

**STRATEGIES-BASED INSTRUCTION: A MEANS
OF IMPROVING ADULT EFL LEARNERS'
SPEAKING SKILLS**

**Strateji-Temelli Eğitim: Yetişkin Yabancı Dil
Öğrencilerinin Konuşma Becerilerinin Geliştirilmesi
İçin Bir Yöntem**

Gülten KOŞAR¹ & Hasan BEDİR²

Abstract

Speaking skill has been claimed to be at the core of language learning. The claim has been expanded with the assumption that aptitude for accomplishing successful oral production is the equivalence of successful language learning. Many factors such as motivation level, methods and materials used in the classroom, atmosphere of the setting where learners are taught, the amount of chances for practicing target language can be mentioned among the broad range of factors exerting influence on speaking skill. One of the compromised conceptions about the proficiency of Turkish adult EFL Learners regarding their speaking skill is upon the entanglements encountered by them in due course of oral communication. Thus, this study which was conducted on 72 university prep-class students whose age rank differed between 18-21 years monitored the progress in the speaking skill of the experimental group (N=37) exposed to strategy training relevant to speaking for four months and compared the collected data with the data of the group (N=35) not trained specifically on language learning strategies. Speaking strategies questionnaire, speaking test, semi-structured interview, researcher's diary, and minute papers were the instruments utilized in order for data collection. Findings obtained from the qualitative and quantitative data showed that the students in the training group made a meaningful improvement in their speaking skills as compared to those in the comparison group.

Key words: *Language learning Strategies (LLSs), Speaking strategies, Strategies-based Instruction, Improvement in speaking skill*

Özet

Konuşma becerisinin dil öğreniminin en önemli unsuru olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Bu iddia, iyi bir sözlü üretimin iyi bir dil öğrenimiyle aynı anlama geldiği varsayımıyla desteklenmektedir. Motivasyon seviyesi, sınıfta kullanılan materyaller, öğrencilerin öğrenim gördükleri ortamdaki atmosfer, İngilizce pratik yapma adına sahip oldukları fırsatlar gibi faktörlerin etkisinde kalan konuşma becerisi, bu çalışmanın esas ilgi alanını oluşturmaktadır. Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen yetişkin Türk öğrencilerinin konuşma becerileri söz konusu olduğunda, karşılaşılan ortak hususlardan bir tanesi bu öğrencilerin konuşma esnasında yaşadıkları zorluklardır. Yaşları 18 ile 21 arasında değişen 72 üniversite hazırlık sınıfı öğrencisiyle yürütülen bu çalışma, dört ay süre ile konuşma becerisiyle ilişkili strateji eğitimine tabi tutulmuş denek grubundaki öğrencilerin (N=37) konuşma becerilerindeki ilerlemeyi gözlemlemiş ve denek grubuna ait olan veriyi strateji eğitimi verilmemiş kontrol grubuna (35) ait veri ile kıyaslamıştır. Bu çalışmadaki veri, konuşma stratejileri anketi, konuşma testi, yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme, araştırmacı günlüğü ve öğrencilerden strateji eğitiminin verildiği her dersin son beş dakikasında toplanılan, içerisinde strateji eğitimiyle alakalı kısa değerlendirmelerinin bulunduğu notlar aracılığı ile toplanmıştır. Niteliksel ve niceliksel verilerden elde edilen bulgular, eğitim verilen gruptaki öğrencilerin kontrol gruplardakiler ile karşılaştırıldığında konuşma becerilerinde önemli bir ilerleme kaydettikleri ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Dil öğrenme stratejileri, Konuşma stratejileri, Strateji eğitimi, Konuşma becerisinde gelişme.*

¹ PhD Student at University of Çukurova and Instructor at Social Sciences University of Ankara, e-posta: gencoglugulten@gmail.com

² Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çukurova Üniversitesi, e-posta: hsnbedir@gmail.com

Introduction

English has become the lingua franca all over the world even though it is not the most spoken language concerning the number of its native speakers. The economic and cultural impact of the USA has paved the way toward the prevailed use of English in various areas of the globe. It has become the medium of technology, and commerce etc., which has channeled lots of people in almost all parts of the world toward engaging into attempts to learn English as a foreign/second language. The reflection of such a widespread tendency has also been felt in Turkey, where English is taught as a foreign language. Turkey has been reforming its educational system in order to catch up with the “decisions, developments, and practices in international context, in particular, European Union” (Bedir, 2013). Nonetheless, the influences of these changes have not been observed in classroom setting. The system, undergoing radical modifications, still does not seem to be contributing to the enhancement in students’ communicative competence, specifically their speaking skill.

