Using a Task-Based Instruction Program for Promoting EFL Pre-Service Teachers' Speaking Skill and Phonological Awareness

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ملخص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى دراسة إستخدام برنامج قائم على مدخل المهام لتحسين مهارات التحدث والوعى الصوتى لدى معلمى اللغة الإنجليزية قبل الخدمة بكلية التربية جامعة المنيا . استخدمت الدراسة المنهج شبه التجريبي(عينة تجريبية واحدة) حيث قامت الباحثتان بتطبيق البرنامج المقترح على عينة الدراسة لمعرفة أثره فى تنمية مهارات التحدث والوعى الصوتى لتحقيق أهداف البحث.

وتكونت عينة الدراسة من عدد عشرون طالبا وطالبة من الفرقة الرابعة– شعبة اللغة الإنجليزية. واشتملت أدوات الدراسة على استبيانات واختبارات فى التحدث والوعى الصوتى والبرنامج التدريبي. وقد أشارت التحاليل الاحصائية إلى فاعلية البرنامج المقترح القائم على مدخل المهام فى تنمية مهارات التحدث و الوعى الصوتى لدى الطلاب ؛ حيث وجدت فروق ذو دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطى درجات عينة الدراسة في التطبيقيين القبلى / البعدي لصالح التطبيق البعدى.

وقد تم عرض النتائج ومناقشتها. وأوصت الدراسة بإستخدام مدخل المهام لتحسين مهارات التحدث والوعى الصوتى لدى معلمى اللغة الإنجليزية ما قبل الخدمة. كما اشتملت الدراسة على أهم التوصيات والمقترحات لبحوث مستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

مدخل المهام مهارات التحدث و الوعى الصوتى

Abstract

The current study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using a task-based learning (TBL) program in developing speaking skills and phonological awareness of 4th year English majors at the Faculty of Education, Minia University. A pre - post experimental group design was used to achieve the study objectives. Twenty students were randomly chosen for the experimental group. Students were trained through the task-based program to develop their speaking skills and phonological awareness. Instruments of the study included a needs assessment questionnaire to determine the sub skills of speaking and another questionnaire to determine the phonological awareness skills that were mostly needed by 4th year English majors, a pre-post test in speaking and a pre-post test in phonological awareness. A training program based on task based approach was designed by the researchers. Analysis of data obtained by students (using t-test) revealed that the experimental group significantly achieved higher on the post speaking and phonological awareness tests as the difference in the mean scores of the two administrations was statistically significant in favor of the post performance. Discussion of these findings, recommendations and suggestions for further research are presented.

Key Terms:

Task-based Approach, Speaking Skills, phonological awareness

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Introduction

Language is considered the human principle of understanding. It is the basic means of communication among people. Of all the language skills, speaking seems spontaneously the most effective for communication. Learning to speak is a crucial aim in itself, for it equips students with a set of skills they can use for the rest of their lives. Speaking is the form of communication used to express opinions, make arguments, offer explanations, transmit information, and make impressions upon others. While articulating such utterances, one is required to take into consideration different phonological features of words. Among the methods, which enables learners to use the language subconsciously in a natural environment is Task-based Instruction (TBI). It is a way to negotiate meaning with others. (Nunan, 2006) presents opportunities to employ effective and meaningful activities and thus promotes communication in the language classroom (Willis, 2004).

Task-based Instruction

There is a call now for a move in the process of learning and teaching the language toward task-based instruction. Task-based Instruction is considered as the most recent effective approach mainly concerned with providing certain learning environment for students in the form of different tasks for communicative purpose. It considers tasks as the central element in the language classroom, because the process of acquiring the language is developed in context through tasks (Ellis, 2003). Task-based approach, as Lin (2009) stated, represents "a trendy concept in language teaching. The purpose of teaching is not to assist learners in obtaining scheduled targets but to provide them with the

context and conditions where language acquisition can take place". Many advocates of TBI regard it as an alternative method to the regular methods of teaching and learning because it favors a methodology in which functional communicative use is aimed at and strived for. They also believe in the valuable impact of this approach to teaching and learning the different language skills as it aims to engage students in communicative use of the language in the process of carrying out defined, meaningful and pedagogical tasks. Moreover, TBI indicates that learning the language is a dynamic procedure which facilitates communication and social interaction among students more effectively when they are naturally exposed to meaningful tasks (Willis, 2004, Shehadeh, 2005, Nunn 2006)**.**

Task-based instruction approach is a student-centered approach which views language a communicative tool that aims at presenting opportunities for learners to master language skills via activities designed to engage learners in the natural, practical and functional use of language for meaningful purposes. The essence of task-based instruction is to engage students in authentic learning activities and to put them in the kinds of situations in which they need to use these skills (Lin, 2009, Jeon, 2006).

Although TBI is a method which concentrates on language learning via tasks performed by learners in real contexts, the definition of the term 'task' is still controversial. For example, Skehan (2003) stated that a task is "an activity in which " meaning is primary; there is some communication problem to solve; there is some sort of relationship to comparable real world activities; task completion has some priority; and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task

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outcome". Ellis (2003), as well , regarded the instructional task as "some kind of activity designed to engage the learner in using the language communicatively or reflectively in order to arrive at an outcome other than that of learning a specified feature of the language". Nunan (2004) defined a task as "a piece of classroom work that is as close to target tasks as possible, tasks become pedagogical in nature which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing   and interacting while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form ".

However, in order to have an overall view on the nature of the Task, Ellis (2003) mentioned six criteria features of a task as follow:

1) A task constitutes a plan for learning activity.

