A Program Based on Fables for Developing EFL Speaking Skills and Moral Values of Official Language Primary School Pupils

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Abstract

The present study aimed at developing official language primary school pupils′ EFL speaking skills and moral values through the use of a program based on fables. Participants of the study were 60 fourth year Defino official language school pupils at Fayoum governorate. They were randomly assigned to two groups; experimental and control, 30 pupils each. The researcher prepared an EFL speaking skills test, an EFL speaking rubric and a moral values scale . Having pre administered the speaking skills test, the moral values scale and taught the experimental group using the program based on fables, the participants were post-tested . The results showed that the use of the program based on fables proved to be effective in developing fourth year official language primary school pupils′ EFL speaking skills and moral values. The study concluded with some recommendations and suggestions for pupils, teachers and curriculum designers. In addition, suggestions for further research were provided.

Keywords: Fables, EFL speaking skills, moral values, official language primary school pupils.

المستخلص العربى

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى تنمية مهارات التحدث و القيم الاخلاقية لدى تلاميذ المدرسة الابتدائية الرسمية للغات باستخدام برنامج قائم على الحكايات الأسطورية ، وتكونت عينة الدراسة من (٦٠) تلميذًا من تلاميذ الصف الرابع الابتدائى بمدرسة دفنو الرسمية للغات بمحافظة الفيوم تم تقسيمهم الى مجموعتين تجريبية و ضابطة بكل مجموعة (٣٠) تلميذًا وقامت الباحثة بإعداد اختبار لمهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية ومقياس تقدير الدرجات ومقياس القيم الاخلاقية وبعد تطبيق اختبار التحدث ومقياس القيم الاخلاقية قبليًا وبعد التدريس للمجموعة التجريبية باستخدام البرنامج المقترح تم تطبيق ادوات الدراسة بعديًا. وكشفت النتائج عن فعالية البرنامج المقترح فى تنمية مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية و القيم الاخلاقية لدى أفراد العينة. واختتمت الباحثة الدراسة بتقديم مجموعة من التوصيات التى تفيد التلاميذ والمعلمين و الموجهين هذا بالإضافة إلى اقتراح بعض الدراسات و البحوث المستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحكايات الاسطورية – مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية ـ القيم الاخلاقية ـ تلاميذ المدرسة الابتدائية الرسمية للغات

1.1 Introduction

Speaking is an important skill in teaching and learning a foreign language because it is the core of oral communication. Mastering speaking skill is necessary since English is considered the most commonly accepted language all over the world. However, mastering this skill is not a simple task. It requires having adequate knowledge of its components including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

Teachers should encourage students to speak and participate in classroom activities through providing them with enjoyable and appealing activities suitable for their age and level. In addition, teachers should provide students with authentic or real life situations to encourage them to use language in a meaningful context. Moreover, they should create a relaxed and friendly learning environment in which students have the opportunity to communicate orally to express themselves without the fear of making mistakes.

Teaching speaking is important for young learners because it helps them to develop communication skill that is considered one of the main skills in 21st century. According to Becker and Roos (2016), the main goal of foreign language learning in primary schools is the development of communicative competence. So, the primary EFL classroom should offer various opportunities for young learners to work with the target language spontaneously, productively and creatively.

Speaking can be developed through various methods and techniques. One of them is fables. Fables, as a literary genre that takes the form of a short allegorical tale, constitute the earliest form of storytelling using proverbs, legends and parables as tools. They aim at helping pupils develop oral skills, expressing themselves and establishing effective communication. Also, they are used for children and are found in children's literature of every country (Iyanda, 2019). Additionally, fables are important as it is through them some values can be implemented.

Values are standards or principles that bring quality and meaning to a person 's life. They shape his identity and character. They act as guidelines as they help him to differentiate between good and bad, and tell him what he should do and what he should abstain from. They are the foundation of human existence. Without values society cannot sustain (Radha,2016). Moral is defined as the right conduct or what is perceived to be the highest good as guided or defined by the respective society. It is based on a set of principles, ideas and norms that are used to distinguish between right and wrong (Kaur, 2015).

Moral values can be considered as some principles that help individuals to assess the right and the wrong behavior directing their choices and decisions. Both parents and teachers have a vital role in inculcating moral values in children. The primary goals of education should be enabling students to gain knowledge and moral values. Moral values must be taught and should be an indispensable part of the education system. They should be taught through frequent repetition (Kaur, 2016), and this can best be done through literature that provides students with an enjoyable and interesting learning environment.

Speaking skills and moral values can be developed through the use of fables as the researcher suggests. Fables, as a genre of children's literature, intend mainly to convey a universal caution or moral truth. They play a significant role in any society. They can be used to educate, entertain and serve as a preserving agent for societal norms and ethos. They should be incorporated into children's school curriculum. This is because they highlight an avenue to develop their reasoning, aptitude, comprehension and judgment abilities (Iyanda, 2019 ; Sahin,2019).

1.2 Context of the problem

Many EFL supervisors and teachers complain that primary pupils encounter difficulties in speaking. Speaking is considered a real challenge for most of them because they do not have a sufficient amount of vocabulary or adequate knowledge of grammatical structures that help them to speak fluently and accurately. They take a long time to compose complete sentences and their spoken English language does not sound natural. As a result, they prefer to be silent instead of participating in classroom activities. This is because they are afraid of making mistakes and being criticized by their teacher and classmates. Also, pupils' immoral behavior, such as cheating on the final exam, lying on the teachers and their classmates and stealing objects from the school canteen and their classmates' bags, is mainly due to lack of moral values that should guide their behavior.

This is supported by several studies some of which are Sidky (2019) and Nurhayati and Fitriana (2019). The former confirmed that students encounter difficulties in speaking due to the absence of the right context that allows students to speak the language for authentic communicative reasons. In addition, they do not practice speaking at schools because speaking skills are not part of the assessment process. The latter observed that many children do not respect their teachers or other people. They do not care about their classmates and have poor moral development level.

To document the problem, the researcher conducted a pilot study on 20 fourth year primary pupils enrolled in Defino official language school. The pilot study consisted of a speaking test where pupils were asked to describe some pictures to tell a fable and to act out two mini dialogues. The results of the pilot study revealed that the majority (77%) have poor speaking skills. Also, the researcher administered a moral values scale that consisted of 12 statements about some moral values including cooperation, kindness, hard work, lying, dishonesty, cheating and stealing. The statements of the scale were written in both English and Arabic. The pupils′ responses reflected their lack of moral values.   .

