



## **The Impact of Three Instructional Scaffolding Techniques in Teaching Grammar on Iraqi EFL Students' Speaking and Writing Performance**

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### **Abstract**

The present study aims at finding out the impact of using three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) in teaching grammar on Iraqi EFL students' speaking and writing performance. To achieve the aim of the study, an experiment has been conducted on a sample of (70) EFL students at the Department of English, College of Education, University of Wasit during the academic year 2015-2016. The sample has been distributed into two groups with (35) students in each, a control group taught according to the conventional techniques and an experimental one taught by using the proposed techniques. The two groups have been equalized according to age, levels of parents' education and pre –test scores.

At the end of the experiment, performance writing and speaking tests have been administered to both groups. The findings of these tests reveal that the results of the experimental group are significantly superior to that of the control group.

Pedagogical recommendations and suggestions for further research are presented in the light of the results obtained.

### **Section One: Introduction**

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Richards & Renandya (2008: 20) state that the mastery of speaking and writing skills in English language is a priority for many second language or foreign language students.

Grammar is an essential part in developing language skills. For Lock (1997: 267) grammatical competence is an essential part of communicative competence

and the development of the communication is the result from the relation between grammar and communication.

According to Rosenshine & Meister (1992:35) the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) are effective for any an ELT class , hence, they are used in enhancing language comprehension and enabling language teacher to adopt appropriate techniques for supporting students in acquiring English language especially in teaching grammar.

The problem of this study circles around the using of these three instructional scaffolding techniques in teaching grammar on EFL students speaking and writing performance in English Departments of Iraqi universities. Students at these departments are reported by Iraqi EFL college teachers' opinions and different studies to be poor English language speaker and writer and most of them either fail or get low marks in the items that measure their ability of speaking and writing in their academic exams (Al-Musawi, 2003: 3).

One possible reason behind this weakness is the teachers' ignorance of the importance of the role of real scaffolding as a significant factor in developing students' ability in English language learning.

In this study the researcher tries to experiment three of the instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) in teaching grammar as an effective alternative orientation in developing speaking and writing skills.

### **Aim**

This study aims at finding out the impact of the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) in teaching grammar on Iraqi EFL students' speaking and writing performance.

### **Hypothesis**

It is hypothesized that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group which is taught grammar according to the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the

Language and Using Visuals) and that of the control one which is taught according to the conventional procedures in their speaking and writing performance.

### **Limits**

This study is limited to the third year Iraqi EFL students at the Department of English / College of Education / University of Wasit during the academic year 2015-2016.

### **Procedures**

To achieve the aims of the study, the following procedures are adopted:

1. Selecting a representative sample.
2. Constructing pre and posttests of speaking and writing performance.
3. Assigning the sample into experimental and control groups.
4. Teaching the experimental group according to the three instructional scaffolding techniques.
5. Administrating the post test of speaking and writing performance and statistically manipulating the results.

### **Values of the Study**

It is hoped that this study will be of value in introducing the instructional scaffolding techniques to EFL teachers to be acquainted with the modern concerns of teaching EFL students. Textbook designers are also hoped to pay more attention to include more effective teaching activities and prescribing new teaching strategies for teaching such activities.

### **Section Two: Review of Literature**

Scaffolding is the process by which teachers use particular conceptual material and linguistic tools and technologies to support student learning (Luria, 1979:243).



The concept of scaffolding has its origins in the work of the psychologist Vygotsky as well as in studies of early language learning (Bruner 1978:176).

Scaffolding is the term given to the provision of appropriate assistance to students in order that they may achieve what alone would have been too difficult for them (Bodrova& Leong 1996:16).

Scaffolding refers to providing contextual supports for meaning through the use of simplified language, teacher modeling, visuals and graphics, cooperative learning and hands-on learning (Yelland & Masters, 2007: 345).

The teacher of second language students has to facilitate that support, then, as students become more proficient, the scaffold is gradually removed (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002: 85).

Scaffolding means providing temporary support for an inexperienced student in order to help them to complete a task or acquire a skill, and then gradually withdrawing that support. Inexperienced students learn from working with someone more experienced than them as they are 'scaffolded' by their knowledge and expertise. This idea is integral to the learning of a language (ibid: 67).

Scaffolding is important for ELT students as it enables them to move from dependent to independent learning. They gradually take over more of a task until they can do it without the expert's support. They can then move onto more challenging learning which continues to be scaffolded by the expert. Scaffolding also enables teachers to maintain high expectations of the student rather than simplifying the task (Simons and Klein, 2007:46).