2) A task involves a primary focus on meaning. It seeks to engage Learners in using language pragmatically rather than displaying language. It seeks to develop language proficiency through communicating.

3) A task involves real-world processes of language use in which learners are engage in an activity such as that found in the real-world.

4) A task can involve any of the four language skills whether receptive and productive.

5) A task engages cognitive processes in which learners are required to utilize such processes as selecting, classifying, reasoning and evaluating information in order to carry out the task.

6)   A task has a clear defined communicative outcome which serves as the means of determining when participants have completed the task.

Generally speaking, TBI is an effective approach which promotes learning language knowledge and training skills through the process of performing tasks. According to Willis (2007) and Stanley (2003) TBI provides students with natural exposure, opportunities to express what they want to mean, and to analyze performances throughout tasks. In TBI, learners work in pairs or groups to rehearse and practice a conversation before they present it in front of their peers. It provides the opportunity to practice the language in a safer context to promote learning. Finally, it is argued that TBI lesson is commonly divided into three basic phases: the 'pre-task' which is concerned with the various activities that students can carry out before they start the task; the 'during task' phase which concentrates on the task itself and affords various instructional options and the 'post-task' phase which involves procedures for following up the task performance (Ellis (2003) &Willis (2007).

Speaking

Mastery of the speaking skill is considered a priority for all students, teachers and those who are concerned with the teaching and learning process. Learning a language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the foreign language. However, in addition to being an important skill, speaking is also a great challenge for students to master. Speaking is the most important language skill which assists students to express themselves freely and spontaneously. It is the verbal communication which involves not only forming meaningful utterances but also receiving others' oral production. Through using verbal and non-verbal symbols, meaning is built and shared among people in the speaking process (Richards, 2007). Therefore, speaking is thus regarded as a critical skill in learning a foreign language by most students, and their success in learning a language is measured in terms of their accomplishment in oral communication (Nunan, 2011).

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According to Brown (2007), speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. It provides learners with the ability to communicate effectively, to convey their message in a comprehensible manner and to converse fluently with others. In order to learn spoken skills, learners need to construct knowledge and skills for participation. Speaking requires that learners not only to know how to produce specific aspects of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary but also to comprehend when, why, and how to produce language.

Luoma (2004) considered speaking 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 for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving.

An ample number of the advocates of TBI to teaching speaking skills (Luoma, 2004; Richards, 2009, Brown, 2007 and Nunan, 2011) agreed   on   some   specific   tasks   and   activities for students to be encouraged to perform in order to enhance their speaking skills as shown in the following:

- Participate in oral pair or group activities such as, a debate, a discussion, a conversation.
- Giving directions for other students.
- * Answering questions.
- * Describing objects from a picture or chart.
- Using own words to tell or retell a well-known story or experience. *
- * Reporting a prepared topic

- * Taking a role in a communicative language game
- * Performing Information gap activity.
- Interviewing someone. *
- *-Giving opinions and making preferences.
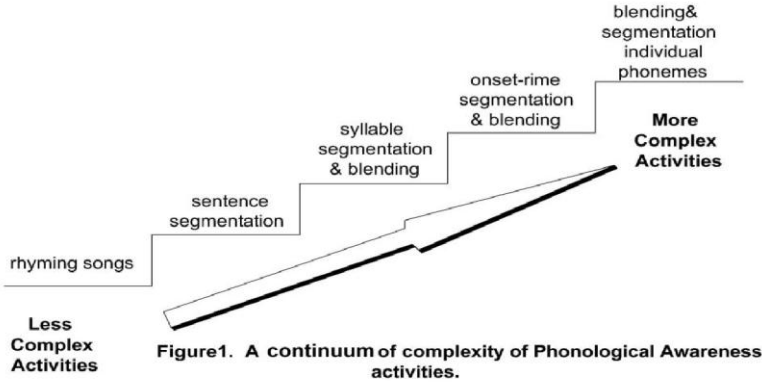- * Making suggestions and giving advice.

Phonological awareness skills:

According to Yopp & Yopp (2009) understanding the sound system of the language requires a certain level of phonological awareness. Teaching phonological awareness requires considerable time and effort. Phonological awareness relates only to speech sounds, not to alphabet letters or sound-spellings, so it is not necessary for students to recognize the alphabet to develop a basic phonological awareness of language. Tibi (2010) also clarified that phonological awareness is not acquired spontaneously. It seems to develop only through systematic and apparent training.

A phonological awareness skill is considered one of the most important skills that students need to demonstrate in order to develop other language skills. Demonstrating good phonological awareness skills means that learners are able to manipulate sounds and words, or "play" with sounds and words (Schuele, 2015). Phonological awareness is the key word in the mainstream of language system as it refers to the ability to distinguish individual letters and their association with sounds, and "is the basis for decoding spoken words into phonemes (the smallest sound units of language), syllables (segments of speech that are uninterrupted by obstructions to airflow), onsets (the initial sound of a word), and rimes (the unit that follows the onset)" (Zhang, 2009).

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Phonological awareness is also regarded as a basic element of the broader category of phonological processing, which refers to the use of speech sounds in processing written language "(i.e., reading, spelling) and oral language (i.e., listening, speaking) (El-Hassan, 2017). Johnson & Geoswami (2010) stated that phonological awareness follows a developmental sequence, with awareness of syllables developing first, then awareness of rhymes, and finally (partly via alphabetic learning) awareness of phonemes. Therefore, it is very crucial to identify certain terms in relation to phonology: Phonological awareness, Phonemic awareness and Phonics.

