

Using In-Service Teacher Training Programs to Teach Teacher-Student Interactional Activity

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Abstract This research investigated the effects of teachers' in-service training on EFL Junior high school students' oral achievement at boy and girl schools. It was hypothesized that there was a difference between the performances of two groups that participated in this study. Four male and four female teachers took part in the study that were selected non-randomly. They were assigned to two experimental and control groups. Eighty students in eight groups were selected non-randomly to participate in the study. The design of this study was based on the quasi-experimental research method. The participants took part in the pre-test of speaking. Each mistake was corrected by the teacher immediately. The participants in the experimental group had to follow the norms provided by the teacher during the instruction sessions. Then a post-test of speaking skill was given to the participants of the eight groups to assess their oral achievement. Their performances were estimated through Hughes (2003) speaking checklist. Dependent and Independent Samples t-tests were used to analyze the data to compare the results of both pre and post-tests. The results showed that the experimental group had more progress compared to the participants in the control in terms of structure, accent, fluency, speaking confidence and communication components of speaking.

Keywords Collaborative learning, in-service teacher education, Teacher-student interaction

1. Introduction

Language is one of the social and cultural necessities which play a key role in improving material civilization and spiritual culture of a nation. These communicative devices are significant in maintaining social inheritance, shared cultural identity through training from the sociological perspective. Language arises in social situations which contains a range of shared meaning in communication. As the most important tool of personal-social communication, it functions in the socialization of the individuals, and in the development of his character and personality. Language is the exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people. Brown (2007) maintains that "language should be considered as a system of formal units and as a means of social interaction" (p. 9).

In an interactional informational exchange, feelings and attitudes should be conveyed efficiently. The variability of linguistic patterns with regard to context is to be accounted as well as pragmatic and social functions for different semantic formulas. Because of the close relationship between linguistic system and culture, we should focus on

how cultures provide their members with a set of interpretations that they use as filters to make sense of messages, intentions, and experiences. Members of speech community master their own culture through the process of learning to learn to function in other cultures (Alipour Madarsara & Rahimy, 2015). Accordingly, the main aim of language learning is to use it in its spoken and written forms. Speaking is a process of conveying, sharing ideas and feeling orally. Therefore, if students do not learn how to speak or do not get any opportunity to speak in the language, they may not be motivated and lose interest in learning.

Adequate exposures to a wide variety of English both spoken and written is a real need to use English in conversational interaction on a daily basis, but as a means of communication, where the focus is on the meaning, then on the form of the language. Danielson's (2007) emphasizes that students (and teachers) are off topic. Other times, the conversations barely scratch the surface of a topic. In the hands of a skilled teacher the speaking and listening that the students does result in deeper understanding, increased engagement, and significant satisfaction with schooling. Spoken language is used for communicating information about daily speech events of the speakers. Verbal communication is a highly structured form of interaction with set rules of grammar. These rules help to understand and make sense of what other people are saying. Luoma (2004) stated that "speaking skills are an important part of

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Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/jalll>

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the curriculum in language teaching, and this makes them an important object of assessment as well" (p.1).

Input, interaction and output and their influence on oral fluency should enhance the understanding of the nature of speaking, an indicator of L2 proficiency, and the understanding of the relationship between learners and factors that influence their SL acquisition. Language use data is analyzed to describe the phonological, syntactic, and semantic systems of those learners, to consider how they might differ from target language norms.

Bygate (1987) mentions that "one of the basic problems in foreign language teaching is to prepare learners to be able to use the language" (p.3); therefore students and teachers both face these problems regarding speaking in class. Goodboy and Myers (2008) argue that participants are sometimes not sure whether they can convey the message; therefore, they need to be confirmed; they may also employ a strategy to make sure that their interlocutor will understand them. Moreover, participants employed 'appeal for approval', 'use of redundant notes', and 'use of nonlinguistic means' along with other CSs in order to make sure that their interlocutor understood them. It should also be noted that finding out about the strategies used by foreign language learners provides a more comprehensive view of inter-language communication, which can help language teachers, and material designers to understand the problem areas which should be catered for in the classroom.

For many years, Iranian EFL learners were taught based on traditional approach in which the teacher was considered as the only decision maker and transferor of English knowledge in the classroom. The students were passive. It means that they were expected to receive significantly what the teacher transfers, the books were the only educational sources and the students were expected to gain the educational purposes by using these sources to be able to speak English and also use it in real context.

