Using Storytime Technique to Improve Iraqi EFL Primary Pupils' Performance in Speaking Skill

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استخدام أسلوب وقت القصة في تحسين أداء التلاميذ العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مهارة التحدث

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الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة إلى دراسة تأثير استخدام أسلوب وقت القصة في تطوير مهارات التحدث لدى تلاميذ المدارس الابتدائية في العراق.

عينة هذه الدراسة تلاميذ الصف الرابع الابتدائي خلال العام الدراسي 2018-2019. تشمل العينة 68 طالبًا تم اختيارهم عشوائيًا. تم تقسيم المشاركين إلى مجموعتين. تتألف المجموعة التجريبية من (35) طالبًا تم تدريس نصوص مهارة التحدث باستخدام تقنية وقت القصة، بينما تتكون المجموعة الضابطة من (33) طالبًا تم تدريس مهارات التحدث باستخدام الأساليب التقليدية. بنت الباحثتان اختبار قبلي وبعدي. تم تقديم الاختبارات لمجموعة من أعضاء لجنة التحكيم للتأكد من صحتها وموثوقيتها، وبعد ذلك يتم تقديم الاختبارات لعينة تجريبية تتألف من (28) طالبًا.. قامتا الباحثتان بالمساواة بين التجربة والمجموعات الضابطة ؛ في المتغيرات التالية: (عمر الطلاب، درجة اختبار تحصيل الذكاء، درجات الطلاب في اللغة الإنجليزية ومتغير الجنس).

بدأت التجربة في 20 فبراير 2019 وانتهت في 20 نيسان 2019، قامت الباحثتان بتدريس المجموعتين. وقد تم تحليل البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها باستخدام صيغة اختبار t لعينتين مستقلتين. أظهرت النتائج أن أسلوب وقت القصة كان فعالا في تحسين اداء مهارات التحدث. وفقًا لذلك، وضعت الباحثتان عددًا من التوصيات والاقتراحات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تقنية القص، مهارات التحدث.

Abstract

The study aims to investigate the impact of using storytime technique on developing Speaking skills of Iraqi EFL Primary Pupils.

The Population of this study is EFL fourth-grade primary school pupils during the academic year 2018-2019. The Sample includes 68 students who were chosen randomly. The participants were divided into two groups; experiment group that consists of (35) students who were taught speaking skill by using storytime technique while the control group consistes of (33) students who were taught speaking skills by using traditional methods. The researchers constructed pre and post-tests. The tests have been given to a group of jury members to ensure their validity and reliability, after that the tests are given to the pilot sample which consisted of (28) students. The researchers did the equalization between the experiment and control groups; in the following variables: (students' age, intelligence test score, students' scores in English and gender variable).

The experiment started at the 20th Feb /2019 and ended at the 20th. Apr.2019, the researchers themselves taught the two groups. The data obtained were analyzed by using t-test formula for two independent samples. The results show that the storytime technique is effective in improving speaking skills' achievement. Accordingly, the researchers set a number of recommendations and suggestions.
Keywords: Storytime Technique, speaking skills.

1.Introduction
1. 1 The Problem of the Study

Speaking or communicating with people is very important in a daily life. Through speaking, people can express thoughts, idea, feeling and maintain social relationship with others. When someone makes an error in their language, it causes misunderstanding, therefore speaking can highly influence communication. Based on the British council report in Syakir (2007), more than two billion people use English to communicate. Therefore, the need of speaking is quite important.

According to Brown(1994), speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing,receiving and processing information ¨. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purpose of speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Speech is used to communicate. People use speaking every day and each places to communicate with the other human from a child until an adult with formal language or not.

The basic premise of English for Iraq course is that primary school pupils learn English for the purpose of communication. "The process of communication requires a clear and explicit focus on the actual development of all four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing" (Harris et al., 2009:8).

Among these four skills, speaking is regarded as the most vital and necessary for pupils in both a classroom context and an extracurricular environment.

