Research Paper

The Effect of Using the Eclectic Approach on Developing Speaking Skills from the Students' Perspectives

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ABSTRACT: *Hedge (2000) asserted that the communicative and eclectic approaches are very important in the non-speaking countries of English in developing the oral fluency and accuracy which are very indispensable for speakers of other languages. This research aims at exploring the effect of using the eclectic approach in developing speaking skills from the students' perspectives. The sample of the study comprises (90) students of Birzeit University and Quds Open University majoring in English for the year 2019. The study is quantitatively descriptive in design. A reliable questionnaire of (20) items has been utilized. The results showed that there is an effect for using the eclectic approach on developing students' speaking skills. The results also revealed that the majority of the respondents has positive attitudes towards speaking skills reaching up to 82%. Respondents felt comfortable with the eclectic approach leading them to participate in the oral classes actively and enthusiastically. 80% of the respondents prefers to implement the eclectic approach activities The study proposes that there is a need to study the effect of using the eclectic approach in developing the writing, listening and reading skills.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Various language teaching methods have been presented in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning and achieve the anticipated impact on learners of English Language. The Eclectic Approach was supported as almost all the individual methods had their assets and faintness and not even a single method was responsible to the real and dynamic classroom setting. Brown (2002) argues that eclecticism finds the right solution as this approach permits the teacher to select what works well in their classrooms within their own dynamic contexts. Even Gilliland, James and Bowman (1994) professed that the justification to adopt the Eclectic Approach lies in the single method or approach because a single method or approach has a narrow theoretical basis and has a fixed set of activities and hence it is unyielding. Eclecticism is a conceptual approach that does not hold strictness to a single paradigm or a set of norms but draws upon multiple theories, styles or ideas to gain balancing insights into a subject or applies different theories in particular cases. "Eclecticism is well-defined as a type of methodology that makes use of the different language learning approaches instead of spiking to one standard approach" (Al-Hamash and Hamdi, 1985:22). According to Weidman (2001:2), "The Eclectic Approach has been widely accepted in English classrooms that many good teachers today use it pompously as a tag to describe to their teaching, wearing it almost like a badge of honor". Kumar (2013) supports the Eclectic Approach, the purpose of advocating eclectic method is to connect life experiences to the ideas presented in learning of the language.'' The Eclectic Approach represents the principle that gives the opportunity to choose cautiously and helps the teachers in their work. Eclecticists strive for the balanced development of all four skills at all stages while accentuating the early development of aural-oral skills. An eclectic teacher has to be inventive, animated and willing to test the purpose of keeping lessons diverse and stimulating. This research aims at exploring the effect of using the eclectic approach in developing speaking skills from the students' and teachers' perspectives.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Weidman (2001) maintained that the Eclectic Approach is one of the best approaches in ELT if teachers implement this approach in English language classrooms. First, the Eclectic Approach (EA) makes teaching pioneering and entertaining since the learning objectives can easily be achieved and because the learner partakes in a lesson energetically and cooperates with teacher and other pupils to fulfill different needs and build confidence in language learners. This approach fortifies effective learning as information of knowledge is retained for a long time that enables learners to speak fluently. According to this approach, the teacher is flexible to choose the methodology or approach he wants to use as it is considered a problem-based approach to teaching languages in the classroom setting. Learners can achieve good results without much pressure since they have a clear image about what they are doing such as manifold tasks, dynamic learning, high collaboration, and good results. Most importantly, this approach links life experiences to the ideas presented in learning the language. According to Wali (2009), this approach is very prevalent today because the learners are varied according to their level of intelligence. Teacher should act as facilitators and provide opportunities for students to express their ideas, without any fear, in English. In this approach, the teacher proposes a variety of exercises, both written and oral, in order to improve the learners' communicative abilities with accuracy and fluency. There are various advantages the Eclectic Approach. One, it integrates all methods, that are appropriate to the classroom environment. Second, grammar is considered as the greatest component of a language and without grammar, nothing can be transported in a language sine language can be spoken or written accurately by using grammatical rules properly through merging sentences, splitting sentences, categorizing pronouns and their antecedents, words and their synonyms and prepositional phrases, focusing on specific features of the language pertinent to learners' background needs. The skills of listening and speaking are incorporated by teachers while teaching English grammar by using Eclectic Approach. In the listening and speaking activities, the teachers emphasizes on the speaking abilities of students by teaching important grammatical aspects such as parts of speech, discourse, sequencing of words, comprehension of sentences and sequential order of thought in speech as well as the ability to interpret and make a perilous evaluation in the course of listening. Eclecticism blends the practice of listening, speaking, reading and writing into a gradual complete. However, this approach is criticized severely because it offers no direction regarding the principles by which countless methods and techniques can be elected.

III. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The main objectives of this study are first to find out the effect of eclectic approach on developing speaking skills attributed to students' attitudes. Second, to find out the effect of eclectic approach on developing speaking skills attributed to the Learners' preferences. Finally, to find out the effect of eclectic approach on developing speaking skills attributed to communicative language teaching. So, this study has the following questions:

1. What is the effect of eclectic approach on developing speaking skills attributed to the students' attitudes?
2. What is the effect of eclectic approach on developing speaking skills attributed to learners' preferences?
3. What is the effect of eclectic approach on developing speaking skills attributed to communicative language teaching?

This study is conducted at Birzeit University and Quds Open University- Palestine -through which (90) students learning English were selected randomly. The researcher used a quantitative tool: a questionnaire which contains (20) items. The questionnaire of this study is validated and its internal consistency reaches to 80%. The results showed that the majority of the respondents has positive attitudes towards speaking skill reaching out to 82% and they feel comfortable with the eclectic approach and participate in the oral classes actively and enthusiastically. 80% of the respondents prefers to implement the eclectic approach activities. Moreover, the 78% the respondents described the classroom environment as friendly and 75% of the participants have good association with the teachers describing them as mentors and facilitators because they motivate and encourage them to speak fluently and freely. The results also showed that 70% of the participants prefer to work in groups in the eclectic approach and this shows that they are companionable learners and they prefer to exchange information and learn mutually. The students' satisfaction of the different activities in the eclectic approach proposed by the teachers is the main reason for creating dynamic, supportive and partaking classroom. The dialogue activity is the most preferred (85%) because it gives the students the prospect to use the language fluently without fear or hesitation. These results harmonize with Kumar (2013), Mellow (2002) and Wali (2009).

IV. DISUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The researcher has highlighted the importance of eclectic approach as vital technique which gives diversity to the activities conducted inside the classroom. This has to be shadowed in the class since the main objectives of teaching a language is to be able to express one self and convey ideas. Second, the eclectic approach is essential in real life situations in a way that the learners feel they are responsible for their learning in the acquisition and mastering of the second language. Finally, the eclectic approach builds a strong bond between language and real life so it produces learners who have robust personalities. The study has many implications for learners of SL. First, the eclectic approach reflects the need to assimilate the real life situations through diversity of techniques inside the classroom. Second, there is a need to deliver some meaningful occasions for students to communicate in the real situation, so that students can learn language aspects and build their own skills while enhancing their communicative, pragmatic and structure competences. Third, there is a need to use collaborative and cooperative learning styles in order to promote students' speaking, reading, listening and writing skills. Fourth, there is a need to decrease teachers' speaking time inside the classroom to give more chances for the students to speak and increases the time of students' communication. Finally, Learners always like something new and exciting. This approach is broad and may include every kind of learning activity and saves learner from monotony. Siddiqui (2012) found that the eclectic approach is significantly higher than those belonging to group taught by traditional method in word reading, reading comprehension, reading fluency, spellings and reading ability. Siddiqui (2012) also concluded that eclectic approach is the most effective approach as the teacher enjoys the freedom to absorb the best techniques of all the well-known methods and approaches. Listening and speaking skills are incorporated by teachers while teaching English grammar by using Eclectic Approach. Here, the teachers focus on the speaking abilities of students by teaching important grammatical aspects such as parts of speech, passive voice, sequencing of words, harmony, comprehension of sentences and consecutive order of thought in speech as well as the ability to construe and make a critical evaluation in the course of listening (Rao, 2018).

V. CONCLUSION

This study highlighted the importance of the eclectic approach for Second Language Learners, especially in enhancing their speaking skills. The results was in accord with previous studies (Abu-Baha, 2017) which emphasized the active pedagogy of the eclectic approach within versatile techniques. The eclectic approach improves the students' attitudes and increases their language preferences and most importantly activate their communicative language learning. Even though the study is limited in scope and cannot be over-generalized, the outcomes of the study had many implications for ESL learners. Teachers need to go beyond teaching using the eclectic approach within an advanced teaching theories without confining themselves to a special approach. Second, teachers should open new horizons for expressive occasions for students to converse in real-life situations in order to improve their communicative competence. Third, pair and group work is a significant aspect in supporting students' speaking skills by giving them more chances to express themselves appropriately and debatably.

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