

THE EFFECT OF JOLLY PHONICS SONGS ON THE SPEAKING SKILL OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DUHOK

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of using Jolly Phonics songs on English-speaking skills among early-grade Kurdish students. Six groups of primary students were selected to take part. Three groups, which consisted of 45 students, were selected as experimental groups. They were taught by using the Jolly Phonics songs for three months. The other three groups, which consisted of 45 students, were selected as control groups. They were taught using traditional teaching methods. The instruments used in this study were Jolly Phonics strategy flashcards and Jolly Phonics songs. Participants' speaking skills were measured both before and after the teaching period through a specially designed rubric that measured their speech clarity, loudness, detail sharing, eye contact, and interaction. The findings of this study show that the Jolly Phonics songs effectively improve the students' speaking skills. Students have achieved very high results in all the measured variables because they learn to speak English in a fun way. Moreover, it is an effective method for all students, even those with learning difficulties.

KEYWORDS: Jolly phonics, young learner education, flashcards, speaking skill

1. INTRODUCTION

For many second and foreign language students, mastery of English speaking is a necessity (Pratama & Awaliyah, 2016). Since English has become a language of communication as well as a language of science and technology, its significance is acknowledged by people all over the world. Learning English has become an important skill for living in a globalized environment, which has raised the importance of connecting with people worldwide. This shows the need to incorporate EFL pronunciation learning activities into classrooms to provide students with situations where they can improve their pronunciation through listening and speaking in more authentic ways (Tsou, 2005).

Both teachers and students have long considered pronunciation to be a challenging subject. Because many schools believe that reading and writing are the most crucial abilities for successful learners, they have prioritized teaching these subjects. To communicate with other language speakers, one must learn how to pronounce it in a way which a variety of listeners can understand. It is crucial for children to have communicative competence because it allows them to engage in conversations, share ideas, and communicate information with others. According to Nashruddin (2013), speaking is the first ability

students strive to master. When students want to speak English fluently, they must be able to pronounce phonemes correctly, employ appropriate stress and intonation patterns, and communicate in connected discourse (Harmer, 2001).

During the early stages of language learning, learners must be able to distinguish between letter sounds and names, imitate pronunciation, identify what is being said, name objects, and understand the left-to-right direction. To aid in the process of learning a foreign language, teachers must create an effective learning environment. Additionally, teaching language-learning abilities to students in primary schools is difficult and requires carefully chosen methods of teaching. Jolly Phonics is a common method for teaching children by using a synthetic phonics approach. Instead of learning the alphabet, students learn the sounds of the 24 different letters. They are then taken through the stages of blending and segmenting words to develop reading and writing skills (Lloyd, 2005).

Jolly Phonics is taught and introduced in an organized way, going from the most basic to the most difficult one. This method has some implications for teaching at the primary level. First, students achieve very high results because children learn to speak in a fun way. Moreover, it is an effective method for all students, even those who have learning difficulties.

The aim of this study is to find out the effects of utilizing Jolly Phonics songs on teaching speaking on primary school students. This will be done through assessing students' speaking abilities and examining whether teaching Jolly Phonics songs will help them to improve their speaking abilities. The study will determine whether this methodology is useful and effective for early-grade (first and second grade) students by trying to answer the following research questions.

- Is teaching using Jolly Phonics songs beneficial in developing English-speaking skills in terms of speech clarity and loudness?
- Is teaching through jolly phonics songs beneficial for students to share details in their speech?
- Does teaching through Jolly phonics songs encourage students to interact with others?
- Do students improve eye contact when taught using Jolly Phonics songs?

It is hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in the average post-instruction scores between the experimental group students who learned English through Jolly Phonics songs and the control group students who learned through the traditional way. Students will be more motivated and study more effectively in a laid-back classroom environment.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Overview

Students learn more through interaction in dialogue rather than just learning grammar. As a result, the subjects, or themes on which their language learning is based should hold their interest and compel them to engage in more social contact. The strategies the teacher should emphasize should be engaging. These activities are typically centred on songs and poems, in the classroom for young students (Betz & Huth, 2014).

Songs can develop language skills and bring enjoyment and fun into the classroom. The enjoyment aspect of learning language through songs is directly related to affective factors. Songs can be used to explain a topic, practice language, prompt conversation about attitudes and feelings, create a homely environment, and provide flexibility and fun to learning. Songs are a technique that establishes a weak emotional filter and encourages language learning (Boothe & West, 2015). Schoepp (2001) reinforces that the affective filter needs to be weak for the best

learning to happen. A weak affective filter indicates a willingness to learn and a good attitude toward it. The learners will not seek out language input if the affective filter is strong, which prevents them from being receptive to language learning.

