



ผลของการสอนพูดภาษาอังกฤษโดยการใช้เรื่องราวที่มีต่อความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษและการมีส่วนร่วมของนักเรียนไทยผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 2 ในโรงเรียนนานาชาติในประเทศไทย

EFFECTS OF ENGLISH SPEAKING INSTRUCTION USING STORIES ON SPEAKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION OF THAI EFL SECOND GRADE STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN THAILAND

สตีเฟน แซงลีร์\*

Stephen Sanglir\*

ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. ปราณภา โมเดหิรัญ\*\*

Asst. Prof. Prannapha Modehiran\*\*

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาผลของการสอนการพูดภาษาอังกฤษโดยการใช้เรื่องราวที่มีต่อทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนไทยผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 2 ในโรงเรียนนานาชาติในประเทศไทย 2) ศึกษาการมีส่วนร่วมของกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่มีจากการสอนภาษาอังกฤษด้วยการใช้เรื่องราว กลุ่มตัวอย่างประกอบด้วยนักเรียนไทย ผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ ที่กำลังศึกษาอยู่ชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 2 โรงเรียนนานาชาติในประเทศไทย เครื่องมือที่ใช้ได้แก่ แบบทดสอบการพูดก่อนและหลังเรียน สมุดบันทึกการพูดของนักเรียน และแบบสังเกตชั้นเรียน สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลคือ สถิติเชิงพรรณนา ได้แก่ ค่าแนวโน้มเชิงเส้น ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน การทดสอบค่าที่ และการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) ค่าแนวโน้มเชิงเส้นหลังเรียนสูงกว่าค่าแนวโน้มเชิงเส้นก่อนเรียนอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ 2) นักเรียนมีความคิดเห็นเชิงบวกต่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษด้วยการใช้เรื่องราว

\* Master's Degree Student, Department of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (International Program)

Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

E-mail Address: [stevosanglir@gmail.com](mailto:stevosanglir@gmail.com)

\*\* Adviser and Lecturer, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

E-mail Address: [praneemod@gmail.com](mailto:praneemod@gmail.com)

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## Abstract

This research project aimed to study: 1) the effects of English Speaking Instruction Using Stories on the Speaking Ability of Second Grade Thai EFL Learners in an International School; 2) the students' participation in the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories. The sample for this study comprised Thai EFL learner participants from the second grade level in an international school in Thailand. The instruments used in this research were a speaking pre-test and post-test, and student talk diaries and classroom observations form. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics: mean scores, S.D., and dependent t-test, and content analysis. The findings of the study indicated that: 1) the speaking post-test mean scores were higher than those of the pre-test at a significant level; 2) the students showed positive participation in the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories.

**คำสำคัญ:** การเล่าเรื่อง/ การสอนการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ/ ความสามารถทางการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ

**KEYWORDS:** STORY TELLING/ ENGLISH SPEAKING INSTRUCTION/ ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY

## Introduction

This study examined the effects of English Speaking Instruction Using Stories on the English speaking ability of second grade Thai EFL learners. English is one of the most widely used languages to communicate among people around the world. Being able to use English to communicate is beneficial and learning English can start from a young age. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region have put emphasis on the importance of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) as the purpose of English for communication at an early age. The Ministry of Education in Taipei has proposed a 12 year program with general guidelines for elementary and junior high school education, which emphasize cultivation of language knowledge and skills related to expression, communication, and sharing in English from an early age in 1998 (Taipei Ministry of Education, 1998). The Singapore Ministry of Education highlights communicative abilities, as the skills used for oral communication are necessary in order to establish a strong foundation in English right from the beginning stages of language learning (Singapore Ministry of Education, 2010). In Thailand, it is specified in the Basic Education Core Curriculum BE. 2551 under the learning area of foreign languages that English must be learned by every Thai student, whereas other foreign languages are optional (Thailand Ministry of Education, 2008). Also, the curriculum specifies that Thai students should possess the ability to use foreign languages for communication as specified in the learning content Strand 1. For young learners, the curriculum indicates that by the end of third grade,

students should be able to use foreign languages to speak about themselves, their families, their school, their surrounding environment, foods, beverage, and other everyday experiences (Thailand Ministry of Education, 2008).

