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The Effect of Oral Dialogue Journals on Iranian EFL Learners' Communicative Competence

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of oral dialogue journals on communicative competence of Iranian EFL learners. Participants of this study were 80 students of two Payam-e-Noor Universities who were proved to be homogenous in the communicative competence based on TSE (Test of Spoken English) interview. The participants of one of these universities were considered as the experimental group. The experimental group practiced oral dialogue journals in addition to participating in Oral Reproduction of Stories 2 class. The comparison group just participated in Oral Reproduction of Stories 2 class. Both classes were conducted by the same teacher. At the end of the treatment two groups were interviewed based on TSE once more. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the comparison group significantly. Moreover it was revealed that this technique (oral dialogue journal) was significantly more beneficial for the low proficient speakers of English than the high ones though useful for the high ones, too.

Key words: communicative competence, oral dialogue journals, TSE.

1. Introduction

Communicative approach is one answer to the deficiencies of many previous methods of teaching that just focused on language usage without paying attention to using language. Communicative competence is a term which refers to a learner's ability in using grammatical rules, forming correct utterances, and knowing how to use these utterances appropriately (Hymes, 1971). It can be explained that communicative competence is the ability of learners of a foreign language in using the form and the meaning of the language. After the influence of communicative language teaching in teaching atmosphere, many different techniques have been used in order to provide communication in classes. In this research, oral dialogue journals are used to create interaction.

Oral dialogue journals are one kind of dialogue journals recorded on tape. According to Peyton (1993), dialogue journals are conversations between a student and a teacher over a specific period of time. He explains that "dialogue journals not only open a new channel of communication but also provide context for language development" (p.1). Through practicing dialogue journals, learners of a foreign language can find opportunity for using the language appropriately to express meaning and for being corrected without being evaluated.

2. Theoretical Framework

Social constructivist theory encourages students to make more active and participatory roles in the classrooms. As Vygotsky (1978) explains, learning is a social activity and learners are creators of their knowledge. Social constructivist theory emphasizes that students learn by creating new meanings. The aim of this theory is providing conversation that relates to personal meaning. In using dialogue journals, it is possible for learners to have a more active role in learning and to express their personal meaning. Social constructivism views each learner as a unique individual with unique needs and backgrounds. Wertsch (1997) explains that social constructivism considers the learner unique and complex and as an integral part of the learning process. This complexity and uniqueness is respected in using dialogue journals.

Although research has been done about using written form of dialogue journals, oral dialogue journals have not been used. Through oral dialogue journals, students freely express their ideas on the tape and record it and receive comments from their teacher on the same tape as the feedback. The aim of using this technique is conveying

purposes and communication without being worried about evaluation. The results of this work showed a positive relation between practicing oral dialogue journals and speaking of the EFL students. The present study tries to check the use of this technique posed by McGrath (1992) not used before in Iran (as far as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned) to develop Iranian English major students' communicative competence.

Audio-taped journals have not been widely used, but are recognized in recent years (Gough and Wedum, 2000). As Ho (2003) has explained "audio-taped dialogue journal is a variation of the written dialogue journal" (p. 269). Audio-taped dialogue journals are journals recorded on the tape. One type of the audio-taped journals is oral dialogue journals. According to McGrath (1992) the oral dialogue journals are journals that emphasize on students discovering their identity. The students who use the oral dialogue journals discuss on a specific topic through which they can express their own views and insights freely (Henry, 1989). Oral dialogue journals can lead to interaction between the students and the teacher. Every speech recorded by the students can be listened and answered by the teacher. The teacher listens to every student's entry and in this way focuses on every student's individuality. The teacher becomes familiar with the students' problems in using language and corrects their errors through her answer in an indirect way.

As Brown (2000) has emphasized, through oral dialogue journal, the students can express themselves orally, can convey their real concerns and thought, and can produce speaking. Oral dialogue journals provide this opportunity for the students to have individual conversation. In this way, the students become more aware of their voices in the second language. Henry (1996) said that the learners through oral dialogue journals practice speaking in their privacy and at their home. He adds that students through dialogue journals focus on "pronunciation, communicating personal needs, introducing elements of their personal lives, overcoming oral communication problems, grammar, vocabulary, and self-evaluation"(p.15).

