

A Study of the Factors Affecting the Learning of English Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

It is generally assumed that language is a purposeful goal-oriented activity; its main objective is the internalization of a system of rules which defines correct linguistic competence accompanied by the required communicative competence. Added to that, Language is a unity of four major skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Recently, it has been argued on both linguistics and psychological grounds that the speaking English should be the principal objective in language teaching. Speaking is a very significant skill which overlooks other four sub-skills namely, fluency, accuracy, grammar and comprehension. The current study has been conducted to investigate English language teachers' perspective of the sources of problems that encounter basic school learners during their learning of English-Speaking Skills from. Moreover, the present study aims at answering the following question: What are the problems that basic school learners face during their learning of English-speaking skills from English language teachers' perspective? This has been done through a questionnaire prepared by the researcher, based on the relevant literature review and previous studies, and presented to a panel of juries in English language to check its validity and reliability. The questionnaire was then applied to a sample of teachers. The collected data have been statistically analyzed. In the light of the results arrived at, a set of concluding point, some recommendations and suggestions for further research have been put forward.

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

1. Introduction

Modern psychological theories provide sufficient evidence to prove that education becomes meaningful and more relevant when it is learner centered and when the entire system revolves around the learner. Likewise, it is generally assumed that language is a purposeful goal-oriented activity; its objective being the internalization of a system of rules which defines the acquisition of competence (Widdowson: 1984, p. 242). To be more specific, learning a language requires constant practice in order to form habits that enhance one's understanding and speaking of the foreign language (FL). Thus, learning has increased in its significance as recent literature on education has referred to. Also, under the urgent need to speak FLs during World War II, programs to teach the aural-oral skills were started in many parts of the United States. In the 1930s, direct control of vocabulary and grammatical structures presented sought to systemize the work of the teacher and to provide principles for equipping the learner with an input designed to match

his presumed learning tactics. The basic principle of the structural approach is that patterns of language need to be practiced by the learner. This can be done by practice and drilling, so that patterns will be produced correctly as a matter of subconscious habit (Stevens: 1977, p. 1).

In the 1940s, the U.S. Army Specialized Teaching Program (ASTP) and its counterparts in Britain incorporated some of the ideas of Bloomfieldian and European descriptive linguistic respectively into specialized courses for teaching languages to service personnel by audio-lingual methods. In the 1950s, in the United States, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) was consciously developed on the basis of Bloomfield's structural linguistics and Skinner's behaviorist psychology. This approach was dominant for over 20 years (Corder: 1973, p. 185); (Stevens: 1977, p. 8) and (Wilkins: 1974, p. 61). According to all the above-mentioned methods, the focus has been primarily on speech, at a time when reading and

writing are usually deferred until speech is mastered. Based on the preceding ideas and assumptions, language is a unity of four major skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking is a very significant skill which overlooks other four sub-skills namely, fluency, accuracy, grammar and comprehension. Recently, it has been argued on both linguistics and psychological grounds that speaking English should be the principal objective in language teaching. Likewise, linguists and psychologists have concluded that speech is the primary form of language (Stevens: 1977, p. 109). Therefore, language teachers have been dominated by the idea that more attention should be paid to the way one talks than to what one says, and that to be a good speaker, continuous practice is required to develop the skills already referred to at the time when various approaches of teaching foreign languages (FLs) have emerged so as to replace the classical-based grammar translation method.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Teaching English forms a golden chance for the development and improvement of the different linguistic skills. Unfortunately, within the Iraqi context, there has been no serious undertaking of the teaching task. This is usually reflected on learners' assimilation and development of the linguistic skills at large and speaking in particular. The outcome is the noticeable inability on the part of learners themselves to practice the oral skills.

1.2 The Research Questions

- What are the speaking difficulties that are related to the teacher?
- What are the speaking difficulties that are related to the student?

1.3 Aims of the Study

The current research aims at:

- identifying the problems that negatively affect the learning of English oral skills, and

- giving answer to the following research question:
What are the problems that negatively affect basic school learners' learning of English from English language teachers' perspective?

