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Investigating the Factors Influencing Learners' Low Performance in the Speaking Skill in English as Foreign Language Classes

The Case of First Year Secondary School Pupils in Jijel

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of a Master Degree in Language Sciences

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Dedication

To our parents

To our brothers and sisters

To everyone who believes in us

II

Acknowledgements

ABSTRACT

Because English has become an international Language in the world, English foreign language learners need to develop their speaking skill. However, they are faced with many problems and difficulties regarding the learning of the speaking skill. Thus, an assumption was put forward is that EFL first year at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School in Jijel experience low oral performance due to many factors. The present study attempts to highlight the major factors influencing pupils' low oral performance in English, the case of first year secondary school pupils. To achieve this end, two questionnaires were administrated to both teachers of English and first year secondary school pupils as the main means of research. The obtained results have shown that there are factors affecting negatively first year secondary school pupils' oral performance; time pressure, planning, the amount of support, language anxiety, feedback during speaking activities, and motivation. Thus, the research assumption is confirmed and a variety of pedagogical recommendations are suggested to enhance the teaching/learning of the speaking skill.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

CA: Communication Apprehension

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

i.e.: In other Words

L2: Second Language

p.: Page

pp.: Pages

Q: Question

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target Language

%: Percentage

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<center>**General Introduction**</center>

1. Statement of the Problem

Recently, great attention has been given to the communicative properties of language in the field of foreign language teaching. At this level, all of the four language skills, i.e.: listening, reading, writing, and mainly speaking are to be involved within the teaching/ learning process without excluding any one of them. Speaking skill is a crucial part of the language learning process. It has received a great attention among scholars, teachers, and learners. The major goal of teaching such a skill is to foster learners' communicative proficiency. As a productive skill, speaking is regarded to be an important process since it helps the teachers in evaluating learners' proficiency in the target language; this is why it very important to use the best instructional methods and strategies in order to improve such a skill. Due to the extensive emphasis on the writing skill in Algeria at the expense of the other skills, many English as foreign language (EFL) learners still find difficulties when learning the speaking skill.

First year pupils at Secondary School need to improve their oral performance in order to be able to communicate effectively in the classroom; with their teacher and with their classmates. According to a pre-questionnaire intended to first year at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School (see appendix 1), it has been revealed that most pupils did not enjoy learning English. Furthermore, they declared that they did not use English when they speak in the classroom because they had difficulties when speaking (pronunciation, lack of the necessary vocabulary, grammatical mistakes, fear of teachers' negative feedback …).

2. The Aim of the Study

The aims of the current study are twofold: on the one, it investigates the factors behind first year pupils' low performance in the speaking skill at Bouraoui Ammar secondary school.

On the other hand, this study points to suggest some pedagogical recommendations to help pupils enhance their speaking skill.

Why first year secondary school pupils?

Pupils during their middle school have acquired just some knowledge in English without taking into account the speaking skill. However, during their secondary school, first year pupils look for developing their oral performance.

3. The Research Questions

The core attempt of the research is to provide satisfactory answers to the following research questions:

1. Are pupils and teachers at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School aware about the importance of the speaking skill?
2. What are the factors behind pupils' low oral performance?
3. What are the methods used by teachers to enhance their pupils' speaking skill?

4. The Research Assumption

The present study is based on the assumption that EFL first year at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School experience low oral performance due to many factors.

5. Means of the Research

To conduct this research, a pre-questionnaire and two questionnaires have been administered. The questionnaires have been administered to both teachers of English and first year pupils at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School. The teachers' questionnaire was intended to get an insight on the teachers' speaking practices in class and their perceptions regarding the reasons behind their pupils' low performance in the speaking skill, while the aim of the

pupils' questionnaire was to get an insight on their perceptions of the speaking skill as well as to identify the pupils' speaking difficulties.

6. The Structure of the Dissertation

The current study has three chapters. The first chapter reviews the literature on the process of communication, communicative language teaching, and the speaking skill; including its definition, its relationship with other skills, the difference between speaking and listening, and its characteristics. The second chapter shed light on the teaching of speaking generally, starting with approaches to teach the speaking skill, then the role of the teacher in an EFL context, moving to the factors that affect the learning of the speaking skill, including the activities used by teachers to improve learners' oral performance, ending with learners' communication strategies. The third chapter represents the analysis and the discussion of the findings provided by the questionnaires intended to teachers of the English language and first year at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School, along with some recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE:
KEY CONCEPTS ON
THE SPEAKING SKILL

CHAPTER ONE: Key Concepts on the Speaking Skill

Introduction

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Introduction

The necessity for classroom interaction was the major focus for many studies of foreign languages. Teachers put forwards methods and activities to create opportunities and situations where communication in English is needed. Speech is the means by which the communication process is performed; it is regarded as a crucial part of foreign language learning /teaching process because it is necessary to display the language proficiency. That is why the emphasis is mainly on speaking.

This chapter is devoted to introduce relevant literature related to the speaking skill. Light will be shed on the concept of speaking skill and its importance in learning English. The process of communication is also to be discussed as well as communicative language teaching and classroom interaction. This chapter will also discuss the integration between the four skills and the difference between speaking and writing, including the characteristics of the spoken performance.

1.1. A communicative Approach to Develop the Speaking Skill

Adler and Towne (1978) described communication as a process between at least two persons that begins when one person wants to communicate with another. Communication originates as mental images within a person who desires to convey those images to another. Mental images can include ideas, thoughts, pictures, and emotions. The person who wants to communicate is called the sender (see figure 1.1). To transfer an image to another person, the sender must first transpose or translate the images into symbols that receivers can understand. Symbols often are words but can be pictures, sounds, or sense information (e.g., touch or smell). Only through symbols can the mental images of a sender have meaning for others. The process of translating images into symbols is called encoding.

Figure 1.1: The Communication Model (Adler and Towne, 1978, p.31)

| SENDER | ENCODES | →Channel→ | MESSAGE | →Channel→ | DECODES | RECEIVER |

Once a message has been encoded, the next level in the communication process is to transmit or communicate the message to a receiver. This can be done in many ways: during face-to-face verbal interaction, over the telephone, through printed materials (letters, newspapers, etc.), or through visual media (television, photographs). Verbal, written, and visual media are three examples of possible communication channels used to transmit messages between senders and receivers. Other transmission channels include touch, gestures, clothing, and physical distances between sender and receiver (proxemics). When a message is received by another person, a decoding process occurs. Just as a sender must encode messages in preparation for transmission through communication channels, receivers must sense and interpret the symbols and then decode the information back into images, emotions, and thoughts that make sense to them. When messages are decoded exactly as the sender has intended, the images of the sender and the images of the receiver match, and effective communication occurs (Maslow, 1970).

1.2. The Importance of Communication

Mastering the speaking skill is crucial for the individuals to achieve effective communication. Communication is a complex two-way process, involving the encoding, translation and decoding of messages. Effective communication requires the communicators to translate their messages in a way that is specifically designed for their intended audience. Creating and delivering an effective message requires a basic understanding of the communication process. Communication is a skill which requires practice; it is improved

through practice that differentiates a skill from other forms of knowledge. Understanding the theory of communication and effective presentation will not in itself make you a brilliant communicator or presenter but should make you aware of how to maximize the impact of your presentations.

It is worth noting that the message that you intend to communicate is likely to be misunderstood. Therefore, in addition to carefully preparing and presenting your message, stay alert for any signs that your audience is mis-interpreting. It is up to you, the presenter, to continually check that your message has been received, understood, correctly interpreted and filed in the receivers mind (Edward &Wertheim, 2008)

1.3. Definition of Communicative Language Teaching

Central to the understanding of communicative language teaching *CLT* is an understanding of the term communicative competence (Harmer, 2001).

1.3.1. Components of the Communicative Competence

Dell Hymes (1972) introduced *Communicative Competence* as reaction to Chomsky's *competence* and *performance*. As many scholars, he agreed on the fact that learning a second language is not only a matter of knowing its rules, but also it is a matter of knowing how to communicate using these rules. He noted that Communicative Competence is "the aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts" (Brown, 2007, p.219). Hymes stated that speakers need to understand the language and to be able to use it according to the socio-cultural environment, i.e. speakers need to have that ability to communicate using the language in relation to the sociocultural environment. This idea was interpreted by Bachman into *Communicative Language Ability* (Bachman, 1990; Hedge, 2000, p. 44-6). Brown, (2007), Canale and Swain (1980) conceived Communicative Competence in terms of four

components: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence.

1.3.1.1. Grammatical Competence

Brown stated that the grammatical competence "encompasses knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar, semantics, and phonology" (2007, p. 219; Canale & Swain, 1980, p.29). In other words, the grammatical competence has not only to do with the recognition and mastery of the grammatical rules, but also with the ability to use them correctly (Savignon, 2001).

1.3.1.2. Discourse Competence

Quoting Brown, discourse competence is "the ability to connect sentences […] and to form meaningful whole out of a series of utterances." (2007, p. 220). In other terms, discourse competence deals with the relationship that exists between words, phrases, series of utterances, and written words and phrases forming a text. The *identification* of isolated sounds and words helps in the *interpretation* of the text/speech meaning; this is known as *bottom- up processing*, while *understanding* the text/speech meaning contributes to the *interpretation* of isolated sounds and words. This is known as *top- down processing* (Savignon, 2001, p. 17).

1.3.1.3. Sociolinguistic Competence

This component of communicative competence helps the speakers to be *contextually appropriate* (Hedge, 2000, p. 50) .i.e. to know whether the utterance is appropriate to the context or not. Savignon stated that sociolinguistic competence has to do with "an understanding to the social context in which language is used" (1983, p. 37 as stated in Brown, 2007).

Canale and Swain broke Sociolinguistic Competence into two different pragmatic categories: Illocutionary Competence (dealing with sending and receiving intended meanings) and Sociolinguistic competence (dealing with politeness, formality, register, and their relation with a given culture) (Brown, 2007).

1.3.1.4. Strategic Competence

For Canale and Swain, strategic competence is: "how to cope in an authentic communicative situation and how to keep the communicative channel open" (1980, p.25; Hedge, 2000). Strategic competence is mainly related to communication strategies. The first strategy to be mentioned here is the *Achievement Strategy*, when learners try to say something and then fail, they tend to mime, use some gestures and use the structure *you know*, seeking to find the right word or sentence. The second strategy is called the *Reduction Strategy*, when learners sometimes, feel uncertain about their knowledge concerning a particular form, so they tend to avoid using it and select, for instance, *perhaps* (Hedge, 2000, p. 53).

1.3.2. The Purpose of Communicative Language Teaching

Freeman clarified the importance of CLT as the ability for learners to communicate in the target language. To do so, learners need knowledge of linguistic forms, meanings, and functions (Freeman, 2000). According to Hymes (1972), the goal of the communicative language teaching is to develop communicative competence. In this view, a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both knowledge and ability for language use with respect to:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible.

2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available.

3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated.

4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails (Richards &Rodgers, 2001).

Richards and Rodgers stated in their book that communicative purposes may be of many different kinds. What is essential in all of them is that at least two parties are involved in an interaction or transaction of some kind where one party has an intention and the other party expands or reacts to this intention (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

1.3.3. Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

Here are the characteristics of CLT as identified by Brown (2001, p. 43):

1. "Classroom goals are focused on all the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence"; i.e. learners should not only learn the grammatical rules and lists of vocabulary, but also learning how to use them in appropriate situations.

2. "Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes"; i.e. the various exercises, activities, or tasks used in the language classroom help getting the learners use the language for meaningful purposes.

3. "Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use"; i.e. teachers focus more on fluency; since the primary goal of CLT is getting learners communicate meaningfully, teachers give

more importance to fluency and tolerate the learners' errors. They believe that the pupils' errors are due to a natural outcome of the development of communication skills.

