

Investigate difficulties face EFL learners in speaking performance: A Case Study of EFL Teachers from Selected Sudanese Universities, Sudan, (2022)

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Abstract: This study investigates difficulties that face EFL learners in speaking performance and suggest some solutions to these difficulties. The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. A questionnaire was distributed for data collection from hundred and four (104) of EFL teachers who selected randomly from different Sudanese Universities. Then the collected data analyzed with the SPSS program. The result indicate that: many of EFL learners face difficulties in speaking performance , using traditional methods of teaching limits students oral interaction , lack of vocabulary harms EFL learners' oral interaction, socio-cultural factors influence learners' speaking skills. The study recommends the following: EFL learners should be enabled to overcome their speaking difficulties, teachers of English language should use modern teaching techniques in EFL classes, learners of English language should be enabled to enrich their vocabulary to practice oral interaction more effectively and EFL learners should be encouraged to practice dialogues and conversations for enhancing their speaking skills.

Keywords: speaking difficulties, solutions to these difficulties, teaching techniques.

1. INTRODUCTION

Practicing oral interaction is a difficult skill for some students that should be taught effectively in EFL classes and it is a skill that learners can perform better in groups. (Celce-Murica 2001). Speaking has an important role in communication. As it's a part of daily life, students should able to practice it in detailed language.

However , language reflects the culture of the speakers as it deals with social contexts and culture moreover in schools , teaches cannot teach everything about culture , but they create classroom interaction involving cultural awareness .

1.1 Problem of the study

Many of EFL learners face difficulties in speaking in front of others in class. Some of these difficulties are related to the learners themselves, the teaching strategies or the teaching environment. Some of the EFL learners lack of vocabulary knowledge, others are shy or lack of self confidence to interact orally.

1.2 Objective of the study

The study aimed at:

- 1- Investigating speaking problems that EFL learners in the classroom.
- 2- Finding teaching strategies for enhancing EFL students' speaking skills.

1.3 Question of the study

The study is intended to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the problems that face EFL learners in speaking performance?
- 2- What are the teaching techniques that enhance EFL learners' speaking skills?

1.3 Hypotheses of the study

The study has the following hypotheses:

- 1- There are 3 some problems that face EFL learners in speaking performance.
- 2- There are many techniques that help in enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study shows the causes of the speaking problems that face some learners in speaking performance. The study also shows some effective strategies of improving EFL learners' oral interaction. The study shows also the role of teachers in creating speaking situations for students to interact.

1.5 Methodology of the study

The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. A questionnaire was designed and used for language teachers for data collection. The collected data analyzed statistically through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences program (SPSS)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many of EFL learners face difficulties in oral communication. Some of them avoid speaking as a result of their worries of making mistakes; others suffer from their shyness to speak in front of the class. However lack of vocabulary is the major reason behind their weak oral participation (Zhang 2009). In addition, speaking practice by most of the learners has largely been neglected in the classroom, but its practiced more by teachers so teachers they have role in promoting students oral speaking.(Hosni ,2014) . However, developing speaking skill is the major goal of all English language teaching. However, it's very important for the learners to perform speaking effectively and accurately in communication (Davies and Pearse, 2000)

The conversation between students and the teacher should be based on classroom observation data (Wenli 2005). Some teachers have problems with students that do not participate in classroom and are always silent. As such, teachers in positions to provide students with opportunities to participate. For example: use pictures, role play. Some studies show that teachers should prepare suitable environment for students to facilitate learning process (Wenli , 2005). Learning can boost speaking fluency through partner taping. Partner taping encourages students to stay in English while taping improves greater fluency and achieves extra practice outside of class and develop students' responsibility for their learning.

Teacher should use a lot of English speaking activities to motivate learners to study and speak in English, and they should increase learning classes.(Oradee2012) .

Teachers can use a funny discussion and ask students to talk about their best moments that they ever had. Students' participation in discussion causes other students to actively take part in negotiation , therefore, students become surprised about their ability and intelligence (Celce-Murica2001).Some students have a lack of desire to speak because of their shyness and low self-confidence, but there is no appropriate solution about how teachers can overcome this problem (Chasrain, 1988). Evidence shows that these learners should start with short answers, and short sentences, but it may be time-consuming.

EFL learners should develop discourse competence through interactional relationships. The rules of cohesion and coherence should be applied in each discourse, whether formal or informal to hold the communication together in a meaningful way (Richards and Renandya2002.) in order to communicate well. Speakers required perceiving and process stretches to discourse and to formulate representations of meaning from referents in both previous sentences and following sentences. Thus, effective speakers need to gain a large repertoire of structures and discourse makers to express ideas, indicate relationships of time, and show cause, contrast and emphasis.

