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Impact of Communicative Activities on Improving Students' Speaking Skills in English as Second Language

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Recommended Citation

Guler, Ozlem, "Impact of Communicative Activities on Improving Students' Speaking Skills in English as Second Language" (2021). *International Graduate Program for Educators Master's Projects*. 13.
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Impact of Communicative Activities in Improving Students' Speaking Skills in English as Second Language

By Özlem Güler

Buffalo State College

Buffalo, New York

2021

Identification of a Researchable Problem

Reasons For Negative Attitude of Secondary and Primary Students Towards Speaking Activities

The researcher is an ESL teacher at Qatar Turkish School and teaches mixed grades. As language is a tool for communication, it is vital to always care about four skills and among them especially speaking as it is the basic and the most essential way of communicating between people as Rao (2019) claimed the same in his work. It doesn't make any sense that students give full points on exam papers unless they can express themselves fluently in the target language. There are some research on this topic.. In their study with junior high school students, Zhu and Zhou (2012) found that anxiety, boredom, hopelessness and low self-confidence are main factors that affect the success of foreign language International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies. Among others, considering the impact of anxiety on foreign language learning, Cui (2011) investigated the high school students' English

learning anxiety in Chinese EFL classrooms and found that negative evaluation fear (mostly by teachers) and test anxiety due to national examinations are major factors preventing Chinese learners' in language learning success.

The researcher has been teaching grade 10 students for almost 4 years, so I know how they used to be. When I look at their exam scores and writing papers, I can see they are competent in the target language, they have all the vocabulary they should and no problem with any grammatical structure. But whenever the researcher asks a simple question in class, nobody wants to answer. Also in writing activities, they write perfectly thought and planned texts but when it comes to reading it aloud, silence is there again. They have a strong communication with those students because during breaks they always come to me to chat and they tend to share everything about their life with me. This made the researcher think of the reasons why those students are having difficulty in speaking activities. Their level is just as it has to be. Their exam scores are almost full points. During breaks they always want to spend their time with me chatting and having fun but in their "**mother tongue**". It didn't take a long time for the researcher to come to a conclusion that what they are struggling with isn't language or activity itself, but the lack of confidence arises from being a teenager. What makes them stressed is the feeling that everyone is watching them when they are talking or the others will judge them if they make any mistake during the presentation or speaking activities. In their study with junior high school students, Zhu and Zhou (2012) found that anxiety, boredom, hopelessness and low self-confidence are main factors that affect the success of foreign language International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies 2016,3 (1), 31-46 34 learning.

When the researcher asks them to stand up and talk they don't want, even while sitting. Or, the worst, they don't want to talk on online zoom classes. Even the anxiety of being heard by others who aren't at a better level than them makes them so stressed that they pretend to be not there. Sometimes the researcher feels like she is talking to herself and feels the need to check if they are really there.

So, the problem seems to arise from not only being seen but also being heard. Those teenage students don't want to be noticed. They don't want to attract attention in society in any way. Maybe there are also different psychological barriers that stop them being comfortable while using the target language in speaking activities that we didn't name yet.

Therefore, the researcher wants to investigate if communicative activities work on secondary and primary students. This research is going to be held in Qatar Turkish School and total number of students is 45, grade 7,8,9 and 10.

Literature review

This "literature review" will present some opinions and citations about the barriers of ESL learners towards speaking. Knowing a language is mainly based on how well you can perform speaking as it is the initial communicative tool between people and language is a tool for communication. No matter how old you are or where you are from, it can be challenging to use the language orally. Even if you know all the grammatical rules very well, you can still fail in speaking. This research will try to find the reasons behind this problem.

The Implementation of Group Investigation to Improve the Students' Speaking Skill- Dinamika Ilmu

Iswardati SMU 2 Samarinda, Indonesia

This research is held to find out how group investigation improves the student's speaking skills and how group investigation improves the student's participation in speaking of second grade students of SMA 2 Samarinda.

The researcher emphasizes the importance of speaking skill among all the other skills and searches about the impact of group investigation in improving the speaking skills of the students. According to Isdarwati (2016), "Speaking, as one of the four skills, should be developed to develop the students' ability communicating in English." Hedge (2003) argued that learning speaking is very important for students. (as cited in Isdarwati, 2016, p. 246) Gebhard (2000) says that get students to talk, (1) the students must know that we do not expect them to speak perfect English, and (2) teachers need to provide opportunities for students to feel at ease in the classroom. (as cited in Isdarwati, 2016)

Isdarwati (2016) note the following:

Nunan (1999) states that the ability to function in another language is generally characterized in terms of being able to speak that language. People measure the mastery of a language by seeing whether one can speak the language or not. Nunan (1999) also states that many English learners are reluctant and unmotivated.

Isdarwati (2016) claims that group investigation is one of the strategies that a teacher could use to improve students' speaking skills. (p.248) Slavin (2008) reveals that cooperative learning techniques including group investigation is helpful to achieve personal learning goal by achieving group learning goal. (as cited in Isdarwati, 2016, p. 248)

“The findings also showed that there was a huge improvement on the students’ participation in the speaking class by using group investigation.” (Dinamika,2016 p.253)

Isdarwati (2016) found out in his research that most of the students think that group Investigation improve their speaking skills, confidence and increase their motivation. (p.256)

The research shows us that group investigation including brainstorming, picture describing improved students speaking skills, eve the ones who are afraid of being laughed at.

