

T. C.
GAZİANTEP UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM

**A DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH ON SPEAKING
PROBLEMS FACED BY TURKISH EFL LEARNERS:
A CASE STUDY IN A HIGH SCHOOL**

MASTER'S OF ART THESIS

NIDAL ABDURRAHMAN

GAZİANTEP
JUNE, 2020

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GAZIANTEP
JUNE, 2020

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I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master's of Art.

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This is to certify that I(we)has(have) read this thesis and that in my (our) opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master's of Art.

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It is approved that this thesis has been written in compliance with the formatting rules laid down by the Graduate School Educational Sciences.

(Title, Name and Signature)

Director

RESEARCH ETHICS DECLARATION

The information contained here is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the university's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with these guidelines, the university's policy on conflict of interest and any other condition laid down by the Gaziantep University Research Ethics Committee or its Sub-Committees. I have attempted to identify all the risks related to this research that may arise in conducting this research, and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I have declared any affiliation or financial interest in this research or its outcomes or any other circumstances which might present a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest, in accordance with Gaziantep University policy on Conflicts of Interest.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, who raised me with their endless love, genuine compassion,
and patience by helping me become who I am now.

To my future wife, who will enlighten the rest of my life.



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ÖZET

İNGİLİZCEYİ YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİN KARŞILAŞTIĞI KONUŞMA PROBLEMLERİ ÜZERİNE TANIMLAYICI BİR ÇALIŞMA: BİR LİSEDE DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

ABDURRAHMAN, Nidal

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı

İngiliz Dili ve Eğitimi Bilim Dalı

Tez Danışmanı: Doç. Dr. Fadime YALÇIN ARSLAN

Haziran - 2020, 138 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı, İngiliz dilini yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerindeki zorlukları tespit etmektir. Bu zorlukların nedenleri de bu çalışmanın kapsamındadır ve bu zorluklar hem öğretmenlerin hem de öğrencilerin bakış açılarından değerlendirilmiştir. Diyarbakır'daki bir lisede gerçekleştirilen çalışmanın katılımcılarını; aynı okulun 9. ve 10. sınıflarında bulunan 135 öğrenci ve aynı şehirdeki çeşitli devlet liselerinde çalışmakta olan 30 İngilizce öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmada nicel bir yaklaşım benimsenmiş ve veri toplamak için 5'li Likert tipinde bir anket kullanılmış; veriler bir istatistik yazılımı olan SPSS 21 ile analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular; bazı sosyal faktörlerin, genel eğitim sisteminin, müfredatın, sınıflardaki fiziksel şartların eksikliğinin, dil bilimsel faktörlerin ve öğretmenlerle ilgili bazı sorunların 9. ve 10. sınıf öğrencilerinin konuşma becerilerini olumsuz yönde etkileyen en yaygın nedenler olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmenler psikolojik faktörlerin de öğrencilerin konuşma arzularını etkilediğini belirtmişlerdir. Toplam puanlara göre yapılan t-testi hesaplamaları, öğrencilerin notları ve cinsiyetleri açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı sonuçlar ortaya çıkarmamıştır. Öte yandan, öğrenciler ve öğretmenler arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılıklar ortaya çıkmıştır. Her kategori için yapılan t-testi sonuçlarına göre, erkek ve kız öğrenciler arasında sosyal faktörler açısından anlamlı farklar gözlenirken, bu konuda öğretmenler ve öğrenciler arasında anlamlı bir farka rastlanmamıştır. Ayrıca, konuşma becerileri ile ilgili bazı algılamalar açısından öğrencilerin likert puanları arasında önemli farklılıklar gözlenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngilizce konuşma sorunları, Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce, cinsiyet, EFL öğretmenleri.

ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH ON SPEAKING PROBLEMS FACED BY TURKISH EFL LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY IN A HIGH SCHOOL

ABDURRAHMAN, Nidal

MA Thesis

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This study was carried out to investigate the difficulties in speaking skills experienced by Turkish EFL learners. The reasons for these difficulties are also in the scope of the current study. The problems were considered from both teachers' and learners' perspectives. The study was conducted at a high school in Diyarbakır, Turkey. The participants were 135 Turkish EFL students from 9th and 10th grades of the same school and 30 English teachers from various public high schools in the city. A quantitative approach was taken, and a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire was used to collect data, and the data were analyzed through SPSS ver. 21. The findings showed that some social factors, the curricula of the education system, lack of classroom facilities, linguistic factors, and some teacher-related problems were the most common reasons that affect the 9th and 10th graders' speaking skills adversely. Moreover, teachers noted that psychological factors also negatively affect students' desire to speak. Based on the total scores, t-test calculations yielded statistically insignificant results for students in terms of their grade and gender. On the other hand, there were statistically significant differences between students and their teachers. Based on the t-test results for each category, significant differences were observed between male and female students concerning social factors, while no significant differences were noticed between teachers and students in this matter. Besides, significant differences were observed between the grades in terms of some perceptions concerning speaking skills.

Key words: English speaking problems, English as a foreign language, gender, EFL teachers

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ESL: English as a Second Language

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

GTM: Grammar Teaching Method

L2: Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

MNE: Ministry of National Education

THEC: Turkish Higher Education Council

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

MOOC: Massive Open Online Courses

ELT: English Language Teaching

TPR: Total Physical Response

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1.Presentation

This chapter presents the background of the research, and it continues with the statement of the problem. Then the purposes of the study and research questions are explained. Moreover, significance, assumptions, and limitations of the study will be reported concisely. Lastly, definitions of the terms related to this research will be illustrated.

1.2. Background of the Study

English, undoubtedly, has become an essential vehicle for communication worldwide. It is used as a foreign or a second language in several non-native English-speaking nations. It functions as a lingua franca among countries (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2013). The English language seems to be like a significant window through which we can get the whole view of the world since it is commonly used in many countries as a first, foreign or second language. According to Imam (2005), English is regarded as a global language; therefore, both the east and the west have become evenly busy interacting through this language. One of the most critical elements of this language that contributes to effective communication between individuals is the speaking skill. Alonso (2012) supported this idea by mentioning that speaking is generally considered the most significant skill among the other skills. Ton and Pham (2010) identified that English is regarded as an international language, and it is used as a means for communication among individuals from different language backgrounds in all parts of the world. For this reason, a foreign language learner

needs to master the oral aspect of the target language since most of the communication abilities depend on speaking skills. Shumin (1997) reported that speaking ability is considered as a dilemma for EFL students since they do not only need to acquire grammar and lexical knowledge but also socially appropriate language knowledge. Furthermore, speaking skill is regarded as a vital component and has a distinctive role in the language learning process. Nunan (1995) proved this idea by stating that learning the speaking skills is regarded as the most important aspect of learning a foreign or a second language, and success is measured based on the ability to perform a conversation in the target language.

In the education system of Turkey, English has become a significant subject in the national curriculum, and it has been taught in various levels of education from elementary schools to higher education level. Nevertheless, the general proficiency level of high school students, especially in public schools, does not go beyond the acquisition of some grammatical structures and inadequate vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, most Turkish students are incapable of communicating through English, because they face problems impeding their progress in learning and acquiring English speaking skills. In Turkey, although the Ministry of National Education (MONE) radically changed the traditional curriculum which was teacher-centered and mainly based on grammar-translation method (GTM) and replaced it by the new curriculum which is based on communicative methodology and promotes student-centered approach, the speaking skill is still neglected, and the priority is given to other skills rather than the speaking skill. Haznedar (2010) indicated that English teachers continue using traditional ways like grammar-translation and rote learning, even though they are familiar with the new approaches to language teaching. Therefore, Turkish students are not sufficiently competent speaking English despite taking English lessons in primary and secondary schools (Paker, 2006).

Therefore, in order to investigate speaking problems and difficulties that are experienced by Turkish students in English speaking classes might be extremely important to analyze. Moreover, it might be useful to comprehend the opinions and perceptions of foreign language learners and their English teachers about the main reasons that cause these problems.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Many EFL students face difficulties impeding them to express and introduce themselves in spoken English. Thereby, the fundamental goal of English language teaching process is to provide students with the ability to use English language skills effectively and adequately in communication (Davies & Pearse, 2000). However, it can be deduced that EFL learners are unable to communicate accurately and fluently in English because of their inadequate knowledge of primary language skills. Al-Lawati (1995) argued that oral production of the learners did not develop yet at an adequate level in the basic abilities of the language.

In Turkey, even though English language has become a significant subject in state schools and English lessons have been made compulsory at an early age, learners still face problems and difficulties in speaking English confidently and accurately. Cetinkaya (2005) argued that even learners who had been studying English in the education system since early primary school were not highly competent in the skills of the target language. Al Hosni (2014), in her turn, noted that EFL students might encounter numerous obstacles that inhibit their development processes of speaking skills regardless of their linguistic knowledge. These obstacles are related to linguistic, non-linguistic, and psychological factors. Wang (2014) also noted that psychological, linguistic, and cognitive factors might influence EFL learners' speaking proficiency.

Linguistic problems might hinder non-native English speakers from communicating smoothly through English, such as lack of grammar knowledge, inadequate vocabulary, and poor pronunciation. Richards (2008) demonstrated that lack of vocabulary needed to initiate a dialogue, poor grammar as well as poor pronunciation are some typical speaking problems encountered by EFL learners. The majority of English learners are usually unable to build correct English sentences grammatically, and they do not have sufficient words to formulate sentences when they are required to express their thoughts and feelings. Moreover, they usually mispronounce English words and phrases. Burnkart (1998) revealed that learners of language need to master three elements of knowledge involved in speaking skills (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) that underline the use of appropriate words in the correct order with the right pronunciation.

Non-linguistics factors may also have a crucial effect on English language learning procedures, especially on speaking skills. Rababa'h (2005) stated that EFL learners face numerous factors that may generate difficulties in speaking the English language, such as the teaching strategies and methods, the environment, the applied curriculum, and other problems related to the learners themselves.

This study also aims to disclose the psychological problems that Turkish learners of English language might face and could demotivate them to acquire speaking skills, impede them from speaking fluent English, and may decrease their desire to communicate through English inside or even outside the classroom. Xinghua (2007) revealed that psychological impediments are often intervene in your feelings and physical condition, your relationships, work productivity, or lifestyle alteration, such as nervousness, lack of self-esteem, and being afraid to say anything. These hindrances may thwart students to enhance their performance in spoken English. Lawtie (2004) also stated that an individual's feelings and emotions might cause speech difficulties, that is oral communication is commonly better and more precise when speakers have self-esteem and feel completely relaxed at the time of interacting with other people.

As for speaking difficulties experienced by Turkish students, to the best of our knowledge, previous studies did not investigate and provide detailed data on high school students in Turkey. Thus, this research aims to draw attention to this education level and raise the learners' and English teachers' awareness about the importance of English language. Thus, they might overcome these problems soon.

1.4. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

It has been well known that Turkish students mostly face difficulties while studying and learning the English language, particularly speaking skills, which might prevent them from communicating orally with other individuals. Therefore, the general purpose of this study is to analyze and investigate the speaking problems and difficulties that are experienced by Turkish learners in speaking classes and the reasons behind these problems from the perspective of students and English language teachers. The specific purpose of the current research is to identify the students' views on the factors that influence their confidence in English classrooms

and to analyze the most influential factors that could affect their desire to communicate in English and how these factors thwart students' English performance and proficiency. Moreover, this research deems it necessary to figure out if there are any statistically significant differences, firstly, between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of speaking problems. Besides, it tries to explain whether a significant difference exists between male and female students related to speaking challenges from their perspective. Lastly, another aim is to find out whether there are any differences between students' and English teachers' perspectives concerning speaking difficulties. For the present research and considering what has been mentioned above, the following research questions have been formulated:

RQ.1. What are the most common speaking skill difficulties experienced by Turkish 9th and 10th graders from their perspective?

- a. Is there a significant difference between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of English speaking problems?
- b. Is there a significant difference between male and female students' perceptions of English speaking problems?

RQ.2. What are the most common speaking skill difficulties encountered by Turkish EFL learners from English teachers' perceptions?

- a. Is there a significant difference between high school students' and English teachers' perceptions of English speaking problems?

RQ.3. What are the most common speaking skill difficulties experienced by EFL learners according to the total means of each subcategory in terms of their grade and gender?

RQ.4. What are the speaking problems that EFL learners in Turkish high schools experience resulting from affective, social, teacher, education system, and facility as well as linguistic factors from their points of view?

- a. Are there any statistically significant differences between students' perceptions of English speaking problems caused by affective, social, teacher, education system, and facility as well as linguistic factors in terms of their grade and gender?

- b. Are there any statistically significant differences between students' perceptions as assessed for each item of the questionnaire regarding their grade and gender?

RQ.5. What are the most frequent speaking problems experienced by EFL teachers according to the total means of each category?

RQ.6. What are the speaking problems faced by EFL learners in Turkish high schools concerning affective, social, teacher, educational system, and facility as well as linguistic problems from English teachers' points of view?

- a. Are there any significant differences between EFL teachers' and students' perceptions of speaking problems arising from affective, social, teacher, educational system, and facility as well as linguistic problems?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Speaking is a productive skill and considered one of the basic skills in English language that helps EFL learners to communicate with foreigners effectively and convey their messages confidently. Speaking English has become a serious and permanent problem in Turkey. Tilfarlioğlu and Öztürk (2007) demonstrated that although the majority of Turkish people know that speaking English is important today, teaching and learning this language is still problematic in Turkey. Most Turkish students have difficulties in communicating with native speakers because of their poor English language proficiency and accuracy. Karahan (2007) deals with English teaching in Turkey and explains "Many Turkish students start learning English at secondary schools; some others since elementary schools or even nursery schools, yet the dilemma is that most are far from attaining the desired level of proficiency either in comprehensive or productive skills or in both" (p. 74). Thus, this study has great importance for Turkish students who mostly have problems in English verbal interaction. Moreover, this research brings to light the essential reasons that drastically contributed to the speaking problems and raises English teachers' awareness to eliminate and minimize the problems that they encounter while teaching speaking; and thus they can gradually overcome these problems.

Overall, the results of this research will be of great benefit for both English teachers and EFL learners. If these problems are related to teachers, they might

attend seminars and teacher training programs to improve their teaching methods and skills. Otherwise, if these problems are related to learners, then English teachers should play a vital role in helping them to find solutions to overcome these problems to be more proficient and competent students in speaking English. This study might also raise students' awareness about the importance of speaking English, and it might be helpful for teacher trainers, administrators, and curriculum designers.

1.6. Assumptions

There are three important assumptions in the current study. Firstly, it is assumed that most of the learners are conscious of speaking problems as well as they can identify and verbalize the reasons that inhibit them from speaking English in English language classes. Secondly, it is assumed that learners are well aware of their needs to learn English language. Thirdly, learners are willing to participate in this survey to show the reasons that may generate these problems.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The present research encountered several limitations. In order to conduct the questionnaire at Diyarbakır Sur Alparslan Anadolu Lisesi, it took months to receive an approval letter which had been sent from the Institute of Education Sciences to the Provincial Directorate of National Education in Diyarbakır.

Due to the delay of the consent, the questionnaire was distributed in the 2nd week of June (the time of school examinations). Therefore, the students, who took a part in the survey, were depressed and that may affect the students' answers in the 5-point Likert scale.

As the participants of the study were selected from the 9th and 10th grades, the findings of this research may not be generalized for other schools and other educational settings.

Moreover, as for the 30 high school EFL teachers, who participated voluntarily in the instrument of this research, the findings may not be generalizable to the other EFL teachers working in different educational levels in state schools.

1.8. Definitions of the Terms

To make it easier for the readers to understand the difficult jargons, all the acronyms, related terminology, the idioms, and the abbreviations that have been used in this thesis will be clarified here:

Communication: Communication is defined “the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information” (Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary).

Linguistics: Linguistics is defined “the scientific study of the structure and development of language in general or particular languages” (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus). Linguistics is the science of language(s) (Dostert, 2009, p.4).

Anxiety: Cope (1986) argued that anxiety is “a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.” (p. 15).

Inhibition: Is a sense of embarrassment that may prevent individuals from performing or saying what they want to convey (Cambridge A. L. Dictionary, 2008).

Shyness: Is the feeling of apprehension, lack of comfort, or awkwardness especially when a person is around other people.

Self-confidence: The concept of self-confidence is commonly related to self-assuredness in someone’s judgment, aptitude, power, and some other aspects, sometimes appearing exceedingly (Lopez, 2004).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Presentation

The essential aim of this chapter is to provide a clear and comprehensive literature review about speaking skills. Firstly, language conception and main skills are discussed and presented with their definitions. Then, teaching and learning English, followed by teaching speaking skills are introduced. Following these, the importance of speaking skills, the development of speaking, the role of speaking skills in EFL classes as well as the difficulty of speaking abilities are illustrated respectively. Detailed information about the factors that cause speaking problems is also presented. Finally, an overview of English language teaching in Turkey is provided to comprehend and perceive the English language teaching strategies and methods in this country.

2.2. Language Conception and Main Skills

Language is one of the attributions that distinguishes human beings from other creatures and connects individuals across all continents of the world. Linguists, philosophers, and psychologists commonly point out that “it is language possession which distinguishes humans most clearly from other animals” (Lyons, 1981, p. 2). Hall (1986) states "language is the institution which enables humans to interact and communicate with each other employing "oral-auditory and arbitrary" symbols and signs" (p. 158). Language is the singular vehicle to transmit the desired and intended messages to the receivers. It is undoubtedly a social communication tool through which they convey their thoughts and express their emotions, feelings,

and desires. Lyytinen (1985) stated that we commonly utilize language to give explicit expressions about our behaviors and emotions and for setting up coordination and monitoring our relationships with other people. Edward Sapir discerns language as a vehicle that is human and unnatural. Furthermore, he reveals "language is used for exchanging of "emotions," "desires" and "concepts" over spontaneously generated symbols and signs" (Lyons, 1981, p. 3). In a broader sense, language is a type of communication system that can be perceived in a diversity of circumstances (Yule, 2010). Bloch and Trager (1942, p. 5) identify language as "a mechanism based on arbitrary vocal symbols and has utilized in social communication." Sweet (1899, p. 31) also stated, "language is a figure of speech that expresses the ideas through speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination responding to that of ideas into thoughts". All the definitions above tell us that language is a vital instrument and a system of signs that we use to communicate with each other.

Briefly, language skills are considered the best adornment of human civilization, and therefore teaching and learning the target language has gained considerable importance. Since English has dominated other languages, it has become extremely vital to have a look at the process of teaching and learning of this language.

2.3. English Language Teaching and Learning

English language teaching and learning is one of the abundant subjects which have been studied for a long time, and still, researchers keep questioning this subject. There are a lot of methods and factors affecting the process of English language teaching and learning, so it is prominent to cover and review these methods and factors.

At first, it is necessary to start by a historical review of the methods of language learning through presenting theoretical backgrounds of these methods, in addition to some characteristics and issues which make them different from others. *The Grammar Translation Method (GTM)*, at first aimed to teach the old language, namely, Latin and Greek. Furthermore, it is mostly synonymous with *the classical Method* and its primary emphasis is on reading, translation, and memorizing new

words, but it neglects the interactive and communicative aspect of language. The classical method was trusted in for a long time until Gouin. Gouin's experience depended on the classical methods aimed to learn the German language. He memorized many grammar books and thousands of vocabulary items, but when he tried to express his ability to communicate, he failed, and could not even understand a single word, so he discovered that everything he had done was nonsense. Whereas he failed in the productive and receptive skills of language with all the efforts he did, he found his three-year-old nephew could speak German without the need for all the materials Gouin counted on (Brown and Lee, 2015, p. 19-20).

Although this experience had failed, it paved the way to another one, *the Direct Method*, which benefited from the weaknesses of the traditional way as it gave great importance to the use of the target language. Chomsky (1975) stated that in direct method, oral communications, pronunciation and grammar are centered and paid attention. In the direct method, there was a place for listening and speaking contrary to the classical method that focused on reading skills and translation. Nevertheless, the direct method failed to be adopted by public institutions, and it remained at the private sector level, and this is what helped the *Audio Lingual Method* to emerge. This method had psychological and linguistics constraints because the supporters of this method believed in the habit formation from a behavioral psychology perspective. Skinner believed that all behaviors (including language) are learned through repetition and reinforcement (Skinner, 2014).

Suggestopedia is another method, and it was created by a Bulgarian scientist Lezonov, who believes in the ability of the human mind and the importance of avoiding the psychological barriers and other impediments to prepare the best circumstances for students. In Suggestopedia lessons it is essential to establish an environment full of colors, using music and fine arts to raise the students' capacities to learn the target language. A commission from UNESCO evaluated Suggestopedia as a supreme teaching method and they recommended the educational academies to adopt it at the international level (Lozanov 1979; Osman, 2017). *The Silent Way* is also one of the methods of language teaching. Instead of forming habits, it focuses on language learners' cognition and skills. Gattegno (1972) noted that the silent way concentrates on the learners' autonomy in learning and considers it as a tool for teaching a language. *The Total Physical Response* (TPR) is a method through which

we can benefit from children's acquisition of language. As babies first begin their learning process by exposure to language and depend on the receptive aspect of language, explicit listening and watching the actions of the speakers, then he will start speaking. The Total Physical Response approach is inspired from the way the infants learn their mother language (Asher, 1969).

2.3.1. Factors Influencing English Teaching and Learning

The role of the teacher in English language teaching is one of the factors that influence the process of teaching and learning English. In their study, Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) pursued to determine the characteristics, which make the English language teacher effective. By investigating the students' opinions and teachers' perceptions, the researchers figured out that there are some attributes bounded to the personality of the teacher, particularly creativity, tolerance, and cleverness. Some other qualities relate to the teacher's role in and even outside the classroom such as on-going support to their students, ever-changing of their methods, and having enough knowledge of culture and the native language of the learners. Another study was carried out by Akbari and Allvar (2010) to identify the relationship between the positive qualities of teachers and student success. This study relied on thirty Iranian teachers by exploring the students' final exam as an indicator of their success or failure in the end. The researchers concluded that three important qualities of teachers affect the success of students. The first of these qualities is reflection, which is the ceasing of teachers from time to time to think and consider their profession for the sake of correcting some of the actions and practices they have executed. According to the researchers, reflection helps teachers to convert the problems they have faced with experiences to benefit from them in the future. The second property is a sense of efficacy that means *a strong commitment to teaching*. Its advantage is represented by giving more time to decide the best plans or strategies or to any procedures teachers have in minds. The third one is the intellectual excitement, or as it is described by the researchers: 'the clarity of what is being presented and how it is being presented'. In this case, the teachers are fond of their teaching process, and they feel much interested when delivering the lesson, so it is sure the result will be positive.

In their professional life, teachers are supposed to undergo preparation programs, whether pre-service or in-service. These programs are mainly designed to equip teachers by reservoirs of skills, competences, and knowledge. Peacock (2009), depending on the teacher's perceptions and opinions, listed many things that make these programs very useful and provide a lot of theoretical supplies such as knowledge about teaching theories and, at the same time, connect it to practice. Other suggestions to enhance the programs were to spend more time on other aspects related to the teacher's proficiency and using technology. Al-Wreikat and Bin Abdullah (2010) confirmed the significance of in-service programs as a tool to enrich the teachers' learning of the professional knowledge and teaching skills to be able to support their students.

Another important factor affecting the qualities of English teaching and learning are the techniques. To define the techniques, Brown (1994) stated "it is synonym to different other terms like a task, strategy, activity procedure, behavior and exercise" (p. 219). Atas (2015) perceived the essential role of using different techniques in teaching, in particular, the importance of using drama as a way of teaching speaking skill and pronunciation aspect since it helps the students to pass different dilemmas in the class, such as scare, embarrassment, and anxiety; in addition to the benefit of making the atmosphere more convenient for the process of learning. Al-Wreikat and Bin Abdullah (2010) also detected that there was a shortage in the concern of the in-service training program as there were little time and effort given to teachers for training using the techniques in the classroom which negatively affect their performance and ability to deal with students.

Integrating technology into learning and teaching a language is another important factor that must be given attention while we are representing this review. The spread of technology everywhere and the desire to benefit from this tool has become the subject of most articles and books that are concerned with teaching and learning English effectively. Brown and Lee (2015) mentioned many benefits students could get from technology. The first one is the opportunities for interaction. As the researchers indicated, there are many digital applications used for learning English like Face book and Twitter. All these applications provide a convenient environment for language learners to meet native speakers and initiate dialogues using the target language. It also provides additional assistance outside the

classroom. The second one is access to authentic linguistic data through the Internet, which is full of useful resources for both teachers and students. Therefore, English teachers will be able to plan their lessons and benefit from the available materials. On the other hand, there are a lot of books, dictionaries, online communities, etc., from which students can benefit. The third benefit is opportunities for cross-cultural learning, where the Internet represents a store of resources through which they could know each other (p. 240-245).

