



An Investigation of the Oral Proficiency Barriers Facing Second-Semester Libyan EFL Students at the Faculty of Education, Janzour

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استقصاء حول عوائق الكفاءة الشفوية التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الفصل الدراسي الثاني بكلية التربية بجنزور

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the problems that face EFL Libyan students at the Faculty of Education- Janzour in learning the English-speaking skill. Moreover, it is aimed at identifying the problems that face EFL instructors in teaching the English speaking, besides, the researcher attempted to determine the speaking strategies used by them in teaching this skill.

For achieving these aims, the researcher employed the explanatory mixed method design. The quantitative data came from the multiple-choice questionnaire which was assigned to fifty female EFL Libyan students at the Faculty of the Education –Janzour, whereas the qualitative data were drawn from a semi-structured interviews that the researcher conducted with ten (10) EFL Libyan instructors who taught English speaking courses in the same college.

Concerning the first objective of the study, the research findings revealed that there was a number of hindrances that diminish the learners from mastering the English-speaking skill adequately; some of which is related to lack of opportunities to practice using the language either inside or outside the speaking classes. Other encumbrances are related to different categories such as affective factors which are expressed in terms of the learners' anxiety to speak the language, as well as their apprehension of errors, lack of motivation, and of lack of self-confidence. Other obstacles were related to the language itself (linguistic factors). For example, most of the participants expressed that they are unable to speak the language fluently due to their lack of vocabulary, inability to use the grammatical structures correctly. In addition, some of the subjects under investigation clarified that they have listening problems which was the main cause of their lack of proper pronunciation, and they also expressed the lack of subject matter as another reason that diminishes them to speak inside the speaking classes. Other impediments behind the learners speaking deficiency are reported in terms of the subjects' mother tongue interference, the lack of the proper educational environment and the negative feedback that the learners receive from their instructors.

As for the second objective of the study, the obtained data clarified that the instructors come across different problems that hinder their way from teaching the English-speaking skill appropriately. These problems are expressed in terms of the scarcity of the teaching material

inside the college, the large number of the students compared with the shortage of time given to the speaking lectures and the learners' low level of proficiency.

Regarding the third objective, the findings revealed that most of EFL Libyan instructors do not use effective teaching strategies. However, they asserted that they teach the English speaking depending mainly on asking the low-level learners to work with the high level once and then they will be asked to choose one of them to say the notes they have written about the topic of discussion. This way is useless since only the high-level learners will have the encouragement to speak however the low-level learners will avoid speaking.

Keywords: EFL, Speaking Skill, Oral Proficiency Barriers, Libyan Higher Education, Mixed-Method Design, Pedagogical Challenges, Affective Factors, Teaching Strategies.

المستخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء المشكلات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الليبيين بكلية التربية - جنزور في تعلم مهارة التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية. علاوة على ذلك، هدفت الدراسة إلى تحديد المشكلات التي تواجه مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية في تدريس مهارة التحدث، بالإضافة إلى محاولة الباحث تحديد استراتيجيات التحدث التي يستخدمها المدرسون في تدريس هذه المهارة.

ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف، اعتمد الباحث المنهج المختلط ذو التصميم التفسيري (Explanatory Mixed Method Design)؛ حيث جمعت البيانات الكمية من خلال استبيان متعدد الخيارات وُزِع على خمسين طالبة من طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية الليبيات بكلية التربية - جنزور، بينما استُمدت البيانات النوعية من مقابلات شبه منظمة أجراها الباحث مع عشرة (10) من مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية الليبيين الذين قاموا بتدريس مقررات المحادثة في الكلية ذاتها.