One way to achieve a weak affective filter and encourage language learning is through songs. As Schoepp (2001: 2) stated " songs can be used to practice a language point, stimulate discussion of attitudes and feelings, encourage creativity and use of imagination, provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere, and bring variety and fun to learning." He clarifies that songs offer a refreshing change from the usual classroom activities. Learning English through songs creates a relaxed classroom environment where the four language skills can be improved.

2.2. The Jolly Phonics Method

Jolly Phonics is a technique of teaching English that uses a variety of worksheets to enhance a variety of learning abilities, including identification of sounds and connecting it to actions and then blending these sounds by listening to the songs (Lloyd & Wernham, 2012).

This approach uses multimedia material like stories, songs, actions, gestures, and music to teach children the letter sounds. The teachers can teach and enhance multiple skills, such as listening, speaking, and pronunciation, by applying these materials.

Jolly Phonic supports the teachers in creating an engaging language learning environment and making the subject simple to acquire and understand. Songs are used in English lessons to highlight the basics of language and communication while encouraging students to speak and understand the language. Students can easily understand and remember the lyrics to songs. Using songs in the classroom has various benefits, including the following.

- There is repetition involved in memorizing and singing,
- This repetition helps them understand the words' meanings and is eventually easy to remember.
- Students are able to recognize how English is spoken without even being aware that they are learning.
- It's a wonderful technique to introduce English speaking, hearing, and comprehension basics (Schoepp, 2001).

3. METHODOLOGY

The general plan of this research is conducted as an experimental design; a pre- and post-instruction rubric is used to assess the effect of the Jolly Phonics songs on the speaking ability of second-year primary students aged 6-7. Six groups of students were selected from four schools in Duhok. The experiment took place during the second term of the school year 2022-2023.

The total number of participants in this study was 90 students of both genders. Forty-five students from three classes served as the experimental groups in this study, and 45 students from other three classes served as the control groups. All the experimental groups are taught using Jolly Phonics songs and flashcards. The control groups are taught using the traditional teaching method following the textbook.

In order to evaluate how the Jolly Phonics songs and flashcards improved speaking skills, a five-category rubric was utilized, which measured their speech clarity, loudness, detail

sharing, eye contact, and interaction. Pre- and post-assessments were conducted at two different times; the time between them was about three months. The purpose of the pre-test was to gauge the students' speaking proficiency before instruction. The post-test aimed to assess how much the instruction had affected the students' speaking abilities.

The results of the assessments and the figures were plotted using R Studio programme.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results which are shown in Table 1 display the distribution of (No, Sometimes, Yes) within the phases of Post_instruction and Pre_instruction among the participants in terms of the five measured categories of speech clarity, loudness, detail sharing, eye-contact, and interaction. The table including the categories and the corresponding percentages within each phase, demonstrate a shift in the distribution of categories between the two phases.

Table (1): The percentages of cases in each category within each phase.

		No	Sometimes	Yes
Speech Clarity	Pre_instruction	37.8	44.4	17.8
	Post_instruction	4.4	35.6	60.0
Speech Loudness	Pre_instruction	46.7	33.3	20.0
	Post_instruction	4.4	44.4	51.1
Detail Sharing	Pre_instruction	42.2	40.0	17.8
	Post_instruction	4.4	44.4	51.1
Eye Contact	Pre_instruction	31.1	51.1	17.8
	Post_instruction	4.4	40.0	55.6
Interaction	Pre_instruction	40.0	48.9	11.1
	Post_instruction	2.2	51.1	46.7

A chi-square test was also conducted to examine the association between the categories and their significance as an effect of the

instructional phase within the Experimental groups as shown in Table 2.

Table (2): Pearson's Chi-Square test results.

Variable	X-squared	df	p.value
Speech Clarity	22.60	2	< .001
Speech Loudness	22.54	2	< .001
Detail Sharing	21.13	2	< .001
Eye Contact	18.37	2	< .001
Interaction	25.08	2	< .001

4.1. Speech Clarity

It was observed that pre-instruction, most of the students were not able to speak clearly in such a way as to allow easy and accurate perception of what was being said in English. This was not only in terms of clarity in the articulation of speech. They needed to think clearly, so giving them flashcards as a facilitator helped them think more clearly and enabled them to organize their

thoughts and as a result, they spoke more clearly post-instruction. The percentage of students speaking more clearly increased from 17.8% to 60%. Instruction using Jolly Phonics flash cards significantly influenced the clarity of students' speech within the Experimental groups with a $p < .001$ (Table 2). This is also shown in Figure 1.

