

RESEARCH TITLE

Integrating Moderna and Traditional Methods in English Language Teaching

Sirag Mohamed Shinnieb¹

¹ Faculty of Arts and Science, Omar Al-Mukhtar University, Libya.

Email: s.shinnieb@uod.edu.ly Elmahdi.elkilani@gmail.com

HNSJ, 2025, 6(6); <https://doi.org/10.53796/hnsj66/22>

Received at 07/05/2025

Accepted at 15/05/2025

Published at 01/06/2025

Abstract

This study explores the development and effectiveness of combining both traditional and modern methods of teaching English language skills to Libyan learners. It is based on the assumption that modern methods may be more effective than traditional ones. While traditional approaches serve as the cornerstone of any educational process—particularly for teaching grammar—modern techniques such as communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, and technology-enhanced learning are increasingly essential and beneficial in classroom settings. This article compares both methods, with greater emphasis on modern methods, through the implementation of a training program involving 100 participants to examine their effectiveness and support in teaching. The study also highlights the importance of traditional methods in the learning process. The findings demonstrate that interactive methods enhance learning and have a significant impact on students' ability to expand their language skills.

Key Words: Traditional methods, modern methods, language skills, Libyan learners, interactive learning.

دمج الطرق الحديثة والتقليدية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية

المستخلص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة تطور وفعالية الجمع بين الطرق التقليدية والحديثة لتعليم مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية للمتعلمين الليبيين، استنادًا إلى فرضية أن الطرق الحديثة قد تكون أكثر فعالية من الطرق التقليدية. في حين تُعد الطرق التقليدية حجر الزاوية في أي عملية تعليمية، لا سيما لتدريس القواعد النحوية، فإن التقنيات الحديثة مثل التدريس التواصلي للغة، التدريس القائم على المهام، والتعلم المدعوم بالتكنولوجيا أصبحت أكثر أهمية وفائدة في بيئة الصف الدراسي. يقارن هذا المقال بين كلا المنهجين، مع التركيز بشكل أكبر على الطرق الحديثة، من خلال تطبيق برنامج تدريبي شمل 100 مشارك لفحص مدى فعاليتها ودعمها في التعليم. كما يسلط الضوء على أهمية الطرق التقليدية في عملية التعلم. أظهرت النتائج أن الطرق التفاعلية تعزز عملية التعلم وتؤثر بشكل كبير في قدرة الطلاب على توسيع مهاراتهم اللغوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الطرق التقليدية، الطرق الحديثة، مهارات اللغة، المتعلمون الليبيون، التعلم التفاعلي.

Introduction:

Learning a second language, particularly English, has become a global necessity, prompting the establishment of various language centers and the adoption of different teaching methods worldwide. Traditionally, methods like Grammar Translation Method (GTM) emphasized grammar rules and vocabulary memorization, while modern approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning (TBL), and technology-enhanced instruction, focus on communicative competence, real-world application, and learner-centered experiences. Despite the differences, both methods hold valuable roles in language education, offering unique strengths in different contexts.

Objectives:

1. To explore the development and effectiveness of both traditional and modern methods of teaching English language skills.
2. To analyze the benefits and limitations of traditional methods like GTM and ALM and modern methods such as CLT, TBL, and technology-enhanced learning.
3. To examine how combining traditional and modern teaching methods can improve the learning outcomes of non-native English speakers.
4. To evaluate the impact of various teaching methods on specific language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
5. To recommend effective teaching strategies that balance linguistic accuracy and real-world communication.

Literature Review:

Learning a second language has become a necessity in all countries, therefore, English language has become the global language to be communicated with and it spread in all over the world. Different Languages centers were opened internationally and different methods of teaching were used to teach the skills of English language. According to Richards& Rodgers in (2001) stated that teaching language's skill has always been using traditional method to teach grammar by translating the rules and memorizing them, whereas, considering the modern mothes, the learners can emphasize communicative competence, learner independence and technological integration.

