



---

## **Impact of Hindering Factors on Students' English Language Speaking Skills**

**Tegbar Kibret**

Haramaya University, Ethiopia

Received: Apr. 10, 2017

Accepted: Apr. 21, 2017

Online Published: May. 27, 2017

---

### **Abstract**

The main objective of this study is to assess causes of speaking anxiety that hinder EFL English language learners' speaking skills and its effect on EFL learners in speaking classroom at preparatory level. To this end, the researcher made a quantitative and a qualitative research design to investigate the issue. A total of one hundred twenty five grade twelve students and four English teachers were selected as a sample. To collect the necessary data for the study, interview (for both teachers and students) was employed as the main data collecting tool. Besides, questionnaires (for the students) and classroom observations were employed as supporting instruments so as to triangulate the findings of the interview. Then, the collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. The study revealed that language anxiety can originate from learners' fear of negative evaluation by their teachers and classmates, teachers' inappropriate teaching methodology, and differences in social status of the speakers. The pedagogical implications of these findings for understanding foreign language anxiety for enhancing learners' communication abilities in the target language were discussed, as suggestions for future research. Furthermore, considering the crucial role of teachers in foreign language pedagogy, a need was felt to investigate the beliefs and perceptions of language teachers about learning and teaching a foreign language.

### **1. Introduction**

This introductory chapter contains eight different parts: These are background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, limitations of the study, significance of the study, and definitions of some important terms of the study. Each sub topic is explained in detail respectively as follows.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Speaking is one of the four basic skills of language which is used as a medium of interaction to express one's thought and emotions. It is a natural art and skill given to human beings so as to serve in day to day interaction. Mohan (2003) explained: "The art of speech is noble and even divine; it is like kindling of the heaven's light to show us what glorious world exists and has perfected itself, in man". In other words Mohan stated that speech is similar to candle that gives light for a dark room, that is, it is speech that lightens the life of human beings. Although

speaking has many purposeful usages, the development of English language speaking skills is as standstill particularly among Ethiopian secondary school students, as far as my personal experience is concerned.

Horwitz, E. K (1986) identified in his study two potential factors that hinder the development of students' English language speaking skills. These are the psychological pressure of making mistakes and students' shy to speak during spoken English classroom. Students tend to be silent learners in spoken English classes due to the fact that they are a fearing of making mistakes in the presence of their classmates and the teacher. Similarly, the students hesitate to speak during spoken classes due to the presence of the learners of the opposite sex. That means getting male students to explain some point to the group using the board in the presence of female students is a bit difficult. In the same way, inviting female students to do that in the presence of male students is almost impossible. Speaking skills are generally considered by the students as the most difficult of the four basic skills to learn. This misconception leads students to become reluctant to work on speaking skills consciously.

Most of the language produced by students in conversational interaction in class develops under highly artificial conditions. Despite the expenditure of much energy and enthusiasm by all concerned, the conversation class just does not achieve its objectives. The learners even those at fairly advanced levels, simply do not speak spontaneously" (Affagnon, 1990). The biggest problem the teachers find is how to bridge the gap between artificial use of language and communicative use. In other words, teachers fail to create a natural linguistic environment which would inspire students to use the target language (English) freely and meaningfully rather than mechanically (Affagnan, 1990).

Second language researchers have long been aware that second language learning is often associated with affective factors, among which the constructs of anxiety has been recognized as important predictors of second language performance. Existing work has generated context-specific findings with respect to the identification and formulation of foreign language anxiety and the assessment of their impact on the learning experience (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986).

EFL learners express their inability and sometimes even acknowledge their failure in learning to speak a foreign language. These learners may be good at learning other skills but, when it comes to learning to speak English, they claim to have a 'mental block' against it (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986). What, then, hinders or stops them to succeed in learning a foreign language? In many cases, students' feeling of stress, anxiety or nervousness may impede their speaking abilities.

Thus, what causes language anxiety is a central question of this study. Considering anxiety as a highly influential construct in language learning, the researcher tried to investigate the sources or reasons that language anxiety can stem from within speaking classroom, and suggests a variety of strategies to cope with it. Language anxiety may be a result as well as a cause of insufficient command of the target language (Sparks; cited in Horwitz, 2001). That is to say it may be experienced due to fearing of negative evaluation and insufficient teaching experience practiced by language teachers while learning and using the target language.

A further detailed investigation of these factors could potentially assist language teachers and students to alleviate anxiety in the classroom setting and to make the classroom environment less anxiety-provoking and hence to improve learners' performance in the target language

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Nowadays, there is no doubt that speaking is essential for interactive survival in global settings more than ever before. In other words, we are living in an educational world where orality is seen as a necessary, positive personal characteristic (Daly, 1991). Wang (1990) noted that focusing on oral skills is a new trend in the reform of English teaching, which promotes an all round development of English as foreign language learners. Thus, worldwide expansion of English language has increased this demand to acquire good communication skills in the target language. However, learners of English language often express a feeling of stress, nervousness or anxiety while learning English speaking and claim to have, a ‘mental block’ against learning English. The problem exists among EFL learners from elementary to more advanced levels. Even highly advanced EFL learners feel nervous while learning and particularly speaking English in some situations, both within and out of the classroom settings. These learners wonder why they cannot speak English well, because their compulsive efforts do not lead to their intended performance.

Horwitz and Young (1991) are the two well-known researchers in the area of ‘language anxiety’ express, “we have been truly surprised at the number of students who experience anxiety and distress in their language classes”. Similarly, Campbell and Ortiz (1991) found language anxiety among secondary students to be ‘alarming’ and estimated that up to one half of all language students experience debilitating levels of language anxiety.

Being an EFL learner of English language teaching, the researcher himself has not only experienced language anxiety but also observed this phenomenon among students of varied secondary schools, the researcher is interested to know why EFL learners’ feel anxious while learning speaking skill.

## **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

The major objectives of this research is to find out why EFL learners develop anxiety or feel embarrassed while learning English speaking and what influence it casts on their communication in the target language. In other words, what are the factors or sources that make speaking English more stressful in speaking classroom?

More specifically the objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the anxiety factors (causes) of EFL learners in learning English speaking skill
2. To assess how the identified factors affect students’ speaking skill
3. To assess the strategies that teachers and students use to overcome these anxiety factors and improve learners’ speaking skill.

## **1.4. Research Questions**

1. What are the anxiety factors that hinder EFL learners’ English language speaking skill?
2. In what way do these factors usually affect the learners’ speaking skill?
3. What are the strategies teachers and learners use to overcome these anxiety factors and to improve students’ speaking skills?

## **1.5. Scope of the Study**

The researcher has limited the scope of his work to Enjibara preparatory school of EFL teachers and some randomly selected grade '12' students of the school. Of course, the researcher was aware that it would be appropriate to conduct a research on a large scale about factors that hinder EFL students' English language speaking skill and its effect in EFL speaking classroom, but in order to dig out the factors deeply on the one hand and due to time and money constraints on the other, the researcher has focused on assessing the anxiety factors of EFL students' English language speaking and its effect in EFL speaking classroom in the selected school. In other words, the researcher focused on identifying the sources of anxiety, its effect in EFL speaking classrooms and strategies to cope with it.

### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

Conducting research is a time taking process and at the same time it requires much financial availability. Firstly, shortage of fund and time were the most important problems that the researcher faced to conduct wider and in-depth study. Secondly, unwillingness of the teachers to be interviewed because they were not volunteered to be audio recorded. Thirdly, the students were reluctant to fill the questionnaire because they assumed that the study was against them. Besides, the students had difficulty of understanding to provide reliable information with respect to some questions in spite of the fact that the questionnaire was prepared with simple and plain expressions. Finally there exists lack of adequate reference materials in Haramay University for the review of related literature. Generally, the points raised above are not the only limitations but the major ones of the study.

