

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Abbes Laghrour Khenchela
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English



Exploring Linguistic Barriers in EFL

Students' Speaking Proficiency

The Case of First year students' at Abbas

Laghrour University

*Dissertation submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master in Language and Culture*

Submitted by:

- **Berrani Bouthaina Nour Elaine**
- **Achi Chahrazed**

Supervised by:

- **Dr. Aggoun Imen**

Academic Year

2023/2024

Dedication

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Allah, Alhamdulillah for his unwavering guidance and strength. It is through his blessings that I have been able to overcome challenges and achieve this milestone.

To my family, your unwavering support and love have been my rock, i will forever be grateful for your encouragement.

To myself, because I worked hard and believed in my abilities. Despite facing numerous obstacles, I remained strong and resilient. I did not let failure discourage me, and instead, I continued to grow and develop. This dedication is a reminder of my perseverance and the strength I possess within.

To BTS, your music has been a source of inspiration and motivation for me. Your artistry and passion have encouraged me to pursue my dreams.

To my purple world, my K-pop friends. Thank you for being a source of joy and inspiration. Your love for K-pop and the sense of community we share have been invaluable. Thank you for being a part of my world.

Thank you all for being a part of this incredible journey with me.

Bouthaina

Dedication

Thank God for all his grace, with whose blessing and mercy good deeds are done.

I would like to dedicate this work to the best father in the world, to my support in this life, my heroic father, who never neglected to provide me with a path of happiness and who supported me in my educational journey. May God protect him, prolong his life, and grant him health and wellness.

To the one whom the Lord—glory be to Him—placed paradise under her feet, to my beloved mother, who stayed up nights, was patient, and stood with me to complete this research, May God protect her, prolong her life, and grant her health and wellness. My parents are the biggest supporters of my educational journey. I wish them all happiness, goodness, and health.

To my little and only sister, the last of the cluster, my beloved friend, may God protect you for me. Grant you success in your academic journey and make you happy in your life.

To my brothers who support me, thank you for your constant encouragement and support. May God grant you success in your academic journey and happiness in your life.

To my friends and colleagues who contributed to this research directly or indirectly and provided comments or observations that I could benefit from, thank you.

I am truly grateful to all of you.

Chahrazed

Acknowledgement

We want to express our gratitude to our supervisor Dr. Aggoun Imen, as well as the oral expression professors and everyone who contributed to the successful completion of this dissertation. Additionally, we extend our appreciation to all first-year students who assisted us in gathering ample information. We are truly thankful for the support and assistance provided by each individual involved in this project.

List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

EFL : English as a foreign Language

SLA : Second Language Acquisition

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DM : Discourse Markers

TESOL : Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

List of Tables

1. Table1. Learners' Gender	52
2. Table2. English as the 1 st Choice in University of Khenchela.....	53
3. Table3. Mastering the Four Skills.....	55
4. Table4. Speaking English Proficiency Level.....	56
5. Table5. Feeling Uncomfortable in Speaking English Language.....	57
6. Table6. Confidence in Pronunciation of English Words and Sounds.....	59
7. Table 7. Challenging Aspects of English Grammar.....	61
8. Table8. Encountering Difficulties in Understanding English When Interacting with Others.....	62
9. Table9. Motivating Students to Speak English in Class by Teachers.....	64
10. Table10. Frequency of Receiving Individualized Feedback from Teachers on Speaking Performance.....	66
11. Table11. Activities to Motivate Students to Speak.....	67
12. Table12. Vocabulary and Communicating Effectively in English.....	69
13. Table13. Feelings Towards Collaborating with Peers to Practice English Speaking Skills.....	70
14. Table14. Experience in Teaching English Language.....	76
15. Table 15: <i>Speaking Skill a Major Concern</i>	77
16. Table 16: Students' Interest in Speaking in Class.....	81
17. Table 17: Students' Preferences to Speak in class.....	82

List of Figures

Figure1. Learners' Gender.....	52
Figure2. English as the 1st Choice in University.....	54
Figure3. Mastering the Four Skills.....	55
Figure4. Speaking English Proficiency Level.....	56
Figure5. Feeling Uncomfortable in Speaking English Language.....	58
Figure6. Confidence in Pronunciation of English Words and Sounds.....	60
Figure7. Challenging Aspects of English Grammar.....	61
Figure8. Encountering Difficulties in Understanding English When Interacting with Others.....	63
Figure9. Motivating Students to Speak English in Class by Teachers.....	65
Figure10. Frequency of Receiving Individualized Feedback from Teachers on Speaking Performance	66
Figure11. Activities to Motivate Students to Speak.....	68
Figure12. Vocabulary and Communicating Effectively in English.....	69
Figure13. Feelings Towards Collaborating with Peers to Practice English Speaking Skills.....	71
Figure 14. Specific Activities Learners Want in English Classes.....	72
Figure15. Supporting Students in Developing their English Speaking Skills.....	73
Figure 16: Speaking Skill a Major Concern.....	78
Figure 17. Criteria of Assessing the Speaking Proficiency of Learners.....	79
Figure 18. Aspects of the Speaking Proficiency.....	80
Figure 19. Preferable Working Activities.....	82
Figure 20. Students 'Challenges in Improving the Speaking Skill.....	83

Figure 21. EFL Students in Khenchela Find Difficulties in Tenses.....	84
Figure 22. Tips to Address Pronunciation Difficulties.....	85
Figure 23. Tips for Overcoming Vocabulary Limitations.....	87
Figure 24. Inspire Learners to Speak Fluently: Tips.....	88
Figure 25. Effective Tasks to Improve Listening Proficiency.....	90
Figure 26. Effective Resources to Address Students ‘Linguistic Barriers.....	91

Table of Contents

Dedications.....	i
Acknowledgment.....	iii
List of Abbreviations & Acronyms.....	iv
List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	viii
Abstract.....	xiii
General Introduction.....	1
1. Significance of the study.....	2
2. Statement of the problem.....	2
3. Objectives and Aims of the study.....	3
4. Research Questions	4
5. Outline of the Study.....	4
Chapter One: Theoretical Part.....	7
Introduction.....	7
1.1 Speaking skill.....	7
1.1.1 Definition of speaking skill.....	8
1.1.2 Speaking Components.....	9

1.1.2.1 Pronunciation.....	9
1.1.2.2 Fluency.....	10
1.1.2.3 Accuracy	11
1.1.2.4 Appropriateness.....	12
1.1.3 Speaking Proficiency	13
1.1.4 Importance of Speaking Skills.....	16
1.1.4.1 Second Language Acquisition Theories.....	17
The Communicative Theory.....	18
1.1.4.2 Language Interference and Transfer.....	18
1.1.5 EFL Pedagogy and Teaching Strategies.....	21
1.1.6 Teachers/ students Role in Teaching/learning Speaking.....	22
Summary.....	24
1.2Linguistic Barriers.....	25
1.2.1 Overview of Linguistic Barriers.....	25
1.2.1.1Vocabulary.....	26
1.2.1.2 Grammar.....	26
1.2.1.3 Pronunciation.....	27
1.2.1.4 Syntax and Discourse Markers.....	28
1.2.2 Factors influencing Linguistic Barriers.....	30
1.2.2.1 Restricted Vocabulary	30
1.2.2.2 Grammatical errors.....	32
1.2.2.3 Difficulties with pronunciation	32
1.2.4 Psychological Barriers and Confidence.....	33

1.2.4.1 Anxiety in Speaking Situation	34
1.2.4.2 Confidence Building Strategies.....	35
1.2.4.3 Overcoming Fear of Making Mistakes.....	36
1.2.5 Pedagogical Approaches and Instructional Strategies.....	37
1.2.5.1 Effective teaching methodologies.....	37
1.2.5.2 Classroom activities for speaking practice.....	38
1.2.6 Assessments to improve speaking proficiency	38
Summary.....	39
Previous Studies.....	40
Conclusion.....	41
 Chapter Two: Practical part (Data Analysis & Interpretations)	
2.1 Research Methodology.....	44
2.2 Population.....	44
2.2.1 Sampling Procedure.....	45
2.2.2 Sample.....	45
2.2.2.1 First sample: First year EFL Students.....	46
2.2.2.2 Second Sample : EFL Teachers.....	46
2.3 Context of the study/ Setting	47
2.4 Research Tools.....	47

2.4.1 Students Questionnaire.....	47
2.4.2 Teachers Interview.....	48
2.5 Procedures Description of Questionnaire and interview.....	48
2.5.1 Description of Students Questionnaire.....	48
2.5.2 Description of Teachers Interview	49
Conclusion.....	49
2.2Data Analysis and Interpretation.....	50
2.2.1 Students' Online Attitudes Questionnaire.....	51
Overview.....	51
General Findings.....	74
Summary.....	74
In-depth Interview with Experts.....	75
2.2.2 Interview Questions, Answers and Answers Analysis.....	75
Overview.....	75
2.3 Results and Recommendations.....	92
2.3.1 Main Findings	92
2.3.2 Recommendations to Empower Students' Listening Proficiency	93
2.3.3 Limitations of the Study	94

Conclusion.....	95
General Conclusion.....	99
References.....	100
Appendices.....	109

Abstract

EFL students often face several challenges that hinder their ability to communicate effectively. This research explores the linguistic barriers in speaking among first-year students in the English department at Abbas-Laghrou Khenchela University. Common barriers include difficulties with pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and grammatical errors, which impede active classroom participation. To investigate these challenges, a non-experimental approach is employed. The purpose of this study is to identify the linguistic obstacles faced by first-year EFL students and propose effective methods to enhance their speaking communication skills. Towards such purpose, data are collected through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires gather information about students' experiences, perceptions, and difficulties in speaking proficiency, as well as the strategies they use to overcome these barriers. Interviews with EFL teachers provide in-depth insights into typical challenges related to vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The data collected are subjected to both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Doubtlessly, the initial analysis of the questionnaire indicates that EFL students are facing serious linguistic barriers related to grammar, sentence structure, and pronunciation, diction while empowering their speaking proficiency, communicative competence and intercommunicative competence. Additionally, the analysis of the indepth interview with EFL teachers reveals extremely important findings. First, teachers are completely aware of the linguistic barriers, secondly, they are tailoring their teaching instructional methods accordingly working towards smart effective high quality education. the study stressed the urgent need to adopt rethinking strategies towards speaking proficiency as well as 21st century communicative competence.

Key words: Linguistic Barriers, Speaking, Proficiency, EFL students.

General Introduction

In a time of unparalleled worldwide interconnectedness, being proficient in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become essential for success in a number of fields, such as education, business, and diplomacy. English proficiency not only makes intercultural communication easier, but it also opens doors to foreign academic and career prospects. Speaking fluency is believed to be far more important than writing, even though reading and writing skills have historically received a lot of focus in English language training. Speaking clearly and precisely, negotiating meaning, and participating in interactive discourse all depend on effective spoken communication.

Even though speaking fluency is widely acknowledged as important, many English as a foreign language (EFL) students face tough linguistic barriers that hinder their progress. These obstacles can take many different forms, from issues with tone and pronunciation to difficulties organizing clear and cohesive speech. Furthermore, students' ability to communicate effectively and fluently in spoken English is frequently hampered by lexical restrictions, grammatical mistakes, and pragmatic misconceptions.

Moreover, this research endeavors to explore the influence of various factors on the development of speaking proficiency in EFL learners. Learners' speaking abilities are likely to be greatly influenced by a variety of factors, including language transfer from their native tongues, cultural variances in communication norms, and individual differences in learning methods and strategies. We hope to learn more about the nuances of developing EFL speaking proficiency by investigating how these elements interact in the context of language learning.

The research has implications for instructional materials development, curriculum design, and language teaching methodology. Through an awareness of and response to the language hurdles impeding the speaking ability of EFL students, teachers can create more efficient and learner-centered methods for teaching language. The ultimate objective is to

enable EFL students to communicate successfully and confidently in a variety of linguistic contexts, improving their engagement and success in the global society.

1-Significance of the study

Our study on “Exploring linguistic barriers in EFL students’ speaking proficiency” is crucial because it can pinpoint and solve specific difficulties that EFL students encounter when trying to speak the language successfully. By understanding their experiences, the research can inform the development of strategies to address not only the linguistic challenges but also the emotional and motivational aspects of learning English. This holistic approach allows teachers to create more effective lesson plans suited to the requirements of EFL students, ultimately improving their ability to communicate in spoken language. Additionally, the study offers insightful strategies that can benefit the fields of teaching and language acquisition.

2-Statement of the Problem

It is well known that English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with over “1.46 billion people speaking it”, according to Dean Talbot, (2023) either as a first or second language. It’s the official language in many countries and is commonly used as a lingua franca for international communication. In Algeria, proficiency in English can significantly enhance your employment prospects across diverse industries, and it can open doors to international investors, enabling individuals to pursue their entrepreneurial ventures with global reach. However, research in Algeria, particularly in Khenchela, has revealed that acquiring English fluency remains a challenge for students due to the linguistic barriers.

EFL students, in particular, face challenges in achieving fluency due to linguistic deficiencies, including pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Recognizing these obstacles,

we aim to find solutions that empower students to develop their speaking skills with confidence.

3- Objective and Aims of the Study

The objectives of this research are:

1. Identify the most common linguistic barriers faced by EFL students in developing speaking proficiency. This includes investigating challenges related to grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency.
2. Analyze how these linguistic barriers manifest in the spoken English of EFL students.
3. Assess the impact of linguistic barriers on EFL students' confidence, motivation, and overall learning experience. This objective explores the psychological and emotional impact of speaking difficulties on EFL students.
4. Identify and evaluate effective pedagogical strategies and resources for addressing linguistic barriers in EFL speaking. This objective aims to provide practical guidance for teachers on how to effectively support EFL students in overcoming their speaking challenges. This may include recommending specific teaching methods, learning materials, and technology tools that address the identified barriers.

Therefore, our final aims are:

- To contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguistic barriers that hinder EFL students' speaking proficiency
- To provide evidence-based recommendations for improving EFL teaching and learning practices. This will ultimately benefit EFL students by enhancing their speaking skills, boosting their confidence, and promoting a more positive and successful learning experience.

4-Research Questions

Our research questions are thus formulated as follows:

- 1- What are the most common linguistic barriers faced by EFL students in developing speaking proficiency, categorized by grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency?
- 2- How do these linguistic barriers manifest in the spoken English of EFL students, and what are the observable patterns in their speech errors and hesitations?
- 3-To what extent do these linguistic barriers impact EFL students' confidence, motivation, and overall learning experience?
- 4-What effective pedagogical strategies and resources can be implemented to address these linguistic barriers and enhance EFL students' speaking proficiency?

5-Outline of the Study

The present dissertation is divided into two (02) chapters. They consist of Theoretical part (theoretical considerations), Practical part (Data analysis & Interpretations) that is divided into three sections (3): Research Methodology section, Data analysis & Interpretations section, and Results & Recommendations section. A list of references and appendices is provided at the end of the work. The chapters are described in a quick review of their contents as follows:

In the first part of our dissertation, we provide an overview of our entire study, general introduction. We define related terms and outline the objectives and significance of our study, highlighting its importance and contribution to the field. Lastly, we demonstrate a critical awareness of the study's scope.

In the first chapter, we dive into the literature review. This chapter is all about exploring and analyzing existing research, theories, and scholarly works that are relevant to

our study. By doing this, we lay the groundwork for our own research by getting a comprehensive overview of the current knowledge and understanding of our topic. The literature review helps us identify any gaps in the existing literature and establish the significance of our own research.

The second chapter is Data analysis & Interpretations. Here, we outline the approach and methods we employed to conduct our study. It is crucial to provide a clear and detailed explanation of our research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques. We discuss how we selected participants, the tools used for data gathering, and any ethical considerations we took into account. By thoroughly explaining our methodology, we ensure transparency and enable others to replicate or build upon our study. Also Data analysis played a crucial role in uncovering patterns and insights and it helped to understand the root causes of these barriers. In the Results & Recommendations section everything was tied together by presenting the key findings and suggesting practical implications.

As the final part of our dissertation, this section summarizes the entire study and its implications for practice. It provides a conclusion of the major concepts and results, allowing us to tie everything together. By summarizing our findings, we can provide a clear overview of the key points and their significance. This section helps to understand the practical applications of our research and how it contributes to the field.

Chapter One

Theoretical Part

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, we cover various aspects related to speaking skills in English learning. This includes understanding what speaking entails, its key elements, proficiency levels, and its importance. We also look at theories of second language acquisition, linguistic interference, and transfer. Additionally, we aim to explore teaching methodologies and strategies that teachers can employ to enhance students' speaking abilities. We will analyze how these teaching approaches contribute to the development of speaking skills among students during lesson presentations. In the second part, we focus on exploring linguistic barriers and the factors that contribute to them. We delve into issues such as restricted vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, and grammatical errors that can hinder students' speaking proficiency. Additionally, we highlight psychological barriers that students may face in language learning and discussed various pedagogical approaches and instructional strategies to address these challenges effectively. By incorporating previous studies at the end of this chapter, we aim to provide a solid foundation for understanding the linguistic barriers in English learning.

1.1 Speaking Skill

Speaking, or the capacity to communicate thoughts and information with people in a clear and effective manner, is one of the most crucial foundational abilities for learning English. Proficiency in speaking fosters positive interactions in the workplace, in the classroom, and in daily life. Students still face a number of challenges when speaking English. Due to teacher's encouragement, students can overcome their fears and express themselves and their feelings with complete fluency in front of their peers and in class, which boosts their confidence. As a result, schools and universities in Algeria have implemented oral expression classes. Algerian colleges and institutions have started offering oral expression courses, most

likely in response to the realization of how crucial it is to have strong communication skills in the modern world. The goal of these classes is to support students in gaining the confidence and eloquent spoken language expression that are necessary for success in social, professional, and academic settings. Institutions can assist students in developing their presentation, public speaking, and interpersonal communication skills, equipping them for a variety of situations outside of the classroom, by offering structured training and practice opportunities.

1.1.1 Definition of Speaking Skill

Speaking, in general, is the act that allows individuals to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings in order to communicate effectively and exchange information with others. It allows others to connect and share information and ideas within a group, fostering participation and communication. This process involves using words, tone of voice, and body language to convey messages effectively. According to Chaney (1998), "speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts." (see Rahimy & Safarpour, 2012, p.13). There are other perspectives that argue that speaking skills are an interactive process for expressing meaning. Among them were Brown (1994) and Burns and Joyce (1997), who defined speaking as an "interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and producing information." It means that speaking is a rich and multifaceted process. It encompasses both verbal expression and non-verbal cues, and it thrives within the context of human interaction in active communication by expressing, interpreting, and responding to messages. In summary, both perspectives stress the interactive and meaning-making aspects of speaking and emphasize the importance of communication as a means of exchanging ideas and understanding within various settings. In contrast, Hedge (2000) saw that speaking means "they are judged while

first impressions are being formed" (p. 261). Hedge's perspective focuses on the evaluative aspect of speaking, suggesting that individuals are judged during the formation of first impressions. While this viewpoint may seem different from the others, it doesn't necessarily contradict them. Instead, it adds another layer to the understanding of speaking by emphasizing the importance of initial impressions in communication. So, these definitions highlight the complexity of speaking as a skill. Chaney and Safarpour emphasized speaking as a process of sharing meaning through both verbal and non-verbal symbols in various contexts. Brown, Burns, and Joyce emphasized speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning, involving the production, reception, and interpretation of information. Moreover, Hedge (2000) adds a dimension by focusing on the evaluative aspect of speaking, noting that individuals are judged during initial interactions. Together, these perspectives underscore speaking as a multifaceted process that involves interaction, meaning-making, and the formation of first impressions in communication. It means that speaking is a dynamic process that extends beyond just words. It includes context, symbols, and interaction. Whether we are sharing ideas, expressing emotions, or negotiating, successful speaking combines expression and reception. To promote meaningful encounters, we, as communicators, must strive for clarity, empathy, and active engagement. Overall, these comments highlight the multidimensional character of speaking skills, which include components of collaboration, engagement, and social evaluation. Effective speaking entails not only presenting information but also interacting with others and regulating perceptions, making it an essential component of interpersonal communication.

1.1.2 Speaking Components:

1.1.2.1 Pronunciation:

Pronunciation is all about the way you say sounds and words in a language. According to Bada, Genc, and Ozkan (2011), “in speaking, they compete with limited time to recall words and also take care of their pronunciation. Speaking is often dealt with at the pronunciation level” (p. 122). This means that while speaking, individuals have a limited amount of time to remember words and must simultaneously focus on pronouncing them correctly. This highlights the challenge of balancing fluency and accuracy in spoken language production. In addition, it emphasizes that pronunciation plays an effective role in communication because it is one of the basics of speaking skills and directly affects the extent to which others understand the message. Therefore, speakers often need to address pronunciation issues in order to communicate their ideas effectively. Correct pronunciation is important for precise meaning transmission, straightforward communication, and confidence-building. It's not only about sounding good. Pronunciation should be given equal weight with vocabulary and grammar in order to improve our total language ability as learners.

1.1.2.2 Fluency :

Fluency refers to the ability to speak a language smoothly, naturally, and effectively, akin to native speakers, with confidence and without undue stress. Developing fluency involves cultivating a rich vocabulary and a solid grasp of grammar. Crystal (1987: 421) defined the term as a “smooth, rapid, effortless use of language.” Crystal's statement emphasizes the outward appearance of fluency, emphasizing the smooth, rapid, and effortless use of language from the speaker's perspective. Further, according to Koponen and Riggensbach's (2000) definition of fluency as “flow, continuity, automaticity, or smoothness of speech” (Koponen & Riggensbach, 2000, p. 6), They claimed that features like flow,

continuity, automaticity, and smoothness of speech are all included in the definition of fluency. Basically, being fluent in a language refers to speaking it naturally and effortlessly, as well as being proficient in it. So, Koponen and Riggenbach's definition of fluency emphasizes that it is more than just being able to speak a language well; it also includes being able to talk intelligibly, smoothly, and naturally. It means that both perspectives highlight different facets of fluency, with one focusing on the speaker's experience and the other on the listener's perception. Ultimately, fluency is a multifaceted construct that combines linguistic competence, cognitive processes, and communicative effectiveness. It is a dynamic interplay between the speaker's internal processes and the external reception of the audience. In contrast, Schmidt (1992) described fluency as "the processing of language in real time" and also as an "automatic procedural skill that is relatively free from conscious attention." (p.358) Schmidt's description highlights fluency as real-time language processing and as an automatic procedural skill that occurs with minimal conscious attention. This perspective emphasizes the cognitive aspect of fluency and how it works in the moment of language use. Together, these statements provide a comprehensive understanding of fluency, including speaker abilities and listener perception, as well as the cognitive processes associated with language production.

