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 - المجلة تحترم كل الاحترام آراء المحكمين وتعمل بمقتضاها .
 - كافة الآراء والأفكار المنشورة تعبر عن آراء أصحابها ولا تتحمل المجلة تبعاتها .
 - يتحمل الباحث مسؤولية الأمانة العلمية وهو المسؤول عما ينشر له .
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The perspectives of Second Year Students At Faculty of Education in EL-Mergib University towards Implementing of Communicative Approach to overcome the Most Common Challenges In Learning Speaking Skill

وجهات نظر طلاب السنة الثانية بكلية التربية- جامعة المرقب اتجاه تطبيق اسلوب التواصل لتقادي الصعوبات الاكثر شيوعا في تعلم مهارة التحدث باللغة الانجليزية قسم اللغة الانجليزية , كلية التربية , جامعة المرقب

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ملخص الدراسة:

هدفت هذه الدراسة الي تحديد الصعوبات الأكثر شيوعا في تعلم مهارة التحدث باللغة الانجليزية التي يواجهها طلاب السنة الثانية لغة إنجليزية. أجريت هذه الدراسة في قسم اللغة الانجليزية بكلية التربية / جامعة المرقب. تضمنت هذه الدراسة بعض البنود منها: ماهي الصعوبات أو المشاكل التي تواجهه طلاب السنة الثانية في تعلم مهارة التحدث بالإنجليزية و ماهي احتياجات الطلاب للتغلب علي هذه الصعوبات و من تم هدفت الدراسة لمعرفة مواقف الطلاب اتجاه مختلف خصائص (اسلوب التواصل) لتحسين و تطوير هذه المهاره . تم اختيار 40 طالباً باستخدام اجراء اخذ عينات عشوائي بسيط. تتبعت هذه الدراسة الطريقه الكمييه لجمع البيانات .أداة الطريقه الكمييه التي استخدمت لجمع هذه البيانات هي (الإستبيان). تضمن الإستبيان 44 فقرة لالتحقق من البنود المذكوره اعلاه . كانت طريقة تحليل البيانات باستخدام الاحصاء الوصفي والنسبه المئوية. بينت النتائج ان الصعوبات او للمشاكل التي يعاني منها الطلاب الجامعيين لتعلم مهارة التحدث كانت وفقا الي نقص الممارسه , عدم الدافعيه وعدم اتاحة الفرص لتحدث اللغة الانجليزية داخل الفصل . كما وضحت الدراسة ان الطرق والأساليب المستخدمه في تعلم اللغة الانجليزية لا تشجع المتعلمين لتحدث اللغة الانجليزية. لذلك ستساعد هذه الدراسة طلاب السنة الثانية لغة انجليزية بكلية التربية - جامعة المرقب علي تقادي هذه الصعوبات وتلبية احتياجاتهم للتغلب عليها. كما ستساعد الدراسة علي التحقق من ان طريقة (اسلوب التواصل) هي الطريقه المثلى والقيمه لتحسين وتطوير مهارة التحدث باللغة الانجليزية لدى طلاب السنة الثانية قسم لغة انجليزية بكلية التربية -جامعة المرقب.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the most common challenges encountered by second year university students in learning speaking. This study was conducted at English Department -Faculty of Education in El Mergib University. This study addresses some main issues: What are the common



challenges faced by second year students at English department - Faculty of Education in learning speaking skills and What are students' needs to overcome their speaking difficulties? What are the attitudes of students towards different characteristics of communicative language teaching to improve/to enhance their speaking skills? A sample of 40 students was selected using a simple random sampling procedure. This study followed a quantitative method. The data collection instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 44 items which investigated the issues mentioned above. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and percentage. The outcomes indicated that the most common challenges for undergraduate students in learning speaking were the lack of practice, opportunities and motivation to speak in English classes. In addition, the techniques/approaches that are used in the lecture do not encourage learners to speak English. Therefore, this study will help second year university students to indicate the difficulties that face in learning to speak English, and what they need to do in order to overcome these challenges. This study also will investigate communicative approach (CA) as the most effective approach to improve and develop speaking skills of second year university students.

Keywords: challenges of speaking, teaching / learning speaking in English, communicative language teaching, practice and motivation.

Introduction

Background of the study

Egan (1999) argues that speaking well is of the greatest importance to pupils when interacting with others in a second language not only in teaching and learning environments, but also outside the classroom. Pupils should be able to "speak in a well-structured way" (Hampel, 2003, p.32) and develop their abilities to take part in a conversation.

Today, around the world courses in speaking have a prominent place in language teaching and learning approaches. According to Aksoy (2010) language teaching is based on the interests of the student in the target language, students should be helped by the teachers to learn and improve their speaking skills. Finding more effective ways to teach English speaking is a necessity of ever-growing needs for fluency in English around the world, as English has become an international language (Richards, 2008). Richards claimed that differences of language teaching approaches are to be expected as students' needs change from reading to oral proficiency; he also pointed out that when teachers select the



approach and materials to use with their students, they should think about learners' needs as well as teachers' preference, and limitations of the school.

Alhosni (2014) argues that the most difficult part which people encounter in learning English as a foreign language is speaking. In spite of the fact that most people know that the best way to avoid this difficulty is to practice speaking as much as they can, people cannot do this because they have not enough chances and not enough time to practice speaking in the classroom. Language centers often create courses focusing on speaking skills but besides the help of these courses, students should make some effort to improve their speaking skills on their own. Qutub (2012) suggested that Arab university students face difficulties in learning speaking English because of the lack of using the best techniques that enable them to speak English as a foreign language. He also argues that after eleven years of English language learning, Arab students are still incompetent and they cannot speak the foreign language well. Engelska (2008) in his study conducted in Pakistan underlined that there "the typical English language learning experience is almost devoid of any speaking practice at all"(p. 42). Further, he said that this is reflected in the examination system which has no provision for examination of oral skills.