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning which is comprised of producing and receiving information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Among the four language skills speaking is viewed to be at the heart of second language learning (Egan, 1999). A common comment confronted among English Language Learners in Turkish context is that they can understand what they read and write despite the probability of making mistakes in writing and understanding the texts incorrectly; yet, they complain about not being capable of transferring their feelings, and ideas through oral language. As Brown (2000) states successful oral communication in the target language with other speakers serves as a display of successful language acquisition. This statement brings forth the significance of developing speaking skill, indicating competent language learners. Thus, the need to improve students’ speaking skills has been intriguing researchers’ interest.

Researchers have shifted their focus from teaching to learning to learn during the years following the 1960s (Cohen & Weaver, 2005). The change in favor of learning and learner placed a substantial importance on learner-centered approach rather than the teacher-centered one. In conjunction with the increasing popularity of learner-centered approach, a number of studies were conducted with the view of detecting the traits of good language learners, which can be exemplified with *The Good Language Learner* (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern & Toedesco, 1978). Rubin (1975), concentrating upon the attributes of good language learners, states that good language learners are competent at making accurate guesses, and possess strong attempts to make use of the chances for communication. Stern (1975) published an article on good language learners driving profit from strategies. Rubin and Thompson (1982) expand the features shared by good language learners via adding the features of *finding their own way, being creative, making their own opportunities for practice*. Cohen (1990), O’Malley & Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990), Weinstein & Mayer (1983), Wenden (1991), Wenden & Rubin (1987) are also among the researchers conducting research to bring out the characteristics of good language learners. The features of good language learners touched upon in the preceding lines draw the attention to language learning strategies in that these features cater for progression in language learning process.

Language learning strategies became one of the most promising topics worth carrying out research on the broader field of educational psychology in the 1980s (Dörnyei, 2005). Selinker (1972) in his paper *Interlanguage* used the term ‘strategies of second language communication’ by which he made a reference to the strategies that support

students whilst showing efforts to overcome the problems they encounter in their language learning journey. The strategies accompany the learners as promoters through converging them into conscious learners about looking for a way out when facing difficulties. As maintained by Dörnyei (2005) the concept of language learning strategies has received a significant focus in the field of L2.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory (1962, 1978). Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory suggests that students can obtain mature thinking via observing how teachers and other experts approach learning tasks, and by practicing expert processes with the aid of coaching from teachers. Bearing in mind the underlying rationale of sociocultural learning theory, the researchers applied CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) instructional design, which encapsulates presentation and modelling of speaking strategies by teachers as an initial stage, and practicing the modelled strategies by students as a succeeding one.

In addition, the study followed the theoretical principle of communicative competence meaning the ability to use language to convey and interpret meaning (Hymes, 1972). According to Canale and Swain (1980), in order to be competent in communication one must develop grammatical competence (learner's knowledge of the vocabulary, phonology and rules of the language), discourse competence (learner's ability to connect utterances into a meaningful whole), sociolinguistic competence (learner's ability to use language appropriately) and strategic competence (learner's ability to employ strategies to compensate for imperfect knowledge). Keeping in mind the aim of the study, the focus is placed more on strategic competence since strategic competence is the recommended fulcrum by which students can develop their speaking skills. Canale (1983: 23) and Canale and Swain (1980: 5) defined strategic competence as "the mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies in L2 used when attempting to compensate for deficiencies in the grammatical and sociolinguistic competence or to enhance the effectiveness of communication."

Definitions

Oxford (1990, p. 1) defines language learning strategies (LLSs) as "the steps taken by the students to enhance their own learning". Regardless of the wide recognition Oxford's definition has received, Wenden and Rubin (1987) state that there has been little consensus on the definition of LLSs. In the 1980s so as to categorize and define LLSs, researchers have put forth several definitions and taxonomies for LLSs such as O'Malley & Chamot (1990), and Oxford (1990). Out of these taxonomies and classifications, the one produced by Oxford (1990) has created a tremendous impact in the realm of SLA. Oxford divided LLSs into two parts: direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies encompass memory, cognitive and compensation strategies and social, affective, and metacognitive strategies are subsumed under the heading of indirect strategies. Interrelationships between direct and indirect strategies are presented as a fundamental factor for a better application of LLSs. The taxonomy of O' Malley and Chamot (1990) is similar to the one brought forth by Oxford. They categorize learning strategies into three main classes: cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective strategies.

