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Developing English Speaking Skills for Secondary School Students through Using Extracurricular Activities

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Abstract:
 This paper investigates developing English speaking skills for secondary school students through using extracurricular activities in Gadarif Municipality. A descriptive analytic method was adopted to conduct the study. To collect the data a questionnaire was designed for (the sample of35English teachers).The findings of the study revealed that the development of EFL speaking skills could be achieved via the use of the following extracurricular activities: English language societies, debates, telling English stories, school radio, academic competition and presenting morning programme in English. Therefore, the study recommends formation of English language societies, conducting debates and academic competition among students as well assisting students to be familiar with English stories so that they can act stage plays since they enable students at secondary schools to develop their English-speaking skills.

Keywords: *Speaking skills, extracurricular activities*

1. Introduction

Extracurricular activities raise aspirations of students and create a positive bond between students and school. When students are positively connected to their schools, they will have confidence for a better perception of knowledge that will lead to efficiency in learning. Extracurricular activities help students build good relationships among peers; therefore, when students participate in these activities, their classroom engagement increases. Extracurricular activities will provide students practice environments,   and these practice opportunities will enable students to gain confidence. Students will stand a better chance of displaying their skills and abilities in a confident classroom practice (Eccles, 2004).The success of language acquisition depends on two kinds of language exposure–outside the formal   environment of the classroom and sheltered curricular exposure within the classroom. ECAs provide the necessary experiential language exposure outside the classroom (Krashen ,1981). Druzhinina R. (2009) argues that for most people "the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language   since speech is the most basic means of human communication". The importance of speaking is more revealed with the integration of the other language skills. For instance, speaking can help students to develop their vocabulary and grammar and then improving their writing skill. With speaking, learners   can express their personal feelings, opinions or ideas; tell stories; inform or explain; request; converse   and discuss, i.e. through speaking, we can display the different functions of language. Speaking is very important outside the classroom as well. Many companies and organizations look for people who speak English very well for the purpose of communicating with other people. Therefore, speakers of foreign languages have more opportunities to get jobs in such companies. However, nowadays the majority of the secondary school students do not use English language for communicative purposes. To them English   is just a school subject which students memorize to learn so as to pass examinations. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why these students have difficulty learning /using English speaking skills. Therefore, students should involve in extracurricular activities not only for entertainment, social and enjoyment purposes, but most important, to improve English language speaking skills. This study seeks to find out how to develop English language speaking skills via utilizing extra- curricular activities for secondary   school students. Since English has become a very important language in the world. As stated by Druzhinina R. (2009), English is used widely all over the world. Almost in all fields of occupations and professions, English takes a very significant role as one of the requirements for applying for a job.

2 Literature Review

Extracurricular activities are those activities that fall outside the realm of the normal curriculum of   school or university education, performed by students. Hunt (2003) states that extracurricular activities   are student experiences that are not included in the educational curriculum. These activities are a significant part of education. It has been proved that

extracurricular activities are as necessary as regular classes for development of skills. Furthermore, Tenhouse (2003) adds that extracurricular activities are good opportunities for students to achieve their curricular goals. Students discover and develop their skills through these activities for achievement. Extracurricular activities are non-academic activities. They are as part of modules to develop students' mentality, sociality and moral values. Developing students' communicative competence and perception of life can be obtainable with learning process and experiences from activities they are enrolled in. On the other hand, speaking is a basic skill that language learners should master with other language skills. It is defined as a complex process of sending and   receiving messages through the use of verbal expressions, but it also involves nonverbal symbols such as gestures and facial expressions. According to Hedge (2000) speaking skills can be defined as "a skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed" .That is to say speaking is an important skill which deserves more attention in both first and L2 because it reflects people's thoughts   and personalities. Thornbury (2005) stated that some of the processing skills needed in speaking differ   from the ones involved in reading and writing. Also, second language speaking differs from first language speaking in terms of the lack of grammar and vocabulary knowledge of learners, i.e., the process of building utterances accurately and regaining words does not yet become automatic in L2 speaking.