وفيما يتعلق بالهدف الأول للدراسة، كشفت نتائج البحث عن وجود عدد من العوائق التي تحول دون إتقان المتعلمين لمهارة التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية بشكل كافٍ؛ ويرتبط بعضها بنقص فرص ممارسة استخدام اللغة سواء داخل فصول المحادثة أو خارجها. كما ارتبطت معوقات أخرى بفئات مختلفة مثل العوامل العاطفية (Affective Factors) التي تمثلت في قلق المتعلمين من التحدث باللغة، وتخوفهم من الوقوع في الأخطاء، ونقص الدافعية، وانعدام الثقة بالنفس. وتعلقت عقبات أخرى باللغة ذاتها (العوامل اللغوية)؛ فعلى سبيل المثال، أعرب معظم المشاركين عن عدم قدرتهم على التحدث باللغة بطلاقة بسبب نقص المفردات لديهم، وعدم القدرة على استخدام القواعد النحوية بشكل صحيح. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أوضح بعض المبحوثين أنهم يعانون من مشكلات في الاستماع كانت هي السبب الرئيسي وراء افتقارهم للنطق السليم، كما أشاروا إلى نقص المحتوى المعرفي (Subject matter) كسبب آخر يقلل من قدرتهم على التحدث داخل الفصول. ومن بين المعوقات الأخرى لقصور مهارة التحدث لدى المتعلمين: تداخل اللغة الأم، وغياب البيئة التعليمية المناسبة، والتغذية الراجعة السلبية التي يتلقاها المتعلمون من مدرسيهم.

أما بالنسبة للهدف الثاني، فقد أوضحت البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها أن المدرسين يواجهون مشكلات مختلفة تعيق طريقهم في تدريس مهارة التحدث بشكل مناسب؛ وتمثلت هذه المشكلات في ندرة المواد التعليمية داخل الكلية، والعدد الكبير للطلاب مقارنة بضيق الوقت المخصص لمحاضرات المحادثة، بالإضافة إلى انخفاض مستوى كفاءة المتعلمين.

وفيما يخص الهدف الثالث، كشفت النتائج أن معظم مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية الليبيين لا يستخدمون استراتيجيات تدريس فعالة؛ إذ أكدوا أنهم يعتمدون في تدريس المحادثة بشكل أساسي على طلب العمل الجماعي بين الطلاب ذوي المستوى المنخفض مع ذوي المستوى العالي، ومن ثم يُطلب منهم اختيار أحدهم لعرض الملاحظات التي كتبوها حول موضوع النقاش. وتعتبر هذه الطريقة غير مجدية لأن الطلاب ذوي المستوى العالي فقط هم من يملكون الجرأة للتحدث، بينما يتجنب الطلاب ذوو المستوى المنخفض المشاركة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مهارة التحدث، عوائق الكفاءة الشفوية، التعليم العالي الليبي، المنهج المختلط، التحديات التربوية، العوامل العاطفية، استراتيجيات التدريس.

1.1 Introduction

Based on the history of foreign language teaching and learning, speaking has always been considered as the most essential skill to be mastered comparing with the other language skills in spite of their importance. In addition, many language learners consider speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. In consequence, they define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. Besides, most of the learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) regard speaking as the most paramount skill to be acquired; hence, they evaluate their progress in terms of their accomplishments in this skill, Ansari (2012). However, by reviewing the related literature, it is

still reasonable to say that the EFL learners in general and the Arab EFL learners in particular face everlasting problem in learning this salient skill effectively. One of the most widespread problems among EFL learners is their considerably lower speaking performance when compared to their theoretical knowledge. Those learners are not able to express their thoughts and opinions in a satisfying way. This fact has been proved by many researchers such as (Rababah, 2003; Aljumah, 2011; Ansari, 2012).

Aljumah (2011) explained the problem saying that in ESL/EFL classroom interactions, teachers and students are frequently on opposing sides with one another: 'teachers babble all the time', whereas 'students mumble and swallow their words, or say nothing'. This phenomenon usually leads to a degree of dissatisfaction and frustrating feelings among the lecturers because of the students' unwillingness to talk or even communicate in English. Moreover, Horwitz (2008) cited in Gan (2013) mentioned that speaking is the aspect of second or foreign language learning which is often associated with anxiety. He goes on emphasizing that this language anxiety exists not only among the students, but also among non-native teachers of English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) which usually leads to avoidance the conversational activities and communicative teaching methods.

