Perspectives of EFL Students' Difficulties in Speaking: A Descriptive Study

Lady Thalìa Caicedo Vargas.

Guide: Rossana Ramirez.

Descriptive Study

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Abstract

Speaking is the ability to express their opinion by oral communication and it is a skill which should be developed in EFL learners. It can be huge challenge for most of the students. This study aimed to explore what causes English speaking difficulties in EFL learners. A Likert-scale questionnaire was conducted to anonymously investigate 70 high school students at a private institution in Guayaquil. A mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) was used to obtain data. The results indicate learners are having affective difficulties (e.g.: anxiety, nervousness, fear of making mistakes), linguistics difficulties (e.g.: correct use of grammar, pronunciation, and fluency), and social difficulties (e.g.: lack of confidence during speaking activities) which affect their oral performance. Most of the students agreed is very advisable to practice English speaking by working in pairs. Some pupils do not consider themselves good enough in case they work with higher level of English partners. In addition, these findings are significant for teachers, coordinators of English area, and principal of high school to update the curriculum to improve the development of speaking English skill.

Keywords: speaking difficulties, high school students, EFL learners.

Resumen

Hablar es la habilidad de expresar sus opiniones a través de comunicación oral y es la destreza que debe ser desarrollada en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. Esta destreza puede ser un gran desafío para la mayoría de los estudiantes. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo explorar las causas de las dificultades de hablar en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. Se llevó a cabo una investigación anónima a 70 estudiantes de niveles superiores de colegio en una institución privada en Guayaquil utilizando cuestionario con escala Likert. El método mixto (cualitativo y cuantitativo) fue utilizado para obtener información. Los resultaron mostró en los estudiantes problemas afectivos (por ejemplo: ansiedad, nervios, miedo a cometer errores), problemas lingüísticos (por ejemplo: uso correcto de gramática, pronunciación y fluidez), y problemas sociales (como falta de confianza durante actividades orales) cuales afectan la producción oral de los estudiantes. La mayoría de los estudiantes concuerdan muy aconsejable practicar inglés oralmente a través de trabajo por parejas. Algunos de los alumnos no se consideran suficientemente buenos al momento de trabajar con compañeros que tengan altos niveles de inglés. Además, Estos hallazgos son importantes para maestros, coordinadores de área de inglés y directores de los colegios para actualizar el plan de estudios para mejorar el desarrollo de la habilidad de hablar inglés.

      Palabras claves: dificultades para hablar, estudiantes de colegio, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Perspectives of EFL Students' Difficulties in Speaking: A Descriptive Study.

Speaking English is not as easy as it seems, even though the nature of what it involves is understood (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 201). English and Spanish are languages totally different. Students should be supported to gain oral communication skills (Honsi, 2014) to develop and leave out shyness to speak. According to Al-Sibai, English-speaking ability is important, especially for people who want to advance in certain areas as professional (2004, p. 3).

Ozkan (2020) stated that some of common speaking difficulties of students are pronunciation, the use of grammar, and vocabulary. It means that students must know grammar structures to apply in their speech and, teachers must give feedback to help student`s pronunciation mistakes through modelling the language. Other researchers consider students are unwilling to participate in the speaking classes, and sometimes it is not possible for teachers to develop their oral production (Caamaño, 2021). The lack of motivation, shyness, or lack knowledge are other causes which learners do not interact in an English-speaking class or activity.

On the other hand, several studies about common difficulties in speaking English indicated the following: being worried about making mistakes, and nervousness (Zhan, 2014, as cited by Shen & Chiu, 2019).   Also, in Shen and Chiu` study (2019), indicated that majority of EFL learners affected them some psychological factors such as "lack of confidence", "shyness" and "anxiety". Comparing to Hosni (2014) study results, revealed 5th grade learners in elementary school in Oman were having problems to choose words while speaking English. Also, learners are struggling with lack of speaking opportunities and finding the correct way to use grammar while speaking accurately.

Lin´s (2013) study, stated types of communication strategies in English oral communication such as Metacognitive, cognitive and socio affective. So, these strategies can enhance the pupil´s oral communication through English activities in class.

The 70 students who were chosen as part of this research will finish their high school and it is expected that they demonstrate a B1 level. As local authorities (Ministerio de Educación, 2012) demand in the curriculum of education, "high school students should end their studies with b1 level as stated by Common European Framework (CEFR)". For that reason, this descriptive research seeks to identify the speaking difficulties in 3rd Bachillerato at a private institution in Guayaquil which works according to the CEFR. The results of this research can help teachers, coordinators of the English Area and principal of the high school to update the curriculum to improve the development of speaking English skill.