1.1.2.3 Accuracy:

Accuracy in speaking pertains to the ability to use proper grammar rules, achieve correct pronunciation, and employ an appropriate vocabulary. It entails the effective use of words, pronouncing them without mistakes, and employing the right sentence structure to convey meaning accurately and to communicate effectively. According to Nation (2008, p. 55), "accuracy is the extent to which students' speech matches what people actually say when they use the target language." Also, Fultcher (2003), stated that "if a student speaks

accurately, he or she is capable of constructing sentences and longer stretches of language that follow acceptable rules of usage" (p. 30). These statements mainly highlight the importance of accuracy in language learning. According to Nation (2008), accuracy refers to the extent to which a student's speech matches native speakers' use of the target language. This means that accurate use of language reflects an understanding of structures, vocabulary, and correct pronunciation. So, both perspectives essentially convey the same idea, which is the importance of accuracy in language learning. They both emphasized that accuracy involves using the correct language forms, such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, in a manner that aligns with native speakers' usage of the language. Additionally, they highlight how accurate language use facilitates effective communication and demonstrates a deeper understanding of the language's rules and structures. Accuracy is vital for effective communication, particularly in formal settings. However, it is critical to find a balance. Accuracy is important, but learners should also focus on developing fluency and natural communication skills. Language learners benefit from a comprehensive strategy that considers both accuracy and fluency.

1.1.2.4 Appropriateness:

Appropriateness in speaking revolves around the use of clear language, an appropriate tone of voice, and presenting content that aligns with the context, away from grammatical errors and misunderstandings. According to Lyster's (1994), appropriateness is "the capacity to recognize and produce socially appropriate speech in context" (p. 263). Crystal (1997), in his definition of pragmatics, referred to choices made by participants and "the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction" (p. 301). Barron (2003) described appropriateness as "knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular languages "linguistic resources" is a crucial part of pragmatic competence" (p. 10). The concept of

appropriateness in language is crucial for effective communication within social contexts. Lyster highlighted the importance of recognizing and producing socially appropriate speech within specific contexts. This involves understanding the norms, conventions, and expectations governing language use in different social situations. Lyster's view emphasizes the need for language users to adapt their speech to fit the social setting they are in, demonstrating sensitivity to the dynamics of communication. Crystal focused on the choices made by participants in language use and the constraints they face during social interactions. He emphasizes that appropriateness is not only about knowing what to say but also about understanding when and how to say it in a manner that aligns with social norms and expectations. This perspective highlights the dynamic nature of language use, where speakers continuously navigate various contextual factors to communicate effectively. Barrons (2003) emphasized the importance of understanding the appropriate contextual use of linguistic resources for pragmatic competence. This includes not only vocabulary and grammar but also features such as tone, register, and nonverbal cues. Pragmatic competence entails knowing how to select and deploy these linguistic resources appropriately to convey intended meanings and achieve communicative goals within specific social contexts. These assertions emphasize the importance of contextual awareness, social standards, and linguistic adaptation in effective communication. Recognizing appropriateness and recognizing pragmatic restrictions contributes to successful relationships in various circumstances.

1.1.3 Speaking Proficiency :

Speaking proficiency refers to the level of competence or ability to communicate effectively and fluently in a spoken language. It encompasses various aspects such as pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammar accuracy, fluency, and coherence in verbal communication. Someone with high speaking proficiency can express themselves clearly,

accurately, and confidently in conversations, presentations, discussions, and other spoken interactions. This proficiency level can vary from basic or elementary proficiency to advanced or fluent proficiency, depending on the individual's language skills and experience. One enormously substantially conventional definition clarified that "proficiency refers to what any character can do or knows in relation to the software program application of the hassle in the authentic world" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 183). This definition emphasized that proficiency in using a software application refers to the practical skills and knowledge a person possesses in relation to the real-world tasks associated with that application. It suggests that proficiency goes beyond mere theoretical understanding and encompasses the ability to effectively utilize the software to accomplish tasks in authentic contexts. Brumfit (1984) used fluency instead of "proficiency" and delivered its definition as "the maximally effective operation of the language system in ways acquired by the student" (p. 543). Brumfit's usage of the term "fluency" instead of "proficiency" highlights the idea of optimal performance within the language system. By defining fluency as the maximally effective operation of the language system, Brumfit suggested that proficiency involves achieving a high level of competence where the language can be used smoothly and efficiently by the learner. According to Bachman (1990, p. 80), "the term "language proficiency" has been historically used in the context of language testing to refer in ordinary terms to knowledge, competence, or capacity in the use of a language, irrespective of how, where, or under what conditions it has been received. Bachman's explanation broadens the understanding of "language proficiency" within the context of language testing. He indicates that historically, the term has been used to encompass various aspects such as knowledge, competence, or capacity for using a language. Importantly, proficiency is not limited to specific learning environments or conditions but is applicable across different contexts and situations. In short, they all relate to being skilled or good at something, whether it's speaking a language, using

software, or understanding and using a language in various contexts. In simpler terms: Speaking Proficiency: Being good at speaking a language. This means being able to talk clearly, use the right words, and express your ideas confidently. This is about being really good at using a language smoothly and efficiently. These approaches agree that language proficiency entails more than just academic knowledge; it also entails practical application, adaptation, and effective communication in real-world situations.

Here are a few tips to improve your speaking proficiency:

1. Practice speaking regularly; have conversations with the native speakers of the language.
2. Listen to native speakers: Pay attention to how native speakers pronounce words. This can help you improve your own pronunciation and fluency.
3. Focus on pronunciation: Work on improving your pronunciation by practicing sounds, intonation, and stress patterns. Also, learn new words and phrases regularly and incorporate them into your speaking practice.
4. Practice is a key to improving your speaking proficiency. Don't be afraid to make mistakes; be more confident; don't be stressed; and keep pushing yourself to communicate in the language as much as possible.
5. Use Language Learning Apps: Many language learning apps offer speaking exercises and feedback to help improve speaking skills. And Challenge yourself to speak in front of others, whether it's in a formal setting like a presentation or informally in group discussions.

For effective communication in a variety of contexts, speaking fluency is essential. The capacity to articulate oneself with clarity and confidence may be extremely beneficial in social situations, professional settings, and personal relationships alike. It promotes trust, cooperation, and understanding between people. Speaking well can also improve one's

chances of landing a job because companies in a variety of industries frequently look for this kind of talent. Additionally, speaking well can enable people to stand up for themselves, present their ideas in an engaging way, and participate actively in conversations and arguments. Speak clearly and efficiently; this is essential for both personal and professional success.

1.1.4 Importance of speaking skill :

Thornbury (2005) stated that “speaking is an activity in real life that is carried out by the speaker to carry out his or her ideas to interact with listeners. The activities are unplanned, and their continuity is based on situations” (p. 4). Richards (2008) stated that “in speaking, we tend to be getting something done, exploring ideas, working out some aspects of the world, or simply being together. If students can speak fluently, that can help them easily communicate and also explore their ideas” (p. 47). So, Thornberry emphasized that speaking involves conveying ideas and interacting with listeners in real-life situations. Richards highlighted the various things that play an important role in speaking skills, such as exploring ideas while socializing, and emphasized the importance of fluency in effective communication. Chastain viewed speaking as a productive skill, which means that it involves generating linguistic output. Ur (1996, p. 121) stated that "the problems in speaking English faced by students include inhibition, nothing to say, the low level of participation, the theme to be spoken, and the use of the mother tongue." On the other hand, Ur identifies common challenges that language learners face when speaking English, including lack of ideas, low engagement, and difficulty choosing topics. According to Chastain (1976),”speaking is a productive skill." Chastain believed that speaking is a productive skill, which means that it involves generating linguistic output, as communication between others and the exchange of information and ideas effectively increase the cognitive stock of language learners. These viewpoints

emphasize the complexity of speaking and the importance of fluency, productivity, and overcoming obstacles that stand in the way of effective communication. The speaking skill is crucial for effective communication in various contexts, including social interactions, professional settings, and academic environments. These perspectives highlight the significance of speaking fluency as a multidimensional ability. Effective speaking requires not only linguistic precision but also the capacity to adapt to different situations and interact meaningfully with others. Overall, speaking skills play a fundamental role in personal, professional, and academic spheres, contributing to effective communication, social interaction, critical thinking, and cultural exchange. The importance of speaking skills, as perceived by students, can vary based on their individual experiences, goals, and contexts. However, some common reasons why students may consider speaking skills important include: Understanding the significance of speaking abilities is critical for students since it involves many aspects important for personal and professional growth. First, effective communication encourages expression and promotes meaningful relationships, both personally and publicly. Second, in an academic setting, excellent speaking skills are essential for active engagement, presentations, and collaborative learning, which improves overall academic success. Third, speaking skills boost confidence and self-esteem, allowing students to express themselves, participate in conversations, and take on leadership responsibilities. Finally, mastering public speaking develops the ability to boldly communicate oneself or ideas, which contributes to personal growth and allows for effective collaboration in solving complicated challenges. Overall, students perceive speaking skills as valuable assets that contribute to their academic success, career readiness, social interactions, personal development, and cultural awareness. They recognize the importance of honing these skills to navigate various contexts and achieve their goals effectively.

1.1.4.1 Second Language Acquisition Theories:

These theories aim to understand cognitive, social, and psychological processes through acquiring a new language. They help teachers, students, and researchers develop effective teaching methods and strategies. Some essential theories include behavioral theory, innate theory, and interactionist theory. Each theory offers different perspectives and points of view on how to learn and improve a second language in different situations. One of the theories that is related to our topic is the communicative theory.

The Communicative Theory: The communicative idea of 2nd language acquisition is grounded on the assumption that profitable language learning is made up of the know-how of forms and buildings of language in addition to the features and purposes a language functions in quite a number of communicative settings. This mannequin of 2nd language acquisition stresses the conversation of meaning in interplay rather than the emphasis on the practice of distinction of grammatical types in isolation (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 215). This means that communicative theory, also known as the communicative approach, is a method of language teaching that focuses on language learners developing their abilities to communicate effectively in various real-life situations. In this approach, language is taught in context, and learners are encouraged to use language for scholarly and practical purposes, such as expressing opinions, making requests, and negotiating meaning. Its aim is to develop learners' communicative competence, which includes linguistic knowledge as well as the social, cultural, and practical aspects of language use.

1.1.4.2 Language Interference and Transfer :

Language interference and transfer refer to the influence of one's native language (L1) on the acquisition of the second language (L2), and this can manifest in different aspects such as language, grammar, and words. There are two types of language interference: positive

transfer and negative transfer. Positive transfer provides elements that facilitate the learning of a language, while negative transfer (also known as interference) aspects of a native language hinder the acquisition and use of the second language. Grammar plays a crucial role in first and second language transfer, as interference occurs when grammatical features of one language overlap with those of the other, affecting the learner's production and comprehension in the second language. This can appear in different ways, such as word order, verb conjugation, use of tenses, and sentence structure. While some aspects of grammar may be transferred directly between languages, others may require proper instruction and practice to acquire. However, the knowledge and skills acquired in learning L1 grammar can provide a foundation for understanding and mastering L2 grammar, and this helps students acquire and use L2 effectively. According to Schwartz & Sprouse (1994, 1996), they stated that "the initial state of L2 acquisition is the final state of L1 acquisition." (p. 40). Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) proposed that the starting point of learning a second language (L2) mirrors the proficiency level achieved in acquiring one's first language (L1). This statement suggests that the skills and understandings developed in acquiring L1 provide a strong basis for approaching L2 learning. This statement sheds light on the dynamic interplay between L1 and L2 acquisition, emphasizing the interconnectedness of linguistic development across languages. Understanding this relationship can enhance our comprehension of language learning processes and inform effective pedagogical approaches in multilingual contexts. MacWhinney (1997) stated that "the early second language learner should experience a massive amount of transfer from L1 to L2." (p. 119). MacWhinney (1997) suggested that early second language learners are likely to experience a significant amount of transfer from their first language (L1) to their second language (L2). Transfer refers to the influence of an individual's native language on the acquisition and use of a second language. The term transfer suggests that many aspects of the first language, including vocabulary, grammar,

pronunciation, and discourse strategies, can be transferred to the second language early in the language learning process. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the early stages of second language acquisition, when learners are still developing their proficiency and knowledge of the target language. This statement emphasizes the importance of recognizing the role of the first language in second language acquisition and highlights the interconnectedness between the two languages. Understanding the extent and nature of transfer can inform language teaching methodologies and help teachers effectively support learners' language acquisition and learning experiences. While Pienemann (1998) said, "My hypothesis is that there won't be a "bulk transfer" of the L1 Formulator; rather, the student will rebuild L2's formulator. This would not preclude the use of L1 methods during this phase. But I surmise that this kind of L1 translocation always takes place as a component of the reconstructive process as a whole." (pp. 81–82). Pienemann (1998) suggested that the process of language acquisition, with a particular focus on how learners move from formulating sentences in their native language (L1) to formulating sentences in a second language (L2), does not transfer the entire sentence formation system from their mother tongue to the second language. Instead of wholesale transfers, they reconstruct a new system for constructing sentences in L2. The new system includes understanding the rules, structures, and patterns of the second language. This hypothesis suggests that second language acquisition involves the process of reconstructing the sentence-formulation system in the second language, with occasional reference to methods or strategies from the native language but without complete transfer of native language form. So, Schwartz & Sprouse suggest a strong relationship between the final state of L1 acquisition and the initial state of L2 acquisition, while MacWhinney highlights the important role of L1 transfer in L2 acquisition, especially in the early stages. On the other hand, Pienemann argues against the idea of "bundled transfer" of L1 to L2 form. Instead, it assumes that learners actively reconstruct L2

formants, which implies a more independent process of L2 acquisition. Each perspective offers valuable insights into the complex relationship between first and second language acquisition. In summary, language transfer occurs when learners apply the rules and norms of their first language (L1) to their second language (L2). Sometimes, these concepts from L1 correspond to L2, but other times they do not and may lead to linguistic errors. It is necessary to master the mother tongue well because it is the foundation of second language acquisition. To summarize, language transfer happens when students apply L1 rules and norms to their L2. Sometimes these concepts correspond to L2, whereas other times they result in linguistic blunders. Mastering one's native tongue is essential for acquiring another language.

1.1.5 EFL Pedagogy and Teaching Strategies:

Teaching English to individuals who do not speak it as their language, known as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy, involves a variety of methods and practices to aid in language learning and effective communication. These strategies aim to create a learning environment where students can interact with the language through activities. Key approaches include communicative language teaching, task-based learning to achieve language goals, immersion techniques in contexts, differentiated instruction tailored to diverse learner needs, and utilizing authentic materials like newspapers and videos for exposure to real-world language use. The ultimate goal is to encourage participation, enhance language skills, and build confidence in using English. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) involves various pedagogical approaches and strategies to effectively impart language skills to learners. Here are some key components:

Language games and cooperative learning are effective tools for improving language skills and enhancing language acquisition. Role-playing and simulation allow students to immerse themselves in real-life scenarios, allowing them to apply knowledge and develop

practical skills in a controlled environment. According to Doff (1990; p. 232), role play is "a way of bringing situations from real life into the classroom.". The statement indicates that role-playing serves as a tool for teachers to present real-life scenarios or situations and transfer them to the classroom environment. By playing these roles and linking them to reality, students can effectively interact with these scenarios, allowing for a deeper understanding, the application of knowledge, and the development of practical skills in a controlled environment. Language games provide a dynamic and fun way for students to improve their language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, sentence structure, and interpersonal abilities. Cooperative learning involves bringing together students with different abilities into small groups, enhancing their understanding of lectures and textual materials through sharing and discussion. Picture narrating, a method that uses visual aids to direct narrative-based courses, encourages creativity, critical thinking, and language development. Brainstorming allows learners to express their ideas freely. Communicative language teaching (CLT) focuses on genuine communication, authentic language use, and a student-centered approach, encouraging learners to use language in meaningful and acceptable ways. This approach makes learning more engaging and helps students see the real-world applications of the language they are studying.

1.1.6 Teachers/ Students Role in Teaching/Learning Speaking:

In teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), teachers play a vital role in developing students' oral communication skills. They create a positive learning environment where students feel comfortable taking linguistic risks and expressing themselves. Teachers foster a sense of community and mutual respect, encouraging active engagement and cooperation.

Teachers design speaking activities tailored to students' language levels and learning goals, such as role-playing, group discussions, debates, and storytelling. They serve as linguistic role models by demonstrating correct pronunciation, intonation, and realistic expressions, helping students internalize speech patterns.

Teachers provide critical feedback on students' speaking performances, focusing on fluency, coherence, word usage, grammar, pronunciation, and communication efficacy. This targeted feedback and encouragement helps students improve steadily.

Neacșu (1990) highlighted the importance of combining methods, procedures, techniques, and organizational strategies to optimize students' learning potential. This involves:

a-**Methods:** general teaching philosophies or approaches like communicative language teaching or task-based language teaching.

b-**Procedures:** Sequential steps within a teaching method to achieve learning objectives, including how exercises are conducted and lessons are organized.

Neacșu's perspective underscores the necessity of informed decision-making in education, where integrating various tactics and strategies creates a dynamic and effective learning environment. Good teaching requires ongoing evaluation and adaptation to meet students' unique needs and preferences.

On the other hand, when teachers implement instructional tactics, students play a crucial role in enhancing the educational process and increasing achievement. Firstly, students engage actively in learning through activities like group projects, discussions, and hands-on exercises. This active participation helps students learn content quickly and develop skills such as teamwork and critical thinking. Secondly, students provide valuable feedback on

teaching methods, allowing teachers to adjust and improve their strategies. This feedback creates a dynamic learning environment responsive to students' needs. Thirdly, students apply their knowledge in real-world situations, deepening their understanding and appreciation of the material. Collaborative learning enables students to share ideas and develop social and communication skills. Additionally, teachers encourage creative problem-solving through project-based learning and arts-centered exercises, fostering creativity and essential skills for success in a changing world.

Summary:

In summary, in this section, we have attempted to highlight EFL students' speaking competency and skill, along with the instructional strategies that teachers should implement to help improve students' speaking level and language acquisition. Success in a variety of spheres of life, such as the workplace, social settings, and cross-cultural encounters, depends on having effective speaking abilities. These abilities enable people to communicate ideas and thoughts clearly and with confidence. People can accomplish their goals and effectively express themselves to others by developing good speaking skills through communication. In light of this, spending time and energy honing your speaking abilities is crucial for both professional and personal development in this developing world.

1.2 Linguistics Barriers

In today's interconnected world, English has become a global language, and proficiency in English is often seen as a key skill for academic, professional, and personal success. However, for EFL students, learning English as a non-native language can pose various challenges, especially when it comes to linguistic barriers. Linguistic barriers refer to the difficulties and obstacles that EFL students encounter in their language learning journey. These barriers can manifest in different forms, such as pronunciation challenges, limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, and struggles with syntax and discourse markers. These barriers can hinder effective communication, impede academic progress, and impact self-confidence. Understanding the nature and causes of these linguistic barriers is crucial for educators, policymakers, and language learners themselves. By identifying and addressing these barriers, we can develop more effective teaching methods, design targeted interventions, and provide appropriate support to EFL students. In this study, we delve into the various linguistic barriers faced by EFL students in general. It explores the factors that contribute to these barriers, such as cultural differences, educational backgrounds, and individual learning styles.

1.2.1 Overview of Linguistic Barriers :

Linguistic barriers, in general, refer to the difficulties or obstacles that arise when individuals from different language backgrounds try to communicate effectively. These barriers can include challenges related to language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation skills, grammar understanding, and cultural differences in language usage. They can hinder comprehension, limit expression, and create misunderstandings between speakers. In the case of EFL students, linguistic barriers can significantly affect their speaking proficiency. EFL students often face challenges expressing themselves fluently and accurately

in English due to various linguistic factors. To overcome these barriers, EFL students need exposure to authentic English language input, opportunities for practice and feedback, and a supportive learning environment. Engaging in conversations, listening to native speakers, and actively expanding vocabulary and grammar knowledge can help improve speaking proficiency over time. It is important to note that linguistic barriers are common for EFL students, and with consistent effort and practice, these barriers can be overcome.

1.2.1.1 Vocabulary :

Vocabulary refers to the collection of words that an individual knows and gets in a specific language. It encompasses all the words, phrases, and expressions that a person can utilize and comprehend when speaking, listening, reading, or composing. Vocabulary has numerous benefits: it progresses perusing comprehension, aids in decoding, enhances by, and provides large insights. According to Hornby (2012), “vocabulary is the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a language ; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings” (p. 1506). Also, Quirk believed that “words are created as a result of an urgent need” (Quirk, 1975, 58), but another study by Whitehall pointed out that “the vocabulary of a language has always been influenced by the intellectual climate of each successful period in the development of the language” (Whitehall, 1975, 202), which means Throughout the evolution of a language, the vocabulary is shaped by the prevailing intellectual atmosphere during each prosperous phase of its development. For example, jargon words [technical words] are used by professionals such as engineers, doctors, or any other professionals. Many times, jargon words are used unintentionally. But common people, like EFL students or those who do not understand the meaning of these words, face problems.

1.2.1.2 Grammar :

When we say grammar, we mean the set of rules and standards that administer the structure. For EFL students, linguistic use can be a critical boundary in speaking. According to Harmer (1987), “people cannot use words unless they know how the words should be put together” (p. 4). It means that understanding and applying grammatical rules is crucial for becoming proficient in a language. Without knowledge of these rules, it becomes difficult to properly use words and construct meaningful sentences. Grammar provides the framework for organizing words and forming coherent expressions, allowing effective communication. Mastering grammar is essential for expressing ideas accurately and being understood by others. Grammar plays a significant role and holds great importance for the speaking skills of EFL students. As Thornburry (1999, p. 15) stated, “grammar is the fundamental discourse machine generator in every language in general.” It means grammar serves as the fundamental framework for constructing meaningful sentences in any language. Let us take English as an example. Without grammar, it would be challenging to form coherent statements like “I love learning languages” or “She is a talented musician.” When discussing the aspects of grammar, it is important to consider various elements that make up the structure of a language. Some key aspects to explore include sentence structure, verb tenses, word order, parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.), subject-verb agreement, pronouns, articles, and punctuation. These elements play a crucial role in forming grammatically correct sentences and conveying meaning effectively. By understanding and applying these aspects, language learners can enhance their communication skills and express themselves more accurately.

1.2.1.3 Pronunciation:

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “pronunciation means how we say words. How we use spoken stress and rhythm is also an important part of pronunciation.” For example, it is

important to know which syllables in a word are stressed and how different patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables are pronounced. There are also common patterns of intonation in English that enable us to give special emphasis to particular words, phrases, and sentences. So, basically, pronunciation isn't just about saying words correctly; it's also about how we emphasize certain syllables and the rhythm of speech. Understanding stressed syllables in words and intonation patterns helps us highlight specific parts of what we're saying, like words, phrases, or sentences. It's like adding musicality to our speech to make it more engaging and clear. In another way, when we talk about stressed syllables, it is like giving extra power or emphasis to certain parts of a word. This emphasis helps listeners understand the meaning and focus of what we're saying. Intonation, on the other hand, adds emotion and meaning to our speech. It is like the melody of our words, helping us convey feelings, questions, or excitement. By mastering these aspects, we can communicate more effectively and express ourselves better in conversations.