Yunus (2018) in his article reflected the changes that technology brings to the classrooms about teaching and learning English and the benefits teachers and students could receive from these digital platforms through which they can improve their English language experiences and abilities, for example, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram, in addition to reading online daily news and watching videos on YouTube. Therefore, technology makes it easier for language learners to meet people online and practice English since they lack chances to do these in traditional classrooms. Besides, technology provides English teachers with appropriate materials that help them to develop teaching methods and easily apply these methods in the foreign language classrooms. Consequently, the change in English language teaching and learning methods has been facilitated by the huge development in the technology, and the role of the teacher is to employ these tools for the benefit of English language learners by leaving some of the old methods of teaching and adopting the technology.

Mobile Learning Environment is one of the innovations that is used to help students in learning different parts or sectors of the language like vocabulary. Ağca and Özdemir (2013) investigated the efficiency of using this environment in absorbing new English vocabulary for students at Gazi University in Turkey. The results showed how this innovative way helped students to make improvements more than the traditional way of learning since it represents an exciting and motivating environment for the learning process.

Combining ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and FLIPPED classes with MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) was a new model of teaching used in China as a reaction to the inability of the traditional ways to make any progress about teaching process. Liu (2016) discussed and analyzed this new model. He indicated that it differs from the traditional ways by providing materials inside and even

outside the classrooms, and it is learner-centered rather than teacher-centered, and it also depends on learning English online. The results of his investigation showed improvements in students' scores and strategies of learning because they became more independent since this model involves students in the learning process.

Briefly, responding to the teacher-centered learning approach of the previous methods, Community Language Learning appeared to move focus to student-centered education and make the teacher a counselor, besides, to offer chances for students to discover and learn the language without teacher interference. Curran (1972) demonstrated that teacher should make a close relationship with their students so that can facilitate the learning process and reduce the students' anxiety. Moreover, the primary role of language learning is to be able to communicate through language effectively, and for this reason, teaching speaking skills is of great significance in the process of learning a foreign language.

2.4. Teaching Speaking Skills

Teaching speaking is considered one of the most important and challenging skills in English language teaching and learning process. Speaking, as Brown defined, is “the ability to accomplish pragmatic goals through interactive discourse with other speakers of the language” (Brown, 2001, p. 267). He also referred to the complex nature of this skill because when EFL learners want to improve their speaking abilities, they need to pay attention to the progress they do to other aspects, such as pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. Alonso focused on the difference between the speaking skill and the other skills of language and proved that it is the interactive nature of the speaking skill, which makes it unique (Alonso, 2014). Malihah (2010) deemed speaking as the hardest skill concerning some supportive characteristics to be developed, such as self-confidence and motivation, also, to overcome some other negative qualities like shyness and fear to teach and improve the oral abilities of the learners.

Many studies have been carried out in the field of ELT to discover the problems that hamper students in governing speaking skills successfully. In his investigation to figure out the problems faced by EFL students in the English department at Syiah Kuala University, Heriansyah (2012) detected many obstacles

that students experience while trying to express themselves using English. The first problem, as he described, was related to *linguistics*, such as inadequate vocabulary, grammatical deficiency, and problems linked to pronunciation. Whereas, the other type of problem was related to *psychological* factors, such as lack of self-esteem, fear of their classmates' scoffing, inappropriate environment to practice English language, and other problems related to students' personality. The same efforts were made by Al-Sobh and Preece (2008), who found that there were some problems hindering the endeavoring of the teachers from improving their students' speaking skills. These obstacles were not inefficiently addressed in English curricula, which neglected listening and speaking assessments, the student's apathy towards speaking skills, and the lack of some facilities in the English classrooms. On the other hand, there were some problems that students encounter themselves, and they resemble the ones Heriansyah have mentioned recently; for example, the weakness of students' grammar and pronunciation which in turn causes nervousness and other problems concerning their peers' points of view about their speaking proficiency. These facts were assured by Al-Roud (2016), who mentioned four domains that create speech difficulties, as social, psychological, and instructor domains, and the linguistic domain.

To reach and achieve successful teaching of speaking skill, some experts suggested appropriate solutions to overcome these problems and obstacles which thwart the process of teaching speaking skills. Al-Sobh and Preece (2008) suggested many solutions to these problems. The first one is shouldered on the government, such as preparing English classes qualified and supplied with the equipment and facilities needed for teaching speaking abilities like libraries and laboratories. The second solution is the one attached to improve the abilities and characteristics of the English teachers by training them well to be highly qualified to teach oral skills dynamically and effectively. The other solutions are the ones relating to improving and reforming students' psychological and linguistic debilities mentioned before and developing their fluency by following different activities. Heriansyah (2012) also suggested that EFL teachers should dissociate the sources of the problems caused by these difficulties, for example, when students feel unconfident, teachers have to prepare a good and safe atmosphere far from criticism and mocking to indulge the

learners in speaking. Concerning linguistic problems, he proposed that students must improve their pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary knowledge.

Some other attempts to teach and improve the speaking skill were made by investigating the efficiency of using some techniques and activities. Krebt (2017) found that the role-play technique is one of the most useful techniques utilized to improve English speaking skill proficiency compared to the traditional ways and it can be used for both, weak and high-level students. He also proposed that the desires and experiences of the students must be taken into account while preparing these activities by the English teachers.

Oral diary is another technique used by Bani Abdelrahman (2013), and this concept, as the researcher defined it, “is a tool by which students record their daily lives and events using recording devices” (pp. 79-87). By allowing students to depend on this technique as an additional activity outside the classroom, the results showed that it helped EFL learners to break the barriers of fear and encouraged them to participate more in the classroom because their self-confidence got higher, and they felt more comfortable than before. Moreover, Bani Abdelrahman (2013) recommended English teachers to assort in the techniques they use and benefit from the available technology as a way to enhance the speaking skill. As opposed to the traditional ways that depend on using drills and non-effectual materials, some researchers test using newspaper articles to teach speaking. These materials represent real situations and events that are derived from culture. The study proved that using newspapers articles improve the students' pronunciation and enrich their supplies of expressions rather than focusing on grammar; besides, these articles are beneficial for English teachers too since they present direct access to the required materials as well as saving time and money by using up-to-date materials (Akdemir, Barin, & Demiroz, 2012). Besides, using different activities in the class, such as dramatization discussions and other communicative activities, seems to be good. Gudu (2015) assured that there are other required procedures to reach the desired results from these activities. These outreach procedures represented by increasing the motivation of students to speak English everywhere not just inside the class and make the students and other English recipients apprehend the importance of speaking in the English language.

2.5. The Importance of Speaking Skill

Human beings are programmed to speak before they learn how to read and write. In any case, humans generally spend a little more time communicating verbally through a language instead of using it in its composed structure. Since individuals manage their lives through interaction between each other in their communities, speaking skill is unavoidable. Without speech, a language is diminished to a mere script. Efrizal (2012) and Gilakjani (2016) demonstrated that verbal communication is of considerable significance for human relations when they speak every day and everywhere. Luoma (2004) pointed out that the capacity to interact in English with others is needed as an essential ability because of the global trend of internationalization. Whenever an international exchange occurs, it involves using spoken English. Rivers (1981) investigated the usage of the language outside of the class condition and comprehended that humans speak twice as much as they write and read in combination. In addition, oral communication is of great significance outside school. Hence, speakers of a language have more chances to get appropriate jobs in multiple companies and organizations. Baker and Westrup (2003) supported these statements, indicating that individuals who can speak English fluently may have further opportunities for finding good jobs, getting a better education, and obtaining a promotion. Speaking is a crucial skill since it is one of the abilities which is required to conduct a conversation; furthermore, it helps people to interact with each other using a language whereby they convey their messages through the words of mouth as well as they receive the intended information. Burns and Joyce (1997) stated that speaking is an interactional procedure of creating meanings that include producing, receiving, and processing information. Baker and Westrup (2006) also indicated that speaking English enables students to deliver their information or to get messages in any field of study. They further pointed out that good English speakers would be in a good position, which could enable them to contribute to the improvement of socio-political and socio-economic issues of their community. This situation demonstrates that by practicing English speaking, EFL learners could acquire valuable skills that can help to improve their daily communication through the use of functional language, and that, in turn, contribute to the creation of good opportunities for people who can use English smoothly and effectively.

Verbal interaction is a technique of producing and exchanging meanings utilizing vocal and gestural symbols in numerous circumstances (Chaney, 1998). Richards (2008) argued that when individuals meet, they swap greetings, take part in short conversations, narrate the latest experiences. since they want to be amiable and create a convenient zone of communication with other interlocutors. As previously mentioned, it can be deduced that speaking smoothly or being efficient in spoken language is considered as a core facet of an individual to remain associated with other people. Moreover, since language is a tool of communication, there is no reason for language learners not to connect through the language they have learned.

Most EFL learners evaluate their success in learning the target language, depending on how well they have learned and developed their verbal skills while communicating fluently with others through the use of the intended language. Nunan (1991) reported that effective speech is evaluated by a human's ability to implement a successful conversation within the intended language. Meanwhile, Ur (1996) reported that speaking, among the four language skills, is considered the most essential skill since someone who has learned a language is evaluated as the speaker of that language. According to Luoma (2004, p. 9), "the importance of the spoken performance of a language is becoming more prominent over the written performance capability. It is because the ability to speak a language reflects a person's personality, self-image, knowledge of the world, ability to reason, skill to express thoughts in real-time". Indisputably, speaking skill represents students' personalities and their previous experiences. Spoken language has become a fundamental aspect of learning ESL or EFL. Hence, language works as a procedure for articulation of meaning. Nunan (1995) supported this idea by stating that learning speaking skills is the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language. Khamkhien (2010) also believed that oral ability gains a significant aspect in second language acquisition. Hence, most people who learn English have in mind that they have to achieve the aim of improving speaking skills, although it is not an easy task.

Nowadays, speaking fluent English has become an urgent need for peoples all over the world. In Turkey, for instance, the English language is taught as one of the main subjects in the curriculum in state and private schools as well as universities. Therefore, it has become inevitable for Turkish students to speak

English skillfully and for English teachers to implement new methods and approaches to improve their students' speaking competence. Human beings speak much more than they write; it is a fact that cannot be denied. For this reason, speaking has grasped its importance in the language learning process. Teachers of English rely on their students' verbal replies of language to determine their proficiency level of the foreign language learned in the classroom (Edge, 1999). For this reason, the development of speaking skills has become extremely urgent to increase students' abilities to communicate effectively.

2.6. Development of Speaking Skill

Speaking is one of the four-macro language skills that are needed to be focused on and developed for EFL or ESL learners to verbalize efficiently in different conditions. Many experts presume that to be able to interact verbally is equivalent to be knowledgeable of the particular language, given that speaking skill is the dominant medium of communication for human beings (Lazarton, 2001). Humans should improve particular skills in the learning process to be proficient in all activities. As Ellis (1994) states, learning a language needs transforming knowledge into performance, like all skill learning processes. Moreover, Bygate (1987) points out the correspondence between learning how to drive a car and learning how to speak a foreign language. A learner, in the previous one, realizes all the rules and uses the car, but he cannot be a skilled driver until he uses it in traffic.

When learning FL or L2, learners first start acquiring linguistic items, and then they learn how to produce sounds. After certain sounds/phonemes are internalized, language development begins, and automatization takes place progressively. Nevertheless, communication, automatization, and comprehension are significant factors of skill development. Tarigan (1990) reported that speaking is a language skill that is developed in child life, which is produced by listening skills, and during that period, speaking skill is learned.

In non-native English nations, English language skills, explicitly speaking ability, are mostly taught at schools and even at English teaching centers. Therefore, students do not have much opportunity to practice English outside classrooms.

Accordingly, speaking skill plays a significant role inside the English classroom since the environment is convenient for learning and practicing oral activities.

2.7. The Role of Speaking Skill in English Foreign Language Classes

Chastain (1998) accentuates the roles of speaking skills in the language learning procedure. Moreover, he explains these roles in three different ways concerning language classes, learning L2, and in addition to other skills. First, in language classes, the students are already acquainted with the idea that they are assumed to speak at least one foreign language to interact with the people of various countries. Therefore, they perceive speaking as their primary goal and the most crucial skill in the language learning process. Hedge (2000) supports this idea by mentioning that the essential goal for learners is to be able to verbalize English efficiently. Furthermore, once the English teacher provides learners the opportunity to speak in the given language, express themselves, and take part in conversations, they can use the target language to function. Consequently, the language class could be a social environment. In this regard, Chastain (1988) states another role of speaking as a tool to participate in classroom activities. Another purpose is that of communication and interaction with their classmates; language learners need to use the target language by practicing speaking skill. Throughout this communication and interaction, the learners can negotiate meaning and express themselves and might feel comfortable as they participate in the natural atmosphere of speech. Likewise, the learners feel that their contribution is significant when they engage in conversations. Therefore, speaking could be a stimulating factor for learners.

Speaking also has substantial roles in second and foreign language learning. Chastain (1988) indicated that when language learners have opportunities in the classroom to practice the target language, they need to learn new things in reading and listening activities as they might feel the necessity to use them verbally in conversations in the future. Therefore, having a chance to speak could be a motivating factor for EFL learners. He further stated that speaking skill supports students to activate their general information to create a message in verbal activities along with linguistic knowledge.

When we analyze and investigate the role of speaking concerning the other language skills and language learning progress, it is impossible to develop speaking skills in isolation. Speaking skill development also depends on the input of listening, in addition to writing and reading skills. Likewise, speaking skills help in the development of three other skills and provide the basis for their growth in the process of language learning (Chastain, 1988). Harmer (1991) supports this view by stating that one skill cannot be developed apart from other skills.

As mentioned above, speaking skill plays a fundamental role in language learning in the classroom. Accordingly, while teaching FL or L2, it is important to bear in mind that language is not an abstract thing, it is a communication tool, and it is best learned by students when they practice it with their peers. In other words, to use a language means to speak that language.

Overall, to master speaking abilities is, undoubtedly, a challenging task and requires more effort to be fluent in this skill. For that reason, the difficulty of speaking skill is discussed and presented in the following section.

2.8. The Difficulty of Speaking Skill

It becomes clear that speaking is the last skill which is learned by the students, and it is believed to be the hardest of all four skills (Richards and Renondya 2002; Fulcher 2003; Bailey and Savage 1994). The most challenging facet of speaking skill is that it is continually performed through interaction with one other speaker, at least. Lazarton (2001) even assumes that using English verbally is difficult because it is predominantly carried out through interaction with one or more speakers. Zhang (2009), in his study, noted that for the majority of English learners, communicating remains the most difficult skill to master, and they even still unable to communicate verbally in the English language. Most EFL learners claim that they have learned English for so many years but still unable to speak it properly and understandably (Bueno, Madrid, & McLaren, 2006). For this reason, many learners were astounded and disappointed when they first used a foreign or a second language in actual communication. Lindsay and Knight (2006) asserted that to manage oral communication, language learners need to speak in different contexts, have interaction ability, produce connected speech, develop a balance between

fluency and accuracy and discuss unfamiliar topics based on their knowledge. Hence, a speaker is supposed to accomplish many factors at the same time when perceiving and comprehending other speakers, such as thinking how to start a conversation, how to verbalize his ideas, articulate his thoughts, produce utterances, and try to predict their effect on others. For this reason, activities in the classroom that develop the ability of the learners to express themselves through speech would, therefore, appear to be an important part of a language course (Ur,1991).

According to Brown (1994), several factors contribute to the difficulty of speaking skills. First of all, colloquial language has abbreviations, elided, and reduced forms that are unfamiliar to EFL learners because they differ entirely from the full form. Besides, he emphasized that it could be difficult for learners to use slang and idioms. Another challenging aspect of speaking of a language is the pronunciation as it consists of intonation, stress, and rhythm. Besides, speaking ability in a foreign language could be a challenge for the students since speaking a L2 or FL, such as English, requires not only grammatical knowledge but also the actual use of the language. Kayi (2006) argued that appropriate words, phrases, and sentences should be selected to initiate an effective dialogue based on the suitable social environment, audience, circumstance, and the subject matter.

Furthermore, English speakers ought to learn many essential components to master English speaking skills such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, and fluency. Luoma (2004) also added that for individuals whose English is their foreign or second language, it is not an easy task to be able to speak at a native speaker's level. They first need to comprehend the English sound system correctly, then have nearly instantaneous access to proper and accurate vocabulary, and be able to put words together intelligibly without vacillation. Furthermore, they also need to understand what is being said and have the ability to reply properly to procure cordial relationships or achieve their interaction aims and needs. Experts of languages and linguists wrote many books and articles concerning foreign language learning difficulties in overall and speaking skills in particular. This is because learning and acquiring speaking skills have not been an easy task for ages. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) mentioned that, in some respects speaking may be regarded as the hardest ability to achieve because it requires command of speech

production sub-skills such as choice of grammatical patterns, vocabulary retrieval, as well as socio-cultural competence.

To sum up, the difficulty of speaking arises from the different features of the speaking skill, which is distinct from the writing skill.

Overall, this research is investigating the factors that could affect the speaking skills in and even out of the English classrooms and might hinder Turkish students, particularly in state high schools, from communicating properly through the English language. However, to better comprehend these factors, it is exceedingly essential to study and investigate their effects and analyze their reasons.

2.9. Problems Related to Speaking English

In line with globalization and modernization, knowing the English language has become an indispensable necessity of almost every sector in Turkey. Since the English language is considered a medium of instruction and a lingua franca, teaching and learning English has gained a more considerable significance in the education system of Turkey. In this regard, the English language has become a compulsory subject for education in Turkish schools, and English has been taught at an early age. Nonetheless, it has not reached the desired objectives in this field. Also, the majority of Turkish students who have accomplished their 12-year basic education ended up knowing a little about the English language. Cetinkaya (2005) mentioned that even Turkish students who studied English since early primary education level were not highly qualified in the language. Students can barely know something even after graduation from universities. Taking into consideration that students in Turkey start learning the English language in the 4th grade, time is long enough to learn and use English properly and accurately. Possibly, teaching only grammatical structures and vocabulary, but nothing more could be the reason behind speaking skill problems. Baker and Wetsrup (2006) supported this idea by stating that many EFL teachers worldwide have to teach mostly grammar and vocabulary; since these areas are generally tested in examinations. This implies that speaking skill has been neglected in many English classrooms.

Students might have a good and wide knowledge of grammar and vocabulary since they need to use this knowledge to pass English examinations, but they

encounter challenges while speaking English outside the classroom. This type of assessment is only at the surface level. Since grammar rules function only for the examinations, all efforts go down the drain at the end of the education year. This is due to the memorization technique in the educational system of Turkey (Merzifonluoğlu, 2014). Turkish EFL learners, especially high school students, make no effort to communicate through English with others, and they are compelled to learn English as if it is a school subject. We can deduce that Turkish students learn English merely from an examination perspective and then forget everything. Merzifonluoğlu (2014) also supported this idea in her study and stated that Turkish EFL learners used to memorize information for exams. Kannan (2009, p. 2) further indicated, “Our examination system makes the students rote memorization rather than testing their analytical and creative skills.” Students’ proficiency and capacity in speaking skills are at a lamentable state. Not to mention the weak students, even brilliant students who obtain high marks in English written exams, are incapable of speaking appropriately in the English language. Students used to put the words in their right order to form correct sentences based on Subject – Verb – Object order. Gökmen (2014, p. 16), for instance, asserted “students focus on form instead of meaning, which constitutes the biggest problem in English language teaching in Turkey.” In other words, students have adequate knowledge of the structure of the English language, but they have no idea about how and when to use these structures because they are not encouraged and motivated to produce the language. Baker and Westrup (2003) revealed that when English teachers ask their students to solve an activity in English, many learners find it hard to respond to the required question because of their inadequate knowledge about what to say, which vocabulary to select and how to apply grammar accurately. Students are unable to manage dialogues and communicate smoothly in English with native speakers since they are not aware of the function of the English language. In other words, EFL students lack basic language skills to have the ability to listen and respond to what has been said and use the language precisely and appropriately in terms of grammar, vocabulary, sounds, syllables, texts, and discourse. Almost everybody in Turkey might be unable to use English accurately and fluently, despite attending English classes since they are 4th graders. In other words, most EFL learners and even other recipients who learn L2 or FL may avoid communicating through the English language. Besides, students are routed as passive recipients during the language learning processes, who

cannot grab the opportunity to participate willingly and voluntarily in the classroom activities (Eckard & Kearny, 1981).

Hojati and Afghari (2013) maintained that speaking abilities are often affected by some linguistic and non-linguistic factors, including vocabulary, grammatical structures, affective factors, pragmatic variables, and the like, which compound the reasons causing speaking skill problems. Thereby, not only do students need to be equipped with sufficient grammar and vocabulary skills, but they also need to be accurate and fluent in a language to maintain meaningful communication (Hinkel, 2006). Many researchers investigated the reasons that caused speaking obstacles faced by EFL learners in the classrooms. For instance, Al-jamal and Al-jamal (2014) carried out a study with 566 Jordanian EFL learners concerning speaking skills difficulties. The findings of their research displayed that the major problems Jordanian EFL learners faced during the process of learning and improving their speaking abilities were excessive use of mother tongue, overcrowded classes, and insufficient time allotted for students to speak in the class. Soureshjani and Riahipour (2012) surveyed 215 Iranian EFL learners' and EFL teachers' perceptions concerning factors that cause speaking difficulties. The results of the inquiry, in terms of the students' perspectives, indicated that the lack of teaching materials, classroom equipment, and teachers were among the most serious factors which caused problems preventing students from developing their oral ability. In contrast, English teachers believed that the number of hours allotted for speaking lessons, the teachers, as well as the classroom condition, could be problematic factors for verbal abilities. Ur (1996, p. 23) also indicated "inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and mother-tongue use was among the factors that influence speaking skills."

Akalın and Zengin (2007) researched the attitudes of Turkish citizens towards teaching and learning a foreign language in Turkey. They deduced that two major factors were affecting the process of teaching a foreign language in Turkey. As a result, the lack of realistic goals was observed as the first factor, and spending so much time teaching grammar rather than other language skills was considered the second factor. Thus, speaking skill has been neglected for a long time and has become a serious obstacle faced by Turkish students. In her study, Hadijah (2014) identified that having limited knowledge on the parts of speaking skills including

grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension were not only the reasons behind English speaking problems but also students' reasons, for instance, shyness, lack of self-esteem, lack of speaking practice, speaking material, time management and exposure problems.

Shortly, it can be claimed that there might be many factors resulting in learners' inability to speak English properly. Some of these factors are presented in detail in the following sections.

2.9.1. Affective Factors

This subcategory concerns factors affecting students' feelings, emotions, and personalities, students' self-perception and self-assessment. Affective factors play a crucial role in the process of learning and practicing speaking skills. As it has already been mentioned, some psychological factors thwart EFL learners to communicate appropriately through the English language in the class. Burns and Joyce (1997), Thornbury (2005) and Schwartz (2005) debate that affective factors, such as shyness or anxiety, lack of self-esteem, and fear of making mistakes are the reasons which commonly inhibit EFL students from using English verbally without a hitch. Mueen (2000) supported the previous idea. He claimed that several factors influence students' performance in speaking English well, such as lack of confidence, shyness, nervousness, and fear of speaking. Khan (2005) also asserts that some students who participated in his study had psychological problems in speaking skills. In light of these considerations, it can be concluded that psychological factors affect students' performance in speaking.

In this section of the study, some of the major affective factors will be discussed and presented concisely.

2.9.1.1. Lack of Confidence

According to Lopez (2004), the concept of self-confidence is commonly related to self-assuredness in someone's judgment, aptitude, power, and some other aspects, sometimes appearing exceedingly. Lack of self-confidence could threaten EFL students to believe that their proficiency in English is poor and feel they will be

unable to be good English speakers. He and Chen (2010) claimed that the first reason for students' lack of confidence in their poor English is their speaking abilities.

In speaking skill, confidence plays a significant role in students' proficiency improvement process. Overall, self-confident students could learn a foreign language better since they are fearless and self-confident in their capabilities. Krashen (1982) mentioned that students with high self-confidence, good self-esteem, and lower level of anxiety are best equipped and most willing to acquire a foreign or second language. On the other hand, lack of self-confidence may hamper EFL students from making advancements in speaking skills. It can be generally comprehended that low self-confidence often takes place when EFL learners realize that their speech companions fail to understand them well or when they are unable to comprehend their conversation partners. In this case, students would prefer to keep silent at the time others do speaking to demonstrate that lack of confidence decreases students' willingness to communicate through a foreign language. To prove this statement, Nunan (1999) argues that students, who have a low level of confidence about their abilities concerning English language skills, inevitably fear to initiate a dialogue with others. This reveals that enhancing and building up learners' confidence is a vital portion of EFL teacher's center of attention in the classrooms.