Speaking skill is the ability to communicate something orally in which the act is built by replies or student-initiated questions or response. It involves identifying the students' fluency and accuracy. Fluency refers to rapid, efficient and accurate word recognition that the students use to speak while accuracy is the ability to produce correct sentences using correct vocabulary. Therefore, there are two elements of speaking skill that used to assess the enhancement of the students speaking skill, they are, fluency and accuracy.

Based on pre-observation of the researchers as they are teachers, some students think that activity speaking is boring because they only listen or speak with the teacher instruction or maybe they must follow the teacher's order. It can be proved by an interview with the teacher, there is some trouble in applying speaking skill how to speak correctly with correct grammar, correct pronunciation, and correct stressing form. The students learn speaking skill who they found some trouble. First, they have to master their vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery will be affected by their fluency in speaking skill. Second, most students were feeling shy when they have spoken in front of the class because they are afraid when their friends bullying them if someone makes a mistake. Based on the observation above, the researchers propos the appropriate technique to teach speaking.

The teacher needs to think and find a good solution to the problems. Therefore, the researchers decide to make research in administering the good techniques for teaching speaking, because speaking cannot be done only by using a theory, but also by requiring practice effective way. The class can be successful if the teacher can choose the best technique in giving information and teaching materials for the students. The ability of teachers in using techniques will influence the students' achievements. One of the suitable techniques that can be used by the teacher to solve the problem in speaking is storytime technique. By applying this technique, the students will be more active in speaking in front of their colleague.

1.2 Aim of the Study
The present study aims at investigating the effect of story time technique on Iraqi EFL pupils' speaking skills.

1.3 Hypothesis

The aim of the present study will be achieved by verifying the following hypothesis:

There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the subjects of the experimental group who are taught speaking according to story time activities and that of the control group who are taught speaking according to the prescribed method speaking posttest.

1.4 Limits

The present study is limited to Iraqi EFL fourth-grade primary school pupils during the academic year 2018-2019. The materials are taken from their textbook 'English for Iraq'.

1.5 Value

The value of the present study stems from the significance of learning to read as an essential aspect of the process of teaching EFL. The speaking skill is very important to be mastered by learners of a foreign language. The current study may also be valuable for teachers of English, teacher trainers, educators, and EFL learners and textbook designers.

1.6 Procedures

To achieve the aim and verify the hypotheses of the current study, the following procedures will be adopted:

1. Selecting a sample of EFL students from fourth-grade primary schools.
2. Dividing the selected sample of students into two groups (an experimental and control group),
3. Choosing a suitable experimental design,
4. Constructing a pretest and posttest in speaking and ensuring its validity and reliability,
5. Administering the pretest to the students to assess the level of the students in speaking,
6. Teaching speaking to the subjects of the experimental group by using STT (Storytime Technique).
7. Conducting the posttest to the subjects of both groups to find out whether the suggested technique has any effect on the subjects or not,
8. Analyzing the collected data to get results by using suitable statistical tools, and finally.
9. Interpreting the obtained results to come up with conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

2. Speaking Skill

According to Nunan (1991: 23), speaking is described as the activity or the ability to express oneself in the situation, or the activity to report acts or situations in precise words or the ability to converse or to express a sequence of ideas fluently.

Speaking is known as an oral skill that processes in conveying one feeling or ideas to others with verbal language. Chaney, as quoted by Berutu and Sumarsih (2013), states that speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. It means that effective speaking needs to be able to process languages in their own heads and involves a good deal of listening and understanding. Many people also use speaking in some different purpose, some people speak in the conversation, for instance, to make social contact with people or built social relationship with other people. In this case, speaking use to improve the students speaking skill effectively, known from the fluency and accuracy.

Brown and Yule in Ali (2013) said that "Speaking is to express the needs request, information, service, etc." From that statement, the speaker says words to the listener not only to express what in their mind but also to express what they need information service. Therefore, communication involves two or more people: sender and receiver. Speaking can be a way to share information, ideas, opinions, views, or feelings. So, it is important that everything we want to say is conveyed in an effective way.

Kurniawan (2014) states that speaking means that oral communication in giving ideas or information to others. The act of speaking involves not only the production of sound but also the gesture and the movement of muscles of the face and indeed of the whole body. The statement shows that speaking is influenced by many internal factors.