According to Yopp & Yopp (2009), Tibi (2010) and Schuele (2015): Phonological awareness is the ability to think about and analyze the sound structure of language It includes skill at the level of words, syllables, and sounds (i.e., phonemes), Phonemic awareness is the ability to analyze the sounds structure of language at the phoneme level including segmentation and blending ; and finally, Phonics is the knowledge of how the sounds of language (speech sounds or phonemes) are represented.   Mayer (2008) added that phonological awareness involves knowing that words are composed of sound units and that sound units can be combined to form words. For example, the spoken word "pan" consists of three phonemes: /p/, /a/, and /n/.Phonological awareness refers to (1) the process of breaking a spoken word into its sound units-such as being able to discriminate the sounds /p/, /a/, and /n/ when the word "pan"' is spoken-and (2) the process of producing and blending sound units to form spoken words-such as being able to produce and blend these three sounds when one wants to say the word "pan". However, tasks of the phonological awareness may vary in type and difficulty and goes through a sequence of processes and activities as clarified by Schuele & Boudreau (2008) in the following figure:

blending&
segmentation
individual
phonemes

onset-rime
segmentation
& blending

**More
Complex
Activities**

syllable
segmentation
& blending

sentence
segmentation

rhyming songs

**Less
Complex
Activities**

Figure1. A continuum of complexity of Phonological Awareness activities.

Accordingly, the phonological awareness skills are distinguished by the task performed and the size of the unit of sound that it is the focus of the task. Blending sounds together, segmenting words into constituent sounds, recombining sounds of words and judging whether two words have some sounds in common (Anthony & Francis, 2005)

Literature Review:

Task-Based and Speaking Skills:

Kasap (2005) explored the effectiveness of (TBI) in improving students' speaking skills and their perceptions of the approach. The researcher used questionnaires, interviews and oral tests to collect data. Findings of the study indicated that students had positive reactions to the tasks included in the instruction and found them helpful in developing and improving their speaking abilities. Findings also indicated that students' general perceptions of TBI were positive. Fan-Jiang's study (2005) investigated the effectiveness of implementing TBI in a Taiwanese primary school. The finding of the study revealed that TBLT could enhance the students' motivation and attitudes toward learning English.

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Al Nashash (2006) examined the effect of a task-based program for teaching English language productive skills on the development of first year secondary grade students' oral and written skills. Results indicated that TBI program enhanced the learning of communicative speaking skill is better than the conventional method of teaching.

Torky (2006) investigated the effectiveness of a TBI program in developing speaking skills of secondary stage students. The researcher developed a checklist, a speaking proficiency test and a task- based program as tools of the study. Results showed that the differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group were statistically significant on the post-test in favor of the former group in the overall speaking. She referred these differences to the exposure to the suggested task-based program. According to the results of this study, TBI program was very effective in enhancing secondary school students' speaking skills.

Aljarf's (2007) investigated the effect of TBI on EFL students at the college of language at King Saud University. The students were taught using TBI principles, instructions, and procedures as they were enrolled in a two-hour speaking course. They were pre and post-tested. The results indicated that the students could speak fluently using correct grammar and pronunciations, and could easily generate ideas. The improvement of students' performance was due to well-organized TBI. Khattar (2008) also attempted to investigate the effectiveness of using TBI approach in developing the oral interaction communicative competence of 1st year secondary school students. Results of the study revealed the improvement of students' performance in their oral skills.

Murad (2009) explored the impact of TBI in improving students' speaking skills among the Palestinian secondary EFL students and on their attitudes towards English. Findings of the study indicated that there was a significant improvement in students' speaking skill and their attitudes towards English.

Dalley (2009) investigated the use of Task-Based Language Teaching in Korean classrooms. She adopted the communicative approach TBI on teaching English for the Korean students. Findings showed that more than 75% of the students were enjoying speaking in the classroom due to using tasks.   .

The study of Rahman (2010) tried to explore the possibility and viability of task-based approach to apply for the teaching of oral communication. Data collected on indicated that the task-based approach to teach oral communication was very promising but needs more empirical data. Similarly, Hasan (2011) explored the effect of implementing TBI in teaching the methodology course on the English oral performance and speaking confidence perception of the general diploma students at the college of education. A checklist of the English oral performance skills, an oral performance test, an assessment rubric and a speaking confidence perception inventory were administered as tools of the study. Data were analyzed and indicated that there were statistically significant differences between mean scores of the experimental and the control group students in both the oral performance test and the speaking confidence perception inventory, favoring the experimental group.

Sofyana (2015) attempted the implementation of the Task-Based Language teaching in improving students' speaking skill. Tools included observation, interview and pre-post test. Results indicated an improvement in students' speaking skills as there mean scores were higher on the post performance of the test.

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Sanchez (2016) aimed to develop the English speaking skills of third graders. The researcher attempted to transform pupils' passive behavior into active participation through concepts and principles taken from task- based learning. The researcher used surveys, questionnaires, self-evaluation grids and video transcriptions as tools of the study. The conclusion of the study revealed and confirmed the positive impact of TB learning on pupils' speaking performance.

Task-based Instruction and Phonological Awareness Skills:

An ample number of studies attempted to examine the effectiveness of TBI approach in promoting different language skills: on reading comprehension (e.g. Amer, 2017, Abdullah & Sahebi, 2012), on vocabulary, on speaking (e.g .Torky, 2006; Hasan,2011, Sofyana ,2015) on grammar (e.g. Yildiz, 2017). However, still these studies are insufficient in the Arab world, particularly in Egypt. Literature review showed that no such a study attempted to investigate its effectiveness on phonological awareness skills in Egypt.

