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Teaching english speaking skill at preparatory schools in sulaimani city

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Abstract

The present study tries to find out how teaching speaking skills is taught in the preparatory schools in Sulaymaniyah city and how the teachers exploit the speaking activities in the preparatory stage text book, what kinds of teaching strategies are used by preparatory English teachers in teaching the skill under study?, and What problems face preparatory English teachers while teaching the skill? A class observation was done to collect data in order to describe the situation in which eleven of them were observed during teaching. During observation of this study, teachers used a variety of strategies to teach speaking, including storytelling, picture describing, role play, games, and pair work. Teachers follow the classic methods to teach specified as grammar translation method, and with a rare using of Pair work was considered to be the most popular method by the teachers in teaching speaking. And, according the findings some problems indicated in which they cannot exploit the speaking activity well. Several of them refer the difficulties to internal factors such as native language usage by both the teachers and learners. And, plenty of them present the problems that relates to external factors such as the environment of teaching, the course book and teaching materials. Moreover, limited time for teaching English language, it makes less opportunity for speaking skill teaching To conclude, although, the preparatory English language teachers in Sulaymaniyah city used some strategies to teach speaking skill, they faced some difficulties.

1.1 Introduction

Students need to develop their speaking skill. Speaking refers to interactions that take place via oral communication and involve either giving or receiving information. Speaking is another ability that is thought to be tough for students to handle in real life. Teachers should choose the best methods or approaches to solve the issue. Because they are in the transitional stage of changing habits and traits, teaching speaking to students in preparatory schools is slightly more challenging than teaching to students in elementary schools and secondary schools. While some of them continue to spend their time playing, others are working on building their confidence. Another reason why teaching speaking for high school students is difficult is that they have a new opportunity to know English, such as not just learning vocabulary or basic phrases, but they must also learn to speak English correctly and fluently in order to prepare for senior high school.

Speaking is one of four essential English skills that must be acquired since it helps or leads students to be better in English. According to (Harmer, 2007) "speaking activities give practices opportunities-chances to practice real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom" while (Bailey, 2005) states that students will be familiar with sentences that are used in speaking. In this case, students are required to learn English through speaking because speaking allows students to become aware of their abilities. For example, if students want to have a conversation in English with someone or a classmate, they must have a sufficient vocabulary. They must also consider some roles such as grammar, structure, and so on.

1.2 Aims This study aims at carrying out a general investigation into the

implementation of teaching speaking skills at the tin eleventh grade of the preparatory schools in Sulaymaniyah city. It tries to scrutinize how it is conducted by identifying the strategies currently practiced in teaching and developing pupils' speaking skills and realizing the issues being experienced by the teachers in their speaking classes.

1.3 Research Questions

The present investigation attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How the teaching of speaking skills is being implemented at Sulaymaniyah public preparatory schools?
2. What kinds of teaching strategies are used by preparatory English teachers in teaching the skill under study?
3. What problems face preparatory English teachers while teaching the skill?

1.4 Scope

The limitations of this study can be summarized as follows:

- Topic limitation: This investigation is tended to explore the actual practice of teaching speaking skills.
- Location limitation: The class observation of this study was conducted in the eleventh grade in fifteen public preparatory schools at the East and West Directorates of Education in Sulaymaniyah city.
- Human limitation: Fifty English language teachers teaching English in Sulaymaniyah preparatory schools were selected as the sample of the study.
- Time limitation: The investigation was carried out during the second term of the academic year (2022-2023).

1.5 Significance of the Study

- **Administrative authorities and English language specialists in the Ministry of Education:** The administrative authorities and English language specialists in the Ministry of Education responsible for preparatory-level affairs can take benefit from the findings of this study to better understand the success and failure of the current practices of teaching speaking skills and work on the obstacles that the English language teachers and preparatory school pupils face in teaching and learning English in general and speaking skill in particular.
- **Syllabus designers:** The current investigation can have significant pedagogical implications for syllabus designers about achieving a greater understanding of the teaching of the skill and how best speaking skills can be taught at the preparatory level.
- **English language teachers:** From the outcome of this research, teachers of English will be better informed about effective teaching speaking techniques and strategies employed nowadays and the problems and challenges that they encounter in teaching English speaking skills and can consequently evaluate the quality of their teaching of speaking skills and take whatever practical measures required.
- **Future researchers:** The present study can be used as reference material for future researchers with similar interests to perform further research on the same or related issues.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Speaking

Hornby (2002) defines teaching speaking as "providing instruction to (a person)": "give a person instruction" (knowledge skill, etc). While speaking, it means to utilize words with a

normal voice. So, teaching speaking is instructing someone on how to communicate. Also, he characterizes speaking as a linguistic ability established in childhood, preceded by listening competence, and taught at the time speaking is learnt. It signifies that speaking is the most fundamental language. Therefore, teaching speaking is a technique for students to express their feelings, communicate their needs, engage with others in various settings, and influence others. As a result, while teaching speaking skills, it is essential to have a comprehensive grasp of what is involved in communication.