1.2.1.4 Syntax and Discourse Markers :

Syntax and discourse markers are related in the sense that they both play a role in organizing and structuring language. Syntax provides the framework for constructing grammatically correct sentences, while discourse markers contribute to the coherence and organization of larger stretches of language beyond individual sentences. By using appropriate syntax and incorporating discourse markers effectively, speakers and writers can convey their intended meaning and facilitate smooth communication. Linguistic barriers can impact both syntax and the use of discourse markers for EFL students. When facing these barriers, EFL students may struggle to understand and apply the rules of syntax correctly, leading to grammatically incorrect sentences. This can hinder their ability to express themselves clearly and be understood by others. Additionally, discourse markers play a

crucial role in organizing and connecting ideas in communication. EFL students may have difficulty understanding the meaning and appropriate usage of discourse markers, which can affect the coherence and flow of their speech or writing. By addressing these linguistic barriers, EFL students can improve their overall language proficiency and overcome these challenges. It's important to provide them with targeted support and opportunities for practice to enhance their syntax skills and effective use of discourse markers.

a. Discourse Markers :

Fraser (1999) defined DMs as “a pragmatic class lexical expressions drawn from the syntactic classes of conjunctions, adverbials, and prepositional phrases” (p. 950). This means discourse markers are like little helpers in our conversations. They're words or phrases that we use to connect ideas and make our communication smoother. We can think of them as sign posts that guide the flow of our conversation. They can be words like « but, » « however, » or « on the other hand » that show contrast or add additional information. By using these discourse markers, we can make our thoughts more organized and our communication more effective.

b. Syntax :

According to Crane et. al. (1981:102), "Syntax is the way words are put together to form phrases and sentences." In simpler terms, syntax is like the recipe for constructing sentences. It tells us how to arrange words in a specific order to make meaningful and grammatically correct phrases and sentences. It's like following a set of instructions to build a sentence that others can understand. Syntax helps us communicate effectively by organizing words in a way that makes sense.

1.2.2 Factors Influencing Linguistic Barriers :

Speaking proficiency is influenced by various linguistic components of a language, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Additionally, there are secondary factors that have a minor influence, including pedagogical and psychological obstacles. So in order to support students in overcoming challenges with speaking, teachers must identify the factors that impact their speaking abilities.

1.2.2.1 Restricted Vocabulary :

Vocabulary can be an obstruction for EFL students since it influences their capacity to get it and express themselves precisely in English. Restricted vocabulary can make it troublesome for students to comprehend perusing materials, take after-class information, and take part in talks. It can, moreover, ruin their capacity to successfully communicate their contemplations and thoughts. Building a solid vocabulary is vital for EFL students to overcome this boundary and progress their general English capability. As Wilkins (1972, p. 109) stated, "Linguists have had remarkably little to say about vocabulary, and one can find very few studies that could be of any practical interest for language teachers." Basically, it means that linguists haven't really talked much about vocabulary, and there aren't many studies that would be helpful for language teachers. It suggests that there's a lack of practical information about vocabulary in the field of linguistics. So, it's like there's not a lot of research or guidance specifically focused on teaching vocabulary. In another study, Michael Lessard-Clouston (2021) argued that "teaching vocabulary was not just about words; it involved multi-word expressions, knowledge of English vocabulary, and how to go about learning and teaching it." This means that teaching vocabulary is not just about learning individual words. It's also about understanding how words are used together in phrases and sentences. It involves having a good overall knowledge of English vocabulary and knowing

effective methods for teaching and learning it. So, it's not just about memorizing words, but also about understanding how they work together in the language. A limited vocabulary can have a significant impact on various aspects of communication. When someone has a restricted range of words at their disposal, it can hinder comprehension. A limited vocabulary can make it challenging to understand and interpret written and spoken language accurately. It may lead to misinterpretation or misunderstanding of messages, and with a limited vocabulary, expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions becomes more difficult. It can restrict one's ability to articulate themselves clearly and effectively. Inadequate vocabulary can erode one's confidence in social and academic settings. It may hinder participation in discussions, presentations, or debates, leading to feelings of self-consciousness or being misunderstood. A limited vocabulary can impede reading comprehension, making it harder to grasp the meaning of texts. It can also restrict the variety and richness of one's writing, limiting their ability to convey ideas effectively. Also, in educational and professional environments, a limited vocabulary can be a barrier to success. It may affect performance in exams, interviews, and written assignments and limit opportunities for growth. Vocabulary is a crucial tool for learning and personal development. By actively working on vocabulary development, individuals can overcome these challenges and enhance their language skills through some strategies for expanding their vocabulary, like reading, diving into books, articles, and other written materials that interest them, paying attention to new words and their context, and exploring different genres to expose themselves to a wide range of vocabulary. Type in the new words you come across and their definitions. Use them in sentences to practice using them correctly. There are also vocabulary-building apps available that offer interactive exercises and quizzes.

1.2.2.2 Grammatical Errors :

Ellis's (2006) stated that "grammar instruction involves any instructional techniques that draw learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it. In other words, teaching methods that specifically target different aspects of grammar. These techniques help learners understand the rules and patterns of a language and how to use them correctly in both comprehension and production. The goal of grammar instruction is to make learners aware of specific grammatical forms, such as verb tenses, sentence structures, or word order. By drawing learners' attention to these forms, it helps them understand them more deeply and apply them in their own speaking and writing. The ultimate aim of grammar instruction is to help learners internalize the grammar rules so they can use them automatically and accurately in real-life communication. These are common grammatical errors made by EFL students, for example: forgetting to match the subject of a sentence with the correct verb form and mixing up different verb tenses within a sentence or paragraph. Also using the wrong pronoun form or not using pronouns correctly. Stringing together multiple independent clauses without proper punctuation or conjunctions. It's important to keep practicing and paying attention to grammar rules to improve our language skills.

1.2.2.3 Difficulties with Pronunciation:

According to Fraser, (2000a, p. 7) , "with good pronunciation, a speaker is intelligible despite other errors; with poor pronunciation, understanding a speaker will be very difficult, despite accuracy in other areas". The quote is saying that even if someone makes mistakes when they speak, as long as their pronunciation is good, people can still understand them. On the other hand, if someone's pronunciation is poor, it can make it really hard for others to

understand what they're saying, even if they are correct in other aspects of their speech. Alshehri (2020) stated that “punctuation is vital for the EFL learners in terms of intelligibility of pronunciation and understanding of oral material.” (p. 208). This statement underscores the significance of pronunciation in terms of being understood by others and comprehending spoken language. By improving their pronunciation skills, EFL learners can enhance their overall communication abilities. Here are a few specific pronunciation difficulties:

a- Sounds : EFL students may struggle with pronouncing sounds that are not present in their native language. For example, the « th » sound in words like « think » and « this » can be challenging.

b-Stress patterns and intonation: EFL students may have difficulty with the stress patterns and intonation of English words and sentences. This can affect the overall rhythm and melody of their speech. English has a wide range of vowel sounds, and EFL students may find it challenging to differentiate and produce them accurately. For example, distinguishing between the short « i » sound in « sit » and the long « ee » sound in « seat. »

c- EFL students may struggle with pronouncing word endings(S, ed), such as plurals, verb conjugations, and past tense forms. This can affect the clarity and accuracy of their speech.

d- Linking and blending : Connecting words smoothly and blending sounds together can be difficult for EFL students. This can result in choppy or disjointed speech. These difficulties can vary from person to person, and individual needs may differ. It’s important to provide targeted practice and support to address specific pronunciation challenges.

1.2.4 Psychological Barriers :

Psychological obstacles play a big role and greatly affect when speaking, and they have a relationship with linguistic obstacles because no matter how much you know how to speak,

you have linguistic knowledge, and your pronunciation is 100% correct. When psychological obstacles interfere, such as anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of making a mistake, you will not speak correctly in all aspects. Shakurov (2001) explained psychological barriers as “external and internal obstacles that resist the manifestations of the subject’s life activity and functioning(pp. . 3–18). In simpler terms, psychological barriers are the external and internal obstacles that get in the way of a person's ability to live their life and function effectively. These obstacles can come from their mindset, emotions, and thought processes, and they can make it harder for individuals to carry out their daily activities. So, it is like there are things that hold them back and make it challenging for them to fully engage in their lives. External psychological barriers can include factors such as social anxiety, fear of public speaking, or a lack of confidence in one's abilities. These barriers are influenced by external factors like the environment, social pressure, or past experiences. For example, someone may struggle with speaking in front of others due to a fear of judgment or criticism. Another example could be a language learner feeling self-conscious about making mistakes in a group setting. These external barriers can have a significant impact on a person’s ability to express themselves effectively.

1.2.4.1Anxiety in Speaking Situations:

MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) stated that “language anxiety can be defined as the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning” (p.284).This means Language anxiety refers to the emotional state of tension and apprehension that individuals experience when using or learning a second language. It is specifically associated with various aspects of second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning. People may feel anxious or nervous when they need to communicate in a second language or when they are in a learning

environment. This anxiety can impact their language performance and overall language learning experience. Horwitz et al. (1986) defined language anxiety as “a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to 7 classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 128). It means that language anxiety is not just a simple feeling of nervousness. It involves a combination of how learners perceive themselves, their beliefs about language learning, the emotions they experience, and the actions they take in the classroom. This complex interplay of factors arises because language learning is a unique process that can be challenging and unfamiliar to learners. By understanding and addressing these various aspects, we can better support language learners in overcoming their anxiety and improving their language skills.

1.2.4.2 Confidence Building Strategies:

“Numerous students think that their English is terrible and feel that they cannot talk English well. So, the fundamental cause of students’ need of self-confidence is their low capacity in talking English” (He and Chen, 2010). It’s common for students to feel the need for self-confidence when it comes to speaking English. This need often stems from their perception of having low proficiency in English conversation. When students feel like they struggle to express themselves or communicate effectively in English, it can impact their confidence levels. Building self-confidence in speaking English involves practice, exposure to the language, and supportive learning environments. With time and effort, students can enhance their speaking skills and boost their self-confidence in English. Brown (2001) also added that the students’ lack of confidence is caused by a lack of encouragement from the teacher because some students find learning demotivating rather than motivating. This makes encouragement a vital thing in building the students’ confidence. The lack of confidence in students can be attributed to the absence of encouragement from teachers. When students

don't receive enough support and motivation from their teachers, it can make the learning process demotivating rather than inspiring. Encouragement plays a crucial role in building students' confidence, as it helps them believe in their abilities and feel supported in their language learning journey. When teachers provide positive feedback, acknowledge students' efforts, and create a safe and encouraging learning environment, it can greatly boost students' confidence and motivation.

1.2.4 .3 Overcoming Fear of Making Mistakes :

Out of the four language skills, speaking is the one that necessitates classroom practice to gain fluency. Tragically, many students feel apprehensive about making errors in front of their peers and teachers. As Lucas, Miraflores, and Go (2011) stated, "Fear of negative evaluation is the apprehension about other people's evaluations" (p. 102). The fear of making mistakes is often connected to the fear of negative evaluation. It's that feeling of being anxious or worried about how other people will judge or evaluate us based on our mistakes. This fear can stem from a desire to be perceived as competent or knowledgeable, and the fear of being judged or criticized can hold us back from taking risks or speaking up. Overcoming this fear involves recognizing that making mistakes is a natural part of learning and growth. It's important to create a supportive and non-judgmental environment where mistakes are seen as opportunities for improvement rather than something to be feared. By embracing a growth mindset and focusing on progress rather than perfection, we can overcome the fear of negative evaluation and gain more confidence in our language skills. "Speaking in front of the class in a second or foreign language classroom without preparation is the most anxiety-provoking factor" (Tasnimi, 2011, p. 209). It highlights that speaking in front of the class in a second or foreign language without preparation is one of the most anxiety-provoking factors when it comes to speaking in class. This means that when students are asked to speak spontaneously in a

language they are still learning, it can cause a lot of anxiety and nervousness. The lack of preparation can make students worry about making mistakes or not being able to express themselves clearly. It's a challenging situation that many language learners can relate to. However, with practice, support, and a positive learning environment, students can gradually overcome this anxiety and become more confident in their speaking skills.

1.2.5 Pedagogical Approaches and Instructional Strategies:

In the context of EFL students' linguistic barriers to speaking proficiency, pedagogical approaches and instructional strategies refer to the methods and techniques used by teachers to address these barriers and enhance students' speaking skills. Pedagogical approaches may include communicative language teaching, task-based learning, or content-based instruction, which focus on providing meaningful opportunities for students to practice speaking in real-life situations. Instructional strategies can involve activities like role-plays, discussions, presentations, and language games that aim to develop students' speaking fluency, accuracy, and confidence. These approaches and strategies are designed to help EFL students overcome their linguistic barriers and improve their speaking proficiency.

1.2.5.1 Effective Teaching Methodologies :

When it comes to effective teaching methodologies for speaking practice, some popular approaches include: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): This approach emphasizes real-life communication and interaction. It focuses on meaningful tasks and activities that encourage students to use the language in authentic situations. Task-Based Learning: In this approach, students work on specific tasks or projects that require them to use the language to achieve a goal. It promotes active engagement and problem-solving while practicing speaking skills. Content-Based Instruction: This approach integrates language

learning with subject content. Students learn and practice speaking skills while studying topics from various subjects like science, history, or literature.

1.2.5.2 Classroom Activities for Speaking Practice :

As for classroom activities, here are a few examples. Role-plays: Students act out different scenarios, such as ordering food at a restaurant or having a job interview. It allows students to step into different roles and engage in simulated real-life scenarios. This encourages them to use the language authentically, express their thoughts, and interact with others in a meaningful way. Discussions and Dialogues: Engage students in group or pair discussions on various topics. This encourages them to express their opinions, share ideas, and engage in meaningful conversations. provide students with a structured conversation where they can practice using the target language in a realistic context. They can work in pairs or small groups to act out dialogues related to everyday situations or specific topics. Also Presentations: Assign students to give presentations on different topics. This helps them develop their speaking skills, organization, and presentation techniques. Language games are not only fun but also effective in promoting speaking practice. Games like « Guess the Word, » « Taboo, » or « 20 Questions » require students to communicate and describe words or concepts using the target language. This helps improve their vocabulary, fluency, and communication skills. These activities create an engaging and interactive learning environment that motivates students to actively participate and develop their speaking proficiency.

1.2.6 Assessments to Improve Speaking Proficiency :

Assessments play a crucial role in improving speaking proficiency. One effective strategy is conducting oral interviews. In this approach, students engage in one-on-one or small group conversations where they are evaluated on fluency, accuracy, and coherence. By asking questions related to the topics they have learned, teachers can assess their speaking

abilities in a more personalized manner. Another assessment strategy is through presentations or speeches. In this method, students are given the opportunity to deliver presentations or speeches on specific topics. By evaluating their ability to convey information clearly, use appropriate language, and engage the audience, teachers can assess their speaking skills in a more structured setting. This allows students to practice organizing their thoughts, speaking confidently, and effectively communicating their ideas. These strategies not only provide valuable feedback but also encourage active participation and engagement in the learning process.

Summary:

In this section on linguistic barriers, we have explored the definitions of linguistic barriers, the factors contributing to these barriers, and previous studies in the field. Based on our findings, it's clear that linguistic barriers encompass various aspects such as vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation skills, and grammar understanding. These barriers can pose significant challenges for EFL students as they develop their speaking proficiency.

Through the previous studies examined, we gained insights into the specific difficulties that EFL students face when it comes to vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. It's evident that word meaning, usage, context, word forms, synonyms, antonyms, register, and connotation all play crucial roles in understanding and using vocabulary effectively. Pronunciation skills, including intonation, stress, and rhythm, are also vital for clear communication. Additionally, grammar understanding, encompassing sentence structure, tenses, and sentence patterns, is essential for accurate and coherent speech.

By recognizing these linguistic barriers, researchers and educators can develop targeted interventions and strategies to support EFL students in overcoming these challenges. Providing explicit instruction, engaging in meaningful practice activities, and creating an

inclusive and supportive learning environment can all contribute to improving EFL students' speaking proficiency.

Previous studies:

Study 1: Challenges of L2 Oral Communication in EFL Contexts (Jamshidnejad, 2020).

The first study or the underscores the multifaceted nature of oral communication challenges faced by EFL learners. It emphasizes that becoming proficient in speaking English, particularly in environments where the language is not commonly spoken, can be a lengthy process. The study suggests that even with advanced proficiency in other language skills, such as reading and writing, students may still encounter difficulties in oral communication. This highlights the importance of addressing not only linguistic barriers but also psychological and social factors, such as anxiety and self-confidence, that can impede language development. Overall, the research provides insights into the nuanced challenges EFL learners face in acquiring oral communication skills and underscores the need for comprehensive support and instruction in overcoming these obstacles.

Study 2: The second study (Khaldi, Halima, & Benkada, Yousra, 2021) delves into the challenges faced by first-year students in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The research explores various aspects of factors that affect learners, like linguistic challenges, psychological challenges, and pedagogical challenges in general. Additionally, it investigates the teacher's role in the classroom and provides suggestions for teaching speaking effectively. But they neglected the aspect of linguistic obstacles. They talked about them, but they did not delve into the details, even though this aspect is more important when speaking a foreign language. There are many obstacles, and importance must be given to each obstacle.

Study 3: EFL Students' Challenges in Learning Speaking Skills: A Case Study
The third study was by Aisha Ganesh Ratnasari (2000) in the Mechanical Engineering Department. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the main challenges that students encounter when learning speaking skills?

2. How do students develop strategies to overcome the challenges they face in learning speaking skills?

The research design employed a case study approach and involved three participants:

- 1: Two students from the Mechanical Engineering Department

- 2: One English teacher from the department
Data were collected through interviews and students' speaking grades from classroom presentations.

The findings revealed four primary challenges: Lack of vocabulary, nervousness, an unsupportive environment, and lack of grammar knowledge.

The previous research explained the challenges and strategies from the students' point of view. In our research, we would like to explore the other challenges and strategies from students' points of view about speaking proficiency that might appear and delve into more details to make it clearer.

Conclusion

This part sheds light on the linguistic barriers, the contributing factors, and the insights from previous studies. This knowledge will serve as a foundation for further research and the development of effective interventions to address linguistic barriers and enhance EFL students' speaking proficiency.

Chapter two

Practical Part

Introduction

In this chapter, a description of the methodology used in the study is provided. A discussion of the nature of our research and the main features of quantitative and qualitative methods, in addition to the reasons behind choosing them, is delineated. Also, it consists of descriptions of the research design, the procedures followed in the development of the research instruments and descriptions of their content, as well as the procedures that were followed to implement the research approaches, including piloting, sampling technique, and techniques for data analysis (descriptive and statistical treatment).

2.1 Research Methodology

In this study, we relied on a non-experimental method, which refers to studies that do not involve manipulating variables or conducting controlled experiments. It focuses on observing and describing phenomena as they naturally occur. The topic imposes on us to use non-experimental method because we are limited by time, the flexibility it offers, and the freedom to study the topic, watch and describe the challenges that face students to speak proficiency without changing them, which can give insights into real life. They're practical and ethical because they don't involve manipulating variables. We relied on explanatory sequential mixed method design, which is both qualitative (numbers and statistics) and quantitative (in-depth information) research about our topic. This combination allows for a comprehensive understanding of the topic and provides a more holistic view of the cultural influences on speaking proficiency.

2.2 Population:

According to Burns and Grove (1993:779), “a population is defined as all elements (individuals, objects, and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a sample “. .He

indicates that a population in a study includes everything that fits the criteria for being part of the research. This definition helps researchers identify the group they're studying and select appropriate sampling methods for their research. The population refers to the entire group of individuals that we want to study, which in our case would be all first-year university students who are learning English as a foreign language (EFL). This includes all students who meet our criteria within that specific population. We used the entire random population instead of a specific sample, because we included all first-year university students in our research. This allows us to gather data from a diverse range of students and understand the linguistic barriers that hinder their speaking proficiency. By examining the experiences and challenges faced by all students, we can provide valuable insights for improving their speaking abilities.

2.2.1 Sampling Procedure

The sampling process for this study uses a random sampling technique. All first-year English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the University of Abbes Laghrour Khenchela are the target population. By ensuring that every first-year EFL student has an equal chance of being included in this study, this method reduces bias and improves the findings' generalizability. The students are required to answer a series of questions meant to uncover and investigate language problems affecting their ability to communicate verbally.

2.2.2 Sample:

According to Polit & Hungler (1993:176) , “a convenient sample consists of subjects included in the study because they happen to be in the right place at the right time.” . This quote means that a convenient sample includes subjects who are included in the study simply because they are available. In another study, Mouton (1996:132) defines “a sample as elements selected with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are

taken". It means that a sample is a group of elements chosen to learn something about the entire population they come from.

2.2.2.1 Sample A: First year EFL Students :

First-year English students in the Department of English Language at the University of Khenchela are concerned with our study. Their total number is 269, divided into five groups. We have chosen this level to work with because they are beginners in their English language, and this is a critical stage in their language learning journey. By focusing on first-year students, we can examine the specific challenges they face in developing their speaking skills and identify any linguistic barriers they encounter. This research will help us better understand the factors that contribute to their speaking proficiency and potentially inform teaching strategies to support their language development. The study was conducted with seventy (70) students from a whole population, which represents 26.02% of the whole population.

2.2.2.2 Sample B : EFL Teachers :

In our research, we focused on a diverse group of teachers who employed interactive and communicative approaches to enhance the speaking proficiency of first-year students. We had a team of six teachers who played a crucial role in providing language instruction and supporting the students' language development throughout the study.

2.3 Context of the Study/the Setting

Our research, "Exploring linguistic barriers in EFL students' speaking proficiency," was carried out at the University of Abbes Laghrour Khenchela in Khenchela, Algeria, during the academic year 2023-2024. It focused on first-year students taking English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses. Conducting the research in the middle of the academic year was

strategic, as this is a crucial time to identify and address language learning barriers. This context allows for meaningful insights into the linguistic challenges faced by new EFL learners in their initial stages of language acquisition.

2.4 Research Tools:

2.4.1 Students Questionnaire:

According to Yugesh (2006, p. 191), a questionnaire is defined as "a form which is prepared and distributed for the purpose of securing responses." Questionnaires are tools used to gather information or opinions from respondents on a particular topic or set of topics.

The aim behind using questionnaire in our research is to gather insights directly from the students. By asking them specific questions about their speaking proficiency, we can understand their experiences, challenges, and perceptions in a more comprehensive way. This information will help us tailor our interventions and recommendations to better address their needs. Ultimately, our aim is to improve the overall speaking skills and language learning experience for the students. We sent the questionnaire to students online via Messenger because it is the most widely used and because sending the questionnaire online is a fast and efficient option for several reasons. Firstly, it eliminates the need for physical distribution, saving time and resources. Secondly, online platforms allow for easy access and convenience for students to respond at their own pace. Additionally, online surveys often have built-in features for data collection and analysis, making it easier to gather and interpret the results. Overall, using online methods for the questionnaire ensures a quick and streamlined process for both the students and the researchers.

