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افتتاحية العدد

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على خاتم النبيين سيدنا محمد، وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

وبعد...

احبتنا الباحثين حول المعمورة... نضع بين أيديكم العدد الثالث من مجلتنا (مجلة جامعة الأنبار للعلوم الإنسانية) للعام ٢٠٢٤ تلك المجلة الفصلية العلمية المحكمة والتي تصدر عن جامعة الانبار والتي تحمل بين ثناياها ٢١ بحثاً علمياً يضم تخصصات المجلة ولمختلف الباحثين من داخل جامعة الأنبار، وخارجها من الجامعات العراقية، فضلا عن بحوث أخرى لباحثين من بلدان عربية مختلفة.

في هذه البحوث العلمية، نرى جهداً علمياً مميزاً كان مدعاة لنا في هيئة التحرير ان نفخر به وإن تلقى هذه البحوث طريقها الى النشر بعد ان تم تحكيمها من أساتذة أكفاء كل في مجال اختصاصه ليتم إخراجها في نهاية المطاف بهذا الشكل العلمي الباهر، والصورة الطيبة الجميلة، والجوهر العلمي الرصين، فجزى الله الجميع خير الجزاء لما أنتجته قرائحهم العلمية والثقافية وسطرته أقلامهم لينتفع ببحوث هذه المجلة والذخيرة العلمية المعروضة فيها كل القارئين من باحثين وطلبة ومهتمين.

إن العطاء الثَر من الباحثين والجهد المعطاء من رئيس وأعضاء هيئة التحرير والدعم الكبير من رئاسة جامعتنا، وعمادة كليتنا يحث الخطو بنا للوصول إلى الغاية المرجوة المنشودة في دخول مجلتنا ضمن المستوعبات العالمية للنشر العلمي. لذا وجب التنويه بأننا بصدد التحديث المستمر والمتواصل لشروط النشر وآليته للارتقاء بأعداد مجلتنا والوصول بها إلى مكانة علمية أرقى وأسمى تضاهي المجلات العلمية ذات المستويات المتقدمة، ولتساهم بفاعلية في حركة النشر والبحث العلمي العربي سعيا لتعزيز مكانة البحث العلمي وتوسيع آفاقه في البلدان العربية لأن البحث العلمي كان وما يزال واحدا من عوامل رقي الأمم ومؤشرا على تقدمها... ومن الله التوفيق

أ.م.د. فؤاد محمد فريح

رئيس هيئة التحرير

تعليمات النشر في مجلة جامعة الأنبار للعلوم الإنسانية

- **الاجراءات والمواصفات العامة للبحث:**

- مجلة جامعة الانبار للعلوم الانسانية، مجلة علمية دورية محكمة، لنشر الأبحاث العلمية في مجال العلوم الانسانية الاتية: التاريخ، والجغرافيا، والعلوم التربوية والنفسية وتصدر بواقع ٤ اعداد سنوياً.

- يقدم الباحث على الموقع الالكتروني للمجلة https://juah.uoanbar.edu.iq/ وفق المواصفات الاتية: حجم الورق A 4، وبمسافتين بما في ذلك الحواشي الهوامش والمراجع والجداول والملاحق، وبحواشي واسعة ٢,٥ سم او اكثر اعلى واسفل وعلى جانبي الصفحة .

- يقدم الباحث خطابا مرافقا يفيد ان البحث او ما يشابهه لم يسبق نشره، ولم يقدم لأي جهة اخرى داخل العراق او خارجه، ولحين انتهاء اجراءات البحث.

- يكون الحد الاقصى لعدد صفحات البحث ٢٥ صفحة.

- يكون البحث مكتوبا بلغة سليمة باللغة العربية او اللغة الانكليزية ومطبوع على الالة الحاسبة بخط Simplified Arabic حجم ١٤، على ان يتم تمييز العناوين الرئيسة والفرعية.

- تكتب الهوامش والمراجع وفق نظام شيكاغو او APA للتوثيق، بخط حجم ١٤،على ان يتم ترتيبها بالتتابع كما وردت في المتن، ويكون تنظيم المراجع هجائياً حسب المنهجية العلمية المعتمدة وباللغتين العربية والانكليزية.

- تؤول كافة حقوق النشر الى المجلة.

- تعبر البحوث عن اراء اصحابها، ولا تعبر بالضرورة عن راي المجلة.

- **بيانات الباحث والملخص:**

- يلزم الباحث بتقديم البيانات الخاصة به وببحثه، وباللغتين العربية والانكليزية، وتشمل الاتي: عنوان البحث، أسماء وعناوين الباحثين، ورقم الهاتف النقال، والبريد الالكتروني، وملخصين – عربي وانكليزي – بحد اقصى ٢٥٠ كلمة يحتويان الكلمات المفتاحية للبحث، والهدف من البحث، والمنهج المتبع بالبحث، وفحوى النتائج التي توصل اليها.

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- اذا تضمن البحث جداول او اشكال يفضل ان لا يزيد عرضها عن حجم الصفحة A 4، على ان تطبع ضمن المتن.

