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**TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH
STORYTELLING**

**RUNĀŠANAS PRASMJU PILNVEIDE, IZMANTOJOT
STĀSTUS**

BACHELOR THESIS

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ANOTĀCIJA

Runāšanas prasmes tiek izmantotas katru dienu. Runa ir valodas prasme, kas palīdz komunicēt. Tas ir sarežģīts process, kas iekļauj citas valodu prasmes un runas orgānus. Tāpēc ir svarīgi attīstīt runāšanas prasmes. Bakalaura darba tēma ir "Runāšanas prasmju pilnveide, izmantojot stāstus". Darba mērķis ir pierādīt, ka, izmantojot stāstu metodi mācīšanās, var uzlabot runāšanas prasmes. Darbā izmantotās pētniecības metodes ir literatūras apskats, gadījumu izpēte un triangulācijas metode. Izvirzītā hipotēze tika pierādīta ar gadījuma izpētes metodi, balstoties uz iegūtajiem datiem no studentu aptaujām un iegūtajiem rezultātiem mācību stundas novērošanas laikā, un apstrādāti sekojošos izpētes darba posmos. Rezultāti apstiprināja stāstu efektivitāti runāšanas prasmju uzlabošanā.

Atslēgas vārdi: runāšanas prasmes, stāsti, gadījumu izpēte, triangulācijas metode, studentu aptaujas, mācību stundas novērošana.

ABSTRACT

Speaking skills are used every day. Speaking is a language skill that helps to communicate. It is a complex process that involves other language skills and speech organs. Therefore, it is important to develop speaking skills. The theme of the Bachelor Thesis is “Teaching Speaking Skills through Storytelling”. The goal of the thesis is to prove that implementing the storytelling method in teaching speaking can improve speaking skills. The research methods applied in the study are the theoretical literature review, a case study, and the triangulation method. The hypothesis was proved by the results achieved during the case study based on the data obtained from the students’ questionnaires and lesson observation, and processed at the following stage of the research. The results confirmed the effectiveness of storytelling in improving speaking skills.

Key words: speaking skills, storytelling, case study, triangulation method, students’ questionnaires, lesson observation.

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INTRODUCTION

Everyone is so excited and in awe when their child says the first word, or even makes the first sound, besides crying. Speaking is considered a very important skill. The first few years of a child's life – the children only know how to listen and speak. That is why developing speaking skills is so important for the growth of that certain individual.

I am personally interested in the theme of the Bachelor Thesis, as I would like to become a teacher and help young learners to study English language to develop their language skills. The method of storytelling could be very useful in developing speaking skills.

The **goal** of the thesis is to prove that implementing the storytelling method in teaching speaking can improve speaking skills.

The **hypothesis** for the Bachelor Thesis is that using storytelling in teaching improves speaking skills.

The **enabling objectives** to achieve the goal of the Bachelor Thesis are as follow:

1. To study the theory on speaking skills, their development using storytelling;
2. To carry out a case study;
3. To collect the data;
4. To analyse the obtained results;
5. To draw relevant conclusions.

The **research methods** applied in this study are theoretical literature review and a case study. The theoretical part consists of literature review of speaking skills, teaching speaking skills, and storytelling. The empirical part consists of a case study, including students' questionnaires-based survey, reflective lesson observation and independent teacher's observation.

Theoretical framework:

The theoretical part of the Bachelor Thesis includes the concept of speaking skills, how speaking skills is developed in correlation with human mind and other speaking skills. Martin Bygate (1987), Joanna Baker and Heather Westrup (2003), Willem J. M. Levelt (1989), Georges Gusdorf (1979), Micheal German (1990) – these authors discuss the importance of speaking skills, and how beneficial it is to develop speaking skills, in order to learn the language properly. It also includes a sub-chapter of Baker's and Westrup's (2003) theory on teaching speaking skills. Their theory is applied in the case study of the thesis. Dawes, L., Grugeon, E., Hubbard, L. and Smith, C. (2001), Jack C. Richards (2008), and John Munro (2011) explain strategies and activities concerning the teaching methods for developing speaking skills.

The author of the thesis investigates theory on storytelling by reviewing Amy E. Spaulding's (2011) and Gail De Vos's (2003) works on storytelling strategies and activities.

The empirical part of the thesis. In this chapter, the author of the thesis applies a triangulation method to conduct a case study, based on the theory laid out in the first two chapters. The third chapter provides a case study, consisting of a students' questionnaires and an assessment of a lesson that was held in the primary school, by applying storytelling method to teaching speaking skills. The results are analysed to verify the suggested hypothesis.

1. SPEAKING

In the first chapter, the author of the thesis focuses on speaking skills, teaching speaking skills and development using storytelling method. The theory discussed in the first chapter will be used in the case study of the Bachelor Thesis. The chapter is divided into four sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter is devoted to the concept of speaking skills. In the second sub-chapter the language teaching theory is discussed. The third sub-chapter describes the method of teaching speaking. And the fourth sub-chapter is devoted to speaking skills development.

Language is a way of communication. Four language skills are essential in order to learn language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Every human develops these language skills in childhood. All four language skills are deeply connected.

1.1. Speaking skills

Speaking is the main communication skill and is acquired at a very young age. In order to communicate every individual has to have a background knowledge of the language itself. According to Bygate, M. (1987:5), it is important for the individual to have knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. However, that does not solve the problem of speaking. Speaking is a skill that needs to be developed.

Baker, J. and Westrup, H. (2003:15) also concludes that with only the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar it is not enough for speaking skills development. They discuss the fact that it is essential for school teachers and the individuals themselves to train this skill with various tools and methods. Further on, if speaking skills are developed, it is easier to access and learn more information. Even future job interviews may depend on the individual's ability to speak and communicate in an adequate level.

Levelt, W. J. M (1989:1) emphasizes that speaking is an exclusive skill that only humans have. He also mentions the value of developing speaking skills from an early childhood. It takes training and continuous interaction between individuals. Gusdorf, G. (1979:4) also speaks about the unique ability – speaking. He describes the differences between animals and humans – which particular organs are used to make a sound and communicate, and how speaking skills are developed in various ways. For example, he clarifies that the first skill that is developed is listening. After a period of time, the individual learns how to speak, and that is where the difference between animals and humans is observed. Where animals have limited communication skills that include various verbal and physical signals, a human is able to create sounds that can be turned into words and sentences.

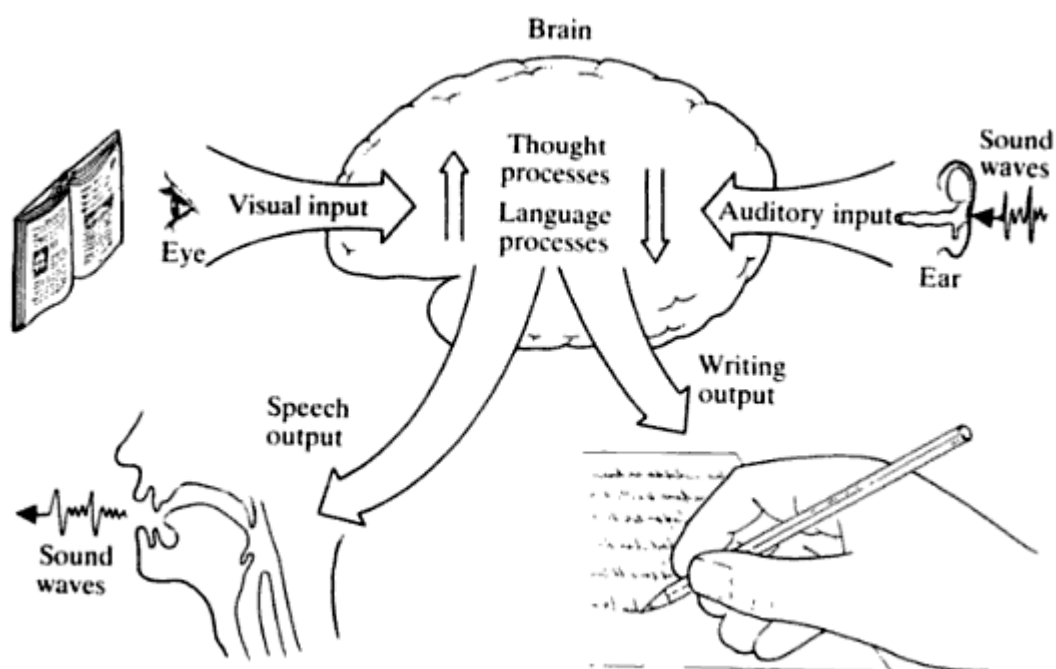


Figure 1.1. **Language switchboard** (German, 1990:5)

The correlation between the features shown in Figure 1.1. is confirmed in the case study of the thesis.

