**In the Name of God**

 

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 **Faculty of Foreign Languages**

 **English Department**

 **M.A Thesis**

**Scaffolding via a Social Network and Teenage EFL Learner’s Oral Reproduction of Short Stories; Speaking Fluency and Accuracy in Focus**

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**Abstract**

 The present study set out to investigate the effect of scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network on teenage EFL learners’ speaking fluency and accuracy. Also, the students’ attitudes towards using a social network in language learning contexts were to be investigated. To do so, a quantitative study was conducted with a sample of 60 pre-intermediate teenage Iranian EFL learners who were selected among 100 teenage students from a language institute based on their performance on an Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The participants were divided into two groups: an experimental group, receiving scaffolding through the medium of WhatsApp, and a control group, who received scaffolding through traditional classroom procedure. In both groups, the students’ speaking fluency and accuracy were pre and post-tested. Based on the statistical results of the Independent-Samples t-tests, scaffolding of oral summarization of English short stories via WhatsApp application was proved to be significantly useful in enhancing speaking fluency and accuracy of EFL learners. Further, the questionnaire data showed a positive relationship between the participants’ attitudes and using social networks in language learning contexts.

**Keywords:** Accuracy; fluency; scaffolding; Sociocultural Theory of Mind; technology-mediated scaffolding.

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 **List of Abbreviations**

**OPT** Oxford Placement Test

**SCT** Sociocultural Theory

**ZPD** Zone of Proximal Development

**Chapter One**

**Introduction**

 **1.1. Background to the Study**

 The important goal of oral communication is mastering speaking fluency and accuracy. From the diverse body of research (e.g., Bygate 1999; Skehan & Foster 1999; Yuan & Ellis 2003; Collentine 2004; Kuiken & Vedder 2007;), fluency and accuracy emerge as dependent variables which can be separately measured and may be variably manifested under varying conditions of L2 use. Therefore, the success of the teaching-learning process may depend on teacher’s creativity in developing a teaching method to create a good atmosphere in teaching which allows students to improve their speaking ability. Accordingly, it is believed that scaffolding is a technique which improves speaking skill. Further, technology plays an important role in learning process. Moreover, engaging students to speak the language during reading activities may improve their speaking ability. All in all, it seems that to improve speaking fluency and accuracy different strategies should be integrated.

 Scaffolding is a technique which can be used in teaching learning process to solve learners’ problems. According to Fitzgerald and Graves

(2005), “Scaffolding is a temporary and supportive structure that helps a student or group of students accomplish a task they could not accomplish or accomplish as well without the scaffold” (p. 6). In a scaffolded learning environment, the teacher acts as a facilitator of knowledge rather than the content expert. Thus, the term scaffolding is used to describe certain kinds of support which students receive from experts, and teachers as they develop new skills.

 To support scaffolding, technology can play a significant role. It can be assumed that technology can hasten the beginning of the learning process by enabling more sophisticated levels of performance through instrument assistance. Moreover, considering the multiple levels of the students’ understanding, by the use of technology tool design the process of scaffolding students toward their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) would be enhanced (Puntambekar and Huebscher, 2005).

 Further, giving the students opportunities to practice target language in meaningful context and situation is quite necessary. Accordingly, story retelling is an activity which can help the students learn a language in the same way as their mother tongue. Nevertheless, it seems that oral summarization of interesting and meaningful context incorporated in scaffolding strategy can not only help language learners improve their knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and pronunciation, but also it might enhance students’ fluency in speaking.

 As it can be seen, considering the importance of speaking fluency and accuracy, it is believed that scaffolding can promote students’ speaking ability. To this end, this study was designed to investigate the effect of scaffolding via a social network and oral reproduction of English short stories.

 **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

 How to improve students’ oral proficiency has been considered as a key question to address in the field. Accordingly, considering the previous research (e.g. Rahimi & Ghanbari 2011; Khaliliaqdam 2014; Izanlu & Feyli 2015; Talebinejad & Akhgar 2015) One of the ways to improve speaking fluency and accuracy has been using scaffolding strategy. Moreover, it has been noticed that students have positive attitudes towards using technology in learning process and it also increases students’ engagement in tasks and motivation which results in better fluency and accuracy. Furthermore, it is believed that retelling the stories orally can affect speaking ability. All in all, previous studies have mentioned that scaffolding, technology, and oral summarization of stories improve oral fluency and accuracy.

 However, although many studies have administrated to investigate the effects of scaffolding strategy, technology, and oral summary on EFL learners’ speaking ability, the effect of blending scaffolding, technology, and oral reproduction of short stories on speaking fluency and accuracy in the target population of this research has not been investigated. Further, scaffolding of oral summarization of short stories is considered to be one-to-one tutoring by more competent others. Therefore, considering the limited time of classes, and the multiple levels of the students’ ZPDs and understanding, providing a scaffolded instruction to a class with a large number of students in one session is not effective. As a result, students might not have sufficient time to be scaffolded well or even may not have the opportunity to be scaffolded which may not lead to proficiency.

 In response to this problem, this study proposes to investigate the effect of blending scaffolding, WhatsApp mobile application as one of the technological tools, and oral retelling the stories together on teenage EFL

learners’ speaking fluency and accuracy because of paucity of research in this domain. More to the point, it seems much research is needed to investigate the students’ attitudes towards using this social networking site on their language learning contexts.

**1.3. Purpose of the Study**

 The purpose of this study is twofold. First, the study sought to investigate the effectiveness of scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories via a social network on students’ speaking fluency and accuracy. Second, students’ attitudes towards using a social network in language learning contexts were to be investigated.

**1.4. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study was designed to seek answers to the following questions and hypotheses:

1. Does scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network have any significant effect on pre-intermediate teenage EFL learners’ speaking fluency?

2. Does scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network have any significant effect on pre-intermediate teenage EFL learners’ speaking accuracy?

3. What are the students’ attitudes towards using a social network in Iranian language learning contexts to improve speaking ability?

H1: Scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories via a social network has no effect on students’ speaking fluency.

H2: Scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories via a social network has no effect on students’ speaking accuracy.

**1.5. Significance of the Study**

 Considering the importance of speaking ability in academic contexts, it is necessary for teachers to find how students can be helped to deal with academic speaking and how to become proficient speakers. Many studies have been conducted focusing on the capabilities of technology-mediated scaffolding which allows students to use language properly. Given that so far, such an attitude has not been investigated in the target population of this research, the results can be used to promote the development of English language learning and teaching behavior adopted by EFL teachers and students, meaning that this study will be beneficial to EFL teachers and students as it will expectedly heighten the awareness of them on the kind of their classroom behavior.

**1.6. Definition of the Key Terms**

 **Accuracy:** The number of ungrammatical clauses divided by the total number of clauses multiply 100.

 **Fluency**: The number of correct clauses divided by the total number of seconds in 1 minute (60 seconds) of speech.

 **Scaffolding:** Providing assistance to the students in a collaborative problem-solving activity which can improve learning.

 **Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT):** States that learning is a social process in which interaction and collaboration with others leads to language learning.

 **Technology-mediated scaffolding:** Integrating scaffolding strategy with technology tools which leads to language learning.

 **1.7. Summary**

This chapter was an introduction to the current study. It presented the background to the study, research questions and hypotheses, and significant of the study. The next chapter reviews the literature related to the study.

**Chapter Two**

**Review of the Literature**

**2.1. Overview**

 This chapter will review literature on the following issues: nature and the aspects of the speaking skill will be made clear. Sociocultural Theory will be defined. The notion of scaffolding and its definitions, steps, and types of it will be discussed in details. Moreover, the role of technology in scaffolding will be defined. Further, the effect that oral reproduction of short stories has on improving speaking ability is made clearer. Also, the concept of attitude will be briefly explained. Finally, this chapter will introduce some empirical research done on the influence of scaffolding, technology, and story retelling on speaking ability improvement with the results they obtained and will highlight the gap that may exist between the present study and the previous ones.

 **2.2. The Nature of Speaking Skill**

 Mastering the speaking ability has long been considered as an important part of language learning. Many researchers and experts believe that major aims for learning English are learning to speak and communicate (e.g., Richards & Renandya 2002; Nunan 2003). Richards (2008) comments that

since speaking is a medium to realize the proficiency in other language skills and sub-skills, it is a primary skill which is used to evaluate the efficacy of a course. Speaking is defined as a process in which meaning is made and conveyed verbally and non-verbally through the use of symbols. Moreover, Florez (1999) stated that speaking is “An interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information” (p.1).

 The fact that mastery of speaking takes priority over the other skills, developing students’ speaking ability has long been a formidable issue. Chastain (1988) refers to speaking as a main element in developing each language skill. Also, he states that it is a skill which transfers cultural knowledge. In fact, many students are looking forward to communicating verbally with others and consider oral proficiency more important than reading or writing. Nevertheless, the students believe that speaking skill is not a simple skill as it combines different kinds of knowledge of the target language. According to Mackey (1978) “Speaking is the most complex of linguistics skill since it involves thinking of what is to be said while saying what has been thought” (p. 263).

 Since speaking is a basic oral communication among people in society, being communicatively competent is necessary for the speakers. According to Bachman (1990) communicative competence has two main components, namely: organizational and pragmatic. Organizational competence is divided in to grammatical (e.g., vocabulary, morphology, syntax) and textual competence (e.g., discourse genres). Illocutionary competence (e.g., requests, promises, offers) and sociolinguistic competence (e.g., sensitivity to language register, dialect) are considered subcomponents of Pragmatic competence. Nevertheless, good speakers choose appropriate form, put them in the correct order, try to have native like pronunciation, and even

make and share right meaning. Therefore, speaking skill is a technical competence which demands fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

**2.3. Two Factors of Speaking Skill**

According to BBC British council accuracy and fluency are two factors that can determine the success of English language learners. They are the main characteristics of communicative approach and they seem complementary in accomplishing a given task. As Canale (1983, p.5) notes while interacting in actual communication, one should have both the knowledge and skill in using this knowledge. Then, as the emphasis of Communicative language teaching (CLT) is on the communicative process, EFL learners should develop oral abilities in different context to communicate fluently and simultaneously know the language system to be accurate in speaking tasks.

