

Another factor that highlights that importance of role-playing-based strategies is their inherent flexibility. An educator who is trying to teach his students the proper way to improve their English-speaking skills, for example, can do it anywhere and anytime. It is important to note, however, that role-playing-based strategies demand a higher level and a more active participation from the students. This is something that students and educators who have grown so used to the traditional lecture-based types of activities would need to become accustomed to.

Role-playing-based strategies serve as important classroom aids because they bridge the gap between theory and practice (Schaap, 2005). Putting this into perspective, a student who is trying to improve his English-speaking skills can do so by first being accustomed to the related theories; he then would have to progress to the actual practice and/or demonstrate the skill. During this time, he would have to translate the things that he has learned during the theoretical phase into practice. Role-playing-based activities have been shown to be effective when it comes to bridging this gap (Randi et al., 2013).

The key principle that is backing up the credibility of role-playing-based strategies in the field of education is the principle of simulation-based learning (Lateef, 2010). Simulation is a technique that can be used in many fields and disciplines, one of which being education. He described it as “a technique (not a

technology) to replace and amplify real experiences with guided ones, often immersive in nature, that evoke or replicate substantial aspects of the real world in a fully interactive fashion” (p. 2).

This is also the principle that makes role-playing-based strategies so effective when it comes to teaching the students a certain theme, skill, or concept. While role-playing, the learners are practically doing the actual thing, albeit in a scripted, guided, but in an interactive manner. Students can receive real-time feedback from their instructors. Thus, students can make the necessary adjustments for them to perfect their skills.

2.2.4 Classroom implementation. Below are some examples of how role-playing-based strategies can be implemented in a classroom:

- Dividing the class into performers and spectators, with the performers doing the actual activity and the spectators offering feedback;
- Instructing the students to practice the skill being mastered without inhibitions;
- Assigning a role-playing activity for every lecture-based discussion or reading material that will be read; and
- Using role-playing activities to ask the students to summarize and demonstrate the things that they learned from a certain period or topic.

2.2.5 Theories that support role-play. Understanding major theories of learning is extremely important within the context of designing new approaches for classroom education. There are many theories that support the use of role-playing-based strategies in improving the students’ learning outcomes, particularly in speaking. One example of such theories would be simulated games (i.e. play). Children who are role-playing to simulate an activity or a process are basically making sense of the world through a process of inner speech, and this is how they get to develop their speaking skills through role-playing activities.

This key theory is supported by other previously published studies. In a study authored by Randi and Carvalho (2013), for example, the authors argued and showed

that role-playing games and other role-playing based activities can indeed be an effective approach for active learning and teaching. They compared the learning and teaching outcomes of two groups of students and teachers: lecture-based and role-playing based. The observation period for the study was 12 months. The results of the study showed that on a medium-term basis, students and teachers from the role-playing classes had more positive quantitative learning and teaching outcomes compared to those who belonged to the lecture-based group.

In another study that was authored by Schaap (2005), it was argued that learning political theories, which are a concept that is often taught through lecture-based discussions, can be more efficiently and effectively done using role-playing activities. This concept, although it focused on the learning outcomes of undergraduate students, can still be applied to elementary stage students who are enrolled in speaking skills improvement classes.

It is essential to determine the precise quality or the features of role-playing activities that make it a good alternative strategy in improving elementary stage students' speaking skills. Westrup and Planander (2013) conducted a study of the value and impacts of role-playing activities when used as an academic approach towards the preparation of the learners for their future practice. It is worth noting that they focused on what the students had to say or show about the specific research problem. The results of their study showed that the supports, which the role-playing-based strategy that they developed and tested provided, had a positive effect on the students' learning outcomes. Specifically, it made it simpler for the learners to recognize the issues associated with the actual activity or concept that they were trying to study from various perspectives.

In group-based role-playing activities, the positive effects of the active participation element can allegedly be further enhanced by the advancement of the feeling of community among the learners, which means knowing the importance of teamwork in accomplishing a task. In the end, they argued as follows:

Role-play could be a viable and forceful pedagogical method whereby teachers give their students the opportunity to prepare for practice; however, to implement role-play as an alternative method of learning requires that the

method is a part of the institutional learning space. (Westrup & Planander, 2013, p. 199)

The Educational Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 2003) can also be used to support the idea that role-playing-based strategies can indeed improve the students' speaking skills. Veteran psychologist Howard Gardner first introduced this theory decades ago; it was only in recent years that the theory became heavily subscribed to by other academicians and practitioners in the field of psychology (Gardner, 2003). This theory basically proposes that there are other types of intelligence aside from the one that is measured using traditional intelligence quotient tests. In the case of the current problem about the effect of role-playing-based strategies in improving elementary students' speaking skills, it is possible that students whose type of intelligence is being more heavily used during role-playing activities can benefit more from the use of such activities in improving their speaking skills than the others.

If this is indeed the case, then role-playing-based strategies may not be for everyone after all—because part of this theory's premise is that not every student should be expected to react to the same teaching stimuli (especially one that relies on only a single type of intelligence) because the students in a class are essentially a heterogeneous mix of individuals with different types of intelligences. Although this theory can potentially limit the level of applicability of role-playing-based strategies, it still proves that it can, under certain circumstances, indeed be an effective strategy to improve elementary students' speaking skills learning outcomes.

One of the basic learning theories is referred to as 'constructivism.' Lev Vygotsky (1978) developed his own version of constructivism, which he called the Cognitive Developmental Theory. He claimed that the Cognitive Developmental Theory supports the idea of using role-playing to improve students' learning outcomes. In this regard, the core of Vygotsky's child development theory is the concept of social constructivism. Vygotsky emphasizes the position of the surrounding culture and people and their acceptance of the roles as the means of development of the kids (Vygotsky, 1978). As the time passes, the children are forced to deal with important changes in their society and surroundings. According to the concepts of social constructivism by Vygotsky, the mental growth of the children

relies heavily on the kind of education that is offered to the children in the course of their young years. In other words, the kids have a tendency of behaving in a rational manner only in a case when they know how to apply the reasonable judgment appropriately as a direct result of their education process (Vygotsky, 1978). Furthermore, according to this theory, the discovery and creativity are the fundamentals, on which the process of learning is based. For this reason, Vygotsky supports the theories of Piaget, as these theories underline the important part that the discovery and creativity play in the development of kids. Therefore, Vygotsky can be understood as a constructivist, emphasizing the position of the educators in helping the kids on their path towards the cognitive development.

The theories of Vygotsky on the subject of social constructivism are usually widely supported by his clarification of language acquisition. According to these clarifications, a full comprehension of the connections among the thoughts and the language is essential in order to understand the processes of intellectual progress fully. Furthermore, Vygotsky does not view the language as simply a demonstration of the obtained knowledge of the children (Vygotsky, 1978). There appears to be a substantial interconnection among the thoughts and speech with regard to the provision of resources for one another. Based on this, it can be said that language is turning into more and more essential in the formation of the thoughts and the development of the personality traits as the child grows up (Vygotsky, 1978). For these reasons, in accordance with the theories that are introduced by Vygotsky, the position of the family and the educators in the process of acceleration of the cognitive development of the kids is rather significant, particularly in the areas of language acquirement and the further progression of the skills.

According to the constructivist theory of learning, children learn through having experiences and through thinking about those experiences. Constructivism holds that children are the creators of their own knowledge, not teachers or parents. When learning something new, children find ways to connect new information to pre-existing knowledge and ideas. This may result in a change of beliefs, or it may lead to the new information being discarded as irrelevant or incorrect. The role of the teacher is to instruct and guide the knowledge-integration and reflection process (Christie, 2005).

In the constructivist paradigm, learning is an active process rather than a passive one. Children do not learn best by being lectured at nor does learning happen because of memorization, recitation and copying notes from the chalkboard. Instead, children learn when they participate in hands-on tasks in authentic, real-world settings; for example, when they problem solve, explore, ask questions, receive feedback, and seek to understand others' point of view (Grabowski, 2004).

When students engage in role-play, they learn to consider different situations from the perspective of another person. Role-playing is a way for students to enhance their understanding of complex social situations by improvisation, by putting themselves in the mindset of people who actually lived through historic events. This experiential knowledge gives students a much deeper understanding of history than memorization of dates, locations, and events (Honebein, 1996).

With the constructionist view of learning in mind, role-playing in the classroom as an activity invites students to enthusiastically participate in the learning process. Role-playing helps students develop their critical thinking abilities and enhance their prior knowledge and understanding. This approach will engage the student on a meaningful level, and this benefit will be reflected in students' academic outcomes. From the constructivist point of view awareness has no goal or outright value. It doesn't exist freely for the learner, but instead is conducted with regard to the learner's understanding, perception, reflection, experimentation and collaboration with the surrounding (Glaserfeld, 1995).

The learners who are involved in the act of role-play start learning a system that places them in the situations, which they have never dealt with before and grants the learners with an opportunity to associate, convey and consult with other learners in the particular roles in these settings (Yardley-Matwiejczuk, 1997). In doing so they learn acceptance as well as the need to tolerate different viewpoints. They master a skill related to individuality as well as circumstance, through impersonation, perception, input, investigation and conceptualization (Steinwachs & Sugar, 1990). While role-playing, students also learn that all things considered can provoke them to enhance different sorts of behavioral mode which expands their capacity to connect (Ladrousse, 1989; Ments, 1994). Still, role-play might be tedious and can contain the danger of overwhelming, up to the rejection of strong hypothesis and realities (Ments, 1994).

2.3 Speaking Skills and Role-Play

This section deals with studies related to speaking skills and role play, with specific emphasis on the importance of developing speaking skills. Most of these studies reveal that training and effective techniques can improve students' speaking skills.

Basturkmen (2001) investigated the effect of "learners as observers of discourse approach" (p. 79) on developing students' academic speaking skills. Outcomes showed that the learners appreciated the experience of analyzing the spoken data and that of following classroom instruction; the learners' perceptions of the acts more closely matched those of native speakers than they did prior to instruction.

Patrick (2002) examined the influence of Readers' Theatre (RT) on teaching oral skills in English education. Outcomes showed that RT helps EFL students enhance their oral skills because they are encouraged to develop their speech and pronunciation when presenting for a live audience. Also, it helps students lift their confidence while speaking English.

