

# Development of Teaching and Learning Communicative Competencies

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## ABSTRACT

English speaking skill is one of the important areas of learning English empowering students to effectively make their communicative competencies. Poor communication may make students less sociable and dull at their academic work. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the issues related to teaching and learning English-speaking skills and recommends a variety of strategies to cope with them. The study is limited to XI and XII classes. The research participants were 20 teachers (only male), and 200 students with equal representation to both genders 100 boys and 100 girls. Three-point Likert scale questionnaires (one for teachers and one for students) were used for data collection. The questionnaires were distributed among both teacher and student participants to know the teaching methods used by teachers in teaching English speaking skills and the problems faced by both teachers and students. This study uses the quantitative descriptive approach and box plots were used to analyze the data to get a better understanding of the phenomenon. The findings of both the teacher and the student participants surprisingly differ to a great extent. The issues which were highlighted by the teachers that the students are victims of the fear of being mocked, shy, and having difficulty in English pronunciation, were not confirmed by the students. Whereas the teachers stressed that teacher training programs are not arranged by the management to teach English speaking skills.

**Keywords:** Issues, speaking skills, psychological factors, second language learners, oral communication skills, quantitative research, Higher Secondary Schools

## INTRODUCTION

The global advancement of the English language has augmented the need of being proficient in communication skills. Especially, after the middle of the last century, great advancement in communication has been observed in education, international trade, politics, and tourism. As a result, the world has become a global village; millions of people

learn languages to stay in touch with one another. This led to a need for a shared language and English came forth as a language fulfilling this need to serve individuals and communities as a lingua franca. (Morozova, 2013) argues that the English language has been the world's need not only in the field of the international economy but also in the field of education, intellectual, social, and

international relations. According to (McKay, 2022) about 80 percent of international organizations make official use of English for their correspondence in their international relations and about 90% of organizations make official use of only English for their proceedings in Asia. Thus, English stands at the top position and no language in the world can be equal to English in the number of its users.

(Mashori, 2007) states ‘...in recent years, the revolution of science and technology and a rapid increase in the public literacy programs have made it compulsory for the students of various levels to master the communication skills so as to face the challenges of the 21st century, governed by globalization’. Furthermore, the importance of English can be viewed from the fact that without getting good marks in English at the secondary and higher secondary levels, students cannot continue their studies at universities. This has become the strong belief of students now that success in life is uncertain without being proficient in English speaking. Therefore, ‘English is considered as a passport to success as the best jobs in the governmental and non-governmental, national and international bureaucracy are reserved for those who are sufficiently proficient in the English language’ (Mansoor, 2004). Almost all job employer agencies and departments demand English proficiency as their first condition and as an important part of the selection criteria.

(Davies, 2000) suggest that the aim of all English teaching should be to equip its learners with such ability that they can use English successfully in real communication. (Abbas, 1998) complains that despite the massive input into the teaching of English, still, the results are very discouraging and poor. A duration of 45 minutes is allocated daily to English teaching at the intermediate level and

two periods each of 45 minutes are allocated at the high school level. Being a teacher of English at the high and higher secondary level for more than 25 years, I have observed that still many students cannot understand the lectures of teachers. They are unable to express themselves in English, the position of speaking skill is the worst, their writing always remains unclear and full of grammatical mistakes, and their reading efficiency is also very poor. For example, (Kannan, 2009) discovers that even after 10-12 years of education, learners cannot get a command of English; they cannot write or say even a single sentence without grammatical errors. Therefore, they need help to improve all their skills, but learners need immediate guidance and support, particularly in the speaking area. Because speaking skill in second language teaching has occupied an important status in the history of second language teaching and it is considered an important branch of teaching and learning (Nunan, 2001). (Abbas, 1998) argues that failure in English is mainly due to unreliable methodology and material. Moreover, (Nunan D. , 1988) also states that the teaching and learning of English in the Pakistani context is mainly based on traditional grammatical patterns, the use of bookish language is common, learners can hardly produce sentences orally and the focus is only on reading and writing skills. This fact is further supported by (Warsi, 2004) that the Grammar Translation Method is still widely prevailed in most of the language programs in Pakistan, and the focus is on reading and writing, and listening and speaking are widely ignored. It is argued that the appropriate pedagogical approach is essential for enhancing foreign or second language teaching and learning (Nunan D. , Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers, 1991) but in the Pakistani context, the use of new interactive strategies has yet remained an

unfulfilled dream. Due to the lack of training, the teachers of English are not aware of modern teaching methods. From the above discussion, it may be assumed that overall, in Pakistan the environment for the teaching of English comes with a group of problems i.e., the unsupportive environment, congested classes, use of conventional methods, defective examination and assessment system, outdated curriculum, and little or no facilities.