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- تخضع جميع البحوث المرسلة الى المجلة الى فحص اولي من قبل هيئة التحرير لتقرير اهليتها للتحكيم، ويحق لها ان تعتذر عن قبول البحث دون بيان الاسباب.

- تخضع جميع البحوث للتقويم العلمي بما يضمن رصانتها العلمية، وقد يطلب من الباحث اذا اقتضى الامر مراجعة بحثه لإجراء تعديلات عليه.

- **المستلات:**

- متاحة جميع المستلات على موقع المجلة الالكتروني وموقع المجلات الاكاديمية العراقية.

- **اجور النشر:**

- يقوم الباحث بتسديد اجور النشر، والبالغة ١٢٥,٠٠٠ مائة وخمسة وعشرون الف دينار عراقي، واذا زادت صفحات البحث عن٢٥ صفحة تضاف٥,٠٠٠ خمسة الاف دينار عراقي عن كل صفحة.

- الباحثون من خارج العراق تنشر نتاجاتهم العلمية مجانا.

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- خارج العراق   ١٥٠ مائة وخمسون دولار او ما يعادلها.

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The Role of Small-Group Discussions in the Enhancement of Iraqi EFL Learners' Speaking Skills

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Abstract:

Aims: The study seeks to investigate the impact of Small-Group Discussions on improving Iraqi University students' speaking proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This includes examining the communication between Iraqi students and their interactions with native English-speaking students and students from the UK and Canada. The Iraqi students now acquiring English language proficiency still require more development in their oral communication abilities.

Methodology: Pre-test and post-test measures were employed to collect the data. A quantitative data analysis method is implemented. Small group discussion is a learning process in the classroom consisting of two or more students who interact with each other, where each group member can express their ideas. In a small group discussion, students must combine their different ideas with those of other students in the same group to understand the text well.

Results: The results from the three hypotheses revealed a significant difference from which we can conclude that the learning of the speaking skills by small group discussions may create a comfortable and safe speaking environment. The study recommends That teachers employ this method and actively motivate their pupils to engage in these groups.

Conclusions: The study concluded with significant results that proved that interaction with peers who speak Arabic as their mother tongue can create a useful, safe and comfortable environment for speaking, and that interaction with native English speakers can benefit students by getting to know different English dialects as spoken by native speakers.

Keywords: small-group discussions, EFL, pre-posttests, hypothesis, speaking skills.

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دور المناقشات الجماعية المصغرة في تعزيز مهارات التحدث لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق

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<u>**الملخص:**</u>

الأهداف: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة واستكشاف تأثير المناقشات في مجموعات صغيرة على تحسين كفاءة التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) لدى طلبة الجامعات العراقيين. ويتضمن ذلك فحص التواصل بين الطلاب العراقيين وتفاعلاتهم مع الطلاب الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أم والطلبة من المملكة المتحدة وكندا حيث لا يزال الطلبة العراقيون الذين يعملون على إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية بحاجة إلى مزيد من التطوير في قدراتهم على التواصل الشفهي.

المنهجية: ترتكز منهجية البحث على استخدام طريقة الاختبار المسبق والاختبار اللاحق لجمع البيانات وتم تحليل البيانات المستحصلة بطريقة التحليل الكمي المعتمدة. كشفت النتائج من الفرضيات الثلاث عن فارق كبير يمكن أن نستنتج من خلاله أن تعلم مهارات التحدث من خلال التفاعل في مجموعات صغيرة يمكن أن يخلق بيئة تحدث مريحة وآمنة. وتوصي الدراسة المعلمين باستخدام هذه الطريقة وتحفيز طلبتهم على المشاركة الفاعلة في هذه المجموعات.

النتائج: كشفت النتائج من الفرضيات الثلاث في الدراسة عن فارق كبير يمكن أن نستنتج من خلاله أن تعلم مهارات التحدث من خلال التفاعل في مجموعات صغيرة يمكن أن يخلق بيئة تحدث مريحة وآمنة. وتوصي الدراسة المعلمين باستخدام هذه الطريقة وتحفيزطلبتهم على المشاركة الفاعلة في هذه المجموعات.

الاستنتاجات: خلصت الدراسة الى نتائج هامة أثبتت أن التفاعل مع الاشخاص من الأقران الذين يتكلمون العربية كلغتهم الأم يمكن أن يخلق بيئة مفيدة وآمنة ومريحة للتحدث كما أن التفاعل مع الناطقين باللغة الانجليزية كلغة أم يمكن أن يعود بالنفع على الطلاب من خلال التعرف على مختلف اللهجات الانجليزية كما يتحدث بها ناطقوها الأصليين.

<u>**الكلمات المفتاحية:**</u> **المناقشات الجماعية الصغيرة، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الاختبارات السابقة واللاحقة، الفرضية، مهارات التحدث.**

Introduction

One of the most crucial communication skills in the world is speaking. People use it to share significant details about one another. It is especially vital for us to learn and utilize English if we speak it when interacting with people in a foreign country. Speaking instruction essential for students to learn language skills in school and advance their proficiency in the future (Rao, 2019). They gained knowledge on how to communicate with their friends. In this age of globalization, this is the most significant method by which they can build rapport with certain foreigners. Understanding what people are saying and responding to spoken language are two aspects of listening. Self-expression is the use of language to communicate ideas and emotions.