Consequently, the aim of the present research is to determine the problems of learning the English speaking skill encountered by the second semester EFL Libyan students at the Faculty of Education- Janzour during the autumn session of the academic year 2024- 2025. Moreover, it seeks to identify the problems that hinder the EFL Libyan instructors under investigation from teaching the English speaking adequately, in addition to identifying the strategies used by them. To achieve the first objective, the researcher randomly selected fifty EFL Libyan female students at the Faculty of the Education. As for achieving the second and the third objectives, the researcher randomly selected 10 (10) EFL Libyan instructors. For the sake of data collection, the researcher adopted two research instruments which are questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

1.2 The Objectives of the Study

- Identifying the problems that face the second semester students under investigation in learning the English speaking skill at Faculty of Education- Janzour.
- Identifying the problems that face the examined Libyan EFL instructors in teaching the English speaking skill.
- Identifying the speaking strategies used by the examined Libyan EFL instructors in teaching the English speaking skill.

1.3 The Research Questions of the study

- What are the problems faced by the second-semester students under investigation in learning the English speaking skill at the Faculty of Education - Janzour?
- What are the problems that face the examined Libyan EFL instructors in teaching the English speaking skill?
- What are the speaking strategies used by the examined Libyan EFL instructors in teaching the English speaking skill?

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2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Speaking is defined as the process in which a speaker interacts with other people to convey his/her thoughts, attitudes or points of view towards certain issues. Therefore, speaking is considered as one of the essential language skills in which the speakers are required to improve certain elements including the communicative competence, pronunciation (i.e. intonation, stress, and pitch), grammar, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, comprehension and

gesture in order to be considered as successful communicators, (Jondeya, 2011 and Khamkhien,2010).

Nazara,(2011)stated that speaking is the most important skill of all the four language skills. It shows the learners' actual ability in using the language. Also, he indicated that mastering the English speaking skill has become an essential demand in every country, because in the world of globalization era, English has increasingly become the medium in every domain of communication, both in local and global contexts. Thus, teaching and learning English should be for communicative purposes in order to meet the demands of global economics and to cope with the growing local, national and international demands for English skills.

Generally, nowadays most schools and universities should focus on developing the productive skills of the students because at a large number of workplaces, employers are looking forward to applicants who are proficient in English speaking and listening skills. (Kulawanit et al, 2005 cited in Janudom&Wasanasomsithi, 2004). Another importance is highlighted by Ur (1996) who described the importance of the speaking skill by saying that people who know a language are called speakers of that language which reflects the involvement of all other kinds of knowing in the speaking skill.

It has been several times asserted that there are factors that impede learning and developing the English speaking skill of Arab learners. For example, Ansari (2012) mentioned the problems that hinder Umm-Al Quara University learners from mastering the English language in Saudi Arabia where English is used as a foreign language, which is exactly similar to Libyan context. He attributed the difficulties faced by his subjects to both 'social' and 'cultural' backgrounds of the students. He described the insufficient knowledge, 'even basic', of English of the learners, in spite of being taught English in schools, as the most important reason that hinders learning the English speaking skill. Similarly, Oradee (2012). attributed the difficulty faced by EFL learners when speaking to their lack of exposure to authentic English language environments where they can communicate and practice their language. He further stated the learners' lack of exposure to the cultures of the native English speakers as another obstacle to learning the English speaking skill. What's more, Masda (2012) attributed the problems that face many language teachers when they come to teach speaking to the fact that most of the students are not enthusiastic to speak due to their lack of vocabulary. This lack according to him results in lack of confidence to speak in front of the class. Moreover, Khamkhien (2010) attributed the learners' inability to master the English speaking and listening skills to the fact that most of the teachers who teach English are not native speakers of English. Consequently, the language used is not natural which in consequence generates failure of real interaction in the language classroom. What's more, Kanoksilapatham (2007) cited in Khamkhien (2010) mentioned that most of EFL teachers have lack of knowledge of designing speaking activities during practice as they are not familiar with the aural-oral method of communicative language teaching (CLT). For this reason, they find difficulties in selecting materials and activities that would match the learners' speaking ability and content.