Through using oral journals, the students are motivated and encouraged to listen to their teacher's answer and comments because they feel that they are discovered and because their individuality is respected. Ho (2003) explained that through audio-taped dialogue journals, the teacher could be aware of his students' learning goals, language level, motivation, needs and problems. He said that the teacher through journals can find opportunity to know his students'

personal concerns, opinions, and experiences. The teacher and the students use their language to communicate.

Communication is a mutual interaction for exchanging meaning in spite of differences in participants' views and is interaction for conveying ideas, new information, and feelings. Over the last several decades communicative language teaching (CLT) has been used as a method focusing on communication. It was an approach that gave an important place to the use of language and criticized many previous methods that just focused on the usage of the language without making the learners able to use the language to accomplish their own functions and purposes. As Hymes (1972) explained this approach aimed for learners' linguistic fluency not just accuracy in real life communication and focused on the students' ability in creating their language in communication. In Communicative language teaching on communicative competence was emphasized.

Many linguists have defined communicative competence. One of the most influential definitions was provided by Michael Canale and Merrill Swain (1980). They explain that communicative competence is composed of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and communication strategies or strategic competence. According to them, grammatical competence involves knowledge of the lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence grammar, semantics, and phonology. They explain that sociolinguistic competence consists of social rules of use and rules of discourse that are crucial to interpreting utterances for social meaning particularly when there is not a direct relation between the literal meaning of an utterance and the speaker's intention. Strategic competence consists of verbal and non-verbal strategies of communication that are used to compensate for communication breakdown. These three competences are essential aspects of the language use that the lack of each of them will lead to breakdown in expressing meaning and communication.

Savignone (2001) defines the four grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and compensatory components for communicative competence as follows: Grammatical competence is the knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and phonology. Sociolinguistic competence requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used that involves the "role of the participants, the information they share, and function of interaction"(p.35). Discourse competence is going beyond the sentence level and is the ability in connecting sentences. Strategic competence "is the strategies that one uses to compensate for imperfect knowledge of rules - or other factors that are

obstacle for interaction such as fatigue, distraction, and inattention" (p. 35).

We use language in order to express our purposes that according to Brown (2000) are the realization of four components of communicative competence. Bachman (1990) considered this communicative competence as manipulating the functions of the language for instance requesting or giving opinion.

The deficiency of communicative competence in English in communities where English is studied as a foreign language is the result of the lack of interpersonal interaction in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning context because in these settings English is not used as a means of communication and as a tool for receiving and sending meaning. Oral dialogue journals by their interactive nature help teachers to open a channel of communication with individual students and can be used for working on accuracy and fluency. These journals can be used for sharing ideas or asking questions about how to use the language, to interact and to communicate competently. In fact dialogue journals give the learners this opportunity to use the language in learning atmosphere and in the classes of teaching English as a foreign language, which many students are deprived from. The motivation behind this study is to see if this technique can be of any help to Iranian English major students in general and Payam-e- Noor students who usually have shorter period classes than usual state university ones. In this study the following research questions are investigated:

- 1) Is there any significant difference between communicative competence of the students who use oral dialogue journals and those who do not?
- 2) Is there any significant difference in the communicative competence of high and low speaking proficiency learners who have used oral dialogue journals?