**2.3.1. Fluency**

 Fluency is an important part of speaking and it is the aim of many language learners. The definition of the term fluency can be very complex. Hughes (2002) defines fluency “As the ability to express oneself intelligibly, reasonably, accurately, and without too much hesitation, otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest” (p.113). Further, as Crystal (1987, p.421) interprets fluency as the “Smooth, rapid, effortless use of language,” it can be said that one is fluent when he/she is able to speak or write quickly or easily in a given language. In addition, Lennon (2000) views it as “The rapid, smooth, accurate, lucid, and efficient translation of thought or communicative intention into language” (p. 26).

 On the other hand, as Thornbury (2005) states despite the fact that fluency is the ability to speak fast and in a rapid speech, pausing is another important factor which makes the interlocutors grasp what one said. Though, Lennon’s (1990) interpretation of this construct is “To produce speech at the tempo of native speakers, unimpeded by silent pauses and hesitations, filled pauses (‘ers’ and ‘erms’), self-corrections, repetitions, false starts” (p. 390). In the same line of thought, Ellis (2003) provides that “Fluency is the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulation” (p.342). Further, as pointed by Richards et al (1992) fluency is “The features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions” (204).

 Since achieving fluency has long been an undeniable issue for many language learners, the teachers should try to provide students with tasks in which the students use their personal language freely to express their own ideas. Hedge (2000) states that “The term fluency relates to the production and it is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation” (p.54). Therefore, to help the students to achieve oral fluency, the teachers are responsible to rehearse learners to speak in a coherent manner. It can be done by paying more attention to the meaning and context than to the form.

**2.3.2. Accuracy**

In second and foreign language teaching, accuracy refers to the correct use of language in which the speaker produces utterances that are free from phonological, syntactic, and semantic or discourse errors. According to Harmer (2001, p. 104) being accurate means to be able to use vocabulary,

grammar, and pronunciation correctly which are three criteria that most teachers take into account while assessing the learners’ command of the linguistic systems. Also, Skehan and Foster (1999) defined accuracy as “The ability to avoid error in performance, possibly reflecting higher levels of control in the language, as well as a conservative orientation, that is, avoidance of challenging structures that might provoke error” (p. 96). Further, Thornbury (2000) interpreted accuracy as “the extent to which the learner’s output matches some external standard– traditionally the output of an idealized native speaker” (p. 3). Moreover, according to Wolfe-Quintero et. al. (1998) the term referred to “The ability to be free from errors while using language to communicate in either writing or speech” (p. 33).

 Finally, it is worth mentioning that although being able to communicate in the target language in a fluent way can be reasonably understood by other speakers since the comprehension of the message is not obstructed, it does not mean that one is free of errors in his/her communication. On the other hand, effective communication is not produced just because a speaker focuses on accuracy.

**2.4. Sociocultural Theory**

 In the early twentieth century, Lev Vygotsky developed the Sociocultural Theory which refers to the role that culture, interaction, and collaboration have in quality of learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), “Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological), and then inside the child (intra-psychological)”. In other words, in can be said that Socio Cultural Theory is a theory of educational framework wherein child’s cognitive development is largely influenced by his surrounding culture.

 The position of social processes in sociocultural theory is considered as primary in the development of higher mental functions through which learning takes place and it should be focused. Accordingly, Cole (1996) illustrated this importance as in the following:

“Because what we call mind works through artifacts, it cannot be unconditionally bounded by the head or even by the body, but must be seen as distributed in the artifacts which are woven together and which weave together individual human

actions in concert with and as a part of the permeable, changing, events of life” (p. 136–137).

 Vygotsky highlights the fact that culture and participation in social interactions have a significant role in the development of thought, language, and higher-order thinking skills. As one interacts and participates in different social events and contexts such as school, family, workplace, and stuff like that, he/she can make use of cultural tools and language to mediate the relationship with the social–material world (Vygotsky, 1978). Moreover, learners acquire new strategies and knowledge of the world and culture as they cooperate in doing a broad range of activities. Therefore, according to Walqui (2006), “Education never takes place in a vacuum but is deeply embedded in a sociocultural milieu.”

 Studies conducted by a number of researchers in the filed suggest the fact that Vygotsky’ ideas are to a large extent applied in the discipline of education. According to Donato (2000) meaning is created through collaboration. His research on SCT represented language learning as a social process in which learning takes place through interaction with others. Further, Lantolf (2000) highlights the role of peer interaction which

contributes to the children’s cognitive development the same as their potential performance.

**2.5. Scaffolding**

 **2.5.1. The Definition of Scaffolding**

 The term scaffolding was first coined from the work of Bruner (1975). He used this term to describe young children’s oral language acquisition in which parents provide young children with instinctive structures to learn a language. He described mothers interacting with their infants as “Supporting the child in achieving an intended outcome, entering only to assist or reciprocate or scaffold the interaction” (p. 12). In addition, Palincsar (1998) describe scaffolding as “An instructional context that is at once supportive, flexible enough to accommodate individual differences, and designed to cede increasing responsibility to the learner” (p. 373). Thus, as it can be seen scaffolding would be a critical teaching instruction that facilitates students in learning.

 Scaffolding is a type of interaction that occurs in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978) by the use of scaffolding the distance between the actual developmental level and the potential development of a child through problem solving of adult or peer guidance can be decreased. This guidance or assistance is known as scaffolding. Although, the notion of scaffolding was never referred by Vygotsky in his writing, it can be recognized that there are some similarities between scaffolding and the concept of ZPD. Thus, considering the synergy that exist between the two concepts, Wood and Wood (1996) argued that there is a gap between what a child can do alone and what can be achieved with the guidance from a more capable peer, and the guidance needed to fill that gap is addressed scaffolding (p.5).

 Considering the work of Vygotsky, the idea of Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) about scaffolding is considered parallel. As they mentioned scaffolding is a “Process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts” (p. 90). In spite of this fact, by controlling those elements of the task which are beyond the students’ capacity, they can complete only those elements that are within their range of competence. As it can be seen, the collaborative effort of the teacher and the students in constructing knowledge is emphasized.

 The application of scaffolding approach in teaching is of great importance and considering the students’ needs and their current level of development it should be done systematically since it is closely related to learning environment and cooperative learning. So, teachers should teach the students the principles and rules which can be used to solve some problems, and engage them collaboratively in tasks that are difficult for them to accomplish on their own. As a result, the role of the teacher is no longer as a knowledge transmitter since it has been shifted to be a facilitator that guides the learning process. The instructor provides students with instructional support, and continually assist them to build their understanding of the content. The temporary scaffolding is removed gradually as the students internalize the content and assume full responsibility for controlling the process of a given task.

**2.5.2. Steps of Scaffolding**

 As Vygotsky stated there are four phases of scaffolding (Byrnes, 2001. P.37) namely: modeling, imitating, removing, and achieving.Modeling is the first phase of instructional scaffolding in which the teacherdemonstrates a new concept or approach to learning and students learn by observing.

Since this phase is along with verbal commentary, students will learn about the pronunciation, the grammar, and the vocabulary that are going to be used. Further, Hogan and Pressely (1997) mentioned that there are three types of modeling namely: think-aloud modeling, talk-aloud modeling, and performance modeling. In think-aloud modeling the instructor verbalizes his thoughts and strategies which is used to solve a particular problem. In talk-aloud modeling as the instructor describes his strategies verbally, he demonstrates the solution, too. Finally, in performance modeling the instructor demonstrates the task, but verbal explanation is not involved.

The second phase of scaffolding is considered imitating phase in which students imitate the skill that their teacher or peers have modeled. During this phase the teacher or peers offer the students assistance and feedback they need to accomplish a task. In this phase students will have sufficient rehearsal time to practice the grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Consequently, they learn how to speak correctly since they become aware of their mistakes.

 Removing is another phase of scaffolding. In this phase as the students’ proficiency improves and they begin to master new content, the teacher and peers gradually remove the scaffolding and offer less assistance and feedback.

 Achieving is the final phase of scaffolding in which students do not need their instructor and peers support. Moreover, in this stage the students’ intended proficiency is fulfilled and they can perform the new task without any help from others.

 Further, Van Lier (1996) proposes six steps of scaffolding. The first step is called the contextual support step. In this step the learner is provided with a setting in which he can commit errors as a usual learning process. The

continuity step is the second one in which since the aim is to balance the routine of the scaffolding procedure, a series of actions and interactions are shuttled. The next step is intersubjectivity. Belland (2017) defines it as “An understanding of what successful performance of the target task would look like that was shared between the scaffolder and the scaffoldee” (p. 18). In other words, in this stage students need to recognize an appropriate solution to problems. Then, in flow step the initiated interaction goes naturally with no pushing force. Contingency step that is knowing when and how scaffolding should be provided or should be removed, comes after that. According to Webster, Beveridge and Reed (1996) contingency is considered important since it enables the learners to take control of their learning. Finally, the responsibility is handed over from the teacher to the student which is the last stage. In fact, this is the stage in which the student can do the task alone.