In the context of international schools in Thailand, Thai students in the international schools generally have to meet requirements of being able to use English for communication, since English is used as the media of teaching main subjects such as English, Science and Mathematics (Singapore Ministry of Education, 2010). The students therefore have to try to use English to communicate in the classroom. It is a challenging thing for them especially during their first two or three years in school. As reported in a study by Yunibandhu (2004), most Thai students in international schools in Thailand have to face difficulties with regard to both English language use and proficiency. They also struggle with being stuck between the pressure to speak Thai with their peers and with speaking English in school (Yunibandhu, 2004).

Apart from speaking English for communication, many studies have revealed its significance in language learning, revealing that speaking helps language learners to progress academically and improve their proficiency in using a second language when they have an opportunity to produce language through output (R. Ellis, 2003; Nation, 2007; Richards, 2003). It is important to teach and practice speaking for EFL students as speaking activities can provide opportunities to talk about real-life situations; students can also gain feedback from their teachers or peers making English use a meaningful act. Students can increase their ability to speak spontaneously if given chances to retrieve knowledge they have stored (Harmer, 2007). English speaking can therefore support English language learning and help students including young students in Thai international schools to step across their difficulties of being a newcomer to the world of English language use.

Although speaking is essential for learning English language, several studies have reported that Thai students seem to have not enough English speaking skills (Boonkit, 2010; Jaiyai et al., 2005). The studies reported the reasons for Thai students' lack of speaking skills in that Thai students lack of confidence and they need to develop their confidence in speaking English as well as be given more opportunities to practice their speaking skills. Other problems of EFL Thai students' speaking can include problems about pronunciation in speaking English (Boonkit, 2010; Jaiyai et al., 2005; Noom-ura, 2013). Similar things happen in the context of Thai students in international schools who are young learners. Without

interesting ways to motivate their output, speaking seems to be difficult for them. Grade reports in the English subjects of the first-year Thai students in international schools have not indicated sufficient satisfaction (Kok, 2015).

One of the interesting ways to motivate overall students to speak can include the use of stories. Several studies have claimed that using stories can enhance the speaking ability of learners as they can help foster children's motivation to acquire a new language, build a rudimentary receptive vocabulary (when hearing one) and productive vocabulary (when telling one). It can also help children develop self-confidence and comfort in expressing their needs and ideas, support phonological awareness, promote alphabetic awareness, and reduce confusion about consonants, vowels, grammar and syntax (Soderman, Clevenger, & Kent, 2013). Using stories can include reading aloud a story from a book to the students and telling a story without a book by reciting or by word of mouth. Reading out already-written stories saves a lot of time by using a script which the teacher follows as a guide, allowing the teacher to tell the story more confidently (G. Ellis & Brewster, 2002). However, teachers can create their own stories to include the characteristics requested by the children and scope down the vocabulary and grammar used in the stories. Using stories in the L2 classroom creates a good learning environment which the children are able to contextualize as the teachers go through the stories and creates opportunities for the students to use the language when talking about the story heard or telling the story created (R. Ellis, 2003; Richards, 2003).

Studies have also suggested that using stories in the classroom provides meaningful context and functions as a springboard to expand into a variety of language learning activities by creating safe language learning environments (Brewster, Ellis, & Girard, 2002; Soderman et al., 2013). In order to develop confidence and motivation in the classroom setting, stories can also be used to arouse interest and increase motivation among students who are learning a second language (González, 2010).

Using stories in the classroom is therefore a great teaching tool to motivate students to speak. To date, the studies about using stories to teach English have been conducted on participants with older age groups like undergraduate students in Thailand (Somdee & Suppasetserree, 2013). Few studies have been made in regards to young EFL learners especially the ones in Thai international schools in Thailand. And the study about English speaking instruction using stories is still limited.

Therefore, the current study was conducted to investigate the extent of English Speaking Instruction Using Stories, which had effects on the English speaking ability of young Thai EFL students in international schools in Thailand.