4. "Learners in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom"; i.e. the tasks used in the classroom should provide the learners with the skills needed to communicate in real world contexts.

5. "Learners are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning."

6. "The role of the teacher is that of a facilitator and a guide."

These characteristics reveal the focal points of CLT. In short, CLT enables learners to communicate in the foreign language using the different types of communicative competence. However, the language techniques encourage them to use the target language purposefully in different situations. Besides, the use of the authentic materials pushes learners to make use of the language in real world contexts. In point of fact, CLT pays less attention to accuracy (the degree to which learners' use of the target language is remarkably free of errors); learners' errors are tolerated since they focus more on meaning and fluency (it is the speed, easiness and spontaneity with which foreign language learners communicate orally). This, actually, helps learners know their different learning strategies and enhances automaticity in them. Additionally, the teacher in CLT is seen as a guide and facilitator not as a controller.

1.4. Definition of the Speaking Skill

In a traditional view, speaking is the means by which human beings use to communicate orally between each other. For many years, it was thought that fluent speaking was the natural

outcome from the teaching of grammar and vocabulary and some pronunciation (Thornbury, 2005). However, there are some other aspects that contribute to clear the concept and broaden its extent, portraying the complex process it involves. For instance, according to the Oxford dictionary (2009, p. 85) speaking means "the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts in spoken language".

For Brown (2005), speaking involves interpersonal and transactional dialogues that learners should understand from the foreign language culture. In accordance to Thornbury (2005) and Horwitz (2007), speaking is one of the crucial components of an alive language since it is the means to communicate with others and it is not isolated since it is the consequence of listening, reading, meaningful practice, and the learner's own strategies to incorporate these elements when interacting.

Speaking English as a foreign language is portrayed and assessed in terms of, basically, three sub skills: fluency, pronunciation, and accuracy. According to the Longman dictionary, the first one refers to the ability to communicate using vocabulary and expressions smoothly. The second one has to do with the appropriate intonation and stress when pronouncing the words or phrases during any interaction. However, the last one is about the appropriate use of varieties of structures according to situations. Consequently, the EFL teacher should help the learners to develop these sub skills.

1.5. Classroom Interaction

The Cambridge International Dictionary of English (2000) defined the verb to *interact* as to communicate with or react to each other". Furthermore, the concept of *interaction* is defined as "reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when these objects and events naturally influence one another" (Wagner, 1994, p. 8). Therefore interaction is more than action followed by reaction. It includes acting reciprocally. It shows us the active and social part of a human being that affects other people through

interaction. Brown (2001, p.165) related interaction to communication "…interaction is, in fact, the heart of communication; it is what communication is all about".

The concept of interaction has a significant importance in the classroom, it has a similar meaning; it is an essential part in learning/teaching processes. Allwright and Baily (1991) stated that interaction is something people can do together i.e. collaboratively. It is considered as important for the teacher to manage who should talk, to whom, on what topic, in what language and so on. The communicative process involves interaction between at least two people who share a list of signs and semiotic rules. Interactions do not occur only from one side, there must be mutual influence through giving and receiving messages in order to achieve communication. Therefore it is a two-way process between the participants in the learning process and the teacher who influences the learners and vice versa.

1.5.1. Forms of Classroom Interaction

Thurmond (2003, p.115) defined interaction as "the learners' engagement with the course content, other learners, the instructor and the technological medium used in the course. True interactions with other learners, the instructor and technology result in a reciprocal exchange of information. The exchange of information intended to enhance knowledge development in the learning environment". From this quote we understand that there are four types of interaction: learner-course content interaction, learner-learner interaction, learner-teacher interaction and learner-technology interaction. In this study the focus will be only on two main types.

1.5.1.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

This type of interaction as Coulthard (1977) mentioned has received a great deal from teachers in a wide range of disciplines. It happens between the teacher and one learner or many other learners, that is to say a teacher takes a part in such interactions. He negotiates with his learners the content of the course, asks questions, uses learners' ideas, lectures, gives

directions, criticizes or justifies learners' responses. On the other hand, learners will benefit by drawing on the experience of their teacher on how well to interact in the manner that is most effective.

During teacher-learner interaction, learners seek to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills in front of their teachers that is why latter should consider his way of interacting which is very crucial in learning and teaching. According to Harmer (2009) teachers should focus on three things when they talk with their pupils. First, they must pay attention to the kind of the language the learners are able to understand, i.e. teachers should provide an output that is comprehensible for the level of all the learners. Second, teachers must think about what they will say to their learners, hence the teacher's speech is as a resource for learners. Finally, teachers also have to identify the ways in which they will speak such as the voice, tone and intonation.

1.5.1.2. Learner-Learner Interaction

According to Scrivener (2005, p.86), many theories of learning maintained that knowledge is actively constructed and skills are improved through interactions between learners. Johnson (1995) supported that if learner-learner interaction is well structured and managed, then it can be an important factor of cognitive development, educational achievement of learners and emerging social competencies. It can also develop the learners' capacities through collaborative works. So, learners will establish social relationship through this kind of interaction, where the sense of learning community is promoted and isolation is reduced in the classroom. Naegle Paula (2002, p.128) added also that "talking students with their peers about the content of the course is a powerful way for them to reinforce what they have learned". Teachers then must encourage such type of interaction between learners because it is the fastest and the best way, it makes learners active rather than passive participants.

1.6. The Importance of Speaking Skills in English as a Foreign Language Classroom

Language is a tool used to communicate with others and to express and share ideas. Communication takes place where there is speech. The importance of speaking skills hence is enormous for the learners of any language. Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. The use of language is an activity which takes place within the confines of our community. An effective speaker can gain the attention of the audience and hold it till the completion of his message. Speaking skills are important for career success, but certainly not limited to one's professional aspirations. Speaking skills can also enhance one's personal life (Qureshi, 2006). According to Chastain (1998), speaking is a fruitful constructive dynamic activity which involves the interaction with real life concepts. Speaking is a fundamental skill for an individual to be part and interact inside a community. According to McDonough & Shaw (1993), speaking reflects the linguistic knowledge of a learner and it has as an objective to create an oral message for communication and self-expression. Therefore, speaking is strongly linked with the communicative skills of an individual, as it provides ideal tools to interact and exchange in a variety of contexts where the language serves as a medium to express an intended message. Kayi (2009) stated that when an individual is learning a foreign language, the speaking skill becomes essential for the achievement and development of the tasks that are set in the target language. For this reason, speaking is such an important field of investigation. Harmer (2001) argued that it is essential for teachers to develop speaking by means of interesting and relevant activities, in a contextualized manner, and related with the communicative necessities of the given population. This way, it is assured that communication will take place in the language classroom, and learners will have the opportunity to use the target language in real life scenarios. In addition, White (2004) argued that speaking in a foreign language can help introverted learners to improve their

communication and academic processes, as speaking in a foreign language contributes greatly for the development of interactive and participative processes in a person's life. Thus, oral language forms an important component of any educational process, and stimulates learner's creativity, imagination, critical thinking and understanding. These benefit learners who struggle in their educative process because of their personality.

1.7. Integration between Listening and Speaking

In discussing aural skills, speaking and listening are two basic skills and are essential in acquiring communicative competence in language learning. So, part of being a proficient speaker is listening to aural language and understanding what is said so that the responses will be accurate. Any speaker needs a listener because speaking is rarely carried in isolation, as pointed by Redmond and Vrchota (2007) *speakers are at the mercy of listeners.* Moreover, the listening skill involves a list of processes of perception, interpretation, evaluation, retaining, recalling, and reaction to the speakers. Therefore, listening will not occur in isolation as well, there must be a speech to listen to. Finally, for communication to occur, both a speaker and a listener must take parts in it through interacting and negotiating verbally. The speaker produces comprehensible output, and the listener pays attention and then tries to process these output effectively.

1.8. Speaking Versus Writing

According to River and Temperley (1987), books are usually what learners depend on to learn the target language. They contain dialogues and conversations where the language used is not totally true, even tapes and records that are used in the language classroom present unnatural aural language read from the written one. The teacher must put into consideration that in order to teach learners the spoken foreign language, it is necessary to know that speaking is different from writing concerning the degree of usefulness, vocabulary, pronunciation and syntax.

Concerning their use, the written language uses clues which clarify the meaning of words and structures like spelling , and punctuation, for example, *plain* and *plane*, *their books* and *they' r books*, *you know* and *no, the sons raise meat* and *the sun's ray 's meet* more than the spoken one. The spoken version, on its side, uses repetitions and coping like *stress, intonation, tone of voice,* and *junctures.* Speakers cannot convey the right meaning or even being understood it if they miss them because they are used only in the spoken language. when taking a spoken form and its same written form, there will be differences, in that: the spoken language contains *stress, intonation, tone of voice, gestures,* and *facial expressions* with *repetition, pauses,* as it contains a certain *speed of the speech,* according or altering some forms, but listeners understand the messages, these characteristics are absent in the written language.

Concerning pronunciation, some words are not pronounced in the spoken forms which lead listeners to misunderstand the message, either situated at the beginning like *and, just, her,* and some words, or to reduce some vowels such as assimilation of some consonants in *for them to go back,* combinations of features such as *for have, for had to,* in pronunciation speakers link words each other in the sentence like *how far away can you get?*

Concerning the vocabulary used in oral language English, there is some vocabulary which is used in conversations such as: *listen, you know, I mean…* which make the speaker communicates with the listener and allow him sometimes to arrange what he wants to say. We notice the absence of such vocabulary in the written language. Also, colloquial clichés which has no place in written forms exists in spoken versions like *madly in love, how far away can you get,* also, demonstrative pronouns (this / these) do not exist in written language, but they exist in the spoken one like *these two girls.*

For syntax in oral speaking, we just use simple declarative sentences but speakers find it difficult to produce a sentence. Words are omitted like (two or three). Also, in speaking full

utterances are considered incomplete utterances in writing like *Egypt, kind a bad problem.* Conversations are full of hesitations and pauses, as well as, difficulties in starting. That displays the big difference in the written language.

In all, speaking is as important as the writing skill but, we must consider the differences between them to learn them.

Figure1.2: Inter-relationship of the four skills (Donn Byrne, 1976, p.87)

Spoken Language

Receptive	Listening	Speaking	Productive
Skills	Reading	Writing	Skills

Written Language
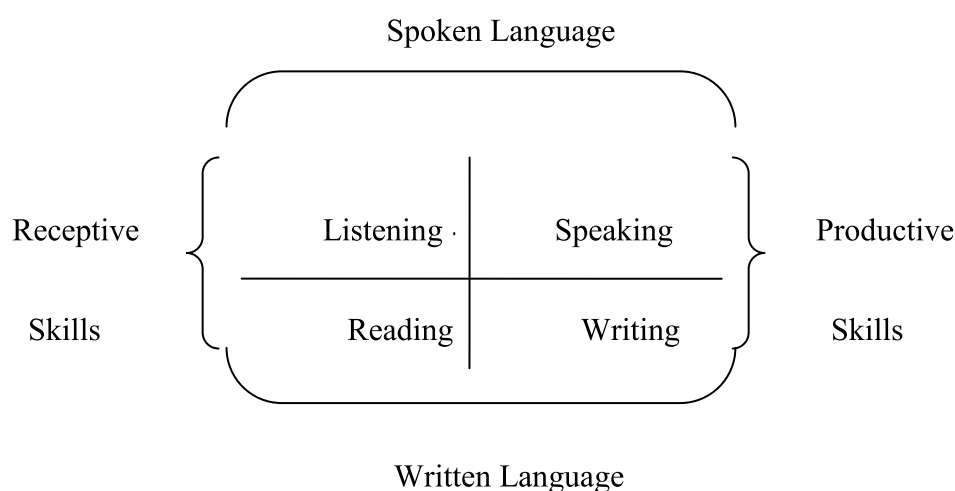
1.9. Characteristics of Spoken Performance

In the communicative approach, fluency and accuracy are of the main characteristics of the spoken language, and they are seen as complementary in accomplishing a given task. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.234) mentioned that "fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal, accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context", and this is an obvious point since the emphasis of communicative language teaching is on the communicative process between learners or teachers-learners, rather than the mastery of the language forms.