English is extremely important in every aspect of life, including commerce, education, travel, and business. It is included in school curricula because it was designated as the first foreign language in Iraq. Speaking is an activity that people use to communicate with each other(Socheath, 2018). Kurm (2016), on the other hand, defines speaking as the ability to speak, express, or engage in thought exchange through language.

Speaking is a productive skill that can be observed empirically and directly; however, the validity and reliability of an oral production test are inevitably compromised by the accuracy and efficacy of a test-taker's listening ability. Students can communicate information and express their thoughts and feelings through speaking. Human communication is based on talking because it is the most direct way for people to connect. According to Pavlovskaya & Minakova (2022), correct and effective listening skills can help develop active speaking abilities over time. Stated differently, a conversation requires the involvement of a minimum of two individuals, each of whom must participate by speaking and listening.

Nevertheless, common problems include their inability to use a foreign language alongside their native tongue, their shyness and anxiety when engaging in an English language conversations, or even issues brought on by teachers who don't use the English language often in the classroom (Farooq & Wahid, 2012). In addition, without taking an action, speaking skill goals would not be attained. Teachers must therefore be able to identify the solutions to address those issues. Speaking exercises for students can be increased through discussion, speeches, and oral dialogues (Crisianita & Mandasari, 2022). In this study,
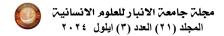
the researcher uses small-group discussions to assist students in developing more functional and communicative English speaking abilities.

Problem Statement

The researcher conducted a needs analysis task distributed to fourth-grade students as an open question to write about the strategy they need to develop before graduation and to be an English language teacher at public and private schools. The analysis revealed that the majority needed the enhancement of speaking skills. Al-Khayyat (2019) (a university professor at the same university where the researcher of this study works) addressed this need, who proved that most university professors didn't focus on teaching students how to speak well and pronounce words correctly. Also, Almadhady, et al. (2021) found that Arab EFL university students, including Iraqis, are facing severe problems in speaking. The Iraqi students learning English still need to work on their speaking skills. In addition, the students who are learning English still need to work on their speaking skills to enhance them. The main aim of learning English is to help students understand spoken English. To use English in communication, you have to understand and be understood when you talk or listen to someone. This helps you to communicate and to learn things. To ensure a message is understood, you must say to say the words correctly. To teach speaking in a foreign language context is more complicated than teaching it in a second language or a native language contexts. This is in the EFL context, students only learn English in school and don't practice it to communicate. This means they have no opportunities to speak the language. To solve the problem, the researcher reviewed the literature and found that the studies of A'ini (2019), Mogea (2019), Bohari (2020), Crisianita and Mandasari (2022), Lin, et al. (2022), Mogea and Oroh (2022), and Sukmawati, et al. (2023) proved the most significance and valuable tool to teach speaking skills is the small-group discussion strategy.

Research objectives:

1- To examine the effects of the Small-Group discussion strategy on students' speaking skills for Iraqi university students.

2- To examine the effects of the Small-Group discussion strategy on students' speaking skills between Iraqi university students and foreign native students.

3- To examine the effects of the Small-Group discussion strategy

on students' speaking skills between Iraqi university students and those who interact with UK and Canadian students.

Research hypotheses:

The current study proposes three hypotheses.

H1.   H0. There is no significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to the small group discussion.

H1. There is a significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to the small group discussion.

H2.   H0. There is no significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to interaction with UK Canadian students in small group discussions.

H1. There is a significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to interaction with UK Canadian students in small group discussions.

H3.   H0. There is no significant difference between the Iraqi students' who interacted with Iraqi students and who interacted with UK and Canadian students via the small group discussions technique.

H1. There is a significant difference between the Iraqi students' who interacted with Iraqi students and who interacted with UK and Canadian students via the small group discussions technique.

The Significance

The outcomes of the current study are significant for all EFL university instructors who teach at the departments of English in the Iraqi universities. Also, the EFL learners can benefit from the outcomes which may considered an excellent indicator to encourage EFL students to communicate inside and outside the educational institutions. In addition, the result may motivate EFL students to speak and interact using the English language.

The Research Limitations

This study is limited to the following:

1. Location: The study was conducted at Anbar University , Ramadi, Iraq, the University of Bedfordshire (UK), and Memorial University of Newfoundland (Canada).
2. The Participants: The participants were only 35 university students from the universities included in the location of the study. Each student holds the nationality of his/her country.
3. Duration: The study was conducted during the first and second semesters of the academic year 2022-2023.

Iraqi EFL Context

EFL learning environment in Iraq is a complex terrain influenced by educational, cultural, and historical factors. The need for effective language instruction is driven by the growing recognition that proficiency in English is necessary for career opportunities, international communication, and academic success (Saed & Aladin, 2023).