To seek correct interpretation, or make up for communication breakdown, the learners should resort to all sorts of strategies. Misunderstanding occurs frequently in interaction due to different factors, which can be, on different occasions, phonological, syntactic, vocabulary, contextual or cultural. Therefore, no more attention they pay to processing semantic, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic levels of communication. They cannot be driven to refine their development knowledge of the language system.

2. Background

2.1. Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis

Krashen (1985) was an important figure whose input hypothesis once exercised powerful influence on SLA. Input is the prerequisite of interaction, as one of the necessary conditions for meaningful communicative use in appropriate ESL/EFL contexts. In Krashen's view, a person can learn language when he is exposed to linguistic

comprehensible input and message when it is above the level of immediate comprehension of the learner. According to his input hypothesis, SLA takes place when the learner understands input that contains grammatical forms that are at 'i+1' (i.e. is a little more advance than the current state of the learner's inter-language). He suggests that "the right level of input is attained automatically when interlocutors succeed in making themselves understood in communication" (Krashen, 1985, p. 2). The Input Hypothesis claims that language input (listening comprehension and reading) is important in the language program and that fluency in speaking or writing in second language will naturally happen after learners have built up sufficient competence through comprehending input. Ellis (1994) stated that studies on the nature of input revealed that input facilitates the acquisition of words in the target language, but does not aid the acquisition of certain syntactic structures.

2.2. Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis

The Output Hypothesis proposed by Swain (1985) argued that language output causes learners to pay attention to the target linguistic form in order to express their intended meaning. Output is the language a learner produces. Output was traditionally viewed as a way of producing what had previously been learned and the idea that output could be part of the learning mechanism itself was not seriously contemplated (Gass & Selinker, 2001). An autonomous output is one pedagogical goal in learning L2. The noticing function of the Output Hypothesis posits that learners may notice the gap in their IL knowledge in an attempt to produce the target language to prompt them to solve their deficiency in ways that are appropriate in a given context. She pointed out that only when learners are obliged to produce comprehensible output otherwise comprehensible input alone is insufficient to L2 learning process. When input is negotiated and learners produce output in interaction, they choose correct linguistic form to express themselves. This process makes it possible for the learners to internalize what they have learnt and experienced.

The study of Tabatabaei, Afzali and Mehrabi (2015) aimed to explore the effect of collaborative learning on improving speaking ability and decreasing stress of Iranian EFL learners. To this end, after the administration of the Solution Placement Test (Edwards, 2007), a total of 60 female intermediate EFL learners were selected out of a population pool of 80 studying at a private language institute in Iran. Their age range was between 18 and 22 and they were randomly assigned to two groups of control and experimental (N=30). Participants in experimental group were given some collaborative tasks, they needed to work in groups and those in control group were given the same tasks but they had to do them individually. Each group did the tasks in six sessions. In order to examine the effect of collaborative learning on improving speaking ability, an oral interview was conducted before and after the treatment

with all the participants in each group. Furthermore, to examine the effect of collaborative learning on decreasing stress, pre- and post-anxiety tests were administered to the participants. The results of the independent-sample t-test analysis for oral interview revealed that the participants in experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of speaking ability. Also, the results of the independent-sample t-test analysis for anxiety posttest revealed that the participants in experimental group had less stress after doing collaborative activities. The attitudes of the participants were explored through a questionnaire which was given to all the participants in the experimental group. The analysis of the responses demonstrated that they had positive attitudes towards collaborative learning. This study offers some implications for EFL teachers, learners, and curriculum designer.

Azadi, Aliakbari and Azizifar (2015) studied the role of classroom interaction on improvement of speaking among Iranian EFL learners. In their views, interaction has been suggested as a way of improving speaking skills in conducting the present research. For this purpose the impact of teaching speaking strategies and participants' gender on improving speaking skills are considered. For conducting the research, 30 intermediate English language learners were studied. The research pursued a pretest/posttest design to examine the research questions. The results revealed that classroom interaction can be considered as a way of improving the learners' speaking ability. Gender made no significant difference for the betterment of their speaking skills. Furthermore, teaching speaking strategies introduced ways of interacting and as a result could help them improve their speaking skills. Structuring the class so that it devotes most of the class time to learners interactions and encouraging in-depth conversations among them can be good ways of promoting classroom interaction.