Reviewing the literature, it was evident that there is a strong relationship between spoken language and phonological awareness as clarified by Gillon (2004) who referred to the phonological awareness as the learners' awareness of the sound structure, or phonological structure of spoken word which would enable them to sound out a word. Similarly, Tibi (2010) referred to phonological awareness as learners' ability to recognize and make use of the phonological structure underlying spoken language. Because of the gap in the literature, there was an urgent need for conducting the current study aiming to investigate the effectiveness of TBI in developing speaking phonological awareness skills.

Background of the Problem:

While teaching EFL pre-service teachers, the researchers noticed that students were unable to talk spontaneously without long hesitations. They committed numerous grammatical and pronunciation mistakes. They showed inability to express their ideas without using their mother tongue. When using videos in methodology classes, many students were unable to comprehend the conversations and speeches presented. To document the problem of the study, the researchers conducted an informal interview with thirty 4th year English majors at the Faculty of Education to ask about their background knowledge and skills they have in conversation and phonology. They asserted that phonology classes were very difficult, disliked, theoretical and uninteresting due to the abstract information that mostly lack the practical side. As for the conversation classes, they confirmed that they did not practice using the language in different situations.

To further investigate the problem, the researchers developed two questionnaires to assess student teachers' knowledge of the main speaking and phonological awareness skills that they mostly need in their future teaching career. Results of the questionnaires indicated that they had problems in the basic speaking and phonological awareness skills.

Consequently, it was evident that the convention models of teacher preparation programs miss the fact that the ultimate purpose of teaching phonology is enhancing students' language skills , particularly, speaking, and phonological awareness.. Therefore, new methods of teaching are called for. Task based instruction (TBI) was suggested in the present study to help pre-service teachers of English excel in English speaking and phonological awareness skills.

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The pilot study

The researchers conducted a pilot study and developed two questionnaires that were conducted on randomly chosen 27 students in the Faculty of Education.. The questionnaires aimed to find out the different speaking skills they had and how far they apply them in the conversation classes. Students indicated that in conversation classes they only had different dialogues and conversations followed by different questions to be answered without referring to any specific speaking skills. Speaking practice is just restricted to giving short answers to some questions. Students also indicated that in Phonology classes they only studied some theoretical background about phonological symbols. The pilot study was conducted two weeks prior to the real implementation of the study. The researchers conducted the Speaking and Phonological awareness tests and calculated their validity and reliability. Face validity for all instruments was determined by consulting a panel of experts, whereas the internal validity was decided by either internal consistency or Cronbach Alpha Coefficience. The reliability was found through Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, test-retest, or the inter-rater method. The pilot study revealed that all instruments were valid and reliable.

Statement of the Problem:

Results of the questionnaire showed that 4th year English Majors needed to develop their speaking and phonological awareness skills. Reviewing literature, task -based learning (TBL) method was suggested to be effective for achieving this purpose.

Questions:

"How effective was using task -based learning (TBL) program in developing speaking skills and phonological awareness of EFL pre-service teachers at the Faculty of Education, Minia University?

More specifically, the first question can be branched into the following questions:

- How effective was using task -based learning (TBL) program in developing speaking skills of EFL pre-service teachers at the Faculty of Education, Minia University?
- How effective was using task -based learning (TBL) program in developing phonological awareness of EFL pre-service teachers at the Faculty of Education, Minia University?

Objectives of the Study:

The study was conducted to :

1- Identify the effectiveness of using task -based learning (TBL) program in developing speaking skills of 4th year English majors at the Faculty of Education, Minia University.

2- Identify the effectiveness of using task -based learning (TBL) program in developing phonological awareness of 4th year English majors at the Faculty of Education, Minia University.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

1-There would be statistically significant differences between mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the speaking test in favor of post administration of the Speaking skills test.

2-There would be statistically significant differences between mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the speaking test in favor of post administration of each sub-skill.

3- There would be statistically significant difference between mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the phonological awareness test in favor of post administration of the whole phonological awareness skills test.

4- There would be statistically significant differences between mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-post administrations of the phonological awareness test in favor of post administration in each phonological awareness sub-skills.

Significance:

the present study was expected to be significant in constructing a program particularly directed to pre-service teachers to enhance their basic speaking and phonological awareness skills. The study might be significant to pre-service students as it provides an instructional strategy based on using different tasks. The findings could be theoretically and practically significant for EFL teachers, curriculum designers and researchers.

Delimitations

1- Only twenty (20) 4th year English Majors at the Faculty of Education, Minia University participated in the study.. They were particularly chosen, because they had some background knowledge of linguistics a prerequisite for the program. They were prospective teachers who needed to demonstrate some basic skills in. speaking and phonological awareness to make use of them in their future teaching.

2- The treatment lasted only for eight weeks in the first term of the academic year 2017/ 2018, three hours a week, in addition to another two weeks for the pre-post tests.

3- The speaking skills were limited to the sub skills that are most needed by 4th year English majors and these were decided upon by jury members who confirmed their suitability for the participants. These skills were Giving opinions and Making Preferences; Discussing a topic; Talking about oneself; Giving information; Describing pictures; Making suggestions and giving advice; Asking questions; Taking Turns and telling a story.