Wenli (2005) conducted a study to improve speaking skills by the means of the instructive training and the oral involvement in the class activities. The study draws the attention of the tutors and the learners to the necessity of the interaction of the students during the learning process or the oral involvement of the learners in the classroom. The study suggested solutions to the existing problem of the reticence of the students who choose English as their second language, engaging the Taiwanese learners in this study. The detailed instructions about active involvement in the learning process were offered to the participants of the study from the experimental group in order to determine if these actions are able to increase the oral involvement of the learners in the classroom and result in the active development of the speaking skills of the learners. Results of the study showed that classroom participation can develop speaking skills and increase students' interaction in the classroom.

Simpson (2006) assessed the speaking proficiency of the adult students of English as the second language in comparison to the speakers of other languages. The study was conducted on the basis of the concerns in the academic world that the contributors to this research will probably have dissimilar outlooks on the subject of the essence of speech event and what a speaking exam consists of in practice. The study employed numerous concepts of language learning, for instance, the concepts of

“knowledge schema” and “frame” with the intention of combining the areas of interest at the same time as the speaking proficiency is tested. Results of the study proved that the speaking tests have to be regarded as the individual interviews or the dialogues among the divergent interpretation of the examination that was conducted among the participants of the study.

Le Page (2006) developed an understanding of English language learner’s interpretations of the roles of oral language proficiency, social interaction, and safe environment in learning to speak successfully. The study’s design was participatory hermeneutic research. Fifth and sixth grade students were selected from schools in Reno, Nevada. Students were needed to interact with peers and teachers who speak English at a higher level. Also, students had to have the opportunity to take risks, ask questions, and have the chance to use their speaking skills. Findings of this study recommend changes in elementary schools that taught English language to students. Students need opportunities to build and develop oral language in a context which encourages their interaction with others who speak at a more fluent level. A safe environment for students provides the opportunity to take risks in speaking a new language.

Jones (2007) outlined a well-defined basis for the development of the speaking proficiency in the framework of the curriculum for the younger population and drawn the attention of the academics towards a number of methods that can be adopted by the tutors in order to encourage efficient talking exercises. In the framework of this research, the dialogic teaching, which is an interactive method of development of the speaking skills with the help of oral exercises) was studied as a method of encountering the beginning, reaction, and criticisms, which served as the primary features of the dialogue between the tutors and the learners. Results of the study demonstrated that the part of the development process of speaking proficiency, by using interactive approaches, can develop children’s metacognitive awareness.

Salem (2013) studied the effect of a proposed program in developing the speaking skills of English language among preparatory stage pupils in light of Multiple Intelligences theory. The participants of the study were 40 preparatory stage pupils. The tool of the study was a speaking test and a program based on Multiple Intelligences theory. Results of the study indicated that Multiple Intelligences theory could have an effect on developing the English-speaking skills of preparatory stage pupils.

The previous studies attempted to evaluate students' performance in oral communication. Results of some studies indicate that communicative and interactive activities could be effective in improving the speaking skills of students at different stages of education. The current study profited from the review of previous studies in planning the program to improve students' speaking skills. These studies, in general, agree with the current study in the following points:

- Emphasizing the importance of developing the speaking skill due to its significance in developing the other language skills.
- Giving importance to teaching language communicatively as language comes to reality in context, situations, and actual speech events.
- Speaking is developed through student-centered techniques, rather than teacher-centered techniques. In other words, pupils must have the main role while the teacher should serve as a facilitator, providing guidance where necessary.

Most of the studies reviewed below demonstrate the importance of including drama and the effect of role playing in developing speaking skills.

Hemdan, Nasr, and El Abady (2005) conducted an experimental study where they investigated the effect of drama activities on developing thinking skills for students in third grade primary school. Results showed that students who learn in the light of drama activities achieved progress over students who learn in the light of traditional language learning approach. The researchers used an interactive approach, depending on group work, while implementing different drama activities, such as role play, singing, and miming.

Abdallah (2008) investigated the effect of dramatizing the content of the novel in developing students' speaking skill. The sample of study consisted of first year preparatory school students. The tools implemented were dramatized course and pre-post speaking test. The results of the study proved the effect of using the technique of dramatizing the content of the novel on developing the first-year preparatory school students speaking skill.

Adel-Halim (2004) examined the effect of using drama in developing the speaking skill of fifth primary pupils. The sample consisted of 85 primary pupils randomly selected from two Cairo governmental primary schools, namely, Helwan Elkadima Primary School for Boys and Girls and Mohamed Farid Primary School.

The tools were a speaking skill checklist and speaking skill test. Results of the study showed that primary pupils' speaking skills improved significantly after using drama as a teaching method. This study also stressed the positive role of the learner in the classroom, and that the role of the teacher is that of a facilitator when drama is used as a teaching method.

Sun (2003) investigated the effect of drama activities in developing thinking skills for primary school pupils. Results showed that pupils who had learnt in the light of drama activities achieved more progress over pupils who learn in the light of traditional language learning approach. The researchers used an interactive approach, depending on group work, while implementing different drama activities, such as role play, singing, and miming.

Johnson (2002) conducted a study on the effect of teaching drama in developing the speaking skills for pupils in the primary school stage. The experimental group was involved in 25 sessions of study. A pre-post test was used to assess the degree to which the experimental group pupils developed their speaking skills. Analysis of data showed that the experimental group scored higher on the post-test, and the results showed that studying drama developed the pupils' speaking skills.

Langer and Fitzgerald (1997) conducted a study that aimed at investigating the use of drama activities in developing reading skills with intermediate EFL learners. The experimental classes involved 10 sessions which included drama activities. The experimental group scored higher on post-tests after studying drama, compared with the control group which studied through a traditional method. Langer and Fitzgerald found out that literature taps into what the students know and who they are. According to Langer and Fitzgerald, literature causes the students to reflect on their lives, open their learning, and improve their language. The experimental group which studied drama was able to practice questioning, interpreting, connecting, and exploring; thus, drama can open horizons of possibilities.

Makita (1998) conducted a study about the importance of applying role-play techniques, which are classroom methods that inspire students to participate in the learning process. It is critical to note that "dramatic activity takes several different forms and that the teacher can provide students with a variety of learning experiences by developing different methodologies according to individual needs interests and learning levels" (Makita, p. 1149). In addition, these role-playing activities allow the

teacher to create a supportive, entertaining classroom environment in which students are motivated to efficiently learn the language.

Based upon the previous studies, the following points were taken into account in designing the present research: Teachers need to bridge new information and students' background knowledge. Teachers have to activate the student's thinking process by applying some drama activities, such as role-play as well as some oral expression.

2.4 Concluding remarks about Chapter Two

This Chapter establishes the theoretical foundation for this thesis, as the researcher reviewed a considerable number of older and recent studies, both theoretical and research-based, about learning to speak in English speak in ESOL classrooms, along with its types, functions, purposes, and components. In addition, the chapter examines a number of studies that tackle the issue of a role-playing strategy in classroom education and its role in developing and improving the speaking skills of elementary school students. As such, the reviewed literature in this chapter helps to obtain a clear idea about the previous theories and assumptions that are closely related to role-playing and its impact on elementary students. The following chapter will provide a description of the research methodology used in this study, including the design, the participants, the tools of the study, the data collection, and the data analysis steps.

Chapter Three – Methodology and Procedures

This chapter gives a complete description of the research design, tools, participants, and procedures followed throughout the present study.

3.1 Research Design

The present study adopted the descriptive method of reviewing literature and studies related to the subject of the study and collect data on EFL speaking skills and role-playing. This study adopted one of the experimental methods which are the quasi-experimental method, as it suits the nature of the study. Quasi-experimental research is usually conducted to assess the effectiveness of a treatment—perhaps, a type of educational intervention. The prefix “quasi” means resembling, and therefore, quasi-experimental research is a research that looks like experimental research yet is not a genuine experimental research. The reason for this is that, despite the fact that the independent variable is controlled, participants are not randomly assigned to conditions or orders of conditions (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Because the independent variable is manipulated before the dependent variable is measured, quasi-experimental research eliminates the directionality problem. But because participants are not randomly assigned—making it likely that there are other differences between conditions—quasi-experimental research does not eliminate the problem of mistaking variables; therefore, quasi-experiments are generally somewhere between correlational studies and true experiments (Cook & Campbell, 1979). This study followed the quasi-experimental design by choosing two groups of students without any random pre-selection process. The class was divided by the researcher with no interference from the school teachers or the administrators.

There are many designs of quasi-experiments. This study will make use of a pretest-posttest design. Cook and Campbell (1979) state as follows:

“The dependent variable is measured once before the treatment is implemented and once after it is implemented. If the average posttest score is better than the average pretest score, it makes sense to conclude that the treatment might be responsible for the improvement. Unfortunately, often, one cannot conclude this with a high degree of certainty because there may be other explanations for why the posttest scores are better” (p.89).

To investigate the effect of the independent variable (role-playing) on the dependent variable (speaking skills), two third year elementary school classes were randomly chosen: One of the classes was the experimental group, and the other was a control group. The experimental group was randomly chosen through their class name list and was taught through the strategy based on role-playing to develop their speaking skills. On the other hand, the control group received regular instruction by their regular classroom teacher. A pre-post speaking skill test was administered to both groups before and after the experiment. Both groups were taught the content within the same hours per week. Role-play strategy replaced the regular class time so it can be directly compared to the control group's class hours.