In relation to the factors that affect speaking skills, Richards (2008) explains that students' willingness to communicate is influenced by their motivation which is affected by their interests. Yorio (1980) also asserted that there is a number of anxiety states that can affect the learning outcomes in an EFL environment such as class anxiety and test anxiety. Blake (2000) argues that motivation is important for student's ability to learn and speak English and the teachers and learners should work to stimulate students' interests in learning.

In Libya, although they have studied English for a long time in schools and universities, the students still have hesitations in speaking English (Alhosni , 2014). Libyan EFL students in higher education institutions and universities use their first language, i.e. Arabic, as a mean of communication. English language is a course that is required by general educational curriculum. Therefore, students must study it in order to pass examinations but not to improve of their speaking skills (Alteib, 2013).

In the light of the previously mentioned issues, throughout the researcher's experience as a student who studied at El Mergib University I noticed that there were some problems that students faced in learning speaking such as there was not any kind of practice in the classrooms, the educators were teaching by using traditional methods in which the learners were silent during English classes. Especially teaching with new techniques is important because they offer more



opportunities for students to practice English speaking (Lam and Lawrence, 2002). There are many approaches that are meant to develop speaking skills.

The Statement of the Problem

The second year university students have challenges in relation to their previous experiences in high schools and secondary schools. Students of English do not have practice on speaking. The students at universities have difficulties in speaking English in their everyday lives and they do not have opportunities to speak English in the classes. Speaking is neglected while it is one of the most important skills to improve the target language (Aksoy, 2010). Therefore, this study will focus on the difficulties that university students face in learning to speak English, and what they need to do in order to overcome these challenges. This study also will investigate CLT as the most effective approach to improve and develop speaking skills of university students.

The Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the difficulties that second year university learners face in learning speaking skills at Faculty of Education- Al Mergib University . In order to reach this aim, this study will attempt to answer the following research questions.

- 1- What are the most common challenges university students face while learning speaking skills?
- 2- What are the students' perspectives on the effectiveness of aspects of communicative approach CA in relation to learning speaking skills?

The Significance of the Study

According to Richards (2008), English language learners face challenges during the language acquisition process especially in speaking skills. So, an investigation of second year university students to find out their difficulties is a significant stemming from the following considerations. Previous studies have shown students' needs to overcome the challenges of their English speaking. There is a need to determine students' attitudes towards providing and facilitating their learning speaking in the class So the results of this study is expected to contribute to the improvement of practice of learning speaking in English classes at faculty of Education at the University of Al Mergib by using communicative language teaching (CLT). Moreover, this study will provide more insights into the efficient teachers who can apply the good approach to support their learners to improve their speaking skills.

Limitations

This study is limited to undergraduate university students at Faculty of Education- El Mergib University . There are not any teacher participants in this



study. They study at the English department. In this study only a questionnaire was used to collect data about students' challenges on learning speaking skills and how they can improve their speaking by using communicative approach.

Literature Review

The Importance of Developing Speaking Skills in Learning English.

Speaking skills is necessary to learn English because by speaking the second language (SL) learners will be motivated to express their thoughts, perspectives, and feelings; it develops other language skills, because, when the speakers try to speak they can improve their ability in grammar, writing, listening and pronunciation; the students can express themselves because speaking promotes self-confidence; and speaking improves learner's capacity to get and express an idea in a special manner (Harmer, 2005).

Morovaza (2013) postulates that speaking is the most important skill to be developed and improved as a meaning of effective interaction. In addition, she claims that EFL language learners should learn how they can increase or enhance their communicative ability (competence) in speaking. Khamkhien (2010) highlights that "Speaking is the most important skill in learning a second language or foreign language. In other words, he argues that "the speaking skill is a critical part of the language learning and teaching process". (p. 184).

Nomass (2013) assumes that learners who try to achieve EFL knowledge need more support of language. The students of EFL need more practice in speaking by being exposed to different activities that can help them to learn speaking effectively and easily.

The Most common Challenges that EFL learners face in learning speaking skill.

For nonnative speakers, English is difficult to speak. Maybe the learners face a lack of confidence or motivation, or embracement and worry in the class and the practice is a vital issue for speaking English so they must try to speak daily by interacting with their instructors and classmates (Dives, 2013). Moreover, Ur (1996) found out that there were some factors that affected speaking such as: EFL learners not having any ability to talk about themselves; the large number of students in the class impacts on the students' participation in the class because some of the students do not have the chance to speak and because of the time limit of the class; some learners are afraid, worried, and shy of making mistakes in front of their classmates; and some learners prefer to communicate with their friends in the class in the first language because they are relaxed when they share their language rather than English (as cited in Al-Hosni, 2014). The lack of communicative activities in textbooks is considered the main reason which making speaking so difficult (Al Hosni, 2014). . Similarly, Khamkhien (2010)



indicates that the factors that affect EFL students in English language speaking are the following: English speaking is considered as a hard subject to learn, there is not any support to speak English outside the classroom to increase the opportunities to communicate, the learners of EFL usually depend on the English teacher to speak and they just listen without practicing, the learners do not find a motivation to speak English in the class, and the learners may have negative attitudes towards the foreign language. .

In addition, English is taught and learned as a foreign language, but there is no opportunity of practising English and this makes speaking it fluently very difficult. In addition, the reasons behind this difficulty are the following: lack of curriculum for the EFL learners by the schools and universities, lack of using good approaches and methods that are suitable for the language environment, and the attitudes of the students that prefer to speak in their mother tongue (Pathan, Aldersi & Alsont, 2014).

The needs of EFL learners to improve and enhance English speaking skills

Motivation and Interests.

For all previous challenges, the educators should be aware of the students' needs to avoid their difficulties to learn English speaking. Motivation is the most important factor that affects the success in learning a second/foreign language (Niederhauser, 1997). According to Harmer (2005) claimed that The classroom is a kind of motivation by teaching methods and teachers who produce the intrinsic motivation (motivation in the classroom) to the students to learn the language.