3. Method

Participants

Participants of this study were 80 students of two Payam-e-Noor universities in Mazandaran who had the course of *Oral Reproduction of Stories 2*. Students of one university were chosen as the experimental group and students of another university were chosen as the comparison group. Both groups had 10 sessions during the

semester. The first group included 11 males and 29 females. The second group included 16 males and 24 females. Both groups benefited the presence of the same teacher. Students of both groups were young between the ages of 20 and 25. To have homogeneous participants in communicative competence, the first interview based on TSE tasks was used for both the comparison and the experimental groups. An independent samples t- test (table C, appendix B) showed that there was no significant difference between the means. Then, the students of the experimental group were classified into high and low speaking proficiency groups based on their scores in the first interview. In fact, those whose scores were between 0.5 and 2 standard deviation above the mean were considered as the high proficient speakers and those with scores of 0.5 and 2 standard deviation below the mean were considered as the low proficient speakers. In brief 40 participants were included in the experimental group and 40 in the comparison one and based on the above mentioned criterion, from the 40 in the experimental group, 13 were considered as high and 12 as low proficient speakers.

Instrumentation

In this research, students of the experimental group had to record their questions, comments, and ideas for 5 to 10 minutes on a subject that they had chosen for every session. Besides, two oral interviews based on the tasks of TSE were used. The first one was used before the experiment and the second one was used at the end of the 12 sessions. The test administrator (the researcher) and one university professor (the teacher of the *Oral Reproduction of Stories 2* class) were present at the time of the two interviews.

The questions of both of the interviews were based on the tasks of TSE produced by Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ (2001). The primary purpose of this test is to measure the ability of non-native speakers of English to communicate orally. According to Brown (2003), TSE only shows non -native speakers' ability to communicate in foreign languages.

The validation of the TSE test was supported by research that indicated the relationship between the TSE comprehensibility scores and FSI(Foreign Service Institute) oral proficiency levels, the intercorrelations among the four TSE scores, and the correlation of university instructors' TSE scores with student assessments of the instructors' language skills(Clark and Swinton, 1980). According to Educational Testing Service (2001), The TSE test was delivered in a

format, which maintained reliability and validity while controlling for the variables associated with direct interviewing.

TSE tasks:

They include 11 different kinds of task

- 1) Describe something physical
- 2) Narrate from presented material(The student should look at the material presented by the interviewer such as a picture and tell the interviewer the story that the picture shows)
- 3) Summarize information of the speaker's own choice(The student should give his information about a subject of his own choice briefly)
- 4) Give directions based on visual materials(The student is given a map and should give directions from one place to another place)
- 5) Give instructions (The student should give instruction for specific case such as how to be a good teacher or to be a good person)
- 6) Give an opinion(The student is asked to give an opinion about specific subjects such as watching movie)
- 7) Support an opinion (The student should support his opinion. For example, if the students is fond of watching movies, he should explain why)
- 8) Compare/Contrast(The student should compare or contrast two views or two things)
- 9) Hypothesize (The student should hypothesize about something such as future action)
- 10) Function interactively (The interviewer wanted the student to imagine something, for example to imagine that he is a teacher talking with other teachers about one student who had problems in learning. The interviewer asked the student to talk as if he is talking to a group of teachers)
- 11) Define (The student should define a term for the interviewer. For example, the interviewer asked the student to define a term used frequently in his field of the study) (Brown, 2003).

These eleven tasks on the TSE are designed to elicit oral production in various discourse and pragmatic contexts. They include different functions of language. Performing every task by the students means manipulating a function that is accomplishing a purpose, e.g. contrasting, describing and so on. According to Brown (2000) manipulating function is the realization of four components of

communicative competence. In fact, every task checks all four components of communicative competence.

All participants had to answer the eleven questions based on the eleven tasks twice, once before the treatment for the first interview and once after the treatment. So the eleven classifications of tasks were the same, but in the two interviews, two different questions were asked for each task. For example, for the first interview, the participants were given a map of a town. They had to give direction from one specific place to another place. For the second interview, the participants were given a map of a university. This time, too, students had to give direction from one place to another place.

Each test taker was given a score ranging from 20 to 60 (TSE scoring category given in appendix A). This scoring taxonomy implied a number of abilities that as Brown (2003) had said, comprised effective communication. Students' scores were based on their ability in:

1) Using correct grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Grammatical competence).

2) Using cohesive devices: The student's ability to use conjunctions and other cohesive devices (Discourse competence).

