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# The Effect of Communicative Games on Developing Intermediate School Students Pronunciation Performance

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## Abstract

This study aims to reveal the effect of communication games on developing intermediate students' pronunciation. To achieve this aim, a quasi-experimental design was used. A pretest and a posttest were used to collect the data. A selected communication games were used to training the students to develop their pronunciation performance. The participants were 68 male students from second grade intermediate school in Baghdad. The results revealed that there is no statistical significance difference between the mean scores of the students in the experimental and control groups due to the teaching method. The researcher suggested to expose students to electronic communication games that provide the sound of the word from a native source .

**Keywords:** Effect, Communicative Games, Intermediate School, Pronunciation, and Performance

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## **Statement of the Problem**

The enjoyment of speaking a foreign language is when one pronounces it correctly (Winddowson, 2000). The ability to pronounce well, that means to master the stress, intonation patterns, and rhythm is one step toward learning a foreign language successfully (Nunan, 1991). From the researcher's experience in teaching English language, conducting need analyses technique is done at the beginning of each semester to focus on students' need to develop. At the beginning of the current semester, the results of the need analyses which were conducted on November 2021 show that the students need to enhance their pronunciation. To this end, the researcher had reviewed the literature and the outcomes of previous studies, it was found that the most suitable activity for the intermediate school level is the use of communication games.

## **Aim of the Study**

This study aims to reveal the effect of communication games on developing second grade intermediate students' pronunciation performance.

## **Hypothesis of the Study**

To achieve the aim of the study, the following hypothesis has been set. There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the achievement of the students in the experimental group who were taught pronunciation via communication games technique and the students (in the control group) who were taught pronunciation via prescribed method of the textbook.

## **Significance of the Study**

It is hoped that the outcomes of the study can be valuable to the educators who are interested in the developing EFL students' language performance, also for the curriculum designers, and even university instructors at the departments of

English. The outcomes will shed light on the most enjoyment activity that helps students to overcome foreign language learning.

### **Limits**

The outcomes of the study are limited to:

- 1- Sample: The participants were form second intermediate school male students in Baghdad.
- 2- Location: The school is located in Baghdad, one of the Al-Karkh it General Directorate.
- 3- Duration: The study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022.

### **Literature Review**

According to the Iraqi context, the most representative pronunciation definition is the definition of Anber and Jameel (2020) who stated that "pronunciation refers to the way a vocabulary is articulated according to acceptable articulation by utilizing correctly uttered segments and suprasegments".

Pronunciation is considered the art of communication, to be able to communicate in a foreign language, one needs to master the pronunciation of the words (Buckby, 2006).

In the level of university, in order to teach communication, the first phase is to train the EFL students to discriminate between the sounds, then the parts of sounds, this phase is very important for successful English language learning (Biloon, 2017).

Being able to say words correctly, is an important aspect of flexible communication. To fail pronouncing correctly may lead to misunderstanding, and poor communication which result unpleasant to the listener(s) (Maccarthy, 1972).

To study the English sounds, the students/learners learn the linguistic aspects of the sound such as phonetics, phonology, phoneme, phones, distinctive feature (the differentiation among phonemes), segments, point of articulation, manner of articulation, consonants, vowels, supra segments, stress, sound recognition, sound production, and phonological errors (Al-Jaff, 2004).

### **Communication Games**

The history of language games went back to the "Natural Methods" which focus on using games of teach language system (Kelly,1976).

The notion that emphasizes learning to be a pleasant experience has been supported by kim (1995) who stated that "if a learner having fun and there is hilarity and laughter, the learning will achieve its aims " (P.35).

Also, Bright and McGegor (1985) emphasized that "enjoyment out to be one of the foremost aims and effects of education, particularly in school, partly because what we enjoy we feel inclined to go on with, and what we have disliked we drop us soon as we can" Language games have pedagogical values especially in foreign language teaching because they enhance cooperative learning and create positive trends toward learning a foreign language, the games also reduce students' language anxiety and stress which hinder language learning (Deesri, 2002).

Harmer (2001) listed the types of communicative games which basically based on "information gap" such as problem solving, solve a puzzle, draw a picture, and word order which deals with grammar, vocabulary, adjectives tenses, language functions, etc.

The researcher in this study noticed that communication games can develop students' Oral skills, the games provides indirect feedback in an interesting way. In the information gap communication games, the students use language to communicate to bridge a gap, which means to a quire information to complete an activity.

According to Al-Jaff (2004) communicative games can improve pronunciation, the games focus on communication between learners, challenge divers speaking skills, encourage cooperation between sender and receiver.