Isdarwati(2016) found out that group Investigation improved the students’ pronunciation, grammatical, vocabulary, and fluency, reduced the students’ worry of making mistakes, fear of being laughed at by other students. Group Investigation also improved problem solving skills using English, sharing, discussing, giving their ideas, accepting others’ opinions, and presenting their ideas. (p. 260)

As well as Isdarwati’s findings in the research, there are different studies which find the same conclusion. According to Rizan (2011) It also has positive effects for the teaching and learning concluded (2011) that cooperative learning could improve the students’ performance. (as cited in Isdarwati , 2016, p. 259)

Using Communicative Games in Improving Students’ Speaking Skills

Ratna Sari Dewi¹ , Umami Kultsum¹ & Ari Armadi²

The aims of this study is to see if communicative games have an impact on teaching speaking skill and describe them if there are on students at junior high schools in Jakarta, Indonesia. Based on Kurt. L model, Classroom Action Research model was implemented. Sari et al.

Sari et al. (2016) note the following:

Speaking is one of the basic language skills that have to be mastered by English foreign learners due to its significance and its use for communication. It is very important to be able to speak English regarding that it is the most commonly accepted language in the world so that it will be very beneficial for those who comprehend it not only to improve their knowledge and skills but also easier for them to get a job. (p. 63) Gard & Gautam states that (2015) moreover than that, they will not find it difficult to communicate and interact with people around the world when they travel (as cited in Sari et al. (2016)

Sari et al. (2016) have found that the students are afraid of making mistakes, being laughed by their friends when they make mistakes. Furthermore, they aren’t also confident while speaking. In addition to these, they are also bored while learning English because the teaching activities are in a conventional way; the students are asked to perform the text they have memorized. Another point is that they also can not speak willingly because the teacher structures what they want to speak which means they only repeat the word given them.

Sari et al. (2016) state that there are a lot of ways to help the students to improve their speaking

English. Harmer (2001) argued that if the teachers want to encourage students to speak, they should use communicative approach and avoid focusing on grammar and vocabulary but emphasize the importance of language function. (as cited in Sari et al. 2016, p.64)

Sari et al.(2016) argue that teachers should motivate students to speak through games combined with communicative approach. In this way, hopefully this can create a positive learning atmosphere and encourage students to participate actively. And so, it will improve the students' communicative competence. According to Mahmoud & Tanni (2014) "Game can be a solution as it stated by Prank that game is used for giving intense and passionate involvement in communication to the students so that they can feel enjoyment and pleasure in learning. " (as cited in Sari et al., 2016, p. 64)

Sari et al. (2016) note the following:

Communicative game is a set of well fun-design activities can stimulate students' interaction in the classroom. These games require them to take part actively in classroom by speaking and writing in order to express their own point of view or give information. More than that, students' confidence will be automatically formed due to its concept in building habits of interaction. Hadfield (1996) state that game means "an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun" (as cited in Sari et al. 2016 p. 64).

The study showed that using communicative games in class improved the students' speaking skills. They enjoyed the lesson and they were more motivated. They also had more interest and confidence while learning. This proves us that communicative games should be applied while teaching speaking. It would also be beneficial if the study is preserved and extended to three other language skills.

A survey for students and post observation notes by the researcher are the instruments for the Classroom Action Research.

The Barriers of Teaching Speaking English for EFL Learners Kristi Nuraini University of Muhammadiyah Jember

Nuraini divides barriers towards speaking English as a second language in two categories.

"The barriers in teaching speaking English come from two aspects: internal and external factors. Internal factors are native language, age, exposure, innate phonetic ability, identity and language ego, and motivation concern for good speaking English and external factors are teaching speaking English at large class and learners' autonomy." (Nuraini, 2016, p. 1)

This study focuses on the importance of speaking among four skills with various citations.

"Speaking is the most important skill among four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) because people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language. This indicates that using a language is more important than just knowing about it because "there is no point knowing a lot about language if you can't use it" (Scrivener, 2005, p. 146)."

According to the article, the more oral exposure by the target language, the better language learners will be in speaking. This makes me think that I should vary the ways of language exposure exposure in my classes.

Harnessing the Barriers That Impact on Students' English Language Learning (ELL) Hussain Ahmed Liton Lecturer, English Language Centre, Jazan University, Jazan, Saudi Arabia, (2016)

This study discusses the barriers and obstacles in terms of academic, course curriculum system and socio-cultural issues that impact students' learning English language in the prep year level at Jazan University, Saudi Arabia.

He discusses these barriers under 5 titles:

Cultural Issues Affecting Students' Learning

Teachers should know about the cultural background of the students to understand which activities may not be welcomed by different cultures.

Linguistic Barriers

First Language interference and phonological differences between languages' sound systems may decrease motivation.

Pedagogical and Social Issues

The teacher should find the ways to minimize the gap between students arise from social background differences.n"... the teacher has to be well equipped, and make a diagnostic study in order to analyze linguistically the nature and type of difficulties that the Saudi learners face during the course of study" (Khan, 2011, pp. 68-80).

Saudi Language Policy

In addition, he talked about some barriers and problems linked with teaching/learning at Jazan Community College. These are mentioned below:

Timing in Class

Students fail to be punctual in joining classes on time as a habit and it is a problem that should be solved.

Cultural Background

Saudi female learners want to disengage with male learners and the teacher should respect this cultural behavior.

The suggestions are basically using technology for motivating students as the more various methods the better they learn. Another suggestion is facilitating an environment for the learners to improve their communication skills through an English Language Club which creates a space for listening and speaking activities. Formulating text materials according to the social background of learners pointing out more grammatical, phonological and communicative practical issues is another suggestion. And one of the most important suggestions is that breaking the barriers to learning needs to create a fun and effective learning atmosphere.

This research will help me especially about the importance of inserting local culture into learning environment which actually is the key point as being a bridge between what the students already know and the new information.

From the literature review, the researcher found out that most of the problems about speaking English as a second language arise from motivational and emotional factors. This shows that students should be motivated and encouraged through some activities that will comfort and entertain them. It is also emphasized that communicative methods and activities showed great improvement about the negative attitude of the students toward the language, especially speaking. The researcher wants to search more about the impact of the communicative activities and games in the class. This is a good resource for me about the importance of communicative activities.