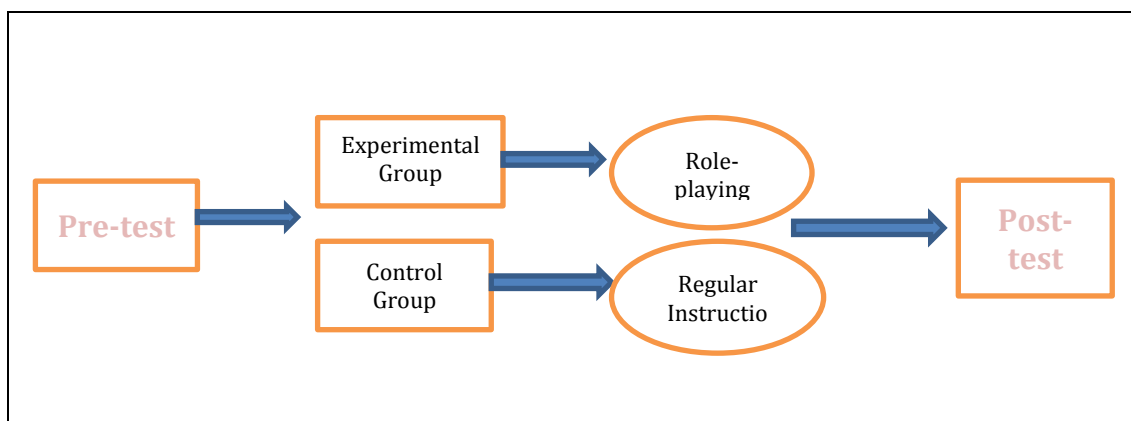


Figure 1 Research Design

3.2 Participants of the Study

The subjects in this study were 24 third grade elementary school students. There were two classes chosen from four classes of third graders in one of the American schools in Cairo. The student's age range was between 7 – 9 years, including both boys and girls.

3.3 Instructions of Both Groups

The control group received the regular instruction by their regular classroom teacher. Regular instruction implies that the teacher should explain the lesson and engages students in activities that depend mainly on reading a text or answering questions. Opportunities for real communication and natural speaking situations were almost absent, whereas, the researcher of the present study taught the experimental group through the suggested strategy that depends on role-playing.

3.4 Duration of the Experiment

The experiment was carried out in the second term of the scholastic year 2016-2017. It started on March 1st 2017 and ended on June 1st 2017.

3.5 Instruments of the Study

The present study implemented three instruments, which were designed by the researcher based on previous studies, which are as follows:

3.5.1 The speaking skill checklist. The speaking skills checklist was designed by the researcher to determine and identify the most important and suitable speaking skills for the third-grade school students. The checklist in its primary form was designed in light of the literature review and previous studies, in addition to opinions of experienced third-grade school teachers. The speaking skills checklist in its primary form included sub-skills (grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy, fluency, coherence, unity, intonation, comprehension, and accent) (See Appendix 1.). The skills had to be rated by jury members to determine the degree of importance and suitability according to a rating scale of three alternatives: very important, important, and less important. Each level of importance is given an estimated value to be scored by the researcher. The first level, very important = 3, the second level, important = 2, and the third level, less important = 1.

3.5.1.1 Definition of skills and sub skills. The speaking skills checklist included sub-skills, such as grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy, fluency, coherence, unity, intonation, comprehension, and accent. The checklist entries named above are defined and described below.

Grammar. Grammar entails the arrangement and structuring of words to compose a proper sentence. Grammar encapsulates a system of language made of morphology and syntax. For role-playing, English speaking checklist included grammar which was indexed as a skill since the learners both in the control and experimental groups were tested on the same (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The learners were evaluated on their ability to carefully structure and compose meaningful and proper sentences, while following the required morphology and syntax.

Pronunciation. Pronunciation entails the manner in which a word, phrase, or language is spoken in its entirety. More specifically, pronunciation signifies the

specifics in which a word is uttered. Notably, pronunciation is a relative concept of language and utterance, since one word can be spoken variably by different people, groups, or societies. The intricacies of varied pronunciation are determined by factors of predisposition, training, and culture. For instance, factors such as childhood exposure, residence, and length of time stayed in a particular significantly vary how different people speak given similar words (Richards & Renandya, 2002). For the study, the checklist aimed at finding out how the learners, in both groups, could pronounce words in free speaking while reflecting on their lessons. The concept of role-play was being tested to determine how it affects pronunciation.

Vocabulary. Vocabulary signifies a body of words, phrases, and expressions used in a given language or that which is known to a person. When speaking English or any other language, the diction known by a person may also be referred to as vocabulary. For the checklist, the students were being tested on their learned English vocabulary (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Those in the experimental group were exposed to a particular set of vocabulary, while those in the control group were not exposed to the set of diction. Therefore, those learners placed in the experimental group exhibited a significant command of vocabulary than those in the control group.

Accuracy. Accuracy entails the degree or level of a conformity and consistency that a result indicates when cross checked with given standard measure or value. The term may also be used to indicate the level of precision of a particular measure, value, or scenario (Sifakis, 2004). For the learners, they were being tested to determine the accuracy with which they could form sentences and express themselves in English.

Fluency. When referring to English speaking, fluency may be termed as the ability to express oneself articulately and easily (Sifakis, 2004). To the English language learners in Egypt, their fluency, following the role-play for the experimental group, was being determined. The experimental group was found to be more fluent in spoken English than the control group.

Coherence. The ability to form consistent, logical, and unified sentences in English is termed as English language coherency (Sifakis, 2004). The learners from both groups were being tested on coherency after the role-play session.

Unity. In English language speaking, unity entails the ability to construct sentences and expressions, which communicate the same idea in a holistic and

integrated manner (Mitrofanova, 2012). The learners were being tested on their ability to construct sentences which were connected and integrated.

Intonation. This entails how the voice rises or falls when speaking. The learners were being tested on their ability to identify which words and phrases required high or low pitch.

Comprehension. This entails the ability to understand something. For the English language, the learners needed to understand the various tenets of English, such as vowels, verbs, adverbs, nouns, and adjectives, among others.

Accent. This entails a particular pronunciation technique associated with individuals, nations, locality, or social class. This may also refer to particular emphasis placed on certain words, syllables, or speech by inserting a specified distinct pitch or stress.

3.5.1.2 Designing the speaking skills checklist. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is a program offered to learners who do not speak English as their primary native language. Learning within the ESOL program has its own contextual intricacies faced by both the students and the teachers. As such, English language teachers, curriculum developers, and general language educators come up with varied methods with which they can effectively teach English as a subject (Cook, 2013). All the methods, approaches, and strategies aim at improving the overall competency of the learners in speaking English as fluently as possible. One of the methods mostly engaged by teachers and general language educators in teaching English is the concept of classroom role-play (Brookhart, 1999). The method is most suitable when applied to elementary stage students in learning of English. In most cases, teachers and curriculum developers have the intention of testing the level and capacity of learning as they progress. Testing the level of learning for the students allows the teachers, parents, curriculum developers, and the school administrators to gauge and determine how the instructional objectives are being met (Arreola, 2000). One method of testing the attainment of the pre-determined instructional objectives is the use of English language check lists.

In Egypt where the study was based, English is spoken and studied as a second language. Therefore, many learners have to cope with the challenge of learning a new language. As such, teachers and English language educators ensure to have specified methods of determining the level of instructional process and outcome as reflected in

the curriculum (Fenwick & Parsons, 2000). The checklist exists as a road map aimed at outlining the various stages, levels, and paradigms that an English language learner must pass in order to be deemed as fluent in the English. Therefore, the checklist is instrumentally significant for teachers, parents, curriculum developers, the school administration, and other important stakeholders. As such, the checklist must be designed in a manner that reflects the expected instructional outcomes as well as the specifics of the instructional objectives relevant for a heterogeneous group of students.

To have a well thought out and effective speaking skills checklist, I have considered a number of points. First, the study had to ensure that the checklist had a clear instructional and learning goal. The goal in the checklist was determined to be the effect of role in learning of English for ESOL. Role-play entails intricate tenets such as free speaking. Therefore, elements of grammar and vocabulary were embedded within the testability aimed by the goals. Vocabulary is also another section aimed by having a goal. Second, the checklist was aimed at having a clear objective (BCIT, n.d). Third, the checklist should address the specific instructional objectives in a clear and concise manner. Additionally, the checklist needs to be appropriate and relevant to the group of learners in a manner that reflects their level of learning, cognitive capacity, and grade. The checklist has to be competitive and contextually challenging to the learners in question as per the grade and learning abilities. Last, the checklist has to be formal, structured, and predictive.

To design my checklist, I considered the factors that contribute to quality and results oriented checklist. First, I determined the specific learning outcome that I was aiming to study. For this case, I wanted to have clear and objective instructional outcomes from both the experimental and the control groups. Secondly, I needed the checklist to contain elements that would indicate the effect of role play to learners within the paradigm of ESOL. Therefore. Elements of free speaking were identified to be instrumentally significant in designing my checklist. Additionally, I added grammar and vocabulary as part of the criteria that would be used when assessing both the control and the experimental groups. Specific aspects of vocabulary were integrated within the checklist deliverables as per the learning outcomes. Since the checklist outlines the specific learning outcomes, it was important to have the same designed in a simple, clear, and concise manner. As such, I designed the checklist to usable by anyone without much of induction. This ideology ensured that using the

checklist to assess the learning deliverables for both groups was easy and fast. The instructional objectives reiterated in the curriculum were listed categorically with increasing level of difficulty and complexity. Additionally, I was able to design a checklist that was relevant and appropriate to the specific group of learners that I was targeting with my study. Notably, I learned that although the level of difficulty of the checklist had to be learner appropriate, it had to be as challenging as possible so that I can get the desired results effectively. Lastly, I was able to design a formal and predictive checklist that can be reused in the event of another study.

To test the validity of the checklist “such evidence may be obtained from thorough search of literature, from representatives of a relevant population, or from content experts who are asked to judge the extent to which items on the instrument represent the defined content” (Gaberson, 2017, p.1093), and thus, to ensure the validity of the speaking checklist; it was first submitted to five jury members specialized in the field of curriculum and English language instruction in its primary form. The five members were to determine the degree of importance and appropriateness of the sub-skills included in the checklist (See Appendix 2). Some items were modified in the initial draft in the light of their comments.

The modifications suggested by the jury were as follows:

Omitting some sub-skills that go beyond the students’ language level at their respective age;

- Reducing the number of sub-skills to be developed appropriately by the researcher in the allotted time of the experiment; and
- Adding the sub-skill ‘comprehension’.

The researcher included the skills approved by the jury members in the final form of the checklist. In light of the comments of the jury, the speaking checklist in its final form consisted of the following sub-skills: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension. Thus, the first question of the present study (which was—what are the verbal ESOL speaking skills required for elementary stage school students in American-curriculum private schools in Cairo, Egypt?) was answered through the following sub-skills: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension.

A pilot study aimed at examining the reliability of the speaking checklist was conducted. Therefore, 10 students from the same school were selected from a

third-grade class other than the two classes of the experimental and the control group for this purpose. Both genders aged between 7 and 9 from an American school in Cairo, Egypt results of this pilot was finding difficulty in expressing their ideas, committing grammatical mistakes, and facing problems with fluency.

