



## The role of outdoor language arts activities in language learning

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### Abstract

Learning should be assisted by both outdoor and in-class activities that contribute to knowledge structuring. Students can energetically participate in outdoor actions and learn by doing. Learning requires an unlimited deal of participation and effort. These activities that afford firsthand experiences, support EFL students in putting theory into repetition and improving their performance. The goal of this investigation is to find out how important outdoor language arts activities are for intermediate school students. The researcher employed an experimental approach and enlisted the help of (60) male students. "The participants are split into two groups, each with thirty students: an experimental group and a control group. To balance the two groups, certain variables are used. The findings show that there are important differences in reading ability between the experimental and control groups, with the experimental group outperforming the control group.

*Keywords*: the role; outdoor language art; activities; language learning; EFL students; performance

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Problem of the Study

The language environment is emphasized as a critical component of the e-education sector and language learning. Previous research indicates a dearth of research in this area; additionally, there is a dearth of study on language learning in outdoor situations; consequently, children's language learning is heavily reliant on the indoor physical environment. Additionally, the paucity of literature on this subject underscore the importance of examining language learning in outdoor settings.

### 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The present study purposes at:

1. "The purpose of this article is to outline critical difficulties that must be solved before the outdoors may be used as a dynamic language learning setting."
2. "Demonstrate the impact of outdoor language on the learning process."
- 3- "The purpose of this study is to investigate, analyze, and characterize the role of outdoor language arts activities on language learning in natural settings."

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### 1.3 Objective of the Study

The study aims at:

1. Measuring the role of Outdoor Language Arts Activities in developing EFL students' achievement in learning language.
2. Finding out the effect of outdoor language activities in raising EFL students' understanding of foreign language.
3. Exploring whether there is any statistically important difference in the levels of achieving the goals of teaching foreign language throughout using Outdoor language Arts Activities.

### 1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

The purposes of the present study are theoretical to be achieved through verifying the subsequent hypothesis:

1. "There are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group in the pre-test."
2. "There are no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group in the post-test."
3. "There are no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of students' achievement of the experimental group in the pre and post-tests."

### 1.5 The Limits

The scope of this investigation is:

1. The role of Outdoor language arts activities and its impact on language learning.
2. During the academic year, Iraqi EFL first intermediate school pupils attended Abin Al-Mutim School (2020-2021).

### 1.6 The Value

The significant of the current research can be as follows:

1. This study aims to shed light on the concept of outdoor language, which may be unfamiliar to others, as well as explain its impact on language learning.
2. This study will be useful for teachers and instructor especially the study highlights how individuals concept their knowledge by participating and interacting in changed social environments and interaction between teacher and learners, so this one of the activates in teaching language.
- 3- Develop of activities related to this subject and choose the opportunity activity for each group of learner and suitable for the context.

### 1.7 Definition of the Basic Terms

#### 1.7.1 The Role

A role is the anticipated conduct of an individual who possesses a certain social position or status in sociology. A role is a full pattern of socially accepted conduct that enables an individual to be identified and placed within a community. Additionally, it acts as a coping method for dealing with repeating circumstances and with the roles of other individuals (for example, parent–child roles).

"Teachers have a significant role in education and, more important, in the lives of the students they instruct. What differentiates a teacher is his or her skill to instruct and favorably effective students. In general, a teacher's role in education encompasses more than instruction. Teaching takes on a multitude of forms in today's world, and a teacher must perform the roles of an external parent, counselor, mentor," and role model, among others.

### 1.7.2 Outdoor Language Arts Activities

A connection to the natural world is critical for all elements of kids' development and is critical for ensuring optimal mental of each student, emotional, social, and physical health. Outdoor education is about involving children and adolescents in a variety of ways. Typically, practitioners function as facilitators, utilizing multisensory and experiential strategies. This helps children and teenagers to partake in "emotional, physical, aesthetic, spiritual, and cognitive experiences as part of their learning process; the location or context in which learning happens also plays a role in the process." Outdoor environments are critical because they agree children to grow an understanding of themselves and their surroundings (Ouvry, 2003).

