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Master's Thesis :

DIFFICULTIES ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS ENCOUNTER IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN LIBYA: A CASE STUDY ON STUDENTS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT AJDABIYA UNIVERSITY

BY: SALHA ALZAEL MOHAMMED

منشورات البرنامج الوطني لتطوير المجلات العلمية



The Libyan Academy - Ajdabiya

School of Languages

Applied Linguistics Department

Difficulties English Language Learners Encounter in Speaking English as a Foreign Language in Libya: A Case Study on Students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University

By:

Salha Alzael Mohammed

Under Supervision of

Prof. Youssif Zaghwani Omar

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الإقرار

أقر أنا **صالحة الزاعل محمد أدم** بأن ما اشتملت عليه الرسالة هو نتاج جهدي الخاص، باستثناء ما تمت الإشارة اليه حيثما ورد، وأن هذه الرسالة ككل أو أي جزء منها لم يقدم م نقبل لنيل أي درجة علمية، أو بحث علمي لدى أي مؤسسه تعليمية أو بحثيه أخرى، وللجامعة حق توظيف الرسالة أو الأطروحة والاستفادة منها مصدراً مرجعيا لمعلومات، لأغراض الاطلاع أو إعارة أو النشر بما لا يتعارض وحقوق الملكية الفكرية المقررة بالتشريعات النافذة.

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مقدمة من الطالبة:

صالحة الزاعل محمد - 212014

الرسالة مجازة من قبل لجنة المناقشة:

		التوقيع
أ.د.السنوسي محمد سعد العرفي	ممتحن أول :	
د.سالم حمد بوسنان	ممتحن ثاني:	
أ.د. يوسف زغوان عمر	المشرف:	

يعتمد

د.عبدالمنعم عثمان أحمد
عميد مدرسة العلوم الانسانية

أ.د. علي محمد المهدي
رئيس الأكاديمية الليبية اجدابيا

د.محمود عبدالرازق الذرعاني
وكيل الشؤون العلمية

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Dedication

To my parents

To my brothers and sisters

To my friends and colleagues

I humbly dedicate this study

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Meaning
EFL	**English as a Foreign Language**
L1	**First Language**
ESL	**English as a Second Language**

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Abstract

Difficulties English Language Learners Encounter in Speaking English as a Foreign Language in Libya: A Case Study on Students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University

This study is conducted for identifying the difficulties English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language in Libya. The study sample consisted of students from the English Department at Ajdabiya University, specifically focusing on second-semester students enrolled in speaking courses. The qualitative research method was employed in this research, and the data collection involved classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to collect in-depth data. The findings of this research revealed that the students at the English Department at Ajdabiya university encountered various difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language. Some of these difficulties were related to internal factors, such as students' lack of vocabulary, the inability to use grammar rules, difficulties related to listening comprehension, sentence structure, the insufficient time to practice speaking activities in the classroom, feeling shy to participate in the classroom, fear of making mistakes, low self-motivation, and the hesitation phenomena. While others were related to external factors such as the classroom activities and teachers' strategies in teaching speaking skills, the time limits or time pressure, classroom size, seating arrangements, and the using of L1 in L2 classroom. Finally, some significant recommendations for further research are provided at the end of this study.

Keywords: Communicative situations; social factors; speaking; fluency; accuracy

Chapter One

Background of the Study

1.0 Introduction

Language plays a vital role in people's lives as a tool for communicating and sharing thoughts, experiences, and emotions with people from diverse cultures and languages. People use language to express their emotions, desires, needs, and the like. Language is a social activity people use as a way of communication. Language, also, works as an identity to its speakers. In this regard, Omar (2020) explains that "people use language as a way of communication to express ideas, beliefs, thoughts, as well as, to give information and facts about the reality" (p. 1). This indicates that language is an integral part in people's lives.

When we talk about language, the problem of using a mediator language arises. People all over the world speak different languages, so they find difficulties in communicating with each other, unless there is a mediator language that approaches the distances among people all over the world. This language, as a matter of fact, is English in this era. English has become the global lingua franca because it has become the most widely used language as a second or foreign language worldwide. In this vein, Omar (2019a) argues that "no one can deny the fact that English is the lingua franca, mediator language, in this era, where it is used among people who do not speak each other's language" (p. 516).

However, in this globalized world, English has definitely become an integral part of everyday human interaction for business, technology, media, academic communication, and many other activities. In this regard, Milan (2019) claims that "in this modern age where English is dubbed as the international language and serves an avenue for professional growth,

non-native English speakers tend to adapt the language for worldwide access" (p. 2). This indicates that not only learn English is a must in this globalized world, but also using it in communicative situations, and this is the aim of this thesis. This thesis aims to explore the specific speaking difficulties students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University encounter. Identifying these difficulties helps inform teaching practices to better support oral language development.

1.1 Literature Review

In this part of this thesis, the researcher is presenting a brief idea about the literature review relevant to the topic of study. Chapter two is dedicated to talk in details about this literature review.

1.1.1 Speaking

Language in general includes four key skills: two productive (speaking and writing) and two receptive (listening and reading). Though all skills are integrated to fulfil the purpose of language, speaking is considered as the one of the most essential skill to master when learning a new language or communicating with others. Speaking, as defined by Chaney (1993) refers to "the process of constructing and sharing meaning through verbal and non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts" (p. 13).

Speaking is a vital and significant skill that acts as the prime source of language learning. The spoken language serves as the medium through which individuals encounter, comprehend, practice, and acquire a new language. Nevertheless, speaking challenges can present obstacles to EFL learning and affect communication. No matter how much they know

about the English language, EFL learners still encounter many speaking difficulties, as several studies and research reveal.

Although speaking is an essential language skill in foreign language learning, several previous studies and research reveal the fact that speaking skill is often underemphasized in EFL classrooms. For instance, Haozhang (1997) highlights that the goal of teaching speaking should be maximizing students' individual use and practice of oral language. He added that by prominently incorporating speaking practice EFL classes could achieve the core goal of building students' communicative abilities in the target language.

However, studies show that in most EFL classrooms, instructors dominate the talking time while students get limited opportunities to speak (Hanh, 2020; Kostadinovska-Stojchevska & Popovikj, 2019; Tanveer, 2007). For instance, in a study by Tuan and Mai, (2015) recorded 40 hours of English lessons at a Vietnamese high school. They found that teachers spoke Vietnamese for 11% of class time, English for 45%, and students spoke just 6.5%. The remaining time was taken up by writing activities done in silence. The researchers concluded that teachers over-relied on display questions that elicited short responses rather than meaningful interaction.

Speaking a new language requires transferring thoughts and ideas from one's native language. Harmer (2001) notes that speaking happens through meaningful two-way conversations. Luoma (2004) also highlighted how speaking competence in a foreign language takes time and persistent effort to develop. EFL learners often face psychological and linguistic obstacles that impede their spoken English abilities and fluency. Hence, speaking requires various elements, amongst of which are the followings:

1. Accuracy: It is crucial that the speaker speak language clearly with correct grammatical rules to be understood by the listeners. Accuracy, as defined by Fidan (2016), is “the speakers’ complete use of the structural features of the language such as syntax, vocabulary, andpronunciation of the oral production of the speaker” (p. 135). In other words, accuracy is concerned with the correct use of grammatical rules of a language. Accuracy in speaking indicates using language without making mistakes in the language.

2. Fluency: Fluency is the element that is concerning with speaking a language without hesitation or unnecessary pause or stop while talking. Fluency is defined by Richards (2009) as “natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence” (p. 14). Also, Thronbury (2005) defines fluency as "the feature which gives speech the qualities of being natural and normal" (p. 141).

3. Appropriateness: It is important for the speaker to decide the type and style of speaking based on the situation or the context, in which the conversation is taking place. Appropriateness is defined by Lyster (1994) as “the capacity to recognize and produce socially appropriate speech in context” (p. 263). Ranney (1992) defines appropriateness as “the ability to perform various speech acts, the ability to manage conversational turns and topics, sensitivity to variation in register and politeness, and an understanding of how these aspects of language vary according to social roles and settings” (p. 25).

1.1.2 Challenges of Speaking

Various studies and research have shown that speaking tends to be the most difficult skill for EFL learners to master, even at advanced stages of language learning. For example, Al-Jamal and Al-Jamal (2014) found that even English majors in their final year of university struggled with oral fluency and accuracy. Similarly, Al Hosni (2014) discovered that college-level EFL students continued to make grammatical and pronunciation errors in speech that hindered their ability to sound native-like and fluent speakers.

In particular, speaking difficulties can present significant obstacles for EFL students. Extensive studies have indicated that in most classrooms in the Middle East and North Africa, there is a lack of target language exposure (Alkhawaldeh,2020). This lack of exposure is a major factor underlying poor English-speaking proficiency (Alhmadi, 2014).Another factor is that the development of oral language has largely been neglected in these classrooms.

Additionally, Gholamhossein and Siamak (2010) found that classroom interactions were dominated by teacher talk rather than student speaking practices. This imbalance had led to limited opportunities for students to practice and improve their English-speaking skills. More teacher-centered approaches, with little focus on developing students' speaking abilities, have resulted in persistent struggles for Arab EFL learners in mastering English oral proficiency (Alshahrani, 2016).

Several recent studies have examined the speaking difficulties EFL students encountered with Arabic as their first language. The findings of these studies reveal that some of the challenges that might be caused by learners themselves, the teachers' strategies and methods of teaching, the curriculum, and the environment. Speaking, according to Zhang

(2009), is the most difficult skill to be mastered by learners of the foreign language. Also, Al-Nasser (2015) concluded in his study that "the Arab learners' lack of exposure to the target language is considered one of the main reasons behind low proficiency of English" (p. 17).

Also, Ur (1996) argued that the factors that cause speaking challenges to EFL learners might be inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven to participation, and mother tongue use. Anxiety is frequently cited as a psychological barrier, manifesting as fear of negative evaluation from peers, worries about pronunciation and grammar mistakes, and reluctance to speak publicly (Al-Nouhand others, 2015; Alrabai, 2016; Ashari & Redzuan, 2021). Lack of motivation and self-confidence also hinder progress (Al-Asmari, 2020; Layali& Al-Shlowiy, 2021).

On the linguistic level, insufficient vocabulary makes it difficult to express ideas fluently and accurately (Alharbi, 2015; Rabab'ah, 2016). Weak grammar knowledge also causes hesitation and errors (Al-Hosni, 2014). Pronunciation and intonation problems further impede spoken intelligibility and fluency (Al-Saidat, 2014; Derwing & Munro, 2005). This array of difficulties combines to affect the speaking performance of many Arab EFL learners.

Recent studies have emphasized the need for more communicative teaching approaches tailored to students' needs, along with increased opportunities for low-stakes practice in supportive environments (Al-Asmari, 2020; Rabab'ah, 2016). This highlights the importance of understanding context-specific challenges.

However, it remains a formidable challenge for many learners who speak English as a foreign language. With continued practice and immersion in authentic English environments,

learners can expand their speaking abilities and work toward proficiency. Strong oral communication skills in English are invaluable in our increasingly globalized society.

1.2 Methodology of the Study

The methodology used in this study is qualitative research method, in which the researcher based on secondary resources represented in the literature review that covers the topic of the study and primary resources represented in observation and interviewing the participants of the study. Furthermore, the data collection methods required to gather enough valid data to reach the objectives of this study are classroom observation and semi-structured interview.

This study was mainly conducted on a sample of students in the English Department at the Faculty of Arts at Ajdabiya University. The data collected from the classroom observation in this study were analyzed based on the researcher's interpretations and the semi-structured interviews were classified into coding based on the thematic analysis to reach findings and submit recommendations.

1.2.1 Problem of the Study

Based on the researcher's observation as a teacher of English, most Libyan students encounter challenges in speaking English in various communicative situations. Various studies and research emphasize that Libyan students at Libyan universities usually encounter various challenges in using English language inside and outside the classroom. These challenges may vary from psychological factors to linguistic factors that affect the students' performance while practicing speaking skill. Pathan and others (2014) claim that "the Libyan EFL students face different problems in speaking skill. From the observation and the personal

experiences of the researchers, first as EFL learners and then as EFL teachers, it can be said that most of the problems faced by the Libyan EFL learners are related to pronunciation" (p. 98). Another study conducted by Asswail (2020) concluded that Libyan students find difficulties in using English inside and outside classroom because their teachers use Arabic in teaching English, so they do not have opportunities to practice English.

The situation of Libyan students is similar to the situation of most Arab countries. For instance, Al-Nakhleh (2016) sees that Palestinian students encounter challenges in suing English in practical situations. He attributes these challenges to lack of opportunities for the Palestinian students to practice English both inside and outside the classroom. Similarly, Bashir (2011) emphasizes the fact that Arab students encounter various challenges in using English commutatively. Arab students know about English, but they do not know how to practice English in reality.

In his study, Omar (2014) concludes that Libyan learners of English spend almost 12 years learning English at school and at university, yet they seem helpless when they communicate in English in communicative situations. They fail even to conduct a simple conversation in English. Accordingly, the researcher of this study sees that there is a problem that needs more investigation, and the researcher tries to find some remedies. The researcher also based on some other previous studies in the Libyan contexts.

1.2.2 Previous Studies

There are some studies, which investigated the speaking difficulties that EFL learners encounter in speaking. For instance, Jahbel (2019) in a study about the communication difficulties faced by Libyan students at Alzytoona University in Tarhouna, Libya states that

"the problems encountered by Libyan university students is the excessive use of Arabic (L1) in the classroom and out of the classroom. However, it is easier for the students to use their mother tongue in the class because it looks naturally" (p. 150), and this makes challenges for EFL Libyan students to develop their English-speaking skill. It seems that speaking skill remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of EFL Libyan learners.