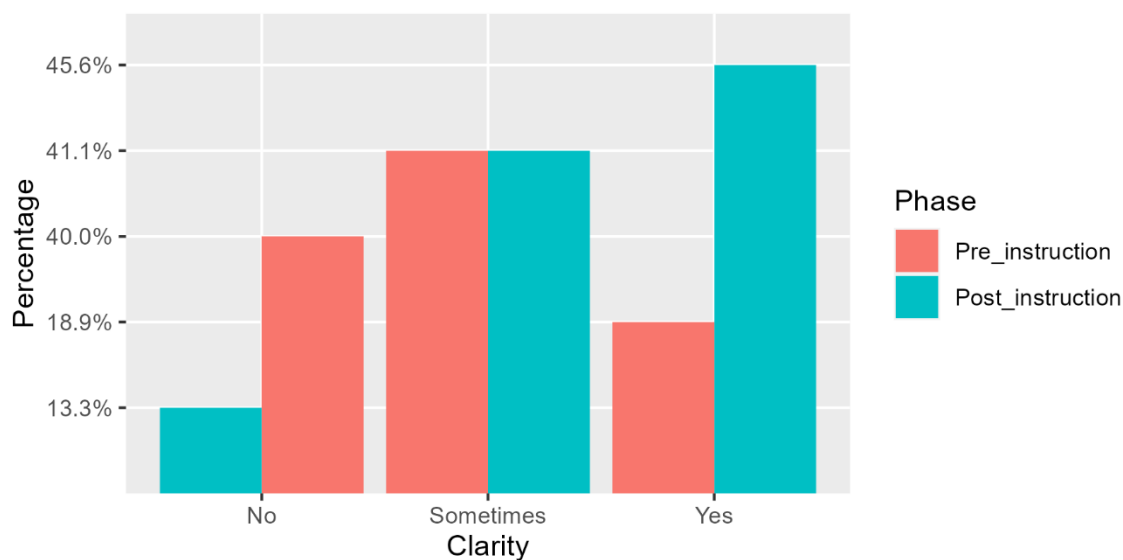


Fig. (1): Pre and post-test count of clarity within the experimental groups.

A comparison between the experimental and control groups in terms of speech clarity shows that the performance of the experimental groups was much better since there was a noticeable

increase in the percentage of students who spoke more clearly as shown in Figure 2. This could be attributed to the flashcard facilitators that they had been using.

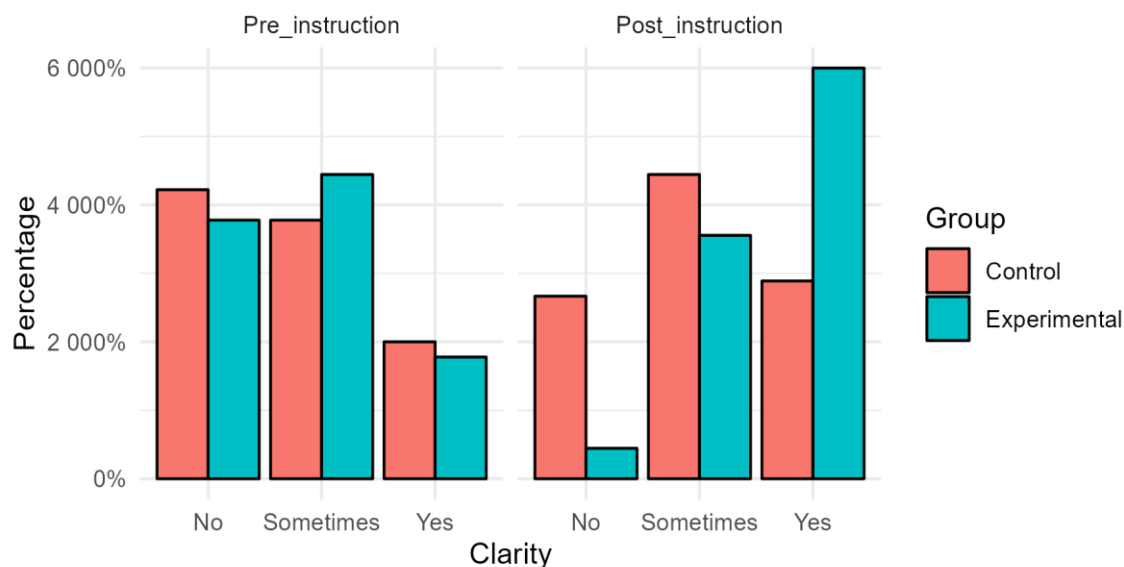


Fig. (2): Percentage of clarity by group and phase.

4.2. Speech Loudness

Students did not speak loud enough to be heard because they felt less confident or shy. The percentage of students speaking louder with confidence increased from 20% to 51.1% (Table 1). Using songs from the Jolly Phonics system has provided a relaxed classroom and built an assertive personality for the students, which encouraged them to speak loudly after the three-

month period of instruction, as clearly indicated in Figure 3.