In the ELT classroom, both teacher and student must work collaboratively in order to learn the additional language facts. This means that the kind of support and scaffold that the teacher provides is crucial to the educational success of the student (ibid: 69).

### **The Instructional Scaffolding**

Instructional scaffolding is the process of supporting students to bridge a cognitive gap or progress in their learning to a level they were previously unable to

accomplish. It evolves as the teachers evaluate the students initial level of ability and then through continued feedback throughout the progression of the task. In the early studies, scaffolding was primarily done in oral, face- to-face learning environments. In classrooms, scaffolding may include modeling behaviours, coaching and prompting, thinking out loud, dialogue with questions and answers, planned and spontaneous discussions, as well as other interactive planning or structural assistance to help the student bridge a cognitive gap (Applebee & Langer, 1983:97).

Instructional scaffolding also is a learning process designed to promote a deeper level of learning. It is the support given during the learning process which is tailored to the needs of the student with the intention of helping the student achieve his/her learning goals(ibid:106).

Applebee & Langer (1983:56) use the notion of instructional scaffolding as a way to describe essential aspects of formal instruction. In their view, learning is a process of gradual internalization of routines and procedures available to the student from the social and cultural context in which the learning takes place. In the instructional scaffolding the language learner is assisted in a new task by a more skilled language user who models the language task to be used verbally or in writing. As well as through modeling, scaffolding is provided by leading or probing questions to extend or elaborate the knowledge the student already possesses. Rather than evaluating the student's answers, the teacher is supporting, encouraging, and providing additional props. As the student's competence grows, so the scaffolding is gradually reduced until the student is able to function autonomously in that task and generalize to similar circumstances.

Instructional scaffolding is Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development . The proximal development is the field between what a student can do by himself (expert stage) and what can be achieved with the support of a knowledgeable peer or teacher (pedagogical stage) (Ellis & Worthington, 1994:221).

Vygotsky (1987:44) was convinced that a child could be taught any subject development. Students are escorted and monitored through learning activities that function as interactive conduits to get them to the next stage. Thus the student obtains or raises new understandings by presenting on their prior knowledge

through the support delivered by more capable individuals efficiently using scaffolding practices by implementing the scaffolds at the Zone of proximal

There are a wide variety of instructional scaffolding techniques that teachers may employ or not but just need a gentle reminder on how awesome and helpful they can be when it comes to student learning. However, the instructional scaffolding techniques are as follows:

### **Show and Tell**

Many learners learn best by seeing something rather than hearing about it. Modeling for students is a cornerstone of scaffolding. Interrupting students by saying "just show me!" while they were in the middle of explaining how to do something will decrease learning. The teachers should devote all the classroom procedures to enhance learning by demonstrating or showing students exactly what they are expected to do.

### **Using Visuals**

This technique is achieved by asking students to share their own experiences, hunches, and ideas about the content or concept of study and have them relate and connect it to their own lives. Sometimes the teachers may have to offer hints and suggestions, leading them to the connections a bit, but once they get there, they will grasp it as their own.

Launching the learning in the classroom from the prior knowledge of the students, and using this as a framework for future lessons is not only a scaffolding technique, many would agree it's just plain good teaching.

### **Give Time to Talk**

All students need time to process new ideas and information. They also need time to verbally make sense of and articulate their learning with the community of students who are also engaged in the same experience and journey. Structured discussions really work best with children regardless of their level of maturation.

## Previous Knowledge

One of the easiest ways to use scaffolding in a content area is to get students thinking about what they already know about a given topic. When a student has previous knowledge in mind, it is easier for him or her to build on that knowledge. Simply asking some questions about the topic on which the teacher will teach can be enough to get the students' minds in the right place. By giving the students some discussion questions about the topic, the teacher will not only activate their prior knowledge about the subject but also to give them an opportunity to practice their listening and speaking skills.

## Asking for Completion

For some students, the teacher can help them in content learning situations by stating the goals prior to the lesson. Even better, write the goals of the activity on the board. When students know the objectives of the lesson, they are able to focus on the most important elements of the material. For example, if the ultimate purpose is to compare and contrast two types of cars, the teacher tells students that they will do that activity before giving them the information on either of the cars. If the teacher wants his students to remember the main plot points of a story, he should tell them before they read the piece. By informing the students of the goal before starting the activity, they will be able to focus on the important information and filter out the less important points in the material.