2.9.1.2. Anxiety

Many researchers identified "anxiety" in a variety of ways. For example, Spielberger (1983) in Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) argued that anxiety is "a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system." (p. 15). He further claimed that among other affective variables, anxiety protrudes as one of the major barriers for efficient language learning. Aydın and Zengin (2008) focused in their study on the effect of anxiety in learning and acquiring a language, and they regarded anxiety as one of the major obstacles impeding EFL learners from learning a foreign language. In other words, anxiety influences EFL students in learning a second or foreign language because it is considered difficult. Additionally, a high level of anxiety and uneasiness affect the students' progress of speaking in the target language

negatively. This idea has been supported by Goh and Burns (2012). They pointed out that anxiety causes difficulties in language learning processes, and students who are suffering from language anxiety believe that using another language verbally is not an easy task. Woodrow (2006) noted that the oral performance of non-native English speakers was affected adversely by anxiety. This experience impedes students and drives them to avoid or pull out from active oral communication. In the same way, Tanveer (2007) investigated the reasons behind students' anxiety while learning speaking skills in addition to the effect of anxiety on the communication of the required language. The findings showed that students' feeling of anxiety and stress hinder their learning process and weaken their performance in spoken language. Moreover, the researcher stresses that a high level of anxiety decreases the speaking efficiency of the learners. Sometimes, excessive anxiety might induce despondency and a sense of failure in EFL recipients (Bashir, Azeem, & Dogar 2011). Students are very cautious about making mistakes while having a real conversation. In their points of view, errors indicate a sense of unconsciousness that may hold them back from communication through English with other interlocutors.

Classroom conditions can be another factor, which may generate speaking anxiety because of the difference of language learners' abilities inside the class. Students consist of two groups as strong and weak ones. The strong students usually dominate the slow and weak students. On the contrary, the weak students might be unwilling to speak English in front of the strong group, which results in their silence throughout the entire class activities. Dil (2009) indicated in his research that during the learning process of English speaking skills, anxiety and unwillingness are regarded as two of the hardest obstructions for EFL students in Turkey. These two factors, anxiety and unwillingness to communicate in English occur when a student is afraid of being negatively assessed while making mistakes, especially in the presence of his/her classmates. Therefore, students avoid taking risks and putting themselves in an embarrassing or uncomfortable situation. It also showed that learners who observe their English level as "very good, good, and OK" usually feel less anxious and are more willing to participate in the English classroom than the other learners considering their English level as "poor." Horwitz (1991) (as cited in Sylvia and Tiono, 2004) assumed that uneasiness might affect the learners' performance while speaking a specific language. It could affect oral language

quality and make students appear less proficient than they are. According to these explanations, EFL teachers should be more aware of this dilemma and start creating a suitable learning atmosphere that provides EFL learners with more comfortable conditions during their learning process.

2.9.1.3. Inhibition

Inhibition is a sense of embarrassment that may prevent individuals from performing or saying what they want to convey (Cambridge A. L. Dictionary, 2008). Thus, it can be assumed that inhibition is the first obstacle that learners experience in English classes. When learners willingly want to verbalize their ideas in the presence of their teachers and classmates, they are often inhibited because they are afraid of making errors and they are anxious about being criticized, or merely shy. In other words, students feel embarrassed by the other learners' perceptions and evaluations towards them. Littlewood (2007) noted that the language classroom environment could be another factor creating inhibition and apprehension for EFL learners. Almost all individuals try to build a set of defense mechanisms to secure their ego. In view of the fact that making errors is common during the process of learning a foreign language, it probably poses potential threats to one's ego. These threats frustrate students to speak English, and therefore they prefer to keep silent instead of being criticized by their classmates or other peers (Brown, 2000). Besides, risk-taking is also relevant to self-esteem and inhibition. Therefore, students who have lack of self-esteem keep back from taking the risk of making errors in their oral activities, which may cause inhibition to the advancement of the learners' speaking learning processes (Mahripah, 2014).

2.9.1.4. Fear of Making Mistakes

The majority of English foreign language learners and speakers have to admit that fear of committing mistakes is one of the main factors inhibiting our spoken English fluency and proficiency while interacting verbally in English. As argued by many theorists (Tsui as cited in Nunan (1999); Yi Htwe, 2007; Robby, 2010), fear of mistakes turns out to be one of the core factors of learners' hesitancy to participate in the classroom tasks through the English language. In terms of the

fear of making mistakes problem, Aftat (2008) reveals that error correction and negative evaluation are the two major factors generating this fear. Furthermore, being afraid of making mistakes could be much affected by the learners' fear of being laughed at by their classmates or being criticized adversely by their English teacher. Consequently, the majority of EFL students quit taking part in speaking activities (Hieu, 2011). This idea was supported by Kurtus (2001). He stated that the main reason behind the fear of making mistakes is that learners are worried to sound like fools in front of peers, and they are fearful of others' perspectives towards them. Further research was implemented by Sato (2003). He concluded that English language learners are not highly qualified in speaking skills because of their fear of making mistakes. For this reason, English language teachers need to reveal the cover to the fact that making mistakes while using English is not a bad habit for students because they could learn and have the benefits of their own mistakes.

2.9.1.5. Shyness

Shyness is the feeling of awkwardness, apprehension, or discomfort, especially when a person is surrounded by other people. Thalia Eley, Professor of developmental-behavioral genetics at King's College London, claims that only about 30% of shyness as a trait is genetically inherited, while the rest appears as a response to the environment (Keating & Sarah, 2019). Concerning learning English as a foreign language (EFL) or a second language (ESL), shyness has been regarded as a severe obstacle that most learners experience at a particular time when they are forced to engage orally in the class discussions through the English language. This suggests that shyness may create problems in students' learning activities, especially during speaking lessons. In agreement with that, Baldwin (2011) furthermore clarifies that talking in front of other persons is one of the most common phobias that learners generally face, and feeling shy makes their minds empty and drives them to forget what to say. On the other hand, Harmer (2007) stated that EFL learners are commonly unwilling to engage in a conversation since they feel shy while trying to convey their ideas to other speakers, especially when they are required to deliver their opinions. According to Emma (2010, p. 10), EFL learners abstain from talking or saying anything because they feel shy about making mistakes during the English class and therefore, "losing face" in front of their English teacher

and classmates. In other words, it can be deduced that shyness has a crucial function in speaking performance done by the learners. Hence, paying attention to this aspect is essential for helping the learners make every possible effort to improve their speaking performance in the classroom (Gebhard, 2000).

2.9.2. Social Factors

As mentioned in this research, Turkish is the first official language and the mother tongue for all citizens in Turkey. Therefore, people do not communicate in English since it is a foreign language and not often used in the Turkish community. In light of the aforementioned, English has been used more frequently inside the English classrooms and rarely outside of English classes. Hetrakul (1995) supported this statement by stating that students utilize English more often merely in class and less often outside of class. Consequently, learners have restricted time for practicing and learning English in the class, whereas they still have inadequate opportunities to communicate in English outside the class to get acquainted with English speaking skills.

Even though the classroom is the only source of foreign or second language input and practice, the mother tongue has dominated all the English language classes. For such learners, Krashen (1985, p. 46) reported, "the only input is teachers' or classmates' talk- both do not speak L2 well". In other words, EFL teachers and learners tend to use their first language "Turkish" as a means of communication while learning English activities, and therefore their English-speaking classes are not useful enough to improve their conversation skills and to help them communicate with English native speakers. Learners' cooperation and the class environment are of utmost importance since these factors motivate and support the learners to improve their speaking abilities. Prieto (2007) conducted a study on cooperative learning tasks. The results of her research proved that one way to develop oral skills is to speak with others, learn from others. Another problem can be considered as the absence of a target language environment, which undoubtedly results in a lack of involvement in real-life situations. The environment here means the people outside the class.

The environment, overall, plays a significant role in the process of developing the language skills of the learners. Whenever students receive much exposure to a foreign or second language and start communicating with other individuals in the surrounded areas, their acquisition is expected to be highly possible of the target language. In his research, Wong-Fillmore (1989) suggested that social settings generate and shape appropriate opportunities for foreign language students because they improve their learning capacities. Therefore, a learner who has lots of opportunities to speak may attain high fluency in speaking skills since they practice daily. Nevertheless, in such countries, like Turkey, where English is taught and spoken as a foreign language, learners face difficulties while they attempt to develop their language abilities, particularly oral skills, since they have a scarcity of chances to contact in English with others in and outside schools. According to Normazidah, Koo, and Hazita (2012) and Trawiński (2005), EFL learners have a deficiency or lack of exposure to the target language because of the limited opportunities of using English outside of school. Additionally, Rabab'ah (2003), Mahboob and Elyas (2014), and Alrabai (2014) also indicated that scarcity of exposure to the intended language is regarded as one of the main factors that resulted in students' low level of English. For this reason, learners should be engaged in all social settings and situations to improve their speaking skills.

2.9.3. Classroom Practice and Activities

This subcategory concerns English teachers' attitudes, methods, and personal features, and how they treat their learners in and outside the English classes.

Senel (2012) implemented research on 32 Turkish EFL learners to analyze and investigate their oral communication problems. The results of his study indicated that learners considered such factors like teachers' interruption and error correction, teachers' methods and strategies of education, deficient number of English classes with poor and insufficient content as well as lack of practice in English outside the class were the reasons that inhibited their progress in learning and improving their speaking abilities.

Teaching methods and strategies may contribute to the speaking problem since they are inadequate, and teachers put less emphasis on speaking skills when

compared to other skills. Atabek (2006) claimed that teachers do not give importance to speaking skills and speaking activities. Also, they do not teach students oral communication strategy use, which leads to a meager development of this skill. Researchers like Gubaily (2012) and Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013) figured out that the methods of teaching speaking abilities were unsatisfactory, and improving teaching methodology was much needed. In light of the above considerations, employing the most effective strategies and methods in teaching speaking skills of English drives the learners to be more attentive while communicating through English in the class.

Teacher intervention and error correction during speaking activities can be another factor contributing to speaking difficulties. For example, Harmer (1991) pointed out that when teachers instantly correct the mistakes of their students, the gush of the dialogue and the main goal of the speaking function might be spoiled. The statement above was supported by Baker and Westrup (2003). They claimed that if students' errors are directly corrected, they will be a disincentive and unmotivated to initiate a real conversation with others. It was proposed that teachers should avoid harsh error correction and should make an effort to correct their students' mistakes positively and indirectly; besides, they should provide them further assistance and persuasion at the time of participation.

Presenting uninteresting and unfamiliar topics for discussion in the class is also considered a serious problem experienced by EFL students. Most EFL learners have complained that they more often lose the desire to participate in class discussions when their English teachers choose a topic they are unfamiliar with. This idea is propped up by Rivers (1968) who suggested that students usually have nothing to utter perhaps because of inappropriate topics that have been selected by their English teachers or they may have inadequate information about these topics. Baker and Westrup (2003) supported the previous statement and revealed that it is a difficult task for EFL students when their teachers request them to give appropriate answers to certain questions using a foreign language since learners do not have enough knowledge about what to say, which vocabulary items to employ, or how to construct correct grammatical sentences. Moreover, some teachers used to implement inappropriate oral activities while teaching English speaking skills which increase students' anxiety and add fuel to the fire. Boonkit (2010) researched the

factors which could promote increasing the improvement of students' oral skills. The findings displayed that the usage of appropriate activities for teaching oral abilities is regarded as an efficient policy to reduce learners' anxiety. Moreover, the findings also showed that selecting topics willingly and freely urge learners to feel at ease, motivate them to contact with others in English and increase learners' self-esteem.

'Mother-tongue use' could be another factor resulting in difficulties in speaking. English language teachers, overall, are accustomed to using their students' mother language during the English learning classes for some purposes, such as classroom management and guidance. Littlewoods (1981) mentioned that many EFL teachers more often use L1 for class management. However, learners tend to use their first language because it is easier and they feel comfortable and less exposed while they use it during English classes. Tuan and Mai (2015) argued that some students share the same mother tongue in the speaking classes because it is easier for them. As a consequence, this may gradually demolish their speaking ability and proficiency. This is because using the mother language of the learners more often in the classroom means sacrificing valuable opportunities for well-motivated use of the foreign language. Furthermore, it functions to diminish the communication throughout the intended language, which is assumed to be used as a medium of interaction among the learners in foreign language learning classes. Students perceive it as being allotted to unessential communicative fields such as exercises or conversation practice, whereas the mother language was and still is the most proper and easiest vehicle for debating issues of instant significance. Çelebi (2006) concentrated on the education policy of foreign language learning in Turkey and found that FLT difficulties have resulted from the excessive use of the mother tongue during foreign language learning classes.

According to Harmer (1991), EFL learners commonly tend to use their mother tongue for communication in English classrooms because of some particular reasons. The first reason lies beyond the teachers' choice of unfamiliar and uninteresting topics which in turn incites the students to use their first language in order to discuss and understand the required topics. The second reason is because the applications of the mother tongue are inherent and natural for students to utilize. Therefore, if English teachers do not attempt to encourage and stimulate their

students to speak in English, students will automatically stop communicating in English and try to use their L1 to take a part in class discussions and explain something to their peers and teachers.

'Teacher talking time' is also considered one of the impediments that may contribute to speech difficulties. English teachers generally dominate the most time allotted for English language teaching and thus learners lose their chance to participate in discourse in the classroom. Gökdemir (2010) carried out a study investigating foreign language teaching hindrances at the level of university education in Turkey. The researcher concluded that the most prominent challenge was that English teaching methods, for the most part, were theory-based rather than practice-based, as well as English education was commonly teacher-centered more than learner-centered. "In order to learn speaking skills, students need both to engage in discussion and to build up knowledge and skills for effective participation" (Cameron, 2001, p. 36). The teacher always dominates the whole time of the class and students listen quietly. Students say nothing, merely talk if something is asked and they are not urged and promoted to share their own opinions and thoughts. Yaping (1998), Alrabaa (1991) and Dobson (1988) argued that teachers talk most of the time in the classroom and do not give many opportunities for learners to take part in class discussions.

2.9.4. Education System

This category will cover several obstacles related to the education system that makes a significant contribution to the speaking skill difficulties both for English teachers and students in the English classrooms.

Over-crowded classes can be regarded as the most critical factor among other factors that contribute adversely to the process of improving speaking proficiency. In a class that contains a great number of learners, some of them will have a little bit of time for speaking but others not since the time allotted for speaking lessons do not match the students' number in the class. Therefore, participation is very low meaning that learners lose their chance to learn and acquire speaking skills effectively. Many researchers had paid significant importance to the size of the classroom because Brumfit (1984), Ellis (1994), Malinowski (1989), Long

and Porter (1985), Alrabaa (1991), Nunan (1999), Ur (1991), Wheeler (1994) and Tsui (1996) mentioned that learners may have more chances to practice the target language when they have opportunities to work in small groups.

Another common issue has appeared prominently inside the English learning classes concerning the textbooks used for teaching English as a foreign language. It has been discussed that these books lack the listening texts and activities needed to enhance the speaking skills. Some experts approved that listening abilities are very closely related to speaking abilities. Human beings should grasp what is being said by other speakers in order to attain a successful conversation. Doff (1998) argued that unless EFL learners improve their listening ability first, they will not be able to develop their speaking ability. Speakers, undeniably, have the role of both speakers and listeners. Shumin (1997) indicated that when a student talks, the other one answers through the listening process. Bozorgian (2012) carried out investigative research to figure out the correlation between listening skills and other language abilities. The findings had proved a strong relationship between listening comprehension and language mastery. It can be deduced that learners are unable to reply if they cannot comprehend what is uttered. In other words, the higher the listening skill, the better the speaking skill. Moreover, the themes, texts and content knowledge in the textbooks for teaching English language generally focused on grammar activities, reading and writing skills rather than speaking skills. Hence, speaking skill has been paid little attention by English teachers. Atabek (2006), Lazaraton (2001), and Watts (1989) illustrated that speaking skill is not paid attention in course books. For this reason, the needs of students and the priority of course books may not be compatible. Saraç (2007) also reported that as teachers are supposed to follow a curriculum and a course book, speaking skills may usually be neglected because mostly little attention is paid for speaking practices and activities.

Lack of efficient facilities in schools or language classrooms may also affect the process of improving speaking abilities. School facilities are the material tools that facilitate effective teaching and learning processes in the classrooms. Osahon (2001, as cited in Ogbodo, 1996) stated that educational facilities are those material recourses that facilitate teaching and learning processes in schools. By nature, educational facilities have been positively linked with students' academic performance and educational efficiency (Osahon, 1994). Knezevich (1975) asserted

that physical facilities are crucial resources that are needed for the effective maintenance and operation of standards in the classrooms/schools. These facilities include furniture, equipment, laboratories, personnel resources, workshops, and other instructional serves. Once these kinds of school facilities are adequately supplied, classroom activities will become efficient and effective. Adequate classroom/school facilities improve the comfort and safety of students and teachers, and thus increasing their performance and efficiency.

2.9.5. Linguistic Factors

This category is concerned with the linguistic factors that have a major effect on speaking difficulties throughout English language classes. Generally, learners need to have enough knowledge of linguistic features to manage successful communication with other people. Thornbury (2005) stated that EFL speakers need to have adequate knowledge of phonology, grammar, and vocabulary to manage verbal communication in L2 in various situations of real life. Lukitasari (2003) also researched students' strategies in overcoming their speech difficulties. The findings of his study showed that learners could not improve their speaking abilities since they had not initially mastered the other three skills of language, i.e. grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

To speak fluent and accurate English, students need to have sufficient knowledge of this language through which they can simply develop their oral proficiency. Wherefore, knowing how to produce sounds along with how to properly place words in meaningful sentences is a very important skill for learners (Canale & Swain, 1980). Concerning phonology, students must have adequate knowledge of how sounds are pronounced correctly to steer clear of common mistakes which are generally transferred from their mother language. Furthermore, students should be conscious of speech characteristics, such as rhythm, intonation, and stress. Besides, they should improve and strengthen their vocabulary to perform effectual and successful verbal communication. Goh and Burns (2012) claimed that an insufficient number of vocabulary items might inhibit EFL learners from expressing themselves or conveying their ideas properly. They further stated that students should have

sufficient grammatical knowledge of the English language for the sake of being comprehended by others.

Briefly, learners must undertake much effort to improve their lexical, phonological, and grammatical English knowledge. Similarly, teachers should utilize specific beneficial strategies to increase their learners' consciousness towards these vital elements. Three components of linguistic factors which may cause speaking skill problems are discussed and presented separately as follows:

2.9.5.1. Grammar

Grammar is considered a significant aspect of speaking skill because it is the basic component in the process of learning a language, which encompasses all the skills of a language. Therefore, to master a foreign or a second language, the structure of the target language should be mastered. Grammar skill resembles a hidden power that directs learners to order appropriate words to build correct sentences according to specific rules. In other words, it can be argued that grammar skill is the spine of a language. Furthermore, grammar commonly supplies appropriate structures intending to organize and place ideas as well as messages across. English and Turkish languages look nothing alike grammatically, and this difference may generate speech difficulties. Sometimes, to express the same idea, completely different constructions will need to be employed. However, when learners start oral communication in the English language, errors resulting from literal translations from the Turkish language come forth. Latha (2012) stated that "grammatical competence can help learners apply and perceive the structure of the English language correctly that leads to their fluency" (p. 339). Furthermore, when EFL learners do not have mastery over grammar, they will fail to produce sentences that are grammatically correct. Farooqui (2007) argued that when students realize their weak point in grammar, they feel ashamed while they are required to verbally produce English sentences.

All in all, to communicate through a language effectively and accurately, learners must be acquainted well with grammatical syntax rules of the target language.

2.9.5.2. Vocabulary

The prominent role of vocabulary in learning a foreign language cannot be undervalued. To communicate efficiently, learners should know as much vocabulary as they could. Without adequate vocabulary knowledge, learners cannot comprehend others or convey their messages or ideas to others. Wilkins (1972) stated, "while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp. 111-112). This statement was supported by Schmitt (2010), who noted, "learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books" (p. 4). This means that even without grammar, learners, in some situations, can manage a dialogue using some useful words. For this reason, learners should first build up a large bank of words during their learning process. Vocabulary problems occur when learners lack vocabulary needed to communicate and have no idea about how to combine the required words into meaningful sentences. Mueen (2000) argued that some factors affect learners' performance in speaking English correctly, such as lack of sufficient and appropriate vocabulary. Urrutia and Vega (2010) also reported that students' spoken performance is affected by their lack of vocabulary knowledge.

Many EFL learners abstain from communicating through the English language with others because they fear to make mistakes resulting from their lack of vocabulary needed. Ballard (1996, as cited in Jin Yan-Hua, 2007) figured out that learners abstain from participating in English dialogues since they have problems in vocabulary knowledge, and they are afraid of making errors, which cause their inability to verbalize fluent English. Because of the insufficient number of English words and limited knowledge of their usage, students cannot express what they want to convey clearly. Hinkel (2005) claimed that speaking problems occur when students face words they do not understand or realize that they cannot articulate their intended meaning.

2.9.5.3. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is probably the most difficult ability among the other four language skills in the course of teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) or a second language (ESL). Since pronunciation has become widely known as a fundamental part for language learners (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin,

1996), the process of teaching and learning pronunciation skill should be paid more attention to by both learners and teachers whether English is learned as a foreign or as a second language (Ha, 2013). In this regard, non-native English speakers are required to speak English as naturally as native speakers. Hinkel (2005) demonstrated that second language learners need to master the individual characteristics of the sounds of the target language.

Mispronunciation is the most common impediment faced by the majority of English recipients. Therefore, English learners usually feel embarrassed and inhibited communicating in English in front of native speakers because of their incorrect pronunciation. EFL learners with limited pronunciation efficiency may feel unconfident in social communication, which “negatively affects estimations of a speaker’s credibility and abilities” (Gilakjani, 2012, p. 119). Rossiter and Derwing (2002), further noted that learners of a foreign or second language were dissatisfied with their pronunciation; besides that, they reported failing in communication because of their mispronunciation.

As reported by Mahripah (2014), speaking proficiency of learners is mostly affected by some linguistic components of the target language such as phonology. English is not a phonetic language meaning that English pronunciation is different from its spelling. Identical orthographic words in the English language are often pronounced in different ways due to their surrounding contexts, such as phonemes and tenses that follow after them. Yule (1996) mentioned that there is no true parallelism between sounds and symbols in the writing system of English. Whereas Turkish pronunciation, for the most part, is pronounced as it is written. According to Bayraktaroğlu (2009, p. 2), "Turkish orthography is, to a large extent, phonemic, i.e., employing a one-to-one letter-sound correspondence." This probably causes many obstacles for Turkish learners of the English language and they may get flustered when they produce English words. In the English language, short and long vowels change the whole meaning of the words. For instance, *bit* and *beat*; *fat* and *fate*. In the same vein, the situation is merely different in the Turkish language.

2.10. Overview of English Language Teaching in Turkey

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the birth of the new Turkish Republic, which was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923, Modernization and Westernization movements brought closer ties with the United States and European countries, which had an influential role in expediting the spread of ELT in Turkey. Consequently, the English language took priority over other foreign languages (Kırkgöz, 2007, p. 217). Moreover, the first phase of the spread of the English language through education in Turkey started in the 1950s and lasted up to the late 1970s (Doğançay-Aktuna 1998).

After the 1980s, Turkey felt urgently in need to keep pace with foreign language proficiency through English language acquisition. By meeting social, cultural, and economic demands as well as the globalization effect, English has undoubtedly become the most dominant means in Turkey and has had an increased status in the country. Ahmad (1993, p. 210) stated in his research on the sociopolitical development of Turkey in the 1980s, “English had become the *sine qua non* for a successful career in almost any field, and hence parents strived to have their children acquire a working knowledge of the language.” Due to the increasing popularity of the English language in the mid-1980s in Turkey, the number of schools offering English-medium education increased. In 1994, a new law provided the possibility of opening ‘Super English Language High Schools.’ Analogous to Anatolian and private secondary schools, those schools mostly provide English language instruction for one year. Students are required to achieve an average score of 4.0 out of 5.0, the highest point, to be able to enter these schools.

At Higher Education level, Middle East Technical University, the first state-owned university with an English-medium education system, was established in 1956. Respond to the requirements to increase the education level of the university using the English language medium, the Tertiary Education Law provided the possibility to establish private universities providing English-medium instruction. As a consequence, Bilkent University was the first private university founded in Ankara in 1983. The two state-owned universities which provide an English-medium instruction system are METU and Bogaziçi (YÖK 2006). Currently, most private universities provide English language instruction for their students.

Likewise, in many state universities where Turkish is the medium of instruction, English language teaching programs are incorporated as a mandatory subject in the curriculum of these universities. First-year students, whose English language proficiency falls below the standard, which is defined by the language teaching center of the universities, are typically offered one year of intensive English education.

In 1997, the Ministry of National Education of Turkey (MNE) created a scheme titled 'The Ministry of National Education Development Project.' This plan was a significant innovative curriculum in FLT and mainly aimed at promoting and developing English teaching in educational institutions in Turkey. Concerning the elementary education level, the most crucial section was the integration of secondary and elementary education into a single stream. It should also be pointed out that this project extended the duration of the previous five years of mandatory education to eight years. The insertion of teaching the English language for Grade 4 and Grade 5, overall, was another significant outcome of the reform. Therefore, this was considered as an essential point because it brought the age down to 9 so that it would be possible for students to experience L2 or FL difficulties. Moreover, this policy provided EFL learners with exposure to the process of learning a foreign or a second language for an extended period so they could acquire it more successfully (see MNE 2001).