### **1.7. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study is expected to have the following important contributions (1) it will contribute to the understanding of those factors that affect the development of students' English language speaking skill, its effect in learning speaking, and strategies to overcome the problem by the school teachers, parents and other bodies concerned (2) the study will initiate the students of Enjibara preparatory school to make a conscious effort to develop their English language speaking skill (3) the study will also create self awareness among English language teachers and students of Enjibara preparatory school to observe their position and take affirmative measures if necessary (4) The findings will also serve as a source for other researchers or a stepping stone for those who have interest in conducting further study in the same area.

### **1.8. Operational Definition of Terms**

For clarity of meaning throughout the thesis the following definitions are applicable.

**English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners and Teachers:** are those who are learning or teaching English while living in a community where English is not spoken as a first language.

**Anxiety:** is a psychological construct, commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, and a vague fear (Hilgard, 1991).

**Foreign Language Anxiety:** the feelings of tension or nervousness centered on the two basic task requirements of foreign language learning: listening and speaking (McIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is about factors (causes) of foreign language anxiety, and the second section will look at how these factors affect the learners' motivation and practice of speaking and some strategies to cope with it.

### **2.1. Factors of Foreign Language Anxiety**

The previous sections have established the conceptual basis of EFL learners' anxiety in speaking English with relation to the importance of speaking English language in the present trend. In the following section, literature on language anxiety from different perspectives has been reviewed. These includes: students' fear of making mistakes, teachers' reactions to learners in the classroom, classroom procedures, Environmental factors, motivational factors, and gender.

#### **2.1.1. Students' Fear of Making Mistakes**

Fear of making mistakes in EFL speaking classroom pertains not only to the teacher's evaluation of the students but also to the perceived reaction of other students as well. Atkins and others (1996) pointed out that most of high school students tend to think that it is bad to make mistakes that they will be ridiculed by other students or by the teacher. They also think that the teacher's job is to correct any deviation from total accuracy. Therefore, they are very careful not to take any risks making mistakes, not to say any thing unless it is correct; Norrish (1990) added that it is hardly likely that second language learners will be able to produce hesitation free utterances. They usually feel that their speech should be free from mistakes.

#### **2.1.2. Classroom procedures**

Different activities in the classroom procedure, particularly ones that demand students to speak in front of the whole class, have been found to be the most anxiety provoking factors. For instance, Koch and Terrell (2001) found that more than half of their subjects in their Natural Approach classes – a language teaching method specifically designed to reduce learner's anxiety – expressed that giving a presentation in the class, oral skits and discussion in large groups are the most anxiety-producing activities. They also found that students get more anxious when called upon to respond individually, rather than if they are given choice to respond voluntarily. In addition, students were found to be more relaxed speaking the target language when paired with a classmate or put into small groups of three to six than into larger groups of seven to fifteen students.

“Sometimes when I speak English in class, I am so afraid I feel like hiding behind my chair. When I am in my speaking class I just freeze! I can't think of any thing when my teacher calls on me. My mind goes blank.” (Horwitz et al. 1986).

This suggests that any measure to treat language anxiety should not fail to exploit learning environments where students feel relatively free of anxiety (Jones, 2004). For this, communicative language teaching approaches are often recommended by the researchers to provide such an unthreatening environment where students talk to one another and not exclusively to the teacher. This is deemed necessary because “the rapport [the student] feels with the teacher as well as with classmates may be crucial in determining the success or failure of the

venture [practice in communication]” (Smimy, 1994). It indicates that arousal of anxiety reactions is also likely to occur in interpersonal relations or communication.

### **2.1.3 The role of teachers’ in teaching speaking**

Most teachers regard errors as undesirable, sign of failure either on the students’ part to pay attention or on the teacher’s part to make his/her meaning clear. In other words, teachers are over conscious of students’ mistakes because of an entirely praiseworthy desire to teach the best possible form of the language. In such traditional approach language classes, students are made to feel that errors bring discredit on the teachers and learners alike and are reprimanded for making too many errors. This means errors are the fault of students, and that should be avoided immediately (Norrish, 1990).

Atkins and others (1996) paraphrased that many teachers do not feel confident in their own English. They get embarrassed by the fact that their own spoken English is not free of errors. They are worried that by making mistakes, they would give their students a bad model of the language and damage their status in the eyes of their students. As a result, they do not speak freely in the class. This bad attitude of teachers leads to the loss of students’ confidence to express themselves because they think that the teacher values accuracy above everything else. However, research findings point out that irrespective of the mistakes made, students should be encouraged to speak freely and confidentially. Errors should be tolerated and seen as a natural part of learning. In other words, teachers should endure errors that may exist during oral communications, and that they should not correct students errors immediately amid their communication, for it can hinder students’ further communication (Freeman, 2000); and (Atkins and others, 1998).

### **2.1.4. The role of teachers to motivate students**

If the learners are highly motivated by the teacher to have better speaking skills, they can develop a concern for communication, and become more eager to take part in the activities and pay more attention to communicate in the target language (Brown 1997). Motivation can be the key to learn the target language, and it in turn enables the students to try to communicate better in the target language (English). Here it must be pointed out what the motivation is and how the learners will be motivated. According to Brown (1997) motivation is thought of as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action. He also stated that learning a foreign language requires motivation in order to achieve the desired goal of speaking classroom activities.

## **2.2. Socio-Cultural Factors**

Language anxiety as discussed in the above sections stems from social and communicative aspects of language learning and therefore have been considered as one of the social anxieties (MacIntyre, 1995). The following sub-sections discussed about some of these socio-cultural factors as follows.

### **2.2.1. Social environment and limited exposure to the target language**

Many teachers agreed that speaking is most important, presumably, the most difficult to teach students of English in a country where English is a foreign language. Pierce, (1988) suggested that opportunities for practicing speaking in authentic communicative setting do not adequate in

an EFL situation particularly because students do not generally hear English spoken outside the classroom. Hissen and Jin (1988), the Chinese researchers explained the situation in their country what communication is a difficult aspect of life to become proficient in, especially for students who are anxious in speaking. They face a multitude of barriers to effective communication. While none of these are insurmountable, they can be difficult to overcome.

Environmental factors, ranging from the literal volume of a setting to the speaker's comfort level in that setting can influence the effectiveness of anyone's speaking skills. For students, this aspect is multiplied tenfold (Hissen & Jin, 1988).

According to Hissen and Jin (1998), effective oral communication, like anything else in life, takes practice to make perfect. Students, by their very age, often have not had the opportunity to practice their formal communication skills. While some may not face barriers in informal communication, they often face significant barriers when it comes to effective communication in formal presentations simply because they have not yet had the opportunity to hone those skills in a meaningful way.

Since environmental factors are highly related to the amount of exposure to the target language, a country where English is spoken as the second language (foreign language), and the learners will have the opportunities to use it only in the classroom environment. So these learners will have no chance or opportunity to use the target language in a real environment. This means that there will be no communication and if there is no communication, there won't be language learning (Hissen and Jin, 1998). Briefly, Kenworthy (1987) mentions that exposure can be a contributory factor for the development of oral communication. If a learner is aware of the necessity of being exposed to the target language, s/he should make use of its opportunities. If the learner does that, s/he will be more successful in case of improving his/her speaking. According to Kenworthy (1987), the best ways of being exposed would be native speakers, videos shows, films, cds, radio or TV programs, computer assisted language teaching programs, etc. He also stated that the amount of exposure is crucial and it must make the students creative and active, not passive and dull. Therefore, the dose of exposure must be adjusted with caution.