4- Phonological awareness skills were limited to the sub skills that are mostly needed by 4th year English majors and these were decided upon by jury members who confirmed their suitability for the participants. These skills were: Producing Rhyming; Segmenting Syllable; Blending Syllable; Blending words; Segmenting Onset-rime; Blending Onset-rime; Segmenting Sound; Blending Sound; Producing Diphthong and Identifying vowels.

Definitions of Terms:

Speaking Skill:

Wikipedia (2017) defined speaking as "the process or act of performing a speech to a live audience. This type of speech is deliberately structured with three general purposes: to inform, to persuade and to entertain. Public speaking is commonly understood as formal, face-to-face speaking of a single person to a group of listeners".

Scanlon and Zemach (2009) defined it as " students' ability to consistently and continuously speak without pauses or hesitations; consistently communicate all ideas without difficulty, pronounce words correctly and clearly; use varied and correct vocabulary and be able to communicate them properly; consistently use correct grammatical structures and use gestures appropriately.

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Speaking is defined operationally in this study as the students' ability to express themselves orally, correctly, clearly and appropriately in a given meaningful context using correct pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

Phonological Awareness

Wikipedia (2017) defined it as " an individual's awareness of the phonological or sound structure of words involving the detection and manipulation of sounds at three levels of sound structure: (1) syllables, (2) onsets and rimes, and (3) phonemes. Awareness of these sounds is demonstrated through a variety of tasks

Schuelle & Boudreau (2008) defined it as the" understanding of the different ways that spoken language can be broken into smaller components. It is the ability to attend to, identify and utilize a range of sounds within speech stream".

Phonological awareness is defined operationally in this study as the Students' ability to rhyme words, segment sentences, segment and blend syllable, segment and blend onset-rime and to segment and blend phonemes through using different tasks.

Task-Based Instruction: (TBI)

Nunan (2004) defines TBI as " an approach which seeks to allow students to work somewhat at their own speed and within their own level and area of interest to process and restructure their inter language. It moves away from a prescribed developmental sequence and introduces learner freedom and autonomy into the learning process".

Frost (2007) defines it as "a method of instruction in the field of language acquisition and learning. It focuses on the students doing meaningful tasks using the target language

The operational definition of TBI is that it is a method of learning that is built on different tasks for students to perform in pairs or groups through interaction in the target language.

Research Design

The study adopted a pre-post experimental group design. Twenty 4th year English majors at the Faculty of Education were submitted to an intensive TBL program. Students were trained to use different speaking and phonological awareness skills. The data of the study were gathered by a pre-post speaking test and a pre-post phonological awareness test.

Variables

Independent Variable

-Using a Task- Based Learning program.

Dependent Variables

1- Developing students' speaking skills.

2- Developing students' Phonological awareness skills

Control Variables:

All students were 4th years English Major at the Faculty of Education, Minia University.

Instruments of the study:

The researchers developed the following Instruments

-A needs assessment questionnaire in the speaking skills.

-A needs assessment questionnaire in the phonological awareness skills.
- A Speaking skills Test.

- A phonological awareness skills Test.

- A rubric for assessing the speaking skills test.

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Description of the different Instruments:

I-The Questionnaires

the researchers developed two questionnaires. The first aimed at specifying the speaking skills that are mostly needed by 4th year English majors. The second one aimed at figuring out students' phonological awareness skills. Building the questionnaires went through the following steps:

● Reviewing the literature related to the field of reading comprehension skills.

● Building up the questionnaires following these steps:

a- Stating the objectives of the questionnaire

b- Stating the sub- skills

 c- Identifying the opinions of the jury members through the preliminary questionnaires.

1- The Speaking skills questionnaire

There were nine basic speaking skills in this questionnaire as mostly needed for 4th year English Majors as modified and approved by the jury members. The questionnaire consisted of twenty sub-speaking skills which were tailed into nine ones according to the viewpoint of EFL experts. These skills were: Giving opinions and Making Preferences; Discussing a topic; Talking about oneself; Giving information; Describing pictures; Making suggestions and giving advice; Asking questions based on information provided; Taking Turns and Narrating or telling a story.

2- **The Phonological Awareness Questionnaire**:

This questionnaire includes 20 items that are mostly needed by 4th year English Majors and were approved by the jury members. The questionnaire consisted of sixteen sub- phonological awareness skills. These skills were: Rhyming Production; Syllable Segmentation; Syllable Blending; Blending words; Onset-rime Segmentation; Onset-rime Blending; Sound Segmentation; Sound Blending; Diphthong production and Vowel identification. For final form see Appendix (A).

Validity of the Questionnaires

Seven TEFL specialists, the jury members, approved the face validity of the questionnaires, their suitability and necessity for the participants.

3-The Speaking Skills Test:

Objectives:

This test was designed to:

1- Assess fourth year English majors' performance speaking skills

2- Measure the degree of improvement after the course is over.

Test Construction:

The test consisted of nine situation questions representing the most important objectives of the program.

Testing Time

During piloting the test, the researcher calculated time taken by each student finishing the test and the average was found to be 30 minutes. Thus the testing time was half an hour.

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Test Scoring

In order to assess students' answers in the speaking test, the researchers developed a rubric for this purpose. The rubric was divided into two main criteria: Accuracy and Fluency. Each criterion included five basic items. Students' scores ranged from (1) to (5) for each criterion. Thus, the total score of each question was (10). Three raters were asked to use the rubric to score the test. The average of their scores was calculated. The inter rater reliability between the 1st and the 2nd raters was (0.93), between the 2nd and 3rd raters was (0.97) and between the 1st and 3rd raters was (0.97). The total score of the test was (90) points.