2.1. Extracurricular Activities and Language

The reported advantages of extracurricular activities for language acquisition include: improvement of student-teacher relationship as well as of student-student relationship, improvement of school morale, improvement of school-community relationship, decrease in the need for disciplinary control, and increase in the school's holding power. ECAs have been shown to foster effective teamwork between students, school staff, teachers and the principal (Anderson, 1963).In accordance with Dornyei (2001), motivation is a valuable condition for language learning and one of the strongest factors in successful language acquisition. Therefore, one of the purposes of employing ECA in language teaching is to develop both social and intellectual motives for learning .watching films, reading authentic magazine articles and listening to music: materials of higher relevance to learners are more motivating to them, and ECAs give the opportunity to reflect the interests of the learners, since the learners are, in most cases responsible for organizing ECAs(Hudson, 2000, Gardner 2001). Extracurricular activities provide students with socio cultural knowledge which is considered another area of language competence .Therefore, the integration of ECAs into L2 curriculum support the context of culturally oriented communicative second language teaching (Kramsch, 1993).Similarly, Ingram and O'Neill (1999) and Harklau, (1999) emphasize that Extracurricular activities provide language teachers and students with various chances for creating the target language environment, and exploring different cultural issues of the country of the target language. It is very important for   L2/ FL learners to alter to the target   culture, a new way of thinking and considering the world. Some studies have shown that the use of extracurricular activities enables students to improve their language skills as well social and cultural knowledge. A study by Stephen(2013) revealed benefits of participation in extracurricular activities   include better grades, scoring higher on standardized tests, fewer school absences ,learning life skills   that are not learned in the classroom, and a feeling of connectedness to their school. AlsoMiloud(2014) the findings of his study have shown that there is a positive correlation between extracurricular involvement and oral proficiency. Another study conducted by Paul (2015)has emphasized listening to English music with lyrics, watching videos, discussions, and conversations with native speakers were most frequently suggested extracurricular activities for enhancing listening and speaking. Among the resources, audio CDs and textbooks were the most frequent aids to prompt listening and speaking activities.

3. Methodology

The study was descriptive analytic .The method was adopted to investigate the development of English speaking skills for students at secondary school level through the use of extracurricular activities. The   population for this study was all English teachers in Gadarif Municipality. Since the population is too large, then by simple random sampling is used. Sample size for this study was about 35 (20 male   and   15 female) respondents. A set of questionnaire was used to collect the data needed for this study. The first part of questionnaire included the respondents' demographic information (gender , age , faculty , specialty, years of teaching experience and types of school).While the second section concerned 13 statements which are based on the questions of the study. SPSS promgramme is used to analyze the data of the current study in order to achieve analysis and logic interpretations for the results.

4 Results

In this section we will present and analyze the results of this study. The data is collected via questionnaire that contains 13 statements. The questionnaire is distributed to 40 of English language teachers. 35 copies were filled and retuned.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	2.9
Not sure	1	2.9
Agree	10	28.6
Strongly Agree	23	65.7
Total	35	100.0

Table 1: The importance of school radio in developing speaking skills

Table 1 shows that 33 (91.3%) of respondents agreed with statement of school radio helps students to develop English speaking skills Therefore, respondents emphasized the utility of using school radio to help the students to develop their speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	2.9
Not sure	2	5.7
Agree	13	37.1
Strongly Agree	19	54.3
Total	35	100.0

Table 2: The using of stage plays in developing speaking skills

Table 2 explains that 32 (91.4%) of the sample agreed with the statement of stage plays enable students to develop speaking skills. While only 1 (2.9%) disagreed. This emphasized the effectiveness of stage plays in developing speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	5.7
Not sure	6	17.1
Agree	10	28.6
Strongly Agree	17	48.6
Total	35	100.0

Table 3: Reading English magazines and speaking skills

Table 3 shows 27 (77.2 %) of respondents agreed with the statement of reading English magazines help students to develop speaking skills. and 2(5.7%) disagreed. Thus, reading English magazines plays a vital role in developing speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	2.9
Not sure	1	2.9
Agree	6	17.1
Strongly Agree	27	77.1
Total	35	100.0

Table 4 :Reinforcing students' abilities by debates

Table 4 shows that 33 (94.2%) of the sample of this study agreed with the statement of debates reinforce students' ability to speak. while only 1 (2.9%) of them disagreed .Therefore , this indicate that the debates enable students to reinforce their abilities

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	2.9
Not sure	2	5.7
Agree	7	20.0
Strongly Agree	25	71.4
Total	35	100.0

Table 5: Development of speaking skills via telling English stories

Table 6 shows that 32(91.4%) of the participants agreed with the statement but only 1 (2.9%) disagreed. Clearly the most respondents ensured the necessity of telling English stories to develop English speaking skills among students.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	5.7
Not sure	3	8.6
Agree	10	28.6
Strongly Agree	20	57.1
Total	35	100.0