### **2.2.2. Social status**

From a socio-cultural perspective, status is an important consideration in people's interaction with one another in social relationships. Within any social context, there exists a status relationship between people that carries a significant impact on language and language use and this is an important aspect of social interaction, for example, "what can be said, the ways it can be said, and possibly, what language to use, and even how much must be said" (Carrier, 1999). In addition, he raises a crucial question as to whether in face-to-face interaction receiver apprehension (anxiety) can be triggered by the particular status relationship between the interlocutors (1999). He states: The effects of status in terms of perceived power over another can also effectively silence a person in a conversation. Sociolinguists posit that social relationships can have a deep impact on conversational interaction. Wolfson (1989), in her Theory of Social Interaction, postulates that inequality of status or social distance "disfavor attempts at negotiation". Similarly, studies of classroom interaction on the pattern of social relationship found that the social relationship between teachers and students gives them an unequal status relationship as interlocutors that can hinder "successful second language comprehension, production, and ultimately acquisition" (Pica, 1987). Earlier research of Doughty and Pica (1999) also showed that there was less interaction when the relationship was unequal, such as, teacher-to-students, than when the relationship was equal, for instance, student-to-student.

### **2.2.3 Gender**

Gender has also been found to cause anxiety in male and female interaction both within and out of the classroom settings. Carrier (1999), states that gender affects communication. Gobel and Matsuda (2003) asserted that gender-related anxiety research has yielded conflicting results. Spielberg (2005), in her study found, “females are more emotionally stable than males in their reactions to highly stressful and relaxing circumstances”. Similarly, in Kitano’s study (2001, cited in Gobel and Matsuda, 2003) of college students, male students have been found to feel more anxiety when they perceived their speaking less competent than those of others; however, such a relationship was not observed among female students. On the contrary, Machida (2003) examined EFL class anxiety based on gender and found that female learners are more anxious than male counterparts.

## **2.3. The Effects of Anxiety in EFL Speaking Classroom and Strategies to Overcome It**

### **2.3.1 Effects**

EFL researchers and foreign language teachers have decoded a number of effects that EFL learners’ are affecting in learning speaking. Gregersen (2003: cited in Gregersen, 2007) states that the negative consequences of anxiety can change students’ behavior in EFL speaking classroom such as unwillingness to discuss in the target language (English) when they are given pair works and group work activities in speaking classroom due to the fear of making mistakes; lack of motivation to learn the language; unwillingness to participate in speaking classroom. He also states that students who have high level of anxiety, engage in negative self-talk. Such students keep on ruminating with poor performance, which affects information processing abilities. (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994) paraphrased the effects of anxiety as: students who have anxiety in speaking classroom usually exhibit avoidance behavior by missing class, unwillingness in role play activities, participating infrequently; and ultimately receiving low course grades (Gregersen, 2007). In addition, Gregersen (2007) in her study found that EFL learners with high level of anxiety usually have limited facial activity, including less eye contact with the teacher, and more rigid and closed with their posture so that they can not improve their speaking ability in the target language.

Horwitz et al. (1986) offer additional descriptions of EFL students speaking related problems in EFL speaking classroom: that students with anxiety, attempt different type of grammatical constructions; are less interpretative of more concrete messages; ‘know’ a certain grammar point but can not express it during oral classes; complain of difficulties discriminating the sounds and structures of a foreign language message; confess they know the correct answer on a test but express wrongly due to lack of the ability to convey correctly; and over-study without any improvement in grades of oral tests. These problems are rooted from different anxiety factors of speaking in the target language. Generally, according to researchers students who are learning with anxiety usually reduce classroom interactions, fewer initiations of conversations, less participation in classroom conversations, fewer instances of silence breakers, and shorter speaking periods when in front of the class. Image protection behavior is characterized by smiling and nodding frequently, by seldom interrupting others, and by giving frequent communicative feedback such as ‘uh-huh’. In such situation EFL learners can not improve their speaking skills in particular and their English proficiency in sub-standard.

### **2.3.2 Strategies to overcome the problem**



Identifying anxiety factors that hinder EFL learners' English language speaking skills and recognizing how these factors affect EFL learners while communicating in the target language are important steps in coping with this problem. An extensive body of research has suggested a variety of strategies to cope with the hindrance of speaking in academic settings, which can also offer an understanding of how to deal with it in the classroom contexts. Ying-Ling & Kondo: (2004) holds that the thinking disturbances about making mistakes that occur in the classroom are the primary sources of anxiety. The researchers recommend students should be encouraged to develop more positive and facilitating self-talk and should be taught to manage their self-evaluation more realistically by considering errors as natural phenomena while speaking.

Foss and Reitzel (cited in Young, 1991) hold the view that the recognition of students' irrational beliefs or fears of making mistakes while speaking and their unrealistic expectations can help students interpret speaking problem-producing situations more realistically. They recommend verbalization or articulation of the target language in the target setting (classroom) repeatedly without fear of making mistakes as a strategy to cope with language problems.

Researchers also suggest taking steps to communicate well orally in order to reduce these anxiety factors and recommend systematic improvement method. This method emphasizes highly on the students themselves (students should always use the target language while learning speaking, should participate in oral classes, should participate in activities like group work, pair work etc.). In other words, the students are taught to reduce the problems of speaking in the classroom by subsequent oral communication situations (Mejias et al., 1991, 97). Young (1990: 1) also offered some suggestions in this regard such as; highest level of interaction; using more pair and group work; playing language games with an emphasis on problem-solving; and role-playing with preparatory activities to instill class rapport.

Young (1990) listed some strategies that teachers should use to overcome anxiety in EFL students English language speaking skills such as motivating learners in EFL speaking classroom to speak rather than dominate the whole time by himself/herself; creating a natural linguistic environment in which students practice speaking more realistically; motivating students to use the target language in EFL speaking classroom; giving awareness to students to feel more at ease when they make errors and telling them errors are natural in speaking. Researchers suggested that teachers should not be harsh in error correction but rather be friendly, patient, and have a good sense of humor. It can also be suggested that equal status relationship between teacher and student is an important aspect for reducing anxiety factors.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter consists of six parts. These are research design, sampling population, sampling technique, methods of data collection, and procedures of data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design is an approach to integrate various elements of a research project in order to address a predefined set of study questions. Therefore, this section aimed to describe the research design which would be used in conducting the study. It seeks to justify the choice of research methods which employed during the research project since there are various options of design for conducting research.

The researcher found that the most appropriate design for this study was a mixed research design. A mixed research design involves both quantitative and qualitative approach because the researcher used questionnaire, interview and observation to gather information from a sample of a population and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. A mixed- research design method is a procedure for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study, and for analyzing and reporting data based on a priority and sequence of information(Creswell,2002).

### **3.2 Sampling Population and Sampling Technique**

Since the study was aimed to identify the anxiety factors which affect the EFL students' English language speaking skills and its effect on their learning in depth, the target population was needed to select the sample.

#### **3.2.1. Sampling population**

For this study, the subjects of the study were 125 grade twelve students who are selected as a sample from 402 of grade 12 students and four English language teachers of Enjibara preparatory school timing for English subject as my target population. And these populations, the sample frame constitutes all the grade '12' students population size.

#### **3.2.2. Sampling technique**

In this study sampling technique employed as collecting information from each member of the population was tiresome and time consuming.

The sampling technique used in this research was simple random sampling which is a probability sampling. In this sampling technique, individuals were chosen in such a way that each member of the population had equal chance of being selected.

The researcher employed the following procedures: first the researcher collected the roll numbers of all grade '12' students with their sections and record on papers and turn them into separate strips. Then the strips were put in a hat and mixed them up thoroughly. Finally the first needed strips were pulled out randomly by closed eyes.

The rational behind choosing this sampling technique was to select sample without any bias, and that it was reasonable to generalize the results from the sample back to the population. It is also easy to accomplish and explain to others (William: 2003).

### **3.3. Methods of Data Collection**

This particular research was designed to dig out the anxiety factors that affect students' EFL English language speaking skills and to assess how this factors affect students' learning to speak. To examine this issue the researcher searched carefully by using different data collection methods. The methods used for this study were therefore, designed according to the needs and purpose of the study. While choosing the methods, its applicability and adaptability were considered by the researcher. Thus, the researcher used three methods of data gathering instruments. These were questionnaires, interviews, and observation.