Validity of the Test

Face Validity of the Test

The test was submitted to a jury of 7 qualified and experienced TEFL specialists. They were requested to judge the linguistic stating of the items, appropriateness, clarity of instructions, the difficulty level, length, applicability, suitability to the participants, and how far the items measure the skill it is intended to measure. Their suggestions were taken into consideration. The jury members confirmed the suitability, validity and applicability of the test.

The Internal Consistency

The validity of the test was determined by computing internal consistency of each question. This was calculated by using (Pearson correlation formula). Correlation coefficients ranged from 0.54 to 0.92 and Eta-Squared ranged from 0.94 to 0.98 as shown in Table (1) below.

Table (1)

Correlation Coefficients &η^2 between each domain and the total sheet of the Speaking test   No=10

Domain	QN	R	η^2
1- Giving opinions and Making Preferences	Q1	0.75*	0.95*
2- Discussing a topic	Q2	0.88*	0.97*
3- Talking about yourself	Q3	0.77*	0.98*
4- Giving information	Q4	0.60*	0.96*
5- Describing pictures	Q5	0.92*	0.98*
6- Making suggestions and giving advice	Q6	0.73*	0.97*
7- Asking questions based on information provided	Q7	0.60*	0.95*
8-Turn Taking	Q8	0.54*	0.94*
9- Narrating or telling a story	Q9	0.66*	0.97*

*Significant at 0.05 level

The Reliability of the Test

The test was administered to ten fourth year English Majors. The data obtained was computed to calculate the reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient (0.80) of the test was determined by Cronbach Alpha which was 0.795 as shown in Table (2). This shows that the speaking test enjoys a high degree of reliability.

Table (2)

Cronbach Alpha's reliability Coefficient of the Speaking test No=10

Variable	Alpha
Speaking test	0.80*

*Significant at 0.05 level

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4- The Phonological Awareness skills Test:

Objectives: This test was designed to:

1- Assess fourth year English majors' performance in phonological awareness skills

2- Measure the degree of improvement after the course is over.

Test Construction:

The test consisted of ten questions. Each question includes five items.

Test Scoring

Each correct answer received one score. The total score of the test is (50) points.

Testing Time

While administering the pilot study, the researcher calculated time taken by each student finishing the test and the average was found to be 60 minutes. Thus the testing time was one hour.

Validity of the Test

Face Validity

A group of twenty seven 4th year English Majors were randomly selected for piloting the test. The test was submitted to a jury of 7 qualified and experienced TEFL specialists. They were requested to judge the linguistic stating of the items, appropriateness, clarity of the test instructions, the difficulty level, length of the test, applicability, fitness of the items for the participants, and how far the items measure the skill it is intended to measure. Their suggestions were taken into consideration. The jury members confirmed the suitability, validity and applicability of the test

The Internal Consistency of the Test Items

The validity of the test was determined by computing internal consistency of each question. This was calculated by using (Pearson correlation formula). Correlation coefficients ranged from 0.50 to 0.78. This indicated that the test was valid as shown in Table (3).

Table (3)

Correlation Coefficients, Alpha& η^2 between each domain and the total sheet of the Phonological Awareness skills Test   No=27

Domain	Q N	R	η2
1- Rhyming Production	Q1	0.52	0.72
2- Syllable Segmentation	Q2	0.54	0.60
3- Syllable Blending	Q3	0.53	0.75
4- Blending words	Q4	0.63	0.65
5- Onset-rime segmentation	Q5	0.59	0.74
6- Onset-rime Blending	Q6	0.75	0.71
7- Sound Segmentation	Q7	0.64	0.63
8- Sound Blending	Q8	0.65	0.73
9- Diphthong production	Q9	0.68	0.74
10-Vowel Identification	Q10	0.50	0.62

*Significant at 0.05 level

Item Analysis

Item Difficulty and Discriminating Power

Responses to individual items were analyzed to determine item difficulty and discriminating power. The difficulty index is accepted as it ranged from 0.33 to 0.55. Item Discrimination was calculated to determine how well each item discriminates between high and low achievers. The discriminating items are those answered correctly by more of the higher group than of the lower one. Discrimination power ranged from 0.33 to 0.55

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The Reliability of the Test

The test was administered to twenty seven 4th year English Majors. The data obtained was computed to calculate the reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient of the test (0.987) was determined by Cronbach Alpha. See   Table (2). This shows that the Phonological awareness test enjoys a high degree of reliability.

Table (4)

Cronbach Alpha's reliability Coefficient of the Phonological Awareness test   No=27

Variable	Alpha
Phonological Awareness	0.987

*Significant at 0.05 level

Procedures Followed in Teaching the Experimental Group

1- The session began by face to face interaction. The instructors posed a question to arouse students' interest and motivation.

2- The instructors started by informing the key words "Task-Based Instruction, speaking skills and phonological Awareness ", to the participants. They tried to identify students' prior knowledge about TBI through some leading questions.

3- The instructors used the TBI approach in which learners did task-based activities via a cycle of pre-task stage, during task stage, and post-task stage.

4- In the pre-task stage, students were encouraged to guess, predict or inquire about the topic. The instructors asked similar questions in the main task. Questions were used to make sure that the tasks instructions were clearly understood by all students to ensure complete involvement in the tasks.