Additionally, they help youngsters develop their ability to communicate their information, express their emotions, and make their own decisions without asking assistance, therefore increasing their independence. They have achieved achievement in their life. Additionally, they serve as laboratories for experimentation, discovery, and research. Children may study freely and enjoying in a secure atmosphere that combines nature and engages all of their senses. Utilizing information and utilizing learning materials independently of instructor limits can help preschool children develop their creativity and comprehension (Studer, 1998).

*Gair* (1997) identified six characteristics of an outdoor environment database of education:

1. Outdoor education takes place. It is not required provided in a classroom
2. Participants take part in activities in a hands-on manner.
3. Objects from the real world are utilised. The activities are carried out with the assistance of real-world items and the senses.
4. Rather than recalling previously acquired facts, it is found that connections exist between things or occurrences as well as those stated.
5. Learning by doing and experiencing engages several senses.
6. Children invention outdoor activities engaging and enjoyable because of the nature of an outdoor education setting, which is not the case in an enclosed classroom.

According to some academics, there are no outdoor education initiatives or programs. It contains information that is meaningful and fair, just like any other educational program does. To put it another way, outdoor education enables schools to deliver programs in a variety of settings and with adequate educational possibilities.

### 1.7.3 Language Learning

Language facilitates the complicated process of discovery, cooperation, and inquiry that constitutes learning. Language is a social and distinctively human way of investigating, representing, and transmitting meaning (Glass & Stanley, 1970).

It is collected of interconnected and rule-governed symbol organizations. Along with being a defining "characteristic of culture, language is an unmistakable marker of individual identity and is required for developing interpersonal relationships, comprehending social situations, expanding

experience, reflecting on one's thoughts and actions, and contributing to a democratic society". "The primary mode of communication and cognition is language. The process of language development is circular and recursive. Pupils develop their language skills by applying what they have learned in new and more difficult circumstances and with growing complexity". They reproduce and usage past information in order to extend and improve their language and comprehension. "Students gain language fluency and competency by learning and incorporating new language structures into their repertoire and using them in a range of circumstances. Positive learning experiences in language-rich contexts inspire students to continue expanding their knowledge, abilities, and techniques, as well as their interests".

Language acquisition is a constant process that enters the bloodstream throughout an individual's lifespan. Students develop language skills as they interact their views, moods, and knowledges, create relations with family, and attempt to understand and organize their surroundings. They may speak many languages or may choose to learn another during their time there in their school. It is vital to respect and enhance the original language of each pupil. Prior familiarity with one language makes learning new languages easier.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### *2.1 Outdoor Language Arts Activities*

Elik (2012) "performed an evaluation of the outdoor play spaces in nine preschools in Zmit, Turkey. They argued that outdoor areas were underutilized and inappropriate for children to play in due to a disregard for the physical arrangement of these locations. Numerous other Turkish research should discovered that physical layouts and green spaces in schools are insufficient for children's growth. This has a detrimental effect on schooling. Additionally, they established that outdoor space arrangements for preschools are ignored and underused" (Elik, 2012; Başar, 2000; Volkan Aksu & Demirel, 2011; Karatekin & Etinkaya, 2013).

Outdoor learning environments, as described in the literature, provide students with opportunities to obtain firsthand experiences and information. Assist students in developing connections between what they learn in class and what they do in their everyday lives. (Ertaş, en, & Parmaszolu, 2011). According to study conducted in the United States, schools that make use of outdoor classrooms as well as new methods of nature-based observed education do better than their counterparts. Social subjects, science, languages, the arts and mathematics have all seen significant improvements in recent years (Cooper, 2015; Kindred, 1968). Being outside and in nature while learning increases the speed with which long-term information acquisition and retrieval takes place.

Many researches had been conducted on the advantages of recreational recreation for the growth and progress of preschoolers, and the results have been positive. Although the connected study has come to certain results, they have not yet been published. This is becoming increasingly popular in early childhood. It is not normal procedure among early childhood researchers who have received formal education to investigate the outdoors as well as landscape activities.

### *2.2 Advantage of Outdoor*

Outdoor activity is an excellent "way for men, women, and children of all ages to have fun".

"It enables people to come outside and appreciate their natural surroundings while also inhaling fresh air. Apart from discovering nature's numerous wonders, the outdoors offers an abundance of activities that never fail to entice us to return for more. Outdoor leisure has a plethora of benefits and will help keep you and your family physically and psychologically well".