According to Kirkgoz (2005), the 1997 Curriculum should be considered as a milestone in the background of English education in Turkey since it introduced the concept of communicative language teaching (CLT) in Turkish classrooms for the first time. The basic aim of the policy was to enhance and upgrade the communicative ability of the students in order to get them ready to utilize the intended language (FL or L2) while doing the activities inside the classroom. Moreover, "the curriculum encourages student-centered learning as a replacement for the conventional teacher-centered notion of learning. Accordingly, the English teacher's role is identified as a facilitator of the learning process" (Kirkgoz, 2007; p. 221). Nevertheless, most of the Turkish students, after graduating from high schools, are not fluent in English, although they study English for nine years. Current research (Education first English proficiency index, 2015) reveals that language

education is not as effective as it should be in Turkey even though communicative language teaching (CLT) has been implemented for fifteen years.

Likewise, as previously mentioned above, learning and interacting through the English language, especially in Turkey, is regarded as a long and tiring procedure. Even though English has been in students' lives for a long time, they still have difficulties using it appropriately. Turkish students commonly encounter problems in English speaking skills, even if they are at the higher education level.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology employed in this research study, which includes information about the research design. It also provides information about the setting, participants of the research, the instrument as well as data collection procedures, and data analysis.

3.2. Research Design

The present study is based on a descriptive research method and was adopted as the most appropriate design for this research. Applying descriptive research involves gathering data that represent events and incidents, then organizing, classifying, and explaining the process of the collected data (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). Descriptive research is distinct from the other research methods since it demands only one variable (Borg & Gall, 1989). The main purpose of the current study was to uncover and understand the speaking problems and difficulties that high school EFL learners face in the English classrooms from their own and English teachers' points of view. Besides, this study aimed to discover the major reasons that cause these obstacles. For this reason, a quantitative research method was selected for this study since the quantitative method focuses on collecting numerical data and generalizing it within groups of individuals or clarifying a specific phenomenon. Moreover, to assess speaking problems, a speaking skills problems questionnaire

with 5-points Likert scale was applied, and the results of the collected data were analyzed quantitatively.

3.3. Setting

The main study of this research was conducted at Sur Alparslan Anadolu Lisesi in Diyarbakir, Turkey. The speaking skills problems questionnaire was applied in the spring semester of the 2018-2019 academic year. Students at the 9th and 10th grades in this school have four hours of English lessons in the weekly schedule, and they use the English textbooks published by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey.

3.4. Participants

The total number of the 9th graders was 149, and that of the 10th graders was 97 at this school divided into seven classrooms, about 35 students in each class. The researcher needed to choose 135 students for study purposes from both 9th and 10th grades; their ages ranging from 15 to 16. In addition, 30 English language teachers (both males and females) working in state high schools in Diyarbakir were selected as the participants of the present research. They were in-service teachers, and most of them graduated from the department of English language teaching. Their teaching experiences varied between 4 to 20 years. All participants have the same mother tongue, Turkish.

For the present study, a convenience sampling technique was used to select the participants since this type of sampling is easy and speedy to reach the available people. Johnson and Christensen (2012) stated that because most convenience sampling is collected with the population available; the researcher can simply collect the required data. On the other hand, using the internet, data of the entire state high schools situated in Diyarbakir city were determined throughout the MONE website to specify and select the required number of English teachers working at these schools. As a result, 30 English teachers volunteered to take part in the research. For the students' engagement in this study, a permission was obtained from The Provincial Directorate of National Education of Diyarbakir to conduct the

questionnaire and the instrument was used with the permission of the school principals (See Appendix D).

Distribution of the demographic features of the participants, who took part in the current study concerning their numbers, percentages, and variables, can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Features of the Participants

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Grade 9	Gender	Male	31	40.7
		Female	45	59.3
	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Grade 10	Gender	Male	23	38.9
		Female	36	61.1
	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
English Teachers	Gender	Male	10	33.4
		Female	20	66.6
	Education	English language teaching	23	76.6
		English literature	7	23.3
	Teaching Experience	3-7	4	13.3
		8-12	8	26.6
		13-17	13	43.3
		18 and over	5	16.6

As illustrated in Table 1, 40.7 % (n=31) of high school 9th graders were males, whereas 59.3 % (n=45) were females. Besides, 38.9 % (n=23) of high school 10th graders were male students while 61.1 % (n=36) were female students. In

addition to this, 33.4 % (n=10) of high school English teachers were males, and 66.6 % (n=20) were females who participated voluntarily in this research.

As for the teachers' education, majority of the high school EFL teachers in this research 76.6 % (n=23) graduated from the department of English Language Teaching. Merely seven teachers (23.3%) graduated from the department of English Literature from various universities.

Concerning the teaching experience duration of the EFL teachers, the data disclosed that 13.3 % (n=4) of the teachers had working experience between 3-7 years, followed by 26.6 % (n=8) who responded that they had teaching experience between 8-12 years. English teachers with experience between 13 and 17 years were 43.3 % (n=13), whereas 16.6 % (n=5) of the teachers responded that they had more than 18 years of work experience in the field of teaching.

3.5. Research Instrument

In this study, one type of research instrument was used and applied for both students and teachers; a speaking skills problems questionnaire (**See Appendix A**).

3.5.1. Speaking Skills Problems Questionnaire

According to Leung (2001), questionnaires are instruments of collecting quantitative data, and they "are best used for collecting factual data" (p. 187). This research was mainly based on a questionnaire for collecting the required data. The instrument was composed of 35 items (both students and teachers' versions) adapted from Irismet (2006). A 5-point Likert scale was used to figure out the participants' degrees of agreement. All the statements were on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The purpose of conducting this questionnaire was to figure out the factors that impede high school Turkish EFL learners to communicate orally through the English language and to reveal the causes of such factors. There are various types of questionnaire patterns involving but not restricted to Likert-type, multiple-choice, and open-ended. Although open-ended questions enable the investigation of a possible range of subjects in a problem, multiple-choice questions are preferred because they are quicker and easier to fill in, record, analyze, and report (Leung, 2001).

The questionnaire of the current study is composed of five subcategories. The first category consists of 5 items concerning *affective-related problems*; the second one contains 4 items related to *social problems*. In comparison, the third one involves 15 items about *teacher-related problems*, as well as 5 items concerning the *Turkish educational system and facility-related problems*. *Linguistics related problems* are the last category, which consists of six questions. All the items for both teachers and students were the same to make the data more reliable. The questionnaire was translated into Turkish (See **Appendix B and C**) by an expert, who is specialized in bilingual translation, to be comfortable and understandable for students and to increase the efficiency of the instrument. Then, the Turkish version was back translated into English by another translator in order to check the similarities and differences between the original version and the English version translated from the Turkish one. This helped us to achieve credibility and objectivity of the findings of the present research. Finally, the Turkish version and the back-translated one were revised and verified by another expert, a professor in ELT, who was familiar with the present research.

Additionally, the reliability analysis of the 35-item of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, which demonstrated an acceptable internal consistency of the questionnaire ($\alpha=.75$).

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

In the present research, the data were analyzed through quantitative analysis technique. Data collection process took place in the last week of May 2019 after obtaining the permission for the application of the method from The Provincial Directorate of National Education of Diyarbakir.

As already mentioned, 135 Turkish EFL learners (76 ninth grade and 59 tenth grade) from a state high school were selected, and then 30 EFL teachers from different public high schools across Diyarbakir city were gathered using convenience sampling. Second, the researcher presented each class, the questionnaire (both teachers and students' version) was distributed to the EFL learners in the classrooms as well as to the EFL teachers. Besides, necessary instructions were given to the participants, explaining that their contribution to this

study was very important, and they were notified that there would not be right/wrong answers. Also, they received assurance that their personal information would be kept confidential, and the findings would not affect the students' scores in the school. The participants were requested kindly to be realistic and sincere while answering the questionnaire. They were also given enough time to complete the questionnaire. However, it took approximately 15 minutes to complete the required items.

In order to recruit 30 EFL teachers who are teaching at state high schools in Diyarbakir, the official website of the Ministry of National Education (MONE) District Office (<http://diyarbakir.meb.gov.tr/>) was used, and related information was gathered about the number of high schools that could match the criteria for participation in this study. As a result, eight public high schools were selected, and each of these schools was visited continuously, and the intended participants (30 English teachers) were contacted at various times over a month. All of these teachers were interviewed in-person to increase the validity and reliability of this research. Since some of the teachers were not at school during the time of the visit, the schools were revisited after a while. A list of the public high schools and the English language teachers who took part in this research are provided in Table 2.

Table 2

List of school names, types of schools, and the number of English teachers who took part in the current research

Name of the school	Type of the school	Number of EFL teachers
Alparslan Anadolu Lisesi	Anatolian High School	2
Salahuddin Eyyubi Anadolu Lisesi	Anatolian High School	4
Kiptaş Mesleki ve Teknik Anadolu Lisesi	Vocational and Technical High School	4
Gaziler Anadolu Lisesi	Anatolian High School	1
Şehit Mehmet Bora Tayfur Anadolu Lisesi	Anatolian High School	5
Ahmedi Hani Anadolu Lisesi	Anatolian High School	7

	Vocational and Technical High	
BAĞLAR Mesleki ve Teknik Anadolu Lisesi	School	3
Sezai Karakoç Anadolu Lisesi	Anatolian High School	4

3.7. Data Analysis

Tukey (1961, P. 48) defined data analysis as "procedures for analyzing data, techniques for interpreting the results of such procedures, ways of planning the gathering of data to make its analysis easier, more precise or more accurate, and all the machinery and results of (mathematical) statistics which apply to analyze data." Judd, Charles, McClelland, and Gary (1989) stated that data are gathered and analyzed to respond to specific questions, test hypotheses, or refute theories.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was utilized to analyze the data and assess the reliability of the present study. The Windows version of SPSS 21 was used by which the standard deviation, means, frequency rates, and percentages were calculated and measured separately to identify students' speaking problems. Besides, one main type of test was employed in the present research; independent samples t-test. Gosset (1908) mentioned that while one-way ANOVA is conducted to test for differences among at least three groups, an independent samples t-test is utilized to test the differences between the two groups. As a T-test was employed to explore whether any significant differences are observed between the 9th and the 10th graders' perceptions, it was also used to compare the means between the English teachers' and the students' points of view to see if any of these means are significantly different from each other on particular problems. Accordingly, the demographic features of the participants were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Finally, the quantitative findings of the research were analyzed, discussed, and subjected to content analysis.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The major goal of this research was to uncover the reasons that hinder Turkish EFL learners from speaking English effectively and aimed to figure out the speaking skills problems from the perceptions of the 9th and 10th graders and their EFL teachers. This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the analysis related to the quantitative data in light of each research question investigated in this study in order to provide a broad picture of the analyzed data.

4.2. Tests of Normality

“As a rule of thumb, the data collected in a given study must meet certain criteria to be processed through robust parametrical tests like T-test or ANOVA” (Larson-Hall, 2015, pp. 58-59). Therefore, Skewness and Kurtosis statistical values were measured in order to determine whether sample data was normally distributed. The results of the analysis are presented and discussed in Table 3.

Table 3

Normality statistics for the instrument

Speaking skill problems	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Value	Std. Error	Value	Std. Error
	.385	.189	.690	.376

Table 3 displays that the data is normally distributed with the skewness statistics .385, while kurtosis statistics are .690 for speaking skill problems questionnaire of this study. Values are between -1.5 and +1.5, which is the accepted range.

4.3. Results of the Analyses

As the quantitative data was the main instrument used in the present research, the findings of the data collected from the questionnaire are presented and discussed in detail under this section.

Throughout the collected data, it was aimed to find out the reasons that prevent Turkish high school students from speaking English fluently. Moreover, under the research questions that were mentioned above, the scores of the questionnaire, which evaluates the student's and teachers' perspectives on speaking problems, are presented in the tables below.

4.3.1. Results of RQ 1. What are the most common speaking skill difficulties experienced by Turkish EFL 9th and 10th graders from their perspective?

To find out the most common speaking skills problems that Turkish EFL 9th and 10th graders experienced in the English classrooms, descriptive statistics of 35 items for each grade are presented separately in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics of the 9th graders' points of view related to speaking problems

Items	M	SD	N
1. I am afraid of making mistakes.	3.06	1.39	76
2. Some of my classmates speak very effectively, but I cannot. This demotivates me.	2.42	1.34	76
3. Shyness prevents me from speaking.	2.64	1.30	76
4. I cannot speak well in the classroom because my self-confidence is low.	2.50	1.28	76
5. My anxiety is too high. This prevents me from speaking well	2.76	1.17	76
6. I have difficulty finding opportunities to practice my speaking outside the classroom.	3.61	1.31	76
7. My speaking classes are not useful enough to help us communicate with English speaking people.	3.25	1.21	76

8. I do not think I will make use of English speaking skills in my country.	3.00	1.32	76
9. There is no cooperation spirit among my classmates in speaking classes.	3.09	1.33	76
10. My teachers do not have a good command of English speaking skills.	1.96	1.31	76
11. It would be better if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking so that they could provide a speech model for students.	3.31	1.45	76
12. My teachers make too much use of our mother tongue in the classroom.	3.09	1.33	76
13. My teachers' pronunciation is not good enough to be a model for us.	3.00	3.68	76
14. My teachers do not encourage students to speak.	2.53	1.37	76
15. The intervention and error correction of my teachers is too harsh.	1.98	1.21	76
16. My teachers do not show the tendency to speak English with me outside the classroom when I try to do so.	2.18	1.35	76
17. My teachers neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations.	2.56	1.33	76
18. My classes are teacher-centered; therefore, I cannot find the chance to express my ideas and participate in class discussion activities.	2.65	1.24	76
19. My speaking teachers spend a large proportion of class time asking questions about things to which I already knew the answers; therefore, no real communication takes place.	2.88	1.45	76
20. My teachers do not encourage any group work or pair work; this inhibits student-student interaction in class.	3.00	1.18	76
21. My teachers do not teach us how to express appropriate speech acts (e.g., greeting, complaint, refuse invitations or offers and so on).	2.13	1.21	76
22. My teachers do not tell us what to do when we cannot find the correct and appropriate word, structure and sentence during our speaking. In other words, they do not teach us oral communication strategy use.	2.00	1.11	76
23. My teachers do not present interesting topics for discussion.	2.81	1.39	76
24. My teachers put less emphasis on speaking skills in comparison to other skills.	2.94	1.41	76
25. There are not enough and efficient facilities in language classrooms.	3.40	1.45	76
26. Our class is overcrowded.	3.53	1.37	76
27. The time of our speaking classes is not appropriate. That is, our speaking classes are held at the time when we do not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions	3.18	1.29	76
28. The time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system are not enough to help us develop our speaking ability	3.13	1.33	76
29. The educational system of Turkey has contributed to my lack of speaking ability.	3.39	1.39	76

30. My poor general English knowledge results in me having difficulty making questions and directing them to my teacher or my classmates.	2.98	1.33	76
31. I do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.	3.00	1.41	76
32. I do not have enough knowledge of collocations.	3.06	1.17	76
33. I think in Turkish when I speak in English, which leads to my lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking.	3.39	3.58	76
34. I do not have enough grammar knowledge, which leads to a lack of accuracy in my speaking.	3.34	1.35	76
35. My pronunciation is not good enough which causes difficulty in my communication.	3.28	1.38	76

The most frequently reported problem mentioned by the 9th graders was practicing English outside the classroom. Students reported that *they have difficulty finding opportunities to practice English speaking outside the classroom* (item 6; M=3.61). The next most frequent problem is overcrowded classes (item 26; M=3.53). Besides, the statistical data showed that the facilities in language classrooms are not enough and efficient (item 25; M=3.40). With the same mean value, participants of the 9th grade claimed that *educational system of Turkey has contributed to their lack of speaking ability* and that *they think in Turkish when they speak in English, which leads to their lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking* (items 29 & 33; M=3.39). 9th graders also reported that *they do not have enough grammar knowledge, which may lead to a lack of accuracy in their speaking* (item 34; M=3.34). According to the analysis, students of grade 9 prefer more than one teacher teaching speaking, so that they could provide a speech model for students (item 11; M=3.31). The results of the data also display that students' English pronunciation is not good enough, which causes difficulty in their communication (item 35; M=3.28) and that English speaking classes are not useful enough to help them communicate with English native speakers (item 7; M=3.25).

The 9th graders also reported that their speaking classes are held at the time when they do not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions (item 27; M=3.18), and *the time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system are not enough to help us develop our speaking ability* (item 28; M=3.13). With the same mean value 3.09, students of grade 9 stated that there is no cooperation spirit among their classmates in speaking classes and that their teachers

make too much use of their mother tongue in the classroom (items, 9 & 12). Being afraid of making mistakes and lack of collocational knowledge were reported as problems by the ninth graders (items 1 & 32; $M=3.06$). With the same mean score 3.00, items (8, 13, 20, 31) revealed that EFL learners of grade nine do not think they will need to communicate in English in their country and that their teachers' pronunciation is not proper enough to be a model for them. Furthermore, they also claimed that their teachers do not encourage any group work or pair work and that they do not have enough vocabulary knowledge. Poor general English knowledge was reported to be a problem by 9th graders ($M=2.98$). Among the less frequently experienced problems we can see that the intervention and error correction of teachers is too harsh (item 10; $M=1.98$), and the teachers do not have a good command of English speaking skills (item 15; $M=1.96$).

The 10th graders' perceptions of speaking skills problems that they encountered in speaking classes are presented in detail in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics of the 10th graders' points of view related to speaking problems

Items	M	SD	N
1. I am afraid of making mistakes.	3.15	1.33	59
2. Some of my classmates speak very effectively, but I cannot. This demotivates me.	2.64	1.48	59
3. Shyness prevents me from speaking.	2.64	1.33	59
4. I cannot speak well in the classroom because my self-confidence is low.	2.64	1.28	59
5. My anxiety is too high. This prevents me from speaking well	2.76	1.34	59
6. I have difficulty finding opportunities to practice my speaking outside the classroom.	3.37	1.37	59
7. My speaking classes are not useful enough to help us communicate with English speaking people.	3.40	1.36	59
8. I do not think I will make use of English speaking skills in my country.	3.55	1.26	59
9. There is no cooperation spirit among my classmates in speaking classes.	3.01	1.44	59
10. My teachers do not have a good command of English speaking skills.	2.32	1.50	59
11. It would be better if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking so that they could provide a speech model for students.	2.98	1.49	59
12. My teachers make too much use of our mother tongue in the classroom.	2.76	1.30	59
13. My teachers' pronunciation is not good enough to be a model for us.	2.37	1.29	59

14. My teachers do not encourage students to speak.	2.23	1.41	59
15. The intervention and error correction of my teachers is too harsh.	2.25	1.45	59
16. My teachers do not show the tendency to speak English with me outside the classroom when I try to do so.	2.44	2.99	59
17. My teachers neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations.	2.40	1.36	59
18. My classes are teacher-centered; therefore, I cannot find the chance to express my ideas and participate in class discussion activities.	2.45	1.26	59
19. My speaking teachers spend a large proportion of class time asking questions about things to which I already knew the answers; therefore, no real communication takes place.	2.20	1.11	59
20. My teachers do not encourage any group work or pair work; this inhibits student-student interaction in class.	2.30	1.22	59
21. My teachers do not teach us how to express appropriate speech acts (e.g., greeting, complaint, refuse invitations or offers and so on).	2.76	3.03	59
22. My teachers do not tell us what to do when we cannot find the correct and appropriate word, structure and sentence during our speaking. In other words, they do not teach us oral communication strategy use.	2.28	1.20	59
23. My teachers do not present interesting topics for discussion.	2.44	1.23	59
24. My teachers put less emphasis on speaking skills in comparison to other skills.	2.64	1.34	59
25. There are not enough and efficient facilities in language classrooms.	3.40	1.42	59
26. Our class is overcrowded.	3.62	1.48	59
27. The time of our speaking classes is not appropriate. That is, our speaking classes are held at the time when we do not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions.	3.06	1.35	59
28. The time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system is not enough to help us develop our speaking ability.	3.37	1.38	59
29. The educational system of Turkey has contributed to my lack of speaking ability.	3.22	1.17	59
30. My poor general English knowledge results in my having difficulty making questions and directing them to my teacher or my classmates.	2.90	1.24	59
31. I do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.	3.13	1.31	59
32. I do not have enough knowledge of collocations.	3.59	4.31	59
33. I think in Turkish when I speak in English, which leads to my lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking.	3.06	1.28	59
34. I do not have enough grammar knowledge, which leads to a lack of accuracy in my speaking.	3.00	1.27	59
35. My pronunciation is not good enough which causes difficulty in my communication.	3.13	1.38	59

Statistical data demonstrated that the majority of 10th graders, who participated in this research, cannot speak English well because their classes are overcrowded (item 26; M=3.62) and they do not have enough knowledge of collocations (item 32; M=3.59). Students also stated that *they do not think they will make use of English speaking in their country* (item 8; M=3.55). With the same mean value (3.40), items (7 and 25) revealed that speaking classes are not useful enough to help students communicate with English native speakers in addition to this, *there are not enough and efficient facilities in language classrooms*. The results of the data also showed that 10th graders find it difficult to practice their speaking skills outside the classroom, and they believe that the time allotted for speaking and listening lessons are not enough (items 6, 28; M=3.37).

10th grade students mentioned that the educational system of Turkey is a problem (item, 29; M=3.22). Furthermore, students stop communicating in English because they are afraid of making mistakes while speaking (item 1; M=3.15). 10th graders also complain that they are unable to form sentences in English because of their inadequate vocabulary knowledge and that they face difficulty in communication because their pronunciation is not proper enough (items 31, 35; M=3.13). 10th graders also expressed that they think in Turkish while trying to speak in English (item 33; M=3.06). With the same mean score, 10th graders reported that *speaking classes are held at an inappropriate time* as a problem (item, 27). The item stating that *there is no cooperation spirit among my classmates in speaking classes* was another problem reported by 10th graders (item 9; M=3.01) followed by inadequate grammar knowledge (item 34; M=3.00) and more than one teacher teaching speaking (M=2.98). The less frequently reported problems were that EFL teachers do not encourage students to practice and communicate through English during English lessons (item 14; M=2.23) and that speaking teachers spend the whole time asking questions about things whose answers the students already know (item 19; M=2.20).

4.3.1.1. Results of RQ1a. Is there a significant difference between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of English speaking skill problems?

To answer this research question concerning whether there is any statistically significant difference between EFL 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of speaking

problems in terms of their grade, an independent samples t-test was performed and the results of which were summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Results of t-test for the difference between students in terms of their grade

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
9 th	76	2.87	.519	.404	133	.68
10 th	59	2.83	.468			

$p > .05$

As the results in Table 6 demonstrate, overall, there is no statistically significant difference between the 9th grade and 10th grade students' perspectives concerning their speaking skill problems ($p > .05$).

4.3.1.2. Results of RQ 1b. Is there a significant difference between male and female students' perceptions of English speaking skill problems?

In order to answer this research question, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare speaking skills problems between EFL learners regarding their gender (males and females).

Table 7

Results of t-test for the difference between students in terms of their gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
M	54	2.79	.412	-1.295	133	.19
F	81	2.91	.534			

$P > .05$

In light of the results that can be seen in Table 7 above, there is no statistically significant difference between EFL learners in terms of their gender ($p > .05$).

4.3.2. Results of RQ 2. What are the most common speaking skill difficulties encountered by Turkish EFL learners from English teachers' perceptions?

Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were used to investigate and analyze the speaking skills problems that Turkish high school EFL

learners face in their English classrooms from the perspectives of EFL teachers. The findings of which are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' points of view related to speaking problems

Items	M	SD	N
1. Students are afraid of making mistakes.	3.83	1.23	30
2. Some of my students speak very effectively, but others cannot. This demotivates them.	3.13	1.27	30
3. Shyness prevents students from speaking.	4.10	.92	30
4. Students cannot speak well in the classroom because their self-confidence is low.	3.86	1.13	30
5. Students' anxiety is too high. This prevents them from speaking well.	4.00	1.01	30
6. Students have difficulty finding opportunities to practice their speaking outside the classroom.	4.30	1.05	30
7. Speaking classes are not useful enough to help students communicate with English speaking people.	3.36	1.42	30
8. I do not think my students will make use of English speaking skills in my country.	3.06	1.28	30
9. There is no cooperation spirit among my students in speaking classes.	3.16	1.28	30
10. I do not have a good command of English speaking skills.	1.90	1.18	30
11. It would be better if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking so that they could provide a speech model for students.	3.53	1.19	30
12. I make too much use of students' mother tongue in the classroom.	2.76	1.04	30
13. My pronunciation is not good enough to be a model for my students.	2.03	1.27	30
14. I do not encourage students to speak.	1.93	1.08	30
15. My intervention and error correction is too harsh.	1.70	1.14	30
16. I do not show the tendency to speak English with my students outside the classroom when they try to do so.	1.83	1.05	30
17. I neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations.	2.13	1.22	30
18. My classes are teacher-centered; therefore, students cannot find the chance to express their ideas and participate in class discussion activities.	2.33	1.12	30
19. I spend a large proportion of class time asking questions about things to which they already knew the answers; therefore, no real communication takes place.	2.10	1.09	30
20. I do not encourage any group work or pair work; this inhibits student-	2.00	.98	30

student interaction in class.

