

THE EFFECT OF USING INDEX CARD GAMES ON IRAQI EFL PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN CONVERSATION

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ABSTRACT: This study aims empirically at finding out the effect of using index card games on Iraqi EFL pupils' performance in conversation. To achieve the purpose of this study, 60 fifth primary pupils were chosen to be the sample of the present study, 30 pupils were considered to be the experimental group in which the experiment has been applied. The other 30 pupils were assumed to be the control group, in which the conventional way of teaching conversation is conveyed. The findings indicate that the experimental group subjects' performance has been found to be better than that of the control group subjects conversation on the post-test and that the experimental group subjects show statistically significant increases in the use of index card games on the post-administration of the test. On the basis of the results obtained, it is highly recommended to use index card games in teaching conversation for the second primary school students.

Key Words: Index Card Games, Conversation, Performance

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM OF THE STUDY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The Iraqi pupils, especially at the primary schools, suffer from many difficulties in learning English as a foreign language because many teachers tend to take the lion's share of the practice at the learners' expense. Some teachers think that games are a waste of time and prefer not to use them in the classroom since games sometimes have been considered only for fun, also they believe that the pupil loses all desire to play games. Vygotsky, cited in [8], mentioned that language is developed by interacting with others, and pupils cannot develop it alone. They also use resources such as their facial expression, body language, dramatization, repetition and so on [9]. Therefore, teachers should organize times when pupils can interact cooperatively, to practice the words in a meaningful context. For most pupils, the main aim of learning English is to speak the language. After all, when we say, "I speak a language," we mean to know the language well enough to be able to communicate easily in speech and hold a conversation in the language. But the achievement of speaking skills depends largely on being able to listen and understand what is said to us. A learner [1].

will have difficulty speaking English if he or she doesn't receive the proper training and organized practice in both listening and speaking [7]. Added to this, there are no studies interested in the influence of using educational games on the development of English language skills in the elementary stage. Accordingly, the problem of the current research is limited to the following question: what is the effect of using Index Card Games on the development of some English language skills?

1.2 THE AIM

The current research aims at finding out the effect of using index card games on Iraq EFL pupils' performance in conversation.

1.3 THE HYPOTHESES:

In an attempt to achieve the main aim of the current research, the following hypotheses have been introduced.

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the development of the experimental group taught by using Index Card Games in pretest and posttest of conversation.
2. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the development of the control group taught by using the conventional method in pretest and posttest of conversation.

1.4 VALUES

The study can be useful in:

- a. exploring teachers' effectiveness of using Index Card Games on developing a conversation.
- b- shedding light on the pupils' perceptions of the influence of such using Index Card Games on improving their language proficiency, in general, and on their conversation, in particular.
- c. giving insights to teachers to use Index Card Games in teaching different courses.

1.5 LIMITS:

This study is limited to

- 1.The pupils (females) of the fifth-year primary schools in Iraq during the academic year 2017-2018.
- 2.The last five units of Pupil's Book 5 (A), Pupil's Activity Book 5 (B) for fifth grade of the primary education stage in the "English for Iraq".

1.6 DEFINITION OF THE BASIC TERMS:

1.6.1. Index Card Game:

Clark [2], states that index card games can be one of the most enjoyable supplementary activities that the teacher can do with his/her class, whether he or she use them once a week or a day.

1.6.2. Conversation

"Conversation is a joint activity in which two or more participants uses linguistic forms and nonverbal signals to communicate interactively " [3]

1.6.3. Performance

According to Borman [4], the term performance can be defined as "the total expected value of an individual behavior over a standard period of time for maintaining and enhancing the psychological, social, and organizational context of work ".

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 INDEX CARD GAMES TO REINFORCE CONVERSATION LEARNING

Games are an essential ingredient for varying learning pace, relaxing, and motivating pupils. By using games, pupils can actively practice language and enjoy learning. Pupils feel less in, inhibited when they are participating in a game; most don't mind risking a linguistic mistake in a game context; rather, they focus on communicating to score a point or win. This games an excellent route for building fluency[7]. Beyond the fact that the games are fun and a welcome change of pace, they also can serve as a painless review of previously studied material. They are also invaluable in helping build the class into a cohesive group,

as long as the competitive aspect of the games is not taken too seriously. In several of games, groups of pupils have to work together toward a common goal, whether it be solving a problem, or building up points and trying to win. In the process of working together, the pupils necessarily have to interact with each other to help, support, suggest, encourage, share, and even correct and challenge each other [3], Inevitably, some teasing, joking, cheering, and play pervade the classroom. In short, the games give everyone, teacher included, a chance to play and be playful, in the language classroom, the play is useful Clark (2006: v).