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study adopted the descriptive analytical method. The population is language teachers at Sudanese Universities. A questionnaire was distributed to hundred and four (104) of EFL teachers. This sample was randomly selected from the total number of teachers in Sudanese Universities for collecting the data about EFL students' speaking difficulties. Then the collected data was statistically analyzed by SPSS program. The statistical analyses of the questionnaire were shown in the following table.

4. DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION DATA

Statements (1) Many of EFL learners face difficulties in speaking performance.

Table (1) EFL learner's difficulties in speaking performance.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	20	19.0	19.0	19.0
Agree	57	54.3	54.3	73.3
Neutral	7	6.7	6.7	80.0
Disagree	21	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

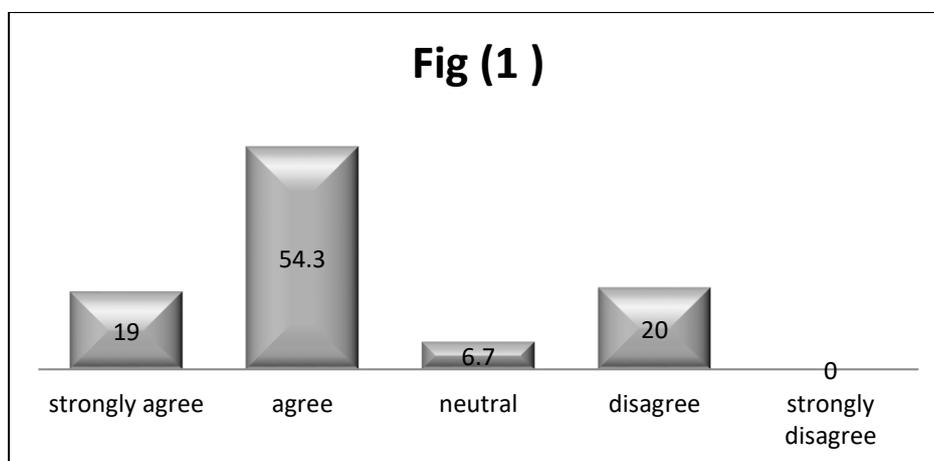


Table (1) shows that most respondents (73.3%) agree that EFL students find difficulties in speaking English, (6.7 %) are neutral and (20%) disagree with the statement. Thus, this statement is justified

Statement (2) Using traditional methods of teaching limit student's oral interaction.

Table (2) Traditional teaching limits student's oral interaction.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	34	32.4	32.4	32.4
agree	19	18.1	18.1	50.5
neutral	26	24.7	24.7	75.2
disagree	22	21.0	21.0	96.2
strongly disagree	4	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

