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**The Use of Constructive Storytelling in Teaching
Speaking Skills**

Case of University Students at the Department of English

University of Laghouat: 2024/2025

*A dissertation submitted to the department of English Language in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for a Master degree in Literature and Civilization.*

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Dedication

Today, as I graduate, I dedicate this achievement to myself for every late night, every challenge I faced, and every time I refused to give up. I honor the strength, resilience, and determination that brought me to this moment.

I also dedicate this day to my beloved parents, who may no longer be here physically but live forever in my heart. Your love, lessons, and sacrifices shaped me into who I am. I know you are watching proudly as I take this step forward, carrying your hopes and dreams with me.

This milestone is not just mine, it is ours.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the use of constructivist storytelling as a pedagogical approach to enhance speaking skills among EFL students at the University of Laghouat. The research aimed to explore the critical approaches preferred by students of oral expression to develop speaking, examine their perceptions of storytelling as a means to improve oral proficiency. It identifies the overall level of their speaking skills. To achieve these objectives, a quantitative method was employed through a questionnaire distributed to 50 students from all the levels in the Department of English. The findings revealed that participants engaged with storytelling in diverse ways, particularly through retelling stories from books and movies as well as sharing personal experiences. Most students emphasized its positive role in improving fluency, confidence, and active participation while reducing speaking anxiety. However, the results also highlighted challenges such as limited curricular time and difficulties integrating storytelling into rigid course designs. Overall, the study demonstrates the significance of constructivist storytelling in supporting both the linguistic and affective dimensions of speaking, and it calls for more curricular flexibility to integrate this method effectively into EFL classrooms.

Résumé

Ce mémoire examine l'utilisation du récit constructiviste comme approche pédagogique visant à améliorer les compétences orales des étudiants en anglais langue étrangère (EFL) à l'Université de Laghouat. La recherche avait pour objectifs d'explorer les approches critiques privilégiées par les étudiants de l'expression orale, d'analyser leurs perceptions du récit comme moyen d'améliorer la maîtrise de l'oral et d'identifier le niveau global de leurs compétences orales. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, une méthode quantitative a été adoptée à travers un questionnaire distribué à 50 étudiants de différents niveaux du Département d'anglais. Les résultats ont montré que les participants s'engageaient dans le récit de diverses manières, notamment en reformulant des histoires tirées de livres et de films ainsi qu'en partageant des expériences personnelles. La majorité des étudiants ont souligné le rôle positif de cette méthode dans l'amélioration de la fluidité, de la confiance et de la participation active, tout en réduisant l'anxiété liée à la prise de parole. Cependant, l'étude a également révélé certaines limites, telles que le manque de temps prévu dans les programmes et la difficulté d'intégrer le récit dans des cours rigides. Dans l'ensemble, la recherche démontre l'importance du récit constructiviste dans le développement linguistique et affectif des compétences orales, et appelle à une plus grande flexibilité curriculaire pour permettre son intégration efficace dans l'enseignement de l'anglais langue étrangère.

المخلص

تبحث هذه الأطروحة في استخدام السرد البنائي كمدخل بيداغوجي يهدف إلى تنمية مهارات التحدث لدى طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بجامعة الأغواط. وقد سعت الدراسة إلى تحقيق ثلاثة أهداف أساسية، وهي استكشاف المقاربات التي يفضلها الطلبة في مقياس التعبير الشفوي لتعلم مهارة التحدث، ودراسة تصوراتهم حول السرد البنائي كوسيلة لتحسين الكفاءة الشفوية، بالإضافة إلى تحديد المستوى العام لمهاراتهم في التحدث. ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف، اعتمدت الدراسة على منهج كمي من خلال توزيع استبيان على عينة مكونة من خمسين طالباً من مستويات مختلفة بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية. وأظهرت النتائج أنّ الطلبة يوظفون السرد بأشكال متعددة، لاسيما من خلال إعادة سرد قصص مأخوذة من الكتب والأفلام، إضافة إلى مشاركة تجارب شخصية. كما أكد معظم الطلبة على الدور الإيجابي للسرد في تنمية الطلاقة، وتعزيز الثقة، وتشجيع المشاركة الفعالة، فضلاً عن تقليل القلق المرتبط بالتحدث. ومع ذلك، كشفت الدراسة عن بعض التحديات مثل ضيق الوقت المخصص لهذا النشاط في البرامج الدراسية وصعوبة دمجها في المقررات الجامدة. وبشكل عام، تبرز هذه الدراسة أهمية السرد البنائي في دعم الجوانب اللغوية والانفعالية لمهارة التحدث، وتدعو إلى مزيد من المرونة البيداغوجية من أجل إدماجها بفعالية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

Key words:

Constructivist storytelling
Pedagogical approach
Enhance speaking skills
EFL students
University of Laghouat
Oral expression
Oral proficiency
Perceptions of storytelling
Quantitative method
Questionnaire
Fluency
Confidence
Active participation

List of Tables

Table 1	the Distribution of Questions in the Questionnaire	P 27
Table 2	Sample of Multiple Choice Types	P 27

List of Figures

Figure 1	Students' Gender	P 28
Figure 2	Students' Age	P 29
Figure 3	Students' Level of Study	P 29
Figure 4	Students' Years of Experience at University	P 30
Figure 5	Students' Preference of Stories	P 31
Figure 6	Students Preferred Way of Reading Stories	P 31
Figure 7	Students' Impression on Acting out Stories	P 32
Figure 8	Students' Options on Types of Storytelling Activities	P 32
Figure 9	Storytelling Development of the Four Skills	P 33
Figure 10	Students' Participation in Structured Storytelling Activities in English Class	P 33
Figure 11	The Importance of Storytelling in Improving Speaking Skills	P 34
Figure 12	The Improvement of Different Aspects of Speaking Skills Due to Constructive Storytelling	P 34
Figure 13	The Frequency of Constructive Storytelling Usage in University Level English Speaking Courses	P 35
Figure 14	Challenges of Using Constructive Storytelling as a Tool for Improving Speaking Skills	P 36
Figure 15	The Role of Storytelling in Constructing Speech Logically (Introduction, Body, Conclusion)	P 36
Figure 16	The Role of Constructive Storytelling in Using Vocabulary and Maintaining Conversation Flow	P 37
Figure 17	The Role of Storytelling in Improving the Mental Aspect During the Speaking Process	P 38
Figure 18	The Role of Constructive Storytelling in Encouraging Learners to Speak in Real Life-Like Situations	P 38

List of Abbreviations

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
DM	Direct Method
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
TBI	Task Based Instruction
ZPD	Zone of Proximate Development

Table of Contents

Dedication	i
Acknowledgement	ii
Abstract	iii
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
List of Abbreviations	vii
Table of Contents	ix
General Introduction	2
Chapter One: Theoretical Background	7
Introduction	7
1. An Introduction to the Constructivist Approach in Education	7
1.1 Main Scholars of Constructivism	7
1.2 Constructivism in EFL/ESL Classes	8
2. Storytelling as a Tool in University Level Classes	9
2.1 Definition and Types of Storytelling	10
2.2 Pedagogical Benefits of Storytelling	11
3. Teaching Speaking Skills in EFL University Classes	13
3.1 Characteristics of Speaking Skills	15
3.2 Challenges in Teaching Speaking	17
4. Storytelling as a Technique to Teach Speaking Skills	20
4.1 the Relation between Storytelling and Teaching Speaking Skills	22
Conclusion	23
Chapter Two: Methodology and Data Analysis	24
Introduction	25
1. Research Design	25
2. Context of the Study	25
3. Population	25
4. Research Methods and Approaches	25
5. Data Collection Instruments	26
5.1. Questionnaire	26
6. Data Analysis	27

7. Discussion of the Questionnaire Results	39
Conclusion	40
General Conclusion	42
Works Cited	46

General Introduction

English has become the language that is most frequently taught in different levels. As speaking it has become a must in nowadays globalized world, different approaches have been developed to facilitate this process. The constructivist approach particularly has been proven efficient. One of the most interesting methods to teach speaking within this approach is constructivist storytelling, in which learners get to learn how to speak English through advanced methods of storytelling.

Teaching speaking through constructivist storytelling goes through different procedures and types. It differs from making learners tell stories to them being told stories, suggesting different endings to books and movies stories, retelling personal stories and role playing. All these constructivist methods play a role in different aspects of learning, starting from formulating vocabulary range, to preparing learners mentally, to improving their existing speaking skills.

In university level English classes, Speaking is taught within the module of oral expression. Teachers use different methods and approaches to teach English speaking to EFL/ESL learners. Those methods differ in the level of effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, a constructivist approach goes great with a modern university level English class. Furthermore, the method of constructivist storytelling helps facilitate and improve the process of speaking.

➤ **The Statement of the Problem**

This research addresses the need to understand the methods applied in constructivist storytelling and how they shape language learning. It focuses on the role of this approach in enhancing the speaking skills of EFL university students. It also examines students' awareness of its usefulness and importance in their learning process.

➤ **Research Objectives**

The present study aims at:

1. Investigating the critical approaches preferred by students of oral expression to learn speaking.
2. It is an assumption to find out how students use see constructivist storytelling as a means to improve their speaking skills.
3. It also aims at identifying the level of students' speaking skills.

➤ **Research Questions**

In order to realize the research objectives, our research asks the following questions:

1. What are the main methods used in constructivist storytelling?
2. How can the use of constructivist storytelling be beneficial to teach speaking to EFL university students?
3. To what extent do university students realize the usefulness and importance of constructivist storytelling as a means to improve their speaking skills?

➤ **Research Hypotheses**

To answer the previous research questions, the following hypotheses are suggested:

1. There are plenty of methods that are used in the constructivist storytelling. The most effective ones may be role playing, personal story retelling or collaborative storytelling.
2. Constructivist storytelling can significantly enhance the speaking skills of EFL university students by providing them with student centered learning experiences. Rooted in constructivist theory, this approach emphasizes active participation, personal engagement, and contextual learning.
3. Students might be aware to a certain extent of the importance and effectiveness of constructivist storytelling on their speaking skills, since they may realize that it reinforces their creativity to speak better and come up with new vocabulary.

Our study is descriptive analytical. It describes the topic area of research and analyzes the data collected through the process of conducting this study. It also applies the quantitative approach to acquire and evaluate the data. Furthermore, the data is collected through a questionnaire administered to 50 students at the department of English, University of Laghouat. The questionnaire serves to investigate the impact of applying constructivist storytelling as a method of teaching speaking.

➤ **Structure of the Thesis**

This research consists of two chapters. The first chapter sheds light on constructivist storytelling in the oral expression module of university classes. It also deals with an overview about constructivism in education generally, its definition and most noticed scholars.

Furthermore, it deals with constructivism in education in general and in EFL/ESL classes in particular. It explores different constructivist methods in education and English language teaching. Additionally, it covers storytelling as a teaching technique in higher education, and its use to teach speaking to students of EFL/ESL, and tackles real-life experiences of using storytelling to teach speaking in higher education classes. It also tackles the relevance of this current study.

The second chapter is a representation of the methodology adopted for this study, outlining the process of data collection and analysis. It also includes the main findings. A questionnaire was used as the primary tool for gathering data. To reach the final conclusions, the results are first displayed through tables and figures, followed by a detailed explanation, evaluation, and interpretation of the participants' responses.

➤ **Significance of the Study**

Our research bridges a significant gap in EFL pedagogy by showing how storytelling can actively support the development of speaking skills especially in contexts where learners struggle with fluency, confidence, or engagement. While much of the literature praises storytelling's cognitive and emotional impact, few studies actually combine theoretical insight with student-based data in an Algerian or similar EFL setting. By using a questionnaire, our study gives voice to learners themselves. It captures their experiences, perceptions, and struggles. That makes our work practical and applicable for teachers looking to make speaking lessons more interactive and less stressful.

Also, storytelling does not require expensive tech or high-level language. It is accessible, creative, and culturally adaptable. Our study therefore shows that even in resource-limited environments, teachers can implement simple, powerful strategies to boost oral language learning. Furthermore, this study addresses a critical need in the field of EFL pedagogy by exploring the use of storytelling as a meaningful strategy to enhance learners' speaking skills. While storytelling has long been praised in educational theory for its cognitive, emotional, and motivational benefits, it remains underutilized in practical language instruction, particularly in EFL classrooms where students often struggle with fluency, confidence, and spontaneous oral expression. By combining a strong theoretical foundation with first-hand data gathered through a student questionnaire, this research offers insights that are both academically grounded and contextually relevant.

The study is especially significant in light of the challenges faced by Algerian EFL learners, many of whom receive limited opportunities for authentic speaking practice. Storytelling, as demonstrated here, provides a culturally adaptable and pedagogically flexible tool that empowers students to engage actively with language in personally meaningful ways. By analyzing learners' perceptions and experiences, this research offers practical implications for EFL teachers seeking to create more communicative, student-centered speaking environments, both in Algeria and in similar educational contexts. Thus, the study not only contributes to the growing literature on storytelling in language learning, but also provides an accessible, low-cost method for improving oral proficiency in classrooms.