Talebi and Sobhani (2012) conducted a study on the impact of Cooperative Learning (CL) on English language speaking proficiency. Experimental design was used with 40 male and female students as a sample enrolled in a speaking course at an IELTS Center in Mashhad, Iran, were involved in the study. They were assigned randomly to control and experimental groups. The two groups were homogeneous in terms of their oral proficiency before carrying out this study. An oral interview was conducted to collect the data of the study. The control group received instructions in speaking; three sessions per week for one month, while the experimental group was taught speaking skills through CL. The results of the study showed that the performance of the experimental group on oral interview. The control group received instructions in speaking; three sessions per week for one month, while the experimental group was taught speaking skills through CL. The results of the study showed that the performance of the experimental group on oral interview held at the end of the course outperformed the control group. The mean score of the experimental group was significantly higher than the control group.

Walsh (2002) found teachers' choice of language and their capacity to control the language use to be crucial to facilitate or hinder learners' participation such as applying open and direct approaches to error correction, using of real-life conversational language appropriately when giving feedback, allowing extended wait-time for learner responses, scaffolding by provided needed language to pre-empt communication breakdowns and offering communication strategies to maintain and extend learners' turns. In contrast, teacher verbal behaviors interrupt learners' language use such as latching or completing a learner's turn, echoing or repeating all or part of what learners have said and making learners loose the thread of their utterances.

Chauhan (2008) conducted a study on "In-Service Teachers' Training Program under SSA in Shimla district: an Evaluative Study" and found that the training component has been judged useful for teachers to a large extent in the areas of use of Teaching Learning Material (TLM) in classroom situation, activity based teaching and child centered approach followed by subject enrichment. Training material was made available to 98 % trainees /participants as and when the training programs were organized. By and large the training modules in the subjects of Hindi, Math, EVS, CCE, General teacher training, Co-curricular activities, and Physical and health education, English, Gender were appropriate for teachers and fulfilled their needs except modules on IE and Art education. The Resource Persons stressed mainly on lecture-cum-discussion approach while communicating with the trainees instead of demonstration techniques, which were rarely used during the training programs. Usefulness of resource material in the actual classroom situation is not as effective as it should have been. In the sampled schools 61% teachers teaching were found male and 39% female. Which clearly shows that the gender gap in the distribution of teachers in aforementioned number of schools selected for the study is more and needs to be leveled off. Majority of the teachers in the sample schools i.e. 84% were found teaching in rural areas and 16% in urban areas. Majority of the teachers serving at primary level in the selected schools are not possessing higher academic qualifications. However, 94% possess the desired professional educational qualifications.

The role of the three closely relevant factors, namely input, interaction, and output has been gradually acknowledged in L2 learning. In addition to input, interaction and output, there are some other factors affecting speaking ability and the procedure of L2 acquisition. Dynamic interactions between teachers and their students occur on a daily basis. Whether engaged in instruction or transitioning between activities, teachers and students have opportunities to interact with each other. During the class activity, there is more emphasis on learners through expressing the meaning by using all the target language to insure comprehension, rather than particular linguistic features.

2.3. Research Questions

According to the aim of the study, this thesis specifically attempted to reflect the following raised research questions:

RQ₁: Do the in-service training programs of EFL Junior high school teachers have any effect on students' speaking ability?

RQ₂: Do the educational programs of untrained EFL Junior high school teachers have any effect on students' speaking ability?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of the study were eight male and female EFL Junior high school in-service training teachers at four public boy and girl high schools in Ahvaz. They were selected (non-randomly) based on conveniences sampling method based on their in-service training to teach the book "English for Schools Prospect Two" to a population of 80 students who were designed to eight groups of 10 based on non-random convenience sampling method. From each class, 10 students were selected regardless of any purpose for choosing and were involved in the study.

3.2. Instrumentation

For gathering data for this study, a face-to-face interview was used to test the subjects' oral communicative competence regarding the linguistic features. The checklist by Hughes (2003) was used for scoring based on seven criteria; fluency, comprehension, structure, communication, vocabulary, accent, speaking confidence in order to measure speaking abilities of the learners. Each item had 5 points and the sum of the points was 35. Four first lessons were taught during the course. For pre-test and post-test, each student was interviewed separately. The teachers asked different questions from different students in order not to have the cheating factor I which could have significant effects on their performance.