There are 4 terms that are discussed in the study and they are defined as follows:

### **1. Speaking Instruction Using Stories**

Speaking Instruction Using Stories in this study refers to a method of teaching that aims to prepare, enable and promote students' speaking. The first stage, prepare, uses pre-story activities which raise the awareness of the students to the new language presented using flashcards and vocabulary games. The second stage, enable uses story reading with while-story activities of connections to the images and text, predictions by the students of what will happen next and questions asked by the teacher to continue to raise awareness by drawing the attention of the students to the story and enable noticing and understanding of the new language. The final stage, produce uses post-story where the students practice appropriation and autonomy by using storytelling to orally communicate about their own experiences.

### **2. Speaking Ability**

Speaking ability refers to the students' ability to communicate orally using appropriate vocabulary and grammatical forms, pronunciation and interactive communication when talking about everyday situations.

### **3. Thai Second Grade EFL Learners**

The second grade English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners were Thai students in Thailand studying in second grade in international schools. The sample group for this study included second grade learners who were Thai EFL learners from an international school in Nonthaburi province, consisting of 12 male and female students ranging from 6 to 7 years old. The students all used English as a foreign language at school and used Thai with their family at home and had had at least 1 year of experience using English as a foreign language in the classroom setting.

### **4 Participation**

Participation in this study refers to the different ways in which students engage in the classroom activities. More specifically, participation is evaluated based on the amount and quality of student talk and other non-verbal engagements that go beyond teacher-student discussions and is related to classroom interaction as a whole.

## **Objectives of the study**

1. To investigate the effects of English Speaking Instruction Using Stories on the speaking ability of second grade Thai EFL learners.
2. To study the participation from students receiving the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories.

## **Participants**

The population of this study was EFL young language learners from Thailand in the second grade level studying in international schools. The samples selected was convenience sampling which were the Thai EFL learner participants from the second grade level in Little Dragons International School (LDIS), in Nonthaburi, Thailand. The students in this school have been exposed to EFL since kindergarten. They practice using English in school as all the subjects are taught in English. The lessons were added as an additional class in the students' weekly schedule and used English speaking instruction using stories to help improve the speaking ability of Thai second grade EFL students. The participants for the research consisted of 12 second grade students.

## **Instructional Instruments**

The instructional instrument that was used for the current study was the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories. The instruments were created by first conducting a needs analysis to find out which characters the participants found interesting and entertaining.

The English speaking instruction using stories course was integrated into the students' daily schedule and substituted their library time for 8 periods. The classes lasted for 50 minutes per lesson and the material was based on their English books and the needs analysis from the students. The stories were developed according to what suggested for grade 2 students to be able to speak about themselves, their families, their school, their surrounding environment, foods, beverage, and other everyday experiences. Following the needs analysis and what suggested by the curriculum, the lessons were planned out and were created based on the topics from the students' English books. The instructional instruments were also reviewed by experts in order to confirm the validity of the lesson plans.

The lessons topics were as follows:

- (1) Let's go shopping
- (2) A day at the Zoo
- (3) Getting around
- (4) What do we wear?
- (5) The calendar
- (6) More about friends
- (7) Holiday Time
- (8) Once Upon a time



Figure 1.0: Conceptual Framework

The first stage, prepare, used pre-story activities which raise the awareness of the students to the new language presented using flashcards and vocabulary games and included the three stages of paying attention to the visual aids and new knowledge, noticing the gap, and understanding how the new vocabulary is used. In this stage, the instructor used visual aids, posters, and flashcards to gain the attention of the students and introduce the topic, new vocabulary, and new language to them.

The second stage was the enable stage where the instructor would tell a story with the use of custom story books and helped students make connections between the text

and images in the story by showing the students the images from the flashcards and storybooks which helped them learn and make connections with the new vocabulary words in the lesson. The instructor also helped the students in making predictions about what would happen next in the story based on their previous knowledge and experience of stories by asking guided questions. Finally the teacher would continue to ask questions about the story to check for comprehension among the students to make sure that they noticed the new language presented and understood and recognize the general rules or patterns in the language being used which may include new input, such as vocabulary, phrases, pronunciation, and structure.