In this regard, this study was conducted in the district of Shikarpur, Sindh-Pakistan to examine the issues related to teaching and learning English-speaking skills and the methods and materials used by teachers. The study was conducted in public intermediate-level schools to explore the reasons why the teaching and learning of speaking skills in Pakistan are ineffective. Hopefully, this study may direct the authorities to take some significant steps to improve the standard of English language teaching and learning of English-speaking skills at higher secondary level and this may also be supportive for teachers, students, and future researchers.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

- To explore the strategies utilized by English language teachers.
- To investigate the problems faced by the students in learning English speaking skills.
- What are the strategies utilized in English speaking skills taught by English language teachers?
- What problems are faced by students in learning English speaking skills?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There are four skills of language called reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Reading and listening are receptive and writing and speaking are productive skills. These four skills are

interlinked and interconnected. The development of one skill affects the other. According to (Renukadevi, 2014) reading is to be writing and listening is to be speaking. One can develop writing a productive skill by reading a great deal of material as an appropriate input. Similarly, if someone wants to improve his/her speaking skill he/she needs to listen a lot to receive sufficient input. Among all the four skills speaking as a productive skill is such a broader term that all definitions become inadequate to define it in a nutshell.

Acquisition of the first language is a subconscious process, and it is an inborn ability of mankind that does not need much labor. On the contrary, second language learning is fairly a demanding job (Collier, 1995). Particularly, while teaching and learning a second language, learning of speaking is a great challenge in a classroom situation in a country like Pakistan, where there are numerous issues linked with the teaching and learning process of English. (Warsi, 2004) argues that the textbooks in public sector institutes are mainly designed on the Grammar Translation Method; more attention is paid to teaching only reading and writing skills while listening and speaking skills are widely ignored. This decades-old traditional Grammar Translation Method is still dominant in teaching English which is by no means supportive to teach speaking skills. Other the most suitable language teaching methods like communicative language teaching (CLT) method, interactive methods, etc., have not yet found their way to schools.

The communicative language teaching (CLT) approach was developed in the decade of 1970 from the idea that language is a system for communication, and its goal is to develop learners 'communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Communicative language

teaching has been a widely accepted and effective way of language teaching. This approach to language teaching emphasizes effective real-life communication as opposed to outdated methods of language teaching which focus only on learning a set of grammatical rules and structures. (Littlewood, 2007) states that CLT pays systematic attention to both functional and structural aspects of language. It prepares learners for successful communication in real life in the target language. (Harmer, 2001) states two aspects of CLT: what to teach and how to teach. The first puts more attention on language functions than on grammatical rules, the second states that classroom interactions should involve meaningful activities.

According to the recent study conducted by (Memon, M. A., Abbasi, A. M., Niazi, S, Husain, I., & Syeda Sarah Junaid. (2023)) on secondary level at elite institute where 'Vocabulary Acquisition (VA) was taught through CLIL (Content & Language Integrated Learning) in comparison to the conventional language teaching of EFL units. CLIL is the most recent and effective method that gained widespread popularity and is widely utilized and implemented in Europe and other parts of the world. It is a dual-focused method of language teaching, especially in foreign or second language teaching with a focus on the content or the subject. This highlights language teaching through content, the learners are taught science, geography, history, or physics with a special focus on language structures simultaneously. The study revealed that the learners taught through CLIL units achieved greater Vocabulary Acquisition than the EFL learners of the target language'. Suhag, A. K; Lashari, A. A; Abbasi, A. M; Memon, Fahim, A. (2017) found that 'the teachers use old traditional methods, rely completely on the text

books, don't engage students in projects, group discussions and activities. The study recommends that teachers should have multiple methods keeping in view of the contents and they should encourage students' participation more in the class room'. ssLashari, A. A, Mashori, G.M; Abbasi, A. M; Talpur, Q. (2018) argue that 'the study reveal that the students have extrinsic reasons as dominant factors for motivation to learn the target language. The dominant extrinsic factors which were investigated among the students are to get a good job and to qualify exams. The intrinsic factors such as learning English for developing self-image and communication skills in English with proficiency in their daily routine work are responsible for motivating students to learn English language'.

### **IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING SKILLS**

Speaking as the productive skill of a language has its distinct importance and function over all the other skills i.e., reading, writing, and listening. We can realize the importance of speaking skills in second language learning from the fact that human beings are programmed to speak before they learn to read and write. Thus, speaking stands primary and its written form developed much later. Spoken form and written form of language differ in many ways (Lier, 1995). The spoken form is received through auditory signals whereas the written form is received visually. Mostly, a spoken form is temporary, and its reception is immediate while the written form is permanent, and its reception is delayed after the text is generated. Therefore, for learners of a second language, speaking can be relatively difficult because unlike reading and writing, speaking happens in real life. The speaker and the interlocutor (the person we are talking to) speak and listen and wait to take their turn. One must speak and listen simultaneously. In this way,

speaking is a two-way process, unlike writing and reading. The two-way process is relatively more difficult than a one-way process hence, it is proved that speaking is more difficult than writing (Brady, 1969).