Furthermore, another case study conducted by Diaab, (2016) to investigate why Arab EFL learners are incompetent in oral communication. The study showed that EFL Libyan environment was the main factors in inhibiting the students from speaking English successfully. The study showed some difficulties that hindered the students from speaking English effectively as (1) the students did not have a sufficient amount of vocabulary to use in speaking, (2) the students also did not have enough grammar to speak effectively, and (3) the students feared of making mistakes they felt apprehensive when speaking.

In their study, Halali and others (2021) revealed that Libyan students who studied abroad, particularly in Malaysia, encountered difficulties with academic speaking due to an inadequate priori English language learning experience in Libya. In spite that the students in Libya study English language for twelve years, they still have low speaking proficiency. Also, Elsaadi and Agila (2023) conducted a study to identify the factors that influence the EFL learners' oral participation in the English Department at Sirte university. The findings of the study revealed that the most influential factors that affected the students' oral participation were "curriculum related factor, students' related factor, instructional environment's related factors, and teachers' related factors" (p. 253).

In a study to investigate the factors that affect EFL students' speaking ability at public secondary schools in Musrata, Raba'a (2023) revealed that a lot of students lacked

vocabulary and difficulty to communicate with others effectively and fluently. The study also showed that some teachers did not encourage their students to speak the language inside the classroom, and there was no clear strategy of teaching English language which could help students use English properly.

Alhamroni (Cited in Abusteen, 2015) claimed in his study that speaking skill was the most challenging skill that learners encountered in learning English as a foreign language in Libya. Despite the fact that Libyan students study English language for an extended period of time at schools and universities, the students still have hesitations in speaking English. Libyan students as well as teachers use Arabic language in learning and teaching English environment, and English language is just a course in order to pass the examination not to improve speaking skill.

Similarly, Akbari (2015) highlights the role of motivation in enhancing students' progress in using English inside and outside the classroom. He claims that "not all students have the same motivation or purpose for learning English. Some of them look at English just as a course that should be passed and do not understand its importance as a means of communication with which they can adapt themselves to new improvements in technology and other sciences" (p. 396).

1.2.3 Participants of the Study

As this study is conducted mainly to find out the challenges that Libyan students in the English Department at Faculty of Arts at Ajdabiya University, the participants of this study include students enrolled in speaking courses at the initial semesters. The participants represent a sample for the population of Libyan students at Libyan universities.

1.2.4 Aims of the Study

Various studies and research in the Libyan contexts emphasize the fact that most EFL Libyan students encounter various difficulties in using English inside the classroom. These obstacles negatively affect their oral proficiency in using English in communicative situations. Thus, this study aims to identify and analyze the specific speaking difficulties that EFL Libyan students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University encounter inside and outside classroom.

This study also aims to use the findings to clarify the real nature of these speaking difficulties and the circumstances in which they arise for EFL Libyan students in this context. In addition, this study aims to fill that gap between knowing about English and using English through discovering the difficulties that English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language in the English Department at Ajdabiya University.

1.2.5 Questions of the Study

To fulfill the objectives of this study, the researcher has already designed one main question which is

- What are the difficulties English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language in the English Department at Ajdabiya University?

To investigate more and support the above main question, the researcher poses three sub-questions that may help to find an answer to the main research question as:

- What are the most difficult specific aspects of speaking English?
- What inhibits students as EFL learners from speaking English?

- How can students improve their speaking skill inside and outside the classroom?

1.2.6 Scope and Limits of the Study

This study focuses solely on analyzing the speaking difficulties faced by current English Department students as EFL learners at Ajdabiya University in 2023-2024. The scope is limited to identifying factors that potentially hinder students' English-speaking abilities and performance.

1.2.7 Significance of the Study

The outcomes of this study will provide insights into the speaking difficulties confronting English Department students at Ajdabiya University. These findings can inform departmental policies, curriculum design, and teaching practices to better support EFL students in developing strong English communication skills. This research contributes to knowledge on context-specific obstacles to oral proficiency growth among tertiary-level EFL students in Libya.

1.2.8 Data Collection

As this study follows qualitative research method, the researcher gathered the data of this study from the primary resources, namely non-participant classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. The researcher, of course, supported the primary resource data from citation from the secondary resources that are relevant. The researcher recorded the interviews with the participants and hided the participants’ faces for privacy. Then, she moved the interviews into transcripts for the sake of the data analysis.

1.3 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters as the followings:

- The First Chapter: It is the background of the study, which presents a brief literature review about the topic of the study, the methodology of the study, the problem of the study, previous studies related to the topic of the study, the aims of the study, the questions of the study, and the participants of the study. The scope and limits and the significance of the studyare also highlighted in this chapter.
- The Second Chapter: It is the literature review used to cover the secondary resources of this thesis. It shows the definitions and the importance of speaking skill. Furthermore, it presents the necessary elements of speaking skill. The Third Chapter:It is dedicated to write about the methodology of the study in details. This chapter provides details information about the tools that were used to conduct this study.
- The Fourth Chapter: This chapter is devoted to the data analysis used to obtain findings and present recommendation. This chapter shows the results of the data collected in this study.
- The Fifth Chapter: This chapter is dedicated to the findings and the recommendations obtained mainly from the data analysis that described in the previous study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the definition of speaking and its elements and the communicative competence and speaking skill are presented and the importance of speaking skill in learning English as a foreign language is addressed too. Furthermore, the basic types of speaking skill, teaching speaking skill, the types of testing speaking skill, the attitude of learners of EFL towards speaking skill and the most common difficulties learners of EFL encounter and impede their communicative competence are all mentioned. Finally, the summary of the chapter is provided.

2.1 Speaking

Speaking is the ability to produce words orally, to communicate by talking, and to make a speech in language practice. The literature offers many definitions of speaking. For instance, Harmer (2001) claims that speaking "happens when two people are engaged in talking to each other, and they are sure that they are doing it for good purpose" (p. 20). Speaking, then, refers to the production of auditory signals to produce various verbal responses to the listeners. This indicates that speaking does not only indicate the use of specific aspects of language, but also it is important for the speaker to comprehend the appropriate timing of when, why, and in what ways to produce language (Nunan, 2003).

From the explanation above, speaking is vital for people due to the fact that initial occurrence of communication is speaking for expressing their thoughts, ideas, emotions,

needs, and many others. It is also the ability to discuss specific topics through communicating with others in a particular language (Hornby, 1995). Brown (2007) defines speaking as "the ability to produce and understand the sounds, words, and sentences of a language in a coherent and meaningful way" (p. 123).

Of course, speaking effectively requires speakers be a full command of the elements of speaking: appropriateness, fluency, and accuracy. These elementshelp people speak the language easily and effectively in various communicative situations. In this regard, Richards and Rodgers (2001) discuss that "fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: Accuracy is judged in the abstract, but in context, while speaking fluently requires students to produce correct utterances to be fully understood and communicatively competent" (p. 157). Furthermore, Spratt and others (2005) view appropriateness in speaking as the variety levels of formality of saying things and for producing speech act of request that suits the situation.

1. Accuracy: In general, the definition of accuracy is to produce sentences correctly that do not contain any type of errors and mistakes. It is an important aspect of speaking skill as people can never talk without grammar. Nation, (1991) defines accuracy as "the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences" (p. 13). This indicates that accuracy is concerned with grammatical rules and syntactical structures. Yet, Thronbury, (2005) believes that accuracy demonstrates the ability for the speakers to use vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation correctly.

2. Fluency: Fluency is one of the criteria that measures one's speaking competence. A fluent speaker means the capacity for the speaker to understand and respond to others in conversation without hesitation or pause to think. In addition, fluency shows the

speaker's comfort and confidence in speaking the language. Thronbury (2005) defines fluency as "the feature which gives speech the qualities of being natural and normal" (p. 141). In addition, Hughes (2002) views fluency as the speaker's ability to speak smoothly, clearly, and concisely without breaking down communication that makes the listener lose interest.

3. Appropriateness: Speaking the language requires the speakers to be appropriate in selecting the language use in various situations. Hymes (1972) emphasizes the role of appropriateness in speaking as being able to speak sentences with correct grammar and vocabulary only is not enough to conduct an effective conversation, but it is also crucial that the speaker be aware of "what to say to whom in what circumstances and how to say it" (p. 277). In addition, Brown and Levinson, (1987) view appropriateness as the skill that involves the ability to choose and use the language, tone, and behavior which are considered appropriate for a specific situation or audience. It is considered as the fact that the speakers fully understand what they are saying to the listeners to avoid misunderstanding speech.

2.2 Communicative Competence and Speaking Skill

Saleh (2013) defines communicative competence as "the speaker's ability to use the appropriate language in the right context for the right purpose" (p. 10). This indicates the speaker's ability of understanding the fundamental aspects of the language and how to use these aspects smoothly in communicative situations effectively. Saleh (2013) also claims that "communicating effectively in a language requires the speaker's good understanding of linguistic, sociolinguistic and socio-cultural aspects of that language" (p. 102).

Speaking skill is crucial due to its important role in oral communication. It is considered as the primary form of language expression, and it is the most significant skill in communication compared with the other language skills. It is the process of producing ideas and thoughts into a spoken form. It also acts as the primary source of language learning, and it tends to be one of the most significant skills for EFL learners to be mastered. Richards (Cited in Abusteen 2015) views speaking as "a major focus of language learning and teaching, both the nature of speaking skills as well as approaches to teach them" (p. 34).

Hence, speaking is vital for language learners due to the initial occurrence of communication in speaking. Thornbury (Cited in Nazara, 2011) defines speaking as "a multi-sensory activity because it involves paralinguistic features such as eye-contact, facial expressions, body language tempo, pauses, voice quality changes, and pitch variation" (p. 30). Brown (Cited in Parmawati, 2018) also defines speaking as "a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed, those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and effectiveness of the test-takers listening skill, which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral production test" (p. 22).

Furthermore, Torky (2006) adopted definitions of speaking with its two main approaches the 'bottom-up approach' and the 'top-down approach. The bottom-up approach neglects the interactive and social aspect of speaking, focusing mainly on its psychomotor aspects. Additionally, it is very difficult to transition from classroom learning to real life use of the language. In contrast, top-down approach emphasizes interactional skill, which entails making decision about communication. This perspective is often referred to as a top-down view of speaking.

2.3 Significance of Speaking Skill in Learning EFL

English has become an international language. It is widely used as language of communication when individuals do not use their mother tongue for communication and instead, they use English as a medium of communication. In the process of gaining the understanding of English as a foreign language, speaking skill performs a significant role among the four basic skills. It plays a vital role in facilitating the interactions and conveying messages, and it contributes in enhancing learners' fluency and accuracy and helps them practice their communication abilities (Omar, 2021).

However, Khamkhien (2010) believes that "speaking is deemed to be the important skill in learning a second or foreign language" (p. 184). In addition, Burnkart (Cited in Nazara, 2011) claims that "speaking is the most important language skill that need to be controlled, and they assess learning achievement based on mastery of speaking skills" (p. 29). Speaking tends to be crucial for learners' academic achievement as well as professional success. Speaking performs a significant role in building the confidence level of persons. It plays a vital role as everything depends on how people deliver their messages to others. In today's globalized world, the ability to communicate proficiently in English is a valuable asset whether it is for academic or professional purposes (Saunders and O'Brien, 2006).

In these modern days, the whole world has become a global village, and people communicate with each other in a common language, called the lingua franca, which is defined by Back (2005) as "a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them" (p. 4). In wider circles, the English language has become the lingua franca In the process of gaining the understanding of English, speaking skill performs a significant role among the four basic

skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In today's globalized world, being able to speak and communicate effectively in English is a highly needed skill whether it is for academic or professional purposes.

However, speakers of the language have to be well trained in the skill of speaking and should be actively practiced in language classrooms because speaking is "a crucial tool for language teaching and learning and can facilitate language acquisition and development" (Goh, 2007, p. 1). Speaking should not be devalued but rather developed in its own right.

Therefore, scholars such as Akhter and others (2020) discuss that "the person with good speaking skill has ability to attract the attention of the people and engage them until the delivery of his/her message" (p. 6023), which is important from this point of view that the learners are judged upon the most in actual life situations. However, as Goh (2007) claims, a well-designed syllabus incorporating interactive teaching methods and speaking assessments can improve speaking abilities and give motivation for students to actively practice their speaking skills.

In the process of learning English as a foreign language, there are components that significantly affect learners' speaking performance. It is important that English language learners have a good grasp on speaking components, which help them speak English language more easily and effectively. By focusing on these components, EFL learners can be well-rounded speakers of the language.

English language learners are considered as sufficient and effective speakers of English when they have capacity to speak and communicate with English both accurately and fluently. This implies that language learners have to be capable of forming grammatically

accurate sentence, choosing suitable words in suitable context, and pronouncing words clearly and correctly. Additionally, language learners may show fluency by speaking smoothly in an appropriate pace and with a consistent rhythm. Accuracy and fluency are two key components emphasized in speaking to enhance the communicative competence and ensure that the message is easily understood by others (Roosdianna & others, 2008).

Accuracy, based on Housenand Kuikken (2009), indicates achieving error-free sentences in speaking performance. Accuracy is the ability to produce the target language in accordance to its rule system. While fluency indicates the capacity to understand and respond to others in conversation without hesitation or pause to think (Skehan and others, 1996). Skehan and others (1996) define fluency as "the learners' capacity to produce language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation" (p. 16).