Chapter One: Theoretical Background

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to shed the light on constructivist storytelling in the oral expression module of university classes. The first part deals with an overview about constructivism in education generally, its definition and most noticed scholars. The second part deals with constructivism in education in general and in EFL/ESL classes in particular. It explores different constructivist methods in education and English language teaching. The third part covers storytelling as a teaching technique in higher education, and its use to teach speaking to students of EFL/ESL. Finally, the last part tackles real-life experiences of using storytelling to teach speaking in higher education classes.

1. An Introduction to the Constructivist Approach in Education

Constructivism is learning and teaching theory that emphasizes the active role of learners in building their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experience and reflection. Rather than viewing learning as the passive absorption of information, constructivism suggests that knowledge is constructed when learners connect new information to their prior experiences, beliefs, and mental models (Piaget, 1972). This theory has significantly influenced educational practices, particularly by promoting learner-centered approaches where students are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and engage in problem-solving tasks that reflect real-world situations.

In the classroom, constructivism encourages teachers to act as facilitators rather than transmitters of knowledge. According to Vygotsky (1978), learning is most effective when it occurs through social interaction within the learner's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where guidance from more knowledgeable peers or teachers helps the learner progress. This perspective highlights the importance of dialogue, collaboration, and contextual learning environments. Consequently, constructivist teaching practices prioritize meaningful activities, scaffold instruction, and the integration of prior knowledge to foster deeper understanding and critical thinking.

1.1 Main Scholars of Constructivism

In his book *Constructivism: A psychological theory of learning*, Von Glasersfeld (1996) discusses the main scholars of constructivism. Starting from Jean Piaget who was working on constructivism before he died in 1980, that had a big impact. Also Vygotsky, him

and his followers focused a lot on social and cultural sides of learning. Then there's Bruner, Gardner, and Goodman, all of them looked into how we use images and stuff mentally to learn things.

Constructivism is not only about psychology. It got roots in biology and also evolution. Scientists like Maturana, Prigogine, and Varela, and some others tried linking biology with physics to kinda explain development and change. I think even Mayr, Margulis and Stuart Kauffman were part of that. Anyway, the chapter next will show more what those scientists did, and then later it'll try to make like a mix of it all to explain what constructivism actually means as a psychological and development theory (Steffe & Gale, 1995).

These scholars have done a lot for constructivism as the theory we know it today. "Piaget spent some 60 years establishing the basis for a dynamic constructivist theory of knowing" (Steffe & Gale, 1995, p. 25). While Vygotsky emphasized the social and cultural side of learning and believed that knowledge is built through interaction with others. Moreover, Jerome Bruner focused on how learning is an active process, claimed that learners build new ideas based on what they already know and highlighted the importance of discovery and scaffolding in teaching (Steffe & Gale, 1995).

Furthermore, Howard Gardner proposed the *Theory of Multiple Intelligences* that brought to the light the idea that there is not only one kind of smart. He also showed that people learn in different ways: visual, musical, bodily, etc, and supported personalized learning and diverse teaching strategies. On the other hand, Nelson Goodman looked at how people create meaning through symbols and representation, said that learning is about *constructing versions of the world*, not just absorbing facts. His work influenced how we understand interpretation and knowledge in education (Glaserfeld, 1996).

1.2 Constructivism in EFL/ESL Classes

According to Vygotsky (1987), learning promotes development in a social setting. Students integrate higher-level cognitive skills when they work on guided tasks that are just a little bit above their independent capabilities (the Zone of Proximal Development). This idea is a potent paradigm for EFL classes because it emphasizes that effective learning occurs through interaction with more experienced classmates or teachers. He maintained that in order to guide the child ahead, focus must be placed on both what the child has accomplished

thus far and what they can accomplish with the assistance of more capable individuals or on the following learning phases. He stated,

An essential feature of our hypothesis is the notion that developmental processes do not coincide with learning processes. Rather, the developmental process lags behind the learning process; this sequence then results in zones of proximal development. ... Learning is not development; however, properly organized learning results in mental development and sets in motion a variety of developmental processes that would be impossible apart from learning. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 5)

British applied linguists such as Palmer and Hornby, starting in the 1920s, helped shape a teaching methodology based on three key principles: (1) selection, which focuses on how vocabulary and grammar were chosen; (2) gradation, which deals with how content was ordered and structured; (3) presentation, which is the methods used to introduce and practice language items in class. Although they sometimes disagreed on the specific techniques for teaching English, their overall approach became known as the Oral Approach. This should not be confused with the Direct Method, which also emphasized speaking but lacked the structured foundation in linguistic theory that the Oral Approach offered. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

2. Storytelling as a Tool in University Level Classes

The book *Learning through storytelling in higher education* discusses the use of storytelling technique with adult learners, Alterio and McDurry (2003) talk about their use of storytelling which aligns with Vygotskian theories, as they see learning as a collaborative and social process. This approach values learners' previous knowledge and personal experiences, encouraging thoughtful dialogue as a way to build new understanding. They also recognize that meaning-making doesn't happen in isolation but it takes place through interaction with broader social, cultural, historical, and ideological contexts. These contexts shape us, just as we also shape and respond to them in return. They further explain,

The learner is actively constructing knowledge rather than passively taking in information. Learners come to the educational setting with many different experiences, ideas, and approaches to learning. Learners do not acquire knowledge

that is transmitted to them; rather, they construct knowledge through their intellectual activity and make it their own. (Alterio and McDurry, 2003, p. 44)

Jennifer Moon (2010), in her article “Using Story in Higher Education and Professional Development” states that The purpose of *using story* is to clarify what is meant by “story,” identify where storytelling naturally appears in both education and everyday life, and examine how we learn through it. The book aims to make the role of story more visible and improve how it is applied in practice. Drawing on her extensive experience, Jenny Moon (2010) explores the theoretical foundations of storytelling and showcases both its current applications and innovative ways it can enhance teaching, learning, and research.

She further emphasizes that she has come to see the growing importance of using examples and illustrations as effective tools for teaching and supporting the learning process, particularly when presented in the form of stories. This idea is closely linked to how we communicate complex concepts, such as reflective learning and critical thinking, making them more relatable and easier to grasp (Moon, 2010).

2.1 Definition and Types of Storytelling

Haven (2007) emphasizes that it's essential to define what "story" means in order to fully utilize its educational potential. He argues that stories are not just entertainment. They are “information delivery systems” (p. 7) shaped by evolutionary forces, mentally wired into how we learn, remember, and make sense of the world. Additionally, he categorizes different forms of storytelling, from personal anecdotes to formalized narratives highlighting their diverse uses in teaching, influence, and cognition

Haven (2007) defines a story as: “*a detailed, character-based narration of a character’s struggles to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal*” (p. 12). This emphasizes that a story must center on a relatable character, involve conflict or challenge, and include a goal worthy of engagement. A broader distinction frames storytelling as the “*communicating [of] story through oral language*”(p. 12) It also places storytelling in context of *natural storytelling*: spontaneous or informal verbal narrative used by individuals in everyday interaction. Together, these definitions clarify two key ideas; (1) a story is a structured narrative with character, conflict, and goal, more than just events in sequence; (2)

storytelling which refers to the act of conveying these stories, whether formally (in class) or informally (daily interaction).

Kendall Haven (2007) also presents a clear taxonomy of story types, showing how different narrative frameworks like David vs. Goliath or Rags to Riches are used across diverse contexts (e.g., education, business, therapy). These types highlight storytelling's versatility and explain why specific story forms personal anecdotes, formal case studies, spontaneous narratives are effective in different learning and professional environments. Furthermore, he argues that our brains are naturally wired to think in terms of story. We automatically make sense of the world, remember things, and build meaning using narrative structures. Story elements like character, setting, and conflict aren't just literary. They shape how we learn and process information. This makes storytelling a powerful cognitive tool, not just a creative one. Essentially, learning becomes more effective when delivered through story (Haven, 2007).

Haven (2007) draws on over 150 studies, both qualitative and quantitative in order to show how storytelling works across many fields, including education, business, and therapy. He highlights that stories are effective tools for communication, learning, and engagement. Different types of storytelling serve different goals, depending on the setting. Whether in a classroom or a workplace, storytelling helps people connect, understand, and retain information more deeply. Its value goes far beyond entertainment.

Miller (2011) identifies several types of storytelling, each with its own educational value. These include cultural stories, which reflect a society's values and beliefs; social stories, which share events involving others; and myths and legends, which express cultural heritage through imaginative tales. Other types include jump stories, known for surprising or supernatural elements, family stories, passed down across generations, friendly stories, shared among peers to build connections; and personal stories, which communicate individual experiences and emotions. Each type serves as a meaningful tool for engaging learners and fostering deeper connections with content.

2.2 Pedagogical Benefits of Storytelling

Egan (1986) argues that children's imagination is not just a playful by-product of childhood. He states that "what we call imagination is also a tool of learning in the early years perhaps the most energetic and powerful one" (p. 24). It is a fundamental cognitive

tool that enhances engagement, meaning, and recall. He confronts the typical “assembly line” educational model, asserting instead that imagination should be integrated into the curriculum to make subjects feel alive and personally relevant. By embedding learning in imaginative stories, educators can spark curiosity and foster deeper understanding. He considers “teaching as Story Telling shows teachers how to integrate imagination and reason into the curriculum” (p. 26).

He furthermore highlights the power of the story form structure with its setup, tension, conflict, and resolution, to organize curriculum content in a way that mirrors how humans naturally make sense of experiences. Lessons structured like stories not only enhance engagement, but also improve retention. He describes that as “a model for teaching that draws on the power of the story... will ensure that we set up a conflict or sense of dramatic tension at the beginning of our lesson” (Egan, 1986, p. 33). By embedding core academic concepts within a narrative, educators can ensure both the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning are activated.

Moreover, Egan (1986) doesn’t just advocate for storytelling. He provides a clear, five step method for teachers to follow: (1) identify what is most important and emotionally engaging in a topic; (2) identify powerful binary opposites (e.g., good vs. evil); (3) organize the content into a coherent narrative structure; (4) use a resolution that ties the conflict back to real learning goals; (5) evaluate whether students grasped both the meaning and the content. This structured method ensures the use of storytelling remains intentional, coherent, and pedagogically sound.

Isbell et al (2004) found in their study that when preschoolers experienced either storytelling or story reading, they showed measurable improvements in their spoken language. Both methods led to richer language skills, suggesting that exposure to story content, whether told or read supports important aspects of language growth. This demonstrates that any form of story engagement is beneficial for young learners’ oral development. They claim that children who heard stories told by a storyteller rather than read from a book showed stronger abilities to comprehend and retell what they had heard. This suggests that the interactive, expressive nature of storytelling helps children grasp narrative structure, themes, and sequencing more effectively.

While storytelling boosted comprehension, story reading encouraged children to produce more complex language structures. Children who listened to books being read used richer vocabulary and more sophisticated sentence forms when retelling or creating their own stories highlighting the value of exposure to written language. In summary, both storytelling and story reading significantly support oral language development. Storytelling particularly aids understanding and narrative skills, while story reading builds linguistic richness and complexity. Both are valuable in early childhood education, especially for language learners.

3. Teaching Speaking Skills in EFL University Classes

Bailey (2005) begins by clearly defining speaking and framing its significance within language education, establishing essential terminology and roles for effective instruction. She outlines the historical evolution of speaking methodologies ranging from the grammar-translation method, to the direct method, audiolingual approach, and the communicative language teaching (CLT) model. Bailey notes that contemporary teaching favors moderate CLT, balancing meaning-focused interaction with attention to linguistic form and context. This balanced approach ensures learners build both communicative competence and structural accuracy. “Chapter 1 offers an introduction to teaching and assessing speaking, along with basic terminology and definitions. It includes an overview of the evolution of methodologies for teaching speaking” (Bailey, 2005, as cited in Viswamohan & Sanala, 2007, p. 2).

Bailey’s work stands out by offering level specific guidance for beginner, intermediate, and advanced learners. She presents distinct teaching principles tailored to each proficiency stage. For beginners, the curriculum emphasizes formulaic expressions, contextualized role play, and guided dialogues. At intermediate and advanced levels, the focus shifts to tasks that encourage negotiation of meaning, abstract reasoning, and fluency development. This scaffolding model ensures that each learner receives developmentally appropriate input and support as they progress. Central to Bailey’s approach is the design of authentic, communicative tasks such as information-gap activities, jigsaw tasks, scripted dialogues, interviews, and roleplays supported by clear example dialogues and materials. Each chapter outlines effective task sequences, teaching strategies, and pronunciation support methods. Bailey uses reflection/ action boxes to help teachers plan, evaluate, and reflect on lesson implementation, making the underlying theory usable for both novice and experienced educators.

