

Dedications

We would like to dedicate this work to our cherished family,

Our parents who have always been our guiding light and endless source of inspiration

To our dear brothers for their support and motivation and encouragement to achieve our goals.

To all those who helped and motivated us and wished for our success.

You were a source of courage, support, motivation and confidence

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This research aims to explore the communication strategies employed by English primary school teachers inside the classroom to interact with pupils in Tizi-Ouzou. This study focuses on two (02) main objectives. The first objective is to identify the most commonly employed communication strategies by English elementary school instructors when interacting with young learners. The second one is to investigate the main challenges that these educators face during classroom interaction. Mariani's (2010) theory of "Communication Strategies, Learning and Teaching how to Manage Oral Interaction" is used as a theoretical framework in this present study. This study adopts a mixed-method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and data analysis. To conduct this research, fourteen (14) classroom observation sessions have been carried out in three (3) different primary schools in Draa El Mizan, Tizi-Ouzou. Besides, interviews have been conducted with three teachers. Classroom observation data are analysed using Descriptive Statistical Analysis (DSA), while the information obtained from teacher interviews are interpreted using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). The findings gathered through the classroom observations and the interview indicate that primary school English teachers rely mainly on using various strategies to interact effectively inside the classroom such as, definitions and descriptions, repetition, body movements, visual aids and objects (realia). Moreover, primary school educators face many challenges when interacting with young children namely, linguistic problems, lack of attention, lack of motivation, and multi-level group. Finally, recommendations for further research are provided.

Key words: *Communication strategies, Classroom Interaction, Primary School Teachers, Pupils, Challenges.*

List of Abbreviations

- **CSs:** Communication Strategies
- **DSA:** Descriptive Statistical Analysis
- **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- **H:** Hypothesis
- **L2:** Second Language
- **MKO:** More Knowledgeable Other
- **Q:** Question
- **QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis
- **YL:** Young Learners
- **ZPD:** Zone of Proximal Development

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Statement of the Problem

Language learning is a process of constructing knowledge conducted mainly by the learner but facilitated by the teacher where an effective communication is an important element in the success of any language learning program. It is important to clarify that communication in teaching is to transmit knowledge, information and ideas between a teacher and his/her pupils. Effective communication is crucial in the language learning process, particularly with young learners who may have limited competence in the target language.

Learning English at an early age provides a multitude of advantages. It enhances cognitive development, communication skills and opens doors to global opportunities. Early exposure helps in better pronunciation and fluency, fostering confidence for future learning and interactions. Additionally, the English language is widely spread in different domains such as education, business, and technology, making it a valuable skill for success in various fields. For this reason, the Algerian educational system implemented the English language in primary schools in 2022/2023. However, using English to communicate is a challenging task to fulfill for any English Foreign Language (EFL) educator since it requires a lot of efforts especially when dealing with pupils. Therefore, elementary school teachers should be cautious when interacting with children and use a variety of communication strategies in order to facilitate the learning process, especially for novices beginning to develop their language skills and have no prior knowledge about the language. Accordingly, the notion of communication strategies was introduced by Selinker (1972) and defined by several authors.

According to Dornyei (1995) communication strategies are essential in oral language learning, providing learners with a sense of security and confidence when they encounter challenges in using the target language.

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The field of communication has been the subject of a significant amount of research. Many studies have been conducted in this field, among these studies we can find the master dissertation conducted in the university of Abderahmane Mira of Bejaia, Faculty of Languages, Department of English by Yasmina Haddad in June 2015, entitled: “Investigating EFL Students’ Communication Strategies in Overcoming Oral Vocabulary Gap: The Case of Master Two Didactics Students at Bejaia University.” This study aims to identify the communication strategies used by master two student at the university of bejaia and overcome the verbal vocabulary gap. The results of this study reveal that master two didactic students at this university who are learning English as a foreign language face difficulty in communicating effectively. Furthermore, these students encounter frequent communication breakdowns because of their limited vocabulary. Another study is conducted by Agam Syahrial in 2013 at the English Department, Faculty of Language and Literature, Satya Wacana Christian University in Indonesia, entitled: “Communication Strategies Used by Young Learners in a Bilingual Classroom”. The aim of this study is to investigate and describe the compensatory strategies employed by EFL Young Learners (YL) in English classrooms to bridge gaps in their language proficiency. The findings reveal that participants in classroom interaction use various communication strategies such as language switch to facilitate effective communication and enhance interaction.

In light of Algeria’s recent integration of English language instruction in public primary schools, it is crucial to mention that little research has been conducted in the field of communication strategies used by EFL teachers when interacting with first grade school pupils. Therefore, it’s worth noting that, up to this point, the lack of such studies has enhanced our interest to explore the issue and shed light on the strategies that elementary school EFL teachers use during classroom interactions.

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Aims and Significance of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to explore the communication strategies used by EFL teachers inside the classroom to interact with third-year primary school pupils. Our objective in this research is to provide answers to our research questions. Our dissertation contains two main objectives. The first objective is to identify the most commonly employed communication strategies by EFL teachers when interacting with young learners. The second one is to investigate the main challenges they face during classroom interactions.

This study adds value to current research in a variety of ways. It provides guidance and support to EFL teachers with an overview of different communication strategies they can use with their learners leading to more effective interaction. Additionally, it benefits EFL teachers by providing them with valuable solutions about the challenges they face. Moreover, teacher training programs can utilize these findings to equip future educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to overcome the difficulties of teaching English to young children.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current research aims at answering the following questions:

Q1: What are the most commonly used communication strategies by EFL teachers with third-year pupils in the selected primary schools in Tizi Ouzou?

Q2: What are the main challenges that EFL educators in the selected schools in Tizi Ouzou face when interacting with third-year primary school pupils?

To answer these questions, two working hypotheses are advanced:

H1: The most commonly used communication strategies for third year primary school pupils are description and definition, repetition, non-verbal language, and visual aids

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H2: The main challenges faced by EFL teachers when interacting with elementary pupils consist of linguistic problems, motivation, and attention.

Research Techniques and Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and data analysis. In terms of data collection, two (02) main research instruments are used, namely classroom observation and interview. In this sake, fourteen (14) classroom observations are conducted in three (03) primary schools: “Belalem Said”, “Ecole De Filles”, and “Lounis Mohamed”, situated in Draa El Mizan, Tizi Ouzou to obtain reliable data and gain a better understanding of the teachers’ practices in using the communication strategies relying on an observation checklist. Where the interview which consists of thirteen (13) open-ended questions is conducted with three (03) elementary educators of the same primary schools. It attempts to investigate the difficulties faced by EFL teachers and to confirm the use of some of the communication strategies mentioned in the checklist. In terms of data analysis, the quantitative method is used to gather numerical data from the checklist relying on Descriptive Statistical Analysis (DSA). The qualitative analysis, specifically qualitative content analysis (QCA), is employed to interpret the data collected from the interviews. The study adopts Mariani’s (2010) “Communication Strategies” theory as a framework to examine and discuss the findings.

Structure of the Dissertation

This study follows the traditional simple model in its overall structure. It consists of a “General Introduction”, which states the problem of this research, its aim and significance, methodology and structure of the dissertation. The first chapter entitled “Review of the Literature” defines key concepts related to the research problem and theoretical framework. The second chapter named “Research Design and Methodology”, describes the research

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procedures and tools used to gather and analyze data. The third chapter called “Presentation of the Findings”. It presents the results gathered from the interviews and classroom observations. The fourth and last chapter is called “Discussion of the Findings” which aims at discussing the collected data and the interpretation of findings to provide responses to the research inquiries and check the validity of the hypotheses. Finally, the “General Conclusion” restates the key points of our research.

Introduction

The present chapter examines the significant literature related to our topic consisting in investigating the communication strategies that elementary teachers employ to interact with young pupils, it defines the key concepts related to the topic. It is divided into five parts. The first part includes the definition of classroom interaction and its types. The second deals with communication and its different types. The next one comprises the different definitions of communication strategies. Then the following part consists of various difficulties and challenges faced by EFL teachers when interacting with young children. The last part deals with the theoretical framework related to this field of research.

1. Classroom Interaction

1.1 Definition of Classroom Interaction

Brown (1994, p.159) defines interaction as “the heart of communication; it is what communication is all about; we send messages; we receive them; we interpret them in a context; we negotiate meaning; and we collaborate to accomplish certain purposes”. That is to say, interaction is the very essential in communication; they are interrelated. It involves sending and receiving messages, interpreting them within a specific context and sharing ideas. In this exchange, we do not only transmit knowledge but also negotiate meaning to bridge the gaps between teachers and pupils to ensure communication.

Engaging in interactive learning experience provides a dynamic context where students can actively expand their language proficiency and to achieve their communicative purposes. Classroom interaction plays a major role in language learning process. It fosters a dynamic exchange of notions, perceptions and knowledge among students and teachers. According to Allwright (1984, p.156), interaction is “the fundamental fact of classroom pedagogy [...]

everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction”. In this context, classroom activities rely on direct situations and real-time interactions between individuals. In more precise terms, it is in these situations where Foreign Language Learning takes place.

