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“Students with Speaking Difficulties and their Achievement in English Classes at the Elementary School Naim Frasheri, Tetovo”

“Nxënësit me vështirësi në të folurit dhe arritjet e tyre në orët e gjuhës Angleze në shkollën fillore Naim Frashëri, Tetovë”

„Учениците со говорни тешкотии и нивните достигнувања на часови по англиски јазик во ОУ Наим Фрашери, Тетово“

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## **Abstract**

The study investigates students with difficulties in speaking and their achievement in English classes. The main purpose of learning English as a foreign language is to achieve effective communication. Among the four language skills' speaking plays a major role in learning a new language. The aim of language learning is to develop and improve the knowledge of the four skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. One of the most important and difficult skill at the same time is speaking. Learning a foreign language requires achieving efficient speaking skills and fluency. However, speaking English is a challenge for many learners and teachers since it is a non-native language and it is not spoken in everyday life. Speaking difficulties may influence students' achievement in English classes, since the classes now are student-centered and oral communication should be mainly used by them rather than by the teacher. This study explores the difficulties students encounter while speaking English and factors which lead to speaking difficulties.

*Keywords:*

*Speaking difficulties, achievement, communication, speaking skills,*

## **Parathënie**

Ky studim shqyrton nxënësit të cilët hasin vështirësi gjatë të folurit dhe arritjet e tyre në mësimin e gjuhës angleze. Mësimi i gjuhës angleze si gjuhë e huaj ka për qëllim arritjen e komunikimit efektiv. Gjatë mësimin të një gjuhe të re, të folurit ka një rol më të rëndësishëm për dallim nga katër shkathtësitë tjera gjuhësore. Qëllimi i të mësuarit të një gjuhe te huaj është zhvillimi dhe përmirësimi i katër shkathtësive gjuhësore si të folurit, të shkruarit, të lexuarit dhe te dëgjuarit. Njëra ndër shkathtësitë më të rëndësishme si dhe në të njëjtën kohë më e vështirë është shkathtësia e te folurit. Duke u bazuar në faktin se kjo gjuhë nuk është amtare dhe nuk flitet në jetën e përditshme, shumica e nxënësve dhe mësueseve te folurit ne gjuhen angleze e shohin si një sfidë. Vështirësitë që hasin nxënësit gjatë të folurit mund të ndikojnë në arritjet e tyre në mësimin e gjuhës angleze duke marrë parasysh që tani kemi mësimdhënien me nxënësin në qendër ku nxënësi duhet të komunikoj dhe të flas më shume se sa mësuesi. Ky studim shqyrton vështirësitë me te cilat ballafaqohen nxënësit gjatë të folurit si dhe faktorët që i shkaktojnë këto vështirësi.

*Fjalë kyçe:*

*Vështirësitë gjatë të folurit, arritjet, komunikimi, shkathtësitë e të folurit*

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

The English language has become the key of communication around the world. Besides its importance as an international language it is also the language of technology, which means that it plays a vital role in every area of our lives. The main purpose of learning a foreign language is to achieve effective communication skills and fluency. It is required to develop and improve speaking skills in order to become fluent speaker and to communicate freely. Despite the fact that all four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are important in learning a foreign language, speaking is considered as the most difficult and important task. Speaking English tends to be a challenge for many learners since it is a foreign language and it is not spoken in everyday life. Most of the students face difficulties when speaking English even though they have general knowledge about the language. There are several factors that cause speaking difficulties. Overcoming these difficulties will help students to acquire English language, achieve effective communication and fluency in speaking.

### 1.1 What is speaking?

Speaking is considered as the most important skill and at the same time as one of the most difficult tasks for learners of a foreign language. A great importance is given to speaking skills in learning languages, and there are a lot of definitions regarding to speaking skills. According to Nazara, “Along the history of foreign language teaching and learning, speaking has always been considered as the most essential skill to be mastered for several reasons. First, approaches and methods for teaching speaking have long been major focuses of language teaching researches and conferences. Second, a huge number of conversation and other speaking course books, audios and videos are continuously published” (2011, p.29).

According to Leong & Ahmadi, “The learning of English-speaking skill is a preference for a lot of English as a Foreign/Second Language (EFL/ESL) learners. Language learners sometimes evaluate their success in language learning based on how well they have improved in their spoken language ability” (2017, p.34).

“One of English language skills that must be mastered by any foreign language learner is the ability to speak. The common question that arises from anybody who wants to know one’s ability in foreign language is whether he/she can speak English or not” (Heriansyah, 2012, p.37).

“Rather than oral skills being simply one aspect of learning language, the spoken form in the young learner’s classroom acts as the prime source of language learning” (Hosni, 2014, p.22). According to Hosni (2014),” Speaking is the active use of language to express meaning, and for young learners, the spoken language is the medium through which a new language is encountered, understood, practiced, and learnt” (p.22).

According to Leong & Ahmadi, “Speaking is very important in second language learning. Despite its importance, speaking has been overlooked in schools and universities due to different reasons like emphasis on grammar and unfavorable teacher-student proportions” (2017, p.34).

“Speaking is one of the most important skills of all the four language skills because individuals who learn a language are referred to as the speakers of that language (Ur, 1996). The main aim of English language teaching is to give learners the ability to use English language effectively and correctly in communication (Davies & Pearse, 2000)” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017, p.34).

The aim of learning a foreign is to achieve fluency in speaking. “In addition, many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. They define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire” (Nazara, 2011, p.29). “That is why teachers’ efforts should be focused on developing students’ ability to speak since learning to speak is considered as the greatest challenge for all language learners (Pinter, 2006)” (as cited in Juhana,2012, p.100). There are learners who have knowledge about language in general, but when it comes to speaking, they still face difficulties in expressing themselves. Learning a language requires more than knowing grammar rules. According to Heriansyha, “For most foreign language learners, speaking in target language is not an easy thing to undertake because learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules” (2012, p.37).

Learning a foreign language should cover more areas of knowledge.

Apart from these, Burnkart (1998) explains that language learners need to have three areas of knowledge involved within speaking namely (1) mechanics of language elements (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary) which emphasize on



use of right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation, (2) the functions of language that deals with speaking performance in the form of transaction and interaction (e.g. knowing how to change information and giving the clarity of essential message), (3) the sociocultural norms (such as turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants, understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason) ( as cited in Heriansyha 2012, p.37)

Acquiring and developing different areas of knowledge in learning a certain language will lead to effective communication skills, which means that speakers will be able to use the language appropriately in various social interactions. At this point communication is necessary. The more students communicate in the target language in this case English, the more they improve and acquire the language components. Encouraging students to speak English language in different situations and creating opportunity where all the learners are involved during speaking activities, will have a great positive effect in learning a foreign language.

One of the reasons why speaking is seen as a challenge is because of lack of communication. The only place to communicate in English is the classroom, and most of the students avoid speaking English because they find speaking in their mother tongue easier. One of the reasons why students avoid speaking English is lack of vocabulary. This happens because most of the students don't have the basic knowledge or they don't read as much as it is needed. In this case the teacher and teaching strategies play a major role in learning speaking. Using the appropriate approach and motivating students to speak English will be helpful in this case. "Realizing the high importance of speaking skill in EFL programs, it is very important to find and use the best instructional methods, materials, activities, media, and other requirements that will help the learners master speaking skill" (Nazara, 2011, p.29). Learners need to be motivated in different ways and by using different methodologies and resources. In the present, we live in the world of technology and globalization where knowing and speaking English is a must.

"We live in an educational world where orality is seen as a necessary, positive personal characteristic (Daly, 1991: 7)" (as cited in Tanveer,2007, p.5). Students will learn English by speaking English. The best way to become fluent in a language is to become immersed on the language. Motivation is also important in learning a foreign language. According to Leong&Ahmadi, "The second problem is that learners complain that they cannot remember anything to say and they do not have any motivation to express themselves. This is supported by

Rivers (1968) who thinks that learners often have nothing to say probably because their teachers had selected a topic that is not appropriate for them or they do not have enough information about it” (2017, p.36). Choosing the right topic has a great importance in learning speaking because it is related to student’s motivation. It is important that the learners get the needed amount of motivation for achieving better result in learning a language, especially in learning speaking. “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)” (as cited in Hosni,2014, p.24). Students who are motivated will achieve better results at the end of the course, also they will have a positive attitude toward the language they learn, which is another reason to practice and learn the target language. Student who have positive attitude toward the language tend to achieve better results in learning foreign language.

## **1.2 Speaking Difficulties**

Among the importance that speaking has in learning and teaching a foreign language, there are also challenges and difficulties encountered by the learners and teachers. Knowing a foreign language means the ability to speak it. “Humans are programmed to speak before they learn to read and write. In any given, human beings spend much more time interacting orally with language rather than using it in its written form. Speaking is the most important skill because it is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. English speaking is not an easy task because speakers should know many significant components like pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension” (Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.35). Despite the importance that all language components have, speaking skill and fluency are considered as the most important skill to master.” Furthermore, he divided listening and reading as receptive skills otherwise speaking and writing as productive skills. Speaking as a productive skill is an important aspect in language learning” (Musliadi,2016, p.74). There is no point in knowing a language or its grammar rules, without being able to speak it. Many learners and teachers face problems while learning and teaching speaking skills.” In fact, many students learning speaking for quite long time, but they still cannot be able practice speaking in the process of speaking improvement. This condition gives more intention about how teaching speaking methodology will affect the teaching and learning speaking in the class” (Musliadi, 2016, p.75). “If teachers want to help

learners overcome their difficulties in learning speaking skill, they should identify some factors that influence their speaking performance. Learners' speaking performance are influenced by factors like performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan & Mai, 2015)" (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.37). Teaching speaking is a challenging task for many teachers because there are many things that should be considered in order to achieve success, especially with students who face speaking problems." Speaking is required by people to interact among them. In speaking activity, many things that should be paid attention, not only relate to what is being spoken, what the language is used, but also who is our interlocutor" (Heriansyah, 2012, p.37). According to Leong& Ahmadi, "Speaking skill is regarded one of the most difficult aspects of language learning. Many language learners find it difficult to express themselves in spoken language. They are generally facing problems to use the foreign language to express their thoughts effectively. They stop talking because they face psychological obstacles or cannot find the suitable words and expressions" (2017, p.34). Among the factors that cause speaking difficulties, psychology factor tends to be one of the main factors leading to speaking difficulties. Most of the learner's struggle with speaking because of their personality for instance they are introvert and they find it difficult to speak in public or in front of others. In order to overcome speaking difficulties, teachers focus should be on supporting and giving opportunities to learners to practice speaking. "For language learning to take place, there are four conditions that should exist, and they are the exposure, opportunities to use the language, motivation, and instruction.—Learners need chances to say what they think or feel and to experiment in a supportive atmosphere using language they have heard or seen without feeling threatened" (Willis,1996, p.7)" ( as cited in Hosni,2014, p.23). It is important for the learners to hear English language in a way that they can also use the language they have heard and at the same time learn new phrases or words without feeling uncomfortable. The teacher as the leader of a class should focus on creating opportunities to use the language and at the same time motivate learners to learn and speak the target language. Despite the importance that speaking skills has, all other language skills such as reading, listening and writing skills have a strong relationship between each other. Students can improve speaking by hearing the language and practicing the language they hear by being involved in different speaking activities such as role plays, discussions, debates etc." Clark and Clark (1977: 223), states that speaking is fundamental and instrumental act. Speakers talk in order to have some effects on their listeners. They assert things to change their state of knowledge. They ask them questions to get information. They request

things to get them to do something for them. They also said that the nature of the speech act should play a central role in the process of speech production” (as cited in Musliadi, 2016, p.76). “Unlike reading, writing and listening activities, speaking requires some degree of real-time exposure to an audience. Learners are often inhibited 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 speech attracts” (Heriansyha,2012, p.39). As discussed in the paper, apart the importance that speaking skill has in learning L2/LF most of the learner’s struggle with it because of criticism and shyness.

Low participation in class is one of the difficulties that students encounter and this belong to environment factor causing speaking difficulties. Low participation in class is a result of huge number of students, where the time cannot afford all the learners to participate in speaking activities. According to Leong & Ahmadi, “In a class with a large number of students, each student will have very little time for talking because just one student talks at a time and the other students try to hear him/her. In the speaking class, some learners dominate the whole class while others talk very little or never speak” (2017, p.36).