3) Using compensatory strategies: The students' ability to use repetition or to clarify his meaning when he lacked linguistic competence (Strategic competence). 4) Understanding situation and audience: Student's ability to understand different contexts of different questions and his ability in using appropriate form of the language i.e. the student's ability to express his ideas more informally or more formally according to context. For example, was the student able to understand the difference between the words daddy and father? Was the student able to understand the difference between starting his question by "would you mind" or by another form of the language? (Sociolinguistic competence)

Two scorers, one university professor (the teacher of the *Oral Reproduction of Stories 2*

classes) and the researcher were present at the time of the interviews and scored the participants.

students who were interviewed.

Procedure

After the first interview based on TSE (Test of Spoken English) to make sure of their homogeneity, the students of the experimental group were classified into two subgroups. The students whose scores were between 0.5 and 2 standard deviation above the mean were

selected as high proficient speakers and those with scores between 0.5 and 2 standard deviation below the mean were selected as the low proficient ones. Students of both of the comparison and the experimental groups had the course of *Oral Reproduction of Stories 2* class but the students of the experimental group had to practice oral dialogue journals in addition to the normal curriculum. Through practicing oral dialogue journals, the students of the experimental group had to record their questions, comments, and ideas on tape in length of 5 to 10 minutes at home on a subject that they themselves had chosen for every session and the researcher gave comments on what they had said, asked some questions either to provoke more thinking or clarify what was not clear, and also used correct form of the students' errors in her response. At the end of the semester, all participants were interviewed again. Both interviews were based on TSE tasks and were scored based on TSE scoring guide (see appendix A). The eleven classifications of tasks were the same, but in the two interviews, two different questions were asked for each task. Two scorers, one university professor (the teacher of the *Oral Reproduction of Stories 2* classes) in addition to the researcher were present at the time of the interviews and gave scores to the students who were interviewed to make scoring more reliable. Limit of agreement between the two raters was measured. Limit of agreement was near the zero and showed that scoring was reliable.

As it has been explained the aim of TSE is measuring communicative competence of non-native learners of a foreign language. In this research, the professor of the class of the *Oral Reproduction of Stories 2* and the researcher were non-native as well as the learners. Thus, none of the participants received score 60 in four components of communicative competence and the scoring was somewhat moderated and the highest score given to the learners was 50.

4. The Study

4.1. Numerical Analysis

In order to check the normality of distribution, one sample Kolmogrov-Smirnov test for both groups were conducted. Tables A and B (See appendix B) show the normality of the distribution of the comparison and the experimental group respectively. Also an independent samples t-test (table C) was conducted to check the homogeneity of the two groups before the treatment (see appendix B).

As shown in table C, the Levene's test was not significant, so the groups' equal variance was confirmed. Based on the results there was not any significant difference ($t_{(78)} = .207$, $p = .836$) between the mean of the experimental and the comparison groups on their communicative competence before practicing oral dialogue journals. In other words, the students of the comparison and the experimental groups had fairly equivalent communicative competence at the first interview.

In order to answer the first research question, an independent samples t-test was conducted between the gain scores of the experimental and the comparison groups. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of TSE gain scores of the experimental and comparison group

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
experimental	40	10.388	11.150	1.7630
comparison	40	5.900	5.446	.8611

As the table indicates, the experimental group outperformed the comparison one. Table 2 shows the t- test results.

Table 2. Independent sample t-test for TSE gain score of experimental and comparison group

	Levene's test for equality of variances		T test for equality of means						
	F	Sig	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.error Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
Score	2.264	.136	6.138	78	.000	4.488	.731	3.032	5.943
Equal variances assumed ,			6.138	46.814	.000	4.488	.731	3.017	5.958
equal variances not assumed									

As the results show, the Levene's test was not significant, so the two groups' equal variances was confirmed. The results of the t-tests show that the mean and in fact communicative competence of the

experimental group after using oral dialogue journals is significantly higher than the comparison group ($t_{(78)} = 6.138, p < .05$). In fact, the results showed that there is a positive relation between practicing oral dialogue journals and communicative competence of EFL learners.