Aim of the study

1990s, and previous decade witnessed a growing tendency toward the implementation of LLSs in the classroom (Chamot, 1993; Cohen, 1990; Sanaoui, 1995; Huang, 2006;

Sioson, 2011). The concern was to see whether LLSs could enhance students' learning in the target language by experimenting with new strategies and already existing ones. Cohen, Weaver and Li (1996) conducted research at the University of Minnesota with intermediate level French and Norwegian learners to determine the impact of LLSs on the improvement of learners' speaking proficiency. The research revealed that LLSs were effective in the improvement of speaking skills of experimental group participants. The studies carried out by Cohen & Olshtain (1993), and Nunan (1996) investigated the correlation between strategy use and speaking ability. A number of studies have depicted the positive influence of strategy use on speaking proficiency (Dadour & Robbins, 1996; Larenas, 2011; Nunan, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, Phaiboonnugulkij & Prapphal, 2013).

There is empirical evidence suggesting the role of language learning strategies in learning foreign and second languages, yet there is little empirical data and research to support their role in developing speaking skill. Thus, this study aimed at developing adult EFL learners' speaking skills through strategies-based instruction by seeking answers to the following questions.

- 1- Are adult EFL learners aware of speaking strategies that can help them overcome the shortcomings during oral communication?
- 2- Does explicit strategy training have effects on improving speaking skills of adult EFL learners?

Methodology

This particular study was conducted using mixed method research techniques involving both qualitative and quantitative data. "Mixed methods research is defined as research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws in differences used in both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or a program of enquiry" (Tashakkori & Greswell, 2007b, p.4). The qualitative data consisted of researcher's diary, minute papers, and semi-structured interviews while the quantitative data was comprised of the speaking strategies questionnaire and speaking tests.

Participants

Seventy-two university students attending the English language preparatory classes of Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University, a state university in Turkey, were the participants of this study. The participants were between 18 and 21 years of age. Two groups were conveniently selected from already existing four classes and they were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Experimental group consisted of 37 students and 35 students were in control group. The participants had 28-hour-English classes per week, and this intensive program was grounded on an integrated approach in teaching language skills.

Data collection

Five types of instruments were utilized to collect the data: speaking strategies questionnaire, pre and post speaking test prepared by taking into account the speaking activities available in participants' course book, semi-structured interview, researcher's diary, and minute papers. The questionnaire consisting of 44 speaking strategies were reviewed and adapted from Oxford's (1990) "*Strategy Inventory for language learning*

(SILL)", and "Inventory of Strategic Language Devices with Descriptions / Definitions, Examples" based on Dörnyei and Scott's taxonomy (1995a, 1995b). The speaking strategies questionnaire was implemented both at the beginning and end of the study, and both in experimental and control group. At the outset of the study, a pre-speaking test was done in order for finding out whether or not there existed a significant difference regarding speaking proficiency between two groups. At the end of the training, lasting four months, post speaking test was conducted with the intention of determining any variation in the oral production of the participants. Pre and post speaking tests were assessed by means of using an analytic rubric.

Qualitative data which were collected by researcher's diary, minute papers, and pre and post semi-structured interviews played a central role so as to advocate the findings attained from the speaking strategies questionnaire and pre and post speaking tests. The researcher kept a diary in which she reported on the reaction and performance of the students during strategy training and students' implementation of the strategies in the speaking activities existing in the course book. Keeping a diary enabled the researcher to track strategy use over time, and thereby, helped to understand how the strategies were employed by the participants. Semi-structured interviews about speaking strategies were conducted before and after the treatment with the experimental group. The basic questions in the interviews were what the participants felt about the instructions, the effect of strategy training on the improvement of their speaking skill, and the problems causing their low speaking proficiency. As Oxford (1990) states "semi-structured interviews are very useful for gathering information on your students' strategy usage". The experimental group was assigned to write minute papers in the last five minutes of each strategy training. The aim was:

- 1- to promote students to reflect on strategy training and provide the researcher with useful feedback (Cross & Angelo, 1988),
- 2- to collect data about the attitudes of the participants towards the speaking strategies they were instructed on and experimented with during the implementation of speaking activities,
- 3- to find out what they considered about the usefulness of those speaking strategies, and the explicit instruction given by the researcher.