Research Purpose and Questions

As far as the researcher has observed during 15 year teaching life, students may fail to speak the target language even if they know all the grammatical rules and vocabulary well. In addition, young learners of English may also giggle when they are embarrassed or when they are unable to understand the lesson

(Byung, 2004).

As language is a tool for communication and human beings use oral language to communicate, It doesn't make any sense knowing the rules and vocabulary of a language unless we don't speak it. We can't say we know a language if we can't express ourselves verbally. According to Scrivener, (2005) "Speaking is the most important skill among four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) because people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that

language. This indicates that using a language is more important than just knowing about it because “there is no point knowing a lot about language if you can’t use it”. Analysing the reasons behind this and taking needed precautions to solve this problem may help me to improve my teaching skills, that’s why I want to search about this topic.

Below are the research questions for the problem presented above:

1-What are the reasons for grade 10 students' negative attitudes toward speaking activities?

2-What is the impact of group work activities in improving my grade 10 students’ negative attitude towards speaking activities?

Data Collection Plan

The aim of this data collection is to gather information about how effective group activities are in teaching and learning English as a second language especially in speaking activities.

First of all, the researcher implemented four different communicative group activities in the class. These are; debates, picture storytelling, brainstorming and role play. Jeyasala (2014, as cited in Toro et al., 2018) argued that teachers should encourage students’ communicative competence all the time, and besides their limitations to use language fluently and accurately, they should provide them with spaces to interact with others or to involve them in speaking activities that improves their ability to use the target language

The researcher distributed a survey to 40 students in total. These students are grade 7, 8, 9 and 10 students in Qatar Turkish School. Via this survey, the researcher is planning to see if group activities are effective or not about improving their negative attitude toward speaking activities in 6 weeks period based on student perceptions. The group activities that were implemented in the classroom are debate, role play, chants, brainstorming, storytelling and drama.

There are “extremely effective, very effective, somewhat effective, not so effective, not at all effective” answer options for the survey.

The researcher also used observation as an instrument as well to observe the students in class to see how group work or communicative methods impact the speaking duration of English. Notes were taken down about how long the students spoke in speaking activities.

Instruments

The instruments that the researcher is going to use for the-is research are survey and observation. As it is a quantitative one, this research is going to be based on the numeric answer percentages of students who are going to take part in this research. For each class the researcher is going to have an observation file which will be written down the duration of their speaking English at the end of the research period.

Survey

Degrees of Agreement	Extremely Effective	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Very Effective	Not at all Effective
1- How would you rate the impact of doing translation on your speaking skills in English?					
2- How would you rate the impact of role plays on your speaking skills in English?.					
3- How would you rate the impact of memorizing new vocabulary on your speaking skills in English?					
4- How would you rate the impact of picture storytelling on your speaking skills in English?					

5- How would you rate the impact of filling in the blanks in the book on your speaking skills in English?					
6- How would you rate the impact of brainstorming on your speaking skills in English?					
7- How would you rate the impact of answering the questions about a given text on your speaking skills in English?					
8- How would you rate the impact of debates on your speaking skills in English?					
9- How would you rate the impact of singing a song memorized on your speaking skills in English?					
10- How would you rate the impact of doing activities based on communicating with others on your speaking skills in English?					

Observation

In addition to surveys, the researcher observed the students speaking time in class before and during communicative activities. First the researcher implemented any activity which is not

communicative and then the communicative ones. Then she compared the numbers of duration and wrote down the increase percentage of SST in class.

Data Analysis Plan

To find out if the communicative and group activities help students learn English better and participate more in speaking activities in English class, the researcher used two instruments. These instruments are survey and observation. As this research is a quantitative one, there will be numeric percentage calculations about the survey questions' answers. Also, the activity based observation of the researcher will be counted as the data.

Ten survey questions which are about the impact of group activities and communicative methods were analysed according to the four given answer options. Each question was analysed one by one and a statement was written for every question. So, the attitude of the students for each question was discussed. The percentage of each question's answer option was calculated.

Observation was written for every activity. The activities that were implemented in the class are debate, brainstorming , role play, karaoke , speaking cards and picture storytelling. Each activity was implemented in all lessons which was only two hours per week. So, this means each activity was implemented four times as there are only sixteen English classes during this eight weeks period and after each implementation a report will be written about the student attitude about the activity.

Limitations and Other Considerations

This research aimed to find out if communicative and group activities help students learn English better and improve their attitude toward speaking activities. As this is quantitative research rather than qualitative research, there was an evaluation based on students' opinions about survey questions and the researcher's observation notes were counted as the data. This could show the research a little less objective but as this is about speaking skills, I think that the data collection plan the researcher prepared was the best that she could do.

Six different communicative activities were implemented as each once a week within a six weeks period. The observation was written by the researcher after each implementation, once a week for six different grades , 45 students about their student speaking time in class.. Including the researcher's observation in a research may not seem valid or reliable. This is another concern of the researcher about the research but as there is the numeric duration results, it has validity. The survey and observation was held after eight weeks, once all the activities were implemented. There was a risk of unmatching between the researcher's observations noted down during this eight weeks and the answers given to survey questions at the end of the research. This was a big question mark about the validity and reliability of the research. But there is a meaningful explanation of all steps and results.

Another concern about the research was that the students were divided into two groups and

hours for all lessons including English were reduced due to COVID 19 pandemic precautionary measures which meant the researcher could implement limited communicative activities in class. Six activities were implemented in the research period. Two weeks midterm break turning into a three week one last minute is another fact that affected the research in terms of duration but the researcher could still do it in 6 weeks and 6 weeks is considered to be enough. By doing this research, the researcher planned to organize her teaching methods. This made her a better teacher who thinks about the needs of the students and made the students learn better as the researcher planned teaching ways based on their answers which could be counted as requests.

