



Effectiveness of Scaffolding Instructions for Speaking Skill of Secondary School Students in Punjab

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Abstract- This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of scaffolding instructions for speaking skill of secondary school students in Punjab. The Randomized Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design was used in the study. Sample of the study consisted of 20 students for both groups, the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group exposed to scaffolding instructions aimed at developing the students' speaking skill. Scaffolding instructions including modeling, think pair share, group discussions and speaking frames (sentence starters, sentence sequencing and sentence frames) were used. And the control group received the usual traditional method of instructions. Relevant data was analyzed to test the hypothesis. Mean, standard deviation, and difference of means were computed for each group. To measure the significance of the difference between the means of the two groups, a t-test of independent sample was applied. Significance of difference between the mean scores of both the experimental and control groups on the variable of pre-test and post-test scores was tested at a 0.05 level. Collected data were fed into the "statistical package for social sciences" (SPSS) program. Data were analyzed by applying the t-test for independent samples. ACTFL proficiency guidelines 2012 were also used to analyze the speaking skill of the students. The results of this study revealed that the experimental group was better in speaking skill while the control group failed in speaking naturally and fluently.

Key Words: Scaffolding Instruction, speaking skill

I. INTRODUCTION:

Teaching is an art of delivering the information to the students in such a way that students can get maximum knowledge. Their level of understanding about different things are much different as compare to the teachers, therefore, it's teacher responsibility to fulfill the quench of their students with all suitable methods and teaching terminologies. And scaffolding instructions provide better teaching atmosphere to the students and to enlarge the scope of their education to meet their educational perspectives (Sawyer, 2006).

Scaffolding, in its more indepth sense, is a structure of little factory in which each step of instruction is a unit which provide a great strength to the next associate task with greater level of effectiveness (Gibbons, 2002). Rosenshire and Meister (1992) apt scaffolding as a procedure in which variety of tasks given to the students to reform their abilities till they did not meet the next level according to the appropriate skills individually. Scaffolding point out those conceptual techniques used to enhance the students progress towards concrete understanding and conclusively a higher perceptive. The teacher's responsibility is to contribute comprehension and skills evaluation tasks on vast level, and in the absence of these strategies students cannot meet the certain level of understanding. Such as physical scaffolding, the participatory strategies are basically evacuated when their need is not as much necessary, and the teacher try to evoke learning passion in the student step by step (The Glossary of Education Reform, 2017)

Scaffolding is absolutely a procedure used to upgrade the knowledge of the students from unknown to known. If scaffolding procedure is properly administered, it will enable the students to learn independently (Middleton, 2004). Scaffolding is the platform that polishes the internal strength of students and to encourage them during their level of knowledge to meet the educational tasks. It has five characteristics; it equips with support; it works as a tool; it prolongs the range of the learner; it observes a

learner to accomplish a task not otherwise possible; and it is used to aid the learner where the requirements are not fulfilled (Fisher & Frey, 2017).

There are three basic features of scaffolding that promote learning. The first feature is the interaction between the teacher and the learner. This interaction should be cooperative in order to peruse effective results. The second one is the zone of proximal development. It illustrates the peaceful understanding between the learner and the teacher in a way that where there session held the environment is totally in the favor of both to run up potentially the entire learning process. In pursuance of this understanding, teacher must be aware to the past level of knowledge of their learners. The third and most important feature is removal of scaffolding. It enables and moderate the student internal level of doing things in a better direction after getting maximum knowledge so the teacher must be aware about that time so that he encourages the level of efficiency and realize the learners their own existence that the method of doing things are going to be perfect level according to the perception of learning. Notwithstanding the past previous support and the directions which had to be given in the past through expert with passage of potential astonished in order to build up their own level of knowledge (Encyclopedia, 2017).

Nonetheless, The concept for learning scaffolds is somewhat old. Most people follow the conceptual framework of LevVygotsky's (1978) idea of the "zone of proximal development." Vygotsky affirms that a learner's developmental stages consisted of two level: the "actual developmental level" and the "potential developmental level." The zone of proximal development is "the distance between the actual developmental level as stubborn by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as nearly through problem solving under adult guidance, or in combination with more suitable peers". In Vygotsky's words, the zone of proximal development "provoke a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment".