The four primary language skills developed in EFL programs in Iraq are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. speaking is frequently the most difficult (Almadhady, 2021). This state of affairs is a result of multiple factors: instructional design and methods, as most EFL courses in Iraqi universities focus heavily on reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. However, due to large class sizes, scarce resources, and conventional teaching approaches that give prefer to written exams over oral assessments, speaking practice might not receive as much attention as it could.

The second factor is the teacher competence and training. There are differences among EFL instructors' proficiency level and teaching approaches. Some teachers may use more conventional, grammar-focused methods, but others may be well-versed in communicative approaches. A lack of trained English-speaking teachers makes effective speech improvement more difficult. Third is the language anxiety as a lot of Iraqi students get nervous when they speak English because they are afraid of making mistakes or don't think they are good enough at the language. This psychological barrier may prevent them from actively participating in speaking exercises or striking up discussions outside the classroom. The fourth factor is the technological integration, while it is still developing, different institutions use technology differently when it comes to teaching EFL (Al-Habsi, 2022). Regarding speaking proficiency, universities that use digital tools like video conferencing or online language labs for language practice tend to achieve better results than those that stick to traditional methods. Finally there are cultural and societal influences; speaking proficiency is also impacted by sociocultural factors, such as societal attitudes regarding English as a foreign language and the availability of English-speaking environments outside of academia. Students not exposed to enough real-world English contexts may find it more challenging to use their language skills in everyday situations.

There are ongoing initiatives in Iraqi universities' EFL programs to improve speaking abilities. Initiatives include curriculum revisions prioritizing oral communication, teacher training workshops on communicative teaching techniques, and expanded access to language practice through language exchange programs and online platforms. But tackling systemic issues necessitates ongoing investments in teacher professional development, technology infrastructure, and instructional strategies that promote a supportive and communicative learning environment for students.

Literature Review

Language is a means we use to talk to each other. We talk to people to share our thoughts and hear what they think. Communication happens when people talk to each other. We need to talk to communicate with each other. Speaking skills are essential for people learning a new language. Without talking, a language is just writing. Using language happens in our community. We use words in different situations. People working in medical or language laboratories need to speak clearly and effectively to communicate with each other, if they don't, it can cause misunderstandings and problems (Qureshi, 2007).

Speaking is a way for people to communicate with their voices. Speaking is how we make and share meaning by using words. Speaking is the use of words and actions for communication in different situations. Speaking is when we share and understand information with others by speaking and listening (Ellis & Brewster, 2014). How we speak to each other and what we talk about depends on who is talking, why they are talking, and where they are when they talk. Speaking is a way of talking to people and does many different things. Brown and Yule (1983) say that speaking has three main purposes: talking to communicate, talking to exchange things, and talking to show off.

To be a good communicator, you must be good at listening, speaking, reading, and writing. But being good at speaking can give you extra benefits. Communicating our thoughts and feelings using words helps us in many ways. Sharing your ideas with others brings a lot of happiness. We learn more about ourselves when we talk to people (Rao, 2019).

Concerning the aspects related to speaking skills, and the topic of this study, speaking has three main functions as suggested by Brown and Yule (1983): speak as a transaction, speak as interaction, and speak as

performance. The functions are:

Speak as a Transaction: Speaking as a transaction means that people negotiate and agree on what they mean when they talk to each other. The talk will be about what people say and do. The main goal is to communicate effectively. In these deals, talking is connected to other actions. For instance, students talk about an assignment and then tell the class about it or do what is asked. Communication is about sharing information and messages, not about the people involved. The participants use different ways of talking to help others understand them. Also, there are lots of questions that require repeating things, and ensuring everyone understands. Sometimes people may also talk about different things and try to make deals. In a conversation, it's not always essential to use perfect language.

Speak as Interaction: Talking with others means having a conversation with them. People talk when they meet. They say hello, chat about things, and share what's been happening in their lives to become better friends. Brown and Yule believe that when people talk to each other, it's usually through speaking. This shows their different roles, who they are, and how polite they are. It can be formal or informal, and follows the rules of conversation. It uses oridinary words and speaking methods and is created together by people.

Speak as Performance: Talking as performance means speakin to people to share information, like giving a presentation in a classroom, making public announcements, or giving a speech. It pays attention to what is said and who it's said to, as well as how it's said and ensures it's correct. It is also easy to follow and understand. Also, its language focuses on writing which is one-way communication.

Speaking is vital for communicating well. Learning to speak another language is often considered one of the most complex parts of learning a new language. Many people who are learning a new language have trouble speaking it. They often have trouble using a different language to communicate their thoughts well. They stop talking because they have problems with their feelings or they can't find the right words (Hughes and Reed, 2016).

The most significant strategy to teach speaking skills to the EFL learners is by small group discussion strategy, Lubis (1988) stated "A good way to give students opportunities to speak English is to schedule them in small group discussion" (P. 55). In small group discussions, the teacher splits the classroom into small groups to teach. Each group

have four or five students. The students sit in small groups and talk to each other. Students can talk and share their ideas in the classroom without feeling nervous. Everyone takes part in a small group talk. (Lin, et al., 2019).