Moreover, index cards have their place in speaking class, too. The teacher collects one card for each pupil and they put the name of a famous person that pupils would know on it. Then they tape one name to each pupils' back, and he or she "is" that person. After that, they give pupils enough time to walk around the room and ask each other yes/no questions about who they are. (One question per person and then he must move on to another student). If a person guesses his identity correctly, he may sit down. Keep playing until everyone has guessed who he is. To sum up, the game can be played as a team activity. One person from each team is the spoke person for the team's collective effort to remember locations. pupils can take turns being the spokesperson (Clark,2006:10; Akhsan et al, 2008:32) [6].

2.2 Teaching Conversation in English Classroom

Teaching pupils to speak a foreign language can be very rewarding, as they are less self-conscious than older learners. Pupils love to have little conversations, sing songs, and learn short phrases, and it is easier for them to attain native-like pronunciation. Pupils [5].

Also respond strongly to music and rhythm, and the teacher will find that they are more easily able to learn a chant or a song than a spoken text (Graham1986:vi). However, teachers often find speaking a difficult skill to teach, because learners have to master several different elements of language in order to say what they want: vocabulary, pronunciation, structures, functions, and so on [10]. According to Lindsay [7] states that a conversation lesson can't be done successfully without preparation and planning. The teacher may cause embarrassment and frustration for himself or herself and his or her pupils if the teacher expect them to speak on subject or topics they cannot cope with. If the teachers introduce speaking in stages and with planning and preparation, pupils will enjoy the speaking lesson and so will the teacher [7].

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The sample of this study includes a number of pupils in section A is 34, while the number of pupils in section B is 32. After excluding the repeaters in every section, the total number of the sample subjects is 60 pupils, 30 pupils in each section, as shown in the table (1).

Table (1): Numbers of Pupils in the Experimental and Control Groups

| Groups | Total | Failures | Pupils under the experiment |
|----------------|-------|----------|-----------------------------|
| A-Experimental | 34 | 4 | 30 |
| B-Control | 32 | 2 | 30 |
| Total Number | 66 | 6 | 60 |

The total number is 150 Female pupils in Alfahaa school for girls at Misan Governorate during the academic year 2017-2018

3.2 INSTRUMENTS

In order to gain information about the pupils (females) of the fifth-year primary schools in Iraq during the academic year 2017-2018, questions tests have been constructed to be the main instrument used [8]. The experiment lasted for eight weeks during the academic year 2017-2018. It started on the 18th of March and ended on the twenty-five of April 2017.

3.2.1 Parents' Educational Attainment:

Parents' educational attainment has been accounted for by giving each level of attainment a figure equal to the years that the level of attainment lasts, and as shown in the table (2):

Table (2): Representing Parents' Educational Attainment

| Level of Attainment | Figure | Level of Attainment | Figure |
|---------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| Illiterate | 0 | Secondary | 12 |
| Read and Write | 3 | Diploma | 14 |
| Primary | 6 | Bachelor | 16 |
| Intermediate | 9 | M.A, Ph.D. | 18,21 |

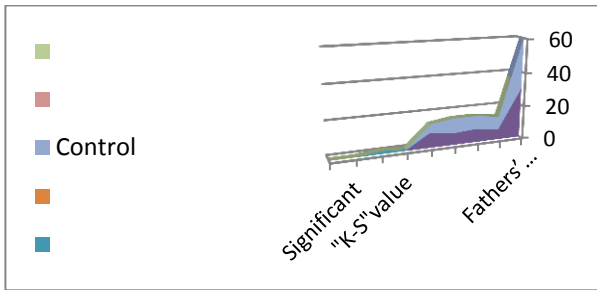
3. 2.2. Fathers' Educational Attainment:

In order to find out whether there is any significant difference between the two groups in the level of their fathers' education, Kolmogorov-Smirnov" formula "K-S" has been used.

The result shows that the table value of K-S is 1.69 for the fathers' education, which is higher than the computed "K-S" value 0.732 at the level of significance 0.05. This means that there is no statistical difference between the two groups in this variable, as shown in the table (3).