Fluency is a process of responding coherently in a conversation, connecting words and phrases, maintaining clear pronunciation, and doing all of this without undue hesitation. It is worth noticing that fluency is not about perfection, instead it is about the ability of speaking easily and smoothly. As in an academic or professional environment, oral presentations or debates require focus on fluency (Hedge, 2002). Fluency, then, "does not mean that a person speaks a language but indicates better communication and transmission of ideas conducting to better proficiency" (Gomez, 2023, p. 26).

Another components also may contribute in the effective speaking skill which are complexity and appropriateness. The concept of complexity is often related to the knowledge and the understanding of the second or foreign language. It refers to the capacity of one's language use. Complexity, as defined by Housen and Kuikken (2009), indicates "the scope of expanding or restructured second language knowledge" (p. 3). The concept 'complexity'

can be interpreted into two different ways: cognitive complexity and linguistic complexity. While cognitive complexity indicates to second language learners' use of the language items, patterns, structure, and rules, linguistic complexity indicates the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical system of language (Housen & Kuikken, 2009).

Furthermore, the component appropriateness in learning English language involves not only knowing grammar structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation, but also successful communication requires appropriate language use. Appropriateness is a tool for clear communication. Hymes (Cited in Dewaele, 2008) explains that "knowing what to say is never enough, it is also necessary to know what to say to whom in what circumstances and how to say it" (para. 6).

Appropriateness is the capacity of knowing both linguistic and socio-cultural competence. In speaking activity, it is important that the English language speakers master the appropriateness as it indicates whether they really understand what they said or not. Developing proficiency in all these components is essential for effective communication, and acquiring the ability to speak foreign language affectively involves the learners' capacity to produce spoken language fluently, accurately, with complexity and in an appropriate manner (Dewaele, 2008).

2.4 Principles of Teaching Speaking Skill

Speaking is an essential part of foreign language learning and teaching, and the ultimate goal of the teacher is to aid the students to speak the foreign language. As several studies and research reveal teaching speaking is somehow a challenge for most teachers of EFL because it requires teachers to train students for communication by giving them instructions in order

to communicate effectively. In this regard, Hornby (1995) argues that "teaching means giving the instruction to (a person): give a person (knowledge skill), while speaking means to make use of words in an ordinary voice" (p. 37).

According to Brown (2004), the basic types of classroom speaking skills are divided into five types as: imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive.

1. Imitative: It indicates to language learning technique where learners imitate words, phrases, and sentences which produced by their teachers or native speakers.This type can help learners to enhance their overall speaking skill. It also helps learners improve their listening by listening carefully to native speakers and produce the same sounds and stress patterns of the target language. Imitative speaking is a useful tool for developing learners' oral proficiency.

2. Intensive: It refers to practice speaking skill in target language learning context. It provides learners with opportunities to practice linguistic features such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse. By intensive practice, learners improve their overall speaking proficiency.

3. Responsive: This type refers to the learners' ability to interact in verbal communication. It assists learners to enhance their listening comprehension, vocabulary usage, grammar accuracy, and overall communication competence. It is limited to short conversation such as greetings, small talks, simple requests, and comments.

4. Interactive: Unlike responsive type, interactive type includes multiple exchanges between speakers and listeners with long conversations, such as interviews, role-play, and discussion.

5. Extensive: It refers to the ability to produce longer and more complex spoken discourse in the target language such as (speeches, oral presentation and storytelling). It helps learners to communicate effectively in various context.

Teaching speaking skill requires well-qualified teachers to teach learners how to produce speech sounds and patterns of the language and to train learners by giving them instructions in order to communicate effectively. For several years, teaching speaking skill was undervalued, and the teachers taught speaking only for memorization and practicing dialogues. In modern days, one of the main aims of teaching speaking skill is to make learners ensure communicating and speak effectively both in classroom environment and in real life situations. Some writers have provided various principles of teaching speaking skill. For instance, Anuradha and others (Cited in Hussain, 2017) present ten principles for teaching speaking skill as the followings:

- Motivate the students to practice speaking skill from the beginner stage and encourage them to speak even with simple words.
- Be patience when students through repeating the sentences.
- Do not give comments when students answer questions with one word.
- Make the students share their knowledge about the language.
- Provide students with new idioms and words and ask them to use them as much as possible in different sentence structure.

- Utilize different language teaching techniques as ‘back-chaining’ and ‘pair-work’ to make the students create long sentences.
- Apply some language teaching activities as ‘role play’ and ‘pair-work’ and monitor the students to correct the active ones and activate the passive ones.
- Prepare the lesson and activities well before the classes.
- Do not interrupt or correct the students when they make mistakes particularly in the primary stage.
- Pay attention to individuals’ weakness and encourage them to participate and enhance their language.

Furthermore, Wang (2014) recommended that four step-pedagogical methods contribute in good language speakers: Before - while - after - extensive practice. ‘Before’ indicates that the teacher should create appropriate environment for learners to reduce their anxiety, and she should provide the learners with the necessary knowledge and vocabulary to speak the language effectively. ‘While’ indicates that the learners practice speaking activities, and the teacher should provide the learners with adequate time to enhance their fluency. ‘After’ indicates that accuracy should take place after speaking tasks, allowing learners to identify and correct language errors. Finally, learners should engage in extensive practice to further develop their speaking fluently and accurately.

Similarly, Brown (Cited in Kshetree, 2020) provided principles for teaching speaking skill as:

- Focusing on fluency and accuracy which considering the learning objective.
- Preparing intrinsically techniques to motivate the students in learning.
- Authenticating language use in appropriate contexts.

- Providing appropriate feedback and correction.
- Capitalizing on the natural link between speaking and listening.
- Giving students opportunities to communicate in learning process as much as possible.
- Encouraging learners to develop their speaking strategy and style.

Teaching speaking skill needs a good collaboration between the teacher and the students. When students are interested in learning, they will evolve during the classroom with the teacher and practice their speaking skill. In speaking classes, the first step the teacher does is to let the students listen to an audio of a dialogue until the teacher confirm that the students understand the content very well. Then, the audio is played again, but this time the teacher pauses the audio at specific points and ask the students to repeat what they have already heard. After that, the students individually repeat the phrases they have heard until they achieve confidence in producing them. This activity aims to build confidence in speaking. The main goal of teaching speaking is to make students speak in certain situations confidently and fluently (Thronbury, 2005).

Adding more, Nunan, (Cited in Gunawan, 2011) argues that for teaching speaking, the teachers should differentiate between teaching speaking skill for students either second language context or foreign language context. The challenges are determined partly by the target language context. EFL students have few opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom; hence, the teachers should give more attention to speaking skill in the classroom. The teachers, for instance, can provide opportunities for students to talk by using group-work activities that increase the amount of time for them to speak more in the target language.

Testing students' speaking proficiency is essential for understanding their language level and competence in real-life communication. Various ways to evaluate students' ability in using speaking skill. These ways include the followings:

Reading Comprehension: This type of testing makes the learners read a text about any topic for minutes in order to examine their fluency in speaking skill.

Oral Presentation: It is an effective type used for examining the learners' ability to speak in front of audience and their attitudes to introduce a topic from their choice.

Interviews: This is the most common type of testing, in which the learners are examined by face-to-face interviews with ask and answer different questions.

Information Transfer: This type is used for allowing the students to read picture stories by themselves in a limited period of time, then the teacher asks them to explain what they have already read.

2.5 Learners' Attitude towards Learning Foreign Language

Foreign language learning is composed of several elements, which are grammatical competence, communicative competence, language proficiency, as well as a change in attitudes towards one's own or another culture. These elements collectively contribute to the overall process of acquiring a foreign language. The consensus about learning a foreign language is the learners' attitude towards that language, which is considered as the main factor that affects language learning. Hence, EFL learners' attitude towards learning language and speaking skill is a crucial component (Diab, 2006).

Learners' attitude towards communication skill have a clear impact on their behavior, which in turn affects their performance in English conversation (Kara, 2009). According to Hosseini and Pourmandnia (Cited in Dimici and others, 2022) attitude is known as a disposition or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain thing such as an idea, an object, a person, or a situation. Students have positive or negative attitude towards the language they want to learn or the people who speak that language. Accordingly, if EFL learners have a positive attitude towards English and the speakers of English, this attitude can facilitate language acquisition and development and gives them motivation and willingness to learn English.

The positive attitude, however, has a crucial effect on speaking skills, while the negative attitude reduces students' motivation and interest in learning and using the foreign language (Brown, 2007). In their study, Elyidirim and Ashton (Cited in Toomnan & Intaraprasert, 2015) reveal that students with negative attitude towards the foreign language can hinder their language learning process. Also, Sadighi and Zarasshan (Cited in Toomnan & Intaraprasert, 2015) mention that students who have positive attitude towards the foreign language, use strategies consistently compared to those with negative attitude. In English speaking classrooms, the active participation of the students is significant for learning language effectively. Besides that, learners, who have positive beliefs about learning the foreign language, have a tendency to learn that language and develop their oral proficiency, contrasting those who have negative beliefs.

Similarly, Pierce and others (Cited in Kara, 2009) claim that students with positive attitude are likely to develop a habit of lifelong learning, and this will not only benefit their academic pursuits, but also prepares them to adopt new developments in their careers. Such

attitude motivates students to acquire knowledge and strive for excellence throughout their lives. Furthermore, creating a positive environment in English classroom courses can make students interact and share their thoughts and opinions in English comfortably. Moreover, it assists them in enhancing their difficulties in the English classroom. Using language for authentic purposes and creating a low stress environment are effective ways to communicate in English; thus, learners have a high opportunity to learn and use the language.

2.6 Difficulties Learners Encounter in Learning Speaking Skill

Learning a skill is often challenging as learners may encounter several obstacles that hinder their ability to gain the skill effectively. Speaking skill specifically is always problematic for EFL learners. There are two factors that can influence EFL learners' speaking performance: internal and external.

2.6.1 Internal Factors

These factors come from the students themselves. These factors imply psychological factors and linguistic factors. Ur (2012, p. 118) labels the difficulties that hinder learners of the foreign language to practice speaking that language as:

1. Using First Language: This relevant to the interference of the first language in speaking first language inside the classroom, which negatively affects the students' learning the second language process. In one hand, using the first language helps learners of the foreign language feel less lost and become more comfortable and confident, and it helps them define new items and check their comprehension. On the other hand, using the first language in the classroom inevitably cuts down exposure to the foreign language.

2. Inhibition: Inhibition is a psychological factor that is defined as a negative feeling that impedes learner of the foreign language spoken ability in different situations. It is a condition, which makes learners of the foreign language feel worried about making mistakes, feel shy to speak in the classroom, and lose face and the attention that their speech attracts others. It prevents some learners of the foreign language from sharing their thoughts and opinions in the foreign language classrooms.

3.Nothing to Say: It happens when the learners of the foreign language cannot think of anything to say in that language even though the learners do not have psychological difficulties, yet they stay silent participants in the classroom. In other words, the learners' reluctance to participate in classroom activities is not due to an interesting topic that teachers present. Instead, it is because of the learners' lack of vocabulary they know and grammar structure to practice. As a result, they remain silent the whole time.

4. Low or Uneven Participation: It happens when one or two students control most of the classroom activities due to their abilities to communicate in the foreign language are better than others do. Therefore, the other students do not have opportunities to contribute any ideas or express their main interests, although they want to initiate speaking in the classroom. Also, students low participant in speaking classes is considered as one of the factors that hinder students oral proficiency as some students are unwilling to participate in speaking activities. In this vein, Pawlak and Mystkowska (2015) argue thatit is very difficult for learners to learn a foreign language if they are unwilling to engage in conversations.

Hadijah (2014) also identifies several reasons that impede foreign language speaking ability. These reasons are not only limited to lack of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, or pronunciation problems, but also personal problems such as lack of confidence, shyness, lack of practice, and insufficient exposure to the foreign language. Juhana (2012) also reveals that the psychological factors influence students speaking skill in English classes; therefore, creating cooperative environment in classroom is significant to encourage students to overcome their negative attitudes and feelings.

Adding more, some previous experts also found that one of the main difficulties that EFL learners encountered in speaking English was the lack of motivation. For instance, Babu (Cited in Amoah&Yeboah, 2021) concludes in his study that lack of motivation hinders students from speaking or participating in any form of discussion in the classroom. Ahmad (2014) also found that anxiety or 'English phobia', family stability, the educational background of family members, and the location of education institutions can play a significant role in motivating EFL students to learn English and use it in various communicative situations.

Furthermore, lack of self-confidence prevents EFL learners from enhancing their speaking skill; as a result, they lose interest in practicing English conversations inside the classroom. Lack of self-confidence happens when EFL learners consider that their speech cannot convey their messages, so they prefer to remain silent. In reaction to this view, the way EFL learners see themselves can affect their confidence. If they see themselves as having the ability to do something, this can help them deal with hard situations and overcome the challenges they encounter (Ahmad, 2014). Burton and Platts (2006) relates self-confidence to human belief in their ability to perform to a

certain standard. Al-Hebaish (2012) views self-confidence as a personal factor that plays a significant role in learners' achievements of foreign language learning.