1.9.1. Fluency

The main goal teachers wish to achieve in teaching the productive skill of speaking is oral fluency; it is the main characteristic of the speaker performance. Hughes (2002) defined

fluency as the ability to express oneself in an intelligible, reasonable and accurate way without too much hesitation; otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest. To achieve this goal, the teachers then should train learners to use their personal language freely to express their own ideas and then avoid imitations of a model of some kind. According to Hedge (2000), fluency is related to the oral production of language and it is normally reserved for speech. It is the speakers' ability to link units of speech together easily and without facing difficulties such as: strain, inappropriate showiness, or hesitation.

In other words, fluency is the ability to respond in a coherent way through linking the words and phrases effectively, pronounce the sounds clearly, using stress and intonation. Hughes (2002) supported also that fluency and coherence refer to the ability to speak in a normal level of continuity, rate and effort in addition to link the ideas together in a coherent way. Speech rate and speech continuity are the key indicators of coherence.

Many of second language speakers think of fluency as the ability to speak fast, that is why they start speaking rapidly without pauses. Thornbury, (2005) argued that speed is an important factor in fluency and pausing too, because speakers need to take breath. Native speakers also need to pause from time to time in order to let the interlocutors catch what they said. However, a frequent pausing is an indication that the speaker has problems of speaking. In such cases Thornbury suggested what is called *tricks* or production strategies, i.e. the ability to fill the pauses. The most common pause fillers are *uh* and *um*, vagueness expressions such as *short of* and *I mean.*

1.9.2. Accuracy

Most of second language teachers nowadays emphasized on fluency in their teaching because learners seek more to be fluent and they ignore being accurate. Without structuring

accurate speech, speakers will not be understood and their interlocutors will lose interest if they perform incorrect utterances each time. Therefore, paying attention to correctness and completeness of language form is of great importance for oral proficiency.

Harmer (2001, p. 104) pointed that "accuracy involves the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation", which are considered by Thornbury (2000, p. 3) as three criteria that most teachers have reliance on concerning the assessment of "learner's command of the linguistic systems." Therefore, to be accurate in oral production, to be understood and to gain interest of their interlocutors; learners should pay attention to correctness and completeness of the language form; they should be knowledgeable and master the use of their meanings.

1.9.3. Grammar

According to Hughe (2002), the grammatical accuracy refers to the range and the appropriate use of the learners' grammatical structure that involves the length and the complexity of the utterances in addition to the ability to use the subordinating clauses. The grammar of speech differs of that of writing. Thornbury (2005, p.21) has listed the following features of spoken grammar which distinguish it from written grammar.

- Clause is the basic unit of construction.

- Clauses are usually added (co-ordinate).

- Head+ body+ tail construction.

- Direct speech favored.

- A lot of ellipsis.

- Many question tags.

- Performance effects (hesitation, repeats, false starts, incompletion, syntactic blends).

1.9.4. Vocabulary

Achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary refers to the appropriate selection of words during speaking. Learners often find difficulties when they try to express what they want to say. Among the reasons are; the lack the appropriate vocabulary and the incorrect use words as in the case of synonyms which do not carry the same meaning in all contexts. Learners then, have to be able to use words and expressions accurately. According to Harmer (2001), the knowledge of the word classes also allow speakers to perform well formed utterances.

1.9.5. Pronunciation

Due to the difference in culture, English language has been long considered by non-native speakers as a difficult language because of its pronunciation. Learners, then who want to develop their speaking skill in English should practice pronunciation overall. They should be aware about the place of articulation, they have also to be aware of where the words should be stressed, when to use raising intonation and when to use a falling one. All these issues give them extra information about how to speak English effectively and help them to achieve the goal of a better understanding of spoken English. Redmond and Vrchota (2007, p.176) argued that "it is imperative to use the correct vocabulary along with the correct pronunciation. Pronunciation entails the speakers' production of words in ways that are generally accepted or understood by listeners. However, if the pronunciation is not correct, speakers then will not be understood and therefore accuracy is not achieved".

Conclusion

Learning to speak entails speakers' engagement in communicative situations, in order to enhance their speaking skill. The development of oral skill requires learners to make active

use of the language that is correct in its grammar and pronunciation. Fluency and accuracy are

two essential aspects to be developed in classroom interactions.

CHAPTER TWO: FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPEAKING SKILL

CHAPTER TWO: Factors Affecting the Speaking Skill

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Introduction

Spoken language production is often considered as one of the most difficult aspects of language learning (Brown & Yule, 1983). Speaking is the active use of language to express meaning and for learners, the spoken language is the medium through which a new language is encountered, understood, practiced, and learnt.

EFL learners no matter how much they know about the English language, still face many speaking difficulties which will be discussed in this chapter in addition to, the approaches used to teach the speaking skill. Light will be shed on the role of the teacher in an EFL classroom, as well as the different kind of speaking activities used by teachers to stimulate motivation in learners. In this chapter, we will discuss also the strategies of communication used by learners.

2.1. Approaches to Teach the Speaking Skill

The mastery of speaking skills is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have made progress in their spoken language proficiency (Richards, 1990). There are three approaches to teach the speaking skill:

2.1.1. Teaching Talks as Interaction

Richards (1990), considered talk as interaction as the most difficult skill to teach since interactional talk is a very complex phenomenon which is controlled by unspoken rules. These rules can best be presented to learners by providing examples embedded in naturalistic dialogs that model features such as opening and closing conversations, making small talk, recounting personal incidents and experiences, and reacting to what others say. One rule for making small talk is to start interactions with a comment concerning something in the immediate vicinity or that both participants have knowledge of. The comment should elicit

agreement, since agreement is face-preserving and non-threatening. Giving feedback is another important aspect of talk as interaction. It involves responding to a conversational partner with expressions that indicate interest and a wish for the speaker to continue such as *that's interesting*, *yeah*, *really*, and *so on.*

2.1.2. Teaching Talk as Transaction

According to Richards (2008, p. 30) "Talk as transaction is more easily planned since current communicative materials are a rich resource of group activities, information-gap activities, and role plays that can provide a source for practicing how to use talk for sharing and obtaining information, as well as for carrying out real-world transactions. These activities include ranking, values clarification, brainstorming, and simulations. Group discussion activities can be initiated by having learners work in groups to prepare a short list of controversial statements for others to think about. Groups exchange statements and discuss them. Role-play activities are another familiar technique for practicing real-world transactions". Richards (2008) suggested the following steps when teaching talk as transaction

2.1.2.1. Preparing

It involves reviewing vocabulary, real-world knowledge related to the content, and context of the role play (e.g., returning a faulty item to a store).

2.1.2.2. Modeling and eliciting

It involves demonstrating the stages that are typically involved in the transaction, eliciting suggestions for how each stage can be carried out, and teaching the functional language needed for each stage.

2.1.2.3. Practicing and Reviewing

It involves assigning learners' roles and practicing a role play using cue cards or realia to provide language and other support.

2.1.3. Teaching Talk as Performance

Richards (2008, p. 35) pointed out that "Teaching talk as performance requires a different teaching strategy. According to Jones (1996, p.17) cited in Richards (2008, p.35) "Initially, talk as performance needs to be prepared for and scaffolded in much the same way as written text, and many of the teaching strategies used to make understandings of written text accessible can be applied to the formal uses of spoken language". This approach involves providing examples or models of speeches, oral presentations, stories, etc. through video or audio recordings or written examples. These are then analyzed, or *deconstructed*, to understand how such texts work and what their linguistic and other organizational features are taking into account the speaker's purpose, the audience, the kind of information does the audience expect, the way talk begins, develops, and ends, the use of other languages (Richards, 2008).

2.2. The Role of the Teacher in English as a Foreign Language Classes

The enhancement of the effectiveness of teachers within the classroom in the point of view of Harmer (2001) depends on their fluency in changing their behavior according to the different stages of a lesson or to the different kinds of activities. Harmer (2001) thought that the roles of controller (standing in front of the class and commands) and facilitator (helping learners to reach and their goals by themselves) are the major distinct roles. Meanwhile, he has identified several other roles, classified as follows:

2.1. Controller:

When the teacher is in charge of the class, s/he stands in front of it and stipulates to the learners orders as what to do, when to speak… etc., here the teacher is acting as a controller. Harmer (2001, p. 58) pointed out that "controllers take the role, tell students things, organize drills, read aloud, and in various other ways exemplify the qualities of a teacher-fronted

classroom". Acting as a controller should be just in a few stages of the lesson such as introducing or announcing new language/rules, restating directions/orders, explaining things, giving feedback...etc.), to provide learners with opportunities to learn and practice easily the communicative activities, otherwise learners will lose the desire to learn.

2.2.2. Organizer

Organizing pupils to do diverse activities is the most important and difficult role to be performed by the teacher because a good organizer leads to the success of those activities. When organizing an activity, the teacher has to well inform pupils about the issue of the activity, the procedure they should take while doing this activity, to put the pupils in pairs or groups, giving them clear instructions about their task, and preparing feedback. Meanwhile, it is well-advised for the teacher to examine the amount of learners' understanding of the instructions before starting doing the activity. Harmer (2001) summarized the role of the organizer as follow: *Engage, instruct, demonstrate, initiate, and organize feedback*, he also allocated each one with a different stage of an activity.

2.2.2.1. The Attractive Stage (Engage)

It is an introductory stage to the activity the organizer (teacher) needs to involve, engage, and get the interest and attention of the learners by discussing with them the familiar topics or by familiarizing them with the new ones.

2.2.2.2. The Instruction Stage (Instructs and Demonstrates)

In this stage, the organizer deals with the division of the learners (pairs or groups), he gives all the needed instructions; as what should be done, and organizes a concise and precise demonstration for better understanding. Finally, he should check whether they grasp the instructions or not.

2.2.2.3. The Initiation Stage

During this stage, the teacher delimits the time in which the activity should be solved for the learners. They begin doing the activity without any intervention of the teacher, expect for reminding them of instructions or time.

2.2.2.4. The Feedback Stage (Organize Feedback)

This is the final stage. When the activity is finished, the teacher gives the organized feedback.

2.2.3. Assessor

The role of the teacher as an assessor comes in play according to Harmer (2001), this role is the major and the most critical one because of the different behaviors and reactions that may occur from learners who feel that they were unfairly judged(criticized, poor grades) contrarily to their colleagues, and which can disturb the learning atmosphere. So the teacher (assessor) should be sensitive (acknowledging the mistake without humiliating the learner), and should inform learners about their parameter of evaluation (assessment) also about the parameters of success in order to self-measure in accordance to what Harmers (2001, p.365) said that "When we act as assessors (whether in the matter of 'instant' correction or more drawn-out grade giving) we must always be sensitive to the pupils' possible reactions. A bad grade is a bad grade, however it is communicated. But, it can be made far more acceptable if it is given with sensitivity and support."

2.2.4. Prompter

Breaking the silence of the learners by encouraging them to participate when they are in lack of vocabulary or inspiring them with ideas when they are confused in playing roles (lack of creativity) during the activities are the main criteria to detect the teacher who transmigrates

the prompter role. To be a good prompter, the teacher should be sensitive, prudent, and encouraging as indicated by Harmer (2001, p.343) "When we prompt we need to do it sensitively and encouragingly but, above all, with discretion. If we are too adamant we risk taking initiative away from the student. If, in the other hand, we are too retiring, we may not supply the right amount of encouragement."