Considering Grammar translation method (GTM) as an old style of teaching any target language has been used for decades. Laresen-Freeman(2000) illustrate the effectiveness of this method in teaching language's skills such as writing and reading can be achieved with grammar usage by translating the texts to their mother languages, concentrating on accuracy, memorizing vocabularies and grammatical structure rather than fluency and noted that using the GTM, despite of all criticism, still adopted by different schools in all the world specially who adopted exam-driven teaching system. Brown (2007) declared that GTM is very useful for those who preferred analytical learning style because this methods provide a clear focus on using grammar and increasing vocabulary. Stern (1983) stated that GTM's concern with grammar and vocabulary has reduced the speaking and listening skills abilities which were used in the daily life interactive and it was useful for people who were looking to analyze sentences.

Skinner (1957) explained that during the second world war and the urgent need for rapid language acquisition, an Audio-learning method (ALM) has appeared which depended on the behaviorist theory of learning particular stimulus response. Richard and Rodgers (2001) claimed that ALM is a theory depends on drilling, repetition and pattern practice and oral skill

is considered to be its key feature in advance of writing and reading with a minimal grammar explanation. In a side of criticizing this method, Richard and Rodgers (2001) also pointed out that this method disregard the creativity and contextual understand of the target language and also can lead to memorizing the language without a full awareness of its usage. and that was matching with what Rivers (1968) assumed that ALM users were concerning with their communicative proficiency more than other skills. Howatt (1984) displayed the Direct method (DM) which was invented in the late 19th century. He claimed the total difference between GTM and DM. The vocabularies' teaching within DM can be done through gaudiness, visual aids and giving more attention to speaking and listening. Both Howatt & Widdowsom (2004) agreed that DM must be supervised and taught by expert teachers in the target language.

The positive and negative sides of traditional method of teaching has participated to look for modern ways that serve the needs of the learners and accelerate their progress. Therefore, another method was invented to serve these needs. Communication language teaching approach (CLT) and Technology-driven methodologies are used in ESL/EFL classrooms. The CLT is considered to be one of the strongest modern methodology used in ESL/EFL teaching strategies. It concerns on communicative participation over grammatical translation, emphasizing real life language use. Cannale and Swain (1980) explained that CLT is considering communication as a mean tool and, the task-based learning activities are the goal of learning language and develop the fluency and accuracy and its mixing all language skills including reading- writing- speaking and listening. Numan (1991) claimed that CLT works among learners independence by increasing their active participation in communicative tasks and pointed out that CLT shift the classrooms to social spaces where language supposed to be learned through communication and not about the communication. Littlewood (2007) did a case study in south Korea that showed the learners who were taught by CLT method performed more better in speaking and listening tasks in contrast of those who were taught by using traditional classes.

Ellis (2003) stated that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is considered another style of CLT that assure on completing meaningful tasks as an ideal way of the learning process specially tasks that includes real-world activities, planning trips or conducting interviews. Skehan (1996) explained that TBLT function to encourage the learning to expand their language use for genuine communication, improve their critical thinking and collaboration and their motivation because the tasks are contextually pertinent. Coyle et al. (2010) observed one of the most active teaching method used in Europe which is Content and language Integrated Learning (CLIL) which connect language learning with subject content such as teaching sciences or history in English and the dual focusing on using them together to improve the learning progress. He also added that CLIL provides a dynamic method as the language is taught not in isolation, but within a meaningful and engaging content.

