

**An Integrated Program to Promote the Confidence of Saudi Public School  
Students in Speaking English**

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## Abstract

This case study investigates the introduction, implementation and evaluation of an integrated program—Let’s Speak English (LSE)—in a Grade 7 Saudi Arabian classroom. This program is designed to promote students’ competence and confidence in speaking English.

Saudi public schools aim to educate students to use English in real-life communication. However, the current curriculum—particularly the spoken English syllabus—does not meet these expectations. The majority of Saudi high school students graduate with low levels of understanding and competence in speaking English, despite having been taught English from Grade 4. This situation in schools demands the development of a syllabus that embraces communicative and interactive pedagogies.

The following questions guide this study:

1. What is LSE?
2. Does LSE build confidence and increase the participation of Grade 7 students in the English-speaking classroom? If so, how does it do this?
3. What teaching and learning strategies of LSE contribute to the improvement of spoken English in a Grade 7 Saudi classroom?
4. What is the role of the LSE teacher in an English-speaking classroom?

This study investigates the teaching and learning associated with LSE over 16 weeks on a daily basis. LSE is based on four themes: ‘My News’, ‘Islamic Chants’, ‘Stories in English’ and ‘Videos in English’. The LSE curriculum differs from the traditional teacher-directed approach to introducing a learner-centred approach. Twenty-one teachers, four supervisors and 28 students contributed to this study and participated in observations, interviews and surveys.

This study found that LSE contributes positively to students’ linguistic confidence and competence. The factors found to contribute to students’ increased confidence and competence included increased opportunities to participate in group activities and speak English in front of peers, connecting learning to real-life experiences and the Islamic religion, authentic activities,

and a supportive learning environment. The outcomes from this study will inform current practice and policy in the teaching and learning of English in Saudi Arabian classrooms, and will contribute to creating an engaging, interactive and learner-centred syllabus for the future.

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## List of Abbreviations

CAH	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CLL	Community Language Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CPH	Critical Period Hypothesis
DGS	Department of General Statistics
EFL	English Foreign Language
EL	English Language
ESL	English as Second Language
FL	Foreign Language
FLL	Foreign Language Learning
GDC	General Direction of Curricula
GPGE	General Presidency of Girls Education
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
LLS	Language Learning Strategies
LSE	Let's Speak English
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Minister of Higher Education
MoP	Ministry of Planning
NA	Natural Approach
PPP	Presentation, Practice and Production
SL	Second Language
SLL	Second Language Learning
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TPR	Total Physical Response
TPRS	Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling