

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Division of English



**An Investigation of Major Difficulties Encountered by EFL
Learners in Speaking
The Case of Second Year Mohamed Belounar Secondary School
Students of Biskra**

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requirement for the fulfillment of Master's degree in English language: Science of
Language**

Submitted by:

Mrs. SAOULI Sihem

Supervised by:

Mrs. HEBIRET Sara

Board Examiners

Dr. TEMAGOULT Slimane

University of Biskra

Mrs. HEBIRET Sara

University of Biskra

Supervisor

Mr. LEBIER Khaled

University of Biskra

Mrs. DJOUAMAA Houda

University of Biskra

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Dedication

I dedicate this present research work to:

My father **LAZHAR** for his infinite sacrifices and great support throughout the many years
of my education

My beloved and caring mother **RACHIDA** for her love and confidence in me

My dear husband **ADEL** for his patience and his supporting words

My dear brothers **ABDELKRIM, SOFIANE, and HICHEM** and their wives

My adorable sister **MOUNA** and her husband

My nephews and nieces

My all family and my husband's family

My soulmate and the companion of the trail **ASMA FERHAT**

My best friends **SID LAMIA** and **NOUARA YAMINA**

All my teachers

My deepest gratitude for their support and encouragements.

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Abstract

Speaking is one of the most significant skills to be developed as a means of effective communication. Speaking skill is viewed as one of the most difficult features of language learning. Most language learners find difficulties to express themselves in a spoken language. They face problems to use and to communicate with the foreign language in order to express their ideas effectually. In this research study, we investigate the major difficulties encountered by EFL students of Mohamed Belounar High School in Biskra in order to check if EFL high school students benefit from their lessons in speaking, figure out the nature of speaking difficulties that usually face them, and examine the major causes of those difficulties that hinder them to speak. Descriptive mixed-method research is used as the design of this research study. The sample of this research consists of 74 second year scientific stream students, their level in English is 9/20, and two teachers. The data used are classroom observations and questionnaires for teachers and students. Based on the classroom observations, the students face psychological hindrances like (a) shyness, (b) fear of making mistakes, (c) lack of self-confidence, (d) they cannot find suitable vocabulary and expressions to use, (e) lack of pronunciation of some words, (f) the misuse of tenses, (g) poor English background, and finally (h) uninterested in the subject matter. The questionnaires also display the major reasons behind the students' failure to speak correctly, including (a) lack of suitable learning environments, (b) lack of language laboratory, (c) lack of authentic videos and real material which could help students learn much better the mechanisms of speaking appropriately in English, and finally (d) insufficient teaching hours for the speaking skill per-week.

List of acronyms

ALM: Audio-Lingual Method

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CBA: Competency-Based Approach

CBE: Competency-Based Education

CBLT: Competency-Based Language Teaching

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

CNN: Cable News Network

DM: Direct Method

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

N: Number

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

US: United State

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General introduction

Speaking is fundamental to human communication. It is the means and the ability to transmit a person's messages, feelings, thoughts, and we can also exchange information in different situations. It plays a major role in helping people to communicate with each other. Teaching speaking is a significant aspect in the field of teaching foreign languages. This aspect prepares students to communicate in English; furthermore, it helps and encourages them to express themselves, and it reinforces their listening skills. It is not just teaching speaking but also learning speaking that has clear importance in improving the students' vocabulary. Students day after day learn new vocabularies which allow them to memorize and retrieve them during oral or written expression. Therefore, learning speaking has major importance in the progress of their writing.

1. Statement of the problem

The educational system in Algeria considers the speaking skill as essential to be taught. Yet, Zemali (2019), in his article entitled, " English language in Algeria" mentions that Algeria is far left behind in English speaking ability compared to some African countries because French is obligated on Algerians.

Speaking is a productive skill. It is very essential and important skill that EFL students need to master to speak in the target language accurately and fluently. The present student researcher has been teaching in high school, and we have noticed that the high school students struggle when they open their mouths and speak in English. For example, they usually get inhibited once speaking in English in front of their teachers or classmates. They also are worried of making mistakes. Sometimes they do not have anything to say. They sometimes have good ideas in their minds, yet they are not able to express or transmit them. In the most of the time, they do not participate, and in case they participate, they use Arabic or. As for the teaching strategies, sometimes teachers in the school, where we have taught, use Arabic in

their explanation because they do not have an effective strategy or method to make the learners understand what they say. Furthermore, students are not motivated to speak in English. This might be due to the curriculum which does not give importance to the speaking skill. Accordingly, there are no language laboratories in the school to teach authentic oral skill. The teaching hours of speaking are insufficient (1 hour per-week). Besides, poor learning environment, poor level students, and reluctant students hinder the development of the speaking skill among secondary school students.

2. Research questions

Based on the statement of the problem, efforts are made to find answers to the following research question:

1. What are the speaking difficulties second year EFL secondary school students usually face?
2. What are the major causes of the second year EFL secondary school students speaking difficulties?

3. Research hypotheses

Throughout the present research work, we attempt to confirm or disconfirm the following hypotheses:

1. If students listen carefully to their teachers' English, that will help them to speak correctly.
2. If students learn via authentic videos, that will enable them to speak correctly.
3. If secondary school students practice speaking inside the classroom, that will support them to speak better.

4. Research aims

This study aims to investigate the major difficulties faced students in speaking English as a foreign language, we attempt to: (a) check if second-year EFL high school students benefit from their lessons in speaking; (b) figure out the nature of speaking difficulties that usually face them; and finally (c) examine the major causes of those difficulties that confront them.

5. Significance of the study

The present study will be significant in investigating the major difficulties come across second-year students studying at Mohamed Belounar of Biskra in speaking skill because this skill is very important in allowing students to communicate in foreign language appropriately. It has also a major influence on enhancing listening skills and memory. Besides, through frequent speaking among students inside and/or outside the classroom, students will increase their English vocabulary. The use of the correct speaking will improve their pronunciation via authentic videos that have a significant impact on the students.

6. Population sampling

At this level, we are going to identify the sample of this study that deals with the speaking difficulties those high school students face. In order to do so, we start with the teachers' sample then we move to the students' samples.

6.1. Teachers' sampling

Teachers' sampling consists of two experienced teachers (n=2). The female teacher has got 30 years' experience in teaching English, while the male teacher is with 12 years' experience in teaching English language at Mohamed Belounar High School in the Willaya of Biskra from the total population (n=5). We are going to work just with the two teachers because this year they are not novice and they know the program very well. Also, we are going to attend their sessions for classroom observations.

6.2. Students' sampling

The students are studying at Mohamed Belounar High School. they are (n=74) students (56 girls and 18 boys). They are from 15 to 20 years old. their first language is Arabic, and their average in English is 9/20. This sample has been selected purposively in order to observe the difficulties and the mistakes that confront them since students are a second-year scientific stream, and they are not specialized in English, and they are interested in scientific subjects.

7. Research methodology

The present research study is descriptive and interpretive in nature. It employs a mixed-method including qualitative and quantitative methods. The aims are to investigate the difficulties of the speaking skill and look for the reasons to propose adequate treatments to them. In order to answer the research questions, we select the following research tools: questionnaire and classroom observations.

7.1. Research tools

In the current research, we are going to use two data collection tools: questionnaires, and classroom observations.

7.1.1. Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a list of written questions with choices and answers in order to collect information from respondents. They are semi-structured questionnaires with close-ended and open-ended forms designed for teachers to collect information about the difficulties of speaking skill and their causes. Its major parts are: (a) part one is about the biographical information; (b) part two is about teaching speaking skill in general; (c) part three is about the speaking difficulties that face students and hinder them from expressing their ideas in English, and finally (d) part four is about the causes that lead to those difficulties. Additionally, questionnaire has been designed for students in order to explore the difficulties that faced them when speaking in English as target language. This questionnaire is semi-structured in nature, and the aim is to get in-depth and more accurate information about the problem from the students' point of view.

7.1.2. Classroom observations

The present student researcher conducts classroom observations. The aim of this research action is to observe, explore, and examine the high school students' of the scientific stream

speaking difficulties and take notes in a form of prose and classify them into themes followed with adequate analysis.

8. Limitations of the study

There have been some obstacles that we have faced along this research study. Questionnaire research tool has been conducted online. Additionally, the number of the respondents have been reduced into 25 participants instead of 74. Further, we planned to make stimulated recall interview with the students to explore the speaking difficulties and their causes; however, this becomes impossible due to Covid-19 in which all schools have been closed.

9. Structure of the dissertation

In this study, our research work will be divided into three chapters: In the first chapter, we are going to talk about the speaking skill, its definition, and its types and importance. In the second chapter, we are going to talk about teaching the speaking skill, speaking difficulties, and the reasons of those speaking difficulties as well as the strategies (and activities) that help secondary school student to improve their speaking. The last chapter that is the practical part will be divided into two main parts. Part one is qualitative data analysis (classroom observations), and part two is devoted to the quantitative analysis of the collected data (questionnaires).

Chapter one: Probe of the speaking skill

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Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) calls for learners' real exposure to foreign language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This latter is an indispensable skill that language learners ought to master with the other skills. It is a complicated process of sending and receiving messages and thoughts through the use of verbal expressions; in addition to non-verbal signs like facial expressions and gestures. The main aim of this skill is to achieve high progress of abilities to produce a second or foreign language. It is considered an essential skill to be promoted since learners are obliged to be placed in situations or positions where communication in the English language is required.

In this chapter, the light will be spot on the speaking skill with more details, its definition, identifying its importance, types, and elements, including its main characteristics, showing the correlation between speaking and other skills, also learners' positive and negative attitudes towards the speaking skill.

1.1. Definition of the speaking skill

A skill is a natural capacity or power to implement something competently with talent and strengths. It is the ability to do something well. Learner's Pocket Dictionary (2008, p. 426) stated that the definition of speaking is the ability to use any language by using the voice to say something or to communicate. It involves the actions in the part of the speaker as a psychological (articulator) and physical (acoustic) stage. Thornbury (2005, p. 5) clarified the act of articulation of a speech via the biological analogy,

A stream of air is produced in the lungs, driven through the vocal cords, and shaped by, among other things, the position and movement of the tongue, teeth, and lips. Vowel sounds are produced primarily by the action of the tongue and the lips. Consonant sounds are determined by the point at which the air stream is obstructed.

Speaking is the main process from which humans can orally express themselves, their feelings, and ideas through human organs. The concept of speaking skill is defined by many authors and each one defined it according to the nature of his/her study. Hedge (2000) defined speaking as "A skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed" (p.261). Speaking as a significant skill refers to the way people think and communicate. It is an influential skill that merits more attention in a first and second language because it refers to people's opinions and identities. Richard and Renandya (2002) announced, "In order to learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules" (p.204). That is to say, the grammatical and semantic rules are insufficient in the process of learning speaking a foreign language because it needs familiarity with the communicative aspects of the target language.

The acquisition of the speaking skill is essential in transmitting messages that facilitate the communication procedure. Cameron (2001) stated, "Speaking is the active use of language to express meanings so that other people can make sense of them" (p.40). Simply, it is a means of communication that make people comprehend each other while expressing opinions. In the same context, Hadfield (1990, p.7) resembled, "Speaking is a type of bridge for language learners between the classroom and the world outside". The current skill paves the way for language learners to relate between the real-life situation and the academic setting. It is more frequently used than writing.

Speaking is supposed to be an active and productive skill. Luoma (2004) proposed what the learners need to know in order to speak in a foreign language. Learners must master the sound system of the language, recognize appropriate vocabulary used, be able to use words together clearly with confidence, and respect the grammar rules. Additionally, they should speak a foreign language pragmatically. In other words, they must understand what is meant,

and be able to respond appropriately to maintain relationships or to achieve their communicative goals (p. 1). Boonkit (2010) suggested,

Speaking is one of the four macro skills necessary for effective communication in any language, particularly when speakers are not using their mother tongue. As English is universally used as a means of communication, especially in the internet world, English speaking skills should be developed along with the other skills so that these integrated skills will enhance communication achievement both with native speakers of English and other members of the international community. (p. 1305)

Nowadays, English is the language of the world and most people use it in their daily life while speaking. That is why the latter skill should be developed with other language skills to promote communication achievement with the members of the whole community.

1.2. Speaking importance in EFL classes

The core of mastering the English language is speaking because it is regarded as the major skill to be improved. It is the means that humans communicate with, exchange ideas and thoughts, share knowledge, hence it is very crucial in allowing people to be able to express their opinions, intentions, and to communicate in foreign language appropriately that is why the focus is mainly on it. Hedge (2000) reported, “They may need this skill for a variety of reasons; for example, to keep up a rapport in relationships, influence people, and win or lose negotiations” (p. 261). She assured the importance of speaking skill to transfer intentions, ideas, and maintain social relationships. In speaking, learners learn how to organize ideas, regulate sentences, and express thoughts with good pronunciation and comprehensible language. According to Nunan (1991) “Mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language” (p. 39). The greatest success in learning a second or foreign language is when learners succeed in handling a conversation with the

ability to use the target language. To rephrase, learners require to use language inside or outside a classroom, give opinions, ask for more explanation, express emotions, and views. Ur (1996) confirmed, “Of all the four skills, speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as “speakers” of the language as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing.” (p.120). That is to say, speaking skill among the other skills is the most substantial which indicates that people who are proficient in speaking, they are considered as though they master all the other language skills.

1.3. Types of classroom speaking performance

In order to enhance learners’ speaking performance, there are several types of the speaking skill. These involve imitative, intensive, responsive, transactional (dialogue), interpersonal (dialogue), and extensive (monologue) (Brown, 2001, pp. 271-274).

1.3.1. Imitative

Imitative can be considered as an efficient way to improve the learners’ speaking. Most EFL learners tend to imitate the heard pronounced utterances from natives whenever teachers insert authentic materials during the lecture. This involves, the ability to simulate words, phrases, or even sentences. A very few times of classroom speaking may be allocated to imitative talk, for instance, drilling is a part of the communicative language classroom offer learners a chance to listen and to repeat orally certain words of language that may cause some phonological or grammatical difficulty. They offer limited practice through repetition, and they allow to focus on one element of a language in a controlled activity.

1.3.2. Intensive

Intensive speaking means that the learners exercise some phonological, grammatical, or lexical aspect of the language. Dissimilar to imitators, intensive requires pair or group work where learners are learning certain forms of the language. In intensive assessment, tasks

include reading aloud, directed response tasks, sentence and dialogue completion, and translation up to simple sentence level.

1.3.3. Responsive

Learners, in responsive speaking, can respond in the classroom when they answer other classmates' or teacher's comments or questions in a real conversation with short, simple, and comprehensible answers so as to create a more interactional atmosphere in the classroom. These answers; as a consequence, should not spread to long conversations; besides, it should be meaningful and reliable like the following example of Brown (2001, p. 273).

T: How are you today?

S: Pretty good, thanks, and you?

T: What is the main idea of this essay?

S: The United Nations should have more authority.

S1: So, what did you write for question number one?

S2: Well, I wasn't sure, so I left it blank.

The example represented simple conversation between teacher and students and how they respond to their teacher's questions in short sentences in order to make the students get involved in speaking English and to be self-confident.

1.3.4. Transactional (dialogue)

This type of speaking, Transactional (dialogue), tries to explore learners' knowledge about a particular topic chosen by the teacher; therefore, different ideas, views, and information are exchanged in a form of long conversations. Transactional dialogue strategy based on group or pair work that seeks to transmit and exchange a piece of particular information. In contrast to responsive talk or speaking, a transactional dialogue is more extensive and may have a more negotiable nature to reach an agreement via discussion. A dependable dialogue is given to explain the previous ideas:

T: What is the main idea in this essay?