It is speaking ability that determines success in learning a foreign language and the learners who learn a language are referred to as the speech community or the speakers of that language. Thus, learning to speak is an important part of learning a foreign language and success in language learning is generally measured based on communication skills (Nunan, 1995). Rao (2019) also considers speaking skills as important for acquiring a foreign or second language. Haidara (2016) states that speaking skills as an oral production are surely one of the skills that students must learn on a priority basis in their language development. 'The teaching strategy survey shows that the more advanced strategies the teachers apply the more effective results they achieve. There is a great need for teacher-training programs to equip them with the latest teaching methods, which ultimately will affect the performance of ESL learners. The ESL teachers should be equipped with the updated methods and the approaches applied in ESL classrooms for communicative competence' (Abbasi, 2011).

### **ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Oral communication in English is an important skill. It is regarded as an ability to talk or to exchange information and ideas orally such as: asking and answering questions, giving instructions, explaining things, or expressing ideas, etc. This ability determines the success of students in academic as well as professional life. Friedland (2004) states that it is necessary for learners of English that they must be proficient in oral communication it has become

an important part of learning a language. We can judge the successful learning of students in the English language by their oral communication skills. The main aim of English language teaching is to bestow learners with such ability that they can use the English language effectively and successfully in communication (Davies and Pearse, 2000).

Hussain, A. Ali, Faizan and Abbasi, A. M (2017) state that 'the study shows that almost 70% of the Pakistani English language learners face pronunciation problems and tenses problems. It was also further discovered that the causes of these problems were lack of practice, being a non-native speaker and less attention toward English language. The language learners can enhance their spoken abilities, if the proper help of the language teacher is taken timely.'

Abbasi (2020) argues 'The phonetic and cognitive aspects of communication skills are problematic i.e., pronunciation, grammar, listening, and reading skills as explored to be the significant techniques for the university students in Pakistan'. Murphy (1991) states, "Oral communication is a complex and multifaceted language process that provides students opportunities for improving oral fluency through interpersonal communication". Staab (1992) is of the opinion that "...communication both talking and listening is a lifetime activity and probably our most important communication tool". Omaggio (1986) defines oral proficiency as an effective way of communication, "Oral proficiency is the ability to communicate verbally functionally and accurately in the target language, a high degree of oral proficiency implies having the ability to apply linguistic knowledge to new contexts, topics and situations". This ability enables its learners to convince others easily

and effectively from their point of view. A similar definition is given by Hadley and Reiken (1993) "...oral proficiency is a performance in a given art, skill or branch of learning with professional correctness and facility".

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS**

Haidra (2016) conducted his research on the psychological factors affecting the English-speaking performance of English learners in Indonesia. The descriptive qualitative design research was used and the instruments for data collection used were as follows: field notes, observations, and unstructured interviews. He selected a sample of 20 students. The data were analyzed using the interactive analysis technique. He reported findings of his study that students' first problem is the fear of making mistakes, second feeling shy while speaking third feeling hesitation and fourth lack of confidence while speaking. In addition, he states that psychological factors truly affect negatively students' English-speaking performance. Compared to the findings of the study, the fear of students speaking English is common, but the nature of fear is a little different; fear of making mistakes and fear of being mocked. The hesitation of students in speaking English in both studies is also a similar issue faced by students, but the context of both studies is different.

### **LINGUISTIC FEATURES**

In addition to psychological factors, some linguistic features are responsible for the poor speech production of students. Esmail, Ahmad, and Noreen (2015) investigated the reluctance of Pakistani students to speak English. The aim of this study was to investigate factors that affected learners by reducing their speaking faculty. They administered a close-ended questionnaire among 110 students (only girls)

of two educational institutes of district Faisalabad Punjab, Pakistan. The data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, tables, and figures. This study was conducted in the same area in which my study is carried out. This study used only questionnaires for data collection as a quantitative study.

### **CURRICULUM**

After the environment, the researcher refers to some of the studies on the issue of the curriculum. (Gan, 2012; Hassan and Ahmad, 2015; Warsi, 2004) reports that the curriculum is not supportive to promote English speaking skills, the textbooks in the public sector are mostly based on the Grammar Translation Method, and the emphasis is only put on reading and writing. The current study also finds the same on the issue of the curriculum. Moreover, Alsaedi (2012) states that speaking skills do not receive enough importance in textbooks, speaking activities, such as storytelling, dialogues and games are missing from textbooks.

### **INEFFECTIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGY**

Bashir et al (2011) carried out their study on the factors affecting students' speech production in Faisalabad one of the districts of Punjab-Pakistan. They selected 20 schools from them, 200 hundred students, and 80 teachers were taken as samples and used a three-point Likert scale as an instrument for data collection. The frequencies and percentages were used to analyze data. According to teachers' findings, most of the teachers avoid using their mother tongue in teaching practice, promote participatory technique and they also use A/V aids in their teaching of English. Teachers and students favor English as a better medium of instruction than Urdu. There is also a contrast between the teachers' and students' responses.

As opposed to the teachers' responses students state that teachers use their mother tongue in their teaching practice and do not use A/V aids and do not promote participatory technique in teaching English. Some similarities between this study and mine are that a three-point Likert scale used in this study has been adapted for my study. Questionnaires were distributed among two types of participants, teachers, and students, the same is done in my study. The difference is that the question items were different excluding some questions. In the findings, the consensus is shown on the issue that A/V aids are missing from language teaching.