Table 6: Using morning program to improve speaking skills

Table 4.6 clarifies that 30 (85.7 %) of the sample agreed with statement of presenting morning   programme in English helps students to improve their speaking skills. , but 2 (5.7%) disagree. Therefore, the respondents formed high percentage concerning   the importance of   Presenting morning program in English language helps the students to improve their speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	2.9
Not sure	2	5.7
Agree	12	34.3
Strongly Agree	20	57.1
Total	35	100.0

Table 7: Using dialogues to strength speaking skills

Table 7 illustrates that 32 (91.4%) of responses agreed with the statement and 1 (2.9%) disagreed. Thus, this emphasized the essentiality of using of dialogues to develop speaking.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Not sure	4	11.4
Agree	16	45.7
Strongly Agree	15	42.9
Total	35	100.0

Table 8: Academic competition and fluency

Table 8   demonstrates that 21(88.6%) of the participants agreed with the statement of Academic   competition and fluency. While 4 (11.5%) of them are not sure. This result affirms the importance of conducting academic competition in English facilitates students' speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Not sure	2	5.7
Agree	9	25.7
Strongly Agree	24	68.6
Total	35	100.0

Table 9: The role   English language societies

Table 4.9 shows   that 33 (94.3 %) of respondents agreed with the statement of the and 2 (5.7%) of are not sure. This result refers to the vitality of forming English language societies in schools to practice speaking skills properly.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	5.7
Not sure	10	28.6
Agree	8	22.9
Strongly Agree	15	42.9
Total	35	100.0

Table 10: Lack of extracurricular activities influence

Table 10 explains that 23 (65.8 %) of the sample agreed with the statement of lack of extracurricular   activities influence. While 2 (5.7) disagreed. This emphasizes that secondary schools in Gadarif locality do not pay attention to extracurricular activities.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	5.7
Not sure	7	20.0
Agree	9	25.7
Strongly Agree	17	48.6
Total	35	100.0

Table 11: The impact of extracurricular activities

Table 11 states 74.3% of respondents agreed with statement of the impact of extracurricular activities and 2(5.7%) disagreed. This result emphasizes the importance of using extracurricular activities specifically by English teachers at secondary schools so that they can help their students to develop speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	1	2.9
Disagree	3	8.6
Not sure	7	20.0
Agree	14	40.0
Strongly Agree	10	28.6
Total	35	100.0

Table 12: Teachers and the use of extracurricular activities

According to table 12, 24 (68.6%) of the sample agreed with the statement of most of English teachers at secondary schools do not use extracurricular activities to develop students' speaking skills. While   1 (2.9 %) disagreed. Therefore, the   most   teachers of English language at the secondary schools do not use extracurricular activities to develop speaking skills for the students.

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	1	2.9
Disagree	2	5.7
Not sure	9	25.7
Agree	11	31.4
Strongly Agree	12	34.3
Total	35	100.0

Table 13: Discouragement of English language syllabi

Table 13 explains that 23 (65.7 %) of participants agreed with the statement of English language syllabi at secondary schools do not encourage students speaking to the practice, 3(8.6%) disagreed. That to say English language syllabi do not involve much extracurricular activities which in turn are needed to develop students' speaking skills.

5. Discussion

The results of the study proved the importance of using extracurricular activities to develop English speaking skills for secondary school students in Gadarif Municipality. Data analysis showed that the   sample in high percentages agreed with the idea of using such extracurricular activities to develop Speaking skills: English language societies (94.3%), debates (94.2%) ,telling English stories, dialogues and stage plays(91.4%), School radio(91.3%),Academic competition (88.7%), presenting   morning programme in English(85.7%) and reading English magazines (77.2%). This appears so because of the fact that such extracurricular activities motivate students to learn English eagerly. Therefore, students can practice English speaking skills by means of arranging debates, dialogue or acting stages plays. In this point our results   join with(Paul 2015, Miloud2014, Stephen2013).

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of using extracurricular activities to develop EFL speaking   skills for students at secondary school level. Therefore, it emphasized the importance of the use of extracurricular activities in developing speaking skills. The study arrived at findings which contribute to solve the problem of the weakness of EFL speaking skills for students at secondary school.

6.1. Recommendations

According to the study's findings which revealed the importance of the use extracurricular activities to   develop students' speaking skills in secondary schools, we recommend the following   :
1. Forming of English language societies.
2. Encouraging students to carry out debates   and dialogues on various topics.
3. Assisting students to perform English stage plays.
4. Academic competition in   English language should be used among students.

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