TEACHING SPEAKING USING GAMES FOR PRIMARY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL PUPILS IN DUHOK

LUREEN I. NASER, NOOR S. ADريس, ROYA. M. AHMAD and AYA S. AHMAD
Dept. of English Language, College of Basic Education, University of Duhok, Kurdistan region-Iraq

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the impact of the use of communicative educational games on the speaking skill of Kurdish EFL learners from age 8 to 11 in public and private schools in Duhok city. 86 fourth and fifth primary school grade pupils took part in this study. Four groups, two experimental and two control groups, from public and private schools were taught by the researchers for 3 months. The experimental groups were taught using communicative games for teaching speaking skill. The control groups were taught using the traditional way of teaching by exactly following their textbooks. The learners were assessed before the start of teaching as a pre-instruction assessment and again at the end of teaching as a post-instruction assessment to measure the rate of impact of using the communicative games compared to the traditional teaching methods. The assessment was done through a rubric that measures five variables in speaking including speech clarity, voice loudness, detailed speech, eye contact and interaction with the teacher and other pupils. The Results show a substantial improvement of all the measured variables in all four groups, the experimental and the control groups.

KEYWORDS: EFL learners, communicative games, teaching speaking, public and private schools

1. INTRODUCTION

The skills covered in a language are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Kaur and Aziz (2020), the productive skills are speaking and writing, while reading and listening are considered as receptive skills. The abilities of speaking and listening are interdependent. To be able to respond or convey an idea we need to listen mindfully. Speaking and listening skills are diurnally used in different situations to achieve everyday duties such as resolving an issue or attaining an aim. Simultaneously, language teaching has changed from concentrating on grammatical principles to the intelligibility of the communicative message (Pakula, 2019). Speaking takes a major space of interest by second-language learners since it helps to convey a comprehensive message (Dewi et al, 2017). Speaking has an essential role in communicating our message to achieve specific aims and state opinions, intentions, desires, and ideas. Furthermore, it has been argued that speaking skill is utilised two times as frequently as reading and writing (Torky, 2006). Thus, language acquisition is ordinarily assessed by language learners based on how much they believe their uttered language has enhanced. Moreover, speaking competency, which is known as a communicative skill, came to be one of the five competencies; critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration and character that each youngster in the twenty-first century should master (Pratama & Awaliyah, 2015).

