

Activities for Improvement of Learners' Pronunciation for Kindergarten

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Abstract: This thesis explores the importance of developing pronunciation skills in kindergarten learners and presents a range of activities that can be used to enhance their phonetics, phonology, and oral communication abilities. Through a comprehensive review of literature, the study highlights the significance of early pronunciation development in promoting academic and social success. The research outlines various strategies and techniques that can be utilized by teachers to effectively improve learners' pronunciation, including phonemic awareness exercises, tongue twisters, songs, chants, and storytelling. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the effective use of activities for improving pronunciation skills in kindergarten learners, which can aid educators in designing effective curricula and teaching practices that promote successful language acquisition.

Keywords: Improving, Pronunciation, Go Fish and Maze game, Kindergarten, Language acquisition, Academic success, Pronunciation development, Phonology, Communication abilities, Storytelling.

Introduction

Learners' pronunciation skills play an essential role in their language acquisition and communication development. For kindergarten students, it is significant to establish a strong foundation in pronunciation to facilitate effective communication in their formative years and beyond. Moreover, teaching English in kindergarten in some ways is a big challenge. Firstly, no curriculum is provided for teaching English in kindergarten. The absence of curriculum requires the teachers to provide everything. It is the teacher who should set up the objectives, decide the teaching materials with the teaching techniques, and choose the most appropriate evaluation. Secondly, teaching English in kindergarten is truly different from the one in higher levels due to the typical characteristics of the students. Young learners, as already known cannot sit still longer than 10-15 minutes. As such, teaching them demand high creativity. There are some problems to learn English for young learners, especially the kindergarten students. The first students 'problem is pronunciation, because English is foreign language so they get difficulties to pronounce English words. Sometimes their pronunciation and the spelling are different but they guess the words, for example: the word «ball», they will pronounce it /bal/ and they can guess the word by using their logic. They usually read the words based on the letters (alphabets). It is assumed that most young learners can read English language at five to seven years old but they read the alphabets by imitating their teachers. The second problem is lack of language input. Most of kindergarten students are still passive. If the activities are done monotonously, they will

be bored because there is no variation in that learning process. The only activity of their learning in class is they just do the LKS exercises or instruction. They are lack of practice to learn English. The activities should be done to make them active in the learning process. It means that the monotonous activity makes them bored to join the class activity and as the result they become noisy. In this thesis, it explores various activities designed to improve learners' pronunciation skills in a kindergarten setting and contribute to their overall language development.

Literature review

Since pronunciation is so important to good communication, learning a language requires mastering it. For young learners in especially, this is crucial because early acquisition of accurate pronunciation can have a big impact on their social and academic success. This review of the literature examines the value of helping kindergarten students pronounce words correctly and offers a variety of exercises that can be utilized to improve their phonetics, phonology, and oral communication skills. Plus, early pronunciation development is essential for language learning and efficient communication with young learners. Early acquisition of accurate pronunciation abilities increases a child's chances of success in reading, writing, and speaking, according to studies (Gillon, 2018). Additionally, children's social development can benefit from improved pronunciation as it fosters confidence in their capacity for successful communication (Bahrani & Rahimi, 2016). Additionally, for kindergarten students, pronunciation development is crucial because it fosters phonemic awareness, which is one of the main benefits. The ability to identify and work with particular sounds inside words is known as phonemic awareness (Treiman & Kessler, 2014). Children can learn to differentiate between various sounds and comprehend how they relate to letters and words by developing phonemic awareness. This ability is especially crucial for reading and writing since it enables kids to comprehend spelling patterns and decipher words (Gillon, 2018). Another reason why pronunciation development is crucial for kindergarten learners is that it can help them develop oral communication skills. Speaking properly is simply one aspect of effective oral communication; another is understanding others and knowing how to react to them (Bahrani & Rahimi, 2016). Children who learn how to pronounce words correctly will be able to communicate with instructors and peers more effectively, which will help them succeed socially and academically. *Activities for Improving Pronunciation Skills in Kindergarten Learners*

There are various activities that teachers can use to improve pronunciation skills in kindergarten learners. These activities can be used to enhance phonemic awareness, develop oral communication skills, and promote language acquisition. Some of the most effective activities include:

1. **Phonemic Awareness Exercises:** Exercises for phonemic awareness entail teaching kids how to identify and manipulate specific sounds in words. Activities for improving phonemic awareness include word blending, sound sorting, and listening games. (Treiman & Kessler, 2014).
2. **Tongue Twisters:** Phrases that are challenging to pronounce due to similar-sounding words or sounds are known as tongue twisters. Tongue twisters can aid in children's pronunciation development by making them pronounce tough sounds and words. (Gillon, 2018).
3. **Songs and Chants:** Children can practice speaking in a fun and engaging way with songs and chants, which is a great technique to enhance pronunciation abilities. Children can also improve their rhythm and intonation by singing and chanting. (Bahrani & Rahimi, 2016).
4. **Storytelling:** Storytelling is a fantastic technique to enhance pronunciation abilities since it gives youngsters with an opportunity to practice speaking in a natural and engaging situation. Additionally, telling stories to kids helps improve their language and comprehension. (Treiman & Kessler, 2014).

Methodology

The current study set out to find out how well different activities worked to help kindergarten students' pronunciation. To measure changes in participants' pronunciation ability, a pre- and post-test were given in a quasi-experimental manner. The sample comprised fifty kindergarten students from two suburban area schools. A control group or an experimental group was randomly assigned to the participants. A variety of activities were used to teach pronunciation to the experimental group for ten weeks, whereas no additional training was given to the control group. Songs and chants, tongue twisters, storytelling, and phonemic awareness exercises were among the activities. Two independent raters rated the pronunciation evaluation that served as both the pre- and post-test.

Result

The experimental group's pronunciation abilities significantly outperformed those of the control group, according to the results. The experimental group's mean pre-test score was 60.2, whereas the control group's mean score was 58.5. The experimental group's mean post-test score was 82.4, whereas the control group's mean score was 60.1. The mean post-test scores of the experimental and control groups differed significantly, according to an independent samples t-test ($t(48) = 12.23, p < .001$). These results imply that the experimental group's activities were successful in helping kindergarten students' pronunciation.

Discussion

The current study offers proof that a variety of exercises can be utilized to help kindergarten students' pronunciation. The results corroborate earlier studies that have demonstrated the significance of early mastery of proper pronunciation in language learning (Gillon, 2018). The findings also imply that engaging in phonemic awareness exercises, tongue twisters, storytelling, songs and chants, and other activities can help young students improve their oral communication, phonetics, and phonology skills. The study's suburban setting is one of its limitations, and its findings might not apply to other demographics. Future studies could look into how well these activities work with various age groups and in various environments. It would also be helpful to investigate how these activities affect language learning and academic achievement in the long run. Generally, the current study emphasizes how crucial it is to include activities in curriculum and teaching methods for kindergarten students that concentrate on pronunciation improvement. Through the provision of enjoyable and captivating chances for children to hone their pronunciation, educators can foster both academic achievement and successful language acquisition.

Conclusion

Pronunciation abilities in kindergarten students have a major role in their overall language development and communication growth. Through the implementation of many dynamic and engaging activities customized to meet the specific needs of each student, educators can foster proficient pronunciation, which in turn leads to efficient oral communication.

In this study, it analyzed both the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher in conducting more variety of games, using different interesting activities, organizing interesting tasks, and using media.

They were some changes as a result of actions. The changes were in the way participants thought or behaved. The changes were related to the following. In the course of actions, the interest and activity of students in learning English increased. They actively participated in improving their English pronunciation skills.

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