Similarly, Urrutia and Vega (Cited in Leong &Ahmadi, 2017) claim that lack of self-confidence is considered as one of the factors that influences learners' oral performance. Furthermore, the development of the learners' confidence is an integral part of an English teacher's role. It has influential variables that affect the learning process in speaking skill specifically. Edred and others (Cited in Marliasari and others, 2021) mention that self-confidence is one of the keys to the successful development of language learning process. In addition, EFL learners who are self-confident are able to communicate effectively in English conversation.

Several studies and research also show that lack of exposure to the foreign language might affect learners' speaking proficiency. It may also impede language-learning process. Hence, exposure to the foreign language can facilitate language learning by providing learners with opportunities to practice the language in authentic contexts which in turn enhance their oral proficiency. In this regard, Carbajal and Peperkamp (Cited in Tantoun and others, 2021) claim that "language exposure is a key factor that can determine language proficiency level among learners depending on quality and quantity of input which plays an important role in language acquisition specifically word frequency" (p. 17).

Al-Nasser (2015) also concludes in his study that the primary factor contributing to the low proficiency of English among Arab learners is the lack of exposure to English. Al-Zoubi (Cited in Tantoun and others, 2021) also finds out that one of the difficulties that EFL learners encounter in learning English is lack of

exposure to English outside the classes. Furthermore, Al-Nakhalah (2016) states that EFL learners do not get enough support from their surrounding environment to practice speaking in English conversations.

In addition, anxiety is another psychological problem which affects negatively in EFL learners' oral proficiency. As Brown (2002) explained anxiety as a state of mind that associated with feelings of discomfort, frustration, or worry. Furthermore, Erdiana and others (2020) also described anxiety as "anxiety is a feeling of getting in a situation that is threatening or difficult" (p. 335). Feeling fear of making mistakes while practicing speaking skill is one of the reasons that causes anxiety. Students may feel self-conscious or worried about being judged, which can hinder their ability to communicate effectively. Pabro-Maquidato (2021) adopted empirical studies about anxiety and they mentioned that “anxious students commonly avoided speaking activities in class they showed unwillingness to participate in any speaking activities” (p. 47).

Dil (2009) also conducted a study and revealed that Turkish EFL learners’ communication in English conversation is affected by anxiety and unwillingness to communicate in English. These two obstacles come from feeling fear of negative evaluation when making mistakes. Furthermore, the Turkish EFL learners, who evaluate their oral proficiency as poor, feel more anxious and unwilling to participate in English conversation compared to those who perceive their oral proficiency as ‘very good’, ‘good’, and ‘Ok’.

Based on some research and studies, not only the psychological factors cause challenges to EFL learners’ speaking skill, but also linguistic factors may hinder the

learners' speaking ability, lack of vocabulary, grammar mistakes, and pronunciation problems. For instance, Prasongko (2023) mentioned that "the linguistic factors happened because students have limited vocabulary mastery. They are also challenging to construct verbally in correct grammar. Then they have pronunciation problems" (p. 107). Ammar (2024) also mentioned that "the most common difficulties EFL students encounter in speaking and listening are inadequate stock of vocabulary, difficulty pronouncing some words, and using the correct grammatical structure" (para. 3).

A study conducted by Normawati and others (2023) at University of Tidar showed that the students faced three main difficulties in developing their English-speaking skill which were grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The lack of vocabulary happens when EFL learners do not have enough vocabulary to speak and express their opinions in English in the classroom. Furthermore, they have difficulties choosing the appropriate vocabulary in a particular situation.

In addition, the grammar difficulties happen when EFL learners consider that learning proper grammar is sometimes thought to be a little boring. The difficulties in learning grammar structure arise from learners' inability to understand some English rules even though demonstrating proficiency in certain grammar structure, the learners still encounter difficulties and resultantly they are unable to communicate effectively due to this linguistic factor.

Moreover, the pronunciation problems have been argued in the study, where it has been confirmed that EFL learners pay little attention to pronunciation. They should master phonological rules in order to speak English accurately. Most EFL learners have difficulties in sounds and sound system or pattern. Furthermore, they feel worried about

mispronounced words. Fatimah and others (2021) mentioned in their study that students have difficulties in speaking skill which were lack of vocabulary, lack of understanding the grammar rules, and difficulties in pronouncing English words.

Adding more, topical knowledge is also another important factor that can affect students' speaking abilities during classroom interactions. It is the EFL learners' knowledge of a particular topic. Harmer (2001) stated that EFL learners participate freely and enthusiastically in the classroom activities when they have enough knowledge about the topic. Vice versa, when EFL learners lack knowledge related to the topic provided, they remain silent and do not participate.

2.6.2 External Factors

These factors come from the teachers' methods used in teaching and learning speaking skills, the classroom environments, and the time duration. Kurniawan and Radia (2017) conducted a study, showing that one of the most challenges that EFL students encounter, particularly in Indonesia, was the lack of competence among English teachers, the insufficient time of teachers in practicing English in the classroom, and the insufficient teaching methods for teaching and learning English.

William and Burden (Cited in Razi and others, 2021) stated that "the strategies that used by teachers are the factors of success in language learning" (para. 5). Effective teaching methods and strategies are crucial for the success of teaching speaking skill. Teachers can encourage students to engage in the classroom activities by using successful methods and strategies that make them involve in speaking discussions. Regarding this point, Razi and others (2021) said, "Teaching strategy defines as the

various methods or ways that are implemented by teachers in the teaching and learning process" (para. 10).

Also, Sari and Zaini (2020) claimed that "teaching speaking strategy is an important aspect in the teaching and learning process. It is an activity that should be done both teacher and learner in order to get learning activity to become effective and efficient" (p. 734). Bilal (2013), moreover, argues that there are some factors that affect the students speaking ability such as teachers' limited experiences in understanding effective teaching approaches, students' lack of motivation, resulting in low participation in the classroom activities. The teacher should motivate their students to make progress and achieve great achievement in language learning. As a result, learners manage to make successful progress due to more motivation. There is an argument that motivating learners would be difficult if the teachers do not have the ability to motivate them in the classroom.

2.7 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reviews speaking and its elements as well the speaking skill and its impact on good communicative competence. It also discusses the types of speaking and how to evaluate the learners' speaking ability in different contexts and their attitude towards learning speaking skill. additionally, this chapter is related to my thesis research in several ways: it provides vital background information, supports my arguments, and presents relevant data that corresponds with my research objectives. furthermore, it helps to contextualize my findings within the larger context of the study.

Chapter Three

Methodology of the Study

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is designed to discuss the methodology and the methods adopted for this study in addition to the mode of inquiry that was employed to investigate the research questions and objectives of the study. The main problem that the study aims to address is also presented. This chapter also outlines the scope and limits of the study; furthermore, the participants who used to gather valid and reliable data are mentioned too. After that, the procedures of the data collection are clarified, and the limitations of the study that the researcher encountered while conducting the study is also described. The final part is a clear justification about the data analysis.

3.1 Methodology of the Study

According to Kumar (Cited in Aban. 2021) the research methodology is "a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically" (p. 36). Choosing the research method is determined by several factors consisting of the nature, the objectives, and the researcher's aim of the study. This research conducted the qualitative research method, which Hancock (Cited in Aldarasi, 2020) identifies it as qualitative research concerned with finding the answers to questions of the study. Shank (2002) defines this method as "a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning" (p. 5).

Various educators and researchers see that using qualitative research method provides an opportunity to find out rich data related to the study and to explore the participants' behavior and attitude towards the issue of the study. And this is the aim of this study as the researcher is using this method to find out the difficulties Libyan students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University encounter in speaking English as a foreign language in the classroom. The present study is a case study only about students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University.

Varieties of research methods have their advantages and disadvantages and selecting the most appropriate method is crucial for the success of any research study. The researcher chose two tools to conduct this study and to collect the data successfully which are classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. To reduce any anxiety and fear before the researcher had conducted the study, the teacher and the students are informed in advance that this study is conducted to find out the difficulties of speaking English as a foreign language, and it is not about assessing the teacher and the students' level in English language.

3.1.1 Classroom Observation

Chaleunvong (2009) defines observation as "a technique that involves systematically selecting, watching and recording behavior and characteristics of living beings, objects or phenomena" (p. 6). In this study, the researcher used the classroom observation technique to allow her to gather information about speaking classes and to focus mainly on the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in the English Department at Ajdabiya University. The observation also helped the researcher discover issues that participants might not be able to talk about in the face-to-face interviews. Furthermore, it enable the researcher to note issues that unconsciously missed.

Denscombe (2017) highlights the significance of the classroom observation as it is the ability to collect the data of the study in a short period of time with less efforts. The researcher particularly focused on the students' oral proficiency and their interaction with the teacher as well as the difficulties they really encountered while practicing speaking skill.

Also the teachers' feedback to the students and how they carried out the speaking classes. Furthermore, the researcher gave attention to the curriculum design of speaking skill and the classroom activities as well. In this study, the researcher observed two groups of speaking courses from December 23, 2023 until 6 January 2024, and each class took almost two hours. Everything observed has taken into consideration and written down in full details.

3.1.2 Semi-Structured Interview

This kind of tool used commonly in many contexts, consisting educational research. Bernard (Cited in Jwaili, 2019) defines semi-structured interview as a tool used "to gather focused qualitative textual data. This method offers a balance between the flexibility of an open-ended interview and the focus of a structure ethnographic survey" (p. 43). Gill and others (2008) claim that the main objective of choosing research interview is to look deeply into the participants' perspectives, experiences, and beliefs in specific topics. In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interview in order to gather the necessary and the required data of the study to reach findings and submit recommendations. Denscombe (2010) also claims that semi-structured interviews can offer in-depth and valuable insights on a topic to the researcher.

In this study, the researcher interviewed the participants in two days after she had had the classroom observations. The researcher utilized semi-structured interview in order to get

primary data through preparing questions to reach the required information about the questions of the study. The researcher used written list of open-ended questions based on the participants' knowledge about English language and how they felt about speaking skill in the classroom.

The researcher also set up cover-up questions during the interview as a result of the participants' responses when needed. The participants' answers on these questions helped the researcher in answering the questions of the study and in the data analysis. Such a tool was helpful and proved to be a valuable means that worked as a primary source of information in this qualitative study. Furthermore, it encouraged the participants to talk in details about any and all of the difficulties they encountered when they used speaking skill in communicative situations.

3.2 Problem of the Study

As mentioned earlier, English has served as a lingua franca among nations, and it is spoken and learned in those countries where English is not a native language. Being able to communicate effectively in English is a highly sought-after skill, whether it is for academic or professional purpose. Holding classroom conversations in English is the primary goal that EFL Libyan universities teachers would like to achieve; hence, good speaking competence is essential in speaking English classes.

Despite of the necessity of speaking skill, the previous studies and research in the Libyan context found out that the majority of EFL learners encounter difficulties in speaking English. For instance, Shihiba (Cited in Omar, 2014) argued that EFL Libyan graduate students from English Departments in Libyan universities had problems in their oral

proficiency, primarily due to the lack of practicing speaking and listening skills during their time at university. Also, Abidin and others (2012) investigated that EFL Libyan students avoided participating in speaking activities in English language classes due to the lack of knowledge that might attribute the students' unwillingness to participate in speaking task.

Ahmad (Cited in Omar, 2019c) also claimed that teaching and learning English in Libya is unsatisfactory. Despite many of studying English language in both school setting and language centers, Libyan students are still unable to use English effectively in four skill and particularly in oral communication. There are several obstacles that hinder EFL learners' oral proficiency. Based on these studies and additional researches, the researcher sees this problem needs further investigations and remedies. Therefore, the problem and the central focus of this study revolve around the difficulties English language learners encounter in speaking English in communicative situations.

3.3 Questions of the Study

O'Leary (Cited in Aban, 2021) mentioned that the research questions are designed to provide direction for the research process. As this study seeks to identify and examine the particular speaking challenges encounter by EFL Libyan students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University, both inside and outside the classroom, the research questions of this study are designed to shed light on the phenomena that the study works on to investigate. To fulfill the objectives of this study, the researcher set up a main question as:

- What are the difficulties English language students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University encounter in speaking English as a foreign language?

In order to investigate and address the main question, the researcher had formulated some other sub-questions that might be related directly or indirectly to the main question of the study as:

- What specific aspects of speaking English are most difficult?
- What inhibits students as EFL learners from speaking English?
- How can students improve their speaking skill inside and outside the classroom?

3.4 Objectives of the Study

In this study, the diagnosis of speaking difficulties aspects and their causes are the primary focus. Hence, the main objectives of this study can be summarizedin the following points:

- To discover the classroom environment which plays a significant role in teaching and learning speaking skill.
- To analyze speaking difficulties that EFL students in the English Department at Ajdabiya University encounter in speaking English.
- To find out the reasons that cause difficulties which in turn hinder the students from speaking effectively in communicative situations.
- To identify the classroom activities used in English speaking classes that may help to overcome the difficulties that students encounter in using English inside the classroom.

In addition, the findings of this study can make the higher education authorities in Libya be aware about the difficulties that students encounter in speaking English as a foreign

language at Libyan universities. These findings also can enable them to develop a support system specifically tailored for students in their initial semesters.

3.5 Scope and Limits of the Study

The scope of this study is directed to identify and analyze difficulties English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language and the effects of these difficulties on the students' capacity in using English in communicative situations. This study, furthermore, was limited on Libyan setting conducting in the English Department at Ajdabiya University. The participants of this study are the students who enrolled in speaking courses at the second semester in the English Department at Ajdabiya University. Hence, it is restricted solely on speaking courses. The limited duration time for conducting this study was from the period between December 2023 and July 2024.