## Simplifying the Language

To assist the students in their content as well as language learning by asking them to produce the information in different forms after the lesson or having students to answer questions orally as an initial response. Then giving each person some time to complete a graphic or chart with the information that they learned. When students are giving answers, the teacher can provide a word bank or choices of answers to further assist them. Finally, ask his students to produce the information that they were given through written answers. In any case, allowing the students to work in groups will also decrease their anxiety and help the answers come more freely. (Applebee & Langer, 1983:112-128).



Rosenshine & Meister (1992:34-37) state that there are three instructional scaffolding techniques have been identified as being especially effective for foreign language students especially in teaching grammar.

1. **Asking for Completion, not Generation:** The teacher can have students choose answers from a list or complete a partially finished outline or paragraph.
2. **Simplifying the Language:** The teacher can simplify the language by shortening selections, speaking in the present tense, and avoiding the use of idioms.
3. **Using Visuals:** The teacher can present information and ask for students to respond through the use of graphic organizers, tables, charts, outlines, and graphs.

### Visual Scaffolding

Visual scaffolding is the support that includes images and words that can be seen as well as heard (Bodrova& Leong, 1996:12).

It is also considered as an excellent way to provide comprehensible input to EFL students so that not only will they learn the essential subject content but also they will make progress in their acquisition of English (Raymond, 2000:184).

EFL students are particularly dependent on scaffolding but often the purely oral scaffolding undertaken by the teacher is not enough. EFL students greatly benefit from the type of scaffolding that makes extensive use of visual aids. When students see an image of what the teacher is describing or see the key words that the teacher is explaining, this not only serves to make the input considerably more comprehensible, but serves to remove the affective filter which results from the fear or boredom that comes of understanding very little in class(ibid).

The Smart board and its software are excellent tools for the production and viewing of content that is both interesting and comprehensible (Bodrova& Leong, 1996:8).

## Scaffolding and Production Skills

For EFL students, scaffolding is of great use since the language barrier can hinder learning content material that the student might easily learn in his first language. By implementing one of the instructional scaffolding techniques, the teacher can enhance the production skills (speaking and writing in addition to improving the reception skills (listening and reading) (Rodgers, 2004:517).

In writing instruction, typically support is presented in verbal form (discourse). The writing tutor engages the student's attention, calibrates the task, motivates the student, identifies relevant task features, controls for frustration, and demonstrates as needed (ibid:519).

In speaking instruction, through joint activities, the teacher scaffolds conversation to maximize the development of a child's intrapsychological functioning. In this process, the adult controls the elements of the task that are beyond the child's ability all the while increasing the expectations of what the child is able to do. Speech is a critical tool to scaffold thinking while responding plays a crucial role in the development of higher psychological processes because it enables thinking to be more abstract, flexible, and independent (Bodrova & Leong, 1996:14).

From a Vygotskian perspective, talk and action work together with the sociocultural fabric of the writing event to shape a child's construction of awareness and performance (Dorn, 1996:33).

Dialogue may range from casual talk to deliberate explanations about features of written language. The talk embedded in the actions of the literacy event shapes the child's learning as the tutor regulates her language to conform to the child's degrees of understanding.

Clay (2005:125) shows that what may seem like casual conversational exchanges between tutor and students actually offer many opportunities for fostering cognitive development, language learning, story composition for writing, and reading comprehension. Conversations facilitate generative, constructive, experimental, and developmental speech and writing in the development of new ideas.

## Grammar and Language Teaching

Palmer (1971: 7) considers Grammar is central to the teaching and learning of languages. It is also considered as one of the most difficult aspects of language especially in teaching. Many people, including language teachers, hear the word "grammar" and think of a fixed set of word forms and rules of usage. They associate "good" grammar with the prestige forms of the language, such as those used in writing and in formal oral presentations, and "bad" or "no" grammar with the language used in everyday conversation or used by speakers of no prestige forms.

According to Ellis (2006: 101), grammar has held and continues to hold a central place in language teaching. Indeed, grammar has played an important part in language learning, explaining why grammar still has occupied a considerable space in current language course-book materials. Moreover, the question of how grammar should be approached has been in the arena for discussion for a century, proving that teaching grammar is a matter of great concern by second and foreign language theorists.

Kohli (1999: 138) sees that language teachers focus on grammar as a set of forms and rules. Teachers teach grammar by explaining the forms and rules and then drilling students on them. This results in bored, disaffected students who can produce correct forms on exercises and tests, but consistently make errors when they try to use the language in context.