Regarding to the CEFR at B1 level, pupils should "express him/herself with relative ease, keep going effectively without help, keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production." (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 7). Sometimes this level is not achieved for most of graduate students from high school because not all the teachers are well prepared in this area.

According to a report of English Proficiency, Ecuador obtained the 93rd position in south America, it is a very low level (Education First, 2020). In Ecuador, learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in private schools is mandatory to finish the school year with an intermediate level of proficiency. Students should gain the ability to interact and communicate in a foreign language. In the institution where the study took place, teachers and learners are constantly evaluated by Cambridge University Press. One of its visions is to be bilingual in the following years. The past school year (2020-2021) was taught as remote

learning because of the global world pandemic COVID-19. This research was developed in an online way.

Meanwhile, learners present difficulties to speak English such as the use of grammar, or the correct pronunciation (Lukitasari, 2008, as cited in Shen & Chiu, 2019). Some of them needed to be motivated to applied what they know while interacting with others. For that reason, this research was focused on the students speaking English difficulties to identify their challenges, so that their teachers can detect these difficulties and students' current problems to enhance oral communication by choosing appropriate speaking strategies.

The research questions were addressed as follows:

- What are students' difficulties to speak in English?
- What type of activities have students had in their English classes?
- What are student`s perspectives towards pair work for speaking?

Literature Review

This section includes the scope of the English-speaking components such as fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation. Also, it is explained the speaking teaching principles and how they were used in other studies.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach in which learners have the chance to communicate with each other expressing their desires and believes (Brown, 2000). This approach considers input, output, and interaction theories (Lessard-Clouston, 2018) they are components of EFL class and go together in a communicative approach.

Oral Performance

The main reason to teach speaking is to make students improve the oral production through interaction. As Haozhan (1997, as cited in Al-Sibai, 2004) stated, language teaching activities in the classroom should aim at maximizing individual language use. According to Vygostky (1962, as cited in Cameron, 2001), people that surround learners play an important

role in the language learning using materials, showing them objects, talking by playing with them using "modelling" to enhance language speaking. This in line with Nilsson`s (2020) consideration about imitation and play are central to learning, as they appropriate language to develop their inner speech. It means that people, in their early years of life, learn a language though imitation and interactive games. Also, this kind of activities is used in teenagers' English class to make it more interactive and communicative. It can be achieved through didactic games, role play, and modelling the language.

Although oral production activities should be used in most of the classrooms. Some teachers do not allow all the students participate and interact with each other to enhance this skill. As Troute stated, to get a successful student's oral production teachers should encourage learners to express their ideas without hesitation. Teachers should not focus on grammar and student`s mistakes only but they should give learners enough time to practice the language (2016, cited in Bocanegra & Ramirez, 2018).

Sayuri (2016) results found speaking difficulties in EFL learners such as vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, discourse, and other skills. Also, he explained what causes these problems are mother tongue influence, lack of practice, confusion on applying grammar. This is similar as a Turkish study results that show learners have the same difficulties such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary (Ozkan, 2020).

Fluency and Accuracy

Some authors describe fluency as the ability to speak in a natural way without interruption and using some fillers (Lopez, 2021). Thinking using pauses is not how people use the language fluently. Not all the learners acquire this ability when speaking. Some people take too much time to speak fluently because of lack of practice. It is better to have a good balance between speaking fluently and accurately. Widdowson (2007, as cited in Fenton-Smith, 2013) stated the idea to teach a language in a CLT approach. The pragmatic

functions should be taught as a priority too. It means that speaking accurately (correct pronunciation and grammar) is not less important as speaking fluently (natural).

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way people give the word an oral /aural shape (Abu, 2019). Some learners are not familiar with the correct pronunciation of the words when they are speaking. It has become a controversy the role of pronunciation in communicative and interactive course of study (Brown, 2000). It means that speaking activities should include practice pronunciation actively. Some educators leave aside pronunciation and prefer not to teach it for different reasons such as: they are not able to correct student´s pronunciation, or they consider it is not important to teach as other skills or components of language. Mispronouncing a single sound causes the listener's misunderstanding or get a meaning totally different from the original message (Ozkan, 2020).