The psychologist German, M. (1990:25) also affirms the uniqueness of human mind. In his book, he describes the ability to process information in specific ways. Figure 1.1. shows how all four language skills are connected. All language skills are very important for language development, but he emphasizes the importance of speaking skills development. It correlates with Bygate's (1987:6) theory that it is not enough for an individual to know just the theory of language.

In the following sub-chapter, the author of the Bachelor Thesis discusses Baker and Westrup's theory on teaching speaking skills.

1.2. Baker and Westrup's theory

Baker, J. and Westrup, H. (2003:1) discuss the importance for a teacher to teach speaking in schools. They highlight the fact that teaching speaking in addition to vocabulary and grammar gives students a better chance to develop their knowledge about language learning in general. They indicate how various speaking activities benefit the learning process. By taking part in speaking activities during lessons, students learn vocabulary and grammar in new ways. It also allows students to participate actively in lessons and use the language frequently. Speaking activities may improve students' ability to speak a foreign language freely, and they will be

encouraged to use it outside of school hours. The motivation plays a big role in encouraging students to be more active.

Baker, J. and Westrup, H. (2003:14) talk about the significance of practical activities, for example, dialogues, short story telling, discussing personal experience on a given topic, etc. Nevertheless, participation from both sides is very important. If the student is not motivated, he/she will not be motivated to get involved in the lesson. The atmosphere is also very important. Students need to lose fear of making mistakes. They need to feel that they have support from the teacher – that is why it is called learning. The authors of the book mention difficulties, for example, the language use outside of school is very little or non-existent. That can slow down the development process (ibid.:20). Teacher needs to be the motivators for using and developing language outside of lessons. There are some challenges for every language learner. The authors have developed certain steps for teaching language:

1. To teach language little bits at a time;
2. To explain the study material simply and clearly;
3. To encourage students to respond and communicate;
4. To revise theme, vocabulary, grammar from previous lessons;
5. To use various activities for full language acquisition (ibid.:27-28).

Baker, J. and Westrup, H. (2003:56) provide three phases for language learning in lessons. They call it Presentation, Practice and Production (further in the text PPP).

The presentation phase is applied at the start of the lesson. This phase includes presentation of the subject that will be discussed during the lesson. It is understandable that the students will not be too active. The goal of the phase is to establish the current level of knowledge of the theme discussed. It can be achieved by asking questions and promoting discussions (ibid.:57).

The practical phase deals with knowledge use, for example, repeating, pronouncing and writing the newly learnt words, expressions, sentences, etc. This phase gives the advantage to correct the students, in case of mistakes, so that they could learn the language properly (ibid.: 58).

The production phase is devoted to verifying the newly acquired knowledge. The activities of this phase should be related to writing or reading exercises in order to involve students in discussions. It could also help the students create a more comfortable atmosphere, because they would not be afraid to make mistakes. A chance of making mistakes in a pleasant environment is less than in a stressful one (ibid.:59).

The authors of the book have created a scheme (see Table 1.1.) of teacher-and-student activities to help improve teaching and learning in lessons.

Table 1.1. Language skills in a PPP lesson (Baker and Westrup, 2003:21)

Phase	Teacher activity	Student activity	Skill
Presentation phase	- Present a new language; - Elicit the new language; - Present the new language through text.	- Watch and listen; - Listen and speak; - Read.	- Listening; - Listening, speaking; - Reading.
Practice phase	- Model the language; - Give written exercises.	- Repeat; - Read and write.	- Speaking; - Reading and writing.
Production phase	- Set up fluency activities; - Monitor group work; - Watch.	- Discuss in groups; - Record results of discussion; - Present the work to others.	- Speaking; - Writing; - Speaking.

Further, the author of the thesis chose to use this table to create a lesson observation checklist (see appendix 5). The observation checklist is used to assess the activities of the teacher and pupils during the lesson, and analyse the received results afterwards.

In the next sub-chapter, the author of the thesis talks about speaking skills, and how important and essential is to teach speaking skills.

1.3. Teaching speaking

The authors of the book “Teaching Speaking and Listening in the Primary School” (Dawes, Grugeon, Hubbard, and Smith, 2001:6) mention that in the late 1980’s, a project was developed for classroom teaching methods, based on speaking skills development. The project was called “The National Oracy Project” (further in the text NOP) and was set up by the School Curriculum Development Committee. The purpose of the project was for teachers to involve pupils in using speaking skills more frequently during language lessons. The goals were:

- Encourage active learning, improve speaking skills;
- Develop the teaching of oral communication skills;
- Develop assessment methods of and through speech;
- Enhance pupils’ performance;
- Improve teachers’ skills and practice;
- Promote importance of oral value in schools and boost its use to improve learning (ibid.:6-7).

The NOP was highly successful. It made a big impact increasing the requirements for teaching speaking and listening in classrooms. These goals of improving speaking skills are preserved till nowadays. Most of the NOP features are reflected in the case study of the thesis.

There is a big difference between spoken language in the classroom and the one in daily communication. The main problem is that classrooms are a very controlled and safe environment for a student to learn the language according to guidelines, and there is no risk of having said anything wrong that a teacher could not correct. Spoken communication without guidelines is something else than discussions or speaking at school. There are many ways to teach students to feel more open towards using spoken language more often, and not for learning purposes only, but also for communication (ibid.:38).

To develop speaking skills, students first need to use strategies that they normally use while speaking in their mother tongue. Secondly, it is important that students learn different types of language – formal, informal, neutral, slang, etc. That way they will know how to speak, according to a specific situation. Students also have to be taught that spoken language has its own specifics, like automatic shortening of words (i.e., do not – don't; should have – should've; I am – I'm). Students should be exposed to a variety of listening situations, so they could separate the information. As mentioned before, listening is very important in speaking skill development. It is crucial for a student to interact in real life situations, using spoken language. The benefits of real life interactions are:

- Overcoming the fear of speaking out loud;
- Gaining real life experience;
- Boosting confidence;
- Fluency in spoken language;
- Smooth switching between languages (ibid.:39-40).

For a student to learn speaking skills, practice is the most important thing. Practicing spoken language may be difficult for some students – it requires knowledge of the language, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. That is why speaking skills are considered very difficult to learn. First of all, a person needs to gain basic knowledge to achieve further language acquisition goals (Online 1).

Richards, J. C. (2008:19) discusses that ability to use speaking skills is very important among people who are learning foreign language. He considers that every language learner measure their success by how efficient they are using spoken language skills. Richards also provides a sequence of activities that can be used in a lesson to develop language skills.

Pre-task activities are as follow:

- The teacher explains students the objectives and the theme of the activity, by using visual materials or discussion about the topic;
- Students are introduced to a game that is relevant to the topic (i.e., crossing the odd word out);
- Students are given time to decide how to do the task, they are encouraged to brainstorm;
- An audible material can be presented as a parallel task, not giving away any details or disturbing the present task;
- The context of the text should be explained (ibid.).

Some of these pre-task activities are included in the case study of the thesis. Pupils were given certain tasks that were based on the theory, including activities from the next chapter about storytelling.

Munro, J. (2011:110) also mentions that, in order for pupils to learn they need to be taught how to pronounce words correctly, they need to have the basic knowledge of the language. He anticipates that teaching is most effective when the student is aware of his/her own knowledge. Feeling confident is very important for the student, and then he/she can learn effectively. In addition, the teaching method must be appealing for the student, because studying something that is enjoyable is considered more efficient.