2. 4.2 Teachers Interview:

Our goal in conducting interviews with teachers is to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on EFL instruction and the challenges that students face in developing their speaking proficiency. By directly engaging with teachers, we can gather valuable insights, experiences, and recommendations that can inform our research findings. These interviews help us gain a more nuanced understanding of effective teaching strategies and approaches that can support students in improving their speaking skills. Ultimately, our aim is to enhance the quality of EFL instruction and contribute to the development of more effective language learning experiences for students.

2.5 Procedures: Description of Questionnaire and Interview:

2.5.1 Description of Student's Questionnaire:

The questionnaire for first-year English students consists of 15 questions that are divided into three sections. Each section focuses on different aspects related to speaking proficiency.

The first section (Qs: 1-3): deals with personal information.

The second section (Qs: 4-8): deals with students proficiency and Linguistic challenges .

The Third section (Qs 9-15): deals with teachers support and Strategies.

2.5.2 Description of Teacher's Interviews :

During the teachers' interview, we had the opportunity to have in-depth conversations with experienced educators. We asked them a series of open-ended and closed-ended questions to gather their valuable insights and perspectives on EFL instruction. The interviews

provided us with a deeper understanding of their teaching strategies, classroom dynamics, and recommendations for improving students' speaking skills. By engaging directly with teachers, we gained valuable qualitative data from the student questionnaire. Overall, the interviews helped us gather a comprehensive view of effective teaching approaches and provided us with valuable insights to enhance EFL instruction.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the first section of this chapter serves as a comprehensive guide to the methodology employed in our study. We have provided a clear and detailed explanation of our research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques. By outlining the approach we took, we ensure transparency and enable others to replicate or build upon our study. We have discussed the selection process for participants, highlighting the rationale behind our choices. Additionally, we have described the tools used for data gathering, such as the questionnaire for students and interviews with teachers. Ethical considerations were also taken into account, ensuring the privacy and well-being of the participants. Overall, this section establishes a solid foundation for our research and sets the stage for the subsequent sections, where we will delve into the findings and implications of our study.

2.2 Data analysis and Interpretations

Achieving proficiency in speaking skill seems difficult, thus one of the most challenging aspects of language learning, often poses significant hurdles for EFL students which is the case of students of English language in the Faculty of letters and foreign languages in Abbas Laghrour University in Khenchela. These hurdles are frequently compounded by linguistic barriers that impede effective communication and progress. Consequently, this research aims to explore these linguistic barriers faced by EFL students in Khenchela, focusing on their

impact on speaking proficiency. The primary aim is to gain comprehensive insights into this issue

A mixed-method approach was adopted. First, an online questionnaire was administered to EFL students to gauge their attitudes, perceptions, and experiences regarding speaking in English. This questionnaire aimed to identify common challenges and patterns related to linguistic barriers that students encounter. The quantitative data gathered from the students provided a broad overview of the prevalent issues affecting speaking proficiency. Following the student survey, in-depth interviews were conducted with EFL teachers of oral expression in Khenchela. These interviews sought to capture the teachers' perspectives on the linguistic barriers their students face, as well as the strategies they employ to help overcome these challenges. The qualitative data obtained from the teachers offered valuable context and depth to the findings from the student questionnaire, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play.

By combining both tools, a student attitude online questionnaire and teachers' interview, we aim to provide a holistic view of the linguistic barriers in EFL speaking proficiency. All in all, the findings are expected to inform both pedagogical practices and policy decisions, ultimately contributing to more effective EFL instruction and improved speaking outcomes for students in Khenchela.

2.2.1 Students' Online Attitudes Questionnaire

Actually, the primary aim of students' online questionnaire is to identify and analyse critically the various linguistic challenges that EFL students in Abbes Laghrour University face in developing their speaking skills. So, this could include understanding specific obstacles such as pronunciation difficulties, limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, lack of exposure to native speakers, anxiety or lack of confidence when speaking, and the impact of

first language interference. To sum up, the ultimate goal would be to gather data that can inform strategies and interventions to help EFL students improve their speaking proficiency by addressing these barriers.

In this chapter, we present a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from the questionnaire entitled "Exploring Linguistic Barriers in EFL Students' Speaking Proficiency." Case study of 1st year students in Abbas Laghrour university in Khenchela. The data collected has been systematically organized and visualized through a series of tables and graphs to facilitate a clear and insightful interpretation. These visual aids allow for an in-depth examination of the key findings, highlighting the most significant linguistic challenges faced by EFL students of Khenchela. By analysing these results, we aim to identify patterns and correlations that can shed light on the underlying causes of speaking proficiency issues. This analysis will provide valuable insights that can guide educators and policymakers in developing effective strategies to enhance EFL students' speaking skills.

Section One: Personal Information

Q 01: Specify your gender:

- Male
- Female

Table1. Learners' Gender

Options	Male	Female
Number	11	60
Percentage	15.7%	85.7%

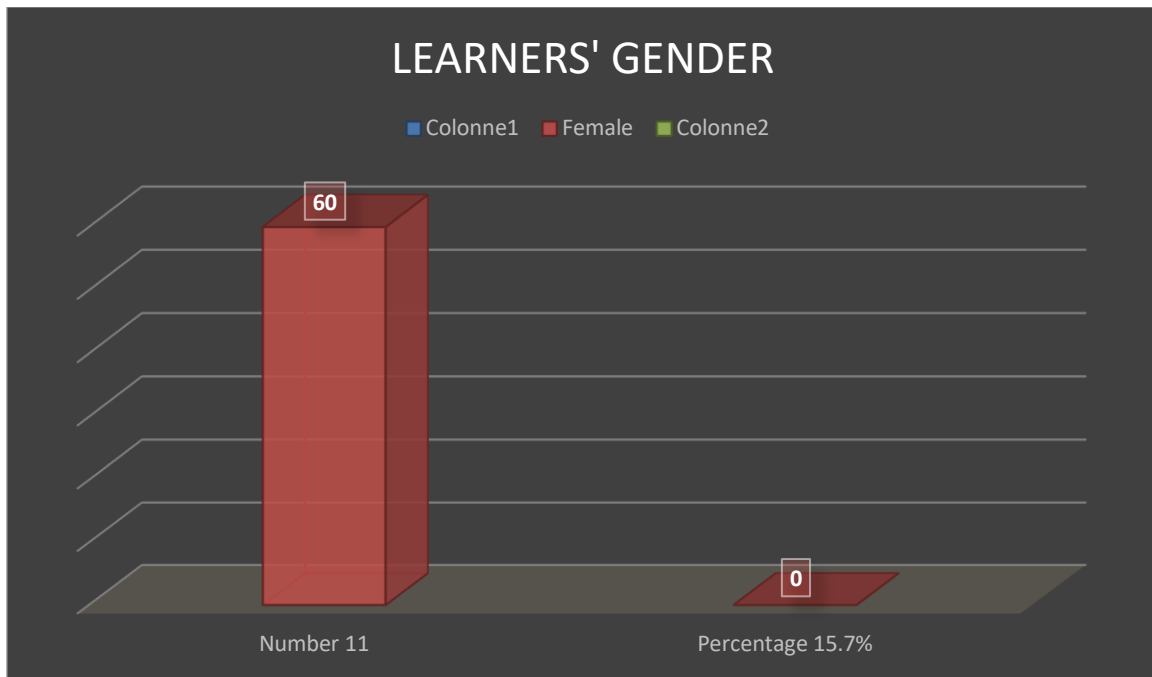


Figure1. Learners' Gender

Remarkably, the data from Question 01 of the online questionnaire, which asked students to specify their gender, reveals a significant gender disparity among the participants. First, out of the total respondents, 11 identified as male, accounting for 15.7% of the sample, while a substantial majority of 60 respondents identified as female, representing 85.7%. This marked imbalance suggests that the experiences and perceptions captured in the study may predominantly reflect those of female EFL students. Consequently, it is important to consider this gender distribution when interpreting the results and drawing conclusions, as the linguistic barriers identified may be influenced by gender-specific factors.

Q 02: Was English your first choice at University?

✚ No

✚ Yes

Table2. English as the 1st Choice in University of Khenchela

Options	Yes	No
Number	41	29
Percentage	58.6%	41.4%

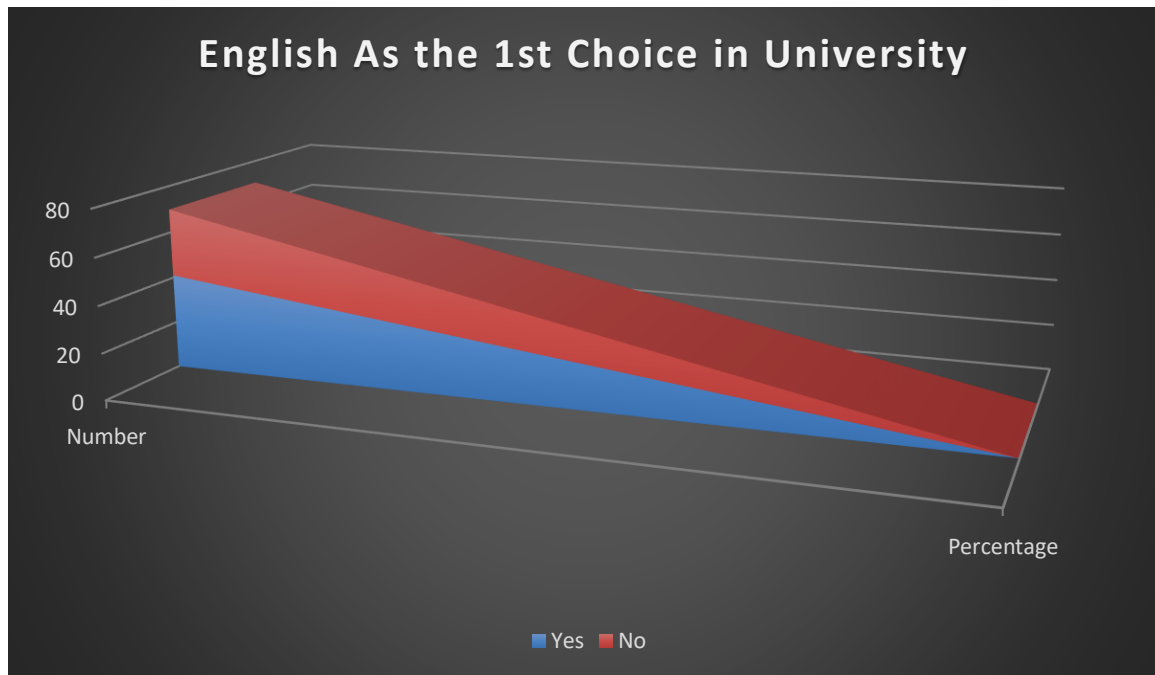


Figure2. English as the 1st Choice in University

Noticeably, the responses to Question 02, which inquired whether English was the participants' first choice at university of Abbes Laghrour, indicate a moderate preference for the subject among the respondents. That's why, out of the total, 41 individuals (58.6%) reported that English was their first choice, suggesting a strong initial interest in pursuing English studies in the department. Conversely, 29 participants (41.4%) indicated that English was not their first choice, reflecting a substantial portion of students who may have chosen the subject due to external factors or as an alternative to their preferred field of study.

Q 03: Which of the four language skills do you want to master the most?

- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Writing
- ❖ Speaking
- ❖ Listening

Table3. Mastering the Four Skills

Options	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
Number	9	15	59	9
Percentage	12.9%	21.4%	84.3%	12.9%

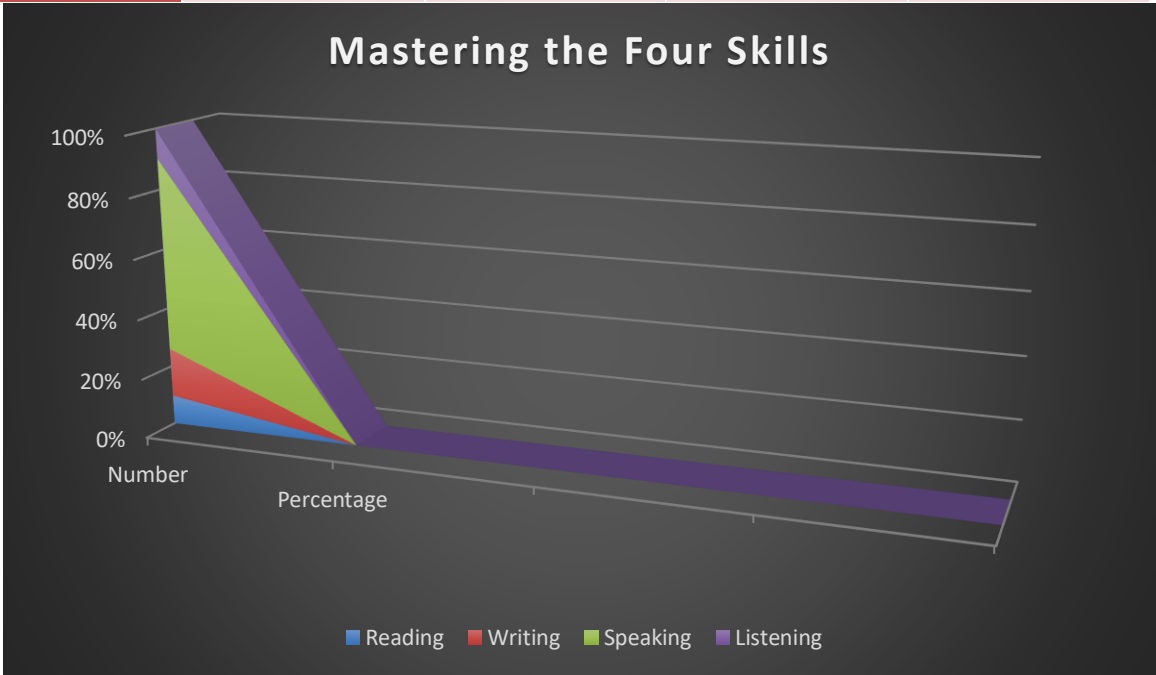


Figure3. Mastering the Four Skills


The most notable observation is that speaking is overwhelmingly the most desired skill to master among the students, with 84.3% of respondents indicating it as their priority. Writing follows, though with significantly fewer responses at 21.4%. Reading and listening skills are

almost equally desired, but notably less so compared to speaking and writing. Thus more attention should be given to the listening skill.

Additionally, this data suggests that the students in Khenchela place a strong emphasis on oral communication skills, possibly reflecting a desire for effective verbal interaction and communication in their language learning journey. This preference may also be influenced by the practical need for oral proficiency in various real-life situations, such as social interactions, presentations in class(ppt), and professional communication.

Student Proficiency and Linguistic Challenges

Q 04: How do you rate your proficiency in speaking English?

 Very good

 Good

 Average

 Weak

Table4. Speaking English Proficiency Level

Options	Very Good	Good	Average	Weak
Number	6	35	28	4
Percentage	8.6%	50%	40%	5.7%

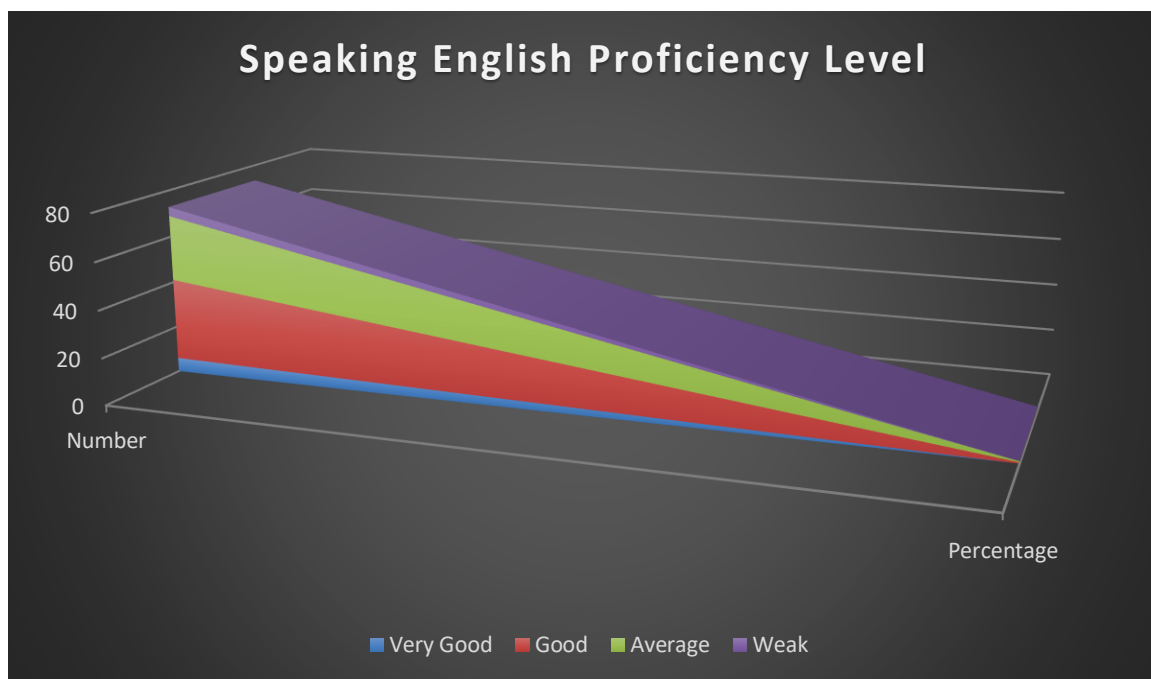


Figure4. Speaking English Proficiency Level

Unquestionably, the analysis of responses to question 04, concerning self-assessed proficiency in speaking English among 1st-year students in Abbas Laghrour University in Khenchela, reveals a diverse range of perceptions. First of all a substantial majority of 50% rate their proficiency as 'good,' indicating a level of confidence and competence in spoken English. Following closely behind, 40% perceive their proficiency as 'average,' suggesting a moderate level of comfort with the language but with room for improvement. Interestingly, a notable minority of 8.6% assess their proficiency as 'very good,' reflecting a small yet confident subgroup within the cohort. still a mere 5.7% consider their speaking skills as 'weak,' implying a relatively small number of individuals who may struggle with spoken English. To put it in short, the distribution indicates a generally positive perception of speaking abilities among the surveyed students, with a significant proportion viewing themselves as either 'good' or 'average,' aligning with the pronounced emphasis on speaking skills observed in the previous question.

Q 05: Do you feel uncomfortable speaking English?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No

Table5. Feeling Uncomfortable in Speaking English Language

Options	Yes	No
Number	48	24
Percentage	68.6%	34.3%

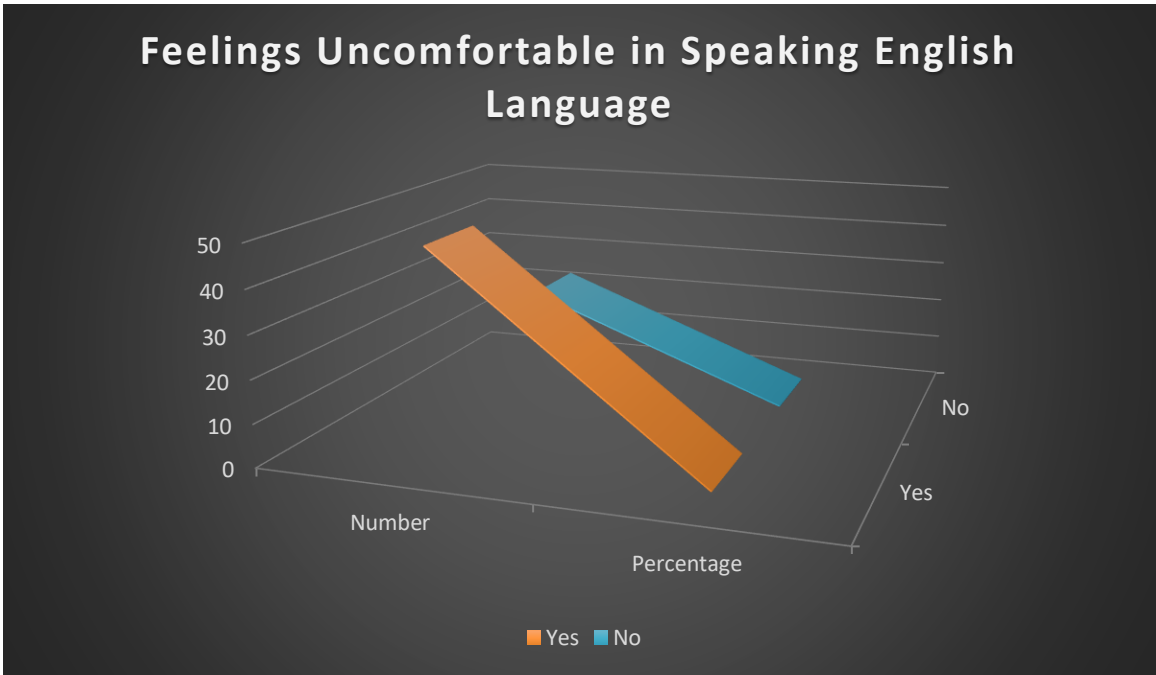


Figure5. Feeling Uncomfortable in Speaking English Language

Well, the findings from question 05 of the online questionnaire, which investigates the discomfort level of 1st-year students in Khenchela when speaking English, are intriguing. A striking 68.6% of respondents admitted feeling uncomfortable speaking English, indicating a significant portion of the cohort experiences unease or apprehension when communicating in

the language. This sizable majority suggests that there may be underlying factors contributing to a lack of confidence or proficiency in spoken English among the students. Conversely, 34.3% of respondents reported feeling no discomfort, implying a smaller yet notable group who are at ease with English speaking situations. Without doubt, the divergence in experiences highlights the complexity of language acquisition and the varied comfort levels individuals may have when engaging in spoken communication in a second language.

If your answer in the previous question is "yes" is it because?

- ✚ You feel anxious
- ✚ You are afraid of making grammatical mistakes
- ✚ You lack confidence to speak in front of classmates

Interestingly, the breakdown of reasons for feeling uncomfortable speaking English among students of Abbes Laghrour who answered "yes" to the previous question reveals several contributing factors. The majority, comprising 55.7% of respondents, attribute their discomfort to a fear of making grammatical mistakes. Actually, this suggests a significant concern among students regarding linguistic accuracy, potentially reflecting a strong emphasis on correctness in language learning contexts. Also, 27.01% of respondents cite feeling anxious as a reason for their discomfort, indicating a psychological barrier to effective communication. This anxiety may stem from various sources; such as fear of judgment or performance pressure. Furthermore, 25.7% of participants identify a lack of confidence to speak in front of classmates as a contributing factor, highlighting the social dimension of language apprehension and the importance of creating supportive learning environments. To make it short, these reasons collectively contribute to students' discomfort in speaking English, emphasizing the need for targeted

interventions to address linguistic, psychological, and social barriers to oral communication proficiency.