3.5.2 English speaking skills pre/post test. The purpose of the speaking skills pre-post test was to measure the effectiveness of teaching speaking by using role-play; the researcher gave oral test to the students.

3.5.2.1 Description of test. The researcher constructed the primary form of the test in the light of the following:

- Reviewing the literature and the previous studies concerning the speaking skills as mentioned in chapter two.
- Students' textbook.
- Consulting experienced third-grade school teachers (See Appendix 2)

The test was submitted to the jury members to reflect on its items' importance and suitability as it was composed of 10 pictures, besides a group of five questions concerning each picture. The students were asked to choose pictures that they liked from the album, prepared by the researcher, and speak about each picture (See Appendix 2). The researcher gave each student the chance to choose his/her picture in order to be able to speak about. The researcher was cautious about choosing a picture or topic that they did not like, so they would not be able to speak about and as a consequence might get false results. In other words, the researcher gave them the chance to choose the picture that suits each student's interests because if the researcher decides for them, they may find it dull or have nothing to speak about. The researcher wanted to be sure that if they do not have the ability to speak, it would be because they lack this skill and not because they do not like the picture chosen and they have nothing to say about it. The researcher prepared a group of questions to elicit students' ideas if they could not proceed in the speech. The researcher used an audio recorder to record their speech. (See Appendix 3)

3.5.2.2 Validity of test. Validity is concerned with whether a test measures the skill or information that it is supposed to measure. In order for the tool to be valid,

the researcher found that it should be checked by jury to judge whether it measures what it is intended to measure, to confirm that the “validity of content-related evidence comes from the judgments of people who are either experts in the testing of that particular content area or are content experts” (Gaberson, 2017 ,p.1092) and therefore, after ensuring the validity of the speaking test, it was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure its ethical suitability and that the rights and welfare of for third graders are protected. The IRB committee acknowledged its suitability after asking for parental consent, due to students’ young age.

3.5.2.3 Reliability of test. To ensure the reliability of the speaking test before administering it to the students included in the study, the test-retest technique was used where the test was administered twice to a sample of 10 students from a third-grade class other than the classes of the experimental group and the control group. The sample group was tested and then retested after two weeks. Reliability of the test was estimated by comparing the scores of the students in both the first and second administrations. The value of the reliability (0.91) showed that the speaking test was reliable. The reliability coefficient was estimated using Pearson's correlation coefficient:

$$r = \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where:

R = Correlation coefficient between the two administrations;

N = Number of the sample;

X = Students’ mean ranks on the first administration of the test; and

Y = Students’ mean ranks on the second administration of the test.

3.5.2.4 Timing the test. The same 10 students, other than the control group and the experimental group, were used to estimate the time required for the students to answer the test questions. The time was estimated by calculating the summation of the time taken by all the students divided to the number of the students. So, the time allotted per picture was 5 minutes. The time was estimated in the following way:

The summation of the time taken by all the students

The number of the students

Test time = $50 \div 10 = 5$ minutes

3.5.2.5 Administering the test. The pre-administration of the test was held with both the control and the experimental groups on March 1st, 2017. Along with me, a group of three professional elementary class teachers were responsible for administering the test and explaining it to the students. The post-administration of the test was administrated to both groups two days after the experiment, on June 1st, 2017. The post-administration conditions were relatively the same as those of the pre-administration of the test in terms of place and time. The tests were administered by the researcher. Data was collected after receiving the IRB approval (See Appendix 6).

3.5.3 The speaking skills scoring rubric. In the light of the checklist, the researcher adapted a scoring rubric from Azza Kamal El Din (Kamal El Din, 2016). Depending on this rubric, the raters of the speaking test will score students' verbal performance. The rubric helped them provide detailed feedback about the effect of the strategy. For each speaking skill, three levels were identified. Level (4) represented excellent performance, level (3) represented good performance, level (2) represented fair performance, and level (1) represented poor performance (See Appendix 4 for further details) (Kamal El-Din, 2016).

3.6 Role Play Strategy

3.6.1 Rationale of the strategy. The role-play strategy is a student-centered one as students discuss, share, and exchange information among themselves. Throughout the study, the implemented role-play strategy depended on group work and interaction among the members of each group, where they discussed together each story, rehearsed and took decisions concerning the roles by themselves.

The essence of these principles stems from the strategy of the role-playing reviewed in chapter two which are as follows:

- Giving students opportunities to practice natural language;
- Focusing on meaning/making sense and delivering the message;
- Role-playing reflects the sense of real life situations;

- Students pretend to be other persons and thus express feelings, ideas and thoughts in a safe and free environment;

Speaking is an interactive process in which two persons or more are involved in a real situation in which they exchange talk or use the target language in a functional, social convenience and with reasonable linguistic ability.

The main aim of the strategy was to develop students' speaking skills through a systematic plan and not through inventory items and rules. Thus, the goal was not only grammatical perfection but meaningful communication.

In the present strategy, language objectives were systematically integrated with role-playing procedures. Students practiced tasks to achieve language objectives related to speaking skill, through stories presented in their academic textbook. These stories were presented through role-playing where students discussed, rehearsed, and acted out the stories.

3.6.2 Aims of the strategy. The strategy enabled students to develop the speaking skills needed as juried by specialized experts in the field.

The importance of teaching English speaking skills could be presented as follows:

- 1- To develop students' spoken competency through various role-playing activities; and
- 2- To enhance students' self-confidence as they engage in communicative activities that promotes speaking.

3.6.3 Objectives of the strategy. By the end of the strategy, students will be able to the following:

- 1- Speak clearly with confidence and with less difficulty;
- 2- Pronounce words appropriately;
- 3- Use correct grammar while speaking;
- 4- Use appropriate vocabulary that suites the situation;
- 5- Speak fluently with less hesitation; and
- 6- Comprehend fully what is said to them as well as use comprehensible language.

Table 1

Summary of the sessions

Story	Number of sessions	Teaching aids and accessories	Characters	Date and time
1- A red riding hood	2	Candle, red hood, and basket rope	Woman (mother)- 3 children–Wolf	45 minutes each 19/3/2017 21/3/2017
2- Chestnut love	2	Apron, nose pig, and a crow for the king	Narrator—Mrs. Lark, the king, Joe Morgan and Fergvson	45 minutes each 23/3/2017 26/3/2017
3- Two Bear Cubs	3	Blue chats on floor as water, MM’s as berries, and a desk as a rock-behind desk as backstage	Story teller—mother Grizzly, older, brother- younger brother- hawk- fox- badger- mother deer- fawn- mountain lion- mouse and worm	45 minutes each 28/3/2017 30/3/2017 2/4/2017
4- Ramona Quinby	2	Cat mask	Ramona- Danny (yard Ape)- Mrs. Waaky- Sara – Janet	45 minutes each 4/4/2017 6/4/2017
5- The Robo dogs of Greenville	2	Classroom	Narrator- Cosmo- Robodog- professor- Captain pacely	Diz- 45 minutes each 20/4/2017 23/4/2017
6- The Science	3	Wings, clipboards,	Ms.Babbitt-	30 minutes

Fair		and desks organized as gym science	Beany- Carol- Mr.Shanner- Kowalski- Shaleeta- Kevin's mom	Kevin- Stacy- Ms. Jessica-	each 25/4/2017 2/5/2017 4/5/2017
7- Voyage across the solar system	4	White coat for the scientist, desks as controllers, rubbers, pens, pencils used as control board	Captain engineer- first scientist- mem 1- 2	- doctor- male- crew	30 minutes each 7/5/2017 9/5/2017 11/5/2017 14/5/2017

3.7 Classroom Teaching Procedures

Based on recommendations of the previous studies mentioned in chapter two, group work is considered one of the recommended techniques teachers may rely on to encourage students to be involved in the learning process. Besides, group work suited the design of the present strategy, which is a student-centered one, based on role-playing that emphasizes interaction through working in groups.

Different activities were used to encourage the students to be involved in role-playing. Acting out cards, discussions, playing games, information gap activities are samples of the activities used in the strategy. The concentration was on the language use rather than language usage, where language usage refers to the rules for making language, (i.e. the structures used) while language use considers the communicative meaning of language.

Accordingly, the following points were taken into consideration during implementation:

- The teacher (researcher) introduced the strategy to the students pointing out that it would be fun, and they would enjoy practicing English speaking as they are going to act out the stories that they study;

- Students were divided into four groups, each consisting of three students.
- Groups chose nick names for themselves;
- Each group was responsible for accomplishing the task assigned, which is mentioned in the sample sessions, concerning the roles that they would play and the exercises provided in each session;
- Each member of the group had a role to play every time;
- When a group acted out a scene, other groups played the role of audience,
- After role playing the scene, the other groups discussed with the actors the scene and the roles that they played; and
- Members of the groups followed these steps each time:
 - Discussed the scene they were supposed to act out together;
 - Divided the roles among themselves under the supervision of the teacher;
 - Rehearsed the chosen scene and one of them acted as a director at the same time;
 - The role of the director changed each time; and
 - They were informed that they can rewrite the scenes using their own words.

Sample session

Each session was divided into several aspects that were consistent throughout the lessons. The researcher did not follow a lesson plan as she followed the procedures of the strategy where she had objectives, content (the stories from the textbook), materials (mentioned in the above table), The researcher assigned time for each task and exercise. Each session gives detailed explanation of what was done in the classroom for each story. This included an introductory session.

Introductory session

Objectives:

By the end of this session, students would be able to:

- 1- Ask and answer questions about the mini lesson
- 2- Discuss short scenes
- 3- Act out short scenes
- 4- Evaluate their own performance

Time: 45 minutes

Procedures:

- 1- The teacher greeted the students and introduced herself to them.
- 2- The teacher presented the strategy to the students; telling them that they would study the stories in their textbook through acting out the scenes of the story.
- 3- She started asking them about the actors and actresses they like most to break the ice.
- 4- She gave each student the chance to introduce him/herself and spoke about the actor or actress he/she liked.
- 5- The teacher told them that they were supposed to speak in English, but if they did not know certain words they might ask for her help.
- 6- The teacher told them that they would start the first activity which was funny and interesting:

Activity1

Title: Cards. Duration: 15 minutes

- The teacher showed them a group of folded cards and asked each student to get a card.
- She asked them to unfold the cards in hand. Asking each student to read his/her sentence.
- The teacher had a card too. She read her own card. The teacher told them that they were supposed to act out the sentence written in the card and she would be the first one who would act out her sentence.
- Students were encouraged to act out their sentences after watching their teacher acting her own.
- This activity was so funny and students enjoyed it.