2.2.5. Participant

The action of the teachers in the classroom (in/during an activity) traditionally was limited between offering feedback and correcting mistakes. However, they may often join or participate in the activity (role-play, discussion…etc.) but only under the condition that they (teachers as participants) do not attempt to dominate the session. If so, pupils will have the opportunity to practice the English language with who is more experienced resulting in the improvement of the atmosphere of learning (Harmer, 2001).

2.2.6. Resource

Teachers act as available resources only in the case where pupils are in need of help (need of information about something during the activity as asking for a meaning or, how to pronounce or write a word…etc.). However, pupils should not be dependent on their teachers. Thus, instead of giving all answers to learners' questions, teachers should offer to them guidance and encouragement to use further resource materials as indicated by Harmer (2001) that when we are acting as a resource, we will want to be helpful and available, but at the same time we have to resist the urge to spoon-feed our pupils so that they become over-reliant on us.

2.2.7. Tutor

The role of tutor according to Harmer (2001) combines both prompter and resource roles. It is a role that can be performed by the teachers when the learners are engaged in an individual work or project work (pairs/small groups). Its difficulty arises from the fact that it hints an intimate relationship (more personal contact between the teacher and his learners in terms of guidance, care, support…etc.). However, this role can be extremely enhancing.

2.2.8. Observer or Investigator

The teacher's role here is to observe what is going on around him in the classroom such as observing the effectiveness of activities, grouping, techniques, procedures, and evaluations, as well as to observe pupils' behavior with each other. The teacher is acting as an investigator in order to improve and promote his own skills and work as the learners' observer. Harmer (2001, p. 62) said that "teachers do not only observe students in order to give feedback. They also watch in order to judge the success of the different materials and activities that they take into lessons so that they can, if necessary, make changes in the future.

2.3. Factors Affecting Speaking Performance

In order to help pupils to overcome difficulties in learning the speaking skill, it is necessary for the teachers to figure out the factors that affect their speaking performance. Pupils' speaking performance can be affected by the factors that come from performance conditions (time pressure, planning, standard of performance and amount of support), affective factors (such as motivation, confidence and anxiety), listening ability and feedback during speaking activities.

2.3.1. Performance Conditions

Pupils perform a speaking task under a variety of conditions. Nation and Newton (2009) believed that performance conditions can affect speaking performance. The four types of

performance conditions that Nation and Newton (2009) suggested are the inclusion of planning, time pressure, the amount of support, and the standard of performance.

2.3.1.1. Planning

Typically, planning involves having time to think about a given topic, having time to prepare what to say, and taking brief notes about what to say. The task may involve being given a set of pictures that represent a story to talk about, preparing a small lecture, making a decision, or providing personal information. Planning helps language production because it allows part of the work to be done before the task so that there are less things to attend to while the task is being performed. In research studies, it has been found that about ten minutes' planning time is usually enough to give good results. In several studies, planning had positive effects on fluency and grammatical complexity, but had mixed effects on accuracy. Getting learners to use new language items while their attention is focused on the meaning that they are conveying is a challenging part of activity design. One of the most effective ways of bringing receptive language knowledge into productive use is to make use of techniques which involve retelling. This retelling may be retelling of a written text or of spoken input. (Ortega, 1999)

2.3.1.2. Time Pressure

The second major performance condition affecting speaking is time pressure. Recently researchers have distinguished on-line planning and pre -talk planning (Yuan & Ellis, 2003). On-line planning involves paying careful attention to turning ideas into speech while they speak, and this is more likely to have a positive effect on accuracy. On-line planning is helped by having plenty of time to speak. Giving pupils plenty of time to perform a speaking task allows them to access both their implicit and explicit grammatical knowledge and thus increase the quality of their spoken output.

2.3.1.3. Amount of Support

Supported or guided tasks allow pupils to operate under the most favorable conditions for oral production. An important design feature in such tasks is the presence of patience, understanding, sympathetic and supportive listeners. There are several ways to achieve this. One way is to train the listeners in supportive listening strategies. These can include providing plenty of wait time while the speaker prepares what to say, using the *you said . . .* strategy to periodically summarize what the speaker has said, asking easy questions to direct the speaker as in the ask and answer activity described above and after sufficient wait time, supplying needed phrases and vocabulary if the speaker is struggling. An important requirement in supportive listening is giving the speaker the chance to find the language items needed without being overwhelmed by support. Using three learners in a speaking activity can be a useful way of training supportive listeners. One learner is the speaker, one is the supportive listener, and one is monitoring the supportive listener with a checklist (Simcock, 1993).

2.3.1.4. Standard of Performance

The fourth major performance condition affecting speaking is the standard of output expected. The pressure on learners to perform well is increased if they have to speak in public, and if they are aware that some judgment is going to be made on their performance. Doing transactional speaking with others when important information has to be conveyed and where it needs to be conveyed accurately is also a way of pushing output. Speaking with others can be supportive; it can also be demanding (Nation & Newton, 2009).

2.3.2. Affective Factors

One of the most important influences on language learning success or failure is probably the affective side of the learner (Oxford, 1990). Krashen (1982) stated that a variety of affective variables has been confirmed to be related to success in SLA these are: motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence.

2.3.2.1. Motivation

Most researchers and educators would agree that motivation "is a very important, if not the most important factor in language learning" Krashen (1982, p.13), without which even 'gifted' individuals cannot accomplish long-term goals, whatever the curricula and whoever the teacher. In terms of the definition of motivation, recent educational theory has tended toward the interpretation of Gardner (1985, p.55) defining motivation to learn a L2 as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity". So the motivation of SLA refers to the desire and impetus of the acquirers. Gardner and Krashen (1986) pointed out that there are two types of motivations, integrative and instrumental. With the former motivation, the L2 acquirers are interested in the target language and willing to participate in that social life. But with the latter motivation, the L2 acquirers only want to pass some examination, go overseas to study, travel or be promoted. It can be easily seen that these two types of motivations are positive and negative to the SLA respectively.

2.3.2.2. Anxiety

There are correlations between anxiety and performance. From the SLA perspective, Gardner and Macintyre (1993, p.45) considered language anxiety as "the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient. This apprehension is being characterized by derogatory self-related cognition, feelings of apprehension, and physiological responses such as increased heart rate". Foreign language classroom anxiety has three types:

2.3.2.3. Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) has been defined by Krashen (1982, p. 19) as an "individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons". The question of communication apprehension becomes

increasingly important. It is a prevalent impairing and chronic condition, and it has been one of mental health condition that afflicts L2 acquirers' achievement. General personality traits such as quietness, shyness, and reticence frequently precipitate CA. When the ability and desire to participate in discussion are present, but the process of verbalizing is inhibited, shyness or reticence is occurring. The degree of shyness varies greatly from individual to individual. About one of every five persons, 20 percent of all college pupils are communication apprehensive. Communication apprehensive people may not appear apprehensive unless they are engaging in a particular type of communication.

2.3.2.4. Test Anxiety

Test anxiety is a psychological condition in which a person experiences distress before, during, or after an exam or other assessment to such an extent that this anxiety causes poor performance or interferes with normal learning. Test anxiety can be developed from a number of reasons. There may be some prior negative experience, with test taking that serves as the activating event. Learners who have experienced, or have a fear of blanking out on tests or the inability to perform in testing situations can develop anticipatory anxiety. Worrying about how anxiety will affect you can be as debilitating as the anxiety itself. Lack of preparation is another factor that can contribute to test anxiety, poor time management, poor study habits, and lack of organization can lead to a learner's feeling overwhelmed. Pupils who are forced to cram at the last minute will feel less confident about the materials covered than those who have been able to follow a structured plan for studying. Being able to anticipate what the exam will cover, and knowing all the information that has been covered during the study sessions, can help pupils to enter the testing situation with a more positive attitude. Lack of confidence, fear of failure, and other negative thought processes may also contribute to test anxiety. The pressure to perform well on exams is a great motivator unless it is so extreme that it becomes irrational. Perfectionism and feelings of unworthiness provide unreasonable

goals to achieve through testing situations. When a pupils' self-esteem is too closely tied to the outcome of any one academic task, the results can be devastating. In these situations, learners may spend more time focusing on the negative consequences of failure, than preparing to succeed (Krashen, 1982).

2.3.2.5. The Fear fom Negative Evaluation

The fear of negative evaluation accompanying anxiety is defined as being overly concerned with others' opinions, hiding from the negative feelings of their unfavorable impressions, avoiding situations where there is potential evaluation, and expecting others to have a low opinion of them. Fear of negative evaluation occurs when L2 learners feel that they are not able to make the proper social impression. It is an apprehension about others' evaluation, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectations. Fear of negative evaluation itself was found to be a strong source of language anxiety (Krashen,1982).

2.3.2.6. Self-Confidence

Second language acquirers' personality factors relate a lot to the learning effect. Among the personality factors self-confidence which is the most important one. Learners who have self-confidence and positive personal image succeed more. Self-confident people dare to adventure, to communicate in foreign language and can gain more. While those who lack self-confidence will lose the chances to practice their target language, for they are afraid of losing face and making mistakes (Krashen, 1982).

2.3.3. Listening Ability

According to Doff (1998), speaking skill cannot be developed unless the listening skill is developed. Learners must understand what is said to them to have a successful conversation. Shumin (1997) shared the ideas of Doff (1998) by stating that when one person speaks, the other responds by means of the listening process. In fact, every speaker plays the role of both

a listener and a speaker. Therefore, one is certainly unable to respond if he/ she cannot understand what is said. It means speaking is closely related to listening.

2.3.4. Topical knowledge

Topical knowledge is defined as knowledge structures in long-term memory (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). In other words, topical knowledge is the speakers' knowledge of relevant topical information. The information that topical knowledge provides enables learners to use language with reference to the world in which they live in. Bachman and Palmer (1996) stated that certain test tasks may be easier for those who possess the relevant topical knowledge and more difficult for those who do not. Bachman & Palmer (1996) believed that topical knowledge has effects on speaking performance.

2.3.5. Feedback during Speaking Activities

Most learners want and expect their teachers to give them feedback on their performance. However, all speaking production should not be dealt with in the same way. Harmer (1991) asserted that the decisions teachers make about how to react to learners' performance will depend upon the stages of the lesson, the activities, the types of mistake made and the particular learner who is making that mistake. If the teachers correct whenever there is a problem, the conversational flow as well as the purpose of the speaking activity will be destroyed (Harmer, 1991). If the learners are corrected all the time, they can find this very demotivating and become afraid to speak. They suggested that the teachers should always correct the pupils' mistakes positively and with encouragement (Baker & Westrup, 2003).

2.4. Activities to Enhance the Speaking Skill

The emphasis on the idea of enhancing learners' ability to communicate in a foreign language has been growing in teaching foreign/second language in recent years as it has been highlighted previously. Consequently, a great variety of activities known as the communicative activities has been designed by many linguists and well-known

methodologists such as Littlewood and Harmer (1995). The aim of the use of communicative activities in class according to Scrivener (2005) is to get learners to use the language they are learning to interact in realistic and meaningful ways, usually involving exchanges of information or opinions. The activity consists of encouraging and enabling learners' communication without worrying a lot about the linguistic production of the learners' accuracy. Thereby, the teacher has to adopt his different roles according to this aim, by reducing his participation, being a guide more than controller, monitoring discretely, helping when necessary and saving correction for later, as to be simulator, manager and consultant. The teacher has to select the most appropriate tasks that tend best with his learners' needs and that is among a great range of communicative activities as presented below:

2.4.1. Discussions

In these activities, learners are encouraged to speak freely about a variety of topics. They are supposed to give their preferences, opinions, interests. According to Millrood (2001, p. 89) discussion is a "simulation of reality for study purposes with problems-raising tasks, co-operating or challenging viewpoints of participants, polarization of opinions, decision making and problem resolution". The teacher should fix the purpose of the discussion activity before starting the discussion, and in order to fulfill it he has to limit his role to a co-communicator, possibly a prompter or guide, so that to enable learners to possibly manage and sustain by themselves the stream of conversation (Brown, 2000).