The teacher-made pre and post-interview were used based on the topics and activities of the materials taught in EFL Junior high school; "English for Schools Prospect Two" was conducted. All the subjects were asked to do the related activities to assess the participants' initial levels in speaking English after the instruction through employing speaking techniques and strategies.

To see the effect of the instruction of the in-service training teachers on the speaking ability of the participants, eight teachers (four as in-service training teachers and four as untrained teachers) had face-to-face interviews with their students in the eight groups in order to see the effect of in-service training variable on the speaking ability of the students. They taught the first four units of the book in 16 sessions through employing communicative techniques and strategies. All the eight teachers interviewed the students one by one. *It was done to determine the effect of teachers'*

in-service training on participants' oral achievement. The inter-rater reliability value of the interview was computed through Pearson Correlation formula as ($r=.897$) to measure the reliability of the test scores.

3.3. Materials

Considering 16 sessions for the all classes at boyish and girlish EFL Junior high schools, the teachers were able to select the first 4 lessons of the book "English for Schools Prospect Two" focusing on conversation with practice, pronunciation and spelling, listening, and integrative skills (listening and speaking skills) which were related to participants' proficiency level. The time of each class was 60 minutes. The students' speaking ability in the designed interview was checked based on Hutches (2003) checklist of speaking. During 16 sessions of instruction, students were prepared for being successful for speaking purposes. Each student's production and communication with the teacher was recorded by an MP3 player to be analyzed and scored carefully by an inter-raters based on the checklist of the speaking skill. The inter-rater reliability of scoring in the pre and post-interviews were ($r=.694$) and ($r=.829$) respectively.

3.4. Procedure

The design of the study was qualitative. In order to conduct the study, eight male and female EFL Junior high school in-service training teachers were selected based on the proficiency level and in-service training factors. Then they were asked to teach the first units of the book "English for Schools Prospect Two" to the population of 80 non-random-chosen students assigned to eight male and female groups of 10. All the groups were instructed by four in-service training teachers and four untrained teachers in four girl and boy EFL Junior high Schools. In both girl and boy schools, there are two trained groups (A and B) and two untrained groups (C and D) in each school. All the eight groups were taught through communicative language teaching with the use of cooperative and collaborative learning activities with several speaking techniques and strategies. The students with the untrained teachers were taught through communicative language teaching approach traditionally.

The program provided 8 sessions (16 hours) of instruction. The material was the book "English for Schools Prospect Two" by Sharbian, Kheirabadi, Alavi Moghadam, Foroozande and Nikoopour (2014). The program required teachers to speak only English during their course of study since effective teachers teach students speaking (productive) strategies. Some questions were asked to discover students' comprehension of it and then they described it. In addition, the students discussed the passages and topics and gave their opinions about them. These strategies help the students expand their knowledge of the language and their confidence in using it.

In order to investigate the effect of in-service teaching

training on improving the EFL Junior high school students' speaking ability, these strategies and techniques employed by the teachers presented with their brief definitions below:

- 1. Role playing-**Role Play is classroom activities in which students take the roles of different participants in a situation and act it out what might typically happen in that situation (Richards & Rodgers, 1992). Here, the students are expected to be able to express their arguments, ideas, and even self-existences through certain roles in which the speaking skill is explored. The teachers however should consider some points in designing the activities, because not all students feel easy to speak or even to pretend to be someone else. Role plays are very important in CLT because they give students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).
- 2. Simulations** are learner-centered in so far as they give students the opportunity to resolve problems without the 'authoritative persuasion' of a teacher (Freiermuth, 2002, p. 187). They can also make course work more engaging by providing instrumental motivation that arises 'out of the function, the duties, and the responsibilities. In addition, having students take on roles in a simulation can reduce the fear of making mistakes and thus lower affective barriers to acquisition (Jones, 1982; Nemitchewa, 1995).
- 3. Discussions-**The purpose of the discussion should be made very clear to the learners. The benefits of pair discussions to language development should also be articulated: they are an opportunity to practice listening for main ideas and details, build vocabulary, use English to explain and elaborate, and use strategies to keep the conversation from breaking down. It is helpful to set time limits, assign roles and responsibilities, and debrief all participants after the discussion.