The use of L1 is another factor contributing to speaking difficulties. Despite the reasons of why the teachers use L1 it tends to be one of the reasons causing speaking difficulties among students. “Another main reason for other teachers to use L1 is vocabulary and grammar. Although their attitudes are of disagreement with L1, this is not reflected in their practice (Al-Busaidi, 1998)” as cited in Hosni,2014, p.24). “Littlewood (1981) argued that some teachers use L1 for class management. Nevertheless, this can be another factor that contributes to the problem of speaking difficulties. This is because using L1 means sacrificing valuable opportunities for well-motivated foreign use” (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.24). According to Leong and Ahmadi, “The first reason is that when teachers ask their learners to talk about a topic that they do not have enough knowledge, they will try to use their language. The second reason is that the application of mother-tongue is very natural for learners to use. If teachers do not urge their learners to talk in English, learners will automatically use their first language to explain something to their classmates” (2017, p.36-37). Choosing the right topic is important in order to avoid using the L1. Students find it easier to speak about something that they are interested in and they have knowledge about. In this case the teacher who is the leader of the class should be careful with speaking activities and should avoid using L1 and should provide the learners with instructions

and information in L2/FL in this case English. In this way the learners will get chances to acquire and use the language better. Creating a supportive atmosphere where students will feel free to use the language the hear and learn is also an important condition to be considered.

The fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, being laughed by their classmates threatens students speaking. Supporting and motivating the learners contributes in overcoming speaking difficulties. It is discussed by many researchers that speaking difficulties have a great impact on students' achievement in learning a foreign language. One of the problems that students with speaking difficulties face is the grading process. The fact that students are being evaluated by their speaking and writing performance, speaking difficulties may affect their achievement in English classes, which means students may get lower grades as a reason of this difficulties. Students who face speaking difficulties should have the maximum support by their teachers in order to feel free to speak and participate in speaking activities, also they should be involved in every speaking activity in order to overcome their difficulties and not be left behind other students. "In other words, to succeed speaking classes, the uses of correct approach, interesting activities, proper equipment's, and high motivation are necessary" (Nazara, 2011, p.32). According to Nazara (2011), there are three well known approaches in teaching second or foreign languages: the indirect approach, the direct approach and the indirect approach plus. "The indirect approach is based on the idea that speaking skill is formed through students' active participation in interactive activities such as discussion, role-play, information gaps, and problem-solving activities (Dornyei & Thurrell, 1994, p. 41)" (as cited in Nazara 2011, p.14). This approach is found appropriate for students to practice speaking skills through different activities by using language structures in different imagined or real situations. On the other hand, "The direct approach is based on information about a systematic program of micro skills, communication strategy, language input, and processes that lead to fluent speaking, which is informed by speaking analysis, second language acquisition and discourse analysis (Dornyei and Thurrell, 1994, p. 40)" (as cited in Nazara,2011, p.32). "The 'indirect plus approach' is a combination of learner-centered training, language exposure, interactional activities and teaching speaking as a spoken discourse (Thornbury and Slade, 2006, p. 295). Seeing from its elements, this approach looks similar to the 'principled communicative approach' (Celce-Murcia et al, 1997, p. 148) and Willis' (1996) 'task-based approach'" (as cited in Nazara, 2011, p.32-33). Choosing the right approach will lead to better speaking skills and better teaching. In addition to the right approach,

there are other things to be considered such as textbooks, curriculum, environment, trainings and opportunities to use and teach the language in the appropriate way.

Among the speaking difficulties that students encounter, anxiety is found to be one of the negative influencers in learning a foreign language. Anxiety has been found to have a negative effect in the learning process, especially in the target language which leads to poor communication skills and speaking difficulties. According to Tanveer, “anxiety experienced when speaking in a second/foreign language seems to be more debilitating than the anxiety experienced when speaking in the first language” (2007, p.3). In the present, learning good communication skill is the goal most of the learners want to achieve when learning a foreign language. Anxiety is a feeling encountered by the learners in general which has been investigated by many researchers worldwide. Researchers have different terms and opinions when it comes to anxiety in the learning process and anxiety which is present in learning second or foreign language. “Anxiety has been found to interfere with many types of learning but when it is associated with leaning a second or foreign language it is termed as “second/foreign language anxiety”” (Tanveer,2007, p.4). “It is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon (Young 1991: cited in cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999: 217) and can be defined as “a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system” (McIntyre & Gardner 1994: cited in 1999: 217)” (as cited in Tanveer,2007, p.4). According to Tanveer (2007), anxiety has been found mainly in two basic task such as in listening and speaking tasks. Many researchers investigated on what causes second/foreign language anxiety.” Language anxiety may be a result as well as a cause of insufficient command of the target language (Sparks and Ganschow; cited in Horwitz 2001: 118). That is to say it may be experienced due to linguistic difficulties L2/FL learners can face in learning and using the target language” (as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p.5). Some of the factors causing anxiety are the socio-cultural background that learners have, motivation, the relationship between L1 and FL. According to Tanveer (2007), investigating factors which cause anxiety among learners could assist language teachers to create less anxious environment and improve learner’s performance in target language.

Communication anxiety is described as a feeling of nervousness, shyness and quietness faced by the learners in specific settings.” Communication anxiety may be specific to only a few settings (e.g., public speaking) or may exist in most everyday communication situations, or may even be

part of a general anxiety trait that arises in many facets of an individual's life" (Friedman, 1980: cited in Taylor, 1987: 1)" (as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p.12). Communication anxiety is another factor contributing to speaking difficulties and it may affect student's achievement in English classes. Students who tend to face communication anxiety hinder to speak in front of the class even if they have knowledge about the topic or know the answers to questions asked from the teacher.

### **1.3 Kinds of speaking difficulties and the factors causing speaking difficulties**

Several researches were done in order to investigate speaking difficulties encountered by the learners of foreign language worldwide. "If teachers want to help learners overcome their difficulties in learning speaking skill, they should identify some factors that influence their speaking performance. Learners' speaking performance are influenced by factors like performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan & Mai, 2015)" (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017, p.37).

"The first factor is pertinent to performance conditions. Learners carry out a speaking activity under different conditions. Performance conditions impact speaking performance and these conditions involve time pressure, planning, the quality of performance, and the amount of support (Nation & Newton, 2009)" (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi 2017, p.37). Many things should be considered with speaking activities and students' performance. Students should receive the needed amount of support and time to accomplish the speaking performance in speaking activities.

"The second factor is related to affective ones. Oxford (1990) said that one of the important factors in learning a language is the affective side of students. According to Krashen (1982), a lot of affective variables have been connected to second language acquisition and motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety were the three main types that have been investigated by many researchers" (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.37).

Motivation is an important factor in learning a foreign language. Students who are well motivated are successful in learning a foreign language. Self-confidence causes speaking difficulties because it hinders students from speaking which leads to poor speaking performance. Self-confidence is related to psychological factors which is seen as one of the main factors causing speaking difficulties. Anxiety is also one of the affective variables related to L2/LF acquisition

as stated at Leong and Ahmadi (2017). Anxiety is investigated and discussed by many researchers who consider it as one of the influencers in learning process especially in learning languages.

“Listening ability is the third factor. Doff (1998) says that learners cannot improve their speaking ability unless they develop listening ability. Learners should comprehend what is uttered to them in order to have a successful dialogue. Shumin (1997) represented that when students talk, the other students answer through the listening process” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.37). Throughout the paper it is discussed about the importance and the relation of all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing skill. Speaking is closely related to listening. Thus, the students are involved in both roles such as speakers and listeners in speaking activities and performances. According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017, p.37) “It can be concluded that students are not able to reply if they cannot comprehend what is told. That is to say, speaking is very closely related to listening”.

“Topical knowledge is the fourth factor. Bachman and Palmer (1996) defined it as the knowledge structures in long-term memory. That is, topical knowledge is the speakers’ knowledge of related topical information. It enables students to apply language with respect to the world in which they live. Bachman and Palmer (1996) assert that topical knowledge has a great impact on the learners’ speaking performance” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017, p.37). Choosing the right topic is an important thing to be considered when teaching speaking. There is no doubt that teaching speaking is one of most challenging and difficult task for most language teachers. The teacher should be very careful with the topic since most of the students hinder from speaking because they lack knowledge related to topic or they do not feel interest to speaking because they find the topic as uninteresting or boring.

Feedback during speaking activities is discussed as one of the factors contributing to speaking difficulties. According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), feedback is considered as one of the factors related to speaking difficulties because most of the learners expect to receive immediate feedback from the teacher during speaking activities. It is discussed by many researchers’ whether giving feedback will have positive effect or it might demotivate the learners and have a negative influence. “Harmer (1991) also continued that if instructors directly correct their students’ problems, the flow of the dialogue and the aim of the speaking task will be spoiled. Baker and Westrup (2003) supported the above statement and said that if learners are always corrected, they will be demotivated and afraid of talking” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.37). The teacher



in this case should be careful and consider many things. “According to Harmer (1991), the decisions that instructors adopt towards their learners’ performance depend on the stages of the lesson, the tasks, and the kinds of mistakes they make” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.37). According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), the instructor or the teacher should find a way to correct the learners in a positive way and give them the maximal support.

According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), English language may be difficult for non-native speakers to learn because of its pronunciation and spelling. According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017),” That is, pronunciation of English words is not similar to their spellings. Words with similar spellings are sometimes pronounced differently because of their surrounding contexts like tenses and phonemes that come after them. This can cause a lot of problems for non-native speakers of English and they sometimes get confused in producing the English words” (p.37).

According to Heriansyah (2012), speaking difficulties are divided in two kind of difficulties such as: linguistic problems and non-linguistic problems. By using the term linguist problems, it refers to three problems such as: lack of vocabulary, lack of grammar knowledge and poor pronunciation. While the term non-linguistic problem refers to other difficulties such as: being afraid of making mistakes, being shy, not used to talking in class, not being confident, anxiety.

Apart from this difficulties, lack of motivation is also seen as a speaking difficulty. “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)” (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.24). “Motivation can influence and be influenced by the components of language learning. According to Merisuo-Storm (2007), an integrative and friendly view towards the people whose language is being learned makes sensitise learners to the audio-lingual aspects of language and making them more sensitive to pronunciation and accent of language” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.38). According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), focusing on communicative competences is not sufficient for improving speaking skills. Also, having a negative attitude toward the language affects student’s performance and achievement in learning a foreign language.

Another difficulty discussed from the researchers is mother-tongue use. According to Hosni, “learners who share the same mother tongue tend to use it because it is easier and because learners feel less exposed if they are speaking their mother tongue” (2014, p.23). Mother-tongue use is

among the factors leading to speaking difficulties. Most of the cases students find it easier to speak in their mother-tongue. “In classes where all or a number of the learners share the same mother tongue, they may tend to use it; because it is easier and unnatural to speak to one another in a foreign language, and because they feel less ‘exposed’ if they are speaking their mother tongue” (Heriansyha, 2012, p.39).

Different factors affect students speaking ability. Some of the factors that cause speaking difficulties are: psychological factors, inhibition, mother- tongue use, lack of motivation, teaching strategies, environment. According to Shahzadi&Manzoor (2014), learners face difficulties in speaking English because they lack adequate vocabulary, lack of confidence, they are shy or nervous when speaking in front of other people, and the best way to overcome this issue is to encourage them with different teaching methods and encouraging words. There are also students who are introvert, and they feel uncomfortable to speak in public, even in their mother tongue. As a result of fear of making mistakes, anxiety, shyness and lack of confidence students cannot express and share ideas, or even give answer to questions they know. This leads to poor communication competence, and in a way, it affects their learning and achievement in English classes. “In terms of findings, the study revealed that psychological factors such as fear of making mistake, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and lack of motivation hinder students from speaking in English class” (Juhana, 2012, p.100). According to Heriansyha (2012), learners are often inhibited to say things because of the fear of making mistakes, criticism or feeling shy because of the attention that the speech attracts. In this case raising awareness about making mistakes, which is a normal thing, is necessary. Students should be aware that making mistakes while speaking is not something that they should worry or laugh about. Making mistakes shouldn’t inhibit students from speaking and expressing thoughts.

Nothing to say is another factor related to students’ personality and motivation. Motivation is also important in learning a foreign language. “Actually, 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)” (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.24). Students who are not motivated they do not feel the need of learning English. Furthermore, they see it as unimportant and they don’t show interest in learning and speaking it. Environment is also one of the factors contributing to speaking difficulties. Considering the huge number of students in a

class, and the teaching strategies the teacher uses to involve all the learners is also one of the reasons related to speaking difficulties.

Teaching strategies and methodology, they use also contribute to speaking difficulties as they are inadequate and lead to poor communication skills. “In addition, the learning methodology used by the teacher is also determine the success of teaching speaking, as Richard (2006:1) states that the demand for an appropriate teaching methodology is therefore as strong as the need of people learn a language” (as cited in Musliadi, 2016, p.80). Teachers should use different strategies and the right methodology to motivate the learners to participate in speaking, and help them overcome these difficulties. According to Nazara,” In other words, to succeed speaking classes, the uses of correct approach, interesting activities, proper equipment’s, and high motivation are necessary” (2011, p.32). Related to teachers, it is important to mention the conditions in the schools they are teaching. Lack of equipment is another issue related to teaching. The school should afford all the equipment that teachers need in order to achieve better results in teaching. Considering the fact that teaching and learning languages focuses more on four skills such as reading, listening, speaking and writing, using the listening materials, videos, flashcards and illustrations are necessary. The school should have enough equipment for all teachers. Lack of equipment and materials is another issue related to teaching and learning speaking. According to Hosni, “Besides, 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 number of cassettes available” (2014, p.24). According to Musliadi, “Speaking learning materials also play important role to succeed students in learning speaking. Materials created in the class must concern the students’ need to learn. With highly respects to the students’ need, the students have to be able to use the materials in practicing whether using the real-world tasks or pedagogical task” (2016, p.75).