21. I do not teach students how to express appropriate speech acts (e.g., greeting, complaint, refuse invitations or offers and so on).	1.66	.92	30
22. I do not tell students what to do when they cannot find the correct and appropriate word, structure and sentence during their speaking. In other words, I do not teach them oral communication strategy use.	2.03	1.06	30
23. I do not present interesting topics for discussion.	2.20	.99	30
24. I put less emphasis on speaking skills in comparison to other skills.	2.23	1.16	30
25. There are not enough and efficient facilities in language classrooms.	3.23	1.50	30
26. Classes are overcrowded.	3.60	1.27	30
27. The time of speaking classes is not appropriate. That is, speaking classes are held at the time when students do not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions.	3.53	1.25	30
28. The time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system are not enough to help students develop their speaking ability	4.13	.93	30
29. The educational system of Turkey has contributed to students' lack of speaking ability.	3.93	1.14	30
30. Students' poor general English knowledge results in their having difficulty making questions and directing them to their teacher or their classmates.	3.83	1.05	30
31. Students do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.	4.03	.88	30
32. Students do not have enough knowledge of collocations.	4.03	.96	30
33. They think in Turkish when They speak in English, which leads to their lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking.	4.00	1.11	30
34. They do not have enough grammar knowledge which leads to a lack of accuracy in their speaking.	3.70	1.11	30
35. Students' pronunciation is not good enough which causes difficulty in their communication.	3.80	1.06	30

Table 8 shows the descriptive statistics of 35 items related to the perspectives of EFL teachers who participated in this research. According to the teachers' points of view, the statistical data revealed that Turkish EFL 9th and 10th graders have fewer opportunities to practice English speaking outside the class (item 6; M=4.30). Additionally, EFL teachers commonly reported that the time allotted for speaking and listening lessons is not enough to help learners develop their speaking skills (item 28; M=4.13). Shyness, in teachers' perspective, was also a serious problem (item 3; M=4.10) that prevents students from practicing the English language inside

the classroom. Items (31 and 32), respectively, with a mean value of 4.03 revealed that *students do not have enough vocabulary knowledge* to form English sentences, and this may reduce their desire to initiate a conversation with others. Following vocabulary knowledge, *students do not have enough knowledge of collocations* was also stated as a problem by EFL teachers.

The analysis of the data of items (5 and 33) also showed that students' anxiety is too high, and students think in Turkish when they want to speak in English (M=4.00). According to the analysis of the results, the mean score of item 29, whether the Turkish educational system has contributed to students' lack of speaking ability, was found to be 3.93. Lack of self-confidence (item 4; M=3.86) was also reported as a problem by EFL teachers. With the same mean value (items 1 & 30; M=3.83) indicated that *students are afraid of making mistakes* as well as they have poor general English knowledge. EFL teachers commonly agreed that students' pronunciation is not good enough (item 35; M=3.80), and their grammar knowledge is inadequate (item 34; M=3.70). Overcrowded classes were also reported as a problem by English teachers (item 26; M=3.60). Besides, EFL teachers agreed that more than one teacher teaching speaking would be more fruitful, and the time of speaking lessons is not appropriate (items 11 & 27; M=3.53). Furthermore, teachers reported that speaking classes are not useful enough (item 7; M=3.36), and the facilities are not efficient in the language classroom (item 25; M=3.23). Besides, they also agreed that there is no cooperation spirit among the learners in the class (item 9; M=3.16). According to the teachers' perceptions, the domination of some students on others in the class seems to be a problem (item 2; M=3.13). Teachers also believe that students do not need to use English in Turkey (item 8; M=3.06).

Table 8 also displays the less frequently reported speaking skills problems based on the perceptions of English teachers. Accordingly, teachers state that they usually encourage their students to speak English (M=1.93), and they have a good command of English speaking skills (M=1.90). Teachers also reported that they show the tendency to communicate in English with their students even outside the classroom (M=1.83). The mean score for (teachers' intervention and error correction are too harsh) was as low as 1.70 whereas the mean score for (I do not teach students how to express appropriate speech acts like greeting, complaint, invitations or offers and so on) was even lower (M=1.66).

4.3.2.1. Results of RQ2a. Are there any significant differences between high school students' and EFL teachers' perceptions of English speaking problems?

To define and emphasize whether there is any statistically significant difference between EFL teachers and high school students points of view, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The findings are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9

Results of t-test for the difference between students and EFL teachers

	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Students	135	2.86	.491	-2.028	163	.04
Teachers	30	3.05	.371			

$p < .05$

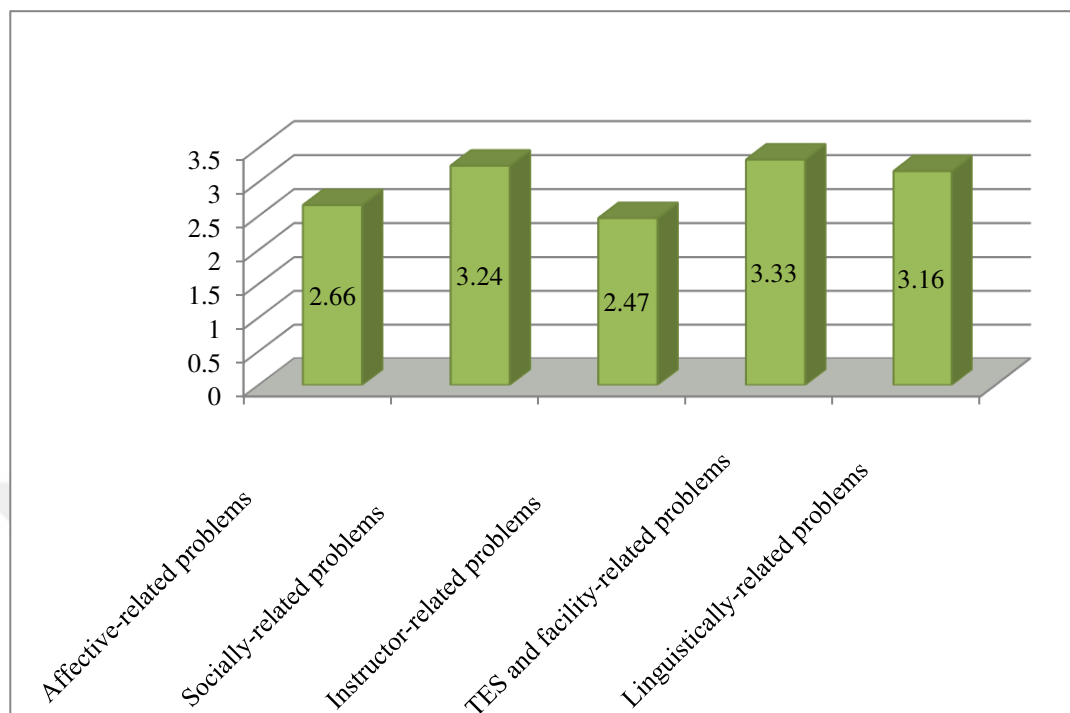
According to the results of the t-test in Table 9 ($p < .05$), it can be deduced that there is a statistically significant difference between EFL teachers and high school students' points of view concerning speaking skills problems. Moreover, it can be understood from the mean scores that English teachers are more aware of the problems that high school students encounter ($M=3.05$) than the students themselves. The mean score for students was found at 2.86.

4.3.3. Results of RQ 3. What are the most commonly speaking skill difficulties experienced by EFL learners according to the total means of each subcategory in terms of their grade and gender?

To figure out which problems were more frequently experienced by Turkish high school students in terms of their grade and gender, the mean score of each subcategory was calculated and presented in Figures 5, 6, 7, and 8, respectively.

Figure 1

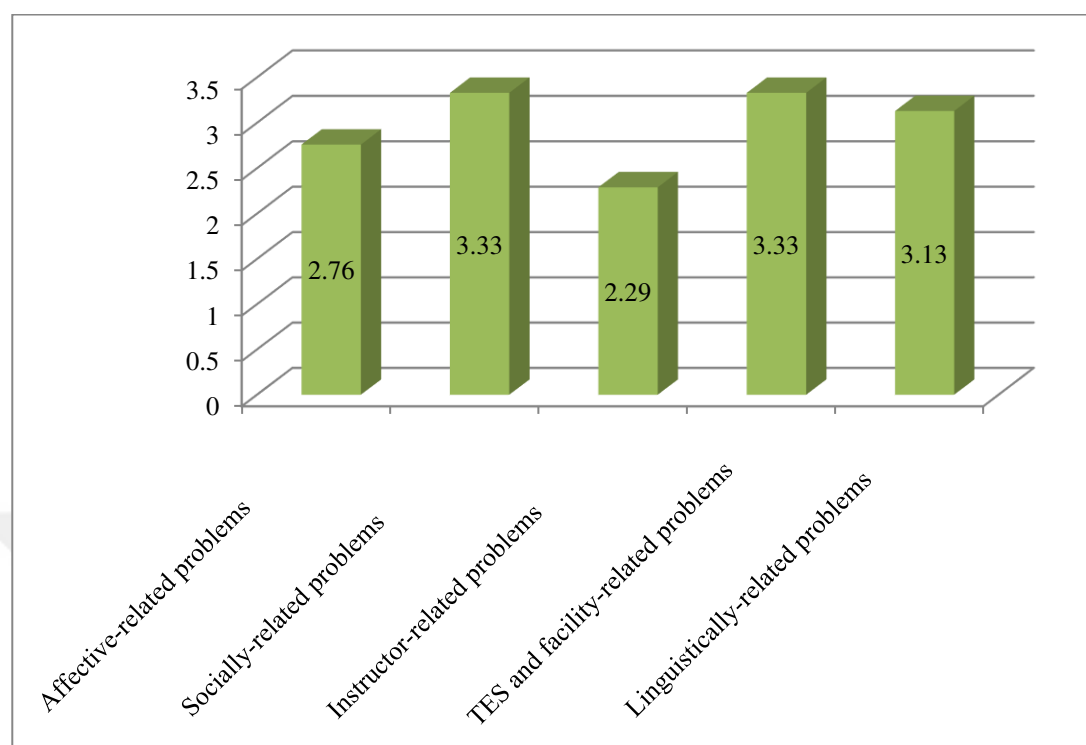
Speaking problems experienced by 9th grade students



As can be deduced from Figure 1, the most frequently experienced problem is concerned *the Turkish educational system and facility-related problems* ($M=3.33$), which means that students of 9th grade were most affected by this problem in speaking classes. *Socially related problems* followed ($M=3.24$). The problems related to linguistics ($M=3.16$) were expressed as the third factor. Subsequently, *affective related problems* were also significant with a mean value of 2.66. The less frequently stated problems by 9th graders are about speaking difficulties caused by their English teachers throughout the English classes ($M=2.47$).

Figure 2

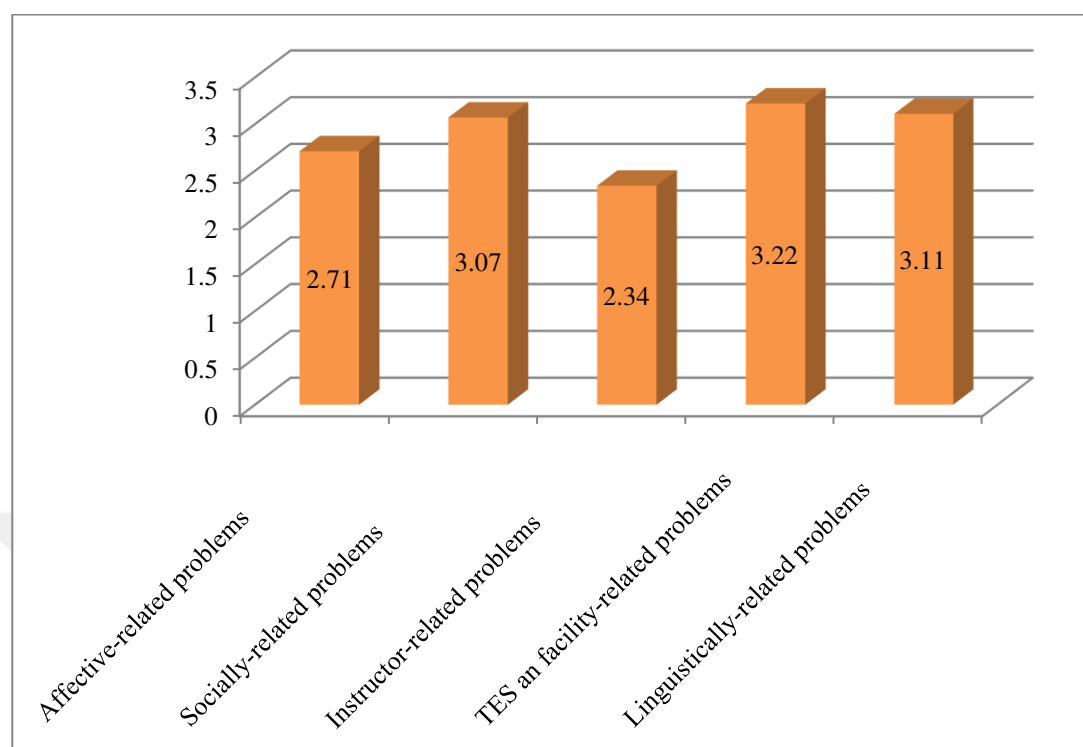
Speaking problems experienced by 10th grade students



As can be observed in Figure 2, it is clear that problems stemming from social factors and the education system of Turkey and lack of facilities were among the most frequently experienced speaking skills problems from the perspective of the 10th graders (M=3.33). Following these two factors, problems related to linguistic factors were expressed as the third issue (M=3.13). Participants also reported reasons related to affective and personal factors (M=2.76). The less frequent speaking skill problems articulated by the 10th graders, who took a part in this research, are related to some troubles, which are caused by their English teachers (M=2.29).

Figure 3

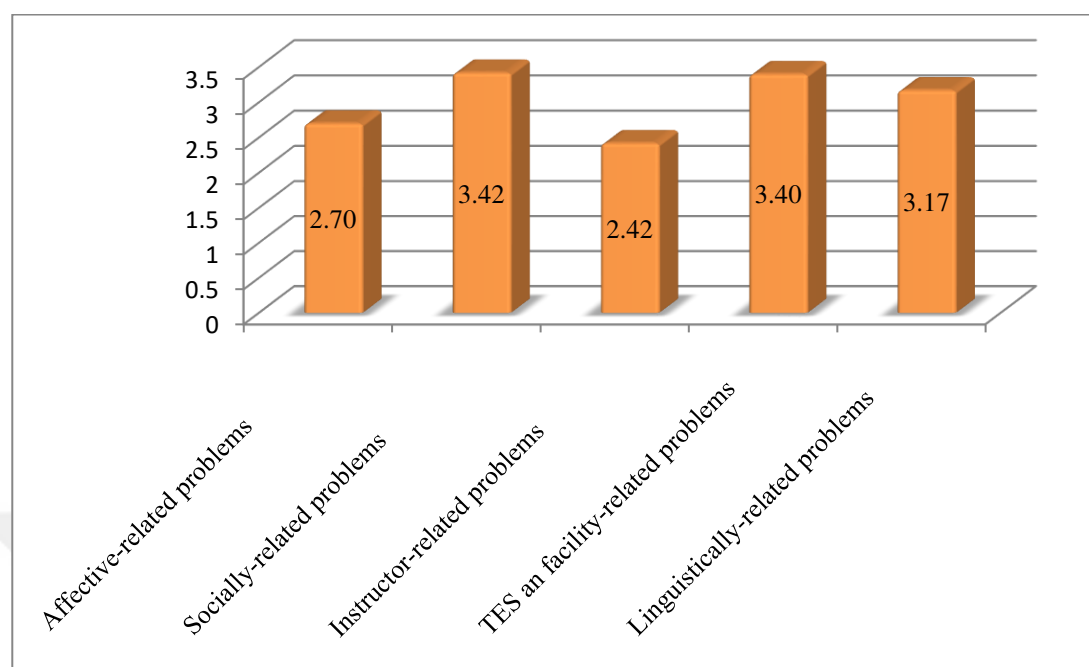
Speaking problems experienced by male students



Depending on the descriptive statistics of students' gender and the total means of each category, the statistical analysis of the collected data in Figure 3 shows that male students report English speaking difficulties attributed to the educational system of Turkey and insufficient facilities as the most frequently experienced problems ($M=3.22$). Besides, speaking skills problems that have arisen from linguistic factors ($M=3.11$) were expressed by males as the second obstacle. Following these two problems, it should also be pointed out that male students reported such important reasons related to social factors ($M=3.07$). Affective and personal factors were coming fourth with a total mean value of 2.71. Based on the findings in Figure 3 above, it is also apparent that the less frequently experienced speaking skills problems by male students were about factors that result from their English teachers ($M=2.34$) during classes.

Figure 4

Speaking problems experienced by female students



As part of the research, the statistical analysis of the relevant data concerning the viewpoints of female high school students from both 9th and 10th grades indicate that the most frequent speaking skill problems stated by female students were about social dilemmas that they face in the English classrooms ($M=3.42$). Following the social factors, the education system of Turkey and insufficient facilities in the language classroom were also reported as serious obstacles by female students ($M=3.40$). The issues connected to linguistic factors were reported as the third problem ($M=3.17$). Affective and personal factors with a total mean score of 2.70 were stated as the fourth issue. The less frequently expressed problems were associated with difficulties resulting from English teachers ($M=2.42$). These findings are presented in Figure 4.

4.3.4. Results of RQ4. What are the speaking problems that EFL learners in Turkish high schools experience resulting from affective, social, teacher, education system, and facility as well as linguistic factors from their points of view?

To answer this research question, descriptive statistics for each subcategory was resorted according to the perceptions of 135 high school students from both grades 9th and 10th, who participated in this study. Means and standard deviations of the learners' perception of speaking skills problems are described in Tables below under five subcategories. First, the students' points of view towards the affective-related speaking problems are presented in the following table.

Table 10

Affective-related speaking problems experienced by 9th and 10th graders

Items	N	M	SD
1. I am afraid of making mistakes.	135	3.05	1.36
2. My anxiety is too high.	135	2.76	1.24
3. Shyness prevents me from speaking.	135	2.64	1.31
4. My self-confidence is low.	135	2.56	1.27
5. Some of my classmates speak very effectively, but I cannot.	135	2.51	1.40
Total	135	2.70	.91

It seems clear that Table 10 includes five items of the first category of the questionnaire, which statistically measures the affective related speaking problems faced by both 9th and 10th graders. As indicated in Table 10, "I am afraid of making mistakes" was reported by EFL students as the most frequently experienced problem with a mean score of 3.05. Anxiety was reported as the second critical problem (M=2.76). It may prevent students from interacting through English with other individuals. Students also stated that shyness is another barrier that hinders them from using English in the classroom (M=2.64). Following shyness, lack of self-confidence (M=2.56) was reported by high school students as a problem that affects their speaking skill proficiency. "Some of my classmates speak very effectively, but I cannot. This de-motivates me" was reported as the less frequently experienced problem by Turkish high school students with a mean score of 2.51.

Table 11 illustrates the students' perceptions of the speaking skills problems that arose out of some social factors.

Table 11

Socially-related speaking problems experienced by 9th and 10th graders

Items	N	M	SD
1. It is difficult to find opportunities to practice my speaking outside the classroom.	135	3.51	1.34
2. My speaking classes are not useful enough.	135	3.31	1.27
3. I do not think I will use English speaking in my country.	135	3.24	1.32
4. There is no cooperation spirit among my classmates.	135	3.05	1.38
Total	135	3.28	.81

The second category of the quantitative method consists of 4 items that set out to investigate the social problems that Turkish high school EFL learners experienced while speaking English inside and even outside the English classes. With the highest mean score (M=3.51), descriptive statistics showed that students have barely any opportunities using English speaking outside English classrooms. Furthermore, "speaking classes are not useful enough to help us communicate with native English speakers" was commonly agreed by students as the second frequent problem (M=3.31). The third important factor reported by high school students is related to their need to practice English in Turkey. Turkish students believe that they do not need to communicate through English in their country (M=3.24). The cooperation spirit among students in speaking classes was the less frequently reported problem as the mean value is 3.05 (Table 11).

A total of 15 items were categorized to analyze the speaking troubles attributed to the EFL teachers in order to figure out the most frequently reported speaking skill problems from the perspective of EFL learners in Turkish public high schools. The results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

EFL teacher-related speaking problems experienced by 9th and 10th graders

Items	N	M	SD
1. It would be better if there were more than one English teacher teaching speaking skill.	135	3.10	1.48
2. My teacher makes too much use of our mother tongue.	135	2.94	1.32
3. My teachers put less emphasis on speaking skills in comparison to other skills.	135	2.81	1.38

4. My teachers' pronunciation is not good enough.	135	2.72	2.90
5. My teachers do not encourage any group work or pair work.	135	2.69	1.24
6. My teachers do not present interesting topics for discussion.	135	2.65	1.33
7. My speaking teachers spend a large proportion of class time asking questions about things to which I already knew the answers.	135	2.58	1.35
8. My classes are teacher-centered.	135	2.57	1.25
9. My teachers neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations.	135	2.49	1.34
10. My teachers do not encourage us to speak.	135	2.40	1.39
11. My teachers do not teach us how to express appropriate speech acts.	135	2.40	2.21
12. My teachers don't show the tendency to speak English with me outside the classroom.	135	2.29	2.21
13. My teachers do not teach us oral communication strategy use.	135	2.12	1.16
14. My teachers do not have a good command of English speaking	135	2.11	1.40
15. Intervention and error correction of my teachers is too harsh.	135	2.10	1.32
Total	135	2.39	.67

As indicated above in Table 12, both 9th and 10th graders commonly approved that more than one English teacher teaching speaking skills could provide a better speech model for EFL students (M=3.10). They also reported that their English teachers make too much use of their mother tongue in the classroom (M=2.94) and put more emphasis on other skills in comparison to speaking skills (M=2.81). Among the less frequent speaking problems expressed by high school students were that *EFL teachers do not teach us oral communication strategy use* (M=2.12), *they do not have a good command of English speaking skills* (M=2.11) and *the intervention and error correction of English teachers is too severe* (M=2.10).

In Table 13, five items were categorized and statistically analyzed in order to determine whether the Turkish education system and facility-related problems harm students' speaking abilities in their points of view.

Table 13

Turkish educational system and facility-related speaking problems experienced by 9th and 10th graders

Items	N	M	SD
1. Our class is overcrowded.	135	3.57	1.41
2. Facilities in language classrooms are not enough and efficient.	135	3.40	1.43
3. The educational system of Turkey has contributed to my lack of speaking ability.	135	3.31	1.30
4. The time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system is not enough.	135	3.23	1.35
5. The time of our speaking classes is not appropriate.	135	3.13	1.31
Total	135	3.33	.92

As it is implied in Table 13, both 9th and 10th graders unanimously agreed that their classes are overcrowded (M=3.57). Descriptive statistics also showed that there are not enough and efficient facilities in language classrooms (M=3.40) and that the educational system of Turkey has contributed to students' lack of speaking ability (M=3.31). The less frequently reported problems were that the time allotted to speaking and listening lessons are not enough to help students develop their speaking ability (M=3.23), and the speaking classes are held at the time when students do not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions (M=3.13).

Table 14 presented the results of the last category, which explored Turkish high school students' points of view towards the linguistic factors they experienced in the English learning classes.

Table 14

Linguistics related speaking problems experienced by 9th and 10th graders

Items	N	M	SD
1. I think in Turkish when I speak in English.	135	3.25	2.81
2. I do not have enough knowledge of collocations.	135	3.23	2.99
3. My pronunciation is not good enough.	135	3.22	1.38
4. I do not have enough grammar knowledge	135	3.17	1.32
5. I do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.	135	3.05	1.37

6. My general English knowledge is poor.	135	2.94	1.28
Total	135	3.14	1.04

As Table 14 reveals, the most frequently reported problem was that students think in Turkish when they speak in English (M=3.25). The item stating “I do not have enough knowledge of collocations” was the following problem with a mean value of 3.23. The third frequent problem was related to pronunciation. Participants reported that they find difficulty in communication because their pronunciation is not good enough (M=3.22). Students respectively reported that they do not have enough grammar knowledge, which leads to a lack of accuracy in their speaking skills (M=3.17). Lack of vocabulary knowledge was also stated as a serious problem (M=3.05). Poor general English knowledge was the less frequently experienced problem with a mean value of 2.94.

4.3.4.1. Results of RQ 4a. Are there any statistically significant differences between students’ perceptions of English speaking problems caused by affective, social, teacher, education system, and facility as well as linguistic factors in terms of their grade and gender?

To answer this research question, an independent samples t-test was conducted for each subcategory of the questionnaire in order to find out whether there are any statistically significant differences between EFL learners’ perspectives of speaking difficulties in terms of their grade and gender.