3.5. Data Analysis

After the instruction period, a test of speaking

achievement (interview) covered all the materials of the first four units of the book which was scored based on four criteria: vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension based on the checklist proposed by Hughes (2003). Finally, the results of the tests were compared to each other to see the effect of in-service teacher training on the students' speaking ability. Data are going to be analyzed through independent sample t-test in order to calculate learners' interview scores based on the check list.

4. Results

The researcher dealt with comparing all the eight teachers based on the effects of in-service training of the teachers on students' oral achievement. To do so, students' speaking exam was conducted at the beginning and the end of the semester as the pre-test and post-test of speaking.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trained	40	15.900	8.31064	1.31403
Untrained	40	14.000	6.69864	1.05915

Table 1 shows the results of descriptive statistics indicated that the mean of the trained teachers (15.90) is higher than the untrained ones (M=14.00).

Table 2 reveals that since the observed t (.264) is less than the critical t (3.25) with $df=78$, the difference between the groups is not significant ($p<0.05$).

Table 3 shows the mean of the trained and untrained teachers are 27.80 and 17.40. The standard deviation for the first group is 5.648 and 7.645 for the second group. The result of standard error of the mean for the untrained (.893) is higher than the trained (1.208).

Table 4 shows the observed t (6.920) is greater than the critical t (3.25) with $df=78$. Thus the difference between the groups is significant ($p<0.05$).

Table 2. Independent Samples t-test (Pre-test)

Trained vs. Untrained	t-test for Equality of Means					
	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	
Equal variances assumed	1.12	78	.264	1.9	1.6	- 1.4 5.2
Equal variances not assumed	1.12	74.6	.264	1.9	1.6	-1.4 5.2

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics (Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trained	40	27.80	5.648	.893
Untrained	40	17.40	7.645	1.208

Table 4. Independent Samples t-test (Post-test)

Trained vs. Untrained			t-test for Equality of Means				
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
				1.2	1.1	- 1.9	6.9
Equal variances assumed	6.920	78	.000	1.2	1.1	-1.9	9.6

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics (Pre vs. Post-tests)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test-trained	17.40	40	7.645
	Post-test-trained	27.80	40	5.648
Pair 2	Pre-test-untrained	14.00	40	6.698
	Post-test untrained	15.90	40	8.310

Table 5 shows that in for the pre-test-trained, the mean was lower (17.40) than the post-test-trained (27.80), whereas the mean of the pre-test-untrained (14.00) and post-test-untrained (15.90) had only 1.900 difference.

Table 6. Paired Samples t-test (Pre vs. Post-tests)

		Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pretest trained vs. Posttest trained	-10.40	-6.653	39	.000
	Pretest untrained vs. Posttest untrained	-1.90	-1.490	39	.144

Table 6 indicates that the observed t (6.653) is greater than the critical t (2.05) with df=39. Thus the difference between the groups is significant in pair 1. Since the observed t (1.490) is less than the critical t (2.05) with df=39, the difference between the groups is not significant in pair 2.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion

This section elaborated on the results and findings presented in previous chapters through providing answers to the questions of chapter one.

RQ1. Do the in-service training programs of EFL Junior high school teachers have any effect on EFL Junior high school students' speaking ability?

The results of the in-service teacher training indicated that for the pre-test and post-test, the mean of the trained teachers was higher than the untrained ones. Their high performance on the post-test was due to the treatment during the course. The program provided techniques to encourage teachers and students to have sufficient social skills, involving an explicit teaching of appropriate communication and resolution skills so that they can

collaborate effectively and to remove inhibitions about speaking English. An oral achievement teaching test within the content taught was given to the students in eight groups as pre-test and post-test at the end of the instruction. The findings of the present study is in line with Azadi et al (2015) who found out that interaction in classroom is based on the input provided by both teacher and students. The interaction can be between teacher and students and also between student and student. Both of these kinds of interaction need to be enhanced in the classroom environment. In a more serious and personal way than other teaching-learning methodologies, role playing encourages students to work with others in analyzing situations and developing practical solutions. It presents a productive channel through which feelings can be expressed.