“In addition, Rababa’h (2005) pointed out that there are many factors that cause difficulties in speaking English among EFL learners. Some of these factors are related to the learners themselves, the teaching strategies, the curriculum, and the environment. For example, many learners lack the necessary vocabulary to get their meaning across, and consequently, they cannot keep the interaction going. Inadequate strategic competence and communication competence can be another reason as well for not being able to keep the interaction going” (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.24). Overcoming speaking difficulties will help students to achieve better communication

skills and better results in learning English language. When learning a foreign language, one must achieve efficient communication skills. Speaking is a tool which is used to interact people and there is no point in learning a foreign language if we cannot speak it.

Another group of students to mention are students who have difficulty with speech or speech disorder. Difficulty with speech is a condition which is present at birth, or it appears later as a result of several diseases.” Speech disorders can affect people of all ages. Some types of speech disorder include stuttering, apraxia, and dysarthria” (Eske, 2019, para.7). Speech disorder is not the same as speaking difficulties. According to Eske, “Speech is the process of producing specific sounds that convey meaning to the listener. A speech disorder refers to any condition that affects a person’s ability to produce sounds that create words” (2019, para.1). This is a wide topic to be discussed, and such cases with students who have difficulty with speech are less in number.

#### **1.4 Learning a foreign language among students with speaking difficulties**

Learning a foreign language means learning and understanding your own language and culture better than before. By learning a foreign language, the learners will also become familiar with its culture, customs, grammar, vocabulary and their way of living. Learning a foreign language expands learners’ point of view in different ways. It gives opportunities to learners to compare cultures, traditions, language structure and at the same time to have a successful career. “At present, the need for speaking mastery in English has been dramatically increasing due to the strengthening position of English as a language for international communication” (Nazara, 2011, p.29). “We live in an educational world where orality is seen as a necessary, positive personal characteristic (Daly, 1991: 7). Worldwide expansion of English language has increased this demand to acquire good communication skills in English. But learners of English language often express a feeling of stress, nervousness or anxiety while learning to speak English language and claim to have, as mentioned above, a ‘mental block’ against learning English” (as cited in Tanveer,2007, p.5). Despite the importance it may have, learning to speak a new language can become stressful for some learners, even though they may be good at learning other skills. According to Tanveer, “Many learners express their inability and sometimes even acknowledge their failure in learning to speak a second/ foreign language.” (2007, p.1). There are many things

to consider when dealing with speaking difficulties. Different factors cause speaking difficulties among learners such as: psychological factors, teaching strategies, environment, mother-tongue use, lack of vocabulary. In many cases learners face anxiety and stress when trying to learn speaking a foreign language. “Researchers have been unable to draw a clear picture of how anxiety affects language learning and performance. Some researchers reported a negative relationship between language anxiety and achievement, e.g. the higher the anxiety, the lower the performance, (Clement, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977, 1980: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999: 218)” (as cited in Tanveer,2007, p.10). While some of the researchers consider that there is a negative relationship between anxiety and achievement, others tend to relate them with a positivity, where the learners are challenged and forced to achieve success in learning speaking.” More recently Horwitz (2001: 121) has reiterated that the issue of understanding the relationship between anxiety and achievement is unresolved” (cited in Tanveer,2007, p.10).

It is important to mention the early communication skill acquisition. Learners who tend to receive more opportunities to communicate will be less affected by anxiety.

Tanveer (2007, p.12-13) in his paper noted:

Children who receive a wealth of early experience of talking are more likely to be less apprehensive than those who receive less opportunities of communication. The last perspective he emphasizes is that the children who have been exposed to appropriate social–interactive models of communication are generally less apprehensive than those who have been exposed to inadequate or less interactive models. All these five explanations suggest that development of CA in individuals is resulted from nature or their surroundings.

According to Hosni (2014), oral language acquisition is a natural process for children which usually is supposed to happen without any given effort. In her paper it is stated that the ability to speak grows with age but this doesn’t mean that it will lead to perfection. In order to achieve fluency which is believed to be a perfection when learning a foreign language much effort should be given by both the learner and the teacher. Based on the age most of the researchers believe that it does not affect learning a foreign language. According to Musliadi, “Generally speaking, children under the age of puberty stand an excellent chance of “sounding like a native” if they have continued exposure in authentic contexts. Beyond the age of puberty, while adults will almost surely maintain a “foreign accent”, there is no particular advantage attributed to age. A

fifty-year-old can be as successful as an eighteen-year-old if all other factors are equal” (2016, p.77-78).

“EFL learners should have the knowledge of words and sentences. They should comprehend 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 English language correctly that leads to their fluency (Latha, 2012)” (as cited in Leong & Ahmad, 2017, p.37). There is a strong relationship between the four language skills such as speaking, listening, writing and reading skill. But there is also the grammar competence related to speaking and learning a foreign language, which leads to correct language structure and fluency. According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), native speakers may make some mistakes but they do not change the meaning of the sentences, while non-native speakers commit mistakes that may change the meaning of the sentences and they may create misunderstandings.

Making students aware of speaking difficulties is very important in a way that they will have understanding for each other and at the same time they will support each other. It is also important the support and the motivation they get from their teacher. Motivation can also influence student’s ability in learning speaking skills. In many researches’ motivation is considered as a crucial force in learning a foreign language. Students who are motivated will improve and acquire different language components. “Some learners are not particularly concerned about their speaking, while others are. The extent to which learners’ intrinsic motivation propels them toward improvement will be perhaps the strongest influence of all six of the factors in this list. Brown, (2001:285) says that that motivation and concern are high, and then the necessary effort will be expended in pursuit of goals. It means that motivation is very important in teaching speaking” (as cited in Musliadi, 2016, p.80).

### **1.5 How to teach speaking?**

Teaching is one of the factors contributing to speaking difficulties that students encounter. By teaching it refers to teaching strategies, environment and motivation. “The theory of teaching speaking is sometimes neglected. The teaching approach used is still ignored, as Richard (2008:19) states that Oral skills have hardly been neglected in EFL/ESL courses (witness the huge number of conversation and other speaking course books in the market), though how best to

approach the teaching of oral skills has long been the focus of methodological debate” (Musliadi, 2016, p.75) Speaking is one the most important skill in teaching and learning a foreign language. “The focus of teaching speaking, of course, is to improve the oral production of the students. Therefore, language teaching activities in the classroom should aim at maximizing individual language use (Haozhang, 1997)” (as cited in Hosni,2014, p.22). Using the appropriate approach in teaching will develop and improve students speaking skills. In order to achieve better results in teaching speaking, the teacher should involve all learners in discussions, debates, presentations, even in answering simple questions. According to Musliadi, “The goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understood, using their current proficiency to the fullest. They should try to avoid confusion in the message due to faulty pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, and to observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situation” (2016, p.76). There are students studying English language for years and they still struggle to speak and communicate freely. “In fact, many students learning speaking for quite long time, but they still cannot be to able practice speaking in the process of speaking improvement. This condition gives more intention about how teaching speaking methodology will affect the teaching and learning speaking in the class” (Musliadi,2016, p.4). Therefore, the focus of teaching speaking should be in practicing the language by involving learners in different speaking activities, conversational interactions and in the appropriate methodology and approach. According to Dorniey & Thurell (2016) among the knowledge of grammar rules, and a vast amount of vocabulary learners know, they still may fail when they have to deal with a real conversation. That is why they need more practice in conversational skills to achieve fluency in speaking. Using the appropriate approach will lead to better results in teaching and learning speaking. The two major approaches that Dorniey & Thurell (2016) on their paper refer to are the direct and the indirect approach. “As Richards (1990:76) points out, there are currently two major approaches to teaching conversational skills. One is an indirect approach, 'in which conversational competence is seen as the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction' such as situational role plays, problem-solving tasks, and information-gap exercises”. (as cited in Dorniey & Thurell, 2016, p.41). On the other hand, the direct method provides learners with more specific language. “This approach therefore handles conversation more systematically than the indirect approach, and aims at fostering the students' awareness of conversational rules, strategies to use, and pitfalls to avoid, as well as increasing their sensitivity to the underlying processes” (Dorniey & Thurell, 2016, p.42). At this point, both the direct and indirect approach

are important and useful in teaching speaking because learners learn several rules and strategies, also they practice speaking through different activities which they may find interesting.). “In addition to the right approach, speaking classes also require a variety of facilities (textbooks and audiovisual media), activities, adequate training, and opportunities to interact with the target language” (Nazara, 2011, p.33).

Teaching as a process has improved in many positive ways. “In term of teaching speaking, the teachers of English have to understand that speaking a language is difficult for foreign language learner because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interaction” (Musliadi, 2016, p.76). Years ago, the educational system was different in the way that the teacher-centered approach was mainly used in schools, where the activities in the class were centered on the teacher. Teacher - centered approach is a traditional method of teaching which in a way makes students passive.” In teacher-centered learning, teachers play important roles in the learning process. Teachers are information providers or evaluator to monitor students to get the right answers, yet students are viewed as learners who passively receive information.” (Emaliana, 2017, p.60). This may be one of the reasons causing speaking difficulties and affecting student’s achievement in English classes. At this point, putting learners in the center of the class and giving them opportunities to speak as much as possible would be in a great help to achieve better results and fluency in speaking. The more learners communicate the more they develop and improve speaking skill.” In the past, oral communication instruction was neglected because of the misconception that oral communication competence develops naturally over time and that the cognitive skills involved in writing automatically transfer to analogous oral communication skills (Chaney,1998)” (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.22-23).

According to Hosni,” The study shows that teachers believe in the importance of teaching speaking, yet they do not spend enough time for that because of the shortage of time because priority is given to the coverage of the textbook topics, which emphasize teaching reading and writing rather than speaking” (2014, p.28). Most of the teachers try to cover the textbook topics and to follow the curriculum which in fact emphasizes reading, writing, listening more than speaking skills. According to Musliadi, “Speaking learning materials also play important role to succeed students in learning speaking. Materials created in the class must concern the students’ need to learn” (2016, p.75). The textbooks and other materials used in language classes should



contain the right activities based on the student's needs. "In addition, material used must be able to invite the students to speak through the pedagogical task to achieve the target task. Reviewing this situation, the teachers need to choose the appropriate teaching methodology to perform students to speak" (Musliadi, 2016, p.75). Teachers need to be train on how to integrate different materials and activities in teaching speaking skills. According to Musliadi, "Material development should not become the obstacle to teach the students as there are a lot of ways used to design it. Developing students learning materials becomes the procedure of preparing teachers teaching in the classroom. One of the learning approaches proposed to help teachers design materials is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)" (2016, p.75). The teachers focus should be in creating the right task in order to help student's oral performance without feeling threatened.

The curriculum is another factor causing speaking difficulties in classes. Most of the teachers follow the curriculum and try to cover the topics which are in the textbooks. In this way they do not have the flexibility to add something extra or even necessary based on students need in this case speaking activities.

Hosni (2014, p.28) in her paper noted:

Many issues related to teachers, teaching strategies, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and assessment regulation should be considered Teachers need to be trained on how to integrate speaking to other skills and how to teach it communicatively. Their awareness of how language is acquired and learned should be raised. Moreover, teachers need to be enlightened on the different teaching strategies that may reduce their use of L1 in their classes.

Teachers should use different strategies to motivate the learners to participate and to help them overcome those difficulties. According to Nazara," In other words, to succeed speaking classes, the uses of correct approach, interesting activities, proper equipment's, and high motivation are necessary" (2011, p.32). "Nunan (1999, p. 241) emphasizes that in speaking classroom learners should be given the maximum number of opportunities to practice the target language in meaningful contexts and situation. The opportunities are an integral part of a speaking class" (as cited in Nazara, 2011, p.33). According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017, p.39)," Based on the review of the literature of the study, teachers should understand their students' interests and feelings, improve their learners' self-confidence, and choose the best teaching method to keep their learners involved in the speaking activity". Apart all the mentioned methods, techniques and strategies, building a friendly relationship with students is an important part of learning process,

especially when it comes to speaking skills. This may be another reason to create positive attitude toward the language they learn, and be motivated and encouraged to speak during classes. According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017) “Teachers should praise their students to speak English. They should build a friendly relationship with their students, make them feel very happy in the class and have a feeling of great enthusiasm and eagerness to study English in general and speak English in particular” (p.39). “The literature review of this study represented that teachers should give their learners enough time for speaking skill, help them overcome their timidity through friendly behaviors to make them feel comfortable when speaking, remind their learners not to worry about making mistakes, and give them true instructions and enough guidance” (Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.39). According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), teachers should give opportunities to learners to practice speaking skills and involve them in speaking activities by using different speaking tasks. “Teachers should give their learners more opportunities to speak English through using some speaking tasks that help them to speak and urge them to take part in speaking activities. In addition, teachers should know when and how to correct their learners’ mistakes so that they are not afraid of making mistakes” (Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.39). According to Nazara (2011, p.33),” The opportunities are an integral part of a speaking class. The main task of an instructor is to assist the student master the mechanical elements of language (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary), elements of language functions, and elements of sociocultural norms by providing an authentic exercise that prepares them to interact in real communication”. Teachers should give opportunities to learners to speak and correct students mistakes in a positive way in order to keep them motivated and encourage them to speak.

