



## USING P.O.S.S.E STRATEGY IN IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILL FOR EFL 5TH PREPARATORY STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** The present study aims at using the predict, organize, search, summarize, evaluate Strategy in improving the speaking skill of preparatory students in Iraq. To achieve this aim, the null hypothesis was assumed. It says that "there are no differences of statistical significance at the level of (0.05) among the mean of scores of the experimental group who study the P.O.S.S.E strategy and the mean of score of the control group who study according to the traditional method ". The experimental approach is applied by designing two equivalent groups: the experimental of (30) students studying according to the strategy proposed, and the control group of (30) students studying according to the traditional method. Each group was given three classes per week throughout a period of 4 weeks (2019-2020) using the platforms of Google Classroom and Telegram.

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### INTRODUCTION

Scholars have been concerned with the process of speaking for thousands of years. Although general researches have been conducted, the teachers and the specialists still lack a clear stated, empirical supported, and theoretical incontrovertible definition of speaking (Bernhardt, 1991:5).

In the present study, the researcher found that the most appropriate definition close to the aim of the current study is the one presented by (Hudson 2007: 28) articulated assumptions that can help the teachers make sense of competing models. The first of these is "speaking is meaning based". The second is that one should undertake that "the active speaker provides a lot of the information necessary to comprehend any text". Speaking classes, as well as language and literateness classes that organize speaking as a main component, may use intensive or extensive approaches or mixture of the two to reach the ultimate goal to enable the learners and the speakers to comprehend the text (Hedgcock, and Ferris 2009: 160-161).

The large inflammation of second or foreign language speaking as well teacher's guide book, approve an intensive approach to comprehend the text, and only sometimes use extensive, self-selected speaking, perhaps as an optional enhancement to the reading syllabus (Aebersold and field, 1997).

### Statement of the Problem

Many EFL students suffer from a lack of communication tools that enable them to effectively understand speaking skill. According to the researcher's personal experience, EFL students at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade face many challenges in developing their abilities in speaking. Moreover, the researchers converse with many EFL teachers and educators who rooted that EFL students at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade of preparatory school face many challenges in speaking. In the light of the above-stated information, the researcher intensely believes that P.O.S.S.E strategy is a very significant strategy that can largely contribute in developing the speaking skill of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at preparatory schools. Therefore,- necessity of using P.O.S.S.E strategy within English language lessons would fundamentally increase their acquisition capabilities of learning Speaking.

## Aims

This study aims at using the P.O.S.S.E strategy in improving the speaking skill of EFL 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at preparatory schools

- 1- The aim of the present study is at developing student's ability in speaking in their textbooks
- 2- increasing student's speaking capacity.

## Hypotheses

This study hypothesizes that there is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance (0.05) between the mean scores of the EG who is taught by P.O.S.S.E strategy and that of the CG who is taught P.O.S.S.E. strategy using the method recommended by the Teacher's Guide.

## Limits

The present study is limited to the English language textbook units (5, 6, 7 and 8 ),the fifth preparatory school in the city center of Bagdad Governorate, and. the academic year (2019-2020)

## Procedures

Choosing a sample of students from EFL 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at preparatory school and dividing the selected sample into two groups (experimental and control groups).

- Constructing a pre-test and post-test for speaking skill and ensuring its validity and reliability.
- Teaching speaking skills to the subjects of the experimental group by using P.O.S.S.E strategy.
- Using the Google Classroom platform to teach the two groups of the study.
- Designing a pre-test and a post-test design and ensuring their validity and reliability and creating a scoring scheme to score them accurately.
- Controlling the test by doing a pilot study to ensure validity and reliability by determining the test's item discrimination and item facility.
- Testing both groups by administrating the pre-test. Making Equivalence between the two groups
- Conducting a post-test to both groups and collecting the required data and analyzing it.
- Finally, drawing conclusions, setting recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

## DEFINITIONS OF BASIC TERMS

### P.O.S.S.E strategy

It is a variety steps teaching strategy that not only promotes students in improving the prior knowledge, but also encourages them to organize their present knowledge and structure, then summarize and isolate on the relationship between what they already knew and what they have learned (Freville&Collen, 2006:21). Furthermore, (P.O.S.S.E) strategy is a strategy to frame habits of speakers and teach them how to employ these strategies. (P.O.S.S.E) stands for: Predict ,Organize, Search, Summarize, and Evaluate. (Englert & Mariage,2009:210)

**-Predict:** when a person expects that something will happen before it will be (Longman, 2006: 1195). To say that something will happen, but not sure if it will be or not (Oxford, 2007: 1185).

**-The student's ability to use brainstorming of what the theme will be about or what will happen.**

**-Organize:** when a person arranges essential maps for something to occur (Cambridge, 2000: 599). Make important arrangements or plans to make something

happen successfully (Longman, 2006: 1079).