In many cases, discussions can fail because of pupils' low motivation and confidence. This situation can make them "reluctant to give an opinion in front of the whole class" and which result in the breakdown of the flow of conversation (Harmer, 2001). Nevertheless, such difficulties can be avoided, and one of the possible solutions is *the buzz groups* as named by Harmer, which means that the teacher has to divide learners in small groups, organize brief

discussion between the members of each group to allow them to think and reformulate their ideas before they are asked to report to the whole class. This requirement leads to a less stressful atmosphere subsequently to a full participation on the part of learners.

An example of discussion task is to involve pupils in groups (5 or 6 learners in each group rearranged in every discussion activity) to an agree/disagree discussions concerning a controversial issue such as "people learn best when they read vs. people learn best when they travel" or also relate to an article, pictures or photographs. Then, each group works on his topic for a given time period, and presents his opinions to the class. They should be encouraged to ask questions, check for clarifications, express support...etc. The speaking time should be equally divided among group members. At the end, the class the teacher decides on the winning group who defended the idea in the best way. This activity stimulates learners for speaking, negotiating meaning between them, and fosters their critical thinking and quick decision making. Through this activity learners learn how to propose, to suggest, to compare their ideas, also to justify them.

2.4.2. Role Play

This activity encourages learners' thinking and creativity and it can be performed in pair or groups. Learners are expected to play different social roles with the pretention that they are in diverse social context. "The role of the teacher in the role play activity is only to control the learners' work by giving them information and directions such as who they are and what they think or feel" (Harmer, 2001, p. 275), another role is to equip learners with the needed materials. Teachers should keep the situation simple to help learners feel easy to adopt the role and to pretend to be someone else otherwise the role-play can fail. So, teachers should be careful when applying this method and take motivation and willingness of learners to play the role in his consideration.

2.4.3. Simulations

There is a great similarity between simulation activities and role-plays. The only difference is that simulations activities are more elaborated. In such activities, and in order to create a realistic environment, learners may bring materials and items with them to the classroom such as microphone if the learners will act as a singer or stethoscope if the role is a doctor… etc. According to Harmer (2001), the advantages of simulations and role-plays activities can arise from the fact that they are entertaining and fun, which may increase motivation and consolidate the self-confidence of confused learners. In other side, the absence of the audience may help learners to act spontaneously without inhibition.

2.4.4. Information Gap

In this activity, there is always an information missing (gap) that should be discovered. It is usually performed in pair-work which presents an ideal condition to reach the desired goal. One learner has to discover the information that his partner does not possess and vice versa. They are expected to discover the information and share it, in that way the communication can be stimulated. Solving a problem and collecting information are the main aims of the information-gap tasks. These later, can be designed according to their difficulty without neglecting the needs of the learner which increase gradually. It commonly comprises two supplementary work sheets (a and b) that include a picture of the missing information or a written form of it. This activity encourages mainly the negotiation of meaning such as appeal for more clarification, ask to reformulate utterances and check for comprehension. However, it has a deficient side that can hinder its effectiveness which is the lack of the real-life situation performance within it. (Harmer, 2001)

2.4.5. Brainstorming

In this activity, teachers give his/her learners a specific topic and a limited time to produce their ideas freely and quickly. They may work individually or in groups according to the context, and they are not criticized neither judged for their thoughts and ideas which may reduce their anxiety and help them to share their thinking without hesitation. (Harmer, 2001)

2.4.6. Storytelling

In this activity, learners are supposed to create or to summarize a story they heard or read before, and to tell it to their classmates. They may tell jokes or riddles at the beginning of the session to attract the attention of the class. This method helps them to listen and speak. Moreover, it reinforces their creative thinking and speaking abilities. (Harmer, 2001)

2.4.7. Interviews

The purpose of this activity is to help learners to become socialized by giving them the opportunity to exercise and to apply their speaking skill in the classroom and outside it as well. The teacher should supply his/her learners with topics and a model of interviews to help them to construct their own interview according to it. The interviews can be conducted with various people and after completion, each study can be presented to the class. (Harmer, 2001)

2.4.8. Story Completion

In this activity, the teacher should organize the site of learners in a form of a circle. He should start to narrate a story, then stop telling it after few sentences to give the learners the opportunity to narrate at their turn and successively starting from the point where the previous one stopped. The story telling activity is extremely funny because learners can create new event, add new characters…etc. at any time. This attracts their interest, motivates them and simulates their creativity thus their speaking. (Harmer, 2001)

2.4.9. Reporting

In this activity, the teacher asks the learners to prepare a talk before coming to classroom. Learners are supposed to choose any topic they are interested in. It can be an experience that they lived or something that they read from a newspaper…etc. This activity according to Harmer (2001) presented a defined and useful speaking genre, and if properly organized can be extremely interesting for both speaker and listeners. Just as in the process of writing the development of talk from original ideas to finished work will be of vital importance.

2.5. Learners' Strategies of Communication

Studies of learners' communication strategies have examined the ways learners deal with communication problems. According to Bygate (1987, p. 42) communication strategies that learners use are the following:

2.5.1. Achievement Strategies

2.5.1.1. Guessing Strategies

It is also called the *conscious transfer* (K. Johnson & H. Johnson, 1999, p.68) that is to say that the speaker can use different manner of mother-tongue transfer such as *Language switch.* In this situation, the learner may borrow or insert words from his mother tongue without changing them hoping that the interlocutor will be familiar with them and eventually, will be able to understand them. He can also translate word by word from his mother-tongue language and this kind is known as "literally translation" (K. Johnson & H. Johnson, 1999: p. 68). Lastly, he can create a new target language word.

2.5.1.2. Paraphrasing Strategies

These strategies involve looking for an alternative way to express the idea or word for which the learner lacks r*esources* in the target language (Bygate, 2003). The learner/speaker will attempt to describe the characteristics of the object or to produce some sorts of definitions or explanations instead of using the appropriate target language items in order to make his idea clearer for the interlocutor. These strategies involve the speaker to find an alternative to the expression that he has by means of looking in his foreign language vocabulary. In paraphrasing the speaker has two options:

Lexical Substitution: To say a synonym, a more general word, or an expression.

Circumlocution: To link sort of words to explain what he wants to communicate using the appropriate target language items in order to make his idea clearer for their interlocutor (K. Johnson & H. Johnson, 1999). Or the lexical substitution strategy; here the learner/speaker uses a synonym or a negated antonym or a more general word *hyperonyme* as alternative to the correct item.

2.5.1.3. Co-operative Strategies

Also named as *appeal for assistance* (Allwright & Bailey, 1996; Johnson & H. Johnson, 1999, p.123) which means that the learner/speaker may consult for translation of a word in his mother tongue from his interlocutors or dictionary, or may ask for providing a necessary grammatical structure. According to Allwright and Bailey (1996, p.88) Co-operative Strategies imply "spontaneously asking for the correct term or structure or for help in solving a problem"

2.5.2. Reduction Strategies

In these strategies, a specific part of the communicating message or the whole topics are abandoned by the learner/speaker in order to adjust the conveyed message according to his knowledge, which means that he will use the reduction strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1983). The learner can exploit one of the two possible options. These include topic avoidance by avoiding complications related with his lack of vocabulary, or message abandonment because of the difficult grammatical structures he suffers from (M. Johnson& H. Johnson, 1999), hence he may change the side of his conversation, abandon a part of the message or simply keep silent.

In addition to the strategies outlined above, Bygate (2003) offered some other strategies that allow learners to pursue the interaction and to gain "time to think". In order to pick out appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures such as:

- Repeating a part of the utterance previously mentioned before providing one's own.

-Exploit some of the expressions and structures the interlocutor has just used.

- Encouraging the interlocutor to persist in his speaking by showing him interest.

2.5.2.1. Avoidance Strategies

It involves the speaker to change his message to keep out of trouble, to avoid some tricky structures, or to avoid difficulty in expressing an idea caused by a lack of vocabulary.

Conclusion

On the whole, scientists suggested various range of activities to develop adequately the speaking skill. These activities focus more on learners and give the teacher the role of a guide or a facilitator who does not interrupt his learners for the sake of getting their answers

accurate. The variety and the interest that these activities bring into the classroom create a less inhibiting atmosphere and stimulate learner's motivation. Consequently, this will help learners to develop their speaking skill.

The description of the different roles indicates that the teacher's choice to act in or transmigrate one of them depends on the objectives that should be achieved by the learners. Being aware of the manner how to carry out those roles and how they can be performed is required by the teachers; consequently, he/she will be able to change and switch roles with great ease.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE FIELD WORK

CHAPTER THREE: The Field Work

Introduction

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Introduction

This chapter is designed to analyze the findings obtained through investigating the factors affecting EFL pupils speaking performance. To achieve this end, two questionnaires were used. It first starts with the presentation of the results, and ends with interpretation and discussion of the results along with some pedagogical recommendations.

3.1. Participants and Data Collection

3.1.1. Participants

3.1.1. 1.First Year Secondary School Pupils

In this study a sample of thirty (30) pupils is to be dealt with, from a total population of about 200 pupils. The participants, in this study were recruited from 4 classes of different streams(scientific and literary streams). The pupils' ages ranged between fifteen and sixteen years.

3.1.1. 2.Teachers

Four teachers of English out of (8) at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School in Jijel are the total population. All the participants in this study are chosen randomly. The reason behind such a choice was to envestigate the teachers' awareness regarding the factors that affect the pupils' oral performance.

3.1.2. Data Collection

3.1.2.1. Research Instruments and Procedures

The research instruments are from different types: questionnaires, interviews, observations. In this work, a questionnaire was selected to collect data from pupils and teachers.

3.1.2. 1.1.Pupils' Questionnaire

The pupils' questionnaire was administered to pupils of first year secondary school. We selected randomly a sample of thirty (30) pupils from group 1, group 2, group 3, group 4, since it is difficult to work with the whole population. Pupils were given identical instructions and explanations that may help them to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire took place on Tuesday, may 4th 2016 at Bouraoui Ammar high school, and took the pupils nearly fifteen (15) minutes to complete it. Almost all the questions were translated in Arabic in order to help the pupils to understand the meaning of the questions and thus, respond appropriately. The questionnaire consists of sixteen (16) questions which are organized in a logical order. They are closed questions requiring from the pupils to pick up the appropriate answer(s) from a number of choices, or to choose "yes" or "no" answers followed by brief justification whenever necessary. This section seeks information about the speaking skill. The questionnaire is divided into two sections, from (Q1-Q5); the purpose of the questionnaire is to detect the pupils' perceptions towards the speaking skill. The second section contains 11questions from (Q6-17); it deals with the factors affecting their oral performance.

3.1.2.1.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

The number of teachers of English teaching first year at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School is eight teachers. The questionnaire was administrated to four of them. They can be seen as an interesting source of data helping to identify the factors influencing pupils' low performance in the speaking skill. The questionnaire consists of ten (10) questions which are organized in a logical order and classified under two sections. They are closed questions requiring from the teachers to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices, or to choose *yes* or *no* answers followed by brief justification whenever is necessary. The first section contains four questions (Q1-Q5) is about teachers' perceptions of the speaking skill.

The second section is about teachers' insights regarding the factors that affect learners' oral performance. From (Q6-Q9) the aim is to investigate the teachers' difficulties in teaching speaking as well as identifying the speaking activities that they focus on most to create a successful interaction. In the last question (Q10), teachers are supposed to give suggestions to overcome pupils' speaking difficulties.

3.2. Data Analysis

3.2.1. Analysis of Pupils' Questionnaire

Section I: Pupils' Perceptions of the Speaking Skill

Q1. How would you classify the following four skills in terms of importance to your learning of English?