There are different activities that teachers can use in their classes. It is important that the teacher or instructor uses the right activity based on the learner’s level. Using the right approach is also important in teaching speaking since it gives opportunities to learners to speak in classes. It is the teacher who is a leader in a classroom and it is up to the teacher how the class is organized and what activities, techniques and strategies are applied in the class. “For example, lecturers can arrange for students to engage in small discussion in a buzz group at appropriate moments (Liu & Littlewood, 1997). The advantage of this kind of group work is that it allows the use of English in a low-risk environment and makes students become less dependent on the teacher and more dependent on the group for their learning, and thus builds their self confidence in using English for meaningful communication” (as cited in Gan, 2012, p.55-56). This suggest that applying the student-centered approach in language classes makes students less dependent on the teacher and

allows them to participate orally in classes. According to Gan, “This type of learner-centered learning activity clearly meets the students’ desire for an active speech role in lectures and tutorials expressed in the interviews” (2012, p.56).

## **1.6 Speaking difficulties affecting learner’s achievement**

Learning a foreign language is a challenge for many people. Learning and knowing a language is a big treasure. By learning a language, we also learn the culture and traditions of a country. Every language that we learn or know counts since it gives us a new way of thinking. Learning a new language, especially for educational purpose will lead to long term success. The world is becoming more and more globalized and speaking more languages is a big opportunity to study or even work with and in different countries. “The expansion of the English language has rapidly increased the needs to gain better communication English throughout the world because the aptitude to use English is very much needed for further studies, journeys in other countries as well as for social and professional global contacts of different kinds (Hashemi, 2011; Susanna, 2007)” (as cited in Souriyavongsa 2013, p.181). Since English has become an international language, it is required everywhere we go. Despite its importance in several areas, it is important to achieve better result in English as a subject in school.

In the same vein, English language is a global language which can be used for communication with native-speakers and non-native-speakers in the worldwide, especially in the education section, all university students need it for their studies in order to search information and obtain knowledge; therefore, a lot of the universities throughout the world need to include English language as one of their educational tool requirements (Khader & Mohammad, 2010). (as cited in Souriyavongsa 2013, p.181).

Among the importance that English language has, there are several difficulties encountered by the learners worldwide. “Nevertheless, students generally are weak in English language learning were found in many parts of the world, especially for the countries that English is not spoken as the mother tongue” (Souriyavongsa 2013, p.181). In general, the biggest issue or difficulty in learning a language is speaking. As mentioned above speaking has been considered as the most important skill to master when learning a language. According to Nazara, “In addition, many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. They define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire”.

(2011, p.29). Since speaking is considered as one of the most important skill in learning a language, speaking difficulties that learners encounter has a long-term impact in their education and in their future. Based on the researches speaking difficulties affect student's achievement in the way that they cannot perform orally and have poor communication skills. "In fact, many students consider language fluency to communicate verbally with others is often considered more important than the ability to read or write. They argue that speaking is the most important language skills that need to be controlled, and they assess learning achievement based on mastery of speaking skills (Burnkart, 1998)" (as cited in Nazara, 2011, p.29).

Moreover, according to Dembo (2004), specifies that time management is involved in students' educational achievement; for instance, students with better time-management skills tend to have higher grade-point average (GPA) than students with poorer time-management skills (as cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013, p.184). By time management it refers to students who tend to spent more time in learning rather than doing other activities. Spending more time in learning, listening, communicating, writing and reading will lead to better achievements in school especially in English classes in this case. Also, students who have friendly attitude toward a language they will be able to improve and acquire the language better than students who have non friendly attitude toward the language. Learning a new language means learning its culture, traditions, way of living and much more. Students should be exposed and introduced with the culture and other things related to the target language they learn. Being exposed with the culture and way of living of the target language, may create positive attitude toward the language.

Learning strategies is also an important factor in achieving success in learning a foreign language. Using strategies for language learning leads to better results and improves students learning.

Abedini, Rahimi, & Zare-ee (2011) and Ratana (2007) identifies learning strategies are approaches that learners use to enrich and succeed their own learning, specially it is important for language learning because they are valuable tools that can foster learner autonomy in language learning and help learners in promoting their own achievements in language proficiency. Strategy plays its role as a key factor that influence the English language learning to gain achievement (Ikeda & Takeuchi, 2006) (as cited in Souriyavongsa, Abidin & Aloysius. 2013, p.58).

Learning strategies can also help teachers to understand better students needs and expectations about their classes. Teachers should be trained on how to teach students to become independent learners and give directions on how to learn, investigate and think. “Moreover, learning strategies can assist learners manage, direct, determine and guide their learning process” (Hu & Tian, 2012) (as cited in Souriyavongsa, Abidin1 &Aloysius,2013, p.58-59). According to Souriyavongsa, Abidin1 &Aloysius (2013) “Therefore, strategies are considered as facilitators, or map to a language learning of students who are learning the English language as a foreign language” (p.59). Learning strategies involve methods, techniques and skills which the learner involves in learning process in order to achieve success. “Consequently, the learning strategies are considered as key factors that influence students’ language learning achievements. It is possible that the students can find out a different diversity of strategies to enhance their learning methods such as they might use the practices communicating in the language, use various memorization techniques, ask questions for clarification, and so forth” (Souriyavongsa, Abidin &Aloysius,2013, p.59-60). Learners need to use or find the appropriate strategies based on their level of learning in order to become successful.

There are different ways that speaking difficulties can affect students’ achievements in English classes. One of them is related with evaluation or grades that students get at the end of each semester. Based on the grading procedure in our country, students who attend language courses are evaluated based on their speaking performance and writing performance. Students are evaluated on their speaking performance by performing orally in the class and at the same way by considering the students performance in speaking activities throughout the whole semester, while by writing performance it refers to tests, dictations, essays etc.

## Chapter 2 Literature Review

The Literature Review section, reviews different literatures and studies related to students with difficulties in speaking English. Many researchers have different results and thoughts about this issue. Several researches are done related to speaking difficulties, factors that cause these difficulties and the teaching strategies which are useful in overcoming difficulties.

As mentioned above speaking is one of the most important language skills that needs to be mastered. Knowing a language means the ability to speak it. But for some learners it is a challenge and not an easy task to do. Most of the students encounter speaking difficulties such as: shyness or anxiety, fear of making mistakes, fear of being laughed by their classmates, feeling uncomfortable to speak in public, and being unable to find the appropriate words to express themselves or share ideas. Several researches were done about this issue. These difficulties were discussed and reviewed by a lot of researchers. Heriansyah (2012, p.38) in his paper noted:

The frequent difficulties in speaking from what I notice during the process of teaching and learning took place were (1) students often have no ideas about what to say, so they tend to keep silent, (2) they are also shy and uncomfortable as well as not confident if they make mistakes., (3) the students are afraid of making errors in class as they will be laughed at by their friends., and (4) the students are not used to talking in class since their pronunciation and vocabulary are poor and confined.

Hosni (2014, p.23) in her paper noted:

Zhang (2009) argued that speaking remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of English learners, and they are still incompetent in communicating orally in English. According to Ur (1996), there are many factors that cause difficulty in speaking, and they are as follows: 1. Inhibition. Students are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism, or simply shy. 2.Nothing to say. Students have no motive to express themselves. 3.Low or uneven participation. Only one participant can talk at a time because of large classes and the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all. 4.Mother-tongue use. Learners who share the same mother tongue tend to use it because it is easier and because learners feel less exposed if they are speaking their mother tongue.

Regarding this, it's found in the literature some psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety are considered as the main causes of students' reluctance to speak (Brown, 2001). This is also in line with Gebhard (2000) who says that the students' problem in speaking is caused mostly by

their shyness or anxiety. All these indicate the importance for teachers to help students reduce those feelings to maximize their learning to speak in English (as cited in Juhana, 2012, p.100).

Leong & Ahmadi (2017, p.39) in their paper noted:

The findings of this paper indicated that learners with a low self-esteem, higher anxiety, and low motivation have serious difficulties in speaking skill in spite of having acceptable linguistic skills. The paper showed that students who have higher motivation and lower anxiety can speak easily and effectively. Thus, students should have a friendly and cooperative environment that can help them overcome their difficulties in oral performance. Based on the review of the literature of the study, teachers should understand their students' interests and feelings, improve their learners' self-confidence, and choose the best teaching method to keep their learners involved in the speaking activity. Teachers should praise their students to speak English.

Anxiety is also one of the difficulties that learners of foreign languages encounter. Many learners have anxiety when it comes to speaking in front of the others or when trying to use the foreign language. Anxiety as a speaking difficulty is related to psychological factors. Psychologists use different terms for different types of anxiety. "Psychologists use the term specific anxiety reaction to differentiate people who are generally anxious in a variety of situations from those who are anxious only in specific situations (1986: 125)" (as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p.2). On the other hand, researchers appear to have different views about language anxiety.

In general, there are two approaches to the description of language anxiety: (1) Language anxiety in the broader construct of anxiety as basic human emotion that may be brought on by numerous combinations of situational factors (McIntyre, 1995; McIntyre & Gardner, 1989: cited in Tittle, 1997: 11). For example, a shy student may feel anxious when asked to give a short talk in front of the whole class; (2) Language anxiety as a combination of other anxieties that create a separate form of anxiety intrinsic to language learning (Horwitz et al., 1986: 128) (as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p.2).

A study has been conducted by (Muhammad, 2007), on the investigation of the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language found difficulties of language learning, differences in learners' and target language cultures, the difference in social status of the speakers are the factors that affect to the students' weakness of language learning (Souriyavongsa, 2013,p.184).

Differences in culture and the social status also affect the learning process of a foreign language and the achievement in English classes.

According to Tanveer (2007), there are three stages of anxiety such as: output, input and processing. “Anxiety while communicating in the target language is more likely to appear at the output stage, which entirely depends upon the successful completion of the previous stages: input, and processing. Anxiety at the output stage refers to learners’ nervousness or fear experienced when required to demonstrate their ability to use previously learned material (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000: 475)” (as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p.23). Anxiety at high level hinders students to speak the target language.

In order to become a good speaker and to overcome speaking difficulties, several things should be considered. The speaker should consider the topic, the audience to whom he/she speaks, and what language to use based on the situation and on the previous things mentioned and what rules to follow.

Dorniey & Thurell (2016, p.40) in their paper noted:

Many people believe that informal everyday conversation is random and unstructured. This is, in fact, far from true. Although conversation may take many forms and the speakers and situations vary widely, all conversation follows certain patterns. There are, for example, subtle rules determining who speaks and when, and for how long. By following these rules, people in conversation can take turns neatly, and avoid overlaps and simultaneous talk.

Despite the situation and the form that the conversation may take, all conversations follow certain patterns, and the learners should follow the rules in order to achieve fluency in speaking, and to avoid making mistakes.

According to Heriansyha (2012), there are two kind of speaking difficulties students encounter while learning a language: linguistic and non-linguistic matters. While we discussed non-linguistic matter above such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, shyness, inhibition, lack of confidence, motivation; linguistic matter is a wide topic to be discussed. Researcher Hendra Heriansyah on his research study “Speaking problems” gives a clear explanation about linguistic difficulties. Heriansyha (2012, p.38-39) in his paper noted:



(1) Clustering. Fluent speech is phrasal not word by word. Learners can organize their output both cognitively and physically (in breath groups) through such clustering. (2) Reduced forms. Contractions, elisions, reduced vowels, etc; all form special problems in teaching spoken English. Students who do not learn colloquial contractions can sometimes develop a stilted, bookish quality of speaking that in turn stigmatizes them. (3) Performance variables. One of the advantages of spoken language is that the process of thinking as you speak allows you to manifest a certain number of performance hesitations, pauses, backtracking, and corrections. Learners can actually be taught how to pause and hesitate. For example, in English our “thinking time” is not silent, we insert certain “fillers” such as uh, um, well, you know, I mean, like, etc. One of the most salient differences between native and nonnative speakers of a language is in their hesitation phenomena. (4) Colloquial language. Students should be reasonably well acquainted with the words, idioms, and phrases of colloquial language and get practice in producing these forms.