1.2. Types of Classroom Interaction

There exist various types of classroom interaction. According to Nunan and Carter (2001), classroom interaction encompasses the interactions between the teacher and students, as well as the interactions among the students themselves within the classroom environment.

1.2.1 Teacher-Learners Interaction

Teacher-Learner Interaction is the transmission of information, knowledge and ideas between teachers and learners inside the classroom. It has a significant role in the learning-teaching process. According to Harmer (1998), the teacher’s interaction with his learners is considered as an important skill in enhancing the teaching and learning processes. Therefore, teacher-learner interactions are contributory in fostering an active classroom communication atmosphere and enhancing the learning process. As suggested by Bucholz and Sheffler (2009), teachers have the power to create a comfortable learning environment, that in turn, can significantly reinforce students’ capacity to learn effectively. The dynamic between teachers and learners not only promotes better learning outcomes but also encourages active participation and engagement within the classroom.

It is also important to indicate that Harmer (1998) highlights that good teachers focus on both verbal interaction and non-verbal interaction. That is to say, the teachers use body language to enhance their communication and reinforce their interaction with students, particularly when dealing with children and with students at lower proficiency levels.

1.2.2 Learner-Learner Interaction

Learner-learner interaction refers to the communication that occurs among students inside the classroom either in group or peer work. Harmer (1998), argues that engaging in pair work and group work gives opportunities to learners to express themselves independently and without being assisted by their instructors. Besides, students' interaction with peers and engagement promotes collective growth and facilitates learning.

1.3 The Role of Teachers in Classroom Interaction

Teachers play a significant role in classroom interaction, serving as the guiding force that facilitates the learning process and ensures a dynamic educational environment especially with young learners. With their experience and their pedagogical skills, they arrange and manage discussions, answer the learners' questions and provide them with the scaffolding needed to build their knowledge step by step through the concept of scaffolding which is an important aspect of children's learning, namely that is often "guided by others" (Stone, 1998a, p.351). Consequently, since the teacher is the instructor inside classroom, he will be the main figure to ensure guidance and support for his learners.

Additionally, scaffolding as highlighted by Vygotsky's (1930) social developmental theory, was used by Wood et al. (1976) to describe how adults can assist children in solving problems together. Moreover, Vygotsky's (1930) Social Developmental Theory emphasizes that learning is fundamentally a social process. Furthermore, his theory also called Vygotsky's (1930) socio-cultural theory states that a child's learning is significantly enhanced when they are instructed by a more knowledgeable member of their community, such as a parent or teacher. In this context, the Vygotskian perspectives emphasizes that our learning occurs within social interactions, particularly with individuals who have better knowledge and experience in specific practices, this refers to "More Knowledgeable Others".

Vygotsky (1978) claims that children do not learn only through MKO, but also in connection with the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In this regard, Vygotsky (1978, p.86) describes the ZPD as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”. That is to say, when a child faces some difficulties during a lesson or in some instructions is guided by his teacher or even with his more capable classmates.

2. Communication

2.1 Definition of Communication

According to Weekley (1921, p.338) “the root of the word ‘communication’ in latin is *communicare*, which means to share, or to make common”. That is to say, the main aim of communication is to exchange knowledge. Lunenburg (2010, p.01) states that “communication is the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another”. Said differently, communication is the process of conveying knowledge, information and expressing thoughts in order to foster mutual understanding between individuals. According to Savignon (1983), communication is an active process, constantly evolving through the collaborative negotiation of meaning between two or more individuals who share reciprocal understanding of the language in use. In short, whenever a group of people interact, communication takes place.

2.2 Types of Communication

Richards and Schmidt (1983, p.4) state that: “the exchange of information between at least two individuals through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, oral and written/visual

modes, and the production and comprehension processes”. Based on this statement, we extract two major types of communication:

2.2.1 Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is very important in human interaction, is considered as the primary means through which we convey thoughts, emotions and ideas. Verbal communication is defined as the oral transmission of messages from the one person to another in real situations where the spoken words are considered as the channel in the communication process (Ballester, 2015). In this regard, in verbal communication we use spoken or written words to convey messages. It can take place in different contexts such as conversations, presentations and dialogues. It plays a crucial role in education and everyday social interaction.

2.2.1.1 Verbal Communication in EFL Classrooms

Verbal language in an EFL classroom is essential for language learning. Mann (2009) emphasizes the crucial role of oral language in making the learning process successful in enhancing classroom interaction, and affirming that the use of verbal communication proficiently is a key factor in achieving success in the classroom interaction process. Therefore, within the classroom setting, verbal language serves as the primary means for teachers to transfer information and gives instructions, as well as for students to seek clarification and engage in discussions. Moreover, it is crucial for EFL teachers to employ clear and age appropriate language with young children. Thus, the good use of this communication ensures a positive learning atmosphere.

2.2.2 Non-Verbal Communication

According to Dileo (1977), language encompasses various forms of communication, including facial expressions, gestures and physical appearances. Each of these cue is understood

differently based on factors like a person's level of education, cultural background, individual differences, and the specific situation in which the interaction takes place. Additionally, Andersen (2007) states that non-verbal communication refers to the exchange of information without the use of words. Interestingly, Birdwhistell (1961) asserts that in communication, a significant portion of information we convey is transmitted through non-verbal signals, while only about 30% of the information is actually expressed through spoken words. Also, non-verbal communication is regarded as the main facilitator of the communication process when the verbal one does not work in some situations (Negi, 2009).

2.2.2.1 Non-verbal Communication in EFL Classroom

In an EFL classroom, effective communication is not only dependent on verbal interaction, but also in non-verbal interaction that plays a crucial role in facilitating understanding and engagement among students. In this regard, Smith and Howard (1979) emphasize the role of non-verbal communication and its influence on the teaching and learning process. Similarly, Mehrabian (1971) points out that the more the educators use body movements, the more their learners understand easily and keep engaged during lessons. Thus, a teacher who masters the non-verbal cues provides a good learning environment that facilitates learners' understanding and the easy flow of the learning process.

Moreover, Orton (2007, p.16) states that "the spontaneous use of gestures plays a significant role in natural learning processes, assisting the learner to grasp concepts, develop skills and store a new knowledge including new language in any field". That is to say, the natural reliance on gestures and body language helps teachers and learners achieve a successful and effective communication and interaction within classrooms.

3. Communication Strategies

3.1 Definition of Strategy

In general use, strategy means the practical steps and procedures needed to achieve an intended objective. Bialystock (1990, p.1) confirms that the term strategy refers to a “wilful planning to achieve explicit goals”. That is to say, strategy involves the actions and steps that need to be implemented to achieve specific goals. Drucker (1954) also notes that strategy refers to the process of assessing the present situations and making the necessary adjustments to reach the intended goal.

3.2 Definitions of Communication Strategies

Effective communication is not only dependent on owning a rich vocabulary in a foreign language; it can also be achieved through the use of different strategies like using synonyms, describing and defining concepts and through the use of body movements. In this regard, it can be effective even in Foreign Language Learning setting. Consequently, these suggested techniques are considered as communication strategies (CSs). Accordingly, “Communication strategies are the ways and means we employ when we experience a problem in communication, either because we cannot say what we would like to say or because we cannot understand what is being said to us” Luciano Mariani (2010, p.1). In other words, CSs are the techniques used when struggling to express or understand an idea due to communication problems.

Interestingly, the concept of CSs is constructed and introduced by Selinker in 1972 in his seminal paper on “interlanguage”, where he highlights the importance of communication strategies in second language acquisition and considers these strategies as a significant component in language learning process. By the time, diverse researchers (Tarone, 1977; Faerch and Kasper, 1983a, and other researchers) have conducted studies and focused on

communication strategies and define it differently. Corder (1983, p.16) defines CS as “a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty”. In more precise terms, CSs are actions that individuals take when they encounter difficulties in conveying or receiving a message.

Additionally, Faerch and Kasper (1983b, p.36) suggest that CSs are “potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal... not only serve to overcome problems learners face but are also used by learners to create the conditions for intake”. Therefore, when a person wants to communicate something, they may create potential plans to overcome any challenges they may face in achieving their communication goal. These plans can help learners overcome obstacles and facilitate learning.

Moreover; Bialystok (1990, p.35) asserts that “communication strategies overcome obstacles to communication by providing the speaker with an alternative form of expression for the intended meaning”. That is to say, CSs provide us with various means of expression to surmount communication obstacles faced when interacting. For instance, when teachers struggle to transmit an information to their pupils, they use different methods to ensure the reception of the idea.

When it comes to EFL learning context, “communication strategies have turned into a crucial topic for all foreign language learners and teachers” (Zhang, 2007, p.43). In addition, Hedge (2000) affirms that students overcome resource limitations in their L2 by finding different means of expression. Consequently, communication strategies are an essential part in EFL classroom interaction for both learners and teachers.