Q 06: How confident are you in your pronunciation of English words and sounds?

- ✓ Very confident
- ✓ Confident
- ✓ Somewhat Confident
- ✓ Not confident

Table6. Confidence in Pronunciation of English Words and Sounds

Options	Very Confident	Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Confident
Number	8	31	29	4
Percentage	11.4%	44.3%	41.4%	5.7%

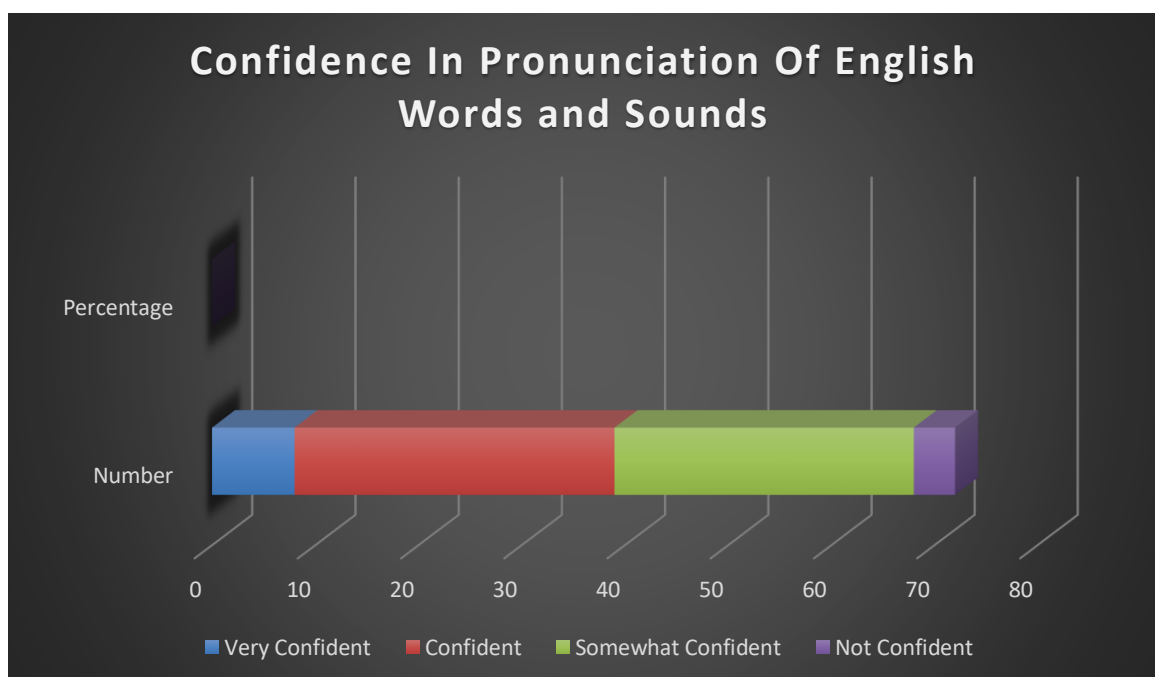


Figure 6. Confidence in Pronunciation of English Words and Sounds

Importantly mentioned that the responses to question 06 provide insight into the confidence levels of 1st-year students in Abbes Laghrour in Khenchela regarding their pronunciation of English words and sounds. First of all, the numerical data illustrates a spectrum of confidence, with 11.4% of respondents expressing being 'very confident,' indicating a high level of assurance in their pronunciation abilities. Doubly important that, 44.3% report being 'confident,' suggesting a substantial proportion who feel secure in their pronunciation skills. Nearly the same percentage, 41.4%, indicate being 'somewhat confident,' reflecting a moderate level of assurance tempered with some uncertainty. However, a small minority of 5.7% admit to being 'not confident' in their pronunciation, indicating a lack of assurance in this aspect of language proficiency. To conclude the majority of students demonstrate varying degrees of confidence in their pronunciation skills, with a notable segment feeling either very confident or confident, while a smaller proportion struggle with confidence in this area, highlighting a potential area for targeted improvement and support.

Q7: Which aspects of English grammar do you find most challenging?

Table 7. Challenging Aspects of English Grammar

Options	Grammar Tense	Sentence Structure	Formal language
Number	35	25	15

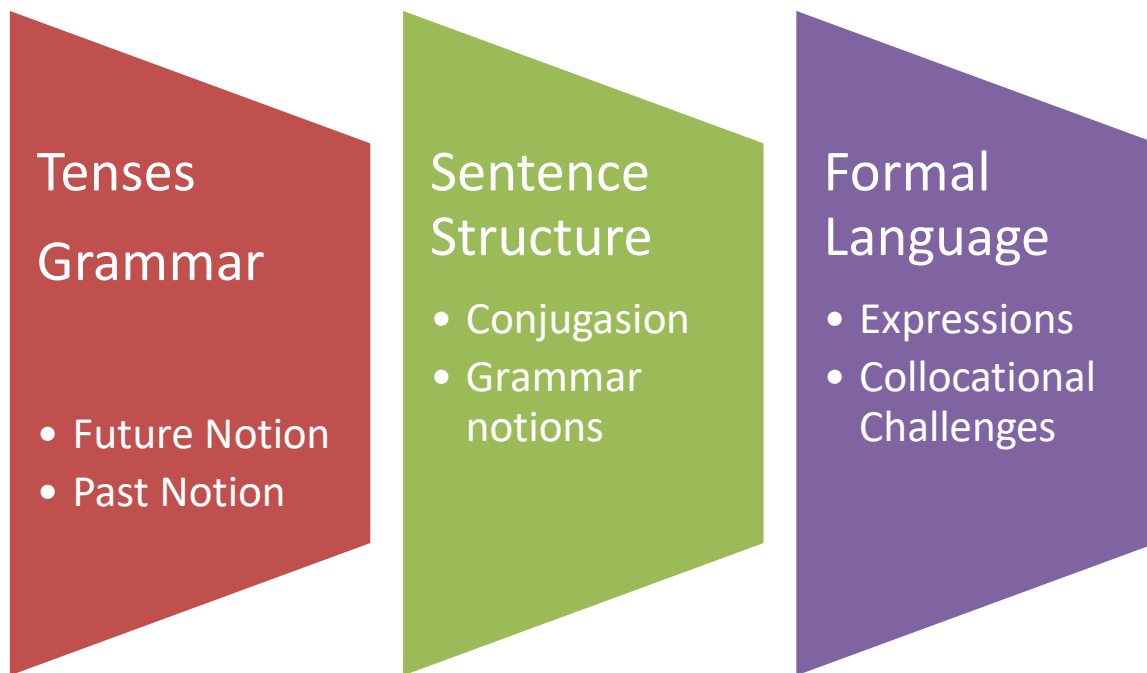


Figure 7. Challenging Aspects of English Grammar

Unquestionably, Question 07 is linked to the specific areas of English grammar that is challenging to 1st-year students in Khenchela. This inquiry reflects an awareness of the intricacies of English grammar among the students and underscores the complexity of language acquisition. Without specific details, it's challenging to pinpoint the exact grammatical features causing the most trouble. However, common areas of difficulty in English grammar could include tense usage, verb conjugation, sentence structure, and articles. Understanding these challenges can inform targeted teaching strategies and curriculum adjustments to address the students' needs effectively. Teachers have to consider these challenges to make education a good quality.

Q 08: Do you encounter difficulties in understanding English when interacting with others?

Yes

No

Table8. Encountering Difficulties in Understanding English When Interacting with Others

Options	Yes	No
Number	43	32
Percentage	61.4%	45.7%

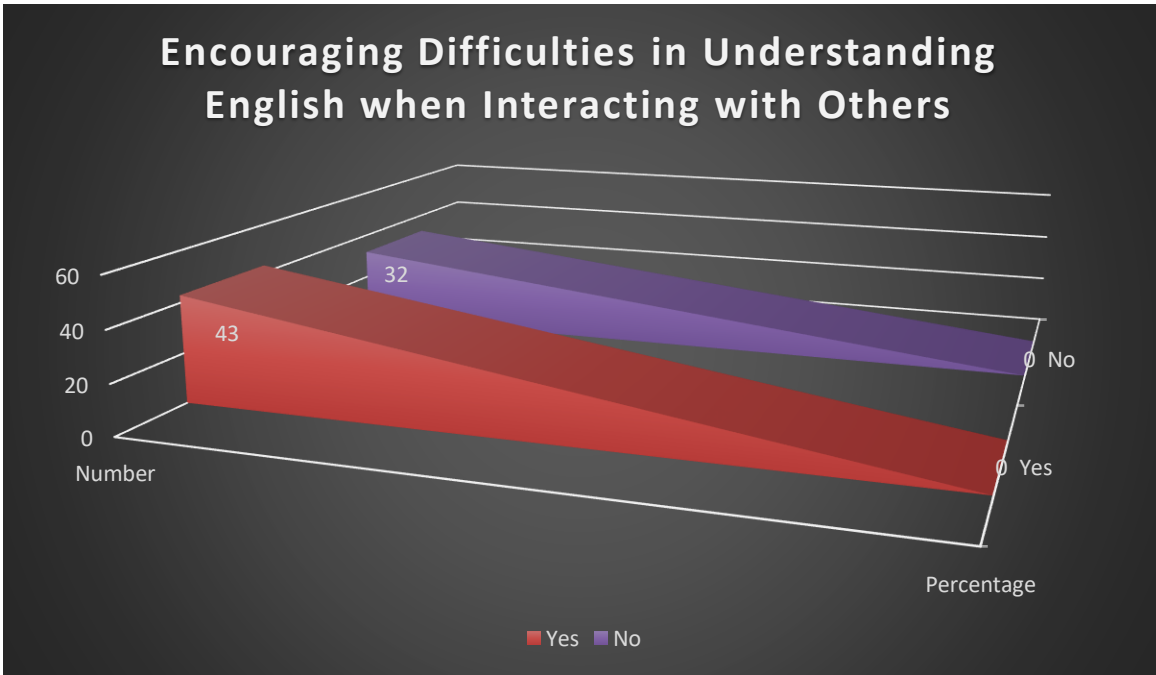


Figure8. Encountering Difficulties in Understanding English When Interacting with Others

Well, as we can see in the figure, a majority of 61.4% of 1st-year students in Abbes Laghrour in Khenchela indicate encountering difficulties in understanding English when interacting with others, while 45.7% respond negatively, stating they do not face such challenges. These findings highlight a significant portion of students who struggle with comprehension during English interactions, suggesting potential barriers to effective communication. Factors contributing to these difficulties could include language proficiency

levels, unfamiliar accents or dialects, varying speaking speeds, or complex vocabulary and expressions. Understanding these challenges is crucial for educators and language support services to provide targeted assistance and enhance students' comprehension skills, fostering more effective communication in English-speaking contexts.

If "yes" what are these challenges?

- ✚ Lack of Vocabulary
- ✚ Lack of Grammar Competence
- ✚ Mother Tongue Interference
- ✚ Others

Interestingly, the students who encounter difficulties in understanding English during interactions, mentioned various challenges. Thirty percent attribute their struggles to a lack of vocabulary, suggesting that insufficient word knowledge inhibits their comprehension. Similarly, another 30% cite a lack of grammar competence as a significant hurdle, indicating that grammatical complexities impede their understanding. Additionally, 20% identify mother tongue interference as a challenge, implying that the structures and patterns of their native language hinder their grasp of English. Notably, 34.3% list other factors contributing to their difficulties, indicating a range of additional challenges such as comprehension of accents, idiomatic expressions, or nuanced linguistic contexts. Doubtlessly, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of comprehension difficulties in English interaction and emphasize the importance of addressing various linguistic and cognitive barriers to enhance students' proficiency and communication skills. If these challenges are regarded by educators, we can then speak of listening proficiency in Khenchela.

Q 09: Does your teacher motivate you to speak English in class?

❖ Yes

❖ No

Table9. Motivating Students to Speak English in Class by Teachers

Options	Yes	No
Number	53	17
Percentage	75.7%	24.3%

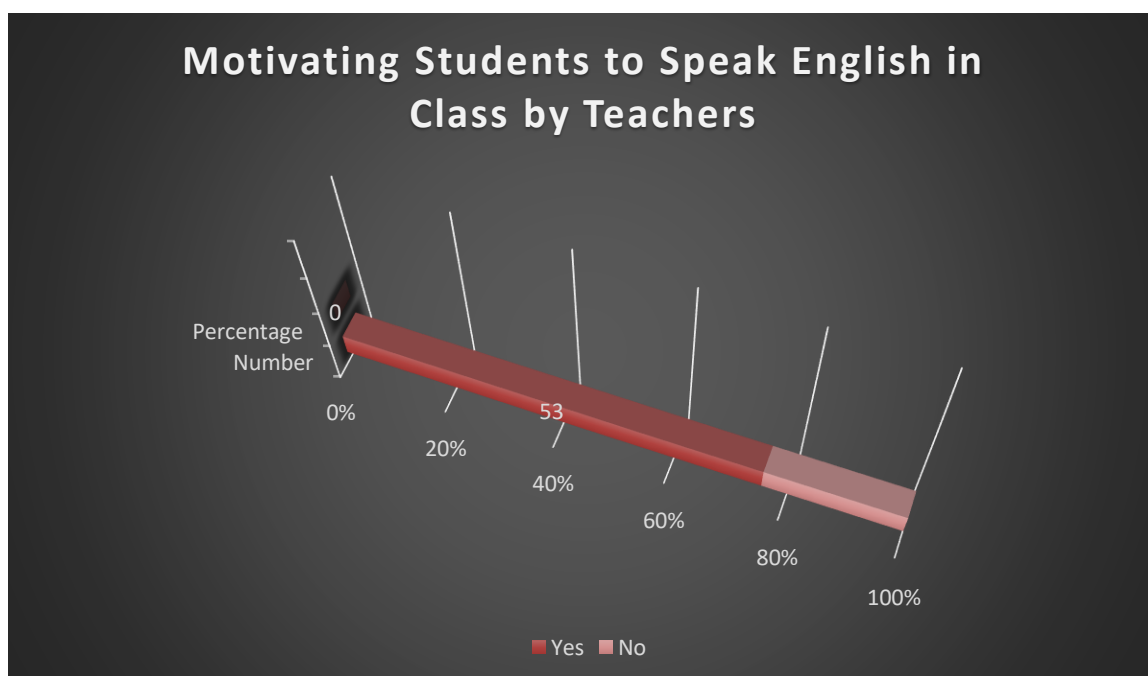


Figure9. Motivating Students to Speak English in Class by Teachers

As we can see, question 09 explores the impact of teachers on student motivation to speak English in class among 1st-year students in Khenchela. The majority of respondents, comprising 75.7%, affirm that their teachers do motivate them to speak English, while 24.3% indicate otherwise. This data suggests that a significant proportion of students perceive their teachers as effective facilitators in encouraging oral participation in English. Positive teacher encouragement likely

fosters a supportive learning environment that boosts students' confidence and willingness to engage actively in spoken English activities. But the presence of a minority who feel unmotivated suggests potential areas for improvement in teacher-student dynamics or instructional strategies to enhance student engagement and language acquisition in the classroom.

Q 10: How often do you receive individualized feedback from your teacher on your speaking performance?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Table10. Frequency of Receiving Individualized Feedback from Teachers on Speaking Performance

Options	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Number	7	29	25	10
Percentage	10%	41.4%	35.7%	14.3%

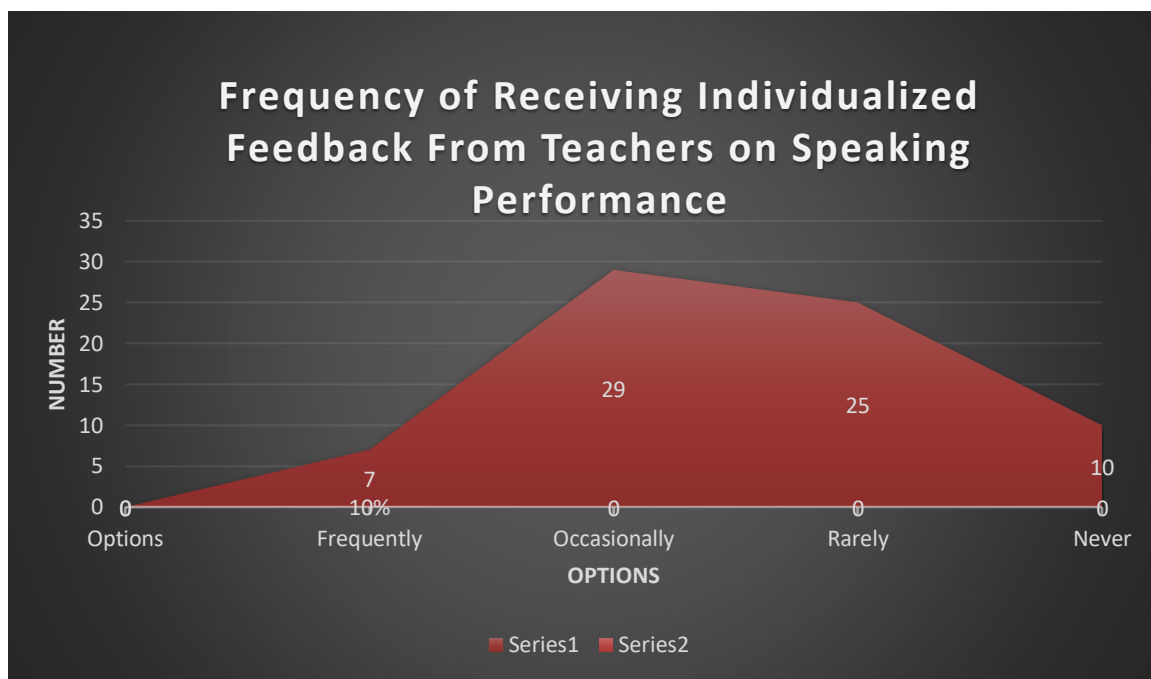


Figure10. Frequency of Receiving Individualized Feedback from Teachers on Speaking Performance

Remarkably in the figure and table above, question 10 delves into the frequency of individualized feedback that 1st-year students in Khenchela receive from their teachers on their speaking performance. The data reveals that a significant portion of students, comprising 41.4%, report receiving feedback occasionally, indicating that they occasionally receive personalized guidance on their spoken English skills. Furthermore, 35.7% state that they receive feedback rarely, suggesting that individualized assessment and guidance on speaking performance are infrequent occurrences. What is more is that, 14.3% of respondents indicate never receiving individualized feedback, indicating a lack of personalized attention to their speaking abilities. Only 10% report receiving feedback frequently, suggesting that consistent and regular individualized feedback on speaking performance is relatively rare. These findings highlight potential areas for improvement in providing tailored support and guidance

to students to enhance their speaking proficiency effectively. Students are really in need of teachers' constructive feedback as an ongoing process.

Q11: What kind of activities does your teacher use most in order to motivate you to speak?

- ✓ Role Play
- ✓ Language Games
- ✓ Dialogues

Table11. Activities to Motivate Students to Speak

Options	Role Play	Language Games	Dialogue
Number	13	25	47
Percentage	18.6%	35.7%	67.1%

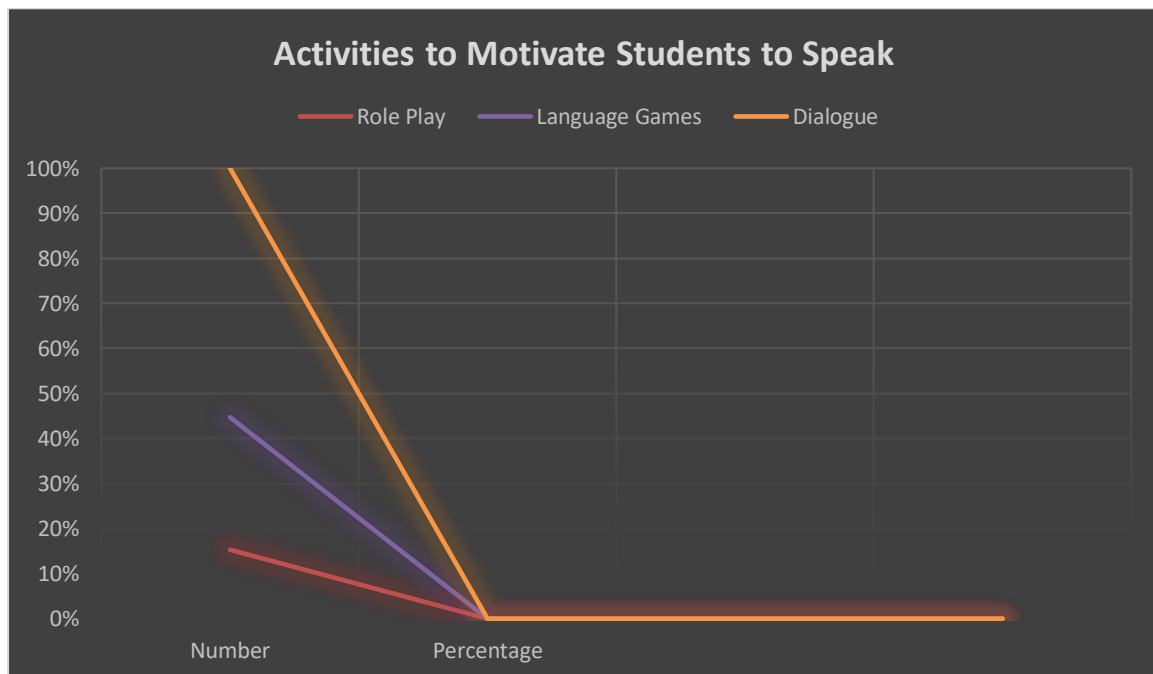


Figure11. Activities to Motivate Students to Speak

Actually, the figure mirror the findings of question 11 which explores the strategies employed by teachers in kenchela to motivate 1st-year students in Abbes Laghrour to speak English. The data indicates that the most commonly used activity is dialogues, with 67.1% of respondents reporting its utilization. Dialogues provide students with structured opportunities to engage in conversational exchanges, facilitating practice and confidence-building in speaking English. Language games rank second, with 35.7% of students mentioning their use. Additionally, these games likely add an element of fun and interactivity to language learning, encouraging active participation and engagement. Role play, though less prevalent, is still employed by 18.6% of teachers, providing students with immersive and contextualized scenarios to practice language skills in simulated real-life situations. To make it short, these findings suggest that a combination of interactive and communicative activities is favored by teachers to foster speaking proficiency among students, emphasizing the importance of varied instructional approaches to cater to diverse learning preferences and needs. It is true that we need different styles to meet our needs.

Q 12: Do you think having a large vocabulary helps you communicate effectively in English?

 Yes

 No

Table12. Vocabulary and Communicating Effectively in English

Options	Yes	No
Number	61	10
Percentage	87.1%	14.3%

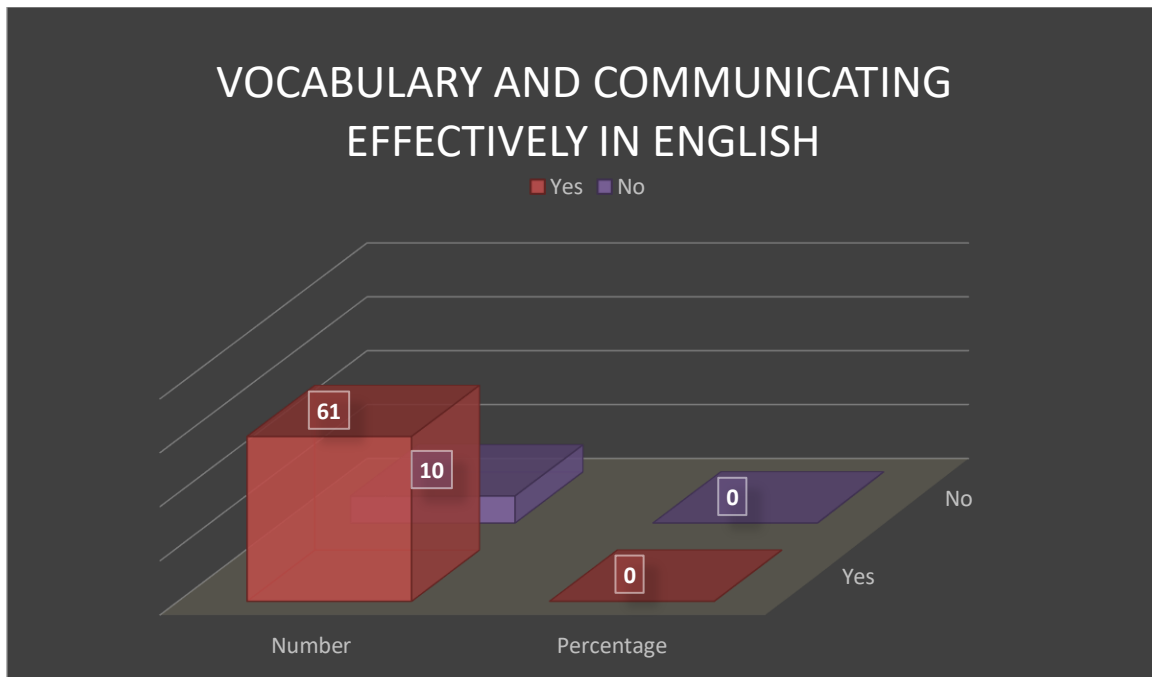


Figure12. Vocabulary and Communicating Effectively in English

Well, the data from Question 12 indicates a strong consensus that having a large vocabulary tips to help students in effective communication in English. A significant majority of respondents, 87.1% (61 individuals), believe that an extensive vocabulary enhances communication. This likely reflects the understanding that a rich vocabulary allows for more precise and nuanced expression, facilitating clearer and more effective conveyance of ideas, a minority, 14.3% (10 individuals), do not see a large vocabulary as crucial for effective communication. This smaller group might believe that other factors, such as clarity, simplicity, or context, are more important than vocabulary size in ensuring effective communication. All in all, the data underscores the prevalent belief in the importance of a broad vocabulary in mastering and effectively using the English language.

Q 13 : How do you feel about collaborating with peers to practice English speaking skills?

- ❖ Positive
- ❖ Neutral

❖ Negative

Table13. Feelings Towards Collaborating with Peers to Practice English Speaking Skills

Options	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Number	58	11	2
Percentage	82.9%	15.7%	2.9%

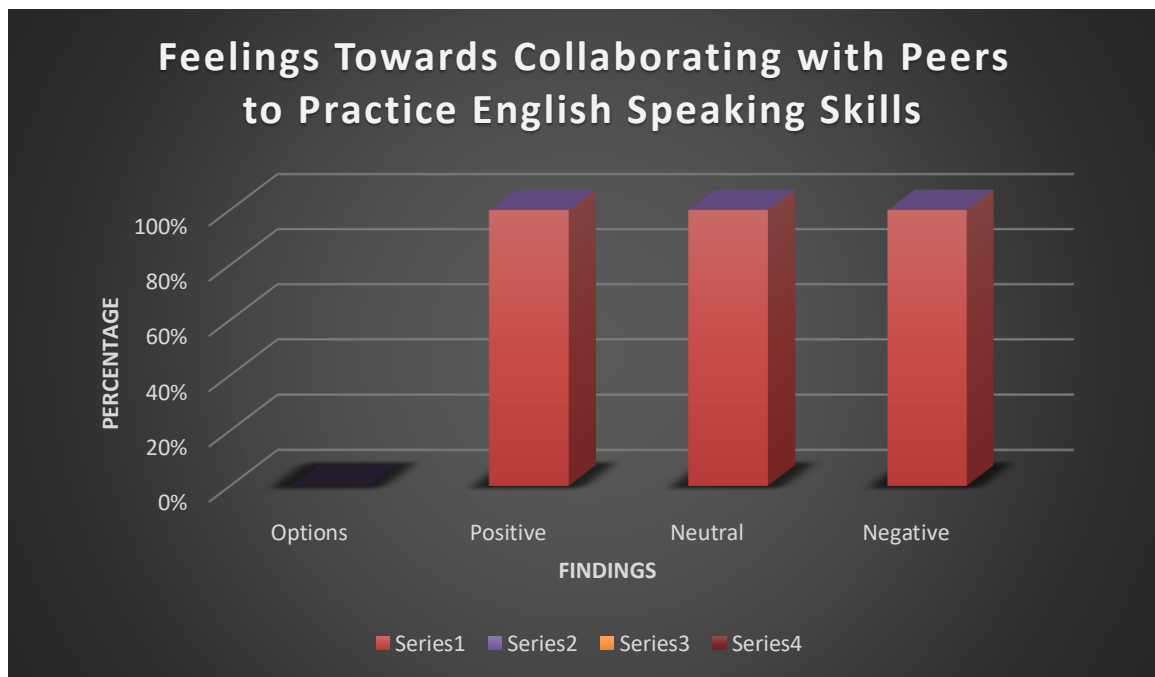


Figure13. Feelings Towards Collaborating with Peers to Practice English Speaking Skills

Firstly, the table and figure above mirror the responses to Question 13 which reveals a strong positive attitude towards peer collaboration for practicing English speaking skills. A substantial majority, 82.9% (58 individuals), feel positively about working with peers, suggesting that they find peer interaction beneficial for improving their language skills. This positive outlook likely stems from the interactive and supportive nature of peer collaboration,

which can enhance learning through mutual feedback, diverse perspectives, and increased opportunities for practice. Meanwhile, 15.7% (11 individuals) feel neutral, indicating indifference or a lack of strong feelings either way about this method of practice. A small minority, 2.9% (2 individuals), have a negative view, perhaps due to personal preferences for solitary study, past negative experiences, or discomfort with peer interactions. In conclusion the data highlights a general favourability towards collaborative learning as an effective strategy for practicing English speaking skills. Teachers ought to consider them all.

Q 14 :Are there any specific types of speaking activities you would like to see more of in your English language classes?

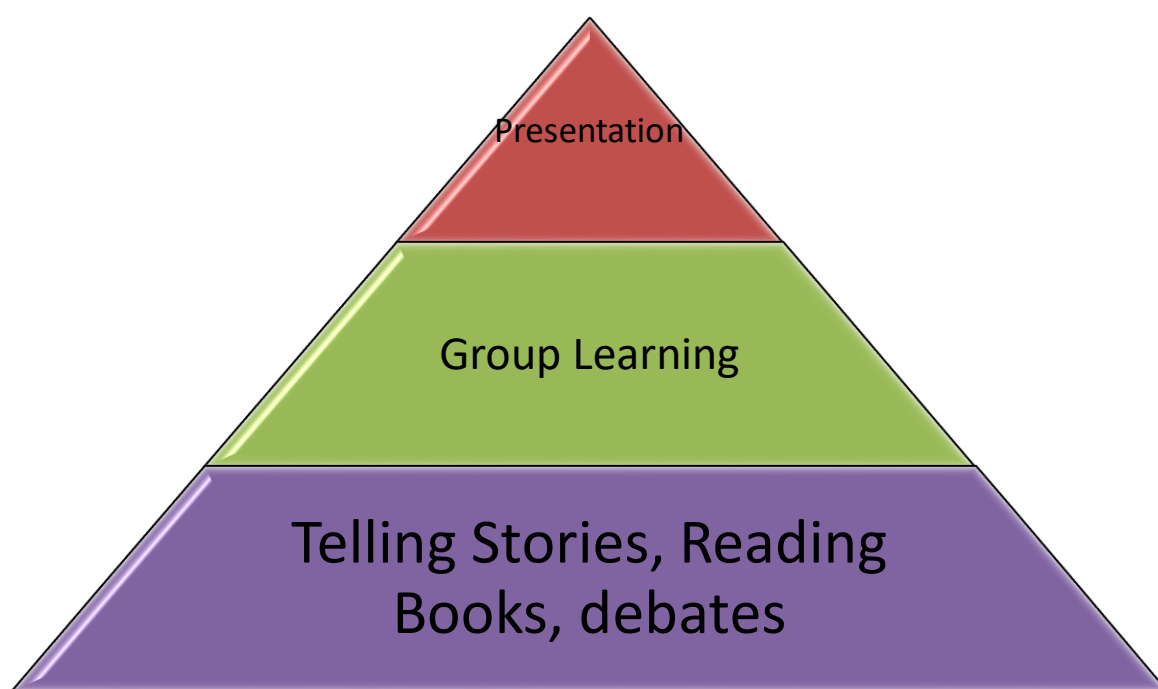


Figure 14. Specific Activities Learners Want in English Classes

Actually, in addition to the activities listed in the responses to Question 11, there are several other interesting strategies and activities that teachers employ to motivate 1st-year students in Khenchela to speak English(as mentioned in answers). These include telling stories, which not only captivate students' interest but also provide them with narrative

contexts to practice language skills. Video games and educational videos offer interactive and multimedia approaches to language learning, engaging students in immersive and dynamic experiences. Reading books and novels not only enhance language proficiency but also cultivate a love for literature and expand cultural knowledge. Listening games and exercises, along with music, movies, and discussions on current topics, enrich students' linguistic and cultural understanding while fostering communication skills. Group learning activities, debates, presentations, and role-playing scenarios provide collaborative and interactive platforms for practicing spoken English. Additionally, incorporating fun language games and expeditions, as well as providing clear instructions and directions, further stimulate student engagement and motivation. In short, these varied strategies and activities cater to different learning preferences and interests, creating a dynamic and supportive learning environment conducive to developing speaking proficiency in English.

Q 15 : In your opinion, what could teachers do to better support students in developing their English speaking skills?



Figure15. Supporting Students in Developing their English Speaking Skills

Interestingly, Question 15 includes motivating suggestions from 1st-year students in Khenchela on how teachers could better support them in developing their English speaking skills. Many responses emphasize the importance of providing more speaking activities tailored to students' needs, as well as allocating additional time for interactive speaking games and exercises. Students also express the desire for teachers to offer more advice, information, and tips to aid in their language acquisition journey. Simplifying lesson explanations and focusing on grammar are mentioned as strategies to build a strong foundation in English. Furthermore, creating a supportive and encouraging classroom atmosphere, where students feel comfortable expressing themselves and making mistakes, is highlighted as essential. Incorporating authentic materials such as movies, music, and podcasts, along with interactive activities like role-plays and group discussions, is suggested to make learning English more engaging and enjoyable. Additionally, peer interaction, personalized attention, and improving pronunciation are identified as important avenues for enhancing speaking skills. Furthermore, the students stress the significance of creating a nurturing and stimulating learning environment where they feel motivated and empowered to actively engage in spoken English practice.

Main Findings

All in all, the analysis of data from the student attitude online questionnaire in Khenchela revealed several key findings regarding linguistic barriers to speaking proficiency. Students commonly faced pronunciation difficulties, limited vocabulary, and grammar concerns, which led to fear of judgment and a lack of confidence. Environmental factors such as limited exposure to English and classroom dynamics, including large class sizes and insufficient speaking opportunities, further hindered their progress. It is recommended to enhance and increasing speaking opportunities, both in and out of the classroom, and

incorporating technology to enhance language exposure and engagement. These findings highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to address the linguistic, psychological, and environmental barriers affecting EFL students' speaking proficiency.

Summary

Overall, the examination of information gathered from the Khenchela student attitude online questionnaire yielded a number of important conclusions on language impediments to speaking fluency. They frequently struggled with pronunciation, had a little vocabulary, and had grammatical issues. These issues made them feel insecure and afraid of being judged. Their progress was further impeded by classroom dynamics, such as large class numbers and a lack of speaking chances, and environmental variables including restricted exposure to English. To improve language exposure and engagement, it is advised to improve and expand speaking chances both within and outside of the classroom and to integrate technology. These results emphasize the necessity of an all-encompassing strategy to address the environmental, psychological, and linguistic constraints influencing the speaking competency of EFL students.

In-depth Interview with Experts

2.2.2 Interview Questions, Answers and Answers Analysis

Remarkably, in the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, the development of speaking proficiency presents a vital significant challenge for students of all levels. Despite the fact that extensive learning efforts are done, many EFL learners struggle to achieve fluency and confidence in oral communication. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the linguistic barriers that hinder EFL students' speaking proficiency, focusing on both the development and instruction of oral production skills. By conducting a

comprehensive interview with specialized higher education teachers of Abbes Laghrour University of Khenchela, Faculty of letters and Foreign Languages, who are experts in teaching speaking skills and oral expressions, this research seeks to uncover the difficulties faced by students in this critical area.

The in-depth interview, structured around 13 targeted questions, explores various dimensions of oral skill development, instructional strategies, and the specific challenges that impede students' ability to speak fluently. The insights gathered from these educators will shed light on the multifaceted nature of speaking proficiency and the pedagogical approaches that can enhance EFL learners' oral communication abilities. By delving into the experiences and perspectives of these specialized teachers in Khenchela, the study endeavors to provide a deeper understanding of the linguistic hurdles faced by students and to identify effective methods for overcoming these obstacles. The general aim is to empower learners' oral spoken competence in Abbes Laghrour University.

Through this analysis, we aim to contribute to the ongoing discourse on EFL education, offering practical recommendations for educators and curriculum designers to better support students in achieving speaking proficiency. The findings of this study will not only highlight the common linguistic barriers encountered by EFL learners but also propose actionable strategies to improve oral production skills, ultimately facilitating more effective and confident communication in English. Also, we will try to deduce a more comprehensive framework to maximize learners' speaking competence in Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela.

Section 1: Personal Information

Q01: How long have you been teaching English language?

Table14. Experience in Teaching English Language

<i>Options</i>	<i>Less than 10 years</i>	<i>10 Years</i>	<i>More than 10 Years</i>
<i>Number</i>	2	1	3
<i>Percentage</i>	33.33%	16.66%	50%

Remarkably, the first section of the in depth interview focused on gathering personal information about the teachers who participated in the interview, all of them work in our department in Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela, starting with their teaching experience. The table responses revealed a significant range of teaching tenures, highlighting a collective depth of experience in English language instruction, all of them work for more than 5 years. The first teacher reported 11 years of teaching, while the second and third teachers indicated 9 and 6 years, respectively. The fourth and fifth teachers both surpassed the decade mark, with 10 years and over 10 years of experience, respectively. Notably, the sixth teacher had the most extensive experience, with 14 years in the field. This variation in teaching duration underscores a well-rounded and seasoned group of educators, collectively contributing decades of expertise to the study. Their extensive experience is invaluable for providing nuanced insights into the linguistic barriers EFL students face in speaking proficiency, as they have likely encountered a wide array of challenges and instructional scenarios throughout their careers. In fact, learners are lucky to have such experienced enough teachers in Khenchela.

Q02: Are the Speaking skills your major concern?

Table 15: Speaking Skill a Major Concern

Options	yes	No
Number	06	0
Percentage	100%	0%

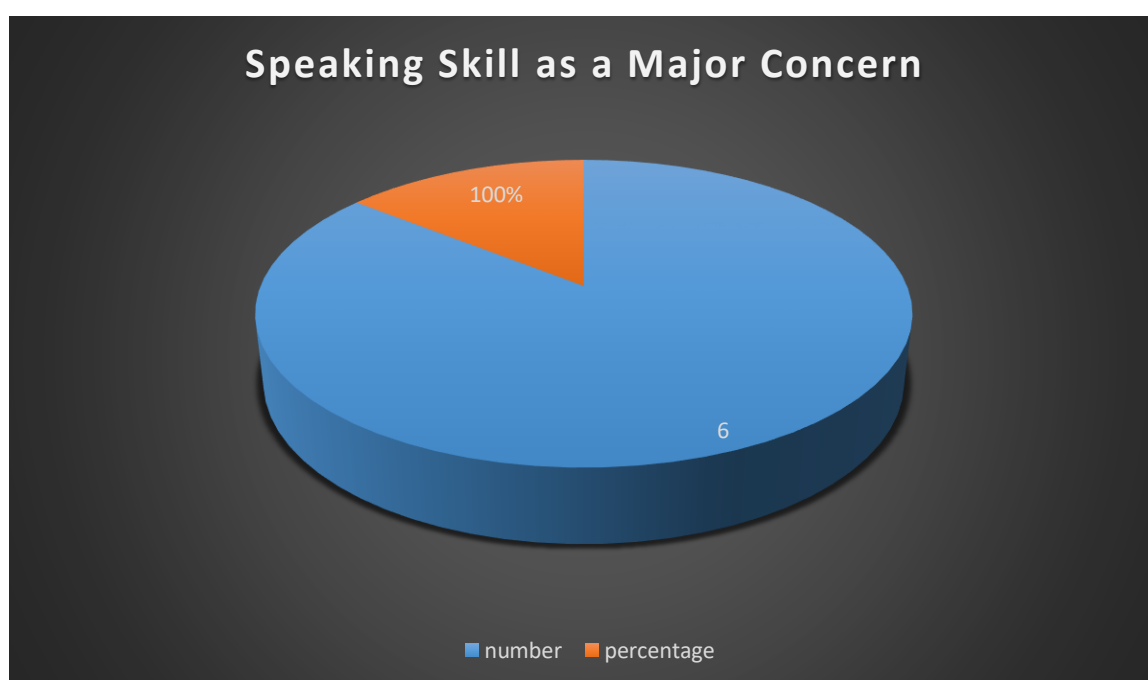


Figure 16: Speaking Skill a Major Concern

Doubtlessly, we need to ask about the target skill in this study, thus in response to whether speaking skills are their major concern, all six teachers in our department in khenchela unanimously affirmed that it is. This consensus among the educators emphasizes the critical importance placed on developing speaking proficiency within the EFL curriculum. Given their collective years of experience, their shared focus on speaking skills suggests a recognition of its fundamental role in language acquisition and communication. This alignment also indicates a likely prioritization of oral production in their teaching practices,

underscoring the widespread recognition of speaking proficiency as a key area requiring dedicated attention and effective instructional strategies. Such a unanimous focus suggests that any identified barriers to speaking proficiency are of paramount importance to address in order to enhance overall EFL education outcomes.

Section 2: Speaking Proficiency Assessment

Q03: How do you assess the speaking proficiency of your EFL students?

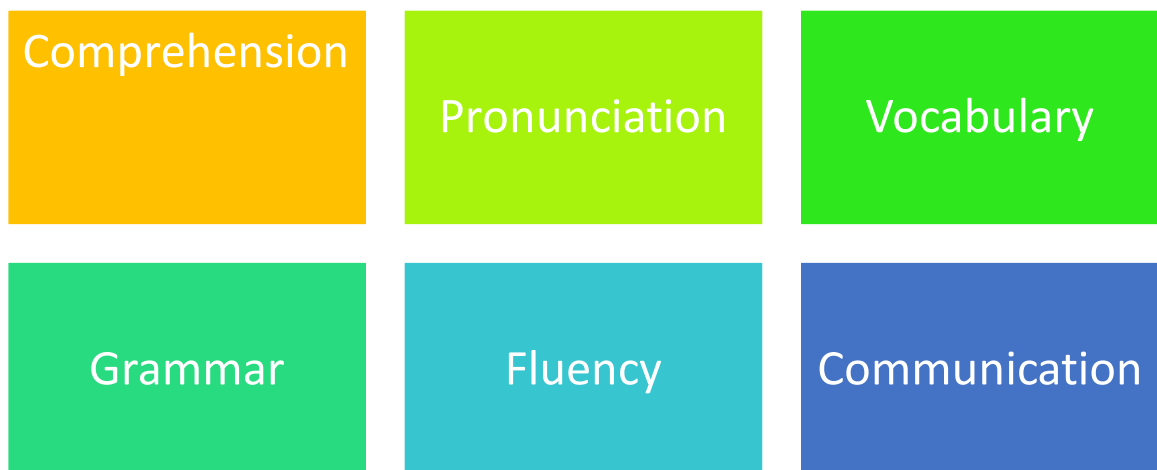


Figure 17. Criteria of Assessing the Speaking Proficiency of Learners

Interestingly, EFL teachers of English in Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela provided diverse approaches to assessing the speaking proficiency of their EFL students, reflecting a multifaceted understanding of evaluation in this skill area. The first teacher noted a generally poor level among students, indicating significant room for improvement. In contrast, the second teacher observed a wide range in proficiency, from excellent to below average, suggesting a more heterogeneous student performance. The third teacher emphasized individual differences, attributing variability in proficiency to each student's capacities and

abilities, with some students excelling while others lag behind. The fourth teacher took a structured approach, assessing students based on five specific criteria: comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. This method provides a comprehensive evaluation of speaking skills, ensuring that all critical aspects are considered. Similarly, the fifth teacher's assessment varied according to the student's year and level, indicating that proficiency expectations might differ based on the students' academic progression. The sixth teacher employed communicative tasks such as role plays and repetitions to gauge proficiency, highlighting the importance of practical, interactive methods in evaluating speaking skills. Together, these varied approaches underscore the complexity of assessing speaking proficiency in EFL students and the necessity of employing diverse methods to capture a true picture of student abilities. This diversity in assessment strategies is crucial for identifying specific areas where students struggle and tailoring instruction to address these challenges effectively.

Q04: In your opinion, which aspects of speaking are more important?