In Chapter 5, Bailey (2005) addresses classroom realities such as mixed-level classes, learners' reluctance to speak, first-language use, and a range of learning styles. She emphasizes the importance of constructive error feedback and formative assessment, promoting an atmosphere where learner risk-taking is encouraged through timely, sensitive correction. Technological tools such as corpora, chat rooms, and pronunciation software are recommended to support speaking development. Bailey's guidance helps teachers design fair, responsive assessment practices that support learner confidence and progress. While Bailey's text is especially valuable for novice teachers due to its clarity, practical layout, and step by step guidance. It also offers rich theoretical grounding and real world insights. Although experienced teachers may find fewer novel methods, the book consolidates real practices and research into a comprehensive toolkit. With its detailed glossary, suggested readings, and resources, it supports ongoing professional development and reflective teaching across all proficiency levels.

Torky (2006) emphasizes that task based instruction (TBI) involves real world tasks in which meaning is the primary focus, and successful task completion is the goal. She stresses that meaningful interaction among students drives the speaking activity. However, she also cautions that meaning focused tasks must be backed by attention to form and accuracy. That's why her program is grounded in the cognitive approach, which prioritizes how tasks are implemented, how learners consciously process language, and how attention is directed toward both meaning and form (The Free Library, 2006). This dual focus ensures that learning is neither random nor purely communicative; rather, it leads to precision in speaking while still maintaining communicative fluency.

To test her hypothesis, Torky (2006) implemented a quasi experimental pretest posttest design with a control group. Seventy-six Grade 9 students from a Cairo girls' school were randomly assigned to the experimental group (receiving TBI based training) and 38 to the control group (standard instruction). A speaking proficiency test based on a checklist of essential speaking sub skills (grammatical, discourse, pragmatic, and fluency) was used to assess initial abilities and final progress, ensuring that outcomes were both valid and reliable. The results demonstrated that the TBI group significantly outperformed the control group on the post test, with improvements across all speaking components grammar, discourse, pragmatic competence, and fluency. Statistical analysis showed differences at the $p < .01$ level, demonstrating that TBI, implemented in a cognitively informed way, not only boosts

overall speaking proficiency but also positively affects specific sub skills. The program also yielded clear intra-group progress: experimental students' post-test scores were significantly higher than their pre-test results, confirming growth over the three month period.

One of Torcky's major arguments is that communicative tasks alone without cognitive structuring may lead learners to neglect accuracy. Her program, therefore, embedded conscious attention to form within communicative activities. This blended approach is derived from information processing theory, emphasizing how learners' attention to language forms can be optimized cognitively while completing meaningful tasks. The cognitive lens is essential for precision, enabling students to aim for both communicative fluency and grammatical correctness. Based on her findings, Torcky urges EFL teachers to devote more classroom time and attention to speaking and its sub skills. She recommends grounding speaking instruction in cognitively informed TBI, as her study proved its effectiveness in secondary classrooms. Task based speaking classes should use real world communicative tasks that simultaneously promote accuracy and fluency. By adopting these principles, teachers can create learning environments where students practice meaningfully, consciously monitor their language, and develop authentic spoken proficiency (Torcky, 2006).

3.1 Characteristics of Speaking Skills

Brown (2001) emphasizes that language teaching must involve active participation from learners. He embeds interactive prompts such as group discussions, partner sharing, and reflective questions throughout the chapters to model learner engagement and reflection. These topics for discussion, action, and research guide educators to not only read but also practice and personalize principles in context. This aligns with the view that teaching is an interactive process, and demonstrating these methods in the textbook encourages future teachers to replicate similar engagement in their classrooms. A consistent feature of the text is its practical orientation. Brown (2001) integrates hands on opportunities for readers to apply concepts immediately. In the chapter on techniques and materials, readers examine authentic course book excerpts and are then invited to design lesson activities or evaluate materials using provided criteria. This "try it yourself" approach (Brown, 2001) underscores the belief that theory only becomes meaningful through application, and it empowers teachers to develop their own strategies rather than relying on prescribed formulas.

Furthermore, Brown (2001) adopts a respectful and balanced tone, refraining from presenting himself as the absolute authority. Instead, he reviews various teaching methods from grammar translation to communicative language teaching highlighting both their strengths and limitations. He also frames key variables as guidelines, not rules. For example, in deciding when to teach grammar, Brown presents six factors and invites reflection rather than dictating a fixed approach. This openness cultivates professional judgment and flexibility among educators. Brown (2001) also organizes teaching principles into cognitive, affective, and linguistic domains. Cognitive principles include meaningful learning, motivation, and strategic investment. Affective ones highlight willingness to communicate and respect for learner identity, while linguistic principles focus on interlanguage development and communicative competence. By categorizing them this way, Brown creates a holistic framework that acknowledges not just what teachers teach, but how and why learners respond offering a balanced approach to classroom design and delivery.

Brown also highlights the importance of the interaction that is led by the teacher and classroom design, guiding teachers through planning, implementing, and reflecting on lessons that prioritize communication. He outlines strategies for initiating and sustaining interaction, managing group work, and using questioning to stimulate language use. These interactive components position teachers as facilitators of dynamic discourse, rather than simply transmitters of content, empowering them to foster engaging, communicative language environments (Brown, 2001).

Bygate (1987) emphasizes that speaking is far more than saying words. It is a complex cognitive and social process. It involves planning, monitoring, and revising in real time, as speakers respond to audience feedback and conversational context. Unlike writing, speaking relies heavily on spontaneity, immediate interaction, and adaptability to the listener (Bygate, 1987). This complexity means teaching oral skills should go beyond phonetics or neutral dialogues. It must incorporate the dynamic nature of real conversation. The second key insight is Bygate's explicit focus on interactional competence. He identifies essential skills such as turn taking, topic management, negotiation of meaning, and repair strategies, all of which underpin successful spoken communication (Bygate, 1987). By emphasizing these skills, he positions speaking not as solitary output but as a collaborative process, where speakers and listeners construct meaning together through dialogue and mutual adjustment (Bygate, 1987).

Moreover, Bygate categorizes speaking activities into three types: drills, which provide controlled repetition and accuracy practice, simulations, which recreate real life scenarios for contextualized language use and tasks that require achieving a non linguistic outcome through communication (e.g. completing a map, planning a schedule) .Each format aligns with different learning objectives from accuracy (drills) to fluency and meaning (tasks). Bygate highlights the value of varied oral tasks in striking a balance between linguistic precision and functional proficiency. Bygate also proposes a planning selection production model, illustrating speaking as a three phase internal process: planning which involves deciding on message content and discourse structure, selection that entails choosing appropriate vocabulary and grammar and production which is the actual delivery of speech, including facilitation and compensation strategies. He emphasizes that proficient speaking requires navigating all three stages smoothly, with each stage shaping both fluency and accuracy in real-time communication (Bygate, 1987).

Bygate(1987) concludes by offering practical guidance for classroom implementation. He advises teachers to create authentic speaking opportunities that reflect natural interaction role plays, group discussions, and learner led projects. Teachers should also cultivate learner strategy use and design assessment practices that capture interactional competence. Bygate (1987) stresses that assessment must reflect real communicative demands, moving beyond isolated accuracy measures to include how well students initiate, respond, maintain, and repair spoken exchanges.

3.2 Challenges in Teaching Speaking

Ur (1996) argues that among the four language skills, speaking is the most central learners often define themselves as speakers of a language, and most enroll to communicate orally. However, effective speaking requires overcoming classroom dynamics where much time is spent on explanation or management rather than communication. Ur emphasizes that learners must actually speak and in language suitable for genuine understanding during activities. The aim is not perfection, since minor errors are acceptable as long as they do not impede meaning. This view encourages routinely designing activities that maximize student talk and authenticity. (Ur, 1996) highlights that pronunciation instruction should combine intuitive uptake through listening with structured awareness rising. She notes the common difficulty learners face in perceiving unfamiliar sounds such as Arabic speakers with English /p/ and advises minimal pair awareness tasks to help recognition. Following listening,

teachers should guide learners to articulate sounds accurately, through imitation, focused drills, and embodied awareness of mouth movements. This blend of awareness, imitation, and systematic explanation supports both perception and production of new sounds (Ur, 1996).

Ur (1996) defines vocabulary broadly, covering single words and multi word expressions like idioms or collocations, and even grammatical items such as articles and pronouns. She insists that teaching vocabulary must include form, meaning, and grammar, plus collocation and context of usage. While form spelling and pronunciation often precedes meaning in learner awareness, understanding usage is equally crucial. Teachers should draw attention to context and connotation, enabling students not just to know words, but to deploy them appropriately in different social or academic settings. While grammar remains essential, Ur (1996) warns against privileging form over function. She explains that learners can construct grammatical sentences but miss subtle distinctions in meaning conveyed by tense or modality. Effective grammar teaching, therefore, integrates forms with their communicative purpose helping learners grasp why a structure is used, not just how. By designing tasks that draw attention to meaning, teachers can help learners internalize both form and function, leading to deeper and more flexible grammatical competence.

Furthermore, listening comprehension precedes speaking, in which learners often understand more than they can produce. Listening materials should offer rich, natural language input longer, more advanced texts than learners could create themselves. Teachers should use extended texts to build comprehension, extract language, and deepen discourse awareness. This exposure supports vocabulary expansion, grammatical insight, and language chunk acquisition. Teachers can be guided to structure listening tasks to build comprehension and then use the text for subsequent language-focused teaching (Ur, 1996).

On the other hand, Leong and Ahmadi (2017) highlight that speaking is essential for effective communication and is often considered the most challenging language skill. They explain that learners frequently struggle to express their thoughts clearly in the foreign language, signaling that oral proficiency continues to be a central goal in education. Modern demands, including participation in media and global communication, further make spoken competence a priority. The authors suggest that English teaching programs often neglect speaking, placing disproportionate emphasis on grammar and written skills. Consequently, students feel unprepared to engage in real world conversations, revealing a critical gap in language instruction. Speaking competence is closely linked not only to linguistic knowledge

but also to learners' confidence and self expression. Moreover affective factors like anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence regularly inhibit learners' speaking performance. Many students choose silence over speaking to avoid embarrassment or perceived failure. These psychological barriers are often compounded by negative past experiences and classroom pressures. In turn, reduced speaking attempts limit opportunities to internalize language form and function. The authors emphasize that teachers should address affective needs by fostering a supportive classroom environment where risk taking is encouraged. Building speaking confidence is foundational to increasing opportunities for meaningful language use in class (Leong &Ahmadi, 2017).

Language learners frequently face cognitive barriers like limited vocabulary, deficient grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation challenges, all of which hinder fluent speech production. Leong and Ahmadi assert that learners who struggle to find words or structure sentences fluently often avoid speaking altogether. This avoidance perpetuates a cycle where limited practice reinforces lack of competence. They recommend that curriculum design should integrate lexis and grammar instruction explicitly tailored for speaking, alongside phonological awareness strategies. Targeted language support even in small doses can increase learners' fluency and accuracy, which in turn boosts their willingness to speak (Leong &Ahmadi, 2017).The study also points out that instructional design and classroom environment play a decisive role in fostering speaking skills. Teachers' methodology, teaching materials, classroom dynamics, and student–teacher ratio can either support or suppress oral interaction. Leong and Ahmadi(2017) emphasize that indirect methods such as group work, discussion tasks, and communicative activities tend to encourage speech more effectively than traditional direct instruction. They suggest that speaking instruction often remains a low priority, leading to reduced classroom speaking time and minimal opportunities for dialogue. To address this, they encourage teachers to redesign lesson plans to include frequent and meaningful speaking practice.

Ultimately, Leong and Ahmadi argue for a focused, learner-centered approach to speaking instruction that explicitly addresses both psychological and linguistic barriers. They recommend prioritizing speaking in curriculum planning, integrating scaffolded practice, open ended discussion, and peer interaction. They also advise that teachers should be trained to identify individual learner needs and deploy techniques that encourage both confidence and competence. By increasing classroom speaking time, integrating motivational support,

and tailoring instruction to affective and cognitive needs, educators can markedly improve learners' oral proficiency. The study underscores that these strategies are critical for aligning classroom practice with learners' actual communicative goals in today's global context (Leong &Ahmadi, 2017).

4. Storytelling as a Technique to Teach Speaking Skills

Abdel-Hack and Helwa (2014) advocate for digital storytelling a blend of narrative and multimedia as a highly engaging method to teach EFL learners. They note that creating video or audio stories encourages students to integrate multiple modes of expression like images, voice, music, and text. This multimodal format captures students' interest and helps them practice language in rich, meaningful ways. The authors argue that by telling digital stories, learners become both content creators and critical consumers, which boosts motivation, creativity, and ownership of their language use tools. They posit that maintaining a narrative blog encourages students to reflect, edit, and interact with peers, thereby enhancing both writing and spontaneous speaking. Blog writing offers a low pressure environment where learners can revise posts before publishing and receive peer feedback practices that support deeper linguistic processing. These interactive spaces encourage student dialogue beyond the classroom and contribute to building a supportive learning community. Their study found that integrating digital storytelling and weblog based tasks significantly improved learners' narrative writing skills. Students produced more coherent, well structured stories with richer descriptions, smoother transitions, and deeper character development. The authors attribute this improvement to the iterative process of planning, drafting, revising, and publishing a structure scaffolded by digital and blog tools. The combination of multimedia and reflective writing helped elevate not just the technical quality of learners' writing, but also its expressive depth (Abdel-Hack &Helwa, 2014).