The next sub-chapter is devoted to the development of speaking skills and to tools that are needed to achieve a successful learning process.

1.4. Speaking skills development

A teacher is an important person that can give specific tools to students, so that they could learn and develop their speaking skills. There are three effective speaking strategies that help students expand their knowledge. They are very simple and easy to use (Online 2).

The first strategy is allowing students to answer with minimal responses. That way they are more comfortable with answering because they do not have to produce large amounts of spoken text. If a student is asked to answer a difficult question, then most likely the student will pass and give an opportunity to someone else. The benefit of minimal responses are that they are predictable, and it is easier to focus on the theme of the lesson (ibid.).

The second strategy includes recognition of spoken scripts. They are – compliments, apologies, invitations, greeting and other scripts that are used in spoken language. Every script can be recognised by a set of words. For example, if a spoken dialogue between two individuals includes words like ‘sorry’, ‘it is alright’ and ‘I did not mean to’, it means that one individual

is apologizing for something he/she said to the other individual. Students can practice these scripts with the help of a dialogue (ibid.).

The third strategy is used to help shy learners be more involved in the lesson. It is said that learners need to be informed that any mishap can occur during any kind of situation and with anyone, for that matter. The issue is that students misunderstand each other. That is caused by not pronouncing words clearly or correctly, or by the level of vocabulary or knowledge being different between the students. Providing students with a positive learning atmosphere and helping them respond in case of a misunderstanding may prevent this (ibid.).

In this chapter, the author of the thesis discussed speaking skills and speaking skills development. The theory of teaching speaking and development of speaking skills was also discussed. The second chapter deals with storytelling. It includes three sub-chapters that describe the concept of storytelling, the potential effectiveness of storytelling, and various stages of storytelling.

2. STORYTELLING

The second chapter deals with the storytelling method that is applied to the case study based on the chosen theme for the Bachelor Thesis “Teaching Speaking Skills through Storytelling”.

The Cambridge Academic Content Online Dictionary explains the term “storytelling” very simply: it is the art of telling stories (Online 3).

Storytelling, truly, is a form of art. Not everyone can tell stories, so that others could live in the story or even remember it. We see stories every day; they are all around us. Stories are found in books, newspapers, in social media; stories can be heard at work, from a colleague, or from a passing-by stranger on the street. Storytelling plays an important role in language acquisition, as it is described further on.

2.1. The concept of storytelling

A story is a structural information in our memory. All stories have different patterns and contents, and they are easily recognizable. It has the power to make readers sensitive to the content of the story and fall into the unlimited time that the story can build in our minds. It is a way of organizing the used language and perceived information in our minds. Story is a structure of understanding something. The information can be changed in many different ways; it depends on how we organize the told information (Livo and Rietz, 1986:102).

According to Vos, G. (2003:3), storytelling is an activity that helps a child to reach maturity. Storytelling is considered to be an activity of entertainment. With every story that is heard, people gain experience. Stories can be imagined or from real life events. The difference is between how the stories are perceived.

The author of the thesis agrees with Gail De Vos’s theory that storytelling can include the listener in the story. Every story has their own unique elements that help imagine things. For example, as most fairy tales start with “Once upon a time”, instantly, the human mind is imagining a long time ago, somewhere in the land, far, far away, where kings are fighting for their lands and princesses are waiting for their princes. He mentions that storytelling is a tool for teaching young adults, developing their language skills and keeping them from losing their identity. In addition, it can help release emotions, because storytelling triggers the mind of a listener (Vos, 2003:27).

Amy E. Spaulding (2011:13) thinks that,

Storytelling is, at the same time, an act of creation and also a connection with people from the past who we never knew. [...], but it is clear that people feel something when they listen to told stories and that they enjoy it [...].

She argues that real-life storytelling is worth the received experience, but storytelling on the internet or in written form, on the other hand, have a bit different value. Storytelling in real life includes facial expression of the storyteller, body language, visual or audible materials, the atmosphere that is created by the people listening to the story and the teller.

The next sub-chapter describes the importance and effectiveness of storytelling.

2.2. Effective storytelling

In a way, storytelling is a performance by the teller. The main goal for a storyteller is to get listeners' attention and give them as much experience from the story as possible. In order to achieve the goal, certain performance skills need to make an effect on the listener (Online 4):

- Voice mechanics – adequate volume, clear pronunciation;
- Body gestures – face and body gestures, expressive, but enough to attract the listener's attention;
- Focus – eye contact with the audience, staying calm;
- Characterization – when telling about a character or when a character is engaging in a dialogue, the teller changes voice, in order to clearly state the introduction of a character of conversation;
- Pace – story is told in an efficient tempo, so that listeners are able to keep up with the story (ibid.).

All of these performance skills were used in the conducted lesson and analysed in the case study of the thesis.

Preparation for conducting an effective storytelling session is very important. It is essential that the storyteller reads the story several times, so that he/she is able to retell the story without any difficulties. The topicality of the themes is also very important. If the theme is not appealing to the storyteller, there is a high chance that listeners will not be interested in the story, or they will not be able to keep up with it. To fully understand and retell the story, the storyteller should know the meaning of every word in the text. For example, if a listener does not understand the meaning of few words and the storyteller cannot explain those – that could ruin the storytelling experience. The more the storyteller believes in characters and the story itself, the richer the experience will be for the listener. That is why stories were created.

Nonetheless, every story should be told with passion, as if feeling and seeing colours and hearing sounds (Online 5).

The author of the thesis considers that self-assessment during and after the lesson is very important. There exist two kinds of self-assessment criteria – inner and outer criteria. Only the person who is telling the story can assess inner criteria. In order to carry out self-observation, the teller has to assess if he/she was nervous in front of the class, if the story was told fluently or not, if the mind was focused during the storytelling activity or not, if the story was pleasant or not, and if there were any revelations during or after storytelling or not. Using these criteria, the teller can easily assess the experience of the lesson, from his/her point of view (Online 6). Outer criteria are assessed from the observer's point of view. Observer evaluates the audibility of the teller, the credibility factor of the characters, the appeal of the story and the storyteller's ability to create an image in the observer's mind (ibid.).

Both criteria types were adjusted in the case study. With the help of inner criteria, the author of the thesis could assess her own storytelling experience. The observer of the lesson (in the case study, an independent teacher) used outer criteria to assess the experience obtained from the student teacher (in the case study, the author of the thesis).

The third sub-chapter describes the stages of storytelling and the way they are used for teaching speaking skills.

2.3. Stages of storytelling

As mentioned in the previous sub-chapters, storytelling is a very effective method to be applied in language teaching. The method includes three stages that are used to organize the activities: pre-storytelling, while-storytelling and after-storytelling stage. Each of these stages contain a number of activities (Online 7).

The pre-storytelling stage is meant for student preparation for the following activities. It consists of:

- Introduction of the theme of the lesson;
- Use of visual or audible materials that apply to the story;
- Asking students their ideas about the plot of the story, on the basis of visual or audible materials;
- Providing students with handouts, for more efficient learning lesson (ibid.:8).

This stage is very important to create a positive communication between the teacher and the students. It creates an environment, where everything is explained and students are comfortable with the received information (ibid.).

The while-storytelling stage includes activities like:

- Telling the story effectively, as mentioned in the previous sub-chapter;
- Highlighting the words or set expressions from the text, that might not be known for the students;
- Explaining the meaning and giving examples of every new word;
- Asking students to create their own examples for the newly learnt word (Online 7).

In this stage, the teacher can explain new words/phrases that were heard during the storytelling activity. By involving students in the discussion, the teacher is able to observe the communication that is happening among the students themselves (ibid.:9).

The after-storytelling stage is meant for an assessment of the lesson. This stage includes activities like:

- Assessing if students understood every word in the text;
- Answering questions related to the story and the theme of the lesson;
- Receiving feedback from the students about the lesson and the story;
- Assessing further development (Online 7).

The last stage gives a full profile observation of the lesson and the students. The feedback from the teacher can lift up students' self-esteem, and they can feel more secure and open to the learning in the future (ibid.:10).