The zone of proximal development can also be defined as the difference between what a learner can do independently and what can be accomplished with the help of a "more knowledgeable other." To scaffold learning, the more knowledgeable other, who can be an adult or a peer, shares knowledge with the learner to fill the gap between what is familiar and what is not. When the learner has broaden the knowledge, the certain developmental level has been shifted from bottom to top meanwhile the zone of proximal development has shifted upward too. In other words, the zone of proximal development is ever fluctuate as the learner legitimize and extends knowledge. This process is what led Vygotsky to write: "Through others, we become ourselves" (Hammond, 2010). But Vygotsky did not use the term scaffold or scaffolding. The term scaffold, as applied to learning situations, comes from Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976), who define it as a process "that encourage a child or beginner to solve a task or accomplished a goal that would be beyond his individual efforts". As they note, scaffolds need the adult's "controlling those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capability, thus allow them to focus upon and accompanied only those contents that are within the area of competence". For example, in teaching a child to ride a bike, the training wheels reflect the picture of scaffold. The adult phase alongside the bike serves as another. Specifically, the adult handles the harder parts are not as much for the long time period, while grants the child to find out the easier parts.

Instructional scaffolding is a theoretical framework through which a teacher enumerates guide line for students in order to strengthen learning and aid in the proficiency of tasks. The teacher does this by consistently work on students' experiences and knowledge as they are learning new skills. As students are able to perform tasks independently, the participation of teachers is no more required. In order to get better comprehension of the term scaffolding, consider the example of a child learning to walk. First, a parent holds the child up. His feet barely touch the floor as he mimics walking. Slowly, the child is allowed to support more and more of his own weight. Next, he will internally assure to keep feet's on the right place because know he is able to assume tuff and smooth level of surfaces and to strongly grab the earth with feet. Soon enough the child starts walking and running independently. Same is the case with instructions. Teacher build up the level of perception in the mind of learners as much accurately and concretely that the learner is no more unstable if he use his own preferences which might helpful for him to build and formulate his own way of creativity with the maximum level of potentially concrete knowledge. Without the help of teacher, learner is able to perform certain task with a great level of competency (The IRIS Center, 2017).

Verenikina (2008) identified the role of scaffolding in nurturing the learners. According to him the scaffolding activities establish educators with an ease to grab the justification of the quality of teacher mediation in children's learning. Nevertheless, due to its metaphorical nature of the term, scaffolding has

a greater flow to be interpreted as any kind of help in ordinary or even as a modification of direct instruction.

McKenzie (2000) classified scaffolding into four categories based on its functionality: conceptual scaffolding, metacognitive scaffolding, procedural scaffolding, and strategic scaffolding. Conceptual scaffolding is the guidance provided to the learners about the concept of different phenomena. It illuminates the learner's brain that directly effect on his thoughts. For example, Toth, (n.d) used prompts to guide pre-service teachers to reflect the instructional content. Metacognitive scaffolding supports learners to observe and generate the new perceptions in their own learning techniques and it also regulates them. For instance, Hartman (2002) counsel the students to judge their understanding of any specific project. Procedural scaffolding encourages the learners to use essential resources and tools that is strengthen by the learning environment. As an example, Bransford, Brown & Cocking (2000) provided the general process of problem solving. Strategic scaffolding provides learners a range of alternative techniques, tips and tricks. For example, Hammond & Gibbons (2001) gave a student clue on how to emphasize his idea clearer by saying "It will be easier to understand if you make a drawing".

Hence, Hogan and Presley (1997) elaborate in various forms the guidelines that can be constructive if teachers add the scaffolding techniques in their instruction. The scaffolding techniques pre-engage the teachers with the students by pointing out pupils' wants and needs and providing assistance in achieving learning task. The scaffolding techniques pre-engage the teachers with the curriculum by proper checking the content. It is revealed that proper arrangement of educational atmosphere and the delivery of the contents with a deep sense of passion show the most effective results. However some sort of addition must be necessarily bind with these techniques such as the proper feedback and discussions.