Outdoor leisure, such as mountain biking, is not an indulgence; it has some health, physical, and economic advantages.

1. Beneficial to the intellect. Outdoor recreation provides several psychological advantages, including tension reduction or avoidance; "greater self-esteem, confidence, and creativity; spiritual growth; and an increased sense of thrill, adventure, and challenge in life."

2. Beneficial to the body. "Getting outside has several physical benefits, including enhanced aerobic, cardiovascular, and muscular fitness, as well as improved immune system function".

3. Even more "beneficial for your social life. The great outdoors provides social benefits such as uniting with like-minded outdoor enthusiasts and increasing pride in your region and country".

4. Economically beneficial. "Outdoor recreation also has economic benefits: those who engage in outdoor recreation on a regular basis tend to be more productive at work. Outdoor recreation generates employment possibilities, which results in economic growth. Additionally, preserving natural areas that are necessary for outdoor activities boosts property values".

5. "Excellent for use in the great outdoors. Outdoor activity has a number of environmental advantages, including an enhanced knowledge of environmental issues. Concern generated by outdoor leisure may result in an increase in participation with environmental concerns".

## 2.3 Literature Review

Outdoor language art activities is a new strategy which have very limited related studies.

### 2.3.1 *Yıldırım and Akamca (2017)*

The purposes of this research which entitled (The effect of outdoor learning activities on the development of preschool children) was directed towards revealing effects of outdoor activities on cognitive, linguistic, motor, and social-emotional development of preschool children. The sample of this study was (35) children in preschool whom they lived in damaging regions in İzmir, Turkey, and they have not able to contract education, ten-week preschool education concerning outdoor activities. This investigation was designed according to one group pre-test and post-test model. The consequences shown that "outdoor activities" improved the skills of preschool children "cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional and motor".

### 2.3.2 *Norling, Martina and Sandberg, Anette (2015)*

The goal of this review is to discover, analyse, and describe how preschool teachers see language development in natural settings. The information was gathered through focus groups with 165 preschool teachers in three Swedish cities. The study is significant because the findings add to our understanding of preschool staff's perceptions of language acquisition in outdoor settings and provide insights to help preschool staff enhance children's language development in these settings.

## 2.4 Discussion of the Previous Studies

1. The goal of Yldrm and Akamca (2017) is to discover the impacts of outdoor activities on preschool children's cognitive, physical, linguistic, and social-emotional development and Norling, and Sandberg, (2015) aim is to search, examines, and term how preschool staff perceive language learning in outdoor environments, while the current study aims are: measuring the role of Outdoor Language Arts Activities in developing EFL students' achievement in learning language, finding out the effect of outdoor language activities in raising EFL students' understanding of foreign language and exploring

whether there is any statistically important difference in the levels of achieving the goals of teaching foreign language throughout using Outdoor language Arts Activities.

2. The sample of Yıldırım and Akamca (2017) is (35) children in preschool whom they lived in damaging regions in İzmir, Turkey, and they have not able to contract education, and Norling, and Sandberg, (2015) sample is 165 preschool staff members, showed in three cities in Sweden are interviewed the current research sample is (60) intermediate Iraqi students.

3. Yıldırım and Akamca (2017) ten-week preschool education concerning outdoor activities, and This study was considered according to one group pre-test and post-test model, and the current study also using pre posttest design to conduct the consequences of the research.

4. The outcomes of Yıldırım and Akamca (2017) shown that “outdoor activities” improved the skills of preschool children “cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional and motor”, Norling and Sandberg (2015) conducted an important study, and the findings contribute to our understanding of preschool staffs' perceptions of language acquisition in outdoor settings, as well as provide insights to assist preschool staff promote children's language learning in outdoor settings.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 The Procedures

Choosing an acceptable "design for a research project is a critical decision that a researcher must make" (Van Dalen,1979). The term "experimental design" refers to "the blueprint for the processes that enable the researcher to test hypotheses by obtaining reliable conclusions regarding the connection between independent and dependent variables (Best and Khan,2006)." The "experimental group of pupils is taught through outdoor language arts activities, whereas the control group is taught through a more traditional way. The pretest-posttest equivalent groups design was used in this investigation".