Knowledge of grammatical and semantic rules of the language is not enough to learn to speak a foreign language. Foreign language pupils should know how to use the language appropriately in different situations which English foreign language learners find it challenging (Shumin, 2002). In addition to verbal communication, diverse interactions also involve suprasegmental speech components like pitch, stress, and intonation, paralinguistic components, such as gestures, body language, posture, facial expression, and so on may also be used to supplement discourse or to convey ideas on their own (Shumin, 2002). According to Maulidar et al. (2019), everyone has the freedom to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions verbally. However, communicating in the target language is not always simple, particularly if pupils lack vocabulary, confidence, and linguistic competence, which causes them to be hesitant to use the language productively. Pupils frequently avoid speaking with their classmates out of shyness, especially when teachers request that they share their individual thoughts (Krebt, 2017). In order to overcome this issue Kaur and
Aziz (2020) mentioned that classroom games provide the opportunity for shy and quiet pupils to speak since classroom games prevent the stress that learners can get whilst being an amusing way of learning. A game is an activity with rules, a goal, and an element of fun. The aim of this research is to test the effectiveness of communicative games in teaching speaking in a foreign language learning environment. Throughout this research, the researchers will show the importance of communicative games in improving the speaking skill of fourth and fifth grade primary school pupils aged (8-11) in Duhok, Kurdistan region, Iraq. Different groups of pupils were chosen from both public and private schools to see whether communicative games have the same effect on pupils of public and private schools.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the main components of communication is speaking, however, speaking effectiveness needs awareness and direction that should cautiously inspect the elements, states, and parts that the EFL teachers supply (Shumin, 2002). Pakula (2019) stated that speaking skill has a minor role in learning English compared to writing skill due to the superior standing of the written language, teaching written examinations, textbook teaching for the written language emphasis and the lack of experience in teaching speaking. Additionally, he discussed the ways to teach a foreign language (FL) according to how speaking skill is learnt and how proficiency in speaking is determined. Different approaches, techniques and materials have been used to tutor foreign language learners and improve their communication skills. Every approach depends primarily on techniques and materials utilised in an ordered chain (Suyunovna, 2020). One of those approaches is interactive games, which helps language learners enhance their speaking abilities while also increase their critical and creative potential and effective communication. Furthermore, interactive games promote the usage and learning of language in authentic contexts and aid the improvement of pair and group work capabilities (Khamrayeva, 2021). An example of interactive games could be role-play which Krebt (2017) described as a tool of communication in pairs or groups that is connected to real-life situations where the pupils gain English language development by cause of practice along with indirect knowledge. Games have a great number of advantages. However, according to Kaur and Aziz (2020), there are three key benefits of implementing communicative games for EFL pupils. First, the language games’ nature pushes EFL pupils to engage with the language instead of only practising it in the classroom. Secondly, language games provide a peaceful environment which reduces pupils’ stress level and keeps them focused. Thirdly, pupil-to-pupil communication in the target language fosters real-life interaction. This also shows that interactive games are created to promote pupils’ exhilaration and ambition. It illustrates an obvious positive effect on pupils’ participation, dependability and speaking volubility. To Sum up, the teaching and learning procedure of language games enhances a beneficial, interesting environment, and demotes learning’s tedium and stress (Dewi et al, 2017). In contrast to non-communicative activities, which only pay attention to how to formulate sentences based on grammatical terms through the learning process of English, communicative language teaching focuses on actual oral communication without too much attention to the form of grammatical patterns (Efrizal, 2012). Additionally, the work of Nainggolan et al. (2022) showed that playing English games might raise pupils’ encouragement and speaking abilities. Speaking skills can be utilised to fulfil a set of objectives. Guessing games, role play, information gap games, and board games have all been utilised. The investigation of oral production exhibits that pupils have mostly developed their speaking skills. The evolution of games has promoted class collaboration, where pupils appear more self-confident and are motivated to speak up more confidently.

When teachers want to get their pupils to speak, they should avoid focusing on grammar and vocabulary while highlighting the importance of speaking skill. This suggests that these tasks will have pupils engage in speaking, where completing the task at hand is more crucial than using accurate language. Besides, there must be a motivator to get pupils interested in communication before they can engage in these activities. This can be achieved using educational games. Games can be used to give pupils effective and active communication participation and make them feel the entertainment value (Dewi et al, 2017). As a result, teachers need try to stimulate pupils to speak by combining games with teaching
speaking skill, in the hope that this will foster positive environments, motivate pupils to participate actively, and raise the level of pupils' communicative competence.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

Two experimental and two control groups were used from both public and private schools in this research in which the researchers acted as a teacher in all groups. The study’s participants total number were 86. 34 of them (16 Girls and 18 Boys) were pupils from the fourth-grade primary school of Duhok British International School aged 8 to 10 and 52 of them (26 Girls and 26 Boys) were pupils from the fifth-grade primary school of Charsteen in Duhok with the age range 9 to 10.

3.2. Context

The period of teaching training for the researchers in the British International School started from the 10th of January till the 15th of April, 2023 continuously daily from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. As for the period of the teaching training for the researcher in Charsteen School, Duhok it started from the 15th of January till the 10th of April, 2023 continuously daily from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Ten lessons were given to the researcher in both schools to follow along with their weekly teaching hours; nevertheless, the weekly lessons at the British International School did not only include English lessons rather they contained non-core lessons such as (Social studies, PSHE and Global perspective).