**2.5.3. Types of Scaffolding**

 From sociocultural theory learning and teaching happens within the social and cultural context in which teaching-learning process is social and communicative rather than individual. Therefore, knowledge is constructed through social interactions. From the time that Vygotsky introduced ZPD, it has come to be one of the cardinal features in learning from a sociocultural perspective. Vygotsky indicates ZPD as “The discrepancy between a child’s actual mental age and the level he reaches in solving problems with assistance” (1986, p. 187). One of the main uses of ZPD is its application in scaffolding. Schumm (2006) defies scaffolding as “providing support for students in their learning, and then gradually diminishing the support as students become more independent” (p. 530). This metaphor is an umbrella term that has a lot of ramifications. There are two kinds of scaffolding, namely symmetrical and asymmetrical which seem to have significant place

in academic context (Baleghizadeh et al, 2010; Izanlu and Feyli, 2015; Roth and Radford, 2010).

 Symmetrical scaffolding emerges from Piagetian perspective which states that cognitive development occurs when individuals interact whit those who have contradictory thoughts and claims. Consequently, learners discover new knowledge through cooperation and interaction and it brings about conflicts that result in higher levels of reasoning. Although, Piaget believes that learning occurs faster in symmetrical scaffolding since the students interact with those who have the same level of knowledge, Farangi and Izanlu (2015) in their study indicated that collective scaffolding is built when at least one of the peers exceed a knowledge threshold. Furthermore, Nguyen (2013) argued that learners’ inspiration and self-confidence are enhanced in group tasks and assignments which lead to higher achievement.

 On the other hand, according to Vygotsky’ s perspective and his notion of ZPD, in asymmetrical scaffolding learners with different ZPDs interact together, but in fact there is always a learner who is more knowledgeable than others. According to ZPD there are two developmental level in learners’ minds, namely the actual developmental level and the level of potential development which are defined as the child’s ability to solve the problems lonely and without any assistance, and the ability to solve problems under adult guidance, respectively. Accordingly, asymmetrical scaffolding can be defined as an expert helping a learner in solving problems and his/her intercession in the promotion of a learner who tries to carry out a task which cannot be done without others’ assistance.

 Therefore, although both Piaget and Vygotsky believe in interaction with others which leads to development of mind and cognition, it seems that there is a considerable difference between their theories of interaction. As Granott

(1993) stated, according to Piaget cognitive reconstruction is prevented since the learners show compliance to adults’ authority. Moreover, he believes that in an asymmetrical relationship learners’ passivity will be prevalent and their initiative and questioning will be circumscribed (Piaget,1965). On the other hand, Vygotsky’s perspective highlights the importance of instruction and the role of more knowledgeable other in the cognitive development.

**2.6. Technology-mediated Scaffolding**

The advent of new technology has changed the way people learn. Nowadays, there are a number of social network applications and software such as WhatsApp which can be used to support learning and to enhance communication within educational environments. Accordingly, selecting an appropriate application is considered to be an important responsibility for the teachers which allow the students to have access to a wealth of resources and enable them to learn anywhere and anytime. But, according to Patel (2011) in order for any technological device to be effective, the teacher must have the knowledge and expertise to utilize, manage, and facilitate the language learning environment.

 Not only is instructional scaffolding occurred in traditional face-to-face settings, but also can be incorporated in technology-based learning as well (McLoughlin, 2004). According to Grabe and Grabe (2004) technology-mediated learning can be referred to an environment in which learners can learn whenever and wherever they want. Techers can integrate scaffolding techniques with and within technology applications and create an optimal language learning environment to direct students’ learning. According to Zyndey (2010), “Educators have become interested in scaffolding provided through computer-based tools because of the difficulty of trying to provide

individual assistance to each student in a large class”. Therefore, since there are students with multiple ZPDs and it is difficult to meet the needs of all students, the teacher can provide the students with adequate and appropriate structure and scaffolding through networked computers.

 Research regarding technology-mediated scaffolding and L2 learning shows that computer-based scaffolds significantly enhance the participants motivational level. Berenji and Saeidi (2017) argued that using a familiar, ubiquitous technology brings about academically motivated students and referred to motivation as the most critical concerns in how and why people learn. Therefore, it can be concluded that scaffolding the students through networked technology can be a potential method for enhancing intrinsic motivation among students since they have ample time to complete their assignments and do not feel intimidated.

**2.7. Oral Story Reproduction**

 Since the speech is regarded as the most basic means of human communication much of the discussion relating to proficiency-centered instruction has focused on the development of oral skills. Thus, identifying effective strategies for teaching speaking is quite necessary. Accordingly, retelling stories could be beneficial since it enables the teachers to retrieve and obtain information about students’ comprehension.

 The importance of reproduction of stories has been addressed since four decades ago. As Morrow (1989) states, “Retelling is reading or listening that learners remember from reading or listening and retell what they recognize either through orally or in writing” (p.40). Further, according to Slavin and Madden (1999) story retelling is summarizing the story by the students and sharing the main points of it with others. Moreover, Morrow (1996) refers to story reproduction as a post-reading activity in which

students recall what they have learned before. Johnson (1983) defined story retelling as “The most directly accessing in teaching and the reaction result of the reader from the text” (p. 54). Therefore, as it can be seen it seems that story reproduction can offer students opportunities to reconstruct the story.

 Story reproduction is an effective instructional strategy which can be used to enhance and evaluate students’ learning process. Considering the student-center approach as Anderson and Roit (1998) state story retelling can create an environment where students can be the center of learning and it is due to the fact that they demonstrate their comprehension and oral skills as they elaborate their ideas and thoughts simultaneously. Thus, since it has been identified that story reproduction can improve oral proficiency which is considered as a critical element in second language acquisition, implementing this strategy can be considered an effective pedagogical tool to facilitate ELL’s academic performance.

 Although the importance of story retelling has come to be known, it is suggested that scaffolding of story reproduction might be an effective strategy which may improve learners’ speaking ability. Moreover, implementing this strategy through the medium of a social network is believed to be an optimal way to improve oral ability.

**2.8. Attitude**

 Attitude can be considered as an important motivator of behavior that affects academic performance of learners. Different definitions have been provided for the concept of attitude according to each researcher's points of view. Mensah et al (2013) defined attitude as psychological orientations which are caused by one’s experiences and affect his point of view toward situations, objects, and people. Further, Marianne and Elaine (2005) mention that positive or negative views about a person, object, idea or

situation is referred as attitudes and can influence the way one responses to challenges. Therefore, attitude is one of the fundamental issues in social psychology and includes ones’ likes and dislikes, and preferences (Askari, 2014).

 In academic context attitude can be considered as an index of how one thinks and feels about studying. In other words, it determines the way people react in different situations. Since the students behave in a way that they think, believe, and feel, an unpleasant learning experience results in unfavorable attitude. Research (e.g., Bokhari, 1966; Hamachek, 1998) show that successful learners are those who adopt positive attitudes towards their studying. Therefore, negative attitudes bring about fiasco while positive attitudes will result in mental stability and make the ground for progress.

 Further, the nature of the attitude is contagious and can easily be transferred to the other. Some teachers may try to behave like those who maintain their positive attitudes in dealing with different students. Moreover, these successful teachers may either strengthen or demoralize other groups.

**2.9. Empirical Background of the Study**

 Learning to speak in a second language (L2) is often considered to be an important skill in language learning and many L2 classes devote much of their time to improve students’ oral proficiency. Learners’ speaking ability is achieved by employing certain kinds of leaning strategies. Scaffolding is one of the techniques that teachers can use to provide learning opportunities for meaningful learning. Teachers can use the scaffolding to make the context of learning more understandable to the learners and also, they can help students to do a task which they cannot do alone. Further, using new technology in language classes has determined changes in pedagogy and

may provide better results of teaching effectiveness compared to traditional teaching methods. Moreover, different research has emphasized the benefits of using oral summary of short stories which may help students connect sentences and provide coherent and meaningful speech.

 Scaffolding is a strategy which is used by teachers to enable students to transit from assisted to independent performance. According to Wood et al (1976), “Scaffolding enables a child or novice to solve a problem, to carry out a task or to achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts” (p. 90). Arfaei and Rahbar (2014) investigated the effectiveness of interactive strategies of scaffolding in speaking. The results of this study indicated that the use of scaffolding strategies in speaking, allow the students to comprehend more information. Moreover, the findings of the study could help EFL teachers believe more in providing situations in language classes which encourage using scaffolding. On the whole, it seemed reasonable to use this opportunity to have better language learners and language teachers.

 Mirahmadi and Alavi (2016) evaluated the role of the four scaffolding techniques known as Hard, Soft, Reciprocal (Traditional) and Technology-mediated (Virtual) in developing the oral communication ability. They concluded that the scaffolding treatments had a significant effect on the speaking ability of the learners. It was reported that students had a significant improvement in their fluency, grammar, lexicon, and pronunciation. Moreover, this study looked upon scaffolding as a teaching strategy which provides individualized support based on the learner’s ZPD.

 Ghasedi et al. (2018) tried to find out whether symmetrical and asymmetrical scaffolding boost speaking complexity, accuracy, and fluency among upper-intermediate EFL learners or not. The results of the study

showed that gathering works or exercises, symmetrically or asymmetrically, affects speaking subcomponents. Furthermore, the findings indicated that having more proficient speakers in groups help novice speakers to be aware of the differences that exist between their oral output and that of more capable peers. So, they try to resemble more proficient speakers and produce more accurate utterances.

 Within the context of oral proficiency improvement, the role of new technology might not become superfluous. It is believed that technology can improve teaching and learning and the quality and quantity of teaching and learning (Marcinkiewicz ,1994). Samadi et al. (2014) studied the impact of computer assisted language learning (CALL) technology on improving female students’ speaking ability. The results of this study indicated that this technology has positive effect on students’ performance in their speaking ability. Further, the participants of the study had positive attitude toward using CALL in their EFL courses.