After reviewing the literature in a national and international context on the issues related to speaking skills, the study still finds decades-old attempts to fill it by adding to the existing literature. Only a few studies have been conducted in the Pakistani context especially, in Sindh province where very fewer studies have been conducted at the higher secondary school level. Furthermore, this review helped me to develop the research

questions by exposing various issues with the students encountered by them at higher secondary levels in national and international contexts.

## METHODOLOGY

### Rationale for the Quantitative Approach

This study follows the descriptive design because it is based on the ordinal data and its data and when a study is based on the ordinal data the descriptive study is more suitable (Butler, 1985; Pallant, 2005). The main studies that the researcher followed in quantitative research are those of Bashir et al (2011) and Esmail, Ahmad, and Noureen (2015). Both have used only questionnaires and studies have been Pakistani context.

### POPULATION

The population of the study consists of all teachers teaching English to class XI and XII in District Shikarpur, Sindh-Pakistan, and all students studying in class XI to XII in public sector higher secondary schools in District Shikarpur, Sindh-Pakistan.

**Table 1:** Showing teachers and students in each of the higher-secondary schools in district Shikarpur Sindh

S. No	Name of School	English Teachers (Male)	English Teachers (Female)	Total	Students Inter Pre-medical	Students Inter Pre Engineering	Students First-year Pre-medical	Students First-year Pre Engineering	Total
1	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	61	147	75	177	460
2	Government (Girls) Higher Secondary School Lakhi Ghulam Shah	3	0	3	81	5	82	4	172
3	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Chak Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	176	187	190	160	713
4	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Rustam Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	223	259	244	90	816
5	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Ruk Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	89	74	114	68	345
6	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Jhali Kalwari Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	1	0	1	35	60	33	71	199

S. No	Name of School	English Teachers (Male)	English Teachers (Female)	Total	Students Inter Pre-medical	Students Inter Pre Engineering	Students First-year Pre-medical	Students First-year Pre Engineering	Total
7	Government (Boys) Qazi Habibullah Higher Secondary School Shikarpur	3	0	3	95	100	82	73	350
8	Government (Girls) Higher Secondary School Haji Fateh Muhammad Usto Shikarpur	2	0	2	130	13	142	13	298
9	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School City Shikarpur	3	0	2	137	144	104	156	541
10	Government Higher Secondary School Sultan Kot Shikarpur	2	0	2	175	22	159	55	411
11	Government Higher Secondary School Garhi Yasin	3	0	3	87	128	126	203	544
12	Government (Girls) Higher Secondary School Garhi Yasin	2	0	2	83	4	102	3	192
13	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School Dhakan	2	0	2	136	66	136	97	435
14	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School Khanpur	2	0	2	218	60	256	63	597
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1726</b>	<b>1269</b>	<b>1845</b>	<b>1233</b>	<b>6073</b>

Note. This information has been received from District Education Office Shikarpur (See appendix 6).

### SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A simple random sampling technique was used; 200 students were selected out of the total population of 6073 students. Equal representation was given to both genders (boys and girls) so, 100 boys and 100 girls were selected. All 20 teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2007). All the teachers were male, and no

female teacher was appointed even in girls' school male teachers were teaching English. Giving equal representation to all schools' an average of 15 students and one teacher were selected from each school. 3 to 5 students were taken from each class from the students present in the class according to their seating arrangements (See Table 2).

**Table 2:** Showing the sample selected from each school for the main study

S. No	Name of School	Teachers (Male)	Teachers (Female)	Total	Students Inter Pre-medical	Students Inter Pre Engineering	Students First-year Pre-medical	Students First-year Pre Engineering	Total
1	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	3	4	4	4	15
2	Government (Girls) Higher Secondary School Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	5	2	4	4	15
3	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Chak Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	1	0	1	4	3	4	4	15
4	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Rustam Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	1	0	1	4	4	3	4	15
5	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Ruk Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	1	0	1	4	3	4	4	15



S. No	Name of School	Teachers (Male)	Teachers (Female)	Total	Students Inter Pre-medical	Students Inter Pre Engineering	Students First-year Pre-medical	Students First-year Pre Engineering	Total
6	Government (Boys and Girls) Higher Secondary School Jhali Kalwari Taluka Lakhi Ghulam Shah	1	0	1	4	3	4	4	15
7	Government (Boys) Qazi Habibullah Higher Secondary School Shikarpur	2	0	2	4	3	4	4	15
8	Government (Girls) Higher Secondary School Haji Fateh Muhammad Usto Shikarpur	1	0	1	4	3	4	4	15
9	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School City Shikarpur	2	0	2	3	4	4	4	15
10	Government Higher Secondary School Sultan Kot Shikarpur	1	0	1	3	4	4	4	15
11	Government Higher Secondary School GarhiYasin	2	0	2	2	2	3	3	10
12	Government (Girls) Higher Secondary School Garhi Yasin	2	0	2	4	1	4	1	10
13	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School Dhakan	1	0	1	4	3	4	4	15
14	Government (Boys) Higher Secondary School Khanpur	1	0	1	3	4	4	4	15
	TOTAL	20	0	20	51	43	54	52	200

Note. This information has been received from District Education Office Shikarpur (See appendix 6).

## INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

This study was a survey research project, using only a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. A three-point Likert-type questionnaire was adapted from the research conducted by Bashir et al (2011). The main advantage of using questionnaires in the present study was that they made relatively easy the collection of data from a large sample (220 participants) in a short period and at a low cost (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007; Harris and Brown, 2010). The use of questionnaires also ensured greater confidentiality and anonymity of the subjects because unlike in an interview, the researcher does not come face-to-face with participants. In addition, the participants were not asked to mention their names on the questionnaires (cf. Strange, et al., 2003; Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007).

Besides advantages, questionnaires also have some disadvantages like the

researcher is not sure which of the subjects have answered the questionnaire items fully and which have given incomplete answers. Due to the lack of interest in the subjects in the content of the questionnaire, there is always the possibility of a low response rate, and the researcher has no opportunity for extra clarification if needed the researcher also has no opportunity to develop a rapport with a subject like in interviews. Besides this, Panhwar (2016), Harris and Brown (2010), and Jekayinfa (2007) also describe that questionnaires have several limitations, including the risk of collecting misleading information and lack of opportunity for the researcher to develop an understanding with participants.

The variables included in the questionnaires were teaching methods like GTM, interactive techniques, and the use of A/V aids. Moreover, students were asked about the environment, extra-curricular activities,

motivation, confidence, fear of being mocked, feeling shy, and curriculum, etc.

### PILOT STUDY

Before the actual process of data collection, a pilot study was conducted on a small scale to establish the reliability of the questionnaire adapted from Bashir et al (2011). This questionnaire was piloted again because the researcher modified many items on it according to the context. 4 teachers and 30 students were

selected through systematic random sampling taken as a sample (Cohen et al., 2007). For example, every fourth student from the register was asked to participate and about 8 students were selected from each class (There were 4 classes in total). All four English teachers from the two schools were sampled. The purpose of the pilot study was to check the research instrument whether iterated the sort of expected data to clarify the items that could be perplexing, misleading, or confusing and to notice any other unforeseen problems (Cohen et al., 2007) (see Table 3).

**Table 3:** Showing the sample selected for a pilot study

S. No	Name of School	Teachers (Male)	Teachers (Female)	Total	Students Inter Pre-medical	Students Inter Pre Engineering	Students First-year Pre-medical	Students First-year Pre Engineering	Total
1	Government (Boys) HSS Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	3	4	4	4	15
2	Government (Girls) HSS Lakhi Ghulam Shah	2	0	2	5	2	4	4	15

During the pilot study, it was noticed that question no 12 which was to know about the training programs of the teachers, included in the questionnaire for students, was considered irrelevant for students because training is only for the activity teachers. Students have nothing to do with the training of the teachers. Therefore, this question was removed from the questionnaire. Now the question items in the questionnaire for students became 19, one question less than the questions designed for teachers, which consisted of 20 question items. The rest of the questions were the same as those asked by teachers and students. In addition to this, some necessary amendments and modifications were made to the questionnaire for final use. For example, question no 3 “Do you promote participatory technique?” was replaced with “Do the teachers teaching English to interact with one another in English?” Because question no two already asks about interactive techniques. The

participatory technique and interactive technique are almost the same.

### DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE AND ITS ANALYSIS

In the present study, the data were analyzed through IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 software program and represented graphically through box plots. The questionnaires for the participants, teachers, and students used Likert scale questions which gained quantitative data. The nature of the data was ordinal, and the responses were ranked as 1 = yes, 2 = no and 3 = sometimes.