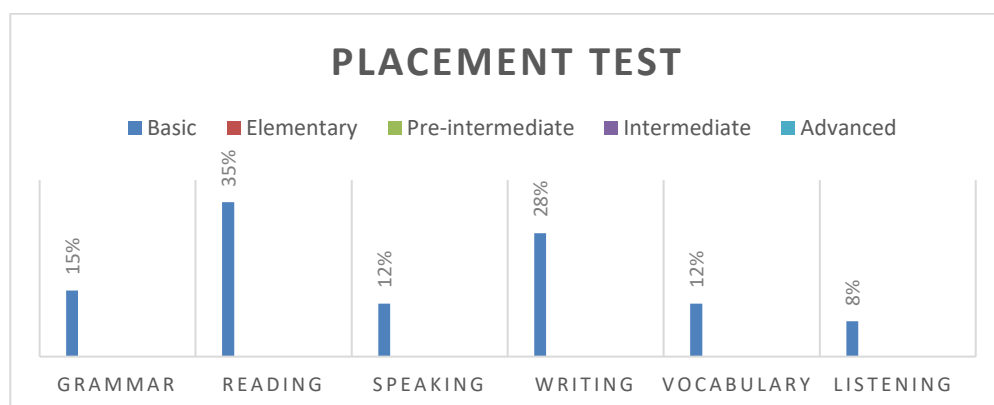
Chapelle (2003) illustrated that Modern teaching mythologies successfully combined technology to improve learning such as language apps, online platforms, virtual classrooms that includes interactive and flexible learning chances. Using Technology in EFL/ESL to improve the language skills are great idea. The language apps like Duolingo, Babble and others can improve the vocabularies and grammatical use and Zoom for virtual communication which helps can be used to conversational practice with native speakers. Warschauer (2004) stated that using the Computer-Assisted Language learning (CALL) develops the learners participating and independence, and permits for the learners to practice all the language skills in interactive which the traditional method doesn't provides in most cases.

The adequacy of traditional against modern methods depends on the instruction goals and

the learning context. The traditional methods such as GTM and ALM concerns about the learners accuracy and knowledge of grammar and both are considered to be very useful in contexts where passing standardized exam is a priority. In contrast, Modern methods such as CLT, TBLT and CALL are contributing extensively in preparing learners for real-life communication and offer additional flexibility and participation for those who seek personalized learning experiences. Zhang and Liu (2010) conducted a study in China and stated that Learners who used CLT demonstrated higher level of speaking fluency and motivation compared to those who used GTM.

The Development of teaching methodology approaches from the traditional to the modern methods serve the needs of the learner and expand all the ideas to find the aids that help to learn a language. It was obvious that the traditional method concerns on providing structural foundation for the learners, whereas, Modern methods provides dynamic engaging, contextual connect and more practicing.

Our Study: we tried to examine the efficiency of both the pervious methodologies by conducting a study on 1000 non-native participants aged between 25-65 years old aims to learn English. The participants took a placement test to measure their knowledge and abilities in English four skills even they have a background of learning English at school or university, but the result has shown their level to be beginners indicating a several weakness in all areas of grammar, vocabulary and basic English skills. Their abilities to communicate or write were zero and disable to read a full text and answering the questions. The first evaluation was requiring the necessity of applying structured and effective teaching approaches to address these fundamental shortages, the following chart shows their marks during the exam:



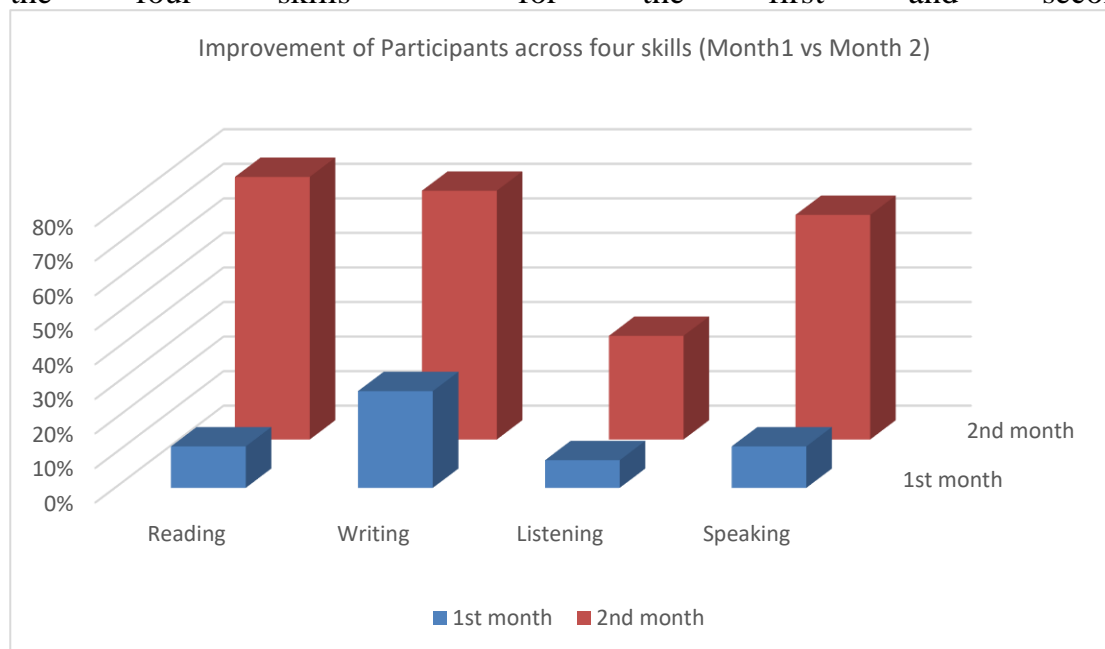
To work on the participants needs , our training course was structured for a period of three months including classes for five days per week. We divided our program into three main levels, the Basic level, Elementary level and Intermediate level's plan. For the first month we will focus on the four skills which are Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking and in fact the traditional method will be used for the first two weeks. Each skill was prepared carefully to cover the required foundational knowledge and build aa strong basement for the participants. Moreover, as the curriculum combined traditional methods for grammar and vocabulary, also it used modern techniques to encourage communication and engagement.

We have divided the participants into five mixed gender and aged group to promote interaction and peer support. A test was done weekly to monitor the participants progress in using language's skills. At the end of the first week, the results were very weak and a significant individual differences were noticed among the participants. At the end of the first month, 35 out of 100 participants presented noticeable improvement, with their marks clearly recorded, the remaining participants showed slight progress in their language's skills. To understand better the main problems the participants were facing during the first month of our program, we distributed a questionnaire regarding to their result. 60% of the participants

referred to the shyness inside the class as a main obstacle particularly of the mixed gender class which prevent them of participating in the class activities. 25% of the participants talked about the age differences as older participants often are unable to keep up with younger participants. Another 10% of 100 participant found memorizing all information which taught in the class were their main challenges. The last 5% of the participant explained their misunderstanding to connect the four skills together. These underlined findings helped us to address the participants need and providing a creative supportive learning environment.

The result from the questionnaire pushed us to reconsider our program again. First of all, we divided the 100 participant into two gender separated group, two groups of over 35 years old and one mixed group for the participant aged 25-35. This new classification aimed to work on the specific concern that raised by the participant in the questionnaire to provide a comfortable and effective learning environment for all participants. We started our second moth with the same plan of teaching, but we gave more extra time for over 40 group to help them. at the end of week 6, we noticed a significant improvement in participation and engagements across all groups. The trainers feedbacks were very positive and referred that the new structure for the groups managed to create an environment for learning. The tutors started to use all the aids and focusing on interactive classes rather than ordinary class. The participants cooperations were strong and very noticeable. During the weekly tests for the second week of our program have shown substantial improvements in basic grammar use, vocabularies acquisition and the ability to preform spoken sentences. The participants has improved their use of English inside the class confidentially in all classroom activities. However, listening skill remained weak across all groups, which required from us to give more attention and focus.

The following chart shows the achievement and developments occurred during our course for two month of teaching English language. The graphic highlight s the participants progress for the four skills for the first and second month.