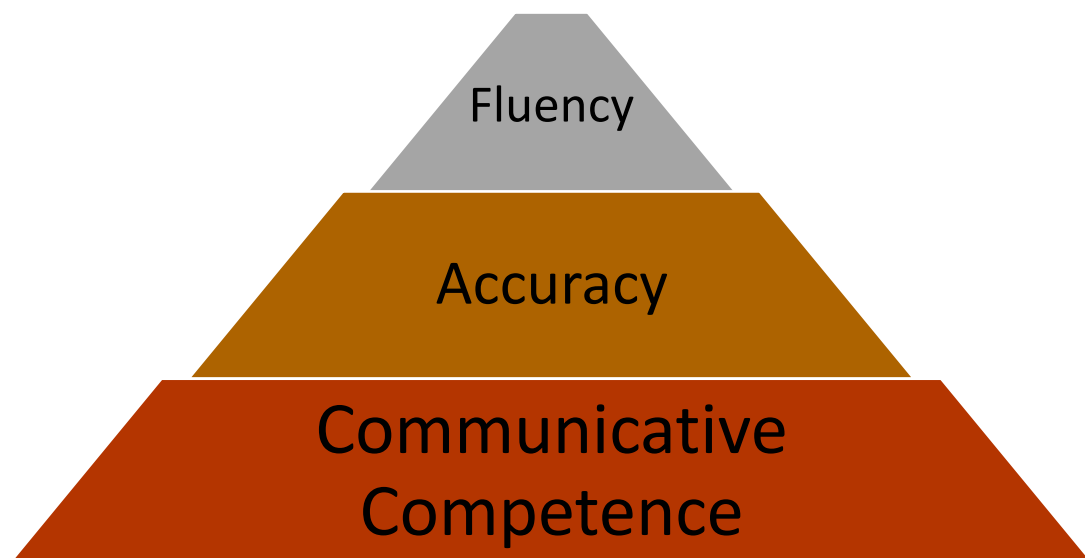


Figure 18. Aspects of the Speaking Proficiency

Unquestionably, when asked which aspects of speaking they consider most important, the teachers of Khenchela highlighted a range of perspectives, with a strong emphasis on fluency and communicative competence. Well, the first teacher singled out fluency as the most crucial aspect, the second teacher who also included accuracy and communicative competence in their response. The third teacher underscored the importance of all aspects of speaking, indicating a holistic view where no single element should be neglected. Similarly, the fourth teacher emphasized both fluency and accuracy, suggesting that these two components are foundational for effective speaking proficiency. The fifth teacher also advocated for a comprehensive approach, valuing fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence equally. Finally, the sixth teacher focused on communicative competence, highlighting the importance of practical communication skills in real-world contexts. To conclude, the collective responses suggest a consensus on the significance of fluency, with several teachers also emphasizing the importance of accuracy and communicative competence. This indicates a balanced approach to teaching speaking skills in Abbas Laghrour University, teachers are really aware of necessary aspect to be empowered, where coherent speech, correct usage of language, and the ability to effectively convey meaning are all deemed essential. These insights reflect the multifaceted nature of speaking proficiency, underscoring the need for a comprehensive instructional approach that addresses all critical aspects of oral communication.

Q05: Do your students show interest in taking part in the activities you use?

Table 16: Students' Interest in Speaking in Class

Option	Yes	No
Number	6	0
Percentage	100%	0%

It seems like most of the teachers in Abbas Laghrour University agree that their students show interest in participating in the activities they use. This suggests that the activities are engaging and enjoyable for the students of Khenchela, which is great for fostering a positive learning environment.

Q06: Do those who are interested prefer to work: Independently, In pairs, In groups?

Table 17: Students' Preferences to Speak in class (More Options)

Options	In groups	In Pair	Independently
Number	06	01	01

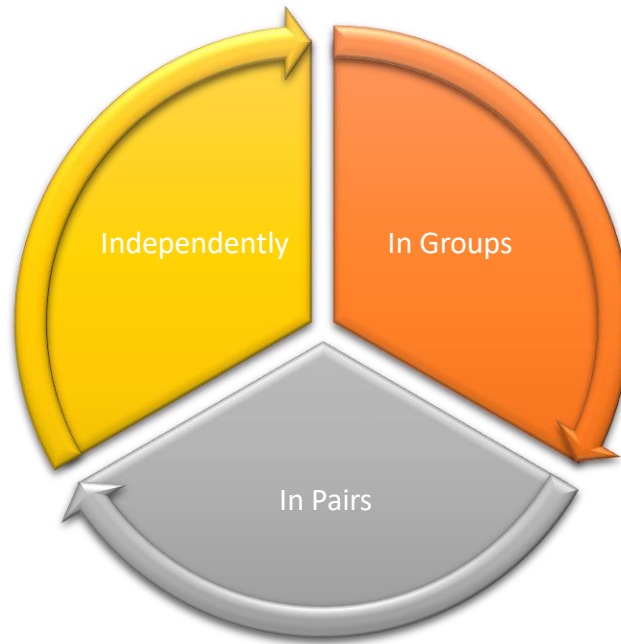


Figure 19. Preferable Working Activities

Remarkably, teachers in Abbes Laghrour University of Khenchela use a variety of learning styles regarding how students prefer to work among different teachers: Some prefer working in groups, as indicated by the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 6th teachers. Others prefer working in pairs, as indicated by the 2nd teacher. There are also students who prefer working independently, as indicated by the 4th teacher. This diversity in preferences suggests that providing opportunities for all types of collaboration—group work, pair work, and independent work—can cater to the needs and preferences of different students in Khenchela.

Section 3: Challenges and Obstacles

7. Q07: Which one of these do you find most difficult for students in terms of speaking?

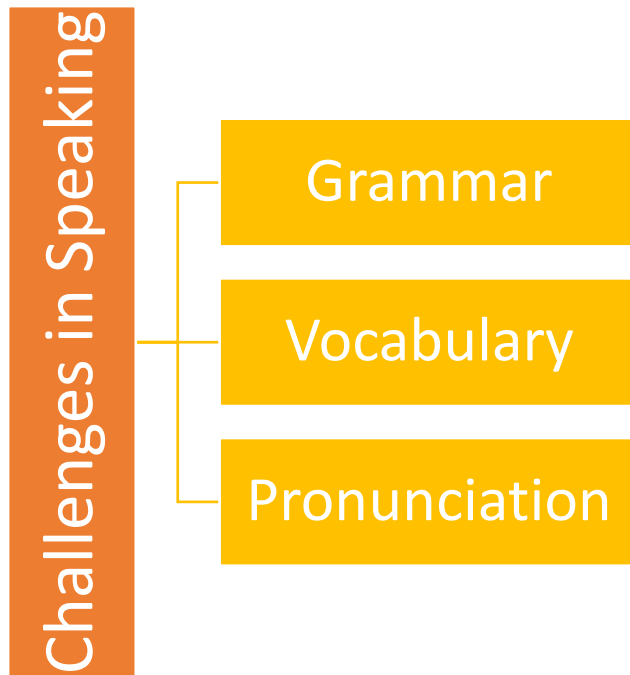


Figure 20. Students ‘Challenges in Improving the Speaking Skill

Among the responses provided by the teachers of Abbes Laghrour in Khenchela regarding the most challenging aspect of speaking for students, a common theme emerges: grammar. This is highlighted by the responses of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 6th teachers, who all mention grammar as a difficulty. Additionally, vocabulary is cited as a challenge by some teachers, such as the 2nd, 4th, and 5th teachers. Pronunciation also stands out as a difficulty, mentioned by the 3rd and 4th teachers. Interestingly, the 4th teacher identifies all three aspects—grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation—as challenging for students. This indicates that while grammar appears to be a consistent struggle for students, vocabulary and pronunciation also play significant roles in their difficulties with speaking. To address these challenges effectively, teachers may need to employ a comprehensive approach that targets all three areas: grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, tailored to the specific needs of their students. It is extremely important to address these problems critically.

Q08: From your experience, what grammatical structures or patterns do EFL students struggle with the most during speaking activities?

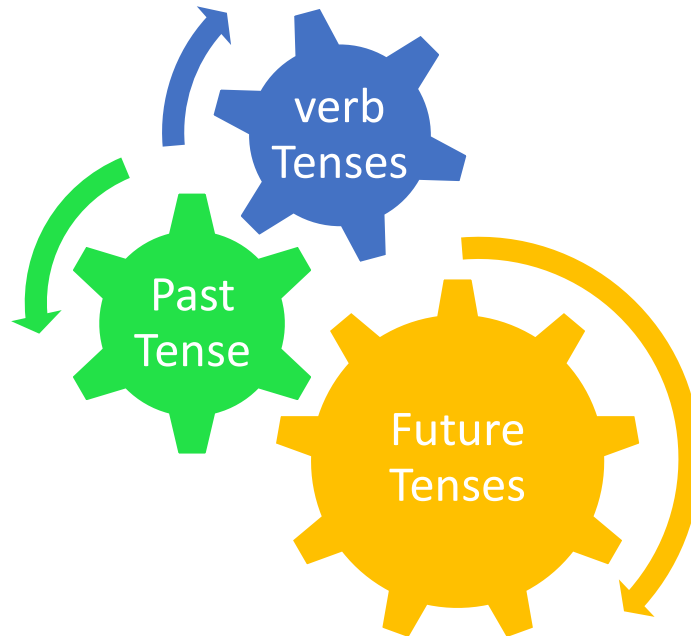


Figure 21. EFL Students in Khenchela Find Difficulties in Tenses

In Khenchela, teachers of Abbas Laghrour University suggested that regarding the grammatical structures or patterns that EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students struggle with the most during speaking activities, a clear pattern emerges: verb tenses, particularly past and future tenses, stand out as significant challenges. This difficulty is highlighted by the teachers of speaking skill in Khenchela of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th teachers, who all identify tenses as an area of struggle for students. Additionally, the 1st teacher also mentions the choice of words as a challenge, which could indicate that students struggle not only with selecting the correct tense but also with using appropriate vocabulary in different contexts. This suggests that EFL students may benefit from targeted instruction and practice focused on verb tenses, with particular attention given to past and future tenses, as well as strategies to improve word choice during speaking activities.

Q09: How do you identify and address pronunciation difficulties in your EFL students?

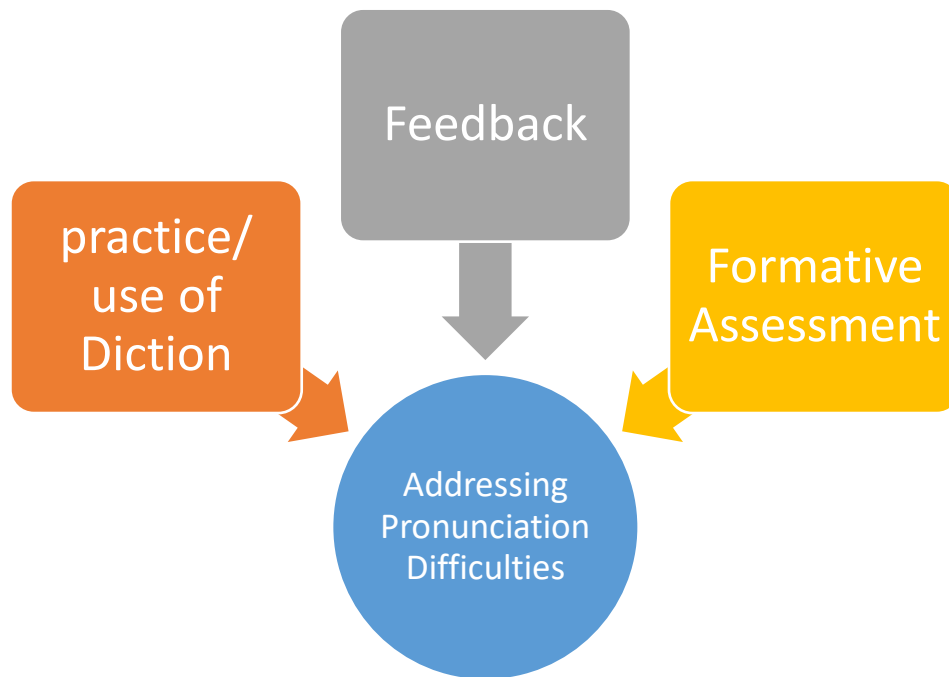


Figure 22. Tips to Address Pronunciation Difficulties

Actually, the approaches to identifying and addressing pronunciation difficulties in EFL students in Khenchela vary among the teachers: The 1st teacher emphasizes continuous assessment, suggesting that they regularly evaluate students' pronunciation skills over time to track progress and identify areas needing improvement and we do agree with him. The 2nd teacher employs active listening and targeted feedback, indicating that they actively listen to students' speech and provide specific feedback to help them improve their pronunciation as a kind of real practice. Additionally, they mention pronunciation exercises, suggesting that students engage in structured practice to enhance their pronunciation skills. The 3rd teacher notes that many students face pronunciation problems, which they attribute to a lack of using dictionaries to confirm the correct pronunciation. This suggests that encouraging students to use dictionaries and smart devices as a resource may be a strategy to address pronunciation difficulties. The 4th teacher highlights the use of authentic materials, implying that exposing

students to real-life language contexts can help them improve their pronunciation skills by providing authentic examples to emulate. The 5th teacher focuses on active listening to students' speech, indicating that they pay close attention to how students pronounce words and phrases to identify pronunciation difficulties and provide targeted support. The 6th teacher emphasizes the impact of the mother tongue on the foreign language and suggests that lack of confidence during speaking may contribute to pronunciation difficulties. This suggests that building students' confidence through supportive environments and encouragement may be key to addressing pronunciation challenges. Overall, these approaches suggest a combination of continuous assessment, targeted feedback, structured practice, exposure to authentic materials, active listening, and building confidence to effectively identify and address pronunciation difficulties in EFL students in general and students of Abbes Laghrour in particular.

Q10: What strategies do you use to help EFL students overcome vocabulary limitations during speaking tasks?

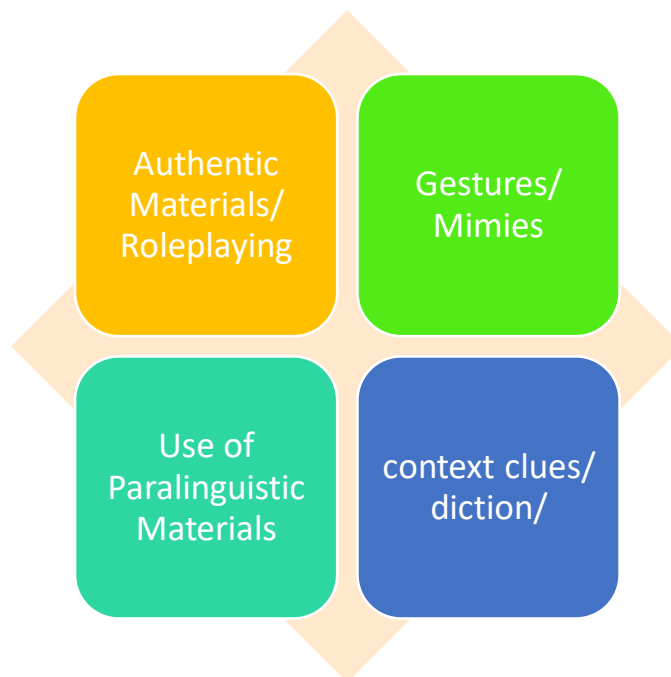


Figure 23. Tips for Overcoming Vocabulary Limitations

Teachers of Abbes Laghrour provided useful recommendations. The strategies used by teachers to help EFL students of Khenchela overcome vocabulary limitations during speaking tasks vary and include: The 1st teacher encourages students to take time to search for words and suggests using synonyms or equivalent phrases to express themselves when they encounter vocabulary limitations. The 2nd teacher relies on context clues and guesswork to help students understand and use new words in their speaking tasks. They also incorporate vocabulary-building activities and provide opportunities for students to practice using new words. The 3rd teacher provides students with words and corrects their mistakes, offering guidance on the appropriate usage of terms and expressions. They focus on ensuring students understand the concepts behind the words and phrases they use. The 4th teacher utilizes authentic materials and role-playing exercises to help students expand their vocabulary and apply new words in real-life situations. The 5th teacher incorporates visual aids such as pictures and gestures to help students learn new words, as well as engaging them in vocabulary games and reading activities to reinforce their understanding. The 6th teacher emphasizes the use of gestures and miming to convey meaning and support vocabulary acquisition, suggesting a hands-on approach to learning new words. Overall, these strategies involve providing support, context, and opportunities for practice to help EFL students overcome vocabulary limitations and become more confident and proficient speakers.

Q11: How do you encourage EFL students to express themselves more fluently during speaking tasks?



Figure 24. Inspire Learners to Speak Fluently: Tips

In Abbas Laghrour University of Khenchela, EFL teachers employed various methods to encourage EFL students to express themselves more fluently during speaking tasks encompass various approaches: well, the 1st teacher focuses on selecting interesting topics to spark students' interest and motivation, thereby facilitating more fluent expression. Additionally, the 2nd teacher prioritizes creating a supportive environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves. They utilize engaging activities and relevant prompts to stimulate conversation and provide constructive feedback to help students improve their fluency. While, the 3rd teacher emphasizes providing ample opportunities for students to participate and express their opinions, alongside offering praise to encourage them. This approach aims to build confidence and create a positive atmosphere for fluent expression. Furthermore, the 4th teacher addresses fluency by helping students manage stress, correcting mistakes, and providing opportunities to practice using target language structures before speaking tasks. Moreover, the 5th teacher employs activities such as spontaneous speech exercises, discussions, role-plays, and storytelling to foster fluency by encouraging students to

think and speak on their feet. All in all, the 6th teacher employs motivational techniques and provides opportunities for students to speak, repeat, imitate, and engage in role-playing activities. This approach encourages active participation and practice, leading to improved fluency over time. To conclude, teachers of oral expression in Khenchela use a variety of methods and strategies, the aim is to create a supportive and stimulating learning environment where EFL students in Khenchela feel empowered to express themselves fluently through engaging activities, relevant prompts, constructive feedback, and ample opportunities for practice and participation.

Q12: What are the most essential methods to improve speech?

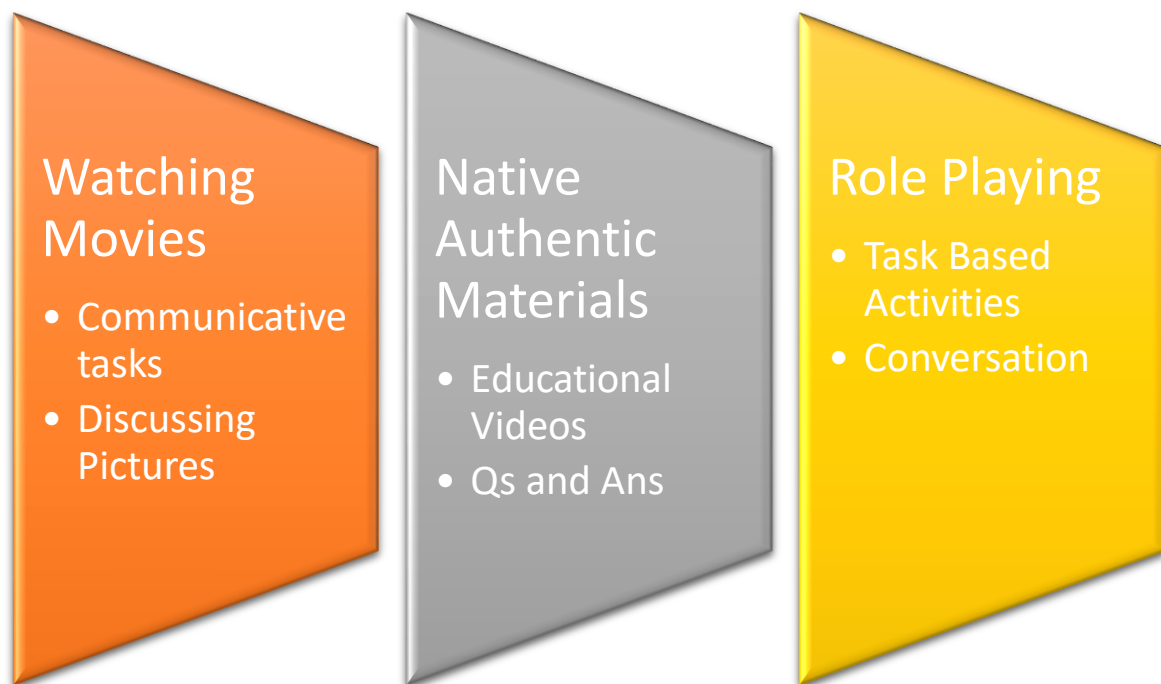


Figure 25. Effective Tasks to Improve Listening Proficiency

Without Doubt, improving speech skills in English involves a combination of effective methods, as highlighted by the teachers' responses of Abbes Laghrour University. Role plays and task-based activities, identified by the 1st and 4th teachers, provide opportunities for students to practice speaking in real-life scenarios, thereby enhancing their communication

skills. The emphasis on listening to native speakers and engaging in conversations, as suggested by the 2nd and 5th teachers, underscores the importance of exposure to authentic language input and interactive communication. Additionally, the 3rd teacher emphasizes the significance of encouraging students to communicate in English both inside and outside the classroom, as well as incorporating multimedia resources like videos to imitate native speech patterns. The 6th teacher advocates for communicative tasks and interactive exercises such as discussing pictures, asking and answering questions, and brainstorming, which promote active participation and engagement in speaking activities. Together, these methods address various aspects of speech improvement, including fluency, comprehension, and confidence, fostering a comprehensive approach to enhancing students' speaking proficiency in English.

Q13: What resources or teaching materials do you find most effective in addressing linguistic barriers in EFL students' speaking proficiency?

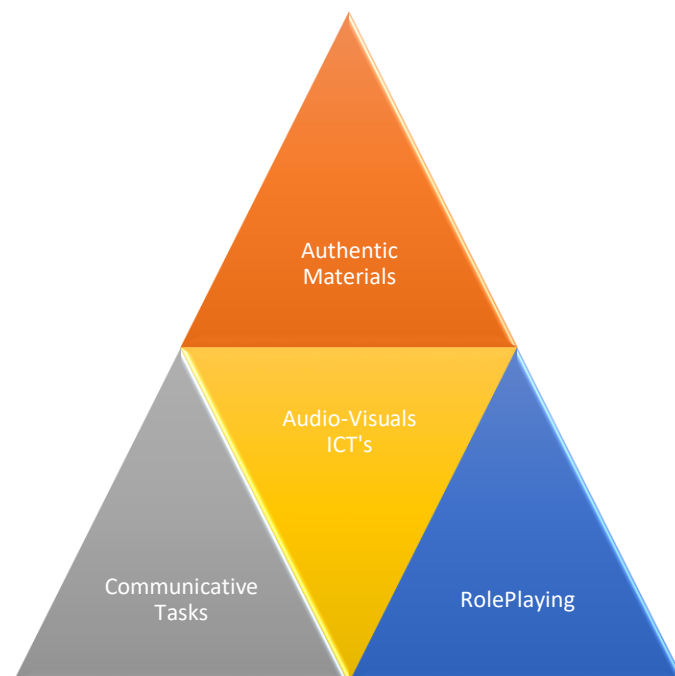


Figure 26. Effective Resources to Address Students 'Linguistic Barriers

The teachers' of Abbes Laghrour use several effective resources and teaching materials for addressing linguistic barriers in EFL students' speaking proficiency in Khenchela. Authentic materials, such as podcasts and British Council lessons, are favoured by the 1st and 4th teachers, providing real-world language examples and contexts for students to engage with. The 2nd and 6th teachers emphasize interactive activities, role-plays, and communicative tasks, which encourage active participation and practical application of language skills. Additionally, the use of authentic listening materials, as noted by the 2nd, 5th, and 6th teachers, exposes students to natural speech patterns and accents, aiding in comprehension and pronunciation. Furthermore, multimedia resources like videos and audio-visual records, as suggested by the 3rd teacher, offer visual and auditory stimuli to enhance learning and overcome linguistic barriers. Role-play activities, simulations, and reading novels and books, mentioned by the 5th teacher, provide diverse opportunities for students to practice speaking in different contexts and scenarios. All in all, the combination of these resources and materials addresses various linguistic challenges, catering to different learning styles and preferences, ultimately facilitating the development of EFL students' speaking proficiency in our department.