Project Timeline

Task	Date
Implementation of debate activity and writing observation	10-18 December 2020
Implementation of brainstorming activity and writing observation	18-25 December 2020
Implementation of roleplay activity and writing observation	25-31 December 2020
Implementation of picture storytelling activity and writing observation	1-8 January 2021
Implementation of karaoke activity and writing observation	8-15 January 2021

Implementation of speaking cards activity and writing observation	15-22 January 2021
Midterm Break	24 January - 14 February 2021
Analysing and writing research results	20 February - 10 March

FINDINGS

This survey is conducted with 40 students at 7,8,9 and 10th grades at Qatar Turkish School.

1- How would you rate the impact of doing translation on your speaking skills in English?

17.50% of the students stated that doing translation in class is extremely effective while 27.50% find it very effective. 35% of the students find it somewhat effective and 20% find it not so effective. Any of the students find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
- Extremely effective	17.50% 7
- Very effective	27.50% 11
- Somewhat effective	35.00% 14
- Not so effective	20.00% 8

-	0.00%
Not at all effective	0
TOTAL	40

2- How would you rate the impact of role plays on your speaking skills in English?

20% of the students find roleplays extremely effective whereas 27.50% find it very effective. On the other hand 35% find roleplays somewhat effective. 17.50% find them not so effective. There is no student who find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	20.00%
Extremely effective	8
-	27.50%
Very effective	11
-	35.00%
Somewhat effective	14
-	17.50%
Not so effective	7
-	0.00%
Not at all effective	0
TOTAL	40

3- How would you rate the impact of memorizing new vocabulary on your speaking skills in English?

Memorizing new vocabulary is found extremely effective by 35% of the students. 27.50% find it very effective and 22.50% find somewhat effective. While 17.50% find memorizing new vocabulary not so effective, only 2.5% find it not so effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	30.00%
Extremely effective	12
-	27.50%
Very effective	11
-	22.50%
Somewhat effective	9
-	17.50%
Not so effective	7
-	2.50%
Not at all effective	1
TOTAL	40

4- How would you rate the impact of picture storytelling on your speaking skills in English?

17.50% of the students find picture story telling extremely effective. With the highest effectivity percentage in this survey, 40% of the students find it very effective. Percentage of the students who find it somewhat effective is 17.50. While 20% find it not so effective, 5% stated that hey find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	17.50%
Extremely effective	7
-	40.00%
Very effective	16
-	17.50%
Somewhat effective	7
-	20.00%
Not so effective	8
-	5.00%
Not at all effective	2
TOTAL	40

5- How would you rate the impact of filling in the blanks in the book on your speaking skills in English?

22.50% of the students stated that they find filling in the blanks in the book extremely effective while the percentage of very effective option is 30%. 27.50% find it somewhat effective and 20% find it not so effective. No students stated that they find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	22.50%
Extremely effective	9
-	30.00%
Very effective	12
-	27.50%
Somewhat effective	11
-	20.00%
Not so effective	8
-	0.00%
Not at all effective	0
TOTAL	40

6- How would you rate the impact of brainstorming on your speaking skills in English?

Brainstorming is found extremely effective by 28.95% of the students whereas 21.05% find it very effective. 39.47% find it somewhat effective while 10.53% find it not so effective. No students find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	28.95%

Extremely effective	11
-	21.05%
Very effective	8
-	39.47%
Somewhat effective	15
-	10.53%
Not so effective	4
-	0.00%
Not at all effective	0
TOTAL	38

7- How would you rate the impact of answering the questions about a given text on your speaking skills in English?

Answering comprehension questions is found extremely effective by 32.50% whereas similarly it is found very effective by 32.50%. 20% of the students expressed they find it somewhat effective. 15% described it as not so effective. No students find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	32.50%
Extremely effective	13
-	32.50%

Very effective	13
-	20.00%
Somewhat effective	8
-	15.00%
Not so effective	6
-	0.00%
Not at all effective	0
TOTAL	40

8- How would you rate the impact of debates on your speaking skills in English?

Debates are found extremely effective by 22.50%. 32.50% of the students expressed they find it very effective. 22.50% of the students think debates are somewhat effective and 15% find it not so effective. 7.50% of the students described it as not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	22.50%
Extremely effective	9
-	32.50%
Very effective	13

-	22.50%
Somewhat effective	9
-	15.00%
Not so effective	6
-	7.50%
Not at all effective	3
TOTAL	40

9- How would you rate the impact of singing a song memorized on your speaking skills in English

40% of the students stated that singing a song memorized is extremely effective. 25% stated that it is very effective while 17.50% think that it is somewhat effective. 15% described it as not so effective while 2.50% described as not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	40.00%
Extremely effective	16
-	25.00%
Very effective	10

-	17.50%
Somewhat effective	7
-	15.00%
Not so effective	6
-	2.50%
Not at all effective	1
TOTAL	40

10- How would you rate the impact of doing activities based on communicating with others on your speaking skills in English?

Activities based on communicating with others is found extremely effective by 33.33% of the students while it is found very effective by 38.46%. 15.38% find it somewhat effective. Whereas 12.82 find it not so effective, no students find it not at all effective.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
-	-
-	33.33%
Extremely effective	13
-	38.46%
Very effective	15
-	15.38%
Somewhat effective	6

-	12.82%
Not so effective	5
-	0.00%
Not at all effective	0
TOTAL	39

According to those findings, picture storytelling and songs seem to be the most effective activities in the students perspective. Memorizing new vocabulary follows it with a 35% percentage whereas activities based on communication are found extremely effective by 33.33%.

We can conclude from the findings that students find communicative activities useful as well as non communicative ones. This can mean two things: The teachers should use eclectic which covers all methods or the students aren't naturally aware of the fact that what matters is their speaking more than learning grammar rules or memorizing vocabulary.

OBSERVATION

7,8,9 and 10. grades have English lesson only 2 hours a week. In one of those lessons the researcher implemented communicative activities in class and in the other noncommunicative activities. The observation shows the duration of students speaking English.