S: The United Nations should have more authority.

T: More authority than what?

S: Than it does right now.

T: What do you mean?

S: Well, for example, the UN should have the power to force a country like Iraq to destroy its nuclear weapons.

T: You don't think the UN has that power now?

S: Obviously not. Iraq is still manufacturing nuclear bombs. (Brown, 2001, pp. 273-274)

The long dialogue was between teacher and student to exchange information and knowing the student's opinion about the subject, and in order to be able to speak English fluently and accurately.

1.3.5. Interpersonal (dialogue)

Interpersonal dialogue is formed to retain social relationships. Transmission of information and knowledge are not planned within this type. Interpersonal speaking includes some difficult features in which learners are unable to deal with oral production since they need to use casual register, colloquial and emotional changes language, slang, ellipsis, sarcasm, amusement, and other sociolinguistic discussions that are complicated to be applied by learners. The following example of (Brown, 2001, p. 274) presents a kind of interpersonal conversation between Amy and Bob

Amy: Hi Bob, how's it going?

Bob: Oh, so-so

Amy: Not a great weekend, huh?

Bob: Well, far be it from me to criticize, but I'm pretty miffed about last week.

Amy: What are you talking about?

Bob: I think you know perfectly well what I'm talking about.

Amy: Oh, that...How come you get so bent out of shape over something like that?

Bob: Well, whose fault was it, huh?

Amy: Oh, wow, this is great. Wonderful. Back to square one. For caring out loud, Bob, I thought we'd settled this before. Well, what more can I say?

The example of interpersonal speaking presented between two friends Amy and Bob, they talked about their personal subjects and exchanged information using sarcastic, colloquial, and slang language that is not understandable by all people. This kind of speaking reinforces social relationship among the members of the community and improve the speaking skills

1.3.6. Extensive (monologue)

Extensive speaking (monologue) needs learners to give oral presentations, speeches, or tell stories where learners can get additional chances for classroom interaction. This kind of speaking can be used with advanced or middle classes; moreover, it can be formal, comprehensible, and well-planned language.

1.4. Elements of speaking

In order to speak second/ foreign language fluently and accurately, learners require to know the following elements that are necessary for vital speaking. Harmer (2001, pp. 269-271) presented these elements which are language features, mental and social processing.

1.4.1. Language features

One of the main elements of speaking is language features that contain the four major parts which are: connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language which aid to speak English accurately and fluently.

1.4.1.1. Connected speech

EFL learners need the ability not only to produce individual phonemes but also to use fluent connected speech. These connected speech sounds are omission i.e., to avoid or to

ellipse some repetition like (for sale), adding linking “r” like (Father-in law), or weakened through the use of stress patterning like (com/**pu**/ter) and contractions of auxiliaries, or modals attached to other words like (He would=He'd). Consequently, teachers are requested to encompass their learners in such activities designed specifically to develop their connected speech.

1.4.1.2. Expressive devices

For using effective phonological rules, foreign language learners ought to change the pitch, the stress of particular parts of utterances, vary volume and speed with the use of verbal and non-verbal (paralinguistic) means, and share some feelings (especially in face-to-face interaction) in order to convey the intended meaning; besides, creating successful and effective communication.

1.4.1.3. Lexis and grammar

Lexical phrases are highly essential in performing a language since learners sometimes use the same lexical structure. This latter means vocabulary which are a collection of words that are used in a language. According to Jackson and Amvela (2000) who suggested that vocabulary, lexis, and lexicon are synonyms. Grammar according to Harmer (2001, p. 12) is a system that describes ways of changing the form of words in a language and they can be combined together into sentences. Lexis and grammar can help EFL learners to speak English correctly. That is why teachers should provide them with different phrases for the use of different functions; for example, agreeing or disagreeing, approval, expressing surprise, opinion, sadness, or happiness in order to be involved in particular speaking contexts like a job interview.

1.4.1.4. Negotiation language

Effective learners who benefit from the use of negotiation of language, ask for further clarification while communicating and listening to others' talk to grasp their ideas. They need

also to perform their utterances efficiently when they demand to be well understood and clear, specifically when they feel that there is a lack of comprehension among the interlocutors.

1.4.2. Mental / social processing

Mental and social processing are the speaker's productive abilities about the knowledge of language skills and the way of transmitting that language skills. This element of speaking consists of language processing, interacting with others, and information processing. Those elements are important which help to understand the meaning of the speech and how that speech is conveyed.

1.4.2.1. Language processing

EFL learners should be able to process language in their minds through combining the speech in a coherent order so as to allow the listener to perceive the intended message; additionally; they should be able to retrieve phrases or words from their memories for using them while interacting with others. Harmer (2001) referred to the ability of the learners' speech to be comprehensible and convey the meaning. Thus, speaking activities during language courses are extremely important since they supply learners with effective tasks.

1.4.2.2. Interacting with others

Most of the time, the process of interaction involves interacting with one or more interlocutors simply it means speakers. An effective speaker should possess the ability to listen, careful understanding of the participant's feelings, and knowing certain linguistic rules like turn-takings, which is the skill of knowing when to start and when to finish a turn in a discussion or allowing others to do so.

1.4.2.3. Information processing

Information processing refers to the ability to process, organize information rapidly in the speakers' minds when they interact in the foreign language context i.e., it is the retrieval of

information. So, the more time is taken in the process of information, the less effective communicators and vice versa.

1.5. Characteristics of speaking performance

Accuracy and fluency are generally the main aspects that could determine the success of learning the English language among learners and their speaking performance. The two factors are considered to measure the linguistic ability and communicative competence in the language use. Traditionally, accuracy considered being more important than fluency. Contrary, Brumfit (1984) (as cited in Nunan, 2004) said that both accuracy and fluency are complementary; therefore, they should be treated equally. That is why it should be taken into consideration the two aspects in parallel.

1.5.1. Accuracy

In second and foreign language teaching, accuracy means the correctness of language system including grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. It refers to “The ability to produce grammatically correct sentences” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 223). In order to be accurate in oral production, and to be understood, learners may take into consideration the completeness and correctness of the language forms, also should be master grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

1.5.1.1. Grammar

Grammar refers to the combination of words to form a sentence which has meaning. Also, it refers to “The description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language” (Harmer 2001, p. 12). Luoma pointed out that learners’ improvements are considerably tracked by grammatical forms that they can produce accurately (2004). Moreover, learners start from simple to more complex structures, then from many mistakes to few or absence of mistakes until they, in the end, can express themselves with the correct forms of utterances.

1.5.1.2. Vocabulary

The basic condition to attain accuracy is the mastery of rich vocabularies, and a learner who possesses a great number of vocabularies may not face difficulties when speaking. According to Turk (2003), vocabulary means “The appropriate diction or the most important thing in a language especially in speaking. It helps us to express our thoughts, feelings and ideas easily both in oral or written form” (p. 87). The acquisition of words is as crucial as the knowledge of synonyms and antonyms in order to avoid the repetition of the same words.

1.5.1.3. Pronunciation

Unfortunately, numerous teachers are unaware of the importance of pronunciation. Their great emphasis is on teaching grammar and vocabulary in the acquisition of a foreign language. According to Harmer (2001), teachers feel that teaching pronunciation is difficult, worse, and boring for young learners. Alternatively, he claimed, “Concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth, making students aware of where words should be stressed – all these things give them extra information about spoken English and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility” (p.183). If learners are taught pronunciation, they will be able to differentiate between sounds, and they will improve their speaking production immensely. Besides, knowing the places of articulation, where to put stress, and when to make rising or falling intonation can help them in improving their level of proficiency and progressing understanding of spoken English. Learners ought to focus on learning pronunciation to be active speakers because if they mispronounce words, the listener will be unable to comprehend the speaker’s meaning.

1.5.2. Fluency

The major aim of EFL learners is to be able to speak fluently which means speaking using coherent speech, full sentences, feeling comfortable, and without making pauses or fillers. In the same sense, Luoma (2004, p. 90) stated,

More fluent learners used formulaic expressions more frequently to get their talk started, keep going, orient their talk to the listener, appeal for understanding, and indicate interest, pleasure and enjoyment. They also softened their talk more appropriately rather than being very direct. Observing these features in learner talk would help construct more concrete and effective fluency scales.

Researchers on fluency demonstrated that the speakers' speed or who is rapidly speaking is not the only factor that determines their fluency but also knowing when to take a pause, to take a breath or let the others understand or grasp what have the speaker said; it is an important factor as well. Some techniques and activities that help EFL learners in developing their speaking fluency like repetition drill, question and answer drill, role play technique. Thornbury (2005) argued that speed as well as pausing are the key factors that determine fluency. However, a recurring pause is an indication of the speaker's disability of speaking. He suggested some "tricks or production strategies. This means that the ability to fill the pauses such pause fillers (e.g. um, err), vagueness expression (e.g. sort of, I mean), and the repetition of the same word if there is a pause.

1.6. The Relationship between speaking and other language skills

There is a significant relationship between the speaking skill and the other language skills like reading, listening, and writing which help teachers to motivate learners in the teaching process. Edge (1993) said, "...analyzing the language into skills gives us more ways of meaningfully focusing our teaching and motivate our learners" (p.106). Teaching the speaking skill alone as a way to teach the second language is impossible; it is an integral part of the other language skills that aid learners to practice the language appropriately in all aspects and situations. Moreover, Edge (1993, p.107) declared, "The more students use their language for enjoyment the more language ability they likely to acquire". Speaking share, a

strong correlation of communication with the other skills especially when learners use them for enjoyment and pleasure.

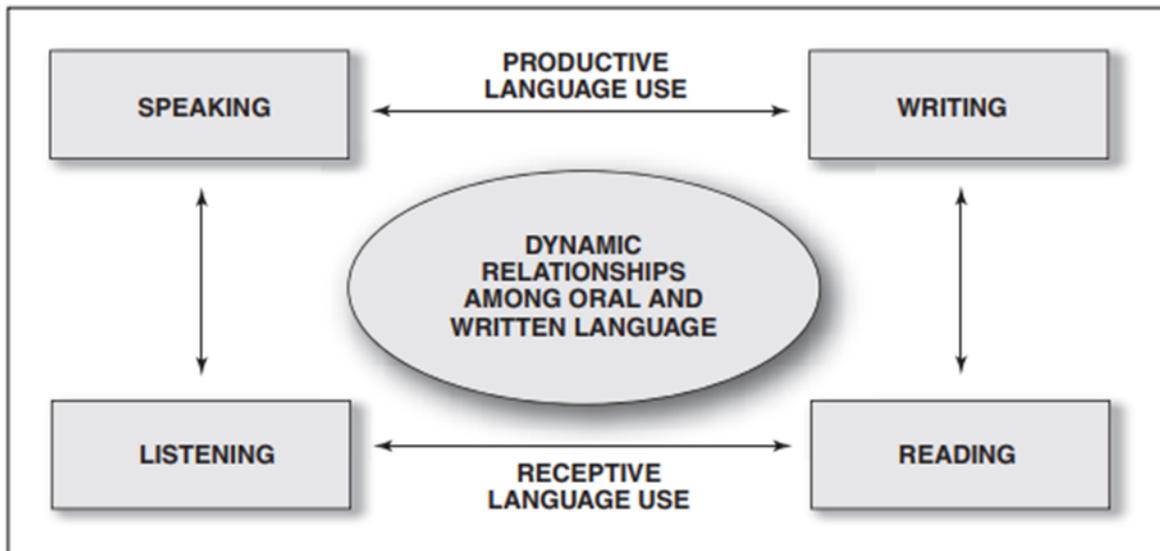


Figure 1.1. Relationships among written and oral language Adopted from reading, writing, and learning in ESL (p. 134), by S.F. Peregoy, O. Boyle, and K. Cadiero-Kaplan, 2013, Boston: Pearson.

The main objective of figure 1.1. is to exemplify the interrelationships among the skills listening, reading, speaking, and writing. More specifically, listening and reading are receptive uses of language. Written or recorded messages are received by eye or by ear, and meaning is restored based on prior knowledge. Listening and reading are not passive processes. Listeners and readers must actively take the speaker's words and re-form the message to understand it. Therefore, when learners were helped with listening comprehension, this can help them with reading comprehension. Conversely, speaking, and writing are productive uses of language. The speaker or writer must create the message for an audience. When learners were assisted with spoken composition, this may help them with written composition. Reading can be one of the most important ways to develop oral vocabulary; and writing helps to learn how to compose in oral language. So, oral and written language are linked, each one supports the other to create the whole picture.

1.6.1. The integration between speaking and listening

There is a substantial and mutual relationship between speaking and listening and they are considered complementary skills. Speaking that is the productive skill relies on the receptive skill of listening because it helps learners to understand what people want to say or transmit so as to be able to respond. Daily conversation needs the exchange of roles between speakers and listeners. Thus, the effectiveness of responses depends on effective listening comprehension. Except for lectures, oral presentations or speeches, both speakers take active mutual turns in an interactive communication. So, it is insufficient to be a good speaker without the ability to comprehend what was said by others. Anderson and Lynch (1988) stated, “For the L2 learner to be proficient partner in conversation, he needs to be skilled as both speaker and listener’ (p.15). Also, Byrne (1976, p. 8) stated that the listening skill is as significant as speaking skill since both the speaker and the listener have a positive function to perform. Thus, it is the interrelationship between the listener and the speaker during face-to-face communication that makes the whole communication. Listening is basically an active process. Nunan (1989, p. 23) stated, “We do not simply take a language in like a tape-recorder, but interpret what we hear according to our purpose in listening and our background knowledge”. When we receive messages, we interpret them and read between lines what we hear based on prior knowledge.

Learners attempt to use the target language outside the classroom where they are exposed to ordinary speech. In this case, break down communication may happen; poor understanding leads to nervousness that will supposedly hinder speech because of insufficient exposure to samples of spoken language like teacher’s talk so as to supply learners with models of oral production. Byrne (1976, p. 9) afforded two main reasons of break down communication:

- a) The learners' ability to comprehend require to be substantially extensive to be "comfortable" in a foreign language and therefore to communicate effectively. Teachers have to provide learners with a wide receptive base.
- b) The learners need properly diverse models of natural speech. Therefore, the listeners have to be taught to listen as well as to speak.

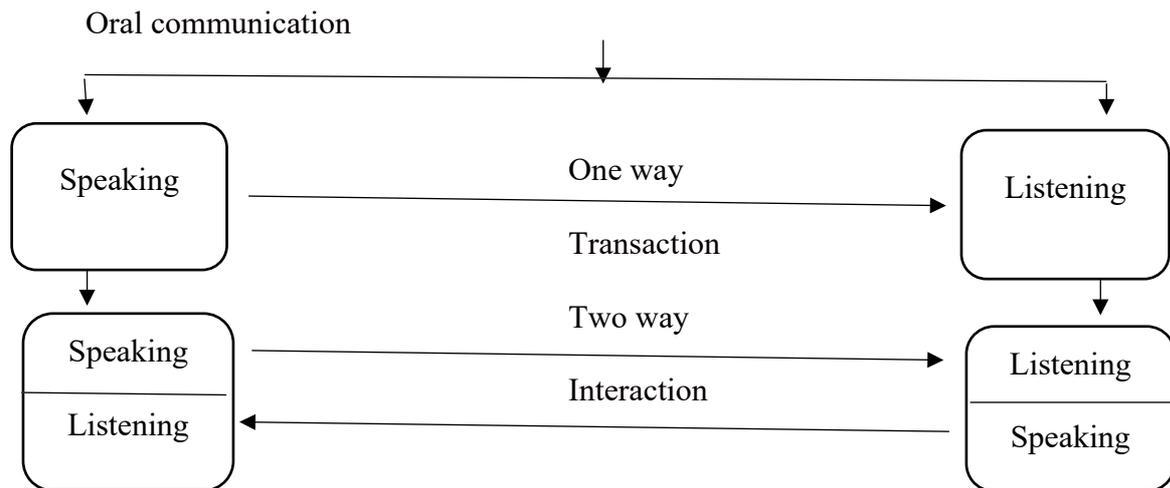


Figure 1.2. Oral Communication Adopted from a study on the learning process of English by higher secondary students (chapter 5), by K. Chidambaram, 2004, retrieved on February 09, 2020, from <http://www.languageinindia.com/dec2005/chidambaramthesis1.html#chapter5>.