In this chapter, the author of the Bachelor Thesis discussed the concept of storytelling and the effectiveness of storytelling. In addition, the three stages of storytelling were discussed and the benefits of these stages were stated. The next chapter is devoted to the methodology of the research.

3. METHODOLOGY

Every research is based on a methodology. In this chapter, the author of the thesis discusses the methodology applied to this research. As it was already mentioned, a case study, a triangulation method and an observation method were the methods used to obtain and analyse the received data from the students' questionnaires and lesson observation.

According to Robert K. Yin (2003:13),

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between object of the study and context are not clearly evident. It copes with technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes case study as 'a published report about a person, group, or situation that has been studied over time; also situation in real life that can be looked at or studied to learn about something'. (Online 8)

"Triangulation method" is a term that originated from social sciences. The triangulation method is compared to a geometrical figure – a triangle. Each *vertex* (the point where two lines meet to form an angle, or the point that is opposite to the base of a shape; from Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus) (Online 9) is meant to be a research method to prove the results from various points of view. The triangulation method is used to verify genuineness and reliability of the research results.

Stuart, C. (2013:64) mentions that the triangulation method was developed throughout the years. According to Bedford, the triangulation was created from researching literature, but Redfern, S. J. and Norman, I. J. (Norman and Redfern, 1994) considered that another method needs to be applied to verify the results. Stuart, C. (ibid.) mentions Norman Kent Denzin (1970) who considers the triangulation method as a combination of various methods. Denzin draws out three types of triangulation:

1. Data triangulation – includes person, time, space;
2. Methodological triangulation – includes observation, assessment;
3. Investigator triangulation – includes assessment of many to validate the results as successful (Stuart, 2013:64-65).

Therefore, the author of the thesis is using methodological triangulation to verify the obtained results. With methodological triangulation, the author of the thesis was able to gather results from various sources.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, observation is the act of watching somebody/something carefully for a period of time, especially to learn something (Online 10). In this case study the author of the thesis used naturalistic observation and participant observation. Naturalistic observation deals with observing a group of people in their natural environment. In the case study, the pupils are observed in the English language lesson. Participant observation is when the teacher becomes one of the group and is also observed (Online 11).

This chapter is devoted to the research methodology. The methods mentioned above are used in the next chapter to obtain data that are necessary for the research.

4. CASE STUDY

The third chapter consists of four sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter is devoted to the pilot teaching. The next three sub-chapters are devoted to students' questionnaires, reflective lesson observation and independent teacher's lesson observation. Bakers and Westrup's (2003) theory is applied to the case study involving a lesson at the primary school.

The following sub-chapter is devoted to pilot teaching, where the author of the thesis discusses the plan of the lesson and necessary tools for preparation. To prove the stated hypothesis that teaching speaking skills using storytelling increases speaking skills development, a questionnaire-based survey was carried out among English philology students, and a lesson was held in the primary school, where the author of the thesis could observe the pupils involved and the independent teacher could assess the teaching by the student teacher.

4.1. Pilot teaching

Knowing a language is not the same as using it in real life situations. Language is changing all the time and fast. It is a privilege to know many languages. In order to use a language, basic knowledge is needed, only then a person can understand and use the language. Speaking a foreign language, in this case – the English language is quite difficult.

There are various techniques that a person can use to acquire the needed skills for oral communication in the English language. The teacher is responsible for teaching speaking skills correctly, but also the student has been given a chance to learn. According to the theoretical part of the Bachelor thesis, Bakers and Westrup's (2003:18) three teaching phases, called PPP, are very useful for language learning. The author of the thesis used their language learning phases to create a plan for the lesson at the primary school. The lesson was conducted according to the plan that was based on the above-mentioned theory:

- Introduction of the lesson;
- Showing some visual materials connected with the following text;
- Providing pupils with handouts of the text;
- Reading the text out loud;
- Writing out new words from the text;
- Providing the meaning of the word, if possible with visual or sound effects;
- Answering to pupils' questions;
- Receiving feedback from the students.

The plan of the lesson was developed based on the previously mentioned theory. Pupils' vocabulary was tested by asking questions. Through analysis of the received answers, the student teacher could understand the level of their knowledge. The pupils' knowledge was taken into consideration in order to conduct a successful English lesson.

The plan of the lesson includes various activities for the teacher and the students.

The activities for the teacher:

- Presentation of the language;
- Presentation of the language through text;
- Asking questions to the students;
- Providing the students with a written exercise;
- Monitoring the activity of the student responses (Baker and Westrup, 2003:18-20)).

These activities can be achieved only through cooperation with students. The activities for the students are as follow:

- Watching and listening to the teacher;
- Reading the given text;
- Answering questions;
- Repeating newly learned words;
- Discussing the language acquisition in groups (ibid.).

All of these activities are the key for successful teaching and learning of new languages.

The next sub-chapter is devoted to students' questionnaires and the analysis of the obtained data.

4.2. Students' questionnaires

The students' questionnaires were distributed among English philology students of the University of Latvia. The students' questionnaires were created in an online survey page (Online 12). The questionnaire consisted of six questions that were based on the theoretical part of the thesis (see Appendix 1). The questions were aimed to gather information on how students feel when using speaking skills and on their opinion about speaking skills development using storytelling. Twenty-one student participated in the questionnaire-based survey. All of the questions were designed by the author of the thesis.

1. Do you use the English language for communication besides educational purposes?

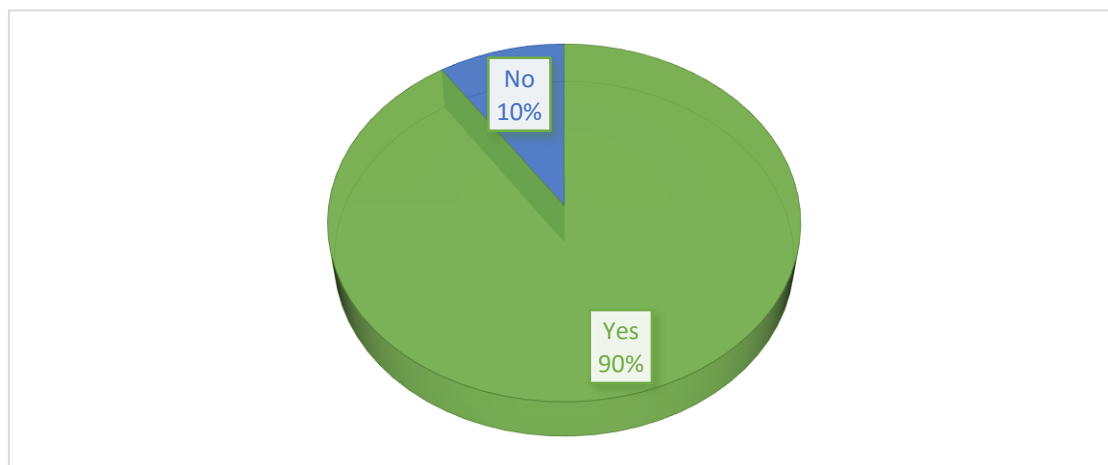


Figure 4.1. Do you use the English language for communication besides educational purposes?

The first question included two possible answers: yes, and no. From all the answers received, only two students responded negatively, the rest of them answered “yes”. According to the collected data, the majority of English philology students use the English language outside university hours. The author of the thesis considers that using a foreign language outside the workplace or the university is very important, because that way the language and human brain are active. As mentioned in the first chapter of the thesis, human brain is responsible for language processes that result in language development.