Abdel-Hack and Helwa also report notable gains in oral narrative skills. Students who created digital stories improved their fluency, pronunciation, and narrative coherence during spoken presentation. The visual and emotional support inherent in the multimedia story helped lower anxiety, making learners more comfortable when speaking. Presenting their digital narratives to peers also provided authentic communicative practice and valuable feedback. Overall, students displayed greater confidence in expressing themselves and connecting with an audience. Finally, Abdel-Hack and Helwa(2014) offer clear recommendations for EFL teachers who wish to implement digital storytelling and weblogs.

They suggest starting with simple, structured digital story projects, integrating step-by-step guidance and peer review stages. Workshops on blog-writing, digital tools and feedback mechanisms are essential. Teachers should design tasks that match learners' language levels and ensure technical support is available. By embedding these digital narrative practices into the curriculum, teachers can foster a dynamic, learner centered environment that advances both writing and speaking while also developing digital literacy.

Nguyen (2010) begins by highlighting a common obstacle in EFL settings learner reticence, where many students prefer silence over participation. This reluctance, she explains, stems from factors like anxiety, fear of mistakes, and a lack of confidence in their English abilities. The result can be stagnation in language development and a growing sense of disengagement. Teachers often find these learners contribute less to class, limiting both their own progress and peer interaction. Nguyen emphasizes that identifying and addressing reluctance is the first step toward creating a more inclusive, communicative environment for all students. EFL learners' reluctance to speak English in the classroom is a problem commonly found in EFL contexts" (Nguyen, 2010, p. 1). The study further explores affective barriers such as anxiety, embarrassment, and low self esteem that prevent students from speaking up. Negative past experiences and high stakes classroom assessment often exacerbate these fears. These emotional blockages diminish learners' willingness to attempt communication, causing a vicious cycle in which the more they hesitate, the less they practice, and the less their proficiency grows. Nguyen argues that cultivating a supportive classroom climate, where risk taking is encouraged and mistakes are normalized, is essential to helping reluctant speakers feel comfortable enough to engage (Nguyen, 2010).

Nguyen (2010) positions storytelling as a powerful strategy to overcome reluctance. She notes that stories naturally invite participation because they are relatable, interesting, and emotionally resonant. When teachers incorporate storytelling in lessons, it creates low pressure situations where students can contribute personal anecdotes rather than feeling tested. The narrative format lowers the affective filter and encourages even shy learners to participate. According to Nguyen, storytelling provides a bridge from silence to spoken contribution that transforms reluctance into active engagement. The study outlines practical storytelling methods, such as personal narratives, chain stories, and picture based co-creation, where students collectively build a story based on visual prompts. These techniques offer scaffolded interaction, with well predicted language use and shared investment in a fun

outcome. By involving learners as co creators, storytelling enhances relevance and ownership, while naturally promoting fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary use. Nguyen emphasizes that when students contribute to the narrative, they feel empowered boosting their willingness to speak (Nguyen, 2010). The latter argument is supported with empirical evidence showing that classes using storytelling saw increased participation, richer language production, and heightened motivation. Pre and post intervention data indicated that previously reluctant learners began contributing more frequently and confidently. The study quantified these gains through increased speaking turns, longer contributions, and improved variety in vocabulary and structures used. Nguyen concludes that storytelling is not just an engaging activity it's a research backed tool that fosters sustained oral participation in EFL classrooms.

4.1 the Relation between Storytelling and Teaching Speaking Skills

Lucarevschi (2016) highlights that storytelling is one of the oldest and most effective pedagogical tools, noted for making lessons fun, engaging, and highly memorable. Unlike traditional textbook methods, storytelling sparks attention and interest, encouraging learners to participate actively. This heightened engagement boosts motivation across all language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Empirical studies consistently show higher levels of student attention and recall when stories are used in lessons. Teachers report that learners are more eager to produce language, retell events, and discuss story themes after storytelling sessions. A significant strength of storytelling is its ability to support multiple language skills simultaneously. Storytelling enhances receptive skills which are listening and reading, and productive skills which are speaking and writing across learner age groups. Studies suggest that storytelling often outperforms traditional methods in promoting complex oral output, reading comprehension, and written narrative skill. This versatility demonstrates storytelling's holistic power, as learners process the story, produce related output, and make personal connections. The narrative structure bridges input and output, offering a unified pathway to language learning (Lucarevschi, 2016). Lucarevschi also identifies three core mechanisms through which storytelling facilitate language development: motivation, comprehensible input, and social interaction. First, storytelling is naturally motivating and enjoyable, which fosters learner engagement. Second, it provides rich, contextually meaningful input that supports comprehension. Third, classroom storytelling encourages

social dialogue students discuss, ask questions, and even retell stories, enabling communicative practice in lower affective filter environments (Lucarevschi, 2016).

Despite overwhelmingly positive findings, Lucarevschi (2016) notes methodological shortcomings in storytelling research. Many studies lack rigorous measurement tools, neglect skill specific analysis, and rarely consider potential negative effects. Additionally, research mostly targets children. Few studies explore storytelling's impact on adult learners. The review calls for more nuanced research designs, including control groups, mixed methodologies, and attention to variables such as story type, format, and learner demographics (Lucarevschi, 2016). Lucarevschi's review offers concrete guidance for future researchers and teachers. She suggests comparing different story types (folk, personal, digital) and formats to identify what best supports specific language outcomes. Research should also investigate the potential drawbacks of storytelling such as oversimplifying input or reinforcing stereotypes. For teachers, the implication is to integrate story based instruction intentionally and reflectively, selecting story formats and types that match learners' needs and curriculum goals. A balanced storytelling approach grounded in evidence and applied thoughtfully is recommended for maximizing linguistic and affective gains (Lucarevschi, 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to explore the role of constructivist storytelling within the oral expression module in university level classrooms. It begun with a general introduction to constructivism in education, including its key definitions and the major scholars who contributed to its development. The second section shifted focus to constructivist approaches in both general education and specifically within EFL/ESL contexts, outlining various methods influenced by constructivist principles. The third part of the chapter discussed storytelling as a pedagogical strategy in higher education, with particular emphasis on its application in teaching speaking skills to English language learners. Finally, the chapter concluded by presenting real life classroom experiences that demonstrate the effectiveness of storytelling for developing speaking abilities in higher education.

Chapter Two: Methodology and Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter will present the methodology adopted for this study, outlining the process of data collection and analysis. It also includes the main findings. A questionnaire was used as the primary tool for gathering data. To reach the final conclusions, the results are first displayed through tables and figures, followed by a detailed explanation, evaluation, and interpretation of the participants' responses.

1. Research Design

According to Creswell (2012), research involves a series of steps used to gather and analyze information in order to deepen our understanding of a particular subject or issue. Similarly, Leedy (1997) describes research design as a structured plan that guides the process of addressing research questions, serving as a blueprint for data collection. In essence, research design refers to a systematic approach that includes formulating questions or hypotheses, collecting relevant data or evidence, analyzing the findings, and ultimately drawing conclusions that offer solutions or insights related to the problem under investigation.

2. Context of the Study

This study is carried out at Ammar Thelidji University of Laghouat that offers courses and programmes of higher education degrees. In August 2025 in the department of English that includes

3. Population

The target sample of the present study is students of oral expression in the department of English along with master's students who were invited to share their experience with the oral expression module during their License years. The study took place in August 2025. Our Google Forms questionnaire reached 50 students who provided and submitted complete answers.

4. Research Methods and Approaches

This study adopts two main methods. The first is the descriptive method, which, according to Kothari (2004), involves conducting various types of surveys and fact finding

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

investigations. In this approach, the researcher does not manipulate variables but rather observes and reports on events as they occur. The second is the analytical method, which is employed to interpret the data collected and examine patterns, and draw meaningful conclusions.

Additionally, the study follows a quantitative approach, defined by Aliaga and Gunderson (2002) as a way of explaining phenomena through the collection and statistical analysis of numerical data. Quantitative research is grounded in objectivity, focusing on gathering and assessing factual information without relying on assumptions.

5. Data Collection Instruments

In research, data collection tools are essential for obtaining relevant information that supports the study's objectives. Common instruments include observation, testing, questionnaires, and interviews. For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire was chosen as the primary tool to gather the necessary data and help achieve the research goals.

5.1. Questionnaire

Participants are supposed to answer the questionnaire, which is the basic instrument of our data collection. It consists of 19 closed questions and statements chosen for students (Table 1). It includes multiple choice options from which the respondent selects the answer closer to their opinion (Table 2). These questions and statements are based on the research questions of the present study in order to test the hypothesis, which helps us reach the last findings and solve the problematic of the research. The questionnaire has been chosen particularly for a number of reasons: First, it is an effective and efficient tool of gathering a large amount of information in a short period. Second, it allows respondents time to bear in mind their answers carefully without interference from. Third, it can be analyzed more scientifically and objectively comparing to other instruments. Finally, questionnaires are very practical and efficient contrary to other research instruments as they save much time, effort and money.

A questionnaire is a useful tool for gathering data because it allows researchers to ask the right questions and collect the right quantity of information in a short amount of time while also ensuring that each question is accurate, objective, and understandable.

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

Questionnaires are one of the most used analysis techniques. In comparison to other research instruments, they are simple to plan, and the results are simple to analyze.

Furthermore, questionnaires can reach a large number of people in various areas. Unlike interviews, informants have more time to deliberate before responding, and while privacy is ensured, informants can communicate secret information more easily than with other instruments (Wray and Bloomer 2006). The following is a quick description of our questionnaire.

Sections	Type of Question	Number of Questions
Section A	Demographic Information	4 questions
Section B	Storytelling and Speaking Skills	15 questions

Table 1: the Distribution of Questions in the Questionnaire

- As presented in (Table 1) the distribution of questions in the questionnaire consists of two sections. The first section contains four questions about the demographic information like gender, age, and studying experience. The second section includes fifteen questions about storytelling and speaking skills.

1. Do you like to read stories?	Yes	No	Maybe		
2. Do you prefer reading stories by yourself or having someone else tell you?	By myself	Prefer someone else tell me			
3. Do you feel comfortable acting out a story after hearing it?	Comfortable	Uncomfortable			
4. I have participated in structured constructive storytelling activities in English class	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Table 2: Sample of Multiple Choice Types

- As it is shown in (Table 2) sample of multiple choice option types presents the closed questions and statements that are answered by students at the University of Laghouat.

6. Data Analysis

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

The quantitative tools are used to analyze the present questionnaire in order to quantify participants' answers and represent it in statistical data, which is summarized in the following tables and figures.

Section A: Demographic Information

The first section contains information about gender, age and students' years of experience at university.

Question 01: Gender.

Question 02: Age

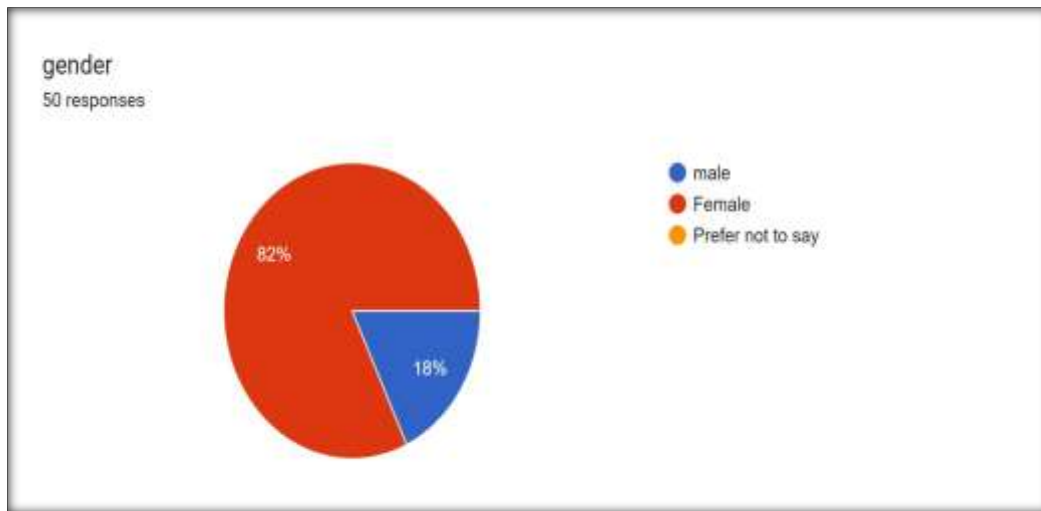


Figure 1: Students' Gender

- The number of female participants in the questionnaire is more than the number of male participants as shown in (Figure 1).