3.6 Participants of the Study

Due to the importance of sampling techniques in this study, the researcher observed and focused in English speaking subject classes. Hatch, (2002) argued that choosing the participants of the conducted study is determined by the type of methodology the researcher uses. Hence, the participants of this study were selected with the purpose of gathering the significant information regarding the objectives of the study.

Therefore, the participants of this study are students of second semester in the English Department at Ajdabiya University who were studying speaking class II at the time of conducting this study. It is essential to select the most effective method for collecting samples. The reason for selecting the students of the second semester was a purposeful reason, Oliver (cited in Thomas, 2022) clarified purposeful samples as "It's a type of non-

probability sampling in which the investigator determines who should be included in the sample based on several characteristics such as subject matter expertise or the ability and desire to engage in the study" (p. 3).

they had recently graduated from high school and this provides the researcher with an opportunity to know the real difficulties from the beginning unlike students in higher semesters or senior students who are already familiar with the speaking classes system.

The researcher observed two speaking class groups with 13 students each. Also in this study, the researcher managed to interview eight students from two different groups. All of these participants were from the English Department at Ajdabiya University, and they have had the same background as: (1) they studied English language as a foreign language in secondary school; (2) they had courses in English language with different curriculums in the first and second semesters at the university; (3) they enrolled in English language speaking course at the University. Asokhia (Cited in Omar, 2014) emphasizes that “the speakers and listeners who have the same language background can understand one another because their common culture provides the common meaning whereas without the common culture such kinds of words are often misunderstood” (p. 111).

Marriam (Cited in Omar, 2014) mentioned that the types of sampling are “typical, unique, maximum, variation, convenience, snowball, chain, and network” (p. 95). The researcher of this study selected the snowball sampling to fulfill the aims of this study. Johnson (2014) explains that “the snowball sampling method is a recruitment approach in which researchers ask participants who have already been sampled to recommend other prospective participants for a study” (para. 17). The researcher of this study selected this type

of sampling because she thinks that this sampling is a useful way to encourage the participants to speak about their difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language.

3.7 Data Collection

As mentioned previously in this chapter, to elicit enough valid data, the research instruments and data collection used in this study were classroom observation and semi-structured interviews in order to understand the difficulties of speaking English as a foreign language. The researcher attempted to study the participants in their natural setting in order to gain deeper insights and interpretations for the difficulties that the students encounter regarding the oral proficiency.

This study was conducted in the academic year 2023-2024, and the researcher started with classroom observation first and interviews second. Olanik (2012) explains that qualitative researchers typically rely on the following methods for gathering the data of the study as: participant observation, non-participant observation, field notes, reflexive journals, structured interview, semi-structured interview, unstructured interview, and analysis of documents and materials.

In doing so, the researcher conducted non-participant role in which she took notes without being a part of the development of the lesson. Of course, this non-participant observation allowed the researcher unbiased perspective during collecting the data. The observation was limited to speaking courses classes as three visits for speaking course group. The classes' duration was two hours for a class. The researcher took notes about everything she observed in the classroom: classroom environments, students' interactions forward speaking activities, and teachers' feedback.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted after the observation had been administered. These interviews aimed to find the accurate data about the difficulties of speaking that hinder the students' performance in communicative situations. The researcher gathered more precisely the data through interviewing the participants of the study individually. By conducting face-to-face interviews, the researcher had more opportunities to obtain the significant information to gain and reach the objectives of this study.

The researcher prepared and set up various questions by using clear and simple words in order to be understandable by all the participants, regardless of their individual level of understanding. The language of the interviews varied from one participant to another as some of the participants preferred to participate in Arabic language while others preferred English language. Although the participants who preferred to use English language faced some difficulties to express their thoughts and opinions and also they got confused to use the suitable words in some sentence structures, the researcher could get them very well because she knew well what they intended by using these words. All the interviews were recorded, and the researcher took notes carefully which could be referred to during the analysis phase of the study.

3.8 Limitation of the Study

Despite the researcher's efforts in conducting this study and gathering the required data, there are certain limitations which cannot be avoided. The use of the qualitative method with a limited sample size is considered as one of the limitations, as the samples of students were only taken from the students of speaking classes. Furthermore, due to the participants' reluctance to speak freely, the interviews were conducted with only eight students. Yet, the

communication with some of the students was difficult since they felt shy and anxious from the researcher in addition to the barrier of language.

Arranging appropriate time that suits the participants and the researcher is one of the challenges that the researcher faced while conducting this study. Conducting interviews with the participants posed a challenge as it could only be done when they were available at the university during their scheduled lectures. Therefore, the participants had to take permission from their teacher to leave their classes and participate in the interviews.

Language of communication is another limitation. When the researcher conducted the interview with the participants, she found that they in some occasions could not express their thoughts in English language, and some participants' English was too low and not clear. Furthermore, it was very difficult for the participants to provide their perceptions about the speaking difficulties they encountered in communicative situations, even though the researcher tried a lot to explicit the questions in various ways. The researcher then asked them in Arabic so they could understand and answer the questions well.

The researcher could not vary her study on different universities or language centers in different countries. Furthermore, the researcher was unable to conduct an in-depth investigation into the research topic for an extended period of time because of the numerous protests at the higher education institution and the subsequent compression of the study period after the end of the protest.

3.9 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by using qualitative data analysis techniques. Data analysis is a crucial process for classifying, interpreting, and arranging data accurately to understand the

findings accordingly. Kumar (Cited in Aban, 2021) argues that in qualitative research, the data are typically analyzed by using techniques such as content or thematic analysis.

During the classroom observation, the researcher created an outline and wrote comments on each activity the students did throughout the class, then she kept them in separate files to analyze them based on her interpretations. These comments helped the researcher answer the main question of the study during the data analysis. Moreover, to analyze the interviews, which conducted in this study, the researcher transcribed the interviews after listening to them carefully, and she coded them based on the participants' answers on the interview's questions. That also helped the researcher in determining the real difficulties the students encounter regarding speaking skill at Libyan universities.

In this study, the researcher first coded and analyzed the data through reading the participants' responses to the questions several time until she became familiar with them. Then, she created initial coding to organize the data and reduce the irrelevant ones. After that, she began the process of naming themes. The last step was to identify all the themes based on their relevance.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of the Study

To address the validity of the study, the research design is carefully organized to ensure that the methods used to assess the intended variable. A comprehensive literature review supported the theoretical framework and provided context for the results. The reliability of the study used consistent methodologies during the data collection process, which allowed for the validation of its findings. For instance, the researcher used tools such as interviews and observation for data collection to test the reliability and the consistent

performance across different contexts. The researcher asked the participants open-ended questions about their experiences. This study offered a detailed description of the procedures followed, which enhances transparency and allows others to repeat the research.

3.11Summary of the Chapter

This chapter begun by the methodology used in order to respond to the main question of this study. Alongside clear justifications for the selection of the method that applied, the research instruments, which used to collect valid and reliable data to reach the objectives of the current study,are described in details. The chapter also includes a range of previous studies, focusing mainly on the difficulties of speaking English as a foreign language in various Libyan contexts. Following that, the main question utilized to analyze the research issue followed by some sub-questions are set. Subsequently the objectives that the study conducted and the participants of the study are described.

Furthermore, this chapter showed where and when the researcher conducted the study, and it also clarified the sample adopted to obtain accurate data for this study. Additionally, how the researcher collected the data and what are the limitations the researcher faced during conducting the study are discussed. Finally, brief outlines about the data analysis were provided.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

4.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to analyze the data collected through qualitative research methods. The tools used in this study offered in-depth insights into the participants' experiences and perceptions of speaking English as a foreign language at the university. Furthermore, they added richness and depth to the data analysis. The qualitative data derived from classroom observation in this study were analyzed using content analysis theory. Additionally, the researcher described in details all notes observed in the classroom for the sake of being analyzed later. Moreover, the qualitative data derived from the interviews in this study were also organized into themes and sub-themes to be presented in details.

4.1 Classroom Observation

Patton (2001) views observation data attractive as "they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather data from live situations. The researcher was given the opportunity to look at what is taking place in the situation rather than at second hand" (p. 203). In this study, classroom observation was the primary data collection tool the researcher used to gather information related to the questions of the study. There are different theories that can be used to analyze the qualitative data collected from the classroom observation. These theories could be content analysis, grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), or discourse analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define these analysis processes as "the operation by which data are broken down, conceptualized, and put back together in new ways" (p. 57).

In order to gain a better understanding of the situations presented in the class and how the teacher and the students reacted to them, the researcher used content analysis theory since she delayed the data analysis process until all data had been collected. By applying content theory post-data collection, the researcher was able to gain a deeper understanding of the problem of the study.

As mentioned in the previous chapter in data collection, during the classroom observation, the researcher's role was non-participant, and she took notices of everything she observed in the classroom. The researcher conducted three visits to the class, with one visit per week lasting two hours each. After collecting the data, the researcher created categories of what she observed as: classroom activities, time limits, teacher's feedback, class size and seating arrangement, and using Arabic in English classroom.

4.1.1 Classroom Activities

The data collected from the classroom revealed that the students did not work in pairs or in groups; all of the students worked individually. Although the interaction among the students in speaking classes can help them create a positive environment and reduce stress for some students, the teacher used learner-instructor type of interaction, so the teacher centered the class all the time. In this study, the researcher also noticed that there is a listening section in speaking classes that was related to speaking lessons (Real Listening & Speaking). Before the teacher started the lesson, he had explained and given instructions to the students on how they needed to do the tasks. For example, completing the gaps in a listening activity, filling the table, or forming sentences or paragraphs for speaking activity.

The researcher also noticed that the teacher needed to repeat the instructions several times to the students, even though he used clear language and simple words to convey the meaning very well, and that took up most of the class time. Sometimes, the teacher changed the way of explaining the tasks; he wrote the topic on the whiteboard, for example, (a meal you can cook - having a meal in a restaurant), with main points (recipe – delicious – spicy - soft drink), and then he played an audio which related to the topics. Even though the sound of the playing audio coming out from the laptop speaker was low and not very clear, and some students mentioned that they found difficulties hearing and understanding the native speaker.

After that, the teacher asked the students to share sentences that included the same points, but most of the students were inactive because some of them did not understand the task well. The researcher noticed that most of the students' English was weak, so they did not have the confidence to share their sentences except two or three students. It is worth mentioning that one of the participants was born in the United States, and she was a fluent speaker of English by nature, so she was able to participate effectively.

4.1.2 Time Limits

In this study, the researcher noticed that the classroom duration caused challenges for both the students and the teacher. Most of the students did not have enough time to prepare their sentences to rehearse and check if they got the task correctly. They also did not have enough time to practice their speaking skills due to the limited duration for speaking classes, which last for two hours and the teacher asked the questions to the whole class rather than to individual students. Most of the time, in fact, was for the teacher, who was speaking, asking questions, answering the questions, and did everything. The classroom was fully teacher-

centered. Furthermore, the number of students in the class was between 25-30 students, which gave no opportunities to the students to practice speaking activities.

4.1.3 Teacher's Feedback

In this study, the researcher revealed that when the students make mistakes or errors while practicing their speaking skills, the teacher did not correct their errors. The students made several serious errors without being corrected by their teachers. And most of the students mentioned that they did not know whether their performance in speaking was right or wrong.

4.1.4 Class Size and Seating Arrangement

The class size posed challenges for the students and the teachers equally. The students did not have enough time to participate in speaking activities due to the number of the students. The researcher noticed that the speaking classroom is large, and most of the windows are damaged or broken. In addition, there was considerable noise in the corridors, and the students mentioned that they could not focus and hear the teacher very well because of the mess outside the classroom. Furthermore, the participants felt that the random seating arrangement in the classroom also may have hindered communication among them during speaking tasks. The researcher also noticed that the arrangement of the seats was not fixed, and the students sat randomly in different places in the classroom.

4.1.5 Using Arabic in English Classroom

The researcher noticed that the teacher and the students did not use Arabic a lot and used English most of the times during the class activities. Even though some students said

that they faced challenges in understanding the instructions presented in English, the data analysis addressed that the teacher used the Direct Method in teaching speaking skill, and he did not use the students' first language while explaining the speaking tasks.

The researcher noticed that when the teacher presented new activities which students could not understand, he changed the words and used simple language to make the tasks clearer and accessible to the students. In some cases, the teacher performed the task himself as a practical model to assist the students in grasping the task and to encourage them to practice their English speaking. Moreover, to reduce their nervousness while practicing English inside the classroom, the teacher gave the students chance to practice the activities themselves.

The researcher also noticed that most of the students except two or three of them were hesitant to share their thoughts in the classroom unless they wrote their thoughts from Arabic into English before speaking. They justified this strategy in that they felt more comfortable expressing themselves in writing before speaking aloud.

4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

According to Strauss and Corbin (2008), semi-structured interviews are commonly used as a format for conducting interviews, whether with individuals or with groups. As mentioned previously, the researcher scheduled the interviews with the students to take place while they were available at the university during their scheduled lectures. In this study, the researcher focused on the students of the second semester as primary resources to find out the real difficulties of speaking those students had encountered from the initial semesters.

At the beginning, the researcher asked the students if they were willing to be participants in the research. To gain trust, she explained to them that the questions were going to be related to their experience of speaking English as a foreign language. Furthermore, she informed them about the purpose of the interviews and the research so that whoever wanted to participate could come to the office next door. She promised that the information used would be used for this study and the names of the participants would not be used for privacy.

