

## **EVALUATION OF FIFTH GRADE TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE IN TEACHING THE ORAL**

### **SKILLS IN " ENGLISH FOR IRAQ " CURRICULUM \***

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**Abstract:** The present study aims at evaluating the fifth grade teachers' performance in teaching the oral skills of "English for Iraq" curriculum. In the light of the aims, the present study hypothesised that there are significant statistical difference between the pre and post tests for both skills. Therefore, two hypotheses are posed. To examine the validity of these hypotheses, a sample has been randomly chosen from the fifth primary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in the city of Mosul. The sample consisted of (20) EFL teachers with the same number of pupils. Each teacher was evaluated by the researcher twice: First, before attending the preparation course of the new curriculum, and Second after attending it. The researcher has prepared the main requirements of the present study, specifying the teaching materials which consisted of oral lessons, observation checklists were designed; one for Listening skill and one for Speaking skill. The findings of the analysis indicated that: There was a significant statistical difference between the pre-test and post test of teaching the oral skills. This indicates the impact of EFL teachers on teaching the new curriculum "English for Iraq".

**Keywords:** Communicative Language Teaching, Teacher's Role, Teaching Aids

#### **تقييم أداء معلمي الصف الخامس في تدريس المهارات الشفوية في منهج " الانكليزية لأجل العراق "**

الملخص: تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تقييم أداء معلمي الصف الخامس الابتدائي عند تدريس المهارات الشفوية باستخدام المنهاج الجديد " الانكليزية للعراق ". لقد تم صياغة فرضيتان في ضوء اهداف الدراسة . ولاختبار صحة هاتين الفرضيتين , تم اختيار عينة عشوائية من معلمي الصف الخامس للغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في مدينة الموصل . تكونت العينة من (20) معلم لغة انكليزية كلغة اجنبية مع نفس تلاميذهم . كل معلم تم تقويمه من قبل الباحث مرتين : اولا , قبل حضور دورة الاعداد للمنهاج الجديد , والثانية بعد حضور الدورة . قام الباحث بإعداد المتطلبات الرئيسة للدراسة الحالية , وتحديد المواد التعليمية التي تتكون من دروس شفوية , حيث تم تصميم قوائم الملاحظة , واحدة لمهارة الاصغاء وواحدة لمهارة التكلم . أما نتائج التحليل فقد اشارت الى ما يلي :- ظهر فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية هامة بين الاختبار القبلي والاختبار البعدي لتدريس المهارات الشفوية , مما يدل على تأثير تدريس منهج " الانكليزية للعراق " من قبل معلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية .

## **1. Introduction :**

Teaching English as a foreign language is considered one of the most crucial important subjects in many countries specially in Iraq . The main objective of teaching English is to enable the Iraqi learners communicate orally and successfully . We can observe this importance through the changes in curricula which have been taking place during the last decade . In spite of these changes in curricula , the learners' performance have been disappointing since many teachers still do not know how to follow the speedy developments occurring in language teaching . This is reflected in the weakness in English language performance . The problem is that most learners are far from reaching the level of proficiency , although they have been learning English language for a long time in their different levels of study . In 2013 , the Ministry of Education in Iraq adopted a new modern curriculum " English for Iraq " for teaching English as a foreign language ( EFL ) . The researcher in the present study

is trying to examine how the fifth grade teachers of EFL are teaching the new curriculum and the impact of that curriculum on their performance . This can be summarized in the following question :

Is there any significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test of teaching the oral skills namely listening and speaking ?

## **2. Aims of the Study :**

The current study aims at :

Observing and evaluating the fifth grade teachers' performance when teaching the oral skills using the new curriculum " English for Iraq " .

## **3. Hypotheses of the Study :**

- 1- There is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test for listening axis .
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test for speaking axis .

## **4. Limits of the Study :**

This study is limited to :

- 1- Fifth grade teachers in the primary schools of Mosul city for both sides( left & right ) during the first term of the academic year 2017-2018 .
- 2- " English for Iraq " Book 5 , pupils book .

## **5. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching:**

The goal of most methods and approaches is to enable the learners to learn to communicate . Generally speaking , learners can produce sentences accurately inside the class , but cannot perform them accurately when genuinely communicating outside the classroom . It is to be noted that being able to communicate needs more than mastering linguistic structures . Many linguists approve the need for creating the Communicative Language Approach which seeks to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching (Hymes , 1972) . It is clear that communication requires students to

perform certain functions such as promising , inviting , declining and invitations within a social context (Wilkins , 1976) . Students may know the rules of linguistic usage , but be unable to use the language (Widdowson , 1978) . This approach aims to put into practice procedures for the four language skills namely (listening , speaking , reading and writing ) that recognize the interrelation of language and communication . It is very important to know what is meant by Communicative Language Teaching ( CLT ) . Different researchers have presented their view points in relation to communicative language teaching . Larsen-Freeman (2000) , for example , argues that CLT refers to a theoretical view of a communicative approach by promoting communication . Freeman ( 2000) , in addition to that , states that communicative competence is the main objective of teaching any language , by recognizing the independence of communication and language .