Figure 1.2. displays that the oral communication between the skills speaking and listening. When the listener just receives the message from the speaker this is called "transaction"; however, if there is an exchange of messages between them this is called "interaction". The aim of this figure is to show the dynamic relation between the two skills speaking and listening.

To help learners speak clearly without any hesitation, give them the ability to pronounce words appropriately, and make their speech easier, teachers should develop the listening skill. They are asked to make their learners in touch with activities that have a relation with listening because it does not only help them to understand the meaning of the words but also to use those words in real context.

The link between the two skills is obvious; they both complete one another. The scope of listening ought to be treated as an integral part of the speaking skill. To conclude, speaking and listening skills are important to complete effective communication.

1.6.2. The correlation between speaking and writing

The productive skills of language are speaking and writing. Both of them differ in many ways, researchers attempt to establish a clear distinction between them. They normally list some points that make each one specific from the other according to different perspectives and views. Harmer (2001) ensured, “A written text has a number of conventions which separate it out from speaking. A part from differences in grammar and vocabulary, there are issues of letter, words and text formation, manifested by handwriting, spelling, layout and punctuation” (p. 255). To differentiate between the two languages, the spoken language requires a simple vocabulary to be comprehensible. It disappears when the conversation is ended. By contrast, in the written language, writers use complex vocabulary and structures. It appears because it is written. The following table some key contrasts between speaking and writing suggested by Van Lier (1995, p. 88).

Table 1.1. Contrasts between speaking and writing

Spoken language	Writing language
Auditory	Visual
Temporary; immediate reception	Permanent, delayed reception
Prosody (rhythm, stress intonation)	Punctuation
Immediate feedback	Delayed or non-feedback
Planning and editing limited by channel Delayed	Unlimited planning, editing, revision

In actual fact, these differences reflect the different purposes for which spoken and written languages are used. The speaking skills is highly different from the writing skills. When we speak, we can hear by ears the spoken language, it has a temporary time and immediate reception, in spoken language there is a clear stress intonation and rhythm, there is immediate feedback from the hearer, and the edition of the speaking is limited; by contrast, when we write, we can see by eyes the written language, it has a permanent time and delayed reception, there is a punctuation marks that show when to stop or take breath, there is no feedback or it may be delayed, and there is planning, editing, revision in written language unlike the spoken one.

1.6.3. The relationship between speaking and reading

Reading is a receptive skill, through which we receive information. It can be silent (in our head) or aloud (other people can hear). Yet the complex process of reading also necessitates the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. Reading is something that one can do on his/her own and that greatly increases his/her vocabulary, and helping him/her in speaking (and in listening and writing). Grabe and Stoller (1997) stated, “Reading and vocabulary are reciprocally causal... that reading improves vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary knowledge supports reading development” (p. 119). Reading is extremely a valuable skill and activity; frequent reading can help one to collect a huge vocabulary background and from which one can use them in his/her daily communication. So, speaking and reading skills have interrelationship and one complete the other. Sufficient listening to good reading will help the learners acquire perfect pronunciation (Suchdeva, 2011). It is recommended that English learners need to read as much as possible in English in order to improve the speaking skills.

1.7. Learners' positive attitudes towards speaking

Generally speaking, attitudes can be defined as the behavioural outcomes of perceptions. Attitude plays an important role in second/ foreign language learning as it determines to a large extent the learners' behaviour (i.e., the action is taken to learn during the learning process). Attitude towards speaking English is one of the chief predictors of success in English communication. Cognitive aspect of attitude contains the beliefs of the language learners about the knowledge that they obtain and their understanding in the process of language learning. Feng and Chen (2009) stated that emotional attitude affect the learning process. Attitude may help learners to express if they like or dislike the objects or surrounding situations. Also, according to Kara (2009) who stated that positive attitudes show a positive behavior toward courses of study and learners were observed to be more eager to acquire new information and useful skills for daily life and to engage emotionally.

1.8. Learners' negative attitude towards speaking

The negative attitudes towards a foreign language can hinder the learning or even speak with that language. Learners with negative attitude will be less willing to participate in speaking activities. Punthamsen (2007) founded that most of learners do not want to learn English because they find the subject matter boring and also teaching methodology in the classroom is not interesting. Anxiety is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and worry (Brown, 2007). So, the less anxiety that learners have, the more effort that they may do, and it affected their performance in speaking English. A positive and negative attitude to speaking English is one of the factors that may be associated with learners' speaking activities.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we attempt to shed the light on the speaking process in EFL classes that is considered as the most sophisticated skill among the others and it is crucial in

helping learners' proficiency in the target language. Learning to speak necessitates learners' attachment in communicative situations and this activates their capacity in speaking. The development of oral performance needs learners to make active use of the language that is correct in its pronunciation and grammar. So, fluency and accuracy are two vital aspects to be advanced in classroom interaction.

Chapter two: An understanding of EFL learners' speaking difficulties

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Introduction

Teaching and learning of speaking are a dynamic part of any language education. Learning a language is when someone finds a balance between studying and practicing it because practicing or speaking a second or foreign language fluently and smoothly is completely different from just knowing the grammar rules of the target language, so the main aim of learning speaking is the ability to communicate. Yet teaching speaking remains challenging for many English teachers. A key issue here is whether what happens in a speaking classroom is concerned with ‘doing’ teaching or ‘teaching’ speaking.

In this chapter, we will shed the light on teaching the speaking skill, reasons for teaching speaking and how to teach this productive skill through teaching methods and approaches, then we will mention EFL learners’ speaking difficulties and the reasons behind those difficulties; next, we will indicate teachers’ roles and responsibilities, determine how to assess those difficulties, and adjust the activities that can improve learners’ speaking.

2.1. Teaching speaking skill

When we talk about teaching speaking, it means to talk about something different from grammar and vocabulary practice. The central meaning of teaching speaking is teaching how to use the second or foreign language to communicate efficiently and easily. According to Kayi (2006), speaking is a key part of second or foreign language learning and teaching. Regardless of its importance, for many years, teaching speaking has been underestimated and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a translation and memorization of dialogues or repetition of drills. Though, today’s world necessitates that the goal of teaching speaking ought to improve learners’ communication skills because in this way learners can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriately in each communicative circumstance. In the same sense, River (1968) claimed that the main goal of teaching speaking is to develop communicative efficiency. When learners try to express

themselves, there is a hesitation; cliché expressions which fill in pauses, much repetition, and frequent vagueness as the speaker seeks the most convenient combination of an element to express his/her intended meaning.

The speaking skill is the most challenging skill in a second or foreign language learning. Teaching speaking can be either for learning the language or for communication. For learning the language, first, learners should master the grammar rules, memorising lists of vocabulary, when and where to use them. Second, they should master phonology features and using the necessary gestures needed as Maccarthy (1972) stated,

When people are learning to speak a language, they are concerned mainly with two things; first, knowing what to say- what words and phrases to use at any given moment, in any given situation- and second, being able to say it- able to perform the required actions, the movement necessary, for saying those words and phrases aloud. (p.9)

For communication; Haley and Austin (2004) said, “To be more orally productive, learners would need to be more capable of responding in a relevant and socially appropriate manner to the communication of others” (p. 189). Learners are required know how to use the foreign language in specific situations.

2.2. Reasons for teaching speaking

Teaching speaking is a crucial element in the learning process. It is important because learners need this skill considerably in learning a second or foreign language. Harmer (2007, p. 123) gave three reasons for teaching speaking. First, learners have more opportunities to practice speaking actually with the help of speaking activities in the classroom. Second, speaking tasks help both learners and teachers to realize their strengths and weaknesses in the target language. Third, learners should retrieve and activate what they know about the language that is stored in their brains in order to automatically use it in real-life situations.

Consequently, learners become autonomous users of the target language and they can speak the language unconsciously and fluently.

2.3. Related methods and approaches to speaking

The traditional approaches of language teaching (Grammar Translation, Direct Method, and Audio-lingual Method) intend to succeed in the language learning process which emphasis in a measured, controlled practice of language items where teachers are the most responsible. On the other way around, the communicative approach and competency-based approach emphasize more on language learning as interaction, and meaningful communication becomes the major point rather than the complexity of grammar rules. The main concept of these approaches is to make learners talk more inside and outside the class in many activities like to give an opinion about a subject, to talk about themselves, to have a joke, without thinking if the structure of the sentences is correct or incorrect since they have fun in English classes. Certainly, each method or approach has its relative advantages and drawbacks. So, the major teaching trends that would be discussed are the grammar-translation method, the direct method, the audio-lingual method, the communicative approach, and the competency-based approach.

2.3.1. The Grammar Translation Method

The grammar translation method focuses basically on teaching grammar deductively. i.e., it comprises presenting and practicing the rules via translation activities. Richards and Rodgers (1986) said, “It hence views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language” (p.3). The use of the target language is limited and nearly constrained to memorization, and repetition. However, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) gives greater emphasis on the form rather than the meaning. So, the two skills speaking and listening are almost disregarded. It does not give learners chances to progress their communicative

skills; that is why they face difficulties to produce spontaneous oral language. Harmer (2001) declared, “But a concentration on grammar translation stops the students from getting the kind of natural language input that will help them acquire language, and it often fails to give them opportunities to activate their language knowledge” (p.30). Simply, GTM prevents learners from getting opportunities to enhance their communicative skills.

2.3.2 The Direct Method

The Direct Method (DM) contains direct connotations with the target language without referring to the first language. Supporters of this method think that language is best taught via the direct use of the target language in the classroom. So, this method involves presenting vocabulary through demonstration activities and teaching grammar inductively. Abdullah (2013) summarized the basic assumption of DM. Some of these are as follows:

1. Classroom instruction is conducted in the target language.
2. Concrete vocabulary is taught through pictures and objects.
3. Students are encouraged to think in the target language.
4. The emphasis is put on right pronunciation and grammar. (p.127)

Despite, DM is supposed to be unfeasible for teaching foreign languages because it exaggerates the importance of fluency and pronunciation. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), “It overemphasized and distorted the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and classroom foreign language learning and failed to consider the practical realities of the classroom” (p. 10). DM is unusable and impractical in the classroom.

2.3.3 The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual Method or the Aural-Oral Method was created because of the need to learn the basic skills of foreign languages during World War II. It is based on the behaviouristic view of learning which studies language learning as a matter of habit formation. This method depends actually on using drills and repetitions. Learners are required to imitate a

sample dialogue and repeat each line. Typical teaching activities can be replacement patterns and drills where correct production is reinforced and rewarded.

Using repetitions and drills can be an effective technique that can be used with specific language patterns, especially with low-level learners. Audio-lingual method helps learners to learn and develop listening and speaking skills quite competently. Visual aids assist to enrich more vocabulary. It is easy and convenient to teach large group of learners. However, the Audio-Lingual Method overuses this technique. It gives more consideration to the form rather than the meaning and functions. Accordingly, Harmer (2001) argued, “Audio-lingualism (and behaviorism) went out of fashion because commentators from all sides argued that language learning was far more subtle than just the formation of habits” (p.31). The observers claimed that language learning according to this method is not a matter of habit formation, but it is more than that i.e., meaning and function. This method enables the learners to build their oral communication. Also, to be able to use a language, it is required to understand the linguistics feature, one of them is pronunciation. According to Richard and Rogers (2001, p. 53), as the language is taught systematically, it pays attention to pronunciation and by intensive oral drilling of its basic sentence pattern. In addition, Setiawan (2011) said that some related studies show that the students’ oral skill improved by using audiolingual method.

2.3.4 The Communicative Approach

Language learning, according to the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), includes the ability to express and send communicative functions through language. Namely, effective language learners should progress the ability to use the language properly in a social context to achieve communicative functions. Harmer (1998) reported, “If students get enough exposure to language and opportunities for its use –and if they are motivated- then language learning will take care of itself” (p. 32). When students deal with native speakers, they will be able to learn the target language and its use in different situations.

CLT encompasses the use of real-life situations via interactive activities. It concentrates first on the active use of language to reach functions, such as: apologizing, thanking, inviting, and disagreeing. Likewise, it considers language as a means of communication where the socio-cultural context is involved. Typical classroom activities can be actions or events that produce discussion and interaction such as dialogues, debates, role plays, group discussions, and so on. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 72), there are three main aspects which characterize the communicative approach,

One such element might be described as the communication principle: Activities that promote real communication promote learning. A second element is the task principle: Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning. A third element is the meaningfulness principle; Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process.

The communicative approach is seen as the best method for promoting learners' oral performance and abilities since it highlights communication through interaction using the target language. Therefore, the four skills speaking, reading, listening, and writing are activated in this approach to improve the speaking skill of foreign language learners. According to Galloway (1993), this approach aims at developing learners' communicative competence. It makes use of real-life situations that requires communication.

2.3.5. Competency-Based Approach

The Competency-based approach (CBA) seeks to establish competences in learners, so they can put in practice what has been acquired in school, in different settings. It is an approach that circles around three main concepts that are competence, problem-situation, and transfer of knowledge. CBA emerged in the United States in the 1970s for helping learners to acquire a communicative competence by emphasising on learners as the target of the learning process. In this approach, the emphasis is on the meaning transmitted by the context rather than

the grammatical forms used in it. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.141) “Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is an application of the principles of Competency-Based Education to language teaching”. In Competency-Based Education (CBE) the focus is on the “outcomes or outputs of learning”. This approach has been an answer to the requirements of the 21st century that makes teachers better considered as a facilitator. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.146) said that the teachers in this approach have to provide positive and constructive feedback in order to help the learners to develop their skills. They require to be aware of the learners’ needs in order to make them feel welcome in class.

2.4. Speaking difficulties

Different from reading, writing, and listening activities, speaking necessitates some degree of real-life exposure to an audience. Most learners while speaking face many problems that hinder them from expressing themselves efficiently. Those difficulties respectively are divided into psychological, linguistic, and non-linguistic problems.

2.4.1. Psychological problems

There are a lot of problems that prevent learners from speaking a second or foreign language and expressing their thoughts and views. Among them, there are psychological problems such as inhibition, fear of making mistakes, anxiety, and learners’ attitude towards error correction.

2.4.1.1. Inhibition

Many factors prevent learners from expressing their ideas when they try to participate in the classroom and most of them remain their concepts in their minds and keep silent due mainly to shyness and fear of making mistakes or criticizing from their colleagues. Ur (1996) stated, “Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom. Worried about, making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts” (p. 121). In this context, Bowman, Burkart, and

Robson (1989, p.40) argued that teachers, in teaching speaking, most of the time ask their learners to express their opinions and thoughts in front of the whole class, the fact that makes them experience what is called “stress” during speaking activities. The two major psychological factors which probably hurdle the learners’ speaking process are anxiety and stress.