2.2 Causes of difficulties

Emotional Factors

According to Shumin (2002) stated that self-esteem, empathy, anxiety and emotions are considered as the affective factors which determine the learner's success or failure in learning a second or foreign language. Shumin also referred to emotional influences that may affect the learners' mastering of the English speaking skill; they mainly include apprehension of making errors and lack of motivation. They are in details as follows:

Apprehension of erring

Shumin (ibid) argues that when learners speak a foreign language in front of native speakers, they feel anxious. They try to avoid committing mistakes that results in being tongue-tied and they find themselves have no words to say. Additionally, the learners fail to speak because they always focus on the way by which their listeners judge them. This is supported by Jianing (2007) who accounts for the same matter stating that EFL students seek to avoid the mockery of the others; they try not to speak in front of the class. By such a way, the learners would not be able to improve or eliminate the feeling of being afraid when they speak English.

Supporting the above opinion, Tseng (2012) stated that there are many studies that support the idea that language anxiety is considered as the main source of the learners' apprehension of committing errors as well as the negative comments of the learners' peers. Moreover, Tseng concluded that the fear of making mistakes prevents some learners from expressing themselves adequately when they speak in front of the others.

Lack of motivation

According to McIntyre and Noels (1996) cited in (Huang, 2010), they referred to several opinions that dealt with motivation as an affective factor with a great impact on mastering the English speaking skill. In other words, learners with high incentive always try to develop their language and vice versa. Additionally, the high-motivated learners always look for speaking opportunities and use different learning strategies. In contrast, those learners who have lack of motivation are always reluctant to speak. Huang (2010) affirmed that motivation is considered as the power horse that prompts learners to learn and sustain their learning until achieving the desired purposes i.e. learners with high motivation are always trying to interact with native speakers of English. According to Astuti (2011), he attributed the learners' lack of speaking to the fact that most of students are not motivated enough to take part in classroom activities. He also stated that EFL learners do not have many chances to practice their language outside the classroom. This is the result of the limited exposure to the authentic English situation in EFL contexts. Therefore, if learners do not have enough motivation that encourages them to practice their language inside the classroom, they will not be able to improve their speaking skill outside the classroom because of the lack of practice.

Lack of exposure to authentic English

In most Arab EFL countries, English is used as a foreign language. This could reflect the limited exposure to authentic English situations. In consequence, according to Rababah (2003) Arab learners or any EFL learners will face difficulty in mastering the English speaking skill since they do not have the opportunity to interact or practice the target language in real life situation. This seems to be an essential factor that hinders acquiring the English language or any other target language. Rababah (2003) stated that the only source for learning English in Jordan; in particular, and many Arab countries in general is through formal instruction. In other words, English is taught only in schools inside classrooms where the language teachers are non-native speakers of English. Consequently, learners have lack of opportunities to learn English through natural interaction, whether inside or outside the classroom. Additionally, Soureshjani and Riahipour (2012) confirmed that the domain in which language is used play an important role in the learners' successfulness to master the English speaking skill. For example, when learners use language in their daily interactions, they would have a broad range of use. In contrast, when the learners have restricted use of language, they would have difficulty in developing their speaking skill because of the partial interaction. Similarly, Tseng (2012) mentioned that EFL learners have a limited exposure to English in their home countries. This leads to a serious obstacle to develop their communicative competence. Besides, he also stated that EFL learners feel stressed and anxious when they are asked to speak. He further attributed

this anxiety to the limited exposure of the target language in their home countries and because of practicing the language in formal classrooms only.

The influence of the first language

Another potential reason lurking behind the difficulties that foreign language learners may encounter during the process of developing their oral skills is the influence of their first language. According to Scarcella, (1990) EFL learners are not motivated to acquire the conversational features of the target language. This is due to the risk of falling back on their mother tongue knowledge, and they are not usually aware of the communication difficulties that arise out of this reliance. Supporting Scarcella (1990), it has been asserted by Mezrigui (2012) that one of the problems that affects the learners' speaking skill is related to the learners' mother tongue. This problem particularly exists when the features of the target language such as phonological are influenced by interfering features of their first language.. Besides, Chi (2011) mentioned that EFL learners used to think in their first language and then translate everything from their mother tongue into English, which in turn, makes them face serious problem in speaking the target language adequately. In contrast, Chi affirmed that if learners think in English whenever they speak, they will probably face no difficulties expressing their thoughts efficiently.