Table 3.1: Pupils' Attitude towards Language Skills

Options	Responses	Percentage
Listening	5	16.67%
Speaking	10	33.33%
Reading	9	30%
Writing	6	20%
Total	30	100%

Results in table 3.1 show that, the highest percentage (33.33%) of pupils agreed that speaking is the most important skill to their learning, followed by reading with (30%), writing with (20%), and finally listening with (16.67%).

Q2. To what extent speaking is important to you when learning English?

Table 3.2: Pupils' Attitude towards the Speaking Skill

Options	Responses	Percentage
Not important	2	6.67%
Important	10	33.33%
Very important	18	60%
Total	30	100%

This question is designed to detect to what extent speaking is important for pupils to learning English. The results show that (60%) of pupils considered speaking as very important in learning English, (33.33%) considered it as important, while(6.67%) considered speaking as not important for them.

Q3. Do you use English when you speak in class?

Table 3.3 (a): The Use of English when Speaking

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	18	60%
No	12	40%
Total	30	100%

The results reported in table 3.3(a) show that the respondents were in touch with English. The high proportion of respondents (60%) use English when speaking, while (40%) claimed that they do not use it.

- If yes, where do you use it?

Table 3.3 (b): The Cases where Speaking is Used

The cases	Participants	Percentage
Social media	2	11.12%
In classroom with their teacher	7	38.88%
In classroom with their classmates	5	27.78%
At home	4	22.22%
Total	18	100%

The obtained results from the table 3.3 (b) reveal that among those who answered yes, approximately (38.88%) used it in classroom with their teacher, (27.78%) used it in classroom with their friends, (22.22%) used English at home with their family members, while (11.12%) used it in social media.

Q4. Is speaking for you:

Table3. 4: Pupils' Opinions about Speaking in English

Options	Responses	Percentage
Very easy	2	6.67%
Easy	9	30%
Difficult	15	50%
Very difficult	4	13.33%
Total	30	100%

This question aims at knowing the different points of views of the pupils on speaking English. The above table shows that half of the pupils (50%) responded that speaking English is a difficult task, while (30%) of them viewed that it is easy to speak English. Furthermore, (13.33%) pupils considered speaking English as very difficult. While, (6.67%) of them considered that it is very easy to speak English.

Q5.How do you evaluate your level in the speaking skill?

Table3.5: Pupils' Self Evaluation in the Speaking Skill

Options	Responses	Percentage
Very good	2	6.67%
Good	5	16.66%
Average	14	46.67%
Low	9	30%
Total	30	100%

This question aims to assess the pupils' speaking abilities. They are asked to evaluate their level in speaking. The results show that most of pupils (46.67%) considered their level as average , (30%) considered their level as low, moreover (16.66%) considered their level as good , and only (6.67%) considered that they speak English very good.

Section 02: Factors Affecting the Speaking Skill in EFL Classes

Q6. Who does most of the talk in the classroom?

Table 3.6: The Teacher/Pupils Talk in the Classroom

Options	Responses	Percentage
Teacher	30	100%
Pupils	0	0%
Total	30	100%

The aim of this question is to know whether or not pupils participate in English class; the results reveal that the teacher's talk dominates the classroom.

Q7. Does your teacher work with the whole classroom or does he interact only with a specific group?

Table3. 7: The Teacher's Interaction with his/her Pupils

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. The whole classroom	10	33.33%
B. Brilliant pupils	16	53.33%
C. Pupils in first places	4	13.34%
Total	30	100%

From the above table, it is clear that the majority of pupils (53.33%) claimed that classroom interaction is dominated by good pupils, (13.34%) thought that the teacher interacts with pupils sitting in the front of the classroom. Such factor may demotivate pupils and make

them unready to study. They may feel that their teacher is unfair because he/she prefers some pupils at the expense of others. Finally, (33.33%) considered that their teacher interacts with the whole class and gives all his/her pupils the opportunity to practice speaking in class.

Q8. When you want interact with your teacher, do you do that in:

Table 3.8: The Use of Mother Tongue/ English in the Class

Options	Responses	Percentage
English	10	33.33%
Arabic	20	66.67%
Total	30	100%

This question aims at getting information about the use of the mother tongue and the English language when asking a question in the classroom. The results in the above table show a high tendency towards the use of the mother tongue by the majority of the pupils (66.67%), whereas about (33.33%) of them preferred asking their instructor in English.

Q9. Do you feel comfortable when you interact in classroom?

Table3. 9 (a): The Pupils' Feeling of Comfort when Speaking English in Class

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	13	43.33%
No	17	56.67%
Total	30	100%

This question aims at knowing the pupils' feeling when speaking English in the classroom. The results in the table 3.10 show that the majority of the participants (56.67%) revealed that they feel uncomfortable when they participate, while the rest of the participants (43.33%) revealed that they feel comfortable.

- If no, is it because:

Table3.9 (b): Pupils' Reasons for Feeling Discomfort when Speaking

Options	Participants	Percentage
A. The Fear of making grammatical mistakes	6	35.29%
B. The Fear of making pronunciation mistakes	2	11.77%
C. Lack of vocabulary	2	11.77%
D. Lack of self-confidence	0	0%
E. Fear of teacher's negative feedback	3	17.64%
F. Shyness	0	0%
G. The topic is not interesting	4	23.53%
Total	17	100%

Among those who said that they felt uncomfortable when speaking in the classroom, (35.29%) of the pupils admitted that they feel so because of the fear of making grammatical mistakes. Furthermore, (23.53) of them admitted that they feel bored and loose interest because the topic discussed is not interesting. However, (11.77%) confirmed that the reason behind their feeling is the fear of making pronunciation mistakes. Also, (11.77) of the pupils stated that they feel uncomfortable because of a lack of vocabulary. While (17.64%) declared that their teacher's negative feedback is the reason behind their feeling.

Q10. When performing an oral task does your teacher give you some time to think about?

Table3. 10: The Pupils' fact about the Presence/Absence of Time to Think about an Oral

Task

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	28	93.33%
No	2	6.67%
Total	30	100%

The majority of respondents (93.33) replied that their teacher gives them some time to

think of an oral task, and only 2 pupils (6.67) responded the opposite.

Q11. Do you think the amount of time devoted to speaking tasks is sufficient?

Table3. 11: Pupils' Attitudes towards Time Devoted to Speaking Tasks

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	13	43.33%
No	17	56.67%
Total	30	100%

The results in the above table show that the majority of the pupils (56.67%) pointed out

that the amount of time allocated for oral tasks is insufficient, while (43.33%) of the pupils

think that this amount of time is sufficient.

Q12. Do you perform better when

Table3. 12: The Effect of Preparation on Pupils' Oral Performance

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. You prepare the topic before the lesson	17	56.67%
B. You prepare the topic during the lesson	13	43.33%
C. You don't prepare your topic	0	0%
Total	30	100%

The results in the above table show that (56.67%) of pupils performed better when they prepared the subject before coming to the classroom, while (43.33%) claimed that they performed better when they prepared the subject during the lesson in the classroom. But, none of them considered a better performance without preparation.

Q13. What is your teacher's reactions face to your lack of vocabulary when answering?

Table3.13: Pupils' Opinion about Teacher's Reactions towards their Lack of Vocabulary

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. Provides you with the necessary vocabulary	20	66.67%
B. Asks you to say it in Arabic	4	13.33%
C. Interrupts you and asks another pupil to answer	6	20%
Total	30	100%

From table 3.13, it is shown that (66.67%) of pupils stated that they get a direct help from their teacher whenever they miss a word. (13.33%) of the respondents said that their teacher asked them to use their mother tongue. Using the mother tongue in language courses may encourage pupils to focus their attention on it and come back to Arabic every time. (20%) of them claimed that they are not given the chance to think about the missed word. They are directly interrupted by the teacher who preferred to ask someone else to answer. This act is not advised in classes because it may turn pupils angry and unready to participate again.

Q14. When you speak English in front of your classmates and you miss a word, what would your reaction be?

Table3.14: Pupils' Reactions in Case of Missing a Word

Option	Response	Percentage
A. Anxious and stop talking	6	20%
B. Shy and start miming	3	10%
C. Keep talking using paraphrase	21	70%
Total	30	100%

The majority of pupils (70%) revealed that they keep talking using paraphrasing. While, six of them (20%) may feel anxious and stop talking. However, two pupils (10%) revealed that they feel shy and start miming when answering.

Q15. If you do not speak enough in classroom; does your teacher encourage you to participate?

Table3. 15: Pupils' Views about their Teacher's Motivation for Participation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Very often	12	16.67%
Sometimes	8	26.66%
Rarely	5	40%
Never	5	16.67%
Total	30	100%

The results, as shown in the table 3.15, are described in the following: (40%) stated that they are rarely encouraged by their teacher to speak. While, (26.66%) opted for sometimes, (16.67%) is the percentage obtained by the participants who opted for very often and never.

Q16. In which kind of activities do you feel comfortable to speak?

Table 3.16: The Kind of Activities Pupils Feel Comfortable to Speak

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. Dialogues	14	46.67%
B. Debates and discussions	6	20%
C. Presentations	1	3.33%
D. Role-plays and simulations	0	0%
E. Telling stories	9	30%
Total	30	100%

According to the results in the table 3.16, pupils' answers are varied. Each pupil has his/her own favorite activity during oral classes. Less than half of pupils (46, 67%) revealed that they prefer dialogues, (20%) of them said that they prefer debates and discussions, (30%) revealed that they prefer telling stories, and only (3.33%) of them chose presentation activities.

3.2. 2. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section I: Teacher's Perceptions of the Speaking Skill

Q1. Which language skills do you focus on in teaching English in class?

Table3. 17: Teachers' Perceptions towards the Importance of Language Skills in Teaching

Options	Responses	Percentage
Speaking Skill	2	50%
Writing Skill	1	25%
Reading Skill	1	25%
Listening Skill	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The results in the above table show that (50%) of teachers stated that they focus on the speaking skill in teaching. While, (25%) is the percentage obtained by the teachers who opted for writing and reading skills.

Q2. To what extent do you agree that in order to learn English, learners have to speak it?

Table3. 18: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Speaking Skill

Options	Responses	Percentage
Strongly agree	4	100%
Agree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	4	100%

It can be seen from table 3. 18. That, all the teachers strongly agree that the speaking skill is important in learning English as Foreign language.

Q3. How do you consider your pupils' level in the speaking skill?

Table3.19: Teachers' Evaluation of their Pupils' Level of Speaking Skill

Options	Responses	Percentage
Very good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	2	50%
Low	2	50%
Total	4	100%

As it is illustrated in the table 3.19, the majority of the teachers agreed that their pupils' level in oral proficiency is between average (50%) and low (50%). However, no teacher has opted good and very good options. It seems that the majority of the teachers thought that their pupils do not have a good command of English, probably, because they are not motivated enough to use the language inside or outside the classroom on the one hand, and because of a lack of practice of the language on the other hand. Pupils can develop their low oral performance and improve their speaking skill if they have more opportunities to speak and increase their talking time.

Section two: Factors Affecting Pupils' oral performance

Q4. What do you focus on when preparing an oral task?

Table3.20: The Considerations Undertaken for Teaching Speaking

Options	Responses	Percentage
Vocabulary	2	50%
Pronunciation	2	50%
Grammar	0	0%
Total	4	100%

This question seeks to know about the considerations the teachers generally undertake when they teach speaking. Half of the informants (50%) assumed that vocabulary should be taken into account and the other half highlighted pronunciation. Whereas, no one pointed out grammar.

Q5.Do you use other languages when teaching the speaking skill in addition to the English language?

Table 3.21: The Use of other Languages in Class

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	4	100%
No	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The results recorded in the table 3.21 show that all the teachers make use of other languages during the lesson.

-If yes, what are they?

All teachers stated that they use both Arabic and French languages.