To make students critical thinkers, it is needed to shift the responsibility of the learning toward the students. In this regard, teacher must have knowledge of students' different preferred learning styles and scaffolding instructions are a source of providing information to the students and enable them to retain it for a longer period of time. To evaluate whether the opportunity is being given to the students to practice new knowledge and to develop the skill of oral expressions or not, the study aims at evaluating the Effectiveness of Scaffolding Instructions for Students at Secondary Level.

Purpose of the Study:

The study tests the following null hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the achievement of experimental and control groups with respect to speaking skill.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between achievement of high achievers and low achievers of experimental and control groups with respect to speaking skills.

II. METHODOLOGY:

Experimental research is the most appropriate way for drawing causal conclusions, regarding interventions or treatments and establishing whether or not one or more factors causes a change in an outcome. (Creswell, 2013). The present study is experimental in nature. The Randomized Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design was used in the study, which is a type of True Experimental Research Design. Essential feature of true experimental research design is the random assignment of the subject to the treatment groups. In Randomized Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design two groups of subjects are used. And both groups are measured twice. The first measurement is called pretest and the second measurement is called posttest. The measurement is collected at the same time for both groups (Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun 2012). Hence, two groups were included in the study. First one was the experimental group and the second one was the control group. The experimental group exposed to scaffolding instruction aimed at developing the students' speaking skill. Scaffolding instructions including modeling, think pair share, group discussions and speaking frames (sentence starters, sentence sequencing and sentence frames) were used by the researcher for them. And the control group received the usual traditional method of instructions. As such, the independent variable was the scaffolding instruction designed by the researcher and the dependent variable was the speaking skill of the students. Both qualitative and quantities approaches were used in the study.

Population of the study:

All the secondary school students male and female, private and public, rustic and urban were included in the population of the study.

Sample of the study:

The most acceptable way of determination of sample size in experimental research is 10:1 ratio (ten participants for one variable). Schreiber (2011) suggested each parameter should have at least 10 participants. The sample of the study consisted of 20 secondary schoolgirls. They were assigned to two groups. One group (N.10) as the control group, the other group (N.10) as the experimental group. Both groups were selected randomly. In randomization, the research participants are assigned by chance, rather than by choice, to either the experimental group or the control group. Randomization reduces bias as much as possible. (Research smarter, 2017). Further, low achieving and high achieving students were also identified in both groups. Those students who achieved who were above the mean scores were named as high achieving students and those who were below the mean were named low achieving students in both experimental and control groups.

Research Instrument:

To investigate the effectiveness of the scaffolding instruction for speaking skill of secondary school students, a test was designed based on the table of specification and measured twice, as a pre-test and a post-test. Based on the specifications table, 10 test items related to speaking skills were written for the selected lessons. The draft test was consulted for content validity by an expert panel of academicians who specialized in English language teaching, including the English language and other language experts. Some test items were revised based on their feedback. The reliability of the test was measured by using the split-half (odd-even) technique. For this purpose, the test items were divided into halves, ensuring that each half was matched in terms of item difficulty and content. Each half was marked separately. The reliability was calculated by using the Spearman-Brown formula: Reliability = $\frac{2r}{1+r}$, where r = the actual correlation between the halves of the instrument. The alpha reliability coefficient of the test was estimated to be 0.88.

Data Analysis:

For qualitative analysis, ACTFL proficiency guideline was used and for Quantitative analysis, Mean, standard deviation, and difference of means were computed for each group. To measure the significance of the difference between the means of the two groups, a t-test of independent sample was applied. Significance of difference between the mean scores of both the experimental and control groups on the variable of pre-test and post-test scores was tested at a 0.05 level. Collected data were fed into the "statistical package for social sciences" (SPSS) program. Data were analyzed by applying the t-test for independent samples.