-**Search:** The students will search for new vocabularies, main ideas, supporting ideas, facts, and opinions.

- **Summarize:** when you review an event, you already know it (Cambridge, (2000870:). To give the main information and make short statement without giving details about an event, a report, or a plan (Longman, 2006: 1549). Give only main points of something (Oxford, 2007: 1537). The students will summarize the text by identifying the key idea of each paragraph in the (P.O.S.S.E) strategy sheet.

-**Evaluate:** This includes four processes – *question, compare, clarify and predict*.

**Question:** the students turn the paragraph summaries into questions or ask 'teacher like' questions about the main ideas in the paragraph (they can also do this at step 5 as part of summarizing the paragraph). A question matrix or question stems can also be provided to help students develop questions about the main idea. Students then answer these questions.

**Compare:** Students compare the concept maps or graphic organizers they prepared before speaking with the maps they prepared as part of the discussion (i.e. Step 4). **Clarify:** Students ask questions about any unfamiliar vocabulary terms and any information not provided by the text. The teacher assist students in clarifying any misunderstandings.

**Predict:** Students now predict what the next section of text will be about.

**Speaking:**

Speaking is defined as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, the participants, and the purposes of speaking (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

Speaking is defined operationally in this study as the secondary stage

students' ability to express themselves orally, coherently, fluently and appropriately in a given meaningful context to serve both transactional and interactional purposes using correct pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and adopting the pragmatic and discourse rules of the spoken language.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Preparatory School:-**

a usually private school preparing students primarily for college British : a private elementary school preparing students primarily for British public schools

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS STUDIES**

### **Speaking**

Revising previous research related to defining the skill of speaking, the researcher noted that two main approaches are adopted to define speaking, the bottom-up and the top down. By the bottom up view, Gate (1987: 5-6) points out that the traditional focus in speaking was on motor perceptive skills. Within this context, speaking is defined as the production of auditory signals designed to produce differential verbal responses in a listener. It is considered as combining sounds in a systematic way according to language specific principles to form meaningful utterances. This approach is adopted by audio-legalize. In terms of teaching speaking, the bottom-up approach suggests starting with teaching the smallest units- sounds and moving through mastery of words and sentences to discourse. Actually, the problem with this approach is that it overlooks the interactive and social aspect of speaking restricting it only to its psychomotor sense. Moreover, it is hard to ensure a satisfactory transition from the supposed learning in the classroom to the real life use of the skill. (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001: 18).

Alternatively, Bygate (1998: 23) advocates adopting a definition of speaking based on interactional skills which involve making decision about communication. This is considered a top-down view of speaking. Adopting this view, Eckard & Kearny (1981), Florez (1999) and Howarth (2001) define speaking as a two-way process involving a true communication of ideas and information or feelings. This top-down view considers the spoken texts the product of cooperation between two or more interactants in shared time and a shared physical context. Thus, proponents of this view suggest that learners should not be taught to make well-formed sentences and then -put those in discourse. Rather, they should be encouraged to take part in spoken discourse from the beginning and then they will acquire the smaller units (Nunan, 1989, 32).

Attempting to elaborate more on the interactive nature of speaking, (define speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, the physical environment, and the purposes behind speaking. Speaking is often spontaneous, open-ended, and developing. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to repeat in certain discourse situations can be identified. (Burns & Joyce and Luoma (2004: 2

### **The Importance of Speaking**

Speaking, as Karen (1994) defines it, is an expressive language skill in which the speaker uses verbal symbols to communicate. The traditional approaches of language learning and teaching, such as the grammar Translation Method, fail to properly care for the speaking skill in the majority of classrooms where the emphasis is mainly on reading and writing. The importance of speaking skills hence, is enormous for the learners of any language. It promotes communicative efficiency. Teachers want students to be able to use language fluently and correctly as much as possible. Students, as well, give the speaking skill priority in their learning because it is, in fact, the active use of language to express meaning. According to Widdowson (1990: 27), learning only the language system is not the appropriate way for learning how to communicate in the E FL because knowledge of the language code alone does not explain the demands of communication and interaction with others in the FL. The rules and isolated terms that are learned are not what learners need outside the classroom.

It is however a very long and often tiresome process to become fluent in speaking the foreign language; "one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still can't speak it" (Thornbury 2008: 208). "One of the main difficulties for language EFL learners is that speaking usually takes place spontaneously and in real time, which means that planning and production overlap. If too much attention is paid to planning, production suffers, and the effect is a loss of fluency. On the other hand, if the speaker's attention is directed solely to production, it is likely that accuracy will be affected, which could prejudice intelligibility. In order to free up attention, the speaker needs to have achieved a degree of atomicity in both planning and production (Ibid).