1.4 The Hypotheses

The current research attempts to verify the following hypotheses:

- There are no statistical differences between the responses of the teachers of English at the basic school stage in that their teaching of English as a foreign language is negatively affected by a set of problems that lead to learners' unsatisfactory development of the speaking skills.
- There are no statistical differences between the responses of the teachers of English at the basic school stage in that their students learning of English as a foreign language is negatively affected by a set of problems that lead to learners' unsatisfactory development of the speaking skills.

1.5 Limits of the Study

The present study is limited to the investigation of the problems that face basic school learners during their learning of English speaking skill as viewed by the teachers of the subject. It is also limited to the teachers of English at secondary basic stage in Iraqi schools during the academic year 2013-2014.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The present study is expected to be of some value to teachers of English as a foreign language by familiarizing them with the problems that negatively affect their pupils learning of English. In this respect, they are supposed to direct and monitor their teaching in such a way to facilitate pupils learning and minimize the effect of the difficulties encountered in this respect. Added to that, the literature review introduced within the current research is expected to be of benefit to those who might be interested in the identification of the negative factors including the problems and difficulties encountered by the pupils.

They might also find in the empirical part of the study a source of better understanding of the teaching and/or learning of the English oral skills. Finally, as it is stated by some researchers, for instance Richards and Lockhart (2004: 1), Tremmel (1993: 434) and Pennington (1995: 706), studying the status of oral skills in teaching is important in terms of being as a means of teachers' understanding of the class dynamics and challenges and bridging the gap between theory and practice.

2. Definition of Speaking

"Speaking" is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips. Speaking is the second of the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. This vocalized form of language usually requires at least one listener.

Speaking can be formal or informal. Informal speaking is typically used with family and friends, or people you know well. Formal speaking occurs in business or academic situations, or when meeting people for the first time. Speaking is probably the language skill that most language learners wish to perfect as soon as possible.

3. The Role of Speaking in Language Teaching and Learning

Speaking is one of language major skills. Speaking is regarded as the most demanded skill on learning a language. Tarigan (1990) states that speaking is a language skill that is developed in child life, which is produced by listening skill, and at that period speaking skill is learned. It is clear that language is a way of communication which cannot be separated from daily life. Clark and Clark (in Nunan, 1991) state that speaking is fundamentally an instrument act. Speakers talk in order to have some effect on their listeners. Students' skills in conversation are the core aspect; it becomes an essential aspect in successful

language learning. As such, language functions as a system for expressing meaning. It is measured, as Nunan (1991) states, through someone's ability to carry out conversation in the languages.

4. Importance of Speaking

By speaking we do not mean mere uttering of words through mouth. It means conveying a message through such words. Richards (2008:) states that "when people meet, they exchange greetings, engage in small talk, recount recent experiences, and so on, because they wish to be friendly and to establish a comfortable zone of interaction with others". This indicates that speaking fluently or being good in oral communication is a core aspect of humans to stay connected to each other. Since language is an instrument of communication, there is no excuse for a language learner for not being able to speak the language learnt.

5. Problems in Speaking Performance

To develop the speaking skill in second or foreign language is a challenge for the learners, because to speak a foreign language such as English requires its in a real context and not mere knowledge of grammar. Hayriye (2006) states that speaking is to select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation, and subject matter. Being a fluent speaker requires knowledge of the language learnt itself and its use in the real communication. Yet there are some problems that encounter learners and make them lack speaking fluently.

According to Doris and Jessica (2007), language problems actually serve as one of the important reasons behind poor academic performance. These problems may become the obstacles that deter learners from enhancing and improving their speaking ability. The reasons why the students are having problems in their speaking are they are poor in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These difficulties

belong to linguistic problems. Other difficulties are psychological problems that may become a barrier for the students to become good speakers of English. Xinghua (2007) states that psychological problems often interfere with emotional and physical health, relationships, work productivity, or life adjustment such as nervous, lack of self-confident and fear to speak. These problems may affect students' performance in their speaking. Khan (2005) claims that some of his participants had psychological problems in speaking. This emphasizes that psychological problems also affect students performance in speaking.

In addition, there are some problems that teachers face with their large classes during the teaching of the speaking activities in the classroom. Studies recently have shown that these problems are not new nor are the solutions offered. Teachers all over the world continue to face the same hurdles, but any teacher who has overcome these problems and has got a large class of energetic students talking and working in English in groups together will claim that it is worth all the trial and error and effort.