3.3. Data collection

The Data collection procedure consists of two cycles, which were teaching training and observation cycles. Various communicative games which interfered with the lessons were conducted in the experimental group. On the other hand, the schools’ lesson plan was followed throughout the lesson without any interference of communicative games. An observation method was used to assess the pupil's speaking abilities via a speaking assessment rubric for young learners, Appendix 1. Pre- and post-teaching practices in both schools, namely, pre-instructions and post-instructions rubrics were also used. The rubric assessed 5 aspects in 15 pupils from each group (G1, G2, G3 and G4). These aspects were speech clarity, voice loudness, detailed speech, eye-contact and interaction with teacher and other pupils. The pupils were assessed according to 3 criteria (yes, sometimes, and no). The choice of one of the criteria was selected according to the pupil’s potential in each of the five aspects mentioned above.

3.4. Materials used: The communicative games used with the experimental groups.

The main aim of the research is to determine whether games have the same impact on pupils in two different school systems. For this reason, various games were used to stimulate the pupils to speak. The following is a list of some of the activities used inside the classroom.

1. Non-scripted role play. The pupils were divided into groups according to the number of characters the dialogue had, and the teacher equipped the pupils with the 5 story elements: plot, settings, characters, point of view and conflicts. Consequently, the groups had chosen their characters and tried to set up a dialogue with scenes to act out in front of the class later (Krebts, 2017).

2. Think it over! Activities based on problem-solving. The pupils were split into 4 groups and were told to invent a machine that could help to move water from 4 different water resources: seas, rivers, frozen icecaps, and underground or groundwater, to the houses of the citizens. Each group had to work on one different resource, draw and describe the machine that they invented to move water from their resource to the houses. Finally, each group had the chance to share their ideas and their machine, while the other groups were allowed to discuss and ask questions related to each machine (Sadow, 1987).

3. Pictures puzzle. Two different but quite similar photos were shared among the pupils; in pairs, they had to find out the similarities and differences by communicating with each other (Keshta, 2013).

4. My Hometown. The whole class was divided into two groups: A pairs and B pairs. Subsequently, the Buildings checklist, Appendix 2, Figure (A) was distributed to Group A while towns plan, Appendix 2, Figure (B), were distributed to Group B. Group A had to choose 5 things they wanted to have in the town they lived in whilst Group B had to come up with a speech to convince the pairs in group A to live in their city. Finally, the city with the most citizens was the winner (Hadfield, 1999).

5. Something old, something new. To play this game the class was divided into half; two groups A and B, cards for an old living room and old bedroom, Appendix 2, Figure (C) were given to the whole class. The old living room card is given to group A and the old bedroom to group
B. The pupils imagined that this is their living room and bedroom, after that A’s card for the new living room and B’s old bedroom were distributed to the pupils and the pupils were asked to find 8 differences between the old and new living room and bedroom, the pupils were given time to find the differences and imagine that this is their friend’s new room. They had to find the changes that their friend had made in their new room (Hadfield, 1999).

6. Job match. The class was split into two groups: A and B. The teacher started writing job descriptions on cards, Appendix 2, Figure (D); each job was written twice, and cards were given to the pupils. The pupil’s mission was to find the classmate with the same job he/she had, by walking around the class and asking the pupil the questions that were written on the card if they find someone with the same job and turned to be true, they sat down together (Hadfield, 1999).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure (1) shows the count of speech clarity before and after instruction. The number of the pupils who did not speak clearly was reduced after instruction which involved teaching speaking using games, from 11 to only 1 pupil. In addition, there was a reduction in the number of the pupils who sometimes spoke clearly from 30 to 22. Simultaneously, a remarkable increase from 19 pupils to 37 can be observed in the number of the pupils who spoke clearly during the post-instruction.

Overall, using games for teaching speaking led to an increase in the pupils’ clarity in speech. The reason behind this increase is due to the pupil’s practicing communication in the English language with other pupils who had the same language level through different communicative games. Additionally, this practice led to the reduction of hesitation which increased clarity in speech.

Figure (2) shows the count of loudness compared in two phases, pre-instruction, and post instruction. The number of the pupils who did not speak loudly was reduced during the post-instruction from 26 to 2 pupils after the high frequency that was observed pre-instruction. On the other hand, a remarkable increase was noted during the post-instruction in pupils who spoke loudly from 21 to 35 and who sometimes spoke loudly from 13 to 23.