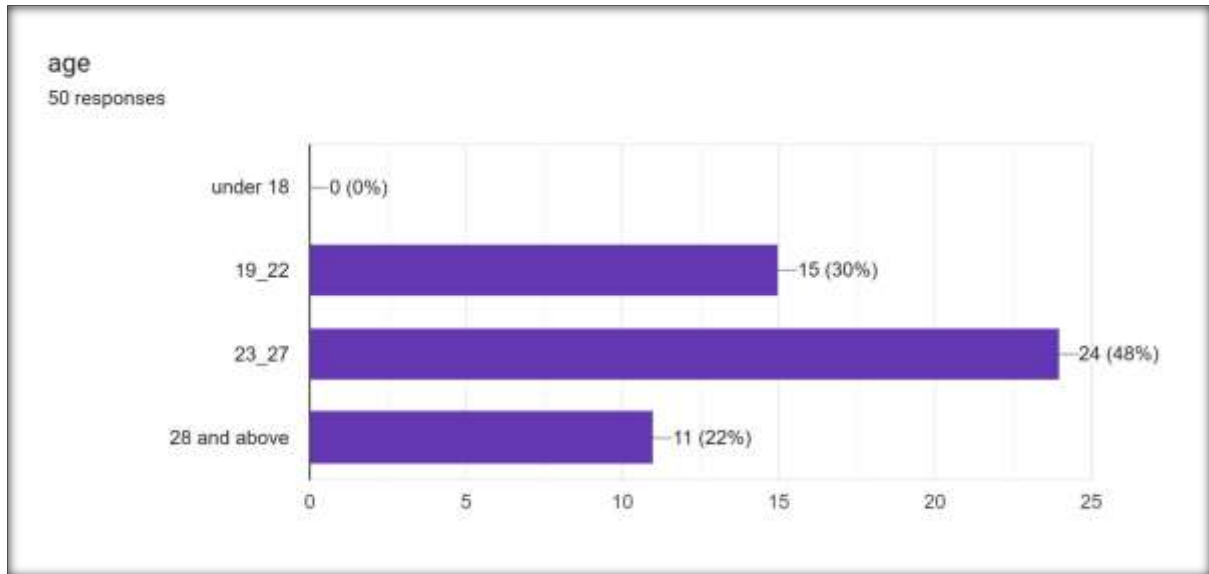


Figure 2: Student's Age

- As presented by the charts above, the number of students of age between 23- 27 is the biggest, then comes the age of 19- 22 and the age of 28 and above. While there are no students under 18 (Figure 2).

Question 03: Level of study

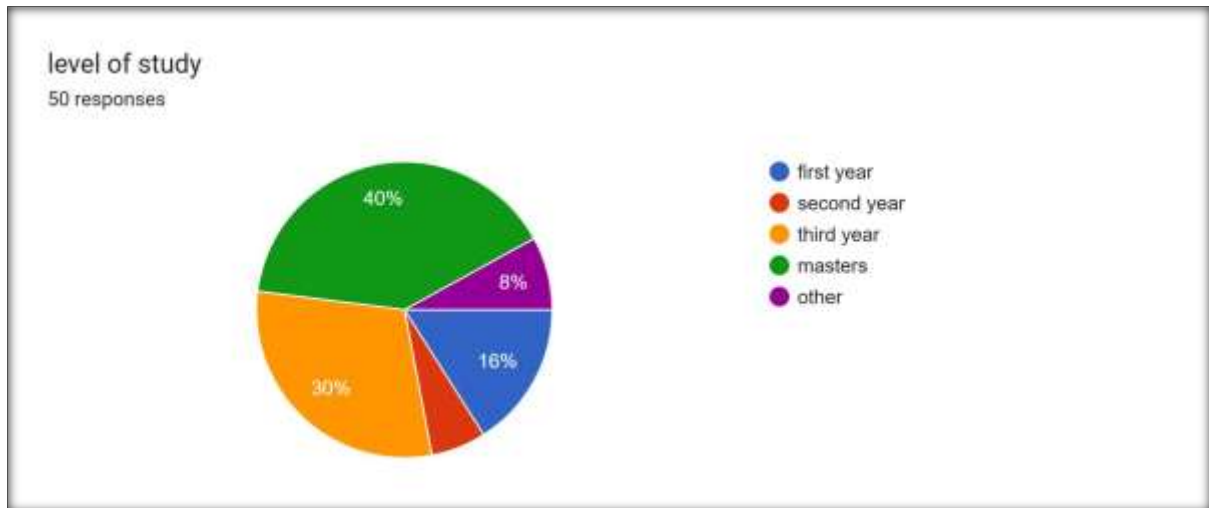


Figure 3: Students' Level of Study

- The previous charts demonstrate the students' level of study, in which 40% of participants are master's students, and 60% are in their license years (Figure 3).

Question 04: How long have you been learning English?

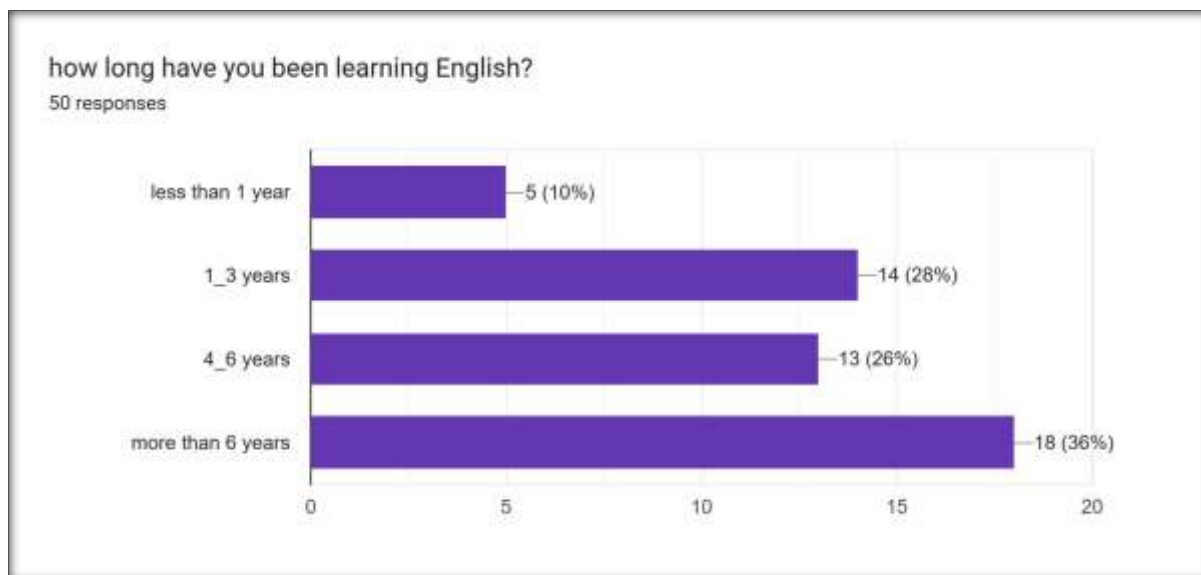


Figure 4: Students Years of Experience at University

- As shown in (Figure 4) 18 participants have been studying English at university for more than 6 years, 13 of them have been studying it from 4 to years, 14 of them from one to 3 years and only 5 of them have been studying it for less than one year.

Section B: Storytelling and Speaking Skills

This section aims at discovering the way students view constructive storytelling and to what extent they understand it and recognize its importance in learning speaking. It also explores students' preferences of the different teaching methods of constructive storytelling as a means to learn speaking.

Question 01:Do you like to read stories?

Question 02:Do you prefer reading stories by yourself or having someone else tell you?

Question 03:Do you feel comfortable acting out a story after hearing it?

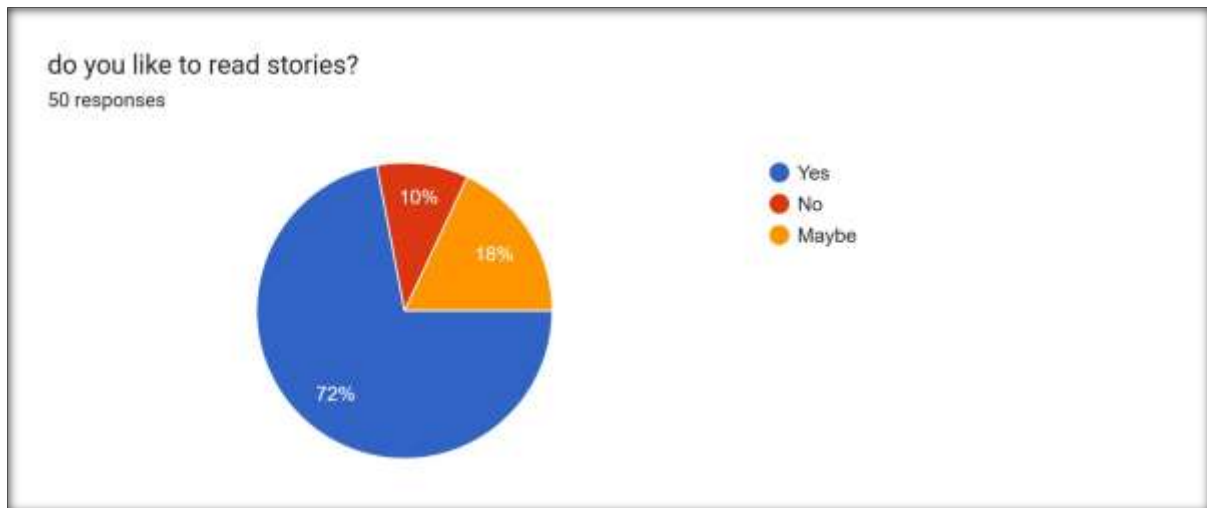


Figure 5: Students' Preference of Stories

- (Figure 5) presents that the number of students who like reading stories is bigger than those who do not as well as those who are neutral.

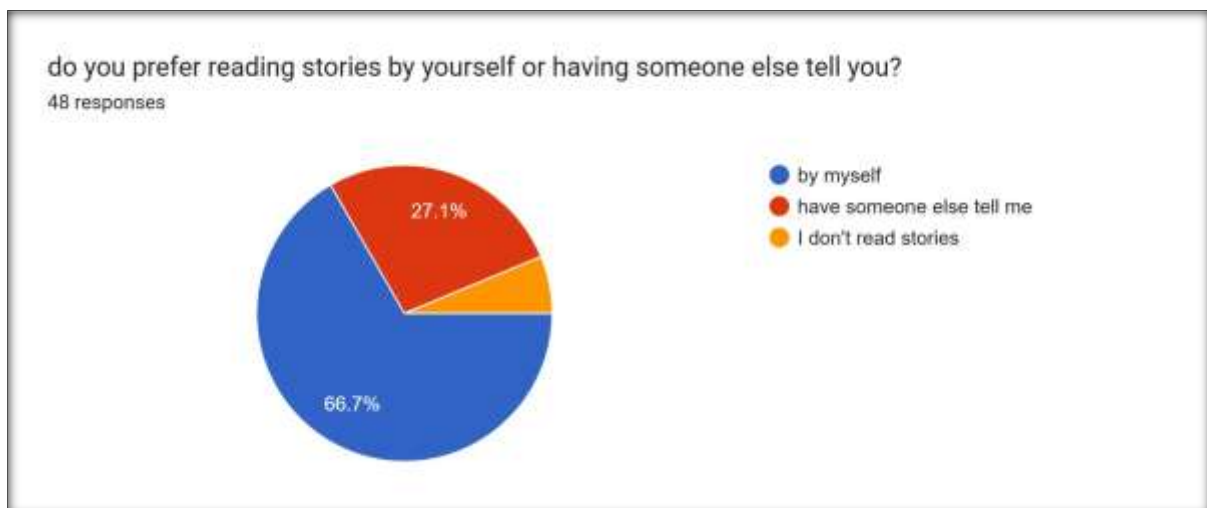


Figure 6: Students Preferred Way of Reading Stories

- Around 66% of participants like reading stories by themselves, while 27 % like having someone else reading for them and the rest of participants do not read stories (Figure 6).