Lack of practice due to large classes

Green, Christopher, and Lam (1997: 135) attributed the difficulties with oral communication to some factors, among which are large classes:

“Discussion skills are often undeveloped in the EFL/ESL classroom. A combination of potent inhibitors is responsible for this situation: large class size, students' level of proficiency, and time constraints. As a result, many teachers never attempt discussions or, as a result of negative experiences, simply stop holding them.”

Mezrigui (2012) stated that the English language is used as a foreign language in Tunisian context, there is a similar phenomenon as in the Libyan context Thus, and learners have problems in mastering the English speaking skill. One of these problems is related to the fact that the time of the English classes is inadequate and the number of the students is very large. Therefore, students will have lack of opportunities to share in speaking activities, even, if these activities done in groups it is difficult for the learners to get speaking opportunities because of the restricted time given.

Classroom atmosphere

The classroom atmosphere affects learning the English speaking skill. In other words, classroom with cheerful and restful atmosphere improves the students speaking skill since the learners will feel more confident when speaking and they will not be afraid of making mistakes. In contrast, if the classroom atmosphere is fearful and anxious, learners will feel worried and they will avoid speaking, (Jianing, 2007).

Supporting the above motioned idea, Tseng (2012:82) described the strict formal classroom environment as significant cause of EFL learners' language anxiety. He stated that "learners feel more anxious and stressed in the classroom environments that follow the traditional behaviorist theories in which the learners are just listeners and follow the teacher's directions without having the chance to speak." On contrary, Tseng assumed that "students would feel less anxious and stressed in classroom environments that follow the constructivist theories of learning; these emphasize collaborative activities by forming learning communities including both teachers and students."In addition, it has been several times asserted that the

instructor's behaviors and thoughts play an important role in motivating their learners to speak. For example, if teachers provide learners with negative feedback when they commit mistakes, this will frustrate them and they will not be motivated for speaking. However, if teachers provide the learners with positive feedback, for example by correcting their mistakes in indirect way, the result will be that the learners will never be afraid of speaking and they will be encouraged for practicing their speaking. (Soureshjani and Riahipour (2012).

Speaking topics

Another factor that could affects the students' participation is the speaking topics, Mezrigui (2012:722) confirmed that

“It is generally recommended that speaking topics be familiar to students in terms of their connection to real life, and at the level of the language required to talk on them, with the aim of raising the students’ interests and making it easy for all of them to take part in speaking activities”.

On the other hand, if the topic is unexciting and tedious the learners will be disinclined to speak, (Soureshjani and Riahipour, 2012 Masda (2012). This is supported by Punthumasen' (2007)who found out that the speaking topic that the teacher uses is one of the most important factors that may motivate or discourage learners to speak. He explained that learners are more provoked to speak when the topic is related to their real lives. Conversely, Jianing (2007) mentioned that some Chinese students refuse speaking about topics that are familiar to them such as talking about their families, schools, hobbies, or majors; and discuss on topics, such as job interviews, meeting visitors, or shopping. He attributed this to the fact that these topics are difficult to develop in depth, and thus, it prevents them from being imaginative since it makes them restricted in their speaking.

2.3 Strategies in Teaching English Speaking

Researchers emphasize that EFL instructors must actively encourage classroom speaking, particularly in contexts like Libya where students lack external exposure to English (Nadeem, 2013; Rahimy & Safarpour, 2012; Graves, 2008). Strategy in this context is defined as the purposeful interaction of time, space, and presence to construct meaning (Sachar, 2006, as cited in Afana, 2012). Key effective strategies identified in the literature include:

Drama

Drama techniques facilitate language acquisition by following a natural sequence: moving from a silent period and comprehension to eventual production (Asher, 1982; Solé, 1987). This approach prioritizes a "mood of relaxation" and the creation of a "feeling of reality" through body movement and target language exposure.

Core benefits of drama include:

- **Authentic Interaction:** It utilizes "let's pretend" scenarios to prepare learners for real-world social communication (Holden, 1982, as cited in Zyoud, 2011).
- **Active Engagement:** Techniques such as role-play, simulation, and "hot seating" involve students emotionally and cognitively, functioning as an "engine for learning" (Reeve, 2006; Afana, 2012).
- **Psychological Support:** Drama helps students overcome shyness and build self-confidence by allowing them to "conceal" behind a character (Desiatova, 2009).
- **Holistic Development:** It integrates all four language skills while empowering students with ownership over their learning process.