### **Pervious Study**

Mudawi et al (2021) investigated the effect of communication games on primary students' speaking skills in English language. The participants were 50 English language teachers in some primary schools in Khartoum city, Sudan. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The results revealed that there is a positive effect of using communicative games in developing Oral communication and verbal interaction.

Moburaki (2020) investigated the effect of education games in developing primary students' vocabulary and grammar in English Language. The Participants were 24 pupils from grad 5<sup>th</sup> at primary school in Gezan, KSA. A pretest and posttest were used to collect the data. The results revealed that the educational games have positive effect on pupils' vocabulary and grammar achievement.

Kurniati et al (2019) investigated the effect of communicative games in improving elementary students' vocabulary performance. The participants were 207 from 3 elementary schools in Jambi city, Indonesia, An observation check list, a pretest and posttest were used to collect the data. The results revealed that the communicative games have motivated students and improved their English Vocabulary, and the students were more receptive and cheerful to learn English Bergig (2019) investigated the effect of communication games in developing and teaching vocabulary. The participants were from primary school level. The researchers used a descriptive theoretical method to presents the significance features of the games in teaching English language. The results revealed that teaching vocabulary Via communicative games required qualified English language

teachers group based instruction, and the games provide good learning atmosphere.

Jasim and Rodhan (2017) investigated Iraqi EFL primary teachers' attitude towards the effect of educational games on improving pupils' speaking skills. The participants were 60 EFL teachers. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The results revealed that there are positive significance of using games on pupils speaking performance.

## **Methodology**

### **Participants of the Study**

The participants were 68 male students who divided into two groups random, each group consist of 34 students from 2nd intermediate grade at Al-Najah Intermediate school for boys. Al-Karkh Second Education Directorate, Baghdad-Iraqi .

### **Instrument**

The researcher selected communication games to train students to pronounce English vocabulary. The types of games were as follow:

- 1- Information Gap Activities.
- 2- Matching Games.
- 3- Exchanging and Collecting Games.
- 4- Guessing Games.
- 5- Arranging Games.

Also, a pretest and posttest were designed to collect the data. The validity and the reliability of the instruments were calculated

### **Procedures**

To achieve the aim of the study, the following procedures have been followed:

- 1- Identifying the participants of the study.

- 2- Dividing the participants randomly into two groups, the experimental and the control groups.
- 3- Conducting the pretest.
- 4- Dividing the participants of the experimental group into small groups.
- 5- Teaching pronunciation via the selected games for 8 weeks.
- 6- Conducting the posttest.
- 7- Collecting the data and analyzing them statistically.

To verify the hypothesis that states "there is a statistically significance difference at (0.05) between the achievement of the students (in the experimental group) who were taught pronunciation via communicative games technique and the students (in the control group) who were taught pronunciation via prescribed method of the textbook", a mean scores and standard deviation at significance (0.05) value were used.

**Table 1: T-test Students' Scores in the Posttest**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Calculated T-Value</b>	<b>Tabulated T-Value</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Experimental	34	25.92	1.49	70	0.36	1.98	0.05
Control	34	24.89	8.79				

The result of table 1 shows that the mean scores of the experimental group is 25.92 and for the control group is 24.89, the calculated T-value is 0.36 which is lower than the calculated T-value with degree of freedom 70 which means that there is no significance difference between the two groups, the both groups are equal in the post achievement pronunciation test, this results indicates that the hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is replaced which states" there is no statistically significance difference at (0.05) between the achievement of the students (in the experimental group) who were taught pronunciation via

communicative games technique and the students (in the control group) who were taught pronunciation via prescribed method of the textbook.

### **Discussion of the Results**

The results revealed that there is no statistically significance difference between the students' pronunciation achievements in both the experimental and the control groups due to the teaching method. This result may due to the fact that Iraqi students learn English language as a foreign language, thus they pronounce visually based to the first language, they pronounce what they hear, they usually try the approximate the sounds of the word to the nearest sound of their first language, also they translate the sound which leads to poor pronunciation. To solve such problem, the students need to listen a native person pronunciation, and using games will be helpful tool to facilitate the learning process, as brown (2001). Prove that using authentic materials and learning by action have strong effect on students' language performance.

The result of the study is inconsistence with the results of Mudawi (2021) , Moburak (2020), kurniatie et al (2019), Bergig (2019), Jasim and Rodhan (2017) which found positive effect of communication games on developing students speaking performance and vocabulary achievement.

In light of the outcomes of the study, it is suggested to train students' pronunciation by using electronic communication games that produce sounds (by native speaker) in order the students to be able to Imitate the sounds of the words from a native speaker, and to be far from the teacher's pronunciation.

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