### **3.3.1. Questionnaire**

Questionnaire is widely used in education research to obtain information about certain conditions of an individual or groups. The questionnaire containing a set of questions or statements was used to gather information from students about the anxiety factors in learning speaking skills, how these factors affect learners in EFL speaking classroom and strategies to overcome the problem. By using questionnaire, the researcher had gathered information about why EFL students feel anxiety while learning speaking skills, the role of teachers in creating and reducing feeling of anxiety, how anxiety affects students learning to speak, what strategies teachers and students use to cope the problem. In other words, the researcher used questionnaire in order to search how teachers' teaching methodology cause anxiety in learning speaking, how the students' ways of learning affect their EFL speaking ability, and how environmental and motivational factors provoke anxiety while students' learning speaking and which strategies are needed to cope with it.

Using questionnaire, according to Kothari (2006) is a method that can be conducted at a low cost even when the universe is large; It is free from the bias of the researchers; Respondents have adequate time to give well thought out answers; The result of this method is more dependable and reliable as the research is conducted at a large scale.

To identify the anxiety factors of speaking and its effect in learning speaking, both closed and open-ended types of questionnaires were used to gather the relevant data for the study. According to Kothari, (2006) the forms of questions in questionnaire is mostly closed (i.e. 'yes', 'no', or multiple type questions) or open ended (i.e. inviting free response). Here the researcher used closed type questions more than open ones so that the respondents find them easier to complete. Moreover, closed question types allow comparability of responses (Bryman, 2004). In the closed type of questionnaire the researcher prepared the questionnaires which have choices ('yes', 'no', 'a,b,c',..., always, sometimes, rarely, never, etc.). To gain more details from the questionnaire the researcher also used open ended questions followed by blank spaces for adding more information. This was done by asking the sample students to write their ideas which could not be included in the closed type questions.

The questionnaires which were going to be designed and distributed to the students were written in English as the researcher believes that the sample students could understand the questions and then translate into the first language (Amharic) of the respondents orally in order to minimize and overcome the language barriers to understand the item contained in the questionnaire and to obtain accurate information (to increase the accuracy of the data).

### **3.3.2. Semi-structured interview**

After having looked at the completed questionnaires which consisted mainly of closed and open ended questions, some responses needed to be clarified, so the next step of data collection was conducting interviews with teachers and students to elicit more explanations.

The interview is a process of communication or interaction in which the subjects or the interviewees give the needed information verbally in face-to-face situation (Kothari, 2006: 106). Therefore, interview was conducted to obtain the information orally.

Similar to the interview studied by Price (1991), Young (1992) and Ohata (2005) concerning the perspectives of students and language teachers on anxiety factors that hinder students' speaking, its effect, and the strategies what teachers and students are using to overcome them.

The rationale behind the use of interview as a data collection tool is that it can provide access to things that cannot be directly observed, such as feelings, thoughts, intentions, or beliefs (Merriam, 1998: cited in Ohata, 2005). It also provides participants with opportunities to select, reconstruct, and reflect upon details of their experience within the specific context of their lives.

Given that the primary goal of this study was to explore the sources of anxiety and its effect, individual and group interviews were seemed appropriate as a means to understand the experiences of the subjects about the issue because they allow for given points to be clarified and elaborated upon where required. Both English language teachers and sampled students were interviewed individually, and in group respectively.

A semi-structured face-to-face interview technique was preferred as it is essential to ensure that the researcher will "in a position of being able to access the degree of the interviewee's interest and involvement" (Robson, 2000). It is also appropriate because of "its flexibility balanced by structure and the quality of the data so obtained" (Gillham 2005).

All the teacher respondents were selected randomly as they were believed to provide maximum insight and understanding towards the issues under the study. Initially, the subjects were asked open-ended questions to establish a rapport with the subjects. Later, a semi-structured question format was used as a guideline to ask questions and to encourage the interviewees to talk in their own way. The interviews contain a balance of open and closed questions, the latter asserting the control of the interviewer, the former offering the interviewees a wide range of choice within a question.

The researcher also used group interview technique to utilize and lend breadth and richness to the data. Its implication is that "group interviews can provide different kinds of data from individual interviews" (Gillham, 2005). Instead of asking questions to each person in turn, "participants will be encouraged to talk to one another: asking questions, exchanging anecdotes, and commenting on each others' experiences and views, and thus generating data through interaction" (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999). Thus, the researcher invited volunteer students from the sample (which were going to be conducted) of EFL learners for the group interview. The interview questions were semi structured and contained a balance of open and closed items.

### **3.3.3. Classroom observation**

In this method, the data about the anxiety factors in learning speaking skills, its effect and strategies that teachers and students use to overcome such problems were collected by the researcher's direct observation.

In the classroom observation, the researcher observed methodological factors such as teachers' approach towards error correctionb of the students, teachers' teaching methodology (using different speaking activities in speaking classroom like role plays, games); the ways of students in learning speaking classroom such as group discussion in the target language, gender factors etc; and environmental and motivational factors. The researcher also observed how these factors affect students' speaking practice in EFL classroom and strategies students and teachers use to overcome the problem in detail.

According to Ohata, (2005) the main purpose of classroom observation as a data collection tool is that it can provide access to get first hand accurate information. In addition, the main advantage of this method, according to Kothari (2006) is that subjective bias is eliminated. Since using this method is independent of respondents' willingness to respond because it does not demand any active co-operation from the respondents, the researcher filled all the semi proposed checklist by observing what was happening in the spoken class room. Moreover, the researcher obtained deep information about those anxiety factors and its effect as well as alleviation strategies because he observed the speaking classroom repeatedly.

The researcher observed the speaking classroom repeatedly by proposing semi structured checklist. The checklist which was prepared on the basis of themes by giving them suitable headings and sub-headings like sources of anxiety (fear of negative evaluation, classroom procedures, psychological pressure of making mistakes, teachers' misperception of errors, the position of teachers in the class, teachers method of teaching, environmental factors); the effects of anxiety in EFL speaking classroom; and strategies which are used by teachers and students to cope with it. Thus, the study was conducted by employing semi-structured observation checklist which combines both predetermined checklists and written notes. The advantage of this combination is that the checklists can facilitate organizing observations, while written notes lead to salient themes.

### **3.5. Data Analysis Procedures**

Like data collection, data analysis and interpretation of results was made carefully. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis procedures were used. The data, collected through questioner, interview and observation methods was analyzed and interpreted following the grounded theory data analysis techniques and procedures. The grounded theory approach is a quantitative and qualitative research method that "uses a systematic set of procedures to develop grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Davidson, 2002). Its primary objective is "to categorizing the relationships of those elements to the context (2002).

The questionnaire, interviews (both students' and teachers'), and observation checklist, were listed and transcribed as a process of data analysis and interpretation" (Gillham 2005). The data was transcribed comprehensively and written down in the relevant section; sections were divided on the basis of the three method categories for identification purposes (questionnaire, interview and observation). In grounded theory, data analysis and the latter stages of data reduction like coding, synthesis, etc. operate iteratively. Coding is a process of simultaneously reducing the data by dividing it into units of analysis and coding each unit (Calloway et al., 1995). The raw data which was emerged from students, English language teachers, and researcher' observation about anxiety factors in EFL students' English language speaking skills and its effect on learning was reduced into units of analyses on the basis of common themes and by analyzing the methods of data collection tools. These units were codified by giving them suitable headings like sources of anxiety (fear of negative evaluation, classroom procedures, psychological pressure of making mistakes, teachers' misperception of errors, gender, teachers' method of teaching, environmental factors, motivational factors); the effects of anxiety in EFL speaking classroom; and strategies which are used by teachers and students to cope with it. For further reduction, these categories were integrated and synthesized into three sets of core categories: factors, effects and alleviation strategies. These categories were used to explain the phenomenon under investigation of speaking problem, effects of it and strategies to overcome this problem which is the theory developed based on the data.