The third stage would promote the students speaking through appropriation, which involved the students taking over the ownership of the new language learned (Thornbury 2005). The students would first move on to work in small groups to use the new language in assisted dialogues by using the new vocabulary words to make and use short sentences. Then the students worked in groups to complete the story which the instructor started by looking at different sets of flashcards/handouts with images, prompts and vocabulary related to the story, which the instructor showed to them in a jigsaw activity. The students would then be supported by the instructor to speak and explain their own connections, predictions, and ask each other questions, about their own variations of the story, which they would have to complete together. Once the stories had been completed, the students would speak and present their stories in their small groups at the end of the activity. After the group activities, autonomy was promoted, which was included in the post reading stage and was the part of the lesson where the students performed and worked cooperatively with their peers to speak and produce language in real operating conditions by sharing with the class through speaking activities like telling their own stories in conversation about their own experiences and real life which will promote productivity, purposefulness, interactivity, challenge, safety, and authenticity.

### **Research Instruments**

There were 3 research instruments for the current study: 1) pre-test and post-test, 2) video observation form, and 3) talk diaries. Detail is as follows.

The research instrument which was used to find whether the participants' speaking ability was affected by the designed instruction included pre-test and post-test which were parallel. The parallel pre-test and post-test used in this study was used to assess the

students' use of appropriate grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactive communication. The tests were composed of 2 parts, a personal interview and a part of looking at pictures and tell a story, which were adapted from The Cambridge English Flyers YLE Test (Cambridge, 2005).

The second research instrument was a video recording of the lessons during lessons 1, 4 and 8. A small, inconspicuous sports camera was used in order to not alert the students to the presence of a camera. The camera was placed to the side away from the view and attention of the students. The 3 video recordings were then analysed. Each video recording was viewed by the researcher and student verbal and non-verbal participation was assessed using the observation form.

The third research instrument was a talk diary, which was also adapted from Gruegen et al. (2005). The talk diary was used to collect verbal and non-verbal participation from the students' perspectives as the instructor's and students' perceptions of participation can vary according to Meyer (2009). The talk diary was assigned to the students to record the way they felt they interacted with others in class with their participation in the different classroom activities. The talk diaries contained a list of 10 items which the students answered either yes or no, which was represented with a smiley face and a sad face respectively. The talk diaries were collected after lessons 1, 4 and 8 with the instructor reading each of the items out to the students and the students were asked to fill out the diary.

### **Procedure**

This study was a single group pretest-posttest experimental design using quantitative research methods. Prior to the treatment, a needs analysis and pilot study was conducted on a sample group of 7 students to prepare the lessons and validate the instruments. The treatment lasted a total of ten lessons for the treatment of the Speaking Instruction Using Stories. Other instruments used to collect data for the treatment were 1) speaking pre-test and post-tests, 2) classroom observation forms and 3) student talk diaries.

### **Data collection**

Before the data collection began, an initial needs analysis survey was conducted on the students to find out their interests in regards to characters, settings, and types of stories they liked. The instructional instruments and research instruments were then designed and

then validated by experts. The pilot tests were then conducted and the instruments were found to be reliable.

After the initial check, the researcher implemented the treatment and instruments proposed in the study starting with a speaking pre-test to determine the speaking ability of the participants. Following the pre-test, the instructional instruments were used on the participants along with three in-class observation assessments and student feedback using the student talk diaries. Finally, a speaking post-test was conducted at the end of the treatment. Three video evaluations of the instructions were assessed as well during the duration of the treatment. These two instruments were used to collect data on the speaking ability of the students. The video evaluations and student talk diaries were collected after lesson 1, 4 and 8. The talk diaries adapted from Grugeon (Grugeon, Dawes, Smith, & Hubbard, 2005), were filled out by the students, under supervision of the researcher to record their opinions towards the teaching instruction.