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite its importance, teaching EFL speaking skills is overlooked in most of official language schools. Teachers teach for exams focusing on reading and writing skills. As a result, several official language school pupils lack the essential speaking skills that facilitate oral communication. Additionally, they are not aware enough of the importance of some moral values. The present study proposed the use of fables to help them develop their speaking skills and moral values.

1.4 Questions of the study

The main question could be stated as follows:

How can a program based on fables be used to develop official language primary school pupils' EFL speaking skills and their moral values?

From this main question the following sub-questions can emerge:

1. What is the effect of using fables on developing official language primary school pupils' overall components of the EFL speaking skill?
2. What is the effect of using fables on developing official language primary school pupils' each component of the EFL speaking skills namely: (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension)?
3. What is the effect of using fables on developing official language primary school pupils' moral values?

1.5 Hypotheses of the study

To achieve the aim of the present study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the experimental and the control groups′ mean scores in the overall speaking skills post test in favor of the experimental group.

2. There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the experimental and the control groups′ scores in each component of the speaking skills post test in favor of the experimental group.

3. There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the experimental and the control groups′ mean scores in the post administration of moral values scale in favor of the experimental group.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The present study was delimited to:

- Some speaking skills: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.
- A group of 4th year primary pupils (N=60) enrolled in Defino official language school at Fayoum governorate.
- Second semester of the academic year 2022 -2023.
- Some moral values including cooperation, kindness, hard work, lying, dishonesty, stealing and cheating. The selected values are complementary with those prescribed to fourth year primary pupils in Values and Respecting the Other course.

1.7 Aim of the study

The present study aimed at developing official language primary school pupils' EFL speaking skills and moral values through the use of a program based on fables.

1.8 Significance of the study

The present study might help:

- official language primary school pupils to develop their speak skills as well as moral values.
- direct teachers' attention to the use of fables in teaching.
- highlight new avenues to researchers in EFL teaching and learning.

1.9 Terminology

Fables

The researcher adopted the definition of Perangin-Angin, Ambarrita and Lubis (2018:48) who defined fables as "stories about life of animals that behave like humans. They are called moral stories because the messages in the fables are closely related to morals".

EFL Speaking Skills

The researcher used the term EFL speaking skills in the present study to refer to fourth year official language primary school pupils′ ability to exchange ideas, act out dialogues and communicate orally in EFL.

Moral values

The term moral values is used in the present study to refer to the principles that guide fourth year official language primary school pupils to develop positive attitudes towards kindness, hard work and cooperation as well as develop negative attitudes towards lying, dishonesty, cheating and stealing.

2. Review of literature

2.1 EFL Speaking skills

Speaking is one of the productive skills that are considered an integral part of developing communicative competence in educational contexts. I t is a complex skill because it demands knowledge of language and a sound mastery of the sub-skills of speaking. Also, it requires a good command of communication strategies (Kirchhoff, 2018).

Speaking is a mean of oral communication that should be developed and enhanced for effective communication. According to Dhieni, Hapidin and Ningtias (2017), speaking is a form of spoken language expression that helps a person convey his/ her ideas, feelings and thoughts orally. This can be done through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols.

Nature of speaking

Burns (2019) stated that speaking is a dynamic skill that involves the use of several simultaneous processes including cognitive, physical and socio-cultural. Speaking is one of the skills which are considered as a social control tool for human beings since it is a form of human behavior which utilizes highly intensive psychological, neurological, semantic, and linguistic factors. According to Thornbury (2005), speaking is a multi – sensory activity because it involves paralinguistic features such as eye-contact, facial expressions, body language, tempo, pauses, voice quality changes, and pitch variation.

Speaking has its own patterns and structures that are different from those of listening and writing. Speaking is the expressive form of oral language while listening is the receptive form of oral language. Speaking is influenced by the ability of listening. This is because speaking is the ability to listen, speak, and communicate effectively (Dhieni et al., 2017). Also, when compared to writing, spoken language uses more verbs and clauses rather than nominalization. In addition, in terms of its lexical and informational content, spoken language is loosely packed–both to allow its audience time to process the content of utterances and as a result of real-time processing that the speaker faces. This is because speaking is always operating under conditions that are substantially different from writing.

While written texts can be redrafted, spoken texts are results of one-shot production (Šolcová, 2011).

Importance of speaking skill

The main aim behind learning a foreign language is to communicate through using that language. Effective communication is considered one of the most important skills that learners should have and develop. Speaking is the most common means of providing communication among human beings. According to Ulas (2008), the key to successful communication is speaking efficiently and articulately, as well as using effective voice projection.

Also, speaking is the most important language skill because from which skills such as dialogues, presentations, radio talks and TV programs erupt. Thus, if language is a tool of expressing all purpose, speaking skill is concerned with all these purposes such as expressing feelings, sensations, ideas, and beliefs. This skill is so important that most language activities are done orally (Hasan, 2014).

In addition, speaking is linked to success in life. It is an important part of daily life interaction and most often the first impression of a person is based on his/her ability to speak comprehensibly and fluently. Moreover, mastering speaking skill helps individuals promote their feelings of self-confidence and self esteem and as they feel satisfied and happy when they succeed to convey their messages.

Components of speaking skill

Syakur (2007) stated that there are at least five components of speaking skill as follows:

1- Grammar

It is the learners' use of grammatical structure appropriately which includes the length and the complexity of the utterances .

2-Vocabulary:

It is the appropriate diction used in communication. Learners cannot communicative effectively or express their ideas if they do not have sufficient vocabulary.

3-Pronunciation

To speak language, learners need to be knowledgeable about its phonological rules i.e. they should be aware of the different sounds and their articulations. Also, they should know about the stress, intonation, pitch to speak the languages effectively and for better performance.

4- Fluency

Fluency is the main characteristic of the speaker′s performance and it is the essential goal that teachers aim to achieve in teaching speaking skill. It is the ability to respond in a coherent way through linking the words and phrases effectively, pronounce the sound clearly, in addition to the appropriate use of stress and intonation.

5- Comprehension

For oral communication, comprehension is a process during which information is received and then transformed into different types of representations.

Teaching speaking to children

Speaking is the basis or early foundation to build child literacy. Teaching speaking is considered as a primary requirement that enables children to have good communication skills. This is because it helps them to express their ideas and feelings to others. The ultimate goal of teaching speaking is communicative efficiency. So, children should use their current proficiency to the fullest. They should try to avoid confusion in the message due to faulty pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, and to observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situation (Pratama & Awaliyah, 2015).

Paul (2003) pointed out that there are several principles that teachers need to take into consideration in preparing children to communicate in English. These include:

1. Introducing patterns in ways that are meaningful to the children, such as in games, in situations where the children want to express themselves, and through personalization.
2. Practising new patterns in combination with the other patterns they have learned.
3. Providing the children with a lot of opportunities to guess how to use the patterns flexibly in novel situations.
4. Giving the children confidence to talk independently in front of the whole class.
5. Building the children′s inner strength to deal with confusing and novel situations, by presenting them with puzzles to solve, and make sure of their success.

Learning activities for children must be as interesting as possible to enhance children′s speaking skills. Fitria (2013) endorsed some activities to promote speaking for children including:

1. Drilling; it is used to help children memorize new materials. Children are required to repeat new phrases and grammatical structures.
2. Sentence/dialogue completion; it is used to introduce the written form of the language, and to give guidelines for the children to talk.
3. Picture-cued; it is used to check children's prior knowledge, accommodate children's intelligences, and give the concrete visualization of what being learnt to children.
4. Games; they are used to improve children's mood and give them some spaces to move.
5. Retelling; it is conducted to help children achieve pronunciation and vocabulary mastery.

Assessing children's speaking

It is important to assess young learners' speaking performance, since speaking is considered as the most rewarding and motivating skill for them. The young learners usually get excited when they are able to express a few things in target language (Pratama & Awaliyah, 2015). The main purpose of assessment is to serve the teaching and learning process by providing feedback to children, creating a positive classroom atmosphere and maintaining strong motivation for learning English. Also, it helps teachers to monitor their performance and plan future work. In addition, it provides parents and school authorities with information about children's progress (Ioannou-Georgiou & Pavlou , 2003).

Assessing young learners' speaking relates to children's ability to effectively use semantic (meaning) and syntactic (function and grammar) cueing systems while communicating (McKay, 2006). Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003) proposed three criteria to assess young learners' speaking performance, namely: pronunciation, intonation and turn-taking. When assessing children's speaking, the teacher should emphasize their communicative ability in basic functions, such as asking questions or introducing themselves

McKay (2006) stated that children's speaking can be assessed using the following techniques:

1- News telling

It requires children to tell other children what they have done recently. It may be done in a whole class setting, in a small group or in partners.

2-Telling a story

Young learners' ability to tell a story can be assessed with the use of illustrations cut away and laminated into a book. It is better to show the

entire sequence of the pictures first, and ask for the story. This is because if children tell the story from page to page, they tend to treat each picture as a separate unit losing the sense of the connected story in their storytelling.

  3-Oral presentation

It can be supported with pictures or objects. This technique assesses children's ability to convey information to the audience with adequate detail and in an appropriate sequence.

Studies related to speaking skills

There are various studies concerned with developing speaking . Following are some of the most recent ones:

Zahran and Qoura (2022) investigated the impact of picture narrating strategy on pupils′ speaking skills and anxiety. Participants were (62) fifth year primary pupils from Omar Ibn Elkhatab primary school at Awish Elhagar, Mansoura City. A speaking test and an anxiety scale were used to collect data. Results of the study indicated that pupils′ speaking skills performance was considerably higher and their anxiety was lower than their counterparts of the control group in speaking test and anxiety scale

Saleh (2021) examined the effect of using content and language integrated learning (CLIL) on developing official language primary school pupils′ EFL speaking skills and their motivation to learn. Participants of the study were (60) fifth year Defino official language school pupils at Fayoum governorate. They were divided into two groups; experimental and control, 30 pupils each. The Quasi-experimental research design was adopted. An EFL speaking skills test and a motivation scale were used to collect data. The results showed that the use of content and language integrated learning proved to be effective in developing official language primary school pupils′ EFL speaking skills and their motivation to learn.

Rizqiningsih and Hadi (2019) investigated the impact of multiple intelligences-based instruction on developing speaking skills of the students of English school in Junior High School, MTs Al-Ihsan Jakarta Barat. Participants of the study consisted of sixty fourth-year perspective students of English. The Quasi-experimental research design was adopted. Results of the study proved the effectiveness of Multiple Intelligences-(MIs) on developing speaking skills of the 9th grade students of MTs Al-Ihsan Jakarta Barat.

As shown in the previous studies, speaking can be developed via several methods and techniques. The researcher hypothesizes that fables can be considered as one of the methods used to develop speaking as well as moral values. The following section is about fables.

2.2 Fables

Nature of fables

Posada, Franco and Buitrago (2017) stated that fables as a category of storytelling that takes advantages of the ease of the narrative style help children understand complex concepts in daily life. They are suitable for children since they contain a predictable story sequence, familiar words, real life animals and an expected end. Mislaini (2015) pointed out that a fable is a short animal tale, most often told or written with a moral tagged on in the form of a proverb . Once it is composed, it may be absorbed into a culture and exchanged as a traditional oral folklore.

Origins of fables

There are many well – known fables from China, India and other Asian cultures. On all fables, Aesop's fables are the most famous ones. They are written by a Greek slave named Aesop in the late to mid- 16th century BCE. Also, they have been translated into multiple languages and become popular in dozens of cultures (Posada et al., 2017).

Aesop's fables serve as a form of children's entertainment beyond being a simple teaching tool. These fables transmit important life lessons while also describing the world of childhood. The primary characters often act in a child- like manner. Such fables describe the challenges of adulthood thus allowing young readers to engage with the characters and morals of adulthood at an early age. Moreover, they provide an opportunity for self-reflection. Although humans and animals share similar traits, humans are different due to their power of reason which allows humans to make different choices about life and living (Widagdo, 2020).

Importance of fables

Fables′ animal character is very popular among children because they like animals especially as characters that can talk and behave like human beings (El Masri, 2017). Such a character leaves a special impression in children′s minds. This is because it generates feelings of astonishment and surprise. For instance, a child would enjoy coming across a laughing bunny character, a talking turtle, a triumphant fox whose tricks work out etc. Those lovely characters carry children into a different world where they can learn in a fun and creative way allowing them to widen their horizons (Posada et al., 2017). Fables interesting and striking characters capture the attention of children and reflect humans′ behavior with the purpose of giving a moral message to children developing their values and attitudes (Castañeda, Forero & Gamboa,2017).

Also, fables help them to learn language since the language included in a fable is easier than other texts (Castañeda et al., 2017). Fables are considered an input for language learning. They help pupils to activate several language skills (Posada et al., 2017). In addition, they have short plots and repetitive rhythms that help children to remember the plot and then reproduce words and structures in a short amount of time (Soltani, Khalaji & Azizmalayeri, 2015).