6. The Previous Studies

- Fitriani and Apriliawati (2015) published in their article entitled "A Study on Students' English Speaking Problems in Speaking Performance" used a likert-scale questionnaire type which consisted of 25 statements regarding students' speaking problems in their speaking performance. The questionnaire was divided into 2 main aspects; linguistic and psychological problems. Based on the research findings derived from students' responses in the questionnaire, the researcher concluded that the most dominant problem faced by the sample of the students was the psychological problems with a percentage 20.70% which was higher than the linguistic problems (19.53%). If the problems are dealt with separately, grammar problem had a total

percentage 22.16%, while the second problem was anxiety (psychological problem) with a total percentage of 21.27%. The third problem was the vocabulary problem (linguistic problem) with a total percentage of 20.19%. Next, the fourth problem that affected students' speaking performance was lack of self-confidence (psychological problem) with a total percentage 20.11%. The last speaking problem was the pronunciation (linguistic problem) with a total percentage of 16.25%.

- Ahmed (2016) investigated the "Problems and Difficulties of Speaking that Encounter English Language Students at Al Quds Open University". The results showed and indicated some difficulties in the speaking of the students due to some reasons such as fear of committing mistakes , shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence.
- Al Hosni (2014) showed that speaking is the active use of language to express meaning, and for young learners, the spoken language is the medium through which a new language is encountered, understood, practiced, and learnt. Rather than oral skills being simply one aspect of learning language, the spoken form in the young learner's classroom acts as the prime source of language learning. However, speaking problems can be major challenges to effective foreign language learning and communication. English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, no matter how much they know about the English language, still face many speaking difficulties. Many studies have indicated that oral language development has largely been neglected in the classroom, and most of the time, oral language in the classroom is used more by teachers than by students. However, oral language, even as used by the teacher, hardly ever functions as a means for students to gain knowledge and explore ideas. To develop the knowledge to deal with oral communication

problems in an EFL context, researchers first need to know the real nature of those problems and the circumstances in which 'problems' are constructed.

- Bozorgian (2012) investigated "The Relationship between Listening and Other Language Skills in International English Language Testing System". The findings showed that there was a closer correlation between listening comprehension and language proficiency. It means the higher the listening score was, the better the speaking score was.
- Urrutia and Vega (2010) carried out a research entitled "Encouraging Teenagers to Improve Speaking Skills through Games". They outlined that learners' oral performance was influenced by their lack of vocabulary, diffidence, and fear of being disposed. It was also found out that learners' cooperation, self-confidence, vocabulary knowledge, and the class environment imposed them to develop their speaking skills.
- Shumin (1997) investigated the "Factors to Consider Developing Adult EFL Students' Speaking Abilities". The major aim was to explore how teachers could more effectively help adult learners develop their abilities to communicate in the FL. The researcher pointed out that in order to provide guidance in developing competent speakers of English, instructors of EFL should keep in mind: (1) what affected adults EFL learners' oral communication? (2) what were the components underlying speaking effectiveness? (3) and how could adult EFL learners speaking abilities be improved? The researcher specified the factors affecting adult EFL learners' oral communication as age or maturational constraints; oral medium; sociocultural factors; and affective factors. He also specified the components underlying speaking effectiveness, namely (a) grammatical competence, (b) discourse

competence; (c) sociolinguistic competence and (d) strategic competence. In conclusion, speaking was found out to be one of the central elements of communication. In EFL teaching, speaking was an aspect that needed special attention and instruction. In order to provide effective instruction, it was necessary for teacher of EFL to carefully examine the factors, conditions, and components of the underlined speaking effectiveness. Effective instruction derived from the careful analysis together with sufficient language input and speech promotion activities, would generally help learners speak English fluently and appropriately.

- Therberge (1990) carried out a research entitled "Evaluation of French as a Second Language Study Program for Grade Nine Immersion: Oral Comprehension and Speaking Skills". The focus was on the program effectiveness in teaching listening comprehension and speaking skills. Results indicated that the majority of the objectives chosen for evaluation were satisfactory. Communication objectives were better attained than functional objectives, and achievement was especially high in identifying clues about the speaker. Deficiencies were still observed in the area of syntax when speaking skills were evaluated.

