

Using Whispering Game in Teaching Speaking Skill to EFL Learners

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Abstract This study examined the effect of using whispering game on learning speaking skills among pre-intermediate Iranian English as foreign language learners. To accomplish the purposes of the study Adiban language institute gave Oxford Placement Test as a homogeneity test to 60 learners to select 30 pre-intermediate as the target participants. The researcher divided them into equal groups (i.e., the experimental and control groups). At the first session, the participants took the pre-test of speaking skill that extracted from Four Corners (Richards & Bohlke, 2012). The experimental group received whispering activities through sentences construction while the control group received speaking tasks which dealt with questions and answer activities. The treatment took eight sessions each session was 75 minutes. Finally, the post-test of speaking tasks was given to the groups with the similar topics and questions. The participants' speech was recorded and rated by two raters to achieve the inter-rater reliability. The checklist for improving speaking skill developed by Hughes (2003) was used to score the learners' pre and post-tests. Data were analyzed through Paired and Independent Samples t-tests which indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control one on the post-test ($p < .05$). Implications suggest the findings of this research is beneficial for teacher to improve the quality of educations, for learners to think intensively and concentration on learning process and for material designers to become aware of importance of using whispering game in learning English language.

Keywords Game, Using whispering game, Learning speaking skill

1. Introduction

English plays an important role in the world, where most people use English as a means of communication, and speaking is a basic skill that language learners should master with the other language skills; it is defined as an intricate process of sending and receiving messages with verbal symbols such as gestures facial expressions. Hedge (2000) defines speaking as "a skill by which [they] people are judged while first expressions are being produced". Richards and Renandya (2002) suggested that "learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing it's grammatical and semantic rules" (p. 25). Many language learners have difficulties in speaking English; there are some factors like afraid of making mistakes, being laughed by other learners and lack of confidence of their own abilities. Therefore a teacher should help the students in solving this problem by motivating them to speak (Zulianti, 2013).

In English learning process, the students still find several

problems especially for speaking skill. The English teachers must be creative and must have techniques to teach and face students. The techniques have to be interesting and to have more education effects on teacher and students to understand and to catch the material from the teacher easily. There is a method that can be used by the teacher to improve the students' skill in speaking English. By doing some games which are interesting and inviting the students to be curious. The teacher can search many games from many sources as his guide in teaching English skills, especially speaking (Zulianti, 2013).

Games help the teacher to create context in which the language is useful and meaningful, Ersoz (2000) says that games are motivating and challenging because games are amusing and interesting. And for the learners want to take part and in order to do so much understand what other saying or have written and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 1984). Most children love games, and the game is one aspect of the English class that most children learn with genuine feeling and take home with them. The technique of using games in learning English makes the students to memorize vocabulary and pronounce English easily (Zulianti, 2013). In this research, the effect of using whispering game on learning speaking skill among

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pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners would be examined. For doing this research, some instruments and material were used that will be introduced in the following parts.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In English learning process the students still find several problems especially for speaking skill, based on the experience in teaching English the researcher found there are many problems in speaking skill. That is to say speaking is an important skill that deserves more attention in both first and second language because it reflects people's thoughts and personalities. Also because of little or no attention to speaking skill in classroom and some students still, hard to learn speaking skill and many factors prevent students from speaking English with their friends.

Language learners specially pre-intermediate students are afraid of making mistakes, of being laughed at by his or her friends and of having lack of confidence in their ability, speaking is one of the essential language skills and it is very significant to be able speaking because it is the most commonly language that accepted language in the world. So in this research the effects of using whispering game in learning speaking skill among pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners examined.

1.2. Objectives and Significance of the Study

This study aimed to illuminate the effect of using whispering game on learning speaking skills by Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. Using whispering games during teaching and learning process can improve the students' participation in English lesson, especially in speaking. Students' speaking skill will be improved by playing whispering game; the students also enjoyed learning English because the games as a technique in teaching English gave a lot of benefits and good effects for the teacher and make the students more interested in studying English, and they do not bored and to the teachers they paid attention to the students speaking skill more.