 Berenji and Saeidi (2017) investigated the effect of technology-mediated instruction on cognitive scaffolding, academic performance and motivation. The results of their study indicated that technology-mediated learning brought about cognitive scaffolding and the students in the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of motivation and academic achievement. They found that that academic interactions in Telegram mediated pedagogy help the students not only draw their attention to the objects but also to attine optimal level learning. Moreover, the use of technology brought about academically motivated students. In addition, based on the results it was explored that there were significant differences in the academic performance of the students who accessed the technology mediated instruction compared to the students who were taught in traditional manner.

 As the importance of speaking mentioned above, the role of short stories in developing this skill cannot be ignored. Khatib and Nasrollahi (2012) Believe that, “Short story like other literary texts can raise cultural awareness, linguistic awareness, motivation, and many others” (pp. 240-246). Omidi and Mahdavi (2016) investigated the effect of short-story retelling on the Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners’ speaking skill. The findings of their study showed that using the short-story retelling technique improves learners’ vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation and grammar.

 Another study was done by Sepahvand (2014). The study tried to investigate the effect of the oral reproduction of short stories on speaking skill in Iranian high school students. The findings indicated that by using oral summary of short stories students’ speaking ability improved. Further, students’ motivation increased due to using stories rather than textbooks.

**2.10. Summary**

This chapter provided a review of the relevant literature on the importance of speaking skill and its two significant factors in oral communication were discussed in detail. Also, the concept of scaffolding was explained and its importance in language learning process was highlighted. Moreover, from a divers body of previous research, it was revealed that technology can significantly mediate scaffolding and plays an important role in improving speaking ability. Further, according to former studies oral reproduction of stories believed to be effective in improving speaking ability. However, one of the indiscernible areas of gap in the literature on speaking ability improvement is that although many scholars have identified the role of scaffolding, technology, and short stories in improving speaking ability, few have engaged themselves with scaffolding the short stories via the use of a social network to see its effects on speaking fluency and accuracy. Given

the fact that there is still lack of research regarding this issue, the present study aims to investigate using scaffolding strategy to scaffold the oral summaries of English short stories through the medium of a social network and its effect on improving fluency and accuracy of learners.

**Chapter Three**

**Methodology**

**3.1. Overview**

The present chapter explores the methodology applied in this study. In so doing, the design of the study (see 3.2) will be discussed, research questions (see 3.3) will be presented, and the participants will be introduced (see 3.4). Information is also provided on the material and instruments (see 3.5) used for collecting the data. Further, the procedure of data collection (see 3.6) and methods of data analysis (see3.7) will be discussed. Finally, a brief summary will close the chapter (see 3.8).

**3.2. Design**

 The design selected for this study was a quantitative method. The present study manipulated variables such as scaffolding of oral retelling English short stories via a social network and scaffolding traditionally as independent variables and their effects on fluency and accuracy of EFL learners’ speaking ability as dependent variables. Further, the effect of using a social network in language classes on students’ attitudes was also

investigated. Therefore, the third question of the study was addressed by embarking on a qualitative approach.

**3.3. Research Questions and Hypotheses**

 Although the research questions and hypotheses were presented in chapter one (see 1.3), they are restated here for the ease of the reader.

The present study addressed the following research questions and hypotheses:

1. Does scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network have any significant effect on pre-intermediate teenage EFL learners’ speaking fluency?
2. Does scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network have any significant effect on pre-intermediate teenage EFL learners’ speaking accuracy?
3. What are the students’ attitudes towards using a social network in Iranian language learning contexts?

The first and the second research question gave rise to the following research hypotheses, respectively (RH1 and RH2):

 **RH for question one:**

1. Scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories via a social network has no effect on students’ speaking fluency.

**RH for question two:**

1. Scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories via a social network has no effect on students’ speaking accuracy.

**3.4. Participants**

 Two groups of participants contributed to this study:

**3.4.1. Students**

 This study was conducted with a sample of 60 male and female pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners aged 13 to 17 among 100 students at an English institute who were selected based on purposive sampling procedure. The institute held English language classes at all levels from beginner to advance. In addition, all the participants were non-native speakers of English who were considered as pre-intermediate based on their performance on an Oxford Placement Test (OPT). They were also considered homogeneous in terms of speaking fluency and accuracy after taking a pretest. They were then divided into two groups, experimental and the control, each group 30 members.

 Table 3.1. Characteristics of students participated in the study

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  N | Age | Male | Female |
| Control groupExperimental group |  *30* 30 | 13 to 1613 to 17 | 1311 | 1719 |

 Other individuals who contributed to this study were as follows:

**3.4.2. Teachers**

 Two experienced teachers helped the researcher to treat, and collect necessary information about the progress of students during and after the participation in the research time. However, they were chosen based on judgment of researcher and two experts in the field. Also, they were briefed on the procedure and the actions that had to be taken.

**3.5. Instruments**

 The materials and the instruments used in this study were as follows:

**3.5.1. Oxford Placement Test (OPT)**

 The OPT enables the teacher to verify learners’ English level. This test manifests participants’ homogeneity and provides greater understanding of the level of the learners. OPT helps English teachers place students into the appropriate level for a language course. They can also use it as a quick measure of a student’s general language ability.

The test contained 60 questions where the participants had to choose the correct answer among the alternatives. The test was given to the participants before the pre-test. After conducting the test, the results were collected and the participants whose levels of proficiency were suitable for the purpose of the study were selected to take part in the study. The participants whose scores were between 20 and 30 were recognized as pre-intermediate learners and qualified to participate in the study.

**3.5.2. Pre-Post Tests**

The following part presents two other tests which were taken in this study:

**3.5.2.1. Pre-test**

 To evaluate the speaking fluency and accuracy of learners in both the control and experimental groups, a pre-test was conducted before the treatment. In so doing, the participants were asked to reproduce the third short story (see 3.5.3) orally. This story was chosen based on experts’ judge including the researcher and two experts in the field as neither too difficult nor too easy. The recorded spoken data of experimental and control group

was transcribed by the researcher for the analysis. Then, the participants’ speaking accuracy and fluency were calculated. Accordingly, their speaking fluency was assessed based the number of correct clauses divided by the total number of seconds in one minute of speech (60 seconds). Further, their speaking accuracy was assessed based on the number of ungrammatical clauses divided by the total number of clauses multiply 100.

**3.5.2.2. Post-test**

 At the end of the treatment, since the participants in the experimental and control groups were to improve their speaking ability, they were given a post-test which was at the same level as the pre-test (see 3.5.2.1). These tests were administrated to show how the control and experimental groups performed after the treatment was over. Therefore, the participant’s oral summaries were recorded, transcribed, and calculated as it was done for pre-test.

**3.5.3. WhatsApp Mobile Application**

 In this study WhatsApp mobile application was adopted as one of the research tools to help the researcher to conduct the study. As it was mentioned earlier (see 1.2) human beings have different ZPDs and should be approached differently. Therefore, the researcher used this social network application to treat each of the students fairly. On the other hand, considering the limited time of the classes (see 1.2) this application allowed the researcher and the students participate in the study without the limitations of physical location or time. Moreover, this application helped the researcher to precisely transcribe the students’ speech and evaluate the students’ speaking fluency and accuracy.

 **3.5.4. English Short Stories**

 Five short stories including The Friendly Ghost, The First Peacock, The Farmer and the Cats, The Lion and the Rabbit, and The Dog’s Bell which were sorted from the shortest and the easiest to the longest and the most difficult ones were given to the students of two groups of the study. The stories were extracted from 4000 essential English words 1(Nation, 2009) among thirty stories of the book based on the expert judges. Prior to the study, the stories were submitted to three experts in the field to verify the degree of difficulty, length, and appropriateness of the stories to the students’ level of language proficiency.

**3.5.5. Questionnaire**

 As reported in chapter two (see 2.8) using technology in language classes affects students’ attitudes. According to some researchers (e.g. Gall, 2005), there are three components that makeup attitudes namely ‘Cognitive component (the beliefs, thoughts, and attributes that are associated with an object)’, ‘Affective Component (the feelings or emotions that are brought to the surface about something, such as fear or hate)’, and ‘Behavioral Component (person’s tendencies to behave in a particular way toward an object)’. Therefore, the questionnaire measuring attitude should include all these three dimensions.

 An attitude questionnaire (see Appendix) was developed from a pool of other attitude items used by previous researchers (Moradi, 2013; Sorensen, 2013; Khosravian, 2015; Askari & Moinzadeh,2014) with some changes required to the study. This was to help finding out students’ attitudes towards using a social network as a new technology in language learning classes. This questionnaire included 30 items and used five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

 For the purpose of clustering the items the researcher sought help from three expert judges in the field. Accordingly, cluster one includes twelve questions (1-2-4-5-8-10-11-12-19-28-29-30) which were related to the use of a social network and its effect on learning. Cluster two includes ten questions (13-14-15-16-17-18-20-22-24-26) which were related to the use of a social network and its effect on affection. Cluster three includes five questions (6-7-21-23-27) which were related to the use of a social network and its effect on learners’ activities. Cluster four includes three questions (3-9-25) which were related to the use of a social network and its effect on learners’ partnership.

 The following part presents the requirements of a questionnaire:

 **3.5.5.1. Validity and Reliability**

 After items were written based on an extensive literature review (see 3.5.5), the initial version of the questionnaire was prepared and piloted on a small sample (10) of the same population with similar characteristics as those of the target group of the study. Piloting was done to check the practicality of the design of the questionnaire and problematic questions, hence to refine them. Accordingly, any problems relating to content, wording, layout, length of the items, and understandability of the items were uncovered and revised. Finally, to verify the validity and appropriateness of the content of each item, the modified questionnaire was submitted for review to three experts in the field. The experts were asked to explain their ideas on the validity of each item. In consequence, the questionnaire was reported to be valid.