In month 1, the result shows that thae participant were struggling across all the skilss. Only 12% of the participant have proficiency in speaking, Writing skill appeared to be better by 28% but they still finding difficultites in grammar and sentence forming and vocabularies use. Reading skill consider to by the stromgest skill during the first month with 35% of the participant were making progress. Listening skill, one the other hand showed an obvious weakness with only 8% of the participants have improved. By month 2, we could notice a

remarkable transformation in the participants proficiency as a result of using new methods and techniques inside the classroom and given the participant a chance to communicate and be more active by using new theories of teaching English skills. We can notice their achievement in speaking skill for example. The participants' number have increased from 12% to 65% as they managed to build a strong confidence inside the class and participating the class activities, group discussion and supportive learning environment. Writing skill has also increased from month 1 by reaching 72% due to their understanding of grammar use, vocabulary and sentence structure. Reading skills has the most top progress to reach 76% of the participant instead of 35%. Finally the listening skill has shown a good improvement by reaching 30% instead of 8% of the participant but we considered it to be the weakest skill among our program. Over all the result showed a great progress for the participant in learning English skills under the plans we structured for them. The combination of using traditional and modern methods such as technology integration, communication activities and class restructure have participated to get such an improvements for spoken, reading and writing. However, we have a look for a further strategies to address the listening skill and improve it. This analysis underscore the importance of a flexible learning centered approach in addressing the individual weaknesses and increase language acquisition. The last month starting from week 9- week 12 we reconsidering of increasing the training hours for all skills by 10 hours per week to 20 hours. This shift gave the participant more time to practice and mastering each skill in a more concentrated manner and allow for the trainers to use more modern methods to increase from the abilities of the participants in the four skills. Therefore, we utilized merged more methods together including interactive activities, technology integration and collaborative exercises to allow for the participant to enhance the learning experience and engagement for all. To make sure that their English level has improved, we merge all the groups again without considering gender mix or age differences. This change would help us to evaluate their improvements and ability in using the language. In addition to that, it will create a balanced and inclusive learning environment that foster collaboration and communication among the participants.

We strongly support the idea that says Effective English learning strategies were connected to the methodologies that prioritize the learner's participation and activity. Therefore, we worked to keep the participant more eager to learn and support them to work on themselves to improve their language skills and proficiency. The dynamic approach take the learners from just a receivers of the information to practicing among their learning process, therefore, we used practical applications and teamwork to reach to our goal and astonishingly we achieved a very remarkable improvements in their ability to use the language.

In addition, we worked on self-reliance promoting which was one of our core principles among the participants. The participants started to explore and discover the information independently and be responsible of their journey of learning a new language. This approach in fact help them to build up a lifelong learning habit and develop confidence in their abilities and cultivate intrinsic motivation. Applications, language learning applications and online forums were given priorities for the participant to be used instead of feeding them in our traditional way. Also, the participants were supported by taking self-assessment exercises to allow them to identify the areas of improvement and follow up their progress over time.

To increase from the ability to change the participants from just a receiver, we worked on designing a program that include more practical applications to increase from their activities. For example, we increase the role-playing exercise group discussions presentations to increase their skills in listening and speaking. It was very remarkable to notice their shift from casual chats to professional dialogues with much improvement in using words, sentence

structure and different writing styles. These exercises helped the learners to increase their confidence in using language and being eager to learn more and search for other issues that increase from their strength.

To keep ourselves on track, these applications and tools were structured to integrate the previous knowledge with new information. This progressive approach could ensure that learners build on what they have learned already. Considering a tool like Duolingo, Memrise and Babbel to improve the learners' vocabularies and grammar were very beneficial and supportive. Using these apps could apply adaptive learning techniques where the exercise evolves based on the learners' performance. Moreover, other active platforms like Kahoot and Quizlet functioned collaborative and gamified learning experiences. The learners have the possibilities to re-check the previous materials and being introduced to the new incorporating manners. This method managed to provide for the learners a chance to develop their deeper understanding of the language and give us a chance to measure their progress as well.