Effective teaching that promotes learners' active engagement and the development of speaking skill is being a challenge to teachers of English as a foreign language. That is, being capable to communicate orally with each other using effectively the target language is nowadays of the utmost importance. Up to the point, learners who are not able to be fluent in using a foreign language cannot be considered effective language users. Celce- Murcia (2001: 103) argues that for most people "the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication". With speaking, speakers can influence their listeners. Speaking is a means of expressing and showing social positions and moving the solidarity of societies as well. Hence, speaking is important in both inside and outside the classroom. It is a tool by which speakers of foreign languages have more opportunities to get jobs. It is also the skill whereby people be friends or separate. Baker and

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Westrup (2003: 05) maintain that "a student who can speak English well may have greater chance for further education, of finding employment and gaining promotion. "

### **POSSE Strategy**

POSSE strategy is a speaking strategy that combines text structure mapping, activation of prior knowledge and reciprocal teaching. POSSE strategy is designed to activate student's prior knowledge about the topic and to link it with new information contained in the text<sup>32</sup>. The five letters in the acronym of POSSE strategy is stand for Predict, Organize, Search, Summarize, Evaluate. POSSE is a multistep teaching strategy that not only assists students in activating the prior knowledge, but also encourages them to organize their existing knowledge and structure, and then summarize and elaborate on the connections between what they already knew and what they have learned. Moreover, POSSE strategy guides students to arrange their ideas in the semantic map that is useful to help students get the key ideas easily from the text. In the POSSE strategy, the students will be guided through pre-reading, during reading, and post reading activities designed to facilitate comprehension. It is clear that, learning reading comprehension through POSSE strategy is taught by activating the background knowledge of the students and combining the existing information with the new information provided in the text.

In teaching reading comprehension using POSSE strategy, the students will follow five steps Predict, Organize, Search, Summarize, and Evaluate. The students first predict what the text will be about based on their existing knowledge, and then organize their thought. Next, Students search for the structure of the text, after that they summarize the main idea in their own words. Finally, they evaluate their understanding by comparing, clarifying, and predicting.

### **Previous Studies**

Eka Rejeki Maha and Berlin Sibarani "The Effect of Applying POSSE (Predict-Organize-Search-Summarize-Evaluate) On the Students" Reading Comprehension"<sup>39</sup>.

The purpose of this study was to find out if the Predict, Organize, Search, Summarize, and Evaluate (POSSE) strategy can create a significant effect in learning success compared to the classical method. A pretest-posttest equivalent control group research model was used. The study was composed of 60 students enrolled in senior high school teacher-training program in 2012-2013 fall terms. Data was obtained qualitatively. According to findings, there was a significant effect of applying POSSE strategy on the students' reading comprehension. O'brein (1996) examined the effectiveness of a course based on communicative tasks to develop speaking proficiency among advanced non-native speakers aged from 17 to 40. Three elements were applied throughout the course: 1) ongoing need assessment, 2) collaboration between the teacher and students in designing the tasks and 3) regular students' assessment of their accomplishment of the task. The students' progress was measured via a speaking test applied individually to students. In addition, attitude assessments were administered The course proved to be effective in developing students' speaking proficiency as it created conditions in which they were able to engage in meaningful interaction while their attention was focused not on explicit features of the language but on understanding the message and using the language they felt they needed. Moreover, students acquired positive attitudes toward the course as they felt that they were an integral part of defining the content and style of the course.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **The Experimental Research Design**

Experimental design is the "blueprint of the procedures that enable the researcher to test hypotheses by reaching valid conclusion about relationship between independent and dependent variables" (Tavakoli. 2012: 206). The current study is designed on the experimental

method of a pretest/post-test design. The population of the study is set in the center of the province of Bagdad and the two samples were taken from the preparatory school of (Ababeel) .

### Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the present study is represented by fifth preparatory school students in the center of the province of Baghdad for the academic year (2019/2020). The total number of students in the center of Baghdad is (30158).

The population of the current study includes 5th grade female students of preparatory schools for the academic year 2019/2020. The sample of the current study is selected randomly. The sample comprises (63) students of Ababeel preparatory school in the center of Bagdad. This school has two 5th grade classes, A and B. The first class (A) consists of (31) students and the second one (B) also consists of (32) students. Class (A) is chosen to be the experimental group and Class (B) as the Control group. The experimental group received the treatment based on P.O.S.S.E strategy and taught by the researcher herself in the second course of 2019/2020. The researcher excluded the students that have failed in the previous year and had to retry the class again and ended up with (30) students in class (A) and (30) students in class (B).