To sum up the responses from students' questionnaires were analyzed and interpreted quantitatively. Therefore, to organize and facilitate the analysis, the gathered data was put into tables, and put into percentage manually. The qualitative data gained through interview and observation as well as with open ended questionnaires were organized and analyzed descriptively in line with the quantitative data. All the information from questionnaire, interview and observation were analyzed simultaneously to cross check the internal consistency of the data. Finally the processed data was summarized and presented by means of tabulation and description.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This Chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained through questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. The subsequent part of the chapter has been divided into four sections to discuss the anxiety-producing factors and ways of alleviation to cope with it. These are (1) factors related to EFL learners, (2) factors related to classroom procedures and teachers' teaching methodology, (3) socio-cultural factors and (4) the manifestations of anxiety in speaking classroom and the strategies to cope with it.

### 4.1. Factors Related to Learners

#### 4.1.1. Fear of making mistakes and apprehension about others' evaluation

The evidence gained through past research supports the notion that language anxiety, for untold number of learners, has its origin in the fear of making mistakes and attracting the derision of classmates" (Jones, 2004).

Table 1: The students' responses whether or not they speak English language in spite of their hesitation to use the language correctly and how they perceive their errors.

No	Items	Variables	Number of respondents	percent
1	Do you speak English although you are not sure that you use the language correctly?	Yes	49	39.20
		No	76	60.80
	Total		125	100
2	When you speak English in the class you may make errors. How would you perceive them?	Positively because they give you encouragement to do more	48	38.40
		Negatively because they are sign of failure	61	48.80
		Neither positively nor negatively	16	12.80
	Total		125	100

Table 1 (item No, 1) shows that 49(39.20%) of the respondents reported that even though they do not know for sure the fact that they are capable of using the language necessarily. However, the majority 76(60.80%) of the respondents replied that they do not speak English unless they

become certain that they are able to express themselves well. The implication of the result is almost identical with the findings of Atkins and others (1996) and Norrish (1990) which states that students value accuracy above everything else and thus they take much care not to commit errors while speaking the language they do not know well. This in turn leads to conclusion that students seem to lack knowledge about the attainment of accuracy through gradual process by learning from the error made.

Table 1 (item No, 2) shows that most of the respondents 61(48.80%) perceive committing errors negatively because they assume that errors are signs of failure. As a result of the fear of making mistakes, some learners in open ended questionnaire expressed that learning and speaking a foreign language in the classroom is difficult. The researcher also conducted interview with English language teachers and students of the school and observed speaking classrooms in order to strengthen the information gained through questionnaire. The findings of the study nevertheless, were in agreement in this respect too. The interviewees frequently expressed that learners feel afraid because of the fear of committing mistakes or errors in front of others, or in Jones' words (2004) because of "a fear of appearing awkward, foolish and incompetent in the eyes of learners' peers or others". One learner stated that, "Classroom is always a problem ...you find many people watching you and try to correct you, laugh at you, you will be blamed for any mistakes, and you have to be correct because it is a class".

This implies that students have not understood the fact that errors are natural part of learning. 48(38.40%) of the respondents however, claimed that they perceive errors positively because they give them encouragement for further practice. 16(12.80%) of the subjects on the other hand reported that they perceive errors neither positively nor negatively as they do not give them sense of encouragement or discouragement.

Table 2: The students' responses about time when they need to speak English language

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	percent
When do you speak English language?	As your needs arise	45	36.00
	When you are forced by your teacher	64	51.20
	Not speak at all in spite of your needs	16	12.80
Total		125	100

Table '2' indicates that more than half of the respondents 64(51.20%) claimed that they speak English language only when they are pressurized by their teacher. 45(36%) of the respondents reported that they speak English any time as their needs arise. However, 16(12.80%) of the respondents said that they do not speak English at all in spite of their needs. The researcher also made observation in speaking classroom in order to strengthen the responses obtained through questionnaire. The results of the observation too reveal that the majority of the students had no self initiation to speak in English but few students tried their level best to communicate in English with their teachers and classmates in classroom activities. From these results it can be concluded that students are very much reluctant to speak English unless there is external pressure that forces them to do so. This external pressure loads the students to make mistakes because at a time they might not be ready to speak and this in turn makes them anxious to speak in speaking classroom. In other words, this may imply that they have no motivation for learning English to develop their skills of speaking.

Table 3: The students' responses about their shyness when they become a point of ridicule.

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
Do you get embarrassed if you are ridiculed by your classmates while speaking in a class?	Yes	77	61.60
	No	48	38.40
Total		125	100

Table '3' shows that the majority of the respondents (61.60%) are embarrassed when they become a point of being ridiculed while speaking in a class. Thus, it appears that frustration experienced when a learner is unable to communicate a message can lead to avoid classroom participation because they are either unsure of what they are saying or lose confidence when giving an answer to a question in the classroom. But 38.40% of the subjects replied that they do not feel shy although they are laughed at by their classmates. The fact that more than 60% of the respondents are anxious as a result of being a point of ridicule seems to reveal that students do not have confidence on their speech or they lack self confidence.

This implies that in the line with the study of Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), fear of making mistakes has been found to be strongly linked with the learners' concern to save their positive image or impression in the mind of their teacher and peers.

## 4.2. Factors Related to Classroom Procedures and Language Teachers

### 4.2.1 Classroom procedure

Table 4: The students' responses about the situations which cause anxiety in speaking classroom.

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
What kinds of situations cause stress or anxiety for you while speaking English in speaking classroom?	Speaking in strict and formal classroom environment	117	93.60
	Giving presentation in the classroom	103	82.40
	Speaking in front of English teachers	100	80.00
	Speaking in front of males/females students	91	72.80
Total		521	416.80

Table 4 shows that 93.60% of the respondents said that the development of their speaking skills is largely affected by strict and formal classroom environment where learners are asked to speak in the class. The interviewees also appeared to be blaming a strict and formal classroom environment as it is a significant cause of their language anxiety. They view the classroom a place where their mistakes are noticed and their deficiencies are pointed out by their classmates and by their teacher. That is why 80% of the respondents asserted that speaking in front of English teachers is one of anxiety provoking factor. With regard to this issue, one EFL learner expressed, "I feel more anxiety in the class because it is more formal (due to the presence of the teacher) but out of class I don't feel stress, talk to my friends, not afraid of mistakes". Thus, these perceptions, can be considered a clear indication that the teachers should recognize that the language classroom could become a highly anxiety-provoking environment for students (Ohata,



2005). 82.40% of the respondents also noted that giving a short talk or presentation in the class is also a highly anxiety inducing factor for EFL learners. The interviewees asserted that speaking in front of the whole class caused anxiety for most of the learners. One EFL student expressed, “In class may be I stand up and do the presentation, I usually feel nervous”. Thus, it can be concluded that a large number of EFL learners considered oral presentation as the most anxiety-provoking activity in the class.

#### 4.2.2. The role of language teachers in speaking classroom

This study as found by Horwitz (1999), students’ embarrassment may be aggravated by the role played by language teachers in the class. The teachers’ reaction towards errors and beliefs about language learning and teaching, and the way they create stressful environment in the class have been significantly related to foreign language anxiety.

**Table 5: The students’ responses about teachers’ reaction towards learners’ errors**

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
How your teacher is reacting to learners’ errors?	Positively	60	48.00
	Negatively	35	28.00
	None	30	24.00
Total		125	100

Table 5 indicates that, 28% of the respondents said that their teachers’ have negative attitudes towards errors, that is teachers consider errors as a sign of failure either from the students’ part or from the teachers’ part. The authoritative, embarrassing and humiliating attitude of the teachers towards students, particularly when they make mistakes, can have severe consequences on learners’ cognition and their willingness to communicate in the class. A learner’s mistake, as Jones (2004) views, “may bring about humiliating punishment from the teacher under the concentrated gaze of one’s peers”. The majority of the respondents (48%) claimed that their teachers’ have positive attitude towards errors. 24% of the respondents nevertheless, replied that their teachers have neither positive nor negative attitude towards errors. This implies that they are not over conscious of students’ errors for a completely praiseworthy desire to teach the best possible form of the language. Thus, it can be suggested that teachers’ views or perceptions about learning a language and their ways of error correction are crucial factors to be considered in order to alleviate language anxiety. In other words, teachers do not criticize their students for making mistakes in teaching learning process rather they seem to encourage them to go ahead and learn from their errors through practice in the long run.