### Results of the study

**Research Question 1: To what extent did the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories enhance the speaking ability of second grade Thai EFL learners?**

In order to answer the first question of whether the English speaking ability of the students improved after implementing the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories, the pre-test and post-test scores were compared. Stories. Descriptive statistics and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to compare the minimum and maximum scores, the mean and the standard deviation.

**Table 1** Comparison of the English speaking test scores

|           | N  | Min | Max | Mean  | Std. Deviation | Z Value | Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-----------|----|-----|-----|-------|----------------|---------|------------------------|
| Pre-test  | 12 | 5   | 9   | 7.83  | 1.115          |         |                        |
| Post-test | 12 | 9   | 12  | 11.42 | .900           | -3.126  | .002**                 |

\*\*The Z value is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis of Table shows the results of the students' scores before and after the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories was implemented. The scores were out of a total of 15 points. In the pre-test, the minimum score was 5 and the maximum score was 9. The mean score was 7.75 with a standard deviation of 1.215. The post-test showed a significant increase in scores as the minimum score was 9 and the maximum score was 12. The mean

score of the post-test was 11.42 with a standard deviation of .900. The results show the significant increasing  $Z = -3.126$  and the  $p$  value= .002.

**Table 2** Wilcoxon signed-rank test of the English speaking test scores

|                    |                | N  | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks |
|--------------------|----------------|----|-----------|--------------|
| Post-test Pre-test | Negative Ranks | 0  | .00       | .00          |
|                    | Positive Ranks | 12 | 6.50      | 78.00        |
|                    | Ties           | 0  |           |              |
|                    | Total          | 12 |           |              |

\*\*The Z value is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

The results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test also indicate that there were not negative ranks in the results of the pre-test and post-tests as all 12 participants received positive scores (See Table 4.3). According to Table 4.2 the scores improved on average, by approximately 3.67 points. Therefore, according to the results of comparing the pre-test and post-test results, it can be construed that the speaking ability of the young learners improved after having taken part in the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories.

**Research Question 2: What was the participation from students receiving the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories?**

**Table 3** Percentage of positive classroom observations

| Item   | N  | Overall percentage (%) of learners' positive participation in each item |          |          |
|--|----|---|----------|----------|
|  |    | Lesson 1  | Lesson 4 | Lesson 8 |
| 1. Does the child initiate and carry on conversations? | 12 | 33.33   | 50.00    | 83.33    |
| 2. Does the child listen carefully?                    | 12 | 33.33   | 41.67    | 91.67    |
| 3. Can the child's talk be easily understood?          | 12 | 41.67   | 50.00    | 83.33    |
| 4. Does the child describe experiences?                | 12 | 33.33   | 50.00    | 83.33    |
| 5. Does the child give corrections?                    | 12 | 16.67   | 41.67    | 91.67    |
| 6. Does the child follow verbal instructions?          | 12 | 75.00   | 83.33    | 100.00   |
| 7. Does the child ask questions?                       | 12 | 33.33   | 58.33    | 100.00   |
| 8. Can the child contribute to a working group?        | 12 | 50.00   | 66.67    | 91.67    |
| 9. Does the child participate in activities?           | 12 | 41.67   | 66.67    | 100.00   |
| 10. Does the child show interest in learning more?     | 12 | 50.00   | 66.67    | 100.00   |

|         |       |       |       |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| Average | 40.83 | 57.50 | 92.50 |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|

It can be seen from the tally scores shown in Table 3 that the initial observation scores after lesson 1 were quite low, with an average of 40.83% of positive times of tally. The lowest score was from question 5) *Does the child give corrections?* (16.67%), showing a slight amount of verbal participation from the number of students who gave brief corrections to their peers during the lesson. The highest scores were from question 6) *Does the child follow verbal instructions?* (75%) which showed non-verbal participation from the majority of the students as they listened to the instructions and followed them out. The average score after lesson 4 increased (57.5%), with the lowest scores this time being from question 2) *Does the child listen carefully?* (33.33%) and question 5) *Does the child give corrections?* (33.33%). The highest score was from question 6 again (83.33%). The final classroom observation showed a significant increase in overall percentage score (92.5%). The lowest scores this time were from 1, 3, and 4 and full scores from question 6, 7, 9 and 10, showing a higher percentage in student participation by the end of the treatment.