4. The Challenges Faced by EFL Teachers when Interacting with Pupils

According to Mariani (2010), teachers may face some difficulties and challenges when interacting with their pupils. In Mariani's book (2010) "Communication Strategies", we find the Linguistic, Phonological, Cultural and Intercultural problems. Interestingly, our main focus is on the two first challenges. The former challenge is the linguistic problem which means at first level the lack of vocabulary, that is to say that young children have limited or no prior knowledge of the words used during classroom interaction because the English language is unfamiliar to them. According to Wilkins (1972, p.111, as cited in Thornbury, 2002, p.13) "without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". In this vein, Vocabulary is essential for effective communication because it provides the words and terms needed to convey ideas, thoughts and information. So, teachers may struggle during classroom interaction when dealing with elementary pupils due to the limited vocabulary and background knowledge. Additionally, pronunciation can be also a challenge during the learning process, Morley (1994) asserts that when a speaker's pronunciation is heavily accented it can affect the listener's understanding. Thus, poor pronunciation can hinder effective communication.

In addition to the challenges extracted from Mariani's book, Nunan (2010, p. 7-12) suggests five main challenges that might be faced by EFL teachers when dealing with young which pupils are: Cognitive Development, Motivation, Attention, Multi-level Groups, and assessment. Our main focus is only on three challenges. Motivating young learners in an EFL setting can be challenging for teachers. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002, p.344) motivation is "generally considered to be one of the primary causes in second language acquisition". Motivation then, is a key factor in language learning, so teachers must use effective strategies to motivate their learners such as using visual aids and games to maintain their motivation. Additionally, Dornyei (2001) states that without sufficient motivation, even the brilliant students are unlikely to continue learning a language for a long period of time. As

a result, in an EFL classroom, the absence of motivation emerges as primary factor hindering pupils' interaction. Hence, attention is another challenge to mention. Schmidt (1995, p.39) argues "attention is required for learning". Additionally, Curran and Keele (1993, p.192) affirm that "subjects who experienced less awareness... show less learning". Therefore, instructors must do their best to keep their young learners engaged and sustain their attention by using, repetition of words and drills to gain their attention, besides using flashcards and real objects. Finally, managing multi-level groups can indeed be a significant challenge in an EFL classroom. This situation typically arises when students in the class have varying levels of English proficiency, making it difficult to cater to the diverse needs of the learners. Accordingly, Tomlinson (1995, p.2) explains that "a differentiated classroom offers a variety of learning options designed to tap into different levels, interests and learning profiles". Thus, young pupils have different learning styles and multi-level of intelligences. So, teachers need to adopt a variety of teaching strategies to fit the diverse needs of their pupils.

5. Theoretical Framework

The book entitled "Communication Strategies", learning and teaching how to manage oral interaction, written by Luciano Mariani, published in 2010 is a handbook for teachers, teacher trainers and educators, equipping them with a sound theoretical and methodological background. In this book, Mariani supports his work with previous research of different scholars, Faerch and Kasper 1983a, Tarone and Yule 1989, Bialystok 1990, Poulisse 1990, Kasper and Killerman 1997, Dornyei and Scott 1997, Dornyei and Kormos 1988, and others. In his book, he emphasizes the role of the instructor during the learning process and inside classroom. In this vein, the book discusses the various techniques and approaches that individuals who speak a second or foreign language can use when encountering difficulties arising from deficiencies in their linguistic, communicative or intercultural skills. These techniques are called "Communication Strategies". Accordingly, Mariani (2010, p.1) defines

CSs as “the ways and means we employ when we experience a problem in communication, either because we cannot say what we would like to say or because we cannot understand what is being said to us”. This quote considers CSs as the techniques we use when facing challenges in communication. These challenges can arise either when we struggle to express our thoughts effectively or when we find it difficult to comprehend the information being conveyed to us.

Communication Strategies help teachers and educators to make the learning process effective and enhance classroom interaction. Teachers use different strategies to convey meaning during lessons. By applying Mariani’s (2010) proposed taxonomy, teachers of third year primary school can greatly benefit their language teaching and learning processes and create a good atmosphere during learning process because of the diverse communication strategies mentioned in this taxonomy. Accordingly, teachers should select the most appropriate communication strategies that fit their learners’ cognitive abilities since they have different interests, levels, and linguistic knowledge. It is worth mentioning that using various CSs in an EFL classroom with young learners is crucial to cater to diverse learning styles, engage students effectively, and fit all the children’s’ diverse needs.

Mariani (2010, pp.30-36) identifies five (5) main groups of strategies that can be useful when interacting during the language learning process are: Meaning-Expression Strategies, Meaning-Negotiation Strategies, Conversation Management Strategies, Para- and Extra-Linguistic Strategies, and finally (Intercultural) Interaction-Monitoring Strategies. However, our main focus is only on three (3) groups:

5.1 Meaning-Expression Strategies

According to Mariani (2010, p.29), “Meaning-expression strategies focus on an individual’s attempt to express a meaning when the specific expression is not (yet) available to her/him by using an all-purpose word, using synonyms, approximations, paraphrase, etc.”. That

is to say, these strategies are the different means of expression that individuals use when they cannot find the exact words or phrases that convey their intended meaning. These strategies are mainly related to the choice of words and grammatical structures used to convey the intended meaning. In other words, sometimes individuals lack certain vocabulary or linguistic skills to express their thoughts. Therefore, they resort to strategies that aid them in conveying the intended meaning.

5.1.1 Using an All-Purpose Word

According to Dornyei (1995, p.58), the use of an all-purpose word refers to “Extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (e.g., the overuse of thing, stuff, what-do-you-call-it)”. Said differently, all-purpose words are blank words used to fill the gap, these words are over used. For instance: “Stuff, thing...” They can be quick and easy way to signal a response or reaction without having to provide a detailed explanation. Using all-purpose words as a communication strategy with elementary pupils may be a useful technique to overcome language barriers and communicate effectively. All-purpose words can be used in different contexts because they have various meanings. By using this strategy, young learners can convey their message more easily and avoid getting stuck trying to find the exact word.

5.1.2 Using a Synonym or an Antonym of a Word

Nation (2001) describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary, knowledge of vocabulary enables language use which in turn leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge. Put differently, vocabulary knowledge and language use are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Hence, having a good vocabulary helps an individual to express himself more effectively in a clear way. Similarly, using a language frequently leads to an increase in an individual’s vocabulary knowledge. Thus, synonyms and

antonyms play a crucial role in enriching and expanding one's vocabulary. By using this strategy, individuals can enhance their word choices and express themselves more precisely and effectively. This technique plays an effective role with YL in reinforcing the meaning of a word or concept. However, it is important to use age-appropriate language for better understanding.

5.1.3 Using Definitions and Descriptions

John Gerring (1999, p.359) declares "It is commonly said that one can prove practically anything simply by defining terms in a convenient way". Thus, using definitions and descriptions is an important tool in helping pupils understand new concepts. When introducing a new term or idea, a teacher can start by providing clear and concise definitions of the term. This can establish a common understanding of the term. Once, the definition has been established, the teacher can use descriptive language and examples to help pupils better understand the concept. By using this technique, pupils absorb ideas easily.

5.2 Meaning-Negotiation Strategies

Communication strategies refer to helpful techniques employed to facilitate message delivery during interactions and the negotiation of meaning (Tarone, 1980). Additionally, "these are definitely based on an explicit attempt at establishing meaning from both parties in the interaction, through various forms of asking for and giving help" (Mariani 2010, p.32). That is to say, the strategies used by people to establish the meaning of something in an interaction with another person. The negotiation process may involve various ways of asking for and giving help to clarify any confusion or misunderstanding. These strategies aim to ensure the understanding and agreement on the meaning of the information being communicated by both parties.

5.2.1 Asking One's Interlocutor to Repeat

Tannen (1987) asserts that the use of repetition in the process of learning and teaching is very essential in acquiring new skills or languages. Repetition is an effective way to acquire new knowledge, vocabulary and grammatical structures. Additionally, repetition plays a vital role in pedagogy and can be used to enhance the learning experience and improve the retention of information and interaction.

In this context, when working with pupils who are new to a subject, repetition is a useful strategy for teachers. It involves repeating key information such as definitions, important vocabulary and new words by hearing the language repeatedly. This strategy helps children memorize and internalize easily, develop their pronunciation and even can be fun for pupils by using games and activities that involves repetition such as drills, songs and chants to interact in an enjoyable atmosphere.

5.2.2 Asking for Confirmation

Using confirmation as a communication strategy in an EFL classroom is essential for fostering understanding and engagement. Encouraging students to confirm their understanding through phrases like "Do you mean...? Have you understood?". It is an effective method to engage and interact with young children. The teacher asks for confirmation to make sure that his pupils have understood what has been said, which can help to prevent misunderstanding and promote clear communication.

5.3 Para and Extra-Linguistic Strategies

"These strategies complement the essentially verbal communication strategies with the important and essential non-verbal component"(Mariani,2010, p.33). Additionally, non-verbal communication refers to "communication by means other than words"(Matthews, 2007, p.

266). In this context, para linguistic strategies refer to the use of non-verbal cues to convey meaning or to supplement verbal communication. These include body language, facial expressions, gestures, objects, flashcards, and other nonverbal cues that enhance the meaning and impact of verbal messages.