Despite its simplicity, fables aim to develop critical and reflective thinking skills. At first glance fables may appear to be simple stories for children. However, upon deeper reflection, its sophisticated nature becomes apparent. With disguised humans as animals or objects that act as main characters, fables attempt to teach moral lessons about human behavior. So, they challenge children to notice, analyze, criticize and evaluate different values that appear in characters′ actions and thoughts deciding if they agree or disagree with the moral messages (Nippold, Lafavre & Shinham, 2020). Also, fables involve certain characteristics in the monologues of the characters where they play with children's emotions making fables adequate to provoke their reflective thoughts (Castañeda et al.,2017).

Fables and children′s literature

Children′s literature is a kind of transition period literature whose basic source is child and childhood. It is mainly directed to develop children′s language preparing them for adulthood in a sensitive way (Gulec & Durmus,2015). A fable is one of literary art forms that belong rightfully to the period of childhood because it has some features that make it more common among children. They are short, novice and interesting (Scdder , 2006) .

Sharing and examining fables in the classroom can provide fun and excitement to introduce children to the world of literature. This is because those texts deal with animals, and those lovely creatures are kids′ favorite company (Mendez,2014). Also, literature provides delight and enjoyment. Literature can educate and entertain at the same time. Children enjoy listening to stories because they can help them develop their imagination, consider others experiences traveling to other worlds no matter what the time or place is (Vargas & Zamora,2016).

Moreover, the use of literature in the EFL classroom helps students to develop their communicative competences. Literature belongs to the kind of texts classified as fiction reading. In contrast with non-fiction texts, literature serves as a way of not only teaching English, but also developing

values and other aspects of the human spirit such as social, cultural, political, emotional and economic aspects (Mendez,2014).

Features of fables

Iyanda (2019) stated that fables have some features that distinguish them from other literary genres. First, fables are narrated in the indigenous languages. The listeners were captivated by the aesthetics of the language and the cultural elements. Second, fables content remains unique though it can be rendered in different ways by different narrators. The characteristics and techniques remain the same across different linguistic settings. The narrator or performer possesses the attributes of changing the theme of a particular fable to be given at different situations to reflect the needs of each generation. This is because literature mirrors society.

El Masri (2017) stated that a fable should have some features to be suitable for children. They should 1) be suitable for children's level and due to their curriculum, 2) provide children with new and useful information, 3) provide them with moral lessons and positive beliefs and 4) be simple and easy for children to comprehend.

Studies related to fables and language skills (including speaking)

To the researcher's knowledge, there are few studies dealing with fables and EFL skills. Reviewing literature revealed that there are two on listening, one on speaking, one on reading and one on writing. In addition, there is one study on vocabulary as one of the language aspects. Following are these studies:

Astuti (2019) examined the effect of using fable animation video on VIII-G grade students' listening achievement . Participants were VIII-G grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Jember. Classroom action research was adopted. A listening test and observation checklist were used to collect data. Results showed that the implementation of fable animation video could improve the VIII-G grade students' active participation and students' listening achievement.

Puspasari, Ikhsanudin and Rezeki (2018) investigated the effect of using animation fable video on teaching eighth grade students' selective listening. Participants were (31) eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Sungai Raya. A listening test was used to collect data. Results showed that teaching selective listening by using animation fable proved to be effective in developing participants' listening skills and the effect of the treatment is categorized into a high effect.

Widagdo(2019) explored to what extent the use of Aesop's fable stories can improve the vocabulary mastery of elementary school students.

Participants were the sixth graders at SDI Darul Huda Semarang. Data was collected through using tests and questionnaires. A Quasi-experimental design was adopted. Results showed that Aesop's fable stories improved the vocabulary of the study participants. It is concluded that Aesop's fable stories should be used as an alternative technique to improve the vocabulary of the elementary students.

Vargas and Zamora (2016) examined the impact of using fables on the EFL speaking skills of 305 and 306 courses from Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. Paticipants were (83) female students between seven and eight years old. Data was collected using field notes, recordings and semi-structured interviews. Results showed that the improvement of speaking skills, among the students of 305 and 306 courses in the LFMN, was quite achieved. Also, fables allowed students to show confidence and improve their attitudes towards the English class. They were the source of motivation and participation in English classes.

Mendez (2014) examined the effect of workshops based on Aesop's fables on developing fifth grade students′ reading skills . Participants were six fifth graders in Marco Tulio Fernandez public school. Classroom action research was adopted. Participant observation, surveys, a diagnostic test, field journals and workshops were used to collect data. Results revealed that the workshops based on Aesop's fables helped students to develop the specified reading skills achieving the purpose of their reading process.

El Masri (2017) examined the effectiveness of using pictured and digital fables on developing sentence- writing skills for sixth graders at UNRWA schools in West Gaza. Participants of the study consisted of (90) students who were randomly and equally divided into three groups; the experimental group(1), the experimental group (2) and the control one. The first experimental group received training on pictured fable technique, the second experimental group received training on digital fable technique while the regular method was used in teaching the control one. She adopted the experimental research design. A sentence-writing skills test was used to collect data. Results revealed that both experimental group students outperformed the control group students in the posttest. While the two experimental groups scored similar results in the posttest. Consequently, using pictured and digital fables techniques had a large effect on developing students' sentence- writing skills.

Fables and moral values

Fables are considered an effective instrument for teaching moral values. They can deliver essential values to students to improve the quality

of educational outcomes achieving both intellectual development as well as character building. Through these animal stories, the teacher educates, shapes children personality and builds their emotional intelligence. Cultivating moral values through stories helps to persuade children with these values. By learning fable texts, children are expected to be able to reap the values and unconsciously apply good characters and not copy bad ones. Fables as persuasive texts are concerned with changing children′s attitudes into the desired ones. Finally, children imitate the behavior of good characters (Kusmana, Pujiatna & Gloriani, 2020).

Also, fables create a connection between students and their characters. They provide students with the opportunity to feel identified with the characters of fables getting into characters shoes in order to give a judgment about what they consider correct to do. Also, students can give pieces of advice to the fables′ characters in order to behave or act properly. Students could determine what the lesson is and what they should do in order to act properly in different contexts and situations. This connection allows students to reflect on bad or incorrect behavior and give different solutions demonstrating that there is a better or appropriate way to behave (Castañeda et al. ,2017).

Moreover, fables, as a means of teaching moral values, can be used as a panacea to unethical behaviors in society. The present generation witnesses more societal havocs and criminal activities which may be partly due to lack of a definite way of cultivating morals values in the youth. So, children should be exposed to moral education as early as they can comprehend communication. The use of fables could be a way out of these societal vices. As a result, the society can witness peace and development in all ramifications (Iyanda, 2019).