Role Play

Role-play is a specific dramatic strategy where participants act out assigned roles in given situations (Ladousse, 1987; Andryani, 2012). It is characterized by spontaneous interaction as students attempt to complete tasks (Zyoud, 2011).

Key pedagogical considerations:

- **Simulated Reality:** Instructors should bring real-life situations into the classroom, allowing students to experiment with various social roles (Harmer, 1984; Graves, 2008).
- **Teacher's Role:** Instructors should act as guides, avoiding interruptions or negative feedback that might stifle the conversation (McDaniel, 2000).
- **Active Participation:** For learning to be meaningful, students must move beyond being passive observers and accept the responsibilities of their roles (Poorman, 2002; Cuthrell & Yates, 2007).
- **Communicative Competence:** By simulating future interactions, role-play enables a "flow of language" that is otherwise difficult to generate in a classroom setting (Livingstone, 1983; Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

Information Gap

Information gap activities are structured tasks where students must exchange missing information to solve a problem or make decisions (Watamni & Gholami, 2012; Neu & Reeser, 1997). This shifts the focus from linguistic form to communicative meaning.

Advantages of this technique include:

- **Collaborative Learning:** It creates a cooperative environment that encourages pair and group work, making students feel more comfortable (Sari, 2008; Ur, 1996).
- **Vocabulary Retention:** The need to negotiate meaning in order to complete a task improves word acquisition and general speaking proficiency (Karimi, 2010).
- **Learner Autonomy:** Research indicates that these tasks reduce student anxiety and decrease dependency on the teacher, providing more opportunities for independent practice (Watamni & Gholami, 2012).

Authenticity: Without these gaps, classroom interaction remains "mechanical and artificial" (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Instruments

In order to explore the difficulties encountered by the subjects of the study, the researcher employed the explanatory mixed method design, which enables us to gather qualitative input with the purpose of explaining and extending quantitative results and to gain a comprehensive insight of the research. As for the quantitative method, the multiple-choice questionnaire was used to gather the quantitative data. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items, which constructed to determine the problems that hinder EFL Libyan university students at the Faculty of Education- Janzour from mastering the English speaking skill.

In order to measure the frequency of problems encountered by the subjects, a five-point Likert scale ranging from almost never (1) to always (5) was used, as shown in table 1 below. The criteria of Rensis Likert (1932) were adopted.

Criteria	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Almost
Scale	5	4	3	2	1

Table 1 Scoring System for each criterion.

Whereas for the qualitative method, the researcher employed a focused semi-structured interview using open-ended questions to gather the data to enrich and support the quantitative findings that are obtained from the questionnaire .i.e. to know the Libyan EFL learners' problems in learning the English speaking skill. These findings based on the EFL instructors' point of views. Moreover, the rationale for using structured open-ended interview was also to understand the problems that the interviewed instructors face in teaching the English speaking, besides exploring the strategies used by them when teaching the English speaking. The interview was semi-structured, whereby four questions were prepared before in advance .According to Moser and Kalton (1971), cited in Ting (2009) an interview is described as a means of eliciting relevant information and personal opinion from the respondents.

3.3 Participants

Participants in the context of the study are fifty EFL Libyan learners those to whom the questionnaire was assigned, and five EFL Libyan instructors with whom interviews were conducted. These include the following:

As for the EFL Libyan learners, the researcher selected fifty (50) EFL Libyan students to identify the problems faced them in learning the English speaking skill. They are at their second semester studying in the English Department at Tripoli University, Faculty of Education-Janzour. The selection of the sample was purposive since the characteristics of the subjects were relative to the phenomena under study. All of them were females and their ages are nineteen and they were selected randomly.

To find out the problems that face the EFL instructors in teaching the English speaking skill ,and to explore the strategies they use , the researcher selected ten EFL Libyan instructors who taught English speaking courses and conducted semi-structured interviews with them. As for their teaching experience, it was ranging between five to fifteen years, and their ages ranged between 30 to 50.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Examination of Student Questionnaire Outcomes (RQ1)

The quantitative data obtained from the student questionnaires indicates a complex array of elements that hinder the advancement of communicative ability. These characteristics can be classified into linguistic impediments, affective and psychological obstacles, and pedagogical and environmental constraints.