Activity 2

Title: interview your colleague. Duration: 15 minutes

- Students were trained in this activity to act out longer scenes, using more complicated language.
- The teacher asked the students to work in pairs. Each one stood facing his/her partner and started a conversation between each other asking about their family, the food they like, the sport they play or enjoy ...etc.

Activity 3

Title: chair character. Duration: 15 minutes

The aim of this activity was to encourage students to improvise and to pretend to be other persons.

In this last activity, the teacher divided the students into three groups, each consisted of four students. Each group chose a name for themselves (this division lasted till the end of the strategy)

- Teacher asked each group to choose one of them to play the role of an actor, actress, singer, player ...etc.
- The rest of the group played the roles of television reports who interviewed this famous character.
- The famous character sat on a chair and the interviewee stood in front of the famous character and started the conversation.
- The teacher circulated among the groups for follow up, and helps if needed.
- The teacher gave them feedback concerning the tone of the voice, the language they used, the pronunciation of some words and the facial expressions as well as the body movements.
- She informed them that from the next time they would give feedback to each other as she had done. Mention the good points first, then mention the points that need to be improved.
- She told them their feedback should include the performance and the language used.

The previous activities were all in the introductory session. Now, I will discuss sessions using the stories from their original textbooks.

Session 1: A Red Riding Hood (45 minutes)

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Discuss the story using their own language
- 2- Rehearse the chosen scenes
- 3- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 4- Pronounce the words correctly
- 5- Use grammar accurately
- 6- Speak their lines fluently
- 7- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech

Materials and teaching aids:

Candles – red hood – basket – rope - textbook

Procedures:

- 1- The teacher began this session by narrating the story for the student
- 2- She gave them the chance to ask questions
- 3- Students were asked to form the groups assigned the previous session
- 4- The scenes were previously prepared and written in cards which were put in a jar.
- 5- The teacher asked each group to choose a card and unfold it to know the scene they were supposed to role play.
- 6- All the narrative parts were omitted. The scenes were summarized and written in the form of dialogues to be covered in only two sessions.
- 7- Each group started reading their part, dividing the roles among themselves, discussing how they would role-play their parts, and finally rehearsing their roles under the supervision of the teacher and with her guidance and help.

Session 2: Red Robin Hood (continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance

Materials and teaching aids:

Candles – red hood – basket – rope - textbook

Procedures: (groups were seated in circles)

- 1- The teacher started this session by asking each group about their scene, asking them to present the characters to her to be sure that each student had a role.
- 2- She gave them 10 minutes to revise the scene before starting the performance.
- 3- Group 1 (The Pioneers) came to the middle of the class and started acting out the scene

(the arrival of the wolf) using the materials mentioned before. Teacher interfered when needed (10 minutes).

- 4- The other two groups were the audience. They were asked to write comments in a sheet of paper.
- 5- After the role playing, the audience together with the teacher gave their feedback on the performance and the language aspects. (5 minutes)
- 6- The same procedures were repeated with the other two groups.

** It is worth noting that after finishing each story, students together with the teacher meet at the theater of the school to role play the whole story. Students were playing the role of the characters and other students play the role of the director, time manager and narrator. They exchanged roles each time they were involved in a role play with a different story.

Chapter Four –Data Analysis, Results and their Interpretations

This study sought to investigate the effect of a strategy based on role-playing to improve elementary stage students' speaking skills. This chapter presents findings related to the second research question and hypotheses of the study. Research question one was answered in chapter three through the speaking skills checklist. The checklist was presented to jury members (See Appendix 2) who indicated the five sub skills appropriate for the subjects of the study. In order to answer the second research question "what is the impact of role-play in developing students' speaking skills?" the first step was to establish the equivalence between the two groups (experimental and control). This step aimed to identify whether there are any differences between the groups. Without this step, results of the post-test would not be accurate, meaning that it would not be exact. Therefore, the pre-test was administered to both groups, and the results calculated were statistically analyzed by Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon.

The Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon test is used to compare differences between two independent groups. The Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon test is "a two-sample rank test for the difference between two population medians . . . It assumes that the data are independent random samples from two populations that have the same shape. (Ashby, 1991, p.391)

The statistical analysis was done on two levels; the first level was analyzing students' performance on the overall speaking test. The second level was analyzing students' performance on each speaking subskill, because the overall test may prove that both groups did not achieve significant results, but one subskill, though, may be found to help the research in achieving positive results more than any of the other sub-skills. Therefore, the researcher decided to emphasize their equivalence in every sub-skill too. The statistical analysis shows that both groups have the same level of spoken language skills. This means that any development achieved by the experimental group would be due to the role-play strategy. The following is the presentation of the statistical analysis of the data gained.

First: Achieving the equivalence between the experimental group and the control group on the overall speaking pre-test and on each speaking sub-skill.

Table 2

Results of Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon comparing the significance of the mean ranks of the overall speaking pre-test between the experimental group and the control group

Variable	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	sig	Eta square η^2
Total score	Experimental	12	11.67	140.00	62.000	140.000	-	.559	-
	control	12	13.33	160.00					

Value of table z at significant level $.05 = 1,96$

Value of table z at significant level $.01 = 2,58$

Table 2 shows that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean rank scores between the experimental and control groups on the overall speaking pre-test, where the calculated $z = 0.585$, which is not statistically significant. This means that both groups' performance on the speaking skill pre-test are similar. They do not differ from each other before applying role-playing strategy, and thus, any change that happens after the study can be due to the suggested role-play strategy.

Table 3

Results of Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon comparing the significance of the mean ranks of the sub skills of the speaking pre-test between the experimental group and the control group

Variable	Group	N	Mean Ranks	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	sig	Eta square η^2
Grammar	Experimental	12	12.25	147.00	69.000	147.000	-.196	.845	-
	control	12	12.75	153.00					
Pronunciation	Experimental	12	11.83	142.00	64.000	142.000	-.526	.599	-
	control	12	13.17	158.00					
Vocabulary	Experimental	12	10.21	122.50	44.500	122.500	-	.074	-
	control	12	14.79	177.50					
Fluency	Experimental	12	11.83	142.00	64.000	142.000	-.515	.606	-
	control	12	13.17	158.00					
Comprehension	Experimental	12	13.75	165.00	57.000	135.000	-.923	.356	-
	control	12	11.25	135.00					

Value of table z at significant level $.05 = 1,96$

Value of table z at significant level $.01 = 2,58$

Table 3 shows that there are no significant differences between the mean rank scores between the experimental group and the control group in the pre-speaking sub-

skills test, where calculated z for each sub-skill is not statistically significant. This suggests that both groups are equivalent to each other's performance level on the speaking skills before actually implementing the role-play strategy.

Second: The statistical differences between the performance of the experimental group and the control group on the speaking skills pre-posttest considering the first and second hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant difference between the mean ranks scores of the experimental and control group on the overall post speaking skill test in favor of the experimental group.

To determine the extent of change in students' performance on the overall speaking skill test due to the implementation of proposed strategy, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests were used. Table 3 indicates the mean ranks, z value and significance of the research groups scores in the overall speaking skills posttest.

Table 4

Results of Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon comparing the significance of the mean ranks of the overall speaking post-test between the experimental group and the control group

Variable	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	sig	Eta square η^2
Total score	Experimental	12	17.63	211.50	10.500	88.500	-3.592	.000	.46
	Control	12	7.38	88.50					

Value of table z at significant level .05=1,96

Value of table z at significant level .01=2,58

Table 4 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores of both groups (experimental and control) on the overall speaking skill post-test in favor of the experimental group, where calculated $z = -3.592$, which is statistically significant. Thus, hypothesis one is accepted, and this supports the claim that role-playing technique could be effective in developing speaking skills.

For further investigation, effect size was calculated to find out how much variance in speaking skill performance was due to the proposed strategy following the formula:

$$rpb = \sqrt{\frac{t^2}{t^2 + df}}$$

where:

- Identifying level of significance equivalent to Wilcoxon test (0.01);
- Identifying (D.F) which is $(2-2 N + 1N)$; and
- Identifying tabulated (t) equivalent to the levels of identified significance and degree of freedom.

Hypothesis 2: There are statistically significant differences between the mean ranks of the experimental and the control group in the sub skills of the post verbal speaking test, in favor of the experimental group.

To test this hypothesis, the non-parametric tests was used. The results of this test can be shown in Table 4 below

Table 5

Differences between the mean ranks of the experimental and control group in the sub skills of the post verbal speaking test

Variable	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	sig	η^2
Grammar	Experimental	12	15.92	191.00	31.000	109.000	-2.70	.007	.46
	control	12	9.08	109.00					
Pronunciation	Experimental	12	15.88	190.50	31.500	109.500	-2.80	.005	.46
	control	12	9.13	109.50					
Vocabulary	Experimental	12	16.00	192.00	30.000	108.000	-2.73	.006	.46
	control	12	9.00	108.00					
Fluency	Experimental	12	14.88	178.50	43.500	121.500	-1.85	.063	-
	control	12	10.13	121.50					
Comprehension	Experimental	12	16.58	199.00	23.000	101.000	-3.02	.003	.46
	control	12	8.42	101.00					

Value of table z at significant level .05=1,96

Value of table z at significant level .01=2,58

Table 5 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores between both groups (experimental and control) on the post overall speaking test as well as the sub-skills test, in favor of the experimental group. This supports the claim that the 12 students in the experimental group have developed significantly in the five sub-skills: grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Chapter Five- Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Researches

5.1 Discussion of the Findings

The aim of the present strategy was to develop the speaking skills of a group of elementary stage students in an American school in Egypt, through role-playing some stories that they study in their English course book. To achieve this aim, a role-play strategy was designed and implemented with third-grade students.