By putting students in groups, they can help each other. In a group, everyone joins in and talks to each other. When people work together, they can learn more than alone. This means that groups who are motivated to learn can do better in the learning process. They can help each other. When people work together, they can make something better (Gibbs, et al., 2021).

Fujishin (2023) mentioned that small group discussions have advantages and disadvantages features, the advantages are:

1- It can help people get better at talking to and being around others people. It helps people become more aware of themselves by sharing their thoughts and ideas with others and getting their feedback. Please rewrite the text you'd like me to simplify.

2- It can be nice and helpful when people feel like they belong and are liked by others.

3- Knowing that other people have the same worries and fears can make you feel better about yourelf.

4- Using small groups and emphasizing that everyone's input is valuable can show that each of us has something to offer and can also guide our learning by coming up with our ideas and thinking about, agreeing with, or disagreeing with the opinions we hear.

While the disadvantages are:

1- It can mean the teacher has less control and students have fewer responsibilities.

2- Evaluating learning is harder when no written tests have clear right or wrong answers.

To conduct a small group discussion, the role of the teacher and the role of students have to be taken into account. The roles of the teacher has been listed by Mogea (2019), that when a teacher talks and teaches students, they have some jobs like:

1- Giving clear directions on when to begin, what to do, and when to finish.

2- Giving obvious tasks.

3- Make a plan for students to work together and know what they should do. Above all, the teacher should act like a helper and be there to give advice and support during the discussion. In class, the teacher listens

and helps instead of being in charge.

While the roles of the students within the group are as following as listed by Rory McGreat (1989, cited in Mogea, 2019) :

1- Starting

2- Sharing and requesting information.

3- Sharing and inquiring about the response.

Summing up the main points.

In a group speaking, one person usually leads and the rest are group members. To have a good and successful conversation, every student should know what they are supposed to do (Bohari, 2020).

Clark and Starr (1981:187) describe the group leader's role as.

1- Start the conversation by asking what we are going to talk about.

2- Make sure the conversation stays focused.

3- Summing up what the group found.

4- Giving advice and leading the discussion.

After the group members are done talking, they must choose one person to share their thoughts with the whole class. After that, the teacher, as leader, talks about results with the whole class. This kind of activity will finish when the groups talk about the outcome and devise a solution that makes both the students and the teacher happy (McDonnell, et al., 2021).

Burgess, et al. (2020) described the procedures of the feedback. They suggested that feedback comes after the session is over. The students are now sitting alone instead of in groups. Feedback needs to be given carefully and thoughtfully. This is more likely to happen if we follow the following rules:

- Feedback should be given instead of forced.
- The Feedback must be obvious and pointed toward things that could be enhanced.
- The Feedback should be focused on good things.
- When you say a terrible thing, attempt to say something acceptale. The giving feedback person should have the responsibile for that and assure to check with others before saying it aloud.
- The students should be considered for the feedback they give, and to be discussed with others.
- The feedback assists personnel and groups to learn more.

Reviewing some of the related studies conducted to the current study will help to uncover merits of small group discussion and the results obtained by researchers who have conducted the research in this domain. One of the new studies was carried out by Cresianita and Mandesari (2022) when they examine the impact of SGD technique in the enhancement of speaking proficiency for students in EFL context. The research respondents are 30 students who used to collect the data in the form of pre-and post-tests. The results showed that the respondents of the experimental group achieved higher scores than those of the control group. This is evidence that the use of SGD helped to device the students' speaking skills.

Another study ws conducted in 2018 by Prayogga who investigated the effect of SGD in improving of students' speaking skills in EFL context. 70 Indonesian respondents were chosen for the research sample. A pre-test and Post-Test data collection tools were employed in the study. The study results showed the positive and effective effect of using SGD in enhancing the study participants' speaking proficiency.

Furthermore, Nurmainati, (2019) also conducted a study to investigate the impact of group discussion in improving the EFL students' speaking. 16 males and females students were the participants of the study. The participants were divided into two groups, each of 8 respondents. The same instrument, pre and post test, is used to collect the research data. The primary results showed that no difference between the students' scores in the experimental and the control groups. Based on the obtained results, this technique has no real effect on the students' speaking skills.

Methodology
The Participants

The study participants are 35 male and female students. They were chosen from the College of Education for Humanities at Anbar University 25 male and female students, The participants from the Faculty of Education, English & Sport at the University of Bedfordshire (UK) were five males and females, and the participants from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Memorial University of Newfoundland (Canada) were five male and female students.

The College of Education for Humanities at Anbar university participants were selected based on the students' agreement to volunteer to be

included in the experimental group. The Iraqi participants were distributed in three groups. The first group consisted of fifteen students (who interact with each other inside the classroom). The other participants (the foreigners) were only then students in each group. The Iraqi participants were five and the UK students were five too, also, the group of students from Canada was ten students, five students from Iraq and five students from Canada. Table 1 below explains the distribution.

Table 1: Distribution of participants

Nationality	Number
Iraq	25
UK	5
Canada	5
Total	35

The Instruments

In this study the researcher prepared a pre-speaking test and post-test and a post speaking test elicited from the literature review. The test assesses students' abilities in: Fluency; Flexibility; Grammar (word order); Vocabulary (to use the most suitable one in the proper context); Pronunciation (to be acceptable and to modify the fossilized one such as the pronunciation of "often", "academic", archive", etc."; and comprehension (to understand and to be understood).