5.3.1 Body Movements

Body movements refer to the physical actions or gestures made by a person using different parts of their body, such as hands, arms, legs, fingers, and facial expressions. These movements can express emotions, convey messages, or indicate intentions and attitudes. Body language is crucial in non-verbal communication. Mehrabian (1971) affirms that when there is a conflict between our body language and spoken words, listeners give more attention to our body language. In this vein, body movements serve as non-verbal communication tools that complements and enhances verbal communication. By using body language, individuals can effectively share their emotions, thoughts, desires, and needs with others. Thus, body language is an effective way to transmit a message when lacking words.

Additionally, Gestures are a part of non-verbal communication. Gestures refer to any movement that occurs in the classroom when the learning process occurs. Usually the hand gestures used in learning process are gestures to appoint an object, to remain silent, to call or to tell something. Gestures help clarify meanings and facilitate communication. With the use of this strategy, teachers can create a more interactive and engaging learning environment that promotes pupils' learning and understanding.

5.3.2 Facial Expressions

The popular saying “A face can tell many tales” argues that human faces are highly expressive. Indeed, Barros and Lazo (2009, p.09) assert that:

Facial expression is more than an emotion of eyes, lips, nose and other muscles of the face. It is a strong demonstration of people's temperament: for this reason teachers must provide their students with a permanent impression for themselves through their expression.

In the light of the quote above, the face plays a significant role in human communication even in the teaching and learning situations. In such situations, a teacher's facial expressions hold great significance. For instance, when educators ask questions to their students, their facial expressions become a powerful tool to convey their attitudes towards the students' responses.

Interestingly, in an English language class, when a teacher asks a question in English, their facial expressions can carry significant influence. All in all, facial expressions are a useful strategy in a language acquisition setting, teachers should use facial expressions that are consistent with the message they are trying to convey.

5.3.3 The Use of Visual Aids

According to Ghulam et al. (2015, p.226) visual aids are “those instructional aids which are used in the classroom to encourage student learning process”. Visual aids are teaching tools and materials that educators use in the classroom to enhance the learning process for students. Therefore, using visual aids in an EFL classroom with YL can be highly effective in enhancing their language learning experience. Visual aids can help make lessons more engaging, memorable, and accessible for YL. Visual aids can take various forms such as flashcards, pictures, etc.

5.3.4 The Use of Objects

According to Cross (2003, p.6), “realia refers to the real things. It can be brought to school: a piece of fruit, a whistle, a stick, toys, eggs and so on are easily carried. They also create interest”. Based on this, incorporating realia into the classroom means using real-life objects or materials to aid in teaching and learning. For example, using actual fruits, vegetables,

pictures of food and drink to interact inside the classroom when talking about food. Also, if a teacher wants to teach his pupils about animals, he can use stuffed animals, flashcards or plastic figurines to demonstrate different animal species. As a result, integrating realia can lead to better retention of information as students can remember things better when presented in real situations. Overall, incorporating realia in the classroom can help create a more effective and engaging learning atmosphere.

5.3.5 Drawings

According to Fasko (2001) creativity is an essential skill that helps children to solve their problems and express themselves. By incorporating creative activities into the curriculum, pupils can develop their creativity skills. Additionally, “Learning occurs when one creates a personal interpretation” (Hoyt, 1992, p. 584). Thus, when one creates a personal interpretation of the newly acquired information, they are actively developing their understanding of the new information.

Furthermore, integrating drawing into the EFL classroom not only facilitates language acquisition but also empowers young learners to communicate and engage inside classroom. Interestingly, for children, who may have limited vocabulary, drawing bridges the communication gap by allowing them to visually express their thoughts and ideas. It fosters creativity, enhances comprehension, and encourages active participation, making language learning a fun and engaging experience

Conclusion

This chapter has tackled the literature review. It is divided into five main parts. The first part defines classroom interaction, explains its role in the language learning process, and its two main types. The second part deals with defining communication and its types and the role of each type in EFL classroom. Then the third part defines communication strategies according to

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different scholars. The forth one includes the challenges faced by EFL teachers that may encounter during classroom interaction. Finally, the last part attempts to highlight the theoretical framework and its elements. The following chapter presents the research design and the methodology adopted within this work.

Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and methodology of the study. The chapter outlines the research approach, research design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. It is divided into two sections, the first section is named “Data Collection Procedures” and it provides the type of research method used in this study, followed by the description of the context of investigation and the presentation of the sample population of the research, as well as the data collection instruments used to conduct the research. The second section called “Procedures of Data Analysis” deals with the presentation of the two methods used for the analysis of the selected data.

1. Research Method

This study adopts the mixed-method approach that combines the qualitative and quantitative research methods. Mixed-method research is the type of research in which a researcher combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a subject and validating their findings (Johnson et al, 2007). Findings from mixed-method research offer a holistic view of a phenomenon and provide additional insights into different components of a phenomenon which might help for generating substantive theories (Venkatesh et al ,2016). In this research, the quantitative method is used to analyze the data gathered from classroom observations, while the qualitative method is for examining the qualitative data obtained from the structured interviews.

2. Context of Investigation and Sample Population

The study under investigation has taken place in three primary schools in Draa El Mizan, Tizi Ouzou, namely: “Belalem Said”, “Ecole de Filles” and “Lounis Mohamed” primary schools. Informants in this study are three teachers of English who teach third-year primary

pupils from three different primary schools. The aim of this research is to explore the communication strategies employed by EFL teachers inside the classroom to interact with pupils.

3. Data Collection Tools

For a better understanding of the topic and in order to confirm or refute the hypotheses stated in the general introduction, two (02) research instruments are used to collect the data. The quantitative data are collected through the classroom observations using a checklist, while the qualitative data are collected through the structured interview with three EFL teachers.

3.1. Classroom Observation

The first instrument used in this research to gather quantitative data is classroom observation which plays a significant role in educational research, allowing researchers to gain first hand perceptions into dynamic processes and interactions that occur within classrooms. Bell (1987, p.88) defines classroom observation as "a technique that can often reveal characteristics of group of individuals which would have been impossible to discover by other means". In the context of the study, the focus is on examining the communication strategies used by EFL teachers when interacting with third-year primary school pupils. The observations are done in a planned way; the observers follow a checklist which is a list of items or information that an observer is going to look at when observing a particular class. Classroom observations are adopted as the main source for data collection due to the help of this source. Moreover, it gives the observer the opportunity to observe several aspects. Classroom observations enables the researcher to explore authentic teaching and learning situations, it allows an objective and direct transfer of data since the researcher actively participates in the research process. In this study, the classroom observation is based on a checklist that contains eleven (11) statements related to the communication strategies adopted from Mariani's (2010)

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"Communication Strategies" (see Appendix 01). We have made fourteen (14) classroom observations in three (03) primary schools. Five (05) sessions have been conducted in "Belalem Said", five (05) sessions have also been carried out in "Lounis Mohamed", and four (04) sessions have been realized in "Ecole De Filles" situated in Draa El Mizan, Tizi Ouzou from April 24th 2023 until May 25th 2023.

3.2. Interview

Incorporating interviews into our research design as a second tool for data collection can be a valuable approach to gather rich and in-depth information. "An interview represents a meeting or dialogue between people where personal and social interaction occur." (Pamela, 2006, p.157). The interview has been conducted face to face with three EFL teachers, it comprises thirteen (13) open-ended questions (see Appendix 02) to identify the communication strategies employed by EFL teachers inside the classroom to interact with third-year primary school pupils, and to investigate the main challenges that teachers face when interacting with them.

4. Procedures of Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data obtained from the interviews and classroom observations, we have opted for two data analysis procedures, the Descriptive Statistical Analysis (DSA) to examine the quantitative data obtained from the classroom observation checklist and the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions of the interview.

4.1. The Descriptive Statistical Method

The Descriptive Statistical Method is used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dataset. Moreover, Descriptive Statistics is an essential tool employed by academic

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researchers for the systematic analysis and organization of collected data. This method serves to calculate, describe, and summarize data in a coherent, meaningful and efficient manner (Vetter 2017). This method allows us to summarize and interpret the main characteristics, patterns, and trends present in the data without making any inferences or generalizations beyond the observed dataset. Furthermore, it is used to analyze the data gathered from the checklist, the results are summarized and revealed in the form of a table. This technique aims to identify the strategies employed by elementary school English teachers during classroom interaction.

4.2. Qualitative Content Analysis

In our study, we have employed the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) as the second method. This approach is used to analyze the outcomes derived from the open-ended questions of the teachers' interviews. "Qualitative Content Analysis is a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of the text data through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns." (Hsieh and Shannan, 2005, p.1278). In other words, QCA is utilized by researchers to gain a profound comprehension of the topic under investigation, primarily to analyze the results obtained from the qualitative research. In our investigation, the data collected from the open-ended questions of the interview are analyzed seeking for answers to reinforce the data gathered during our research about the strategies they employ to interact with elementary pupils and to determine the challenges they face. Indeed, the results are displayed in the form of texts.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter of the dissertation has presented the research methodology employed in this study. It begins by describing the methods of data collection used during the investigation, the context of the study and the sample of participants. Additionally, it provides a description of the research tools implemented in this study, namely the teachers' interviews

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and classroom observations, as well as the data analysis procedures employed to interpret the results derived from both classroom observation and interviews. Lastly, this chapter explains the chosen methods of data collection and data analysis.

Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation of the findings obtained from the classroom observations conducted in three different primary schools in Draa El Mizan in Tizi-Ouzou , “Lounis Mohamed”, “Ecole de Filles” and “Belalem Said” primary schools, and the interviews conducted with three EFL teachers at the same primary schools. The results are presented in the form of tables and texts. This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section is about the presentation of the results gathered from the classroom observations, and the second one displays the results obtained from the teachers’ interview.

1. Presentation of the Results Obtained from the Classroom Observation checklist

The communication strategies that EFL primary school teachers use with third year pupils	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. The teacher uses an all-purpose word to convey meaning and facilitate understanding for the pupils	00	00	03	00
2. The teachers employs clear definitions and descriptions to provide explanations and enhance understanding of new concepts and vocabulary	00	00	03	00
3. The teacher utilizes repetition to reinforce key points, vocabulary and instructions	00	03	00	00
4. The teacher incorporates appropriate body movements to support verbal communication and facilitate understanding	03	00	00	00
5. The teacher incorporates synonyms and antonyms of words to aid comprehension and expand vocabulary knowledge among the students	00	00	03	00

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6. The teacher utilizes objects to provide concrete examples and make abstract concepts more tangible and understandable	01	01	01	00
7. The teacher incorporates visual aids to reinforce understanding, clarify concepts and support language learning	03	00	00	00
8. The teacher incorporates drawings as a means of communication and interaction with young pupils	00	03	00	00
9. The teacher frequently asks for confirmation from the pupils, encouraging active participation and checking comprehension during the lesson	00	02	01	00
10. The teacher employs gestures to reinforce meaning and aid comprehension, and effectively linking verbal and non-verbal cues for the learners	03	00	00	00
11. The teacher uses facial expressions to convey emotions, highlight important information and enhance communication with the learners	00	03	00	00

Table 01: Results of Classroom Observations of the Communication Strategies used by English Teachers to Interact with Third-Year Primary School Pupils.

The table illustrates the checklist statements used during classroom observations, specifically pertaining to the communication strategies implemented by EFL educators to interact with third-year primary school pupils. The checklist encompasses eleven (11) different strategies employed by those teachers. The findings are presented in tabular form.

2. Presentation of the Results of the Teachers' Interviews

The second research instrument employed in this study is the interview, which has been administered to three (3) English teachers in three (3) primary schools. The detailed outcomes derived from the teachers' interviews are presented below

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Question 1: Would you cite some of the common challenges that EFL teachers face when interacting with young learners?

After having collected the answers of the three EFL teachers, we have noticed that all of them encounter several challenges when teaching young learners. According to the responses given, the challenges faced consist of: language barriers and lack of vocabulary, pronunciation problems, the use of mother tongue, different learning styles and multi-level group, lack of motivation and lack of attention.

Question 2: In which way do young learners' limited vocabulary impact the way EFL teachers communicate with them?

The three instructors have answered that young learners' limited vocabulary and language skills affect the teacher-learner communication and interaction, and the teaching and learning process which lead teachers to use non-verbal communication strategies.

Question 3: What strategies do you employ to overcome language barriers to effectively communicate with young pupils?

Based on the teachers responses, one of the them favoured the use of verbal communication strategies such as defining and describing the basic concepts, speaking slowly and clarifying things by using synonyms and antonyms to enrich the learner's vocabulary, while the two others prefer using non-verbal strategies such as gestures, body movements, realia... to facilitate understanding.

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Question 4: How do you help young children improve their limited vocabulary so that they become able to communicate?

One of the three interviewees has answered that she helps her pupils improve their vocabulary by choosing funny strategies to make the learning process enjoyable such as using songs, games, drawings and dialogues to keep them engaged during lessons. Consequently, these strategies increase the chance of easy memorization because it is a kind of practice and the best way to learn is practice. Moreover, the two others claim that they help their pupils improve their limited vocabulary by creating vocabulary notebook, practice by using new words in conversations, discussing word meaning with them by giving definitions and descriptions and use of visuals to fix the image and its meaning.

Question 5: Could you describe the communication strategies you use with your pupils?

The purpose of this question is to find out the communication strategies that EFL teachers use to enhance classroom interaction and to transmit a message effectively. Two of the teachers have answered that they use different verbal strategies for instance: definitions and descriptions, summarizing, drilling and repetition. Besides, they use non-verbal strategies such as the use of visuals, flashcards, body language and facial expressions. Likewise, the other teacher asserts that she generally uses verbal strategies specifically repeating new words related to the topic for better memorization and listening to songs and imitating to attract the children's attention.

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Question 6: How do you decide which communication strategy to use with a particular child or group of children?

The three teachers assert that the level of the learners should be taken in consideration to decide which strategy to use. Since pupils are not of the same level, teachers should select appropriate strategy that fits their learners and adopt different learning styles in accordance with the level of intelligence of each pupil or group of pupils. For instance, two of the respondents affirmed that in their classroom there exist auditory, visual, kinaesthetic and tactile learners.

Question 7: How would you explain the importance of using definitions and descriptions as a communication strategy?

The three educators confirm that the use of definitions and descriptions provide concise and clear meaning of terms or concepts by using age-appropriate language in order to avoid misunderstanding, promote comprehension and facilitate memorization. Another point to mention is that this strategy serves to avoid ambiguity and ensure that a message is accurately conveyed.

Question 8: How could you effectively incorporate repetition as a communication strategy with young children to support their language development and interaction?

All the interviewed teachers state that this strategy can be highly effective in supporting their language development. Repeating key words and phrases helps young learners memorize quickly and reinforce their vocabulary. Also, they have mentioned that it helps improve the children's listening skills and they highlighted that with repetition, pupils improve their pronunciation.

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Question 9: How do you integrate objects/realia into your lessons for your learners to enhance their language learning and comprehension?

The three teachers are keen on the idea that integrating realia or concrete objects into language lessons can greatly enhance language learning and comprehension for primary school pupils, because young children prefer learning with visuals since it is easy to understand. They have added that they bring in real objects such as fruits, toys and even household items that are relevant to the lessons' topic to attract the students' attention and motivate them to learn better.

Question 10: In what situations do you believe non-verbal communication is more effective than verbal communication, and why?

The answers obtained from the interviewees show that one of them believes that non-verbal communication is more effective when dealing with young learners who do not have the necessary vocabulary to understand what is said to them. So, that's why she believes that using non-verbal cues such as pictures, gestures and body language can help bridge the communication gap, facilitate understanding, enhance comprehension inside the classroom. While, the two other respondents emphasize the importance of non-verbal communication in maintaining young pupils' engagement and capturing their attention. Also, they argue that actions such as smiling at a child builds a trust and self-confidence.

Question 11: What strategies do you use to make interaction in English fun and engaging?

The three educators have answered that they incorporate various interactive games, quizzes and funny activities into their lessons to make learning the English language enjoyable. For instance, they use gestures and objects to capture their attention and keep them engaged, also the incorporation of games makes the learning atmosphere enjoyable. Furthermore, music

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can be great way to engage young learners, they confirmed that using songs and chants with catchy melodies and simple lyrics help pupils gain vocabulary and practice their pronunciation in a fun and memorable way.

Question 12: Do you face lack of motivation during classroom interaction?

How do you deal with such problem?

According to the three instructors, sometimes it is challenging to maintain motivation during classroom interactions. So, they usually try to make the lessons engaging and interactive by using activities, games and real-life examples to capture the pupils' interest. Additionally, providing a positive and supportive classroom environment helps keeping young learners motivated during classroom interaction.

Question 13: Lack of attention in an EFL setting can be a big challenge, could you cite some strategies that you use to capture a child's attention?

The three teachers have confirmed that keeping young learners engaged in an EFL classroom is a difficult task to achieve since the English language is new and difficult for children. So, they have asserted that the best way to keep the pupil's attention is by incorporating games, realia, flashcards, body movements and technology tools.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the presented chapter has interpreted the outcomes gathered from the classroom observations and the teachers' interviews. The first section has focused on the results obtained from the classroom observation that are presented in the form of a table. Likewise, the second section has presented the different answers gained from the teachers' interviews in the form of texts and paragraphs. The following chapter will provide a detailed interpretation and analysis of these outcomes.

Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

The present chapter aims to discuss the results and findings obtained from the classroom observations and the teachers' interviews. There have been fourteen (14) classroom observations in three different primary schools and three (03) English teachers have been interviewed in order to identify the communication strategies used by EFL instructors inside the classroom to interact with pupils and to investigate the main challenges that teachers encounter when interacting with young learners. This chapter comprises two (02) major parts, each part seeks to confirm or refute the hypotheses that have been advanced in the general introduction. The first part discusses the communication strategies that elementary school English teachers use in order to communicate or interact with young learners. The second one discusses the different difficulties or challenges faced by EFL teachers when interacting with young children.

