

## A STUDY OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS

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### Annotation

The general assumption is that language is a purposive, goal-directed activity; Their main goal is the internalization of a set of rules that defines correct linguistic competence accompanied by the required communicative competence. In addition, a language is a unit of four main skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Recently, for both linguistic and psychological reasons, it has been argued that speaking English should be the primary goal of language teaching. The current study was conducted to examine the causes of problems that primary school learners encounter when learning English from the perspective of English teachers. In addition, the present study aims to answer the following question: What problems do primary school students face when learning English from the point of view of English teachers? This was done using a questionnaire prepared by the researcher based on the relevant literature review and previous studies and submitted to a jury in English for verification of its validity and reliability. The questionnaire was then applied to a sample of teachers. The data collected were statistically evaluated. In light of the results obtained, several concluding points, some recommendations, and suggestions for further research were made.

**Keywords:** Basic school learners, speaking skills, teachers' perspectives, speaking problems.

### Introduction

Modern psychological theories provide ample evidence that education becomes meaningful and more relevant when it is learner-centered and when the whole system revolves around the learner. Likewise, it is commonly believed that language is a goal-directed activity; their goal is the internalization of a system of rules that defines the acquisition of competence (Widdowson: 1984, p.242). More specifically, learning a language requires constant practice to develop habits that improve understanding and speaking of the foreign language (FL). Therefore, learning has gained importance, as mentioned in the recent literature on education. Amid the



urgent need to speak FLs during World War II, programs to teach listening and listening were started in many parts of the United States.

In the 1930s direct control of vocabulary and presented grammatical structures aimed to systematize teachers' work and provide principles that would provide the learner with input tailored to their presumed learning tactics. The basic principle of the structural approach is that language patterns must be practiced by the learner. This can be done through practice and practice so that patterns are properly generated as a matter of unconscious habit (Stevens: 1977, p. 1). Ideas of Bloomfieldian and European descriptive linguistics in special courses for language teaching for service staff with audio-lingual methods. In the 1950s, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) was deliberately developed in the United States based on Bloomfield's structural linguistics and Skinner's behavioral psychology. This approach was dominant for over 20 years (Corder: 1973, p. 185); (Stevens: 1977, p. 8) and (Wilkins: 1974, p. 61).

All of the above methods have emphasized language at a time when reading and writing are usually deferred until the language is mastered. Based on the previous ideas and assumptions, a language is a unit of four main skills, namely listening and speaking, reading and writing. Speaking is a very important skill that overlooks the other four sub-skills, namely fluency, accuracy, grammar, and comprehension. Recently, for both linguistic and psychological reasons, it has been argued that speaking English should be the primary goal of language teaching. Likewise, linguists and psychologists have concluded that language is the primary form of language (Stevens: 1977, p. 109). Therefore, the prevailing idea among language teachers was that the way one speaks should be given more attention than what one says, and that to be a good speaker one needs constant practice to develop the skills, which was already pointed out at the time when different approaches to foreign language teaching (FLs) were emerging to replace the classic grammatical translation method.

**Problem statement:**

Teaching English is a unique opportunity to develop and improve various language skills. Unfortunately, in the Iraqi context, there has been no serious debate about the role of the teacher. This is usually reflected in learners' assimilation and development of language skills in general and speaking in particular. The consequence is the noticeable inability of the learners themselves to practice their oral skills.



## The Research Questions

What language difficulties are related to the teacher?

What are the language difficulties associated with the student?

### Aims of the study:

The current research aims to identify the problems that negatively affect oral English acquisition and to provide answers to the following research question: From the point of view of English teachers, what problems negatively affect the English learning of elementary school students? to learn?

The Hypotheses: The current research attempts to test the following hypotheses: There is no statistical difference between the primary school English teachers' responses that their ESL teaching is negatively impacted by a range of problems, resulting in unsatisfactory development of learners' language skills leads. There is no statistical difference between the responses of primary school English teachers that their students learning English as a foreign language are negatively impacted by a range of problems that lead to the underdevelopment of the learners' speaking skills.