Table (3): Frequency and the "K-S Value for the Level of Fathers' Education of the Subjects of Both Groups

| Groups | Fathers' Level of Education | | | | | "K-Value | | Significant |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------|------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| | No. of Subjects | Primary | Intermediate | Secondary | B.A. | Computed Value | Table Value | |
| Experimental | 30 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 0.732 | 1.69 | Not Significant |
| Control | 30 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 5 | | | |



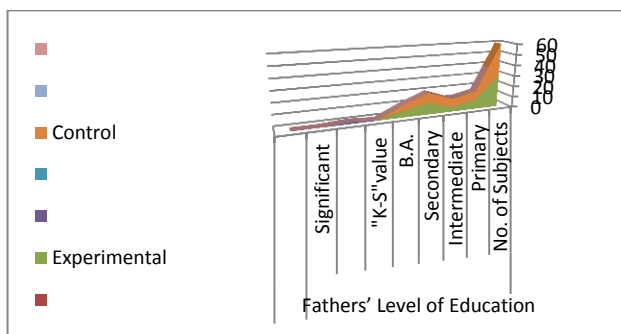
Graphic 1: Frequency and the "K-S Value for the Level of Fathers' Education of the Subjects of Both Groups

3.2.2.1 Mothers' Educational Attainment:

The result shows that the computed "K-S value is found to be 0.281 which is less than the table value of K-S value, which is 1.69 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is no statistical difference between the two groups in this variable as shown in the table (4).

Table (4): Results for Mothers' Educational Attainment

| Groups | Fathers' Level of Education | | | | | "KS" value | | Significant |
|---------|-----------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------|------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| | No. of Subjects | Primary | Intermediate | Secondary | B.A. | Computed Value | Table Value | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 30 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 5 | Control | 30 | 8 |



Graphic 2: Results for Mothers' Educational Attainment

3.2.3 Prescribed Teaching Materials

The analyzed material is extracted from units (4-8). These units are chosen from pupil's book (4) for fifth grade of the primary education "English for Iraq" (Book 5) and from the workbook and manual (5) for fifth grade of the primary stage.

3.2.4 Face Validity

In order to a certain face, and content validity as well as authenticity validity of the oral test, the test has been exposed to the jury members. Recommendations and modifications of the jury members are considered in the refined version of the test, as shown un table (5).

Table (5): The Academic, Ranks, Names, and Locations of the Jury Members

| No | Academic Rank | Name | College |
|----|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1 | Prof.(Ph.D. in ELT) | Salam Hameed | College of Education, University of Baghdad |
| 2 | Asst. Prof.(M.A. in ELT) | Alaa Ismail Chalooob | College of Education University of Anbar |
| 3 | Asst. Prof.(M.A. in ELT) | Saadon Salih | College of Basic Education, University of Misan |
| 4 | Asst. Prof. (Ph.D. in ELT) | Liqa Habeeb | College of Education University of Dyala |
| 5 | Instr.(M.A. in ELT) | Najim Abdulah | College of Education, University of Misan |
| 6 | Instr.(M.A. in Linguistics) | Iqbal S. Disher | College of Basic Education, University of Misan |

3.2.5 Pilot Administration of the Oral Post Test

The test is given to a sample of fifth pupils from section (A) and (B) randomly selected from the whole population as mentioned before. It has been found out that the items are appropriate to the pupils' level, and the directions are clear enough. The average time required to answer the oral test is 10 minutes for per testee (see appendices 1,2).

3.2.6 Reliability: Since scoring of an oral test is considered highly subjective, the researcher used some criteria to increase the reliability of the oral test: The correlation is found to be 0.975) and this is considered a high stable coefficient. Fifteenth of March and ended on the tenth of April 2018

4. RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

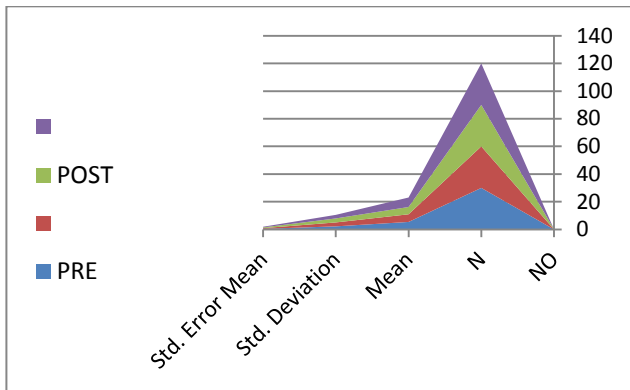
4.1 RESULTS RELATED TO THE FIRST HYPOTHESIS

The result reveals that the mean ranks of the experimental group are 6.8667 and the mean ranks of the control group is 5.2667 at 0.05 level of significance and under 27 degree of freedom. See Graphic 1 table (1) & table (6).