Validity of the Instruments

To obtain the validity for the post test, it was given to a jury of member specialists in the methodology and the field of applied linguistics. The specialists suggested several recommendations that the researcher accounted. They suggested adding details to the speaking test criteria, such as flexibility, fluency, and vocabulary.

Concerning reliability, the researcher distributed a pilot sample to five respondents excluded from the study sample. Ten days later, the test was distributed again to the same respondents under the same circumstances. After analyzing the test items using Cronbach Alpha, the reliability Coefficient was 0.89. This means the items of the test are acceptable.

The Procedures

1. The students were chosen randomly due to the student's desire to participate in the experiment.

2. The 25 Iraqi students, males and females, are divided into three groups to apply the technology among them.
3. Contact was made with students from Britain and Canada, and a meeting was agreed upon between them and the Iraqi students.
4. Free Conference Call application was used as a communication tool between the students in Iraq, the UK and Canada.
5. A group of five Iraqi students and five British students was allocated, as well as another group of the same number of Canadian students.
6. The experiment was implemented under the researcher's supervision to conduct dialogue and give feedback to the students.

The Results

Results of the First Hypothesis

H1.   H0. There is no significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to the small group discussion.

H1. There is a significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to the small group discussion.

Table 1: Mean scores, and criterion deviation of the Iraqi students' pre-test and post-test

Tests	No.	Means	SD	T-Values		Df.	Sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated		
Pre-test	15	49.59	6.51	3.34	2.00	14	0.05
Post-test	15	53.50	8.66				

As shown in Table 1, the post-test mean was higher (M= 53.50, SD= 8.66) compared to pre-test mean (M= 49,59, SD= 6,51). The result revealed that there was a significant difference. Thus, based on the above result the H0 that ' there is no significant ……….. . can be rejected and the H1 that there is a significant ….. . is accepted.

The Results of the Second Hypothesis

H2.   H0. There is no significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to interaction with UK Canadian students in small group discussions.

H1. There is a significant difference between the Iraqi students' pre and post-tests due to interaction with UK Canadian students in small group discussions.

To verify the second hypothesis "There is a significance difference at (α=0.05) between the Iraqi students' pre-test and post-test due to the interaction with the UK and Canadian students in small group discussion", the means scores, standard deviations, and t-values were used to analyze data. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Means scores, standard deviations, and t-values of pre-test and post-test interaction between the Iraqi and foreign students

Tests	No.	Means	SD	T-Values		Df.	Sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated		
Pre-test	5	49.59	6.51	3.47	2.00	4	0.05
Post-test	5	57.32	8.91				

In Table 2, the mean scores of post test are 57.32 which is higher than the pre test scores which are 49.59, and calculated t-value is 3.47 which is higher than the tabulated t-value which is 2.00. This means that there is a significant difference between the pre and the post tests for the favor of the post-test due to the interaction between the Iraqi students with the students from the UK and the Canada. This means that second hypothesis is accepted.

Results of the Third Hypothesis

H3. H0. There is no significant difference between the Iraqi students' who interacted with Iraqi students and who interacted with UK and Canadian students via the small group discussions technique.

H1. There is a significant difference between the Iraqi students' who interacted with Iraqi students and who interacted with UK and Canadian students via the small group discussions technique.

To validate the third hypothesis "there is a significance difference at (α=0.05) between the Iraqi students' who interacted with Iraqi students and who interacted with UK and Canadian students via the small group discussion technique", a t-test, mean score, and standard deviation are used to analyze data. Table 3 shows the result.

Table 3: Means scores, standard deviation, and t-values of pre-test and post-test interaction between the Iraqi and foreign students

Interaction	No.	Means	SD	T-Values		Df.	Sig.
				Calculated	Tabulated		
With Iraqi students	5	11.56	1.53	3.83	2.00	4	0.05
With UK, and Canadian Students	5	13.36	2.09				

Table 3 shows that the mean scores of the students who interacted with Iraqi students is 11.56, while the mean score of those who interacted with the students from the UK and Canada is 13.36. The calculated t-value is 3.83 that is higher than the tabulated t-value which is 2.00. That means there is a difference between students who interacted with Iraqi students and with those who interacted with UK and Canadian students in favor of the students who interacted with students from the UK and Canada. This means that the third hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of The Results

The result of the first hypothesis revealed a difference between the pre and post tests of the students in the experimental group who interacted with the Iraqi students in the favor of the post-test. This means that the Small Group Discussions technique significantly effects the students speaking skills. The exposing to the experience of discussion with peers has encouraged the students to engage in communication for long period, this fact has been proved by Homayouni, 2022; Peralta Cisneros, 2022; and Chen, 2023. Due to this teaching technique, the students look for their possess encounters and encounter them specifically; do it yourself; cultivating agreeable participation among students which in turn can encourage gather work; the students learn and work based on their claim.