The researcher initially prepared five questions, with additional questions arising during the interview process. The questions of the study stemmed from literature on the challenges Libyan students encounter in speaking English in various communicative situations. These questions aimed to gather insights into the students' perspectives regarding their participation in speaking class activities. The students expressed their desire to participate willingly in this study until the research reached the desired sample. The students were eight, consisting of seven girls and one boy, who was the only male enrolled in the speaking course.

The duration of the interviews varied based on the students' ability to speak and express their thoughts in English or Arabic for those who were weak in English. The researcher gave the participants space to speak freely and express their thoughts, and she did not interfere with the participants unless she needed to inquire about something in specific or add a cover-up question. All the interviews were audio recorded, and the researcher listened to them very carefully and translated them from Arabic language to English for those who preferred using Arabic.

In analyzing the data collected, the researcher listened to the recordings several times to understand each participant's experience in learning and using English as a foreign

language. In addition, she focused on the information given by the students to provide a real picture of what happened during the interviews. The researcher grouped and organized the important answers, which were related to speaking difficulties and deleted the repeated and unnecessary data and statements. After that, the researcher identified the important statements into sub-themes like (vocabulary – sentence structure – grammar structure – listening comprehension – shyness – fear of making mistakes – low self-motivation – hesitation phenomena – time duration) and she grouped them under themes like (language barriers or language lack of preparations) – psychological-related challenges or inhibitions – insufficient time). These themes emerged from the responses of the participants about their English backgrounds and how they feel about speaking skills.

Themes	Sub-themes
Language barriers	Lack of vocabularies, sentence structure, grammar structure, listening comprehension.
Psychological-related challenges	Shyness, fear of making mistakes, low self-motivation, hesitation phenomena.
Insufficient time	Time duration

Theme One: Language Barriers

Firstly, all the participants spoke about the obstacles that hindered them from speaking English effectively in communicative situations. The data analysis of the interview reveals that most of the participants encounter challenges in speaking English in the classroom due to lack of vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar structure, and listening comprehension.

1. Lack of Vocabulary

The data analysis of the interviews reveals that most of the participants see the lack of vocabulary is a big challenge for them that hinders them from speaking English in the classroom. For instance, student 1 said, “I cannot understand anything in English. I do not have any background about the language. I cannot speak and I do not have vocabularies.” Similarly, student 3 mentioned lack of vocabulary as one of the challenges she encountered and prevented her from speaking English and sharing her thoughts in speaking classes. She said, “When I want to speak English, I don’t have vocabularies. I do not have idioms too. Sometimes I try to learn new vocabularies, but actually I could not because I am not interested in learning English, so I forget them.”

Moreover, student 4 said, “I enjoy learning English language and I like practicing speaking skill, but the lack of vocabularies affects my speech, and this is one of the difficulties I encounter when I practice speaking.” She continued with a big sigh “I think I do not have many words to speak English effectively.”

2. Sentence Structure

Besides the vocabulary problem, the data analysis of the interview reveals that the sentence structure is considered as another obstacle that hinders the students from speaking English effectively in communicative situations. For instance, student 2 said, “I struggle to create sentences and to connect them correctly, as I faced similar issues in the previous semester.” Similarly, student 4 added that in addition to vocabulary challenges, she also encountered difficulties when speaking long sentences. She reported, “I have difficulty with

conjunctions and linking sentences. When I begin a sentence, I often struggle to complete it."

Student 5 also has the same problem, expressing that "I have a lot of words and idioms but when I need them, I lose them and I struggle to connect sentences smoothly and often find myself speaking word by word." Similarly, student 7 pointed out that "I have difficulty in organizing sentences, despite having a wide range of vocabularies, but forming a sentence or group of sentences poses a significant challenge for me."

The researcher also noticed that student 8 struggled a great deal in speaking English while answering the interview questions and could not speak one sentence. Therefore, the interview was conducted in Arabic and translated later by the researcher. She said, "I always struggle to arrange words in a sentence and I find it challenging to speak continuously for five minutes with long sentences."

3. Grammar Structure

The data analysis also indicates that using English grammar structure while students speak English might be another challenge for the EFL learners. For instance, Samira emphasized that the challenge of grammar structure was one of the most challenges she encountered. She said, "I always worry about the other students to misunderstand my speech, actually I do not know how to use the tenses, speaking is indeed difficult for me, especially grammar when I speak I don't know if I should use the past or the present."

4. Listening Comprehension

Based on the data analysis of the interviews, the researcher found out that listening comprehension may also hinder the students' speaking ability to communicate in the

classroom effectively, as student 4 expressed this by saying, “I am able to speak English as long as I comprehend what you are saying. But listening is a problem for me, so that is why I do not share in the classroom activities.”

Theme Two: Psychological-Related Challenges or (Inhibitions)

Secondly, in addition to the language barriers, the data analysis of the interviews reveals that psychological-related challenges can influence negatively on the students’ speaking abilities too and inhibit them from speaking English in the classroom. The participants of the study referred to these challenges as shyness, fear of making mistakes, low self-motivation, and hesitation phenomena.

1. Shyness

Based on the data analysis of the interviews, most of the participants view that it is very difficult for them to speak in public because they feel shy. For instance, student 6 mentioned that “I am a very shy individual and I feel uncomfortable speaking in class,” and added “even in Arabic (in normal life) I do not like to speak because I feel shy, I am introvert”. The researcher observed that the participant’s responses to the questions of the interview indicated that she was quite shy in person.

In the same vein, student 7 mentioned that “beside the sentence structure problem I have a problem in sharing my thoughts and opinion in the speaking classroom,” and she said, “I feel shy when I speak, though I am unsure of the reasons behind these emotions.” Furthermore, student 8 explained, “I want to speak and participate in the classroom to enhance my speaking ability, but shyness feeling prevents me.” She added, “I am a very shy person, I feel shy to participate and speak English in the class.”

2. Fear of Making Mistakes

Another challenge the data analysis of the interviews reveals is the fear of making mistakes. For instance, student 2 reported, “I also struggle to speak and make mistakes when I am in the presence of a teacher, feeling fearful in those situations.” Additionally, student 3 commented about this, and she said, “I am not interested in practicing speaking because I study English language because of mum, but when the teacher asks me a question and I have to answer actually I feel fear of making mistakes when I speak and share my thoughts and opinions in front of others in the classroom.”

Furthermore, student 5 admitted that with the vocabulary problem “speaking in front of others is something difficult for me. I always feel fear of making mistakes when I speak and participate in the classroom activities.” Moreover, student 6 stated that she had challenges, and fear of making mistakes was one of these challenges, and this affected on her communication competence. She said, “I always try to enhance my speaking skill and engage in the classroom activities, but I feel fear of making mistakes in front of teacher and friends.”

A similar issue was pointed out by student 7, who expressed that her challenges created negative feelings for her to participate in speaking classes. She said, “Actually speaking in public is a hard thing for me and speaking skill requires us to speak aloud and share our thoughts freely, but I have a problem with this. I feel fear to make mistakes when I speak.” The researcher observed from the interview that conducted with student 8 that she wanted to speak English and improve her language, but the feeling of fear of making mistakes hindered her from speaking English. She said, “I am always worried that my speaking performance would not go well, actually I feel fear of making mistakes when I speak.”

3. Low Self-Motivation

Based on the data analysis of the interviews reveal that the low of self-motivation is considered as one of the challenges the participants encounter in speaking English. For instance, the researcher observed that student 3 lacked the self-motivation to speak in English. She admitted that she lacked the desire to learn English and did not find any kind of enjoyment in the learning process. This, of course, led to her to be reluctant to participate in class activities. When the researcher asked about this feeling, she answered, "I study English language because of mum", and she added, "I am not interested in learning English."

4. Hesitation Phenomena

The data analysis of the interviews also reveals that three participants have challenges related to the hesitation phenomena. Student 2 admitted that he took a long time to consider participating in the class activities in English. He mentioned that being the only boy in the class contributed to his tendency to remain silent. He said, "I am the only boy in the class, it is very difficult for me to share my thoughts, and I do not know what to say (how to express it) … actually I always hesitate to participate in the class."

Similarly, student 7 explained that despite facing various challenges, "sometimes I desire to participate in the classroom tasks and become more active, but I always hesitate to share my answers and speak in English." Moreover, student 6 added to her shyness and feeling fear of making mistakes, the challenges that she always struggles with feelings of hesitation. She said, "although the speaking tasks are not difficult and most of the topics are familiar for us and I know the answers but I cannot share them, I hesitate when I intend to participate, I tried a lot to overcome this problem but I could not."

Theme Three: Insufficient Time

Thirdly, beside on the previously mentioned challenges, the data analysis of the interviews reveals that classroom duration is another factor that worsens the existing problems faced by students. This problem was echoed by student 3 by saying, "for a particular speaking performance, I do not have enough time for preparing sentences in a short time," continuing saying "I can add the time in the class is not enough, it is too short to prepare the sentences and share in the class, and this is also another problem."

Student 4 also shared the same idea as the classroom duration hampered her desire to be more involved in speaking tasks and that did not give her ample preparation time. She said, "Time is another problem, two minutes for each student is not enough." Another case in point, student 8 mentioned that time constraints were identified as another challenge for her, with only one class per week being inadequate for speaking courses to get a good speaking performance, and this often had an impact on the academic progress of learners. She said, "I think the time is another problem for me, as having only one class per week is inadequate to fulfill your requirements." She further added that "the classroom duration for each class is too short when I try to participate in the classroom activities I need time to write down my thoughts first. I do not have capacity to respond to the teacher immediately unless I write down what I intend to say."

Similarly, student 7, despite all her challenges, also could not participate in the classroom activities immediately. She mentioned that "time duration for speaking classes contribute as an obstacle for me to prepare my answers before participating in the classroom activities. Additionally, I am unable to express my opinions until I have written them down." Student 6 also clarified that time was another problem for her. She argued that "if the teacher

poses a question to the entire class and I have to respond too, I typically prefer to write down my thoughts before speaking, but time is insufficient, preparing sentences in a short time is hard for me."

Furthermore, student 5 admitted that "although I have difficulties in speaking, but sometimes I have found that writing down my thoughts before speaking aloud has helped me feel more confident when participating in class activities, but speaking classes lasts for two hours and this is inadequate time for preparing perfect answers."

Also, student 4 said, "I find that writing out my sentences before speaking them can sometimes help me articulate my thoughts more effectively but actually the time of the lectures does not help us." Student 2 commented on that, and he said, "The problem of time in speaking causes a major obstacle, regardless of the difficulties I encounter in speaking, but if I get enough time to write down what I want to share, it will be easier for me to participate in the classroom activities."

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter presents an analysis of the data obtained from a qualitative research method. Furthermore, it shows the difficulties English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language in the English Department at Ajdabiya University. In the first section, this chapter provides details about what the researcher observed in the classroom, utilizing content analysis theory to guide the analysis. In the second section, the data obtained from the interviews categorized into themes and sub-themes for detailed explanation, and it is explained in details. The following chapter will discuss the findings and conclusion of the study.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is conducted to discuss the findings that emerged from the data analysis of the primary resources, which related to the difficulties of speaking English as a foreign language that EFL learners encounter at Ajdabiya University. Furthermore some recommendations for more research are provided in this chapter.

5.1 Findings and Discussions of the Classroom Observation

The findings that obtained from the classroom observation identified certain factors that hinder the students' English-speaking skill which will be elaborated in this chapter.

The data analysis revealed that the classroom activities were rare and so limited and there was lack of group works and pair works among the students in speaking classes. As a result, this might affect the students' speaking skill and hinders them from participating in communicative situations. In this vein, Al-Hosni (Cited in Diaab, 2016) argues that "speaking skills and all related activities are totally overlooked in the classroom. Consequently, it becomes very difficult for the learners to make any progress and master that skill" (p. 339).

The data analysis revealed that the majority of the students were inactive due to the limited activities they used in the class. Despite the varieties of activities that students could use which in turn made them effectively engage in speaking tasks, they did not use any type of activities and all the participants worked individually. In this regard, Al-Hosni (2014)

explains that the lack of interaction among the students inside the classroom may contribute in the difficulties that hinder them from using language structure in spoken discourse.

Although a good relationship between the students and the teacher in the classroom is an important key to create an effective teaching environment, the data analysis revealed that the teacher-centered most of the class time. Therefore, the interaction and group works among students are absents. A successful lesson is evaluated based on the varied activities the teacher used to make the learners engaged in the classroom. It is very useful for the teacher to use a variety of active learning strategies in the process of teaching languages, especially in speaking classes as it provides the students with opportunities to interact with the teacher in the class. In this regard, Syahputvi and Ismail (2022) mention that students skill can be enhanced through learning activities, which the teachers can effectively convey the expected level of student achievement, demonstrate key evaluation criteria, offer fundamental and supplementary training, conduct appropriate assessments, and provide feedback to enhance student skills.

The data analysis revealed that the teacher did not encourage the students to practice English inside the classroom. In this regard, Fauziati (2002) claims that encouraging the students to participate in the classroom can help them foster the discussion, interact, and learn from each other.

Time limits or time pressure is also one of the challenges revealed from data analysis in this study. In this regard, Nation and Newton (Cited in Tuan & Mai, 2015) claim that there are types of performance conditions that affect students speaking performance and time pressure is one of them.

The data analysis of the observation showed that the students were given short time to practice speaking English in the classroom, typically around two minutes each. Consequently, most of the students did not have opportunity to prepare their answers and participate in speaking tasks due to the shortage of time, and this effects on their language learning process. In most situations where students are required to practice their speaking skills, they often face time constraints. Hence, the students need time to prepare what to say, to rehearse, and to check if they get the task correctly.