2.4.1.2. Fear of making mistakes

In many classes, some learners prefer to keep their ideas to themselves since they are afraid of being corrected by the teacher. However, learners’ mistakes must be corrected. Fear of making mistakes is a kind of feeling where the learners attribute their unwillingness to participate in every class presentation and discussion. When learners are attempting to encode their thoughts, they should be interrupted as little as possible. This problem reveals more when learners try to participate in the classroom, yet factors distract them from doing so such as fear of making mistakes or feeling that their pronunciation in English is incorrect because of the inferiority of the linguistic aspects of the target language. Learners fear to make mistakes especially if they speak in front of the audience i.e., they have no self-confidence. That's why, Bygate (1987) declared,

Our learners often need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out many of their most basic transactions. It is the skill by which they are most frequently judged, and through which they make or lose friends. (p. 1)

Learners should speak with confidence, fearlessness, and without hesitation because they are frequently judged. Also, Ur (1996) said that learners who are inhibited in their speaking activity generally are afraid of making mistakes, losing face, and fearful in saying or doing something.

2.4.1.3. Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the main obstacles for most EFL learners. Anxiety is a negative emotion that creates trouble in the learning process. Brown (2001) defined anxiety as emotions of uneasiness, apprehension, worry, and disturbance, fear, and self-doubt. Anxious learners do not learn well, also do not communicate effectually in a classroom situation. Virginia, Wrench, and Gorham (2009, p.55) supported the fact that

Students don't communicate effectively with us [teachers] when they are fearful, anxious, apprehensive, or scared to communicate with us. Students don't complete tests well when they are fearful, anxious, apprehensive, or scared of testing situations. Simply put, students don't do well in the classroom environment when they are fearful, anxious, apprehensive, or scared.

When learners are anxious and fearful, they will be unable to communicate with teacher and they cannot be well tested. Anxiety reveals more when learners try to participate in the classroom, so they feel uncomfortable about speaking English in front of their classmates.

2.4.1.4. Learners' attitude towards error correction

An error is a result of the learner's lack of correct grammatical knowledge. It occurs repeatedly, and it is unrecognizable by the learner until it is corrected by teachers and knowledgeable people. Oral corrective feedback plays an essential role that cannot be ignored in second and foreign language learning. It helps in telling the teacher about learners' progress, about the needs to be taught further, and about the strategies that should learners use in the learning process.

Learners sometimes dislike being corrected during the teaching and learning process because they think that their errors and mistakes are insignificant. That is why they show some negative attitudes towards error correction. Attitude has been defined as "A learned predisposition to respond positively or negatively to a specific object, situation, institution, or

person” (Aiken, 2000, p. 248). Learners’ attitudes have a major role that influences language learning. They can determine learner’s success or failure according to the way teachers correct their learners’ errors.

2.4.2. Linguistic problems

Sometimes learners find themselves incapable to learn and speak English as a foreign language in the classroom due mainly to some linguistic problems like lack of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In this sense, Mahripah (2014) claimed that EFL learners’ speaking skill is affected by some linguistic components of language like phonology, syntax (grammar), and vocabulary.

2.4.2.1. Lack of pronunciation

Phonology is a difficult feature of language learning for EFL learners. Knowingly, the pronunciation of English words is not similar to their spellings. According to Hancock (2003), “Letters are not always the same as sounds. For example, the words *key* and *car* begin with the same sound, but the letters are different” (p. 10). Words with similar spellings are sometimes pronounced differently because of their surrounding contexts such as tenses and phonemes that come after them. This can cause many problems for non-native speakers of English and they sometimes get confused in producing the English words.

2.4.2.2. Lack of grammar

EFL learners should know words and sentences. They should understand how words are divided into different sounds and how sentences are stressed in specific ways. Grammatical competence can help speakers apply and perceive the structure of the English language correctly which leads to their fluency (Latha, 2012). Native speakers say what they want without having any problems as they are familiar with the language. If they have problems in expressing some perceptions, they try to use other ways of telling them. They may make certain mistakes syntactically, but these mistakes do not change the meaning of the sentences

they want to express, and this doesn't create serious problems for the listeners to understand them. Nevertheless, Mahripah (2014) claimed that the mistakes that non-native speakers commit are those that change the meaning of utterances and messages they want to convey and can create some problems for their understanding.

2.4.2.3. Lack of vocabulary

Most EFL learners do not have sufficient vocabulary, words, and expressions to use when they want to speak English or to express their ideas. That is why they fail to learn or to speak the English language. Urrutia and Vega (2010) demonstrated that learners' oral performance was influenced by their lack of vocabulary, diffidence, and fear of being despised.

2.4.3. Non-linguistic problems

Sometimes the speaking English problems are not due to neither psychological nor linguistic problems, but because of the non-linguistic problems as Ur (1996) said that there are many factors that cause difficulty in speaking such as nothing to say, the use of mother language (L1) in EFL classrooms, and low or uneven participation.

2.4.3.1. Nothing to say

The majority of learners in foreign language classrooms stay silent since they have nothing to express. In this case, maybe they are unconcerned with learning English itself. This is due mainly to the teachers' methods of teaching, failure in the selection of topics that are unsuitable with their level of understanding. Most learners have nothing to talk about or they say "I don't know", "no comment". These expressions are the result of the lack of motivation in expressing themselves or in the chosen topic they should discuss or talk about. Rivers (1968) said, "The teacher may have chosen a topic which is uncongenial to him [the learner] or about which he knows very little, and as a result, he has nothing to express, whether in the native language or the foreign language" (p.192). Students sometimes find themselves unable to understand the topic or teachers may have selected inappropriate topics that are unfamiliar

with their understanding; consequently, there are no responses in the target language even if in the mother language.

2.4.3.2. The use of the mother language (L1) in EFL classrooms

Learners, in their daily communication, tend to speak with their mother language more than English outside and even inside the classroom because they feel more comfortable and less exposed to the target language. Therefore, the learners will be unable to use the foreign language correctly if they keep on being influenced by the use of their mother language. In this sense, Baker and Westrup (2003) stated, “Barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language “(p. 12). Lack of the vocabulary of the target language usually leads learners to borrow words from their native language.

2.4.3.3. Low or uneven participation

There are many sharing problems hindering learners to take part in a class. In some cases, learners unable to participate even if they want to do so; because of the large class number considering that participation should have one talks a time; some learners had the opportunity to speak while others had not. Ur (1996, p. 121) included,

Only one participant can talk at a time if he or she is to be heard; and in a large group, this means that each one will have only very little talking time. This problem is compounded by the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

In class, perhaps some dominant learners take all the time devoted to learners' talk, keeping their classmates with no opportunity to talk at all. Besides, the other learners do not talk until they confirm that their answers are completely correct; while others stay calm with no sign of interest in participating or talking, as for others, they will not talk even if they know what to say unless they are obliged by the teacher to speak.

2.5. Causes of speaking difficulties

Several aspects cause difficulties in speaking English among EFL learners. Some of those aspects are related to learners themselves, teaching strategies, the curriculum, and the classroom environment. For instance, most learners lack the required vocabulary to get their meaning across, and therefore, they are unable to keep the interaction going. Deficient strategic competence, teachers maybe not well trained in teaching the speaking skills can be other reasons as well for unsuccessful interaction.

2.5.1. Learners themselves

Some learners lack the motivation to speak English. They do not see a real need to learn or speak the English language because they think that it is not important subject that help them to get degree, the Algerian society doesn't use English language in real-life situation or they have poor background about English language, that is why they have no motivation to speak English. In fact, "Motivation is the crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks in a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he preserves" (Littlewood, 1984, p.53). The development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have the motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and relate with the people around them (Littlewood, 1981). Learners are unable to learn any skill without having the motivation and real interest to do so.

2.5.2. Teaching strategies

Teaching strategies also contribute in preventing learners from speaking because they are insufficient, and they do not emphasize speaking, which results in a meagre development of this skill. Teacher-training programs were found to be not very successful in changing the teachers' methodology (Rababa'ah,2005). So, vocabulary items are taught in isolation, and listening materials are not used by the majority of schoolteachers because of the large number

of teachers compared with the equipment available, the overuse of textbook by the teacher rather than speaking activities.

2.5.3. Curriculum

Curriculum for teaching speaking is insufficient. The lack of using the target language inside and outside classroom results the lack of involvement in real-life situations. So, the curriculum should specify time and provide materials and language laboratory to teach the speaking skills. Talley and Hui-Ling (2014) observed that curriculum for teaching speaking skill should attempt to expose learners to practical, and authentic situations for speaking English and encourage active learners to involve in the lesson. Talley and Hui-Ling (2014) argued that English speaking curriculum ought to take the perception of international and local cultures that should exist equally.

2.5.4. Classroom environment

Another factor that contributes to the problem of speaking difficulties is the classroom environment. Learners feel uncomfortable to speak English in the classroom because of unsuitable environment, limited time, and lack of authentic materials that motivate them to speak. Littlewood (1981) argued that some teachers use L1 for class management. This affect negatively the learners to speak English, because using L1 in the classroom devalue English as a foreign language. Also, it tends to devalue the foreign language as a vehicle for communication. Panggabean (2015) also founded that the teacher rarely gave learners' tasks in order to produce the language. Even if they do so, the time allocation for speaking practice is rather short for the vast size of speaking class.

2.6. Teachers' roles and responsibilities

Teachers play a considerable role to facilitate the learning process in EFL classes. These great roles create a room for classroom interaction that will improve the learner's speaking performance. EFL teachers play a great role in developing learners' speaking skill by

implementing different techniques and strategies in the classroom that will make learning of speaking more efficient. Teachers' roles and responsibilities are as: controller, organizer, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, corrector, and observer classroom interaction. These roles play a major role in facilitating learners' progress and in the enhancement of EFL speaking skills and they are classified according to Harmer (2001, pp.57-62).

2.6.1. Controller

The teacher takes charge of the whole class and activities by taking the roll, telling learners instructions, organizing drills, reading aloud. According to Harmer (2001, p.58) "When teachers act as controller they are in charge of the class and of the activity taking place in a way that is substantially different from a situation where students are working on their own in groups". Teachers feel very comfortable when they view their job as transmission of knowledge from themselves to their students. However, according to Harmer (2001) this role cuts down the chance for learners to speak because when learners work as group, just few learners who can speak.

2.6.2. Organizer

In this role, the teacher organizes learners to work on classroom activities and how are going to do those activities. So, teachers should get learners involved and ready in order to make the activity interesting and enjoyable (Harmer, 2001). In addition, they have sometimes to spent engaging the students' interest and ensuring their participation.

2.6.3. Assessor

A good teacher is the one who assesses their learners' speaking skill by observations and quizzes or exams designed to evaluate oral skills of the learners. However, in most language instruction courses, assessment of the learners' speaking skill is usually ignored. For perfecting students' speaking skill the teachers have the role of an assessor (Harden and

Crosby, 2000). In short, a teacher provides learners with feedback regarding their performance and grades them in distinct ways.

2.6.4. Prompter

When learners are not sure about how doing a task, here teachers play the role as a prompter. During the speaking tasks, learners may show a kind of struggling when they try to express themselves. In this case, the teacher usually gives hints, suggests some words or phrases (Harmer, 2001, pp. 275-276). Contrary, the teacher should be careful when he/she gives prompts to learners during oral tasks since the primary purpose of prompting is to give the right amount of motivation and encouragement

2.6.5. Participant

When teachers participate in discussions not as teachers but as peers of foreign language learners. The teacher usually assigns learners to do a speaking activity and from time to time interferes to give feedback or corrects mistakes only if necessary. This role allows teachers to understand difficulties of learners encounter during speaking activities. (Harmer, 2001, p. 276).

2.6.6. Resource

Another role that learners need from teachers is to be as a resource. According to Harmer (2001, p.61) one of the most important jobs of the teacher is to encourage students to use resource material for themselves when they are searching for information, to become more independent in their learning generally. Teachers are acting as resource to be helpful and available. Also, language teachers should encourage learners to speak English about interesting topics by providing them with a comfortable atmosphere where learners are not afraid to take risks to use English with their teachers as well as with their classmates.

2.6.7. Tutor

Among the other roles of teachers, the tutoring role is one broadly recognized because it is combining the two roles as a prompter and a resource. Harmer (2001, p.62) claimed that it is better when students are working in small groups or in pairs when preparing for talk or debate because teachers can easily provide the guidance and correct the oral mistakes. So, learners can have a real chance to be helped and supported with tutoring teacher in order to develop EFL learners speaking.

2.6.8. Observer

Observer means that the teacher observes learners to give feedback and judge the success of different activities, and observes their speaking performance. According to Harmer (2001, p. 62) “We will want to observe what students do (especially in oral communication activities) so that we can give them useful group and individual feedback”. Through observing, teachers can evaluate learners’ development in the speaking skills if there is failure, then the teacher can make changes in the future.

Successful language teaching relies typically on the way teachers adopt to address their learners' needs. According to Ur (2012) communicating orally and fluently in formal and informal interaction is the primary objective for many language learners. For that purpose, teachers ought to design classroom activities to develop learners’ ability to promote oral fluency. Thus, teachers should promote student talk activities. The above-mentioned roles are significant during classroom interactions because they help in enhancing and developing the learners’ performance in the target language.

2.7. Assessment difficulties of speaking skill

Assessment refers to frequent evaluation taken by EFL teachers to check and test learners’ advancement and performance. Lindsay and knight (2006) stated, “Assessment is the

process of analyzing and measuring knowledge and ability” (P. 121). It is to test and analyze whether or not the learner has grasped the intended meaning of the language course.

Assessment of speaking does not only comprise assessing learners’ language skills in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation but also the learners’ aptitudes and knowledge to communicate effectively. The actual aim behind assessing the learners’ speaking is to encourage and reinforce them to speak; for instance; being interviewed, being involved in a discussion or a debate, describing something to someone. However, teachers usually find it difficult to assess the learners’ oral performance since speaking is considered as a sophisticated skill due mainly to its integrated parameters and aspects. According to Luoma (2004, p. 1), “Assessing speaking is challenging, however, because there are so many factors that influence our impression of how well someone can speak a language, and because we expect test scores to be accurate, just and appropriate for our purpose”. These factors are age, intelligence, aptitude, personality, motivation etc...

The major difficulties encountered by EFL teachers in assessing speaking are: first, learners’ limited vocabulary is one of the difficulties in assessing speaking skill. With limited vocabulary, learners got a hard time in teacher’s assessment because there was pauses or they have nothing to say at all while the main purpose of speaking is to communicate (Louma, 2004). Also, Kim (2003) who said that speaking difficulty is caused by students’ low English proficiency which refers to limited vocabulary and structures. Second, learners’ motivation, learners with high motivation are eager to speak, because they are interested in the topic and want to contribute in achieving the task objective (Ur, 1996). However, low motivation will affect their participation in speaking activity. So, teacher should maintain their learners’ motivation in following all the speaking activities especially the assessment part. Third, learners’ limited willingness to speak, and according to (Ur, 1996) this difficulty can be

affected by learner's self-confidence including their feeling of embarrassment or worry about making mistakes, or just simply shy of attention which is known as inhibition.

2.8. Improving EFL learners' speaking skill

To deal with speaking a foreign language, it needs to real exposure to certain activities to promote learners' speaking in the classroom such as role-play, storytelling, classroom discussions, group work, and the use of authentic videos. According to Ur (1996, p. 120), "Classroom activities that develop learners' ability to express themselves through speech would therefore seem an important component of a language course". Those speaking activities can reinforce learners' language, also they have the chance to learn how to express their opinions as well as they learn new vocabulary during the lesson.

2.8.1. Role-play

There are many ways to get learners engaged to speak. One of them is the role-play activity that is to perform the role of a character as if s/he is the main person or predicting to be another person. According to Hedge (2000), role play is an activity that develops learners' fluency since in this task they are forced to speak unlike in free discussion, here the learners are obliged to talk about their feelings and opinions while performing the character. Accordingly, Ur (1996, p.133) mentioned, "Factors that can contribute to a role play's success are: making sure that the language demanded is well within the learners' capacity; your own enthusiasm; careful and clear presentation and instructions". Learners require to master the language, to be ardent, and have a skill of presentation in order to succeed the role play activity.