Q6. What do you find most difficult in teaching the speaking Skill?

Table 3.22: Teachers' Perceptions of Common Speaking Difficulties when Teaching

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. Grammar	0	0%
B. Pronunciation	2	50%
C. Vocabulary	0	0%
D. Utterances	2	50%
Total	4	100%

According to the results of the table 3.22, the difficulties encountered in teaching speaking varied from one teacher to another. (50%) of teachers claimed that their pupils' need in the speaking skill is pronunciation. Also, (50%) of them confirmed that pupils' need is sentence structure. Pronunciation is one of the items that need to be developed for effective speaking as well as sentence structure. No teacher pointed out to grammar and vocabulary.

Q7. Do you give your pupils some time to think about an oral task?

Table3. 23: Teachers' Opinion about the Presence/Absence of Time to Think about an Oral Task

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	4	100%
No	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The results in table 3.23 show that all the teachers (100%) replied that they give their pupils some time to think about an oral task.

Q8. Do you think the amount of time devoted to speaking tasks is sufficient?

Table 3.24: Teachers' Attitudes towards Time Devoted to Speaking Tasks

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	3	75 %
No	1	25%
Total	4	100%

The results in the above table show that the majority of the teachers (75%) pointed out that the amount of time allocated for oral tasks is sufficient, while (25%) of them declared that this amount of time is insufficient.

Q9. Do your pupils perform better when

Table3. 25: The Effect of Time Preparation on Pupils' Oral Performance from the Teachers'

Perspective

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. They prepare the topic before the lesson	3	75%
B. They prepare the topic during the lesson	1	25%
C. They do not prepare their topic	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The results in the above table show that (75%) of teachers claimed that their pupils

perform better when they prepared the topic before coming to the classroom, while (25%) of

teachers claimed that their pupils perform better when they prepare the topic during the lesson

in the classroom. But, none of them considered a better performance without time preparation.

Q10. What is your reaction toward your pupils' lack of vocabulary?

Table3.26: Teacher's Reactions towards Pupils' Lack of Vocabulary

Options	Responses	Percentage
A.Provide them with the necessary vocabulary	3	75%
B.Ask them to say it in Arabic	1	25%
C.Interrupt them and ask another pupil to answer	0	0%
Total	4	100%

From table 3.26 it is shown that (75%) of teachers stated that they supplied their pupils

with the needed vocabulary whenever they miss a word. (25%) of teacher said that they

allowed their pupils to use their mother tongue. None of them replied that they interrupted their pupils and asked another pupil to answer.

Q11. How often do your pupils participate in class?

Table3.27: Teachers' perceptions towards Pupils' Participation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Very often	0	0%
Sometimes	4	100%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Total	4	100%

All the teachers confirmed that the majority of pupils participate sometimes. These answers assert that there are some factors affecting their participation and hinder them from speaking in class.

-If 'no', based on your observations, what are the factors that affect your pupils' oral performance?

Table 3.28: Factors Influencing Pupils' Oral Performance in Class

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. The Fear of making grammatical mistakes	0	0%
B. The Fear of making pronunciation mistakes	1	25%
C. Lack of vocabulary	1	25%
D. Lack of self-confidence	1	25%
E. Fear of teacher's negative feedback	1	25%
F. Shyness	0	0%
G. The topic is not interesting	0	0%
Total	4	100%

According to the results displayed in the above table, the teachers' answers are equally distributed between the fear of making pronunciation mistakes (25%), fear of teacher's negative feedback (25%), lack of self-confidence (25%) and vocabulary (25%).

Q12. Do you encourage your pupils to participate in class?

Table3. 29: Teacher's Motivation for Pupils' Participation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	4	100%
No	0	0%
Total	4	100%

The results in the 3.29 table show that all teachers stated that they encouraged their pupils to participate in the classroom when performing an oral task.

Q13. In which kind of activities do your pupils feel comfortable to speak?

Table3.30: Teachers' Favorite Speaking Activities in Creating Successful Interaction

Options	Responses	Percentage
A. Dialogues	1	25%
B. Debates and discussions	1	25%
C. Presentations	1	25%
D. Role-plays and simulations	1	25%
E. Telling stories	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Many activities can be used in teaching the speaking skill. Five options have been proposed for teachers .The table 3.30 illustrates that all the teachers focus on one activity except telling stories no one focus on it: (25%) of teachers considered dialogues as the best activity to teach the speaking skill, while (25%) of them preferred debates and discussions, also (25%) preferred presentations, and (25%) saw role-plays and simulations as effective way of teaching speaking.

Q14. What can you suggest to make your pupils participate in class?

The following suggestions were made by the teachers:

-Provide a positive feedback.

-Provide equipped laboratories to help learners in terms of listening and speaking.

3.3. Interpretation of the Results

The results obtained from the questionnaires administrated to both first year pupils and their teachers at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School indicated that there are both similarities and differences in teachers' and pupils' answers and have helped to identify some factors influencing pupils' low oral performance. First, the question which is related to the time devoted to the speaking tasks revealed that first year secondary school pupils acknowledged the fact that the time is insufficient. However, this result seems to have a contradiction with the teachers' answers of this question. Yuan & Ellis (2003) stated that giving pupils plenty of time to perform a speaking task allows them to access their knowledge and thus, increase the quality of their spoken output. Second, responses concerning the effect of the topic preparation on pupils' oral performance, have revealed that both teachers and their pupils agreed on the idea that oral performance is better developed when there is a preparation. In this respect, Ortega (1999) thought that planning helps language production because it allows part of the work to be done before the task so that there are less things to attend to while the task is being performed. Third, the results of the question which related to teachers' reaction towards the pupils lack of vocabulary indicated that, first year pupils were supplied with necessary vocabulary and phrases when needed. Simcock (1993) declared that supported tasks allow pupils to operate under the most favorable conditions for oral performance. Fourth, the crucial problem pupils may face is related to language anxiety as reported by teachers; it has a negative effect on pupils' oral performance. Gardner and Macintyre (1993) considered language anxiety as a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient. It is characterized by feelings of apprehension, and

physiological responses such as increased heart rate. As far as feedback during speaking activities is concerned, both teachers and pupils are aware of its importance. Furthermore, pupils declared that they had fear of teachers' negative feedback which prevented them from participating during an oral task. In this respect, Baker and Westrup (2003) asserted that if pupils are corrected all the time, they can find this very demotivating and become afraid to speak. Finally, teachers' answers regarding their encouragement of pupils to participate showed that they motivate them to speak. Unlike teachers' responses, pupils stated that their teachers' encouragement is not satisfactory. Krashen (1982) confirmed that motivation is a very important factor, if not the most important one in language learning, without which even *gifted* individuals cannot accomplish long-term goals.

3.4. Pedagogical Recommendations

To close this study which highlights factors affecting pupils' speaking skill in EFL classes, some pedagogical recommendations are suggested, they will be useful and helpful for both teachers and pupils.

- **Increasing Pupils' Speaking Time**

Since speaking seems to be the most important skill, teachers' speaking time in class should be reduced in order to give more opportunities for pupils to practice more the English language. By doing so, pupils are given the chance to practice more speaking and their English language will be improved gradually.

- **Rewarding Pupils**

Teachers should encourage their pupils to speak and express their opinions by rewarding them. This can be an effective way to make the whole classroom participates. For instance,

teachers may inform their pupils in advance that the more they participate the more they will get extra markes or simply by praising those who participate most of the time.

- **Creating a Suitable Learning Atmosphere**

 Teachers have to create a warm and supportive classroom environment to make the pupils feel secure and to contribute in language learning success. They should try to make the classroom sounds as a very safe place where mistakes are allowed and corrected. By doing so, pupils' self-confidence will be developed gradually.

- **Varying Pupils' Activities and Materials**

Teachers have to vary their pupils' speaking activities that better develop their communicative abilities such as role plays, discussions, debates, and some games. These activities should be simple and funny sometimes because generally the difficult ones may lead pupils to feel bored and frustrated. In addition to that, they should vary the materials used in teaching speaking such as videos, data shows, etc. When teachers make use of different teaching materials, they will make their pupils more enthusiastic to speak English.

- **Focus on Pupils' Interesting Topics**

 During the lesson, teachers must take into account pupils' interest. They have to ask them from time to time about the favorite topics they want to discuss; because if the topics are interesting for them this obviously will attract their attention and lead them to speak confidently without any hesitation. However, if the teacher chooses topics that their pupils are not interested in, in this case pupils will not speak.

Encourage Collaborative Work

When performing an oral task, teachers should implement group work from time to time. This will be beneficial and help pupils to practice speaking in English with their classmates. Through permanent practice, pupils' oral production will be developed gradually. Furthermore, there will be a positive effect of the brilliant pupils on the rest of the classroom.

- **Practice English inside the Classroom**

Pupils must practice their English inside the classroom because the more they practice speaking, the more they become fluent speakers of English. They practice it through engaging in discussions and debatable topics, as well as trying to use English as much as they can with their teacher; they should try to participate more in the classroom not only when they have got the right answer, because mistakes are part of the learning process. Pupils should avoid using their mother tongue and forget their shyness and anxiety.

- **Practice English outside the Classroom**

Outside the classroom, pupils can practice their English by for example, connecting on the net with English native speakers (Facebook and skype), practice more listening of videos and songs this will help them to work on their pronunciation. Pupils should also practice extensive reading to enlarge their vocabulary; they are advised to read permanently English book, articles, and novels.

3.5. Limitations of the Study

Classroom observation is considered as a more beneficial method for collecting data, it helps the researcher by providing him with the needed details. It was among the planned means of collecting data in this study and due to time constraints, it was impossible to attend the classroom.

Since the questionnaires were conducted at the end of the academic year (May, 4ᵗʰ, 2016) and the exams were forthcoming, teachers fulfilled the curriculum; most of pupils did not attend the class, so it was very hard to work with a sample of thirty pupils.

Conclusion

This chapter is concerned with the analysis and the discussion of the data obtained from both teachers of English and first year pupils' questionnaires which were administered at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School. The aim was to identify the factors that affect pupils' low oral performance. All the questions were analyzed and the answers were organized in tables. The results show that there are many factors that affect first year secondary school pupils' oral performance; time pressure, planning, the amount of support, language anxiety, feedback during speaking activities, and motivation. Finally, in this chapter, valuable pedagogical recommendations are suggested for both Teachers and pupils to enhance the learning of the speaking skill.

General Conclusion

English has become gradually a global language used for communication across the world. This fact has led to the increase in a demand of learning and teaching this target language. On the basis of the following assumption: EFL first year at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School in Jijel experience low oral performance due to many factors, this study has been carried out with the aim to investigate on the one hand, the factors influencing first year secondary school pupils' low oral performance at Bouraoui Ammar Secondary School. On the other hand, help teachers to develop their pupils' oral performance. So, this dissertation is primarily concerned with providing useful recommendations for both first year secondary school teachers and pupils.

In the handling of this point, the present research work has been framed within three chapters. The first chapter aimed at shedding the light on some key concepts related to the speaking skill and its importance in learning English, the process of communication, communicative language teaching, the integration between the four skills and the difference between speaking and writing, including the characteristics of the spoken performance. The second chapter deals with, approaches used to teach the speaking skill, factors affecting learners' oral performance, the role of the teacher in an EFL classroom, speaking activities used by teachers to stimulate motivation in pupils, as well as the strategies of communication used by pupils.

Chapter three was devised to analyze, interpret, and discuss the results obtained from questionnaires. The findings were in the direction of the research questions and hypothesis set at the onset of this dissertation. There are many factors that affect first year secondary school pupils' oral performance; time pressure, planning, the amount of support, language anxiety, feedback during speaking activities. Also, they led to the concluding remedial strategies to

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Appendices

Appendix I : Pre-Questionnaire for Pupils

Appendix II: Questionnaire for Pupils

Appendix 1 : Questionnaire for Teachers

Appendix I

Pre-Questionnaire for Pupils

This pre-questionnaire is a part of a Master dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirement of a Master degree. It aims at getting information about first year secondary school pupils' difficulties when learning the speaking skill.