1. Discussion of the Communication Strategies Used by EFL teachers with Third-Year Primary School Pupils

The results obtained from the first communication strategy “**the teacher uses an all-purpose word to convey meaning and facilitate understanding for the pupils**” reveal that the observed teachers sometimes use an all-purpose word to provide context and examples to help pupils understand their various meanings and uses (see Table 01). As it is mentioned by Dornyei (1995), all-purpose words are blank words used in various situations to fill the gaps. It appears that these words are helpful for pupils and allow them describe objects, concepts, or activities giving them a chance to practice their language skills in different contexts. During our investigation, we have noticed that pupils may not understand specific words, consequently, all-purpose words can break down barriers and even make complicated concepts accessible to all learners. Sometimes, in a classroom we may find pupils of different levels and intelligences.

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So, an all-purpose word can serve as a unifying tool. However, all-purpose words require careful consideration where teachers must select appropriate words that align with the curriculum's objectives. Another point to mention, an all-purpose word is often familiar to both the speaker and the listener which can further facilitate communication. During our observations, we have noticed that all the instructors use an all-purpose word to facilitate comprehension for the learners. The following examples are advanced by a teacher we have observed:

- Give me a ruler?
- What is a ruler?
- A ruler is a **tool** used to measure with.

Regarding the second strategy in the checklist “**the teacher employs clear definitions and descriptions to provide explanations and enhance understanding of new concepts and vocabulary**”, the outcomes show that all the instructors sometimes use definitions and descriptions (see Table 01). As we have noticed, the use of this strategy with young children can be highly effective in facilitating language learning and comprehension. In this regard, John Gerring (1999, p.359) claims that “It is commonly said that one can prove practically anything simply by defining terms in a convenient way”. Thus, definitions are used to simplify language and to make things clear. Additionally, young learners are in the early stages of language development and may not have a fully developed vocabulary. To emphasize this point, we have asked the teachers in question number seven (07) “**How would you explain the importance of using definitions and descriptions as a communication strategy?**” The educators argue that providing clear and concise definitions or descriptions can foster the learners' understanding and acquisition of the target language. During our classroom observations, we have noticed that EFL teachers should simplify their language when interacting with their

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pupils. By way of illustration, one of the observed teachers uses a toy of a bird to describe its parts by saying, “the bird has feathers, it has a beak, claws, wings...” Using concise definitions and descriptions help breakdown difficult concepts and vocabulary into more accessible language that a young learner can understand. Another point to mention, this strategy encourages active learning where a child can participate in activities that involve matching objects with descriptions or actions with words, making the learning process enjoyable. Additionally, teachers can create a comfortable atmosphere with the use of this method by including guessing games. For example, a teacher tells pupils that they have to guess an object which he/she is going to describe step by step, by giving more details. The teacher writes on the board the first part of the description, for instance, he/she tells them “it is an object we use to write” then he/she writes their guesses on the board, she will continue the description “this object contains ink...” then, children interact by providing answers, the educator chooses the right answer if it is included at the end of the game.

As regards the third strategy in the checklist “**the teacher utilizes repetition to reinforce key points, vocabulary, or instructions**” indicates that the three (03) educators often repeat new words, important information, key words, and pronunciation of sounds (see Table 01). When we have asked the teachers in question eight (08) of the interview “**How could you effectively incorporate repetition as a communication strategy with young children to support their language development and interaction?**”, they have explained that repetition offers the practice that learners need to master new skills, and to enhance memorization. This shows that this strategy is highly important since young children’s brains are still developing, and repetition aids in their cognitive and language development, it helps reinforce concepts and information. According to Cohen and Cowan (2006, p.242), “Repetition helps to develop automatic knowledge of word meaning that is important to reading comprehension”. Said differently, by repeating information, teachers can enhance memory retention and

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understanding. For instance, the teacher repeats several times any new word or instruction or expression such as: “you are my guest”, pupils will retain the word guest and memorize it. Furthermore, we have noticed that repetition as a communication strategy makes pupils feel more confident in their learning when they encounter familiar material. Then, repetition gives them a sense of mastery and encourages active participation. Consequently, repetition is a strategy through which a child improves his pronunciation and his language proficiency.

The data gathered from the fourth strategy “**the teacher incorporates appropriate body movements to support verbal communication and facilitate understanding**” indicates that all the educators always use physical movements and gestures to reinforce the spoken words and concepts being taught (see Table 01). According to Raah (2015, p.23) “Communication is much more than words...Body language is the language you speak without words”. That is to say, body language oversteps verbal language to the nonverbal one including gestures, facial expressions and posture, conveys a large amount of information without the need for spoken words. It is important to mention that in human interaction, nonverbal cues play a crucial role in understanding and expressing messages. By integrating these nonverbal cues into the educational setting, educators can create an effective mean of communication, promoting better understanding and engagement among pupils. To exemplify, when the teachers we have observed teach the adjectives “**long**” and “**short**” for instance “**long tail**” and “**short tail**”, they make some movements with their hands to demonstrate the meaning of “long” and “short” by extending their hands or bringing them closer. Additionally, People learn in various ways, and incorporating body movements beside verbal communication ensures an effective learning process. In some cases, pupils learn better through visual experiences. Using this technique is an effective way to teach young learners since they may have different learning styles. Sometimes, teachers use gestures and body movements when speaking to clarify the message and make discussions simpler. For instance, when introducing new topics, there may

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be some challenging terms that we cannot convey through words alone. So, the teacher tries to clarify them and make them easier for pupils to grasp.

As to the fifth strategy **“the teacher incorporates synonyms and antonyms of words to aid comprehension and expand vocabulary knowledge among the students”**, the findings show that the instructors sometimes use this strategy to promote a deeper understanding of the language (see Table 01). We have seen that using synonyms and antonyms allows pupils to understand the meaning of words in different contexts. For example, when a child encounters a new word, the teacher explains it by giving its synonym, this helps pupils relate it to familiar words, making it easier to comprehend its meaning. Accordingly, Thornbury (2002, p.18) asserts “another way of defining the word meaning and it can include: providing an example situation; giving synonyms, antonyms or subordinate terms” For instance, when clarifying the word **“joyful”**, the teacher uses the word **“happy”**. Similarly, antonyms provide contrasting meanings that help learners to better understand the word’s specific meaning. Hence, the teachers we have observed used the antonyms **“sad”** and **“happy”**, **“long”** and **“short”**, **“big”** and **“small”** to provide their learners with various words that facilitate the intended meaning. In consequence, synonyms and antonyms expose pupils to a wide range of words with similar or opposite meanings. Furthermore, expanding vocabulary through this strategy can significantly enhance pupil’s communication skills. So, they will be better equipped to express themselves clearly. Another point to mention, classroom activities that involve synonyms and antonyms such as word games, puzzles and discussions can be more interactive and enjoyable for children. However, we have noticed that this strategy doesn’t always fit and meet all the children’s needs since they do not have the same capacities and levels.

As for the strategy **“the teacher utilizes objects to provide concrete examples and make abstract concepts more tangible and understandable”**, we have observed that all the

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teachers use objects to demonstrate concepts and ensure that learners have understood but with different degrees, the first teacher always uses objects to introduce new terms, the other one often employs this strategy, while the last one uses it sometimes (see table 01). Incorporating objects into an EFL classroom with young learners is a brilliant way to enhance their language learning experience. Objects serve as tangible aids that facilitate comprehension. In this context, Cross (2003, p.6) explains that “realia refers to the real things. It can be brought to school: a piece of bread or fruit, a whistle, a stick, toys, eggs and so on are easily carried. They also create interest”. From this saying, by introducing toys, or everyday items related to the lesson, learners can connect words to real-life experiences, making learning more interactive and memorable. To add more emphasis on this point, we have asked the teachers in question number nine (09) of the interview **“How do you integrate objects or realia into your lessons for your learners to enhance their language learning and comprehension?”** the three (03) instructors have answered that integrating realia or objects in their lessons enhances language learning and comprehension especially for first stage pupils. This strategy is highly beneficial for young learners as it helps them grasp abstract ideas in a more concrete manner. Young children have limited vocabulary, realia provides concrete representation of the target language, making it easier for children to understand and remember new words and concepts. For example: using a toy car to introduce the word “car” allows children to associate the word with a tangible object, aiding comprehension.

During our observations, we have remarked that when the teachers use realia during lessons, it adds an element of novelty and fun to the classroom atmosphere. From this point, we have seen that bringing real objects makes the learning process more enjoyable for young learners. When children are excited and motivated, they are more likely to actively participate in language activities and communication, as it can serve also as prompts for interactive activities. For example, to explain the concept of numbers, the teacher uses blocks of different colors and sizes

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to help his pupils understand. Using these tangible objects makes the classroom environment more enjoyable and interactive. Also, using a set of fruit objects can facilitate retaining and memorizing the names of fruits. Usually, young learners like to touch and discover new things, that's why teachers should bring concrete objects to make the learners focused and motivated to actively participate and communicate inside the classroom. In light of the above, realia will be beneficial for pupils with different learning styles or those who may struggle with the verbal strategies. For instance, the teachers we have observed, used candles, sweets, forks, spoons, plate, juice ... to introduce and explain the topic of birthday party.