 Further, in this study Cronbach’ alpha method was used to verify the coefficient of internal consistency among the items. Accordingly, the reliability of this questionnaire was calculated to be 0.82. Therefore, as the

alpha value varies from zero to one, the closer it is to the value one, the higher reliability it shows. Consequently, this questionnaire was considered to have high acceptable reliability.

**3.6. Procedure**

 To address the questions of the study, the following procedure was carried out:

 After taking an OPT the students were assigned to two groups namely experimental and control. Also, pre-test (see 3.5.2.1) was administrated by the researcher to evaluate their speaking level in terms of accuracy and fluency. This was done to see whether the participants were at the required level of the study or not. The participants in both groups received ten 90-minute sessions, two sessions per week, and nearly 40 to 50 minutes of each session was spent working on the current study. They underwent traditional classroom setting and instruction in the same classes. All the participants received the same amount of materials and instruction in classroom setting. The only difference was that the participants of the experimental group underwent treatment procedure after school time through the WhatsApp application (see 3.5.2) by the researcher, two assistant teachers (see 3.3.2), and other participants of the group. The control group however received scaffolding in the traditional classroom setting only.

 The stories were given to the students from the easiest to the most difficult ones during the treatment. Each story was to be summarized on each dedicated week. The students of the control group were to summarize the stories orally in the classroom while the participants of the experimental group were to audio record their summarization via their mobile phones and share the audio-records to the WhatsApp application.

 The overall treatment took five weeks during which the learners in both groups underwent scaffolding by the researcher, the assistant teachers, and the participants as well. The participants of the experimental group were provided with hints and comments as scaffolding techniques through the WhatsApp application. The participants of the control group however scaffolded inside the traditional classroom setting. The comments were on their grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

 Further, the study also addressed EFL learners’ attitudes towards using a social network as a new technology in language learning classes. This was done by administrating the attitude questionnaire (see 3.5.4) to experimental group of the study at the end of the treatment.

**3.7. Data analysis**

The obtained data of the study were analyzed via Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22. Research questions one and two were answered and analyzed by means of Paired-samples t-tests and Independent-Samples *t*-tests. To analyze the results of the questionnaire, which was related to the third research question, first the researcher scored the options (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no idea) from 4 to 0. Further, as explained earlier (see 3.5.5), the items were classified by three expert judges in the field. After clustering, the values of each item responses were added up to create a mean score for each group of items. Thereafter, each item was analyzed separately by the researcher and the percentages were calculated.

**3.8. Summary**

 In this chapter a full description of the research methodology was provided. First, the design of the study was presented (see 3.2). After, explaining the design, a detailed description of participants who participated in the study (see 3.4) and instruments that were utilized in this study(see3.5) was given. Then, the procedure of this study was explained in detail (see 3.6). Finally, information about the data analysis procedure of the study (see 3.7) was provided by the researcher. The next chapter presents the results of the study.

**Chapter Four**

**Data Analysis and Results**

**4.1. Overview**

 The methodology of the study was completely described in the previous chapter. The current chapter deals with reporting the results of the study and analyzing them. Therefore, the research questions are answered in this chapter and analyzed via statistical procedures which were previously mentioned in chapter three. The statistical tests used for this purpose are independent-samples, paired-samples, and one-sample *t*-tests. The results are shown using tables and figures.

**4.2. Results of the Placement Test**

OPT was run to evaluate the participants’ general English knowledge and to confirm their homogeneity.

Table 4.1. Descriptive Results of OPT

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Participants | *N* | Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| OPT | Experimental Group | 30 | 24.43 | 2.85 | .52 |
| Control Group | 30 | 24.90 | 2.49 | .45 |

 The table shows the mean score and standard deviation of the participants in the experimental group (EG) (*M* = 24.33, *SD* = 2.85) and the control group (CG) (*M* = 24.90, *SD* = 2.49). It can be noticed that the participants in the CG slightly outperformed on the test. To make sure these results were not statistically significant either, independent-samples *t*-test was run.

Table 4.2. Results of the Independent-Samples t-Test for OPT

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | *t*-test for Equality of Means |
| *F* | *Sig.* | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | *Std*. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| OPT | Equal variances assumed | .69 | .407 | -.68 | 58 | .497 | -.47 | .69 | -1.86 | .91 |
| Equal variances not assumed |  |  | -.68 | 56.98 | .497 | -.47 | .69 | -1.86 | .91 |

 Results of the independent-samples *t*-test show that the difference between the mean scores of the groups on OPT was not statistically significant (*t* (58) = -.68, *p* = .497) because the *p* value was greater than .05. Hence, all participants were at the same level of proficiency and they were all pre-intermediate EFL learners.

**4.3. Results of the Pretest**

The pretest was given to the participants before the treatment to make sure that they were at the same level in terms of fluency and accuracy in speaking.

*Table 4.3. Descriptive Results of Fluency Pretest*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Participants | *N* | Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Fluency Pretest | Experimental Group | 30 | 11.74 | 1.54 | .28 |
| Control Group | 30 | 12.07 | 1.70 | .31 |

 The mean score and standard deviation of the participants in the EG (*M* = 11.74, *SD* = 1.54) and the CG (*M* = 12.07, *SD* = 1.70) on the fluency pretest are shown in the table. It can be observed that the participants in the CG inconsiderably performed better on the test. To make sure these results were not statistically significant either, independent-samples *t*-test was run.

Table 4.4. Results of the Independent-Samples t-Test for Fluency Pretest

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | *t*-test for Equality of Means |
| *F* | *Sig.* | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Fluency Pretest | Equal variances assumed | 1.67 | .201 | -.77 | 58 | .441 | -.32 | .42 | -1.16 | .51 |
| Equal variances not assumed |  |  | -.77 | 57.425 | .441 | -.32 | .42 | -1.16 | .51 |

 According to the results of the independent-samples *t*-test, the difference between the mean scores of the groups on the fluency pretest was not

statistically significant (*t* (58) = -.77, *p* = .441) since the *p* value was greater than .05. Consequently, all participants were at the same level of fluency in speaking before the treatment.

Table 4.5. Descriptive Results of Accuracy Pretest

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Participants | *N* | Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Accuracy Pretest | Experimental Group | 30 | 12.63 | 1.63 | .29 |
| Control Group | 30 | 12.57 | 1.41 | .25 |

 The mean score and standard deviation of the participants in the EG (*M* = 12.63, *SD* = 1.63) and the CG (*M* = 12.57, *SD* = 1.41) on the accuracy pretest are indicated in Table 4.5. It can be remarked that the participants in the EG insignificantly performed better on the test. To make sure these results were not statistically significant either, independent-samples *t*-test was conducted.

Table 4.6. Results of the Independent-Samples t-Test for Accuracy Pretest

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | *t*-test for Equality of Means |
| *F* | *Sig.* | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | *Std*. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Accuracy Pretest | Equal variances assumed | .92 | .341 | .17 | 58 | .866 | .07 | .39 | -.72 | .85 |
| Equal variances not assumed |  |  | .17 | 56.79 | .866 | .07 | .39 | -.72 | .85 |

 Based on the results of the independent-samples *t*-test, the difference between the mean scores of the groups on the accuracy pretest was not statistically significant (*t* (58) = .17, *p* = .866) because the *p* value was greater than .05. Therefore, all participants were at the same level of accuracy in speaking.

**4.4. Addressing Research Questions**

**4.4.1. Addressing Research Question One**

 The first research question was posed to investigate the effect of scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network on the participants’ fluency in speaking. To this end, the results of each group on the fluency pretest and fluency posttest were analyzed via paired-samples *t*-test and the results of the two groups on the fluency posttest were analyzed via an independent-samples *t*-test.

Table 4.7

Descriptive Results of the Experimental Group on the Pretest and the Posttest

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Mean | *N* | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Pair 1 | Fluency Pretest | 11.74 | 30 | 1.54 | .28 |
| Fluency Posttest | 15.96 | 30 | 1.66 | .30 |

 The table shows the mean score and the standard deviation of the experimental group on the pretest (*M* = 11.74, *SD* = 1.54) and on the posttest (*M* = 15.96, *SD* = 1.66). It is obvious that the participants had a better performance on the posttest. The paired-samples *t*-test was run to make sure that the difference between the mean scores was statistically significant.

Table 4.8

Results of the Paired-Samples t-Test on the Fluency Tests for the Experimental Group

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Pair 1 | Fluency Pretest - Fluency Posttest | -4.22 | 2.32 | .42 | -5.08 | -3.35 | -9.95 | 29 | .000 |

 According to the table, the difference between the mean scores on the pretest and posttest was statistically significant (*t* (29) = -9.95, *p* < .001) because the *p* value was lower than .05. Therefore, the participants in the experimental group significantly outperformed on the fluency posttest in comparison with the fluency pretest.

Table 4.9

Descriptive Results of the Control Group on the Fluency Pretest and the Fluency Posttest

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Mean | *N* | Std. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Pair 1 | Fluency Pretest | 12.07 | 30 | 1.71 | .31 |
| Fluency Posttest | 13.27 | 30 | 1.73 | .32 |

 Table 4.9 indicates the mean score and the standard deviation of the control group on the pretest (*M* = 12.07, *SD* = 1.71) and on the Posttest (*M* = 13.27, *SD* = 1.73). It can be noted that the participants performed better on the posttest. The paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to make sure that the difference between the mean scores was statistically significant.

Table 4.10

Results of the Paired-Samples t-Test on the Fluency Tests for the Control Group

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Pair 1 | Fluency Pretest - Fluency Posttest | -1.20 | 2.34 | .43 | -2.07 | -.325 | -2.81 | 29 | .009 |

According to Table 4.10, the difference between the mean scores on the pretest and posttest was statistically significant (*t* (29) = -2.81, *p* = .009) because the *p* value was lower than .05. Therefore, the participants in the control group significantly performed better on the fluency posttest than the fluency pretest.