The statistical analysis indicated that the strategy could be effective, as the experimental group's performance on the pre-post speaking skills test improved significantly in the overall skill and in every sub-skill. Also, the experimental group achieved progress over the control group in the speaking skill post-test and the results were significant. These results answer research question two that sought to identify the impact of role-playing on developing the speaking skills. This could be due to the following reasons:

The study was a student-centered one where students had enough time to practice the spoken language. Students were no longer passive recipients and lecturing or modeling was no longer the sole teaching technique. The role-playing strategy provided an opportunity for a student-centered technique, where students were active members. They interacted with each other and with their teacher as well. They were responsible for their work and for the success of their performance. Spontaneity and confidence enhanced students' spoken language. This result supports that of Garrett (2008) and Mykrä (2015) who indicated that student-centered instruction contributes to students' positive learning environments; students who were participating in challenging, meaningful activities have little need or opportunity to be off-task or disruptive.

An important finding of this study is that the elementary stage students have reasonable knowledge about the English language, as they are American school students, but they lacked the opportunity to put this knowledge into practice. They know about the language, but they do not know the use of the language. Once they had the chance to practice the language in a free, non-threatening learning environment, they could apply the knowledge that they had already gained

successfully. Thus, it is concluded that language use is as important as learning the language usage. Language use means using language in communication and applying the linguistic rules in real life-like situations, where language usage means knowing about the language, learning rules, and memorizing vocabulary. Simply teaching the usage, with the minimum opportunity in using this knowledge in real situations, hinders the communicative ability of the students. This conclusion supports that of Nunan (2003) who advised teachers to use authentic language in meaningful contexts. He admitted that it is not easy to keep coming up with meaningful interaction. It takes energy and creativity to device authentic contexts and meaningful interaction, but the teachers must not give up. It must be done by teachers to produce competent speakers of English.

Having an introductory session seemed to be important for elementary stage students. It helped breaking the ice between them and the teacher. The researcher encountered some resistance at the very beginning. Later, when students started practicing the cards activity, the character chair activity, and the interview activity, they responded actively and were willing and enthusiastic to know more about the strategy. Thus, this session played a great role in the success of the strategy. This conclusion supports that of Bassma Ibrahim and Azza Kamal El Din (2015), who started their practical parts with introductory sessions as it helps students and teachers learn about each other and feel more at ease in their new setting.

Because the strategy was based on the stories that the students should study in their school textbook, they were actively willing to role-play them. This was an important element in designing the strategy. Most Egyptian students' interests are always related to what they study, to their exams, and the benefit that they get from engaging in such work. Therefore, the researcher relied on the stories in their textbook. This conclusion has been stressed in most studies accomplished in the Egyptian setting in all levels, because Egyptian students are exam oriented (Kamal el Din, 2015).

Classroom management was another element that could have helped in the success of the strategy. Teacher-student relationship and student-student relationship played a great role. Setting rules from the first session was important. Students were divided into groups from the first session and were informed that they would remain

in these groups till the end of the strategy. They were informed that they all should share roles in the scenes and that they were responsible for their work. Also, they knew the rules of criticism which included that they should identify the good points before the one that need modification. They were informed that they criticized the character, not the person who was playing that role. These rules encouraged students to participate in a friendly atmosphere. Shy students, who refused to play a role at first and were satisfied by playing the role of the director, were later encouraged to participate in acting out the scenes. This was a real success and accomplishment for the researcher. It enhanced their spontaneity and wellness to interact in the role-play process this conclusion supports that of Sieberer (2016) and Khatri's (2012), where they indicated that motivation is important for success in language learning. Motivation inspires the learning process and creates better opportunities in the activities. Also, students emphasized that besides developing the linguistic aspects of language, drama activities also promote a chance for authentic and spontaneous communication. Role-playing is an easy and profitable technique for language learning that should be known and used by all the language teachers who wish to improve their teaching and get the students more interested in the classes.

The idea of dividing the stories into scenes and each group role-playing a scene created an interactive atmosphere, where they shared information instead of memorizing it. This type of group work flourished their better understanding of the stories and enriched their emotional interaction and appreciation. This conclusion supports that of Toledo, (2016) who supported the use of group work in the language classroom as they believe that group work, foremost, offers students to engage in social interactions, which provides further opportunities for all students to communicate, collaborate, build a sense of belonging, friendship, and develop and enhance diverse skills. By prioritizing group work in the classroom, all students will be benefitted and develop essential skills beyond the English language. Besides, it saved time as each story was covered in two sessions, except for the last one that was covered in three sessions. Later, the whole story was acted out in the school theater and that sparked lively reactions among the students.

Finally, although the strategy aimed at developing students' verbal skills, it enhanced their non-verbal skills too. Role-playing means not only linguistic development of the language but also non-verbal skills. These include facial

expressions and body language because such non-verbal skills have a great role to play in delivering a message. Therefore, students were trained to express the characters' emotions through both verbal and non-verbal language. The integration of both, gave students the sense of reality and amusement at the same time. This conclusion supports that of Walesko (2000), who emphasized that role-playing develops, mainly, the student's oral skills. It emphasizes that the process of communicating develops more fluency than accuracy and promotes enthusiasm in the classroom, which makes the students speak up, one of the biggest challenges for teachers today.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that role playing is an effective technique to develop the speaking skills for elementary stage students, as it takes into consideration many factors that affect the learning process:

- There is an indication that students' spoken language progresses when language content, activities, and materials are related to what students' study in their courses.
- There is an evidence that the degree of progress in the spoken language affects the degree of content comprehension. The flexibility of the role-playing technique showed effect of the teaching/learning process, because it gave students room to discuss, express themselves, and evaluate and use their own language. That helped students better understand the stories and this understanding were reflected in their spoken language.
- The strategy seems to be effective in developing vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and comprehension of the students.
- There are evidences that when the learning process is centered around the learner and the teacher's role is minimized to that of a facilitator, students are urged to practice, discuss, share opinions, take decisions, and evaluate characters and situations. In other words, they become active learners.
- The results seem to indicate that group work facilitates learning, saves time, and creates friendly, encouraging and enjoyable atmosphere.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- 1- The speaking skill for the elementary stage needs to be enhanced through activities and techniques like role-playing to stimulate their creativity and critical thinking, to be able to give opinions and evaluate situations, which are 21st century skills;
- 2- Learning should be student-centered and teachers' authority should be minimized. Teachers should be facilitators and guides. They have to employ new educational techniques in their classes;
- 3- The use of pair and group work are recommended, as they encourage students to cooperate and help engage in negotiations that improve and develop their speaking skills;
- 4- Understanding of the speaking parameters or guides should be circulated amongst teachers and students;
- 5- There is a need for schools and teacher-education programs to include those techniques as an alternative to the traditional methods courses for in-service teachers' programs; and
- 6- Adjusting the tools of assessment of the speaking skills are to be more authentic, by including oral assessment tools.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Listed below are some suggestions for further research.

The use of role-playing technique to develop slow learners' listening and speaking skills:

- Using role-playing technique to improve elementary stage students' non-verbal skills; and
- Using role-playing strategy to develop speaking skills and achievement of the history course for preparatory stage students.
- A program based on role-playing to develop the linguistic and spiritual intelligence for secondary stage students

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Speaking skills checklist (First form)

Skill	Very important	Important	Less important
Grammar			
Unity			
Coherence			
Intonation			
Accent			
vocabulary			
Pronunciation			
Accuracy			
Fluency			

Speaking skills checklist (Final Form) after being modified

Skill	Very important	Important	Less important
Grammar			
vocabulary			
Pronunciation			
Comprehension			
Fluency			

Appendix 2

Jury members

Jury Members	Position
1- Dr. Manal Mohamed Abdul Aziz	Associate professor of TEFL, Department of curriculum and instruction, Faculty of Girls, Ain Shams University.
2- Ms.Liliane George	Head of Department, Department of English, The Egyptian Language school.
3- Ms.Maggie	English Teacher, Department of English, The Egyptian Language school.
4- Dr. Amira El-amir Khater	Associate professor of TEFL, Department of curriculum and instruction, Faculty of Girls, Ain Shams University.
5- Dr. Hanah Ahmad Hussien	Lecturer of TEFL, Department of curriculum and instruction, Faculty of Girls, Ain Shams University

Appendix 3

Pre/post Test

Situational Questions

To start the test, each student will first be asked to introduce him/herself, and then choose some pictures to talk about. I will leave the student to talk about it as much as he/she can for 5 minutes each picture. If they stopped before the time ends, I will help out by mentioning some questions about picture to get them going on with the conversation again. The questions are mentioned beneath each picture. Answers will be Audio recorded.

The present situational questions aim to develop speaking skills through a strategy for elementary American school students in the light of role-playing. This strategy is meant to develop the speaking skills in which it includes the verbal communication skills, which involves grammar, pronunciation, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary. This situational question was designed to determine the effect of the strategy. This will provide evidence for the effect of the role-playing in developing the speaking skills of third grade elementary students.

Describe the picture in the screen in as much detail as you can. You will have 5 minutes to talk about the picture.



1. Did you ever go to the park?
2. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
3. Do you have a pet at home?
4. Who's waving at you?
5. Name Parks that you've visited in Egypt?



1. Which goat has yellow eyes?
2. What color is yours?
3. Do you have a favorite animal? Tell me about it
4. Which animal don't you like?
5. Can you name all animals in the picture?



1. What's your favorite color?
2. What clothes do you like to wear?
3. Do you enjoy shopping? Where?
4. Do you choose your own clothes?
5. What's your favorite mall?



1. When is your birthday?
2. What do you do on your birthday?
3. Have you attended any birthdays this year?
4. How often do you like to hang out with friends?
5. Who do you usually like to hang out with?