Debate (1st Week)

The first week started with debate activity. Before debate, the researcher asked students to do fill in the blanks activities about tenses in all grades. And in the next lesson there was a debate about different topics for each grade..

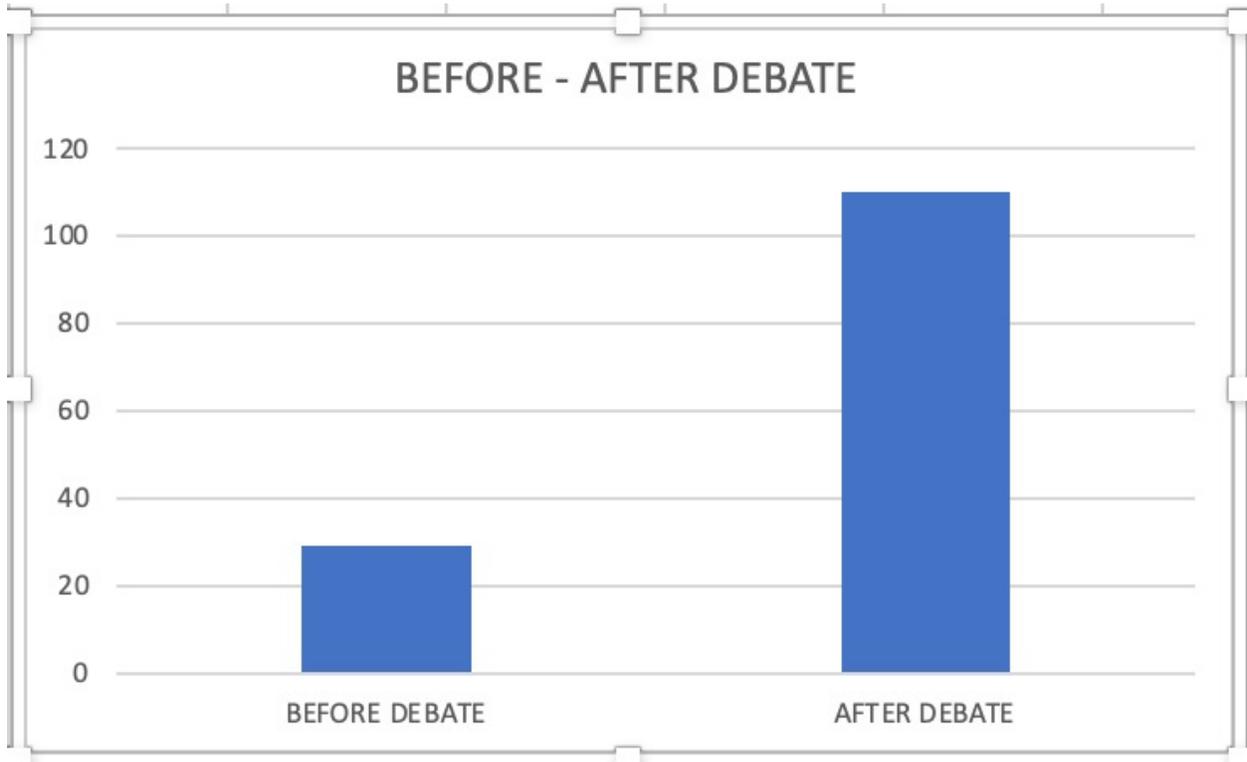
During fill in the blanks activities in the 7th grades, the students speaking time was approximately 8 minutes in total whereas it increased to 28 minutes while there was a debate activity in class.

For 8th grades, the SST was 6 min before and after it increased up to 26 minutes.

For 9th grades, SST before is 7 minutes and 27 minutes after.

For 10th grades, SST is 8 minutes whereas 28 minutes after.

So, total SST for all 4 grades during fill in the blanks activities is 29 minutes while it increased up to 110 minutes during debate activities. The increase in SST is 379%.



Brainstorming (2nd Week)

Before the brainstorming activity, the researcher asked the students to translate sentences from Turkish to English. Then, brainstorming was done in different topics in each grade.

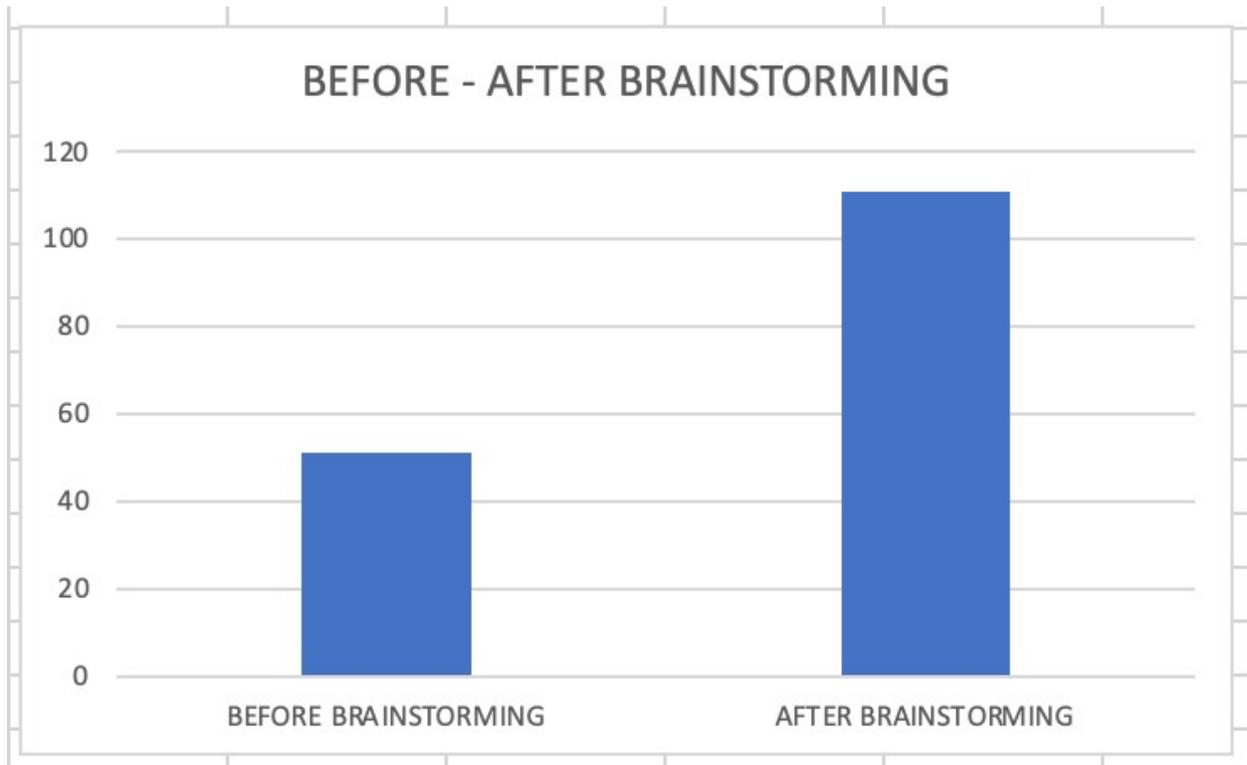
During translation in 7th grade,, total SST was 12 minutes while it was 26 min during brainstorming activity.