#### 3.2 Population and Sampling

The term "population" refers to the whole thing that is being looked into (Best and Khan,2006). The demographic of this study is made up of students who will be in their first year of intermediate school in 2020-2021. 90 students were chosen at random to be in the research group. The 60 students who took part in this study were split into two groups. "The experimental group is taught using outdoor language arts activities, whereas the control group is taught through a traditional way. As stated in table, the experimental group consisted of thirty students, whereas the control group comprised of thirty students as shown in table (1)".

**Table 1.** The Sample of the Study

Group	N. of students	Approach
Control	30	Conventional
Experimental	30	Outdoor Language Arts Activities

#### 3.3 Equivalence of the Groups

After selecting a sample from each group and prior to conducting the experiment, an equivalency was performed using information supplied by students or other sources. Here, we talk about how old the students are and how well their parents have been educated.

#### 3.4 Validity and Reliability of the test

Validity is defined as "the truthfulness of the test when it assesses the components meant to be measured by the examinee." (Bynom, 2001). Validity is classified into two categories: validity on the face and on the content. Using the same test on the same set of testees on two separate occasions is called "reliability." This means that the results are the same when the same test is used (Douglas, 2004). According to Cronbach's Alpha test, a test is credible if the calculated coefficient is 0.81, which is what the test needs to pass.

### 3.5 Item Analysis

This entails "verifying replies generated by all students for each item on the test" (Davies, 1986). The procedure of determining the ease and complexity of each item and replacing the incompatible ones. In order to give one group (the upper group) 27% of the highest scores and the other group (the lower group) 27% of the lowest scores, total scores were ranked from highest to lowest (those represent the lower group). It's important to figure out how hard the test items are and how good they are at telling you which ones are which.

#### 3.5.1 Difficulty Level (DL)

"The DL indicates the percentage of examinees who passed the examination. It is determined by dividing the proportion of students who successfully answered the item by the total number of pupils. The purpose of this approach is to choose objects whose complexity corresponds to the students' level" (Wilson, 2005).

#### 3.5.2 Discrimination Power

It has been used to assess "insight capability. Additionally, difficulty level has been utilized to quantify the complexity of post-assessment test items (Heaton, 1988). Ebel (1972) indicates that when the discriminating power is 0.30 or above, the item is appropriate; when the discriminating power is less than 0.30, the item is weak, and the instructor should replace it. All test items demonstrated enough discriminating power and an appropriate level of difficulty. Only a few components are modified and altered to be suitable".

### 3.6 Final Administration of the Test

After ensuring that the exam is valid, reliable, administerable, and of an appropriate degree of difficulty, it is administered to a random sample (30) of second intermediate school pupils. It had been applied to pupils in a similar manner. Students were instructed to listen to the computer and then write their comments on their exam sheets. Following the distribution of the test papers, "the researchers read the instructions to the students, demonstrated how to answer certain items, and described the aim of the exam in order for them to take the test more seriously and interact with it more successfully". The individuals were given adequate time to respond thoroughly to the questions. The exam was limited to one hour in duration.

### 3.7 Achievement Assessment Scoring Scheme

The Assessment Methodology is a way to better understand the results that come from the tests. The test is worth 100 points. The test has four questions, each worth 25 points, and each question has a score of 50.

#### 4. Data Analysis, Discussion of Outcomes, Conclusions, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

##### 4.1 Data Analysis and Discussion of Outcomes

After administering the achievement exam to the sample of pupils, the resulting data were gathered and statistically analyzed:

##### 4.1.1. Comparison of control and experimental Groups' performance in pretest.

The control "group's mean score on the pretest is (18.37), while the experimental group's mean score is (18.70). Then, the t-test procedure is used to control whether there is a statistically important difference between two independent samples' mean scores. As indicated in table, the calculated t-value is (0.85), whereas the tabulated t-value is (2.000) at (29) degrees of freedom and (0.05) in "level of significance" as exposed in table (2).

People who took part in the study's pre-test were not statistically different from each other. This means that the first hypothesis is true, which says that "there is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of children in the pre-test between the two groups." This is normal because the two groups have the cultural background and same social and were taught the similar English during their early teaching years.