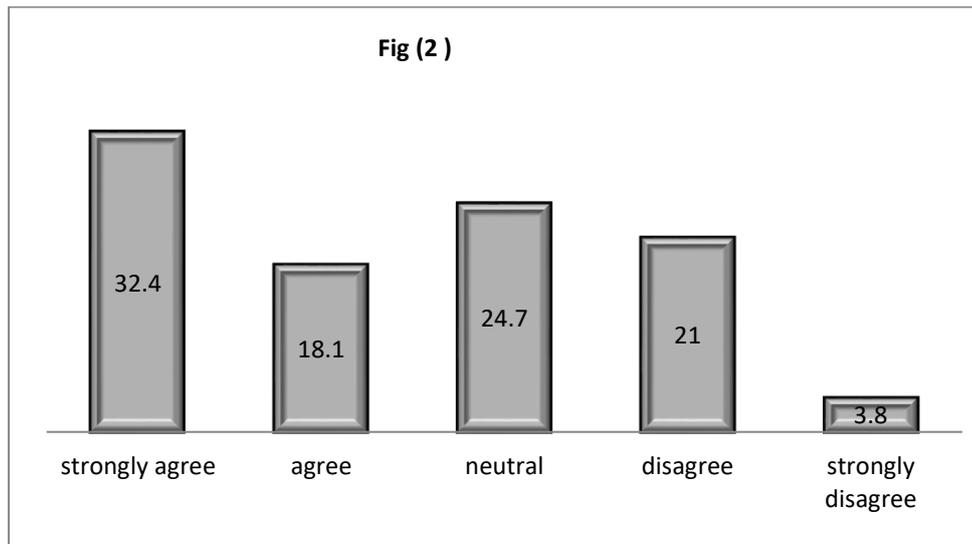


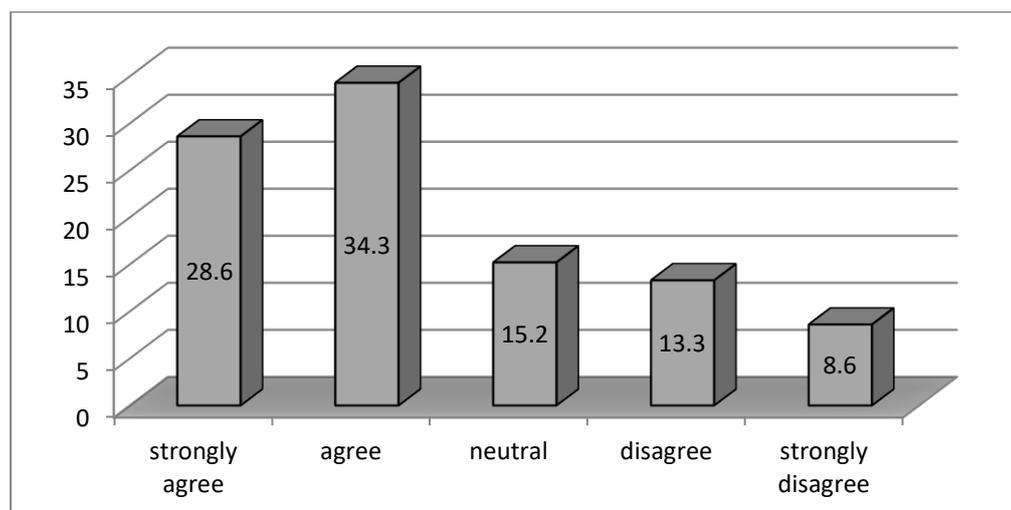
Table (2) reflects that, using traditional methods of teaching limits students oral interaction.(50.5%) of the sample agree with the statement, and (24.7%) are neutral. And (24.8%) disagree. Accordingly, the statement is proved.

Statement (3): Lack of vocabulary harms EFL learners' oral interaction..

Table (3) the impact of vocabulary on EFL learners' oral interaction

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	30	28.6	28.6	28.6
Agree	36	34.3	34.3	62.9
Neutral	16	15.2	15.2	78.1
Disagree	14	13.3	13.3	91.4
strongly disagree	9	8.6	8.6	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

Fig (3)



According to the statistical analysis of table (3), most respondents (62.9%) agree, (15.2%) are neutral and (21.9%) disagree that, lack of vocabulary harms EFL learners' oral interaction. Therefore this statement is justified.

Statement (4): Socio-cultural factors influence learners' oral interaction.

Table (4) the influence of socio-cultural factors on learners' oral interaction

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	37	35.2	35.2	35.2
agree	52	49.5	49.5	84.7
neutral	12	11.5	11.5	96.2
strongly disagree	4	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

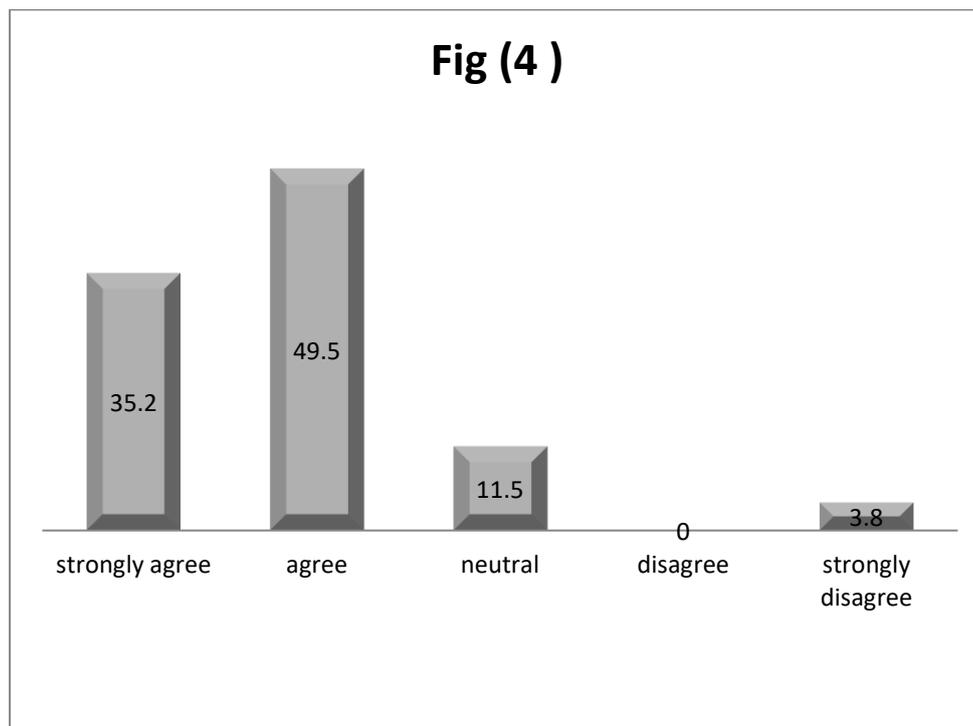
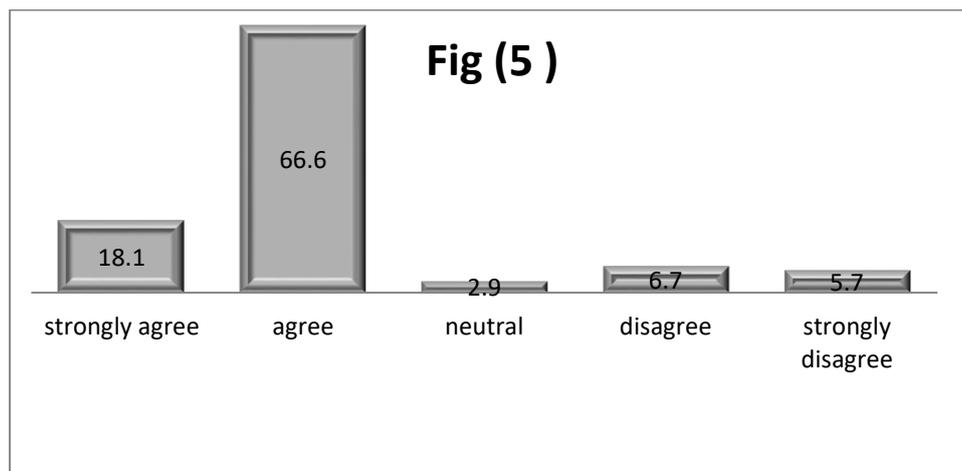