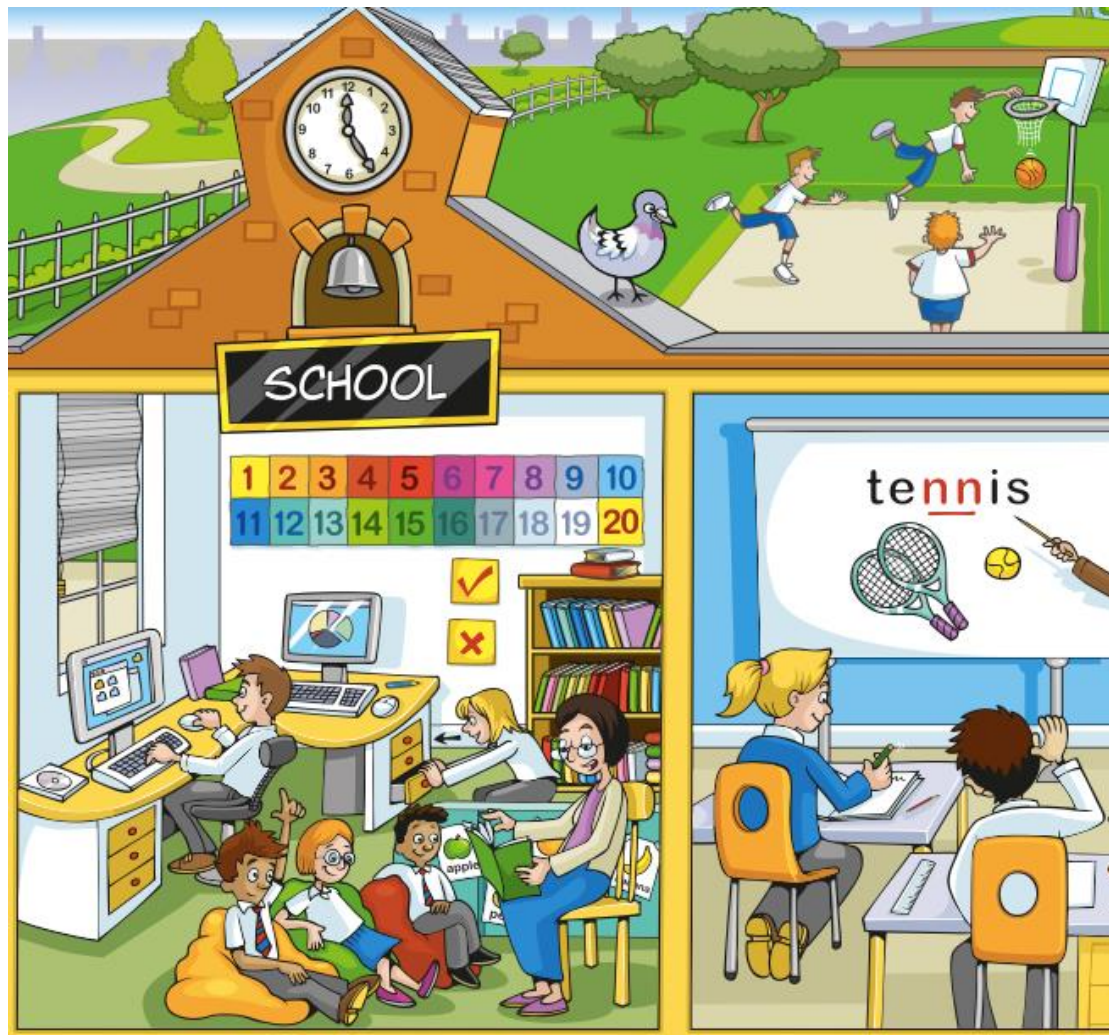
1. What do you eat for breakfast?
2. What is your favorite food?
3. Can you name all the food in the picture?
4. What's your favorite vegetable and fruit?
5. How often do you eat fruits?



1. How do you usually spend your weekends?
2. Do you love to go to restaurants?
3. When do you spend time with your family?
4. What did you do last weekend?
5. What are you going to do next weekend?



1. Describe your day at home
2. Where are, the children watching television?
3. Can you describe the place where you live? Please describe the room you live in?
4. What part of your home do you like the most?
5. How much TV do you (usually) watch? What's your favorite TV program?



1. Do you enjoy school? Tell me about your school
2. Do you enjoy reading books and listening to stories?
3. Do you like to spell?
4. What do you do when you get home from school?
5. What is your favorite subject? Why?



1. There are a lot of games here, which one do you like the most? Why?
2. Do you play any sports?
3. Do you have a favorite sports star?
4. What are the most popular sports in Egypt?
5. What kind of sports would you like to try in the future?



1. Where did you go last summer?
2. What public holidays do you have in Egypt?
3. Which public holidays do you like the most?
4. What did you do during the last holiday?
5. What would you like to do during your next holiday?



1. Tell me about your street
2. Please describe your hometown a little.
3. What's the most popular means of transportation in your hometown?
4. Do you think people will drive more in the future?
5. Would you ride bikes to school in the future?

Appendix 4

The Speaking Skills Scoring Rubric

	Poor=1	Fair= 2	Good= 3	Excellent=4
Grammar	Student was difficult to understand and had a hard time communicating their ideas and responses because of grammar mistakes.	Student was able to express their ideas and responses adequately but often displayed inconsistencies with their sentence structure and tenses	Student was able to express their ideas and responses fairly well but makes mistakes with their tenses, however is able to correct themselves.	Student was able to express their ideas and responses with ease in proper sentence structure and tenses.
Pronunciation	Student's pronunciation was incomprehensible	Student's pronunciation made understanding difficult	Student's pronunciation was understandable with some errors	Student's pronunciation was correct and sometimes was native speaker like.
Vocabulary	Student had inadequate vocabulary words to express his/her ideas properly, which hindered the students in responding.	Student was able to use broad vocabulary words but was lacking, making him/her repetitive and cannot expand on his/her	Student utilized the words learned in class, in an accurate manner for the situation given.	Rich, precise and impressive usage of vocabulary words learned in and beyond of class.

		ideas.		
Fluency	Hesitates too often when speaking, which often interferes with communication	Speaks with some hesitation, which often interferes with communication	Speaks with some hesitation, but it does not usually interfere with communication	Speaks smoothly, with little hesitation that does not interfere with communication
Comprehension	Student was unable to comprehend the speech. Speech had to be repeated and responses were completely inappropriate.	Student showed little comprehension of speech. Speech had to be repeated frequently. Responses were inappropriate most of the time.	Student understood most of the speech and responded correctly most of the time.	Student fully understood the speech and responded appropriately.

Adapted from: Kamal El-Din, A.: The effectiveness of a strategy designed in the light of content-based instruction and drama activities in developing the English oral expression skills of preparatory stage students. M.A. thesis, Women's College, Ain Shams University.2014

- The researcher adopted from Kamal El-Din, A the Pronunciation and fluency. The vocabulary and grammar were added by the researcher and also comprehension as recommended by the to the jury members checklist

Appendix 5

Introductory session

Objectives:

By the end of this session, students would be able to:

- 1- Ask and answer questions about the mini lesson
- 2- Discuss short scenes
- 3- Act out short scenes
- 4- Evaluate their own performance

Time: 45 minutes

Procedures:

- 1- The teacher greeted the students and introduced herself to them.
- 2- The teacher presented the strategy to the students; telling them that they would study the stories in their textbook through acting out the scenes of the story.
- 3- She started asking them about the actors and actresses they like most to break the ice.
- 4- She gave each student the chance to introduce him/herself and spoke about the actor or actress he/she liked.
- 5- The teacher told them that they were supposed to speak in English, but if they did not know certain words they might ask for her help.
- 6- The teacher told them that they would start the first activity which was funny and interesting:

Activity 1: 15 minutes

- The teacher showed them a group of folded cards and asked each student to get a card.
- She asked them to unfold the cards in hand. Asking each student to read his/her sentence.
- The teacher had a card too. She read her own card. The teacher told them that they were supposed to act out the sentence written in the card and she would be the first one who would act out her sentence.
- Students were encouraged to act out their sentences after watching their teacher acting her own.
- This activity was so funny and students enjoyed it.

Activity 2: interview your colleague :15 minutes

- Students were trained in this activity to act out longer scenes, using more complicated language.
- The teacher asked the students to work in pairs. Each one stood facing his/her partner and started a conversation between each other asking about their family, the food they like, the sport they play or enjoy ...etc.

Activity 3: chair character: 15 minutes

the aim of this activity was to encourage students to improvise and to pretend to be other persons.

In this last activity, the teacher divided the students into three groups, each consisted of four students. Each group chose a name for themselves (this division lasted till the end of the strategy)

- Teacher asked each group to choose one of them to play the role of an actor, actress, singer, player ...etc.
- The rest of the group played the roles of television reports who interviewed this famous character.
- The famous character sat on a chair and the interviewee stood in front of the famous character and started the conversation.
- The teacher circulated among the groups for follow up, and help if needed.
- The teacher gave them feedback concerning the tone of the voice, the language they used, the pronunciation of some words and the facial expressions as well as the body movements.
- She informed them that from the next time they would give feedback to each other as she had done. Mention the good points first, then mention the points that need to be improved.
- She told them their feedback should include the performance and the language used.

Session 1

Session 1: A Red Riding Hood (45 minutes)

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Discuss the story using their own language
- 2- Rehearse the chosen scenes
- 3- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 4- Pronounce the words correctly
- 5- Use grammar accurately
- 6- Speak their lines fluently
- 7- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech

Materials and teaching aids:

Candles – red hood – basket – rope - textbook

Procedures:

- 1- The teacher began this session by narrating the story for the student
- 2- She gave them the chance to ask questions
- 3- Students were asked to form the groups assigned the previous session
- 4- The scenes were previously prepared and written in cards which were put in a jar.
- 5- The teacher asked each group to choose a card and unfold it to know the scene they were supposed to role play.
- 6- All the narrative parts were omitted. The scenes were summarized and written in the form of dialogues to be covered in only two sessions.
- 7- Each group started reading their part, dividing the roles among themselves, discuss how they would role-play their parts, and finally they rehearsed their roles under the supervision of the teacher and with her guidance and help.

Session 2

Session 2: Red Robin Hood (continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance

Materials and teaching aids:

Candles – red hood – basket – rope - textbook

Procedures: (groups were seated in circles)

- 1- The teacher started this session by asking each group about their scene, asking them to present the characters to her to be sure that each student had a role.
- 2- She gave them 10 minutes to revise the scene before starting the performance.
- 3- Group 1 (The Pioneers) came to the middle of the class and started acting out the scene
(the arrival of the wolf) using the materials mentioned before. Teacher interfered when needed (10 minutes).
- 4- The other two groups were the audience. They were asked to write comments in a sheet of paper.
- 5- After the role playing, the audience together with the teacher gave their feedback on the performance and the language aspects (5 minutes)
- 6- The same procedures were repeated with the other two groups.