Pair Work

Thomas (2015) indicated that the purpose of authentic materials is to communicate rather than teaching a language. This author considered in her article that having good strategies, and authentic materials will help students improve their language skills. On the other hand, pair work activities expand the chances of students to interact with others and use their prior language through communication. According to Dapa (2020), interaction technique is appropriate to enhance student`s speaking skills and to help in the emotional area because this kind of activities requires pupils interact with their pair. Students can exchange knowledge and leave apart shyness.

Socio-affective area:

Aliyu et al. (2019) stated that students face five levels of anxiety which affected their oral performance when they interacted with others in class. These levels are "Psychological anxiety, Fear of negative evaluation, English classroom speaking anxiety, Social-

environmental factor and Perception factor". Also, problems associated of the self-steem make EFL students feel uncomfortable and unconfident about speaking English (Shen & Chiu, 2019).

While working and interacting in pairs or group work, pupils may have difficulties because of their shyness, low motivation, and level of English they consider not appropriate for the task. For that reason, teachers must know very well their students at the moment to create the pair work to give students the opportunity to interact with their partners with a good level of English. It will be helpful for them.

Methodology

Design

Descriptive studies focus on explaining about the distribution of variables, analysis of results obtained from individuals (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). This study helped researchers to determine the students' problems and the possible reasons. In other words, this descriptive study showed the difficulties learners have while speaking English with the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. This data was obtained through an online survey described in the instruments section. The results were tabulated and ordered in an excel sheet in order to analyze them to know students` difficulties.

Participants

In this study, there were 74 participants selected who answered the survey. Four of them were deleted because they did not complete it right. So, participants were 70 students at the moment. They all belonged to a private high school in Guayaquil city. They were from 3rd Bachillerato. There were 50 females and 20 males in a range of age between 16 to 19 years old. Most of them were 17 years old. All students were from Ecuador.

According to the student`s perspectives, 92.9 % belong to Middle class, 2.9 % belong to High-income class, and 4.3% belong to Low-income class. Most of the students had access

to internet from home. There was a high percentage of participants which had access to the technology by smartphone (81.4 %). Other students used laptop (57.1 %), desktop (47.1%), or tablet (10%) to study at home. There were 68 L1 students, 1 student who speaks English and 1 student who is bilingual. According to the students, most of them considered they were in an intermediate level (55.7%), others were basic level (40%), few of them considered themselves in advanced level (2.9%) and very few were beginners (1.4%). There were some students who did not know their ethnicity and most of them considered themselves as mestizos. They were Christians.

Instruments

Speaking Survey: The researcher conducted a survey via online using google forms. Each student read the questions carefully and answered it at home. This survey asked about student`s perspectives of speaking English difficulties. Also, they were asked about the kind of activities they used to do in their English classes. Learners wrote with their own words about how they felt working with classmate outlining advantages and disadvantages. Students answered 40 questions about their personal information, what kind of institution they study, and their perspectives of speaking English. This survey was in English and Spanish to avoid misunderstandings.

Data Analysis

Participants were asked to fill out the 40-items survey. The data from the survey was entered in a spreadsheet of excel using the Likert scale. Each scale of the survey was coded (Table 1). Each item was assigned a number as a code. For example, "To great extent" means 5 and "none" means 1. To analyze the results, participants answered the questions according to their perspective towards pair work. For instance, the students chose "totally disagree" which means 1 showing that they perceived working in pairs is not useful for them and if the students chose and "totally agree" which means 5 showing that they perceived working in

pairs is very useful for them. Then, the next step was to find the mean of each item to get the

data. Not relevant results were not considered.

Table 1

Code for the scales of the survey

Scale	Code	Scale	Code	Scale	Code
None	1	Never	1	Totally disagree	1
A little bit	2	Hardly ever	2	Agree	2
Some	3	Sometimes	3	Neutral	3
A lot	4	Frequently	4	Disagree	4
To a great extent	5	Always	5	Totally agree	5

Source: Author

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were crucial to the development of this study. First of all, it is the

parents' consent to their kids be part of this research. Without their consents it was not

possible to follow the next step which was asking them to complete a survey in google forms.

All the parents were aware of what the study is about, what their kids would do and how it

could benefit them during the learning process. However, the protection of minor learners

and its privacy were totally confidential in case the observer decided to ask personal

information. It was very important that the data from the pupils were private and used only in

educational purposes. Teachers had to bear in mind dangers for them such as intimidation,

bullying, or other causes.

Results

This section describes the results from the survey. Also, it explains and explores the

student`s speaking difficulties, the different activities they used to do in class, and their

perspectives about working in pairs. Table 2 shows student´s experience while speaking

English.

Table 2

Positive and Negative Experience while Speaking English.

Positive Experience	Negative Experience
1. Use of social media to reinforce English interaction.	1. Do not practice English in their daily lives.
2. English language listening comprehension during their school or initial level.	2. To understand foreign people and shyness to speak.
3. To study at English academy, increase their English grammar.	3. A teacher who was not patient with A1 students.
4. To watch Tv series and videos in English help them to comprehend better.	4. Speaking English in public sometimes is difficult.
5. Learning to handle the English language through practice.	5. To listen and comprehend English videos or audios track.
6. Having a basis of the language since kindergarten.	6. Do not speak fluently to people.
7. Funny teachers who teach English during the class.	7. Having basic knowledge or vocabulary when I speak.
	8. To apply the different tenses while speaking or writing an opinion.
	9. Too much grammar is difficult to understand and use.

Source: Author` survey in Google Forms.

To answer the research question 1, What are students' difficulties to speak in English?

Participants answered the survey in the Likert scale (see Table 1) from 5 means "to a great extend" to 1 means "None".

Table 3

Speaking Difficulties.

When you speak in English, you ...	*Mean*
Feel confused about the topic	2.30
Feel confused for not knowing what to say	2.93
Feel anxious to respond quickly	2.93
Feel anxious trying to look for words to respond correctly.	3.57

Feel anxious because you cannot translate what you want to say.	2.97
Feel afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation.	3.51
Feel afraid of making grammar mistakes.	3.54
Translate everything I want to say.	2.91
Can´t structure a sentence.	2.50
Can´t continue the conversation because of lack of vocabulary.	2.94
Feel embarrassed of making mistakes.	3.23
Are not confident enough to speak in English	2.79
Don´t understand what the other person is saying.	2.64
Speak without many pauses.	2.83
Speak spontaneously.	2.64
Consider you speak correctly.	2.74
Have a good intonation of questions.	3.37
Have a good intonation of sentences.	3.40
Have a good pronunciation.	3.23
Use word stress.	3.01
Use sentence stress.	3.00
Can interact with the interlocutor.	3.34

Source: Author` survey in Google Forms.

Results indicates participants has speaking problems associated to the affective area. One of the difficulties students had in speaking is feeling anxious trying to look for words to respond correctly (3.57). Respondents need to learn more words and phrases to increase their vocabulary. Also, they felt afraid of making grammar mistakes while speaking (3.54). They felt afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation (3.51). Another problem is having good intonation of sentences (3.40) and good intonation of question (3.37). Finally, participants had problems while interacting with interlocutor (3.34) and having a good pronunciation (3.37). So, they need to practice while performing role plays and create conversations with their classmates.

However, in the open-ended questions, pupils reported having problems like lack of confidence and anxiety. One of the respondents wrote: *"Speaking English in public*

sometimes is difficult". Also, it is reported that participants have problems using grammar while speaking. One of the participants wrote: *"much grammar is difficult to understand and use.* Another issue described by the students was they cannot coordinate their ideas and speak them aloud without making mistakes. Some of them said: "*It is difficult having everything organized and structured in my mind and wanting to pronounce without mistakes".* Similarly, someone expressed: *"It is difficult to apply the different tenses while speaking or writing an opinion".*

To answer question 2, What type of activities have students had in their English classes? Items 23 to 40 were considered to answer this question. The researcher determined the kind of activities students used to work in their English classes. Participants chose how frequently they practice the following activities (see Table 4). The Likert scale were from always (5) to never (1).

Table 4.

Speaking activities.

Items	Mean
Fill in the space with correct grammar.	3.83
Write correct answers to questions to practice grammar.	3.79
Practice specific vocabulary in writing of an activity or topic from the book	3.87
Practice specific vocabulary orally of an activity or topic from the book.	3.54
Practice of technical vocabulary in writing	3.50
Practice of technical vocabulary orally	3.51
Oral practice with vocabulary of personal interest	3.56
Written practice with vocabulary of personal interest	3.49
Oral pair work activities in the classroom.	3.29
Pair work in writing activities in the classroom.	3.19
Pair work in general outside the classroom.	2.54
Created a short speech	2.89
Made an oral presentation.	3.30

Participated in a forum	2.17
Commented on a general topic	2.93
Created dialogues to practice with peers	3.30
Written a dialogue from ideas from the book.	3.09
Practiced a dialogue about free ideas	3.21

Source: Author` survey in Google Forms.

According to the results from the survey, the activities respondents used to do in

English class are related to the correct use of grammar, oral practice with vocabulary of

personal interest, oral pair work activities inside and outside the classroom, creation of

dialogues by witting them using ideas from the book and short speech in oral presentations.

Also, other kinds of activities they did not work in classroom were participating in forums

and comment in a general topic.

To answer the last research question, what are students' perspectives towards pair work

for speaking? Participants must answer according to their perspectives with a scale from

Totally agree (5) to Totally disagree (1) as mentioned before (see Table 1).

Table 5.

Students' perspectives towards pair work for speaking.

Item	*Mean*
Pair work is useful to practice speaking.	4.10
Pair work for speaking is difficult because the student who knows more dominates the conversation.	3.09
It is advisable although some pairs speak slowly.	3.77
It is advisable although some pairs do not pronounce correctly.	3.66
The pair makes constant interruptions.	2.89
It takes too much time.	3.10
It is good if I work with the pair I choose.	3.50

Source: Author` survey in Google Forms.

According to the student`s perspectives, students consider useful to practice speaking.

This item obtained the high score (4.10). Also, they thought it is advisable to work in pairs

even though their partners speak slowly (3.77) or mispronounce words (3.66). However, participants consider pair-work is good for them just in case they choose the partner to work (3.50). On the other hand, some students coincided that it takes too much time (3.10) and it results difficult because the partner who has a good level of English or had developed speaking skill will dominate the conversation (3.09). It will cause to them problems of lack of confidence and shyness. A low average of students (2.89) consider they could get distracted of the activity because sometimes pair makes constant interruptions.

Meanwhile, in the open-ended questions, learners considered some disadvantages about working in pairs. One of the pupils wrote: *"Partners do not have the same level of English as me, so I cannot practice with them"*. Another learn considered *"It is not possible to practice because my partner make interruptions and we talk about other topics".* Also, one of them reported having problems such as lack of confidence and nervousness. The respondent expressed: *I am nervous while speaking in oral presentations in front of the class. I feel afraid to make mistakes and my partners laugh about me."*

In contrast, some of pupils considered advantages through pair-work activities. One learner wrote *"I think partners should work with students who do not have much knowledge because it is the best way to learn faster".* Another advantage described by them is: *"I can practice constantly with my partners, and it allow us to exchange knowledge.* Table 6 showed participants opinions about advantages and disadvantages they consider about pair- work in speaking activities.

Table 6

Advantages and Disadvantages towards pair work for speaking.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Being a leader and organize the teamwork to do the activities together.	1. The classmate did not collaborate and do nothing of the work.

2. The classmate can explain in a better way to help understand others.	2. Do not being the same level of the co-worker (vocabulary and fluently)
3. Learn from others vocabulary words.	3. The classmates do a bad job.
4. Working in pairs, they can finish quickly.	4. To work with someone who I did not know.
5. Help to trust in themselves and leave out shyness.	5. The classmate does not have patience to explain.
6. To express themselves about a topic in different ways.	6. When the classmate did not know how to pronounce the words.
7. They can correct each other and pronounce better the words.	7. When they cannot help each other because they do not understand.
8. Develop the responsibility.	8. They begin to distract by talking about their preferences.
9. Practice vocabulary and share ideas accepting opinions from others.	9. The other person does not know how to deal with it.

Source: Author` survey in Google Forms.

Discussion

In this section, it is considered the results of similar findings about English speaking difficulties in EFL learners and compared them with this research results obtained by the survey. Speaking English can be considered difficult for students when they have the chance to use it (Caamaño, 2021).