Procedure

The CALLA (The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) instructional design, comprised of five phases - preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, expansion (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999) - was employed in due course of strategy training.

The *preparation stage* occupies a fundamental place in providing a learner-centered classroom, which is the heart of strategy training. In order to gain the above mentioned end, the questionnaire for determining short and long term goals, speaking strategies questionnaire and semi-structured interview were employed. Pre-speaking strategies questionnaire was administered so as to figure out the existing awareness of the participants, if any, on the speaking strategies as heightened awareness of the learners on the influence of speaking strategies is a requisite for establishing learner-centered classroom environment. Pre semi-structured interview made it possible to gather information about the participants' existing knowledge of the impact of speaking strategies, their approach towards behaving strategically so as to attain better oral production. Moreover, pre-speaking test displayed the speaking proficiency of the participants and revealed the extent of the strategy employment by the participants. As

teaching a specific speaking strategy, the researchers initiated a short question- answer session during which their ultimate goal was to activate participants' background knowledge relevant to the strategy. For instance, prior to the teaching of the speaking strategy "code-switching" the participants were asked: "Do you use a Turkish word instead of an English one you cannot remember?"

In the *presentation phase*, speaking strategies were explicitly modeled, explained and named. According to the content of the speaking activities in the participants' regular course book, the speaking strategies were chosen and they were modeled to the participants explicitly. The speaking strategies appropriate for successful implementation of the speaking activities were modeled by the researchers. For instance, using gestures whilst oral production when a word cannot be recalled was taught to the students, since using gestures is a strategy which can be addressed to as an invaluable means at times of having difficulties in remembering proper words.

In the *practice phase*, the experimental group students practiced the strategies that were explicitly named and modeled by the researchers. The participants were directed to utilize the chosen strategies in the speaking tasks which could be handled much better by employing predetermined strategies.

In the *evaluation phase*, participants in the experimental group evaluated the new speaking strategies they dealt with and learned during the course. Evaluation was largely done by the students, yet from time to time it was accompanied by the evaluation of the researchers. The participants wrote minute papers at the end of the training embedded in their regular program. They jotted down the new strategies they learned, and what they thought about the effectiveness of the learned strategies. As well as minute papers, the diary kept by the researcher provided her observation of the participants during strategy training, their reactions, feelings, and contribution to the speaking tasks by utilizing newly learned speaking strategies.

Chamot et al. (1999) insist that critical effective strategy learning requires the capability of transferring a strategy from a familiar context to an unfamiliar one. Thus, in the *expansion phase*, students should be able to decide what strategy they need to use when they come across with a problem. Thus, the researcher traced the employment of the speaking strategies by the participants during the speaking tasks throughout three months following the completion of the training. They were motivated and supported to continue making use of speaking strategies to perform better in the speaking tasks and to accomplish higher levels of speaking proficiency.

Data Analysis

The data obtained through pre and post speaking strategies questionnaires and pre-post speaking tests which were administered both in experimental and control groups were analyzed by SPSS statistics (independent and paired sample t-test). The administration of the post-speaking test was video recorded to gather more information about the differences between control and experimental group students as regards to the usage of speaking strategies in order to facilitate speaking regardless of the deficiencies in the linguistic knowledge or the impact of affective filter. The minute papers collected at the end of each lesson following the application of the strategy training were examined to gather more comprehensive insights into the speaking strategies used during speaking activities and what the participants thought about their effectiveness.

Semi-structured interview was a means of going over the responses of the experimental group participants received during the interview. The information elicited from the semi-structured interview was an essential medium for qualitative data collection procedure. The answers of the experimental group participants were revised after the interview, and their relevant responses to the topic of this study were selected to be placed in suitable parts.

Findings

The data collected by pre- and post-speaking strategies questionnaire paved the way to develop a sense about the participants' awareness and use of strategies, and the probable changes that might take place in the application of speaking strategies following the training. Table 1. displays pre and post speaking strategies results of the experimental group.