2.8.2. Storytelling

Storytelling is the act of sharing or telling tales or series of events. The teacher tells stories and the learners can briefly summarize the story that they heard from their teacher. This activity reinforces creative thinking and it supports learners to express their ideas, Therefore, it

is considered the most operative activity that leads them to speak in the classroom which aims at helping them to be able to tell stories in English. Thornbury (2005) explained, “Storytelling is a universal function of language and one of the main ingredients of casual conversation” (p.95). Storytelling is an international means of language and one of the components of informal discussion or speech.

2.8.3. Classroom discussions

Discussion means oral interaction among learners in the classroom. They may give their opinions, express their thoughts and emotions, state their preference and speak English respectfully and naturally without any pre-arrangement. Kazemi and Hintz (2015) stated that classroom discussions need teachers to have an understanding of where the discussion is headed and how to get there. It can be an exceptional strategy for enhancing learners’ motivation, and fluency, also creates opportunities for learners to practice the speaking skills and develops their critical thinking through the exchange of different views.

2.8.4. Group work

In order to change the pace and make learners speak and participate in the classroom, the teacher has to create a small group activity. This latter “Increases the sheer amount of learner talk going on in a limited period of time and also lowers the inhibitions of learners who are unwilling to speak in front of the full class “(Ur 1996, p.121). In other words, group work can decrease learner’s inhibition, and raise their responsibility and independence. It can also develop motivation, create a feeling of cooperation in the classroom, and contribute in the learning outcomes.

2.8.5. Authentic videos

When people talk about technology in language classrooms, the first motive is to think about computer technology since technology prevailed in their home and workplace contexts. It also covers audio-tape players and videos. Sometimes to see and to listen to something at the

same moment is very useful. Authentic or genuine educational videos like YouTube videos in the classroom reinforce learners' concentration about the lesson, also it is something easier to learners who learn through visuals and the most important thing is that learners are able to learn how to speak English correctly and fluently from native speakers. Chung and Huang (1998) stated, "As more complete video instructional packages are made available to foreign language teachers, they search for ways to make students' learning experience more active and interesting, similar to those that occur in the real world" (p. 554). According to them, videos are highly crucial to foreign language teaching and learning because they increase learner's engagement, facilitate the teaching and learning task, and expose learners to a variety of language and cultures. In the same path, Stempleski (1987) claimed that an authentic video is "A rich and exciting source of video software for EFL/ESL classes" (p. 3). Videos can be useful for the effective and joyful learning, also they give positive effects on the learners' interest and motivation in studying English language as well as to enhance their speaking skills.

Conclusion

Teaching speaking is an essential part of foreign language learning. The ability to communicate in a second or foreign language correctly and competently contributes to the success of the learners in school and later in every stage of life. Thus, language teachers must pay a great attention to teaching speaking skills. Rather than leading learners to memorization, providing a rich environment where clear and meaningful communication takes place is desired. With this intention, several speaking activities like role play, classroom discussion, and using authentic videos in EFL classrooms can contribute in promoting learners' basic interactive skills necessary. So, this chapter exposed the nature of the teaching and learning situation as far as the productive skill of speaking is concerned.

Chapter three: Analyses of field work findings

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Introduction

In order to achieve the research objective of investigating the major difficulties encountered by EFL learners in speaking at Mohamed Belounar Secondary School in Biskra, the present student researcher has seen that there is a need to submerge deeply in the everyday experience of the EFL teaching and learning context. The main purpose of this chapter is to offer a description of the research method applied in the study that is a mixed-method: a qualitative approach, in which the main data collection technique is classroom observations, and a quantitative approach, in which the major data collection are questionnaires for teachers and students. First, the chapter will describe and analyze the classroom observations' findings in details. Then, the explanation of the questionnaires that are employed for teachers and students in order to explore as much as possible the difficulties and problems that hinder EFL high school students from speaking English correctly.

3.1. Classroom observations

Classroom observations present the opportunity for a researcher to observe the teaching and learning process inside the classroom in order to answer the research questions. "Observation is the subsistence method to gather data in the qualitative research" (Ary, et al, 2010, p. 474). In this tool, we will mention the description of classroom observations and its analysis.

3.1.1. Description of the classroom observations

The current data collection tool takes six (06) sessions with two classes of second-year scientific stream students. The present student researcher attended three sessions with one class and the rest three ones with the other class in Mohamed Belounar Secondary School of Biskra in order to collect as much as possible information about the difficulties that confront students in speaking. The units of the observed lessons are "Budding scientist" and "No man is an island. The time allotted is one hour in each session. The observations are accomplished by

taking notes and writing in a form of prose. The number of students in class one is 34, and about 40 students in the second classroom.

3.1.2. Analysis of classroom observation

Throughout the observation, we found that there are numerous difficulties and problems encountered by EFL students in speaking. That's why, the analysis of the classroom observations findings is organized and classified under psychological, linguistic, and non-linguistic problems.

3.1.2.1. Types of learners

Throughout classroom observation sessions, it has been found that there are three different types of students find it difficult to speak in English. When teacher asks shy students to speak or answer a question in English, their face become red, their hands start shaking with a scared smile. There are students who are introverted. They are slow to take the action, sit alone and do not speak at all. Some students who are good in English have good ideas and answers, but they avoid to participate. They are reluctant. Additionally, some students, who are noisy, tap their pencils, make some sounds, interrupt and distract the teacher from presenting her lesson. Simply because they fail and repeat their academic year again, they have a low-level in English, they are uninterested in the lesson, the lesson is too easy or too difficult, or may be due to some psychological disorders.

3.1.2.2. Mispronunciation of words

It has been observed that students incorrectly employ the diphthongs. For example, one student says, " **Now**, I can't instead of saying **no**, I can't" and saying, " **To choice** instead of saying **to choose**". It is also observed that the students mispronounce final /s/ like in the word **choices** with /s/ instead of pronouncing it with /iz/. Some of the observed students have used French pronunciation in their speaking when the teacher asked them about the qualities of water. In so doing, one student replied, "transparent" with French accent. The word "data" has been also

pronounced with French accent. furthermore, one student has pronounced the silent letters in the word “thoughtful”.

3.1.2.3. Production of incomplete sentences

In the first session, it has been observed that there are few students while they are participating, they produce single word, short and even incomplete sentences. A sentence that misses a subject or a verb; for example, “look difference” instead of saying “it looks different”. Students want to speak English language appropriately, yet sometimes the lack of grammar knowledge distracts them from doing so. According to Carroll (2008, p.195), there are types of errors occur with a number of linguistic units. In some cases, a single phoneme or words are added, deleted, or moved. The unity of grammar also learns the right way to gain proficiency in a language in oral and written form.

3.1.2.4. Interference of the first language Arabic

Most of the time, students use Arabic language words to express their ideas because of the poor vocabulary. Their aim is to show that they understand their teachers' English. In the second session with the male teacher, one student says, " I went to المكتبة " instead of saying, "I went to the library". With the female teacher, we observed that students responded to their teacher in Arabic although she speaks and asks them to use English in the classroom. Also, when the teacher asks them to read the text, one of the observed students starts reading with Arabic accent because of the lack of exposure to authentic videos and real materials.

3.1.2.5. Low participation

We have observed in all sessions that just a few students who participate in the classroom and when we ask the rest of the students about the reason why they didn't participate, they replied that they didn't speak English and they didn't even understand what the teacher said in English to respond. Ur (1996, p. 121) says, “Low or uneven participation, only one participant can talk at a time if he or she is to be heard; and in a large group this

means that each one will have only very little talking time". Generally, there is passive participation in the two classes. Also, we observed that boys rarely participate. In contrast, most of the time girls participate in both observed classes. According to Deborah (1992), women tend to see themselves as individuals in a network of connection, and desire for intimacy, equality, understanding, support and solidarity. By contrast, men are inclined to view themselves as individuals in a hierarchical social order, perusing social status and independence. Generally, there is passive participation in the two classes.

3.1.2.6. Fear of criticisms and mistakes

Some students kept silent all the time in both classes because they have no confidence in their abilities when using English. They are afraid to produce mistakes because this makes them embarrassed and nervous in front of their classmates. Thornbury (2005) claimed that psychological factors, such as anxiety or shyness, lack of motivation, lack of confidence, and fear of mistakes are the main aspects which commonly distract students from opening their mouth to say something related to the presented content.

3.1.2.7. The absence of the use of a dictionary

In all sessions with the two classes, students did not use the dictionary or even use the notebook to gain and learn more vocabulary in order to use them while speaking English. Harvey and Yuill (1997) say that learners use dictionaries when writing to provide them with information about spelling and meaning. When students don't use dictionary, they find difficulties in how to pronounce some words in English even in finding their synonyms. The use of a dictionary is very crucial in the teaching and learning process, from which students will be able to learn more words, synonyms, and even their antonyms to collect huge baggage about the English language and to communicate with it.

3.1.2.8. Incorrect questioning statements

In the first session, we have observed that the majority of students do not know how to ask a good question. For example, one student asks, "We do this activity" instead of saying, "Do we answer this activity?" We observe that they are weak in grammar and tenses. Premack (1983) writes, "Though she [Sarah] understood the question, she did not herself ask any questions unlike the child who asks interminable questions, such as What that? Who making noise? When Daddy come home?" (p.29). The ability to ask questions is often assessed in relation to comprehension of syntactic structures. Questions raised by students activate their prior knowledge, focus their learning efforts, and help them elaborate on their knowledge (Schmidt, 1983). There are several personal, psychological, and social hindrances that may prevent students from asking questions in the classroom. The number and type of questions that students ask may be influenced by their age, experiences, prior knowledge and skills, the attitude of the teacher, teaching style, nature of the topics, reward structure, classroom evaluative climate, and social interaction patterns (Biddulph & Osborne, 1982). According to Biddulph, Symington, and Osborne (1986), teachers have to provide their students with suitable stimuli, modelling question-asking, developing a receptive classroom atmosphere, and including question-asking in evaluation.

3.1.2.9. De-motivation and lack of interests in English module

Throughout the observed sessions, it has been remarked that the majority of the students are passive and completely not motivated to learn. This is due to the traditional ways of teaching like textbook, unclear oral explanation, lack of real and concrete materials like authentic videos to motivate students to learn speaking in English. According to Bird and Williams (2002), using videos are very useful tool for students to learn new words, they also enjoy films or documentaries from other cultures and countries. If they are not interested in

what they are studying, they will not participate, and this provokes them to make noise and disturb their teachers and classmates.

3.1.2.10. Teacher talks most of the time

The teachers take the session's time speaking without giving their students opportunity to speak. Nunan states, "Constant teacher talk during the lessons did not significantly improve students listening comprehension and communication skills" (1999, p. 209). Nunan (2003) says, "Research has repeatedly demonstrated that teachers do approximately 50 to 80 percent of the talking in classrooms." (p. 55). Late studies have affirmed that students must talk about 80% in the classroom to contribute in building the content of the lesson talking in the classroom about 80 %, whereas teachers talk only about 20%. In this way, we believe that students can overcome their speaking difficulties.

3.1.2.11. Poor English background and large classrooms

Throughout the observation in the two classes, we observe that the majority of students have a low level in English language. This is due to many reasons. One of the important reasons is the fact of the overcrowded classes in the secondary schools' classrooms. Murcia-Celce (2001) confirms the fact that "Large classes are often the norm of overseas, limiting both student opportunities to talk and teacher opportunity to provide feedback." (p.110). Also, other researchers attempt to support the idea that a large class impact negatively on teaching and learning by focusing on the problems that teachers and students face in large classes, such as anonymity and passivity among students, poor engagement of student with course content, low motivation and low participation level are the consequences of being taught in large classes (Biggs, 1999; Carbone & Greenberg, 1998; Ward & Jenkins, 1992). Since students could not have an opportunity to practice their English in overcrowded classes, they fail to improve their basic skills.

3.1.2.12. Lack of practice

Throughout the observed sessions, it has been witnessed that all students of the two classes do not practice speaking English inside or even outside classrooms. They also do not follow or benefit from the instructions provided by their teachers about how to speak correctly and fluently. This hinders these students to speak correctly. Thornbury (2005, p. 28) claimed that a lack of practice is the big factor that influences speaking failure. Exercises that emphasize on practicing the speaking skill could help students speak confidently and fluently.

Influence by the aforementioned findings of classroom observations, it has been noticed that in the two classrooms some students speak incorrectly, this is marked by frequent pauses, many oral errors, and repetitions of same words. They further use non-verbal symbols to communicate their thoughts in case they do not have in their mind the needed vocabularies. The great majority of the observed students remained silent since they are not confident about their linguistic capacities in English.

3.2. Questionnaire for EFL secondary school teachers

A questionnaire is a way of data collection from our sample of teachers and their students about the speaking difficulties that prevents students to participate in the classroom. “A questionnaire is an instrument for the collection of data, usually in a written form consisting of open and/or closed questions and other probes requiring a response from the subject” (Nunan, 1992, p. 231). Also, according to Brown (2001), “Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers” (p.6). In this section, we are going to analyze the gathered information of questionnaire designed for teachers.

3.2.1. Description of the questionnaire for teachers

Online questionnaire has been given to a sample of two (n=02) teachers of English as foreign language teaching at Mohamed Belounar Secondary School in Biskra. We have divided the questionnaire into four (04) sections. the questions range from open-ended to close-ended questions. These questions intend to investigate the major difficulties teachers encounter with when their students speak. The first section is about biographical information. The second section deals with teaching the speaking skill. The third section emphasizes on the speaking difficulties. The last section attempts to explore the causes of those speaking difficulties.

3.2.2. Analysis of the questionnaire for teachers

After collecting data from teachers' answers, we analyze the results. The analyses focus on exploring the difficulties and problems that face EFL students studying at Mohamed Belounar Secondary School of Biskra while speaking in English. This analysis may also help our sample of teachers know how to treat those difficulties allowing their students speak in English correctly and fluently.

Section one: Biographical information

Q1. How many years have you been teaching in secondary school?

The participants in this questionnaire are experienced in teaching English. The female teacher has thirty (30) years of experience in teaching in high school. The male teacher has been teaching in high school for twelve (12) years. According to Lamm (1969), knowledge is sufficient in order to teach, and a knowledgeable person is capable of teaching. Knowledgeable teacher influence to great extent the teaching and learning process. That's why, years of experience is an essential aspect in improving the level of students and education in general.

Section two: Teaching the speaking skill

Q1. How do you teach speaking skills?

When we asked the teachers about the way they teach the speaking skill, one teacher states that introducing the topic and pose questions to elicit answers from the students. The other teacher presents speaking through interactions or through oral summary of the lesson, dialogue, etc. These techniques of teaching are somehow beneficial because there are other techniques and methods of teaching speaking like students talk a lot speaking activity. According to Ur (1996), students should talk as much as possible in the class rather than teacher.

Q2. Where do you teach speaking? Is it in the laboratory via listening to authentic materials?

The main aim of this question is to check if this secondary school contains language laboratory and teachers use it or not. The first teacher acknowledged that the school does not contain laboratory to teach oral language. Thus, both of them present speaking lesson inside the classroom. In this context, Stone (1991) says that a language laboratory is an instructional technology instrument involving of a source unit that can distribute audio materials enhance the students' learning. The supporting authentic techniques or tools like language laboratory or using pictures and images contribute in facilitating students' learning and simply enable them to acquire the knowledge and understand the content of the teaching. Teaching speaking in the classroom and without using authentic materials or instruments, it makes the teaching and learning process difficult to convey the intended meaning of the course.

Q3. How do you motivate your students to speak?