5- In the pre-task stage, students were assigned roles in pairs or groups tasks and discussed how to manage the time for each task. In some cases, students were asked to perform tasks similar to those performed in the during task stage to ensure complete understanding of the different tasks. While performing those tasks, they were asked to use only English to prepare them for the next stage. This is why this stage is called the preparation task-phase. This stage paved the way for the students to do the tasks efficiently and accurately.

6- In the during task stage, students were provided opportunities to accomplish real and authentic tasks on different speaking and phonological skills. They performed the main tasks sometimes in pairs and other times in groups. Tasks were challenging and meaningfully introduced to participants so as to acquire deeper understanding. In this stage, participants were provided opportunities to combine more than one skill in the same task and were practicing different activities in which they produced sentences and appropriate expressions based on the different situations. Students were asked to present their tasks using English and concentration was on fluency rather than accuracy. Students played different roles to perform each tasks. Topics were suitable, familiar to the students,   imaginative and appropriate for students' interests, language level and culture. Tasks were varied e.i. .talking about oneself; discussing a certain topic and narrating a story, and as for the phonological awareness tasks were segmenting and blending of syllables; onset-rime blending and segmenting

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7- In the post-task stage: students were encouraged to comment on their implementation of the tasks and received feedback from other groups and the instructors for further understanding. Through this stage, students focused on the language they used to complete the task and sometimes they were asked to repeat the performed task, and make comments on the it by themselves to encourage reflection on how the task was performed. Task repetition helps students to improve fluency and acquire the speaking and phonological awareness skills. Sometimes, students were required to perform different conversations in front of the whole class taking into consideration the utterances and expressions they used and the phonological abilities.

Results

The present study tried to explore how effective teaching speaking and phonological awareness through TBI was on the experimental group. The "t-test" was utilized for the analysis of data obtained from the Speaking and Phonological awareness tests. Scores of the participants on the pre-post tests were analyzed and compared.

Hypothesis (1)

Hypothesis (1) predicted that there would be significant difference (in favor of the post performance) between mean scores on the pre and post performance on the total speaking test.

Results indicated that the experimental group's mean scores on the post administration of the whole sheet of the Speaking test was higher and statistically significant compared to the pre- administration as t-value (0.98) is (16.04), and Eta- squared was 0.98 as presented in table (5). Consequently, the first hypothesis is confirmed and accepted.

Table (5)

t-value & η^2 between mean scores of the Experimental

group in the Pre-Post Speaking Test

No	Experimental group	Mean	SD	DF	t-value	$\eta2$
20	Pre	28.05	7.76			
20	Post	61.75	4.85	38	16.04*	0.98*

*Significant at 0.05

Hypothesis (2)

Results revealed that the experimental group achieved a significant improvement on each domain of the post speaking test as the difference in the mean scores between the pre and post administrations was statistically significant. Results also showed that students got high marks on particular speaking skills (Discussing a topic; Asking questions based on information provided; Giving opinions and Making Preferences and Describing pictures) as t-values were high as shown in table (7). This result illustrates that the enhancement of the Experimental group performance was due to the exposure to the TBI program which was found to be effective in promoting speaking skills of the participants. Consequently, the second hypothesis is confirmed and accepted.

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Table (7)

t-value & η^2 between mean scores of the Experimental group in relation to the Pre-Post Speaking Test Domains

Domain	Mean Pre	Mean Post	SD Pre	SD Post	$\eta2$ Post	t-value
1- Giving opinions and Making Preferences	2.95	6.85	1.06	0.81	o.99	12.76*
2-Discussing a topic	2.85	6.95	0.792	0.81	0.99	15.83*
3-Talking about yourself	3.45	7.60	1.36	0.81	0.98	11.47*
4- Giving information	3.25	6.65	0.963	o.83	0.99	11.66*
5- Describing pictures	2.85	6.70	1.01	0.90	0.99	12.38*
6- Making suggestions and giving advice	3.00	6.50	1.07	0.71	0.99	11.88*
7- Asking questions based on information provided	2.90	7.40	1.20	0.89	0.98	13.14*
8- Turn Taking	3.80	6.55	1.07	0.93	0.98	8.46*
9- Narrating or telling a story	3.05	6.55	1.32	0.92	0.98	9.47*

*Significant at 0.05 level

Hypothesis (3)

Results indicated that the experimental group's mean scores on the post administration of the whole sheet of the Phonological Awareness test was higher and statistically significant compared to the pre-administration as t-value (15.18) is significant and Eta- squared is (0.94) as presented in table (8). Consequently, the third hypothesis is confirmed and accepted.

Table (8)

t-value & η^2 between mean scores of the Experimental

group in the Pre- Post Phonological Awareness Test

No	group	Mean	SD	DF	t-value	η2
20	Pre	20.50	4.27			
20	Post	41.05	4.07	38	15.18*	0.94*

*Significant at 0.05

Hypothesis (4)

Results revealed that the experimental group achieved a significant improvement on each domain of the post Phonological Awareness test as the difference in the mean scores between the pre and post administrations was statistically significant. Results also showed that students got high marks on particular Phonological Awareness skills (Diphthong production; Onset-rime segmentation; Syllable Blending; Sound Blending and Onset-rime Blending) as t-values were high as shown in table (9). These results illustrate that the enhancement of the Experimental group performance was due to the TBI program which was found to be effective in promoting Phonological Awareness skills of the participants. Consequently, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed and accepted.