Lack of vocabulary is another speaking difficulty encountered by learners. There are students who have general knowledge about a language, also they know grammar rules but when it comes to speaking, they struggle to find the appropriate words to express themselves. According to Hosni (2014), based on her observation, students struggled to find the appropriate vocabulary item, which is a reflection of insufficient vocabulary. Also, they find it difficult to build sentences to express ideas. Another issue related to linguistic difficulties is the use of mother-tongue. The only place where students can speak English, and practice their speaking skills is mainly the classroom. Since English language is not used in their everyday life, students find it difficult to communicate in English with their classmates in English classes. This could be a result of insufficient or inadequate vocabulary. “Therefore, the inadequate vocabulary repertoire and weak sentence building skills are the reasons for using the mother tongue” (Hosni, 2014, p.26).

According to Heriansyah (2012), the difficulties mostly faced by the student were: having lack of vocabulary, not being confident to speak, not being used to talk in class and difficulty expressing words or sentences.

According to Ur (1996), there are many factors that cause difficulty in speaking, and they are as follows: 1. Inhibition. Students are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism, or simply shy. 2. Nothing to say. Students have no motive to express themselves. 3. Low or uneven participation. Only one participant can talk at a time because of large classes and the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all. 4. Mother-tongue

use. Learners who share the same mother tongue tend to use it because it is easier and because learners feel less exposed if they are speaking their mother tongue (as cited in Hosni 2014, p.23).

According to Nazara, “Results of many studies have indicated that students’ perception plays a great role in every language teaching and learning process. In the context of speaking classes, how the teachers/lecturers work with the students, how they motivate speech activities, and relate them to their personal interests and needs, are vital factors for the improvement of speech” (2011, p.33). It is important that the teacher uses speaking activities which cover topics that students find important and interesting at the same time.

Hosni (2014, p.28) in her paper noted:

The findings of this study suggest that grade 5 students encounter some speaking difficulties that can be overcome by putting more emphasis on this skill. Many issues related to teachers, teaching strategies, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and assessment regulation should be considered. Teachers need to be trained on how to integrate speaking to other skills and how to teach it communicatively. Their awareness of how language is acquired and learned should be raised. Moreover, teachers need to be enlightened on the different teaching strategies that may reduce their use of L1 in their classes.

The curriculum also is considered to be one of the factors contributing to speaking difficulties. Most of the teachers in schools avoid using speaking activities too often as a result of following the curriculum and trying to cover the textbooks. According to Hosni (2014), “The study shows that teachers believe in the importance of teaching speaking, yet they do not spend enough time for that because of the shortage of time because priority is given to the coverage of the textbook topics, which emphasize teaching reading and writing rather than speaking” (p.28).

Al-Lawati (1995) also investigated the difficulties encountered by Omani students in their oral production of English and found out that the linguistic domain (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and discourse) constitutes the most serious area of difficulty, and this is because, as explained by teachers, the learners have not yet developed an adequate level in the basic abilities of the language. This is because—they think—of the curriculum that does not provide enough opportunity for learning and practicing new and varied vocabulary and does not provide enough variety in tasks designed for the teaching of grammar. This results in having very few opportunities for students to practice the speaking skill, especially with the large number of students in class (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.24)

Another reason leading to speaking difficulties is the lack of oral activities in textbooks. “AL-Abri(2008) argued that the lack of oral activities in textbooks is a strong reason for students’ difficulties in speaking, and thus he recommended including some oral activities in the form of songs, rhymes, and simple stories and more conversational language to enable students to have more fun and enjoy learning to improve their speaking skill” ( as cited in Hosni, 2014, p.25).

“These difficulties were supported by a research finding by Taiqin (1995) about non- language factors, which showed that ninety-five percent of students said that they had difficulty speaking because they were afraid of making errors in class, they had no idea what to say, they were not confident and comfortable if they made mistakes, and they were not interested with the topics that are given by the lecturers” ( as cited in Heriansyah, 2012, p.38).

Inhibition is one of the speaking difficulties that most of the learner’s encounter and it is discussed by many researchers around the world. Most of the learners do not participate in speaking activities because of several reasons which create inhibitions. “Inhibition is the first problem that students encounter in class. When they want to say something in the classroom they are sometimes inhibited. They are worried about making mistakes and fearful of criticism. They are ashamed of the other students’ attention towards themselves. Littlewood (2007) expressed that a language classroom can also create inhibitions and apprehension for the students” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017, p.36).

Heriansya (2012, p.38), in her paper noted:

The frequent difficulties in speaking from what I notice during the process of teaching and learning took place were (1) students often have no ideas about what to say, so they tend to keep silent, (2) they are also shy and uncomfortable as well as not confident if they make mistakes., (3) the students are afraid of making errors in class as they will be laughed at by their friends., and (4) the students are not used to talking in class since their pronunciation and vocabulary are poor and confined.

According to Heriansya (2012), there are two kinds of difficulties that students encounter while speaking: linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties. The cause of the problems most of the students faced was the fear of making mistakes in class. In her paper she had some suggestions about overcoming these problems. Despite the mastery in speaking skills, she suggests that students need to master vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.

Motivation can also influence language learning components. Motivation has a great importance in learning a foreign language. It is considered as a force leading to better results in learning a foreign language.” If learners have an unfriendly attitude towards the language, they will not have any substantial improvement in acquiring the different features of language” (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017, p.38). On the other hand, if learners have a friendly attitude towards the language they will succeed in learning and acquiring different features of language.

Learning a foreign language means learning about the culture, traditions, way of living and much more about one nation. Based on the fact that, knowing English language has become a must worldwide, most of the learners have friendly attitude toward English language. “At present, the need for speaking mastery in English has been dramatically increasing due to the strengthening position of English as a language for international communication” (Nazara, 2011, p.29). After the globalization there are multinational companies in every country and speaking English language is required as a must for better job. Most of learners learn English to become successful in their career and because it is a must for their job.

Most of the researchers suggest that learning strategies lead to better learning skills, which means that learners must know how to learn, investigate and become independent learners. “Neala & Moira, (2008) identified successful learners use strategies appropriate to their own stage of learning, purpose for learning the language, and some factors that can be effective learning such as motivation, the ways how to practice the language, whereas, less successful students in language learning also use their own strategies, but do not well understand how to apply the appropriate strategies” ( as cited in Souriyavongsa, Abidin&Aloysius,2013, p.60). Finding the appropriate learning strategies most of the students find difficulties when it comes to speaking skill. “According to the results mentioned above which obtained similarity with the research conducted by (Ratana, 2007) entitled “An Investigation of Thai Students’ English Language Problems and Their Learning Strategies in the International Program at Mahidol University” found that the majority of Thai students had difficulty with speaking skills, they needed to improve. The frequency of strategy use among students was medium or sometimes” (Souriyavongsa, Abidin&Aloysius,2013, p.68).

According to Souriyavongsa, Abidin&Aloysius (2013),” The results revealed that the majority of students are low in speaking skill and conversational English abilities. In general picture, however, the students’ English proficiency level is in the moderate” (p.68).

“Boonkit (2010) carried out a study on the factors increasing the development of learners’ speaking skill. The results represented that the use of appropriate activities for speaking skill can be a good strategy to decrease speakers’ anxiety. The results also revealed that the freedom of topic choice urged the participants to feel comfortable, persuaded to speak English, and increased the speaking confidence among EFL learners” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.38).

“Tanveer (2007) examined the factors caused anxiety for learners in learning speaking ability and the impact of anxiety on target language communication. The obtained results indicated that learners’ feeling of stress and anxiety stop their language learning and performance abilities. The researcher emphasized that the high anxiety lowers the learners’ speaking performance” (as cited in Leong & Ahmadi,2017, p.38).

Leong & Ahmadi (2017), in their study reviewed the factors that affect students speaking performance. The findings indicated that the mentioned factors in the paper had an important role in learning speaking. The learners with low self-esteem, high anxiety and low motivation tend to have difficulties in speaking performances. While learners with high motivation and low anxiety tend to achieve better results in learning, especially in speaking performance.

“A majority of the respondents agreed that the opportunity they got for improving speaking in speaking classes was appropriate. Most of them also stated that materials in speaking classes are exciting and the activities were varied and interesting. However, they thought that the time provided was too limited and the learning facilities need to be improved” (Nazara, 2011, p.41).

Nazara (2011, p.41) in his paper noted:

Although more than a half the respondents stated they also got proper opportunity to speak English in non-speaking classes, a bigger number of them still insisted on having more intensive use of English in non-speaking classes. Therefore, lecturers in non-speaking class need to make their class more interactive or student-centered. By doing so, the students will get greater opportunity to practice speaking as a tool for learning. They do not only learn about English but also learn to use it in a natural way during the classes.

In student-centered classes the attention and focus are on the student, where the students are the center and they have to participate in speaking activities as well as in other activities during classes. In student-centered approach the lessons are done in an interactive method which includes

both the learner and the teacher. Thus, this is a good method to involve all the learners in speaking activities.

“Liu and Jackson (2008) claim that lack of vocabulary was regarded as a main obstacle for spoken communication by Chinese English learners. In the present study, inadequate vocabulary was also reported as a prevalent concern among the students” (Gan,2012, p.49).

According to Gang (2012), most of the students struggled with speaking because they had lack of vocabulary as a result they inhibited to speak because they didn't know what and how to say things. Lack of vocabulary is another problem that most of the learner's face. This happens because learners are not introduced with the topics which are being discussed in the class, or they have a poor reading history from the early age of childhood. Thus, at this point reading is also important in learning a foreign language. As it is stated in the research all the four language skills are related with each other, reading in this case have a strong relationship with learning speaking.

Another problem that students faced was the use of the mother-tongue. Most of the students shared the same language and if someone tried to speak English, they would feel strange. Apart from speaking, in his research it is also discussed about teaching speaking and teachers adequate training, proficiency and self-confidence. “Other researchers (Littlewood, 2007; Li, 1996, Carless, 2006) observe that some secondary school English teachers in Asia often lack confidence in conducting communication activities in English because the teachers themselves feel that their own proficiency is not sufficient to engage in communication or deal with students' unforeseen needs” (as cited in Gan,2012, p.55).

Musliadi (2016), in his research concluded that the problem with speaking is not related only to students factor but there are also other things like outside context. Based on his research some of the internal problems are related to native language, age, exposure, innate phonetic ability, identity and language ego, and motivation and concern for good speaking. While some of the external problems were related to teaching speaking and this happened as a result of the limited time the teachers had because of the hours of English language per week.

“Based on the problems above, it is suggested to the teacher to choose the suitable learning model to carry out the problems that they found in their teaching. In this paper, the writer offers Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as an appropriate approach in teaching speaking” (Musliadi,2016, p.87).

## **Chapter 3 Research Methodology**

This chapter discusses which methods and instruments were used in the study. It gives clear information about the participants of the study. Also, it presents the research aims, questions and hypothesis. Moreover, it gives a clear explanation of the question “how”, and the answers are presented in the paragraphs below.

### **3.1 Research Aims**

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate that speaking difficulties affect students’ achievement in English classes. The research gives a clear information of speaking difficulties that students encounter in learning English language. It also discusses and identifies the factors that cause speaking difficulties. Throughout the research there are also presented different findings and researches related to this issue. Also, it gives suggestions on how to overcome difficulties so that the student’s achievement won’t be affected.

### **3.2 Research Questions**

Throughout the research the focus was to give proper answers to the questions presented below:

1. What are the main speaking difficulties encountered by learners in English classes?
2. What are the factors that cause speaking difficulties in learning English language?
3. How do speaking difficulties influence students’ achievement in English classes?
4. Do speaking difficulties affect students’ grades?

### **3.3 Research Hypothesis**

This research gives clear answers to the questions presented in the research questions paragraph above.

1. The main speaking difficulties encountered by the learners are: fear of making mistakes, being shy or anxious, lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, and mother tongue use.
2. There are many factors that cause speaking difficulties such as: psychological factors, linguistic difficulties, mother tongue use, lack of motivation, environment.
3. Students with speaking difficulties cannot perform orally in the class which means they do not participate in speaking activities such as: debates, role plays, discussions,

presentations, games or even give short answer to questions they already have knowledge about.

4. Based on the fact that the students are being assessed and graded on their oral performance and their activity throughout the semester, speaking difficulties affect student's grades in English classes.

### **3.4 Research design**

As it has been stated, this is a Qualitative study and the instruments applied were questionnaires with both students and teachers, also there was observation in English classes. The instruments used in this research and the previous researches and findings helped in gathering data for conducting this research and for better results. It showed that there are a lot of students who face speaking difficulties in English classes. And speaking difficulties which they encountered because of different factors affect their achievement in English language.