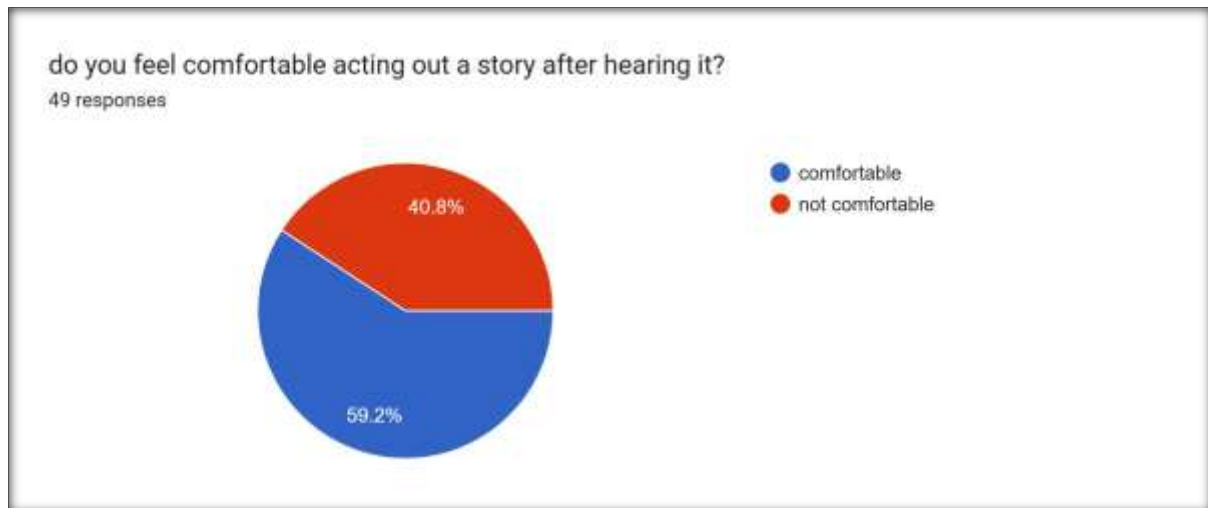


Figure 7: Students' Impression on Acting out Stories

- (Figure 7) shows that the percentage of students who are comfortable acting out a story after hearing it is more than the number of the students who feel uncomfortable doing so.

Question 04: What type of storytelling activities do you find most helpful for improving speaking skills?

Question 05: In your opinion, storytelling supports the development of the following skills:

Question 06: I have participated in structured constructive storytelling activities in English class

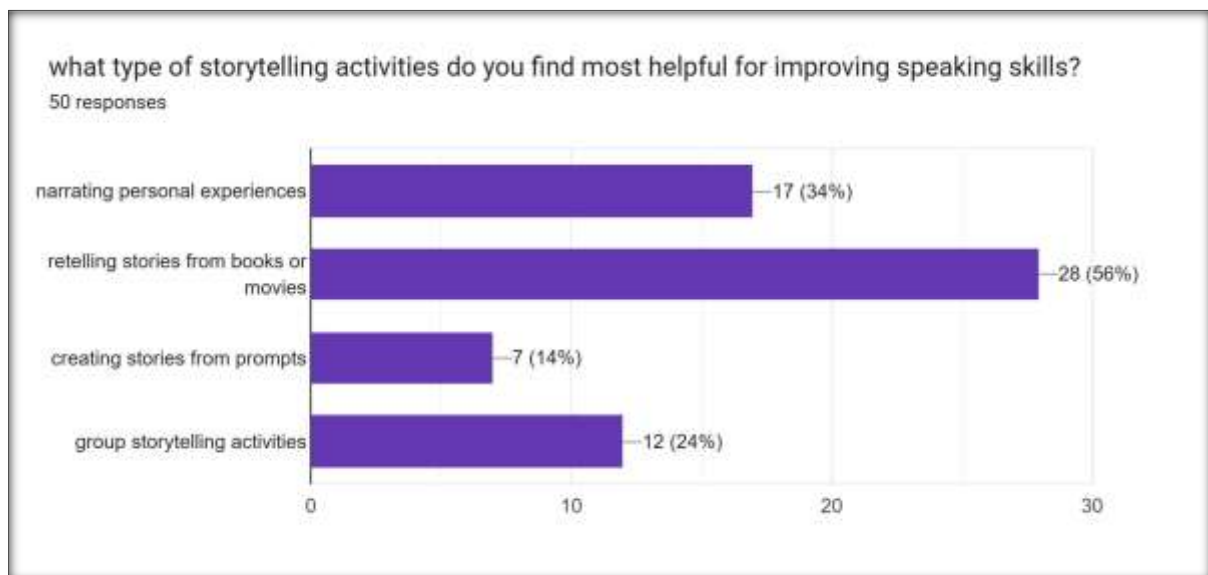


Figure 8: Students' Opinions on Types of Storytelling Activities

- The charts above shows that 28 participants think that retelling stories from books or movies is the most helpful type of storytelling for improving speaking skills, 17 of

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

them chose narrating personal experiences, 12 participants chose group storytelling activities while only 7 students picked creating stories from prompts (Figure 8).

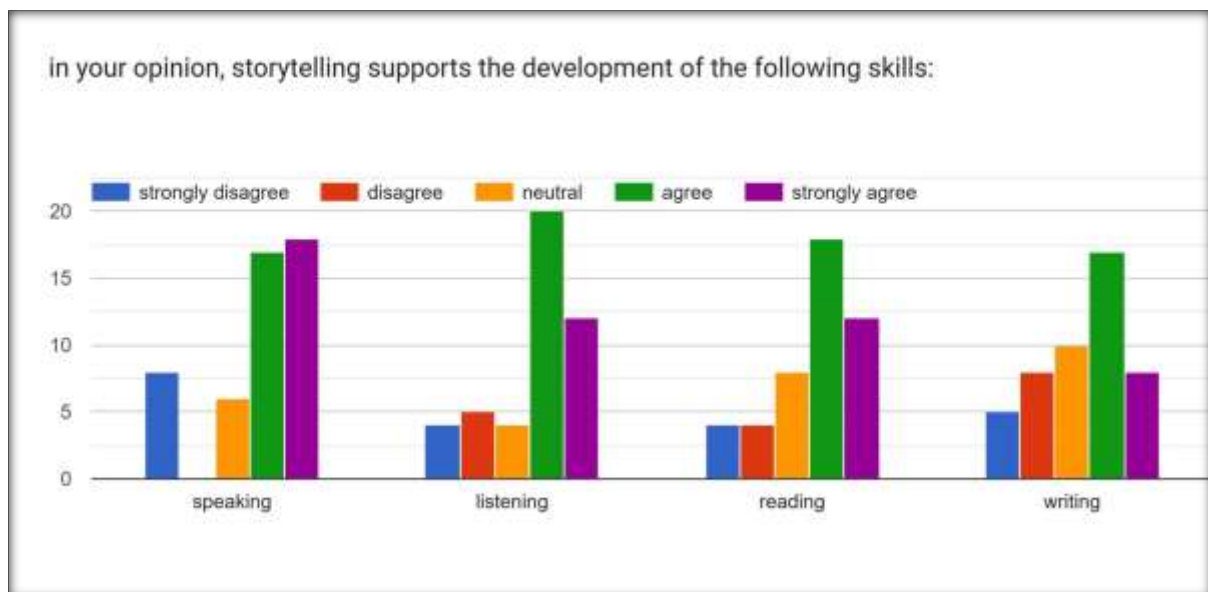


Figure 9: Storytelling Development of the Four Skills

- As presented by (Figure 9) the biggest amount of participants agreed that storytelling supports the development of the four skills. Concerning the speaking skill particularly, it took the biggest percentage on strongly agree.

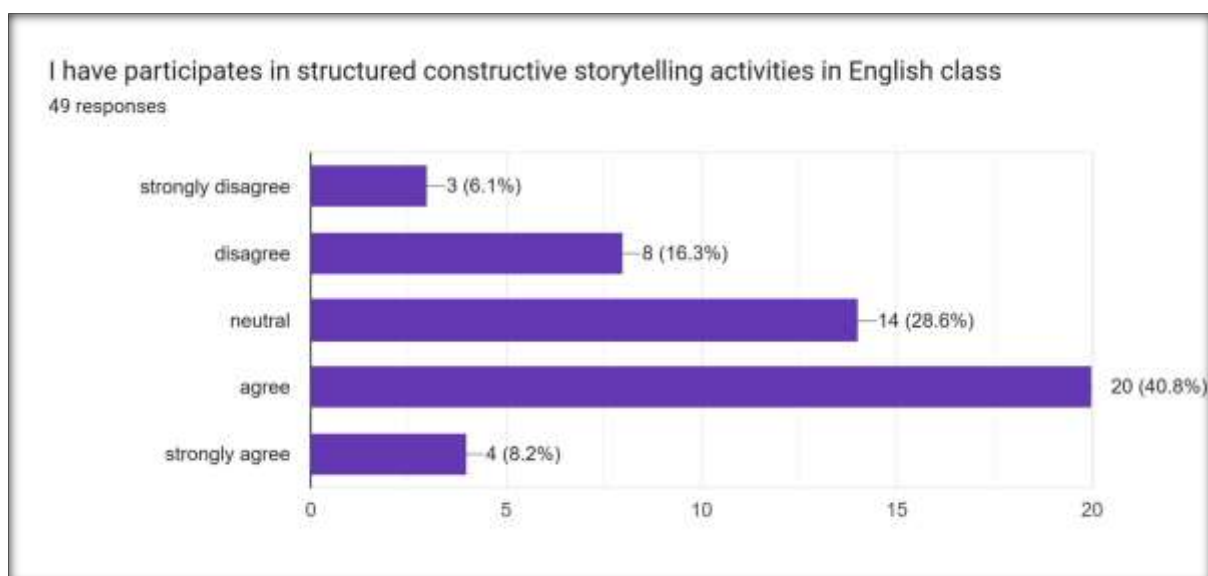


Figure 10: Students' Participation in Structured Storytelling Activities in English Class

- (Figure 10) shows that 20 participants have participated in structured constructive storytelling activities in English class, 14 were neutral about it, 8 of them disagreed, 4 of them strongly disagreed and 4 of them strongly agreed on that.

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

Question 07: Constructive storytelling is important for improving speaking skills

Question 08: the following aspects of my speaking skills have improved through constructive storytelling

Question 09: Constructive storytelling should be more frequently used in university level English speaking courses

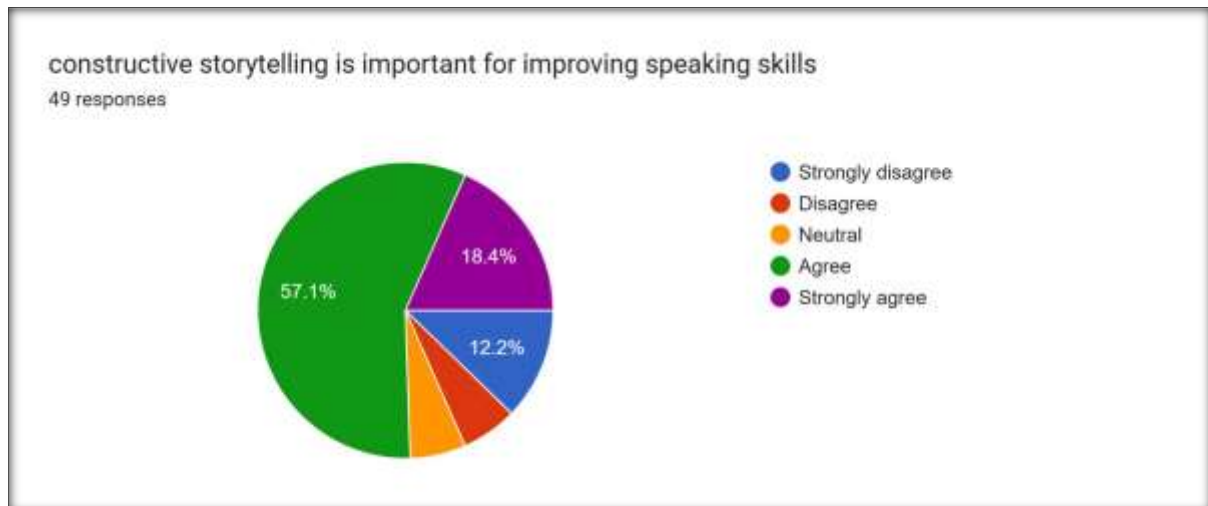


Figure 11: The Importance of Storytelling in Improving Speaking Skills

- More than half of the number of participants agreed on the importance of storytelling in improving speaking skills. More than quarter the number strongly agree with that idea, while the rest differed from neutral to disagree and strongly disagree (Figure 11).