To test the hypothesis, namely "there is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the development of the experimental group taught by using index card games and the control group taught by using the conventional method in the total of conversation test" [9]. The mean scores of the total speaking skill posttest for the two groups have been calculated and tested. See Table (6): The results presented in Table (6) indicate that there is a significant statistical difference between the scores of the posttest of conversation for the two groups and in favor of the experimental group. This is so because the T-calculated value is larger than the T-tabled one. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected [10].

Table (6): T-test Results for Posttest of the Total Speaking Skill Test for the Experimental and Control Groups

| | NO | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | T |
|------|--------------|----|--------|----------------|-----------------|-------|
| PRE | CONTROL | 30 | 5.4000 | 2.22215 | .40571 | |
| | EXPREMANTAIL | 30 | 5.5333 | 2.82517 | .51580 | 0.203 |
| POST | CONTROL | 30 | 5.2667 | 2.88795 | .52726 | |
| | EXPREMANTAIL | 30 | 6.8667 | 2.59620 | .47400 | 2.57 |



Graphic 3: The Mean Ranks of the Experimental and Control Groups

4.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS:

In the current study, the results show that there has been a significant statistical difference between pupils’ mean scores on the conversation posttest for the experimental group taught by using index cards game and the control group taught by using the conventional method in favor of the former. Such results may be attributed to the following:

1. The effectiveness of using index cards game in teaching English, which results in substantially, increased pupils’ development in conversation.
2. The effectiveness of using index cards game in teaching language skills, especially conversation due to the fact that index card games are a pupil-centered style which motivates the learner (pupil) to achieve the objectives of the activity. It is also a style, which creates motivation, makes the pupil feels comfortable, and wants to learn more, creates a relaxed atmosphere which in itself has been found to facilitate learning and provides meaningful contexts in which the various language skills can be practiced and developed. It is also a style which provides the pupils with an opportunity to practice communication, for the sake of developing his/her speaking and writing ability.

5. CONCLUSIONS:

In the light of the results arrived at, the following concluding points can be stated:

1. Using index cards game can be considered as an activity style in teaching English for fifth primary pupils, because of the positive effectiveness on the development of English language skills.
2. The use of games correctly developed pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar of speaking skill, also developed writing, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling of writing skill.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

In the light of the results which are arrived at and an attempt to develop speaking and writing skills, the researcher recommended the following:

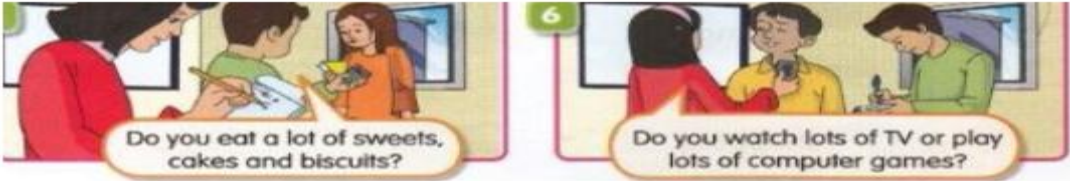
1. Teachers should use index card games that are useful to their pupils in order to enhance pupils’ proficiency and help them to achieve their goals.
2. The prescribed textbook must provide more games, aim to develop speaking and writing skills.
3. The teacher’s guide must involve the steps of using index cards game and the procedure of preparing them.
4. Providing primary schools with some games which are related to the prescribed textbook and appropriate to the level of the pupils.
5. Educational administration should provide games in training English teachers.

7. SUGGESTIONS:

Based on the findings of the current research, the researcher suggests carrying out the following studies:

1. The influence of using index card games on the development of some English language skills of female pupils.
2. The influence of using index card games on pupils’ achievement at the elementary or intermediate level and attitude or interest.
3. Pupils’ attitudes towards the use of the index card games in TEFL in primary schools.
4. Carrying out similar studies on other language skills.

APPENDICES (1)

| | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Do you exercises? | Do you drink enough water ? | |
| 2 | Do you Sleep for 9 or 8? | Do you eat lots fruit or vegetables ? | |
| 3 |  | | |
| 4 | Do you lots of TV or play lots of computer games | | |

APPENDICES (2)

- **Feeling safe** – stress-free speaking without fear of humiliation. Songs and pairwork and groupwork allow children to experiment with the language without having to ‘perform’ to the whole class.

5th Primary gives teachers help in providing their pupils with a stress-free speaking environment

► Read the questions and match them with the answers on the next page.



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