In order to answer the second research question, i.e. to see if the difference between the high and low proficient learners after the practice of oral dialogue journal is meaningful, due to the low number of the participants, a non-parametric independent samples t-test, i.e., a Mann-Whitney U, was conducted. Table 3 shows the ranks of the two groups for the gain scores.

Table 3. Ranks of the high and low proficient speakers

group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
low	12	18.3	220.00
high	13	8.08	105.00
Total	25		

In the following table the degree of difference is investigated.

Table 4. Mann-Whitney U for the gain scores of high and low proficient speakers.

	Gain score
Mann-Whitney U	14.000
Wilcoxon W	105.500
Z	-3.525
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.000 ^a

Table 4 demonstrates that this difference is significant ($Z = -3.525, p < .05$). In other words the low proficient groups made more benefit of this oral dialogue journal. Though it was not the question of this study, to see if it was useful for the high group as well, a non-parametric matched t-test, i.e., Wilcoxon W test, was conducted. It was to check the difference in the pre and post test of the high group. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics of the pre to post test changes in the high proficient speakers.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of pre-test and post- test scores of students with high level of proficiency in the experimental group

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
pre - test	44.238	13	3.59175
post - test	46.2308	13	3.88166

As it is revealed, the mean of this group after the treatment is higher than before it but as table 6 shows, this difference is not significant ($Z=-1.439$, $p=.109$).

Table 6. Wilcoxon W for the high proficient speakers before and after the oral dialogue journals

Z	-1.601 ^a
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.109

So it can be concluded that in fact the communicative competence of both students with high and low levels of speaking proficiency after the treatment was higher than before practicing oral dialogue journals. But based on the results, the effect of oral dialogue journals on the low level proficient speakers was significantly more than that of the high proficient ones.

4.2. Non-numerical Analysis

To provide a better picture of the differences mentioned in the tables before and after the treatment, some of the participants' sentences transcribed from the tapes related to four high and four low proficient speakers are provided below. Number one is related to the first entry of the student and number two is related to the last entry of the same student.

Low proficient speakers

Student 1

1) I want talk about law of attraction. Law of attraction says we reach everything want, for example, money, happy, have relation with others. I accept this law of attraction.

2) Thought and motivations make actions. There are two kinds of positive thought and negative one. If you think positive, the environment will be positive for you. The world is not only things that we obviously see, in fact; there is a world inside us. The world inside us makes the world that is around us.

Student 2

1) I don't have such experience in my life but I have seen people that they have worked very hard in your life and have reached in your wills

2) I want to talk about hope. We can want everything from God and if we trust God, we can have everything that is good. Sometimes we want a thing and do try for it but our effort is aimless. Perhaps God knows the truth what we don't know and are not aware about.

Student3

1) My name is-----. I am studying English

2) It is very important for human to help each other because they need to live together. When a man help another, he or she feels very good his inside and enjoys it. Of course some people don't like to help. I think helping is a holy work. As a young person I like to help everyone that needs my help. It is important for me to get rid someone that need any help.

Student 4

1) I watch the film of troy. The man was strong. The film was wonderful.

2) At the writing class, one student asked the teacher teach us to write better. The teacher answered: there is not enough time. I do not accept his answer because many times at the class we have no work to do. I think nobody pay attention for us.

High proficient speakers

Student 1

1) Justice is a word I never believe in. I like speak about it. Why there is inequality in this world and some are more comfortable than others. I can ask this question from you? How we can reach equality? How we can reach justice?

It is possible or not? It is real or not?

2) Secret is one wonderful film. Prosperity is all people's right. This film answers the question: how can I have a better life full of happiness and success. I enjoy seeing this film. It was like reading a

book. This film gives all people the hope for having a better life and future. We ourselves make our destiny by our mind and actions.

Student 2

1) Painting is my favorite hobby. I don't know how it can explained, I mean how can I explain it. I like it so much. Painting nature, trees, people who we watch and are around us. It is so fantastic. You paint life and people who live.