Learning speaking skill through games seems to be a successful way to develop speaking skill for young learners. Not only games are like an important part children's everyday life, the game settings allow them to co-operate and interact, a natural way for developing speaking skill. When the children speak to prepare and run the games, they are not just answering questions or asking questions, but interacting with the other learners by making suggestions, responding to others' suggestions, asking questions and evaluating the answer from the others. Findings of this research will help teachers, designers and planners to improve the speaking skill of pre-intermediate students. The findings of this empirical study can develop teaching listening through using whispering game activities. Furthermore, this study can make the teachers aware of the important role which whispering games play in teaching and learning listening. The findings of this research aid teachers to have more interesting classes through encouraging students to compete

with each other. This study also helps the teachers to figure out the importance of the students' involvement in the learning process. The results of the study can be to the benefit of the students. Students can enjoy the games and competition to learn the target materials. Their stress may be decreased, their concentration may be raised, and their real communication may be fostered.

2. Literature Review

Whispering game is a game played around the world, in which one person whispers a message to another, which is passed through a line of people until the last player announces the message to the entire group. Errors typically accumulate in the retellings, so the last player announces the statement differs significantly, and often amusingly, from the one uttered by the first. Reasons for changes include anxiousness, impatience, erroneous corrections, the difficulty-to-understand mechanism of whispering, and deliberately altering what is being said to guarantee a changed message by the end of the line. This game needs more attention in listening and speaking (Sintung, 2014). Accordingly, the game of whispering is a party game. It is easy to set up and a lot of fun to play. Students tried to pick a phrase, "passed it on" by whispering it to someone else, and had fun seeing how much it changed during the game. All students required playing in a couple of friends and they get everyone in place. Although the game of whispering is simple to play, students needed to arrange the players in a way that supports the game. Students stand in a line or a circle, players spaced far enough apart that they didn't overhear the word when it isn't their turn. Proper position is important when playing whispering game, and then students need to whisper a phrase to a person during the game of whispering. Whispering helps in two ways; keeping the phrase a secret and making it hard to interpret correctly. In the present study, whispering game refer to an activity in which one person whispers a phrase to another, which will be passed through a line of people until the last player announces the message to the entire group. Errors typically accumulate in the retellings, so the statement announced by the last player differs significantly, and often amusingly, from the one uttered by the first.

Speaking skill is defined as an intricate process of sending and receiving messages with verbal expressions, but it also includes non-verbal symbols such as gestures and facial expressions. Hedge (2000) states speaking as "a skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed" (p.261). That is to say speaking is very important skill which deserves more attention in both first and second language because it indicates people's thoughts and personalities.

Speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with other. It takes place everywhere and it is part of our daily behavior. When people speak, they interact and use the language to express their ideas, feelings and thoughts. They

also share and change their information to other through communication. Speaking is one of skills which is required the learners to reach at least the standardized score or goals (Zulianti, 2013). In this study, speaking skill refer using the sentences that selected from *Four Corners* book in participant's speaking by the technique of whispering game.

According to Hadfield (1990), "Speaking is a type of bridge for language learners between classroom and the world outside" (p.7). Bygate (1997) believes that "it is vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional progress and business. It is also a medium through which much language is learnt". Language learners must say something to know they can speak. To do this they should act on knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. The function of this knowledge can be realized by speaking practice. New Webster Dictionary (1994) states that "speaking is an act to express idea, feelings, and thought orally. It is also called oral communication" (p. 932). According to Syakur (1987, p.5), speaking is a multiple skill because it is concerned with components of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency.

Speaking is a basic skill that language learners should master with the other language skills. It is defined as a complex process of sending and receiving messages through the use of verbal expressions, but it also involves nonverbal symbols such as gestures and facial expressions. Hedge (2000) defines speaking as "a skill by which people are judged whereas first impressions are being formed" (p. 261). That is to say speaking is an important skill which deserves more attention in first and second language because it indicates people's thoughts and personalities. Richard and Renandya (2002) stated, "In order to learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules" (p.204).

Lourdunathan and Menon (2005) in their research on developing speaking skills through interaction strategy training find that cooperative learning and peer support can be used to motivate limited language proficiency learners to contribute more to general group communication. Speaking is the most important part for language learners in learning a foreign language. Although, there are many books for developing students' speaking abilities in the market but many students still have difficulties in speaking.

For most people, the ability to speak a foreign language is same as knowing that language because speech is the basic means of human interaction. English learners no longer expect the traditional approach of their teachers based on developing mainly the grammatical competence and using methodology popular in the past. Now, teachers are expected to provide their students with useful task knowledge of the foreign language, not just theory about the language. Speaking as a skill taught at schools presents the student's ability to express their opinions, thoughts and ideas to a particular matter. Speaking practice, which is usually based on storytelling, giving speech, is the necessity for later successful conversation. Speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with other. It is everywhere and

has become part of our daily activities. When someone speaks, he or she interacts and uses the language to present his or her ideas, feeling and thought. He or she also shares information to other through communication. Speaking is one of important required subject to reach at least the standardized score or goals (Zulianti, 2013).

2.1. Problems with Speaking Activities

Ur (1999), also points out "there are many problems that learners have in speaking activities. The problems include inhibition, the lack of theme to be spoken, the low of participation, and the use of mother tongue" (p.121). In inhibition part, Speaking needs some exposures to a listener. Learners are often shy in trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, they are worry about mistakes, fearful of criticize, or shy. In the second problem that is the lack of theme to be spoken, some learners have problems in thinking of anything to say, sometimes because they have bad feeling and have no motivation to start speaking. The third problem is the low participation; often few of participants talk about the subjects while others speak very little or no. Sometimes because of limited time some participants do not have enough time to speak. The last problem with speaking activities is the use of mother tongue, when in a number of classes; the learners also share the same mother tongue. They may tend to use it because it is easier and feels abnormal to speak to other in a foreign language. When they less expose to the foreign language they like to speak in their mother tongue. If they are talking in small groups, it can be quite hard to keep using the target language at all.

2.2. Characteristics of Games

A game has objectives; one of the rules is the achievement of an objective. This objective can be something like making points correctness of finishing an activity first. A game is a closed activity. It means games must have beginning and an end, must be easy for the player and the teacher, to know who is about to reach the goal.

2.3. Kinds of Games

According to Wright et al (1997, p.15-179), there are several types of games such as picture games that is a game in which the use of pictures have a major part. In this games involve comparing and separate pictures, considering differences or similarities. The other game is psychology games that included the range of games which might all lead to a more awareness of the working of human minds and wisdom. There is much individual variation of opinion and experience in psychology games, and encourage concentration and language use. The next one refer to the magic trick game, in this type repetition is authentic needed. Magic trick always attract attention and invite comment. In caring and sharing games all the games in this section demand encourage trust and interest in others. The complexity of these games is learners' shyness or reluctance to share personal feelings and experience with other class

members. Only the teacher can decide how and when to make the attempt to introduce the learners to caring and sharing activities. The another one is sound games that can create in the listener's mind and impression of people, places, and actions. There is a demand for the listener to contribute through imagination. This inevitably leads to individual interpretation and individual points of view and to express opinion and ideas. Story games provide a framework for learner to speak and write at length instead of engaging in short exchange. The teacher should decide that it might be helpful to correct certain errors that made, them make a written or mental note of the errors during the story telling, but delay delaying with them until afterwards.

The other kind of educational game is word games in which the games focus of intentions is initially on the word rather than the sentence: spelling, meanings, words for sentence-making, words as inferred from contexts, or words as categorized according to grammatical usage. In true/false games, someone makes a statement that is either true or false. The other type is memory games; essentially, these games challenge the player's ability to remember. The inevitably differences between what players remember lead to discussion, in which opinion and information are exchanged. The question and answer game refer to a variety of games designed to create contexts in which the learner want to ask question in order to find something out, usually connected with grammatical points. The last one is guessing and speculating games in which, someone knows something and the others must find out what it is. It is useful for the less sophisticated learner and/ or the learners whose English is limited. However, learners with a wider range of English at their command should be required to think and speak in a more extended, connected way.

2.4. Whispering Games

Whispering game is the game that needs more attention in listening and speaking. In order to play this game, the students will whisper what they heard. This game will help the students to demonstrate the importance of communicating clearly with other; also by playing this game, the students will able to demonstrate how easy it is to miss exactly what others are saying and discuss what that means for communicating. Automatically, by playing this game, the students can help the students to increase their vocabulary. Whispering game is a game played around the world, in which one person whispers a message to another, which is passed through a line of people until the last player announces the message to the entire group. Errors typically accumulate in the retellings, so the last player announces the statement differs significantly, and often amusingly, from the one uttered by the first. Reasons for changes include anxiousness, impatience, erroneous corrections, the difficulty-to-understand mechanism of whispering, and deliberately altering what is being said to guarantee a changed message by the end of the line. This game needs more attention in listening and speaking (Sintung, 2014).

According to several researchers (e.g., Ersoz, 2000, 2005), whispering game help the students and teachers to speak interactively, since: (1) For teachers, games can make them easy to give explanations about the lesson, and (2) For students, they understand the material very easily, the lesson is not bored anymore, help them to remember the material easy and fast, they become active in class, and game can growth up the solidarity and sportsmanship between them. The purpose of playing this game is to introduce some new phrases to the students of pre-intermediate. Accordingly, the game of whispering is a party game. It is easy to set up and a lot of fun to play. Students try to pick a phrase, "pass it on" by whispering it to someone else, and have fun seeing how much it changed during the game. All students will need to play in a couple of friends, a phrase, and a quiet whisper. Students get everyone in place. Although the game of whispering is simple to play, students will need to arrange the players in a way that supports the game. Students stand in either a line or a circle, players will be spaced far enough apart that they will not overhear the word when it isn't their turn. Proper position is important when playing whispering game, and then students need to whisper a phrase to a person during the game of whispering. Whispering helps in two ways; keeping the phrase a secret and making it hard to interpret correctly. Keeping the phrases quiet can make it more likely that it will end up being mishear and wildly different from the starting phrase.

In order to serve the purpose of study the following research question is proposed: Does using whispering game affect learning speaking skills among pre-intermediate EFL learners?

3. Methodology

This section elaborates on the characteristics of the included participants and the way they were selected. It explains about the instruments which were utilized to collect the needed data. Data collection and data analysis are explained at the end of this section.

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study were 30 EFL female students who selected in two intact classes that taking conversation courses through Four Corners English language textbook series developed by Richard's and Bohlke Education Publication at pre-intermediate in Adiban language institute located in the city of Ahvaz. To accomplish the purposes of the study Adiban language institute gave Oxford Placement Test as a homogeneity test to 60 learners to select 30 pre-intermediate as the target participants. The participants were female learners with an age range of about 14 to 17. They were randomly divided into two identical groups, One group was experimental group (n= 15) and the other one was the control group (n=15).

3.2. Instrumentations

3.2.1. Check List for Measuring Speaking Skill

Hughes (2003) that has 30 norms makes this checklist and each factor has 5 point. During this test two raters will mark participants' voices base on some factors like;

Fluency: that has three items as: (a). use pauses effectively (b). don't say "uh" "umm" too much (c). speak loud enough so the other person can hear you, this factor has 5 scores.

Interactive Communication: that has 5 items as: (a). start a conversation (b). introduce new ideas to the conversation (c) keep a conversation going by using questions like "How about you?" "What do you think" (d). check in with the other speaker to see if He/She has understood you (e). listen and respond to the other speaker appropriately to the situation, this factor also has 5 scores

Pronunciation: that has 4 items as: (a) is understandable and can be followed by the other speakers (b). use some variety in your voice (volume, rate, pitch and rhyme), (c). use stress and intonation, (d). emphasize key words, pronunciation has 5 scores.

Content: that has 13 items as: (a) give an opinion (b) ask a question (c) ask for clarification (d) offer to help (e) agree or disagree (f) politely interrupt someone, (g) make a suggestion, (h) give advice, (i) get information from the other speaker (j) provide information (k) summarize what the speaker has said, (l) discuss important issue, (m) introduce you're self, content has 5 scores.

Grammar: that has 8 items as: (a) use responses/phrases, not just yes/no answer (b). form simple sentences in the correct word order (c) use a variety of verb tenses where appropriate, (d). use a variety of sentences structures (e). connect ideas with and, but, so, etc. (f). connect ideas using adverb clauses, (g). connect ideas using relative pronouns (h). use transition words and phrases so other can follow you're sequence of ideas, grammar like other factors has 5 scores.

3.2.2. Pre-Test Questions

In pre-test section, 24 question phrases chosen from Four Corners by Richards and Bohlke (2012), Then hen at the first session the researcher ask these questions from participants in the control and experimental groups, the researcher recorded their voices one by one, so two raters scored them base on check list for measuring speaking skill, this test is made by Hughes (2003). The goal of this test is to know the effect of using whispering game in learning speaking skill among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners.

3.2.3. Post -Test Questions

In post-test section same as pretest, 24 questions were chosen from Four Corners by Richards and Bohlke (2012), then at the last session the researcher asked participants about these questions and recorded their voices one by one. Therefore, two raters checked the participant's voices at the end scored them base on checklist for improving speaking

skill. Inter-rater reliability used through Pearson Correlation Analysis to examine the reliability of the scoring. After the treatment, the post-test gave to the students. The test in this part were be as the same as the pre-test composition. The goal of this test is to know the effect of using whispering game in learning speaking skill among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners at the end of treatment sessions.

3.3. Materials

This book has 12 units and every unit has one different topic. Therefore, every unit includes many activities that focus on speaking, listening, reading and writing. It used as the materials to examine the speaking skill of pre-intermediate learners during the current study.

3.4. Procedure

The present study engaged 30 EFL female students who have been taken conversation courses through Four Corner English language textbook series by Richards and Bohlke (2012), Education Publication at pre-intermediate in Adiban language institute located in the city of Ahvaz, Iran. Adiban language institute gave Oxford Placement Test as a homogeneity test to 60 learners to select 30 pre-intermediate as the target participants At the first session the researcher ask pre-test questions that were selected from Four Corners book by Richards and Bohlke (2012) in both classes, experimental and control classes, and the participants' voices were recorded one by one then two raters checked the participant's voices and their speaking skill, at the end scored them base on checklist for improving speaking skill by Hughes (2003). During the treatment sessions the researcher taught 24 phrases in 8 sessions, three phrases in one session by the whispering game technique to the experimental group, in which the researcher whispered a message or phrase to the first person, the game was started when the first person of the experimental group knew the phrase, then each player whispered each message to the next player till the last player said what she heard out-loud.

In the last session post-test questions were asked by the researcher and the participant's voices were recorded one by one. Then two raters checked the participant's voices and their speaking skill, at the end scored them base on checklist for improving speaking skill by Hughes (2003). Data were analyzed through Paired and Independent Samples t-tests which indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control one on the post-test ($p < .05$).

3.5. Data Analysis

The data of the pretest for each group inserted and analyze separately in order to find the mean and standard deviation of the scores of each group. The same procedure followed with the scores of the post-test and delayed post-test of each group. Independent and Paired Samples t-test employed to see if there are significant differences between the control and experimental groups. The hypothesis was tested at a .05 level of significance.

4. Results

The data collected were analyzed based on the data collection procedure of section three. Independent Samples *t*-test and Paired Samples *t*-test were used to analyze the data; the results are reported in the following tables.

Table 1 depicts one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test since the participants of this study were small, the normality test was calculated and the results showed the normality of the test, Thus the parametric statistics like *t*-test can be used.

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics of control group and experimental group on the pre-test. As it is shown, the mean of control group is 13.3000 and the mean of experimental group is 13.6333. It could be concluded that both groups performed almost equally on the pre-test.

Table 3 shows the result of independent-Sample *t*-test for the pre-test of two groups. Thus the difference between the pre and post-test of the control group is (.795) so it is not significant at ($p < .05$).

In Table 4, the descriptive statistics of both groups on post-test are reported. The mean of the control group is

15.2000, which is higher than the mean of experimental group which is 21.3000. The experimental group got higher scores on the post-test; this may be due to using whispering game.

Table 5 depicts that the difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group is significant at ($p < .05$).

In table 6, the descriptive statistics of both groups on pre and post-tests are indicated. The means of control group on the pre-test and post-test are 13.3000 and 15.2000 respectively. The means of experimental group on pre-test and post-test are 13.6333 and 21.3000 respectively. On the post-test, they got better scores and had better speaking performance. The results of the above table show that experimental group who received the treatment had better performance on the post-test comparing to the control group.

Table 7 shows that the difference between the pre and post-test of the control group is not significant because it is .167 so it is more than ($p < .05$), but the difference between the pre and post-test of the experimental group is significant because it is .003, so it is less than ($p < .05$). Cohen's *d* effect size of experimental group is greater than the control one.

Table 1. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Pre-test Control	Post-test Control	Pre-test Experimental	Post-test Experimental
N		15	15	15	15
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	13.3000	15.2000	13.6333	21.3000
	Std. Deviation	3.89505	5.89128	3.02647	6.19274
	Absolute	.164	.179	.341	.221
Most Extreme Differences	Positive	.164	.167	.341	.158
	Negative	-.109	-.179	-.192	-.221
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.635	.693	1.322	.857
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.815	.723	.061	.454

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics (Pre-tests)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	15	13.30	3.895	1.005
Experimental	15	13.63	3.026	.781

Table 3. Independent Samples t-test (Pre-test)

	F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.152	.699	-.262	28	.795	.33	1.27
			-.262		.796		

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics (Post-tests)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	15	15.2000	5.89128	1.52112
Experimental	15	21.3000	6.19274	1.59896

Table 5. Independent Samples t-test (Pre-test)

	F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.008	.928	2.764	28	.795	6.10	2.20

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics (Pre vs. Post-tests of the Groups)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Control Pre-test	13.300	15	3.89505	1.00570
	Control Post-test	15.200	15	5.89128	1.52112
Pair 2	Experimental Pre-test	13.630	15	3.02647	.78143
	Experimental Post-test	21.300	15	6.19274	1.59896

Table 7. Paired Samples t-test (Pre vs. Post-test)

		Paired Differences					<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed) <i>d</i>
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Control. Pre vs. Post-test	-1.90	5.05	1.30	-4.69	.89	-1.457	14	.167 0.38
Pair 2	Exp. Pre vs. Post-test	-7.66	8.10	2.09	-12.15	-3.17	-3.663	14	.003 1.57

5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion

This section elaborates on the results obtained and presented in the previous section. As mentioned earlier, the present research explored whether using whispering game affect learning speaking skills among pre-intermediate EFL learner. The answer to the question was positive. Indeed, after analyzing the data, the results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference between the performance of both experimental and control groups on the pre-test. In fact, both groups had the same speaking ability before running the treatment section. However, after administering the post-test, it was found that experimental group who received the treatment got higher scores on the post-test and outperformed the control group. In effect, whispering game affected learners' speaking skill meaningfully and positively.

In the present study, whispering game was applied in the experimental group in order to help the students improve their speaking skills. During running the study, it was observed that the participants of the experimental group focused on the phrases that they learned through the treatment by technique of whispering game. In fact, whispering game raised students' motivation and, accordingly, increased their speaking skill. It is important to note that speaking was important for the students to demonstrate their ability and their understanding, and how to form idea; in this case the students' motivation and interest were very central to make the process of their understanding more straight forwardly.

Results of the present study are in line with Kuo's (2008)

research who compared regular teaching and game teaching and concluded that that the experimental group who received game instruction was superior to the control group. In the present study, the researcher found that using whispering game was a fun for the students which increased their confidence to speak in the class as games not only bring fun to the class, they also motivate students and build their confidence. The technique of games in learning English makes the students easier to memorize phrases. It shows the whispering game was effective to improve the students speaking skill.

The findings lend support to the study done by Hemmati, Teimoori, and Jafarigohar (2013) in which they investigated the impacts of two methods of storytelling and game playing on Iranian EFL kindergartner learners' vocabulary recognition. The findings revealed that storytelling and game playing could affect vocabulary recognition in an efficient way.