No	Item	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire		P
		Mean	St. Deviation	Mean	St. Deviation	
1	The relationship between the existing knowledge and the new things learnt	2,35	,949	3,76	,683	,000
2	Using new words in sentences	1,70	,618	3,32	,818	,000
3	Connecting the sound and image	2,32	,852	2,30	,661	,881
4	Using rhymes	1,00	,000	3,19	,811	,000
5	Reviewing lessons often	2,24	,955	3,73	,652	,000
6	Saying new words several times	1,51	,692	3,46	,605	,000
7	Practicing the sounds	2,14	,751	3,59	,798	,000
8	Using words in different ways	1,19	,518	2,68	,747	,000
9	Starting conversations in English	2,00	,782	2,92	,682	,000
10	Trying to talk like a native speaker	2,51	1,017	2,54	,869	,875
11	Watching TV programs and films in English	1,41	,725	2,08	,682	,000
12	Similar words in the native and target language	3,35	,789	3,78	,534	,003
13	Trying to find patterns	2,49	,768	3,38	,893	,000
14	Finding the meanings of the words by dividing them	2,22	,787	3,30	,812	,000
15	Not translating word-for-word	2,30	,845	3,24	,683	,000
16	Making guesses	2,97	,897	3,11	,699	,453
17	Describing something when a word cannot be remembered	1,43	,899	2,76	,895	,000
18	Using gestures	1,86	1,032	2,49	,768	,002
19	Coining words	1,57	,899	2,00	,972	,044
20	Switching to mother tongue	1,05	1,225	3,68	,669	,000
21	Guessing the following words	1,81	,739	3,05	,743	,000
22	Using synonyms	1,89	,966	2,73	,838	,000

23	Finding ways to use English	2,68	,818	3,38	,828	,001
24	Topic avoidance	2,51	,961	3,27	,804	,000
25	Selecting topic	2,81	,776	3,51	,804	,000
26	Noticing mistakes to be better	2,84	,764	3,46	,730	,001
27	Paying attention when someone is speaking English	3,19	,739	3,62	,639	,008
28	Finding out how to better learners of English	2,65	1,086	3,35	,789	,005
29	Looking for people to speak English	1,41	,644	2,59	,762	,000
30	Clear goals to improve English	2,89	1,048	3,54	,650	,001
31	Thinking about progress	2,49	,932	3,62	,639	,000
32	Relaxing to speak English	1,84	,898	2,95	,705	,000
33	Encouraging themselves to speak English	2,00	1,000	2,65	,824	,009
34	Giving reward when s/he does well	1,30	,571	3,27	,932	,000
35	Noticing the tension when speaking English	1,95	,848	3,57	,647	,000
36	Writing down feelings in minute papers	1,14	,585	3,84	,602	,000
37	Talking to someone about their language learning journey	2,62	1,210	3,32	,709	,002
38	Asking the other person to slow down	2,16	1,118	3,43	,765	,000
39	Asking for correction while talking	1,35	,716	3,89	,393	,000
40	Practicing English with others	1,59	,762	3,24	,683	,000
41	Asking for help	2,24	,925	2,81	,811	,004
42	Asking questions in English	1,22	,584	2,86	,673	,000
43	Learning the culture of English speakers	1,08	,277	1,86	,536	,000
44	Asking for verification	1,78	,976	3,68	,626	,000

Table 1. Pre and post speaking strategies questionnaire results of the experimental group

Table 1. indicates that with the aid of the strategies-based instruction, in the post speaking strategies questionnaire an increase in the application of the majority of the speaking strategies is observed, which is supported by qualitative data.

One of the students in one of his minute papers wrote down that when he could not understand his teacher (one of the researchers) in the lessons, he started to ask her to slow down. Another student noted that he preferred to switch to his mother tongue when he could not remember the proper word or words while speaking, and this strategy helped him keep conversations going. Another participant in her minute paper jotted down: "I believe in myself and I will speak better.", which is in line with the affective strategy *encouraging themselves to speak*. *Giving reward when s/he does well* is among the affective strategies and as can be understood from Table 1 the mean value of this strategy demonstrated an increase in comparison to its mean value in the pre questionnaire. One of the students in her minute paper noted "I will go shopping today, because I spoke very well in the lesson."