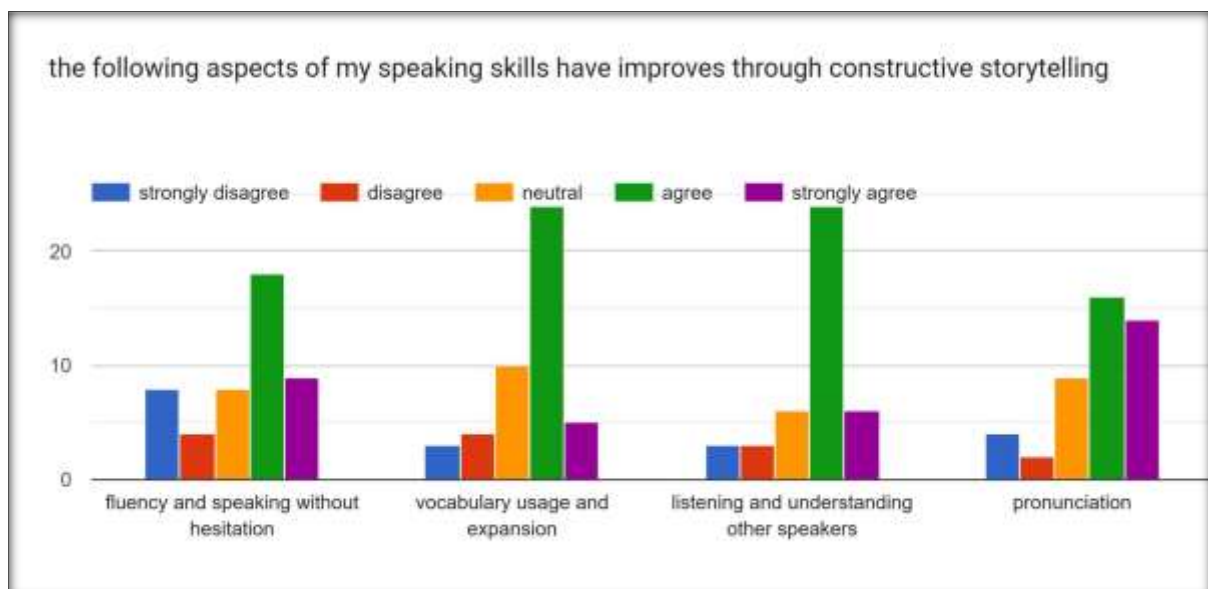


Figure 12: The Improvement of Different Aspects of Speaking Skills Due to Constructive Storytelling

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

- (Figure 12) demonstrates that the biggest percentage of participants agreed that storytelling has improved all the given aspects of their speaking skills, the second percentage is that they strongly agreed that it has improved the aspects of pronunciation and fluency while very few of them disagreed and strongly disagreed.

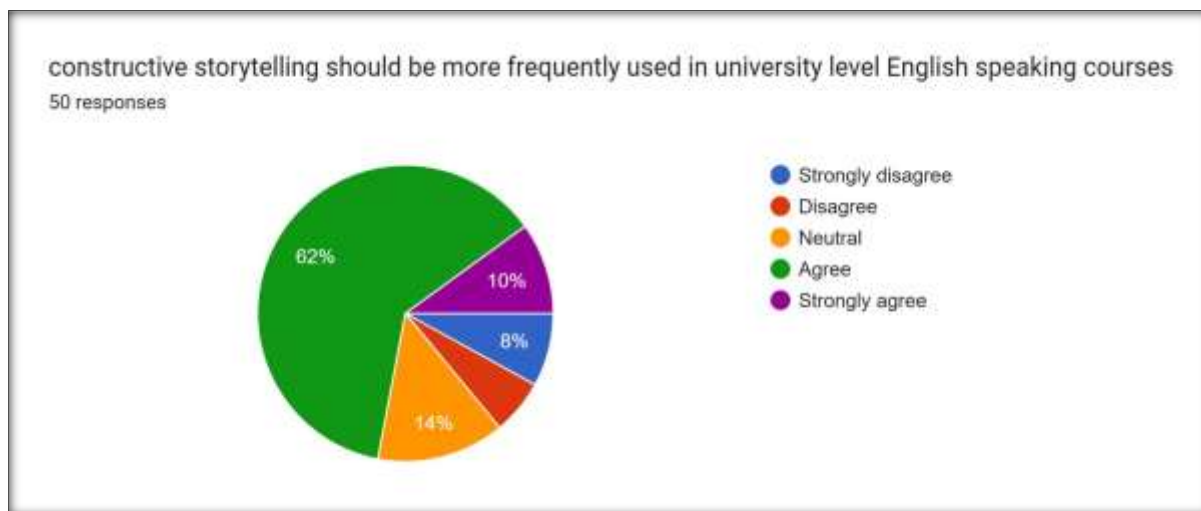


Figure 13: The Frequency of Constructive Storytelling Usage in University Level English Speaking Courses

- As shown in (Figure 13) 62% of students agreed that constructive storytelling should be more frequently used in university level English speaking courses, while 14% of them are neutral and the rest differed between disagree, strongly disagree and strongly agree.

Question 10: What do you consider to be the main challenge in using constructive storytelling as a tool for improving speaking skills?

Question 11: Constructive storytelling helps me structure speech logically (introduction, body, conclusion).

Question 12: Constructive storytelling helps me use a wide range of vocabulary and maintain conversation flow.

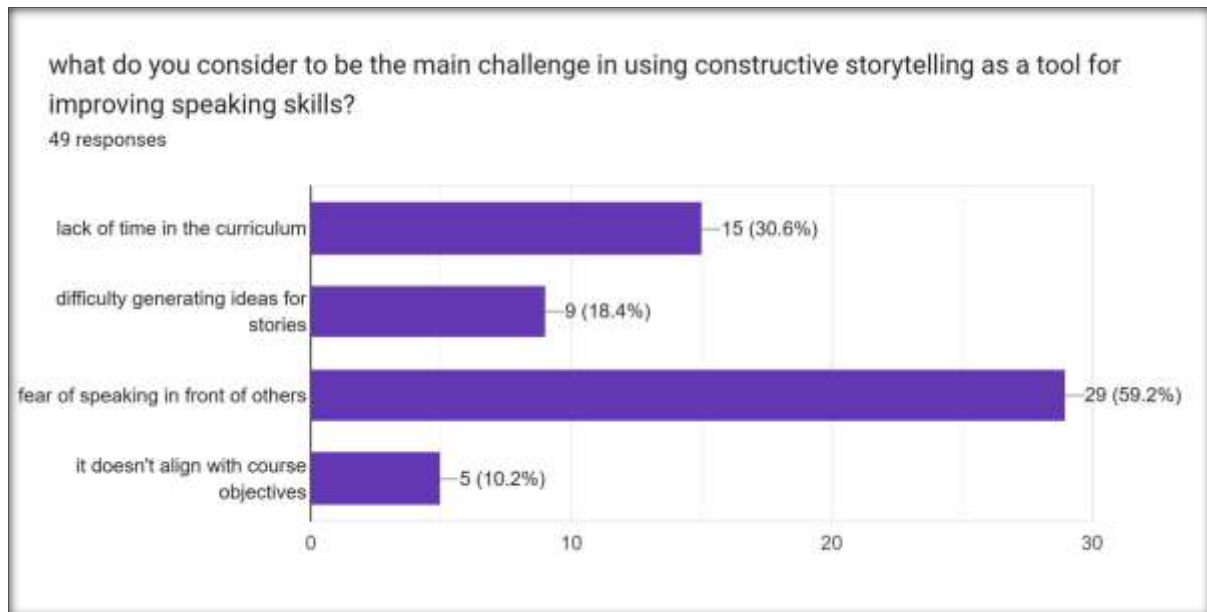


Figure 14: Challenges of Using Constructive Storytelling as a Tool for Improving Speaking Skills

- 29 students said that the main challenge in using constructive storytelling as a tool for improving speaking skills was the fear of speaking in front of others, 15 of them said it was the lack of time in the curriculum, 9 of them said it was the difficulty generating ideas for stories, and only 5 said it was the fact that it does not align with course objectives (Figure 14).

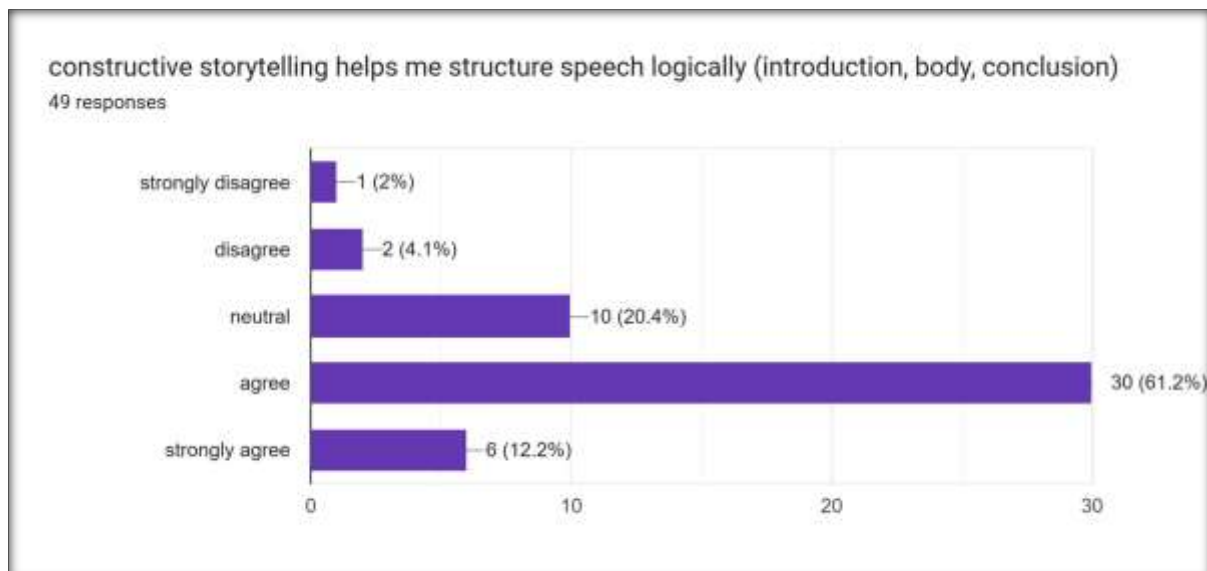


Figure 15: The Role of Constructive Storytelling in Structuring Speech Logically (Introduction, Body, Conclusion)

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

- 30 students agreed that constructive storytelling helps them structure speech logically (introduction, Body, Conclusion), 10 of them were neutral, while 6 of them strongly agreed with the idea, 2 disagree and only one student strongly disagreed (Figure 15).

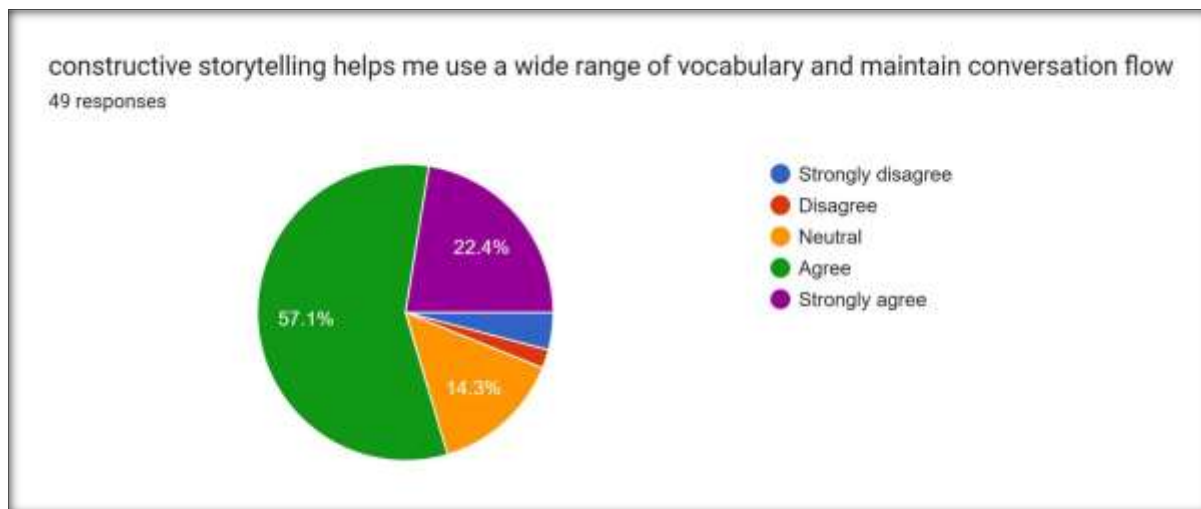


Figure 16: The Role of Constructive Storytelling in Using Vocabulary and Maintaining Conversation Flow

- More than half of the number of students agreed that constructive storytelling does help them use a wide range of vocabulary and maintain conversation flow, and more than quarter the number strongly agreed with that, while the rest that represents the smallest percentage differed from neutral, disagree and strongly disagree (Figure 16).

Question 13: Constructive storytelling allows learner to emotionally connect with content, improves retention and makes the speaking practice more natural

Question 14: Constructive storytelling encourages learners to speak in real life-like situations

Question 15: Do you have any additional comments or suggestions about using storytelling in English learning?