Garcia (2003: 35) believes that other language teachers, influenced by recent theoretical work on the difference between language learning and language acquisition, tend not to teach grammar at all. Believing that children acquire their first language without overt grammar instruction, they expect students to learn their second language in the same way. They assume that students will absorb grammar rules as they hear, read, and use the language in communication activities. This approach does not allow students to use one of the major tools they have as students; their active understanding of what grammar is and how it works in the language they already know.

## Grammar and Language Skills

There is an interrelated relation between grammar and the four language skills .This relation is thought to be equal among these language skills ,i.e., productive skills (speaking and writing ) and the receptive skills (reading and listening ) (Eyres 2000: 73).

Leech et.al (1982: 4) believes that grammar is the core of the language which relates the semantic to the phonology. Grammar can also be regarded as a necessary master skill that enables competence to develop in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When grammar is incorrect or misunderstood in any of these areas, communication may be disrupted.

Long and Richards (1987:211) add that grammar cannot be ignored that it plays a central role in the four language skills and vocabulary to establish communicative tasks. Further, grammar is thought to furnish the basis for the four language skills.

It is generally accepted that practice of grammar can facilitate accuracy and fluency. In this regard, accuracy focuses on correct use of language (for example, rules of language). This can be achieved through controlled activities or practice of grammar. In fluency, after students master the rules of language, they are required to apply the rules of language in the form of spoken or written language. It is important to keep in mind that both accuracy and fluency are interdependent (ibid: 217).

## Grammar and Speaking

In a job interview, an applicant is asked, “How long have you been working at your current job?” The applicant replies, “I worked there for two years.” The interviewer wonders: Is the applicant still working there or not? In this situation, knowledge of the present perfect would have enabled the student to reply more accurately. Spontaneous speech is marked by the use of a number of common lexical phrases, especially in the performance of certain language functions (Hart, 2000: 169).

Teachers should therefore supply a variety of phrases for different functions such as agreeing or disagreeing, expressing surprise, shock, or approval. Where

students are involved in specific speaking contexts such as a job interview, teachers can prime them, in the same way, with certain useful phrases which they can produce at various stages of an interaction (ibid: 170).

Recently Ur (2011:509) sustains that spoken language displays a range of grammatical features that include aspects such as the use of coordination of sentences rather than subordination, grammatical reduction, or ellipsis ( “Don’t know,” “Trouble is ...”), “heads” and “tails” (“My sister, she lives in...” or “He’s nice, that guy”); unconventional, non-clausal, inconsistent, or fragmentary grammar (“There’s a lot of people out there,” “He wasn’t hurt wasn’t it?”); and an enormous number of colloquial prefabricated lexico-grammatical chunks, many of them fillers or expressions of vagueness, (“you know,” “or something”). The grammatical constructions used in the speech are typically different from those that are used in written language. Complexity in speech is largely clausal; that is, speech contains a relatively large number of coordinated, noun and adverbial clauses (Nation, 2011: 450).

Luoma (2004:12) states that the major difference between spoken and written grammar is that speakers do not usually speak in sentences. Rather, speech can be considered to consist of idea units, which are short phrases and clauses connected with *and*, *or*, *but* or *that*, or not joined by conjunctions at all but simply spoken next to each other, with possibly a short pause between them. The grammar of these strings of idea units is simpler than that of the written language with its long sentences and dependent and subordinate clauses. This is because speakers are trying to communicate ideas that listeners need to comprehend in real time, as they are being spoken, and this means working within the parameters of the speakers’ and listeners’ working memory.

### **Grammar and Writing**

Grammar is considered the foundation upon which all the other skills are built. Efficient communication cannot take place without correct grammar. In the context of writing, grammar allows the students to put their ideas into intelligible sentences so that they can successfully communicate in a written form.

In other words, Doff (2000:33) says that by learning grammar students can express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences.

Thornbury (2004: 8) says that grammar in the recent days presented to the students is essentially based on written grammar. Leech et.al (1982: 184) say that having knowledge of grammar will improve the style of writing and it will help students to criticize and discuss their own writing.

Leech put four principles for good writing.

1. The language should be easy to follow.
2. It should be clear (avoiding ambiguities).
3. Writers should be economical (avoiding unnecessary words).
4. Writers should be effective.

### **Section Three: Procedures**

#### **The Experimental Design**

In order to achieve the aim of this study, the researcher has used the Quasi-Experimental Design (the Nonrandomized Control –group Pretest– Posttest Design) (Van Dalen, 1973:295).