Using gestures is a very effective means of going on conversation regardless of the obstacles one may come across when speaking. As Oxford (1990, p. 95) states "in this strategy, the learner uses physical motion, such as mime and gesture, in place of an expression during a conversation to indicate the meaning". Subsequent to the treatment, a statistically significant difference came into existence ($p = .002$) as can be seen from Table 1. In the minute papers, nearly all of the participants stated that they used this strategy to overcome

the knowledge gaps in the target language. In the pre semi-structured interview, some of the participants said that they made use of the gestures as a means of conveying the desired meaning, but in the post semi-structured interview the number of the participants employing the strategy of *using gestures* increased.

During the pre-semi-structured interview it was understood that the majority of the students were not aware of the impact of speaking strategies; nonetheless, in pursuit of the strategy training post semi structured interview put forward that almost all the experimental group participants began to employ speaking strategies; for example, the last metacognitive strategy *thinking about progress* shows a significant difference with .000 P value in Table 1. In the post semi-structured interview, one of the questions was about their improvement since the start of the semester; and the majority of the participants stressed that there was a substantial difference between their speaking proficiency level at the beginning of the term and after being exposed to training.

Researcher's diary provided precious data about the reactions of the participants toward learning speaking strategies and their application of the speaking strategies in the classroom. In addition, researcher's diary consisted of a considerable amount of information demonstrating positive reactions of the participants toward learning speaking strategies and their praiseworthy efforts to implement these speaking strategies in the speaking activities. On the purpose of deepening our understanding of the influence of strategy training Table 2 is given below including the numerical data obtained from the control group by pre and post speaking strategies questionnaire.

No	Item	Pre Questionnaire		Post Questionnaire		P
		Mean	Std	Mean	Std	
1	The relationship between the existing knowledge and the new things learnt	2,31	,963	2,37	1,003	,838
2	Using new words in sentences	1,83	,747	1,83	,618	1,000
3	Connecting the sound and image	1,49	,951	1,74	,919	,312
4	Using rhymes	1,14	,430	1,20	,473	,624
5	Reviewing lessons often	2,03	,857	1,57	,739	,016
6	Saying new words several times	1,60	,695	1,63	,843	,872
7	Practicing the sounds	2,11	,993	1,80	,797	,148
8	Using words in different ways	1,43	,778	1,37	,598	,729
9	Starting conversations in English	1,49	,818	1,09	,284	,011
10	Trying to talk like a native speaker	1,77	1,003	1,97	,985	,421
11	Watching Tv programs and films in English	1,89	,932	1,77	,910	,535
12	Similar words in the native and target language	2,37	,910	2,40	,881	,895
13	Trying to find patterns	2,11	,993	1,94	,765	,431
14	Finding the meanings of the words by dividing them	2,49	1,067	1,49	,818	,000
15	Not translating word-for-word	2,40	1,063	1,69	,963	,008
16	Making guesses	2,63	1,190	2,14	1,061	,098
17	Describing something when a word cannot be remembered	1,89	,900	2,23	1,140	,172
18	Using gestures	2,29	1,296	1,60	1,035	,015
19	Coining words	1,94	1,110	1,23	,731	,006
20	Switching to mother tongue	1,37	,690	2,83	1,014	,000
21	Guessing the following words	1,66	,639	1,43	,698	,174
22	Using synonyms	1,91	,951	1,86	,944	,818
23	Finding ways to use English	2,06	1,136	1,69	,832	,167
24	Topic avoidance	2,69	1,183	3,23	1,087	,105
25	Selecting topic	2,31	1,051	2,69	,963	,141
26	Noticing mistakes to be better	2,51	1,095	2,37	,910	,537
27	Paying attention when someone is speaking English	2,37	1,060	2,83	1,098	,122
28	Finding out how to better learners of English	2,60	,976	2,49	1,040	,673
29	Looking for people to speak English	2,06	1,110	1,86	,944	,433
30	Clear goals to improve English	2,80	,964	3,17	,923	,102
31	Thinking about progress	2,83	,954	2,89	,832	,812
32	Relaxing to speak English	2,71	1,126	2,09	,981	,032
33	Encouraging themselves to speak English	2,31	,993	2,11	,900	,456
34	Giving reward when s/he does well	2,14	1,004	1,43	,850	,004
35	Noticing the tension when speaking English	2,17	,785	2,37	,973	,344
36	Writing down feelings in minute papers	1,14	,550	1,09	,507	,661
37	Talking to someone about their language learning journey	2,43	1,313	3,29	,957	,010
38	Asking the other person to slow down	2,51	1,095	2,17	1,150	,292
39	Asking for correction while talking	2,34	1,083	1,63	,942	,018
40	Practicing English with others	1,74	,852	1,46	,611	,152
41	Asking for help	2,80	1,052	2,91	1,222	,676
42	Asking questions in English	1,91	,981	1,31	,758	,004
43	Learning the culture of English speakers	1,14	,355	1,26	,701	,353
44	Asking for verification	2,69	1,207	2,34	1,162	,276