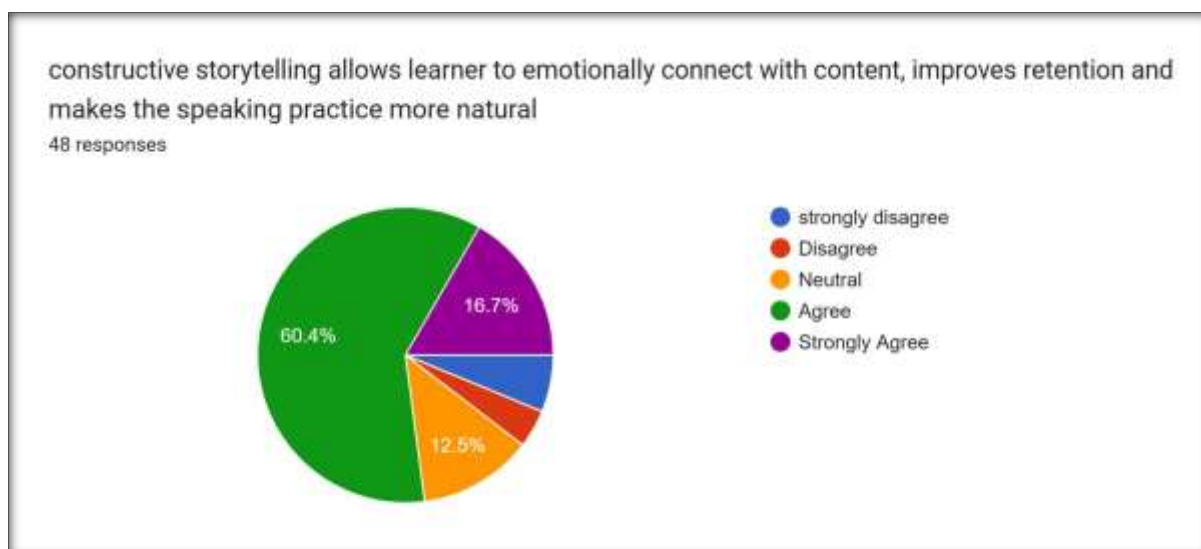


Figure 17: The Role of Constructive Storytelling in Improving the Mental Aspect During the Speaking Process

- As the charts above demonstrates, 60.4% of participants agreed that constructive storytelling allows them to emotionally connect with content, improves retention and makes the speaking practice more natural, while 16.7% strongly agreed with this fact, 12.5% of them were neutral and the rest differed between disagree and strongly disagree (Figure 17).

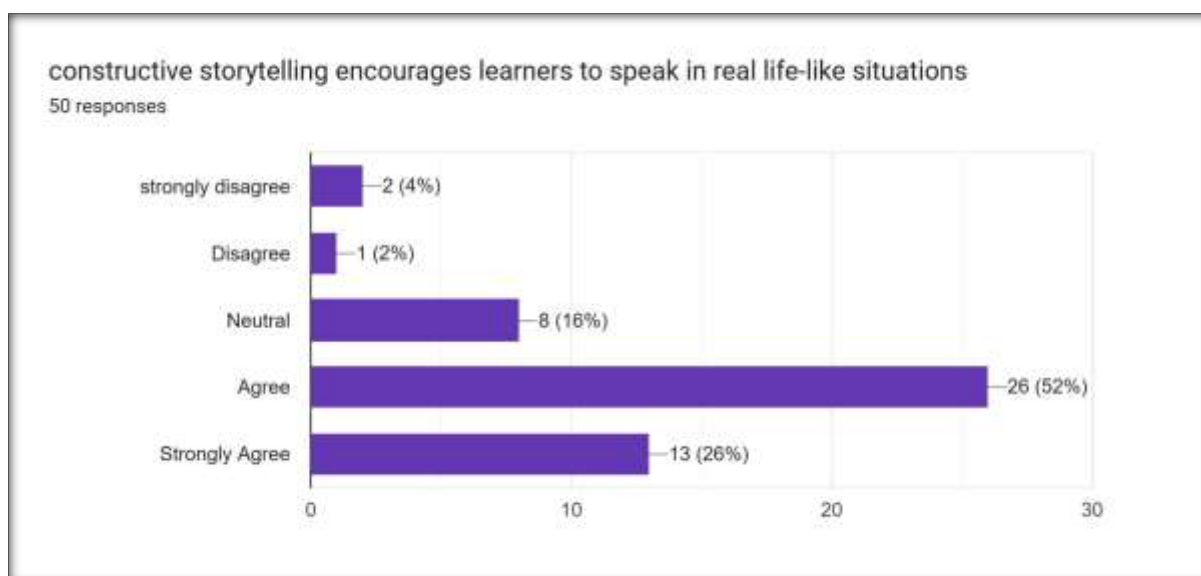


Figure 18: The Role of Constructive Storytelling in Encouraging Learners to Speak in Real Life-Like Situations

- 26 students agreed that constructive storytelling encourages them to speak in real life situations, 13 of them strongly agreed, 8 of them were neutral, 2 of them strongly disagreed and only one student disagreed (Figure 18).

7. Discussion of the Questionnaire Results

This questionnaire was used to find answers to the research questions and test the research hypotheses. The main findings of participants' answers on the use of constructive storytelling to teach and learn speaking skills are represented in the following part.

➤ Section A: Demographic Information

In conducting a research, it is important to gather the required data concerning the gender, age, and level of study as well as years of experience of the participants. We have concluded that most participants are females, above 23 years old and most of them are master and third year students and have been for more than 4 years studying at university.

➤ Section B: Storytelling and Speaking Skills

This section shed light on different aspects on constructive storytelling and its relation to teaching and learning speaking. The results demonstrate that most participants like reading stories and they are ready and enthusiastic when it comes to encountering stories. Furthermore, they feel at ease with telling and being told stories.

The findings of this section also show that participants are engaged with different methods of constructive storytelling, in which they prefer retelling stories from books and movies as well as narrating their personal experiences. Moreover, most of them think that constructive storytelling has a role in developing their four skills especially speaking, and they have participated in constructive storytelling activities in class, which proves the effectiveness and efficiency of constructive storytelling in getting them engaged in speaking activities.

Results have also shown the effectiveness of constructive storytelling in the mental and psychological aspects of students during the process of speaking, since most of students agreed that it has helped them speak without fear and be more at ease while talking. Furthermore, students addressed the challenges of using constructive storytelling saying that they think it does not align with courses design and there is not enough time for it in the curriculum, in which they recommended it will be used more frequently in class. That being said, students do believe in the importance of the use of constructive storytelling in class for speaking skills improvement.

Conclusion

Chapter Two : Methodology and Data Analysis

This chapter represented the heart of our research, in which the research design, context of the study and participants were presented and all the data collection tools needed to identify and analyze information about the topic were displayed.

Questionnaire results were based on the participants' answers about the use of constructive storytelling in university level classes to teach and learn speaking skills.

General Conclusion

General Introduction

This study aimed at encountering the use of constructive storytelling as a means to teach speaking skills. It shed light on the different methods of constructive storytelling and its use in university level English classes. It also aimed at finding how student think of constructive storytelling and its importance in improving their speaking skills.

This thesis consisted of two chapters. The first chapter shed the light on constructivist storytelling in the oral expression module of university classes. It dealt with an overview about constructivism in education generally, its definition and most noticed scholars as well as constructivism in education in general and in EFL/ESL classes in particular. Furthermore, it explored different constructivist methods in education and English language teaching. It also covered storytelling as a teaching technique in higher education, and its use to teach speaking to students of EFL/ESL. Finally, it tackled real-life experiences of using storytelling to teach speaking in higher education classes. The second chapter presented the methodology adopted for this study, outlining the process of data collection and analysis. It also included the main findings. A questionnaire was used as the primary tool for gathering data.

To reach the final conclusions, the results were first displayed through tables and figures, followed by a detailed explanation, evaluation, and interpretation of the participants' responses. Moreover, the result indicated that participants engage with various forms of constructivist storytelling, showing a preference for retelling stories from books and movies, as well as sharing personal experiences. Most students believe that constructivist storytelling plays a significant role in enhancing their language skills especially speaking. Their involvement in classroom storytelling activities further supports its effectiveness in encouraging active participation in speaking tasks.

Additionally, the findings highlighted the positive impact of constructivist storytelling on students' mental and emotional comfort during speaking. Many reported feeling less anxious and more confident when expressing themselves. However, students also pointed out some challenges, noting that this method often doesn't fit well with the course design and there's limited time allocated for it in the curriculum. Despite these concerns, they expressed a strong belief in the value of using constructivist storytelling more regularly to improve their speaking skills.

Building on these findings, it becomes clear that constructivist storytelling holds both theoretical and pedagogical importance. From a theoretical perspective, it aligns with the

General Introduction

principles of constructivism by emphasizing learner autonomy, knowledge construction, and active engagement with content. From a pedagogical perspective, it offers a concrete strategy for improving oral proficiency in higher education classrooms, while also addressing psychological barriers such as speaking anxiety. Thus, the present study contributes to the growing body of research that supports the use of interactive, learner centered approaches in EFL instruction.

Another important implication concerns the role of the teacher. The study suggests that instructors who integrate storytelling into their practice can create a more dynamic and inclusive environment. Storytelling not only allows students to practice speaking in meaningful contexts but also encourages creativity, collaboration, and peer learning. However, for this potential to be realized, teachers need institutional support, including training, time allocation, and curricular flexibility. Without these adjustments, storytelling risks being treated as a marginal activity rather than a central component of the speaking module.

Despite the encouraging results, the study also underlines some limitations that future research should address. The data were drawn primarily from questionnaires, which capture students' perspectives but do not fully reflect classroom dynamics. Future investigations might therefore benefit from combining questionnaires with classroom observations, interviews, or experimental studies that measure progress in speaking skills over time. Furthermore, the sample of students was limited to one specific context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Conducting similar studies in different universities or educational systems would provide a broader understanding of how constructivist storytelling functions across diverse learning environments.

In addition, the scope of this study focused mainly on speaking skills, but the potential applications of storytelling extend beyond this single area. Storytelling could be explored in relation to listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking, or even intercultural awareness. Such extensions would not only enrich the research field but also provide educators with a more holistic understanding of how to use storytelling as a versatile pedagogical tool.

In conclusion, this thesis demonstrated that constructivist storytelling is more than an innovative classroom activity. It is a valuable method that can transform language learning

General Introduction

into a more interactive, meaningful, and student centered process. While challenges remain in terms of curriculum design and institutional support, the findings strongly suggest that storytelling should be integrated more systematically into university level EFL instruction. Ultimately, this study reinforces the idea that effective language teaching must go beyond the mechanical practice of skills and instead provide learners with opportunities to express themselves, construct meaning, and engage with others through authentic communication.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

Constructive_Storytelling_Questionnaire

re

Constructive storytelling is a narrative approach that plays a significant role in peace-building and conflict resolution. It emphasizes the use of storytelling as a means to foster understanding, empathy, and mutual recognition among conflicting groups. Constructive storytelling is not just about sharing stories; it is a powerful method for building peace and understanding through shared narratives that resonate across cultural divides.

1. gender *

Mark only one oval.

- male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

2. age *

Check all that apply.

- under 18
- 19_22
- 23_27
- 28 and above

3. level of study

Mark only one oval.

- first year
- second year
- third year
- masters
- other

4. how long have you been learning English?

Check all that apply.

- less than 1 year
- 1_3 years
- 4_6 years
- more than 6 years

5. do you like to read stories?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

6. do you prefer reading stories by yourself or having someone else tell you?

Mark only one oval.

- by myself
- have someone else tell me
- I don't read stories

7. do you feel comfortable acting out a story after hearing it?

Mark only one oval.

- comfortable
 not comfortable

8. what type of storytelling activities do you find most helpful for improving speaking skills?

Check all that apply.

- narrating personal experiences
 retelling stories from books or movies
 creating stories from prompts
 group storytelling activities

9. in your opinion, storytelling supports the development of the following skills:

Mark only one oval per row.

strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree

	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree
speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
reading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. I have participated in structured constructive storytelling activities in English class

Check all that apply.

- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neutral
- agree
- strongly agree

11. constructive storytelling is important for improving speaking skills

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

12. the following aspects of my speaking skills have improved through constructive

storytelling

Mark only one oval per row.

	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree
fluency and speaking without hesitation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vocabulary usage and expansion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
listening and understanding other speakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
pronunciation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. constructive storytelling should be more frequently used in university level English speaking courses

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

14. what do you consider to be the main challenge in using constructive storytelling as a tool for improving speaking skills?

Check all that apply.

- lack of time in the curriculum
- difficulty generating ideas for stories
- fear of speaking in front of others
- it doesn't align with course objectives

15. constructive storytelling helps me structure speech logically (introduction, body, conclusion)

Check all that apply.

- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neutral
- agree
- strongly agree

16. constructive storytelling helps me use a wide range of vocabulary and maintain conversation flow

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

17. constructive storytelling allows learner to emotionally connect with content,
improves retention and makes the speaking practice more natural

Mark only one oval.

- strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

18. constructive storytelling encourages learners to speak in real life-like situations

Check all that apply.

- strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

19. do you have any additional comments or suggestions about using storytelling in English learning?

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