7. Procedure

In this part, the researcher is going to present the method of the research. Furthermore, the tool of the research will be accounted for in terms of constructing it, its validity, reliability, the sample, its application and the statistical means that are going to be used in data analysis of results.

8. Method of the Research:

The current study has been conducted depending on the descriptive method to collect the required information since it fits such a kind of research.

9. Research Instrument; The Questionnaire

To verify the hypotheses and answer the research questions, a questionnaire has been administered to the teachers of English language in Kurdistan Region- Duhok city, to highlight the problems that students face in English speaking.

9.1 Validity of the Questionnaire

Validity is perhaps the most complex concept in evaluation. It refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else (Best: 1981, p. 197) and (Heaten: 1988, p. 159).

Furthermore, there are different types of validity. Face validity means that a test item looks right to other testers, teachers, moderators, and testees. Harris (1969, p. 21) points out that face validity can never be permitted to take the place of the empirical validation. Content is fourth type of validity which depends on careful analysis of the language being tested and of the particular course objectives. Added to that, a test has construct validity when it is capable of measuring some specific characteristic in accordance with a theory of language behaviour and learning. Finally, there is an empirical validity which usually referred to as statistical validity. It is obtained as a result of comparing the results of the test with the results of some criterion measure (Heaten: 1989, p. 159-60). In the present study, the validity of the test has been confirmed through its presentation to a panel of experts.

The questionnaire was presented to a panel of juries at Universities of Mosul, Baghdad and Duhok to check it for validity.

9.2 Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability means the stability of the test scores. It is a necessary characteristic of any good test to be valid. It should first be reliable as a measuring instrument (Heaten: 1989, p. 162). To be more accurate, a test cannot measure anything well unless it measures consistently (Best: 1981, p. 14). This indicates that a

reliable test consistently yields the same results when repeated measurements are taken from the same entities under the same conditions (Van Dalen: 1979, p. 138).

Reliability can also be obtained by using one of the following methods: (1) Re-administering the same test after a lapse of time, (2) administering parallel forms of the test to the same group, and (3) using the split-half method. The last method is estimated a different kind of reliability form that estimated by test / re-test procedures. It is based on the principle that, if an accurate measuring instrument was broken into two equal parts, the measurements obtained with one part would correspond exactly to those obtained with the other. The reliability of the whole test can also be estimated by using the formula of Kuder Richardson. This formula is simple to use since (1) it avoids troublesome, and (2) in addition to the number of items in the test, it involves only the test mean and standard deviation, both of which are normally calculated anyhow as a matter of routine (Heaten: 1988, p. 162-4).

The half- division method was used to prove the reliability of the questionnaire which was divided into two parts (odd, even items) depending on Spearman Brown formulae and test-retest method. In other words, the split-half reliability was. The researcher first gave a single administration of one form of the questionnaire, and then, by dividing the items into two halves (usually by separating odd-and even-numbered items (Van Dalen: 1979, p. 139 and Harris: 1969, p. 15).

9.3 Tool Application

The questionnaire was distributed among the teachers of English Language in Duhok City during the second term of the academic year (2013-2014).

9.4 Population

The current research included 84 teachers, the total number of teachers of English language at basic stage

within Duhok city, during the second term of the academic year 2013-2014.

9.5 Sample of the Study

The sample of the current study included the whole population of teachers of English language at basic stage in Duhok city during the second term of the academic year 2013-2014.

9.6 Statistical Means

To analyze the collected data, the researcher used the following statistical means:

- frequencies.
- Percentage.
- Chi-square for correlation.
- Spearman Brown formula

$$R_{xx} = \frac{2R_{hh}}{1 + R_{hh}}$$

R_{xx} : Reliability of total test (Ferguson: 1979, p. 113;438).

10. Data Analysis

The researcher made an analysis of the data obtained by using the SPSS program. Moreover, the frequencies were used for the answers of each item. Also, the percentage and Chi-square were used to find out the equivalence in terms of the differences between answers.