**Table 4** Percentage of learners' positive answers from *Talk Diaries*

| Item   | N  | Overall percentage (%) of learners' positive participation in each item |          |          |
|--|----|---|----------|----------|
|  |    | Lesson 1  | Lesson 4 | Lesson 8 |
| 1. Did I talk to the class?                              | 12 | 41.67   | 83.33    | 100      |
| 2. Did I answer a question?                              | 12 | 66.67   | 83.33    | 100      |
| 3. Can I tell a story?                                   | 12 | 41.67   | 58.33    | 83.33    |
| 4. Can I talk about things that happened to me?          | 12 | 41.67   | 66.67    | 100      |
| 5. Did I learn some new words?                           | 12 | 75  | 75       | 83.33    |
| 6. Do I remember things I am told?                       | 12 | 50  | 66.67    | 91.67    |
| 7. Did I ask a question?                                 | 12 | 33.33   | 75.00    | 91.67    |
| 8. Do I like talking to my friends about what I learned? | 12 | 75  | 83.33    | 100.00   |
| 9. Can I talk more about everyday things?                | 12 | 50  | 66.67    | 100      |
| 10. Did I like the stories?                              | 12 | 100   | 100      | 100      |
| Average  |    | 57.50   | 75.83    | 95       |

The results of the talk diaries showed that there was verbal and non-verbal participation from the students' perspectives as well. Again, from the students' perspectives there was more non-verbal participation in the first lesson, but as the lessons continued, the

level verbal participation increased. The majority of the students enjoyed participating in the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories which showed non-verbal participation. They increasingly gave positive answers to both verbal and non-verbal participation: lesson 1 - 57.50%, lesson 4 - 75.83%, and lesson 8 - 95%. The highest scores which were reported 100% for all three lessons include the ones from Item 10: *Did I like the stories?* The lowest score shown in lesson 1 was verbal participation: lesson 1 - 57.50%, lesson 4 - 75.83%, and lesson 8 - 95%. The highest scores which were reported 100% for all three lessons include from Item 2: *Did I ask a question* (33.33%), but the score showed improvement after lesson 4 (75.00%), and finally after lesson 8 (91.67%), which was substantially high in the end.

## **Discussion**

The main purpose of this study was to find out 1) to what extent does English Speaking Instruction Using Stories enhance the speaking ability of second grade Thai EFL learners and 2) to find out what was the students' participation in the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories. The two research questions are discussed below.

### **English Speaking Ability**

The comparison and analysis of the pre-test and post-test results revealed that the students improved in their speaking ability by displaying appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactive communication. The findings from this study are consistent with previous studies that stated that using stories in the classroom can enhance the students' speaking abilities by giving them opportunities to practice using the target language (Brewster et al., 2002; G. Ellis & Brewster, 2002; Guha, Druin, Montemayor, Chipman, & Farber, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Thornbury, 2005).

An increase in speaking English in the classroom activities was noted in the video observations as the results showed increase in verbal participation from initiating and carrying conversations, to participating and contributing to the group activities. These results also appear to agree with Grugeon and others (Grugeon et al., 2005), by showing that stories had a significant part in the oral development of children, and the results also suggest that story comprehension for children and their ability to speak and retell stories were enhanced by hearing stories (Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, & Lowrance, 2004).

### **Students' participation in the English Speaking Instruction Using Stories**

The video observation and the student talk diaries were used to collect data on the verbal and non-verbal participation of the students. The results of the video observations

showed a clear increase in verbal and non-verbal participation (from 40.83% to 92.5%) as the students enjoyed getting opportunities to share their own personal experiences with the rest of the class. According to the results of the talk diaries, there was also a significant difference in the percentage of the student's own view of verbal and non-verbal participation at the beginning of the treatment compared to the end of the treatment (from 57.5% to 95%). By the final lesson, all the students were able to tell short stories about personal experiences that tied in with the day's lesson. The results from the observations and talk diaries showed some interesting findings.