2.2 Components of Speaking Skills

There are specific components of speaking that are crucial for students to master. According to Richard (2008), speaking is a complicated collection of talents that includes a variety of elements, such as pronunciation, listening, and grammatical abilities (Hughes, 2011). If a student can communicate effectively in English with proper grammar, pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, understanding, and vocabulary, that student will be judged to have a skill in the language.

Due to the fact that speaking involves five different components, including vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation, for the majority of students, developing speaking abilities is the most crucial part of learning a foreign language. According to (Cohen, 2005), speaking abilities consist of five elements: fluency, understanding, grammar, and vocabulary. According to Harris (2015), it's important to consider the elements of speaking abilities such pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding when deciding how to teach speaking.

2.3 Teaching Speaking Skill

Hornby (2002) defines teaching speaking as "providing

instruction to (a person)": "give a person instruction" (knowledge skill, etc). While speaking, it means to utilize words with a normal voice. So, teaching speaking is instructing someone on how to communicate. Also, he characterizes speaking as a linguistic ability established in childhood, preceded by listening competence, and taught at the time speaking is learnt. It signifies that speaking is the most fundamental language.

Listening skill has occurred or was preceded by the development of speaking skill. Improving one's listening skills is extremely advantageous to one's language skills. The purpose of training speaking ability is to improve communication efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understood by enhancing their present proficiency. They should endeavor to avoid message confusion caused by incorrect pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, and they should follow the social and cultural conventions that apply in each conversation (Hornby, 2002). From these views, teaching speaking is a technique for students to express their feelings, communicate their needs, engage with others in various settings, and influence others. As a result, while teaching speaking skills, it is essential to have a comprehensive grasp of what is involved in communication.

2.4 Strategies in Teaching Speaking skill

Strategies are preplanned strategies for regulating and manipulating certain information, according to Brown (2000), and they are specialized ways of tackling a problem or activity. In order to overcome classroom issues and effectively manage the class for the purpose of achieving the teaching-learning objective, teachers who are teaching speaking must have a strong teaching approach.

According to Brown (2000), strategies were the precise actions that took place in the

classroom and were in line with a strategy, therefore they were also in line with an approach. These instructional techniques have been compiled to meet the needs of language learners, particularly those who are learning English orally. The following are the strategies:

Simulation/Roleplaying Role play is a teaching method suitable for the student and social-cultural experience since it allows learners to utilize the language they know and begin with simple dialogues before progressing to more sophisticated interactions. Another strategy is Picture Description According to Harmer (2007), pupils may readily create a tale when they describe or relate the picture. It suggests that using pictures to explain things is an excellent method since, in addition to being engaging, it uses a lot of words.

After that Telling a Story is technique to promote pupils' speaking proficiency in the target language, in this instance English, is the telling of stories. The instructor might prod the pupils to recount the narrative they have just read. The finest stories are undoubtedly those that students share about themselves, their families, or their friends, (Harmer, 2007).

2.5 The Role of the Teachers in Teaching Speaking

The key to effective speaking teaching is "how teachers structure and react to students' work" (Hamer, 2001). In most cases, there are various phases in the training of certain speaking activities: The first step is the lead-in, which is an introduction stage in which the teacher seeks to arouse students' interest in the subject by providing information, comparing it to the students' experiences, asking questions, and so on. The following phase is task assignment, in which the teacher instructs the students on what they must accomplish, understanding tests, and sets the classroom

properly (for example for pairwork). The next step is to keep an eye on the students while they are working on the activity. The teacher assists students who are having problems and monitors their progress. Finally, the teacher provides gives feedback on the students' speaking performance. The teacher will react to faults in the content or the language used to communicate meaning, depending on the nature and aim of the activity. If the speaking task is combined with ability, it may be followed by a reading, writing, or listening exercise (Harmer, 1983).

2.6 Teaching Speaking Difficulties

The problems that faced by teacher on teaching speaking skills for the learners are divided into two categories: internal difficulties and external difficulties. What in internal difficulties comes from the teachers and the learners themselves in speaking skill teaching and learning. On the other hand, the external difficulties refer to classroom environment, Material teaching speaking skill and teachers' strategies on teaching speaking skill. Thus, this section will explain clearly about both difficulties.