To Sum up, most of the pupils did not speak loudly during the pre-instruction, before using the game methods while teaching speaking, nevertheless, most pupils started speaking loudly during the post-instruction. Enthusiasm while playing games had a great role in raising the pupils’ voices because of the competitive environment that energized the learners to win in the game.
Fig. (2): The loudness of speech

The count of sharing details compared between the pre-instruction and post instruction are shown in Figure (3). The number of the pupils who did not add details to their speech decreased during the post-instruction from 12 to 2 pupils. Furthermore, the number of the pupils who sometimes shared details also decreased from 27 to 22. On the other side, the number of the pupils who shared details increased significantly from 21 to 36.

Altogether, a great number of pupils were not sharing details at first but when games started to be conducted in the class, an increase was clear in the pupils who shared details during the post-instruction, where they shared details about their real life to what they learned. Communicative game’s main purpose is to let learners communicate with each other. Through this communication and teamwork, they started sharing details related to the topic of the game from their own perspective.

Fig. (3): Sharing details

Figure (4) displays the count of eye contact before and after instruction. The number of the pupils who did not make eye contact while speaking dropped during the post instruction from 29 to 9, and who sometimes made eye contact reduced from 27 to 25. Moreover, the number of the pupils who made eye contact has risen from 4 to 26 post instruction.

To sum up, a reduce in the number of pupils’ who did not make eye contact appeared during post-instruction. The rate of the elevation of the eye contact issue was weak due to the learners’ personality and self-confidence reasons, however, a remarkable increase in the number of the pupils who started to use eye contact appeared during the post-instruction specifically when they were sure about their answers and were delighted to share them.
In terms of general interaction, Figure (5), the pupils barely interacted with each other in the classroom first, which can be seen in the high number of the pupils who did not interact, which was 24 and became 16 after instruction. The main change can be noted in the marked increase of the pupils who interacted during the post-instruction from 12 to 33.

All in all, learners interacted and communicated more at the end of the teaching period due to communication’s vast role on educational games. They learned the importance of teamwork, where everyone participated including the lower-level pupils, and accepted each other’s different points of view which led to a healthier and more comfortable interaction.

Figure (6) shows the count of clarity in all four groups G1, G2, G3 and G4. Increases in the number of the pupils who spoke clearly were in G1 from 5 to 10 during the post-instruction, G2 from 6 to 10, G3 from 3 to 10 and G4 from 5 to 7. Improvement appeared in all four groups, where they spoke clearly or sometimes spoke clearly. In both G1 and G3, the experimental groups, the pupils had the opportunity to communicate with each other and to express themselves more freely, which was a useful language practice that led to this improvement in the clarity of their speech. Unexpectedly, there was a slight increase in the number of the pupils who started speaking clearly in G2 and G4 even though they were not exposed to the communicative game’s method.
The count of loudness of speech in all four groups G1, G2, G3 and G4 is shown in Figure (7). A growing number of pupils who spoke loudly can be noticed in G1 from 7 to 10, G2 from 5 to 8, G3 from 3 to 6 and G4 from 6 to 11. Whilst a decrease has been noticed in the number of the pupils who did not speak loudly, G1 from 7 to 0, G2 from 7 to 0, G3 from 9 to 1 and G4 from 3 to 1. A clear development had been observed in the 4 groups as they started to speak loudly in the class. Due to the pupil’s desire to participate in the lesson and provide the right answer to make their team win, an improvement in the pupils’ loudness and confidentiality in their answer was noted.

Figure (8) shows the count of the pupils who shared details in their speech in all four groups G1, G2, G3 and G4. More pupils shared details in G1 from 4 to 9, G2 from 4 to 6, G3 from 5 to 10 and G4 from 8 to 11 during the post-instruction. Meanwhile, the number of the pupils who did not share details during the pre-instruction reduced in post instruction in G1 from 6 to 0, G2 from 3 to 0, G3 from 1 to 1 and G4 from 2 to 1. The growth of the number of pupils who shared details was obvious in all 4 groups. They shared more details. This was the
result of the communicative environment that they had in the classroom where they had the chance to interact with each other and also discuss or debate their answers with their teacher using the foreign language.