Savignon has already defined communicative language teaching as purposes and procedures in classroom learning , which are built on the theoretical concept : " communicative competence , basically means expression , interpretation and negotiation of meaning . " ( 1971 : 9 ) .

According to Richards (2006 : 13) the communicative approach appeared during the 1970s and its main principles at that time were the following :

- 1- Make real communication the focus of language learning .
- 2- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know .
- 3- Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building .
- 4- Up his or her communicative competence .
- 5- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.
- 6- Link the different skills such as speaking , reading and listening together , since they usually occur so in the real world .

In the application of these principles in the classroom , Richards (2006) asserts that new techniques and classroom activities were needed , as well as new roles for teachers and students in the classroom . Instead of using activities , which required memorizing the exact phrases and repetition , some activities were required in which students could negotiate meaning and interact significantly .

## **6. Defining Communicative Competence**

Communicative competence can be defined as the ability to use language , or to communicate , in a culturally-appropriate manner in order to make meaning and accomplish social tasks with efficacy and fluency through extended interactions.

The term " Communicative Competence " was coined by Dell Hymes (1972) . Communicative competence , then , is that aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and negotiate

meanings interpersonally within specific contexts .

Savignon (2002) mentions that Hymes uses CC “ to represent the ability to use language in a social context , to observe sociolinguistic appropriateness ”and maintains that Hyme's focus was not language learning but language as social behavior ” (p.2) . The farthest goal of English language teaching is to develop the learner's communicative competence which will enable them to communicate successfully in the real world . Successful communication refers to passing on a comprehensible message to the listener .

Moreover , this approach essentially focuses on the development of communicative competence as its main objective through the foreign language as a means of communication in the class sessions .In this sense , Canale and Swain (1980) explained the communicative competence

based on four dimensions which assembled importance in the Communicative Language Teaching approach . These dimensions were defined as follows :

1- *Grammatical competence* : it refers to the ability to make good use of grammatical rules established in order to produce and understand a message .

2- *Sociolinguistic competence* : it consists of the ability to use language in any social context .

3- *Discourse competence* : it refers to the ability to connect a set of ideas correctly to understand , interpret and exchange messages .

4- *Strategic competence* : it consists of being able to use abilities and communication strategies as a result of a lack of language ( vocabulary , grammatical points , etc. ) .

The basic goal behind using the above skills is to be able to understand and being understood at the same time . Therefore , communicative competence must be the core issue when it comes to teach a language .

## **7. Role of the Teachers within a Communicative Language Teaching :**

According to Prieto (2008) , at the time of teaching practice , teachers should give themselves this practice with the attitude of being an element of the class rather than the main one . The teacher should conceive the teaching-learning process as a community matter , in which all members of the group should participate . In this way , Prieto states that : " communication between the students and the teacher will be enhanced , resulting in greater interaction and , certainly , a greater quality in the formative process of the group as a whole . " (2008 : 334)

According to J. Harmer (2003) , the teacher has several roles in the classroom . The teacher , then , can be a controller , an organizer , an assessor , a prompter , a participant and resource .

**A- Controller** : teachers as controllers are in charge of the class and of activities going on in groups . This role is useful during the accurate reproduction stage of the lesson and in frontal activities .

**B- Organizer** : one of the most important roles that the teachers

have , is to organize the students to do various activities . It involves providing the learners with information , defining the work – forms in the classroom and organizing teaching materials .

**C- Assessor** : the teacher has to assess his students performance , as a major job, to see how well they are performing and how well they have performed .

The different types of error correction must be distinguished . At the accurate reproduction stage , where the teacher is totally in control , is the best time for correcting each student error or mistake .

**D- Prompter** : the teacher here needs to encourage the learners to participate in a role play activity or to make suggestions about how students may proceed in any activity . The role of prompter has to be performed with discretion not aggression so as not to make the learners lazy and passive .

**E- Participant** : teachers have to participate in certain activities as a partner but

should not involve in pair-work or group –work so as not to be

prevented from monitoring the learners and performing other important roles .

**F- Resource :** several decades ago , teachers used to be the only resource of information but this role cannot be performed nowadays . Students have an access to the Internet and other important sources , so teachers add some information to the one gained from other sources . Teachers are supposed to organise and coordinate the process of acquisition , to act as a catalyst .(Harmer , 2003 : 56-63)

## **8. Teaching Aids :**

It is well known that today is considered the age of science and the development of technology . The teaching-learning process has widely affected by it . The teaching-learning process depends upon several types of equipment available inside the classroom .