2. How do you feel while communicating in the English language?

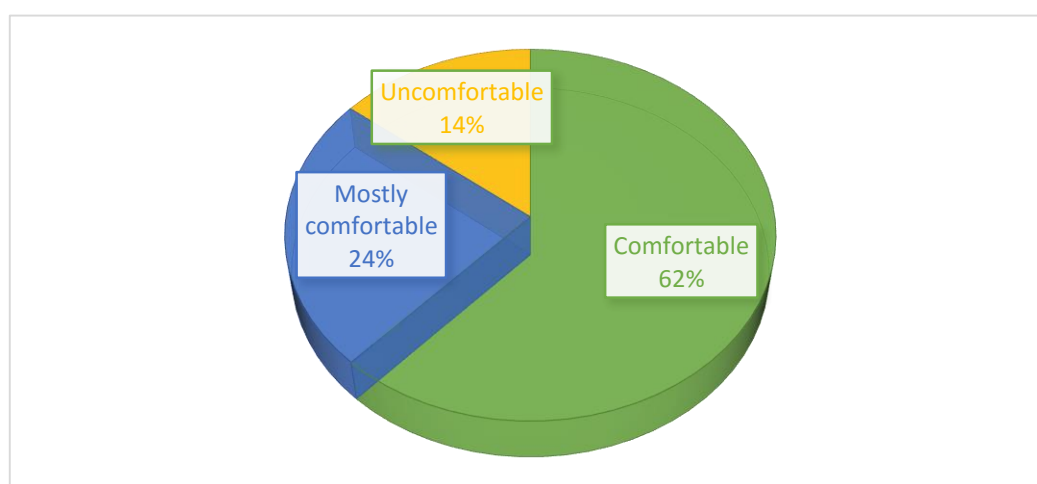


Figure 4.2. How do you feel while communicating in the English language?

The second question included three possible answers: comfortable, mostly comfortable, and uncomfortable. According to the answers, thirteen respondents are comfortable using the English language while communicating. Five students are mostly comfortable, and only three respondents are uncomfortable while communicating in the English language. The results show

that, even if a person is studying the language, having the knowledge is not the same as being able to communicate. It correlates with Bakers and Westrup's (2003) theory set out in the first chapter of the thesis. They consider that confidence during communication in a foreign language is achieved by PPP. The Presentation, Practice, and Production is the key to a successful communication among foreigners.

3. Are there any difficulties while communicating in the English language? What are they?

The third question is an open text question. Respondents were able to write what problems they encounter while communicating in the English language. There were few respondents claiming that they have no difficulties communicating in the English language. In addition, few answers included difficulties with grammar, and lack of knowledge or vocabulary. One of the participants claimed that his/her English is very 'bad', even though his/her answer was grammatically correct. One answer also indicated fear of saying something wrong, and feeling scared if something he/she said would be incorrect. The results reveal that more than half of the respondents feel comfortable using a foreign language in communication, but there are few students that have difficulties. The most common problem was the lack of vocabulary. Here are few of the answers, listed below:

- "Forgetting words, not being able to express my thoughts smoothly and fluently, errors in sentence structures (also incorrect use of tenses)";
- "Language barrier, different accents";
- "No, there aren't, in rare cases of course specific accent could get in the way, but only for the time interval it takes to adapt to it";
- "Suddenly switching to English feels slow and difficult. At first, it is harder to find the correct words or synonyms, or to adjust the pronunciation. This, however, disappears after a very short while";
- "Lack of vocabulary".

This question revealed various difficulties that occur during communication in a foreign language. These difficulties are the result of insufficient teaching and learning of the English language.

4. What has improved your speaking skills in the English language?

The fourth question was an open text question. The most popular responses from the participants were watching movies, talking with friends, foreign people, and work related. There was only one response which clearly stated: "University of Latvia", meaning he/she has

improved his/her speaking skills studying in the university. Respondents also emphasized the importance of regular practice. A few examples of the responses:

- “Every English related conversation and movies, series, books that last long enough. If it is just a sentence or a couple of those, I feel they really do not improve my speaking skills. Longer things, however, force me to digest them and relate one thing to another to make the context understandable”;
- “Daily communication with foreign people”;
- “Traveling, studying in English, communicating with Erasmus students, films, music”;
- “Constant use of the language for entertainment purposes”;
- “Books and movies in English, communication with friends from different countries”;
- “My job, television series, movies, videos and reading science, technology and other news. Recently I have noticed that listening gave me a huge impact in my speaking skills. When I talked to foreign colleagues or tourists from USA or GB - they gave me positive feedback on my speaking and even different English accent skills”.

To sum it up, the practice and the use of the language every day is the key to develop speaking skills.

5. How do you value speaking skills development, compared to other language skills (listening, writing and reading)?

The fifth question was also an open text question. Judging by the answers, respondents really put their mind into the thought. The answers are listed below.

- “It depends on the needs. F. ex., for translators who work mostly with written texts, reading skills would be more important than speaking skills. For people who live or work in an English speaking or international community, or for those who have to work with English speaking clients, speaking skills development would be of utmost importance (but not exclusively – listening skills are also important in conversations, and writing skills – in communication with clients, for example (e-mail writing))”;
- “As less important in the overall sense. Speaking in the basic sense is a tool when you are in a position of power (teacher, parent, etc.), that comes after you have acquired knowledge by using the latter skills”;
- “I feel more comfortable in it. I am not afraid to make mistakes because of the interaction with other multilinguals. I do know that nobody cares while they understand me. This results in me speaking more fluently instead of just searching for words and making awkward silence. I feel that in English I have developed all skills equally well

while in French, German, and Russian – listening skill is definitely more developed than others”;

- “I rate it second, listening being the most important. You may have survived in a tribe by listening to what others say. You may not have survived without that”;
- “I was struggling at speaking because I didn't have a lot of practice, but one can get pretty good at it really fast if he/she finds ways (video chatting, foreigners in non-English speaking countries, etc.) to practice it”;
- “I think speaking could be one of the most necessary skills to develop, because if you learn to speak all other skills arrive as a package deal”.

Concluding from the answers, majority of respondents admit that speaking skills are very important, if not the most important skill in communication. Only few participants argue that speaking skills are very basic and easy to learn – as it is already ‘installed’ in human’s abilities. One respondent answered that all language skills are equally important. In conclusion, the majority of the respondents consider speaking to be the most important skill.

6. In your opinion, can storytelling help improve speaking skills?

The last, but not least – the sixth question – was an open text question. In this question respondents were asked to give their opinion if storytelling as a teaching tool can improve speaking skills.

- “I think storytelling can improve your vocabulary, but mostly the actual speaking skills would improve from any kind of daily usage”;
- “Yes, as any story long enough with a background forces the person to imagine, organize what he heard in some way. Storytelling also provides a way to new things in a very easy to understand manner. It may be more difficult to understand what is going on within a story from just the action and dialogue. It is easier when someone tells the story”;
- “Yes, because storytelling is a fun activity, and who does not like interesting activities”;
- “Of course, any type of talking will definitely improve speaking skills”;
- “Of course! People practice and structure their thoughts (what storytelling requires), and so improve their speaking skills”;
- “No. I believe that dialogue form is a better form than monologue storytelling if the goal is speaking skills improvement”;
- “Yes, because it is practical”;
- “Everything that involves using language helps. Thus, storytelling can also benefit”.

From all the respondents, only one answered 'no' to the question if storytelling can improve speaking skills. There were many responses just saying 'yes' that indicated that respondents agreed to the question given above.

According to the results, majority of respondents were comfortable using the English language orally. They also agreed that speaking skills are very important, and in order to improve these skills practice is considered to be the best learning method. The biggest difficulties in speaking and using the English language orally are caused by lack of vocabulary, lack of knowledge of grammar or pronunciation.

The next sub-chapter includes an analysis of reflective lesson observation. The author of the thesis is self-assessing the activities that were conducted during the English lesson at the primary school.

4.3. Reflective lesson observation

Reflective teaching is one of the research methods applied in this case study. According to The British Council home page, reflective teaching is a method where a teacher can assess and analyse his/her own work in the classroom. This technique may result in teaching improvements (Online 13). In order to verify the hypothesis of the Bachelor Thesis "Teaching Speaking Skills through Storytelling", the author decided to hold a lesson at the primary school.

The lesson took place at Mežciems Primary School. Pupils that participated in the lesson were 17 fifth-graders. The English teacher was given the role of an independent observer. Two evaluators carried out the observation: an independent teacher and a student teacher (the author of the thesis). The independent teacher was given an observation checklist at the beginning of the lesson. The theme of the lesson was discussed between the teacher and the author of the thesis beforehand.

The goal of the lesson was to broaden pupils' vocabulary with new words. The storytelling method applied to the lesson was, in author's opinion, quite beneficial for pupils to develop their speaking skills.