RQ2. Do the educational programs of untrained EFL Junior high school teachers have any effect on students' speaking ability?

The means of the untrained teachers in pre-test and post-test had no significant difference. Lack of speaking ability can be as the result of lack of enough exposure to English outside of the classroom and forget all the items after a while. Therefore, they cannot practice well and improve their experiences. The results also confirm the findings of Burkart (1998) who believes that students often think that the ability to speak a language is the product of language learning, but speaking is also a crucial part of the language learning process. Effective instructors teach students speaking strategies-using language to talk about language, recognizing scripts, and using minimal responses to help themselves expand their knowledge of the language and their confidence in using it. The instructors help students learn to speak so that the students can use speaking to learn.

Paying attention to the students who think, analyze, synthesize, reason and state their reason instead of passively accepting the information in class, teachers should be aware of their practices. They should be more conscious to help the students develop their perception and production process. Studying communicative factors; Improving listening and paying attention, deep understanding of linguistic messages, readiness for receiving message and new area in language learning, continuous assessment of findings, and learning items through creative communication with regard to age, sex, social and economic status are the most important criteria of sociological dimension of English teaching and learning.

The community of Inquiry model can be used as a framework for further studies to explore the relationship between teaching presence and learners' level of critical thinking when using message as the unit of measurement for the computer mediated communication transcripts.

There are different criteria which affect speaking ability of the students:

1. More interactions lead to improving the speaking ability
2. Using visual aids such as flashcards, films, and pictures for teaching each lesson
3. Teacher as a proficient speaker can be a suitable model for imitation.
4. Spending sufficient time in school programming increase the students' learning activities.

After the pre-test and post-test these results were achieved:

1. More practice reinforces the mind and memory for stabilizing new vocabulary.
2. The students of the untrained teachers couldn't comprehend the rater's well and she tried to clarify the questions for them and sometimes through translation into their mother tongue.
3. They did not know the key words of each lesson and just answer the two first questions like "Where are you from?" or "What's your nationality?" and even they weren't familiar with the difference between the name of the country and nationality. They substituted them for each other wrongly due to lack of their knowledge though the teachers repeated this item to them several times.
4. Their answer was in Persian in spite of the teachers' request for answering in English for the reason of lack of vocabulary.
5. Due to background knowledge, some of them reply correctly and sufficiently.
6. Being unable to make full sentences or complete answers.

The factors which are so inhibitive in improving the speaking ability of the learners are as following:

1. Insufficient time for the required task-based activities and communicative strategies
2. Not equipping the classes with smart system
3. A large number of the students which results in evaluating all the students by the teacher.

The results of this study show that due to in-service teacher training in schools, some teachers may have weak performance and using L1 in the class but some of them were so experienced and proficient in English.

5.2. Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the effect of in-service teacher training on improving the speaking ability of EFL Junior high school students. The results of the research indicated that the teacher's in-service training programs

affected the EFL Junior high school learners' speaking ability. Although the mean score of participants in the post-test increased compared to the mean score of participants in the pre-test in experimental group, the mean score of participants in the control group was significantly lower than the experimental group in both tests.

The findings of this research can be in favor of the teaches who can help students overcome this problem by assuring them that misunderstanding and the need for clarification can occur in any type of interaction, whatever the participants' language skill levels. Discussion of the learners is an obvious way to promote interactions, can be about almost anything, from cultural issues, education, learning English, to current events. They work in pairs and discuss issues relevant to their lives, such as finding ways to use English outside the class. It works well when each person has a specific role and the tasks are clearly set out for them, but they require preparation and thought so that the learners get the most out of the exchange of ideas. Holding communicative skill courses for the teachers, decreasing social distance between the teacher and the students to improve active participation of the both sides, employing teachers familiar with the regional dialects are appropriate ways for increasing learning experiences and speaking ability of the learners. Some suggestions would be applicable concerning the assessment of the high learning levels for further studies. The amount of time needed for higher order thinking skills training should be sufficient to help learners develop such skills in a short period of time. The place of the study was limited to a few schools. Therefore, more research is needed in similar situations to support the findings and to find more about the role of teacher's in-service training on the speaking ability of the students. Also, only 16 sessions were run to see the effects of the treatment. Moreover, this study was conducted on learners in secondary school. The program should be investigated on more students with different educational levels.

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