To conclude, fables, with their moralizing characteristic, work perfectly in EFL classrooms not only in terms of language teaching but also in terms of ethical and moral values teaching (Mendez ,2014). Through using fables in learning, the teacher has the opportunity to develop children's language skills and moral values, create class community by discussion and debate about moral behavior and build students' characters. Also, children can encounter a variety of attitudes and behaviors that reflect a group, develop imagination as well as critical and reflective thinking skills to apply ethics in the real world (Detor ,2001).

Studies related to fables and moral values

A number of studies have been conducted on the use of fables to develop moral values. They are as follows:

Posada et al (2017) examined the effectiveness of the use of fables as the content in EFL classes to teach vocabulary, reading and moral values to children. Participants were a group of third grade students whose ages ranged from 8-10 years old. Observation sheets, field diaries and cloze tests were used to collect data. Results confirmed that fables proved to be an effective means to teaching vocabulary, reading and moral values. Students gained linguistic skills such as pronunciation in English as well as the ability to grasp meanings of words through teachers' examples and visual aids. It was also evident that students felt motivated by the teachers' instruction using material related to fables and this helped create a cheerful environment where children felt enthusiastic about learning English. Students expressed the importance of morals in their lives and related these to values.

Mukhlash (2016) conducted a study with the aim of portraying ethical value(s) in three selected English fable stories as well as to letting the readers know that they can learn something from the fables. Three selected English fable stories entitled "The Rabbit and the Turtle, The Fox and the Goat, and The Monkey and the Crocodile" were analyzed. Data was collected based on the researcher's random survey on Primary and Junior High Schools students. The results indicate that each fable has, at least, a moral lesson in its narrative, among others: "Never underestimate the weakest opponent, Never give up is the key of success, Think first before doing an action, Being smart helps better in life, and Trust is the basis of relationship"

Setyoasih (2014) analyzed moral values within Aesop's fables. Thirteen stories chosen of Aesop's fables were the objects of the research. Library research or content analysis was adopted as a design of the research. Document note taking was used to collect data. Results showed that the moral values implied in Aesop's fable were care of soul, kindhearted, respect, tolerance, justness, fairness, responsibility, and belief. It was concluded that Aesop's fables were able to be used as learning material for parent and teachers in the way to teach morality and build good character of children

2.3 Moral values
Nature of moral values

Rana and Kumari (2019) stated that moral values refer to those principles which guide a person to evaluate good and bad things. These are the levels of quality which help an individual to distinguish between good and evil and also help to govern a person's behavior. Kaur (2015) pointed

out that moral values are the vital common beliefs that shape human relations to each culture. They can be understood as general codes of what constitutes good citizenship and preferred moral character for citizens

Importance of moral values

Moral values play an important role in every aspect of an individual's life. They are necessary for the holistic growth of an individual (Kanzal, Subikshalakshmi & Goswami, 2016). They impact individuals' social development because they shape a desirable and responsible attitude towards others and an understanding of right and wrong behaviours expected by the norms of the society. Also, they give them the knowledge required to be socially successful in society (Penton, 2019). Thus, they help to shape the character and personality of an individual which is held in a high respect and admiration by the members of the family and the society in which a person lives (Rana & Kumari , 2019).

Also, moral values affect individuals' behavior positively. They make individuals' behavior better because they lead them to decide the good and the bad things in their lives (Sari, 2013). Morals of an individual always insist him / her to behave in a good manner to each person respecting each other no matter what ago of this person is (Rana & Kimari, 2019).

Moreover, moral values influence students' achievement and emotional intelligence. Students' achievement is influenced by their emotional intelligence. This is because emotional intelligence relates to moral behavior, the way of thinking, problem solving, personal emotion and academic achievement (Sari, 2013). In order to develop students' moral intelligence, teachers have to provide them with a supportive, just and caring environment that helps develop moral capacities. Creating an appreciation of moral values such as the oneness of humanity, unity in diversity, open mindedness, understanding, tolerance, honesty , fairness, courage, wisdom, trustworthiness and caring sets the stage for moral intelligence to emerge, which in turn , increases students' achievement (Clarken, 2009).

Moral values and education

Moral values should be learned in the household and enforced at school (Penton, 2019). This is because education is a combination of literacy and moral values (Kaur, 2015). Schools have long been seen as institutions for preparing children for life, both academically and as moral agents in society (Johansson et al., 2011). In primary schools, moral education is necessary because it promotes inclusion, tolerance and respect among learners. It also enhances social skills, communicative competence,

and critical and creative thinking skills (Read, 2018). Schools should provide an environment which challenges the moral reasoning of children, and force them to see contradictions in their reasoning. This is because they must contribute to the development of morally mature individuals who, in turn, will help to ensure the existence of a just and caring society (Kaur, 2015).

Moral values should be integrated into the school curriculum, and the teacher has to impart such values to students (Sari, 2013). The moral values that should be emphasized through the curriculum include honesty, responsibility, friendship, discipline, care, cooperation, politeness, teamwork, peace, respect, love, happiness, humility, tolerance, unity, gratitude and cleanliness (Ayub , 2019 ; Kaur, 2015). The school curriculum, rules of the school, co – curricular activities, personality of the educators and school environment as a whole influence the development of the children including their moral development. Thus, schools could be effective resources in inculcating mural values in children (Kanzal et al., 2016).

Teaching moral values

Teaching moral values require advocating a wide range of teaching strategies that include implicit and explicit teaching, opportunities to practice values, discussion and reflection. The most prominent approaches to teaching moral values were engaging children in moral activities (Johansson et al., 2011). Moral education should be activity - based and pupils should feel the presence of moral values in each class. The teaching methodology should not only focus on making the students know the concepts but also focus on making them aware of the effectiveness of practical implications of such concepts. Imparting moral education as experiential learning can be more useful than theoretical explanation (Kanzal et al., 2016).

According to Read (2018), in order to integrate moral education into everyday classroom practice, the teacher should 1) encourage children to notice and reflect on moral values, 2) give opportunities to discuss moral values and express personal opinions, choices and preferences, 3) encourage children to apply moral values to their personal life,4) look for ways to expand children's understanding and to think critically and creatively about moral values-related issues, 5) give opportunities to act and put moral values into practice and 6) acknowledge and praise positive moral values-related behaviour.

Also, to inculcate moral values in children, teachers have to deal with teaching methods that emphasize the concept of student – edutainment in the process of teaching and learning such as storytelling and fables. Storytelling has been used as an educative instrument to inculcate moral values in children as it helps them to differentiate between the good and the bad things (Thambu, 2017). Moral education can provide children with models and rich stimuli to enrich chidlren's experience and achieve personal, social, cultural and aesthetic development (Clarken, 2009).