2.3 Results and Recommendations

2.3.1 Main Findings:

Interestingly section four is divided to draw general findings, recommendations as well as future implications. Actually, through examining the responses provided by multiple teachers of oral expression in Abbes Laghrour university in Khenchela, regarding various aspects of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning, several key findings emerge. Firstly, there is a consensus among teachers that students of Khenchela generally show interest in participating in activities used in the classroom, with most preferring to work

in groups or pairs rather than independently. However, individual preferences may vary. When it comes to speaking proficiency, teachers in Khenchela identify grammar as a consistent struggle for students, along with vocabulary and pronunciation, though the extent of difficulty may differ. To address these challenges, teachers employ diverse strategies, such as continuous assessment, targeted feedback, and exposure to authentic materials. In particular, verb tenses, past and future tenses in particular, emerge as a significant hurdle for students. Additionally, vocabulary limitations are tackled through various methods, including providing time to search for words, using context clues, and engaging in vocabulary-building activities. Moreover, encouraging fluency in speaking tasks involves creating a supportive environment, utilizing engaging activities, and providing relevant prompts and constructive feedback.

All in all, many teachers at Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela shared insights into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning. They noted that students in Khenchela generally prefer group or pair work over independent study and struggle with grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, particularly verb tenses and vocabulary limitations. To tackle these challenges, teachers use continuous assessment, targeted feedback, and authentic materials. Strategies like role plays, interactive activities, and exposure to native speakers' language are emphasized to enhance speaking proficiency. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of diverse teaching methods tailored to address various EFL challenges and promote students' language skills and confidence in English speaking.

2.3.2 Recommendations to Empower Students' Listening Proficiency

In fact, engaging in active listening exercises is an excellent way for learners to enhance their listening abilities, requiring full engagement and feedback to demonstrate comprehension; teachers can facilitate pair work, group discussions, or role plays to promote

active listening, customizing these exercises to match the learners' levels and needs. Additionally, utilizing visual aids like videos, pictures, and diagrams can improve understanding of the material, and it's crucial for teachers to select relevant and easy-to-understand aids that encourage discussion and questions while catering to different learning styles. Note-taking is another valuable strategy for retaining information and maintaining focus during listening activities; teachers should encourage learners to take notes during lectures or discussions and provide guidelines on effective note-taking techniques to help organize and review the material later, consolidating their learning. Furthermore, teachers can instruct learners in active listening strategies such as paraphrasing, summarizing, and asking questions to keep them engaged and prompt clarification when needed, enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving skills by modelling these techniques during class discussions. Lastly, feedback is essential in the learning process; teachers should offer constructive feedback on learners' listening skills, highlighting areas for improvement and providing opportunities for self-assessment, helping learners recognize their strengths and weaknesses and take steps to improve.

Evaluations should go beyond merely measuring listening skills; they should also promote improvement. Feedback should be constructive, emphasizing both strengths and areas for growth. Encouraging students to engage in self-assessment and reflection fosters their autonomy in learning. Teaching listening skills to ESL students is a complex task that requires patience, creativity, and flexibility. By creating a supportive environment, using varied techniques, and tailoring approaches to meet individual needs, teachers can help students become proficient listeners, thereby enhancing their confidence in navigating the English language.

2.3.4 Limitations of the Study

Unquestionably, this research study about the linguistic barriers faced by EFL students at Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela provides valuable insights into the challenges impacting speaking proficiency and yet as any research, it has given limitations. Regarding the sample size of students participating in the online questionnaire may not be large enough to represent the entire population of EFL students at the university, as it is online some students were not motivated enough. The same thing for the number of teachers interviewed, and their perspectives may not fully represent the diversity of experiences and strategies among all EFL teachers at the university (small one). While the quantitative data provides a broad overview of the issues, it may lack depth in understanding the complexities of the linguistic barriers, as th questionnaire might not capture the full range of student experiences and specific nuances of their difficulties with speaking proficiency. The findings from this study are specific to EFL students and teachers at Abbes Laghrour University in Khenchela, and therefore, the results may not be generalizable to other contexts. Additionally, the language proficiency of the students responding to the questionnaire might affect their ability to fully articulate their challenges and experiences, leading to incomplete or unclear responses. By acknowledging these limitations, future researchers could suggest areas for future research to address these gaps.

Conclusion

All in all, in response to the research main questions, the findings of the research study conclude that:

1- What are the most common linguistic barriers faced by EFL students in developing speaking proficiency, categorized by grammar,vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency?

-EFL students are facing unfortunately serious linguistic barriers while empowering speaking proficiency , including barriers in Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, to name few:

-Learners of English as a foreign language face several Grammatical linguistic barriers, including complex verb tenses (basically the future and the past notions) and aspect systems, irregular verb forms, and subject-verb agreement rules without forgetting English's use of definite /indefinite articles (a, an, the) they found them confusing, as many languages do not have direct equivalents what is more is that pronunciation challenges arise due to the interference of the first mother language as well as English's inconsistent spelling-to-sound correspondence in addition to lack of awareness towards the target culture via lack of understanding and using idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs further complicate comprehension and usage. Syntax differences, such as word order and sentence structure.. Consonant clusters and is also marked as a particularly difficult without forgetting English's stress patterns, including word stress and sentence stress, as well as intonation, because they are not similar to learners' native languages. Also, the inconsistent relationship between English spelling and pronunciation is confusing them, leading to difficulties in accurately predicting how words should be pronounced. Worthy mentioned that all of these problems affect negatively students' speaking proficiency.

2- How do these linguistic barriers manifest in the spoken English of EFL students, and what are the observable patterns in their speech errors and hesitations?

Doubtlessly, the above mentioned linguistic barriers in spoken English of EFL students manifest as mispronunciations of vowels and consonants, incorrect stress patterns, and awkward intonation in being misunderstood by others, impacting the communicative competence consequently observable patterns include frequent hesitations, misplacement of

word stress lead to misunderstandings and hinder fluent communication, as well as the intercommunicative competence.

3-To what extent do these linguistic barriers impact EFL students' confidence, motivation, and overall learning experience?

Actually, to great extent, the more or the less learners overcome the above mentioned linguistic barriers, the more or the less they could develop and maximize their speaking proficiency, communicative as well as intercommunicative competence.

4-What effective pedagogical strategies and resources can be implemented to address these linguistic barriers and enhance EFL students' speaking proficiency?

Based on the recommended answers, engaging in active listening exercises significantly enhances learners' listening abilities, requiring full engagement and feedback to demonstrate comprehension. Teachers can facilitate pair work, group discussions, or role plays, customizing these exercises to match learners' levels and needs. Visual aids like videos, pictures, and diagrams improve material understanding, and it's important for teachers to choose relevant, easy-to-understand aids that encourage discussion and cater to different learning styles. Note-taking is a valuable strategy for retaining information and maintaining focus; teachers should encourage note-taking during lectures or discussions and provide guidelines on effective techniques to help organize and review material, consolidating learning. Additionally, teachers can instruct learners in active listening strategies such as paraphrasing, summarizing, and asking questions to keep them engaged and prompt clarification, enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving skills by modelling these techniques during class discussions. Feedback is essential; teachers should offer constructive feedback on learners' listening skills, highlighting areas for improvement and providing opportunities for self-assessment, helping learners recognize their strengths and weaknesses

and take steps to improve. Evaluations should promote improvement, emphasizing both strengths and areas for growth. Encouraging self-assessment and reflection fosters autonomy in learning. Teaching listening skills to ESL students requires patience, creativity, and flexibility. By creating a supportive environment, using varied techniques, and tailoring approaches to individual needs, teachers can help students become proficient listeners, boosting their confidence in navigating the English language.

General Conclusion

This work delved into the linguistic barriers impacting the speaking proficiency of EFL students in Abbas Laghrour University. Based on student's attitude online questionnaire alongside the in-depth interviews with EFL teachers, a comprehensive picture of these challenges was painted. The student questionnaire shed light on the common obstacles and perceptions related to speaking English, while teachers' interview provided deeper insights and practical strategies to address these barriers. The integration of these two research tools yielded a well-rounded understanding of the linguistic hurdles that hinder EFL students' speaking abilities. The data gathered highlighted the multifaceted nature of these barriers, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions and supportive teaching methodologies. The findings of this study can guide teachers in developing more effective strategies to enhance speaking proficiency, ultimately fostering greater language acquisition and fluency.

To sum up, effective methods for improving speech proficiency include role plays, interactive activities, authentic listening materials, and communicative tasks. Additionally, teachers highlight the importance of using authentic materials, multimedia resources, and exposure to native speakers' language. Finally, these findings underscore the importance of employing a diverse range of strategies and resources tailored to address the multifaceted challenges of EFL teaching and learning, ultimately fostering students' language proficiency and confidence in speaking English.

References

- 1) Abdelouahab, I., & Boumekhita, S. (2023). Investigating psychological barriers to speaking fluency: The case study of first-year LMD students at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahya University. [Type of document: Dissertation]. University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahya – Jijel, Faculty of Letters and Languages, Department of English.
- 2) Bachman, L. F. (1990). Fundamental considerations in language testing. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 3) Barron, A. (2003). Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- 4) Brown, H.D. (1994). Teaching by principles: an interactive approach to language pedagogy. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- 5) Brown, H.D. (2001). Teaching By Principles: An interaction Approach to Language Pedagogy. Longman: San Francisco State University.
- 6) Brumfit, C. (1984). Communicative methodology in language teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 7) Burns, A., & Joyce, H. (1997). Focus on speaking. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research.
- 8) Cambridge Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/grammar/british-grammar/pronunciation>).

- 9) Chaney, A.L. (1998). Teaching Oral Communication. In *Grandes K-8*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- 10) Chastain, K. (1976). *Developing Second Language Skills: Theory to Practice*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- 11) Council of Europe. (2001). *A Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning and Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 12) Crane, L. Ben, et al. (1981). *An Introduction To Linguistics*. Canada: Little, Brown and Company Limited.)
- 13) Crystal, D. (1987). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language*. Cambridge.
- 14) Crystal, D. (1997). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 15) de Jong, N., & Perfetti, C.A. (2011). Fluency training in the ESL classroom: An experimental study of fluency development and proceduralization. *Language Learning*, 61, 533–568.
- 16) Doff, A. (1990). *Teach English: A Training Course for Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 17) Doff, A. (1990). *Teach English: A Training Course for Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 18) Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: an SLA perspective. *Tesol Quarterly*, 40(1), 83-107)

- 19) Fraser,B.(1999) what are discourse markers ? Journal of pragmatics ,31(1),931-952)
- 20) Fraser,B.(2000),Alshehri,A.(2000). Exploring students' speaking difficulties in an EFL context: Case of first-year students at BELHADJ BOUCHAIB University. Presented by Khaldi Halima and Benkada Yousra.
- 21) Fulcher, G. (2003). Testing Second Language Speaking. London: Pearson Education.
- 22) Harmer, J. (1987). The correlation between students' language proficiency and academic achievement. In Hanifah, FKIP UMP
- 23) He,Summer X & Chen, Amanda J.Y, 2010, How to Improve Spoken English. <http://sites.google.com/site/languagejournal/Home/how-to-improve-spoken-English>
- 24) Hedge, T. (2000). Teaching and learning in the language classroom. Oxford University Press.
- 25) Hornby, A. S. (2012). Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (8th ed.). New York. Oxford University Press
- 26) Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. The Modern language journal, 70(2), 125-132.
- 27) Jamshidnejad, A. (2020). Introduction : Challenges of L2 Oral Communication in EFL Contexts. In Speaking English as a Second Language (pp. 1-30).

- 28) Jonathan. (2008). Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking. Routledge Press: New York.
- 29) Khaldi, H, & Benkada, Y. (2021). « Exploring Students' Speaking Difficulties in an EFL Context : Case of First Year Students at BELHADJ BOUCHAIB University. » Unpublished master's thesis, BELHADJ BOUCHAIB University, Department of Linguistics.
- 30) Koponen, M., & Riggensbach, H. (2000). Overview: Varying perspectives on fluency. In H. Riggensbach (Ed.), Perspectives on fluency (pp. 5-24). Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.
- 31) Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (2013). Language learning in early childhood. In How Languages are Learned. Oxford University Press, pp. 15, 103, 20.
- 32) Lucas, R. I., Miraflores, E., & Go, D. (2011). English language learning anxiety among foreign language learners in the Philippines. *Philippine ESL Journal*, 7(1), 94-119.
- 33) Lyster, R. (1994). The effect of functional-analytic teaching on aspects of French immersion students' sociolinguistic competence. *Applied Linguistics*.
- 34) MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The Subtle Effects of Language Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in the Second Language. *Language Learning*, 44 (2), 283-305
- 35) MacWhinney, B. (1997). Second language acquisition and the competition model. In A. M. B. de Groot & J. F. Kroll (Eds.), *Tutorials in bilingualism* (pp. 113 – 142). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- MacWhinney, B. (1997). Second language acquisition and the competition model. In A. M. B. de Groot & J. F. Kroll (Eds.), *Tutorials in bilingualism* (pp. 113-142). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- 36) McKay, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an International Language: Rethinking Goals and Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 37) McKay, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an International Language: Rethinking Goals and Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 38) Neacșu, I. (1990). *Instruire și învățare*. București: Editura Științifică.
- 39) Neacșu, I. (1990). *Instruire și învățare*. București: Editura Științifică .
Teaching Methods, Teaching Strategies, Teaching Techniques and Teaching Approach. "Journal Name", 2(2).
- 40) Ozkan, Y., Bada, E., & Genc, B. (2011). *Speak the Real: News Articles as Major Source for Oral Competence*. In David, J.A. *English as a Second Language: Languages and Linguistics*. New York: Nova.
- 41) Pienemann, M. (1998). *Language processing and second language development: Processability Theory*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- 42) Pienemann, M. (1998). *Language processing and second language development: Processability Theory*. Benjamins: Amsterdam.
- 43) Quirk R., Greenbaum S., Leech G., Svartvik J. *A Comprehensive Grammar of English Language*. – London and New York: Longman, 1988 – 1779p

- 44) Ratnasari, A. G. (2020) EFL Students' Challenges in Learning Speaking Skills :A Case Study in Mechanical Engineering Department. Foreign Language Teaching and Learning journal. Umy.
- 45) Richards, J. C. (2008). Teaching listening and speaking from theory to practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 46) Schmidt R. 1992. Psychological mechanism underlying Second Language Fluency. – Studies in Second Language Acquisition 14: 357–385.
- 47) Schwartz, B. D., & Sprouse, R. A. (1994). Word order and nominative case in non-native language acquisition. A longitudinal study of (L1 Turkish) German interlanguage. In T. Hoekstra, & B. D. Schwartz (Eds.), Language acquisition studies in generative grammar: Papers in honour of Kenneth Wexler from the 1991 GLOW workshops. Philadelphia, PA: J. Benjamins, pp. 317-368.
- 48) Schwartz, B. D., & Sprouse, R. A. (1996). L2 cognitive states and the Full Transfer/ Full Access model. Second Language Research, 12, 40-72
- 49) Tasnimi, M. (2011). Affective factors: Anxiety. Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics, 13(2), 117-124.
- 50) Thornbury, S. (1999). The correlation between students' language proficiency and academic achievement.
- 51) Thornbury, S. (2005). How to teach speaking. London: Pearson Education.

- 52)** Timothy,R. (2023). What is vocabulary ? Part 5 of the essential components of literacy. Imse journal. <https://journal.imse.com/what-is-vocabulary>
- 53)** Whitehall H. (1975).The Development of the English Dictionary. Readings in Modern English Lexicology, pp.202-207.
- 54)** Wilkins, D. A. (1972) p.109. Exploring students' speaking difficulties in an EFL context: Case of first-year students at BELHADJ BOUCHAIB University. Presented by Khaldi Halima and Benkada Yousra. p. 18.

Résumé

L'anglais est une langue largement parlée utilisée pour la communication et la recherche dans le monde entier. Dans le contexte de l'EFL, l'aptitude à parler est essentielle pour mieux apprendre la langue et communiquer efficacement. Il permet l'échange d'informations, l'expression d'idées, et aussi il aide à construire des relations socio-culturelles. Mais il y a plusieurs défis lorsqu'il s'agit de communiquer. Cette recherche explore les barrières linguistiques à la parole chez les étudiants de première année du département d'anglais de l'Université Abbas-Laghrour Khenchela. À notre connaissance, les élèves rencontrent souvent des barrières linguistiques qui entravent leur participation active à la salle de classe. Ces obstacles peuvent inclure des difficultés de prononciation, un vocabulaire restreint et des erreurs grammaticales. L'objectif est de donner aux étudiants les moyens de surmonter ces défis. La recherche dépendait d'une approche non expérimentale en incorporant des questionnaires d'étudiants et des entrevues d'enseignants pour étudier ces barrières linguistiques. Sans aucun doute les résultats reflètent que les enseignants et les étudiants de l'Université Abbas Laghrour de Khenchela mettent l'accent sur l'importance des méthodes d'enseignement diverses pour relever les défis d'anglais comme langue étrangère (EFL). Les enseignants utilisent une évaluation continue, des commentaires ciblés, des matériaux authentiques, des jeux de rôle, des activités interactives et l'exposition à des locuteurs natifs pour améliorer les compétences linguistiques des élèves. Dans l'ensemble, des conseils d'enseignement et d'apprentissage efficaces de haute qualité pour toutes les compétences sont nécessaires pour l'éducation encyclopédique du XXI^e siècle. Sur la base des résultats de la recherche, nous pourrions envisager de proposer des stratégies telles que l'incorporation d'activités de parole interactives, l'offre de séances de pratique de la prononciation et l'intégration des exercices de construction de vocabulaire pour améliorer les compétences de parole des élèves. Sans aucun doute, l'analyse initiale du questionnaire indique que les étudiants de l'EFL sont confrontés à de sérieuses barrières linguistiques liées à la grammaire, à la structure de la phrase, à l'interprétation, au dictionnaire, tout en renforçant leurs compétences en langue, en communication et en intercommunication. En outre, l'analyse de l'entretien approfondi avec les enseignants de la EFL révèle des conclusions extrêmement importantes. Premièrement, les enseignants sont parfaitement conscients des barrières linguistiques, et, deuxièmement, ils adaptent leurs méthodes d'enseignement et d'instruction en vue d'une éducation de haute qualité intelligente et efficace. L'étude a souligné la nécessité urgente d'adopter des stratégies de réflexion en faveur de la compétence linguistique ainsi que des compétences communicatives du XXI^e siècle.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

Thank you for participating in this study. Your responses will provide valuable insights into the linguistic challenges faced by first-year English students at Abbes Laghrour University and the strategies that can help improve English speaking skills. Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability (tick the corresponding box).

* Indique une question obligatoire

Section one: Personal Information

Q 01: Specify your gender:

- Male
- Female

Q 02: Was English your first choice at University?

- Yes
- No

Q 03: Which of the four language skills do you want to master the most?

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking

Section Two: Student Proficiency and Linguistic Challenges

Q 04: How do you rate your proficiency in speaking English?

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Weak

Q 05: Do you feel uncomfortable speaking English?

- Yes
- No

If your answer in the previous question is "yes" is it because?

- You feel anxious
- You are afraid of making grammatical mistakes
- You lack confidence to speak in front of classmates

Q 06: How confident are you in your pronunciation of English words and sounds?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not confident

Q7: Which aspects of English grammar do you find most challenging?

.....
.....

Q 08: Do you encounter difficulties in understanding English when interacting with others?

- Yes
- No

If "yes" what are these challenges?

- Lack of vocabulary
- Lack of Grammar competence
- Mother tongue interference
- Others

Section Three: Teacher Support and Strategies

Q 09: Does your teacher motivate you to speak English in class?

- Yes
- No

Q 10: How often do you receive individualized feedback from your teacher on your speaking performance?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- never

Q11: What kind of activities does your teacher use most in order to motivate you to speak?

- Role-play
- Language games
- Dialogues

If there is other strategies or activities(note down, please)

Q 12: Do you think having a large vocabulary helps you communicate effectively in English?

- Yes
- No

Q13 : How do you feel about collaborating with peers to practice English speaking skills?

- Positive
- Neutral
- negative

Q14 :Are there any specific types of speaking activities you would like to see more of in your English language classes?

.....

.....

Q15 : In your opinion, what could teachers do to better support students in developing their English speaking skills?

.....

.....

Appendix 2 : Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers,

We are glad to have an interview with you. Your responses to our questions will play a significant role in determining many of the study's findings. The purpose of this study is to investigate the linguistic barriers that EFL students encounter in speaking proficiency. The interview's objectives are to learn more about oral production skill development and instruction, as well as to look into the difficulties that students face when speaking.

Section 1: Personal Information

Q 01: How long have you been teaching English language?

.....

Q 02: Are the Speaking skills your major concern?

yes

No

Section 2: Speaking Proficiency Assessment

Q 03: How do you assess the speaking proficiency of your EFL students ?

.....

.....

Q 04: In your opinion, which aspects of speaking are more important?

Fluency

Accuracy

Communicative competence

Q 05: Do your students show interest in taking part in the activities you use?

.....

Q 06 : Do those who are interested prefer to work:

Independently

In pairs

In groups

Section 3: Challenges and Obstacles

Q 07 : Which one of these do you find most difficult for students in terms of speaking?

Grammar

Vocabulary

Pronunciation

Q 08: In your experience, what grammatical structures or patterns do EFL students struggle with the most during speaking activities?

-
.....

Q 09: How do you identify and address pronunciation difficulties in your EFL students?

-
.....

Q 10: What strategies do you use to help EFL students overcome vocabulary limitations during speaking tasks?

-
.....

Q 11 : How do you encourage EFL students to express themselves more fluently during speaking tasks?

-
.....

Q 12: What are the most essential methods to improve speech?

-
.....

Q 13: What resources or teaching materials do you find most effective in addressing linguistic barriers in EFL students' speaking proficiency?

-
.....