It is clear in Table 2 that a significant difference did not occur in the use of the majority of speaking strategies between pre and post questionnaires, which might be illuminated by drawing attention to the control group's not being exposed to strategy training.

The results of the pre-speaking test, displayed in Table 3, were utilized to shed light on the equivalence concerning the speaking proficiency levels of the participants both in the experimental and control groups.

Group	N	Mean	S.D	Minimum	Maximum	P
Experimental	37	74,59	18,611	50	100	.931
Control	35	68,14	19,670	35	100	

Table 3. Pre-speaking test results of the experimental and control group

The interpretation of Table 3. indicates that there was not a significant difference between the two groups before the launch of the study. .931 P value ($.931 > .005$) also supports the fact that a difference that could signal the significant speaking proficiency difference between the two groups was not observed at the beginning of the study. Even though there is a slight difference in the mean values of the two groups, it is not at a level to signify the inequality.

In pursuit of the implementation of training, to detect the speaking proficiency levels of the groups, a post-speaking test, the results of which are given in Table 4 below, was carried out.

Group	N	Mean	S.D	Minimum	Maximum	P
Experimental	37	83,65	14,844	50	100	.000
Control	35	62,71	14,519	35	85	

Table 4. Post-speaking test results of experimental and control group

Table 4. shows that the mean value of the experimental group was 83.65 at the end of the study, while it was 62.71 in the control group. Besides the mean values, the probability value, .000, was an indication of the significant difference with regard to speaking proficiency between two groups that occurred after training.

The data gathered from post semi-structured interview advocated the data obtained from the post speaking test. The majority of the participants in the experimental group stated that they were capable of speaking better in the post speaking test due to the speaking strategies. The performance of the students in the pre and post speaking tests were video recorded; thereby, investigating the applications of the speaking strategies by the participants was available after the tests. The video revealed the fact that the experimental group was utilizing their gestures so as to support their intended message in order to compensate for the deficiencies in their linguistic knowledge.

Discussion and Conclusion

Improving speaking skill, which has not received enough attention in Turkey, is the major concern of this study. Though the students have had approximately ten-year- English language education once they commence their academic education at universities in Turkey, they are incapable of expressing themselves competently through oral production. This study was carried out to seek for the impact of strategies-based instruction on improving speaking skills of adult EFL learners. Integrating speaking strategies into the regular flow of the courses by teachers could create the atmosphere for stimulating less proficient language learners to struggle more with the intention of developing their speaking skills. Nevertheless, Rees-Miller (1993) emphasizes the requirement for empirical evidence illuminating the propounded relationship between strategy use and language proficiency. This study, with the data collected by quantitative and qualitative research methods, yielded that conscious use of speaking strategies is a means of improving speaking skill.

A considerable amount of research reveals that LLSs are the key factors contributing to the emergence of self-directed learners, which is an anticipated accomplishment in education world (Bedir, 1998; Brown, 1994; Oxford, 1996; Skehan, 1998; Wenden, 1991; Yang, 1998). Zimmerman (1989) argues that "students can be described as self regulated to the degree that they are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process" (p. 4). Explicit teaching of speaking strategies and participants' own attempts to experiment with the presented and modelled strategies led to increased self regulation among the participants. This was manifested by the three-month-observation carried out in pursuit of training with the intent of figuring out the extent the participants continued using speaking strategies without any guidance from their teachers to employ appropriate strategies.

In Turkey, there is a huge burden on the shoulders of language learners resulting from their prejudice about the difficulty in speaking skill improvement. Generally, they do not believe in themselves, and do not think they will be able to express themselves through speaking in English one day. Besides the demotivation among adult EFL learners, some English Teachers do not place the necessary importance on the improvement of the speaking competence as they are not aware of the facilitating and positive influence of strategy training on speaking proficiency or even if they do possess the knowledge of speaking strategies, they may not demonstrate these strategies to students and create opportunities for them to use speaking strategies in order for coping with any problem during speaking.