Moreover, the fable is considered an effective method for moral education. It encourages children to reflect on the ethical values of humanity and , subsequently, assimilates some moral behaviour patterns. The aesthetic side is rendered by comic situations to create good mood and moral is usually summed up at the end of the story. Fables truth and authenticity are not considered, but the top priority is given to the moral lesson (Iyanda, 2019).

Teacher's role in teaching moral values

Apart from parents who have been referred to as the moral teachers, school teachers also play an important role in teaching moral values to students (Kaur, 2015). They have to be models of moral education, exemplifying virtues they seek to inspire in their students. For example, teachers can teach respect through modeling how they value authority figures in the school and showing good manners and courtesy in the classroom (Clarken, 2009). If the moral acts of teachers are evident in their behaviour, students are likely to follow the same (Kanzal, et al. , 2016). This is because teachers are a role-model for their students. Teachers′ actions convey more than their words, and students learn values from what the teachers do rather than from what they say. Teachers make a maximum impact on the personality of students especially in the formative years (Radha, 2016).

Additionally, teachers should implicitly impart moral values to the lesson topic or activity in the class. This should be done when they select and exclude topics, insist on correct answers, encourage students to seek the truth of the matter, establish classroom routines, enforce discipline and organize activities (Sari, 2013). Moreover, teachers can nurture moral values by encouraging students to practice yoga and meditation, celebrate national and religious festivals, visit historical places and participate in social services (Radha, 2016).

Studies related to moral values

There are several studies concerned with developing moral values. Following are the most recent ones:

Thambu (2017) investigated the use of storytelling to inculcate moral values and ethics among children. Participants were seven children selected between the age of five and six. Data collected using interviews, observations, document analysis (children's creative painting) and video recording. Results showed that storytelling and story reading methods were capable of fostering moral values such as help and love.

De Mello, Jing, Arumugam and Noh (2015) investigated the effect of narrating moral stories using storyboard on developing pupils' moral values. Participants were 57 students in two primary schools. Observations and semi-structured interviews were carried out to collect data. Results indicated that moral stories using storyboard was an effective tool in developing primary schools pupils' moral values. The results also revealed that moral stories enable pupils to examine the kind of life that is worth living and to consider what kind of life they want for themselves. Moral stories also inspired children to choose their own positive personal and moral values and to take greater responsibility for their own behavior .

3. Method

A. Participants

Participants of the present study consisted of sixty pupils divided into two groups; experimental and control, 30 pupils each. They were randomly selected from fourth year primary pupils enrolled in Defino official language school at Fayoum governorate, Egypt.

B. Design

The researcher used the quasi experimental with experimental/control pre/post test design.

C. Instruments and Materials

To fulfill the aim of the present study, the researcher designed an EFL speaking checklist, an EFL speaking test, a speaking rubric, a moral values scale and a program based on fables.

The EFL speaking skills checklist

The aim of the EFL speaking skills checklist

The speaking skills checklist aimed at identifying the required and suitable skills for participants. It was developed in the light of a systematic and accurate review of literature and previous studies. Also, the researcher took into considerations the directives of Ministry of Educations of teaching

speaking for official language primary school pupils and revised some exams.

3.1.2 Validity of the EFL speaking skills checklist

The checklist was submitted to a panel of jury members (N=7) (See Appendix A). They were asked to determine its validity in terms of clarity and suitability for the required skills and pupils' level. They indicated that the checklist is valid after making some modifications. Some statements were deleted and some others were added. Then, the final version of the checklist was prepared (See Appendix B).

3.2 The EFL Speaking Skills Pre-Post Test

After making the speaking skills checklist and validating it by a panel of jury members, the EFL speaking test was prepared.

3.2.1 The aim of the EFL speaking skills pre-post test

The aim of this test was to measure speaking skills among fourth year official language primary school pupils for both the experimental and control groups. It was used as a pre-post test. As a pre test, it was used to determine the participants' level in EFL speaking skills before the treatment. As a post test, it was used to investigate the effectiveness of the program based on fables in developing participants' speaking skill.

3.2.2 Description of the test

The speaking skill pre-post test consisted of two questions described as follows:

 1- The first question consisted of two mini dialogues to act out orally.
 2- The second question required pupils to tell the fable of The fox and the Goat orally (See Appendix C).

3.2.3 Validity of the test

The EFL speaking test was submitted to a panel of jury members . They were asked to determine the validity of the test in terms of clarity and suitability for the pupils' level . They indicated that the test is clear and suitable for the pupils' levels (Face Validity). To ensure the content validity of the test, it was developed in the light of a systematic and accurate review of literature and previous studies. This accurate and systematic review determined the general form of the test, and how it should be graded and/or scored. Therefore, the content of the test was representative of the skills that were intended to be measured. Thus, the test was valid.

3.2.4 Inter-rater reliability of the test

The inter-rater reliability was used where two raters (the researcher and an English teacher) assessed pupils′ answers. The reliability of the test was found to be (0.75) which is an acceptable level of reliability.

3.2.5. Scoring the test

Two raters rated pupils′ answers giving a score out of ten to each question. The total mark of the test is 30.

3.2.6 Piloting the test

Piloting the test aimed at determining clarity, readability and estimating the time needed for taking the test. The test was piloted on (15) pupils other than those of the main treatment. The speaking test time was 40 minutes. This took place by computing the time taken by each pupil divided by the number of the pupils (15).

3. 3 The speaking rubric

The rubric was adopted from Saleh (2021) to help in scoring the test in an objective manner. The rubric consisted of 5 speaking skills: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency and comprehension. Also, it included 3 levels of performance, ranging from 3 to 1. Each level included a set of indicators for assessing the performance of each speaking skill. Thus, each level indicator gave a quantitative grade score for scoring students′ spoken performance (See Appendix D).

3.3.1 Validity of the rubric

To establish validity, the rubric was submitted to a panel of jury members. They confirmed that the rubric is valid.

2.3.2 Reliability of the rubric

The split -half method was used to determine the reliability of the rubric. The correlation coefficient was (0 .77) reflecting that the rubric is highly reliable.

3.4 The moral values scale

3.4.1 The aim of the moral values scale

The scale aimed at collecting data and measuring pupils′ moral values before and after the treatment.