In order to figure out whether there is a difference between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions concerning the speaking problems resulting from some psychological factors, an independent samples t-test was run for this purpose and the results are summarized and presented in the following table.

Table 15

T-test comparing 9th and 10th graders’ views of affective related speaking problems

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
9 th	76	2.66	.892	-.666	133	.50
10 th	59	2.76	.953			

p > .05

According to the t-test results in Table 15, there is no significant difference between the learners' perceptions ($p > .05$). However, considering the mean value, it might be said that 10th grade students ($M=2.76$) experienced affective problems slightly more than their colleagues studying in grade 9 ($M=2.66$).

The results in Table 16 display whether there is a difference between the students' perceptions regarding the speaking skills hindrances stemming from some social factors.

Table 16

T-test comparing 9th and 10th graders' views of socially related speaking problems

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
9 th	76	3.24	.818	-.700	133	.48
10 th	59	3.33	.806			

$p > .05$

As the results in Table 16 reveal, there is no statistically significant difference between the 9th and 10th graders' points of view regarding socially-related problems ($p > .05$). Notwithstanding what has just been mentioned, the mean score revealed that students in grade 10 experience speaking skill difficulties ($M=3.33$) concerning social problems somewhat more than the students in grade 9 ($M=3.24$).

To answer the question concerning whether there is a difference between the 9th and 10th graders' perspectives concerning the English speaking troubles that are caused by the teachers, an independent samples t-test was conducted and the results are presented in Table 17.

Table 17

T-test comparing 9th and 10th graders' views of teacher related speaking problems

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
9 th	76	2.47	.624	1.516	133	.13
10 th	59	2.29	.721			

$p > .05$

Based on the results provided in Table 17 ($p > .05$), it is clear that there is no statistically significant difference between the two grades' perceptions of speaking skill problems related to EFL teachers. Nonetheless, the statistical data

pointed out that 9th graders were more aware of the difficulties (M=2.47) than 10 graders (M=2.29) regarding the speaking problems that may be caused by their English teachers in the classroom.

To compare the 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of speaking skills problems stemming from the education system of Turkey as well as the ineffective and inadequate classroom facilities, the results of the t-test are summarized and presented in Table 18.

Table 18

T-test comparing students' views of the Turkish educational system and facility related problems

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
9 th	76	3.33	.907	-.046	133	.96
10 th	59	3.33	.956			

$p > .05$

As Table 18 reveals, the t-test results indicate a statistically insignificant difference between the 9th and 10th graders' perceptions regarding the education system and facility-related speaking problems ($p > .05$). Moreover, taking into consideration the mean scores, it could be said that both graders have experienced similar difficulties concerning the education system of the country and facility-related problems with a mean value of 3.33.

In order to find out whether there is any significant difference between the 9th and 10th graders' points of view towards the speaking skills problems caused by some linguistic factors, an independent samples t-test was conducted, and the findings are shown in Table 19.

Table 19

T-test comparing students' views of linguistically related speaking problems

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
9 th	76	3.16	1.02	.163	133	.87
10 th	59	3.13	1.06			

$p > .05$

The t-test results do not suggest any statistically significant difference between the ninth and tenth graders' perspectives ($p > .05$). Despite that, as Table 19 indicates, there is a difference between 9th ($M=3.16$) and 10th graders ($M=3.13$) in terms of the linguistic problems that they experience during lessons.

Table 20 below displays the results of the t-test in order to show the difference between the perspectives of male and female students related to the speaking skills problems, which may result from some affective factors.

Table 20

Results of t-test between male and female students based on the affective related problem

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
M	54	2.71	.792	.092	133	.92
F	81	2.70	.997			

$p > .05$

The findings in Table 20 indicate that there is no significant difference between male and female students' points of view regarding affective-related speaking problems ($p > .05$).

A t-test was conducted to determine whether there is any significant difference between male and female students' viewpoints concerning social factors, which they experience throughout their English speaking lessons. The results can be analyzed in Table 21.

Table 21

Results of t-test between male and female students based on socially related problems

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
M	54	3.07	.868	-2.492	133	.01
F	81	3.42	.745			

$p < .05$

According to Table 21, there is a significant difference between males' and females' perceptions of socially related speaking skill problems ($p < .05$). In other

words, female students have a significantly higher mean score regarding social factors ($M=3.42$) than male students ($M=3.07$).

In order to see whether there is a difference between the viewpoints of male and female students regarding the speaking skill problems attributed to the English teachers, a t-test was performed. The results are given in Table 22.

Table 22

Results of t-test between male and female students based on teacher-related problems

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
M	54	2.34	.628	-.696	133	.48
F	81	2.42	.700			

$p > .05$

As can be seen in Table 22, there is no noticeable difference between females and males' perspectives concerning English speaking obstacles caused by their English teachers in the classroom ($p > .05$). Despite previous mentions, the data showed that female students had a slightly higher rate of the factors, which prohibited them from communicating through English because of some problems caused by their English teachers ($M=2.42$). The mean score for male students who took part in the study was recorded as 2.34.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to find out the difference between the students' gender in terms of speaking skills problems stemming from the education system of Turkey and the lack of facilities in the language classrooms. The related findings are displayed in Table 23.

Table 23

Results of t-test between male and female students based on the Turkish educational system and facility related problems

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
M	54	3.22	.896	-1.156	133	.25
F	81	3.40	.942			

$p > .05$

As the results of the t-test in Table 23 indicate, overall, no statistically significant difference can be seen between males and females' points of view towards the educational system and facility-related problems as the significant value was found as ($p > .05$). Nevertheless, it was noticeable that female students had a higher mean score than male students with a mean score of 3.40. The score for males was found to be 3.22.

In order to notice any possible difference between male and female students' perspectives regarding the linguistic factors that may contribute to speaking skills problems, a t-test was performed, and the results are presented in Table 24.

Table 24

Results of t-test between male and female students based on linguistically-related problems

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
M	54	3.11	1.02	-.320	133	.75
F	81	3.17	1.05			

$p > .05$

The results in Table 24 ($p > .05$) reveal that males' viewpoint does not statistically differ from females' viewpoint regarding the linguistic problems that they experience during their English lessons. Apart from that, the results show a slight difference between students in terms of gender. The mean score for males was reported as 3.11, while it was recorded as 3.17 for females.

4.3.4.2. Results of RQ 4b. Overall, are there any statistically significant differences between students' perceptions regarding their grade and gender?

In order to answer this research question, an independent samples t-test was conducted for each individual item of the scale. Only those findings of which were statistically significant are displayed in Table 25 and 26, respectively.

Table 25

Results of t-test between 9th and 10th graders based on individual items of the questionnaire

No. of Item	Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
8	9	76	3.00	1.32	-2.481	133	.01
	10	59	3.55	1.26			
19	9	76	2.88	1.45	2.975	133	.00
	10	59	2.20	1.11			
20	9	76	3.00	1.18	3.329	133	.00
	10	95	2.30	1.22			

As Table 25 clarifies, a statistically significant difference was observed between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of their English speaking skills problems for item 8, *I do not think I will make use of English speaking in my country* ($p=0.01$). The result also suggested that 10th graders have a significantly higher mean score ($M=3.55$) than 9th graders ($M=3.00$) related to utilizing English in their country. Following this problem, the results of item 19, *my English teachers ask questions about things to which I already know the answers*, yielded a significant difference between both graders 9 and 10 ($p=0.00$). In other words, 9th graders ($M=2.88$) have a higher mean score than 10th graders ($M=2.20$). Respectively, item 20, *my teacher does not encourage any group work or pair work*, demonstrated a statistically significant difference between high school students of 9th and 10th grades ($p=0.00$). It means that students of 9th grade were more knowledgeable about this problem ($M=3.00$) than students of 10th grade ($M=2.30$).

Table 26

Results of t-test between male and female students based on individual items of the questionnaire

No. of Item	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
3	m	54	2.94	1.36	2.199	133	.03
	f	81	2.44	1.24			
7	m	54	3.05	1.36	-1.971	133	.04
	F	81	3.49	1.19			
10	m	54	1.77	1.36	-2.341	133	.02

	f	81	2.34	1.19			
17	m	54	2.14	1.20	-2.507	133	.01
	f	81	2.72	1.38			
35	m	54	2.81	1.31	-2.875	133	.00
	f	81	3.49	1.36			

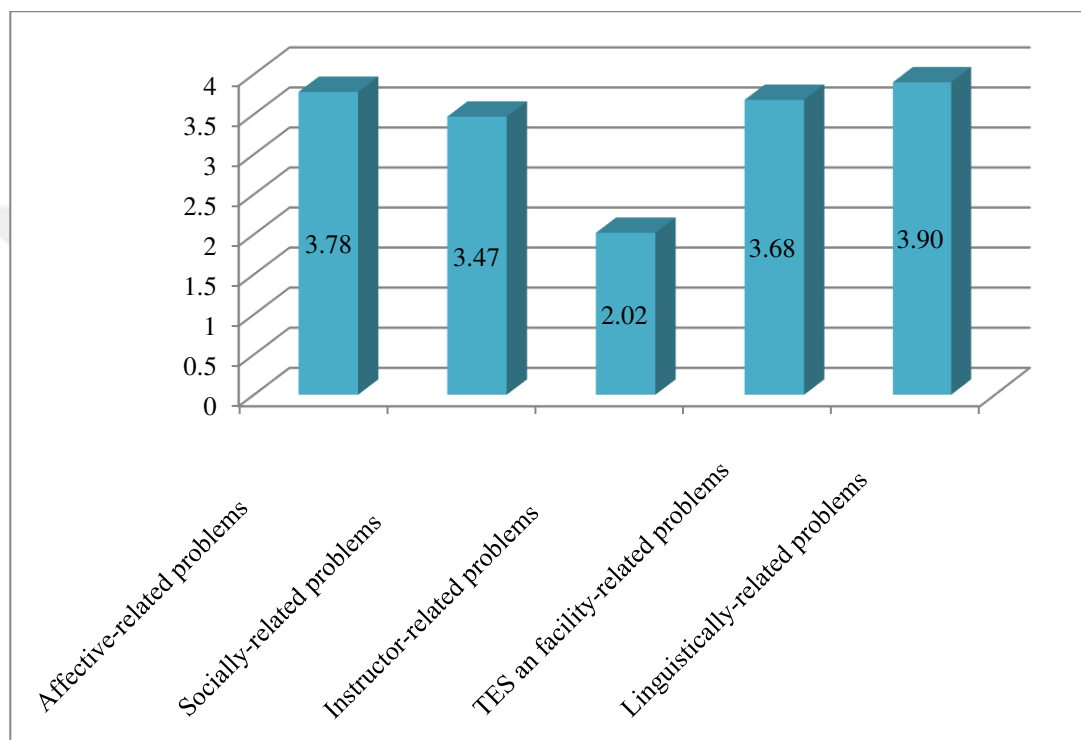
Based on the t-test results for each item of the questionnaire, significant differences were observed in five separate items which disclosed the difference between male and female students' perceptions of speaking skills problems. As Table 26 displays, the result of item 3, *shyness prevents me from speaking*, suggested a significant difference between males and females ($p= 0.03$). However, the data showed that males had a higher rate of shyness ($M=2.49$). The mean score for females was recorded as 2.44. Following this problem, t-test results of item 7 concerning *inefficient speaking classes* brought to light a statistically significant difference between females and males ($p= 0.04$), meaning that females are more aware of this problem ($M=3.49$) than males ($M=3.05$). Likewise, item 10, *my teacher does not have a good command of English speaking skills*, also yielded a significant difference value in terms of students' gender ($p= 0.02$). Moreover, it is evident that females suffer from this problem ($M=2.34$) more than males. The mean score for males was found to be 1.77. Furthermore, according to the outcome of item 17, *my teachers neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations*, a significant difference was observed in terms of the gender of the students ($p= 0.01$). In other words, females were more affected by this problem ($M=2.72$) than males. The mean value for males was found to be 2.14. Besides, it was clear that item 35, *poor pronunciation*, illustrated a difference between males and females ($p= 0.00$), meaning that females' pronunciation ($M=3.49$) was relatively weaker than males' pronunciation. The mean value for males was recorded as 2.81 (Table 26).

4.3.5. Results of RQ. 5. Overall, what are the most frequently speaking skill problems experienced by EFL teachers according to the total means of each category?

To answer this research question, the mean scores for each category were calculated and considered in order to figure out the most commonly speaking skills difficulties expressed by EFL teachers during the English speaking lessons. The results of the overall data are demonstrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Speaking problems explained by English teachers



According to the mean scores of each category, it is quite understandable that linguistic factors, as reported by English teachers were the most trouble-making factors hinder high school students to speak English effectively ($M=3.90$). Affective and personal factors were expressed as the second issue with a mean score of 3.78. The difficulties stemmed from the education system as well as inadequate and inefficient facilities were described as the third problem ($M=3.68$). Following these, the teachers also reported reasons related to social factors ($M=3.47$). It seems clear that the less frequently stated factors by EFL teachers were about the problems caused by English teachers themselves throughout the English classes ($M=2.02$).

4.3.6. Results of RQ 6. What are the speaking problems faced by EFL learners in Turkish high schools concerning affective, social, teacher, educational system, and facility as well as linguistically problems from English teachers' points of view?

Means and standard deviations for each subcategory related to EFL teachers' perspectives towards English speaking problems that are faced by Turkish high school students are presented and interpreted separately in five Tables below.

First, the perceptions of EFL teachers concerning the speaking skills troubles arising out of some affective and personal factors are illustrated in Table 27.

Table 27

Affective-related speaking problems expressed by EFL teachers

Items	N	M	SD
1. Shyness prevents students from speaking.	30	4.10	.92
2. Students' anxiety is too high.	30	4.00	1.01
3. Students' self-confidence is low.	30	3.86	1.13
4. Students are afraid of making mistakes.	30	3.83	1.23
5. Some students speak very effectively, but others cannot.	30	3.13	1.27
Total	30	3.78	.82

Among the affective factors, EFL teachers unanimously agreed that shyness ($M=4.10$) and anxiety ($M=4.00$) are the most serious problems preventing Turkish high school students from initiating a conversation with their peers using the English language. Following these two factors, learners' lack of self-confidence was also reported as a problem by EFL teachers, which prohibited students from communicating through the English language in the classroom ($M=3.86$). Being afraid of making mistakes was another problem the students encounter with a mean score recorded as 3.83. "Some students speak fast and dominated the class, which may demotivate others" was the less commonly expressed problem by EFL teachers ($M=3.13$).

In order to know the EFL teachers' viewpoints towards the speaking skills obstacles attributed to some social factors, the results of descriptive statistics for this category are summarized and shown in table 28.

Table 28

Socially related speaking problems expressed by EFL teachers

Items	N	M	SD
1. Students have difficulty finding opportunities to practice their speaking outside the classroom.	30	4.30	1.05
2. Speaking classes are not useful enough for students.	30	3.36	1.42
3. There is no cooperation spirit among my students in speaking classes.	30	3.16	1.28
4. Students will not make use of English speaking skills in their country.	30	3.06	1.28
Total	30	3.47	.69

Table 28 provided results of four items related to some social problems that high school students encounter the English teachers' points of view. The mean score of item 6 revealed that learners face difficulty in finding opportunities to communicate through English outside the classroom (M=4.30). Following this problem, teachers reported that students could not communicate well with English native speakers depending on speaking classes (M=3.36). They also agreed that there is no cooperation spirit among students in speaking classes (M=3.16). "Students will not make use of English speaking skills in Turkey" was reported as the least problem (M=3.06).

Table 29 introduces the perspectives of EFL teachers of the speaking difficulties that may be caused by their behaviors, methods of teaching, their qualifications as well as their strategy used in teaching speaking skills in the classroom.

Table 29

English teacher-related speaking problems expressed by EFL teachers

Items	N	M	SD
1. It would be better if there were more than one English teacher teaching speaking	30	3.53	1.19
2. I make too much use of students' mother tongue in the classroom.	30	2.76	1.04
3. My classes are teacher-centered.	30	2.33	1.12
4. I put less emphasis on speaking skills in comparison to other skills.	30	2.23	1.16
5. I do not present interesting topics for discussion.	30	2.20	.99
6. I neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations.	30	2.13	1.22
7. I spend a large proportion of class time asking questions about things to	30	2.10	1.09

which students already knew the answers

8. My pronunciation is not good enough to be a model for my students.	30	2.03	1.27
9. I do not teach my students oral communication strategy use.	30	2.03	1.06
10. I do not encourage any group work or pair work	30	2.00	.98
11. I do not encourage students to speak.	30	1.93	1.08
12. I do not have a good command of English speaking skills.	30	1.90	1.18
13. I do not show the tendency to speak English with my students outside the classroom.	30	1.83	1.05
14. My intervention and error correction is too harsh.	30	1.70	1.14
15. I do not teach students how to express appropriate speech acts.	30	1.66	.92
Total	30	2.02	.42

According to the perspective of EFL teachers, Table 29 illustrated English teacher-related problems that may affect students' ability and desire to learn and practice English speaking effectively in the English classroom. As indicated in this category, the most frequently reported problem with a mean score of 3.53 was related to the number of teachers. According to the data analysis, the mean score of whether EFL teachers make too much use of students' mother tongue in the classroom was found to be 2.76. Teacher-centered classes were reported as the third most frequent problem (M=2.33).

The mean score for whether teachers' intervention and error correction are too harsh or not was as low as 1.70, whereas the mean score for whether they teach students how to express appropriate speech acts or not was even lower (M=1.66).

Table 30 displays the EFL teachers' points of view regarding the speaking skills impediments stemming from the education system of Turkey as well as the lack and ineffective facilities in the speaking classes.

Table 30

Turkish educational system and facility-related speaking problems expressed by EFL teachers

Items	N	M	SD
1. The time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system is not enough.	30	4.13	.93
2. The educational system of Turkey has contributed to students' lack of speaking ability.	30	3.93	1.14

3. Classes are overcrowded.	30	3.60	1.27
4. The time of speaking classes is not appropriate.	30	3.53	1.25
5. Facilities in language classrooms are not enough and inefficient.	30	3.23	1.50
Total	30	3.68	.74

Five items of the questionnaire aimed to uncover the speaking problems, which may arise out of the education system of Turkey and the English classroom facilities from the EFL teachers' points of view. As seen in Table 30, the most frequently experienced problem by EFL teachers was that the time allotted to speaking and listening lessons is not enough to help students develop their speaking proficiency ($M=4.13$). Connected to this statement, the education system of Turkey has contributed to students' lack of speaking ability with a mean value of 3.93. Overcrowded classes were another problem reported by EFL teachers ($M=3.60$). Teachers also stated that the time of speaking classes is not appropriate ($M=3.53$). The less frequently expressed problem by EFL teachers was that the facilities in language classrooms are not enough and inefficient ($M=3.23$).

Table 31 below reveals some linguistic problems encountered by EFL learners in the English learning classes from the perspective of EFL teachers.

Table 31

Linguistics related speaking problems expressed by EFL teachers

Items	N	M	SD
1. Students do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.	30	4.03	.88
2. Students do not have enough knowledge of collocations.	30	4.03	.96
3. Students think in Turkish when They speak in English.	30	4.00	1.11
4. Students' general English knowledge is poor.	30	3.83	1.05
5. Students' pronunciation is not good enough.	30	3.80	1.06
6. Students do not have enough grammar knowledge.	30	3.70	1.11
Total	30	3.90	.83

Table 31 provides the results of the last category, which consists of six items related to linguistic problems that Turkish high school students experienced in speaking classes from the perspective of EFL teachers. As Table 31 displays, the most frequently experienced problems are related to vocabulary knowledge and knowledge of collocations ($M=4.03$). Thinking in Turkish when they speak in

English was another problem stated by teachers ($M=4.00$). Students' poor general English knowledge was stated as a problem, too ($M=3.83$). The analysis of the data also showed that EFL learners have difficulty in pronunciation ($M=3.80$). In this respect, our students need to practice the pronunciation of English more in their English classrooms because they could not have such a chance outside their English classes. According to the teachers' perspective, the data also revealed that high school students do not have enough grammar knowledge ($M=3.70$).

4.3.6.1 Results of RQ 6a. Are there any significant differences between EFL teachers' and students' perceptions of speaking problems arising from affective, social, teacher, educational system and facility as well as linguistically problems?

To answer this research question, an independent samples t-test was conducted to figure out whether there are any statistically significant differences between EFL teachers' and students' viewpoints for each subcategory regarding English speaking skills problems.

To whether, overall, there is any possible difference between the perceptions of EFL students and English teachers related to some affective factors, the t-test results are presented in Table 32 for this purpose.

Table 32

The T-test results for students' and teachers' perspectives on affective related speaking problems

	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Students	135	2.70	.917	-5.918	163	.00
Teachers	30	3.78	.823			

$p < .05$

The t-test results of the overall data, including affective problems related items, show that there is a significant difference between EFL learners and teachers ($p < .00$). In other words, EFL teachers have a statistically significantly higher mean value concerning affective problems ($M=3.78$) than EFL students ($M=2.70$).

In order to reveal the difference between the EFL teachers' and students' points of view concerning the speaking difficulties stem from some social factors, an independent samples t-test was used, and the findings are displayed in Table 33.

Table 33

The t-test results for students' and teachers' perspectives on socially-related speaking problems

	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Students	135	3.28	.811	-1.198	163	.23
Teachers	30	3.47	.695			

$p > .05$

As Table 33 illustrates, the t-test results notice a statistically insignificant difference between EFL teachers and high school students ($p > .23$) regarding the social factors that both experience although the mean score for teachers ($M=3.47$) was slightly higher. The mean score for high school students was recorded as 3.28.

In order to find out the difference between the EFL teachers' and students' perspectives concerning the speaking problems resulting from EFL teachers' behaviors and methods in the speaking classes, an independent samples t-test was conducted, and the results can be seen in Table 34.

Table 34

The t-test results for students' and teachers' perspectives on teacher-related speaking problems

	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Students	135	2.39	.671	2.892	163	.00
Teachers	30	2.02	.425			

$p < .05$

The results of the t-test point out a significant difference between EFL teachers and EFL learners ($p < .00$). It is also clear that students in grades 9 and 10 have a statistically significantly higher mean score ($M=2.39$) than English teachers ($M=2.02$) concerning the problems caused by the teachers.

The next research question is related to the differences between high school students' and EFL teachers' points of view towards speaking skills difficulties about

the education system of the country and facility-related speaking problems. A t-test was conducted, and the results are summarized in Table 35.

Table 35

The t-test results for students' and teachers' perspectives of the Turkish education system and facility-related speaking problems

	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Students	135	3.33	.925	-1.944	163	.04
Teachers	30	3.68	.747			

$p < .05$

Overall, there is a significant difference between English teachers' and EFL learners' perspectives ($p < .04$). In other words, EFL teachers have a statistically significantly higher mean score ($M=3.68$) than high school students ($M=3.33$) in both the 9th and 10th grades.

Table 36 displays the results of the t-test to show whether there is a difference between students' and teachers' viewpoints about the linguistic problems faced by 9th and 10th graders inside the classroom.

Table 36

The t-test results for students' and teachers' perspectives on linguistically-related speaking problems

	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Students	135	3.14	1.040	-3.692	163	.00
Teachers	30	3.90	.839			

$p < .05$

According to the results of the data related to the linguistic factors that both EFL teachers and students experience in the classrooms, there is a difference between the perceptions of students and English teachers regarding English speaking skill problems stem from the linguistic factors ($p < .00$). In other terms, the mean score of English teachers ($M=3.90$) on linguistic speaking problems was relatively higher than the students ($M=3.14$).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.1. Presentation

The present research focuses on the factors that cause speaking skill problems faced by Turkish high school students in English classrooms. This chapter introduces and discusses the findings of the research questions related to this study.

5.2. Discussing the Findings of the Research Questions

The essential aim of this research was to investigate and analyze the perceptions of EFL learners and EFL teachers towards speaking skills problems and figure out the significant differences existing between learners in terms of their grade and gender and also between the learners and English teachers according to the quantitative collected data. Below, the findings of the research questions of the current study are discussed and compared with those of other researchers in detail.

5.2.1. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 1

According to the findings of the first research question, the results revealed that Turkish EFL 9th and 10th graders who participated in the current study experienced nearly the same speaking skills problems that influence their English oral efficiency in the classroom. This implies that Turkish EFL learners in public high schools probably encounter the same speaking difficulties.

The first speaking skill obstacle that both 9th and 10th graders in Turkish state high schools commonly shared was *being afraid of making mistakes* when they are asked to take part in the class discussions. They may not like being criticized negatively by their teachers or being laughed at by their classmates and look

ridiculous. This finding confirms other studies, for instance, Grengersen and Horwitz (2009), and Liu (2005) state that feeling afraid of making mistakes is among the affective factors preventing EFL learners from participating in speaking lessons. This problem was also observed in a related study done by Sayuri (2016). He investigated the speaking problems encountered by fourth-semester students of the English department at Mulawarman University and found out that being afraid of making mistakes was a serious problem expressed by his participants.