SST of 8th grade was 13 minutes and after, 29 minutes.

SST of 9th grade before is 14 minutes whereas it is 30 minutes, after.

SST of 9th grade during translating activity is 12 and 26 minutes during brainstorming.

Total SST of all 4 grades during translation activity is 51 minutes while it increased up to 111 minutes during brainstorming activity. The increase percentage is 217%.



Roleplay (3rd Week)

The students in all 4 grades answered reading comprehension questions in the first lesson and then they did roleplays.

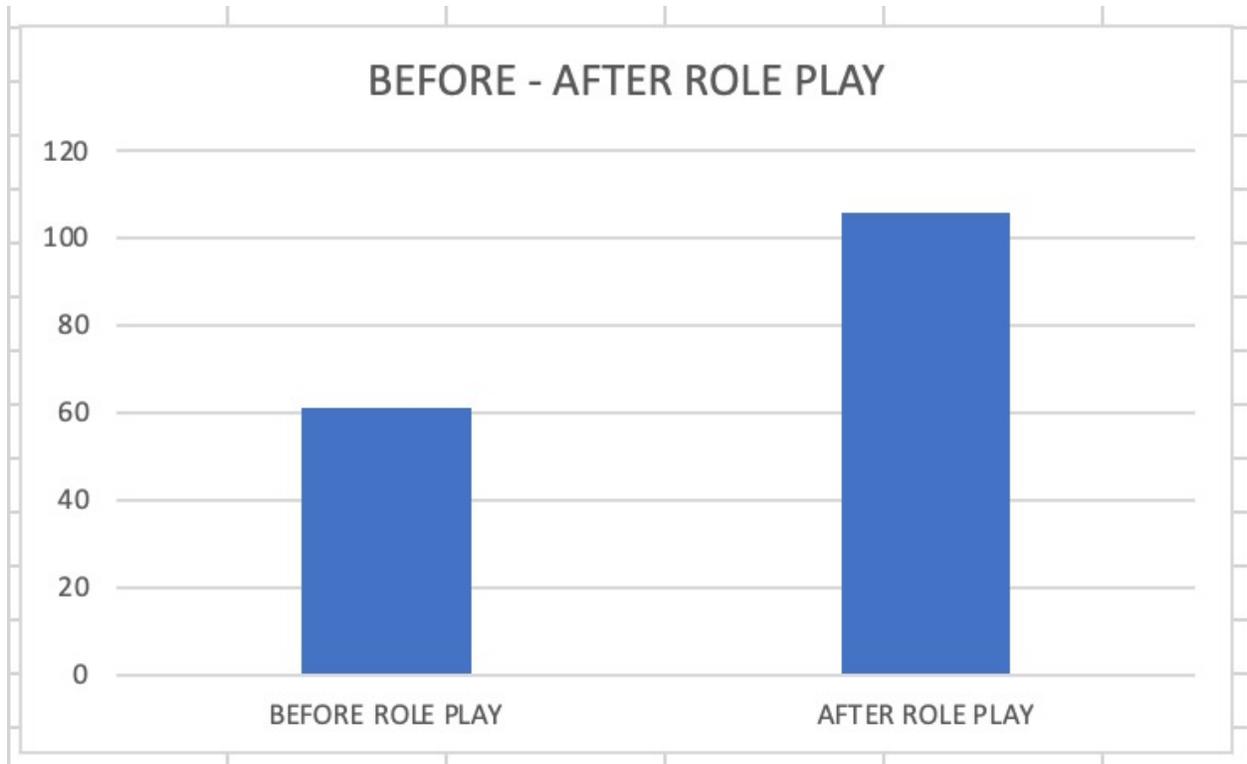
Total SST before in 7th grade was 15 min while during roleplay it increased up to 27 minutes.

SST of 8th grades increased up to 25 minutes from 13 minutes.

SST of 9th grades increased up to 28 minutes from 16 minutes.

SST of 10th grade increased up to 26 minutes from 17 minutes.

Total SST before is 61 while it is 106 minutes after. The increase is 173%



Picture Storytelling (4th Week)

The students in all 4 grades answered the questions about a movie watched in the class and then they started picture storytelling activity.