Table (4) shows that socio-cultural factors influence learners' oral interaction. . However, most respondents (84.7%) agree, (11.5%) are neutral while (3.8%) disagree with the statement. So, the statement is accepted.

Statement (5) Practicing dialogues and conversations enhance EFL learners' speaking skills.

Table (5) Enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills.

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	19	18.1	18.1	18.1
agree	70	66.6	66.6	84.8
neutral	3	2.9	2.9	87.6
disagree	7	6.7	6.7	94.3
strongly disagree	6	5.7	5.7	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	



According to the statistical analysis in table (5), most of the sample (84.7%) agrees that practicing dialogues and conversations enhance EFL learners' speaking skills. (2.9%) are neutral and (14.4%) disagree. This statement is accepted.

4.1 Discussion

The students' feel a lack of confidence because they feel their English is not good, and they keep silent. Some students lack of confidence because they do not have motivation to produce oral language. The analysis of the questionnaire shows that the majority of the respondents agree that lack of vocabulary and motivation are the major causes of students difficulties in speaking. However, the problem faced by EFL learners is that they may understand what other students talk about, but they have less confidence when speaking in English. In this case, speaking is not merely about the way how people communicate but also how they try to share the information. Moreover, students may also need opportunities to speak even as weak speakers, as such, their weakness may also due to lack of time to speak and interact with others. Thus, many strategies may help students to speak, like the practicing conversations, questioning strategy, turn taking activities, negotiating of meanings or collaborative activities.

5. CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

The data collection was analyzed in relation to the study hypothesis. The data was collected by questionnaire which had given to teachers for English to check their point of view in this issue.

Also analyzing the collected data from the questionnaire had been given to teachers of English exclusively drawn from some Sudanese Universities concerning those who belonging to College of Education, College of Language and College of Arts. A sample of 104 teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire.

The research has used the questionnaire as a tool in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed questionnaire to explore difficulties faced by students in improving speaking performance. The marks obtained from the questionnaire for all participants were analyzed and compared statistically by using frequencies and percentages. The analysis showed many findings which justifies the hypotheses of the study.

5.1 Findings

After the data analyses, the study came out with the following findings:

1. Many of EFL learners face difficulties in speaking performance
2. Using traditional methods of teaching limits student's oral interaction.
3. Lack of vocabulary harms EFL learners' oral interaction.
4. Socio-cultural factors influence learners' oral interaction.
5. Practicing dialogues and conversations enhance EFL learners' speaking skills

5.2 Recommendations

The study states the following recommendations:

1. EFL learners should be enabled to overcome their speaking difficulties
2. Teachers of English language should use modern teaching techniques in EFL classes.
3. Learners of English language should be enabled to enrich their vocabulary to practice oral interaction more effectively.
4. EFL learners should be encouraged to practice dialogues and conversations for enhancing their speaking skills.

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