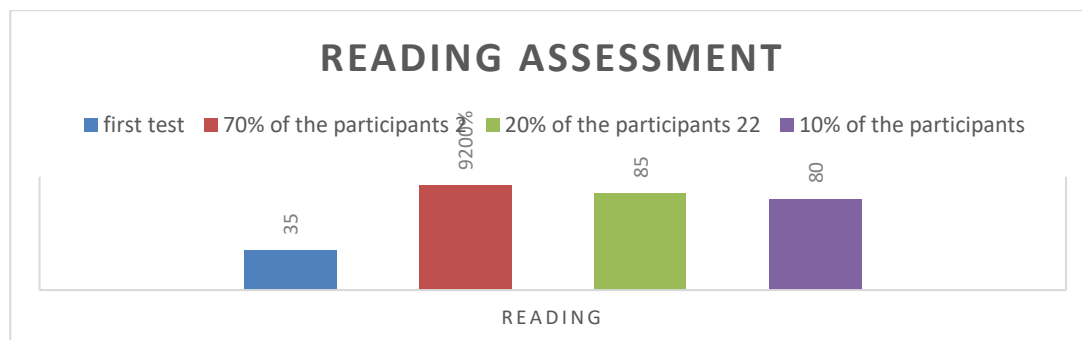
In Fact, the experiential approach requires from the learners to involve more in the live experience where English was the only mode of communication. Therefore, we encourage learners to watch more English videos, TV shows and other English videos without subtitles and trying to listen to English podcast or audiobooks and being a part of virtual exchange with native speakers.

Emphasizing teamwork was an important cornerstone in our methodology. 80% of our structured exercises were around collaborative activities. Working in pairs or small groups provides a chance for the learners to share ideas, offer constructive feedback and support each other's progress. By creating a cooperative environment, the learners could enhance their language skills and foster essential interpersonal skills as well. This collaborative approach largely contributes to improving communication skills and nurtured a sense of community. Getting support from each other, they develop their trust and strength their ability to use a language.

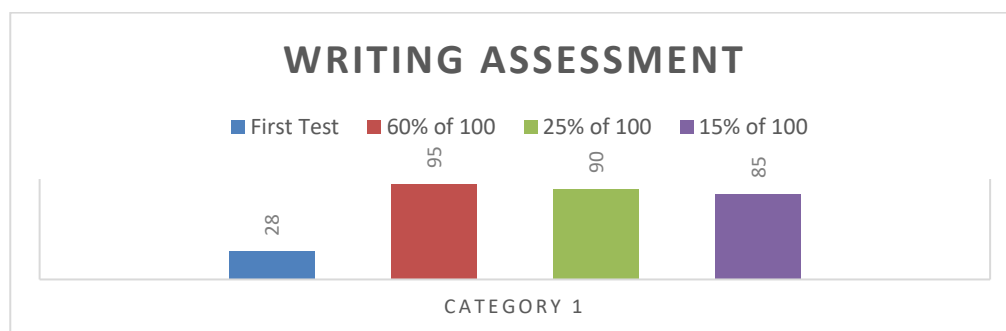
We incredibly noticed the improvements in participants' skills across all domains. Learners has showed great fluency and confidence in spoken interactions and become able to understand different accents and responding appropriately in conversation. Other skills like reading and writing have improved significantly as they showed enhanced comprehension and the ability to express themselves clearly in writing. This is ,of course, give a sign that their vocabularies has expanded and become more comfortable in using complex sentences structures. Also, Their teamwork skills and self-reliance has dramatically improved. Taking in consideration that the implementation of the collaborative activities increased a mutual respect and understanding, while self0reliance cultivated a sense of contributed to the establishment of an encouraging and empowering educational environment.