Instruction using Jolly Phonics songs significantly influenced the loudness of students' speech with a $p < .001$ (Table 2), indicating a significant association between the loudness category and instructional phases within the Experimental group at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

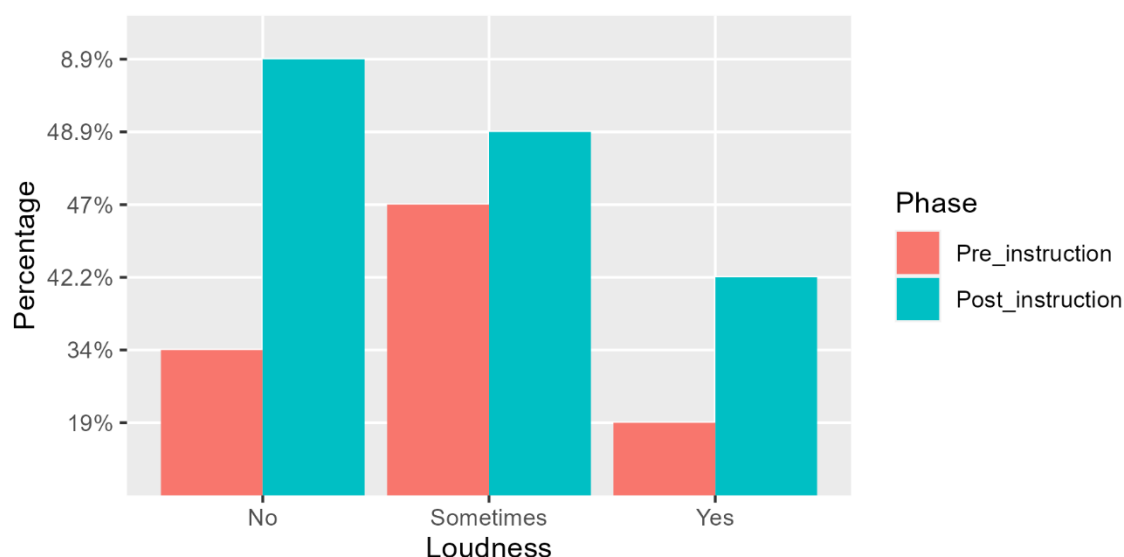


Fig. (3): Pre and post-test of loudness within the experimental groups.

The experimental groups have improved more than the control groups in terms of speech loudness. The classroom environment created a

motivated atmosphere that raised the level of students' confidence. This is shown in Figure 4 .



Fig. (4): Percentage of loudness by group and phase.

4.3. Detail Sharing

Most students were giving short answers when responding to the teacher's questions to limit the time of using English. However, at the end of the teaching period, as shown in Figure 5, more students were willing to give lengthy answers, share more details and express more. They were even sometimes eager for more questions to have

the opportunity to speak more. The percentage of students giving more details in their speech increased from 17.8% to 51.1% (Table 1). This indicates an increase in their confidence levels.

The use of Jolly Phonics songs inside the classroom within the experimental groups had a significant impact on the amount of details students shared with a $p < .001$ (Table 2).

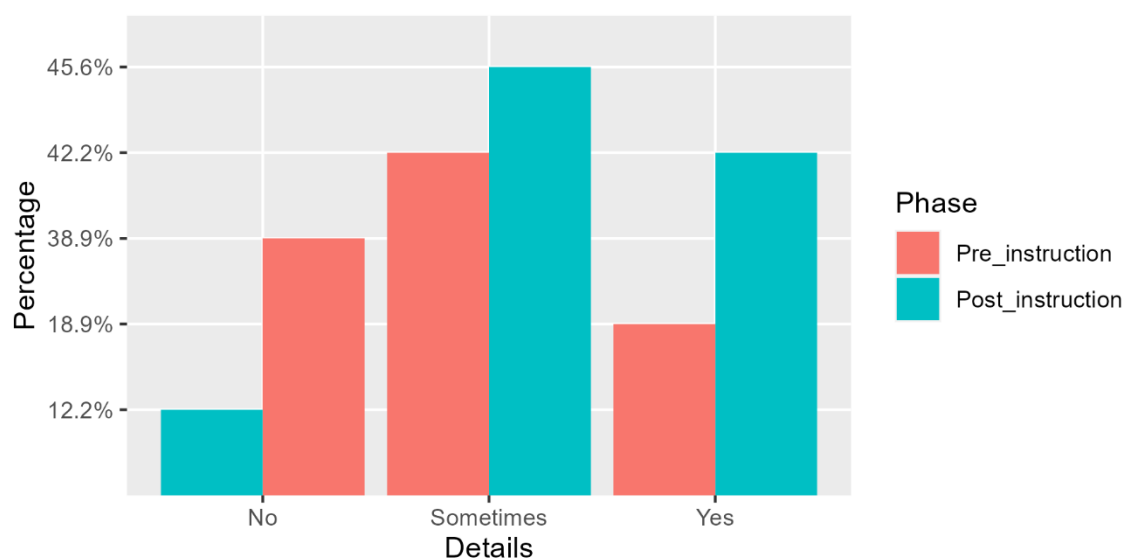


Fig. (5): Pre- and post-instruction of detail sharing within the experimental groups.