Considering the findings attained from this study, in service trainings for English language teachers about speaking strategies and the methods to teach them can be organized, which might result in prevailed implementation of speaking strategies in classroom settings by integrating them in students' regular program.

References

- Bedir, H. (2013). The perceptions of ELT prospective teachers on CLIL. Paper Presented at CLIL 2013 Conference on Modernizing Educational Perspectives in Content and Language Integrated Learning. Ustron. Poland.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Teaching by Principles*. New York: Longman.
- Burns, A., & Joyce, H. (1997). *Focus on speaking*. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Chamot, A. U. (1993). Student responses to learning strategy instruction in the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 26, 308-321.
- Chamot, A. U., Barnhardt, S., El-Dinary, P. B., Robbins, J. (1999). *The Learning Strategies*. New York: Longman.
- Cohen, A. (1990). *Language learning: Insights for learners, instructors, and researchers*. New York: Newbury House.
- Cohen, A. D., Weaver, S., & Li, T-Y. (1996). The impact of strategies-based instruction on speaking a foreign language. In A. D. Cohen, *Strategies in learning and using a second language* (107-156). London: Longman.
- Cohen, A.D., & Weaver, S. (2005). *Styles and strategies based instruction: A teacher's Guide*. University of Minnesota. Carla Working Paper Series.
- Cross, K. P., & Angelo, T. A. (1988). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for faculty*. Ann Arbor, MI: National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and Learning.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the Language Learner*. New YORK: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dadour, S., & Robbins, J. (1996). University-level studies using strategy instruction to improve speaking ability in Egypt and Japan. In R.L. Oxford (Ed.), *Language Learning Motivation: Pathways to the new century* (pp. 157-166). Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Scott, M.L. (1995a). Communication strategies: What are they and what are they not?. Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Association for applied linguistics (AAAL), Long Beach, CA.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Scott, M.L. (1995b). Communication strategies: An empirical analysis with retrospection. In J. S. Turley & K. Lusby (Eds.) (pp. 155-168). Provo, Ut: Brigham Young University.
- Egan, K. (1999). Speaking. A critical skill and a challenge. *Calico Journal*. 16 No: 3, 277-293.

- Huang, L. S. (2006). Heightening advanced adult second-language learners' awareness of strategy use in speaking: A little can go a long way. (Eric Research Report No. 59). Retrieved November 25, 2013, from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search>.
- Larenas, C. D. (2011). Exploring Knowledge of English Speaking Strategies in 8th and 12th graders, *Facultad de Ciencias Humanas*, 13 (2), 85-98.
- Naiman N., Fröhlich, M., Stern, H., & Todesco, A. (1978). *The good language learner*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Nunan, D. (1996). The effect of strategy training on student motivation, strategy knowledge, perceived utility and development. Unpublished manuscript. Hong Kong: The English Center, University of Hong Kong.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House/Harper Collins.
- Phaiboonnugulkij, M., & Prapphal, K. (2013). Online speaking strategy assessment for improving speaking ability in the area of language for specific purposes: The case of tourism, *English Language Teaching*, 6(9), 19-29.
- Rees-Miller, J. (1993). A critical appraisal of learner training: Theoretical bases and teaching implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(4), 679-689.
- Rubin, J. (1975). What the "good language learner" can teach us. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9, 41-51.
- Rubin, J., & Thompson, I. (1982). *How to be a more successful language learner*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Sanaoui, R. (1995). Adult learners' approaches to learning vocabulary in second languages. *Modern Language Journal*, 79, 15-28.
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *IRAL*. 10, 209-231.
- Sioson, I. C. (2011). Language learning strategies, beliefs, anxiety in academic speaking task. *Phillippine ESL Journal*, 7, 3-27.
- Stern, H. H. (1975). What can we learn from the good language learner?. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 34, 304-318.
- Weinstein, C. E., & Mayer, R. E. (1983). The Teaching of learning strategies. *Innovation Abstracts*. V No.32. Macmillan: New York.
- Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner Strategies for Learner Autonomy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Wenden, A., & Rubin, J. (1987). *Learner strategies in language learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.