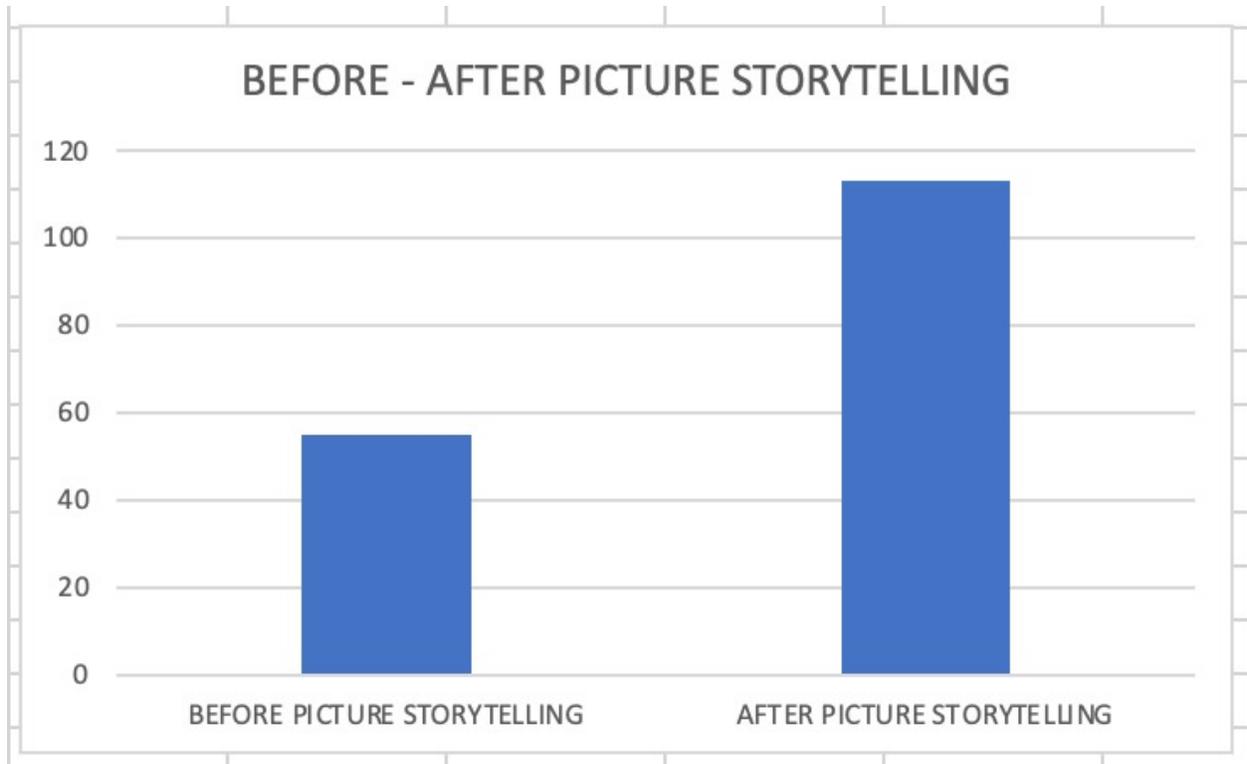
Total SST in 7th grade before was 14 minutes while it was 29 minutes during picture storytelling activity.

SST of 8th grade increased from 12 to 26 minutes.

SST of 9th grade increased from 14 to 28 minutes.

SST of 10th grade increased from 15 minutes to 30 minutes.

Total SST increased from 55 to 113 minutes. The increase is 205%.



Karaoke (5th Week)

The students in all 4 grades read a story and they were asked to summarize it verbally. The next lesson they performed a karaoke song they chose.

Total SST in 7th grade before was 12 minutes and it increased up to 23 minutes.

SST of 8th grade increased from 11 to 22 minutes.

SST of 9th grade increased from 13 to 24 minutes.

SST of 10th grade increased from 14 to 23 minutes.

Total SST increased from 50 to 92 minutes. The increase percentage is 184%



Speaking Cards (6th Week)

The students in all 4 grades did writing activity. They wrote their favorite vacation and were asked to read aloud. The next lesson the researcher gave students some cards which were written personal questions on them like " Who is your favourite singer?, What kind of movies do you like?..etc. Then the students one by one pick a card and reply the questions.

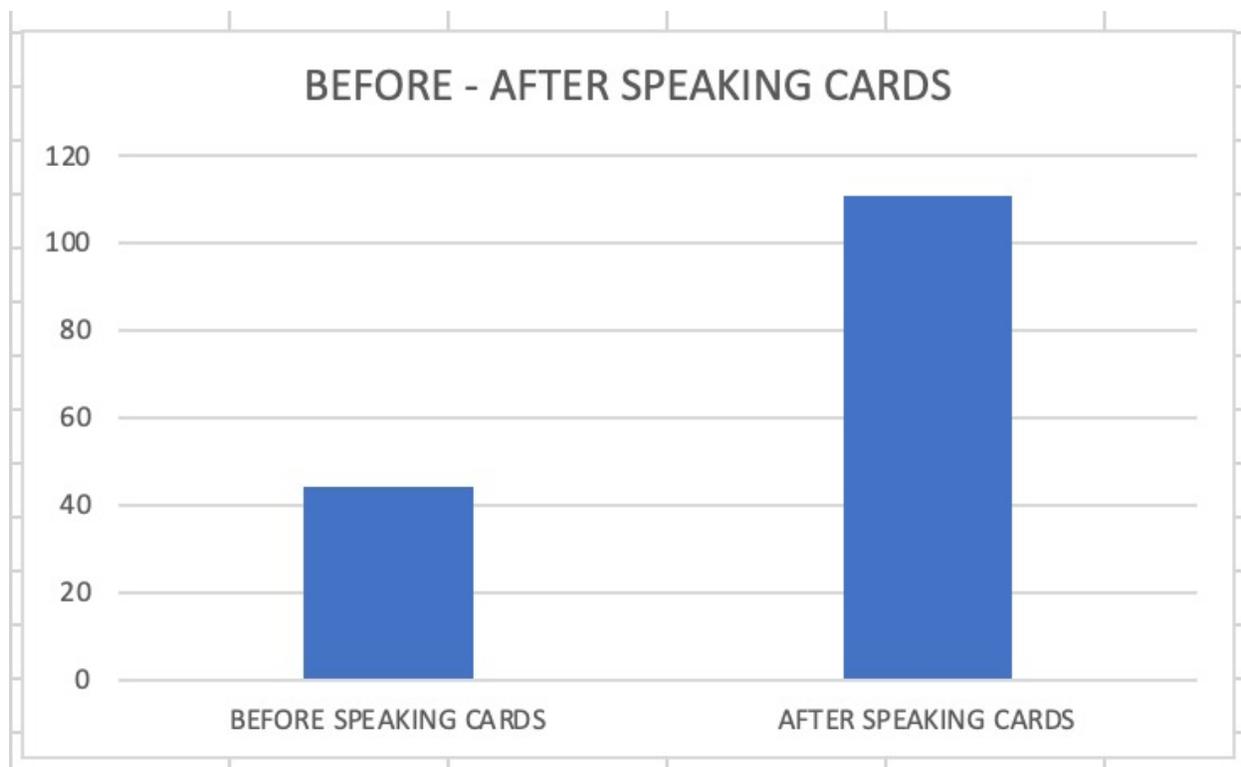
Total SST in 7th grade before was 10 minutes and then 26 minutes.