Table 4.11. Descriptive Results of Fluency Posttest

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Participants | *N* | Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Fluency Posttest | Experimental Group | 30 | 15.96 | 1.66 | .30 |
| Control Group | 30 | 13.27 | 1.73 | .31 |

 Table 4.11 indicates the mean score and standard deviation of the participants in the EG (*M* = 15.96, *SD* = 1.66) and the CG (*M* = 13.27, *SD* = 1.73) on the fluency posttest. It is obvious that the participants in the EG performed better than the participants in the CG on the test. To make sure these results were also statistically significant, independent-samples *t*-test was run.

Table 4.12. Results of the Independent-Samples t-Test for Fluency Posttest

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | *t*-test for Equality of Means |
| *F* | *Sig.* | *t* | *df* | *Sig.* (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Fluency Posttest | Equal variances assumed | .37 | .543 | 6.14 | 58 | .000 | 2.69 | .44 | 1.81 | 3.57 |
| Equal variances not assumed |  |  | 6.14 | 57.91 | .000 | 2.69 | .44 | 1.81 | 3.57 |

 Results of the independent-samples *t*-test revealed that the difference between the mean scores of the groups on fluency posttest was statistically significant (*t* (58) = 6.14, *p* < .001) since the *p* value was lower than .05. Therefore, scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network had a significant effect on the participants’ fluency in speaking. The results are illustrated graphically by the following figure, too.

Figure 4.1. Means Scores of EG and CG on Fluency Pretest and Posttest

**4.4.2. Addressing Research Question Two**

 The second research question was posed to investigate the effect of scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network on the participants’ accuracy in speaking. To this end, the results of each group on the accuracy pretest and accuracy posttest were analyzed by means of paired-samples *t*-test and the results of the two groups on the accuracy posttest were analyzed using an independent-samples *t*-test.

Table 4.13

Descriptive Results of the Experimental Group on the Pretest and the Accuracy Posttest

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Mean | *N* | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Pair 1 | Accuracy Pretest | 12.63 | 30 | 1.63 | .30 |
| Accuracy Posttest | 17.02 | 30 | 1.41 | .26 |

 The table indicates the mean score and the standard deviation of the experimental group on the pretest (*M* = 12.63, *SD* = 1.63) and on the Posttest (*M* = 17.02, *SD* = 1.41). It is noticeable that the participants had a better performance on the posttest. The paired-samples *t*-test was run to make sure that the difference between the mean scores was statistically significant.

Table 4.14

Results of the Paired-Samples t-Test on the Accuracy Tests for the Experimental Group

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Pair 1 | Accuracy Pretest - Accuracy Posttest | -4.38 | 1.78 | .33 | -5.05 | -3.72 | -13.49 | 29 | .000 |

 According to the table, the difference between the mean scores on the pretest and posttest was statistically significant (*t* (29) = -13.49, *p* < .001) because the *p* value was lower than .05. Therefore, the participants in the experimental group significantly performed better on the accuracy posttest compared to the accuracy pretest.

Table 4.15

Descriptive Results of the Control Group on the Pretest and the Accuracy

 Posttest

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Mean | *N* | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Pair 1 | Accuracy Pretest | 12.57 | 30 | 1.41 | .26 |
| Accuracy Posttest | 13.60 | 30 | 1.63 | .30 |

 The table presents the mean score and the standard deviation of the control group on the pretest (*M* = 12.57, *SD* = 1.41) and on the Posttest (*M* = 13.60, *SD* = 1.63). It is clear that the participants had a better performance on the posttest. The paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to make sure that the difference between the mean scores was statistically significant.

Table 4.16

Results of the Paired-Samples t-Test on the Accuracy Tests for the Experimental Group

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Pair 1 | Accuracy Pretest - Accuracy Posttest | -1.03 | 1.88 | .34 | -1.74 | -.33 | -3.00 | 29 | .005 |

 As it is shown in Table 4.16, the difference between the mean scores on the pretest and posttest was statistically significant (*t* (29) = -3.00, *p* = .005) because the *p* value was lower than .05. Therefore, the participants in the control group significantly performed better on the accuracy posttest compared to the accuracy pretest.

Table 4.17. Descriptive Results of Accuracy Posttest

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Participants | *N* | Mean | *Std*. Deviation | *Std*. Error Mean |
| Accuracy Posttest | Experimental Group | 30 | 17.02 | 1.40 | .25 |
| Control Group | 30 | 13.60 | 1.63 | .30 |

 Table 4.17 indicates the mean score and standard deviation of the participants in the EG (*M* = 17.02, *SD* = 1.40) and the CG (*M* = 13.60, *SD* = 1.63) on the accuracy posttest. It is noticeable that the participants in the EG performed better than the participants in the CG on the test. To make sure these results were also statistically significant, independent-samples *t*-test was run.

Table 4.18. Results of the Independent-Samples t-Test for Accuracy Posttest

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | *t*-test for Equality of Means |
| *F* | *Sig.* | *t* | *df* | *Sig*. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | *Std*. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
| Lower | Upper |
| Accuracy Posttest | Equal variances assumed | .683 | .412 | 8.69 | 58 | .000 | 3.41 | .39 | 2.63 | 4.20 |
| Equal variances not assumed |  |  | 8.69 | 56.75 | .000 | 3.41 | .39 | 2.62 | 4.20 |

 Results of the independent-samples *t*-test indicated that the difference between the mean scores of the groups on accuracy posttest was statistically significant (*t* (58) = 8.69, *p* < .001) because the *p* value was lower than .05. Therefore, scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network had a significant effect on the participants’ accuracy in speaking. The results are also graphically shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.2. Means Scores of EG and CG on Accuracy Pretest and Posttest

**4.4.3. Addressing Research Question Three**

 The third research question was posed to figure out the participants’ attitudes towards using a social network in Iranian language learning contexts. To achieve this aim, the results of the questionnaire were analyzed in three levels. First, general attitude of the participants towards using a social network in language learning contexts was analyzed. Next, attitudes of the participants towards each cluster were analyzed. Finally, the participants’ views towards the items in the questionnaire were calculated and presented in percent.

**4.4.3.1.** **General Attitude of Participants Towards Using a social network in Language Learning Contexts.**

 Analyzing the questionnaire showed that there is a positive relationship between the participants’ attitudes and using a social network in language learning contexts. To this aim, first the alternatives were assigned as 4(strongly agree), 3(agree), 2(disagree), 1(strongly disagree), and 0(no opinion). When somebody chooses the option “strongly agree” for all the item, the total score of that person is 120. Accordingly, each participant’s responses were calculated. After calculating the data from all the participants, the obtained average was 69.9. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards using a social network in language learning contexts.

**4.4.3.2.** **Participants’ Attitudes Towards Each Cluster**

**4.4.3.2.1.** **Participant’s Attitudes Towards Using a Social Network and Its Effect on Learning**

 Analyzing cluster one which was about participants’ attitudes towards using a social network and its effect on learning showed the following results. Considering the same procedure (see 4.5.1) if somebody choses the item “strongly agree” for all the items, the total score of that person is 48. Accordingly, after calculating the data the obtained average was 28.06 which indicated that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards using a social network and its effects on their learning.

**4.4.3.2.2.** **Participants’ Attitudes Towards Using a Social Network and Its Effect on Learners’ Affection**

 Analyzing cluster two which was about the participants’ attitudes towards using a social network in language learning classes and its effect on learners’ affection showed the following results. As it was done before (see 4.5.2.1) the same procedure was adopted to calculate this part.

Accordingly, when someone choses the option “strongly agree” for all the items, the total score of that person is 40. Considering the obtained average which was 23.4 it can be concluded that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards using a social network which affects their affection.

**4.4.3.2.3.** **Participants’ Attitudes Towards Using a Social Network and Its Effect on Learners’ Activities**

Analyzing cluster three which was about the participants’ attitudes towards using a social network and its effect on learners’ activities indicated that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards the effects of a social network on their activities. To this aim, the same procedure (see 4.5.2.2) was carried out. In this cluster when somebody choses the option “strongly agree” for all the items, the total score is 20. Therefore, based on the obtained average which was 11.33 it can be said that the majority of the participants’ attitudes were positive.

**4.4.3.2.4.** **Participants’ Attitudes Towards Using a Social Network and Its Effect on the Learners’ Partnership**

Analyzingcluster four which investigated the participants’ attitudes towards the effect of using a social network on the learners’ partnership showed that the participants’ attitude was neutral. This is due to the fact that if somebody choses the option “strongly agree” for all the items, the total score is 12. Therefore, the obtained average which was 6.36 indicated that majority of the had no idea about the effects of a social network on learners’ partnership.

**4.4.3.3. Participants’ Views Towards the Items in the Questionnaire**

 To investigate the participants’ views towards the items in the questionnaire, each individual item was analyzed separately. Table 4.19 shows the results in percent.