Brown & Rodgers (2002: 211) call it “quasi- experimental design” and it is characterized by the following features:

1. Selecting the groups randomly and assigning them to experimental and control groups.
2. The independent variables are administered only to the experimental groups.
3. All groups of subjects submit to “a pre-test and then to a post-test” to measure the influence of the dependent variable.

Two equivalent groups of students are selected randomly. One experimental and one control have been taught English grammar by the researcher. Before starting the experiment, the pre- test is applied on the selected sample. The grammar has been taught according to the three instructional scaffolding techniques to the experimental group only, on the contrary the control group is taught

grammar by using the conventional method. At the end of the experiment the two groups are exposed to the constructed post-tests to find out the impact of the independent variables (three instructional scaffolding techniques; Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) on the dependent ones "students' speaking and writing performance ". Pre-posttests experimental - control group design has been used as the experimental design.

### Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study covers the total number of (549) EFL students at the department of English of the college of Education / Wasit University in the academic year 2015-2016.

The third year stage has been chosen randomly to be the sample of this study. The third year stage includes 112 students. After excluding the repeaters and the students of the previous year, 70 students have been chosen randomly to be the sample of this study. Hence the final number of the sample subjects is (70) students (35) in each group (see Table 1).

**Table (1)**

**The distribution of the subjects of the study**

Group	Section	Students No.	Repeaters	Final No.
Experimental	A	55	7	35
Control	B	57	9	35
		112	16	70

The researcher is fully convinced that the students of the two groups are extraordinarily similar since they study in the same department and they are from the same district, moreover; they are distributed among sections randomly not on their attainment level or any other factors.

### Equalization of the Sample Subjects

To increase the sensitivity of the experiment, and thereby increase the probability of detecting the effect that actually occurs, both groups have been equated on some of the variables which may affect the findings of the experiment. These variables are: age, level of fathers education, level of mothers education and the subjects pre –test scores. Relevant information is taken from the students themselves.

After implementing the t-test for two independent samples , it is found out that the subjects of the experimental and control groups are matched in all the above mentioned variables since there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups at 0.05 level of significance and under 68 degree of freedom . Table (2) summarizes the results.

**Table (2)**

#### **t-test Statistics for the Variables of Age , Level of Parents Education Pre –test scores**

Variables	Groups	No	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	table
					Computed	
Age in months	E.G	35	195.5	5.668	0.644	2.000
	C.G	35	194.7	3.194		
Level of fathers education	E.G	35	5.533	1.008	1.246	2.000
	C.G	35	5.133	1.432		
Level of mothers education	E.G	35	5.133	1.196	1.127	2.000
	C.G	35	4.733	1.530		
Pre –test scores	E.G	35	7.33	2.040	1.339	2.000
	C.G	35	8.10	2.383		

### Test Design

The tests consist of two parts; the first part is the speaking performance test, it comprises of six main questions, each question includes eight items, these items will be used for measuring the subject's ability to speak English. The second part contains another six questions which are designed to measure student's ability to write in English. The students in the experimental and control groups have been asked to answer one question for each section. The intended sample of the study

(one experimental and one control) is taught the same identified grammatical lessons by the researcher himself in order to control the teacher's variable in the experiment. The experimental group is taught grammatical material according to three instructional scaffolding techniques while the control group is taught the same grammatical material according to the traditional method.

### **Instruments of the Study**

In order to achieve the aims of the study, a speaking and a composition writing pre-posttests have been used. The pretests are conducted to ensure the equalization of the groups involved in the study while the posttests are used to measure the effectiveness of the experimental procedures.

### **Speaking Performance Test**

Richards & Renandya , (2008:24) claim that the most common format of testing speaking is the interview in which the test takers converse with an interviewer , by which his or her performance is evaluated . Concerning the speaking test, a structured interview has been constructed, it is prepared for interviewing each two students by asking each one five questions which have been chosen by the interviewers.

At the beginning of each interview, the interviewers have tried to establish rapport with the student to make him feel at ease by greeting him, asking him some general questions and clarifying the purpose of the interview.

### **Writing Performance Test**

The writing test includes six questions, one question will be chosen for each student. The test has been applied by the researcher in coordination with the teachers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the Department of English/ College of Education / Wasit University. This test is also scored out of 100 marks.

### **Face Validity of the Pre-Posttests**

To ensure face validity, the tests and the scoring schemes have been exposed to a number of specialized jury members.

The criteria followed in selecting the topics are authenticity of the topic, modernity of the idea, and suitability to the sample interest and level. Six topics and the list of guiding questions have been exposed to the jury members to ensure the validity and suitability of them.

Accordingly, the jurors approve all of the six conversation topics with their lists of guiding questions with some modifications.

The topics of the writing test have been also chosen according to the same criteria followed in selecting the speaking test topics, i.e., authenticity of the topic, modernity of the idea, and suitability to the sample interest and level the students' interest . Accordingly, six selected topics have been exposed to the jury members to ascertain the validity and suitability of them for the level of the third year students to be tested on.

### **The Pilot Administration of The Pre- Post tests**

The pilot administration of the pretest has been carried out after ensuring its validity. The pretest has been applied on a sample of 50 EFL students from the College of Education/ University of Thi-Qar, other than the sample of the study.

Consequently, no serious ambiguity is found concerning the clarity of the tests, as for the time allotted for answering the speaking performance pretest, it has been found that each student needs about (10-15) minutes to finish it. Each interview has been recorded on the researcher's mobile.

The same group of 50 EFL students from the College of Education/ University of Thi-Qar, other than the experimental and control groups , is prepared to administer a pilot study of the writing performance pretest.

Concerning the writing test questions, no serious ambiguity is found about the clarity of the test. Moreover, It has been found that EFL students need 40 minutes to answer the writing test.

### **Construct Validity**

Construct validity of a scale can be evaluated through checking the patterns of correlations within the scores achieved by subjects responding to the scale items.

This can be achieved through statistical analysis of the scale items (Trochim et. al., 2015:159).

### Statistical Analysis

The instruments of the study are conducted on 100 students (not included in the sample) who are randomly selected from the Department of English - College of Education/Wasit University to form the statistical analysis sample. This is done to check item discrimination power and item- difficulty level of the scales both of which are indicators of construct validity.

### Item Discrimination Power

The sample subjects' scores in the two scales are separately arranged from the highest score to the lowest one. According to this arrangement, the subjects' scores in each scale are divided into an upper group and a lower one. To compute the discrimination power of items, t-test for two independent samples is utilized to check the difference between the mean scores of each item in the upper and lower groups of each scale. The computed t values of the speaking test items are found to range between 3.77-10.0. The computed t values of the writing test items are found to range between 2.99-9.59. All of these values are higher than the critical t- value 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance and under 98 degree of freedom which makes them acceptable (see Table3).

Table (3)

Ranges of T-values of Items in the Two Tests

Scale	Range of t-values	Critical t value	Level of Significance	Degree of Freedom
Speaking Test	3.77-10.0	1.98	0.05	98
Writing Test	2.99-9.59			

### Item- Total Correlation

Pearson correlation formula is used to compute the correlation between each item's score and the total one in each test. The results achieved reveal coefficients ranging between 0.250– 0.621, 0.322-0.584, and 0.314 – 0.959 for the Writing Test and Speaking Test respectively. All of these coefficients are higher than the critical

value of Pearson correlation coefficient 0.196 at 0.05 level of significance and 98 degree of freedom which again indicates that all items are acceptable (see Table 4).

**Table 4**

**Ranges of Pearson Correlation Coefficient**

**of Items in the Two Tests**

Scale	Range of correlation coefficients	Critical Pearson correlation value	Level of Significance	Degree of Freedom
Writing Test	0.250-0.621	0.196	0.05	98
Speaking Test	0.322-0.584 0.314 – 0.959			

**The Pre- Post Test Reliability**

Since the nature of a written test is subjective, three methods have been used to ensure reliability:

1. Alpha Cronbach Formula is used to obtain the internal consistency among the components of the test. The reliability coefficient is found to be 0.84.
2. Intrascorer method by the researcher himself. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Formula is used to calculate the correlation coefficient of reliability, which is found to be 0.97.
3. Interscorer reliability method. The result has indicated that the correlation coefficient of reliability is 0.95.

Concerning the speaking test which is also subjective, two methods have been used to ensure reliability:

1. Alpha Cronbach Formula is used to obtain the internal consistency among the five components of the test. The reliability coefficient is found to be 0.87.
2. Interscorer reliability method has been used to estimate the reliability of the interview. After using Pearson Formula, the result has indicated that the correlation coefficient of reliability is 0.95

## The Instructional Material

The instructional material in this research depends on the " A University Grammar of English by Quirk, Randolph & Sidney Greenbaum , 1973 which is taught to the third year of study at the Department of English / College of Education/ University of Wasit .Only one unit is included to be taught for this study. The fourth unit has been chosen to be taught to the experimental and control groups.