The second speaking hindrance encountered by both ninth and tenth graders was *the difficulty of finding opportunities to practice speaking outside the English classes*. However, in Diyarbakir, the problem is more complicated, as Turkish EFL students are unable to find opportunities to communicate with English native speakers because of the shortage in the number of foreign tourists in the city. Besides, the majority of citizens in Diyarbakir prefer to communicate through their mother-tongue (Turkish), so no real communication takes place in English. Another study in the literature supports these findings. Senel (2012) conducted a study on 32 Turkish EFL learners and also reported that one of their speaking problems was the lack of L2 use outside the classroom.

The third speaking skill problem as both graders commonly reported was *ineffectual speaking classes*. This may occur due to methods and tasks that English teachers employ in speaking lessons, which focused on other skills rather than speaking skills, or it might stem from the EFL teachers' lack of theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of teaching and improving speaking skills. This finding is supported in other literature studies. For instance, Asakereh and Afshar (2016) conducted a study on Iranian EFL first-year students and seniors. The participants of their study commonly agreed that the speaking classes are inefficient because of the instructors' poor knowledge of teaching oral activities. Kayi (2006) claims that even though oral abilities play a crucial role in human beings' communication, EFL teachers usually fail to concentrate on this ability properly; instead, they mainly focus on exercises, repetition, and the memorizing English dialogues.

The fourth speaking skills dilemma that is commonly shared by most of the high school EFL 9th and 10th graders was that *using English speaking skills in their country is unnecessary*. This may be because the Turkish learners are unaware of the

importance of the English language in their life after graduation from universities and getting appropriate jobs or traveling abroad to work or live there. In his study, Atabek (2006) reported that EFL learners thought there was no need to communicate through English outside the classroom.

The fifth speaking skills problem shared by the participants of both graders 9 and 10 was *the absence of cooperation spirit among students in speaking classes*. This might stem from students' poor general English knowledge, so they are reluctant to practice English with their classmates since they have nothing to say or share with others in English.

The sixth speaking skill challenge commonly reported by both 9th and 10th graders was *the inadequate and inefficient facilities in language classrooms*. English language classrooms should have adequate and efficient equipment to enhance EFL students' speaking skills, such as video projectors, smart boards, computers, pronunciation tasters, besides, provide the learners with Internet access so they can achieve authentic materials and have the chance to contact with native speakers online. This issue was also found in the literature. For instance, Uline and Tschannen-Moran (2008), in their research, revealed that there is a correlation between the quality of university facilities and learners' achievement. Büyükyavuz and İnal (2008) also reported that English language teaching in Turkey has difficulties resulting from the lack of teaching materials.

The seventh speaking skill problem that both graders commonly shared was *the overcrowded classes*. In these situations, students might have very little time for talking or never speak because some students dominate the classroom discussion while others keep silent and merely listen. Corroborating this, Ur (1996) indicated that in crowded classes, some learners lose their chances to participate through the target language, and this condition creates passive and dominant learners. Furthermore, a class that contains a large number of students, pair work, or group work is hard to be employed. Jin et al. (1998) also mentioned that students could not work in pairs or groups in overcrowded classes.

The eighth speaking skill difficulty commonly experienced by Turkish high school students in both grades 9 and 10 was *the inappropriate time of speaking classes*. Students complained that speaking lessons are held at the time when they do

not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions. This problem was highlighted in another research study done by Asakereh and Afshar (2016) They reported that Iranian EFL seniors are not satisfied with the time their speaking lessons are lectured either in the early morning or after lunchtime.

The ninth speaking skills trouble commonly encountered by Turkish 9th and 10th graders was related to *the insufficient time allotted to speaking and listening classes*, which restricts the process of developing speaking abilities of the learners. This implies that the textbooks, the curriculum, and the education policy of Turkey may put more emphasis on grammar, reading, and writing skills rather than listening and speaking skills. Corroborating these findings, Lazaraton (1989) and Atabek (2006) stated this issue by noting that speaking ability is usually neglected in the course books. In terms of listening, Grant (1987) indicated that listening skill is exceedingly crucial. Firstly, because communication will break down without understanding what is being said. Second, learning and acquiring a language becomes easier after some progress in listening skills.

The tenth speaking skills problem reported by the students of grade 9 and 10 was related to *the education system of Turkey* since it may contribute to students' lack of speaking ability. This may due to the education policy of the country, which may need to make a balance among the four macro skills of the English language since the textbook for teaching English skills at public high schools may lack speaking and listening activities. Yılmaz (2008) highlights the fact that English textbooks utilized in Turkish schools are mostly reading and grammar-based, and lack supporting speaking activities. Besides, the classrooms may lack facilities and materials needed for teaching and learning speaking skills. It may also be a result of conducting the traditional methods of teaching foreign languages or the deficient number of training courses offered to English teachers. Farhadi, Hezaveh, and Hedayati (2010) argued that reforming an educational system demands adequate evidence of the new theoretical structure, materials improvement, assessment procedures, equipment, administration, and teacher training.

The eleventh speaking skill problem experienced by both 9th and 10th graders was related to *inadequate vocabulary knowledge*. For this reason, EFL learners in Turkish high schools face difficulty finding appropriate English words to form phrases or sentences when they are compelled to speak English. Similar findings of

the same problem are mentioned in the literature. For instance, Güney (2010) stated that the participants in her study complained about their insufficient vocabulary knowledge. Tokoz-Goktepe (2013) carried out a study on ninth-grade high school Turkish EFL students and concluded that the majority of the 9th graders reported that their inability to speak English results from their lack of vocabulary.

The twelfth speaking skill issue reported by high school students was that *they think in Turkish when they speak in English*, which may lead to their lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking. Corroborating this result, Güney (2010, p. 64), depending on her findings, stated that, "learners think and organize their sentences in Turkish, but then they try to speak in English."

The thirteenth speaking skill dilemma commonly agreed by Turkish students in high school was *insufficient grammar knowledge* that might lead to a lack of accuracy in students' oral ability. Students used to memorize some tenses to get high scores in English examinations at school; therefore, they barely know some grammatical structures at the end of the academic year. Jabeen (2013) mentioned that most EFL learners in Bangladesh easily get confused with English grammar structures, whereas grammar is essential to form correct sentences.

The fourteenth speaking skill problem that both ninth and tenth graders encountered in the English classroom concerned their *mispronunciation*. Students' pronunciation is not good enough, and this might cause difficulty in their communication. They may feel shy or embarrassed when they mispronounce some English words at the time of speaking, so they may give up participating in oral activities or might hesitate to speak English with foreigners. This issue was also reported by Tokoz-Goktepe (2013). She found through the observation of her study that most of the ninth graders had difficulty producing certain sounds, and they also have problems regarding intonation.

The fifteenth speaking skill issue was related to *the lack of collocational knowledge*. Collocations are exceedingly useful for EFL learners to be aware of while developing their target language. It can be deduced that ninth and tenth-grade high school Turkish EFL learners make many errors/mistakes while using English since they have insufficient collocational competence in the English language. Channell (1981), Liu (1999), and Bahns (1993) mentioned that EFL learners made

lots of collocational mistakes in their speaking and writing skills because of their inadequate collocational proficiency in English. Besides, Turkish EFL learners have accustomed to rely on translation from their native language to English when they are required to produce sentences, which lead to unnatural expressions. Howarth (1998), Laufer, and Waldman (2011) indicated that collocational errors stem from mother-tongue intervention. Additionally, Bağcı (2014), in her study to investigate the collocational knowledge of Turkish learners of English at the university level, revealed that the participants had problems with English prepositions since Turkish is a postposition language and does not have prepositions. The status of 'prepositions' in different languages generally causes problems (Saint-Dizier, 2006).

Lastly, students indicated that *it would be better if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking skill* so that they could provide different speech models for students. This finding was similar to the findings of a study conducted by Asakereh and Afshar (2016, p. 122) on Iranian EFL first-year students and seniors. They stated, “EFL freshmen and seniors believed that it would be more fruitful if more than one instructor were teaching English speaking so that they could be provided with different speech models, which could give them a more comprehensive picture of English pronunciation, accent, lexical resources, grammatical repertoire, and discourse management.”

Even though many of the speaking skill difficulties were commonly shared by both ninth and tenth graders of high school Turkish EFL learners, some other problems were reported exclusively by either 9th or 10th graders, which are demonstrated and discussed separately below.

Turkish ninth grade EFL learners complained that *their English teachers make too much use of Turkish in the English classroom*. Therefore, no real communication may take place among students in the classroom since they used to contact their mother tongue (Turkish) instead of English, which may cause a lack of fluency in speaking skills. This problem was also reported by D. Al-Jamal and Al-Jamal (2014) in their study of describing the speaking problems faced by Jordanian students at public universities. The results of their study showed that using the Arabic language in English classrooms is excessive.

The statistical analysis of the data also showed that ninth graders in Turkish public high school claimed that their *English teachers' pronunciation is not good enough* to be a model for them. Conforming to this, Nualsri (2012) investigated English listening and speaking problems faced by third-year Thai students at private vocational schools and found out that a speaker with poor pronunciation may affect the listeners' input negatively. Gunday (2007) also mentioned that teachers of foreign languages should be a good model for their students both in terms of syntax and phonology. They also claimed that their *EFL teachers do not encourage any group work or pair work during the speaking activities*; this may inhibit student-student interaction inside the class. Supporting this idea, Baker and Westrup (2000) stated "group work allows all students to practice language and to actively participate" (p. 131). 9th graders also related their weakness of fluency to their poor general English knowledge.

According to the results of the quantitative data, the mean score for whether English teachers have a good command of English speaking skills and whether the intervention and error correction of the teachers are harsh or not were below the average. This might be because 9th graders may not have enough knowledge of speaking skills and may not know whether their teachers are well qualified in English speaking or not. Furthermore, students may not participate in speaking activities; therefore, no negative feedback will be received from their teachers.

Based on the statistical analysis of the 10th graders, the less frequently expressed problems were related to whether EFL teachers encourage students to speak English in the classroom and to whether their teachers spend a large proportion of class time trying to make real communication or not. This is because students might feel reluctant or uncertain about their ideas and how to report them in the questionnaire, or they might be unaware of what the teachers are conducting in the class discussions.

5.2.2. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 1a

As the results of the t-test indicated, no significant difference could be detected between the perceptions of ninth and tenth graders concerning speaking skills difficulties. The findings might suggest that, overall, Turkish EFL 9th and 10th graders face almost the same type of speaking problems. In other words, tenth-grade

Turkish EFL learners in the state high schools still encounter the same speaking hindrances as their counterparts in the ninth-grade do.

5.2.3. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 1b

According to the results of the t-test, no statistically significant difference was observed between EFL learners in terms of their gender. This might imply that gender has no impact on the issue, and both male and female students approximately experience the same factors that caused speaking skills problems.

5.2.4. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 2

Although the bulk of EFL learners of both 9th and 10th grades believe that the psychological factors are not the prime reasons impeding them from developing their oral abilities except *being afraid of making mistakes*, the majority of EFL teachers reported that psychological factors were among the most problematic factors which thwarted Turkish high school students from making advancement in speaking ability.

Supporting the teachers' points of view, Soo and Goh (2013) indicated that Malaysian EFL learners' reluctance was because of psychological factors. Additionally, Jamshidnejad (2010) also revealed that affective factors worsened speaking problems faced by Iranian EFL learners. However, it seems that EFL ninth and tenth graders were not aware of the other affective factors or were uncertain about their ideas to report them on the scale.

The statistical analysis of the data disclosed that *the bulk of EFL teachers also reported social factors* as the most trouble-making factors hindered Turkish EFL 9th and 10th graders from mastering English speaking skills. In line with this, Jabben (2013) illustrated, "the first cause that makes the students difficult in speaking English is that the environment does not support the students to speak English frequently" (p.34). For instance, students quit speaking English outside the class since the people surrounding by may think that they want to show off themselves; therefore, students use their mother language in daily life to avoid being criticized negatively by the people around them. As a result, Turkish students face difficulty to communicate in English easily outside their classes. Another study was

done by Eray, Aycan and Tuğba (2017) with 66 students who had to enroll one year of intensive preparatory English class to figure out the causes of difficulties Turkish EFL students encounter while speaking in the English language. The results of their research showed that social reasons are among the most important problems impeding Turkish EFL learners to speak fluent English.

Concerning the speaking skills problems stemming from the English teachers, the findings showed that the majority of EFL teachers, who took part in the present study, commonly reported that they have adequate experience in teaching speaking skills. They disclaimed any responsibility for the speaking problems which were reported by the participants of high school students concerning teachers related problems except item 11. Consequently, both EFL teachers and high school students agree that more than one English teacher teaching speaking abilities would be better to provide the learners with various models of speech.

According to the descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' points of view related to speaking skills problems caused *by the education system of Turkey*, the results revealed that most of the English teachers approved that the education system of their country contributes to the rise in speaking troubles which prevent EFL learners from speaking fluent English. Such problems related to the inefficient facilities in the classrooms, overcrowded classes, deficient textbooks, inappropriate time for teaching speaking lessons, the insufficient time allotted to speaking and listening skills, and other problems related to the education policy. In line with this, Erkan (2012), in her study to identify the difficulties encountered in English language teaching in primary education level in Turkey, found out that the efficiency in teaching the English language decreased in overcrowded classes in public primary schools and that the time allotted for teaching English was very limited in the weekly schedule. She also stated that the textbooks used in teaching the English language in primary schools have various deficiencies, and the classrooms lack the essential tools needed for the effective teaching process.

In line with the majority of high school EFL 9th and 10th graders, the bulk of EFL teachers strongly agreed that *linguistic factors* also contributed to the students' inhibition of making any progress in English speaking skills. Corroborating this, in their study on Iranian EFL first-year students and seniors, Asakereh and Afshar (2016) also believed that linguistic factors impeded learners' achievements in

speaking skills. Furthermore, Merzifonluoğlu (2014) in her study on the first and fourth years students in the department of English language teaching at Ataturk University reported that most of the participants encountered problems in speaking ability, such as thinking in Turkish before speaking English, lack of grammar, inadequate vocabulary, and poor pronunciation.

5.2.5. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 2a

The results of the t-test yielded a significant difference between EFL teachers' and high school students' perceptions of speaking skills problems. Moreover, it can be understood from the mean scores that English teachers were more aware of the problems that high school students encounter than the students themselves. The mean score for students was found at 2.86. In line with this, Soureshjani and Riahipour (2012) investigated the factors affecting Iranian EFL learners' oral abilities from their own and their EFL instructors' perspectives and observed a significant difference between the two groups on the matter.

5.2.6. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 3

According to the total mean scores of each subcategory, the findings in Figure 5 revealed that *the education system of Turkey and language classroom facilities* were the most frequently speaking skill problems that affected the 9th graders' proficiency and accuracy. The ninth graders reported *social factors* as the second most commonly speaking skill problem. Following this, ninth-grade high school EFL learners complained that *linguistic factors* also prohibited them from mastering speaking abilities.

As the results in Figure 6 revealed, the most commonly reported speaking skill problems that affected the 10th graders' willingness to make progress in English speaking ability were related to social factors and the education system of Turkey. Linguistic factors were also reported as serious obstacles preventing 10th graders from speaking fluent English.

It can be deduced from the results of the two subcategories, *affective factors*, and *teacher-related speaking problems*, that the participants in both 9 and 10 grades were less affected by these factors since they may not be much aware of these

troubles or they might hesitate or were unwilling to report these problems in the scale. In other words, they approximately shared the same problems with a little bit difference in the mean scores.

In terms of the students' gender, the total mean values of each subcategory illustrated that male students were most affected by the problems that arose out of the educational system of Turkey and the insufficient facilities in the language classroom. Speaking skills problems that are caused by linguistic factors were the second obstacle expressed by male students. These were followed by social factors, as reported by male students. On the other hand, it was obvious that social factors influenced female students most. This was followed by speaking problems attributed to the education system of Turkey and the inefficient facilities in language classes. Linguistic factors were the third trouble-making factors reported by female students.

Depending on the statistical analysis of the collected data in Figures 7 and 8, the results indicated that both male and female students are commonly less affected by *affective factors* and *teacher-related problems*. In other words, gender does not affect the statistical analysis according to the total mean scores of the five subcategories of the questionnaire.

5.2.7. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 4

The questionnaire conducted for the present study has a total of 35 items. These items were grouped into five subcategories concerning English speaking skills problems.

The first category included five items of the questionnaire, which statistically measured *the affective related speaking problems* faced by both 9th and 10th graders. The findings revealed that *being afraid of making mistakes* was reported by EFL students as the most frequently experienced problem. *Some of my classmates speak very effectively, but I cannot. This de-motivates me* was reported as the least experienced problem by Turkish high school students. This finding was in contrast with Heriansyah's (2012) study, which examined the speaking difficulties experienced by English department students in Syiah Kuala University and revealed that some learners have better oral abilities than others; this encouraged some students to dominate while others kept silent.

The second category of the questionnaire consisted of four items that investigate the *social problems* that Turkish high school EFL learners experience while speaking English inside and even outside the English classes. Descriptive statistics showed that students have barely any opportunities to use English speaking outside the classroom, and this item is followed by inefficient speaking classes and feeling no need to speak English in Turkey. The cooperation spirit among students in speaking classes was the least reported issue. According to the results, there is no doubt that students of both grades 9 and 10 were most affected by social factors, which inhibited their English speaking skills progression. Atallah A. Al-Roud (2016) reported in the discussion of his study that social domains were the most frequent difficulties encountered by the students of southern region universities in Jordan.

The third subcategory was composed of 15 items analyzing the speaking skill hindrances stemming from EFL teachers. Consequently, students of ninth and tenth-grades believed that more than one English teacher to teach speaking skills could provide a better speech model for EFL learners. This idea conformed with EFL teachers' perceptions as well. Students also claimed that their English teachers make too much use of their mother tongue in the classroom that may encourage EFL learners to use Turkish instead of using the English language, so no real communication takes place in the English classes. On the other hand, among the least common speaking skills troubles reported by high school students in this category were that *teachers do not teach students oral communication strategy use, they do not have a good command of English speaking, and the intervention and error correction of teachers is too harsh*. This indicates that students might have no idea about English language teaching strategies, or they may think that their EFL teachers are qualified enough to teach speaking skills. Conforming to this, Nidya (2014), in her study to investigate the speaking problems encountered by English department students, found out that students have no ideas in speaking, and they believe that their lecturer is a perfectionist.

A total of 5 items of the questionnaire were selected for the statistical analysis of the speaking skills problems stemming from the education system and inefficient facilities in language classrooms from the perspective of 9th and 10th graders. Students unanimously agreed that their classes are overcrowded, and the classroom facilities are inefficient and inadequate. Students also claimed that the

education system of their country has contributed to their lack of speaking ability, and the time allotted to speaking and listening lessons may not be quite enough to help students develop their speaking ability. They also stated that the speaking classes are held at the time when students do not have enough energy to participate in class discussions effectively .

The last category included six items of the questionnaire which explored EFL students' points of view towards the linguistic factors. The descriptive data showed that both 9th and 10th graders who participated in the current study were affected negatively by linguistic factors. Students reported that they think in Turkish when they speak in English, which may lead to their lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking. The findings also showed that students have inadequate knowledge of collocations, poor pronunciations, poor grammar knowledge, insufficient vocabulary, and poor general English knowledge. In agreement with this, Al-Roud (2016) also mentioned in his study that the linguistic domain has mainly contributed to English speaking difficulties.

5.2.8. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 4a

An independent samples t-test was conducted to find out whether there was any significant difference between EFL learners from 9th and 10th grades for each subcategory based on their grade and gender.

According to the findings of the five subcategories of the questionnaire, the results of the t-test did not yield any significant differences between 9th and 10th graders in terms of their grades. It means that both graders experienced almost the same speaking skills problems in the classroom.

In terms of the students' gender, the results of the t-test yielded a significant difference between males' and females' perceptions of speaking problems attributed to *the social factors*. In other words, female students have a significantly higher mean score than male students regarding social factors. This may reveal that female students were more aware of social problems than male students; therefore, they were more affected by these factors. The fact that females are generally more emotional than males might be another reason that arose the influence of female students towards the problems resulting from social factors.

5.2.9. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 4b

As Table 25 in Chapter 4 clarifies, a statistically significant difference was observed between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of their English speaking skills problems for item 8, *I do not think I will make use of English speaking in my country*. It was seen that 10th graders have a significantly higher mean score than 9th graders meaning that 10th graders experience this problem more often than 9th graders. The results of item 19, *my English teachers ask questions about things to which I already know the answers*, yielded a significant difference between both graders 9 and 10. It was clear that students in grade 9 complained about this problem more often than students in grade 10. Furthermore, item 20, *my teacher does not encourage any group work or pair work*, demonstrated a statistically significant difference between 9th and 10th graders. In other words, 9th graders were more knowledgeable about this problem than 10th graders since they may have the desire to master speaking skills more than their peers in grade 10.

Based on the t-test results for each item of the questionnaire, the result of item 3, *shyness prevents me from speaking*, suggested a significant difference between male and female students. However, the data show that males have a higher rate of shyness than females. It can be claimed that females are more willing to speak English, or they might have higher self-confidence than males. The results of item 7 related to *inefficient speaking classes* observed a significant difference between male and female students meaning that females were more aware of this problem than males. *My teacher does not have a good command of English speaking skills*, also yielded a significant difference value between students' gender (item 10). It can be seen that females suffer from this problem more than males. Furthermore, item 17, *my teachers neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations*, which recorded a significant difference between males and females. It is clear that females were more affected by this problem than males. Lastly, item 35, *poor pronunciation*, illustrated a difference between male and female students in high school, meaning that females' pronunciation was relatively weaker than males' pronunciation. This may indicate that females were more interested in English pronunciation than males.

5.2.10. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 5

According to the analysis data, EFL teachers strongly agreed that *the linguistic factors* regarded the most trouble-making factors preventing both 9th and 10th graders from speaking fluent English followed by affective and personal factors, Turkish education system and facilities, and social factors. Problems caused by EFL teachers were regarded as the least important factor on students' speaking proficiency from the perspectives of the English teachers who took part in this study. Al Lawati (1995) also examined the difficulties Omani students experience in their oral English output and figured out that the linguistic factors, such as grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and discourse were the most serious obstacles faced by Omani EFL learners.

5.2.11. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 6

Among the affective factors, EFL teachers unanimously agreed that shyness and anxiety are the most serious problems inhibiting 9th and 10th graders from starting communicating with others through the English language. Following these, lack of self-confidence and being afraid of making mistakes were also stated by EFL teachers as the main hindrances that stop students from making any progress in the field of learning oral abilities. The domination of some students in the class was reported as the least serious problem. In line with this, Dea , Rahayu, and Wardah (2015) in their study on the most dominant troubles in speaking performance faced by the third-semester students of English Education Study Program of FKIP Tanjungpura University stated that psychological factors were the most trouble-making factors encountered by their participants.

EFL teachers considered social factors and reported them as the most serious obstacle that thwarted Turkish high school students to speak English effectively. Teachers strongly agreed that Turkish students face difficulty finding opportunities to use English verbal skills out of schools. Besides, most of the teachers who participated in this study agreed that speaking classes are ineffective in enabling EFL learners to initiate a real dialogue with native speakers since the classes might be teacher-centered, and students merely listen and keep silent, or it might stem from the shortage of speaking lessons. Teachers also reported that there is no

cooperation spirit among students in speaking classes, which may create a situation of avoiding using English properly inside the classroom. Some English teachers claimed that students may not need to speak English in their country since the majority of Turkish people may still not aware of the importance of the English language, or they may think that English is just a school subject like Math and/or History.

To analyze the speaking problems that arise out of the English foreign language teachers, a total of 15 items were grouped in order figure out the perceptions of the English teachers, who work in state high schools in Diyarbakir, towards the speaking skills problems that Turkish students in public high schools encounter in the English classes. The majority of teachers expressed that they could provide different speech models for students if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking skill so their students could have a broad view of English pronunciation, grammatical repertoire, dialogue management, and accent. Furthermore, teachers claimed that it is the students' responsibility to study more, practice, and pay more attention to the class in order to master the English language skills, particularly speaking skills.

According to the perspectives of the English teachers, the descriptive analysis of the collected data revealed that the time allotted to speaking and listening classes is not enough to help students develop their speaking proficiency, and the education system of Turkey has contributed to students' lack of speaking ability. This indicates that the education policy has played a pivotal role in diminishing the students' ability to communicate through the English language effectively. Teachers also agreed that the students' participation is meager because in a class with a large number of learners, each student will have very little time to talk, which may drive them to keep silent or unwilling to participate. Following these, teachers reported that speaking classes are held at the time when students do not have enough energy to participate in class discussions effectively. Accordingly, some teachers mentioned that they are unable to apply new methods of teaching and improving speaking skill due to lack and inefficient equipment in the English language classrooms.

EFL teachers unanimously agreed that linguistic factors were among the most trouble-making factors prohibiting EFL learners from using English speaking skills effectively and accurately. Teachers reported that students have inadequate

vocabulary knowledge, and therefore, they may not find appropriate words to form short sentences or phrases to express their ideas and introduce themselves. They also reported that high school Turkish students do not have enough knowledge of collocations; besides, they stated that students think and form their sentences in Turkish while they try to speak in English, which leads to their lack of fluency in speaking. Students' poor general English knowledge was stated as a problem because they may have difficulty making questions and directing them to their teacher or their classmates. EFL teachers believed that students have difficulty in pronunciation, which causes difficulty in their communication since they may feel embarrassed when they mispronounce some English words in front of their teachers or native speakers. Moreover, teachers claimed that students do not have enough grammar knowledge, which may cause their lack of accuracy in their speaking, so students might feel reluctant to talk in order to avoid the harsh error correction by their English teachers.

5.2.12. Discussing the findings of the Research Question 6a

To figure out whether there were any significant differences between EFL teachers' and high school students' perceptions of speaking skills problems, a t-test was conducted for each subcategory of the questionnaire. The results of the first category related to affective factors illustrated a significant difference between the students' and the teachers' points of view, which means that EFL teachers are more aware of speaking difficulties stemmed from psychological factors than students in ninth and tenth-grades. As for the social factors, the t-test results yielded no significant difference between EFL teachers and high school students, meaning that both teachers and students experienced the same difficulties attributed to the social factors. Accordingly, there was a significant difference between teachers' and students' perspectives related to speaking obstacles resulting from English teachers inside the classroom. Students claimed that their inability to speak well was caused by their EFL teachers, while the teachers disclaimed their responsibility.

A significant difference was also observed between English teachers' and EFL learners' perspectives concerning the troubles that arose from the education system of Turkey and the inadequate and ineffective facilities in foreign language learning classrooms. Although both teachers and students reported the same

problems, it was clear that teachers have experienced the problems related to Turkish education system and facility more often than students in both ninth and tenth grades. According to the results of the last category, independent samples t-test yielded a significant difference between the perceptions of students and English teachers regarding English speaking skill problems stem from the linguistic factors, which means that English teachers have negative attitudes towards linguistic factors more often than students. In other words, the majority of EFL teachers strongly agree that for Turkish students to speak English proficiently, they first need to overcome the linguistic factors first.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

6.1. Presentation:

In this final chapter, firstly a summary of the present research will be summarized. Then, the necessary conclusions will be presented according to the findings of this descriptive study. Finally, some implications for further research will be discussed.

6.2. Summary of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to analyze and investigate the speaking problems and difficulties that were experienced by Turkish learners in speaking classes and the reasons behind these problems from the perspective of students and English foreign language teachers. In contrast, the specific purpose of this study was to identify the students' views on the factors that influence their confidence in the English classes and to analyze the most influential factors that could affect their desire to communicate in English and how these factors thwarted students' English performance and proficiency. Moreover, this research deemed it necessary to figure out if there is a significant difference, firstly, between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of speaking problems in terms of their grade and gender. The next purpose was to find out whether there are any differences between students' and English teachers' perspectives concerning speaking difficulties.

A speaking skills problems questionnaire was conducted to collect the required data for the current research, and 135 students of 9th and 10th graders at Sur Alparslan Anadolu Lisesi in Diyarbakir participated in the survey; besides, it was also administrated to 30 EFL teachers working in various Turkish state schools in

the same city. The questionnaire was applied in the spring semester of 2018-2019 academic year. The collected data was analyzed through IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Moreover, an independent sample t-test was conducted to investigate the differences between the participants in terms of their perceptions of the speaking problems.

6.3. Summary of the Findings

Although the findings of the study showed that the majority of Turkish EFL ninth and tenth graders were approximately experienced the same difficulties in speaking skills, some other problems were reported exclusively by either 9th or 10th graders. Accordingly, EFL 9th graders complained about the excessive use of their first language by their English teachers in the classroom. Besides, they stated that their teachers' pronunciation is not good enough and that their teachers do not encourage any group work or pair work during the English classes.

The findings of the present study demonstrated that there was no significant difference existed between the perceptions of ninth and tenth graders concerning speaking skills difficulties. Besides, the results of the t-test did not yield a difference between male and female students' points of view towards English speaking problems.

Although the bulk of EFL learners of both graders 9 and 10 believed that the affective factors were not the prime reasons impeding them to develop their oral abilities except item 1 (being afraid of making mistakes), the majority of EFL teachers reported that some factors like affective, social, linguistic as well as the ineffective education system of their country were among the most severe obstacles which thwarted the students from making advancement in their speaking ability. Moreover, EFL teachers were not in line with the perceptions of ninth and tenth graders about speaking problems stemming from the English teachers except item 11 (It would be better if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking so that they could provide a speech model for students). Furthermore, the results of the t-test yielded a significant difference between EFL teachers' and high school students' perceptions of speaking skills problems.

According to the total mean scores of each subcategory, it was quite clear that students in both variables (grade and gender) were more affected by the

speaking problems attributed to the education system of Turkey and inefficient facilities, social factors as well as the linguistic factors. On the other hand, students, in terms of their grade and gender, were less affected by the problems caused by the affective factors and English teacher-related factors.

According to the findings of each subcategory of the questionnaire, the results of the t-test did not yield any statistically significant difference between 9th and 10th graders in terms of their grade. Besides, the results of the t-test also did not yield any significant difference between male and female students except the problems related to the social factors. On the other hand, a statistically significant difference was found between 9th and 10th graders' perceptions of English speaking skills problems based on every individual item of the questionnaire; items (8, 19, 20). Likewise, significant differences were observed in five separate items (3, 7, 10, 17, 35), which disclosed the difference between male and female students' perceptions of speaking skills problems.

According to the total means of each subcategory of the questionnaire, EFL teachers strongly agreed that the linguistic factors were among the most trouble-making factors preventing EFL learners from speaking fluent English. This was followed by affective factors and factors related to the education system of Turkey as well as social-related factors, respectively. Accordingly, statistically significant differences were detected between EFL teachers' and students' perceptions of speaking skills problems related to affective factors, teacher-related problems, the education system of the country as well as the linguistic factors. On the other hand, no significant difference was observed between teachers and students in terms of socially-related speaking skills difficulties.

6.4. Conclusion

Even though the English language has spread all over the world and its usage has become a must, it is still a problematic issue for Turkish EFL learners. Based on the findings of the current research, it can be concluded that high school 9th and 10th graders nearly experience the same difficulties in the process of learning English speaking skills. Besides, it is noteworthy to mention that students (in terms of grade and gender) are most affected by the problems resulting from linguistic and social factors as well as the problems related to the education system of their country.

Moreover, although two of the speaking hindrances (i.e. being afraid of making mistakes and providing more than English teacher teaching speaking skills) shared commonly by EFL 9th and 10th graders were in line with what the majority of EFL teachers reported, most of the English teachers agreed that factors like affective, social, linguistic and the inefficient education system of their country are regarded as the most problematic factors. These factors impede Turkish students to achieve any progress in their oral production. The results also showed that 9th graders experience speaking troubles more often than the 10th graders since students in grade 9 might be more aware of these problems than their peers in grade 10, or they may concentrate more on speaking issues than 10th graders. Furthermore, it is evident that female students are more influenced by social factors than male students. This may be because females are more emotional or more sensitive than males. It was also clear that female students were often more aware of speaking skills problems than males since females may have the desire to master English speaking skills more than male students. Finally, EFL teachers appear to be more knowledgeable than students concerning speaking difficulties faced by EFL learners at the secondary education level in Turkey. Therefore, English teachers may raise the awareness of their students to the importance of learning and acquiring English language skills, particularly oral abilities, and start finding appropriate solutions to these obstacles with the help of the Ministry of National Education of Turkey.

6.5. Implications

The findings of the present study suggest several practical implications in the field of English language teaching. Firstly, the results could encourage EFL teachers to mitigate the students' phobia regarding their fear of making mistakes and deem it as a natural phenomenon in the field of learning a foreign language. Aktaş (2005) recommends EFL teachers to encourage their students to speak freely without being afraid of making mistakes and being self-criticized. Secondly, the findings suggest that EFL teachers should encourage their students to create opportunities to communicate through English with other individuals extensively outside the classrooms and also raise the students' awareness of the importance of using English in their country. Thirdly, the results imply that EFL teachers should increase their students' awareness concerning their inadequate linguistic knowledge and warn them to consider this issue during the process of learning speaking skills. Fourthly, EFL

teachers need to apply group work or pair work, which may reduce the students' anxiety, besides, teachers might be more aware of the excessive use of the first language in the classroom. Finally, English curriculum designers and education policymakers in Turkey need to insert more speaking and listening activities in the English textbooks to meet the students' speaking skills needs, increase the number of English classes in the weekly schedule, consider proper and adequate time for speaking lessons, decrease the number of students in each class so that students can have more chances to speak and participate in the class discussions and are provided with efficient and sufficient facilities and materials that are needed to equip them a better environment for better learning of English speaking skills.

6.6. Suggestions for Further Study

This study implemented a quantitative method for collecting data through a questionnaire, so further research may be required to have a broader picture of the speaking skills problems in Turkish state schools and to elaborate on students' perspectives comprehensively by conducting observation and interview techniques.

This study was conducted on 9th and 10th graders at a public high school in Diyarbakir. Further research can be implemented on 11th and 12th graders since students of different age and education level might encounter different speaking problems and have different perceptions towards learning English speaking skills in the classroom.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Speaking Skills Problems Questionnaire (student and teacher versions)

	No	Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
Affective-related problems	1	I/students am/are afraid of making mistakes.					
	2	Some of my classmates/students speak very effectively, but I cannot. This demotivates me/them.					
	3	Shyness prevents me/students from speaking.					
	4	I/students cannot speak well in the classroom because my/their self-confidence is low.					
	5	My/students' anxiety is too high. This prevents me/them from speaking well					
Socially-related problems	6	I/students have difficulty finding opportunities to practice my/their speaking outside the classroom.					
	7	My/_ speaking classes are /were not useful enough to help us/students communicate with English speaking people.					
	8	I do not think I/they will make use of English speaking skills in my country.					
	9	There is no cooperation spirit among my classmates/students in my/- speaking classes.					
Teacher-related problems	10	My teachers/I do not have a good command of English speaking skills.					
	11	It would be better if there were more than one teacher teaching speaking so that they could provide a speech model for students.					
	12	My teachers/I make too much use of our/students' mother tongue in the classroom.					
	13	My teachers' pronunciation is not good enough to be a model for us.					
	14	My teachers/I do not encourage students to speak.					
	15	The/My intervention and error correction of/my teachers is too harsh.					
	16	My teachers/I do not show the tendency to speak English with me/students outside the classroom when I/they try to do so.					
	17	My teachers/I neglect to focus on idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and collocations.					
	18	My classes are teacher-centered; therefore, I/students cannot find the chance to express my/their ideas and participate in class discussion activities.					
	19	My speaking teachers/I spend/spent a large proportion of class time asking questions about things to which they/I already knew the answers;					

		therefore, no real communication takes/took place.					
	20	My teachers/I do not encourage any group work or pair work; this inhibits student-student interaction in class.					
	21	My teachers/I do not teach us/students how to express appropriate speech acts (e.g., greeting, complaint, refuse invitations or offers and so on).					
	22	My teachers/I do not tell us/students what to do when we/they cannot find the correct and appropriate word, structure and sentence during our/their speaking. In other words, they/I do not teach us/them oral communication strategy use.					
	23	My teachers/I do not present interesting topics for discussion.					
	24	My teachers/I put less emphasis on speaking skills in comparison to other skills.					
Turkish education system and facility-related problems	25	There are not enough and efficient facilities in language laboratory.					
	26	Our class/classes is/are overcrowded.					
	27	The time of our/- speaking classes is not/was not appropriate. That is, our speaking classes are/were held at the time when we/students do/did not have enough energy to participate effectively in class discussions					
	28	The time allotted to speaking and listening lessons in the education system is not enough to help us/them develop our/their speaking ability.					
	29	Educational system of Turkey has contributed to my/students' lack of speaking ability.					
Linguistically-related problems	30	My poor/students' general English knowledge results in my/their having difficulty making questions and directing them to my instructor/their instructor or my/their classmates.					
	31	I/students do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.					
	32	I/students do not have enough knowledge of collocations.					
	33	I/they think in Persian when I/they speak in English, which leads to my/their lack of fluency and naturalness in speaking.					
	34	I/they do not have enough grammar knowledge which leads to lack of accuracy in my/their speaking.					
	35	My/students' pronunciation is not good enough which causes difficulty in my/their communication.					

APPENDIX B

Speaking Skills Problems Questionnaire – Turkish Version (teacher version)

Kişisel Bilgiler: Cinsiyet : ☐ Erkek ☐ Bayan Sınıf : ☐ 9. ☐ 10.			
Sayın katılımcı, Bu anketin amacı, İngilizce öğrenenlerin konuşma derslerinde yaşadıkları konuşma problemlerini ve zorluklarını incelemektir. Lütfen aşağıda numaralandırılmış ifadeleri okuyunuz ve her durum ile ilgili görüşlerinizi (X) işareti ile belirtiniz. 1 = Kesinlikle katılmıyorum 4 = Katılıyorum 2 = Katılmıyorum 5 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum 3 = Kararsızım			

Konuşma Becerileri Sorunları Anketi (öğretmen versiyonu)

NO	İFADELER	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1	Öğrenciler hata yapmaktan korkar.					
2	Öğrencilerin bazıları çok iyi konuşuyor, bu da konuşamayanların motivasyonunu bozuyor.					
3	Utangaçlık öğrencilerin konuşmasını engelliyor.					
4	Öğrencilerin özgüvenleri olmadığı için sınıfta konuşamıyorlar.					
5	Öğrencilerin kaygı düzeyi yüksek olduğu için konuşamıyorlar.					
6	Öğrenciler sınıf dışında İngilizce konuşmaya fırsat bulmakta zorlanıyorlar.					
7	İngilizce konuşma dersleri öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşan insanlar ile iletişimine yardım edecek yeterlilikte değildir.					
8	Öğrencilerin ülkemizde İngilizce konuşma becerisini kullanacaklarını sanmıyorum.					
9	Konuşma derslerinde öğrencilerin kendi aralarında grupça çalışma ruhu yoktur.					
10	Öğretmen olarak İngilizce konuşma becerim iyi değildir.					
11	Birden fazla İngilizce öğretmeni olsa daha iyi olurdu; böylece öğrenciler için daha fazla konuşma modeli sağlanmış olurdu.					
12	Sınıfta öğrencilerin ana dilini çok fazla kullanırım.					
13	Telaffuzum öğrencilere model olacak kadar iyi değil.					
14	Öğrencileri konuşma konusunda cesaretlendiremiyorum.					
15	Öğrencilere müdahale etme ve hata düzeltme şeklim çok serttir.					

16	Sınıf dışında İngilizce konuşmaya çalıştıklarında öğrencilerimle İngilizce konuşma eğilimi göstermem.					
17	Derste deyimlere, atasözlerine ve söz öbeklerine odaklanmıyorum.					
18	Derslerimiz öğretmen merkezli olduğu için öğrenciler fikirlerini ifade etmeye ve sınıfta tartışma etkinliklerine katılmaya fırsatı bulamıyorlar.					
19	Dersin çoğunu zaten cevabını bildiğim soruları sorarak geçirdiğim için gerçek karşılıklı konuşma gerçekleşmiyor.					
20	Sınıfta, grup ya da ikili çalışmaları cesaretlendirmiyorum. Bu da öğrenciler arası etkileşimi engelliyor.					
21	Öğrencilere; selamlaşma, şikayet etme, daveti reddetme gibi söz eylemlerini uygun bir şekilde nasıl ifade edeceklerini öğretmiyorum.					
22	Konuşma esnasında doğru ve uygun kelimeyi, yapıyı ve cümleyi öğrenciler bulamadıklarında ne yapmaları gerektiğini söylemem. Diğer bir deyişle onlara sözel iletişim stratejilerinin kullanımını öğretmem.					
23	Ben sınıftaki tartışmalar için ilginç konular vermiyorum.					
24	Diğer becerilere oranla konuşma becerileri üzerinde daha az duruyorum.					
25	Dil sınıfımızda yeterli ve etkin imkanlar yok.					
26	Sınıflar çok kalabalık.					
27	Konuşma derslerinin zamanı uygun değil. Genellikle derslere etkin bir şekilde katılmaları için gereken enerjilerinin yeterli olmadığı zamanlara denk geliyor.					
28	Eğitim sisteminde konuşma ve dinlemeye ayrılan süre öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmeye yardımcı olmak için yetersizdir.					
29	Eğitim sistemi öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerindeki eksikliklerini arttırmaktadır.					
30	Öğrencilerin genel İngilizce bilgilerinin zayıflığı, sorular oluşturup bunları öğretmenlerine veya arkadaşlarına sunmada zorlanmalarına sebep oluyor.					
31	Öğrencilerin kelime bilgileri yeterli değil.					
32	Öğrencilerin söz öbekleri konusunda yeterince bilgileri yok.					
33	Öğrenciler Türkçe düşünüp, İngilizce konuşmaları İngilizcilerinin akıcılığı ve doğallığı bozuluyor.					
34	İngilizce dilbilgisi eksikliği, konuşmalarında hatalara yol açmaktadır.					
35	Telaffuzları yeterince iyi olmadığı için iletişimlerin de zorluklara sebep olmaktadır.					

APPENDIX C

Speaking Skills Problems Questionnaire – Turkish Version (student version)

Kişisel Bilgiler:				
Cinsiyet :	☐	Erkek	☐	Bayan
Sınıf :	☐	9.	☐	10.
Sayın katılımcı, Bu anketin amacı, İngilizce öğrenenlerin konuşma derslerinde yaşadıkları konuşma problemlerini ve zorluklarını incelemektir. Lütfen aşağıda numaralandırılmış ifadeleri okuyunuz ve her durum ile ilgili görüşlerinizi (X) işareti ile belirtiniz. 1 =Kesinlikle katılmıyorum 4 = Katılıyorum 2 = Katılmıyorum 5 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum 3 = Kararsızım				

Konuşma Becerileri Sorunları Anketi (öğrenci versiyonu)

NO	İFADELER	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1	Hata yapmaktan korkarım.					
2	Sınıf arkadaşlarımdan bazıları çok iyi konuşuyor. Fakat ben konuşamıyorum. Bu da benim motivasyonumu bozuyor.					
3	Utangaçlığımdan ötürü konuşamıyorum.					
4	Kendime güvenmediğim için sınıfta iyi konuşamıyorum.					
5	Kaygı düzeyim yüksek olduğu için iyi konuşamıyorum.					
6	Sınıf dışında İngilizce konuşma fırsatı bulmakta zorlanırım.					
7	İngilizce konuşma derslerim, İngilizce konuşan insanlar ile iletişimime yardım edecek kadar yeterli değildir.					
8	Ülkemizde İngilizce konuşma becerimi kullanacağımı sanmıyorum.					
9	Konuşma derslerimde arkadaşlarım arasında grupça çalışma ruhu yoktur.					
10	Öğretmenlerimin İngilizce konuşma becerisi iyi değildir.					
11	Birden fazla İngilizce öğretmeni olsa daha iyi olurdu; böylece öğrenciler için daha fazla konuşma modeli sağlanmış olurdu.					
12	Öğretmenlerim sınıfta öğrencilerin ana dilini çok fazla kullanır.					
13	Öğretmenlerimin telaffuzu bize model olacak kadar iyi değil.					
14	Öğretmenlerim öğrencileri konuşma konusunda cesaretlendiremiyor.					

15	Öğretmenlerim, müdahale ederken ve hata düzeltirken çok serttir.					
16	Sınıf dışında İngilizce konuşmaya çalıştığımda öğretmenlerim benimle İngilizce konuşma eğilimi göstermiyor.					
17	Öğretmenlerim İngilizce deyimlere, atasözlerine ve söz öbeklerine odaklanmıyor.					
18	Derslerimiz öğretmen merkezli olduğu için fikirlerimi ifade etmeye ve sınıfta tartışma etkinliklerine katılmaya fırsatı bulamıyorum.					
19	Konuşma öğretmenim dersin çoğunu zaten cevabını bildiği sorular sorarak geçiriyor. Bu yüzden gerçek karşılıklı konuşma gerçekleşmiyor.					
20	Öğretmenler grup yada ikili çalışmaları cesaretlendirmiyor. Bu da sınıfta öğrenciler arası etkileşimi engelliyor.					
21	Öğretmenlerimiz bize selamlama, şikayet etme, daveti reddetme gibi söz eylemlerini uygun bir şekilde nasıl ifade edeceğimizi öğretmiyorlar.					
22	Öğretmenlerim bize konuşma esnasında doğru ve uygun kelimeyi, yapıyı ve cümleyi bulamadığımızda ne yapmamız gerektiğini söylemiyor. Diğer deyişle bize sözel iletişim stratejilerinin kullanımını öğretmiyor.					
23	Öğretmenlerim tartışma için ilginç konular vermiyorlar					
24	Öğretmenlerim diğer becerilere oranla konuşma becerileri üzerinde daha az duruyorlar.					
25	Dil sınıfımızda yeterli ve etkin imkanlar yok.					
26	Sınıfımız çok kalabalık.					
27	Konuşma dersimizin zamanı uygun değil. Derslerimiz genellikle derslere etkin bir şekilde katılmamız için gereken enerjimizin yeterli olmadığı zamanlara denk geliyor.					
28	Eğitim sisteminde konuşma ve dinlemeye ayrılan süre konuşma becerimizi geliştirmeye yardımcı olacak kadar yeterli değildir.					
29	Eğitim sistemi konuşma becerimdeki eksikliğimi arttırmaktadır.					
30	Genel İngilizce bilgim zayıf olduğu için sorular oluşturup bunları öğretmenlerime veya arkadaşlarıma sunmada zorlanıyorum.					
31	Kelime bilgim yeterli değil.					
32	Söz öbekleri konusunda yeterince bilgim yok.					
33	Türkçe düşünüp, İngilizce konuşmam İngilizcemin akıcılığını ve doğallığını bozuyor.					
34	İngilizce dilbilgisi eksikliği konuşmamda hatalara yol açmaktadır.					
35	Telaffuzum yeterince iyi olmadığı için iletişimimde zorluklara sebep olmaktadır.					

APPENDIX D

**Consent from the Provincial Directorate of National Education of
Diyarbakir to Conduct the Questionnaire**



T.C.
DİYARBAKIR VALİLİĞİ
İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 30769799-604.02-E.9772620
Konu : Araştırma İzni (Nidal ABDURRAHMAN)

17.05.2019

MÜDÜRLÜK MAKAMINA

- İlgi: a) MEB Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğünün 22/08/2017 tarih ve 12607291 sayılı 2017/25 Nolu Genelgesi
b) Gaziantep Üniversitesi Rektörlüğünün 08.05.2019 tarih ve 9539 sayılı yazısı.

Gaziantep Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi Nidal ABDURRAHMAN'ın "**İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Türk Öğrencilerin Karşılaştığı Konuşma Problemleri Üzerine Tanımlayıcı Bir Çalışma: Bir Lisede Durum Çalışması**" konulu ölçek çalışmasını İlimiz Sur İlçesine bağlı Alparslan Anadolu Lisesinde uygulama isteği ilgi (b) yazıda belirtilmektedir.

Söz konusu araştırma çalışmasının okul müdürlerinin gözetiminde ve sorumluluğunda gönüllülük esasına bağlı olarak, 2018-2019 eğitim öğretim yılı içerisinde eğitim öğretimi aksatmayacak şekilde yapılması uygun görülmektedir.

Makamlarınızca da uygun görülmesi halinde olurlarınıza arz ederim.

Metin DİREK
İl Milli Eğitim Müdür Yardımcısı

OLUR
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Süleyman İLGE
İl Milli Eğitim Müdür.V

- Eki:
1-Araştırma Değerlendirme Formu
2-Tez Önerisi
3- Anket Çalışması

Adres: Şehitlik Mahallesi, Mehmet Akif Ersoy Blv. Eski Eğitim
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ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Nidal Abdurrahman 1980 yılında Suriye’de Hasakah Şehri yakınlarında küçük bir köyde doğdu. 2007 yılında Şam Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi İngilizce Çeviri Bölümünden mezun oldu. Yüksek Lisansını Gaziantep Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümünde ‘İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenen Türk Öğrencilerin Karşılaştığı Konuşma Problemleri Üzerine Tanımlayıcı Bir Çalışma: Bir Lisede Durum Çalışması’ üzerine yaptı. Suriye ve Libya’da İngilizce Öğretmeni olarak çalıştı. 2014 yılından beri Diyarbakır, Türkiye’de özel bir okulda İngilizce Öğretmeni olarak çalışmaktadır.

VITAE

Nidal Abdurrahman was born in a small village near Hasakah city in Syria in 1980. He graduated from the Department of English Translation, Faculty of Arts and Science at Damascus University in 2007. He held his Master’s degree on ‘A Descriptive Research on Speaking Problems Faced by Turkish EFL Learners: A Case Study in a High School’ in the Department of English Language Teaching at Gaziantep University. He worked as an English teacher in Syria and Libya. He has been working as an English teacher in a private school in Diyarbakir, Turkey since 2014.