One interesting observation was that as the lessons were conducted, students were able to show signs of peer correction. For example, the use of past tenses:

Student A: Yesterday, I go to-

Student B: WENT!

Student A: Yesterday, I went to...

Another example was students correcting each other using possessives:

Student C: This for me...

Student D: C, You have to say "This is mine..."

Student C: Oh, sorry. This is mine...

These exchanges seemed to agree with the results from the observations regarding question: 5) Does the child give corrections, which rose from 16.67% after the 1<sup>st</sup> lesson, to 41.67% after the 4<sup>th</sup> lesson and finally to 91.67% after the 8<sup>th</sup> lesson. This finding showed an increase in deliberate verbal participation in the classroom. Along with the verbal participation, this also agrees with Ellis and Brewster (2002) regarding using stories in the classroom providing opportunities for the students to check their own work either individually or in groups. This helped them to take on responsibility for their own learning and work out where and why they may have made a mistake (G. Ellis & Brewster, 2002).

Confidence in speaking out loud in the classroom was another interesting observation. The results seem to show that the positive verbal participation in the class gradually improved as the students became more familiar with the lesson format and as they become more confident in telling their own stories. When it came to students asking and answering questions, the data provided interesting results. Results from the first lesson showed that about 66% of the students were able to answer questions, but only about 33% were able to ask their own questions. This showed that initiating a conversation was quite

difficult in the beginning as opposed to replying and continuing on a conversation. But the results after the final lesson showed a significant increase as about 91% of the students were able to ask their own questions and all of them were able to answer questions. This increase in verbal and non-verbal participation, shown from the results of questions such as *Can I tell a story? Do I like talking to my friends about what I learned? and Can I talk more about everyday things?*, seems to suggest that the stories lessons were able to create positive language learning conditions (Brewster et al., 2002), which in turn helped build vocabulary and helped the children develop self-confidence and comfort in expressing and sharing their needs and ideas along with presenting which was agreeable with Sodermal et al. (2013) and Harmer (2007).

The results from the talk diaries and classroom observations seem to correspond with what was mentioned above as the Speaking Instruction using Stories created opportunities for the students to practice peer-correction, broaden their vocabulary and gain confidence in speaking out loud in class.

### Conclusion

Looking at the results and findings from the present study, it seems that English Speaking Instruction Using Stories played a part in improving the English speaking ability of young English learners. The findings suggest that the use of stories in the classroom setting, especially when used with real-life situations with which the students can relate to, provides meaningful context and functions as a means to continue into a variety of language learning activities (Brewster et al., 2002), which was seen in the classroom activities using stories. Creating or using carefully selected and relevant stories in the classroom in order to gain the students' attention has been shown to help keep students attentive and engaged in the lesson.

Using questions and predictions during the story can also help encourage speaking in the classroom among the students. The consistent use of communication between teacher to student and student to student talk through questions, predictions and connections during the instruction using stories really helped facilitate and encourage both verbal and non-verbal participation. Even though the students' may show a lower level of verbal participation in the beginning of a course, it should be noted that they are still involved in non-verbal participation.

Finally, the use of activities which the students can participate in and use their previous knowledge from real life experiences has shown to help students gain confidence in speaking English during the activities. When students have real experiences from which to draw previous knowledge from, they are able to be more confident in their verbal participation and show a desire to share this knowledge with their peers.

This suggests that using stories in the classroom should be looked into more in order to help improve the speaking ability of young language learners. The teacher's observations and student's talk diaries were also proven to be a useful tool for the teacher and student to be aware of the student's verbal and non-verbal participation.

### Suggestions

According the results from the present study, the following suggestions are presented as follows:

A longer study well as different age groups would be desirable to study the effects more thoroughly. Possible questions to explore further are:

- What kind of classroom setting is appropriate to encourage confidence in speaking a new language?
- Do teachers have to have a certain characteristic or persona to tell a story?
- How can using stories in the classroom support the confidence of EFL learners?

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