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Table (9)

t-value & η^2 between mean scores of the Experimental group in relation to the Pre-Post Phonological Awareness test Domains

Domain	Mean Pre	Mean Post	SD Pre	SD Post	t-value	$\eta2$
1- Rhyming Production	2. 50	3.70	1.53	0.72	3.13*	0.98*
2- Syllable Segmentation	2.10	4.10	1.64	0.62	4.97*	0.98*
3- Syllable Blending	2.00	4.10	1.38	0.44	6.33*	0.99*
4- Blending words	2.10	4.25	1.64	0.62	5.34*	0.98*
5- Onset-rime segmentation	2.10	4.35	1.33	0.65	6.59*	0.96*
6- Onset-rime Blending	1.90	4.05	1.41	0.59	6.13*	0.99*
7- Sound Segmentation	1.85	4.00	1.62	077	5.22*	0.98*
8- Sound Blending	2.00	4.10	1.33	0.62	6.19*	0.99*
9- Diphthong production	1.90	4.30	1.37	o.56	7.05*	0.98*
10-Vowel Identification	2.05	4.10	1.60	0.70	5.13*	0.98*

*Significant at 0.05

Discussion

Based on the results mentioned above, there is evidence that the suggested TBI program had a large effect on promoting speaking and phonological awareness of EFL 4th year students at the faculty of Education. This is indicated by the previously presented statistical analysis where scores of the experimental group on the pre-post

administrations of speaking and phonological awareness tests were compared using t-test. The researchers attributed these results to the implementation of TBI program in teaching the experimental group. Using the TBI program was found to be effective and useful for the participants. This is consistent with the results provided by varied studies that proved the effective role of TBI program on promoting EFL students' different language skills (e.g. Amer & Demirel, 2 017, ; Yildiz, 2017, Sofyana, 2015, Sarani &   Sahebi, 2012,   Rahman, 2010, Murad, 2009,Torky, 2006, etc.)

There is a great consensus among researchers, as mentioned in literature review, that TBI provided different valuable opportunities for students to learn new information and acquire skills actively. TBI focuses on learners through which students worked cooperatively, exchanged ideas, expressed opinions and shared experiences to perform certain tasks. Using pair work and group work throughout tasks increased the talking time of students and lowered their unwillingness to talk in front of the full class thus increased their motivation to participate. Each task had a clear and obvious outcome which helped students to focus and define their target clearly. Students also found these tasks useful and effective since they built on authentic, daily language use. Besides, they were satisfied that they had variety of chances to practice newly learned vocabulary related to a different topic in each task**.** Moreover, the direct and clear guidelines at the pre-task stage helped to create interest in doing the task which increased their involvement, and willingness to practice speaking and do phonological activities.

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Students were given the opportunity to make use of the guidelines they were exposed to and the planning they did to perform a real task in the performance stage of the task. In the post- task stage, reporting and presenting the task helped students rethink their performance throughout group discussion with the instructors before they performed publicly in front of their peers, which gave them a sense of confidence and willingness to take part. Students not only were required to present their final task outcome, but they were required also to repeat the whole task performance publicly at the post task stage. The majority of students enjoyed talking in front of their peers, making presentations and expressing their viewpoints as revealed in their reflection on the TBI program. Some students were unwilling to participate at the beginning of the experiment but after sometimes they began to get used to presentations and even shy students were willing to participate.

Conclusion:

The findings of the study reflect the utility of the TBI program in developing students' speaking and phonological awareness skills. Students highlighted the benefits of using the TBI program as a useful tool for developing their speaking and phonological awareness skills. They indicated that they enjoyed the task cycle of the TBI program which were very motivating and interesting. They were satisfied with learning through different tasks which encouraged them to speak, collaborate, cooperate and debate with each other. Those tasks increased their motivation and positive attitudes towards learning to speak.

Providing students with clear and obvious instruction before the task fostered their understanding of the basic characteristics of spoken discourse and phonological awareness skills they were required to perform and also to use these characteristics and their underlying skills in actual performance. There is evidence that providing supportive feedback throughout task cycle is highly effective and appreciated from the student as revealed in their reflections (See, Appendix C). Through this feedback, students' strengths in speaking were stressed and possible suggestions for improvement were offered throughout in such a way that helped them develop their speaking and phonological awareness. They also gained clearer insights of expectations of others peers and the tutor s as well. Some of students' reflections are: "I enjoyed the pre-task stage of the activity because it tell me what to do exactly"; "I now recognized different speaking skills which I did not know before"; "I liked the professor's comments and feel as I learn much from them"; " I liked working in a group with my friends that helps me to involve more in work because I feel shy"; " I improved my speaking so much through the program "; "I feel like I want to speak more and more with my friends to do my task"; " I think it is very useful and interesting method to learn with"; " I understand some phonological terms and skills that I did not hear before although I took phonology course for more than two years" "I acquired many abilities from the TBI program as working with my friend, playing different roles etc." I liked while-task stage as we perform many useful tasks in it". (For more students' reflections.

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The study concludes that the use of the TBI has a significant impact on the students' performances of different tasks in speaking and phonological awareness. Undoubtedly, results gained from analysis of data are clear empirical evidence that the TBI program works effectively. The program enabled the students to understand and prepare themselves well to the tasks and hence fosters their spoken performance and phonological awareness skills. TBI program also assisted students to acquire different skills which they will basically benefit from in their prospective teaching profession

Suggestions for further studies:

Studies could be done to investigate:

1. Using TBI for developing students' writing and reading skills.

2. Using TBI for developing students' critical thinking skills.

3. Using TBI for improving students' attitudes towards writing.

4. Using TBI for enhancing students' cultural awareness.

5. Using TBI for enhancing students different speaking genres

6. Using TBI for enhancing students listening skills.

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