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that the students in the post-test showed higher result than in the pre-test due to interaction with the students from the UK and Canada. The interaction with native language has influenced the students' experience to communicate in an authentic context with native speakers. The idea that the interaction with native speakers can positively developed EFL students speaking skills (Freiermuth, 2001; Boonkit, 2010; Jauregi, et al., 2012; Liu, et al., 2023; Mahdi, 2022, and Nymeyer, et al., 2022) have been proved in this study. When the students interacted with native speakers, their grammar

competence, diversity of topics, generated ireas, use of vocabulary, the pronunciation of words, and also listening ability developed during the communication and interaction with the native peer speakers.

The result of the third hypothesis revealed a significant difference between the students who interacted with Iraqi students and those who interacted with UK and Canadian students in favor of the students who interacted with students from the UK and Canada. Interaction in an authentic context can increase students' speaking skills more than interaction with peers. Both teaching methods were significant, but interaction with natives has proved more effective than interacting with peers.

Conclusion

This research study is to examine the role of the small group discussion strategy in the development of EFL students' speaking skills by Iraqi EFL university students between each other and between them and foreign native students, as the students who interact with peers and who interact with UK and Canadian respondents. The significant results of the study revealed that interacting with peers whose native language is Arabic can creates comfortable and safe speaking environment. Also, interacting with English native speakers can expose the students to various colloquialisms. The English language has various colloquialisms and accents. We as Arabic speakers do not distinguish between these colloquialisms and accents unless we expose to the English language in real context. The Small Group Discussion also works to encourages students to be aware of the English language fluency and accuracy when using the language for communication exposing them to the English culture, by using culture during communication. The study also assisted the participants to improve their speaking abilities as utlizing Small Group Discussion is a beneficial technique in English language teaching when the teachers and students are concerned to enhance the students' speaking skills. One of the important outcomes of using the small group discussion is that this technique helps increase the students confidence when they use English to talk and communicate. This strategy is preferred over the extensive group discussion, therefore teachers are recommended to use it and encourage their students to participate in such groups effectively.

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JOURNAL OF UNIVERSITY OF ANBAR FOR HUMANITIES

ACADEMIC REFEREED JOURNAL

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In the name of God, the Most Gracious, The Most Merciful
Editorial of the issue

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, and may blessings and peace be upon the Seal of the Prophets, our Master Muhammad, and upon all his family and companions.

Dear researchers around the globe, it is our pleasure to announce the third issue for the year 2024 of our scientific journal (Journal of University of Anbar for Humanities) (JUAH), the peer-reviewed quarterly scientific journal. This issue contains 21 scientific papers that include the journal's specialties for researchers from the University of Anbar and other Iraqi universities. It also contains international scientific papers. In these scientific research, you could find scientific effort that we in the editorial board should be proud of. These research found its way to publication after being peer-reviewed by qualified professors, each in his field of specialization.

The generous contribution of researchers, the generous effort of the Editor in Chief and members of the Editorial Board, and the great support from the presidency of our university and the deanship of our college encourage us to take steps to reach the looked-for aim of indexing our journal in the largest abstract and citation database (Scopus). Therefore, it must be noted that we are in the process of continuously updating the publishing procedures in order to improve the journal and bring it to a higher scientific status. Furthermore, our future aim to contribute effectively to the Arab publishing and scientific research movement in order to enhance the status of the scientific research and expand its horizons in Arab countries because we believe that the scientific research is one of the factors in the progress of the nations and is an indicator of its progress.

Dr. Fuaad Mohammed Freh
Editor in Chief

Instructions to Authors

1-SUBMISSION OF PAPER

1-1-Requirements for new submission

Authors may choose to submit the manuscript as a single word file to be used in the refereeing process.

1-2-Requirement of revised submission

Only when the submitted paper is at the revision stage, authors will be requested to put the paper in to a 'correct format' for acceptance and provide the items required for the publication of the manuscript.

1-3- Authorship Guidelines

Authorship credit should be based on: (i) Substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (ii) Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (iii) Final approval of the version to be submitted for publication. All of these conditions should be met by all authors. Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group alone does not constitute authorship. All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section. All authors must agree on the sequence of authors listed before submitting the article. All authors must agree to designate one author as the corresponding author for the submission. It is the responsibility of corresponding author to arrange the whole manuscript upon the requirements and to dialogue with the co-authors during the peer-reviewing and proofing stages and to also act on behalf.

2-BEFORE YOU BEGIN

2-1- Publishing Ethics

The ethical policy of JUAH is based on the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines and complies with JUAH Editorial Board codes of conduct. Readers, authors, reviewers and editors should follow these ethical policies once working with JUAH. The ethical policy of JUAH is liable to determine which of the typical research papers or articles submitted to the journal should be published. The publishing decision is based on the suggestion of the journal's reviewers and editorial board members. The ethical policy insisted the Editor-in-Chief, may confer with other editors or reviewers in making the decision. The reviewers are necessary to evaluate the research papers based on the submitted content in confidential manner. The reviewers also suggest the authors to improve the quality of research paper by their reviewing comments. Authors should ensure that their submitted research work is original and has not been published elsewhere in any language. Applicable copyright laws and conventions should be followed by the authors. Any kind of plagiarism constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. For information on this matter in publishing and ethical guidelines please visit (Publication Ethics).