2.1 Kinds of Speaking

1. Speaking Performance

Manser in Budiayarno (2014), states that performance is the person's process or manner of play. Therefore, the researchers may conclude that speaking performance is the way of one's manner in speaking.

2. Speaking Competence

Manser in Budiayarno (2014), defines competency as the ability, skill, and knowledge to do something. Then, through this basic definition, the researchers also may conclude that speaking competence is one's ability to speak which is supported with adequate skill and knowledge and it is not assessed by how is delivered.

2.2 Elements of Speaking

Harmer in Aini (2014) categorized those things in six skills, they are:

1) Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write. Vocabulary also refers to the words we must understand to communicate effectively.

2) Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the speaking elements that have a strong relation with articulation, stress, and intonation. Pronunciation is the act or result of producing the sounds of speech, including articulation, stress, and intonation.

3) Grammar

Cook (2009) defines these types of grammar such as perspective grammar, traditional grammar, structural grammar, and grammar as knowledge. Another definition, grammar is the study of language which deals with the forms and the structure of word (phonology) and with the customary arrangements in phrases and sentences (syntax).

4) Fluency

Fluency refers to how well a learner communicates meaning rather than how many mistakes they make in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Fluency is often compared with accuracy. Syukri (2015) stated that fluency refers to rapid, efficient, accurate word recognition skills that permitted a person to construct the meaning of a context. This definition shows the strong correlation between fluency and comprehension. Therefore, fluency is highly complex ration relate mainly to the smoothness of continuity in discourse.

5) Comprehension

The last speaking element is comprehension. Comprehension is discussed by both speakers because comprehension can make people get the information that they want. Comprehension is defined as the ability to understand something by a reasonable comprehension of the subject or as the knowledge of what a situation is really like. Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that there are five elements needed for spoken production, they are vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and comprehension.

3. Storytime Technique

The storytime activities are feeding the pupils interest in storybooks and enhance the pupil's language. It represents a great method to transmit information. The story techniques can be used in a lot of another curriculum for example math's, science and social studies. (Read, 2011:3-7).

Most parents know that speaking to your child for fifteen minutes every day is one of the most important activities you can do with your preschooler to help her learn to read and succeed in school. But what you may not know are some of the secrets teachers use during storytime to teach important early literacy skills to their kids(Education.com Updated on Sep 17, 2013).

3.1 Aims of Using The Storytime Technique

It aims to provide feeding for the pupils' interest in storybooks and enhance the pupil's language to transmit information and motivate the pupils. Storytime includes detail picture, finger puppets picture puppets, marionettes toys, hand puppets, costumes and various props that can help to focus attention on the story. They help to support the story because the pupils communicate with the story better when they feel, see, touch objects.

4.Procedures and Methodology

Design of the Study, the experimental design is a "blueprint of the procedure that enables the researcher to test his hypothesis by arriving at valid conclusions about relationships between independent and dependent variables" (Best and Kahn, 2006:177).It is very hard to arrange a true experimental design, particularly in school classroom experimental research. For this reason, the current study adopts one of the quasi-experimental designs, which is "the pretest-posttest non-equivalent groups". Discussing the design in question, (ibid:183) mention that "this design is often used in classroom experiments when experimental and control groups are such naturally assembled groups as intact classes, which may be similar". To carry out the experiment of the present study, two classes in an intermediate school were selected by tossing a coin. One group was served to be experimentally taught by using storytime technique, whereas the other was served to be the control group taught by using the recommended method of teaching. Prior to the introduction of the storytime technique, both groups were submitted to a pre-test. And again at the end of the experiment, a post-test was conducted to see whether there is any significant difference between the two groups or not.

4.1 Population and Sample of the Study

The study population is the fourth- grade at the primary schools for girls in Kirkuk province during the academic year (2018-2019). Al- Bayader primary School was chosen to be the sample of this study. The number of students is (78) divided into three sections A, B, and C. Two sections were selected randomly to represent the experimental (section A)and the control (section B) groups. There are (35) students in group A and (33) students in group B. After excluding the repeaters in each group, the number of students has become (33) in group A and (32) in group B.