Richards (2008) assumed that motivation affects the competence level and interest of the students. So, it is vital for the instructors to not be demoting of the speaking in the class. That means he should let the chance for the learners to speak in class as much as possible.

Proficient Teacher. Teachers play an important part in students' learning English. They are the instrument responsible for creating a good situation in the learning of a foreign language. Teachers' success is due to their proficiency in the language and his/her competence and expertise in approaches and ways of language teaching (Pathan, 2014).

Harmer (2005) noted that the job of the teachers who deal with developing speaking skills is more difficult than that of the other teachers who develop other language skills. If the teacher who deals with speaking skills is fluent in the class then the students will talk fluently also. Therefore, the students will not be fluent just if they hear speech; the teacher should give learners some opportunities to practise speaking skills.



Practice and attitudes. Nguyen (2011) claimed the students needed more practice to develop their speaking by interacting with their classmates. He also argued that the students believed that teachers should focus on the point of interest of the learners in the class. Moreover, he argues that it will be good if the teachers found the student's needs of listening and speaking by sending the learners to the labs and using communicative activities that support students' expressing their opinions in front of the whole class. The success of the students in speaking skills is affected by their capacity to communicate (Brown, 2001).

Using Communicative Language Teaching in Fostering English Speaking Skills

Richards (2008) asserted that "speaking has always been a major focus of language learning and teaching, both the nature of speaking skills as well as approaches to teach them" (p.2). In the light of teaching and learning speaking through employing the most effective approach, researchers and educators agree that second/foreign language learners have to learn speaking by "interaction" and this aim could be achieved best when communicative language teaching is made valuable (Al Hosni, 2014). Moreover, the communicative approach enhances the interaction of the class and increases the opportunities for students to practice by communicating in the process of learning. It is an approach that includes pair and group work of learners to increase self-confidence by engaging and giving the students opportunities to practice the language in the class (Agbatogum, 2014). "English language teaching and learning have been continually modified to suit the students' needs and interests in order to discover the most effective way to improve the quality of learning" (Aksoy, 2010, p.1).

CLT increases the motivation of the learner in the class room; it is a learner centered approach which focuses on the needs and interests of the second/foreign language (L2) learners in the class (Brown, 2015) Lake (2013) claimed that there are four features of CLT which make this approach the most effective approach to learn speaking: it considers interaction the most important issue of learning and teaching the language, CLT is an effective approach because it focuses on learning and centers on the practice of learning language which meets the needs of the learners and provides students with communication opportunities;

On the other hand, the CLT learners have a lot to achieve while speaking in the foreign language. The learner is an active participant with all the members of the class. Speaking together in the class enhances the skills of effective communication. In addition, the students in CLT classes are cooperative learners. The learners should work with each other and they also need to be responsible for each other in the process of their educational development. (Harmer, 2005).



Therefore, CLT is an efficient approach where students learn the foreign language through communication (Teaching English 4 all, 2011).

Methodology

Overall Research Design

This study is designed as a survey study(quantitative study) by using a questionnaire which is a major tool to collect data. In questionnaire studies Oxford (1990) referred that this method of data collection is efficient because it enables the researcher to cover a large number of participants in a relatively short time which would be very difficult with other data collection tools .This design is useful to understand and find out the challenges that university students face in learning speaking skills. A questionnaire which includes a group of close- ended questions that were given to second year university students at the English department at Faculty of Education to reveal the students' difficulties in learning speaking English was prepared by the researcher. Gay and Airsain define a questionnaire as a "written collection of self-report questions to groups of research participants" (as cited in Alteibe, 2013, p.90).

The use of the questionnaire suits the purpose of the study because the researcher has a large number of people to investigate, in this case, the researcher may acquire accurate and useful information derived from the questionnaire. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed carefully according to some criteria which will be discussed in the data analysis section later because the researcher tried to investigate and understand what happened in the English classes which made English speaking so difficult from the answers given by the students in the questionnaire. Therefore, based on the problem of the present study and its objectives, the approach taken is the descriptive analytic method, which aims to describe the phenomenon and shed light on different aspects in order to understand and identify their causes. The descriptive analytic approach aims to explain the reality of the phenomenon through derivation assets of micro scientific steps in which attempts are being made to answer the differences between respondents according to some variables and expressed quantitatively down to understand the phenomenon and the required procedures to deal with (Creswell, 2008).

Sampling and participants

The participants of this study included university students. The current study involved 40 students, both male and female. All of them are students who are studying in the English Language Teaching (ELT) department. The sample of this study were students who were randomly selected from second year at the ELT department of El Mergib university because random sampling is a method



for which participants are selected in a deliberative and non-purposive fashion to achieve a certain goal. According to Creswell (2008) “the intent of simple random sampling is to choose individuals to be sampled who will be representative of the population. Any bias in population will be equally distributed among the people chosen” (p. 153).

Data collection instruments.

In this study, data were collected through a questionnaire, which was necessary to achieve the objectives of the study. This questionnaire consists of 44 items of different questions related to this study. These questions are focused on student’s challenges that they face in learning speaking skills. This questionnaire was given to students for one day and was collected the next day to give students sufficient time to think and answer freely and accurately. The questionnaires were given to the students to give their opinions on major difficulties that affected their learning speaking skills. The questionnaire of the study used a five point -Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, in which 1 is strongly agree, 2 agree, 3 neutral, 4 disagree, 5 strongly disagree with each of the forty-five items. The data elicited from the questionnaire were descriptively analyzed and presented in items of frequencies (f) and percentage (%).

Data analysis

The data was analyzed quantitatively. The responses in the questionnaire were descriptively analyzed. It was also used to identify the frequencies which are important for interpretation of the data.

A frequency table can show what level the most of respondents agreed or disagreed with the statements. The descriptive statistics was used to identify the percentages and frequencies of the students’ respondents. Frequencies and percentages were computed to analyses the data. These measures were used to describe the findings on the challenges that students face in learning speaking, the needs of the students in speaking classes, and how the teacher can help to improve their speaking.