4.19. Percentages of the Selected Alternatives for Each Item

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree  | Agree | Strongly Agree | No Opinion |  |
| Item 1 | 7% | 13% | 17% | 27% | 37% |  |
| Item 2 | 7% | 10% | 30% | 33% | 20% |  |
| Item 3 | 3% | 13% | 27% | 27% | 30% |  |
| Item 4 | 7% | 13% | 40% | 23% | 17% |  |
| Item 5 | 20% | 10% | 27% | 27% | 17% |  |
| Item 6 | 13% | 17% | 33% | 23% | 13% |  |
| Item 7 | 17% | 7% | 20% | 40% | 17% |  |
| Item 8 | 17% | 13% | 37% | 17% | 17% |  |
| Item 9 | 10% | 17% | 17% | 33% | 23% |  |
| Item 10 | 3% | 7% | 50% | 20% | 20% |  |
| Item 11 | 10% | 10% | 30% | 30% | 20% |  |
| Item 12 | 10% | 3% | 37% | 40% | 10% |  |
| Item 13 | 3% | 7% | 43% | 23% | 23% |  |
| Item 14 | 3% | 7% | 43% | 23% | 23% |  |
| Item 15 | 10% | 17% | 30% | 20% | 23% |  |
| Item 16 | 7% | 27% | 30% | 13% | 23% |  |
| Item 17 | 7% | 27% | 30% | 13% | 23% |  |
| Item 18 | 3% | 10% | 37% | 30% | 20% |  |
| Item 19 | 7% | 7% | 43% | 23% | 20% |  |
| Item 20 | 23% | 3% | 33% | 33% | 7% |  |
| Item 21 | 7% | 13% | 27% | 27% | 27% |  |
| Item 22 | 10% | 17% | 37% | 10% | 27% |  |
| Item 23 | 7% | 23% | 23% | 30% | 17% |  |
| Item 24 | 3% | 13% | 33% | 27% | 23% |  |
| Item 25 | 17% | 10% | 40% | 20% | 13% |  |
| Item 26 | 3% | 13% | 40% | 30% | 13% |  |
| Item 27 | 10% | 17% | 30% | 27% | 17% |  |
| Item 28 | 13% | 10% | 43% | 20% | 13% |  |
| Item 29 | 7% | 17% | 23% | 27% | 27% |  |
| Item30  | 20% | 10% | 33% | 20% | 27% |  |

 For the ease of interpretation, the responses strongly agree and agree were considered as “agree” and therefore they were added up. Similarly, the responses strongly disagree and disagree were regarded as “disagree”. In general, table 4.19 shows that majority of participants had positive views about using a social network in language learning classes. Therefore, it is quite clear that technology is regarded as one of the important tools in language learning.

 Considering the most prominent percentages of the selected alternatives, as it is indicated in table 4.19, 77% of participants agreed with the idea that using a social network is effective in improving vocabulary range of students. Also, 70% of the participants thought that using a social network is really important in process of learning. Similarly, 70% of the participants were in line with the fact that using a social network encourages students to speak since it makes them motivated. Moreover, 67% of them were in agreement with the idea that students are more careful while speaking through the media of a social network. In addition, 66% of the participants agreed that using a social network had been effective in their learning process. Correspondingly, 66% consented that by the use of a social network their motivation for learning a language enhances.

 Following table shows the most prominent percentages of the selected alternatives.

4.20. Most Prominent Percentages of the Selected Alternatives.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Disagree | Agree  |
| Item 12. using a social network is effective in improving vocabulary range of students. | 13% | 77% |
| Item 10. using a social network is really important in process of learning. | 10% | 70% |
| Item 26. using a social network encourages students to speak since it makes them motivated. | 16% | 70% |
| Item 18. students are more careful while speaking through the media of a social network. | 13% | 67% |
| Item 19. using a social network had been effective in their learning process. | 14% | 66% |
| Item 20. use of a social network their motivation for learning a language enhances. | 26% | 66% |

**4.5. Summary**

 The current chapter aimed at answering the research questions and analyzing them statistically. The findings of the study revealed that scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network had a significant effect on the participants’ fluency in speaking. Similarly, scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network had a significant effect on the participants’ accuracy in speaking. Furthermore, it was revealed that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards using a social network in Iranian language learning contexts. These findings will be discussed in the following chapter and conclusions will be drawn.

**Chapter Five**

**Discussion and Conclusion**

**5.1. Overview**

 The statistical analyses carried out in chapter four were intended to shed light on the effectiveness of scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network and developing speaking fluency and accuracy. This chapter is divided into the following parts. First, the obtained results of the study, which were described in the previous chapter, are mentioned again. Second, the null-hypotheses of the study are restated and each one is discussed separately. Then, the implications of the study are presented. Afterward, the limitations, which were faced during the research, are mentioned. Some suggestions for further research are also offered for those who are interested in pursuing the same line of the research. Finally, the chapter is closed with the concluding remarks that are drawn from the results of the study.

**5.2. Restatement of the Findings**

 The summary of the results elaborated in chapter four are once again touched upon here:

 The results of pre-test and post-test analyses showed that both scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories via a social network and scaffolding of oral reproduction of short stories traditionally improved

speaking accuracy and fluency, but it was revealed that using a social network in scaffolding of oral reproduction best improved the speaking fluency and accuracy of the participants. Accordingly, it is quite obvious that blending scaffolding, social networking, and oral summarization of short stories together can improve speaking fluency and accuracy.

 Further, another aim of this study was to figure out the participants’ attitudes towards using a social network in Iranian language learning contexts. To achieve this aim, an attitude questionnaire (see 3.5.5) was administrated to the participants of the experimental group of the study. The results indicated that the participants’ general attitude was positive.

**5.3. Discussion**

 As mentioned in the first chapter of the study, the goal of the current study was to test the following research hypotheses:

1.Scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network does not have any effects on students’ speaking fluency.

2. Scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network does not have any effects on students’ speaking accuracy.

**5.3.1. Addressing Research Hypothesis One**

 In order to test this research hypothesis, the results of the participants of the experimental group and the control group on the fluency test were compared with each other by an Independent-Samples t-test. According to the obtained results, the participants of the experimental group significantly outperformed. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was not accepted.

 The findings of this study were in line with those of Wood et al (1976) who approved that using scaffolding strategies would help the students to

solve their problems and achieve their intended goals. Also, this study could confirm the findings of Alavi and Mirahmadi (2016) who maintained that scaffolding contexts had statistically significant effects on the fluency of the Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, Ghasedi et al. (2018) investigated the effect of symmetrical and asymmetrical scaffolding on speaking complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The results are in line with the findings of the current study. Their findings indicated that the presence of scaffolding strategies improves speaking fluency as well as complexity and accuracy.

 Further, the findings support those of Ahmadi and Marandi (2014) who revealed that the new technologies support individual and collaborative learning in that via the interaction of participants in the virtual communities, learners gain knowledge from those community members positioned as masters or peers. Accordingly, instructors can use new technology tools for its potential contributions on students. Moreover, this study could confirm the findings of Samadi et al. (2014) who utilized computer assisted language learning (CALL) technology to improve female learners’ speaking ability. It can be inferred from the results of this study that technology has positive effect on students’ performance in their speaking ability.

 Considering the effect of oral reproduction of stories on speaking ability of learners the results of the present study are in agreement with findings of Marzuki et al. (2016), and Sepahvand (2014) who state the effectiveness of storytelling in developing the speaking ability of language learners. The findings of this study were in line with those of Khodabandeh (2018) who approved that telling stories through the use of social networks have been effective in improving the participants’ speaking ability. Further, Omidi and Mahdavi (2016) investigated the effect of short-story retelling technique on the Iranian intermediate EFL learners׳ speaking in terms of fluency.

Regarding the results of their study it was noticed that the experimental group performed better on the fluency aspect of the test than did the control group. These findings are in line with the findings of the present study since the students’ speaking fluency was improved by employing English short stories.

**5.3.2. Addressing Research Hypothesis Two**

 In order to test this research hypothesis, the results of the participants in the experimental group and the control group on the accuracy test were compared with each other by an Independent-Samples t-test. According to the obtained results, the participants in the experimental group significantly outperformed. Therefore, the second research hypothesis was rejected.

 The findings of the present study were in line with those of Khaliliaqdam (2014) who suggested that language scaffolding in ZPD could be used as a potential vehicle for foreign language speech development. Therefore, language scaffolding could provide a functional and a more naturalistic context for learning and acquisition. Similarly, it can be inferred from the results of Izanlu and Feyli’s (2015) study who investigated the effects of Symmetrical and asymmetrical scaffolding on university students' grammar acquisition. According to the obtained results, it was found that scaffolding had positive effect on participants’ grammar acquisition. Therefore, it can be said that students’ cooperation with each other results in more modified and adjusted sentences.

 The findings of the current study confirm what Arfaei and Rahbar (2016) investigated. According to their investigation interactive and intervening strategies of scaffolding were considered as the major techniques to help EFL learners enhance their speaking ability. Therefore, the overall speaking

ability of the participants of their study was significantly improved after they had been trained to use scaffolding strategies.

 Further, the findings of the present study support those of Pazhouhesh and Ghapanchi (2014) who investigated the effects of scaffolding instruction via audio podcasts and story maps on EFL speaking skills. According to their study, it was found that the traditional story retelling setting showed no difference in learning outcomes while experimental interventions brought about significant outperformance.

**5.4. Implications of the Study**

 The results of the study shed light on the importance of scaffolding via social networks in speaking process and open a new window on the research about employing this technique in EFL classrooms. The results of this study are useful for English teachers in schools and language institutes in that they can change the traditional methods of teaching the speaking skill by utilizing scaffolding technique via a social network in their classes and help their learners to improve their accuracy and fluency in English speaking. This study is beneficial for language teachers by enabling them to improve the way they arrange the activities and provide materials in their classes for their students.

 Further, this study can be beneficial for EFL learners and educators in that it allows them to be aware of the positive effects of scaffolding on their speaking ability. Moreover, students can have a clear picture of using new technology in their language learning process and the facilities that it provides them to cooperate with other individuals. Findings of this study also inform the students about the positive effect of summarizing English stories on their speaking fluency and accuracy. Therefore, they can make use of the findings to best improve their oral proficiency.

 More to the point, language institutes can use the results of the study to teach the speaking skill to their students more effectively. Similarly, curriculum designers can make use of the findings of this study to enrich their curricula and syllabi by putting scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network in them.