4.1.1 Equivalence of Subjects

The two groups were equalized by controlling some variables which may affect the experiment outcomes. These variables are students' age (measured in months), parents' educational level, and students' English scores in the first-course examination of the same academic year.

4.1.2 Controlling Extraneous Variables

The researchers attempt to manipulate the influence of these variables. Extraneous variables are independent variables that have not been controlled. Therefore, the investigator's task is to eliminate their effect. (Tavakoli, 2012: 217).

1.History
2. Experimental Morality
3.Maturity
4. Selection Bias
5. Instrumentation

4.3 Instructional Material

The researchers have adopted the material taken from English for Iraq, Book 4. Units 4, 5,6 and 7 of the student's book and activity book are used in the experiment for both groups EG and CG. She taught them unit4, 5and 6.

4.4 Research Instrument

1) The Performance Test

It is defined as the assessment of the knowledge of an individual in a particular area content area, skill or accomplishment in a particular curriculum, time frame, and material. They can also help in diagnosing the level of students and what they need to develop and work on (Brown.2003).

The performance test was constructed by following these steps:

- The purpose of the test: the desire for constructing the test was to measure students' speaking skill aptitude in the English language by depending on the behavioral objectives specified by the teachers' guide.
- Determining test items: the test items were determined by the researchers to be 25 test items and prepared a scoring scheme for the test.
- The test was designed by depending on the revised Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives.

2) Pilot Test

The researchers chose the students of two schools that are located near the main school on which the experiment was conducted. The two schools were Babylon intermediate school and Al-Rahman and on (50) student from each school. The test items were statistically analyzed and found that the item difficulty ranged from (0.76- 0.31) by which the test items are considered valid in difficulty. The item discrimination ranged from (0.82- 0.33) which is accepted also.

3) Conducting the test

4.4.1 The Pre-test Final Administration

Both students of the experimental and control groups were pre-tested on the 20th of February 2019. This pre-test aims at comparing the scores of the students' achievement in the pre-test with those in the post-test. As a result, the researchers tested and scored the sample of the study.

4.4.2 The Post-test

Students of both groups (the experimental and control ones) were post-tested on the 20th of April 2019. The same pre-test procedures were followed in conducting the post-test, namely scoring scheme, validity, pilot study, item difficulty, item discrimination, and reliability. It is worth mentioning that the post-test also was seen by a jury of fifteen specialists in linguistics and TEFL methodology.

4.4.3The validity of the Tests

One of the most important criteria that must be taken into consideration when selecting or constructing a test is its validity. Validity is the degree to which conclusion drawn from the outcomes of a particular assessment is suitable, expressive, and significant to the assessor's intention Gronlund (1998: 226). In other words, validity pertains to the degree to which an exam assesses what it is intended to assess. This means that you have to test what you teach and how you teach it Coombe(2010: xxii). In terms of classification, Brown (2010: 30-6) classifies validity as criterion-related, face, consequential, construct and finally content validity (Hammad, et al.2018).

4.4.3.1 Criterion-related Validity

consists of concurrent validity and predictive validity. According to Mousavi (2009: 247) face validity refers to: the degree to which a test looks right, and appears to measure the knowledge or abilities it claims to measure, based on the subjective judgment of the examinees who take it, the administrative personnel who decide on its use, and other psychometrically unsophisticated observers. The test was seen by a jury of twenty specialists in linguistics and TEFL methodology in order to ensure its face validity. Those experts were asked to decide the face validity of the test and state their suggestions about the suitability of the test and its items to the students' level. The jury members agreed that the test is valid in its face and its items are suitable for the students' level except for some modifications which are taken into consideration.

5. The Results

The students of the experimental group who studied according to the storytime technique are superior to the students of the control group, who studied according to the guided method in the performance test, thus rejecting the first null hypothesis and accepting the alternative null hypothesis: (There is a statistically significant difference at the level of (0.7) And the average score of students in the control group who study according to the guided method in the English test). This is consistent with the studies that confirmed the superiority of the experimental group studied according to storytime technique to those of the control group, which was taught according to the recommended way as the study of.

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