Providing more attention to self-reliance, application practicing learning tools experiential learning and teamwork we could achieve a remarkable success to our program. The participants have not just improved their language's skills, but also gained the required confident to continue their learning process independently. This great approach ensure that their the learners ability to improve themselves will be strong enough to improve their language abilities, usage and express themselves in a perfect method. By the end of our pregame which last for 12 weeks of training, an comprehensive assessment was conducted for the four skills . A separate assessment was done for each skills to measure the effectiveness of our methodologies. The result reflect a positive side of our successful choose to adopt these methodologies in teaching language for non-native learners and increase their level of proficiency.

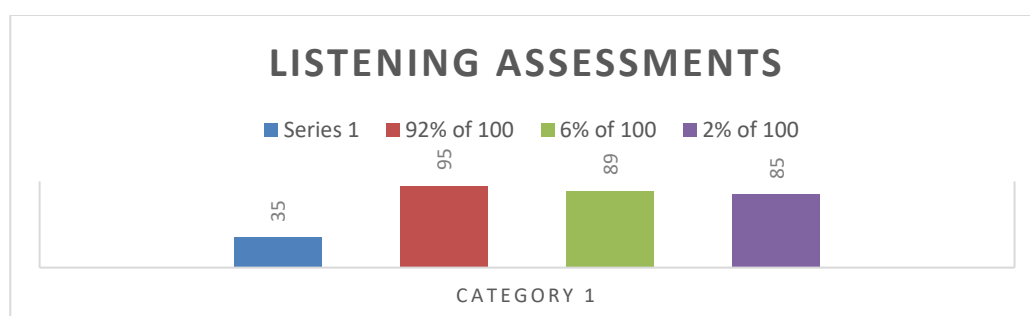
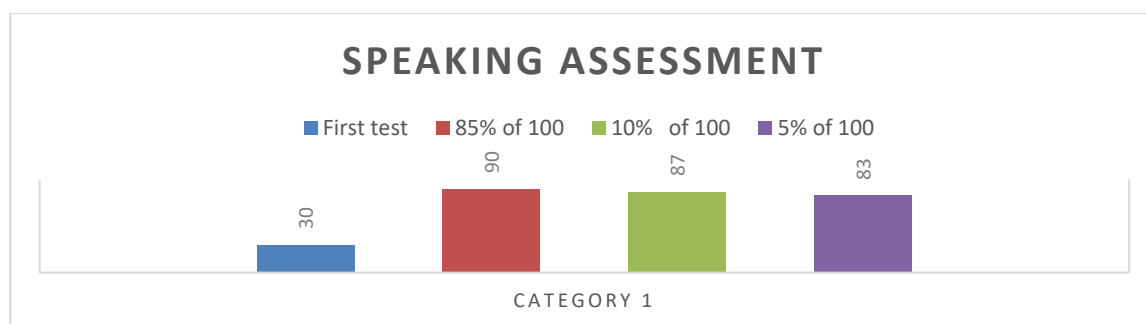
The following charts show the result gained by the trainers during the assessments after the 12 weeks of practicing and learning.



The Chart is showing the result of the assessment test for reading skills and shows that result of the first test was 35 marks as the highest marks. After 12 weeks of exercising and learning, the marks of the learners improved massively. We can notice that 70% of the participant has got 92 out of 100, 20% has got 85 and 10% of the participants has got 80 marks out of 100. By comparing the result with the first test, we can assure that the learners are more capable and understandable of this skill and have built a large basement of text comprehension.



The evaluation of writing skills shows the achievements of the learners during the 12 months and explain their abilities to express themselves in writing very well. As you can notice that 60% of the participants has gained 95 out of 100 marks, 25% of the participants obtained 90 out of 100 marks and 15% of them achieved 85 out of 100. These result validate our concern on writing skill practicing during our 12 weeks which prepared in prospective of real world communication.