The experimental groups made better explanations and shared more details when speaking in English than the control groups, Figure 6. The control groups did not show the

same ability to express themselves in English, so they tried to use their native language sometimes inside the classroom instead of expressing themselves in English language.

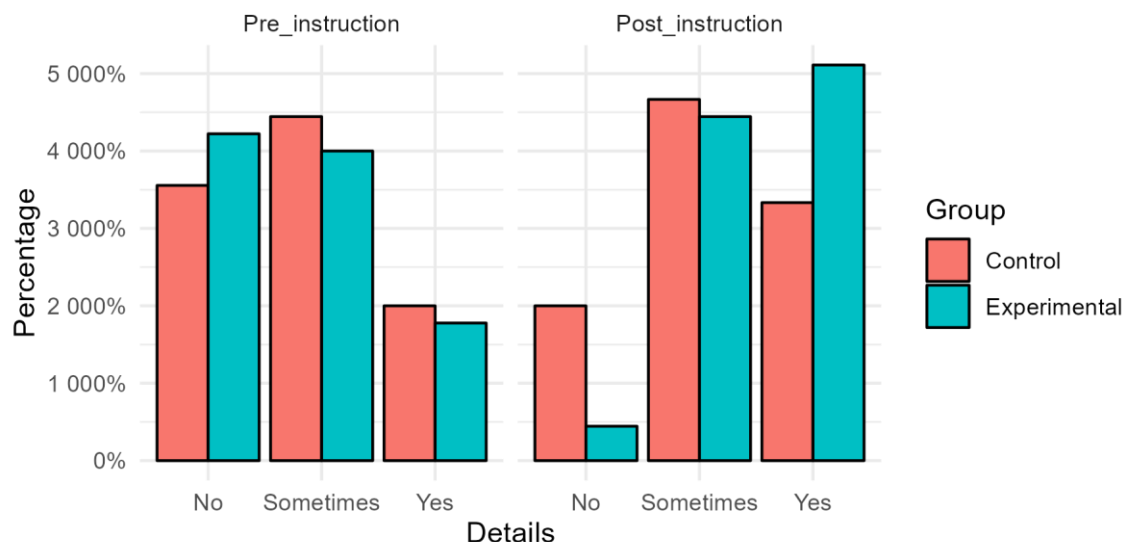


Fig. (6): Percentage of detail sharing by group and phase.

4.4. Maintaining Eye Contact

Jolly Phonics songs had a significant effect on the ability of students to maintain eye contact with a $p < .001$ (Table 2). The percentage of students maintaining eye contact during speaking within the experimental group increased from 17.8% to 55.6% (Table 1). This may also indicate an increase in their confidence levels.

Pre-instruction, most students avoided eye contact with the teacher, especially when they had social anxiety or were feeling nervous. Songs provided an encouraging environment, worked as a calming strategy, and helped them overcome that difficulty and when speaking in English. This is also shown in Figure 7.