**Table (3-2)** Sample of the Study

GROUPS	Section	Number of students Before exclusion	Number of students after Exclusion
Experimental	A	31	30
Control	B	32	30
Total		63	60

### Equivalence of the Sample

It is necessary to achieve equalization between the two groups in the following:

1. The age of the students (Measured in Months).
2. The student's achievement in English in the mid- year examination.
3. The subject score in the pretest.
4. Education level of fathers.
5. Education level of mothers.

### Age of Students

The researcher obtained the students' ages from their school records at the beginning of the school year (2019-2020). By applying t-test formula for the two independent samples, the researcher found that there was no significant difference in age between the EG and CG because the computed t-value was (1.092) while the tabulated value was ( 2 ) under ( 58 ) degrees of freedom and at (0.05 ) level of significance , which means that the two groups were equal in their age (see Table (3.2) and (Appendix 1).

**Table (3.2)** T-Test Statistics Of The Students Age

Groups	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-Value	Level of significant
EG	30	208	12.7	58	CTV	TTV
CG	30	209	8.48		1.092	2

### Fathers' Level of Education

Chi-square was used to decide whether there was a statistically significant difference between the frequencies of the experimental and the control groups or not. The result showed that the value of the calculated chi-square for the fathers' level of education was (2.4) and tabulated (9.488) with a degree of freedom of ( 4 ) at ( 0.05) level of significance (See Table3.3). This means that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in this variable.

**Table (3.3)** Fathers' Level of Education in both Groups

Groups	No	Fathers' Level of Education				Chi-square		Level of significant	DF
		Primary and below	Intermediate	Preparatory	B.A. and more	Computed	Tabulated		
EG	30	11	7	6	6	2.4	9.488	0.05	4
CG	30	11	8	4	7				

### Mothers' Level of Education

The same above procedures followed in fathers' education were used here. The calculated Chi-square value was (1.23) and tabulated (7.81) with a degree of freedom of (3) at (0.05) level of significance (see Table 3.5). This means that there was no statistical difference between the two groups in this variable.

**Table (3-4)** Mothers' Level of Education in both Groups

Groups	No	of Mothers'				Chi-square		Level of significant	DF
		Primary and below	Intermediate	Preparatory	B.A. and more	Computed	Tabulated		
EG	30	12	7	6	6			0.05	4
CG	30	11	8	4	7	2.4	9.488		

### Extraneous Variables Equivalence

The researcher verified the equivalence of the two sets of research in some variables that are believed to affect the course of the experiment. She also tried to avoid the effect of some extraneous variables in the course of the experiment. In this sense, it is worthwhile to mention some of these variables and how the researcher tried to control them. These are: The accidents that were associated with the experiment.

There were no accidents during the course of the experiment. No students left the school or got transported to another one. The sample was chosen intentionally and the two sets were equalized accordingly.

The maturity factor: Since the duration of the experiment was unified between the two research groups as well as the age of students in the two groups, all the growth that occurred would be unified between all the students because they were on the same level. Thus, this factor did not have an impact on the research. The impact of experimental procedures: The researcher worked to reduce the impact of experimental procedures that can affect the dependent variable during the course of the experiment)

### Pilot Study

Pilot study means a preliminary scale of assessing the feasibility and usefulness of the data collection tool. It is applied to a small group, used in advance for a major or formal research project in order to try out techniques, methods, procedures, and instruments (Good, 1973:143). The value of the pilot study is to identify the difficulty level and discrimination power of the items, to estimate the time required for answering all the questions, to check the test instructions, to analyze the items of the test, and to indicate the reliability of the test. The test administered to a pilot sample consisting of (68) fifth preparatory students who are selected randomly from AIEkhlis preparatory school on January 15, 2020.

Time

It is found that the total time, which is needed to answer all the items of the test, is 40 minutes.

### Conducting the test

The students of both groups were notified a week ahead of the exam. And the researcher supervised both of the exams personally at the same time.

**Teaching Materials:** Method: four units of speaking. students book(unit5\6\7\8)



## Instructional Material

P.O.S.S. E strategy sheet –Google class room– Recorders-

### RESULTS

In order to investigate the aims of this study which is the impact of reciprocal listening activities on 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory students' listening comprehension, improve the students' performance and examine the hypotheses. The data obtained from the pre- and post-test of the experimental and control groups are statistically analyzed. This analysis proves if there is any significant difference between the two groups in the pre- and post-test.

### SUGGESTIONS

It is possible to investigate one of the following studies which are suggested for further studies:

1. The effect of using P.O.S.S.E strategy on the secondary school students' pronunciation.
2. The Impact of P.O.S.S.E strategy on enhancing preparatory students' conversation.
3. A similar study could be prepared in the elementary school students or primary school.
4. The Impact of reciprocal teaching strategy on enhancing preparatory students' listening.
5. Evaluating the speaking skills of the students at different learning stages.

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