Table 6: The students’ response whether or not they are motivated by their teacher during oral classes or not.

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	percent
Does the teacher motivate you to speak English during oral classes?	Yes	53	42.40
	No	72	57.60
Total		125	100

From table ‘6’ one can see that the majority of the respondents (57.60%) revealed that their teachers’ do not motivate them to speak in the target language (English) during oral classes.

42.40% of the respondents answered that their teachers' motivate them to speak English. The same question was asked through the interview made with four teachers of the school. All of the respondents (4 teachers) stated that in spite of the recklessness of their students, they motivate them to speak English actively in oral classes. This result seems to contradict with the result found through the questionnaire because the majority of the subjects asked through the questionnaire responded that their teachers do not motivate them to speak English. The contradiction may have occurred because both the students and teachers do not want to be blamed for failure by exposing their negative side. Nevertheless, the researcher conducted observation to check the actual situation. As a result of the observation the researcher found that teachers motivate their students to speak English during oral classes in spite of the carelessness of the students. This result therefore, fallcifies the response of the students.

Asked about the techniques the teachers employ to motivate their students to speak English, the minority of the respondents of the questionnaire and all of the respondents of the interview almost collectively listed the same techniques of motivation summarized below.

- Get students in groups and make each individual express his/her view.
- Raise argumentative questions that make all students find themselves in a hot debate using the target language unconsciously.
- Praise any contributions the students make in a class.

Table 7: The students' responses about the extent of talking time covered by either students or teachers in a class

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
By whom is more time of speaking in the class covered	Teacher	67	53.60
	Students	58	46.40
Total		125	100

From table 7 one can note that 53.60% of the respondents said that the teachers have more time of talking in the whole period covered during oral classes that is the talk is mainly channeled through teachers as cited in Jordan (1997). But 46.40% of the respondents claimed that they have more time of talking than teacher in a class. This result may imply that teachers have relatively dominant position in a class, and thus students find it difficult to extend their opportunities of talking time. However, the result of the observation seems to contradict with the result of the questionnaire because the researcher found through observation the fact that teachers give more opportunities of speaking for students. But the students are very much reluctant to implement what they are told to do.

Table 8: The students' responses regarding to what extent teachers emphasize on speaking in teaching learning process.

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
What do teachers emphasize in teaching learning process	Vocabulary and grammar rules	69	55.20
	Oral language skills	15	12

in a class?	Reading and writing	41	32.80
Total		125	100

Table ‘8’ reveals that the majority of the respondents (55.20%) reflected that teachers emphasize more on vocabulary and grammar rules; only 12% of the subjects replied that oral language skills (speaking and listening) are emphasized more in a class and the remaining 32.80% of the respondents on the other hand, responded that teachers emphasize more on reading and writing skills. From the finding it can be concluded that speaking skills are not given due attention by the teachers, thus students have little chance of developing speaking skills since they are not taught in a class intensively.

### 4.3. Socio-Cultural Factors

The findings discussed in the previous section in relation to learners’ fear of making mistakes, teachers’ method of teaching, and the classroom setting while learning, speaking contribute greatly to causing learners’ anxiety. In addition to these factors, according to Jones (2004), the social context learners belong to, social status, their own sense of foreignness while speaking a language other than mother tongue; gender, etc. have also been found to be linked with EFL learners’ anxiety provoking factors. Some interviewees even remarked that social factors are a more important cause of language anxiety than fear of making mistakes and teachers’ method of teaching. This section discusses some socio-cultural factors that can help explaining the sources of EFL anxiety for EFL students.

Table 9: The students’ responses about the socio-cultural factors that cause language anxiety for EFL learners

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
What are the socio-cultural factors that cause language anxiety for EFL learners?	Environmental factors (limited exposure to the target language)	120	96.00
	Social status	81	64.80
	Sense of foreignness (other than L1)	57	45.60
	Gender	80	64.00
Total		338	270.40

#### 4.3.1. Social environment and limited exposure to the target language

The respondents of the questionnaire stated that limited exposure to the target language (English) is a serious obstacle in the development of their communicative competency. According to Lightbown (2006) limited exposure to the target language is troubling for EFL learners when they are required to speak. In table 9 above one can see that 96% of the respondents said that the major source of anxiety for EFL learners is environment. In other words the development of their speaking skills is highly affected by environmental factors which are the amount of exposure in which students’ takes place in the target language. As one grade 12 learner of the school said in this regard, “We could practice English only in the class, out of the class, no practice; lack of chances or practice”. From this it can be concluded that lack of exposure to the target language is

the main reason of EFL learners' anxiety while speaking English in an English-speaking classroom.

### 4.3.2 Social status

The study also found that social status can have a considerable influence on speaking anxiety. In Table 9, 64.80% of the respondents reported that social status has its own effect in provoking students' anxiety while speaking in classroom. In other words, speakers' sense of inferiority complex while talking to someone higher in status may cause stress or anxiety for them. In accordance with the research on classroom interaction by Pica (1987), the study found that unequal status between students and teachers can also be a source of anxiety for the students. Speaking in a foreign language was found to be disturbing because of the fear that it might lead to the loss of one's positive self-image or self-identity (Pica, 1987).

### 4.3.3 Gender

According to Table '9' shows, 64% of the subjects said that gender has its own effect on students' speaking anxiety. 72.80% of the participants in table '4' also asserted that there are different experiences of feeling anxiety or discomfort while talking to the opposite sex. As one female EFL learner said, "I do worry when I speak in front of males because mostly I get them only in the classroom". This could suggest that where males and females study in separation out of the school, they are more likely to feel communication anxiety when they are asked to speak in speaking classroom.

**Table 10: The students' responses about the causes of classroom speaking anxiety in comparison.**

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
Which factors are more importantly provoke anxiety during English speaking classroom?	Fearing of making mistakes	117	93.60
	Teachers perception towards errors	105	84.00
	Lack of motivation	117	93.60
	Lack of authentic environment to speak English language	102	81.60
	Social status	100	80.00
	Gender related factors	80	64.00
Total		621	496.80

Table '10' reveals that 93.60% of the respondents said that anxiety which affects the development of their speaking skills is equally provoked by both lack of motivation and fear of making mistakes. 84% of the subjects responded that the direct causes of students' anxiety while speaking in the classroom is rooted in teachers poor teaching methods. 81.60% of the respondents reported that lack of authentic environment (absence of English language input from the environment community) is accountable for anxiety inside speaking English language. 80% of the respondents claimed that social status affects their speaking activities during spoken classes. Only 64% of the subjects, however, replied that the gender related factors provoke anxiety in speaking classroom. In order to get more information about the factors of anxiety that affect students while speaking in classroom, the researcher also made interview with four English teachers of the school. All the respondents (4) pointed out that fear of making mistakes, lack of motivation, and lack of authentic environment to speak English language are the potential

factors that provoke anxiety in speaking classroom. Half of the subjects (2) also further reported that the socio-cultural factors like gender, status, power relations etc. also induce anxiety in classroom.

The respondents were also requested to put the major factors of speaking anxiety in order of their importance. On the basis of the data collected through questionnaire, fear of making mistakes and lack of motivation concurrently come first, teachers perception towards errors takes the second position, environmental factors take the third position, and social status and gender factors comes forth and fifth respectively. However, according to the data obtained through interview and observation checklist, fear of making mistakes comes first; lack of motivation takes the second position. From this it can be inferred that the major factors that provoke anxiety during English speaking classroom are: fearing of making mistakes, lack of motivation, teachers' misperception of errors, environmental factors, status and gender factors respectively.