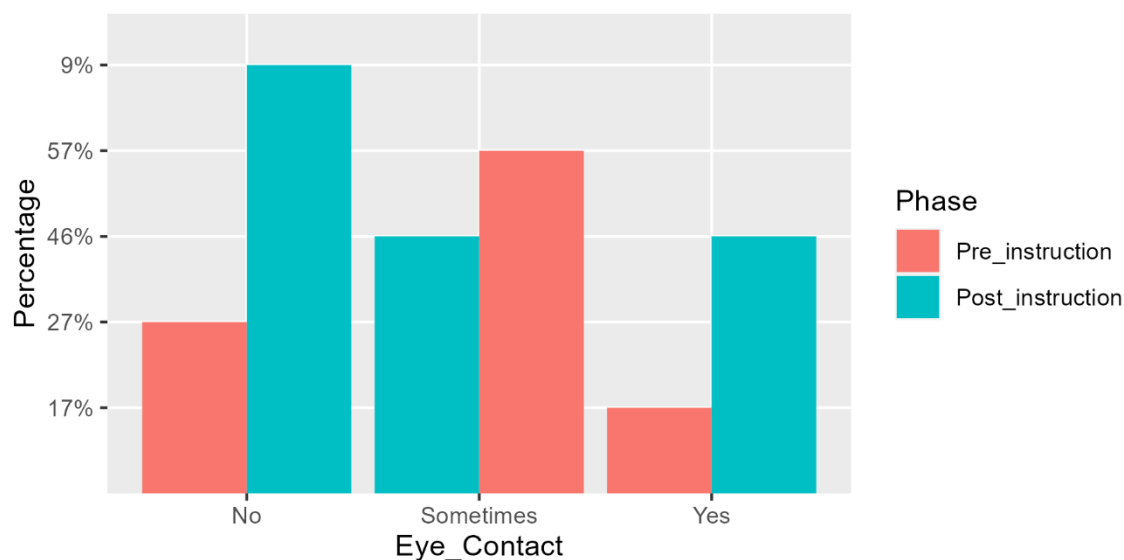


Fig. (7): Pre- and post-instruction of eye contact within the experimental groups.

The Jolly Phonics teaching method had an impact on both experimental and control groups with reference to maintaining eye contact, Figure

8. There is improvement in the ability to maintain eye contact in all groups after instruction.

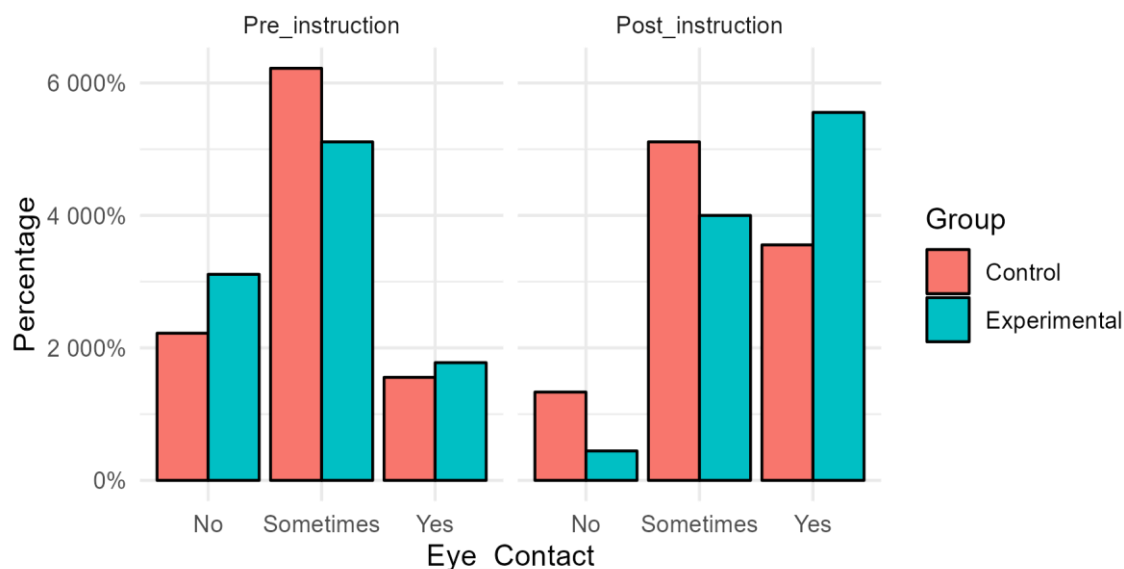


Fig. (8): Percentage of eye contact by group and phase.

4.5. Interaction

The percentage of interaction among students increased from 11.1% to 46.7% (Table 1). Instruction within the experimental groups using Jolly Phonics songs had a significant impact on the amount of interaction between students with a $p < .001$ (Table 2).

Figure 9 shows the improvement in students' interaction before and after instruction using songs. Songs do not just bring enjoyment into the class; they also give students the opportunity to activate their wide imagination and interchange more with each other.