Figure (8) shows the count of making eye contact in all four groups G1, G2, G3 and G4. The number of the pupils who made eye contact rose in G1 from 1 to 6, G2 from 2 to 9, G3 from 1 to 4 and G4 from 0 to 7. As for the pupils who did not make eye contact a reduction appeared in G1 from 6 to 0, G2 from 4 to 0, G3 from 11 to 3 and G4 from 8 to 6. All in all, there was an Advancement in the number of the pupils who made eye contact. Emphasis on eye contact, gestures, and facial expressions had to be carried out in all the groups to the learners due to their significant role in communication.

Figure (9) shows the count of the interaction between pupils in all four groups G1, G2, G3 and G4. Expansion in the number of the pupils who interacted with each other was highly noticed in G1 from 4 to 14, G2 from 8 to 15, G3 from 0 to 3 and G4 from 0 to 1. However, the
pupils who did not interact with each other during the pre-instruction decreased in post-instruction; G1 from 2 to 1, G2 from 2 to 0, G3 from 9 to 4 and G4 from 11 to 11. To sum up, the pupils in all groups made great progress during the post-instruction and they interacted more with each other without hesitation or stress. In G1, G2, and G3, the pupils had the freedom to interact in English with one another, but in G4; the control group, the pupils did not have that freedom in class due to the regulations used in public school. Additionally, G3 and 4 were not as involved as G1 and 2 due to their foreign language proficiency levels.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the following conclusions can be made.

- Pupils were more energetic and involved in the lesson when playing communicative games than in normal lessons.
- Communicative games provided the opportunity for lower-level pupils to engage and speak in the lessons more.
- Communicative games created a less stressful environment in the classroom and helped to create a stronger rapport between the teacher and pupils.
- Communicative games provided an association between pupils' lifestyles with what they are learning.
- Pupils in the public school were not as interested as the pupils in private school in such games because of their English language proficiency level.
- Interactive games fostered pupils’ self-confidence levels and their ways of sharing their own perspectives freely without hesitation.

REFERENCES

1) G1 identifies the experimental group of 4th stage pupils at Duhok British international private school.
2) G2 identifies the control group of 4th-stage pupils at Duhok British International private school.
3) G3 identifies the experimental group of 5th-year pupils at Charsteen public school in Duhok.
4) G4 identifies the control group of 5th-year pupils at Charsteen public school in Duhok.


### APPENDICIES

**Appendix 1**

**Speaking Assessment Rubric for Young Learners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaks clearly</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaks loudly</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares details</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks at the audience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacts with others</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

Fig. (A)-: Buildings checklist

Buildings checklist

What are the main things you want to have in the city you live in? Choose only five

☐ Market
☐ Swimming pool
☐ Restaurant
☐ Zoo
☐ Hotel
☐ School
☐ Bank
☐ Theatre
☐ Cinema
☐ Police station
☐ Hospital
☐ Fire station
☐ Park
☐ Ministry
☐ Patrol station
☐ beach

Fig. (B)-: Town plans

Fig. (C): Something old, something new cards for the old living room and old bedroom
Fig. (D): Job description card

- **POSTMAN**
  - Get up 7:30 am
  - Go to work 8:30 am
  - Have lunch 12:30 pm
  - Come home 4 pm
  - Go to bed 11 pm

- **FARMER**
  - Get up 5 am
  - Go to work 5:30 am
  - Have lunch 11 am
  - Come home 7 pm
  - Go to bed 10 pm

- **TEACHER**
  - Get up 1 am, 3 am, 4:15 am, 7:30 am
  - Go to work 1:15 am, 3:15 am, 4:30 am, 7:45 am
  - Have lunch 12:30 pm
  - Come home 4 pm
  - Go to bed 11 pm

- **NURSE**
  - Get up 3 am
  - Go to work 10 pm
  - Have lunch 2 am
  - Come home 6 am
  - Go to bed 8 am