#### 4.4. Manifestation of Language Anxiety and Its Effective Alleviation

##### 4.4.1 Manifestation

Learners' anxiety while speaking in EFL classroom is manifested in a variety of different ways. Language teachers can therefore, recognize these manifestations and then can begin to explore their teaching strategies to alleviate learners' anxiety.

Table 11: The students' responses about the manifestation of anxiety in EFL speaking classroom.

Item	Variable	Number of respondents	Percent
What do you do in a stressful situation while speaking English?	Getting nervous quickly	114	91.20
	Use short broken sentences	117	93.60
	Quickly finish the conversation	113	90.40
Total		344	275.20

The obvious signs of anxiety students manifest according to Jones (2004) are getting nervous, blushing, rubbing the palms, perspiration, staggered voice, reluctance, poor performance in spoken activities, less enthusiasm or willingness to speak, less interpretativeness, less eye-contact, reading from the script while giving presentation, either too fast or too slow speed of speech, etc. in this connection, table '11' reveals that 91.20% of the respondents said that students get nervous in stressful situation while speaking in oral classes, However, 93.60% and 90.40% of the subjects use short and broken sentences and try to finish the conversation quickly in speaking classroom respectively.

In addition to using questionnaire, the researcher also used interview and classroom observation in order to understand the real manifestation of anxiety in speaking classroom. Some learners stated that when they are asked to speak in speaking classroom, they usually get nervous, start shaking while speaking, mix another idea without the point of discussion, stop speaking, etc. One EFL learner said, "I try to skip away from the situation. I won't go into much detail because I know my weakness." Similarly, another student said, "I'll stop speaking, stop conversation about this point, I don't want to show to my class that I am nervous". It can be concluded that EFL learners show different signs of anxiety while speaking in the classroom.

#### 4.4.2 Strategies to cope with language anxiety

Table 12: The students' responses about suggestions of reducing language anxiety in speaking classroom.

Item	Variables	Number of respondents	Percent
What would you like to suggest in order reducing language anxiety in speaking classroom?	Creating friendly classroom environment	113	90.40
	Students should be encouraged to speak and not to get worried about errors	109	87.20
	Positive feedback should be given	105	84.00
Total		327	261.60

Table '12' shows the majority of the respondents (90.40%) reported that creating friendly classroom environment is essential in order to alleviate anxiety from students while learning speaking in speaking classroom. 87.20% of the subjects also reveals that students should be encouraged to speak and not to get worried about errors. The rest 84% of the respondents provided their report to alleviate students speaking anxiety by giving them positive feedback while speaking in speaking classroom. In addition to this, One English teacher states that to create less stressful classroom environment, teachers should create situations where students can feel successful in using English and avoid setting up the activities that increase the chances for the students to fail. In the line with this, another teacher asserted that in order to make the classroom a safe and less anxiety-provoking place, the friendly and encouraging role of the teachers in speaking classroom is crucial. According to Jones (2004), language anxiety, "being an unsettling psychological construct", has been found to make a huge difference in learning to speak a foreign language. Many studies on language anxiety have suggested a variety of strategies to successfully cope with this multifaceted dilemma and this study follows the same pattern. Interestingly, both teachers and students of the school seemed to have given adequate thought to the ways of reducing language anxiety.

In Price's (1991) interview study, the most frequent observation of the subjects was that, "they would feel more comfortable if the teachers were more like a friend helping them to learn and less like an authority figure making them to perform". A general feeling among the teachers and the students was that the students' confidence should be developed to make do not worry about making mistakes while using the language. In other words, teachers should talk about the role of mistakes in speaking classroom and should assert that mistakes are the natural part of learning in the class.

## 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the summary and conclusions drawn from the major findings of the study. It also presents possible recommendations forwarded by the researcher based on the conclusions.

### 5.1 Summary

In this study, a variety of causal factors and its effect found in EFL speaking classroom is discussed. The study provided that language anxiety most possibly can originate from learners' fear of negative evaluation by their teachers and classmates, teachers' inappropriate teaching methodology, differences in social status of the speakers, etc. In the first two parts of the study, the factors related to the students' fear of making mistakes, inappropriate teachers' teaching methodology and classroom procedures, and factors related to socio-cultural perspectives have been discussed under various headings like, fear of making mistakes, classroom environment, etc. The socio-cultural factors like, limited exposure to the target language, social status and, gender, etc. have been discussed in the second part. In the third part, effects of anxiety, and a variety of strategies have been discussed to successfully cope with the language anxiety. The findings also suggest the importance of identification and knowledge of these factors by language teachers in order to assist students to make progress in their speaking development.

## **5.2. Conclusions**

As stated in chapter one, the major objectives of this study were to assess the anxiety factors that hinder the development of EFL students' English language speaking skills and its effect in EFL speaking classroom.

On the basis of the results obtained from responses to questionnaires, classroom observations and interviews of teachers and students, the following conclusions have been drawn:

Almost all the research subjects had high theoretical orientations and understanding that EFL learners feel anxiety and nervousness while speaking English in front of others, its sources, how it affects students speaking and strategies to overcome it. On the other hand, the teachers made it clear that they did not get adequate training on the practical aspects of how they can teach in speaking classroom where EFL learners' anxiety. Therefore, it seemed that there was a gap between the teachers' theoretical knowledge of speaking anxiety and their practical aspects of teaching in anxious classrooms.

The anxiety provoking situations (causes of anxiety) just as Jones (2004) listed could be included in classroom interaction in the form of open class forum, group participation or class presentation, or giving a short talk in the classroom, limited exposure to the target language, fearing of evaluation by the classmates and teachers, lack of motivation, etc. What makes a foreign language classroom a highly anxiety-evoking place is its evaluative nature: evaluation by the teachers, peers, and by learners themselves accompanied by high expectations and beliefs about EFL learning. It was found that the feelings of anxiety become more threatening when the language teachers' manner of error correction is rigid.

The strategies found in this study, as well as recommended by the researchers, could "certainly work as prescription for anxiety but it might as easily be advice on 'what good teachers' should routinely do" (Oxford, 1999: cited in Jones, 2004). All such advice is excellent but also applicable to students who do not show signs of anxiety; therefore, the advice cannot be other than general (2004). Language anxiety, it can be postulated, may not require any 'special treatment' but what it does demand is the careful attitude of the language teachers in order to understand and to effectively diagnose this phenomenon in the learners (2004). Then, it requires the application of modern approaches that lay emphasis on enhancing learning opportunities in an environment that is conducive to learning.

### 5.3. Recommendations

This study was conducted not only to identify causes of anxiety but also to recommend some solutions that may help to resolve the prevailing problems. Therefore, the researcher forwarded the following constructive recommendations based on the conclusions drawn above.

1. It would be advisable for EFL teachers to acknowledge the existence of anxiety in learning speaking English language and then should take initiatives for its effective reduction even if they cannot completely alleviate it.
2. Teachers should make a great effort in order to get students to avoid the habit of fear of making mistakes while speaking English by telling them that mistakes are the part and parcel of learning, and that they are the way to attain accuracy. Furthermore, teachers' error correction, and selection of error correction techniques as Horwitz et al. (1986) recommended, should be based up on reducing defensive reactions in students.
3. Teachers should motivate their students to speak in English in a class by finding the students' likes and dislikes and applying new teaching techniques. They should also give works and activities that may arouse the students' interest and provoke positive reactions from them.
4. As students reported lack of practice of speaking skill, a truly communicative approach should be adopted to provide students with more chances to practice their speaking skill.
5. Teachers should withdraw themselves from the central dominant position in a class so that students get wide opportunities to interact with one another in their speaking activities.
6. In the classroom discussion, it should be ensured that students are provided friendly, informal and learning-supportive environments. This can be done by teachers' friendly, helpful and cooperative behavior, making students feel comfortable when speaking in the class.
7. To encourage students to feel successful in using English, teachers should avoid setting up activities that enhance the chances for them to fail. They should also make sure whether the students are ready for the given activity and have sufficient ideas and lexis to complete the task successfully.
8. The government should provide English language teachers with regular in service training so as to make them pay due attention to speaking skills and create awareness about the effect of ignoring speaking in English tests.
9. Further consecutive research should be conducted in the area of language anxiety from both causal and remedial perspectives.