The numbers of choices at descriptive statistics in this study as follows :

(5- strongly agree , 4- agree, 3-neutral , 2- disagree, and 1- strongly disagree),then (Frequency) , after that (Percentage (%), next (Mean), finally (std.D)



Results and Discussion

Table 1 The most common challenges encountered by second year university students in learning speaking skills in English

A-I find it difficult to speak English because:					
1 There was not any kind of practice in my class.	5	39	98%	4.98	0.14
	4	1	2%		
2. The activities that were used in the class were not enjoyable.	5	36	91%	4.91	0.29
	4	4	9%		
3. I faced a lack of motivation to speak in English in the class.	5	35	89%	4.89	0.31
	4	5	11%		
4. I did not feel any interest to speak in the class.	5	34	85%	4.85	0.36
	4	6	15%		
5. I preferred to be silent because I had a fear of being misunderstood by my teacher and classmates.	5	34	87%	4.77	0.71
	4	3	9%		
	3	2	3%		
	2	1	1%		
6. Teaching approaches were not effective to improve my speaking skills.	5	33	83%	4.73	0.69
	4	32	10%		
	3	1	5%		
	2	1	1%		
	1	1	1%		
7. There was no variety of activities in the class to suit my level to enhance/improve my speaking skills.	5	30	77%	4.62	0.81
	4	5	13%		
	3	2	6%		
	2	2	3%		
	1	1	1%		
8. I had a lack of confidence to contribute/participate and practice speaking.	5	32	80%	4.58	1.02
	4	4	10%		
	3	1	3%		
	2	1	2%		
	1	2	5%		
9. I had not opportunity to practice speaking because my class was very large.	5	30	75%	4.57	0.89
	4	6	15%		
	3	1	3%		
	2	2	6%		
	1	1	1%		
10. I was not willing to speak about myself in the class.	5	28	70%	4.55	0.81
	4	6	10%		
	3	1	5%		
	2	5	15%		
11. I considered English is a hard subject to learn	5	26	66%	4.48	0.89



because my other subjects were in my first language.	4 3 2 1	7 2 4 1	24% 3% 6% 1%		
12. In the class more attention was paid to grammar rather than speaking.	5 4 3 2	22 14 1 3	55% 36% 4% 5%	4.41	0.79
13. In my class English was not used all the time.	5 4 3 2 1	26 5 4 3 2	65% 15% 10% 7% 3%	4.32	1.1
14. I just listen to my teacher talking.	5 4 3 2 1	27 5 3 1 4	67% 13% 7% 3% 10%	4.24	1.31
15. I could not identify my errors, I need my teacher to guide me.	5 4 3 2	21 5 5 9	50% 15% 15% 10%	4.15	1.02
16. I didn't participate with my classmates and teacher in the class.	5 4 3 2 1	20 8 8 2 2	50% 20% 20% 5% 5%	4.05	1.17
17. I felt embracement/shyness when I started to speak in English in the class.	5 4 3 2 1	14 18 5 2 1	35% 46% 11% 6% 2%	4.05	0.96
18. I was relaxed when I asked questions to my teacher in my first language.	5 4 3 2 1	20 8 4 5 3	51% 22% 7% 16% 4%	4.00	1.26
19. When I spoke, I worried about making mistakes in front of my classmates.	5 4 3 2 1	20 10 1 5 4	50% 25% 2% 15% 8%	3.94	1.36
20. I put in my mind that I need English only to pass	5	18	45%	3.76	1.36



an exam	4	6	15%		
	3	8	20%		
	2	5	11%		
	1	3	9%		
21. I preferred to participate in the lesson by using my first language rather than English.	5	18	43%	3.74	1.35
	4	6	17%		
	3	8	20%		
	2	5	11%		
	1	3	9%		

The questionnaire of the study included twenty two statements regarding the difficulties that University EFL students face in learning English speaking skills. According to the responses of the participants, more than half of the students have difficulties in learning English speaking. The statements in Table (1) were designed to investigate these challenges that the second year University students face in learning speaking skills.

The results also showed that practice is very important for the students' ability to participate and learn English speaking properly and the teachers should try to motivate them to develop interest for learning speaking (Harmer, 2005). The first statement indicates that 98 % of the students strongly agreed that there was no practice in their classes, while only 2 of the 40 students reported to 'agree'. Thus, all the students agreed that they lacked practice in the classroom. The results therefore revealed that the majority of the participants at Al-Mergib University were suffering from lack of participation and communication in English classes. To some extent, this result may be because of the students' lack of confidence and motivation to speak English in the class. As a result of this, they find it difficult to practice English speaking skills. This is supported by the evidence of the students whose answers are "zero" and the no ones who "disagree" that lack of practice in the class contributed to these challenges. It may also be due to the methods used by teachers which are teacher centered. Hence, the results of the current study highlight the need for practice in classrooms in order to improve their speaking skills. The students will not be able to speak English fluently and accurately if they do not practice and make contribution in the class together with their classmates (Nazara, 2011).

The next statement in Table 2 indicates that students do not participate in the lessons effectively. There were 50% of the respondents who stated that they did not participate in interaction with their classmates and teachers in the English classes but 5% of the participants remained neutral, 20% disagreed, and 25% strongly disagreed. As a result of the present study, it was discovered that the



students had problems in communicating and expressing themselves properly. Actually, it may be that they can speak/ express their ideas in the class but they did not have any opportunities to interact with their classmates in the class because the approach that are used in the class was teacher centered, while 45% stated that they had enough background information about the subjects taught in English classes that were enable them to participate in the class. However, most of the students do not have an opportunity to participate in class activities and to interact with their classmates and teachers because of a very limited time given in learning speaking skills. However, similar results can be identified in the following statement of which 80% of the respondents believed that students are not confident enough to practice and express themselves fluently in speaking skills, whereas the minority of the participants 10% disagreed. These findings imply that the students like to practice speaking in the class but they are timid to do so. The students can not discover the proper words to express themselves and they are scared of making mistakes that might occur while speaking (Ferris & Tagg, 1996). Statement which clearly follows shows that the majority of the respondents 89% stated that students face a lack of motivation to speak English in the class, while the minority of the respondents 11% remains neutral.