- **DOCTOR**
  - Get up 1 pm
  - Go to work 7 pm
  - Have lunch 1:30 pm
  - Come home 4 am
  - Go to bed 5 am

- **FACTOR WORKER**
  - Get up 7:30 am
  - Go to work 9 am
  - Have lunch 1 pm
  - Come home 5 pm
  - Go to bed 11 pm

- **SINGER**

- **SECRETARY**
تعليم التحدث باستخدام الألعاب لطلبة المدارس الابتدائية العامة والعامة في دهوك

الخلاصة

هذا البحث يبحث عن تأثير استخدام الألعاب التعليمية على مهارة التحدث للمتعلم (متعلم اللغة الإنجليزية) من سن 8 إلى 11 في المدارس العامة والعامة في مدينة دهوك. شارك في هذه الدراسة 86 طالباً من المرحلتين الابتدائية الرابعة والخامسة. وقام الباحثون بتقييم أربعة مجموعات، مجموعة تجريبيين ومجموعتان ضابطتان، من المدارس العامة والعامة لمدة 3 أشهر. وتتم تجريد المجموعات التجريبية عن طريق استخدام الألعاب التفاعلية لتعليم مهارة التحدث. يتم تقييم المجموعات الضعيفة عن طريق استخدام الطريقة التقليدية للتدريب باتباع كتبهم المدرسية.

و جرى تقييم المتعلم قبل بدء التدريس كنقطة (لا بعد التعليم) ثم في نهاية التدريس كنقطة. تم إجراء التقييم من خلال عنوان بحث خمس مثيرات في الكلام، وتشمل وضع الكلام، وارتفاع الصوت، وأكلاهما النصي، والاتصال البصري والتفاعل مع المعلم والطلاب الآخرين. تظهر النتائج تحسنًا كبيرًا لجميع المتغيرات المقاسة في جميع المجموعات الأربعة، والمجموعات التجريبية والمجموعات الضعيفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، الألعاب التفاعلية، التعليم التكلمي، المدارس العامة والعامة، الخاص

يوخته

نتقف على نهج باكترنيا يارين ورويدرديين بيهودنيكي (كاهاندن). لسير
شيائنا ناخين فيرخازينة كورن بين كي نهماني نيمليزي دخويتين، وك زمانهن كي بانيا، ل ذيب (35) سايل ل فوتاناختيات حكومي و نا حكومي (تابيت) بين بازريه دهول 80 خويندكردين فينجين، جوار و بينج بين سرهاني بهشادي دفق فهكولن دا كربيب. جار كروب (دوو غروبين تايفكري و دوو غروبين كونترول). ل فوتاناخان حكومي و نا حكام زا فهكولن فه بو ماون (3) مانان وانه بو هاتهن كوت. غروبين تايفكري هاتهن فيركرن ب ريكا
باكترنيا بارين يوسيدنيكري بو فيكرونا شياتنا ناخين. غروبين كونترول هاتهن فيركرن ب هنام شياوزاي تقلندي كا جوهان د ينيتيكين واكية هايبي. خرخاز هاتهن فه زالكين هنة. فه كنيسيتا وريرلا. وك هملا هنكندا تيش فيكزني و ديسا ل دوماهما فيركرن. وك هلسلنا هنكندا باشي فيكزني. بو بيفاتكزا ريسا
كاريكريا باكترنيا يارين بيهودنيكريبي بو بروادر دجمل شياوزي نا شليبيين. هناسه ناندنن دين كن ب ريكا نموشييا تايفكري (وريرك) كي بيفاتا بينج زا رنكنارنين. غروبين نا ناخين دا بيدجنت زرونالا
ناختنون. بلامريا منيكي. هوروبيرني د ناختنون. دا جايفوينكراكري بو كاراكرن دا. ل ماموسا و خوندينارن ديدان. نجام باشريوونوكا بو روسا بخوين دنت ل عند مي بيكز فيهدين. فه فيكز فيكزني بو
غروبين كونترول

ئهيفي سهكرمي: خوندينارن. زمانن نيمليزي ودك زمانهن كي بانيا، يارين بيهودنيكريتي. فيكزترنا ناخين.