Please read the questions carefully, and then answer them:

Q1. Do you enjoy learning English?

سؤال 1 . هل تستمتع بتعلم اللغة الانجليزية

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Q2. Do you use English when you speak in class?

سؤال 2 . هل تستعمل اللغة الانجليزية عندما تتحدث في القسم

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Q3. Do you have difficulties when you speak English?

سؤال 3. هل تواجه صعوبات عند تحدثك باللغة الانجليزية

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Thank you for your collaboration شكرا لكم على تعاونكم

Appendix II

Questionnaire for Pupils

This questionnaire is a part of a Master dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirement of a Master degree. It aims at getting information about first year secondary school pupils' difficulties when learning the speaking skill. As well as exploring the factors affecting learners oral performance.

Please read the questions carefully, and then answer them by putting a tick (√) in front of the most suitable answer for you.

Section 01: Pupils' Perceptions of the Speaking Skill

Q1. How would you classify the following four skills in terms of importance to your learning of English?

سؤال 1. كيف تصنف المهارات الأربعة التالية من حيث الأهمية في تعلمك للغة الإنجليزية

a. Listening (   )

b. Speaking (   )

c. Reading (   )

d. Writing (   )

ا. الاستماع ( ) ( )

ب.التحدث ( ) ( )

ج. القراءة ( ) ( )

و. الكتابة ( ) ( )

Q2. To what extent is speaking important for you in learning English?

سؤال 2.إلى أي مدى التحدث مهم بالنسبة لك في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

a. Very important ( )

b. Important ( )

c. Not important ( )

ا. مهم جد ا ( )

ب. مهم ( )

ج. غير مهم( )

Q3. Do you use English when you speak?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

سؤال 3.هل تستخدم اللغة الإنجليزية عند الكلام؟

ا. نعم( )

ب. لا ( )

If yes, where do you use it?

إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم، أين تستخدمها؟

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Q4 Is speaking for you?

a. Very easy (   )

b. Easy (   )

c. Difficult (   )

d. Very difficult (   )

سؤال 4.كيف تجد التحدث باللغة الانكليزية؟

ا. سهل جدا( )

ب. سهل ( )

ج. صعب ( )

و. صعب جدا ( )

Q5. How do you evaluate your level in the speaking skill?

a. Very good (   )

b. good (   )

c. Average

d. Low (   )

سؤال 5.كيف تقيم مستواك في مهارة التحدث؟

ا. جيد جدا ( )

ب. جيد ( )

ج. متوسط ( )

د. منخفض ( )

Section 02: Factors Affecting the Speaking Skill in EFL Classes

Q6. Who does most of the talk in the classroom?

a. Teacher (   )

b. Pupils (   )

سؤال6.من هو أكثر متحدث في الفصل الدراسي؟

ا. المعلم ( )

ب. الطلاب ( )

Q7. Does your teacher work with the whole classroom or does he work only with a specific group?

 a.   The whole classroom

 b.   Brilliant pupils

 c.   Pupils who sit in front of him

سؤال7.هل يعمل المدرس مع الصف بأكمله، أو أنه يعمل فقط مع مجموعة محددة؟

ا. مع الصف بأكمله

ب. مع الطلاب المتألقين

ج. مع الطلاب الذين يجلسون أمامه

Q8. When you want to ask your teacher, do you do that in:

a. English (   )

b. Arabic (   )

سؤال8.عندما تريد أن تسأل معلمك، يمكنك أن تفعل ذلك بـ؟

ا .الإنجليزية ( )

ب العربية ( )

Q9. Do you feel comfortable when speaking in the classroom ?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

سؤال9.هل تشعر بالراحة عندما   تتحدث بالفصل الدراسي؟

ا. نعم( )   ب. لا ( )

- If no, is it because:

a. The Fear of making grammatical mistakes   ( )

b. The Fear of making pronunciation mistakes ( )

c. Lack of vocabulary ( )

d. Lack of self-confidence ( )

e. Fear of teacher's negative feed back ( )

f. Shyness ( )

g. The topic is not interesting ( )

إذا كانت الإجابة لا، هل هو للأسباب التالية:

ا. الخوف من ارتكاب الأخطاء النحوية

ب. الخوف من ارتكاب أخطاء في النطق

ج. لديك نقص مفردات

د. عدم الثقة بالنفس

ج. الخوف التعليق السلبي للمعلم

د. الخجل

ه. الموضوع ليس مثيرا للاهتمام

Others, please specify

إذا كانت هناك أسباب أخرى حددها

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Q10. When performing an oral task does your teacher give you some time to think about?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

سؤال10.أثناء أداء عمل الشفوي هل يعطيكم المعلم بعض الوقت للتفكير؟

ا. نعم( )

ب. لا( )

Q11. Do you think the amount of time devoted to speaking tasks is sufficient?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

سؤال11.هل تعتقد أن المدة المخصصة لأعمال الحديث كافية؟

ا. نعم( )

ب. لا( )

Q12. Do you perform better :

a. You prepare the topic before the lesson (   )

b. You prepare the topic during the lesson (   )

c. You don't prepare your topic (   )

سؤال12.هل أداءك أفضل عندما؟

أ- تحضر للموضوع قبل المجيء إلى الصف ( )

ب- تحضر الموضوع أثناء الدرس ( )

ج- لا تحضر( )

Q13. What is your teacher's reactions face to your lack of vocabulary when answering?

a. Provides you with the necessary vocabulary

b. Asks you to say it in Arabic

c. Interrupts you and asks another pupil to answer

سؤال13.ما هي ردود فعل المعلم على نقص المفردات لديك عند الإجابة؟

ا. يوفر لك المفردات اللازمة( )

ب. يطلب منك أن تقولها باللغة العربية( )

ج. يقاطعك ويسأل تلميذ آخر بالإجابة( )

Q14. When you speak English in front of your classmates and you miss a word, what would

your reaction be?

a. Anxious and stop talking (   )

b. Shy and start miming (   )

c. Keep talking using paraphrase (   )

سؤال14.عندما تتحدث بالإنجليزية أمام زملائك وتفتقد كلمة ما، ماذا سيكون ردك؟

ا-القلق والتوقف عن الحديث ( )

ب - الخجل والبدء بالإيماء( )

ج-الاستمرار في الحوار باستخدام إعادة صياغة ( )

Q15. If you do not speak enough in the classroom; does your teacher encourage you to

participate?

a. Very often (   )

b. Sometimes (   )

c. Rarely (   )

d. Never (   )

سؤال15.إذا كنت لا تتكلم بما فيه الكفاية في الصف هل معلمك يشجعك على المشاركة؟

أ. في كثير من الأحيان ( )

ب. أحيانا ( )

ج. نادرا ( )

د. أبدا( )

Q16. In which kind of activities do you feel comfortable to speak?

a. Dialogues ( )

b. Debates and discussions (   )

c. Presentations (   )

d. Role-plays and simulations (   )

e. Telling stories (   )

Other activities:

………………………………………………………………………………………………

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سؤال16.ما هي نشاطات التحدث مهتم بها؟

أ. الحوارات ( )

ب. مناظرات ومناقشات ( )

ج. العروض ( )

د. لعب الأدوار والمحاكاة ( )

ه. سرد القصص ( )

أنشطة أخرى:

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Thank you for your collaboration شكرا لكم على تعاونكم

Appendix 13

Questionnaire for Teacher

This questionnaire is a part of a Master dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of a Master degree. It aims at getting information about teacher's difficulties when teaching the speaking skill with first year secondary school pupils. In addition to the methods and activities used to focus on this skill. We would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

Section One: Teacher's Perceptions of the Speaking Skill

Q1. Which type of language skills do you focus on in teaching English in class?

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Q2. To what extent do you agree that in order to learn English, learners have to speak it?

a. Strongly agree (   )

b. Agree (   )

c. Disagree (   )

d. Strongly disagree (   )

Q3. How do you consider your pupils' level in the speaking skill?

a. Very good (   )

b. good (   )

c. Average

d. Low (   )

Section two: Factors Affecting Pupils' oral performance

Q4. What are the considerations that you take into account before/when preparing an oral task?

a.vocabulary (   )

d. pronunciation (   )

e. Grammar (   )

Others, please specify:

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Q5. Do you use other languages when teaching the speaking skill in addition to the English language?

a. Yes (   )

b. No (   )

If yes, what are they?

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Q6. What do you find most difficult in teaching the speaking Skill?

a. Grammar ( )

b. Pronunciation ( )

c. Vocabulary ( )

d. Sentence structure ( )

Q7. Do you give your pupils some time to think about an oral task?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

Q8. Do you think the amount of time devoted to speaking tasks is sufficient?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

Q9. Do your pupils perform better when

a. They prepare the topic before the lesson ( )

b. They prepare the topic during the lesson ( )

c. They do not prepare their topic ( )

Q10. What is your reaction toward your pupils' lack of vocabulary?

a. Provide them with the necessary vocabulary ( )

b. Ask them to say it in Arabic ( )

c. Interrupt them and ask another pupil to answer (   )

Q11. How often do your pupils participate in class?

a. Very often (   )

b. Sometimes (   )

c. Rarely (   )

d. Never (   )

Q12. Do you encourage your pupils to participate in class?

a. Yes (   )

b. No (   )

Q13. In which kind of activities do your pupils feel comfortable to speak?

a. Dialogues (   )

b. Debates and discussions (   )

c. Presentations (   )

d. Role-plays and simulations (   )

e. Telling stories (   )

Other activities:

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Q14. What can you suggest to make your pupils participate in class?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION

Résumé

En raison du statut international de la langue anglaise dans le monde, les apprenants de langue étrangère anglaise ont besoin de développer leurs compétences de parler. Cependant, les apprenants de langue anglaise sont confrontés à de nombreux problèmes et difficultés liées à l'apprentissage de la compétence de parler. Cette étude tente de mettre en évidence les principales raisons derrière la faible performance oral d'apprenants en anglais des élèves de la première année secondaire, ainsi que de proposer des solutions pour les enseignants et les apprenants visant à améliorer la performance orale des apprenants. Afin d'atteindre ce but, nous avons adopté un questionnaire pour les enseignants d'anglais et un autre pour les élèves de la première année secondaire comme un moyen principal de recherche. Les résultats obtenus ont montré qu'il ya des facteurs qui affectent négativement la performance orale des élèves de la première année secondaire. Ainsi, des solutions variées sont proposées pour les enseignants et les apprenants pour améliorer l'apprentissage de la compétence de parler.

ملخص

تحظى اللغة الانجليزية بمكانة دولية في العالم،و لهذا متعلمو اللغة الأجنبية الإنجليزية يحتاجون لتطوير مهارة التحدث لديهم. ومع ذلك يواجه متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية العديد من المشاكل والصعوبات متعلقة بتعلم مهارة التحدث. الدراسة التالية تحاول تسليط الضوء على الأسباب الرئيسية للأداء الشفوي الضعيف في اللغة الإنجليزية لتلاميذ السنة الأولى ثانوي، وكذلك اقتراح الحلول لكل من المعلمين والمتعلمين هادفين إلى تحسين الأداء الشفوي للمتعلمين. ولتحقيق هذه الغاية اعتمدنا استبيانين لكل من مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية وتلاميذ السنة الأولى ثانوي كوسيلة اساسية للبحث.أظهرت النتائج أن هناك عوامل تؤثر سلبا على الأداء الشفوي لتلاميذ السنة الأولى ثانوي. بناءا على هذا تم اقتراح مجموعة من الحلول لكل من المعلمين والمتعلمين لتحسين تعلم مهارة التحدث.