Further, the class was introduced with the new teacher. Pupils were introduced to the goals and objectives of the lesson. The goals were to teach new words with the help of storytelling and to make pupils participate in the activities. The goals were achieved by fulfilling the following objectives:

1. Read the given text (see Appendix 2);
2. Explain the underlined words;
3. Give examples from everyday life, for better understanding.

In order to conduct the lesson, certain steps were taken: introduction of the lesson, objectives and goals. The lesson itself was 30 minutes long.

The introduction consisted of explaining what storytelling is and how it is used to teach and develop speaking skills. Then some visual materials were showed in order to draw pupils' attention (see Appendix 3). Pupils were asked to share their thoughts on what the story is about and how the pictures could correlate with each other. After receiving some answers, the teacher gave handouts to pupils and the independent teacher. After introducing the objectives and goals, the teacher told the story "King Bruce and the Spider". The story that the author of the thesis chose was appropriate for the theme that pupils were studying in their regular English lessons. Even the tense of the story (past tense) was relevant. While the teacher told the story, pupils were able to listen carefully. This activity took about 7 minutes.

After the storytelling ended, pupils were asked to retell the story in their own words, based on their memory. The bravest ones retold the story quite good, taking into consideration that most of the pupils were very shy.

The next activity included reading and writing out the underlined words on the blackboard. Pupils were asked to say what they thought the underlined word meant. Each word was explained with an example that would be easily understandable to everyone. Afterwards, pupils had to come up with their own examples. When the activity was over, the teacher received questions from pupils about the meaning of few other words that were not underlined.

At the end of the lesson, pupils were asked to give feedback on how they liked the new teacher, the story, the activities, was it difficult, and did they learn new words. Feedback was very positive – pupils liked the story, the new teacher, and they even wrote which words (without looking in their handouts) they learnt. Two pupils wrote the message of the story: if you give up, you will never know what could have happened.

The goal of the thesis is to prove that implementing the storytelling method in teaching speaking can improve speaking skills. In order to accomplish the goal, the author of the thesis used storytelling method that was developed by putting various elements together, as explained before in the literature review.

The activities and the content was specifically developed to be suitable for 5th grade pupils. Not to forget, an independent teacher attended the lesson observing and assessing the activities and the communication between the pupils and the teacher. An observation checklist was given to the independent teacher to write down the assessment (see Appendix 4). The checklist was created to be suitable for the specific lesson, according to the activities and the content.

As to the pupils and their participation in the lesson, the author of the Bachelor Thesis can claim that every pupil understood and took part in every activity that was given by the

teacher. At the start of the lesson, all the pupils were quiet and shy, but with big smiles on their faces, as they were participating in something new. After the storytelling activity, they started raising hands, which gave the idea that they were interested in asking questions and receiving ones from the teacher. Pupils enjoyed the visual and sound effects that were used to describe or explain words. Of course, some of the pupils were very unwilling to speak, but in the end they also participated. At the end, the author of the thesis discussed the lesson and its activities with the independent teacher.

The lesson was conducted in order to confirm the hypothesis of the Bachelor Thesis: teaching speaking skills using storytelling increases speaking skills development. Based on the observation in the lesson and the results, the author can state that storytelling is an effective and interesting teaching method which can be used to teach speaking skills.

As a result, the hypothesis was proved. Using storytelling in teaching speaking skills is very effective. It increases interest in learners and adds new words to their vocabulary. Every now and then, teachers should use storytelling as a teaching method, if not use it regularly.

In this sub-chapter the author of the thesis described the observation that included self-assessment and an assessment of the pupils. The next sub-chapter discusses the assessment made by the independent teacher.

4.4. Independent teacher's lesson observation

The independent teacher is the English language teacher at the Primary school. She carried out the observation of the lesson, which includes an observation of the student teacher and of her pupils.

As mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, a checklist was given to the independent teacher in order to assess the lesson (Appendix 4). The checklist was filled in during the observation of the lesson. After the lesson, the independent teacher gave an oral commentary on the subject.

The observation checklist contained basic information: the time and place of the lesson and a table of objectives to assess the student teacher. The independent teacher also wrote a commentary on her thoughts about the lesson (see Appendix 6).

At the start of the lesson, the objectives and goals were clearly stated. The author of the thesis designed the plan of the lesson. When the plan was discussed before the lesson started, the independent teacher verified that the designed plan of the lesson is appropriate to the pupils. The independent teacher was a bit concerned that pupils might not understand a few of the words, as they had not been studied in previous English lessons. Her doubt, however was

cleared after the lesson, when pupils not only understood the words, but also memorised them by heart and could repeat them knowing the meaning.

As to the teaching method designed to develop speaking skills, the independent teacher admitted that storytelling is a very interesting and productive method to use in lessons. The independent teacher was pleased with the communication between the pupils and the student teacher, because at the start the pupils were very shy, and did not speak very freely. She also commented that the atmosphere in the lesson was positive and welcoming for pupils to feel comfortable.

When the student teacher asked any questions about the new words, the pupils were happy to answer. When the student teacher invited them to ask questions, a few brave pupils raised their hands – they wanted to know the meaning and explanation of a few other words.

After the lesson, pupils gave a very positive feedback on how the lesson went by, the activities that were included in the lesson, and the student teacher herself. The author of the thesis received written feedback from pupils, and all of it was very positive.

As to the commentary from the independent teacher (see appendix 6), use of more visual materials was suggested. As to the teaching part, the independent teacher was very pleased with the results of the lesson. The independent teacher agreed that using storytelling as a teaching method for developing speaking skills is very effective and beneficial.

In this chapter, the author of the thesis carried out a case study, where the triangulation method was applied to obtain and analyse the results, in order to prove the hypothesis. The case study consisted of three parts: students' questionnaires, reflective lesson observation, and the independent teacher's lesson observation. The obtained results were analysed as well.

The results from the students' questionnaires showed that speaking skills are very important for a person to be able not only to use the language, but also to communicate and feel comfortable while doing it.

According to the lesson observation results, the case study proved the hypothesis of the thesis that using storytelling in teaching is very effective and more efficient in developing speaking skills. The feedback from the students showed that using storytelling in an English lesson makes it much more interesting, and it gives a chance for the students to be more involved in the lesson.

CONCLUSIONS

Speaking is a very important skill that is used for communication. The process of speaking is very complex and includes different speech organs and human brains. Nonetheless, in order to speak, one has to have knowledge and ability to use speaking skills.

To develop speaking skills, it is essential to have motivation and desire to learn. Practice is considered the most effective way to develop speaking skills. However, in every learning process there are difficulties that can disturb it. There are various ways to overcome the difficulties.

Teaching takes a big part in overcoming difficulties that may occur during speaking skills development. Various teaching theories and methods include activities for a teacher to provide the best learning experience for the student. One of the teaching methods includes storytelling. By applying the storytelling method in a language acquisition lesson - students are able to learn in a joyful and interactive way.

The suggested hypothesis of the Bachelor Thesis was that using storytelling in teaching improves speaking skills.

The goal of the present research was to prove that implementing the storytelling method in teaching speaking can improve speaking skills. The author of the Bachelor Thesis proved the suggested hypothesis, based on the results of the case study. A combination of a case study and the triangulation method were necessary to validate the data and the results of the study. The author of the thesis can conclude that the goal of the research was reached.

The thesis was divided into four main chapters. The first two chapters were devoted to the literature review of speaking skills and storytelling. The third chapter discussed the methodology used in the research. And the fourth chapter consisted of the case study. A student's questionnaire was distributed among English philology students, and a lesson was conducted at the primary school.

The research was related to applying the storytelling method to teaching and further development of speaking skills.

The data obtained from the questionnaire-based survey revealed that the majority of the respondents used the English language outside the university. Even though most of the respondents use the English language outside the university hours, they do not feel very comfortable using it for communication purposes. Further, the difficulties in communicating in the English language were revealed. The most common answers were "lack of vocabulary" and "fear of messing up grammar". The obtained data also showed that practice is the key to developing speaking skills. Almost all the respondents agreed that speaking skills are the most

important of all the language skills. Only one of all the respondents did not consider storytelling as an effective teaching method for developing speaking skills.