As regards the strategy **“the teacher incorporates visual aids to reinforce understanding, clarify concepts, and support language learning”** the instructors always use visual presentations such as flashcards with images representing vocabulary words, they show the flashcards while saying the corresponding words aloud (see Table 01). In this regard, Burton (1963, as cited in Aggrawal 1996, p.134) says “visual materials are those sensory objects or images which initiate as stimulate and reinforce learning”. Put differently, using visual materials in education can be highly effective because they not only capture learners' interest but also support their understanding and retention of information. Visual aids like images, flashcards, and videos can make learning more engaging and accessible. Similarly, Jurish (2001) affirms that using images gives students a valuable resource for linking unfamiliar words to their meanings, making it easier for them to comprehend and remember. By way of illustration, the educators observed, use flashcards of animals or pets such as cats, dogs., birds...and objects they use in a birthday party like cake, candles, hats...This helps young children associate the English words with the visuals, making the learning process more memorable. They also use videos, and interactive games, these tools make learning interactive and can cater to different learning styles. The observed teachers have noticed that using audio-

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visual presentations draw the pupils' attention to the lesson and make the learning process more enjoyable.

The data gathered from the strategy **“the teacher incorporates drawings as a means of communication and interaction with young pupils”** indicates that all the educators often use this strategy in order to capture pupil's attention since it can be a creative strategy more than verbal communication alone (see Table 01). When information is presented in a visual format like drawings, it becomes easier for pupils to process and retain the content. Every pupil has a unique learning style, some of them prefer auditory learning, while others are more visual learners. By incorporating drawings, the teacher helps those who grasp information better through visual means, making the learning experience more inclusive and effective. As an example, the teachers that we observed drew different body parts of pets such as: tail, feather, and fins to simplify the terms and make them relatable enabling pupils to grasp and store the concepts more easily. Moreover, the use of drawings helps create mental images that are associated with the information being addressed. When teachers use drawings as a communication strategy, they encourage creativity in their pupils. In this sense, Hoyt (1992, p.584) claims “Learning occurs when one creates a personal interpretation”. This can inspire pupils to think outside the box, ask questions, creating a more dynamic interactive atmosphere. For pupils who struggle or face some difficulties in understanding the target language, drawings can act as a visual language that across linguistic barriers, it makes learning more enjoyable. To go deeper, teachers' drawings help them make concepts simpler which makes young learners feel comfortable especially when using colors leading to capture the pupils' interests. Young children love to draw and color, this can be a great way to communicate and interact with them. For instance, when one of the observed teachers taught his learners parts of the body, she drew a person and labels the different parts. Consequently, the use of drawing activities motivates children and encourages them to express their own ideas and feelings.

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As to the strategy **“the teacher frequently asks for confirmation from the pupils, encouraging active participation and checking comprehension during the lesson”**, we have noticed that two (02) teachers often use this strategy. They find it an effective strategy especially when interacting with young learners, while the other does not give much attention to this strategy. She uses it sometimes due to the limited knowledge of her pupils (see Table 01). By asking for confirmation, the teacher encourages pupils to be actively involved in the learning process. For example, the teacher asks his learners: “Have you understood?”, “Did you get it”, “Is it ok?”, “Is it clear?”. Moreover, young children may not always express themselves if they are struggling to understand a concept, by seeking for confirmation, the teacher can assess the pupils’ comprehension levels discreetly, if the learner gives an incorrect answer or seems unsure, the teacher can address the issue immediately and provide clarification. When pupils are given opportunities to confirm their knowledge or understanding, this can boost their confidence, correct answers and positive reinforcement from the teacher makes pupils feel more self-assured and motivated to participate such as “very good”, “well done”. However, this strategy does not meet all the learners’ needs since they may feel uncomfortable expressing themselves verbally or hesitate confirming their understanding.

As for the strategy **“the teacher employs gestures to reinforce meaning and aid comprehension, and effectively linking verbal and non-verbal cues for the learners”** we have noticed that the three (03) teachers always use gestures to communicate or interact with young learners since it plays an important role in enhancing interaction and understanding among pupils (see Table 01). Language barriers can often impede effective communication especially when learners are not yet proficient in the target language, however, employing gestures serves as a bridge to overcome these obstacles. By integrating hand movements and body language, the teacher conveys meaning, clarifies concepts, and demonstrates various linguistic elements in a visual and dynamic manner. To exemplify, the observed teachers show

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that the pupils answer correctly by making a thumbs-up or clapping hands. Additionally, gestures provide a visual representation of a language, making it easier for pupils to connect the meaning of words and phrases to physical actions. This association can enhance memory retention and comprehension, especially for visual learners which creates a friendly and positive atmosphere in the classroom, it can also break the boredom of the class and keep pupils engaged and attentive. An important point to mention, the use of gestures fosters a more interactive and dynamic relationship between the teacher and his pupils.

As regards the last communication strategy “**the teacher uses facial expressions to convey emotions, highlight important information, and enhance communication with the learners**”, the three (03) educators often employ this strategy to foster interaction (see Table 01). Knapp and Hall (2006, p. 260) claim that: “The face is rich in communicative potential. It is the primary site for communication of emotional status, it reflects interpersonal attitudes; it provides non-verbal feedback on the comments of others”. Therefore, when a teacher employs facial expressions to convey emotions, it creates a rich and engaging atmosphere in the classroom. Besides, a teacher’s smile can convey warmth and approachability which can help to create a positive and welcoming classroom environment. On the other hand, a furrowed brow or stern expression can signal disapproval or concern which can be useful in disciplinary situations. As an illustration, we have noticed that all the teachers show smiling faces to encourage pupils to participate and interact during lessons. A warm smile can foster a sense of comfort and approachability, while a concerned look demonstrates empathy and understanding. Moreover, highlighting important information through expressive facial cues helps capture the pupils’ attention, making the subject matter more memorable and accessible. By incorporating a wide range of facial expressions, from enthusiasm to seriousness, teachers can effectively convey the underlying emotions associated with the lesson, adding depth and nuance to the material being taught. In return, we have noticed during the classroom observations that this

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cultivates an emotional connection with the pupils promoting better understanding and encouraging active participation during interactions. The good use of facial expressions as a communication strategy helps breakdown the language barriers and facilitate communication.

2/ The Challenges that EFL Teachers Encounter During Classroom Interaction

The findings of the first question in the interview show that the respondents face many challenges when interacting with elementary pupils. The major challenge is the linguistic one, where EFL teachers often encounter a variety of difficulties during classroom interactions. One significant obstacle is the language barrier, which can impede effective communication and comprehension. Young learners may struggle to understand complex instructions or explanations due to their limited language proficiency. Additionally, these learners have a limited vocabulary. During our classroom observations, we have noticed that pupils often use their L1 due to their lack of vocabulary, hindering their ability to express themselves adequately. For example, discussing complex topics like emotions or abstract ideas which affect their ability to participate actively in conversations. Teachers often need to find creative ways to introduce new words and phrases and encourage vocabulary development.

Pronunciation is yet another challenge or obstacle, as young learners struggle with articulating sounds in a correct way, probably this will affect their language development. According to Jenkins (as cited in McCrocklin, 2012, p.249), “communication can break down not only due to pronunciation errors, which is certainly the first cause, but more seriously, these problems are very common and very hard to overcome”. In this vein, pronunciation errors can lead to communication breakdowns, and it is a challenging issue to resolve. For instance, when a YL pronounces a word in a wrong way, teachers find it difficult to decipher the intended message which leads to failure in communication during classroom

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interaction. To demonstrate this point, from the teachers' interviews and from our classroom observations we have attended, we have noticed that the majority of pupils tend to pronounce some letters and words as they are pronounced in French. From our point of view, to address this challenge, instructors should incorporate audio-visual aids, gestures and particularly different shapes of mouth, and simplified language to enhance comprehension, they can also include interactive activities and repetition to improve their pronunciation skills to effectively interact.

As we progress in this study, the findings of the question twelve (12) in the teachers' interview denote that educators often grapple with the difficulty of maintaining motivation among pupils. Keeping children engaged and enthusiastic about learning a new language can be a difficult challenge to address. Young children struggle with staying focused for a long period of time during lessons. So, they need to be under control of their instructors to captivate their attention and keep them motivated. Another important point to mention, pupils with higher motivation help teachers in the lesson progress and in the achievement of the learning goals. This goes in relation with what Dornyei (2001, p.05) says "Without sufficient motivation, however, even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language". To tackle the motivation challenge, teachers can employ various strategies integrating interactive and dynamic activities such as role-playing, group discussions, and language games, as asserted by one of the interviewees, "**Simon says game**" where the players should only follow the commands if they start with the phrase "Simon says". If the command doesn't start with that phrase and a player follows it, they are out of the game. The final person remaining in the game wins. This game is often used to keep young learners motivated. Moreover, creating a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere where pupils feel comfortable expressing themselves without fear of making mistakes can go a long way in sustaining their motivation to interact and improve their language skills. Finally, employing

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positive reinforcement such as praise, rewards, and encouragement can keep children motivated.