#### **3.4.1 Subjects**

Participants in this study were students and teachers from elementary school Naim Frasherri. Both teachers and students helped a lot in conducting this research. Teachers and students of this school were given questionnaires and they were observed in English classes. In this study there were three hundred and fifty students who participated and three English teachers of the same school where the study was conducted. It took only 10 minutes per class to complete the questionnaire. While the observation was done in four classes. The students of this school were having English classes three times per week. The school totally had sixth classes of each grade. For instance, six classes belonging to the sixth grade, six of them belonging to the seventh and it continued the same till the ninth grade.

#### **3.4.2 Instruments**

The instruments used in this research to identify students speaking difficulties and their achievement in English classes were questionnaires with both students and teachers and observations in English classes.

The questionnaire contained multiple choice questions combined with strongly disagree/ disagree/ neither agree nor disagree/ agree/ strongly agree. The questionnaire was adopted from Occhipinti 2009, and it was distributed only to the students. The questionnaires included 24 questions which were based mostly on speaking difficulties that learners face, the motivation



they get, the speaking activities they enjoy and that the teachers use to make them speak in the English classes. Also, the likes and dislikes related to speaking in general in English classes. This instrument was used to test the research questions and hypothesis. When it comes to the structure of the questionnaire, much effort was made so they have all the characteristics of a valid and reliable questionnaire.

Another instrument used in this study was the questionnaire with English teachers of the same institution. The questionnaire contained ten questions which were designed to identify if there is a huge number of students who face speaking difficulties, the possible factors that cause those kinds of difficulties and what strategies do they use to overcome this issue.

The third instrument of this study was observation. The aim of this surveillance was to observe English classes at the elementary school Naim Frasheri, the school where the study was conducted, and to see the speaking difficulties encountered by the learners, speaking activities used in English classes and the motivation students get to participate orally in class. At the same time to observe teachers 'strategies used in English classes, how often speaking activities are done in classes, and if all the learners are being involved in such activities.

### **3.5 Procedures**

This paragraph gives clear information about the procedure, it gives details about the procedure of analyzing the results and the participants. As it is stated in the previous paragraph above this is a qualitative research and three instruments were applied. The first instrument used in the research was questionnaire with students. The participants were students from the sixth grade till the ninth grade. The total number of participants was three hundred and fifty students. Because of the huge number of students this school has and the length of questionnaire, only three classes per grade were asked to answer the questionnaire. For instance, three classes from the sixth grade, three from the seventh and it continued in the same way till the ninth grade. The participants were helpful as they managed to answer the questionnaires in nearly five minutes. It took only one day to complete the questionnaires with the students. The most challenging task and time consuming at the same time was the calculation of the results. The questionnaire contained twenty-four questions which were combined with the options: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and

strongly agree. The questions covered different areas such as psychological factors, teaching strategies, environment and linguistic difficulties. The results of questions which were analyzed and calculated will be presented in numbers and percentage in the section below.

Among the questionnaire the students have participated, they were also observed for three days in a row. The aim of this surveillance was to observe English classes at the elementary school Naim Frasheri, the school where the study was conducted, and to see the speaking difficulties encountered by the learners. At the same time to observe what teaching strategies were using, how learners are involved in speaking activities, and how often and what speaking activities they do in English classes. The observation was done through a checklist which will be presented in the next chapter.

And the last instrument used in the study is the questionnaire with the teachers. The participants of this surveillance were three English teachers of this school who didn't hesitate to answer the questions. The questionnaire contained ten open ended questions. The questions covered different areas such as psychological, environment, teaching strategies, speaking activities etc. The answers were analyzed and will be presented in the upcoming chapter.

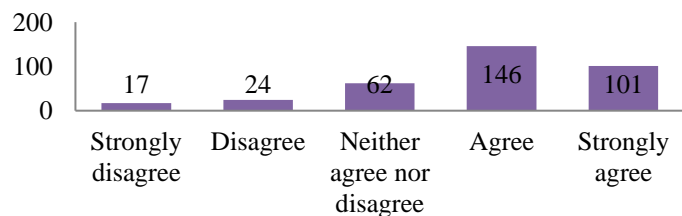
## Chapter 4 Data Analysis

This chapter represents the results from the study conducted. As it mentioned above the instruments used in this study ere questionnaires with both students and teachers and observation in English classes. The study gives details, numbers and percentage of each question from the questionnaires and the results from the observations presented with tabled and figures.

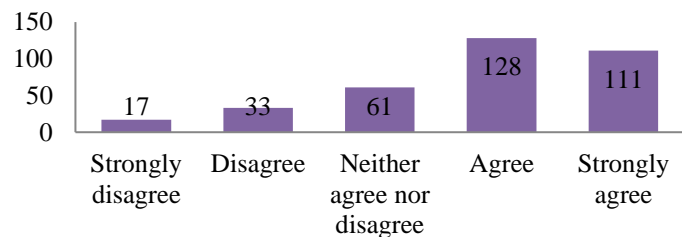
### 4.1 Results from student's questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 24 questions in forms of statements which were combined with options: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. Each question will be presented in chart below.

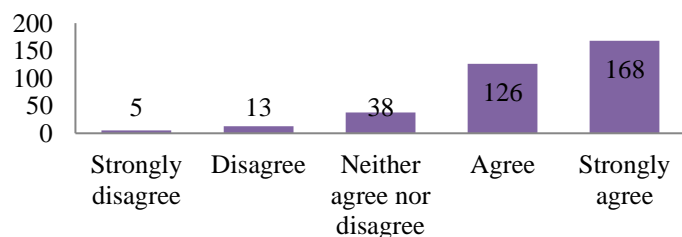
1. I would feel more confident about speaking in class if we practiced more



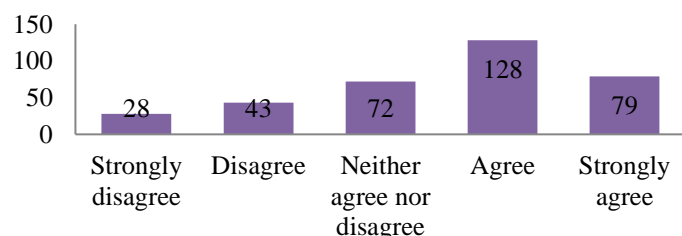
2. I would feel less self-conscious about speaking in class in front of others if I knew them better



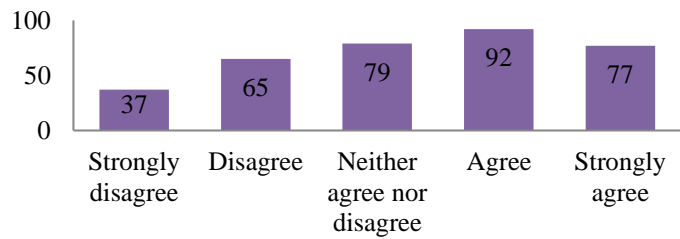
3. I feel very relaxed in class when I have studied a great deal the night before



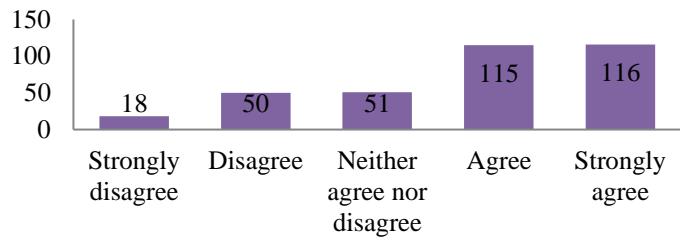
4. I am less anxious in class when I am not the only person answering a question



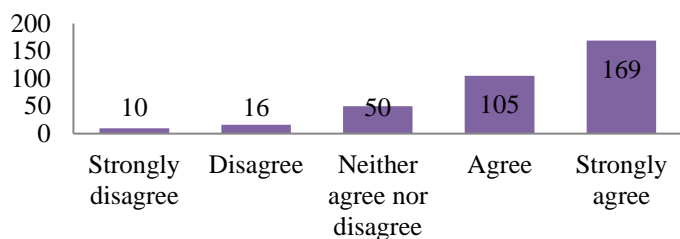
5. I think I can speak the foreign language pretty well, but when I know I am being graded, I mess up



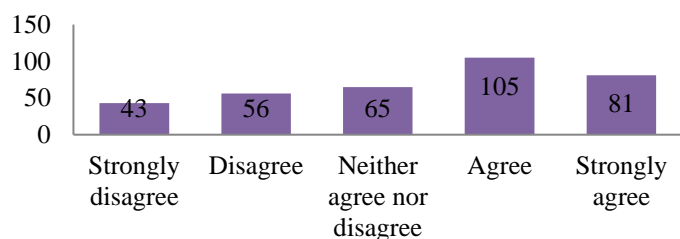
6. I would be more willing to volunteer answers in class if I weren't so afraid of saying the wrong thing



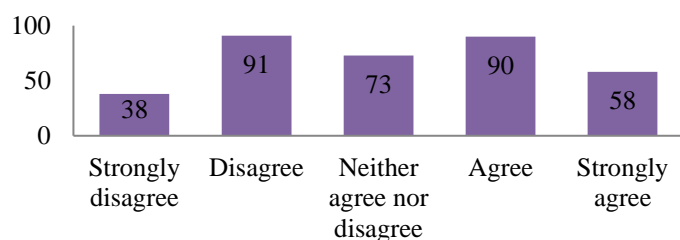
7. I enjoy class when we work in pairs



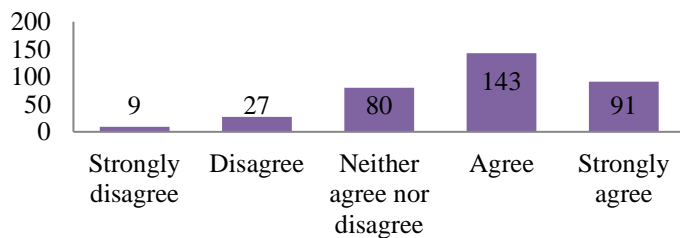
8. I feel more comfortable in class when I don't have to get in front of the class



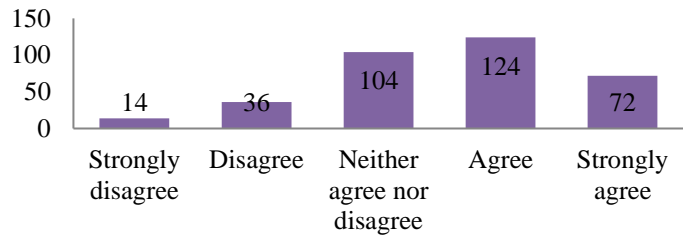
9. I would enjoy class if we weren't corrected at all in class



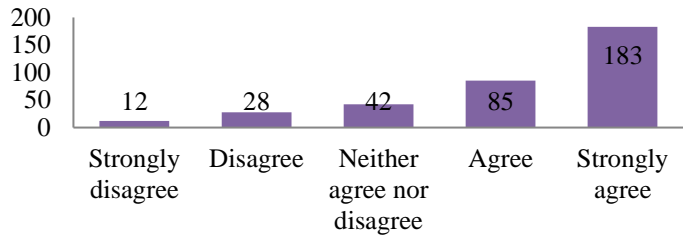
10. I am more willing to speak in class when we discuss current events



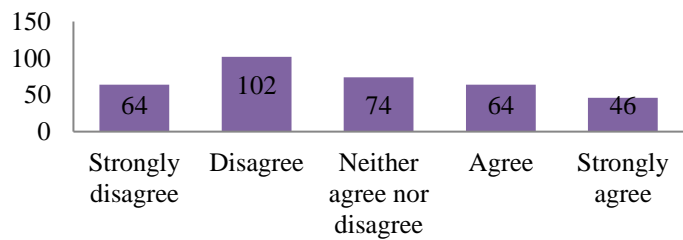
11. I would get less upset about my class if we did not have to cover so much material in such a short period of time



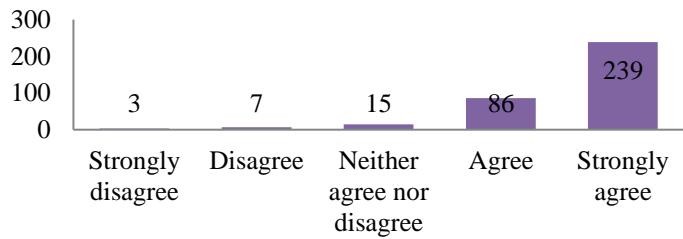
12. I enjoy class when we do skits in class



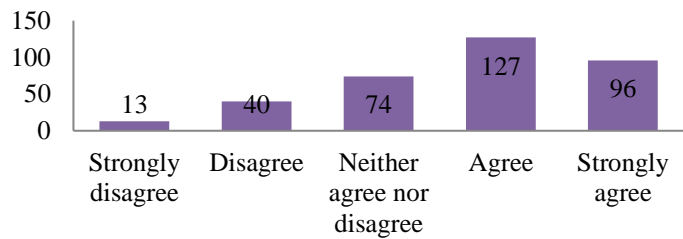
13. I would feel better about speaking in class if the class were smaller