Any technique that serves as a stimulus to one or more than one of the five senses namely (sight , hearing , touch , taste , and smell) can provide , clarify , make vivid , or support an idea . When a person is orally given information , less percent of that

information may be remembered few days later . While when that information given is supported by teaching aids , high percent will still be remembered some days later . Teaching aids are objects (such as a pen , a picture , or a map) or devices ( such as DVDs or computers ) used by the teacher to enhance classroom learning . So teaching aids can be defined as tools used by the teacher to improve the four language skills , and relieve anxiety , fears , or boredom .

Teaching Aids can be of different types :

### **A- Visual Aids**

This kind uses the sense of vision , such as real objects , pictures , charts , flash cards , chalk boards , slides , overhead projector , maps , drawings , video tapes , motion pictures , etc. . The teacher himself is considered one of these

kinds .

### **B- Audio Aids**

This kind of teaching aids involves the sense of hearing , For example :-

radio , tape recorder , gramophone etc. .

### **C- Audio-Visual Aids**

This one includes the sense of vision as well as hearing . Such as television , film projector , film strips etc. .

Teaching aids play a very important role in the teaching-learning process as is shown below :-

#### 1- *Motivation*

Teaching aids motivate the learners so that they can learn better through different types of teaching aids .

#### 2- *Clarification*

Teaching aids enable the teacher to clarify the subject matter more easily .

#### 3- *Discouragement of Cramming*

Teaching aids can facilitate the proper understanding to the learners which discourage the act of cramming .

#### 4- *Increase the Vocabulary*

Teaching aids help to increase the learners' vocabulary more effectively .

#### 5- *Saves time and effort .*

6- *Classroom Live and Active*  
Teaching aids make the classroom lesson more live and active

through using real objects and situations which activate learning .

#### 7- *Direct Experience*

Teaching aids provide direct experience to the learners that be will directly fixed in their memory .

8- Everyone has the tendency to forget . Proper use of teaching aids serves to get more concepts permanently .

9- Teaching aids create an interesting environment for the learners .

10- Teaching aids develop the proper image when the learners see , hear taste , and smell properly .

It is well known that learners learn through their senses , and the sense of sight plays an important and major role in this respect . For this reason ,both psychologists and educators lay much stress on the extensive use of visual aids in the teaching learning process . Using such aids helps in achieving good results . S. Pit Corder , cited in Mohammed (1975 : 47) that " it is now almost taken for granted that visual methods of teaching get better results than methods which depend exclusively upon language " .



Researchers have indicated that the efficiency of sight sense in learning ranges between (73-75 %) according to (Al-Heela , 2000 : 73) .

Ayres and Janice (1994) presented some guidelines for using teaching aids :-

- 1- Teaching aids have to be an integral part of the subject and needed for supporting and making the meaning easy to obtain .
- 2- Teaching aids must be seen and heard by all the learners .
- 3- Teaching aids should support the use of language , not as a substitution or a replace for it .
- 4- Using teaching aids should not distract learners and shatter their thoughts away from the main and specific purpose .
- 5- Teaching aids must be clear and simple .
- 6- Teachers must not make learners feel uncomfortable when handling the teaching aids .
- 7- The teacher should be more careful and aware of using live aids such as pets or young babies .

- 8- The teacher should check out the aids before attending to the classroom ,and have to determine when , how , and where to use them .

## **9. Methodology :**

### **A- The Experimental Design :**

The current study has adopted the 'observational checklist' design in terms of using it to check or examine the fifth grade teachers' performance in teaching the oral skills , namely Listening and Speaking according to "English for Iraq " curriculum . This adaption of the ( observational checklist ) is designed by the researcher to determine the extent to which the fifth grade teachers' performance matches the quality standards .

### **B- Population :**

The population of the present study included the fifth grade EFL teachers at the city of Mosul / Iraq during the first term of the academic year 2017-2018 .

### **C- The Sample :**

For the present study , the researcher has randomly chosen

twenty EFL teachers from both the left and the right bank of the city .

#### **D- Instruments :**

##### **1- Observation Checklists :**

The observation checklists were designed specifically to meet the purpose of the study . The observation checklists were divided into two parts ; one for Listening and one for Speaking .

##### **2- Time Allotted :**

Two lessons were allotted to observe each teacher as pre and post tests .

The pre-test is administered before attending the course on the new curriculum adopted by the Ministry of Education in Iraq , while the post-test is done after attending the course .

##### **4- The Teacher :**

The researcher has chosen twenty teachers randomly who are specialized in teaching English for fifth grade , with their same pupils and classrooms without any comments by the researcher .