10.1 The First Hypothesis

"There are no statistical differences between the responses of the teachers of English at the basic school stage in that their teaching of English as a foreign language is negatively affected by a set of problems that lead to learners' unsatisfactory development of the speaking skills".

The sample's responses were put in tables for each item, and Chi-square was used to find out the equivalence statistically as it is demonstrated in table (1):

- Agree to a large extent = T agree
- Often agree to a medium extent = Often

- Disagree/ don't agree = D Ag
- Response of the sample = R
- Percentage = P

Based on table (1) above, it is clear that the level of problems that are related to the teacher was statistically significant (item 11) for the benefit of the highest frequency under the (agree) response, and statistically significant for the items (5,7,12,13) for the highest frequencies under (agree) response. Also, it is statistically significant for the items (1,2,3,4,6,8,9,10) and for the benefit of the highest frequencies under the response (often agree).

Table 1: The frequency, percentage and Chi-value for each item from first part and identification of the statistical difference

No.	By	Sample Response								Chi-Value	St Significance
		T Ag		Agree		Often		D Ag			
		R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P		
1	The teacher does not explain the significance of English speaking to the learners (students).	19	17.3	33	30.8	44	41.3	12	10.6	23.61	Often
2	The teacher's speaking is very fast.	32	29.8	36	33.7	38	35.6	2	1.0	32.77	Often
3	Speaking by the teacher once only.	34	31.7	32	29.8	40	37.5	2	1.0	33.39	Often
4	Speaking any sentence during typical (model) speaking is not clear.	26	24.0	31	28.8	48	45.2	3	1.9	39.77	Often
5	The use of one method in teaching speaking.	25	23.1	45	42.3	35	32.7	3	1.9	37.23	Agree
6	The unsuitable choice of teaching aid or there is no any teaching aids.	18	16.3	43	39.4	47	43.3	2	1.0	49.63	Often
7	The time of teaching speaking is not enough during the lesson.	27	25.0	45	42.3	31	28.8	40	3.8	31.69	Agree
8	There is no chance for the learner (student) to practice speaking during the lesson.	30	28.0	29	26.9	41	38.5	2	1.0	34.85	Often
9	There is no attention to correct learner's (student's) errors during speaking process.	34	31.7	19	17.3	52	48.1	4	2.9	46.85	Often
10	There is little attention to learners' (students) understanding concerning what they are speaking during the lesson.	23	21.2	31	28.8	42	39	12	10.6	18.54	Often
11	There is no care by the teacher to the low (weak) students in speaking from the beginning of the instruction?	47	41.3	27	24.0	36	33	2	1.0	38.20	Too agree
12	There is no variety by the teacher in using different types of speaking teaching.	31	28.8	40	37.5	35	32	2	1.0	23.61	Agree
13	There is no combination (connection) between speaking and other linguistic skills during teaching speaking.	17	15.4	52	48.1	37	33	4	2.9	49.46	Agree

Thus, the analysis above reflects that the speaking problems that are related to the teacher take the following ratio (percent):

(0.076) for the response (too agree), (0.230) for the response (agree), (0.615) for the response (often agree). Concerning the distributed percentages above, It can be noticed that the highest percentage is (0,615) that is related to the response (often agree) and thus the test of the hypothesis is that:

There are statistically significant differences between the sample responses concerning the identification of the speaking problems that are related to the teacher and for the benefit of (often agree). Depending on table (1) above the researcher sees, that most of the responses are nearly to (agree item) more than to the

disagree although the responses were for the benefit of the item (often agree). The reason behind that contrast in the responses may be attributed to the sample experience. Furthermore, some of the sample's members, i.e. teachers minimally emphasize and care about the evaluation of speaking during the lesson. Moreover, the method for teaching speaking needs variety of the teaching styles so that the teacher can master and meet learners' needs in speaking

10.2 The Second Hypothesis:

“There are no statistical differences between the responses of the teachers of English at the basic school stage in that their students learning of English as a foreign language is negatively affected by a set of problems that lead to learners’ unsatisfactory development of the speaking skills”.

To test the second hypothesis, Chi square was used for the statistical analysis of the responses of the second part (reading difficulties that are related to the learner). See table (2).