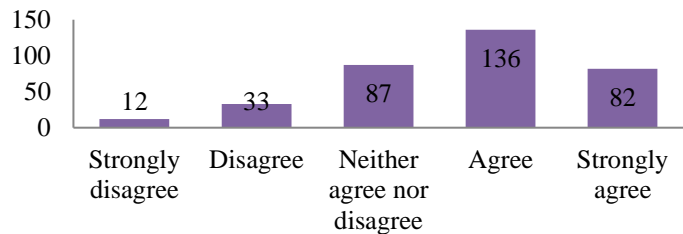
14. I feel comfortable in class when I come to class prepared



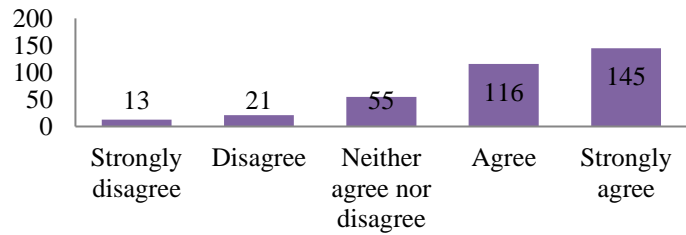
15. I am more willing to speak in class when we have a debate scheduled



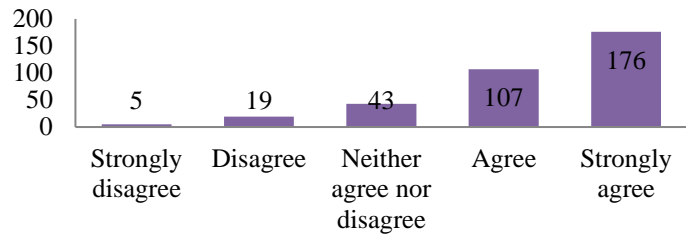
16. I am less anxious in class when I am not the only person answering a question



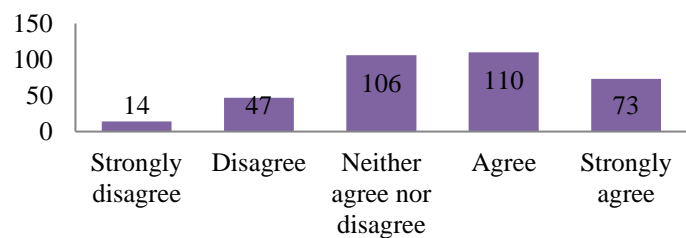
17. I like going to class when we are going to role play situations



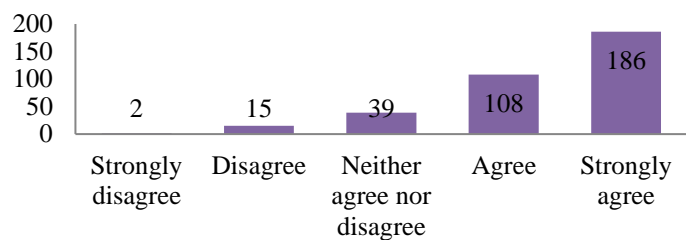
18. I would not be so self-conscious about speaking in class if it were commonly understood that everyone makes mistakes, and it were not such a big deal to make a mistake



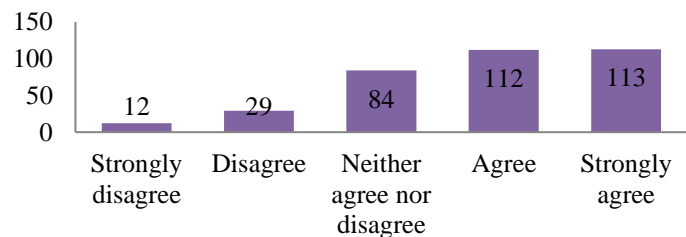
19. I prefer to be allowed to volunteer an answer instead of being called on to give an answer



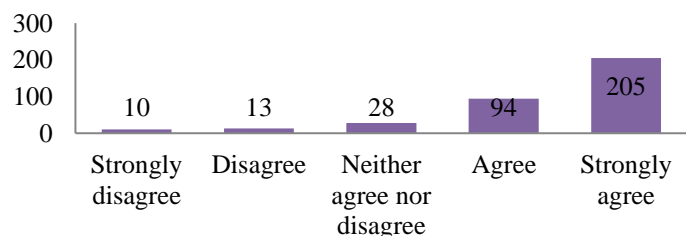
20. I am more willing to participate in class when the topics we discuss are interesting



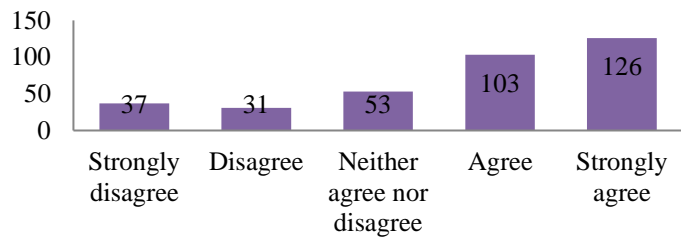
21. I would be less nervous about taking an oral test in the foreign language if I got more practice speaking in class



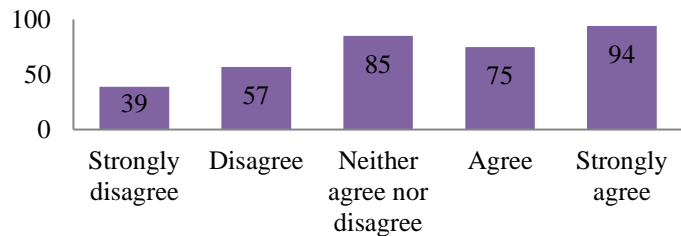
22. I enjoy class when I can work with another student



23. I would feel uncomfortable if the instructor never corrected our mistakes in class



24. I feel uneasy when my fellow students are asked to correct my mistakes in class



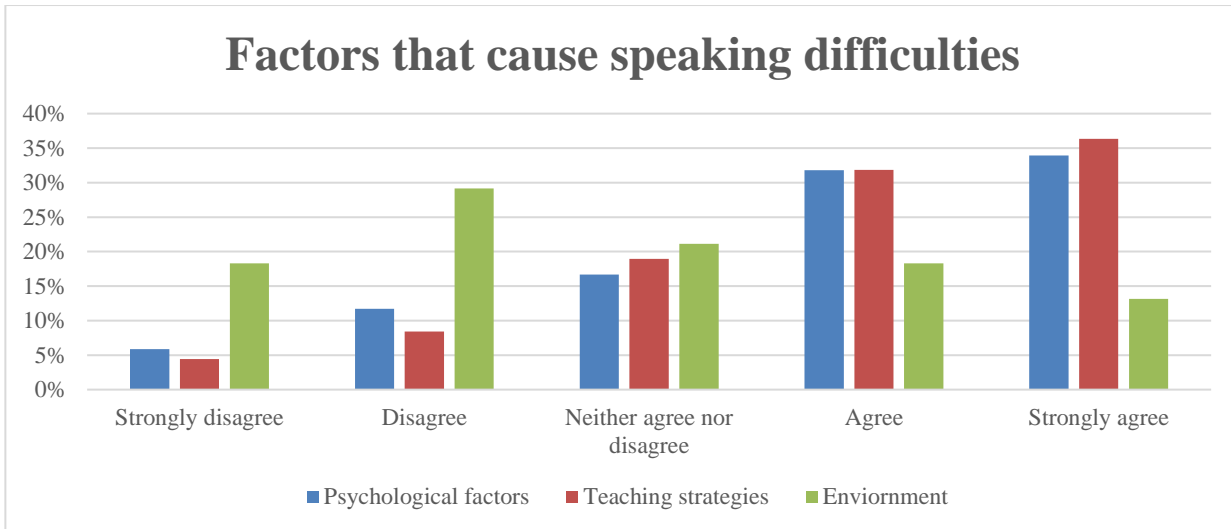
**Figure 1 Results of questions. Students questionnaires**

The questions were also divided based on the factors that they belong, and the results are presented in the table below and in a rating scale. As it is shown in the table below three of the factors affected students speaking. Teaching strategies is one of the factors which contributed the most in speaking difficulties that students of this school face. Based on the students answers 36% of the students strongly agreed that teaching strategies is one of the main reasons when it comes to speaking difficulties. While teaching strategies was seen as one of the biggest reasons leading to speaking difficulties, psychological factor is almost at the same scale where 34 % of the students strongly agreed that it caused speaking difficulties. The last and least rated factor was the environment factor which was rated as the less common factor causing speaking difficulties with only 13 % of the students strongly agreed that this factor causes speaking difficulties, while 29 % of the students disagreed.

### Data analysis

Answers	Psychological factors	Teaching strategies	Environment
Strongly disagree	6%	4%	18%
Disagree	12%	8%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	19%	21%
Agree	32%	32%	18%
Strongly agree	34%	36%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 2 Results based on the factors causing speaking difficulties**



**Figure 3 Factors that cause speaking difficulties**

#### **4.2 Results from teacher's questionnaire**

Teachers questionnaire contained 10 open ended questions, where three English teachers of the same school where the study was conducted participated by answering the questions. The questions aimed to find out the speaking difficulties encountered by the learners, teaching strategies, speaking activities used in class, the impact of speaking difficulties in learner's achievement, factors that cause speaking difficulties and environment. The teachers agreed that there are students who face speaking difficulties such as: difficulty with spelling the words, difficulty with word order, students who understand English language but cannot express or share ideas and students with speech disorder which is present from birth or it appears later as a result of health problems. They also agreed that students with speaking difficulties need special treatment and they do their best to help them overcoming difficulties by trying to listen to them carefully and using the appropriate teaching strategies.

The speaking activities used by the teachers are communication activities, stories, games, describing pictures and interviews. Asked on how often do they use speaking activities the three of them agreed that they follow the curriculum, but there are cases when there are exceptions. The teachers also claimed that they find difficulties with speaking activities in classes with huge number of students.



Related to the environment the teachers agreed that the school offers such conditions for creating speaking atmosphere and speaking activities. It also contributes in every aspect by giving professional and material support.

According to the teachers of this school the factor which contributes to speaking difficulties is mainly psychological factor. There are a lot of students who are introvert and not confident to speak in front of others. Being laughed by their classmates is also another issue which teachers doesn't allow to happen during classes but it can happen outside the school. Also, the fear of making mistakes and not reading enough in order to enrich the vocabulary from an early age. The results or the answers of teacher's questionnaire will be presented in the table below.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Teacher 1</b>	<b>Teacher 2</b>	<b>Teacher 3</b>
<b>1. Are there students that face difficulties while speaking English in the classroom?</b>	Yes, there are students who face speaking difficulties with spelling and word order.	Yes, there are. There are also students who have speech disorders and students who understand English language but they cannot speak it.	Yes, there is an average number of students facing speaking difficulties. They cannot share their ideas freely.
<b>2. How do you deal with students who face speaking difficulties? Do they need special treatment?</b>	Yes, there are. This year the school has employed special teachers for this kind of students.	Yes, there are and we treat them the same way as other students. We try to listen to them carefully.	Yes, there are students with speaking difficulties in our school. They need special treatment.
<b>3. How speaking disability affects student's achievement in English classes? Which methods do you use to overcome this issue?</b>	The methods we use are individual. It depends on student's temperament and personality.	Communication, debates and others. The difficulties affect student's achievement even though we use	Questions with answers, visual aids, games, interviews, describing pictures, stories.

		different resources for evaluating.	
<b>4. Which are the adequate exercises for developing students speaking skills?</b>	Individual exercises	Different games and English club	Questions with answers, visual aids, games, interviews, describing pictures, stories.
<b>5. What speaking activities do you use in your classroom? How often?</b>	We follow the curriculum with some exceptions.	Communication, depends on the curriculum, English club	We follow the curriculum but we do use them often enough.
<b>6. Do you face any difficulties while creating speaking atmosphere in the classroom?</b>	It depends, in some cases yes depending on student's mood.	Sometimes yes because of the huge number students.	No, we do not face difficulties in creating speaking atmosphere.
<b>7. Do students participate in speaking activities?</b>	In general, yes, depending on the topic.	Most of them are.	It depends on the students.
<b>8. Do speaking difficulties affect students' achievement in English classes? How and in what way?</b>	In a way that they are not feeling comfortable to speak in class and are afraid of making mistakes or being laughed from others.	Yes, it affects their communication, but we use different tests, workbooks etc.	They cannot share and express ideas freely.
<b>9. Based on your experience as a</b>	Giving the opportunities to	Huge number of students	Introvert students ( psychological

<i>teacher what are the main factors that cause difficulties in speaking?</i>	Speak and treating them right.	(environment factor), introvert students (psychological factor).	factors) and students who don't read and don't have rich vocabulary.
<i>10. Does your school have conditions to create speaking environment in classes?</i>	Yes, in every aspect. The school supports us financially and in a professional way.	Yes, sometimes after classes.	No. the school doesn't have such conditions. We try to create speaking atmosphere where students will feel free to speak.