### DISCUSSION

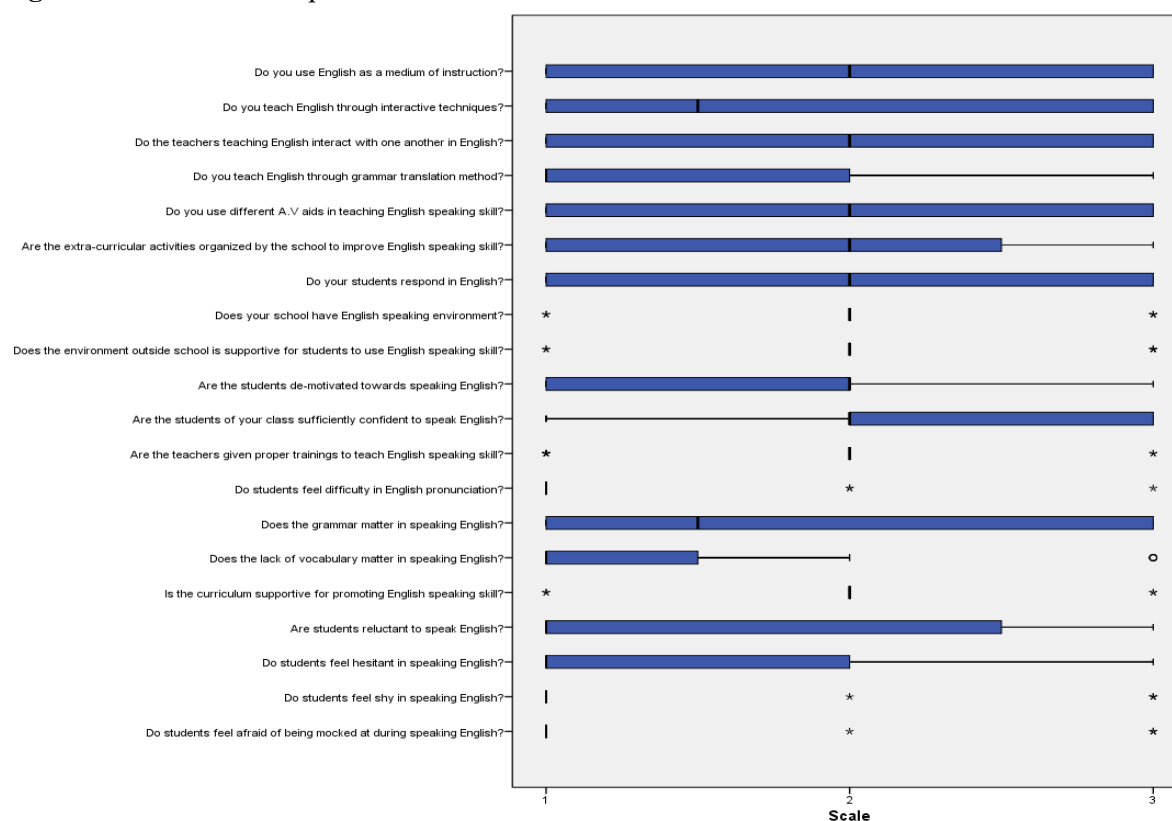
#### Teachers Responses

To elicit the perceptions of teachers on the issues in speaking and methods used in

teaching and learning speaking skills they were required to respond to several questions using a 3-point Likert scale, where 1 = yes, 2 = no, 3 = sometimes. The data generated by the questionnaire is ordinal. According to Butler (1985), for ordinal data, the most suitable way to measure central tendency is the median, and a suitable way to measure the dispersion of data is the interquartile range (IQR). A descriptive method is used for data analysis and the results

are revealed graphically using box and whisker plots. The vertical line on the left side shows the consensus on positive perceptions of the participants and the vertical line on the right side indicates the consensus on negative perceptions. The blue-colored color box shows the spread of data which means participants' perceptions are divided and could not make a consensus on the issue. The results are summarized in **Figure. 1** as follows:

**Figure 1.** Teachers' responses



**Figure 1** represents the responses of teacher participants to twenty questions about methods and issues related to teaching and learning English-speaking skills. It is noticed that out of 20, only 8 questions elicit considerable consensus. Questions 8, 9, 12, 13, 16, 19, and 20 have the highest level of conformity; question 15 has a little less but still a visible consensus. Questions 13, 15, 19, and 20 show positive perceptions of the participants, and

questions 8, 9, 12, and 16 show negative perceptions of teacher participants. The rest of the statements do not give a clear picture of the data because it is highly spread, and the responses of items show a discrepancy. The issues on which many teachers showed their consensus are as follows:

- Commonly used teaching methods
- The unsupportive school environment

- The unsupportive environment outside the school
- Lack of Teacher Training Programs
- Difficulty in English pronunciation
- Lack of vocabulary
- Out-dated curriculum
- Shyness in English speaking
- Fear of being mocked

### **DIFFICULTY IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION**

Question 13 is regarding English pronunciation. According to teachers, the difficulty in English pronunciation is one of the great concerns of students in learning English speaking skills. Chen (2005) reports that learners face lots of problems in identifying and matching the pronunciation of the words spoken to them due to low mental processing abilities. It is generally known that English is not a phonetic language and sometimes the pronunciations of English words are not alike to their spellings. Sometimes letters in English words are pronounced the same way. For example, the letter “c” in the word “cup” is pronounced with the “ka” sound but that is different in the word “place”. Therefore, students get confused about producing English words accurately. Without sufficient knowledge and practice in English pronunciation, we cannot expect our students to be fluent in English. If the teachers want their students to be fluent, they should help them to correct their pronunciation. This finding agrees with the findings of (Esmail, Ahmed, and Noreen, 2015; Gan, 2012; Mahripah, 2014).

### **LACK OF VOCABULARY**

Question 15 shows the consensus of teachers that a lack of vocabulary is also a big problem for students that do not allow their English-speaking skills to flourish. We cannot deny the importance of vocabulary in language learning.

Vocabulary is a core of the human language, and it provides a strong base for a language. Without enough vocabulary students cannot continue English speaking, they become intermittent and discouraged due to a lack of vocabulary. This is supported by Amalia (2018) and Seffar (2015) that due to a lack of vocabulary students can carry on no more speaking English. This issue also calls for the immediate attention of teachers to be addressed. This finding is also in agreement with the findings of (Esmail, Ahmed, and Noreen, 2015; Gan, 2012; Kurniawan, Syafrizal, and Fernandita, 2018; Mahripah, 2014; Seffar, 2015)

### **OUTDATED CURRICULUM**

Question 16 reveals that the curriculum is not supportive to promote the English-speaking skill of the students. The curriculum has a significance of its kind in language learning, it provides the path and center of all language learning activities. Since a long-outdated curriculum is in action that it consisted of three books first “a textbook” with sufficient grammar exercises, second a book of poetry “Selection from English Verses” and third a book of drama “Two One-act Plays”. After reviewing all three books we conclude surprisingly that teaching speaking activities are not included in any of the three books. This is also one of the major reasons for the poor speaking skill of the students. This has already been discovered by (Gan 2012; Mashori, 2007; Warsi, 2004).

### **SHYNESS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING**

Question 19 indicates that shyness during speaking English is one of the main problems that students face in learning speaking skills. Like fear of being mocked shyness is also a kind of psychological issue associated with students. This issue also originated from

students' cognition and the degree of shyness varies greatly from individual to individual and situation to situation. This issue also needs the immediate attention of teachers to be addressed. In this respect, an interesting aspect is that shyness prevails only when they speak English, but they are not shy by nature and do not feel shy in speaking their mother tongue. This finding is similar to that of Amalia (2018) and Zhiping (2013) arguing that students are shy about speaking English and the degree of shyness varies greatly from individual to individual.

### FEAR OF BEING MOCKED

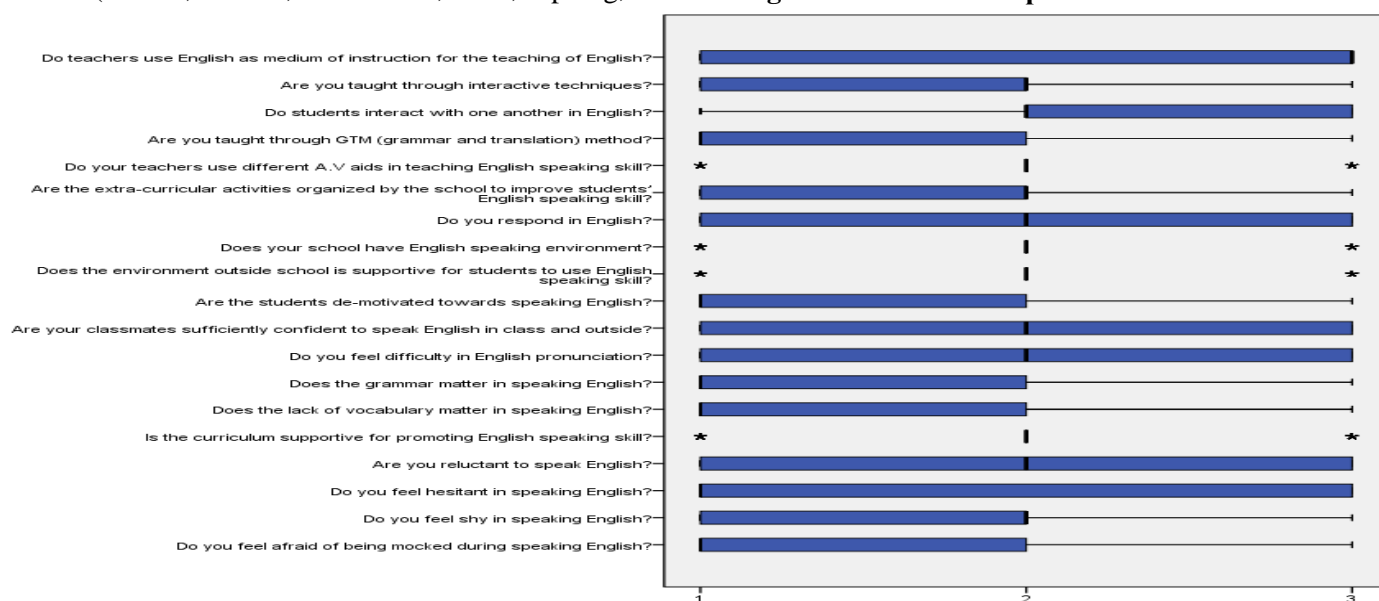
Question 20 shows the substantial consensus of the teachers that most students are afraid of being mocked during speaking English or they are in fear of being criticized by their fellow students for making possible mistakes. This is a psychological kind of issue associated with the students generated from students' cognition. This is an important issue to be addressed immediately. Due to this fear, students remain calm and isolated in class and do not participate in classroom discussions. This finding agrees with the findings of (Esmail, Ahmed, and Noreen, 2015; Ziping,

2013). According to them, students are afraid of being mocked and overly concerned with other people's opinions.