The aim of this question is to know how teachers motivate their students to speak. The teacher with 30 years of experience in teaching explains that throughout her teaching experience, she encourages students to speak by using as many ways as possible to create a

good language speaking environment. Speaking is one of the four skills. It can be mastered only through practice. The other teacher with 12 years of experience employs pictures and asks students to describe the posted images on the board orally. This teacher also uses discussion by creating situations about different topics and then asking students many questions to exchange knowledge and information in English. Dincer and Colleagues (2012) find that autonomy-supportive teacher behaviours are positively correlated with achievement, engagement, and positive self-evaluation regarding speaking. By creating a suitable atmosphere for speakers, that means that students can freely express their ideas, making them feel eager to engage in oral communication and adopting a student-centred approach, teachers can trigger inner drives within their students in class (Dincer et al., 2012; Liu & Jackson, 2011; Vibulphol, 2016). Teacher should make students feel free to express themselves by creating good atmosphere to motivate them to speak, encouraging voluntary participation in class, respecting students' ideas while speaking, psychological factors like rewarding is very helpful.

Q4. How do you correct students' speaking errors?

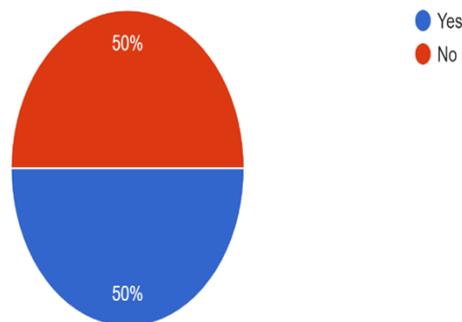
The aim of this question is to know if the students make oral errors and how their they are corrected. On the one hand, one teacher states that she does not correct oral errors immediately. Instead, she postponed correction to the end of the session. The immediate correction will intimidate the students and make them lose the train of thoughts and discourage them from practicing. On the other hand, the other teacher mentions that after students finish speaking, he encourages them to identify and correct their errors. Ur (1996) says that "in the context of teaching in general, feedback is information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance" (p. 242). Also, Edge (1989) finds that correction is a reminder, informational, and helpful through providing feedback and he discussed the aim of correction in language learning and reports that "Correction is a way of reminding students of the forms of standard English. It

should not be a kind of criticism or punishment” (p. 20). Correction makes the students aware about their errors, it is kind of help in order not to repeat that error or mistake, and it informs students how well or badly they have performed.

Q5. Do you use materials to teach speaking?

Table 3.2. *The use of materials to teach speaking*

	Yes	No	Total
Teachers	01	01	02
100%	50%	50%	100%



Graph 3.1. *The use of materials to teach speaking*

Table and the graph show that one teacher uses materials in teaching speak, but the other teacher does not use materials in the classroom. The female teacher mentions that she uses materials including pictures, books, concrete situations, technology. The male teacher reveals that there is a lack of materials in their school. Hedge (2000) claims that authentic materials are appropriate means for students to cope with the authentic language of the real world. Also, Harmer (1994) claims that learners can greatly benefit from authentic materials as these types of input help students improve their language production, acquire the language in an easier

manner, and increase their confidence when using the language in real life situations. Authentic materials are helpful to improve the students' vocabulary and language production.

According to those teachers, the female teacher with thirty years of experience justifies that the materials are pictures, books, concrete situations, sometimes means of technology, yet the male's teacher justification is that there is a lack of materials (few projectors used by scientific subject teachers).

Q6. How do you deal with shy and low-level students when they speak or refuse to speak?

The aim of this question is to know how teachers deal with shy and low-level students when they reject to speak. The female teacher reports that she regularly encourages her students with special needs to just repeat what has been said about the lesson. The male teacher encourage role play or asks them to read written dialogue from a book. Nind and Wearmouth (2006) recommend that teachers focus on peer group interactions and a common concern with participation in a learning community (p. 122). Also, working alongside the student and getting physically to their level can help all of them (Marsh, 1970). Teachers should understand that there are some shy and low-level students in class, they need to encourage them to speak like using group interaction and encouraging them to speak just with simple words in English in order to breakdown shyness.

Section three: Speaking difficulties

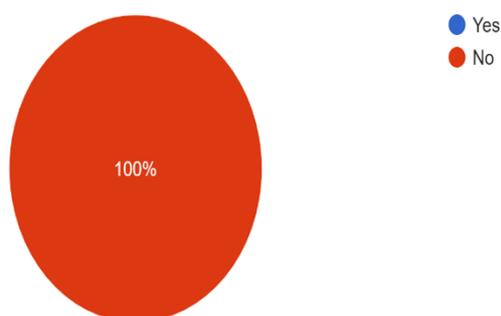
Q1. In your opinion, why do think students fail to speak correctly in English?

We want to know from asking this question what is the reason that makes students have difficulty in speaking English correctly. The female teacher says that because of the lack of vocabulary items and being afraid to make mistakes (do not master the grammar rules). Whereas, the male teacher claims that because of the lack of interest or lack of basics.

Q2. Does the use of authentic videos inside the classroom distract you to teach?

Table 3.3. *The distraction of the use of authentic videos inside the classroom.*

	Yes	No	Total
Teachers	0	02	02
100%	0%	100%	100%



Graph 3.2. *The distraction of the use of authentic videos inside the classroom.*

As it is represented in the table above, both teachers indicated that they do not use real and authentic videos inside the classroom. According to the female teacher, authentic videos are very useful and good means to present the topic and introduce new vocabularies, and they facilitate the task for both teachers and students. Peacock (1997) comments that authentic materials "may increase learners' levels of on-task behavior, concentration, and involvement in the target activity more than artificial materials" (p. 152). It is beneficial to use authentic materials like video in teaching the speaking skills because it improves the students' level.

Teacher one justifies her answer that is authentic videos are useful and good means to present the topic and introduce new vocabularies, and they facilitate the task for both teachers and students, but the other teacher says that he does not usually use them.

Q3. What are the activities that you use to teach speaking and do not help all students in the classroom to speak?

The main objective of the question is to know the activities that are used by the teachers in order to assist all students to speak English in the classroom. Teacher one claims that the activities are story completion, interview, but brainstorming is effective and learners generate ideas quickly and freely because the students are not criticized for their ideas. So, the students will be open to share new ideas. Discussions are also a good kind of activity. The discussion should be set by the teacher. Teacher two says that the activities are like making dialogues or oral summaries/ presentations. Usually for lack of interest/ basics.

Q4. What is the nature of errors your students make while they speak?

In their answer to this question, one teacher states that there are three types of errors their students make while speaking. These are grammatical errors, stylistic errors, and diction (word choice or vocabulary). Whereas, the other teacher mentions that the students usually produce oral grammatical mistakes and sometimes inappropriate selection of word.

Section four: Causes of speaking difficulties

Q1. Based on your experience and observation, what are the major causes of your students' speaking difficulties?

In their response to this very important question, they reveal that the major causes of students' failure to speak have to do with the lack of vocabulary items and being afraid of making mistakes. The other teacher claims that lack of interests is the reason behind student's inability to speak correctly.

Q2. What are the weaknesses of the competency-based approach in relation to teaching and learning the speaking skill?

When we ask about the weaknesses of the Competency-Based Approach, the female teacher mentions that CBA requires students to be self- disciplined, self -motivated and able to

plan and work independently which might not be possible for all students. The weakness is not in the approach itself. Instead, the application of the approach is not easy because of students' lack of interests, overloaded programs, insufficient teaching hours, limited background knowledge. The male teacher reveals that the lack of sufficient time and the number of students per-classroom make the present applied approach weak particularly when teaching and learning the speaking skill.

Q3. Do you think that the current program gives focal attention to speaking lessons and practices in terms of quality, material use, time, and space (laboratory) to better secondary school student's oral skills?

The major aim of this question is to know whether or not the program gives clear attention to speaking lessons and practice in order to enhance high school students' speaking performance. One teacher argues that due to the length of the program, the speaking skill is not given a great deal of importance since the students will be tested in a written form (Baccalaureate examination). The students learn by heart paragraphs to write them down and not to retell them in an oral form. They are interested in getting marks and not in expressing themselves in English. The second teacher responds saying that it seems that the syllabi are good in general, but time is not enough (for first-year students), there is a serious shortage of materials.

Q4. Suggest a strategy that will help students with speaking difficulties to speak correctly?

In their answer to this question, one teacher suggests that to improve English speaking skill, teachers should immerse their students in English as much as possible, make students listen (modal) and then speak (drill), reading aloud, and practice through songs, games, and other tools. Whereas, the other teacher points out that the strategies suggested in the syllabi

seem to be working but within classes with low numbers of students as teachers may give more attention to larger numbers of students.

3.3. Questionnaire for EFL secondary school students

Throughout this research tool, the present student researcher aims at investigating the main difficulties and problems that come across EFL high school scientific stream students of Mohamed Belounar in Biskra while speaking in English. The findings of this questionnaire will be described and analyzed.

3.3.1. Description of the questionnaire for students

The online questionnaire for students has been used to collect the data about the major problems and difficulties that face EFL high school students of Mohamed Belounar in Biskra. The number of students equals 74 participants. We worked with 25 students only due to Covid-19. Their first language is Arabic, and their average in English is 9/20. This sample has been selected purposively in order to observe the difficulties and the problems that confront them since the students are a second-year scientific stream, they are interested in scientific subjects. The questions will take close-ended and open-ended formats. The questionnaire will be divided into four (04) sections. Section one is about personal information, section two talks about the speaking skill, the third section about speaking difficulties, and the last section about causes of speaking difficulties.

3.3.2. Analysis of questionnaire for students

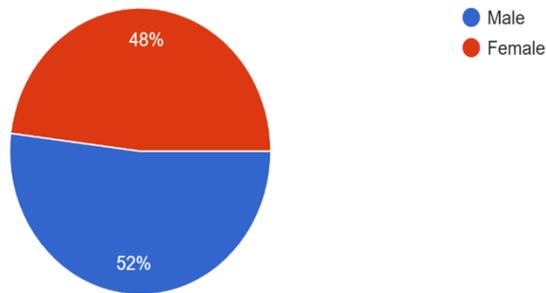
After collecting data from students' answers, we will analyze the results. The analyses will offer information about the deficiencies and problems that hinder EFL students in speaking English of Mohamed Belounarin High School in Biskra, and it could also help them to find solutions to those difficulties in order to speak English correctly and fluently.

Section one: Personal information

Q1. What is your gender

Table 3.4. *Students' gender*

	Male	Female	Total
Students	13	12	25
100%	52%	48%	100%



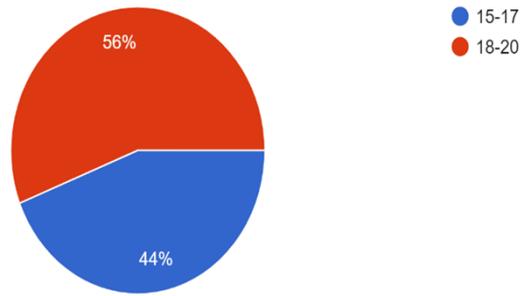
Graph 3.3. *Students' gender*

The table above shows that the results are approximately close between the number of males and females. The result of the former is 13 (52%), but the results of the latter are 12 (48%).

Q2. What is your age?

Table 3.5. *EFL secondary school students' age*

	15-17	18-20	Total
Students	11	14	25
100%	44%	56%	100%



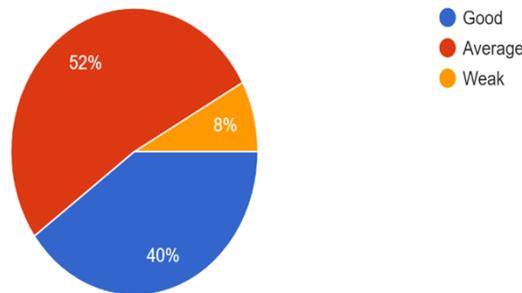
Graph 3.4. EFL secondary school students' age

The result of graph 4 shows that the participants whose age between (15-17) is 11 about 44%, and those whose age between (18-20) is 14 about 56%. It means that most of the answers are written by the repeaters of students.

Q3. How do you consider your English level?

Table 3.6. *Students' English level*

	Good	Average	Weak	Total
Students	10	13	02	25
100%	40%	52%	08%	100%



Graph 3.5. Students' English level

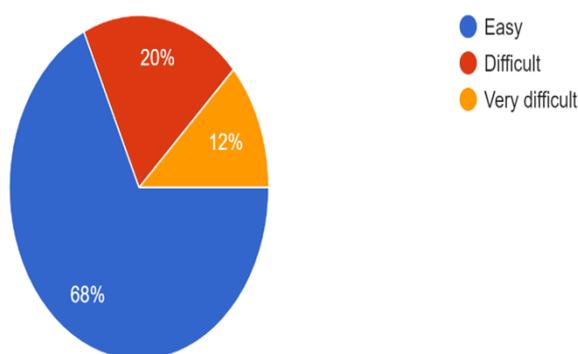
From the results of graph 5, we notice that the level of students varies from good, average, to weak level students. The good participants are 10 about (40%), the average participants are 13 about (52%), and the weak participants are 2 about (08%). The results indicate that a great number of students have an average level in English.

Section two: Speaking skill

Q1. How do you find speaking in English?

Table 3.7. Students' speaking in English

	Easy	Difficult	Very difficult	Total
Students	17	05	03	25
100%	68%	20%	12%	100%



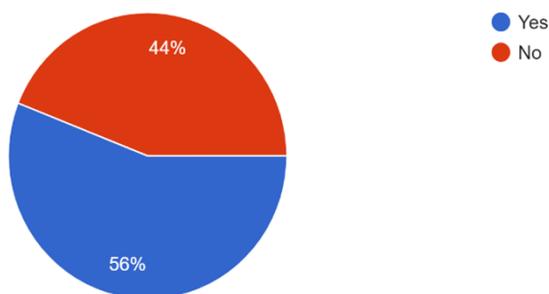
Graph 3.6. Students' speaking in English

The table and the graph present display that 17 students about (68%) speak English easily. About 5 students about (20%) speak English with difficulty. 3 students about (12%) find speaking in English very difficult. The results show that the majority of the participants speak English easily. According to Chastain (1998) "Speaking is a productive skill that involves many components, such as grammar, strategy, sociolinguistics and discourse; for him speaking is more than simply making the right sounds, choosing the right words or getting the constructions correct" (pp. 330-358). To be correct and fluent speaker, students should know the grammar rules, say the right pronunciation, choose the right words, and master the sociolinguistics competence.

Q2. Does speaking in English correctly seem difficult to you?

Table 3.8. *The difficulty of speaking in English correctly*

	Yes	No	Total
Students	14	11	25
100%	56%	44%	100%



Graph 3.7. *The difficulty of speaking in English correctly*

The table and the graph show that the participants who said “yes” are 14 about (56%), and those who answer with “no” are 11 about (44%). The majority of the participants find it difficult to speak in English correctly. Their justifications about the difficulty of speaking in English correctly are: (a) the accent, there is a mix-up between the accents, (b) the need to have good pronunciation with good grammar, (c) English has a lot of rules of grammar, (d) speaking in English correctly is not an easy task, (e) knowing some words in English. They cannot speak in English correctly.

By contrast, the justifications of students who say that speaking in English correctly is not difficult are the following: (a) humans make mistakes, so every time they must correct their mistakes, (b) English is easy language, (c) listening to music, playing games, and speaking with natives help those students to speak correctly and fluently in English.