SST in 8th grade increased from 13 to 27 minutes.

SST in 9th grade increased from 11 to 28 minutes.

SST in 10th grade increased from 10 to 30 minutes

Total SST increased from 44 to 111 minutes. The increase percentage is 252 %.



Limitations and Other Considerations

This research aimed to find out if communicative and group activities help students learn English better and improve their attitude toward speaking activities. As this is quantitative research rather than qualitative research, there was an evaluation based on students' opinions about survey questions and the researcher's observation notes were counted as the data. This could show the research a little less objective but as this is about speaking skills, I think that the data collection plan the researcher prepared was the best that she could do.

Number of Participants

The number of students supposed to take the survey was 45 in the beginning but due to worldwide pandemic circumstances 5 students left either the country or the school. So, the survey was conducted on 40 students.

Ambiguity about Reliability and Validity of Teacher Observation

Six different communicative activities were implemented as each once a week within a six

weeks period. The observation was written by the researcher after each implementation, once a week for six different grades , 40 students about their student speaking time in class.. Including the researcher's observation in a research may not seem valid or reliable. This is another concern of the researcher about the research but as there is the numeric duration results, it has validity. The survey and observation was held after eight weeks, once all the activities were implemented. There was a risk of unmatching between the researcher's observations noted down during this eight weeks and the answers given to survey questions at the end of the research. This was a big question mark about the validity and reliability of the research. But there is a meaningful explanation of all steps and results.

Change in Hours of Weekly English Classes

Another concern about the research was that the students were divided into two groups and hours for all lessons including English were reduced due to COVID 19 pandemic precautionary measures which meant the researcher could implement limited communicative activities in class. Six activities were implemented in the research period. Two weeks midterm break turning into a three week one last minute is another fact that affected the research in terms of duration but the researcher could still do it in 6 weeks and 6 weeks is considered to be enough. By doing this research, the researcher planned to organize her teaching methods. This made her a better teacher who thinks about the needs of the students and made the students learn better as the researcher planned teaching ways based on their answers which could be counted as requests.

6.Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Further Study

This research is conducted to see the impact of communicative activities in students speaking skills in English as second language. And it is reached to a conclusion that communicative activities cause longer student speaking time in class. Moreover, the students mostly state that they learn better through communicative activities. Using language as a tool for communication rather than an aspect to learn will serve better. Language isn't learnt but acquired such as the mother tongue. That's why it should be done naturally just like a baby making baby steps to start uttering first words.

Expectedly, singing a memorized song is found extremely effective by 40% of the students. This is a strong proof that students feel like they are really learning English when they use this knowledge in their daily lives. Memorizing new vocabulary follows it with a 35%. This would show us the importance of meaningful input until the students are competent enough to utter a language. Communicative activities are in third place with 33.3%. As well as researchers, students have the awareness about how effective using the language through communicative activities. Reading comprehension is found extremely effective by 32.50%. Here, one point is

essential. A reading comprehension activity can be made communicative by the teacher or just a dull answer the questions activity. If the teacher does pre-reading activities such as guessing what the text is about looking at the first sentence or post-reading activities such as writing an alternative ending to the text together with their peers in groups. Roleplays are another way to make a reading activity more communicative. At this stage, the teacher's role is rather critical. Brainstorming is found extremely effective by 28.95%. Students enjoy while they are sharing their opinions but it should be a controlled activity as there is the risk of getting lost about what is requested by the teacher. This way, more students might feel brainstorming activities are helping them well. Filling in the blanks activity is found extremely effective by 22.50%. This shows us that the students find communicative activities more effective than the ones that are not. It is strange that picture storytelling is found extremely effective by 17.50 while 40% find it effective even though it is a communicative activity but if we take into consideration the percentage of effective option, it is still appreciated by students in terms of teaching success. Another unexpected point is that students find roleplay only 20% extremely effective while the percentage of effective is 27.5%. **The perception of students' roleplay activities can be another subject to be researched as well as picture storytelling.**

It is obvious that the SST increased drastically during communicative activities. What we, as educators, expect from the students in ESL classes is just speaking the target language. Because language is a living mechanism and as long as you speak it you can keep up with it. Just like the first language learning, learners first save and then start uttering English. It doesn't matter how grammatically correct a baby can speak. As long as he/she can communicate, we count that they speak the language. According to Sirbu, 2015, "Language is essentially a means of communication among the members of a society." (p.1) That's why we should focus on increasing students' speaking time. As the saying goes; "Practice makes perfection." The more the learners speak the language, no matter correctly or false, the more they will learn it.