Session 3

Story: Two bear cubs

This story took 3 sessions

Each session lasted for 45 minutes.

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events.

Materials and teaching aids:

Blue charts – Desks

Procedures:

- 1- By the end of the first two classes of the story, students were able to understand the role-playing strategy and gained self-confidence through engaging in it.
- 2- The classroom was organized in U shape. The teacher was thus able to proctor the performance of the students.
- 3- Behind the desks was used as a back stage.
- 4- The teacher engaged in the story as the narrator.
- 5- This story had 12 characters so this time was a chance for all 12 students to engaged at the same time, therefore it took more sessions for them all to cooperate together.
- 6- The story was designed in scenes.
- 7- This first session was designed to prepare and discuss the story together.
- 8- Characters' names were put in a jar and assigned randomly.
- 9- Each student had to read their lines at home and practice it in any form during rehearsals.

Session 4

Story: Two bear cubs (Continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events.

Materials and teaching aids:

Blue charts – Desks- customs- makeup

Procedures

- 1- The teacher asked the students to identify their roles in the scene.
- 2- The teacher acted as the narrator. Students were able to rehearse scene 1 and 2.
- 3- Students were asked to rehearse the scenes. Students in this procedure were asked to put on simple clothes they had brought or to wear the makeup they prepared and rehearse the conversation and the parts they would act.
- 4- Students were able to pronounce sentences correctly.
- 5- Teacher asked the students to give full attention to their fluency.
- 6- Students were asked to prepare their lines of scene 3.

Session 5

Story: Two bear cubs (Continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events.

Materials and teaching aids:

Blue charts – Desks- customs- makeup

Procedures

- 1- The teacher told the students that they would prepare scene 3 in their own words and then start covering the whole story.
- 2- In previous session, they were asked to prepare their lines for scene 3, therefore this session they were asked to act it out.
- 3- Students went to the school theatre along with their teacher to practice their final performance there.
- 4- Teacher listened to their prepared scene 3 at home and found that they improved in using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
- 5- The teacher thanked all to show appreciation of their hard work and thus encourages them.

Session 6

Story: Ramona Quimby, Age 8

This story took 2 sessions

Each session lasted for 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events.

Materials and teaching aids:

Cat mask.

Procedures

- 1- This story didn't need any accessories except a cat mask. Students were set in two groups to create one, using their creative ideas and materials in class.
- 2- The story took place at school in a classroom so the setting was already in place
- 3- This session was used to discuss and read the story together. students were able to communicative together in English fluently.
- 4- The teacher divided the role for next sessions as 5 students acting, 5 of them were audience and 1 of them director and 1 as a narrator. After finishing the roles would change so they all get to act and rehearse.
- 5- In this story the teacher added expressions, she asked the students to use their voices to show characters' feelings.

Session 7

Story: Ramona Quimby, Age 8 (continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance

Materials and teaching aids:

Cat mask.

Procedures

- 1- The teacher wrote down some discussion questions on the board for students in order to make sure that they are all on same page and understand the content clearly.
- 2- Students are supposed to give a reasonable answer to the questions as there is no model answer in literature.
- 3- Students answered in fluent English using good grammar and vocabulary.
- 4- Students were asked to prepare the scene and start rehearsing.
- 5- As this story was already in a setting of a class, and it didn't need much accessories. First 5 students acted for 20 minutes and vice versa.
- 6- The teacher asked the students to go back to their seats.
- 7- Teacher asked the student to pay attention to their comprehension and pronunciation to improve their speaking skills.
- 8- Teacher told the students that they must concentrate on their vocabulary as well.
- 9- Students who weren't acting and watching their colleagues had to criticize and communicate in English regarding their comments and vice versa.

Session 8

Story: The Robodogs of Greenville

This story took 2 sessions

Each session lasted for 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Procedures

- 1- This story had 6 characters so like previous stories, 6 of the students had to role-play and the rest criticize and vice versa. This session after reading, rehearsing and discussing the script. We only had time for one group to act this session.
- 2- The classroom was organized in U shape to proctor their performances.
- 3- This story took place in the future in the year 2222 in a small town called Greenville, in the story it was mentioned that in the future there are robot dogs, the students enjoyed this story so much as they were really having fun speaking and acting as robots as they see in movies, it was an addition to the class and it was the student's ideas.
- 4- The teacher thanked them to show appreciation of their hard work and improvement.

Session 9

Story: The Robodogs of Greenville (continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Procedures

- 1- Students who were criticizing last class, acted this time.
- 2- The rest of the students criticized the role-playing and acting process according to fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The criticism must not exceed 5 minutes for each student.

Session 10

Story: Chestnut cove

This story took 2 sessions

Each session lasted for 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids:

Apron – Pig nose- crown

Procedures:

- 1- There was 5 characters and a narrator in this story so like previous classes, students exchanged roles.
- 2- The class was organized into 2 groups of desks, some desks were organized as homes, some as a ship.
- 3- This story had a narrator, he was standing on a desk on the side with a loud voice narrating. He was asked to read the script well but say in his own words what he understood.
- 4- Students were able to speak fluently with no difficulty.
- 5- Students were able to pronounce the words correctly.
- 6- Teacher asked the rest of students to rehearse at home so they can come prepared next session.

Session 11

Story: Chestnut cove (continued) 45 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids:

Apron – Pig nose- crown

Procedures

- 1- Students who were criticizing last class, acted this time.
- 2- The rest of the students criticized the role-playing and acting process according to fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The criticism must not exceed 5 minutes for each student.
- 3- The teacher gave comments for both groups acted last session and this session.
- 4- The teacher was really enjoying the improvements in their speaking skills.

Session 12

Story: The science fair

This story took 3 sessions

Each session lasted for 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids:

Desks organized as a bedroom.

Procedures

- 1- Scene 1 – beany in her room
- 2- This story took longer time as they were in exams week and classes were squeezed into a 30 minutes' session only. Role playing in 30 minutes was really challenging. Students needed to prepare for their roles at home.
- 3- This story was divided into 3 scenes. each scene was rehearsed, acted it out in one session.
- 4- The teacher asked the students to identify their roles in the act
- 5- Students presented the costumes and the makeup they prepared for the character.
- 6- The teacher chose a group randomly to start acting the beginning of scene 1.
- 7- All 12 students were participating in this story at the same time.

Session 13

Story: The science fair (continued) 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids

Makeup – wig – clipboard, desks organized as if on a bus. (in two rows)

Procedures

- 1- Desks were organized as the gym science fair.
- 2- In this scene, we used a wig for Ms. Babbit, and Ms. Kowalski a clipboard.
- 3- Students talked from their own experience about the science experiments they did in their science class last year.
- 4- Students engaged in a communicative event while each explaining to the class and their teacher about their experience. They were able to comprehend the speech, use grammar accurately, used appropriate vocabulary and speak fluently. I was very proud at this moment they knew they can only communicate in English and be more comfortable using it.

Session 14

Story: The science fair (continued) 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids

Wig, clipboard, and certificate

Procedures

- 1- Desks were organized in U shape
- 2- Scene 3 was acted this session.
- 3- By the end of this session students were able to speak fluently with no difficulty.
- 4- Pronounce sentences correctly.

Session 15

Story: Voyage across the solar system

This story took 4 sessions

Each session lasted for 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids:

Desks organized in circle

Procedures

- 1- This story took place on a spaceship. The students were able to use their imagination. The students were really excited.
- 2- This script was ready.
- 3- We discussed the script and divided the roles.
- 4- The class was very short. I had to manage my time next time because this story needed a lot of rehearsing.

Session 16

Story: Voyage across the solar system (continued) 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids

Desks were organized in circle, white coat

Procedures

- 1- The students started rehearsing,
- 2- They acted as a spaceship explorers heading toward the sun.
- 3- We've set the class as they are sitting inside the circle, it was the student's idea. So, they feel as they are sitting in a spaceship.
- 4- Each of the students used the desk in front of them as controllers, as seen in their textbook, they were allowed to use rubbers, rulers, pens, and pencils to create their control board.
- 5- There were six characters in the story. One of the characters was a scientist and brought a white coat as part of his character custom.
- 6- We practiced and rehearsed the lines.

Session 17

Story: Voyage across the solar system (continued) 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids:

Desks were organized in circle, white coat

Procedures

- 1- Before starting the class, we had to discuss what they already know about the planets.
- 2- They were divided into groups and had to present the planets so everyone can remember them.
- 3- Students were free to use their own words and not stick to the script.
- 4- Students engaged in a communicative event while each explaining to the class and their teacher about the different types of planets. They were able to comprehend the speech, use grammar accurately, used appropriate vocabulary and speak fluently. I was very proud at this moment they knew they can only communicate in English and be more comfortable using it.
- 5- Six of the students acted, the rest of the students criticized the role-playing and acting process according to fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The criticism must not exceed 5 minutes for each student

Session 18

Story: Voyage across the solar system (continued) 30 minutes

Objectives:

By the end of this session students would be able to:

- 1- Role-play the scenes effectively
- 2- Use appropriate vocabulary
- 3- Pronounce the words correctly
- 4- Use grammar accurately
- 5- Speak their lines fluently
- 6- Comprehend the speech uttered by others and respond with comprehensible speech
- 7- Criticize their performance
- 8- Gain self-confidence through being engaged in different communicative events

Materials and teaching aids:

Desks were organized in circle, white coat

Procedures

- 1- Students who were criticizing last class, acted this time.
- 2- The rest of the students criticized the role-playing and acting process according to fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The criticism must not exceed 5 minutes for each student.
- 3- The teacher gave comments for both groups acted last session and this session.
- 4- The teacher was really enjoying the improvements in their speaking skills.
- 5- The teacher thanked them to show appreciation of their hard work and improvements.
- 6- Wrapping up the whole class. Discussing their experience
- 7- Students wanted to have a role-play at the end of year show because they enjoyed it so much. Some suggested that they would like to write their own story/play.

Appendix 6

CASE #2016-2017-120



To: Hania Ezz
Cc: Dena Riad & Salma Serry
From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB
Date: April 28, 2017
Re: Approval of study

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled "A strategy based on role-playing to improve elementary stage students speaking skills." and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" heading. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Amr Salama. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Atta Gebril".

Dr. Atta Gebril
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