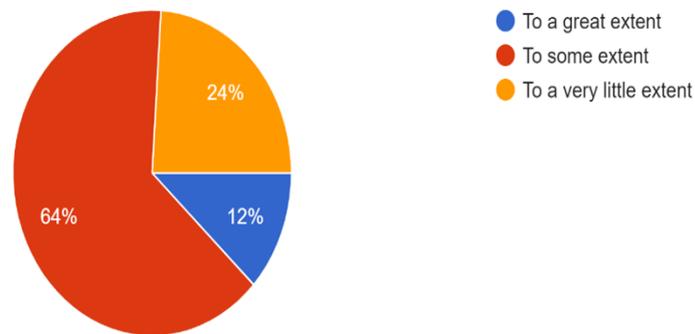
The participants who find difficulties in speaking English indicate that English pronunciation between British and American, a matter of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar and the interference of the mother tongue. Contrary, those who don't find

difficulty in speaking English correctly, their reasons are to listen to songs, watch movies in English, play games with natives.

Q3. To what extent you can express yourself through speaking?

Table 3.9. *Students express themselves through speaking*

	To great extent	To some extent	To very little extent	Total
Students	03	16	06	25
100%	12%	64%	24%	100%



Graph 3.8. *Students express themselves through speaking*

According to the results of this question, the majority of 16 about (64%) of respondents indicate that they can express themselves by speaking in certain degree. The percentage of (24%) about 06 students indicate that they encounter some challenges in their attempts to express their ideas in English. Few of our respondents about 12% (3 students) speak in English accurately and fluently. We can notice the majority of participants cannot speak in English confidently, and the minority of them have no difficulties to speak in English language.

The students' justifications are the following: (a) thinking in Arabic and translating in English, (b) speaking in English is easier than writing, (c) forgetting words because they do not speak them frequently, (d) they are not good at speaking in English, and they have a

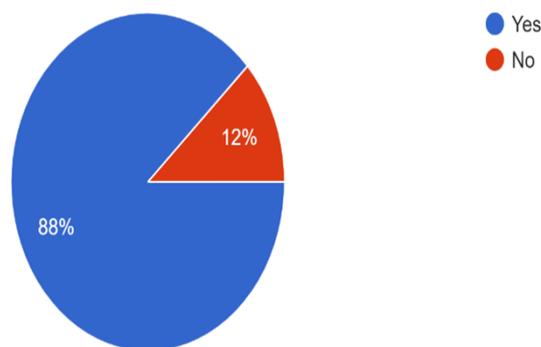
problem with difficult words, (e) they are introverted, so they do not participate in the classroom activities, and (f) very few vocabularies distract those students speak fluently.

The participants show that they are good in expressing themselves by speaking because they think in Arabic and translate in English and also, they are not bad and not good. Students who express themselves via speaking badly because they need a lot of vocabulary to express themselves, but they do not master them, and they can express themselves through writing better than speaking. However, few students speak English brilliantly.

Q4. In your opinion, should speaking skill be given more importance in English language tests?

Table 3.10. *Place of speaking skill in English examination*

	Yes	No	Total
Students	22	03	25
100%	88%	12%	100%



Graph 3.9. *Place of speaking skill in English examination*

The results of this question present that the majority of the students about (88%) declare that teachers have to test their speaking skill. However, the minority of them (12%) mention that they do not want their teachers to test their oral skill and ability to speak in English.

Students justify their answers saying: (a) we can't judge people's English by only writing, (b) we speak more than writing to communicate, (c) we answer questions, so the answers express our level and capacity in the language, (d) we should have an oral expression module to advance our speaking skill, (e) we need to listen to each other, and the teacher has to correct our oral errors.

The justifications of students who reject to take exam in speaking skill are the following: (a) English is difficult, and we can't get a good mark, (b) we take a bad mark in the oral test.

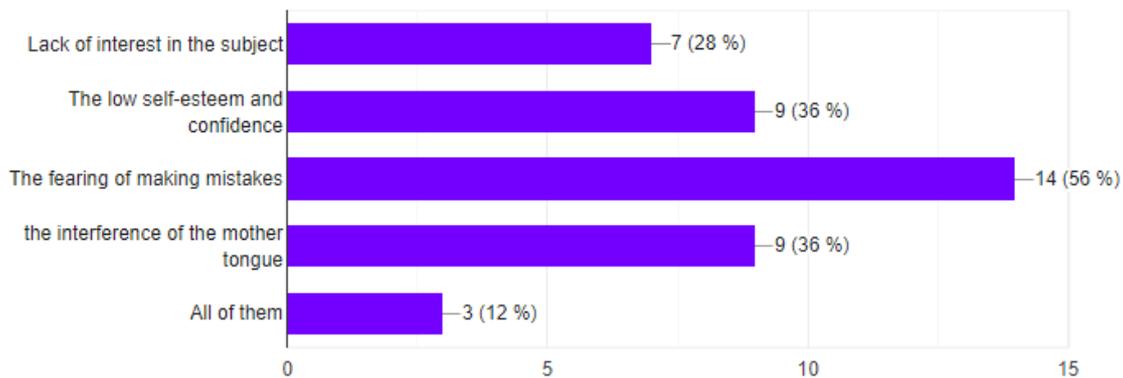
From the students' justifications, we notice that those who like to take oral test their capacities in English language are good. They also want to learn how to communicate in English correctly with the help of their teachers even if they do not get good marks. Further, they have the motivation to speak English and communicate with their friends. Whereas, those students with negative attitude toward the fact of examining their oral production believe that they could not achieve good grades because of their low level in English and some other psychological defects.

Section three: The speaking difficulties

Q1. What are your speaking difficulties? You can select more than one option.

Table 3.11. *The students' speaking difficulties*

	Students	%
Lack of interest in the subject	07	28%
The low self-esteem and confidence	09	36%
The fearing of making mistakes	14	56%
The interference of the mother tongue	09	36%
All of them	03	12%



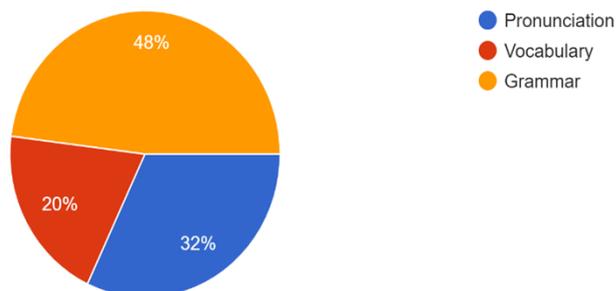
Graph 3.10. The students' speaking difficulties

The Graph and the table present the results of speaking difficulties. About (28%) of the participants are not interested in studying English. (36%) of them have low self-esteem and confidence. The vast majority of students (56%) suffer from fear of making mistakes. (36%) have difficulty of mother tongue interference. Just a few of the participants about (12%) have problems in all of the mentioned difficulties.

Q2. What is the most difficult aspect that you encounter while speaking in English?

Table 3.12. Language difficulties in speaking among EFL secondary school students.

	Pronunciation	Vocabulary	Grammar	Total
Students	08	05	12	25
100%	32%	20%	48%	100%



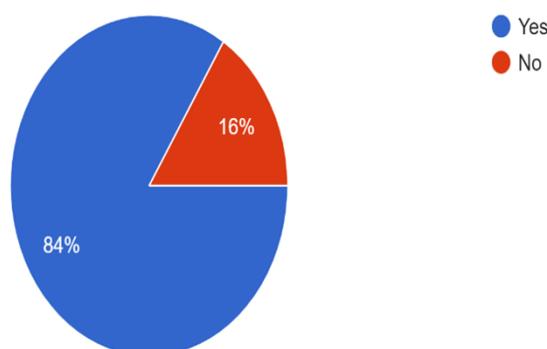
Graph 3.11. Language difficulties in speaking among EFL secondary school students.

From the obtained results, it appears that the majority of the participants about 12 (48%) find that grammar is the most language difficult aspect that encounter them when they speak in English. Some participants 08 about (32%) said that pronunciation which is the most difficult. A small number of students 05 (20%) indicated that vocabulary is the most difficult feature that confronts and hinders them from speaking in English.

Q3. Do you prefer your teacher to correct your speaking errors?

Table 3.13. *Students' attitude towards teacher's oral error correction*

	Yes	No	Total
Students	21	04	25
100%	84%	16%	100%



Graph 3.12. *Students' attitude towards teacher's oral error correction*

The results show that the majority of the participants about 21 (84%) prefer their teachers to correct their oral errors. Only 04 students about (16%) express negative attitude towards teacher correction of their oral errors.

The justification of students about their preference towards teacher oral error correction are the following: (a) the teacher will give me the right answer, (b) feedback makes them learn from their mistakes, and to not repeat them again, (c) differentiate between what is correct and what is not correct, (d) they want to learn English from the teacher because s/he is professional in the language.

However, students who don't prefer their teacher to correct their oral errors say that (a) oral feedback makes them Inept, (b) they do not like the teacher to stop them and correct their oral errors, (c) they prefer self-correction, and (d) they feel shy and nervous in front of their classmates when the teacher corrects their speaking errors publicly.

Q4. How does your teacher correct you?

Students' answers about teacher's correction of their oral errors are the following: (a) when they finish speaking, their teacher corrects their mistakes, (b) they stop them to correct their oral errors, (c) they correct kindly without harming their emotions, (d) they never correct them, (e) they sometimes correct orally, and sometimes by writing in the students' copybook, (f) they ask them to repeat the incorrect sentence to recognize their mistakes, then they correct them together with the teacher, (g) teacher relays on peer correction.

From the answers of the participants about the ways that their teachers correct their oral errors, we notice that the respondents have different views about their teachers' errors correction. The majority of them say that the correction is done orally. In terms of time, they correct immediately, and they sometimes delay correction. This correction can be done orally on the air and by writing the correct form on the board. The teachers sometimes do not correct students' errors. In this respect, Hedge (2000) states that immediate feedback or errors correction is a controversial issue because there have been much arguments whether giving immediate feedback to speech errors is favourable to students or not. Also, Martínez (2006) refuses the idea of correcting errors to students assuming that correction might affect learners negatively and de-motivate them or cause them to be scared of speaking. However, Edge (1989) sees that mistakes and errors as "learning steps". In the same context, Hedge (2000) explained that error correction might be vital in figuring out the rules of the second language. Teachers' oral correction has positive and negative sides toward students in the

learning process. So, in order to encourage students to accept the teachers' correction, Allen (1991) provides a technique by using a tape to record the students' verbal communication in out of class activities which they can listen to their own conversation and figure out their mistakes by themselves.

Section four: Causes of speaking difficulties

Q1. Why do not you participate in the classroom?

The responses of the participants about the reasons of low or uneven participation are the following: (a) they are shy students, (b) participating in English module is boring, (c) they prefer to listen more than to speak, (d) I am not good at the language, (e) they are afraid of making oral errors, for their friends start laughing on them, and (f) they do not have the right response to the posed question.

The responses of the question about the reason of the students' unwillingness to participate in the classroom are varied. Some students are shy and afraid of making mistakes. Some other students feel bored and uninterested in the subject matter. Other category indicated that they are not good at English language, for they do not usually have the right answer. However, very few participants state that they usually participate in the classroom. Kaewkatron and Lynch (2013, p.96) state, "Many studies have identified that there is a significant relationship between introversion and extraversion, and the speaking skill". Lestari, Suha and Suhartono (2013, p.11) indicate, "There are also some students whom seemed passively involved, they rarely asked a question and speak only when the lecture demand them to answer the question or to participate in the class discussion. This kind of students was commonly known to possess introvert personality". Teacher will find the difficulty to excite those students. They also explain, "Students whom relatively active in the class, they speak English without hesitation. These active students are generally regarded to possess extrovert

personality". This mean that there is difference ability in speaking between extroverted and introverted students.

Q2. To what extent classroom environment distract or help you to speak?

The students' justifications about whether the classroom environment distract or help them to speak are the following: (a) it helps when they express their opinions in different subjects, (b) when their classmates participate, this makes them motivated and creates competition in the classroom, (c) it never help because we do not have a laboratory to listen to native and authentic oral conversion, and (d) when the classroom is noisy, we cannot learn or listen to the teacher.

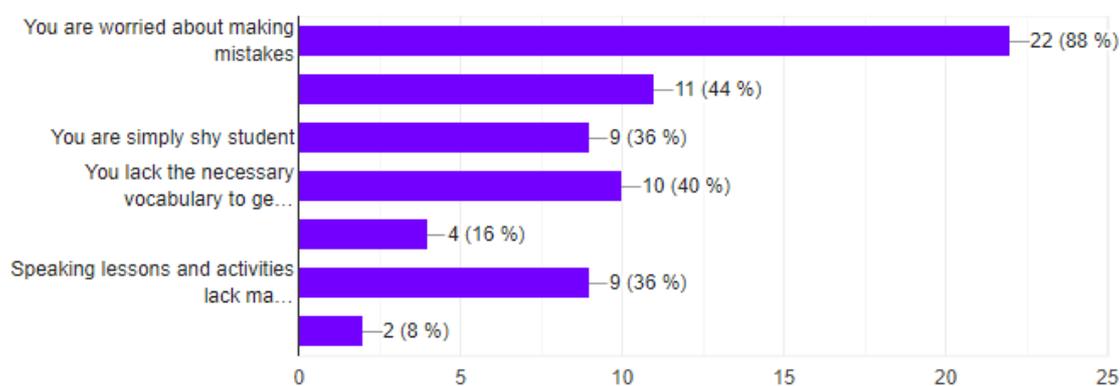
From the responses of the respondents, we notice that there are differences between answers. Few of them see that the classroom environment is helpful to a great extent for students to speak. However, the majority of them suffer from the lack of equipment and real materials to listen to oral conversion. Some students say that the classroom environment is not helpful to speak. Walberg (1974) says that the classroom psychological or social environment refers to the climate or atmosphere of a class as a social group that potentially influences what students learn. According to Steele (1973) who states that the physical environment can influence the way teachers and students feel, think and behave. Grubaugh and Houston (2013) say that the system of arrangement of desks seems to make students lose focus and creates a higher number of disruptions in the classroom. Also, Overcrowded classrooms affect learners who are weak and poor because less attention is paid to them (Materechera, 2014). The hearing impairment is significant enough that affects the learner's educational performance (Raymond, 2013). In addition, Juhana (2012) mentions, "Psychological factors such as fear of making mistake, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and lack of motivation hinder students from speaking in English class" (p.100). There are physical and psychological problems that hinder

students from learning in the classroom like overcrowded classrooms, the hearing impairment, fear of making mistakes, shyness, etc.

Q3. Why do you find speaking in English difficult? You may choose more than one.

Table 3.14. *Reasons for the difficulties of speaking in English*

	Students	%
You are worried about making mistakes	22	88%
You are afraid of criticisms from your teacher or classmates	11	44%
You are a simply shy student	09	36%
You lack the necessary vocabulary to get your meaning across	10	40%
You lack the motivation to speak English	04	16%
Speaking lessons and activities lack materials, such as authentic videos	09	36%
Your teacher does not allow learners to participate	02	08%



Graph 3.13. *Reasons for the difficulties of speaking in English*

Graph 13 presents that the majority of the participants 22 about (88%) indicated that they are worried about making mistake when they speak. Some of them about 11 students (44%) are afraid of criticisms from their teachers or classmates. About 09 students (36%) become shy when they talk. 10 students about (40%) lack the necessary vocabulary to express their ideas. 04 students about (16%) are not motivated enough to speak English. 09 students about (36%) among the participants indicated that the lack of speaking materials is the reason that they do

not speak correctly and fluently. Very few students (2) about (8%) revealed that the teacher does not give them chances to speak or participate.

Q4. Any suggestions for the improvement of your speaking performance in the classroom.