3.4.2 Description of the scale

The moral values scale was designed after reviewing the well known Sengupta and Singh′s (2010) moral values scale for children from 6-12 years taking into consideration its four dimensions; cheating, stealing, dishonesty and lying. In addition, the researcher interviewed some Arabic language and religious education teachers and supervisors to identify the appropriate moral values to primary stage pupils reviewing the directives of teaching religious education. The present scale consists of 30 statements including kindness, hard work, cooperation, lying, dishonesty, cheating and stealing values. Participants were asked to tick (√) in the suitable place which best indicates how

often they do it. The participants were asked to rate the frequency of each category on a 3-point Likert-scale, ranging from never, sometimes, to always (0-2) points, respectively (See Appendix E).

3.4.3 Validity of the scale

To establish validity, the scale was submitted to a panel of jury members (See Appendix E). They indicated that the scale is valid after making the required modifications. Some of these modifications were:

a- changing "I think that lying is acceptable in some situations" into ''I believe in good lies.''

b- changing ''I use prohibited things like notes during examination.'' into ''I use prohibited things like hidden notes and calculators during examination.''

3.4.4-Reliability of the scale

The scale reliability was measured by using the test – retest method. It was administered to (10) fourth year official language primary school pupils. Then, it was readministered to the same group after two weeks. The calculated Pearson correlation between the two administrations was (0 .82) at the 0.01 level reflecting that the scale was reliable.

3.5 The program based on fables

3.5.1 Aim and objectives of the program based on fables

The program aimed to help fourth year official language primary school teachers develop their pupils′ speaking skills and moral values through using fables (See Appendix F).

Objectives

By the end of the sessions, pupils are expected to be able to:

- use new vocabulary in speech correctly.
- develop their pronunciation of new words.
- retell the fable fluently.
- use grammatical structures correctly.
- use word and sentence stress appropriately
- describe pictures correctly in terms of grammar.
- use certain language functions appropriately.
- respond to a certain situation appropriately.
- ask their teacher or classmates for information orally
- guess the moral lesson of the fable appropriately.
- mention a similar situation happened in real life
- identify the good behavior in the fable.

3.5.2-Content

The researcher selected some Aesop's fables to be taught to fourth year official language primary school pupils via the program. The fables were shown in the following table.

Table (1) Sessions of the program

Session	Title
1	An Introductory Session
2	The Boy Who Cried Wolf
3	The Lion and the Mouse
4	The Crow and the Fox
5	The Ants and the Grasshopper
6	The Bat, the Beast, and the Bird
7	The Apple Tree
8	The Bear and the Bees
9	The North Wind and the Sun
10	The Eagle and the Fox

These sessions were preceded by a session devoted to administrating the pre-test and followed by another session devoted to post-testing. The total sessions were 12.

3.5.3 Activities and techniques

Various individual, pair and group work activities were used. Each session contained individual activities and other activities that require pairs of pupils to confer with each other. Some other activities were group-based where groups of pupils were asked to confer and become involved in discussion and conversation. Individual and group pupils were encouraged to self - question and generate questions of their own.

3.5.4 Evaluation

The two types of evaluation were used; formative and summative evaluation. The formative evaluation was represented in the questions and exercises pupils were asked to carry out during the sessions whereas the summative evaluation was represented in the post test administered to the pupils at the end of the sessions.

3.4.5 Experimental procedures

- **Pre-testing**

Pre-testing of the speaking skills test took place on 13th February 2023.This was done to measure the pupils' entry level before the treatment.

- **Treatment**

Teaching sessions were based on fables. There were 10 sessions devoted to enhancing the experimental group′s speaking skills and moral values. They took place on 15th February 2023 and ended on 23th March

2023 .In the first session, the researcher introduced fables to the pupils and explained to them what they are going to do throughout the program. At the beginning of the treatment, the researcher observed that learners encountered some difficulties in speaking including lack of a sufficient amount of vocabulary and inappropriate grammatical structures. Also, they were shy and hesitated to take the initiative to express their ideas and opinions.

In each session, the researcher presented a fable that aimed to teach a moral lesson using multimedia. Pupils were asked to watch an animated video about the fable, listen to the native speaker and read silently the written sentences on the screen. Then, she encouraged them to describe the fable animal characters, evaluate their behaviour and identify the moral lesson of the fable using various activities. At the end of each session, she asked them to talk about similar situations they came across in their lives and how they behaved. Thus, the program sessions helped pupils to develop their speaking skills and moral values in an enjoyable and supporting learning environment that connected learning to real life.

• **Post-testing**

At the end of the treatment, the researcher administrated the study instruments with the aim of investigating the effectiveness of the program based on fables in developing the experimental group pupils′ speaking skills and moral values.

4. Findings of the study

 The findings of the present study are presented in the light of the hypotheses using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.

4.1 The first hypothesis

The first hypothesis stated that "There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the experimental and the control groups′ mean scores in the overall speaking skills post test in favor of the experimental group".

Table (2) Comparing the performance of the experimental and the control groups in the post overall EFL speaking skills

Groups	N	Mean	S.D	T-Value	D.F	Sig.
Experimental	30	18.88	3.08	12.51	58	0.05
Control	30	8.83	3.13			

Table (2) shows that the experimental group pupils' posttest scores are significantly higher than the control group ones in overall EFL speaking skills. They attained a higher mean score in the posttest (18.88) than that of

the control group (8.83). t – value is (12.51)   and this difference is significant at (0.05) level .Thus, the first hypothesis of the study was supported.

4.2 The second hypothesis

The second hypothesis stated that "There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the experimental and the control groups′ mean scores in each component of the speaking skills post test in favor of the experimental group ".

Table (3) Comparing the performance   of the experimental and the control groups in the post speaking skills Test

Components of Speaking Skill	Groups	N	M	S.D	T-Value	D.F	Sig.
vocabulary	Experimental	30	3.13	0.34	15.09	58	0.05
	Control	30	1.20	0.61			
grammar	Experimental	30	3.67	0.47		58	0.05
	Control	30	1.84	0.59	13.18		
pronunciation	Experimental	30	3.67	0.47	13.18	58	0.05
	Control	30	1.84	0.59			
fluency	Experimental	30	2.80	0.66		58	0.05
	Control	30	1.10	0.30	12.73		
comprehension	Experimental	30	5.60	1.32	6.94	58	0.05
	Control	30	3.20	1.34			

Results revealed that the t- value of vocabulary component (15.09) that is significant at 0.05 level in favor the experimental group . Also, the t-value of grammar component is (13.18) that is significant at 0.05 level in favor of the experimental group. In addition, the t- value of pronunciation component is (13.18) that is significant at 0.05 level in favor of the experimental group. Moreover, the t- value of fluency component is (12.73) that is significant at 0.05 level in favor of the experimental group. Finally, the t- value of comprehension component is (6.94) that is significant at 0.05 level in favor of the experimental group. Thus, the second hypothesis of the study was supported.