During the pilot teaching, the author of the thesis obtained an overall view of how well the pupils know the English language. The author of the thesis asked the pupils to share their thoughts about the theme of the lesson. At first, most of the pupils were very shy, but also excited. They were eager to know what the new student teacher will teach them. The pupils were encouraged not to be afraid and if they do not understand something, they are free to ask questions, and they will be answered. After the introduction, the author noticed that the pupils started to relax and enjoy the newly received experience. To make the lesson more interactive, the author of the thesis provided visual materials. New words were explained with a visual materials or sound effects. Explaining the new words in that manner proved to be effective in the pupils remembering the words easier because of the references. They also tried to give few examples of the meanings themselves. The pupils were asked to write down the feedback of the lesson. The received feedback revealed that the pupils understood the meaning of the story, they learned new words, and they really enjoyed the lesson. Few pupils mentioned that the new teaching method using storytelling was interesting and they would like to have similar lessons in the future.

The observation of the lesson was carried out from two different perspectives – the student teacher and the independent teacher. The student teacher was running the lesson too, and the independent teacher was observing the lesson without participating or influencing the activity of the pupils. The student teacher observed the lesson and by reviewing the obtained results concluded that using storytelling in teaching speaking skills is very effective. After the lesson, the independent teacher commented that she was surprised that the pupils genuinely understood the given text, even though it was a bit difficult. She also mentioned that she was satisfied how the plan of the lesson was carried out without any misunderstandings. The independent teacher was observing the manner of the student teacher as well. The independent teacher endorsed that the lesson was held successfully as the student teacher was prepared and confident which created a positive atmosphere in the classroom. The independent teacher considers that the goal of the lesson was reached and stated that using storytelling in teaching helps to develop speaking skills.

During the case study the author of the thesis also discovered the problems that can interfere with language acquisition. The results obtained from students' questionnaires revealed that the lack of grammar and vocabulary themselves may cause problems communicating in the English language. Nonetheless, without practice speaking skills cannot be properly developed. Storytelling offers the opportunity to practice. The results obtained from the lesson observation

revealed that the lack of vocabulary, insufficient knowledge of grammar and language practice, are the cause of students problems in developing their speaking skills. In addition, the atmosphere in the classroom should be pleasant for student to feel comfortable and encouraged to be more involved in the lesson.

In conclusion, the hypothesis of the Bachelor Thesis was proved by the received results during the case study based on the data obtained from the students' questionnaires and the lesson observation.

Further research might be proposed where students of different age groups are provided with various tasks that could give different results over a period of time. These results could be then compared with the previous results.

THESES

1. Speaking is the main skill for communication and is acquired at a very young age.
2. Speaking is an exclusive language skill that only humans have.
3. There are four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.
4. Presentation, Practice and Production phases are essential for language learning in a lesson.
5. The National Oracy Project is a successful teaching method that increased the demand for teaching speaking and listening in classrooms.
6. When speaking is taught in addition to vocabulary and grammar, the students have a better chance to develop their knowledge about language learning in general.
7. Practice is essential for speaking skills development.
8. Role of the storyteller is to create a pleasant atmosphere, in order for a student to feel comfortable.
9. Role of the listener is to pay attention and have courage to participate in the lesson.
10. Effective performance is very important for successful conduction of the lesson.
11. Storytelling is an interactive teaching method.
12. Storytelling is an effective teaching method for improving speaking skills.

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GLOSSARY

Case study – a research method that includes a person or a case, over a period of time.

Communication – an activity that transfers information between two individuals in written or spoken manner.

Foreign language – a language that is not a native language; usually acquired in school, at a certain age.

Oracy – ability to express and understand anything in a spoken manner.

Questionnaire – a set of written questions aimed to collect data on a specific subject or matter.

Speaking – a skill that is acquired in the childhood, starting from learning speaking from parents and relatives to learning speaking skills at school.

Story – a real life or a fictional narrative, created to entertain or inform a reader/listener.

Storytelling – an ability to tell a real life or fictional stories; usually very expressive with an emotional background.

Triangulation – a research method, used to collect data, information from various sources, in order to verify the suggested theory.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Language Proficiency Questionnaire (sample)

Hello! My name is Madara Dakse. I am a fourth year student. I am writing Bachelor Thesis on the theme "**Teaching Speaking Skills through Storytelling**". Please, answer the following questions. The collected data will be used for academic purposes only.

1. Do you use the English language for communication besides educational purposes?
 - Yes
 - No

2. How do you feel while communicating in the English language?
 - Comfortable
 - Mostly comfortable
 - Uncomfortable

3. Are there any difficulties while communicating in the English language? What are they?

4. What has improved your speaking skills in the English language?

5. How do you value speaking skills development, compared to other language skills (listening, writing and reading)?

6. In your opinion, can storytelling help improve speaking skills?

Source: The students' questionnaire is designed by the author of the Bachelor Thesis, based on the theoretical framework of the thesis.

Appendix 2: Students' Questionnaires' results

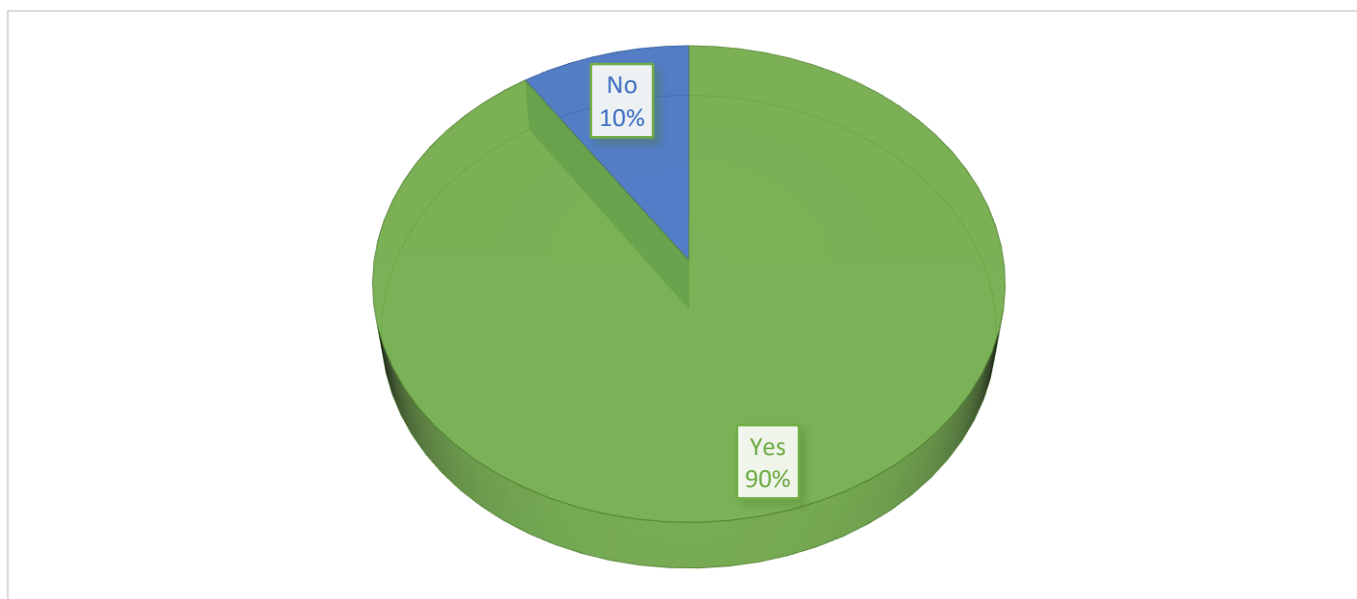


Figure 3.1.1. Do you use the English language for communication besides educational purposes?

Source: The diagram is designed by the author of the Bachelor Thesis, based on the obtained data from the students' questionnaires.