## Final Administration

During the academic year (2015-2016), the final version of the post-test has been conducted on (70) EFL third year students of the English Department at University of Wasit. The subjects have taken one hour for responding to the item chosen in the writing test, which is the time allotted for the test, whereas the subjects have been asked to answer five chosen questions in the speaking test.

Any question, the subjects have asked, the researcher answered. The subjects have been assured that the test was purely for research purposes and did nothing with their marks by informing them not to write their names on the test sheets.

Moreover, the subjects are asked to give their responses on the test papers so as not to waste time and effort. Brown (2002: 205) remarks that “ a good test should be economic both in time and stationary.” After collecting the test sheets, the researcher himself has scored those papers.

The speaking test is accomplished by a committee of three interviewers (the researcher and two another interviewers). The students' responses have been assessed according to the scoring schemes. The three marks are collected and divided on three; the final mark for the speaking test is of 100 marks.

## Section Four: Results and Conclusions

In the light of the empirical evidence revealed in this study and in relation to the researcher's own observations during the experiment, it has been concluded that the three instructional scaffolding techniques are efficient techniques in teaching grammar for improving the EFL college students' speaking and writing performance. It has also been concluded that teaching grammar through the three

instructional scaffolding techniques proved to be more vital and useful for EFL college students than through the conventional method. The adequacy of these three instructional scaffolding techniques is clear on developing both speaking and writing performance. However, the results of this study are as follows:

1. There is a statistically significant difference among the experimental and control groups, in favour of the experimental group in the speaking test.
2. There is a statistically significant difference among the experimental and control groups, in favour of the experimental group in the writing test.
3. The effective application of the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) provides EFL college students with opportunities which help them improve their level of speaking and writing performance. It, moreover, motivates them to be enthusiastically engaged in activities related to grammar and to be more active in interacting with classroom instructions, and helps them to secure fluency and accuracy in generating so many ideas.
4. The enjoyable English lessons created by the teacher through adopting the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) allow students to behave freely and talk to their peers inside classroom confidently and semi-naturally.
5. Although the traditional teaching technique is useful in helping students to acquire grammar, it can be said that through mere sitting, imitating, and reading the students will learn lesser than what is expected from them to learn. The traditional method cannot supply students with the opportunities needed to interact in meaningful and interesting contexts.
6. Using techniques such as the three instructional scaffolding techniques is efficient for motivating the students to speak freely and improve their fluency significantly. This may be due to the interesting, challenging and motivating atmosphere that these three instructional scaffolding techniques provide to the students, since they allow the students to express their own opinions and points of view.

7. The three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) provide students with an enjoyable experience.
8. Motivation is likewise fostered and sustained through the variety and sense of expectancy generated by the activities.

### **Recommendations:**

In the light of the yielded results and conclusions mentioned earlier, some pedagogical recommendations have been stated as follows:

Curriculum designers and decision makers are recommended to:

1. Supply colleges with different materials for employing the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals).
2. Enhance the Iraqi ELT curricula with techniques that tackle different concepts in English grammar.

### **Supervisors are recommended to:**

1. Conduct training courses that help teachers enhance their competencies of implementing the instructional scaffolding techniques in their classes.
2. Conduct workshops that aim at familiarizing teachers of how to exploit the instructional scaffolding techniques in their classes.
3. Prepare and distribute instructional materials that increase teachers' awareness of the instructional scaffolding techniques significance and necessity of using these techniques in teaching English grammar.
4. Emphasize the fact that the instructional scaffolding techniques of teaching should be used with different concepts of English grammar.

### **English language teachers are recommended to:**

1. Enrich the ELT curricula with the instructional scaffolding techniques to enhance students' use of English grammar.
2. Help students to use English in "real-life "situations.
3. Adapt modern techniques that enhance students' participation and interaction.
4. Shift from the traditional teaching methods to communicative language teaching that are based on the students' real environment in teaching – learning process.
5. Use the instructional scaffolding techniques to create an appropriate learning environment.
6. Consider students' individual differences and learning styles while using the instructional scaffolding techniques.
7. Change the role from teachers who dominate the class into educators whose role is to help, guide and support the students to acquire language.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

Based on the present study findings and conclusions, further studies are suggested to be conducted:

1. Experimenting the effectiveness of using the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) in teaching other English language subjects like (composition, poetry, novel, drama, etc.).
2. Conducting similar studies for teaching EFL students by using the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) at other academic stages especially at the intermediate and preparatory stages.