4.3 The third hypothesis

The third hypothesis stated that "There is a statistically significant difference at (0.05) between the experimental and the control groups′ mean scores in the post administration of moral values scale in favor of the experimental group".

Table (4) Comparing the performance of the Experimental and the control groups in the post administration of the moral values scale

Groups	N	Mean	S.D	T-Value	D.F	Sig.
Experimental	30	77.11	18.79	9.34	58	0.05
Control	30	44.41	3.85			

Table (4) shows that the experimental group pupils' posttest scores are significantly higher than the control group ones in moral values scale. They attained a higher mean score in the posttest (77.11) than that of the control group (44.41). t – value is (9.34) and this difference is significant at (0.05) level. Thus, the third hypothesis of the study was supported.

5. Discussion of the Results

The aim of the present study is to enhance speaking skills and moral values among fourth year official language primary school pupils using a program based on fables. The results of the study revealed that the program proved to be effective in enhancing the experimental group students′ overall speaking skills and moral values. Such effectiveness might be due to the content of fables was appealing, stimulating and engaging to pupils. In addition, the researcher encouraged them to compare fable characters behavior to their own behavior in real life situations creating an authentic learning environment that connected learning to life.

The use of fables as a genre of literature that is more appealing to pupils as well as the use of multimedia in teaching fables that provided them with the opportunity to watch animated videos, listen to native speakers and read silently the written sentences on the screen created a stimulating and enjoyable learning environment. Such motivating learning environment encouraged them to participate in different speaking activities. Pupils were eager to speak up describing the fable′s animal characters, evaluating their behaviour and giving them pieces of advice to behave or act properly.

Also, the use of various activities including questioning, discussion, information gap and picture-cued as well as pair and group work encouraged pupils to express their opinions about fable′s characters and events and identify good and bad behaviors. In addition, the researcher′s delayed correction of some of the pupils′ mistakes tolerating some others encouraged and motivated them to initiate speech. This helps them overcome their shyness and fear of making mistakes and being corrected by their teacher in front of the whole class.

Moreover, the program helped pupils to develop values of kindness, hard work, cooperation, truthfulness and honesty since program sessions included fables that aimed at inculcating such important moral values in

them. The researcher noticed that pupils felt empathy and had positive attitudes towards good fable′s characters. They suggested solutions to help them solve their problems and reach their goals. On the other hand, they had negative attitudes towards fable′s characters that showed cheating, dishonesty, lying, and stealing values. They criticized and rejected their behavior as being evil and unfair. Thus, fables provided students with the opportunity to develop their speaking skills and moral values at the same time.

Additionally, at the end of each fable, the researcher helped pupils to make a connection between the fable and their lives. Pupils were asked to mention similar situations they came across in their lives and how they behaved comparing their own behavior to that of the fable′s characters. Also, she encouraged them to suggest solutions to help fable′s characters overcome their problems emphasizing that there is a better or appropriate way to behave. Thus, fables encouraged students to reflect on their own behavior and think about how they could behave better in similar situations connecting learning to life.

Furthermore, the researcher noticed that the use of fables as a means of teaching moral values was more effective and persuasive for pupils. She attributed the reason to the fact that fables, with their lovely animal characters, provided pupils with models that they could observe their behavior and the consequences of the right or wrong behavior. Some of pupils′ comments were:

- *No one will respect, love or help a liar as what happened in The Boy Who Cried Wolf fable.*
- *Stealing others' objects is a bad behavior as what the bear did in the Bear and the Bees fable .*
- *Friends should cooperate and help each other as what animals did in The Apple Tree fable.*
- *We should work hard today for what we will need tomorrow as what ants did in The Ants and the Grasshopper fable.*
- *The kind person will win the competition as what happened in The North Wind and the Sun fable.*
- *Honesty will help us to keep our dear friends unlike what the eagle did in the Eagle and the Fox fable.*

Finally, the present study confirmed that the program based on fables proved to be effective in enhancing the experimental group students′ overall speaking skills and moral values. Such findings were consistent with other findings such as Vargas and Zamora (2016) who confirmed that fables

proved to be effective in developing students′ speaking skills. They were the source of motivation and participation in English classes . The study findings also agreed with the findings of Castañeda et al. (2017) who assured that using Aesop's fables in the foreign language classroom allowed teachers to have interesting material that could help children learn values as well as language skills.

6.   Limitations

The researcher encountered the following challenges:
1- In the first session, most of pupils focused on what they watched (the events of the fable) neglecting the moral lesson behind it, but when the researcher attracted their attention to the fact that each fable has a moral lesson, they began to pay more attention to it as they will be tested.
2- Some students were shy to talk about situations similar to those of fables they came across in real life and how they behaved. To overcome this problem, the researcher assured that the main purpose of such activity is to encourage them to use language to express themselves and their previous experience. In other words, she did not intend to assess or criticize their behavior.

7. Conclusions

The results of the study showed that fourth year official language primary school pupils' speaking skills and moral values were improved after the use of the program based on fables. Therefore, the significant differences found in favour of the experimental group in the post administration of the speaking skills test and moral values scale can be ascribed to the implementation of the program based on fables.

The experimental group′s improvement in the speaking skills was not only in overall speaking skills, but also in each speaking skill/component of the speaking skills. This is because the program provided pupils with an interesting, motivating and encouraging learning environment. Pupils became identified with the characters of the fables describing and evaluating their behavior. They were no longer shy to speak up and participate actively in classroom activities.

Also, they learned several moral lessons from the fables. The program comprised a number of fables that showed positive and negative values. Pupils were encouraged to guess or extract the moral lesson behind each fable. Thus, the program provided pupils with the opportunity to learn and develop moral values in an effective and persuasive way.

8. Recommendations of the study

In the light of the previous results, the following recommendations could be presented:

1. EFL curriculum designers of primary stage should include fables in English courses.
2. Appropriate fables, that aim to modify pupils′ immoral behaviour, should be emphasized.
3. The use of literature , including its various genres, in teaching English courses for primary stage should be taken into consideration.

9. Suggestions for further research

Based on the findings of the present study the following suggestions are presented.

1. Investigating the effect of fables on developing other language skills such as listening, reading and writing.
2. Using fables for teaching vocabulary for pupils with special needs.
3. Using fables to develop pupils′ critical thinking skills.
4. Using fables to develop pupils′ grammatical structures and reflective thinking skills.

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