In learning speaking skills, there are studies that support the importance of motivation to develop and improve speaking skills. One of these studies is Wu's (2010) study. He states that "It is the teacher's duty to create a less threatening atmosphere to motivate and to strengthen students' confidence. More motivated students tend to be more successful language learners" (p.184 -185). The results of the current study also reveals that the students need to be motivated because they face challenges. The challenge is that they are not encouraged and motivated to improve their speaking skills for communicative purposes. It may be because they had no chance to express their opinions in the class. This therefore makes the students not to give attention to some topics because the topic did not attract their interest. Similarly, next statement indicated that 70% of the respondents that participated are not willing to speak about themselves. The result also shows that there seems to be difficulties in University lectures especially in the area of speaking and understanding English. For statement after, in which there was a very limited opportunity for the students to practice English speaking, the results show that more than a half of the respondents 65% believe that University students face difficulty to practice the language which may be because students mostly do not have an opportunity to live in an environment where English the main language of communication. Furthermore, the other reason for this, may be that the time allocated for English teaching in



the classroom is very minimal. The students of Al-Mergib University are taught English the speaking skill for approximately 2 hours per week. On the other hand, the teachers still understand that speaking is an essential skill for students and they work on this important skill, yet nearly half of them complain that they did not have enough time to practice the speaking skills efficiently (Bilal, 2013). In addition, in the present study 50 % respondents stated that when they needed to speak with their teacher they often worried about making mistakes in front of their classmates. They usually try to speak in their first language (L1) rather than English when they want to ask questions to their teacher in English classes. Moreover, 51% of the respondents in statement which indicated that learners feel relaxed when they ask their English teacher in their own mother tongue. This might be due to their little knowledge in the English language and they were afraid to make mistakes while speaking. They may also be the students had a lack of confident to interact in the class. For the next statement 19 the results revealed that more than half of the respondents 67% (M= 3.74 and SD =1.35) believe that the teacher talked in the class while the students only listen to the teacher without practice, whereas 13% remained Neutral and disagreed. The results therefore show that the participants had problems with the techniques that are used in the English class. This is may be there was no kind of participation and contribution with their teachers and classmates. The students listen to the teacher while talking without practicing what they were learning. Mccombs (2001) describes that “teachers who use communicative approach are more successful in engaging students in an effective learning process and are themselves more effective learners and happier with their jobs” (p.190). On the other hand ,the following statement clearly shows that nearly all the respondents 91% stated that the activities that are used in English are not enjoyable for the improvement of the students’ skills. While 9% remained neutral.

The findings therefore show that the participants of second year at Faculty of Education in Al-Mergib University had difficulty in learning speaking skills. The reason may be that the activities used in English classes did not help the students to improve the use of their communicative skills. They did not help to improve the grammatical knowledge of the students. Nolasco and Arthur (1987) emphasize this fact that is a good responsibility to provide students with an English speaking environment. The significance of the activities in a classroom lessons is for the teacher to use a good method and approach to motivate the students to speak the English language. Similarly, the next statement indicated that more than half of the respondents 55% show that more attention is paid to



the grammatical structure rather than speaking. Therefore, this shows that the participants have a lot of challenges with the exercises of the classroom activities. The students would always want to do some activities like pair and group work and information gap activities in order to improve their speaking skills. The reason behind that may be In Al-Mergib University, the students were provided with new grammar topics such as gap feeling of which was a very limited opportunity for students to practice the language. It may also be the activities and the techniques used in the classes which often pay more attention to engaging the students in a situation within which they could use their grammatical knowledge effectively. The communicative activities will not only enable students to communicate in another language but also helps them gain confidence in learning the foreign language as a medium of instruction (Davis, 2013) .

Statement that accentuates that the majority of the respondents 83% strongly agreed that the teaching approaches are not effective to improve students' speaking skills. The findings show that the students have problems with the technique that their teachers are using in English classes. The reason behind this may be that the teachers use traditional methods and approaches in a situation in which the teachers talk and how the students pay attention; there is no other kind of practice in the class. Therefore they can easily learn English by communication and by seeing how the language can be used. It may also be because of the limited time and large classes in Al-Mergib University. It was difficult to use communicative approach in the classrooms. The students only had two teaching hours of speaking skills per week. Thus, it was difficult to have opportunity to practice speaking to all students in the English classes . Besides the syllabus was provided and the teachers were expected to cover the whole syllabus in every week (Mccombs, 2001).

Statement on what students need, investigated that the students have an idea in their mind that they need English only to pass examination. The results show that less than a half 45% (M =3.76, SD =1.36) stated that they needed to know English in order to pass their examinations. In this case, it should be emphasized that the students of Al-Mergib did not only need the English language to pass their examinations but also need it for daily class communication in order to improve their speaking skills. With this result, it shows that the participants show positive attitude towards learning speaking skills. However, more than half of respondents 85% indicated that the students did not show interest in speaking the



English language in the class. The students will participate more in English classes if they develop interest for the subject. In this case, this may be made possible when there is communicative language teaching that enhances and maintains speaking skills to make students more interested in English classes (see table 2).