III. RESULTS:

Pre/post test were conducted by using direct administration and collection of data technique. Respondents were given proper guideline and verbal instructions by the researcher for the completion of the test. ACTFL proficiency guidelines 2012 were used to analyze the speaking skill of the students having pretest and posttest qualitatively, which has been using in the field of language teaching and learning in United States for 25 years. It has five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate and Novice. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate and Novice are subdivided into high, mid and low sub levels (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012). So the students' performance were analyzed on the basis of these levels; Distinguished, Superior, Advanced High, Advanced Mid, Advanced Low, Intermediate High, Intermediate Mid, Intermediate Low, Novice High, Novice Mid and Novice Low. The result of the most of the students of experimental group gained some advance levels; advance high, advance mid and advance low level. Some of them got intermediate levels; intermediate high and intermediate mid level in pre-test. And in post test, most of them got advance level while some of them got intermediate levels. Whereas the performance of the control group is concerned, Students at the Advanced high level spoke on different topics, with different time frames i.e., past, present and future. They had sufficient control over the basic structures of the sentences and had sufficient stock of the vocabulary to be used by them. Advanced Mid speakers had the ability to narrate in all time frames of past, present, and future but with interwoven thought. There was a substantial flow in their

communication. Advanced Low speakers had command to speak in all time frames with some control of aspect. Responses produced by them were typically not longer than a single paragraph. There was an irregular flow in their communication and they contained noticeable self-correction. More generally, their performance tended to be uneven. Students had Intermediate High level handled successfully uncomplicated tasks. The feature of breakdown existed in their language. They used appropriate vocabulary but there occurred a pattern of gaps in their communication. Students at Intermediate Mid Level performed reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions. They felt difficulty in linking ideas. They used most of the time in combining and recombining most of the elements of the language. Their speech contained pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. Students at Intermediate Low level handled successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks. They tended to be primarily reactive. They struggled to answer direct questions. Their responses were often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they searched for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message. Their speech was characterized by frequent pauses, ineffective reformulations and self-corrections. Students at Novice-level communicated short messages through the use of isolated words and phrases that had been memorized and recalled. They respond to simple, direct questions. At Novice Mid level, when responding to direct questions, they used only two or three words at a time or give an occasional stock answer. They paused frequently as they search for simple vocabulary or attempt to recycle their own. At Novice Low level, they had no real functional ability. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they might be able to exchange greetings, give their identity, and name a number of familiar objects and could not therefore participate in a true conversational exchange.

Results of quantitative analysis

The significance of difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups were found on the pre-test and post-test by applying the t-test. Obtained results, along with analysis and interpretation, are presented below.

Table 1
Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups on Pre-Test with Respect to Achievement in Speaking

Group	N	Mean	SD	T.Value Table value	C.Value Calculated value
Experimental	10	4.32	3.15	1.68	0.30*
Control	10	4.04	3.45		

*Not Significant d.f.=48

Significance level = 0.05

Table 1 indicates that the calculated result of t was 0.30 and the table value of t was 1.68. Results were tested at 0.05 (level of significance) and the degree of freedom was 48. Hence, the table value of t (1.68) was greater than the t (0.30) obtained value.

Thus, H_0 was accepted because no significant difference between the mean scores was found. In this way, the experimental and control groups were similar with respect to previous knowledge of speaking skills on the pre-test.

Table 2
Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of the Low Achievers of the Experimental and Control Groups on Pre-Test with Respect to Achievement in Speaking

Group	N	Mean	SD	T.Value Table value	C.Value Calculated value
Low achievers of the Experimental group	5	1.78	0.97	1.703	0.949*
Low achievers of the Control group	4	1.5	0.83		

*Not Significant

d.f. = 27 Significance level = 0.05



Table 2 reflects that the obtained result of t was 0.949 and the table value of t was 1.703. Results were tested at 0.05 (level of significance) and degree of freedom was 27. Hence, the table value of t (1.703) was greater than the t (0.949) obtained value. Thus, Ho1 was approved because no significant difference between the mean scores was found. Hence, the low achievers of the experimental and control groups were the same with respect to prior knowledge of speaking skills on the pre-test.

Table 3
Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of the High Achievers of the Experimental and Control Groups on Pre-Test with Respect to Achievement in Speaking

Group	N	Mean	SD	T.Value Table value	C.Value Calculated value
High achievers of the Experimental group	5	7.55	1.44	1.729	0.5*
High achievers of the Control group	6	7.9	1.79		

*Not Significant d.f. = 19 Significance level = 0.05

Table 3 indicates that the obtained result of t was -0.5 and the table value of t was 1.729. Results were tested at 0.05 (level of significance) and degree of freedom was 19. Hence, the table value of t (1.729) was greater than the t (-0.5) calculated value. This is why Ho1 was approved: because no significant difference between the mean score was found. In this way, the high achievers of the experimental and control groups were identical with respect to achievement in speaking skill on pre-test.