3. Method of the Study

The chapter discusses the following topics: the population of the research, the sample of the research, tool, implementation and processes, data collecting tool, research design, and data analysis procedures.

This is a quantitative and qualitative design which is use descriptive study. Ary et al (2019), states that "qualitative research" refers to a broad range of research methodologies that investigate phenomena in their natural settings without the use of preset hypotheses. This study's research methodology was qualitative description. According to Mack et al (2005), descriptive research is used to investigate

phenomena using interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. So that, the study can be derived from the aforementioned statement that qualitative research can be used to characterize any phenomenon using the information obtained from the study. The study's scope focus on the teachers in teaching speaking skill.

The Population The population of the research contains all the English teachers who teach English language in preparatory schools in center of Sulaymaniyah city for the academic year (2021-2022). The Sample of the Research fifteen English language teachers of Sulaymaniyha preparatory schools were chosen as sample for the research.

Class observation was chosen as a tool of data collection of the study. The main advantage of using observation as a primary tool is that "it allows the investigator to collect live data from naturally occurring situations without relying on second-hand accounts" Cohen et al. (2011). In this sense, an immediate observation is more likely to yield authentic data, which will substantiate the validity of the research findings and results. Furthermore, as an actual observer of a classroom incident, the researcher is able to discover aspects of teaching that teachers would not feel comfortable discussing or justifying in interviews for fear of losing face.

The process of collecting data in this research instrument of the study from subject research is: the researchers took the official papers from (the General Directorate of Sulaymaniyah Education, Directorate of Sulaymaniyah West Education, and Directorate of Sulaymaniyah East Education), and then went to the preparatory schools in Sulaymaniyah city, and took permission from the head of the schools and the

teachers for attending and observing the class English class. Then, the lessons were observed according to the rubric, and the lessons were recorded and written notes to not missing some important points during teaching.

4. Findings and Discussion

During the observation process, some findings were obtained according the questions research. The sulaymaniyah preparatory teachers implement variety of strategies to teach speaking skill based the contend of teachers guidebook (Sunrise) as *Pair work* is one of the technics in which the students make them keep it clear by asking them to do simple things in pairs. Then, the activity should be sorted because if it is too long, it is difficult to control it. After that, *demonstrate* them and tell them what they need to accomplish first, and then do it yourself; then have a couple of students perform it before the teacher set them to go. People who do a lot of pair work find it easier and more successful as time goes on. Try again if it doesn't work right the first time. Keep in mind the adage: "Practice makes perfect."

Role plays in sunrise is another activity to perform speaking skills before the role-play, the subject should be written on the board and the background situation should be read out loud to the students. The teacher then should check that they understand and ask them to think about the subject. Next, the teacher should make a list of things the students should think about when they write about the topic or act out a scene. Ask questions to find out what students think and feel about the subject at hand. The teacher can help their students understand how a *role-play* works by having them read about each stage.

The strategy they follow to teaching speaking skill commonly is pair work to dialogues in the context during which the

teachers and students use first language for the dialogue. This when play role are followed rarely in some of the preparatory schools.

There many difficulties that are faced teaching speaking skill. Those which related the internal problems are the students. The most common difficulties for the pupils in high school level are using their first language much and lack of exposure which has immediate effect to speak fluently. Then, the obstacles which are related to the teachers are lack of using English language in teaching including teaching speaking skill. And, they follow the classic methods to teach specified as grammar translation method in which they give a great importance to the context grammar. For this purpose, Most of the tests is related to the grammar and all the examination process is written style there no any oral test to the learners.

The external difficulties are concerned as class management of the high school. Most of them have a rare classroom management for teaching English language including speaking skill. Also, deficiency of authentic material is another problem for teaching sill which are observed in most of public preparatory schools of Sulaymaniyah city. And, the time management is not compact with teaching speaking skill. In addition the context is not a proper material for Kurdish social cultural background.

5. Conclusion

This section summarizes the current study's findings. These results are closely related to the research problems established in the preceding section How the teachers exploit the speaking activities in the preparatory stage text book, what kinds of teaching strategies are used by preparatory English teachers in teaching the skill under study?, What problems

face preparatory English teachers while teaching the skill.

The research has found some results Preparatory English teachers use a variety of strategies and instructional techniques in teaching speaking skill including storytelling, picture describing, role play, games, and pair work. Pair work was considered to be the most popular method by the teachers in teaching speaking.

The most common difficulties for the students are using their first language much and lack of exposure. Teachers follow the classic methods to teach specified as grammar translation method. Most of the tests is related to the grammar and all the examination process is written style.

Most of them have a rare classroom management for teaching English language including speaking skill. In addition, the context is not a proper material for Kurdish social cultural background.

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