2) Your research is about interaction. Students many times have difficulties in speaking. I think it is because they are afraid to be known or to be laughed at. When we want to speak we should have something in our mind and then we should read more and more to have many vocabularies and topics in mind. I think those who are better reader, are better speaker. Reading books, listening to stories and seeing carefully can give us vocabularies.

Student 3

1) I am fond to poetries. I have written many poems about many things. I can show them to you. But my family criticizes me. I am interested to write. My classmates and my friend encourage me and I am happy to having such friends.

2) The story of bet was wonderful. This story emphasized how life is important under every circumstance. I believe in hope. Just believing in god and being positive can lead to being a successful person. To make a happy life, we should try and forget about bad events.

Student 4

1) I do not need this practice

2) I like to become a director to turn my dreams into reality. Although nobody believe in me and many times people laugh at me, but I wanted to be brave but sometimes I got disappointed. How can I overcome this sense?

As transcriptions of the students' last entries compared to their first entries show, students were able to communicate their meaning. In fact, transcriptions show that students were more motivated to use the language in order to express what they had in their mind and in order to interact.

5. Discussion

Practicing oral dialogue journals helped the teacher know the students more and understand their learning problems that caused obstacles in the way of communication. In this way, the teacher emphasized on those aspects of language and tried to help them to enhance their communicative competence (their competence in conveying their meaning) by solving those problems in using language individually. In fact, practicing oral dialogue journals significantly changed the communicative competence of EFL learners but this change for learners with low level of speaking proficiency was significantly more than that of the students with high level of the speaking proficiency. If high level proficient students became aware of their weaknesses and found the chance to solve them through practicing oral dialogue journals, learners with low level of speaking proficiency not only found the chance of becoming aware of their errors and of being corrected indirectly but found the opportunity to start speaking through oral dialogue journals. It seems that the privacy and specific feature of oral dialogue journals that was valuing individuality of learners gave the learners with low level of the speaking proficiency enough confidence to start communication free from anxieties they felt in face to face conversation in the classroom. Oral dialogue journals could provide an opportunity of interaction between learners and the teacher which when added to the limited interaction of the classroom could bring about a great change for all.

6. Conclusion

As this study demonstrates, practicing oral dialogue journals can be a technique for providing the opportunity of speaking for EFL learners when learners have limited time to speak in classes related to oral skills in general and for students in Payam-e-Noor universities specifically who in comparison with other university students have less contact with the teacher. In fact the results of this study are in line with what McGrath (1992), Peyton (1993), Henry (1996), Brown (2000), and Ho (2003) have posed about the benefits of oral dialogue journals for the language development. On the other hand, since the participants in this study were limited to a specific setting, i.e., Payam-e Noor, with its specific characteristics, the generalization of the results requires more approval from other settings like other state or private universities or institutes.

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Appendix A

TSE Score Band Descriptor Chart gives five score levels from 20 to 60 and specifies response characteristics for competence at each of five levels that is given in this appendix.

TSE Score Band Descriptor Chart (TOEFL Program Services and Educational Testing Services, 2001).

The highest score (60) for the 4 components

1) 60= communication almost always effective: task performed very competently; speech almost never marked by non- native characteristics.

Linguistic competence: Errors not noticeable; accent not distracting;

range in grammatical structures and vocabulary; delivery with no hesitancy or pauses

Discourse competence: Response is coherent, with logical organization and clear development; contains enough details to almost always be effective;

sophisticated cohesive devices result in smooth connection of ideas

Sociolinguistic competence: Speaker almost always considers register and demonstrates audience awareness; understanding of context and strength in discourse and linguistic competence; demonstrate sophistication.

Strategic competence: Native-like repair strategies (Effective strategies that are never distracting and never end in failure)

Score (50) for the 4 components

2) 50= communication generally effective: task performed competently,

Successful use of compensatory strategies; speech sometimes marked

by non native characteristics.