**Limitations of the study** The present study is limited to examining the problems of primary school learners in learning English from the point of view of subject teachers. In the 2013-2014 school year, it is also limited to primary and secondary English teachers in Iraqi schools.

**The Significance of the Study:** It is expected that the present study will be of some value to ESL teachers by acquainting them with the issues that negatively impact their students' English learning. In this regard, they should direct and supervise their instruction in a manner that facilitates student learning and minimizes the impact of difficulties encountered. Additionally, the literature review introduced into the current research is expected to be of use to those who may be interested in identifying the negative factors, including the issues and difficulties encountered by the students.

You may also find a resource for a better understanding of the teaching and/or learning of oral English in the empirical part of the study. Finally, as noted by some researchers, for example, Richards and Lockhart (2004:1), Tremmel (1993:434), and Pennington (1995:706), examining the status of oral skills in the classroom is



important for teachers' understanding of the Dynamics in the classroom and challenges and bridges the gap between theory and practice.

**Definition of Speaking:** Speaking is the transmission of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sound using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal cords, tongue, teeth, and lips. Speaking is the second of the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This vocalized form of speech usually requires at least one listener. Speaking can be formal or informal. Informal speaking is typically used with family and friends or people you know well. Formal speaking occurs in business or academic situations, or when meeting people for the first time. Speaking is probably the language skill most language learners want to perfect as quickly as possible.

**The role of speaking in language teaching and learning:** Speaking is one of the most important language skills. Speaking is considered the most desirable skill when learning a language. Tarigan (1990) states that speaking is a language skill that develops in childhood that is generated through listening skills, and it is at this time that speaking skills are learned. Language is being deprived of communication that cannot be separated from everyday life. Clark and Clark (in Nunan, 1991) state that speaking is essentially an instrumental act. Speakers speak to make an impact on their audience. The focus is on the conversational skills of the students; it becomes an essential aspect of successful language learning. As such, language functions as a system for expressing meaning. As Nunan (1991) states, it is measured by a person's ability to carry on conversations in the languages.

The Importance of Speaking by speaking we don't just mean uttering words through the mouth. It means conveying a message through such words. Richards (2008:) states that people who meet, exchange greetings, engage in small talk, share current experiences, etc. do so because they want to be friendly and create a comfortable zone of interaction with others. This indicates that fluency, or good oral communication, is a key aspect of keeping people connected. Because language is a means of communication, there is no excuse for a language learner not to be able to speak the language they are learning.

**Issues with Speaking Performance:** Developing speaking skills in a second or foreign language is a challenge for learners because speaking a foreign language such as English requires speaking in a real context and not just knowledge of grammar. Choose appropriate words and phrases depending on your social



environment, target group, situation, and topic. Being a fluent speaker requires knowledge of the learned language itself and its use in real-world communication. However, there are some issues that learners encounter that result in their not being able to speak fluently. According to Doris and Jessica (2007), language problems are one of the most important reasons for poor school performance. These problems can become obstacles that prevent learners from expanding and improving their speaking skills. The reasons why students have trouble speaking are their lack of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These difficulties belong to language problems. Other difficulties are psychological issues that can be an obstacle to students speaking English well. afraid to speak.

These problems can affect students' language ability. Khan (2005) claims that some of his participants had mental problems when speaking. This underscores the fact that mental health problems also affect students' speaking performance. In addition, there are some problems that teachers face in their large classes when teaching speaking activities in the classroom. Recent studies have shown that these problems are not new, and neither are the solutions offered. Teachers around the world continue to face the same hurdles, but any teacher who has overcome these problems and has a large class of energetic students who speak in groups and work in English will claim that all the trial and error and effort has paid off worthwhile.

### **Conclusion:**

Recent research has shed light on the main issues that negatively impact the development of learners' English skills. Analysis of the collected data has revealed a significant difference between the responses concerning the teacher himself, which is mainly represented by the teacher's inability to identify the learners' needs for the successful acquisition of speaking skills. The lack of fluency, accuracy, and rarity of the teaching materials also play a crucial role in promoting learners' ability to speak fluently and expand their vocabulary. For their part, learners prefer good pronunciation, and teachers allow them to participate in activities, especially those related to speaking, to express their ideas and communicate as much as possible.

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