Table 4
Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups on Post-Test with Respect to Achievement in Speaking

Group	N	Mean	SD	T.Value Table value	C.Value Calculated value
Experimental	10	21.72	4.05	1.68	8.319*
Control	10	10.48	5.40		

*Significant d.f.=48 Significance level = 0.05

Table 4 shows that the obtained result of t was 8.319 and the table value of t was 1.68. Results were tested at 0.05 (level of significance) and the degree of freedom was 48. Hence, the table value of t (1.68) was less than the t (8.319) obtained value. This is why Ho2 was discarded: because a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups was found. The group taught through activity based learning showed dominance over the control group in the speaking skills on the post-test.

Table 5
Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of the Low Achievers of the Experimental and Control Groups on Post-Test with Respect to Achievement in Speaking

Group	N	Mean	SD	T.Value Table value	C.Value Calculated value
Low achievers of the Experimental group	4	17.92	5.28	1.703	7.992*
Low achievers of the Control group	5	6066	1.34		

*Significant d.f. = 27 Significance level = 0.05

Table 5 indicates that the obtained result of t was 7.992 and the table value of t was 1.703. Results were tested at 0.05 (level of significance) and the degree of freedom was 27. Hence, the table value of t (1.703) was less than the t (7.992) obtained value. This is why Ho2 was discarded: because a significant difference was found between the mean scores of the low achievers of the experimental and control groups. In this way, the low achievers who were taught through activity based learning showed superiority over the low achievers of the control group with respect to achievement in speaking skills on the post-test.



Table 6
Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of the High Achievers of the Experimental and Control Groups on Post-Test with Respect to Achievement in Speaking

Group	N	Mean	SD	T.Value Table value	C.Value Calculated value
High achievers of the Experimental group	8	24.72	3.46	1.729	5.383*
High achievers of the Control group	6	16.20	3.79		

*Significant d.f. = 19 Significance level = 0.05

Table 6 shows that the obtained result of t was 5.383 and the table value of t was 1.729. Results were tested at 0.05 (level of significance), while degree of freedom was 19. Hence, the table value of t (1.729) was less than the t (5.383) obtained value. This is why Ho2 was discarded: because a significant difference between the mean scores of high achievers of the experimental and control groups was found. In this way, the low achievers who were taught through activity based learning outscored the low achievers of the control group with respect to achievement in speaking skills on the post-test.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

The first group of students who taught through scaffolding instructions was better in speaking more fluently and naturally because they have learnt to use their own sentences and their creativity to develop their speaking. The second group of students who were taught through general method (text memorization) mostly failed because of feeling nervous when they forget one sentence or even one word that made them forget the whole text. Moreover they had many problems related to speaking skill, such as confusion and embarrassment, and face difficulty in pronouncing some words, the limited amount of vocabulary and the difficulty in understanding questions.

According to the results of the research, there were no significant differences in

the pre-test scores of speaking skills between the experiment and control groups. However, the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on the post-test with respect to achievement in speaking. The difference between the post-test mean scores of both groups was significant at the (0.05) level. Similarly, low achievers and high achievers of the experimental group outscored the control group with respect to achievement in speaking skills on the post-test. Therefore, the null hypothesis was abandoned. It was concluded that scaffolding instructions significantly increased the level of student achievement in speaking skills.

The results supported the findings of Bailey (2005) and Songsiri (2007), who stated that speaking ability and self-belief in speaking might be enhanced if a suitable program of study, teaching methods, adequate activities, and resources could be provided to students. The literature also suggests that teachers should conduct a variety of speaking activities in the classroom to enhance their speaking abilities (Zhang, 2009). This study confirms the views of Zahoor-ul-Haq et al. (2015) who were of the opinion that low achievers who had learned through activity based learning outscored control group in the language skills acquisition.

Recommendations

This study concluded that scaffolding instructions were effective in enhancing student speaking skills. Based on the results of the present study, it is recommended that in order to enhance the speaking skills of students, teachers should use the scaffolding instructions in the classroom.

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