### REFERENCES

Affagnon, R., 1990. Practicing English out side the class room. *Language teaching research*, 4 (3): 275-300.

Araujo, A., 1990. Improving oral language skills of beginning students. The Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 109-125.

Apaibanditkul, K., 2006. Anxiety of international Thai students in an English speaking context. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.



- Atherton, J.S., 2003. Learning and teaching: Exercises role play. United Kingdom.
- Atkins, J., B. Hailom, and M. Nuru, 1996. Skill development methodology. Addis Ababa University press.
- Brown, D.H., 1997. Principles of language learning and teaching. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, New Jersey.
- Bryman, A., 1988. Quantity and quality in social research. London: RoutledgeByrne, Donn, (1986), Teaching Oral English: Longman Handbooks for English Teachers. Singapore: Longman Group.
- Calloway, L.J. and C.A. Knapp, 1995. Using grounded theory to interpret interviews. Accessed from: <http://csis.pace.edu/~knapp/AIS95.htm>, (17/08/07).
- Campbell, C. and J. Ortiz, 1991. Helping students overcome foreign language anxiety: a foreign language anxiety workshop. *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 153-168.
- Carrier, K., 1999. The social environment of second language listening: Does status play a role in comprehension. *The Modern Language Learning*, 83(1): 65-79.
- Chen, Y., 2005. Barriers to acquiring speaking strategies for EFL learners and their pedagogical implications. *TESL-EJ*, 8 (4): 1-25.
- Cohen, L, L. Manion, and K.Morrison, 2000. Research methods in education. 5<sup>th</sup> edition, London, Routledge Falmer.
- Crookal, D. and R.L. Oxford, 1990. Simulation, gaming and language learning. New York.
- Daly, J., 1991. Understanding communication apprehension: An introduction for language. *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 3-14.
- Dewaele, J.M., 2002. Psychological and socio-demographic correlates of communicative. in L2 and L3 production', *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 6 (1): 23-38.
- Dornyei, Z. and J. Kormos, 2000. The role of individual and social variables in oral test performance. *Language Teaching Research*, 4 (3): 275-300.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985) *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. Longman.
- Edge, J., 1993. Essential of English language teaching. Longman, Longman University press.
- Ellis, R., 1994. The study of second language acquisition. Oxford University Press.
- Gardner, J., 2006. Assessment and learning. SAGE Publications
- Gardner, R.C. and W.E. Lambert, 1972. Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning. Rowley, Mass, Newbury House Publishers.

- Gillham, B., 2005. Research interviewing: the range of techniques. Open University Press.
- Gregersen, T., 2007. Breaking the code of silence: A study of teachers' non-verbal decoding accuracy of foreign language anxiety. *Language Teaching Research*, 11 (2): 209-221
- Harmar J., 1991. The practice of English language teaching. Longman Group, Longman University press.
- Horwitz, E.K., M.B. Horwitz, and J.A. Cope, 1986. Foreign language classroom speaking. *The Modern Language Journal* 70 (2): 125-132.
- House, S., 1997. An introduction to teaching English to children. Richmond Publishing.
- Jones, J.F., 2004. A cultural context for language anxiety. *EA (English Australia) Journal* 21 (2): 30-39.
- Jordan, R.R., 1997. English for academic purposes. United Kingdom, Cambridge University press.
- Kenworthy, J., 1987. Teaching English pronunciation. London: London University press.
- Laine, E.J., 1987. Affective factors in foreign language learning and teaching: A study of the "Filter", Jyvaskyla Cross-Language Studies. Accessed From: [http://www.eric.ed.gov data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage](http://www.eric.ed.gov/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage).
- MacIntyre, P.D. and S.C. Baker, 2003. The role of gender and immersion in communication and second language orientations. *Language Learning*, 53 (1): 65-96.
- MacIntyre, P. D., 1995. How Does Anxiety Affect Foreign Language Learning: A Reply to Sparks and Ganschow. *The Modern Language Journal* 79(1): 90-99.
- MacIntyre, P. and R.C. Gardner, 1991. Investigating language class anxiety using the focused essay technique. *The Modern Language Journal* 75 (3): 296- 304.
- Mejia, H., 1991. Oral communication apprehension and hispanics: an exploration of oral communication apprehension among Mexican American students in Texas'. In: E.K. Horwitz, and D.J. Young, (eds.). *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 87-98.
- Mohan, 2003. Fluency and accuracy in spoken English—implications for classroom practice in a bilingual context. Cambridge, Cambridge University press.
- Neuliep, J.W. and McCroskey, 1997. The development of intercultural and interethnic communication apprehension scales. *Communication Research Reports*, 14 (2): 145-156.
- Neuliep, J.W., 1998. The influence of intercultural communication apprehension and socio-communicative orientation on uncertainty reduction during initial cross cultural interaction and communication. *Communication Quarterly*, 46 (1): 88-99.

- Ohata, K., 2005. Language anxiety from the teacher's perspective: Interviews with seven experienced ESL/EFL teachers. *Journal of Language and Learning*, 3 (1): 133-155.
- Onwuegbuzie, 1999. Factors associated with foreign language learning. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 20 (2): 217-239.
- Peirce, B.N., 1995. Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1): 9-31.
- Pica, T., 1987. Second language acquisition, social interaction, and the classroom. *Applied Linguistics* 8(1): 3-21.
- Price, M.L., 1991. The Subjective experience of foreign language learning: Interviews with High Anxious Students. In: E.K. Horwitz and D.J. Young, (eds.). *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Pryor, J. and H. Torrance, 2001. Developing formative assessment in the classroom: Using Action research to explore and modify theory. *British Educational Research Journal* 27 (5): 615-631.
- Richard, A.P., 1996. *Making it happen: Interaction in the second language classroom – From theory to practice*. White Plains, NY: Longman
- Robson, C., 2000. *Small-Scale Evaluation: Principles and Practice*. London, Sage Publications.
- Samimy, K.K., 1994. Teaching Japanese: Considerations of learners' affective variables', *Theory into Practice*, 33 (1): 29-33.
- Scovel, T., 1991. The effect of affect on foreign language learning. A Review of the Anxiety Research', in Horwitz, E.K., & Young, D. J. (eds.) *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 15-24.
- Sparks, R.J., 2000. Deja vu all over again. A response to Saito, Horwitz, and Garza'. *The Modern Language Journal*, 84 (2): 251-255.
- Taylor, H.H., 1987. Communication apprehension: The quiet student in your classroom. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills Urbana IL. Accessed From: [www.ericdigests.org/pre-926/quiet.htm](http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-926/quiet.htm) (06/07/07- 19/08/07).
- Theodore, H., 1960. *Audio visual technique in teaching foreign language*. New York.
- Tittle, M., 1997. The effects of foreign or second language students' irrational beliefs on classroom achievement. Accessed From: [http://www.Nelliemuller.com/ESL\\_EFL\\_reading\\_comprehension\\_tests\\_and\\_anxiety.htm](http://www.Nelliemuller.com/ESL_EFL_reading_comprehension_tests_and_anxiety.htm). (08/04/07 – 02/08/07).
- Wang, J.H., 1991. Some causes that lead to ineffectiveness of high school English teaching. English teaching forum.
- Wolfson, N., 1989. *Perspectives: Sociolinguistics and TESOL*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury.

Young, D.J. 1990. An investigation of students' perspectives on speaking. *Foreign Language Annals. The Modern Language Journal*, 75 (4): 426-439.

Zhang, H. and N. Kortner, 1995. *Oral language development across the curriculum*. New York.