4.2.1 Language and Cognitive Barriers

To become proficient in speaking, you need to be able to use phonological, lexical, and grammatical knowledge all at once. The data shows that the participants have major problems with these language domains, which makes it very hard for them to talk. This means that they require specific help to get better at communicating in general.

A significant 74% of the participants reported persistent challenges with pronunciation, while 22% indicated a consistent failure to articulate the language correctly. This phonological barrier is intricately linked to receptive abilities; 84% of the students acknowledged encountering difficulties in listening comprehension during spoken interactions. Khan (2011) observed that the differences between Arabic and English phonological systems, namely the existence of interdental fricatives, had a big impact on Saudi and other Arab EFL learners. Consequently, in the Libyan setting, this failure to effectively decode and encode spoken English weakens the fundamental processes of two-way communication, resulting in misconceptions and hindrances in the clear expression of ideas in both academic and social situations.

- Lexical and Grammatical Deficits: The research shows that 68% of learners have a serious

shortage of vocabulary and 76% of learners have trouble with grammar all the time. These structural impairments indicate that learners lack the fundamental verbal resources necessary to establish or maintain a conversation. Abu El-Enein (2011) pinpointed such weaknesses as principal impediments to academic oral presentations among Arab English majors. L1 interference, a substantial cognitive barrier, arises from a marked reliance on the native language. The study findings revealed that a significant 88% of the participants construct their speech in Arabic before translating it into English. This intentional translation process significantly increases cognitive burden, which prevents automaticity and fluency. As a result, pupils see English as an academic code that needs to be figured out, not as a flexible instrument for simple communication. This result aligns with Mezrigui's (2012) insights regarding Arab learners.

4.2.2 Emotional Factors and Psychological Obstacles

The emotional filter theory posits that heightened anxiety, decreased self-confidence, and lowered motivation serve as psychological barriers, obstructing the use of understandable material in language acquisition. The results obtained from the questionnaire data present substantial evidence of a significantly heightened affective filter within the designated target population.

- **Language Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation:** An astonishing 90% of participants reported being hindered by the fear of making errors. This anxiety is quite specific to the situation. For example, 42% of people always feel uncomfortable when they talk to their teachers, and 52% feel anxious when they talk to their friends, mostly because they are afraid of being made fun of or ridiculed. Tseng (2012) confirmed that in analogous EFL circumstances, the apprehension of losing face among peers or facing adverse judgment from authority figures inhibits oral production.
- **Low Self-Esteem:** You need to have confidence to take risks with your speech. But 88% of the people who took part said directly that they don't have the self-confidence to speak English. This lack of self-esteem creates a cycle of problems with their language skills: a lack of vocabulary makes them hesitate, which hurts their confidence, which makes them even less likely to communicate.
- **Instrumental vs. Integrative Motivation:** Motivation is what makes learning a language possible. The research indicates a significant deficiency in integrative motivation among the students. Seventy percent of the people who took the test said that their main goal was to pass it so they could get a certificate. They don't see English as a way to talk to people; they see it as a school problem. As a result, 58% of the people who took part said they had missed chances to practice the language, and 74% showed no interest in watching or listening to English media (TV, radio), which backs up Huang's (2010) claim that indifferent learners will inevitably fail to gain oral competency.

4.2.3 Limitations in Teaching Methods and the Lack of Input

The setting where these pupils learn does not support the communicative approach necessary to develop speaking skills.

- **Classroom Dynamics and Instructor Feedback:** The kids don't speak English as much as the teachers do. A whopping 62% of students say they speak Arabic in English sessions. Also, the classroom is seen as too strict; 56% of students said they were more anxious because of the strict rules. Importantly, 90% of students said their teachers were critical of their speech performance. Cutrone (2009) pointed out that a teacher's bad attitude is one of the main causes of language anxiety.
- **Lack of Communicative Opportunities:** The formal education does not mimic authentic communication. The study shows that teachers hardly often (36%) or never (24%) bring up disputed themes to get pupils to negotiate meaning. Also, 74% of timid students are mostly

ignored, which means that most of the interaction in the classroom is done by a small group of really skilled, outgoing kids.