The following statement indicated that nearly more than a half of the respondents 77 % stated that speaking activities were not suitable for their level to improve their language skills. In addition, the majority of the respondents 65 % agreed that these activities that they did in the class were not sufficient and interesting for the development of the English language in their classes all the time . As it can be viewed from the findings, it is obvious that the students find it difficult to speak the English language fluently while doing the activities. This may be the students speak mostly in their native language during pair or group work activities which they try to do in the English classes. Moreover, this may be that students are not encouraged to speak and improve their English speaking and they did not stop using their native language to communicate during the English class. Hence, the results also show that the students should be encouraged during the class activities and do everything in accordance with students' interests. The majority of the respondents 50% stated that the students could not identify their errors; they always need their teacher to guide them . In addition, the majority of the respondents 87% agreed that students prefer to remain silent in the class because they are afraid of being misunderstood by their teachers and classmates . As a result of this, the students may be have a lack motivation in speaking skills because they are afraid of being embarrassed in front of their classmates. This shows may be the students need encouragement to speak English language without being afraid of making mistakes. They should be therefore informed that making mistakes in while speaking English language is a normal thing that happens often especially to non native speakers and they should be made to understand that mistake is a ladder to perfection in their learning process (Alteibe, 2013).

Table 2 The Need of Students to Improve and Develop Speaking Skills in English Classes

B- To improve and develop my speaking skills in the class I need:					
22. A good teacher who used techniques that supported interaction among students.	5	36	93%	4.93	0.26
	4	4	7%		



23. Effective approaches/ techniques that helped me to improve my English speaking.	5 4 3 2	37 1 1 1	94% 3% 2% 1%	4.9	0.44
24..Motivation to support me to speak English.	5 4 3 2	36 2 1 1	93% 4% 2% 1%	4.89	0.45
25. A friendly teacher who had good relation with me.	5 4 3 2 1	32 3 3 1 1	82% 10% 4% 3% 1%	4.69	0.77
26.Encouragement and interest to learn speaking skills.	5 4 3 2 1	32 3 3 1 1	84% 6% 5% 3% 2%	4.67	0.87
27. To work in a group and in pairs with my classmates.	5 4 3 2	30 4 5 1	73% 10% 15% 2%	4.54	0.82
28.Enough opportunities to practice the speaking skills.	5 4 3 2 1	30 6 1 1 2	73% 17% 3% 2% 5%	4.51	1.02
29. Enough time to practice my speaking skills.	5 4 3 2 1	30 3 4 2 1	72% 8% 10% 7% 3%	4.39	1.11
30. Suitable size of class to promote English speaking.	5 4 3 2 1	26 8 3 2 1	65% 20% 7% 5% 3%	4.39	1.02
31. To play language games in the class.	5 4 3 2 1	25 8 2 4 1	63% 22% 5% 8% 2%	4.36	1.03
32. Significant activities that support the	5	25	64%	4.32	1.07



practice of speaking in the class.	4	6	16%		
	3	3	10%		
	2	5	8%		
	1	1	2%		
33. Enjoyable tasks that attract my attention.	5	26	66%	4.31	1.15
	4	6	14%		
	3	4	10%		
	2	2	5%		
	1	2	5%		
34. To converse with my friends and my teacher.	5	20	50%	4.1	1.14
	4	10	25%		
	3	4	15%		
	2	3	5%		
	1	3	5%		

According to the questionnaire of the study there were 13 statements designed to understand the needs of the participants to overcome their difficulties in learning speaking skills. The results in this section showed that the majority of the respondents find the characteristics of the communicative language teaching approach was benefit to improve the students' speaking skills. Statement that stated that the students need motivation to improve their speaking skills. 93% of respondents agreed, 4 % remained neutral, while 1% disagreed with this statement. There were also more than half of the respondents 84% stated that they need encouragement to boost their interest in improving their speaking skills, while 6% remained neutral and 5% disagreed .

The result of this shows that the participants need motivation and encouragement from their instructors in order to practice speaking skill. The reason for this might be because they feel relaxed while communicating with their classmates by sharing ideas together and this gives them a good sense of motivation and it is a good indication that the students are supposed to be encouraged in speaking English without being afraid of using the English language in the class. The students therefore need support to speak the English language without making them to allow their native language to overwhelm English language in English classes. Motivating the students to speak is a crucial issue that must be put into consideration. When the teachers encourage the students it helps their morale and they try as much as possible to develop more interest to speak English. When motivation is lacking, the students easily lose interest and they find it difficult to speak (Almasri, 2013). Moreover, the students need to pick interest and find it enjoyable especially in their English classes.



Once they enjoy it the enthusiasm becomes very high. However, during the some studies, it has been proven that the researcher considers investigating the learner's interest as an important aspect of learning English and foreign languages. According to Nunan (1988), he points out that language teaching is based on the students' interest in the target language. The next statement explores that the students need more opportunity to practice the speaking skills. There were 73% of the respondents agreed with this statement while the minority of the respondents 25% disagreed. The findings therefore show that the interest to speak is vital for the participants to communicate and improve their speaking by sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings with their teacher and classmates in the English class. Therefore there is a need for enough opportunities from their teachers to improve their speaking skills. The following statement shows that the students need effective approach that helps them improve their English speaking. Nearly all of the respondents (n=94) strongly agreed with this point while 1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The result of this is that the participants have difficulties in the technique being used in the class and this hinders them to improve their speaking skills. This may be because of the lack of an effective approach and in this case they need a good approach in order to improve their speaking skills in their classes. However, English language teaching and learning have been modified continually in accordance with the students' needs and interest in order to discover the most effective method of English learning.

The findings therefore show that the communicative approach (CLT) is benefit to learn speaking skills. This might be to the fact that communicative language teaching focuses on the practice and needs of the learners, the most essential purpose of CLT which consists of developing learners' communicative competence and improving the objectives of program according to the learners' needs. Therefore, the students should learn the language for communicative purposes to express their needs by knowing how to use the language.

In the light of the above discussion, the researcher found out that effective oral communication between students and their teachers is very important for developing English speaking skills. Before designing the syllabus, the needs and the interests of the students in the target language are to be investigated. Thus, the participants need an enjoyable task that will attract their attention to improve their speaking skills. As shown in statement in which 66% of the respondents strongly agreed, 10% disagreed and neutral. The next statement shows that the



students need a proficient teacher who uses a technique that encourages interaction among students. 94% of the respondents agreed with this statement while minority of them remain neutral and disagreed. The reason behind this may be the teachers try to do their best to apply different types of technique to teach the students in order to motivate and improve their speaking skills in their English classes.