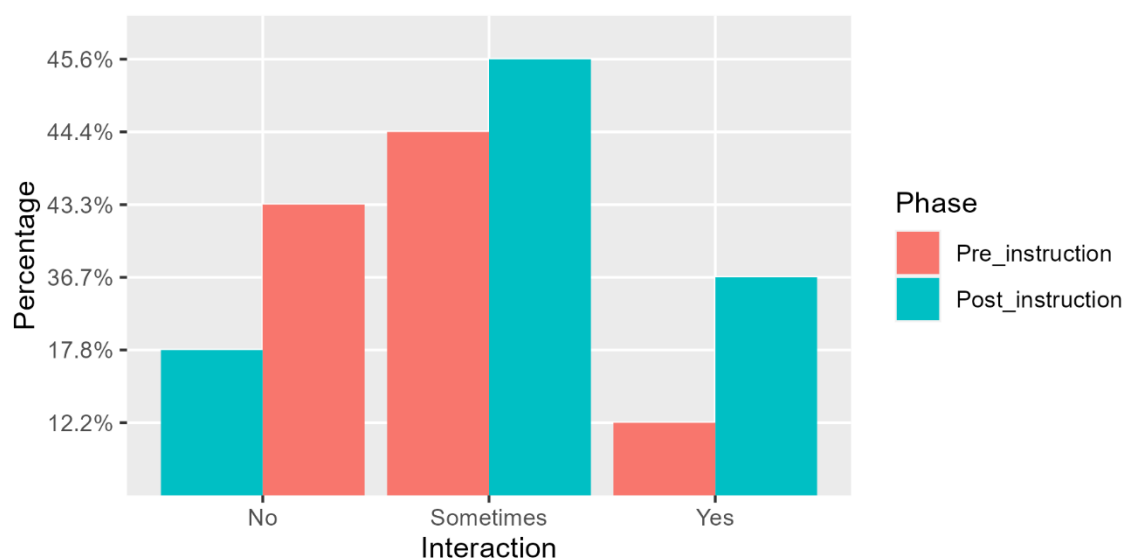


Fig. (9): Pre- and post-instruction of interaction within the experimental groups.

Most of the students of the experimental groups had been super-on in their classes in terms of interaction. On the other hand, the control

group students interacted less in the classroom, as shown in Figure 10.

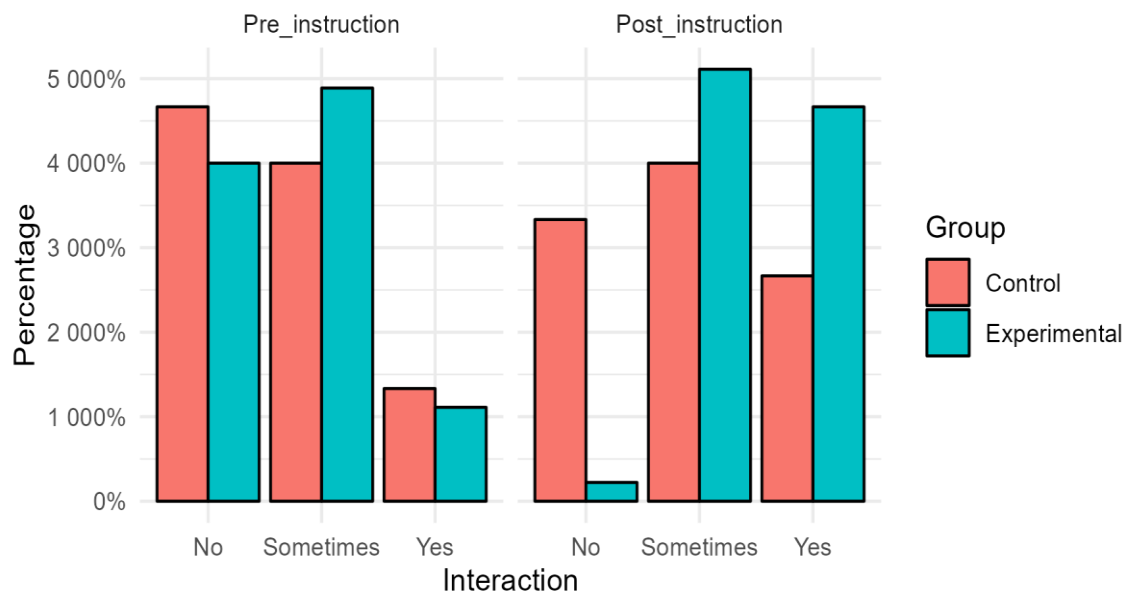


Fig. (10): Percentage of interaction by group and phase.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study investigates how teaching young students with Jolly Phonic songs affects their English-speaking abilities. The study includes four schools: two that used Jolly Phonics songs and two that used different methods. The provided data presents the results of an attempt aimed at improving speaking fluency in terms of five key measures: speech clarity, speech loudness, detail sharing, eye contact, and interaction. By comparing the findings of students before and after instruction, the improvement in each category was estimated.

The results show that the students' speaking ability have significantly increased. The instruction significantly improved speaking fluency since there is an improvement in all categories. The main conclusions of the results this paper are summarized below.

- Including songs in English lessons helps to create a fun and enticing learning environment for young students. Additionally, it helps encourage their motivation and enthusiasm for learning.
- Performing actions and movements while singing the songs creates a fascinating and enjoyable situation, allowing kids to be active learners and make the songs more remembered.
- Making use of flashcards helps students pay attention and comprehend what is being said better. Employing flashcards can be bright and vibrant, which has a tremendous impact on visual learners.