This research showed that pupils face problems with anxiety, nervousness and lack of confidence while speaking English. They feel afraid of making grammar and pronunciation mistakes because they could be embarrassed in class. Also, they feel anxiety when they try to find the correct word to use at speaking time. These results are similar to Aliyu et al. (2019) who explained that anxiety affects learner´s oral performance. They concluded that the most common difficulties students face is related to the five level of speaking anxiety. Teacher might help the students through motivation and encourage them to interact. However,

Lukitasari found that learners need to be motivated to apply their knowledge when speaking (2008, as mentioned by Shen & Chiu, 2019). Also, results reported problems in pronunciation, grammar, and lack of confidence. The factor of this could be teachers tend to speak the whole class and do not give learners chance to practice speaking accurately and fluently (Ozkan, 2020). Learners are not familiar with the language because they do not practice it in the environment they live (Brown, 2000). However, limited speaking opportunities can create psychological reactions such as being afraid of speaking English or being criticized or laugh by others (Shen & Chiu, 2019).

Regarding to the results about the speaking activities, learners used to do activities related to grammar and practicing vocabulary in writing. But, they still need to practice by participating in oral speech, commenting general topics using their own ideas, and discussing outside the classroom. To get learners participation, students should be motivated to communicate in English giving them enough time to practice with the language (2016, cited by Bocanegra & Ramirez, 2018). Also, they could develop speaking skills through activities using their speaking authentic materials and speaking strategies.

On the other hand, results of the study found most of the students have good reactions and perspective about working in pairs. One of the advantages they wrote in the survey was *"My classmate can explain in a better way to help me understand"* and *"Help to trust in myself and leave out shyness"*. Something important to say is learners consider useful working in pairs. Especially when they choose the partner to work with because they can help each other. These findings are similar to Ozkan (2020). The author reported that Turkish learners agreed that they experience gaps through speaking to others, but they improved by working together. However, inviting foreigners to join the English class, or create spaces where students have enough time to interact each other can expand their vocabulary and provide opportunities to communicate.

Conclusion

Speaking English requires practice to gain oral communication skills and it can be challenge for them. Findings in this study about EFL learners speaking difficulties showed different factors such as social, cognitive, and affective. Learners' opinions and comments help teachers to understand better how participants feel about practicing speaking ability in their English classrooms.

First, learners experienced difficulties controlling anxiety and nervousness. Most of the times, they tried to translate the words because of their insufficient vocabulary to use while communicating and expressing their opinions about a general topic. Also, they experienced linguistic difficulties while speaking accurately. The most common difficulties are grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. According to their perspectives, it is confusing for them to choose the correct grammar tense and having good pronunciation at the same time while speaking English.

Likewise, pupils are unwilling to speak in front others being afraid about what the teacher and classmates will say to them. They are worried to feel embarrassed about a mispronounce word because they consider do not to speak correctly. Translating everything they want to say causes them not to understand what their partners are communicating. Besides these difficulties, some of the learners are capable to have good intonation of question and sentences, use word stress and can interact with the interlocutor.

On the other hand, working in pairs is considered useful according to the learner´s perspectives. It is a good opportunity to them to practice the language. The problem is that some students consider it takes too much time at the beginning until they got engaged in the activity. Another problem students faced is they do not consider themselves good enough in case they work with partners with higher level of English. Also, they explained in the open-

ended questions that this kind of activities can distract each other talking about their preferences.

Limitations

One of the limitations about making this study is the pandemic around the world. It affects the education, and the opportunity of learners to interact in class. For that reason, the researcher sent consent letter to student`s representative because they are minors. Another limitation is participants and researcher did not interact face to face. Participants must answer an online survey in google forms and it was sent to the student`s email. This situation did not allow researcher to explain better about the survey. The answers of the students took too much time because without pressure of teacher, students sent their responses after the deadline.

Recommendations

This study offers an important insight to further studies and researchers for a better understanding of speaking difficulties. To complement this study, it is advisable to apply more research method to collect in-depth data. In the following years, when the pandemic is over researchers could interview students and observe the class to collect more valid information. To improve student´s speaking ability, researchers and teacher can expand student´s vocabulary, give them enough opportunities to practice the language inside and outside the classroom. To avoid anxiety in students while speaking, the author suggests inviting foreigners to join the English class, or create spaces where students have enough time to interact each other can expand their vocabulary and provide opportunities to communicate. Also, teachers should encourage their students to practice the language inside and outside English class. The author believes this study could catch the attention of new researchers to focus on English language speaking difficulties and create more studies about strategies to enhance speaking skills.

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Appendix 1

Survey

Available upon request.

Appendix 2

Information mail.

Available upon request.

Appendix 3

Parents´ Consent letter.

Available upon request.

Appendix 4

Institution´s Consent letter.

Available upon request.