In addition, the participants need a significant activity that encourage speaking English in classes. The majority 64% therefore agreed with this while 16% remain end neutral and disagreed. The results show that the syllabus should be designed in accord with the communicative skills so that the students will have opportunities to develop interest for speaking skills and they will become more confident to interact with English language in the class. It is therefore very important to develop some activities in the class, this helps the students to practice language in the class effectively. The types of activities that help in achieving this are group and pairs works, educational games with their classmates in the . In relation to this, the half of the respondents stated that the students need to converse during lectures in order to improve their speaking skills, while the majority of the respondents 63% agreed that they need to play educational game in English class see statement 39.

These findings show that the university students need some activities that will help them in their speaking skills. this is may be because they will have to do make use of English language as their language of communication during their activities and the university students should be supported with the efficient techniques such as CLT that are capable of improving the students' speaking skills. The communicative approach is therefore mainly meant for the development of speaking skills between the teachers and the students especially CLT that involves some communicative activities such as group/ pairs works, discussion, and educational games. These are effective factors that enhance speaking skills. The following statement 40 stated that (82%) of the participants agreed that they needed a friendly teacher with good human relation in order to be able to flow. Aksoy (2010) stated that subjects arouses learners' interest and if the learners have something informative about the subject it makes the participation active and with close relationship with their teacher they can speak English well. He also said that the relationship of the students with their teachers is a good factor that keeps students' interest in developing their speaking skills.



The result of this study therefore shows that the second year students should learn about their learners' interest and find out some fascinating topics that can hold and arrest the learners' interest and attention and this will make the students and the teacher establish a very good relation that will make the students feel their teacher is not hostile at them and he is a friendly person. In the next statement , it is indicated that the second year students need enough time to practice the speaking skills. More than half of the respondents 72% agreed with this statement. In relation with this, the majority of the students 65% agreed that they needed a suitable size of English class to promote English speaking. Johnson (2011) points out that if the teacher gives the students enough time to practice the language used in the performance rises because the sufficient time give to practice English speaking arouses more interest to speak it. Thus, as a result of this point, it shows that it is important to give more time to the students to prepare and participate and this will encourage them to speak more effectively. Moreover, the findings show that EFL learners need a small number of the classes. This gives the students more opportunity to practice English language interestingly in the classes. Engelska (2008) highlights that the use of a small number of class makes the students to utilize well what they have leaned in English and this will give them an opportunity to practice adequately the speaking skills among themselves.

Table 3: The perspectives of students towards the characteristics of Communicative language teaching to overcome their difficulties and improve their English speaking

C- My English teacher can help me in learning speaking skills when he/she :					
35. Knew my abilities in learning speaking skills.	5	33	87%	4.93	0.26
	4	3	7%		
	3	2	4%		
	2	1	1%		
	1	1	1%		
36. Engaged me to express my opinions in the class.	5	33	86%	4.9	0.44
	4	3	4%		
	3	3	8%		
	2	1	2%		
37. Encouraged me to speak in English.	5	37	95%	4.89	0.45
	4	2	4%		
	3	1	1%		
38. Facilitated the learning process by using simple language	5	31	78%	4.67	0.87
	4	4	12%		
	3	3	5%		



	2	1	2%		
	1	1	3%		
39. Involved me more in communicating in the class.	5	31	79%	4.54	0.82
	4	5	11%		
	3	1	3%		
	2	3	7%		
40. Motivated me to learn speaking skill.	5	24	68%	4.51	1.02
	4	8	22%		
	3	1	2%		
	2	3	5%		
	1	1	3%		
41. Had experience to take care of the different levels of his/her students.	5	35	89%	4.36	1.03
	4	4	10%		
	3	1	1%		
42. Allowed me to make mistakes and still feel OK.	5	38	98%	4.32	1.07
	4	1	1%		
	3	1	1%		
43. Reduced my anxiety when I wanted to speak in the class.	5	38	96%	4.31	1.15
	4	1	3%		
	3	1	1%		
44. Used significant activities that maintain the practice in the class.	5	39	99%	4.1	1.14
	4	1	1%		

In the following sections, analysis of each response of the participants of the study of how the English teachers can help their EFL students to overcome their challenges in learning speaking skills. There are statements regarding this part . These statements were designed to investigate the roles of the teachers when they use CLT in English classes to develop their students' speaking skills. The statement in this Table indicates that the students will be greatly improved in their English speaking if their teacher encourages them. Ninety five percent of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement while 4% remains neutral and 0% disagreed. Similarly, in the statement next more than half 68% stated that the teacher should motivate their students to learn speaking skills. Richards (2013) points out that the teachers' effort to set up tasks, techniques and activities in which learners play the major role. It is therefore their duties to motivate, facilitate and monitor these activities and techniques to give them a proper modification. Hence, the result reveals that the respondents indicated that the teachers should help their learners when they play their own roles in the classes.

In the next statement indicated that the students needed teachers as facilitators to facilitate learning speaking by using simple language. There was 78% of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while 12% remained neutral and 2% disagreed. In the next statement it indicates that the



teachers can help their students to improve their speaking skills when they engage them in expressing their ideas and opinions in the class. There was 84% of the respondents that remained neutral and disagreed. The following results revealed that almost all the students 96% strongly agreed that their students can improve in speaking English by helping their teachers reduce their anxiety while they are speaking. Moreover , 87% of the respondents showed that the teachers should know their responsibility as regards helping the students to improve their English speaking . Also, almost all the students strongly agreed that it is good for their teachers to assist them in overcoming their difficulties in speaking English by allowing them to make mistakes and wisely and politely correct them . In addition, 89% of the respondents strongly agreed their teachers to let their experience be taken care of.