The most remarkable performances have showed in both speaking and listening skills. In fact a survey was done after the exam and the purpose was to evaluate our program and see what are the weakest and strongest side from the point of view of the learners. Most of the answers referred to the skill of speaking and listening. Improving these two skills to be used in their daily life conversations allow them to feel more confident and believe on their abilities to learn other skills with the same believe and strength they did. Therefore, the two charts show the marks of the learners after 12 weeks to be the higher from the other two skills. Increasing the time to learn new words and adopting the collaborative methodology that allow for the learns to use them among teamwork and pairs discussion was very affective.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes the significant progression in English language teaching methodologies, proving that both traditional and modern approaches hold valuable roles in language education. Traditional methods, characterized by their focus on grammar rules, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and teacher-centered instruction, continue to provide an essential foundation for learners. These methods enable students to develop a strong understanding of the structural components of the English language, which is critical for mastering reading comprehension, writing accuracy, and overall linguistic correctness. The organized and systematic nature of traditional approaches ensures clarity and consistency in learning, particularly beneficial in classrooms with large groups or learners requiring additional guidance.

Conversely, modern teaching methods—such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning (TBL), and technology-enhanced instruction—prioritize real-world communication, student interaction, and practical application of language skills. These learner-centered strategies engage students more actively, encouraging them to use English in authentic, meaningful contexts. By incorporating collaborative tasks, role-plays, and problem-solving activities, modern methods foster fluency, confidence, and communication competence, shifting the focus from mere grammatical correctness to effective meaning conveyance. Furthermore, the integration of technology through multimedia tools, language learning applications, and online platforms enriches the learning environment by providing personalized and interactive experiences outside the traditional classroom.

The findings from the training program involving 100 participants reinforce the effectiveness of combining these two approaches. Learners exposed to a hybrid model performed significantly better than those who studied exclusively through traditional or modern methods. Traditional instruction provided the essential grammatical framework, while modern techniques enabled students to apply this knowledge in communicative and task-based contexts, enhancing their ability to speak and write coherently and confidently. Additionally, technology played a pivotal role in extending learning opportunities beyond classroom hours, supporting listening comprehension, vocabulary expansion, and self-directed practice.

This evidence suggests that a flexible, integrated teaching approach is crucial to meeting the diverse needs of today's English learners. Educators should balance the strengths of traditional methods—such as linguistic accuracy and structured learning—with the dynamic, interactive advantages of modern methods that foster engagement and real-life communication skills. Such a balanced pedagogy not only equips learners with foundational knowledge but also prepares them to navigate the demands of global communication effectively.

Despite these positive outcomes, this study recognizes its limitations and calls for continued research into hybrid teaching models. Future investigations should explore how different

learner demographics, educational contexts, and technological tools influence the success of integrated approaches. By advancing our understanding and refining these methods, educators can develop more effective, inclusive, and adaptable language teaching practices that respond to the evolving challenges of English language education worldwide.

In conclusion, the integration of traditional and modern teaching methods emerges as a powerful and promising strategy to enhance English language learning. This balanced approach fosters both linguistic competence and communicative ability, thereby preparing learners to achieve greater proficiency and confidence in using English across diverse contexts. As the field continues to evolve, such hybrid models will likely play an essential role in shaping the future of language teaching.

References :

- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-47.
- Chapelle, C. A. (2003). *Computer-assisted language learning: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Howatt, A. P. R. (1984). *A history of English language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Howatt, A. P. R., & Widdowson, H. G. (2004). *A history of English language teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Littlewood, W. (2007). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. Prentice Hall.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Rivers, W. M. (1968). *Teaching foreign-language skills*. University of Chicago Press.
- Skehan, P. (1996). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Skinner, B. F. (1957). *Verbal behavior*. Copley Publishing Group.
- Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Warschauer, M. (2004). *Technology and language learning: What the research says*. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 7(2), 39-49.
- Zhang, Y., & Liu, H. (2010). A comparative study of task-based language teaching and traditional methods in Chinese secondary schools. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 884-890.