The data analysis of the classroom observation also revealed that there were no time management as the classroom duration for speaking course was not tailored according to the level of student's engagements, attention on task completion, and balance between their cognitive of the tasks and practice opportunity of these tasks. Regarding this point specifically, Kaushar (Cited in Nasrulla& Khan, 2015) claims that at higher education level, the schedule must be planned in order to achieve optimal outcomes, prioritizing time management also aids in formulating cost-effective educational strategies particularly for authorities in higher education institutions.

The data analysis of the classroom observation also revealed that the teacher did not offer enough space for the students. It seems that the teacher was not conscious that the students were unable to communicate in English because they needed extra time to order their stream of thoughts to be able to participate. Regarding this point, Anggrarini and others (2022) see that providing students with ample time to complete a speaking task enables them to access into both their implicit and explicit grammatical knowledge, leading to an enhancement in their spoken output.

The analyzed data showed the number of students and the classroom size in speaking classes made another challenges and might have the potential impact on the students' learning process. It also affected the students' participation and interaction in speaking tasks. In this case study, the speaking class consists from 25 to 30 students. In this vein, Ehrenberg and others (2001) see that the number of students may affect how much time the teacher give to individual students' needs rather than on the group as a whole. Due to the large number of students in speaking classes and the shortage time, the teacher cannot pay attention to the progress of all the students in the classroom. This could have substantial affected on students' achievement indirectly.

The findings also showed that the classroom size was large and the students were sitting in different places in the classroom, which affected negatively on their interaction. In this regard, Abubakar and others (2023) see that "the size of large classes in any institution appear to be the major challenges to the lecturers, institutions management and the stakeholders" (p. 31).

The data analysis of the classroom observation revealed that the large classes urged the students to be more disruptive, where they hid from participation, engagement, or even attendance. In this vein, Al-Jarf (2006) views the number of students and the size of the class as a challenge because the instructors do not have enough time to pay attention to each student and give every student a chance to speak and participate.

Based on the data analysis and the findings, it has been revealed that teachers' feedback may contribute negatively on the students' performance in speaking English in the classroom. During speaking class, the teacher did not provide the students with feedback neither positive nor negative even though some students made errors and mistakes, but the teacher did not

comment at any of them. Sakale (2019) adopted empirical studies on teachers' feedback, which showed that the learners who received feedback from teachers were able to make modification to their language to suit their speakers with varying degrees according to the setting, type interaction, and whether they interact with native speakers or non-native speakers. It is very crucial for teachers to give the students feedback in a timely manner to ensure that it affects their learning process. Swain (Cited in Sakale, 2019) discusses that "the students' perception of being pushed is highest when the feedback comes from the teacher and that it is least when it comes from a nonnative speaking peer" (p. 345).

Related to the use of Arabic in English classroom, the analyzed data revealed that the teacher did not use Arabic during teaching English speaking classes. Using Arabic as a tool in language learning depends on how it is utilized, whether it is detrimental or helpful to the learning process. Although the majority of the students mentioned that they did not understand the aims or instructions of the speaking tasks, the teacher preferred to use English. He clarified the tasks several times by using simple words, and sometimes he performed the task himself to make it clearer. Some of previous studies (Carson &Kashihara, 2012) reported that there was no specific time to use first language, but its usage should be occasionally adopted to students' needs.

The data analysis of the observation revealed that the teacher was not flexible to create comfortable environment in language learning process, which affected negatively on the students' participation and engagement in the classroom activities. This finding showed that the teacher's use of high-level English during teaching speaking made challenge to the students and hindered them from participating effectively. In this sense the students, who

were at the beginner levels and were not used to high-level of English speaking lost interest to practice their speaking skill.

5.2 Findings and Discussions of the Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to shed more light on the difficulties of English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language at the Department of English at Ajdabiya University, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the students of the second semester who enrolled in speaking course. The researcher noticed that the participants were very shy and anxious while they were answering the interview questions, too. Below are the findings based on the data analysis:

The first section from the data gained from the interviews showed some results related to the most difficult aspects of speaking English. Three of the participants admitted that they had difficulties in speaking English, both in receiving and producing the language due to the lack of vocabulary. This agrees with De La Cruz & Paula (2023), who said, "The lack of vocabulary of the students actively affects their productivity, even if the students want to participate in class, they will not be able to do so due to their lack of vocabulary, and they will be afraid to have a conversation with their classmates or with the teacher" (p. 17).

Of course, without having enough vocabulary, the learners do not have the ability to express their thoughts and opinions in the classroom. The more vocabulary the students have, the more ability they have to participate in communicative situations. Vocabulary, according to Asyiah (Cited in Tantoun and others, 2021), is the fundamental components of language proficiency that is defined as the aspect that connects the four language skills of the target language.

Additionally, five of the participants mentioned that they had limited ability to build long sentences, which hindered them from practicing their speaking skill in the class. According to Haryanto (2007) EFL learners struggle in creating long sentences because they apply their first language structure to the structure of the second language. This issue might be caused from words problems, which occur when students do not know how to combine words in sentences. The students are confusing in their speaking and face challenges of building sentences while speaking lies in bridging the gap between thoughts and words.

Constructing simple and short sentences is not difficult, but it gets harder when constructing long sentences. A case study in Saudi Arabia by Al-Hazmi(2003) showed that most of the Saudi English teachers completed their college and university years in English majority without being able to speak simple sentences. It remains challenge task due to EFL learners have to make long sentences without planning.

Moreover, based on the interviews, one of the participants encountered difficulties in using English grammar rules, which in turn presented significant problems in the students' oral performance in speaking tasks. Maji and others (2022) argue that language grammar factor is one of the factors that hampers students speaking skills. Students may struggle to understand and apply grammar rules accurately, which can affect negatively on their ability to communicate effectively in English.

In this regard, Humaera (2015) emphasizes that "most students assume that in taking conversation or speaking English, they have to say in right way with structured. Students' grammatical judgment inhibited them to take a part in a conversation because of afraid to produce some words ungrammatically" (p. 34).

In this sense, knowledge of English grammar rules helps EFL learners produce correct sentence's structure. Hence, understanding grammar rules is crucial as it enables learners to effectively convey their intended message. Furthermore, structuring sentences correctly is essential for initiating conversations as students need to comprehend sentence structure and differentiate grammar rules to enhance their language skills. Mastering correct grammar can significantly improve students' abilities in communication. Harmer (Cited in Humaera, 2015) points out that English grammar structure is not only concerned with syntax, but also with effectively utilizing language forms in communication.

Furthermore, the analyzed data revealed that listening comprehension was another issue which seemed to be problem for EFL learners while practicing speaking skill. One of the participants admitted that they had difficulty in speaking due of listening comprehension. They found it difficult to understand and response while listening to English speakers, and they mentioned that their ability to speak was dependent on their understanding of what they had already heard.

In this regard, Septyanti and Kuriaman (Cited in Ramzan and others, 2021) view listening comprehension crucial as a responding piece in communicative process, and because of this listening plays a vital role in the advancement of speaking skill for EFL speakers. This ensures that successful communication relies on the active participation of both the speaker and the listener; both parties play crucial roles in ensuring effective and meaningful communication. Hence, listening is essential in the communication process as it enables the listener to be fully aware of the ongoing communicative exchange. It plays a vital role in understanding the message being conveyed and fostering effective communication.

Furthermore, Rintaningrum (Cited in Ramzan and others, 2021) argues that effective listening may enhance students speaking performance. This finding acknowledging that listening comprehension is a vital skill not only for learning new language, but also for daily life communication. Indeed, being a good listener is essential for becoming a good speaker. Effective communication involves both speaking and listening skills, and they are interconnected in the communication process.

Going on the same path, Lynch (Cited in Ziane, 2011) explains that there are three principles of connecting listening and speaking skills. First, listeners make better speakers. Second, listeners affect what speakers say. Third, conversations involve both listening and speaking, and if it does not, it is not a conversation. It can be concluded, as Leong and Ahmadi (2017) claim, 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" (p. 37).

The second section from the data gained from the semi-structured interviews reveal the inhibitions that hinder students as EFL learners from speaking fluently. The findings show that there are also inhibitions represented in some psychological factors that hinder the students' speaking ability from participating in English speaking activities. In this regard, Juhana (2012) presents various psychological factors that can hinder students from speaking in class. These factors may include shyness, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and anxiety.

During the interviews, three of the participants wanted to share their thoughts and opinions in the classroom, but they felt shy to speak aloud in front of the others. Regarding this point specifically, Afoufou, (2020) believes that "this personal factor affect negatively

on the students' learning performances in which the students keep silent without participation in the classroom especially in the oral activities" (p. 17).

Furthermore, Baldwin (Cited in Ahmad and others, 2023) claim that speaking in front of others in English speaking classes may lead students to feel shy and make their minds go blank or forget what to say. This factor may affect negatively on students' performance in practicing English and hinder their learning process. Also, Nurdin (Cited in Abdelli, 2022) sees that the majority of EFL learners fail to perform well in speaking activities due to their ability influenced by feeling shyness. Mustafa (Cited in Tuiran& Ochoa, 2019) explains that "to behave shy might create a barrier that does not permit students to develop a speaking performance" (p. 16). This finding, of course, indicates that feeling shy could be a source of difficulties that hinders students learning activities in speaking English in the classroom.

Moreover, the analyzed data gained from the interviews also showed that some of the participants' answers were related to fear of making mistakes. Students' fear of making mistakes may negatively effect on their oral performance. The analysis shows that six of the participants mentioned that they had difficulties in participating and sharing their thoughts in speaking activities due to feeling of fear of making mistakes. In this regard, Danish and others (2021) discuss that the fear of making mistakes is a common factor that can impede students' oral communication skills.

In some situations, students are afraid to speak English because of the fear of being wrong or criticized by their friends. In this vein, Boudamouz and Outes (2018) view that "fear of making mistakes is another reason that hinders learners from speaking in front of their classmates and teacher. A learner who is unsure that what he will say is true will be

scare of making mistakes and being laughed at or being criticized and humiliated by the teacher" (p. 31).

Moreover, Kurtus (Cited in Makhsun, 2020) believes that fear of making mistakes may inhibit students from speaking in the classroom. It can be the primary reason that affects students' performance in front of other students in the classroom. The current study showed that most of the students hardly shared and replied to the teacher in speaking classroom. This finding is in line with Ariyanti (Cited in Arifin, 2017), who emphasizes that "the students tend to feel anxious when performing their speaking because they are afraid of making mistakes" (p. 31).

Furthermore, the analyzed data revealed that low-self motivation was another challenge that hampered students' speaking ability. The analysis reveals that one of the participants reported that low-self motivation was another main reason for their inability to speak English effectively. One of the participants mentioned that she was unwilling to speak English because she did not have desire to learn the language. She added that she was not interested in learning English language.

The unmotivated students who do not have desire to involve in their study cannot improve their second or foreign language skills. In this regard, Rajab and others (2012) emphasize that "without motivation even gifted individual cannot accomplish long-term goals, whatever the curricula and whoever the teacher is" (p. 419). It has been argued that the students' self-motivation is one of the aspects of effectiveness of the learning process. Hence, Li (2014) explains that unlike students who have high motivation, students with less motivation tend to make minimal efforts in the process of language learning. This means that self-motivation is considered as a fundamental factor in ESL/EFL learning process.

Motivation, based on Reimann (Cited in Youssef, 2012) has been widely accepted as a key factor, which influences the rate and success of the second or the foreign language learning. Furthermore, Dornyei (2001) claims that motivation provides the students the ability to learn and practice the foreign language. Consequently, motivation is a significant factor for the success of any learning process of the foreign language.

Additional challenge that students encounter in speaking English in the classroom is the hesitation phenomenon when the students want to participate and share their answers in the classroom. The data analyzed from the interviews showed that three of the participants mentioned that they did not have the ability to speak freely and effectively because they hesitated and thought a lot before they could speak in front of other in the classroom. Regarding this point, Rose (2013) believes that hesitation phenomena is the various patterns of hesitating in speech.

Carroll (Cited in Dewi 2020) views the hesitation as "the silent moments that emerges between units of language in uttering sentences" (p. 102). Warren (Cited in Dewi, 2020) also explains that being hesitant among EFL learners is a common occurrence and acceptable, as English language is not their native language. The hesitation phenomena is part of the language learning process of producing thoughts and opinions. In English conversation classes, the hesitation phenomena is caused by being unable to express thoughts and poor communication skill.

Moreover, the hesitation phenomena occurred in spontaneous speech, when the students have to deal with classroom interaction in English speaking classes. Ajani (2021) argues that "the existence of hesitations in any language indicates a feature of natural speech that occurs when participants unable to express their particular idea during speaking" (p.

113). In any case, it is important for EFL learners to learn English through practicing conversations even when they may encounter difficulties in conducting English activities.

Furthermore, the time duration for speaking tasks can be another issue that hinders the students' communicative competence. This is the same point the researcher observed through the classroom observation as the time affects negatively on the students' oral communication. In this case study, the limited amount time duration devoted to speaking classes was only two hours per week. Throughout the interviews, seven of the participants argued that they were simply given short time to perform the speaking tasks and practice their speaking skill, which in turn affected negatively on their learning process.

For the importance of giving the students enough time for practicing English inside the classroom, Ma and Lei (Cited in Mak, 2011) explain that "using the target language in front of the class can be frustrating as the process places linguistic, cognitive and psychological demands on the learner. It is therefore recommended that teachers should ensure that learners are given time to prepare the speech/presentation before being asked to speak in front of the class" (p. 212).