### THE STUDENTS' RESPONSES

To elicit the perceptions of students on the issues and methods in teaching and learning speaking skills they were required to respond to several questions using a 3-point Likert scale, where 1 = yes, 2 = no, and 3 = sometimes. The data generated by the questionnaire is ordinal. According to Butler (1985), for ordinal data, the most suitable way to measure central tendency is the median and the most suitable way to measure dispersion is the interquartile range (IQR). A descriptive method is used to analyze the data and the results are revealed graphically using box and whisker plots. The vertical line on the left side shows the consensus on positive perceptions of the participants and the vertical line on the right side indicates the consensus on negative perceptions. The blue-colored box shows the spread of data which means participants' perceptions are divided and could not make a clear consensus on the issue. The results are summarized in figure 1 as follows:

**Figure.2 Students' Responses**



**Figure 2.** represents the responses of 19 student participants about the issues faced by them in learning English speaking skills and the methods used by teachers in teaching English. It is found that out of 19, only 7 questions elicit considerable consensus. Questions 5, 8, 9, and 15 show the highest level of agreement, and questions 4, 13, and 14 are a little less but still visible. Questions 5, 8, 9, and 15 show negative perceptions, and questions 4, 13, and 14 show positive perceptions of the students. The responses to the rest of the questions are indicative of diverse opinions among students and the data is spread. The issues on which most students showed their consensus are as follows:

### **GTM METHOD**

Missing A/V aids

The unsupportive school environment

The unsupportive environment outside the school

Lack of grammatical knowledge

Lack of vocabulary

Out-dated curriculum

### **TEACHING METHODOLOGY**

Teaching with GTM (Grammar Translation Method), missing A/V aids from teaching practice, and lack of teacher training programs are the three other important issues that need to be addressed urgently to make teaching and learning speaking skills an effective one.

No doubt GTM method of teaching English can be helpful for a small number of slow learners to produce sentences in written or spoken form. But when we aim at preparing students in speaking English, it needs different approaches like the CLT communicative language teaching method, interactive method, participatory techniques, etc. Therefore, teachers should replace the GTM method with the most suitable method like CLT. According to Canale (1983),

Nunan (1991, 2004), and (Littlewood, 2007), communicative language teaching emphasizes the language that is used in real-life communication, and the students are given sufficient opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. According to Bashiruddin (2003), teachers can make changes in their teaching methods if they are introduced to new teaching techniques. Masood, A. M, Abbasi A. M & Umrani, T. (2016) argue that the findings of the study show sixty percentage of the subjects favored GTM while, forty percentage language teachers favored CLT method as an effective method.

The use of Audio/Video aids has become an important part of language teaching in this modern era. They have a long-lasting impact on the minds of students and increase their interest in the students. Therefore, teachers should not hesitate to use A/V aids to help students receive sufficient listening input. According to Feyten (1991), there is a significant relationship between listening ability and speaking skills in a foreign language. The more the students listen the more they produce language. Students are advised to listen as much as they can. Teachers should use computer laboratories with the permission of the heads of the institutes. In schools, in which language laboratories are not available Audio/Visual aids should be arranged on their own or with the help of the head of institutes. Soomro (2019) argues that ‘the results revealed that communication apprehension can cause the variety of barriers among undergraduates during oral presentation’.

This issue of teacher training programs shows the lack of interest of authorities. Arranging training programs is the responsibility of the authorities. Therefore, the education department should arrange teacher

training programs from time to time to train the teachers according to the modern needs for teaching English, bearing in mind the importance and need for English speaking skills. This will allow teachers to update their language teaching skills. Furthermore, it is also suggested to English teachers that they should search for different related websites for training programs like (USEFP) The United States Education Foundation for Pakistan. [www.usef.org.pk](http://www.usef.org.pk), Evolution. [www.evolution.com](http://www.evolution.com) etc. Besides, there are many other national and international organizations that offer free training programs within the country and abroad. Therefore, teachers should not hesitate to join such programs in terms of updating their language teaching skills.

## CONCLUSION

A proper communicative approach should be used to provide students with more opportunities to practice their speaking skills. Teachers should replace the GTM method with modern communicative language teaching methods like the CLT communicative language teaching method, interactive method, participatory technique, etc. The learning should be learner-centered rather than teacher-centered or book-centered. Spooner (2015) favors that nowadays, classes are different from traditional ones and students' learning necessities have also changed to a great extent. Similarly, Meeks (2014) also states that modern students cannot benefit from decades-old traditional methods of education. Both the teachers and the students should create a conducive environment in schools to promote English-speaking skills. Additionally, teachers should use Audio-Video aids and other instructional material in teaching English. Furthermore, it is strongly suggested that teachers use English as a medium of instruction

and interaction in class and develop the confidence of the students by ensuring the active participation of students in classroom discussions to overcome the shyness of the students and the fear of being mocked. Furthermore, students are suggested to practice as much as possible what they learn in the classroom and refer to other sources of reading and listening to cope with linguistic difficulties like lack of grammar, vocabulary, and difficulty in English pronunciation. Students are further advised not to care about others' remarks to defeat the fear of being mocked and shy during speaking English.

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