The results of the statements of current study shows that the respondents that it is the duty of the teachers to help students overcome their difficulties in speaking skills, and make them have confidence to improve the quality of their speaking skills. This may be It is important for teacher to prepare a class and the atmosphere where students will be able to express their opinions and ideas while learning in the classroom. Heller, Underwood, and Tasi (2012) states that teacher should build a friendly relationship with students based on mutual trust. He further states that once the students trust their teacher they develop confidence and they will not be afraid to make mistake because the teacher has created a conducive environment for interaction and practice. Therefore, the result of this statement becomes very important for teachers and learners to have a mutual trust; under such condition every mistake of error will become another topic for learning and it will expand students' knowledge. One of the difficulties in learning speaking is lack of self esteem. Self-esteem leads to great achievement in acquiring English speaking. Those students who have a very self-esteem and confidence are always very outspoken in the class and the improve so quickly. Thus, the teachers' role is to be aware of the levels and abilities of their learners. T he teachers should therefore encourage their students to have confidence in themselves and their speaking learning process. The teacher should develop their students in speaking skills in order to participate more in class discussion.

The following statements indicate that the teachers can help their students by engaging them in communication in the class. Therefore, 79% of the respondents strongly agreed with this point. Moreover, nearly all the participants 99% accepted that the teacher should use a very significant activities and technique that improves the practice in speaking English in the classroom. The



results then show that the teachers are expected to guide the class; their roles should help students to work with one another to find answers to rising questions on communication. It is therefore important for the students to be encouraged by their teachers. Ebrahimi, Salehi, Sattar, and Shojaee (2015) states that ” In planning class activities, the focus of the English teacher was on identifying the tasks students needed to do in order to learn speaking”(p.95). The results of this study showed that one of the most important points in teaching process is that teacher may need to consider the learners’ ideas in learning speaking and provide every necessary activities for the students in learning speaking skills.

Conclusion and recommendations

Main Findings

Based on the analysis of the students’ questionnaire, in relation to difficulties faced when learning speaking in English ,the second year students at Faculty of Education in Al-Mergib University suggest that they face difficulties related to lack of motivation and teachers’ interest in students, lack of confidence to practice speaking English , and use of traditional approaches to teaching English language. Most of the participants said that they feel embarrassed when they speak in English in the class, and that they are relaxed when they speak in their first language rather than English . The findings therefore show that the participants of El- Mergib University may be experiencing foreign language speaking anxiety or lack of confidence in producing the target language in the classroom. They do not use activities that engage students to practice speaking English in the classroom. Nelson and Arthur (1987) emphasize The significance of the activities in a classroom lessons and using effective methods/ approaches by FL teachers are important to motivate the students to speak English language. In addition, major of the participants’ responses determined that they have not opportunities to speak English during English classes because of the limited time and large size of the classes.

Moreover, in relation to the needs of students when learning English speaking, the findings of the current study showed that second year students therefore need some help and encouragement from their teachers . They also need to be interested in English classes by selecting enjoyable tasks that attract their attention. They also need enough opportunities to practice the speaking skills. In addition, the results showed that second year students need an efficient teachers who use effective approaches and techniques that support interaction among students to improve their speaking skills in English classes. They need enough time to practice their speaking skills and suitable size of class to promote



English speaking. According to Saricoban (1999), “. Speaking skill of second language is not derived naturally; it needs some processes of learning” (p.89). The process of learning in the classroom involves students and teacher relationship. The process of speaking in the classroom requires students to be taught by some effective approaches that enhances their speaking skill (Richard, 2008).

In relation to the students’ perspectives about their attitudes towards the different characteristics of CLT to improve their English speaking skills, students feel/think that they would benefit from methods that utilize a communicative language teaching (CLT) to eliminates difficulties in learning speaking skills. This is because CLT is the approach that deals with interaction and practice. It allows students to become fluent in speaking English as foreign language (Bilal, 2013). All of this improved by the results of the final part of the questionnaire that showed the English teachers can help their students in learning speaking skills by encouraging, facilitating, and motivating them in learning speaking skills. The results also showed that the English teachers can help their students to improve their speaking by using significant activities that maintain the practice in the class, knowing the ability of their students to learn speaking , and taking care of the different levels of their students in the class. All of the percentages, total of mean score, and standard deviations of each statement are detailed in previous details.

Recommendation

Suggestions for Educational Practice

When learning English speaking, Lie (2012) states that many EFL students have not succeeded in speaking in English well because they lack motivation, practice, and the method of which the teaching of the English language is being used. It is therefore recommended that:

- Teachers should realize that motivation, interest, interaction and practice that will improve the attitudes of students towards English speaking are vital factors to develop university students in their speaking skills.
- The current study found that, students believed that teachers are not using aspects of CLT in their classrooms. It also found that they do not employ interesting activities. Therefore, it is recommended that EFL teachers, especially at universities, should take their students’ interests into account and prepare activities that are enjoyable and not only based on grammar.
- Teachers should create a warm and encouraging environment in the classroom to allow students to use and practice English.



- Students should be supported with communicative activities that will help them develop their English speaking.
- More hours should be allocated to the teaching of English speaking which will encourage the students to practice and learn more about the speaking skills.
- Teachers should not totally depend on a single approach when teaching English speaking. Innovative approaches when teaching English should be preferred to be employed rather than traditional language learning approaches.
- EFL teachers should be trained on the innovative approaches to be able to employ them in their EFL classrooms.
- Teachers should eliminate the anxiety of their students while they speak English in the classroom.
- EFL teachers should provide their students opportunities to use the target language and eliminate native language usage in the EFL classroom.
- EFL teachers should avoid any embarrassing situation that will make the students feel disgraced in front of their classmates.
- In relation to the needs of the students, teachers of EFL should be proficient enough in speaking to provide confidence and motivation to their students.
- EFL teachers should have a good relationship with their learners in order to enhance students' confidence. By doing so, students develop self-confidence (Harmer, 2005).
- To avoid poor speaking, lack of self-confidence, shyness, and embarrassment in EFL classes, EFL teachers should focus on communication among classmates which could be made possible through group and pair work.

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