Similarly, in their study, Khan and Ali (Cited in Ali and others, 2019) revealed that the majority of students expressed that they lacked sufficient practice time for various speaking exercises, so they felt inhibited from speaking English in the classroom. Increasing the amount of time dedicated to speaking in the classroom can have a positive impact on language learning. Also, Tsui (Cited in Mak, 2011) when investigating classroom interaction, concludes that not giving enough wait-time for learners to process a question and formulate an answer is another reason for the lack of response from students.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings obtained from the classroom observation and the semi-structured interviews, the researcher presents the following recommendations that might provide remedies for the challenges Libyan students encounter in speaking English in communicative situations.

- It is recommended that the teachers of English enhance the education of peer work in the classroom to participate in various English activities. For the importance of the peer work in learning English specifically, Kasim (2015) discusses that "group work can give better learning achievements in English language teaching and learning" (p. 100).
- It is recommended that the teachers of English perform various activities in English to encourage the students to practice English in authentic situations. Regarding the role of activities in learning English, Gari(2020) emphasizes that "activities in a foreign language classroom provide a chance to develop basic language skills in an enjoyable manner" (p. 428).
- It is recommended that the teachers of English give more space and time to the students through shifting from teacher-cantered strategies they use into learner-centered, in which most of the work inside the classroom is performed by the students. Shah and others (2018) explain that "the learner centered approach is oriented towards students. Here the students are engaged in different learning activities. In other words, learning activities are done through students. The students are given importance" (p. 130).

- It is recommended that the departments of English at Libyan universities decrease the number of the students in speaking course, so that the students can have time to practice English inside the classroom individually and within groups. The small number of students, as Jusuf and others (2021) explain, provides the students with opportunities to use the language in an effectively understandable learning environment.
- It is recommended that the teachers of English provide immediate feedback on the students' speech in all aspects of language: structure, grammar, vocabulary, or meaning. Regarding this point specifically, Aini and Rochmahwati (2020) said, "Through that feedback, the students' assignments are able to be corrected by the teacher's correction to get a better performance next and better result of learning" (p. 60).
- It is recommended that the teachers of English focus more on the processes of speaking and listening in order to practice English in communicative situations. In this regard, Omar (2019b) emphasizes the role of oral-aural activities in enhancing the students' oral performance in English.
- It is recommended that the teachers of English be more tolerant with the students regarding making mistakes, as making mistakes is part of the process of successful learning process. Virlan (2022) views making mistakes as an important part in the process of language learning. The teacher and the students should make use of the language mistakes in improving the students' performance in practicing the language inside the classroom.
- It is recommended that the teachers of English enhance the students' self-motivation to practice and use English inside and outside the classroom in various

communicative situations. For the role of motivation in learning foreign languages, Purmama and others (2019) believe that "motivation is one of the most significant things in learning process. Without motivation, the purposes of learning is tough to be achieved" (p. 539).

- The study recommends conducting other similar studies to address a clearer understanding of the difficulties students encounter while dealing with speaking skill in English speaking activities.
- In order to develop students' speaking skills, the teachers of speaking courses should provide students with intensive practice training to achieve successful communication skill. In this regard, Harmer (2001) emphasizes that getting students to speak - to use the language they are learning - is a vital part of the teacher's job.
- It is important for teachers to create a positive and encouraging environment to help students feel comfortable and motivated to participate in speaking activities.
- It is essential for the students to understand that making mistakes and errors is a natural part of language learning process, and this can assist you identify areas for improvement and enhance your skills.
- The study recommends that similar kind of research could be expanded to include a broader range of understanding, such as reading courses or listening courses for providing more comprehensive understanding of the difficulties of speaking.

5.4 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provides the findings of the study based on the data analysis obtained from the classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. These findings indicate that there are ranges of challenges that can affect negatively on the students' speaking performance. Some of these challenges are related to linguistic factors and others are related to psychological factors. The chapter also presents some recommendations based on the findings of the study.

5.5 Conclusion of the Study

This study aims to find out the difficulties English language learners encounter in speaking English as a foreign language in the English Department at Ajdabiya University. The data of the study were collected mainly from two different tools: the classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. Based on the analysis and the discussion of the data collected, the researcher revealed that students in the English department at Ajdabiya University had weakness in speaking skill and they encountered several difficulties in oral communicative situations.

To reach findings and submit recommendations, the researcher set questions of the study to find out the challenges Libyan students at university level in Libya encounter regarding speaking English in communicative situations. The findings of the study reveal that the students encounter mainly two types of difficulties in speaking English inside the classroom and in communicative situations. These factors are internal and external.

In the internal factors, there are nine sub-factors that affect the students' speaking performance, which are: students' lack of vocabulary, the inability to use grammar rules,

difficulties related to listening comprehension, sentence structure, feeling shy to participate in the classroom, fear of making mistakes, low self-motivation, and the hesitation phenomena.

In the external factors, there are four sub-factors, which hinder the students from communicative effectively. These sub-factors include the followings: the classroom activities and teacher's strategies in teaching speaking skills, the time limits or time pressure, classroom size and seating arrangements, and using of Arabic in English classroom. Thus, the results of the current research appear to be consistent with the findings from previous studies and research in the Libyan context.

Final thought

This thesis has greatly impacted on my personal and academic developments in the following ways.

It has deepened comprehension of the topic, enhanced my research ability, and fostered critical thinking. furthermore, the process of conducting this research has helped me develop a greater sense of confidence in my abilities and has motivated me to conduct further studies in this field.

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Appendix A

Observation Schedule

Classroom Observation Information

Location:	The University of Ajdabiya. The department of English.
Observation:	Three Times
Date:	From 23th/ December/ 2023 To 6th/ January/ 2024
Time:	From 12:00 pm To 02:30 pm

Appendix B

Semi-Structure Interview Schedule and Questions

Time	Two Weeks
Number of participants	8 students

Interviews Questions

Q1/ When did you start learning English language?

Q2/ Could you tell me about your experience in learning English Language?

Q3/ What is your favorite skill? If not Speaking? What about speaking skill?

Q4/ What are the difficulties you encounter in speaking English?

Q5/ Could you provide more details about the factors contributing to your difficulties in speaking?

Appendix C

Participants answers on the research questions (after translating from Arabic to English)

The researcher grouped and organized the important answers which related to speaking difficulties and deleted the repeated and the unnecessary data and statements.

Student 1

"I cannot understand anything in English, I do not have any background about the language. I cannot speak I do not have vocabularies. I do not know anything about it because of my school and the city where I lived. so I cannot speak English to participate in classroom".

Student 2

"I cannot express my thoughts in English language, when I am alone, I can speak, but in the class I cannot, actually I feel shy. Also, I struggle to connect the sentences, as I faced similar issues in the previous semester. And I struggle to speak and make mistakes when I am in the presence of a teacher, feeling fearful in those situations. I am working on this problem I am training myself to speak in public. Hmmm and also, I am the only boy in the class, it is very difficult for me to share my thoughts. I do not know what to say (how to express it) actually I always hesitate to participate in the class. Another difficulty I encounter is the problem of time in speaking, it causes a major

obstacle, regardless of the difficulties I encounter in speaking, but if I get enough time to write down what I want to share, it will be easier for me to participate in the classroom activities"

Student 3

"I do not want to learn the language, I am not interested in practicing speaking because I study English language because of mum, but when the teacher asks me a question and I have to answer actually I feel fear of making mistakes when I speak and share my thoughts and opinions in front of others in the classroom. Also when I want to speak English I don't have vocabularies (lack of words) .. I do not have idioms, Aaaa sometimes I try to learn new words but actually I could not because I am not interested in learn English so I forget them. For particular speaking performance, I do not have enough time for preparing sentences in a short time. I can add that the time in the class is not enough, it is too short to prepare the sentences and share in the class and this is also another problem".

Student 4

" I enjoy learning English language and I like practicing speaking skill, but the lack of vocabularies affects my speech, and this is one of the difficulties I encounter when I practice speaking. As further I think I do not have many

words to speak English effectively. Actually, I have difficulty with conjunctions and linking sentences. When I begin a sentence, I often struggle to complete it. But I find that writing out my sentences before speaking them can sometimes help me articulate my thoughts more effectively but actually the time of the lectures does not help us. And I translate in my mind before I speak. Frankly listening also causes challenge for me, I am able to speak English as long as I comprehend what you are saying, but listening is a problem for me so that is why I do not share in the classroom activities. I can add that time is another problem, two minutes for each student in not enough"

Student 5

"Speaking in front of others is something difficult for me. I always feel fear of making mistakes when I speak and participate in the classroom activities, also the words fail me, I have a lot of words and idioms but when I need them, I lose them. I translate the words and sentences in my mind before I speak as what I am doing now. Moreover, I struggle to connect sentences smoothly and often find myself speak word by word. Although I have difficulties in speaking, but sometimes I have found that writing down my thoughts before speaking aloud has helped me feel more confident when participating in class activities, but speaking classes lasts for two hours and this is inadequate time for preparing perfect answers".

Student 6

"I always try to enhance my speaking skill and engage in the classroom activities, but I feel fear of making mistakes in front of teacher and friends, I am a very shy individual and I feel uncomfortable speaking in class, even in Arabic (in normal life) I do not like to speak because I feel shy, I am introvert. Although the speaking tasks are not difficult and most of the topics are familiar for us and I know the answers, but I cannot share them, I hesitate when I intend to participate, I tried a lot to overcome this problem but I could not. If the teacher poses a question to the entire class and I have to respond too, I typically prefer to write down my thoughts before speaking, but time is insufficient, preparing sentences in a short time is hard for me".

Student 7

"I have difficulty organizing sentences, despite having a wide range of vocabularies, but forming a sentence or group of sentences poses a significant challenge for me. Time duration for speaking classes contribute as an obstacle for me to prepare my answers before participating in the classroom activities. Additionally, I am unable to express my opinions until I have written them down. Beside the sentence structure problem, I have a problem in sharing my thoughts and opinion in the speaking classroom, and I feel shy when I speak, though I

am unsure of the reasons behind these emotions. I always worry about the other students to misunderstand my speech, actually I do not know how to use the tenses, speaking is indeed difficult for me, especially grammar when I speak, I don't know if I should use the past or the present. Sometimes I desire to participate in the classroom tasks and become more active, but I always hesitate to share my answers and speak in English. Actually, speaking in public is a hard thing for me and speaking skill requires us to speak aloud and share our thoughts freely, but I have a problem with this I feel fear to make mistakes when I speak."

Student 8

"I want to speak and participate in the classroom to enhance my speaking ability, but shyness feeling prevents me. I am a very shy person; I feel shy to participate and speak English in the class. I am always worry that my speaking performance would not go well, actually I feel fear of making mistakes when I participate in the class. I struggle to arrange words in a sentence and I find it challenging to speak continuously for five minutes with long sentences. Furthermore the classroom duration for each class is to short when I try to participate in the classroom activities I need time to write down my thoughts first. I do not have capacity to respond to the teacher immediately unless I write

down what I intend to say. I think the time is another problem for me, as having only one class per week is inadequate to fulfill our requirements".

الخلاصة

الصعوبات التي يواجهها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية عند التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا: دراسة حالة على طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة اجدابيا

يهدف هذا البحث إلى معرفة الصعوبات التي يواجهها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية عند التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا ،وتتكون عينة الدراسة من طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة اجدابيا، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على طلاب الفصل الدراسي الثاني الذين التحقوا بمادة المحادثة، هذا وقد تم استخدام أسلوب البحث النوعي في هذا البحث، وشملت جمع البيانات ملاحظة الصفوف وإجراء مقابلات شبه منظمة لجمع بيانات مفصلة، وقد أظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن طلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة اجدابيا يواجهون صعوبات متنوعة في التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، وبعض من هذه الصعوبات تتعلق بالعوامل الداخلية، مثل نقص المفردات لدى الطلاب، عدم القدرة على استخدام قواعد النحو، الصعوبات المتعلقة بالاستيعاب السماعي، تركيب الجُمل، الوقت غير الكافي لممارسة أنشطة النطق في الصف، الشعور بالخجل من المشاركة في الصف، الخوف من ارتكاب الأخطاء، انخفاض الدافع الذاتي وظاهرة التردد، بينما يتعلق البعض الآخر بالعوامل الخارجية مثل أنشطة الصف واستراتيجيات المعلم في تدريس مهارات النطق، الضغوط الزمنية، حجم الصف وترتيب المقاعد واستخدام اللغة الأم في صف تعلم اللغة الثانية، وأخيرًا، تم تقديم بعض التوصيات الهامة لإجراء بحوث إضافية في نهاية هذه الدراسة.

الكلمات الافتتاحية: المواقف التفاعلية، العوامل الاجتماعية، التكلم، الطلاقة، الدقة

الأكاديمية الليبية للدراسات العليا / اجدابيا

مدرسة اللغات

قسم الدراسات اللغوية التطبيقي

الصعوبات التي يواجهها متعلمو اللغة الانجليزية عند التحدث باللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا: دراسة حالة على طلبة اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة اجدابيا

مقدمة من الطالبة:

صالحة الزاعل محمد - 212014

تحت إشراف

أ.د. يوسف زغواني عمر

قدمت هذه الرسالة كأحد متطلبات الحصول على درجة الإجازة العليا (الماجستير) في علم الدراسات اللغوية التطبيقي بتاريخ 08/صفر/1446هـ الموافق 2024/08/13م