**5.5. Limitations of the Study**

 As with any research project, the current study faced with a number of limitations, some of which could have influenced the findings and confined the generalizability of the results. Being aware of the limitations of the research might pave the way for conducting more research in future. The following is the limitations over which the researcher had little or no control.

1. The study was restricted to pre-intermediate EFL learners, whereas giving treatment to other levels of proficiency might produce different results.

2. The participants of the study were only teenage learners. By conducting the study to other ages, somewhat different results can be acquired.

3. The number of the students who participated in the study was 60 which was very limited. By increasing the number of the participants, more comprehensive and generalized results can be acquired.

4. The study was implemented within limited number of sessions due to lack of sufficient time, while a longer period of instruction may result in different findings.

**5.6. Suggestions for Further Research**

 This study mainly focused on the effectiveness of applying scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network on Iranian teenage EFL learners’ speaking accuracy and fluency. Thus, the following areas of research can be recommended to those who are interested in pursuing the same line of research:

1. Investigating the effects of scaffolding of oral summarization of short stories via a social network on other aspects of speaking like complexity.

2. Investigating the effects of scaffolding of oral summarization of short stories via a social network on L2 learners’ vocabulary retention.

3. It also will be interesting for further research to do such an investigation to see its effects on learners’ motivation, self-efficacy or willingness to communicate.

**5.7. Concluding remarks**

 The current study revealed the positive effects of employing scaffolding of oral reproduction of English short stories via a social network on improving EFL learners’ speaking accuracy and fluency. In addition, it was revealed that EFL learners have positive attitudes towards using new technology in language learning contexts.

 The results of the presents study confirmed the findings of the previous studies that scaffolding strategies can positively affect language performance of EFL learners (Arfaei & Rahbar ,2014; Mirahmadi & Alavi ,2016; Ghasedi et. al.,2018). According to the experimental findings in this study, scaffolding of oral retelling of short stories via a social network positively improved learners’ ability to speak accurately. The findings also

suggest that scaffolding of oral retelling of short stories via a social network can enhance speaking fluency among EFL learners.

 Further, from the obtained results of the study it can be concluded that employing new technology such social networking sites in scaffolding learners can be an effective tool for improving aspects of L2 speaking explicitly accuracy and fluency. Therefore, teachers can integrate scaffolding techniques with and within technology applications and create an optimal language learning environment to direct students’ learning.

 In addition, according to the findings of the current study it can be inferred that scaffolding the learners’ while they are summarizing English stories through the medium of a social network can positively improve oral proficiency of EFL learners. Thus, it enables teachers to understand the process of students’ oral reconstruction. It also provides students with an environment where they can be the center of learning and it is due to the fact that they demonstrate their comprehension and oral skills as they elaborate their ideas and thoughts simultaneously.

 Therefore, from the obtained results of the study it can be concluded that by employing scaffolding technique via social networking sites while students are involved in oral reproduction of English stories, EFL learners’ speaking ability develops. However, English instructors must be familiar with this strategy and familiarize their students with the positive effects this technique on their accurate and fluent speaking.

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**Appendix**

**به نام خدا**

**با سلام و احترام خدمت دانش آموان گرامی**

ضمن تشکر به منظور مشارکت شما در فرایند تحقیق اینجانب، برای جمع آوری قسمت دوم داده های تحقیق، پرسشنامه ای تنظیم شده که تقدیم حضور می شود. ضمن عرض پوزش ازاینکه حضرت عالی وقت گران بهای خود را صرف پاسخ به سوال های پرسشنامه می فرمایید، استدعا دارم که میزان موافقت یا عدم موافقت خود را نسبت به استفاده از تکنولوژی فضای مجازی در فرایند آموزش و یادگیری زبان، با زدن علامت (X) در طیف مقابل هر سوال مشخص فرمایید. ضمنآ پاسخ های ارائه شده به سوال های پرسشنامه ها کاملا محرمانه خواهد بود.

نام و نام خانوادگی: .................................... جنسیت: زن ⃝ مرد ⃝ سن: .............. . میزان تحصیلات: .................. .

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| کاملا موافق | موافق | نظری ندارم | مخالف | کاملا مخالف |  سوالات |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | استفاده از شبکه اجتماعی دسترسی به مطالب انگلیسی را تسهیل می کند | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  | با استفاده از شبکه اجتماعی بازخورد بیشتری دریافت می شود | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  | کارهای گروهی با استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی افزایش می یابد | 3 |
|  |  |  |  |  | یادگیری زبان با کمک شبکه اجتماعی در روانی صحبت دانش آموزان اثر گذاراست | 4 |
|  |  |  |  |  | تمامی مهارت های زبانی با استفاده از شبکه اجتماعی تمرین می شود | 5 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شرح دادن مطالب در شبکه اجتماعی زمان کمتری نیازدارد | 6 |
|  |  |  |  |  | انجام تکالیف درشبکه اجتماعی به خوبی انجام آن ها در فضای سنتی کلاس است | 7 |
|  |  |  |  |  | یادگیری به کمک شبکه اجتماعی به اندازه ی یادگیری سنتی تاثیرگذار می باشد | 8 |
|  |  |  |  |  | استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی درآموزش محیط دوستانه ای را برای فراگیران فراهم میکند | 9 |
|  |  |  |  |  | استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی در یادگیری اهمیت دارد | 10 |
|  |  |  |  |  | صحت صحبت دانش آموزان به کمک شبکه اجتماعی بهبود میابد | 11 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شبکه اجتماعی در افزایش دامنه لغات تاثیر گذار است | 12 |
|  |  |  |  |  | استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی در آموزش خسته کننده است | 13 |
|  |  |  |  |  | استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی جذابیت بیشتری را نسبت به آموزش سنتی برای من دارد | 14 |
|  |  |  |  |  | با انجام تکالیف در شبکه اجتماعی احساس خوبی دارم | 15 |
|  |  |  |  |  | اعتماد به نفس من دریادگیری از طریق شبکه مجازی افزایش میابد | 16 |
|  |  |  |  |  | یادگیری زبان با استفاده از شبکه اجتماعی سطح استرس من را کاهش می دهد | 17 |
|  |  |  |  |  | درهنگام صحبت درشبکه اجتماعی دقت بیشتری می کنم. | 18 |
|  |  |  |  |  | استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی در یادگیری من تاثیرگذار بوده است | 19 |
|  |  |  |  |  | یادگیری زبان با استفاده از شبکه اجتماعی انگیزه من را افزایش می دهد | 20 |
|  |  |  |  |  | فعالیت در شبکه اجتماعی برای من آسان است | 21 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شبکه اجتماعی باعث می شود دانش آموز محافظه کاری نباشم | 22 |
|  |  |  |  |  | یادگیری زبان از طریق شبکه اجتماعی برای فرهنگ ما خطری به همراه ندارد | 23 |
|  |  |  |  |  | ازاینکه دیگران صحبت من را درشبکه اجتماعی بشنوند خجالت نمی کشم | 24 |
|  |  |  |  |  | در شبکه اجتماعی افراد زیادی به بهبود مهارت صحبت من کمک می کنند | 25 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شبکه اجتماعی با ایجاد انگیزه کافی من را به صحبت کردن تشویق می کنند | 26 |
|  |  |  |  |  | با استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی فرصت فعالیت برای دخترها و پسرها یکسان می شود | 27 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شبکه اجتماعی به من کمک می کند تا پیشرفت خود را ارزیابی کنم | 28 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شبکه اجتماعی در بهبود لهجه انگلیسی من تاثیر گذاراست | 29 |
|  |  |  |  |  | شبکه اجتماعی به من کمک می کند تا از معلم به راحتی کمک بگیرم | 30 |

**چکیده**

هدف از انجام این پژوهش بررسی تااثیر پشتیبانی معلم از بازگویی شفاهی داستان های کوتاه انگلیسی با استفاده از شبکه اجتماعی وهمچنین بررسی نگرش دانش آموزان نسبت به استفاده ازشبکه مجازی در فضای های آموزشی می باشد. به این منظور، در این پژوهش طرحی از روش های مختلف که شامل ترکیبی از تحقیقات کمی و کیفی است با نمونه ای از 60 نفر نوجوانان ایرانی درحال فراگیری زبان انگیلسی ازمیان 100 نفر از فراگیر که با استفاده از آزمون تعیین سطح آکسفورد انتخاب شدند اجرا شد. شرکت کننده گان این پژوهش به دو گروه تقسیم شدند: گروه آزمایشی که پشتیبانی را ازطریق شبکه اجتماعی دریافت میکردند و گروه کنترل که درفضای سنتی کلاس پشتیبانی می شدند. شایان ذکراست که در هر دو گروه، توانایی صحبت دانش آموزان مورد ارزیابی های قبل و بعد از اجرای پژوهش واقع شد. نتایج بدست آمده بیانگراین هستند که پشتیبانی از بازگویی شفاهی داستان های کوتاه انگلیسی با استفاده از شبکه مجازی تاثیر بسزایی در بهبود توانایی صحبت دانش آموزان دارد. علاوه براین، نتایج حاصل شده از تحلیل پرسش نامه حاکی از آن است که نگرش دانش آموزان نسبت به استفاده ازشبکه اجتماعی مثبت بوده است.

**کلمات کلیدی:** دقت صحبت، سلاست صحبت، پشتیبانی، نظریه جامع شناختی ذهن، پشتیبانی به کمک تکنولوژی.

 

 **دانشگاه اصفهان**

  **دانشکده زبان های خارجی**

 **گروه زبان انگلیسی**

پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد رشته آموزش زبان انگلیسی آقای

 علی فتاحی نژاد تحت عنوان

 **پشتیبانی به وسیله ی شبکه اجتماعی و بازگویی شفاهی داستان های کوتاه انگلیسی توسط فراگیران نوجوان زبان انگلیسی; تمرکز بر سلاست و صحت صحبت**

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