The outcomes of question thirteen (13) reveal that teachers often encounter the challenge of capturing and maintaining the pupils' attention. Schmidt (1995, p.39) argues "attention is required for learning". That is to say, attention is a fundamental aspect for an effective learning process. Schmidt (1995) highlights the role of attention in acquiring new knowledge and skills. However, without attention, the learning process can be a difficult task for teachers to achieve. Children especially in their early year, have limited attention spans and can easily become distracted or disengaged during lessons. To address this difficulty, teachers employ several effective strategies to deal with such problem by making interaction more fun and engaging. As it is mentioned in question eleven (11) in the interview, by incorporating funny and interactive activities, quizzes, role-plays, visual aids, music and songs, and games such as "**Kim's games**" which are mentioned by one of the instructors as an effective way of making interaction and communication between the teacher and the pupils more enjoyable. Kim's games are games where the teacher places pictures of pets for example on the board and then asks the pupils to close their eyes while she takes away one of the pictures. Subsequently, the learners are tasked with guessing which pet has been removed. This strategy or game helps young children to maintain their attention and also motivates them.

The findings reached from question seven (07) from the teachers' interview reveal that the educators inside the classroom have different learners from different levels. Furthermore, teachers may have learners of different levels and abilities. So, it is a challenging task for them to ensure that all their learners have understood. For instance, some pupils learn better through verbal cues, while others learn better through nonverbal cues such as visual cues (flashcards, objects or realia, drawings...). It depends on the learners' preferences. This is in accordance with what is stated by Tomlinson (1995, p.02) that "a differentiated classroom offers a variety

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of learning options designed to tap into different levels, interests and learning profiles.” Thus, managing multi-level group within an EFL classroom when interacting with young learners is obligatory in order to control learners, develop an effective learning process and integrate pupils in the classroom interaction. These groups consist of pupils with varying language abilities, making it difficult to ensure that each child receives the appropriate instruction and support. In such cases, teachers face the task of adjusting their lessons to meet the diverse needs of the learners. Some learners might be more advanced and require more complex language tasks, while others may struggle with even basic vocabulary. This challenge is further complicated by the need to provide a balanced learning experience for all the pupils. To tackle this problem, instructors can adopt a few strategies Grouping pupils based on their abilities for specific activities. Utilizing peer tutoring where more advanced pupils help their peers, can create a collaborative learning environment and provide individualized attention. Frequent formative assessment can also help teachers identify pupils’ strengths and weaknesses allowing them to adjust their teaching and communication strategies accordingly. Overall, managing multi-level groups in an EFL classroom requires a combination of adaptability, differentiated instructions and creative teaching styles to ensure that each pupil receives the necessary support.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has examined and addressed the outcomes from the utilization of two (02) distinct data collection tools. These methods have been employed to address the research questions and validate the hypotheses mentioned or proposed in the general introduction. The study has involved classroom observations and interviews with three (03) EFL teachers on three (03) different primary schools in Tizi Ouzou. The findings extracted from these classroom observations and teacher interviews have revealed that EFL instructors employ a combination of visual aids, descriptions and definitions, repetition, and non-verbal

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language for effective communication with young learners. Furthermore, these results highlight that teachers encounter several challenges during classroom interaction.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Nowadays, the English language plays a significant role in our lives since it is an international language that is widely spread in all domains especially the educational one. For this reason, the Algerian educational system implemented the English language in primary schools as a core subject which posed a significant challenge for EFL teachers. The success of this integration relies mainly on effective ways of transmitting knowledge and sharing ideas through the use of multiple communication strategies by these educators during classroom interaction. This study has investigated the communication strategies that primary school English teachers use to interact with third-year primary school pupils in three selected schools in Tizi Ouzou, namely “Ecole De Filles”, “Lounis Mohamed”, and “Belalem Said” primary schools situated in Draa El Mizan. The investigation in this area is important since this subject is new in Algeria. Furthermore, this subject adds valuable information in the classroom interaction process.

This study sought to answer the questions about the communication strategies that EFL teachers use to interact with young learners and the challenges they face when interacting with them. Accordingly, in order to answer these questions, we have suggested two (02) hypotheses. The first hypothesis was that EFL teachers use descriptions and definitions, repetition, non-verbal language, and visual aids to interact with their pupils. Another hypothesis was that teachers face many challenges during classroom interaction such as the linguistic, motivation, and attention challenges.

This study adopted a mixed-method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and data analysis. The research utilized two (02) key tools, classroom observations and interviews to address the research questions and test the hypotheses. We have attended fourteen (14) classroom observation sessions at three (03)

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primary schools in Draa El Mizan, Tizi Ouzou and conducted structured interviews with three (03) EFL teachers from three different schools. The interview has comprised thirteen (13) questions. Quantitative data from the classroom observations has been analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative content analysis (QCA) has been employed to interpret findings from the teachers' interviews.

This research was conducted relying on Mariani's (2010) "Communication Strategies," Learning and teaching how to manage oral interaction" theory which attempts to explain the verbal and non-verbal ways and means that teachers use to manage classroom interaction in a second (L2) or foreign language. This theory suggested that using various communication strategies help both speakers (educators) and listeners (learners) to overcome the problems they face when interacting during lessons. Interestingly, from Mariani's proposed typology, EFL teachers in primary schools should select appropriate tactics and strategies that fit with the learners' needs, age, and level to keep pupils engaged and make the interaction and communication effective.

The discussion of the findings obtained from the classroom observation sessions and the structured interviews provided answers to the research questions and hypotheses advanced in the General Introduction. The examination of the results gathered from the classroom observation checklist and teachers' interviews had underscored that primary English teachers in Tizi Ouzou adopt diverse strategies such as repetition, body movements and the use of objects and drawings to effectively communicate and interact with elementary pupils. The findings gathered from both the classroom observation sessions and the structured interview confirm the initial hypothesis presented in the introduction. Furthermore, the outcomes from the teachers' interviews found that EFL teachers encounter many challenges when interacting with young learners. These challenges encompassed issues such as lack of motivation, attention, and

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linguistic problems. Consequently, the outcomes gathered from the teachers' interviews had also affirmed the second proposed hypothesis.

In summary, this study has investigated the communication strategies that primary school English teachers employ to communicate with third-year primary school pupils in three (03) selected primary schools in Tizi Ouzou. To expand upon this research, future studies could investigate which communication strategies are most effective in promoting language acquisition and engagement among primary school pupils. Additionally, investigating the role of technology in enhancing communication between EFL teachers and primary school pupils, considering the use of digital tools for language learning.

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Interview

A structured interview that includes fourteen (14) questions. It is conducted with three (3) EFL teachers in “Belalem Said”, “Ecole de Filles”, and “Lounis Mohamed” primary schools situated in Draa El Mizan

- 1- Would you cite some of the common challenges that EFL teachers face when interacting with young learners?
- 2- In which way do young learners’ limited vocabulary impact the way EFL teachers communicate with them?
- 3- What strategies do you employ to overcome language barriers to effectively communicate with your pupils?
- 4- How do you help young learners improve their limited vocabulary so that they become able to communicate?
- 5- Could you describe the communication strategies you use with your pupils?
- 6- How do you decide which communication strategies to use with a particular child or a group of children?
- 7- How would you explain the importance of using definitions and descriptions as a communication strategy?
- 8- How could you effectively incorporate repetition as a communication strategy with young children to support their language development and interaction?
- 9- How do you integrate objects or realia into your lessons for your learners to enhance their language learning and comprehension?
- 10- In what situations do you believe non-verbal communication is more effective than verbal communication; and why?

11-What strategies do you use to make interaction in English fun and engaging?

12-Do you face a lack of motivation during classroom interaction? How do you deal with such problem?

13-Lack of attention in an EFL setting can be a big challenge, could you cite some strategies do you use to capture the child's attention?

Thank you for your Contribution

Classroom Observation Checklist

The communication strategies that EFL primary school teachers use with third year pupils	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. The teacher uses an all-purpose word to convey meaning and facilitate understanding for the pupils				
2. The teachers employs clear definitions and descriptions to provide explanations and enhance understanding of new concepts and vocabulary				
3. The teacher utilizes repetition to reinforce key points, vocabulary and instructions				
4. The teacher incorporates appropriate body movements to support verbal communication and facilitate understanding				
5. The teacher incorporates synonyms and antonyms of words to aid comprehension and expand vocabulary knowledge among the students				
6. The teacher utilizes objects to provide concrete examples and make abstract concepts more tangible and understandable				

Appendix 1

7. The teacher incorporates visual aids to reinforce understanding, clarify concepts and support language learning				
8. The teacher incorporates drawings as a means of communication and interaction with young pupils				
9. The teacher frequently asks for confirmation from the pupils, encouraging active participation and checking comprehension during the lesson				
10. The teacher employs gestures to reinforce meaning and aid comprehension, and effectively linking verbal and non-verbal cues for the learners				
11. The teacher uses facial expressions to convey emotions, highlight important information and enhance communication with the learners				

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