- The Extracurricular Void: In Libya, English is not the language that people use to talk to each other every day. The questionnaire showed that 80% of students have little chance to practice English outside of college. When the external environment lacks input (Rababah, 2003) and the inside classroom setting is teacher-centered and non-communicative, students are completely cut off from real language practice.

4.3 Examination of Instructor Interview Outcomes (RQ2)

The semi-structured interviews with ten EFL instructors yielded essential insights into the structural and pedagogical issues that hinder the provision of successful speaking courses.

4.3.1 Limitations in Institutions and Logistics

The Faculty of Education's physical and administrative realities have a big impact on how teachers choose to teach.

- absence of Facilities: Almost all of the teachers who were interviewed said that the absence of teaching facilities was a major problem. There are no language labs, audio-visual equipment, or multimedia rooms, which means that teachers can't give pupils real native-speaker input. So, 92% of students said that their teachers seldom use visual aids. The teachers themselves agreed, saying that the administration generally requires them to use only a whiteboard and marker.
- Time Constraints and Overcrowding: Nine out of ten teachers said that the amount of time set out for speaking classes is not nearly enough when you consider that each session has an average of 30 to 40 students. Khamkhien (2011) said that this structural mismatch makes it almost impossible to provide tailored assessments and useful pair/group work. If a teacher tries to do a communicative exercise, not all of the students can take part because of time limits, which leaves weaker students out.

4.3.2 What Teachers Think About Students' Weaknesses

The teachers' findings strongly support the results from the student questionnaires. Eight out of ten teachers said that the students' very low level of initial competency was a major problem. They noticed that many pupils move from high schools that use traditional grammar-translation methods. Because of this history, they often have trouble making basic statements, which makes it much harder for them to communicate meaningfully and participate effectively in the learning process.

- The teachers were right when they said that the kids' lack of extracurricular activities and their mostly instrumental drive were the main reasons for their lack of progress. In addition, teachers knew that L1 interference might be harmful and that kids' reliance on mental translation led to speech that was stunted and wrong.

4.3.3 The Gap in Teaching Skills

The most concerning and significant discovery from the qualitative interviews relates to the instructors' methodological abilities.

- No Strategy: When asked directly about the precise strategies or tactics they utilized to teach speaking courses, seven out of ten teachers said they had "no idea" about speaking strategies and admitted they had never studied them professionally.

- Ineffective Mitigation Tactics: The teachers don't know much about communicative language teaching (CLT) methods like information gap exercises, jigsaw problems, and authentic role-play, thus they adopt simple, frequently useless mitigation tactics. A few people said they tried

to make the classroom "comfortable" or ignore mistakes to lower the affective filter, but they still used traditional methods in the classroom.

- **Bad Task Design:** The methods employed to teach spontaneous speech are often not good for learning. Some teachers, for instance, urge students to come up with a theme at home and read it out loud the next day. This tests reading aloud and memorizing, not talking to someone on the spot or figuring out what they mean. Some people match weak students with strong students without any support, which often leads to the strong student taking over the task while the weak student stays quiet because they are scared.

4.4 Synthesis and Conclusion of Findings

The combination of the quantitative and qualitative data shows that the lack of English-speaking skills among second-semester students at the Faculty of Education - Janzour is not caused by one thing, but by a system that repeats itself. The cycle starts with structural problems, such big classes, low time limits, and no multimedia equipment at all. These limitations force teachers—70% of whom say they don't know how to use new communicative teaching methods—to go back to old, teacher-centered methods. This way of teaching, which relies a lot on negative feedback and tasks that students have to do again and over again, directly stimulates their emotional barriers. This makes them more anxious and less likely to want to study.

The pupils stop paying attention because they are scared of being made fun of by their peers, are anxious about language, and don't believe in themselves. They go back to their first language and mentally translate Arabic to English, which makes them less fluent. Since their only goal is to pass written tests, they don't try to get the extra exposure they need to get over the lack of input in Libya's EFL environment. As a result, they go through their academic semesters with mistakes that have been there for a long time, very few words, and a serious inability to speak.

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