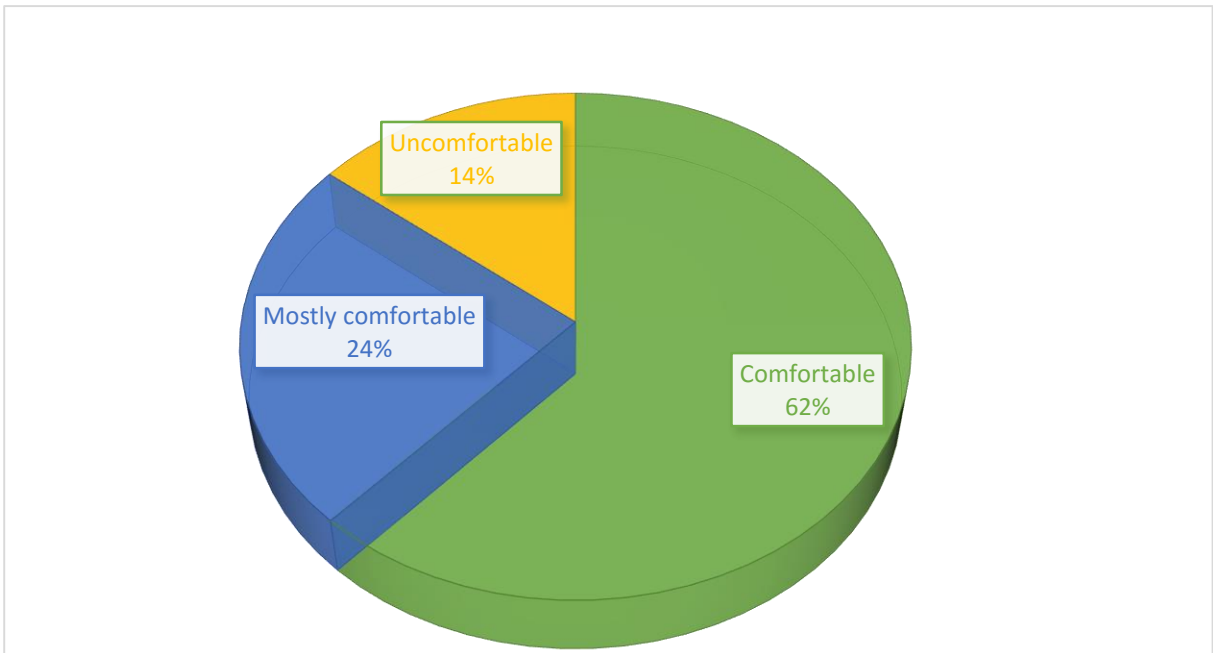


Figure 3.1.2. How do you feel while communicating in the English language?

Source: The diagram is designed by the author of the Bachelor Thesis, based on the data obtained from the students' questionnaires.

Appendix 3: King Bruce and the Spider (sample)

There was once a king of Scotland whose name was Robert Bruce. He had need to be both brave and wise, for the times in which he lived were wild and (1) rude. The King of England was at war with him, and had led a great army into Scotland to (2) drive him out of the land.

Battle after battle had been fought. Six times had Bruce led his brave little army against his foes; and six times had his men been beaten, and (3) driven into flight. At last his army was (4) scattered, and he was forced to hide himself in the woods and in lonely places among the mountains.

One rainy day, Bruce lay on the ground under a (5) rude shed, listening to the (6) patter of the drops on the roof above him. He was tired and sick at heart, and ready to give up all hope. It seemed to him that there was no use for him to try to do anything more.

As he lay thinking, he saw a spider over his head, making ready to (7) weave her web. He watched her as she (8) toiled slowly and with great care. Six times she tried to throw her (9) frail (10) thread from one beam to another, and six times (11) it fell short.

"Poor thing!" said Bruce: "you, too, know what it is to fail."

But the spider did not lose hope with the sixth failure. With still more care, she made ready to try for the seventh time. Bruce almost forgot his own troubles as he watched her swing herself out upon the (12) slender line. Would she fail again? No! The thread was carried safely to the (13) beam, and fastened there.

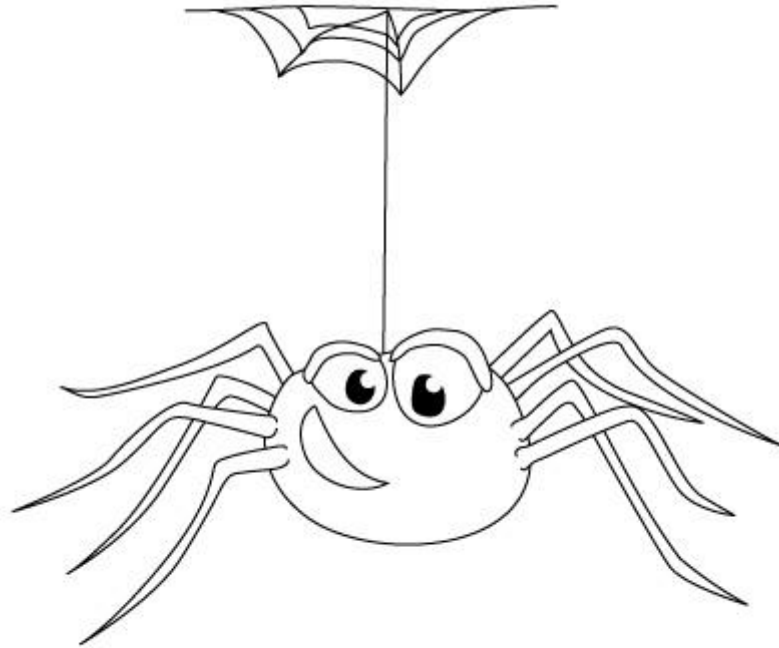
"I, too, will try a seventh time!" cried Bruce.

He (14) arose and called his men together. He told them of his plans, and sent them out with messages of cheer to his (15) disheartened people. Soon there was an army of brave Scotchmen around him. Another battle was fought, and the King of England was glad to go back into his own country.

I have heard it said, that, after that day, no one by the name of Bruce would ever hurt a spider. The lesson which the little creature had taught the king was never forgotten.

Source: (Online 13).

Appendix 4: Visual materials



Source: (Online 14).



Source: (Online 15).



Source: (Online 16).

Appendix 5: Observation Checklist (sample)

School:

Grade:

Teacher:

Observer:

Theme of the lesson:

Time of the lesson:

Date of observation:

Nº	Lesson Observation Checklist	Yes	No
1.	The student teacher is prepared.		
2.	Introduction of the theme is clear.		
3.	The objectives are clear and understood.		
4.	The theme is interesting for pupils.		
5.	The communication between the pupils and the student teacher is adequate.		
6.	All pupils are involved in the activity.		
7.	Combined visual and sound effects were used.		
8.	The student teacher's response to questions is appropriate.		

Observer's Comments:

Observer's Signature:

Date:

Student Teacher's Signature:

Date:

Source: The observation checklist was designed based on Baker's and Westrup's theory (Baker and Westrup, 2003).

Appendix 6: Observation Checklist (filled-in)

Observation Checklist

School: Mežciems Primary School

Grade: 5th grade

Teacher: Madara Dause

Observer: Irina Spinga

Theme of the lesson: Storytelling implementation for speaking skills development

Time of the lesson: 30 minutes

Date of observation: 11.05.2015

№	Lesson Observation Checklist	Yes	No
1.	The student teacher is prepared.	✓	
2.	Introduction of the theme is clear.	✓	
3.	The objectives are clear and understood.	✓	
4.	The theme is interesting for pupils.	✓	
5.	The communication between pupils and student teacher is adequate.	✓	
6.	All pupils are involved in the activity.	✓	
7.	Combined visual and sound effects were used.	✓	
8.	The student teacher's respond to questions is appropriate.	✓	

Observer's Comments:

The aim of the lesson has been achieved. Although the text was a bit complicated for elementary students the ST was able to explain all the unknown words properly. She also responded to students' questions well and they could understand the meaning of the new words and the whole story. The students were interested in the theme because the previous lessons they had learnt about history and famous people and could cope with the Past Simple Tense. The ST was very positive, could create a good atmosphere, but the students were a bit shy. As a teacher I could recommend to use more visual materials.

Observer's Signature:

Spinga

Date:

11th May

Student Teacher's
Signature:

Dause

Date:

11.05.2015