**Table 2.** The outcomes of the control and experimental groups in the pre-test.

Group	No. of Students	Mean Scores	SD	DF	T-Value		Level of Significance
					Computed	Tabulated	
Control	30	18.37	1.43	29	0.85	2.000	0.05
Experimental	30	18.70	1.62				

##### 4.1.2 Comparison of control and experimental performance in post-test.

After the test, the average value for the control group is (18.33) and the average value for the test group is (21.36). Then use the t-test method to determine if there is a statistically important difference between the mean values of the two independent samples. As shown in the table, the calculated t-value is (6.15), and the tabular t-value (2,000) is at the degrees of freedom (29) and the significance level (0.05) as stated in table (3), respectively.

This shows that there is a statistically important difference in the post-test between the study's two groups. Thus, the second hypothesis is rejected, since "there is no significant change in the mean accomplishment scores of students in the post-test between the two groups." This suggests that when kids are taught English through outdoor language arts activities, their performance in learning English improves.



**Table 3.** The results of the two groups in the post-test.

Group	No. of Students	Mean Scores	SD	DF	T-Value		Level of Significance
					Computed	Tabulated	
Control	30	18.33	2.25	29	6.15	2.000	0.05
Experimental	30	21.36	1.49				

#### 4.1.3 Comparison of results before and after the test between the control group and the experimental group.

Group: The pre-test had a score of 18.70. The post-test had a score of 18.70 as well (21.37). Afterwards, use the t-test method to see if the mean of the results from two independent samples is different in any way. Figure out how many degrees of freedom you have. Then figure out how many significant levels you have. Then figure out how many degrees of freedom you have. Then figure out how many significant levels you have This means that there is a statistically important difference between the consequences of the post-test and the pre-test for the group that was taught outdoor language activities. This means that it is cheaper after the test. I am here. s

**Table 4.** The results of the two groups in the pre and post-test.

Test	No. of Students	Mean Scores	SD	DF	T-Value		Level of Significance
					Computed	Tabulated	
Pre	30	18.70	1.62	29	5.70	2.04	0.05
Post	30	21.37	2.25				

## 5. Discussion

The current study's findings reveal that students in the experimental group who were taught utilising Outdoor Language Arts Activities (OLAA) performed better than those in the control group who were taught using the standard method. This suggests that OLAA is more effective in teaching English than the traditional method.

According to the study, the improvement in students' English achievement with OLAA can be attributed to the following factors:

- 1/ OLAA is simple for teachers to implement and for students to utilise.
- 2/ It's adaptable and entertaining to use.

- 3/ It boosts pupils' self-assurance in their studying abilities.
- 4/ It promotes critical thinking, brainstorming, and creativity.
- 5/ It aids kids in better comprehending, memorising, and learning language skills.

### 5.1. Implementation of the Study

A practical outdoor learning activities build on EFL students' ideas, assess current practice and address obstacles.

In implementing outdoor learning activities in EFL classroom skills will support to help all students and make classrooms become a rich and accessible for teachers and facilitate the curriculum in a very simple way.

Training to help students make the most of their school outdoor spaces, developing ideas and building their skills and self-assurance.

Collaboration outdoors' collaboration can developed EFL students' "emotional, intellectual and behavioural performance, their creativity, problem-solving, independence, confidence and more".

"Students demonstrated more positive social behaviour when they are learning and playing outside their classes."

In using Outdoor learning activities students feel that they are free in learning all language skills without afraid of making mistakes. They enjoyed to participate in lesson's activities and student - student and student teacher interaction.

## 6. Conclusion

As a consequence of the investigation, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Data analysis shows that outdoor language and artistic activities are a useful tool to help children learn and master the subject.
2. All students believe that outdoor language activities help improve communication skills (reading, speaking, writing, listening), grammar, vocabulary and creative thinking.
3. Gathered statistics demonstrate that pupils are more capable of expressing their views than they were before to the study's conduct.
4. Outdoor language arts activities not only pique students' curiosity, but also attract and maintain their attention, therefore enhancing their ability to learn a foreign language.
5. The utilization of outdoor language arts activities fosters student connection.
6. Additionally, the outdoor language arts activities allow kids to practice repeating what they have heard in order to improve their speaking and reading abilities.
7. Outdoor language arts activities are less intimidating for many pupils and can help boost their engagement in class.

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