##### **5- Prescribed Teaching Materials :**

The prescribed teaching material is the new one namely " English for

Iraq "for fifth primary adopted by the Ministry of education in Iraq . According to the aim of the present study , the researcher observes the teachers in teaching lessons related to oral skills .

#### **10- The Results :**

This study is based on two hypotheses :

##### **The First Hypothesis :**

" There is statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test for Listening axis ."

The mean scores of the difference between the pre-test and the post-test for listening skill have been calculated and tested by using Wilcoxon formula .

The results are shown in Table ( 1 ) :

**Table ( 1 ) : The Pre and Post Test Results for Listening skill**

Sq.	Pre- Test Scores	Post- Test Scores	Diff.  With Signals	Absolute  Diff.	Order of Diff.	Diff.  Signals	W - Value		Level of Sig.
							Cal.	Tab.	
1	4	6	-2	2	9	- 9	0.000	60  at  (0.05)	Sig.
2	10	11	-1	1	4.5	-4.5			
3	4	8	-4	4	14.5	- 14.5			
4	5	7	-2	2	9	- 9			
5	3	6	-3	3	11.5	- 11.5			
6	4	8	-4	4	14.5	- 14.5			
7	6	8	-2	2	9	- 9			
8	3	8	-5	5	17.5	- 17.5			
9	5	6	-1	1	4.5	- 4.5			
10	3	6	-3	3	11.5	- 11.5			
11	4	10	-6	6	19.5	- 19.5			
12	8	8	0	0	1	-1			

13	6	7	-1	1	4.5	- 4.5		(20)	
14	4	5	-1	1	4.5	- 4.5			
15	4	5	-1	1	4.5	- 4.5			
16	6	11	-5	5	17.5	- 17.5			
17	5	9	-4	4	14.5	- 14.5			
18	4	10	-6	6	19.5	- 19.5			
19	7	11	-4	4	14.5	- 14.5			
20	6	7	-1	1	4.5	- 4.5			
	5.05	7.85	W ( + ) = 0.000						
			W ( - ) = 209						

Table ( 1 ) shows that the calculated Wilcoxon –value is (0.000) , which is less than the tabulated value (60) at level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom is (20) . That is to say , there is statistically significance difference

between the Pre and Post test for Listening axis . Hence , the first hypothesis is verified .

### **The Second Hypothesis :**

" There is statistical significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test for Speaking axis . "

To examine this hypothesis , the researcher used Wilcoxon formula between the pre and post test . Table ( 2 ) shows the results :

**Table ( 2 ) : The Pre and Post Test Results for Speaking**

Sq.	Pre- Test Scores	Post- Test Scores	Diffs.  With Signals	Absolute  Diffs.	Order of Diffs.	Diffs.  Signals	W – Value		Level of Sig.
							Cal.	Tab.	
1	5	6	-1	1	4	- 4	10	60  at  (0.05)	Sig.
2	10	10	0	0	1.5	-1.5			
3	4	5	-1	1	4	- 4			
4	11	8	-3	3	10	- 10			
5	5	8	-3	3	10	- 10			
6	3	6	-3	3	10	- 10			
7	5	10	-5	5	15.5	- 15.5			
8	4	11	-7	7	20	- 20			
9	5	8	-3	3	10	- 10			
10	4	7	-3	3	10	- 10			
11	4	5	-1	1	4	- 4			
12	8	10	-2	2	6	- 6			

13	5	11	-6	6	18	- 18		(20)	
14	4	4	0	0	1.5	- 1.5			
15	4	9	-5	5	15.5	- 15.5			
16	5	11	-6	6	18	- 18			
17	5	8	-3	3	10	- 10			
18	5	8	-3	3	10	- 10			
19	5	11	-6	6	18	- 18			
20	7	11	-4	4	14	- 14			
	5.40	8.35	W ( + ) = 10						
			W ( - ) = 197						

The results in Table ( 2 ) show that the calculated Wilcoxon value is ( 10 ) , which is less than the tabulated value ( 60 ) at level of significance ( 0.05 ) and the degree of freedom is ( 20 ) . This means there is statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test for Speaking axis . Then , the hypothesis is verified .

### Interpretation and Discussion of the Results :

A statistically significant difference has been found between the pre-test and the post-test of teaching the oral skills ( Listening and Speaking ) . This indicates the impact of the course of the new curriculum " English for Iraq " on the teachers who have attended it .

Thus , the answer to the first research question ( Is there any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the oral skills namely Listening and Speaking ? ) is a big ( Yes ) . The new course can help improving the achievement in teaching English as a foreign language specially in the case of the oral skills .

## 11. Conclusion :

In the light of the findings arrived at , the present study provides a clear evidence for the positive impact and the effectiveness of the new curriculum " English for Iraq " on the fifth grade teachers , that will in turn be reflected on the pupils' achievement .

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