High school students' suggestions about their improvement of the speaking performance in the classroom are the following: (a) we need authentic videos and materials, so they could learn more and speak English, (b) the student in the classroom must speak with each other in English to develop their skills, (c) they do not need to be afraid to ask questions for clarifications, (d) the teacher should be a friend to his/her students, (e) there must be competition between the students during discussions, (f) they need to read books.

Students are affected negatively by harsh criticisms from teachers or students when they receive oral correction. Carroll, Swain, and Roberge (1992) indicate that students would rather not be marked down for each oral error because it destroys their confidence and because they prefer to communicate successfully rather than perfectly. Teachers need to consider whether their corrective techniques infuse a feeling of success in language usage and learning on behalf of their students (Panova & Lyster, 2002). Holley and King (1974) suggest that teachers should not use the methods which make learners feel embarrassed or frustrated, and thus teachers should be more sensitive about how to respond to and correct learner errors. The teacher should encourage students to speak, give them free time to talk and express their ideas rather than take the whole session explaining because this makes the lesson boring and the students lose the concentration.

In order to improve their speaking performance, most of the participants suggest that they need to be exposed to real and authentic materials in the classroom. For this, the speaking skill should be given sufficient teaching hours per week, so the students will have a great chance to practice and improve their oral skill.

3.4. Discussion of the main findings

Classroom observations and questionnaires for teachers and students are used as research instruments in this work in an attempt to investigate the major difficulties encountered by EFL secondary school students in speaking. From the employed research instruments, we notice that the most of the students are shy, introverted, and noisy. They have linguistic problems like incorrect use of grammar rules, lack of vocabularies, and poor pronunciation. Also, they use their mother tongue "Arabic" when speaking in English. Large classes prevent those students to speak. All these deficiencies affect negatively our sample's oral skill.

All the difficulties are due to the lack of practicing the language inside and outside classrooms. Students do not follow the teachers' instructions about learning the speaking skill. Also, the classroom environment is not helpful at all to learn speaking. Additionally, there is a lack of laboratory and authentic materials. There is the lack of motivation and interests in the subject. The main reason that hinder students from speaking in the classroom is the fear of making mistakes, being criticized by their teacher or their classmates, and the lack of activities related to learning the speaking skills.

Conclusion

This chapter shed the light on the analysis of fieldwork findings employed with EFL high school students of Mohamed Belounar in Biskra in order to investigate the major difficulties faced by students in speaking. The major instruments conducted in this research study are classroom observations, questionnaires for teachers and students. The classroom observations findings include that the students with different learning styles students are shy, introverted, overcrowded class impede teachers and students to benefit from oral discussions or correction of errors, and students' lack of linguistic knowledge. The main findings of questionnaire for teachers include the teachers do not use language laboratory and authentic materials in teaching speaking, the domination of the teachers' talks, lack of specific time to teach

speaking. The questionnaire for teachers' main findings includes students' lack of interest in the subject, the fear of making mistakes and criticising, and the low or absence of participation. These findings can be helpful and open the door for researchers to enhance the speaking English level of EFL high school students.

Recommendations

Based on the obtained results from (25) scientific stream students of Mohamed Belounar High School in Biskra, the present student researcher proposes some recommendations to the concerned be taken into considerations.

1. Syllabus designers

In order to improve the poor level among our sample in speaking in English language and cultivate their speaking difficulties, a huge contribution can be brought by the syllabus designers. For, we have proposed three recommendations.

1.1. Creating language laboratory

The syllabus designers should and authentic materials like computer rooms and data show in the secondary schools which can help students in listening to real language and enhance the speaking skill, also make them accessible to a more realistic practice than the traditional ways of teaching like scripted textbooks or showing some pictures.

1.2. Dealing with large classes

The syllabus designers should minimize the number to twenty (20) students per class because this will give more opportunities to all students to participate in a session, also the teacher can easily recognize their strengths and weaknesses.

1.3. Devising speaking program

Course designers are required to reduce the intensive program of written lessons and offer extra importance to oral lessons accompanied with practices that suit the student's levels and specialities to promote the speaking skill in high school all over Algeria. Since there is a string need to English language to improve the economy of our country on the part of the current government, extra teaching hours should be devoted to speaking skill.

2. EFL secondary school teachers

There are some recommendations for secondary school teachers in order to cover the difficulties that come across EFL high school students.

2.2. Creating stress free environment

The major cause that makes high school students find it difficult to speak English is the unsuitable environment for the students to speak English frequently. So, teachers should create a comfortable and suitable environment by strengthening the confidence of English language students and motivate them to speak, also they ought to encourage their students to speak by using different tasks and activities which fit their students' style of learning.

2.2. Soft correction of oral errors

Teachers should not correct immediately the errors of students when they struggle to build their meanings. When teachers correct their students' errors, they should try not to intimidate or ridicule them. Instead, they need to make sure to offer feedback that is positive by saying for example, "Very good try again, you had better to say..., etc". Further, it is good to delay or postponed correction instead of correcting too frequently and immediately. This will make students frustrated to talk because they are confident what will be said is usually incorrect in the teachers' eyes. They should not insist on the students' errors when they are speaking.

2.3. Reduce teacher's talk to 20%

Teachers should reduce their talking time and increase students talking time to 80%. In doing so, they are encouraging students to contribute in building the content of their lessons through discussion, debate, answering questions, etc. For, teachers have to consistently insist on the use of the target language frequently in the classroom. Additionally, they should know how the best strategies that will contribute in improving students' both fluency and accuracy.

3. EFL secondary school students

In order to improve EFL secondary school students, students should take into consideration the following recommendations.

3.1. Read intensively

Students have to read a lot to enrich their vocabulary. McCarthy (2000) states that lexical and grammatical knowledge are knowingly correlated to reading comprehension. This means that through intensive reading, one can master grammar and vocabulary.

3.2. Benefit from oral feedback

Students should not be afraid of making mistakes and errors, also they must understand that they are learning. Correction is very helpful to avoid making same errors again and again. write three other different benefits of oral correction of errors to students

3.3. Learn authentic language

Students could speak correctly and fluently by listening to music, watching movies, news, and following channels like the BBC and CNN that use English for broad casting. Newmann and Wehlage (1993) say that the more there is a connection to the real-world students live in, the more a lesson gains authenticity. When students get exposure to native speakers of the target language, they learn from them the genuine language, they learn the real pronunciation, master the grammar rules excellently and unconsciously, and gain more and different words with their appropriate situations; in addition, they learn the social cultural rules of the target language.

General conclusion

One of the most crucial skills among the four language skills reading, listening, writing is speaking because it allows humans to communicate. The current research study investigates whether second-year scientific stream students of Mohamed Belounar High School in Biskra face difficulties in speaking, whether they benefit from the teachers' instructions of speaking lessons, and major causes of the students' speaking difficulties. Through this research, we hypothesized that if students listen carefully to their teachers' English, that will help them to speak correctly. Additionally, if they learn via authentic videos, that will enable them to speak correctly. The last hypothesis shows that if high school students practice speaking inside the classroom, that will support them to speak better. In this research, we employ three research tools which are classroom observations, a questionnaire for (02) teachers, and the other questionnaire administered to (25) students.

The first chapter of the research study comprises an overview of the speaking skill which is the ability to effectively communicate with a language. It is an important skill because it maintains a rapport in relationships, influence people, and win or lose negotiations. Its major characteristics are accuracy and fluency. Also, the speaking skill has a great relationship with reading, listening, and writing. In addition, in this chapter we mention the students' attitude towards speaking because students have different attitudes like positive or negative.

The second chapter is about an understanding of EFL learners' speaking difficulties, it includes the process of teaching the speaking skill through approaches and methods like the direct method, audio-lingual method, the communicative approach, then we mention the speaking difficulties like shyness, lack of participation, lack of grammar and vocabulary and their major causes because of inappropriate classroom environment, overcrowded classroom, and lack of language laboratory. Also, we refer to the teachers' roles in the classroom as an assessor, a controller, a prompter, an organizer...etc., after that we indicate how teachers face

difficulties in assessing the speaking skill, and last we mention the most important activities of the speaking skill like the role play, using group work, and using authentic materials like videos in the classroom in order to improve EFL high school students speaking skills.

Secondary school students face difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language. In response to research question one about to what extent do second year EFL secondary school students benefit from instruction of speaking skill lessons? In this study, we observe that high school students don't benefit from the teachers' instructions. In response to research question two which is what is the nature of speaking difficulties second year EFL secondary school students usually face? We find that the difficulties are related to a very poor pronunciation, inappropriate selection of vocabularies, incorrect application of grammatical rules, and wrong use of English language tenses. The second-year scientific stream students also show other difficulties when speaking in English, such as being shy, introverted, noisy students, and inhibited. Furthermore, they never practice speaking in classroom, rarely participate, and poorly trained in English since the middle school level. It has been also founded that secondary school students frequently use their mother language "Arabic" in the classroom instead of communicating in English. Learning in large classes distracts teachers to give all students equal opportunities to speak and cultivate their psychological, social, cognitive learning difficulties in speaking.

In response to our research question about the major causes that prevent students of scientific stream which are about (N= 25 of students) to speak correctly and fluently, we find the following results: (a) the lack of practice of the language, (b) failure to follow the teachers' speaking instruction, (c) unhelpful classroom environment, (d) there is no language laboratory and authentic materials, (e) the lack of motivation and interests in the subject, (f) insufficient time of speaking lessons, (g) the lack of activities related to learning the speaking skills, and finally, (h) fear of making mistakes and being criticized by their teacher or their classmates.

All of these reasons hinder EFL high school students from speaking and expressing themselves in English correctly and fluently.

The results obtained from classroom observations, questionnaire for teachers and students confirmed that students should listen carefully to their teachers' speaking instruction to great extent, they also have to listen to others' speaking in English and memorize how to pronounce words in order to retrieve them in different and suitable situations correctly, reading books to enrich their knowledge (vocabulary), learn phrases rather than words, the creation of language laboratory and the use of audio and audio-visual material to teach speaking authentically is necessary .

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is presented in order to collect information about teaching the speaking skill and the major methods and strategies applied to teach speaking in classroom under our title which is: An investigation of major difficulties encountered by EFL learners in speaking. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us in our research for the Master's degree in Language Sciences. We inform you that your answers will absolutely remain confidential.

Section One: Biographical information

1. How many years have you been teaching in secondary school?

.....

Section two: Teaching the speaking skill

1. How do you teach speaking skills?

.....

.....

2. Where do you teach speaking? Is it in the laboratory via listening to authentic materials?

.....

.....

3. How do you motivate your students to speak?

.....

.....

4. How do you correct students' speaking errors?

.....
.....

5. Do you use materials to teach speaking?

a. Yes b. No

Please, justify your answer

.....
.....

6. How do you deal with shy and low-level students when they speak or refuse to speak?

.....
.....

Section three: Speaking difficulties

1. In your opinion, why do think students fail to speak correctly in English?

.....
.....

2. Does the use of authentic videos inside the classroom distract you to teach?

a. Yes b. No

Why?

.....
.....

3. What are the activities that you use to teach speaking and do not help all students in the classroom to speak?

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.....

4. What is the nature of errors your students make while they speak?

.....
.....

Section four: Causes of speaking difficulties

1. Based on your experience and observation, what are the major causes of your students' speaking difficulties?

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.....
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.....

2. What are the weaknesses of the competency-based approach in relation to teaching and learning the speaking skill?

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.....

3. Do you think that the current program gives focal attention to speaking lessons and practices in terms of quality, material use, time, and space (laboratory) to better secondary school student's oral skills?

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.....

4. Suggest a strategy that will help students with speaking difficulties to speak correctly?

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.....

Thank you very much for your collaboration

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Students

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions for the sake of our study which is entitled “An investigation of major difficulties encountered by EFL learners in speaking”. Your answers are very important for the validity of this research we are undertaking. We inform you that your answers will absolutely remain confidential.

Section one: Personal information

1. what is your gender:

a. Male b. Female

2. What is your age?

15_ 17 18_ 20

3. How do you consider your English level?

a. Good b. Average c. Weak

Section two: The speaking skill

1. How do you find speaking in English?

a. Easy b. Difficult c. Very difficult

2. Does speaking in English correctly seem difficult to you?

a. Yes b. No

Why?

.....

3. To what extent you can express yourself through speaking?

- a. To a great extent b. To some extent c. To a very little extent

Why?

.....

4. In your opinion, should speaking skill be given more importance in English language tests?

- a. Yes b. No

Why?

.....

Section three: The speaking difficulties

1. What are your speaking difficulties? You can select more than one option.

- a. Lack of interest in the subject b. The low self-esteem and confidence

- c. The fearing of making mistakes d. the interference of the mother tongue

- e. All of them

Others.....

.....

2. What is the most difficult aspect that you encounter while speaking in English?

- a. Pronunciation b. Vocabulary c. Grammar

3. Do you prefer your teacher to correct your speaking errors?

- a. Yes b. No

Why?

.....

4. How does your teacher correct you?

.....

.....

Section four: Causes of speaking difficulties

1. Why do not you participate in the classroom?

.....
.....

2. To what extent classroom environment distract or help you to speak?

.....
.....

3. Why do you find speaking in English difficult? You may choose more than one.

- a. You are worried about making mistakes
- b. You are afraid of criticisms from your teacher or classmates
- c. You are simply a shy student
- d. You lack the necessary vocabulary to get your meaning across
- e. You lack the motivation to speak English
- f. Speaking lessons and activities lack materials, such as authentic videos
- g. Your teacher does not allow learners to participate

4. Any suggestions for the improvement of your speaking performance in the classroom.

.....
.....

Thank you very much for your collaboration

ملخص

يعد التحدث أحد أهم المهارات التي يجب تطويرها كوسيلة للتواصل الفعال. تعتبر مهارات التحدث واحدة من أصعب سمات تعلم اللغة. يجد معظم متعلمي اللغة صعوبات في التعبير عن أنفسهم بلغة منطوقة أيضا يواجهون مشاكل في استخدام اللغة الأجنبية والتواصل بها للتعبير عن آرائهم بشكل فعال. في هذه الدراسة البحثية ، يهتم الباحث الطالب الحالي بالتحقيق في الصعوبات الرئيسية التي يواجهها طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ثانوية محمد بلونار ببسكرة للتحقق مما إذا كان طلاب المدارس الثانوية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية يستفيدون من دروسهم في التحدث ، ومعرفة طبيعة صعوبات التحدث التي تواجههم عادة ، وتدرس الأسباب الرئيسية لتلك الصعوبات التي تعيقهم عن الكلام. تم استخدام البحث الوصفي متعدد الأساليب كتصميم لهذه الدراسة البحثية. تتكون عينة هذا البحث من 74 طالباً من السنة الثانية ثانوي شعبة العلوم التجريبية ، ومستواهم في اللغة الإنجليزية 20/9 ، ومعلمان يدرسان في نفس العام ونفس الشعبة. البيانات المستخدمة هي ملاحظات داخل القسم ، واستبيانين للمعلمين وللطلاب. بناءً على الملاحظات يواجه الطلاب عوائق نفسية مثل الخجل والخوف من ارتكاب الأخطاء وقلة الثقة بالنفس ، أو عدم تمكنهم من العثور على مفردات وتعابير مناسبة لاستخدامها ، وعدم نطق بعض الكلمات ، وسوء استخدام الأزمنة ، وضعف معارف اللغة الإنجليزية ، أو عدم الاهتمام بالموضوع. يُظهر الاستبيانين أيضاً الأسباب الكامنة وراء مشكلات الطلاب مثل عدم وجود بيئة صفية مناسبة ، ونقص مقاطع فيديو معملية أصلية أجهزة حقيقية يمكن أن تساعدهم على التحدث كامالا يوجد وقت محدد لتعليم مهارات التحدث.