**Figure 4 Results form teacher's questionnaire**

### **4.3 Result from the observation**

The observation was done in four classes, and the participants were students and teachers belonging to sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades. The classroom observation was used to collect data on speaking activities used in classes, the importance of speaking, and the learner's involvement in speaking activities. The speaking activities used in classes were: role play, questions, game and interview. The students were participating even though a low number of students weren't active during the activities. There were also students who didn't raise their hands to participate in the activity but when the teacher asked them to, they did totally fine. The teachers gave a huge importance to speaking, they were doing interactive teaching where students had to participate and be active all the time. Most of the students were involved in speaking activities except the class with huge number of students where the time didn't allow all of them to participate. To sum up the results of the observation two factors were present: psychological factor and environment.

	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>
<i>The importance of speaking skills during classes</i>	Great	Great	Great	Average
<i>Speaking activities used in classes</i>	Warm up activity: questions with short answers Role play	Game – ask and answer questions	Warm up activity: questions with short answers Interview	Give answers to questions from a text
<i>Learners involvement in speaking activities</i>	All the learners participated in the given activity	All the learners participated in the given activity	Most of the students participated in the activity	Not all the learners participated in the activity

**Figure 5 Observation check-list**

## Chapter 5 Conclusions

This chapter provides a clear conclusion of the study, the results from the used instruments and other studies related to the same field by other scholars.

As it mentioned above speaking is one of the most complex and important skill to master when it comes to learning a foreign language. Knowing a language means the ability to speak it. There is no point in learning a language without being able to communicate or speak it. Speaking tends to be the most important skill among reading, writing and listening. Even though in order to achieve success in learning a foreign language one must master all of them. Many researchers agree that speaking is the most important skill but at the same time it is a challenging task .“The use of English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) in oral communication is, without a doubt, one of the most common but highly complex activities necessary to be considered when teaching the English language especially because we —live at a time where the ability to speak English fluently has become a must, especially who want to advance in certain fields of human endeavor|(Al-Sibai,2004, p.3).” (as cited in Hosni, 2014, p. 22). Despite its importance in teaching and learning it has, it is also an important task needed in certain areas of life.

Among its importance that speaking has it still remains as a difficult and challenging task for many learners around the world. According to Heriansyah (2012), “For most foreign language learners, speaking in target language is not an easy thing to undertake because learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules” (p. 37). There are learners who have knowledge about a language in terms of knowing the grammar rules but when it comes to speaking, they find it difficult to keep a conversation going. “These learners may be good at learning other skills but when it comes to learning to speak another language; they claim to have a ‘mental block’ against it (Horwitz et al., 1986: 125).” (as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p.1). There are several factors that cause this issue. Many students face difficulties when speaking such as: fear of making mistakes, being laughed by their classmates, being shy or introvert, not giving an opportunity to speak in class, lack of vocabulary. Some of the factors which lead to this kind of difficulties are such as psychological factors, teaching strategies, linguistic difficulties.” In addition, Rababa’h (2005) pointed out that there are many factors that cause difficulties in speaking English among EFL learners. Some of these factors are related to

the learners themselves, the teaching strategies, the curriculum, and the environment “(Hosni, 2014, p.24).

Based on the results of student’s questionnaire of this study conducted, the most common factor which caused speaking difficulties is the teaching strategies and psychological factor, whereas the environment factor was less common factor causing speaking difficulties among students. In terms of teaching strategies, it refers to speaking activities, topics, students being involved in speaking activities and the motivation they get to speak English language. On the other hand, in terms of psychological factor it refers to student’s personality, for instance there are students who are introvert and they find it difficult to speak in front of others, being shy or afraid of making mistakes, being laughed by classmates. The last and least common factor based on students survey is the environment factor which refers to numbers of students per class, for instance there are small classrooms with huge number of students and it is impossible for the teacher to involve all the learners in speaking activities, or the school doesn’t have such conditions for treating students with speaking difficulties in a special way or involving some of the speaking activities in the curriculum. Even the activities which are in the curriculum because of environment factor cannot be performed in classes. Students claimed that they would feel better to speak in class if they practice speaking more, it is easier for them when they are not the only one to speak in class, they enjoy working in pairs, they prefer skits and role plays as activities, they are more willing to participate in class when the topic is interesting, they feel better when the teacher corrects their mistakes. Students also revealed that they would feel better if all the students were aware that making mistakes is normal and common during classes.

The data collected from the teacher’s questionnaire shows that the main factor causing speaking difficulties is psychological factor. Students tend to be shy, uncomfortable to speak in front of others, afraid of making mistakes and afraid of being laughed by others. Even though the last one isn’t allowed in classes but it can happen outside the school. While the less common factor causing speaking difficulties is environment, small classes with huge number of students. The teachers also mentioned that it is important for the learners to get the needed support and motivation, which is an important component in learning speaking in order to overcome speaking difficulties. Asked about the speaking activities the teachers claimed that they have to respect the curriculum, even though there are cases when there are some exceptions.

Based on the data collected from the observation, there was a huge importance given to speaking skills and also speaking activities were used in classes. The teachers were using teaching strategies in a best possible way and they tried to involve all the learners by using interactive teaching methodology. There were students who tend to be quiet and not volunteering to participate, but when the teacher asked them to do, they did totally fine. Shy students were present in classes which means psychological factor was present. Another factor to be mentioned is environment. Because of huge number of students in classes, the students didn't have chance to participate in the activities.

This study revealed that the main speaking difficulties encountered by the learners of this school which were related to psychological factors, teaching strategies and environment. Students face speaking difficulties such as: being afraid to speak because they are shy, being introvert and afraid of making mistakes in front of the others.

The study shows that teachers give a great importance to speaking but when it comes to speaking activities, they follow the curriculum with some exceptions in some cases. They claimed that the psychological factor is the most common factor which causes speaking difficulties. In order to overcome speaking difficulties, the teachers revealed that they try to give maximal importance and support to students with difficulties.

Depending on the factor which causes speaking difficulties, whether its students' personality, teaching strategies or the environment, it is important to mention the student's perception in the learning process. According to Nazara (2011), the teacher should involve speaking activities based on students' needs and interests. Covering the topics that are common nowadays may attract student's attention and motivate them to speak and share ideas. Students will participate more in speaking activities if they have knowledge about the topic or if they are interested in the topic. This is related to lack of vocabulary, where students avoided speaking because they didn't know what to say or they didn't know how to say it. For instance, there are students who have knowledge about a topic but they lack the right amount of the needed vocabulary. Or they do not have knowledge about the topic and they don't know what to speak about.

There are several things to consider in order to overcome speaking difficulties. Starting from the support and motivation that students with speaking difficulties should receive, they should also practice speaking more and become aware that making mistake is normal during English

classes. The teaching process of foreign languages should be focused in speaking skills, where the teachers should use the best methods, activities and techniques in order to improve students speaking skills, and at the same time motivate them to use the language they learn and hear during classes. As it mentioned above in the research the student-centered approach should be applied in English classes as it gives opportunities to learners to participate orally in the class. In student-centered approach the focus is on the learner rather than the teacher which is encouraging and it allows the learner to speak as same as the teacher speaks in classes. It makes the students more active by participating in speaking activities. The teachers in the study claimed that they apply the student-centered approach and interactive teaching. The study shows that teachers are aware of speaking difficulties that learners encounter and they try to overcome this issue by using different teaching strategies even though they find it difficult to manage the classes since there are small classrooms with huge number of students. The result of this survey showed that teachers sometimes tried to make them speak in English during the class and often they motivated their learners to participate in speaking activities. Of course, not all the students have those kinds of difficulties, but most of them struggle with speaking, this was a good reason to be studied.



## **Chapter 6** Limitations and Recommendations

This chapter represents the actual contributions of the research, especially to English teachers, and learners with difficulties in speaking. It also shows the difficulties and the challenges which appeared when conducting the research. Furthermore, it gives recommendations and limitations to other researchers interested in this topic.

### **6.1 Contributions of the study**

The arguments presented in the paper, which are proved by other researchers and based on the actual findings from the instruments used in this research reveal that difficulties in speaking affects student's achievement in English classes. The paper gives answer to the following questions: what are the factors that lead to speaking difficulties? What strategies teachers can use to help learner overcome those difficulties? In what way do the speaking difficulties affect students' achievement? And do speaking difficulties affects students grading? In this paper there are enough reasons to overcome speaking difficulties, and one of the main reasons is the impact it has on learners' achievement and grades.

### **6.2. Limitations of the study**

When conducting this research, the sample was large and the data was at risk of turning out invalid. Fortunately, it turned to be managed in a good way and the results came out with much in depth analysis. Some limitations were that some teachers refused their classes to be observed and some students were bored because of the length of the questions that the questionnaire contained.

### **6.2 Suggestions for further research**

In terms of suggestions for further research, we recommend more researches to be done related to speaking difficulties. As stated in the study, speaking difficulties may influence students' achievement and grading in English classes. The study suggests that it needs a great effort in order to overcome speaking difficulties. Great importance should be given to speaking skills and teaching strategies. Motivation and support should be an important part of teaching process. Also, the curriculum should incorporate with students needs and more speaking activities should be

involved in teaching process. Overcoming speaking difficulties will help students to communicate and use the language without feeling threatened.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Students questionnaire

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree

1. I would feel more confident about speaking in class if we practiced more. 1 2 3 4 5
2. I would feel less self-conscious about speaking in class in front of others if I knew them better. 1 2 3 4 5
3. I feel very relaxed in class when I have studied a great deal the night before 1 2 3 4 5
4. I am less anxious in class when I am not the only person answering a question. 1 2 3 4 5
5. I think I can speak the foreign language pretty well, but when I know I am being graded, I mess up. 1 2 3 4 5
6. I would be more willing to volunteer answers in class if I weren't so afraid of saying the wrong thing. 1 2 3 4 5
7. I enjoy class when we work in pairs. 1 2 3 4 5
8. I feel more comfortable in class when I don't have to get in front of the class. 1 2 3 4 5
9. I would enjoy class if we weren't corrected at all in class. 1 2 3 4 5
10. I am more willing to speak in class when we discuss current events. 1 2 3 4 5
11. I would get less upset about my class if we did not have to cover so much material in such a short period of time. 1 2 3 4 5
12. I enjoy class when we do skits in class. 1 2 3 4 5
13. I would feel better about speaking in class if the class were smaller. 1 2 3 4 5
14. I feel comfortable in class when I come to class prepared. 1 2 3 4 5
15. I am more willing to speak in class when we have a debate scheduled. 1 2 3 4 5
16. I am less anxious in class when I am not the only person answering a question. 1 2 3 4 5
17. I like going to class when we are going to role play situations. 1 2 3 4 5
18. I would not be so self-conscious about speaking in class if it were commonly understood that everyone makes mistakes, and it were not such a big deal to make a mistake. 1 2 3 4 5
19. I prefer to be allowed to volunteer an answer instead of being called on to give an answer. 1 2 3 4 5
20. I am more willing to participate in class when the topics we discuss are interesting. 1 2 3 4 5
21. I would be less nervous about taking an oral test in the foreign language if I got more practice speaking in class. 1 2 3 4 5
22. I enjoy class when I can work with another student. 1 2 3 4 5

23. I would feel uncomfortable if the instructor never corrected our mistakes in class. 1 2 3  
4 5

24. I feel uneasy when my fellow students are asked to correct my mistakes in class. 1 2 3 4  
5

Adopted by Occhipinti, 2009, p. 97

<https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/25584/Daxstamparexoggixultima.pdf?sequence>

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## Appendix B

### Teachers questionnaire

1. Are there students that face difficulties while speaking English in the classroom? What difficulties do they mostly encounter?
2. Are there students with speaking disabilities in your school? How do you deal with this those kinds of students? Do they need special treatment?
3. How speaking disability affects student's achievement in English classes? Which methods do you use to overcome this issue?
4. Which are the adequate exercises for developing students speaking skills?
5. What speaking activities do you use in your classroom? How often?
6. Do you face any difficulties while creating speaking environment in the classroom?
7. Do students participate in speaking activities?

8. Do speaking difficulties affect students' achievement in English classes? How and in what way?
  
9. Based on your experience as a teacher what are the main factors that cause difficulties in speaking?
  
10. Does your school have speaking environment?



## Appendix C

### Observation checklist

	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>
<i>The importance of speaking skills during classes</i>				
<i>Speaking activities used in classes</i>				
<i>Learners involvement in speaking activities</i>				