Table (2): The frequency, percentage and Chi-value for each item from first part and identification of the statistical difference

No.	Items	Sample Response										Chi-Value	St Significance
		T Ag				Agree		Often		D Ag			
		R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P		
1	The loss of self-motive by the learner in speaking skill instruction.	57	55	38	33,5	7	6,7	-	-			39,44	T agree
2	Weakness in the ability to pronounce linguistic letters in one word.	47	45,2	54	51,9	2	1,9	1	1,0			93,31	Agree
3	Division of the word into several syllables during speaking.	34	32,7	45	43,7	22	21,2	3	2,9			37,31	Agree
4	Word spelling while speaking.	43	41,3	39	37,5	19	18,3	3	2,9			39,87	T agree
5	Mispronunciation of the letters.	60	57,7	65	63,7	8	7,7	1	1,0			84,7	Agree
6	Mispronunciation of the word while speaking.	64	61,2	35	31,2	6	5,8	1	1,0			96,88	T agree
7	The misrecognition of the learner concerning the correct place of pauses.	55	52,9	43	42	7	5,8	-	-			37,25	T agree
8	The inability to differentiate between phonemes.	57	54,8	40	38,5	6	5,8	1	1,0			83,92	T agree
9	Forgetting to the shape of words that have been learned previously.	63	60,6	32	30,8	8	7,7	1	1,0			90,54	T agree
10	Repetition of some words while speaking.	20	19,20	51	49	30	28,8	3	2,9			46,39	Agree
11	Addition of some words while speaking.	17	16,3	65	62,5	20	19,2	2	1,9			85,16	Agree
12	Skipping some words while speaking.	44	42,3	46	44,2	14	13,5	-	-			18,54	Agree
13	The inability to analyze sentences into their constituents.	43	41,3	46	44,2	13	12,5	2	1,9			55,16	Agree
14	The inability to self-correction of mistakes while speaking.	51	49	46	44,2	6	5,8	1	1			78,85	T agree
15	The inability to arrange the words while speaking.	32	31,7	60	57,7	9	8,5	1	1,0			80	Agree
16	The inability to control letters pronunciation while speaking.	48	46,2	45	44	11	10,6	-	-			57	T agree
17	Speaking the sentence separately (word by word)	56	53,8	39	37,5	9	8,7	-	-			35	T agree
18	The learner is not so careful of speaking in English language.	71	66	25	20,2	12	11,6	-	-			59	T agree
19	The use of probability in sentence speaking.	45	42	40	45,3	9	9,6	2	1,7			64	Agree
20	Mixing letters' pronunciation that have similar sounds.	45	43,3	55	51,0	4	3,8	2	1			88	Agree
21	Speaking the sentence in an opposite way i.e., from right to left.	16	12,6	14	13,5	77	72	2	1,0			124,8	Often
22	The learner's stuttering in word pronunciation.	39	35,2	54	52	12	12,2	-	-			26	Agree

23	The inability to follow the teacher while speaking.	43	40,2	47	48	14	12,6	-	-	20,80	Agree
24	The inability to understand the teacher's directions.	32	30,8	59	55,8	14	16,5	-	-	28,26	Agree
25	Learners' little knowledge of English vocabularies.	65	59,8	37	35,9	5	4,8	-	-	47,10	T Agree
26	The use of translation in writing words in Arabic.	50	48,1	41	39,4	14	11	-	-	21,48	T Agree
27	The learner's writing of the word pronunciation in Arabic.	7	67,3	25	24,0	8	7,7	1	1,0	112	T Agree
28	Weakness of listening skill by the learner.	35	33,7	60	38	9	7,9	1	1,0	84,9	Agree
29	The learner does not pause correctly.	35	33,7	56	35,8	11	10,9	2	1,9	68,60	Agree
30	Weak practice of speaking correctly.	44	42,3	44	40,6	16	15,4	2	1,8	48,55	Agree
31	The loss of practice at home.	84	80,8	16	15,4	4	3,9	-	-	108,32	T agree
32	Feeling shy to practice in front of her colleagues and afraid of committing mistakes while speaking.	51	49	44	41,2	11	9,8	-	-	28,30	T agree
33	Spending long time while silent speaking.	22	20,2	65	61,4	19	18,3	-	-	37,29	Agree
34	Weak understanding of speaking.	40	38,5	50	48,1	13	12,5	1	1	60,23	Agree
35	The effect of Arabic on learner's speaking in English.	31	29,8	50	48,1	22	21,2	1	1	47,77	Agree