3. Making a comparative study between the efficiency of the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) and other new teaching techniques in developing students' speaking and writing performance at the various levels of study.
4. Another study could be done to investigate the impact of the three instructional scaffolding techniques (Asking for Completion, Simplifying the Language and Using Visuals) on the students' recognition and production skills.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Speaking Pre-Post tests

##### *The Topics and the Questions of the Interview.*

*The first three topics for the pre-test and the second three topics for the post-test.*

#### 1. Television and Radio

- What is your favourite television station?
- What is your favourite television program?
- In your opinion, is TV too explicit at times?
- What is your favourite radio station?
- Do you listen to the radio? How often?
- Which type of shows do you normally watch?
- Which do you prefer; games shows or talk shows?
- Do you think that children watch too much television?

#### 2. Age

- What are the main differences between the youth of today and the older generation?
- A common complaint from the younger generation is that old people complain too much. Do you agree?
- Why should we respect our elders?



- In our country, at what age is somebody considered to be an adult?
- At what age do people in our country retire? Do you think that this is a fair age?
- Do younger people in our country usually give up their seat on a train or bus for an older person?
- In most countries, politicians are middle aged and older. Is this true for our country? Do you think that younger politicians could do a better job?
- What do you plan to do when you get older?

### 3. Facebook

- Do you have a Facebook account?
- How many friends you have on Facebook?
- What do you usually do on Facebook?
- Have you ever had a problem on Facebook?
- Are you well known on Facebook?
- Do you chat on Facebook?
- Do you know any story about a problem caused by Facebook?
- Do you accept any friend request?

### 4. Internet

- Do you often use the Internet?
- What do you usually do on the internet?
- What are some advantages and disadvantages of the internet?



- How can the internet develop one's culture?
- How can the internet be helpful to the students?
- When did you first use the Internet?
- Do you use a computer or a cell phone (mobile) to access the Internet?
- How can the internet help you learn English? Do you take advantage of this?
- Do you think our lives have been improved by the Internet?
- Do you have any ideas or ambitions to start an Internet company?

### 5. College

- How many subjects are you taking this semester?
- Who is your favorite teacher?
- How did you decide which college to attend?
- What is your typical day at college like?
- What are three big differences between your college life so far and your high school days?
- Why did you choose your major? Do you have any regrets?
- What is the most difficult class you have taken so far?
- Are you interested with acquiring English language?

### 6. Accidents at Home

- What is the most dangerous thing in your home? How can your home be made less dangerous?



- What is the most dangerous thing in your home for a child? How can it be made less dangerous?
- What is the most dangerous thing in your home for an elderly person? How can it be made less dangerous?
- What dangers can be found in the kitchen that can cause accidents?
- What can be done to prevent kitchen accidents?
- What dangers can be found in bathrooms that can cause accidents?
- What can be done to prevent bathroom accidents?
- What dangers can be found outside the home in the garden that can cause accidents?



## Appendix B

### Written Pre-Post tests

*The first three questions for the pre-test and the second three questions for the post-test.*

1. write a composition about " My First Day at College " Including information like ;what college it was ;what preparations you made for going there ;(the clothes ,the bags , etc.) how you went there (by bus , on foot , by a taxi , etc.);who went with you ; how people treat you ;how you ended the day .
2. Write a composition about "My Home " Include information like : What sort of home you have ( a house , a flat , apartment , etc.); how big it is ; how many room it consists of ;what the walls and roof are made of ; what colour the walls ,roof ,windows ,etc. whether you have a garden ; how big it is ...
3. Write a description of any famous person you like. Include the following information: What does he / she look like? What clothes does he/ she like to wear? What is he/ she famous for? Information about his / her family. Where does he /she live? Why do you think this person famous? Give reasons. How does this person affect you?
4. Write a composition about "A thief ".Make use of the following information: when you return home late one night, you find that a thief has entered your house .Describe how he is caught.
5. Write a composition about "A trip to (A nice place) " including the following information : The place (country, city) and why you choose this place; Give reasons ;The weather - the food (you like it ;give your opinion) . Who go with you (friends, family).mention them in your answers.
6. Write a biography about your favorite person: a friend, a relative, a teacher or someone you know and admire well. Write about: His appearance - personality - likes and dislikes –why do you choose him/ her? Why do you admire this person? Give reasons.