2-2-Peer-Review Process

In order to sustain the peer review system, authors have an obligation to participate in peer review process to evaluate manuscripts from others. When appropriate, authors are obliged to provide retractions and/or corrections of errors to the editors and the Publisher. All papers submitted to JUAH journal will be peer reviewed for at least one round. JUAH journal adopts a double-blinded review policy: authors are blind to reviewers, and reviewers are also blind to authors. The peer review process is conducted in the online manuscript submission and peer-review system. After a manuscript is submitted to the online system, the system immediately notifies the editorial office. After passing an initial quality check by the editorial office, the manuscript will be assigned to two or more reviewers. After receiving reviewers' comments, the editorial team member makes a decision. Because reviewers sometimes do not agree with each other, the final decision sent to the author may not exactly reflect recommendations by any of the reviewers. The decision after each round of peer review may be one of the following:

Accept without any further changes.

1. Accept with minor revision. The revised manuscript may or may not be sent to the reviewers for another round of comments.

2. Accept with major revision. The revised manuscript sent to the reviewers for another round of comments.
3. Reject. The manuscript is rejected for publication by JUAH.
4. Unable to review. The manuscript is reassigning to another reviewers.

2-3-Post-Publication Evaluation

In addition to Peer Review Process, the JUAH Journal has Post-Publication Evaluation by the scientific community. Post-Publication Evaluation is concentrated to ensure that the quality of published research, review and case report meets certain standards and the conclusions that are presented are justified. The post-publication evaluation includes online comments and citations on published papers. Authors may respond to the comments of the scientific community and may revise their manuscript. The Post-Publication Evaluation is described in such a way; it is allowing authors to publish quickly about Humanity sciences concepts.

3-1- Writing Language

Publications in JUAH are in English or Arabic language. Authors whose first language is not English should make sure their manuscript is written in idiomatic English before submission. Please write your text in good English (American or British is accepted). language and copy-editing services are provided by the JUAH; hence, authors who feel their manuscript may require editing to eliminate possible grammatical or spelling errors are encouraged to obtain such services prior to submission. Authors are responsible for all costs associated with such services. (Editing Language)

3-2- New Submissions

Submission to JUAH journal proceeds totally online and authors will be guided stepwise through the creation and uploading of the manuscript files. As part of the manuscript, authors may choose to submit the manuscript as a single file to be used in the refereeing process. This can be a Word document (*.doc or *.docx), that can be used by referees to evaluate the manuscript. All figures and tables encouraged to be embedded and included in the main manuscript file.

3-3-References

References list must be provided according to the JUAH references format in a consistent style. Where applicable, author(s) name(s), article title, year of publication, journal full name, article/chapter/book title, volume/issue number and the pagination must be present. Use of DOI is highly encouraged.

3-4-Formatting requirements

There are no strict formatting requirements but all manuscripts must contain the essential elements needed to convey your manuscript, for example, Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, Acknowledgement, Conflict of Interest and References. Please ensure all figures and tables should be embedded and included in the main manuscript file. for download Arabic template click here.

3-5-Revised Submissions

Regardless of the file format of the original submission, at revision the authors are instructed to submit their manuscript with JUAH format at Word document (*.doc or *.docx). Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. To avoid unnecessary errors the authors are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' for the submitted manuscript. At this level the author(s) name and affiliation should be inserted.

3-6- Manuscript Submission and Declaration

While submitting a manuscript to JUAH, all contributing author(s) must verify that the manuscript represents authentic and valid work and that neither this manuscript nor one with significantly similar content under their authorship has been published or is being considered for publication elsewhere including electronically in the same form, in English. All authors have agreed to allow the corresponding author to serve as the primary correspondent with the editorial office, to review the edited manuscript and proof.

3-7- Manuscript Submission and Verification

Manuscripts are assumed not to be published previously in print or electronic version and are not under consideration by another publication. Copies of related or possibly duplicated materials (including those containing significantly similar content or using same data) that have been

published previously or are under consideration for another publication must be provided at the time of online submission.

4-MANUSCRIPT STRUCTURE

Manuscript literature and tenses must be structured as: Title; Abstract; Keywords; Introduction; Materials and Methods; Results and Discussion; Conclusion; Acknowledgements and References submitted in a file with limited size. The text should not exceed 25 double spaced type written or printed A4 pages with 25 mm margins and should be printed on one side only and all pages should be numbered. A covering letter signed by Author should be sent with the manuscript. Each manuscript component should begin on a new page.

4-1-Title Page

The first page of the manuscript includes the title (capitalize only the first letter) of the article, followed by one-line space and the names of all authors (no degrees) and their addresses for correspondence, including the e-mail address of the corresponding author. The first letter of each name and main word should be capitalized. The title, author's name and affiliation should be centered on the width of the typing area.

4-2-Manuscript Title

Title of up to 17 words should not contain the name of locations, countries or cities of the research as well as abbreviations. Avoid complicated and technical expressions and do not use vague expressions.

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