Table (2) above shows that the rate (percentage) of speaking problems that are related to the learner was statistically significant for the items (1,4,6,7,8,9,14,16,17, 18,25, 26,27,30,31,32) for the benefit of response (T agree) and statistically significant for the items (2,3,5,10,11,12,13,15,19,20, 22,23,24,28,29,33,34,35) for the benefit of the highest frequency under the response (agree), and statistically significant for the item (21) for the benefit of response (often).

From the analysis above, we can see the speaking problems related to the learner have the following percentages:

(0.457) for the response (T agree), (0.514) for the response (agree), (0.028) for the response (often).

Concerning the percentages above, we can see that the highest percentage is (0.514) for the response (agree), and thus testing the second hypothesis is as follows:

There are significant statistical differences between the responses of the sample in identifying the speaking difficulties related to the learner. These differences may be statistically related to the fact that learners at this stage are considered to be the foundation stage for English skills instruction especially the speaking skill that needs good practice in order to arrive at satisfactory mastery level. Additionally, the large number of learners in one classroom makes them unable to comprehend well unless choral repetition happens during speaking as outlined in item (28) and spending a long time on speaking (items 33, 34). Most

problems that learners meet affect their inability to differentiate between the pronunciation of similar letters or the letter forms in English language. For instance, the learner replaces the pronunciation of the letter (d) by the letter (b) (items 2,5,20). Besides, learners in the first stage face difficulty in moving the eyes from left to right. So the learner directs his sight in reading from right to left as she has been used to in reading materials in her mother tongue. (items 21,23).

11. Conclusion

The current research has shed light on the main problems that negatively affect learners development of speaking skills in English. Analysis of the collected data has lighted a significant difference between the responses that are related to the teacher herself /himself, represented, in the main, by teachers' inability in identifying learners' needs for successful learning of the speaking skill. Also, lack of fluency and accuracy and the rarity of the teaching aids play a crucial role in facilitating learners' ability to speak fluently and enrich their vocabulary. Learners, on their part, prefer to have good pronunciation and that teachers allow them to participate in the activities, especially those related to speaking so as to express their ideas and to communicate as much as possible.

12. References

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Appendices

Questionnaire for the Teachers
University of Mosul, Baghdad, Duhok
Faculty of Basic Education

Dear Teacher,
I am preparing a study entitled:

Identifying the Problems Affecting Learning English Speaking Skills

I would be grateful if you could fill in the attached questionnaire concerning learners' problems in learning their oral skills. The questionnaire is addressed to basic school teachers (males/females) .

Instructional Note:

Dear Teacher: The following statements describe sources of learner problems in speaking. Use a tick to mark if you agree, disagree or have no opinion.

Section (1): Speaking Problems Related to the Teacher

<u>No.</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>Teacher Response</u>		
		<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither Agree nor Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
	Do you agree that the following statements describe situations that contribute to reading difficulties			
1	The teacher does not explain the significance of English Speaking to the students.			
2	The teacher speaks quickly (fast).			
3	The teacher speaks the English passage once only.			
4	There is no clear sentence speaking during typical speaking.			
5	The teacher uses only one method of TEFL (e.g audio-lingual method) in teaching speaking.			
6	The teacher does not choose the suitable teaching aid (e.g audio or audiovisual or there is no teaching aid in speaking instruction.			
7	The amount of time spent for speaking activity is limited.			
8	There is no chance for the learner (student) to practice speaking during the lesson.			
9	Speaking comprehension questions answered by learners are not corrected.			
10	There is no keen (accurate) attention to learners' (students') understanding concerning what they are speaking during the lesson.			
11	There is no care from the teacher to the low (weak) students in speaking from the beginning of the instruction.			
12	The teacher does not use different types of speaking during teaching.			
13	There is no combination (connection) between speaking and other linguistic skills during teaching speaking.			