Linguistic competence: Errors not unusual, but rarely major accent may be slightly distracting; some range in vocabulary and grammatical structures which may be slightly awkward or inaccurate; delivery generally smooth with some hesitancy and pauses

Discourse competence: Response is generally coherent, with generally clear, logical organization, and adequate development; contains enough details to be generally effective some lack of

sophistication in use of cohesive devices may detract from smooth connection of ideas

Sociolinguistic competence: Speaker generally considers register and demonstrates sense of audience awareness; occasionally lacks extensive range, variety, and sophistication; response may be slightly unpolished

Strategic competence: Linguistic weakness may necessitate some repair strategies that may be slightly distracting

Score (40) for the 4 components

3) 40= communication somewhat effective: tasks performed somewhat competently, some successful use of compensatory strategies; speech regularly marked by non native characteristic

Linguistic competence: Minor and major errors present; accent usually distracting; simple structures sometimes accurate; but errors in more complex structures common, limited ranges in vocabulary; some inaccurate word choices

delivery often slow or choppy; hesitancy and pauses common

Discourse competence: Coherence of the response is sometimes affected by lack of development and/or somewhat illogical or unclear organization; sometimes leaving listener confused; may lack details, mostly simple cohesive devices are used somewhat abrupt openings and closures

Sociolinguistic competence: Speaker demonstrates some audience awareness, but register is not always considered; lack of linguistic skills that would demonstrate sociolinguistic sophistication

Strategic competence: Sometimes excessive, distracting, and ineffective repair strategies used to compensate for linguistic weaknesses (e.g., vocabulary and/or grammar)

Score (30) for the 4 components

5) 30= communication generally ineffective: task generally performed poorly, ineffective use of compensatory strategies; speech very frequently marked by non native characteristics

Linguistic competence: Limited linguistic control; major errors present,

accent very distracting, speech contains numerous sentence fragments and errors in simple structures, frequent inaccurate word choices; general lack of vocabulary for task completion, delivery almost always plodding, choppy, and repetitive; hesitancy and pauses very common, lack of linguistic control,

accent so distracting that few words are intelligible, speech contains mostly sentence fragments, repetition of vocabulary, and simple phrases,

delivery so plodding that only few words are produced

Discourse competence: Response is often incoherent; loosely organized and inadequately developed or disjointed discourse often leave listener confused.

Often lacks detail; simple conjunctions used as cohesive devices, if at all

Abrupt openings and closures

Sociolinguistic competence: Speaker usually does not demonstrate audience awareness since register is often not considered; lack of linguistic skills generally masks sociolinguistic skills

Strategic competence: Repair strategies excessive, very distracting, and ineffective

Score (20) for the 4 components

6) 20= no effective communication; no evidence of ability to perform task, no effective use of compensatory strategies; speech almost always marked by non native characteristics.

Linguistic competence: Lack of linguistic control, accent so distracting that few words are intelligible, speech contains mostly sentence fragments, repetition of vocabulary, and simple phrases, delivery so plodding that only few words are produced

Discourse competence: Response is incoherent.

Lack of linguistic competence interferes with listener's ability to assess discourse competence

Sociolinguistic competence: Speaker is unable to demonstrate sociolinguistic skills and fails to acknowledge audience or consider register

Strategic competence:

Attempts in using repair strategies end in failure.

Appendix B

Table A. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for comparison group before the treatment

		Score
N		40
Normal Parameters(a,b)	Mean	35.0625
	Std. Deviation	6.95654
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.119
	Positive	.119
	Negative	-.083
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.751
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.626

a Test distribution is Normal.

b Calculated from data.

Table B. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for experimental group before the treatment

		Score
N		40
Normal Parameters(a,b)	Mean	34.7188
	Std. Deviation	7.84713
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.086
	Positive	.086
	Negative	-.055
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.546
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.927

a Test distribution is Normal. b Calculated from data.

Table C. Independent samples t-test between comparison and experimental groups before the treatment

	Levene's test for equality of variances		T test for equality of means						
	F	Sig	T	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std.error Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.559	.457	-.207	78	.836	-.34375	1.65809	-3.64476	2.95726
equal variances not assumed			-.207	76.895	.836	-.34375	1.65809	-3.64551	2.95801