- Using songs and flashcards increases student participation in class.
- Reading skill is also improved automatically. Before instruction, most of the students could not read. However, after using jolly phonics songs and flashcards, students were able to blend words and read more fluently.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The experimental groups performed better in speaking fluency than the control groups. Students taught English with Jolly Phonics songs and flashcards have been shown to help teachers enhance multiple skills simultaneously and reach their aims since it is based on the needs of the students, allowing them to naturally engage with it.

These results show that the use of songs inside the classroom is highly recommended and can be used by early grade teachers as a great tool to engage students more and encourage them to express themselves in English more.

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کارتیکرنا سترانین جولی فونیکس لسه رناختنا قوتابیان ل قوتابخانیت دهوکی

کورتی

نارمانجا سهرهکی ژقن فهکولینن نهوه کا چاوان سترانین (جولی فونیکس) شیاپه کارتیکرنن بکهت لسه زمانن نینگلیزی ژبو قوتابین کورد ل پولین دهستپیکن، ههژی گوتنن یه کو شهش گروپ ژ قوتابخانین سهرهتایی هاتنه دهستپیکرن: کو سئ گروپ ژ گروپین بکارهاتی هاتنه دهستپیکرن کو پیکهاتینه ژ ۵ قوتابیان، نانکو نه و هاتنه فیرکرن بریکا (جولی فونیکس) بو ماوئ سئ مه هان. ههرسئ گروپ دئ وهک کارنهینای هاتنه دهستپیکرن کو پیک هاتن ژ ۵ قوتابیان نهوه گروپ هاتنه فیرکرن بریکا پروگرامن خاندنن یئ کهفن، ههرهسا نالاقین هاتینه بکارنن دقن فیربونن دا وهکی: (پلیتیت بروسک جولی فونیکس و سترانیت جولی فونیکس) ناستن نهوان هاتیه پیقان ژ بهری فیربونن و پشتی دهمن هاتینه فیرکرن، ب تابهتی پیقانا وان ب چیکهرو تابهتی کو هاتیه دیزاینکرن ژبو پیقانا :- (زهلالیا ناخفتنن بلندیا دهنکی، پشکداریا پتر پیزانینا، نیکهلیا چاقی) کار ل گهل کرن. نهجامن قن قن کولینن دیاردکهت کو سترانین (جولی فونیکس) کارتیکرن ههیه لسه باشبونا ناخفتنا قوتابیان. قوتابیان دهستکهفتهکی بلند دهستکهفتن د چیکهرو تابهت دا چونکی نهوه فیربونن ب ریکیت کهیفخوشکرن، ههرهسا دیاردکهت کو ریکهکا کاریگهره بو ههمن قوتابیان ههتا کو بو وان یئ زهمهتی د فیربونن دا ههبت.

پهقیقن سهرهکی: بکارنن سترانین (جولی فونیکس)، فیربونا قوتابینن دهستپیکن، پلیتیت بروسک، ناخفتنن

تأثیر آغاني جولي فونيك على مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب المدارس الابتدائية في دهوك

الخلاصة

الغرض الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة هو التحقق من تأثير استخدام أغاني جولي فونيك على مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية بين طلاب صفوف المرحلة الأولى من الأكراد. تم اختيار ست مجموعات من طلاب المرحلة الابتدائية للمشاركة. تم اختيار ثلاث مجموعات كمجموعات تجريبية تتكون من 45 طالباً. تم تعليمهم باستخدام أغاني جولي الصوتية لمدة ثلاثة أشهر. تم اختيار المجموعات الثلاث الأخرى كمجموعات ضابطة، والتي تكونت من 45 طالباً. تم تعليمهم باستخدام طرق التدريس التقليدية. الأدوات المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة هي بطاقات فلاش إستراتيجية جولي فونيكس وأغاني جولي فونيكس. تم قياس مهارات التحدث لديهم قبل وبعد فترة التدريس من خلال نموذج تقييم مصمم خصيصاً يقيس وضوح الكلام، وارتفاع الصوت، ومشاركة التفاصيل، والتواصل البصري، والتفاعل. تظهر نتائج هذه الدراسة أن أغاني جولي فونيكس قادرة بشكل فعال على تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى الطالب. حقق الطلاب نتائج عالية جداً في جميع المتغيرات المقاسة لأنهم يتعلمون التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية بطريقة ممتعة. علاوة على ذلك، فقد أثبتت أنها طريقة فعالة لجميع الطلاب، حتى أولئك الذين يعانون من صعوبات في التعلم.

الكلمات الدالة: استخدام أغاني (جولي فونيكس)، تعليم المتعلمين الصغار، البطاقات التعليمية، مهارة التحدث