Another suggested reason for the obtained results may lie in the idea that learners, According to Ur (1996), in general, learn better when they are active and when learning is channeled into an enjoyable and interesting game. Games require participation and competition in order to achieve certain goals. Thus, it can be said that the employed games in this study were competing, and this competition could bring a lot of excitement to the class. And also learners can learn best through discovery and experimentation and being motivated to learn in a playful and relaxed context where the goals of the games are simple and obtainable. The game used in this study can put the learners in a pending position make motivated them. In fact, in the whispering game, all the participants were awaiting their turn to produce the words and phrases through whispering. All the games involved the

students in cooperative and team learning and they had a competitive element that enhanced effective learning as they kept learners interested in winning. It is noteworthy that Ur (1996) agrees with the results of this study and states that teachers should not confuse using games as method of teaching a language with a situation where the language learning activity is called a “game” which conveys the message that it is just fun not to be taken too seriously. The researchers felt, to some extent that, using pure games as a language teaching method was likely to lead to an anti-educational and demoralizing situation. Put it differently, the conclusion can be highlighted that games should be considered as a complement to other teaching methods than alternative methods.

To further consolidate the arguments raised here, Hadfield (1990) is of the opinion that games share multifarious purposes but their goal directionality is that of communication and engagement. We shall with Hadfield (1990) argue that the aims of whispering activities is to promote interaction among Iranian EFL students. Whispering games can include various components. They, for example encompass linguistic games and communicative games. Although, they both aim at developing interaction in the target language they can also place emphasis on very different elements. Linguistic games might encourage speaking correctly while the goal is fluency.

5.2. Conclusions

The focus of the present study was on investigating the effect of using whispering game on learning speaking skills among pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners. As our findings indicated, the experimental group who received treatment based on whispering game outperformed the control group. Whispering game was welcomed by the experimental group. In fact, it can be concluded that using whispering game can play a facilitative role in enhancing speaking skill when it is applied properly in the EFL context.

Whispering game is advantageous since it provides a competitive environment for the learners in the classroom. To put it briefly, educational uses of games are gaining recognition due to the benefits they offer. For example, they give students responsibility and the opportunity to be active physically and mentally. Another advantage they offer is that games are almost student-centered rather than teacher-centered, as well as they easily capture children’s attention, boost their interaction and are fun to play in the formal academic process, and socialize students. Therefore, based on the results we gained, it can be fair to say that improving students’ speaking skill of pre-intermediate learners increased students’ speaking skill using whispering game and activities.

Our study highlighted the significance of using games in general and whispering games in particular. Based upon the results we gained, we argue that using whispering game and activities can offer numerous advantages to the students as follows: help students learn new experiences, add variety to

lessons, enhance motivation, and help students engage themselves in different tasks.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications of the Study

This study is beneficial for teachers as by means of such strategies they improve the quality of education without much burden, and put a share of instruction’s responsibility on the learners’ shoulders during involving them in the learning process. This technique implied that the teacher for speaking class to develop and improve the students’ speaking skill with any other activity and style based on the students’ interest could use it. Through findings of the present study, teachers can stop taking the full responsibility of teaching, engage the learners in the process of learning, and bring up independent and autonomous language learners. The advantages of using games to teach English have been proved can improve students speaking skill and motivation. In fact, through whispering game the classes become more learner-centered rather than teacher-centered. Teachers should try to make known their students with innovative teaching strategies such as the one explored in this study-whispering game.

Teachers can engage students in game-based activities, the capture an opportunity to maximize the process. Put it simply, employing this technique allows the individual teacher to assign various dynamic roles in the classroom setting. Another important consideration regarding the use of games in general and whispering games in particular is that games should be regarded as complementary materials and cannot replace the methodology of classroom discourse. Indeed, our findings lay stress on the fact that games and technologically based activities should be further highlighted that can add spice to the classroom atmosphere.

Furthermore, whispering games help teachers to diminish anxiety and stress in the classroom. This offers two advantages. First, it functions to strengthen students’ motivation and students, as a result, display enormous interest in speaking activities. Second, teachers can capitalize on this and offer a range of open-ended topics for authentic interactions.

In what follows an attempt is made to open up new horizons for further research in light of the findings of the current study. As the focus was on speaking proficiency in this research study, it is suggested to explore the effect of whispering game on other language skills (listening, reading, and writing) and language component (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and spelling). To get further reliable and valid findings, it is necessary to conduct the present study in other settings with more participants. Further, it is offered to investigate the impact of whispering game on speaking proficiency in male gender. In addition, it worth examining influence of whispering games on other proficiency levels including begging and advanced levels. Finally yet importantly, it seems quite necessary to reveal how whispering game leads to speaking learning in EFL learners in qualitative view.

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