

## Research Article

# Difficulties Encountered in English Language Speaking Skills Among Second Language Learners (A Study Based on School Leavers at IPHS Campus, Akkaraipattu)

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## Abstract

This research explores into the Difficulties encountered in speaking English for second language school leavers at IPHS Campus, Akkaraipattu. The objective of the research were; to identify the difficulties encountered by school leavers when speaking English, to explore the factors and root causes of the difficulties, and the factors influences on their studies, to make them aware and understand by different and easy techniques to fulfill their studying target and objectives, to give them a proper guidance and good practice ways and to make them confident to overcome the struggles in their speaking skills. The research used a mixed method of qualitative and quantitate approach to collect data deeper in accordance. The first approach, questionnaire conducted to 24 students the rest of the instruments were implanted to 20 students. Using diverse research instruments, including questionnaires, practical tests, observations and interviews, the study categorizes difficulties into linguistic and non-linguistic domains. And the root causes are classified into educational, psycholinguistic, and environmental factors. The study not only conveys the

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difficulties but also provides suggestions and practical insights for learners and educators. A versatile approach involving appropriate curriculum adaptation, consistent practice, educator training, psychological support, family involvement, and technological integration is recommended. Implementing psychological support, like confidence-building workshops, and collaborating with families to emphasize language-based activities at home are crucial. In the digital age, integrating technology, such as language-learning apps and virtual exchange platforms, extends language exposure. These measures enhance the spoken English proficiency of second language school leavers, ensuring preparation for effective communication in diverse linguistic contexts. Techniques and suggestions derived from the analysis offer a comprehensive approach to develop effective spoken English skills among second language school leavers, contributing to the ongoing discussion on language education strategies.

**Keywords:** Speaking Skills, Difficulties, Linguistic, Non-Linguistic, Psycholinguistic.

### **INTRODUCTION**

English is recognized as a global language and its proficiency is crucial for individuals to succeed in various aspects of life, including education, career opportunities, and social interactions. For school leavers, the ability to speak English proficiently is often a crucial skill. However, many school leavers face difficulties in speaking English fluently and confidently because of various factors affects their language acquisition and communication skills. In today's sophisticated world, the dependence and relationships between nations have led to a requirement for a universal language, and English is the most suitable language for this purpose (Abousenna, 1994). The ability to speak fluently is considered the most crucial aspect of learning a second or foreign language for the majority of individuals (Nunan, 1991).

Most of the students learn English for the sake of studying and scoring in term tests only, which effects their post school life directly or indirectly. Generally in Sri Lankan education system a student is taught English grade three onwards but the rate of acquiring and speaking the language is lower in later years. Students keep the subject English aside to study after A/L privately, they mainly focus their core subjects in their A/L and they could not take effort more for a language study when they solely aim to reach universities. Hence not everyone can easily learn English after school as they had already thought to study separately and peacefully later. Even if they learn English they face different difficulties when they start to speak in practical situations. Every individual who learns second language is to communicate with others but not that much easy to everyone as they think.

School leavers face difficulties in speaking English under communication skills, and sometimes in pronunciation, vocabularies, tenses and grammatical and syntactic structures and more. They may have several reasons in the backdrop, at first technically, lack of exposure to English inside and outside of the classroom, poor knowledge in grammar, unawareness of rules and structures, absence of a speaking partner, confusions in right accents and dialects, limited resources to correct their mistakes, influence of the mother tongue and secondly personal factors such as poor interest, lack of concentration to studies and apply, fear of being judged or ridiculed, shyness to talk or personal introvert characteristics like

lack of confident, social/ cultural barriers as well. These kind of issues should be fixed before they enter their next phase of their lives. So, understanding these challenges is crucial for learners to develop effective strategies and interventions to support school leavers in order to overcome these obstacles and improving their English speaking skills.

Therefore, this research was conducted to identify and understand the challenges faced in speaking English skills by school leavers at IPHS Campus, Akkaraipattu, with the objective of providing insights and recommendations to address these challenges and to fix these struggle effectively.

The aim of the research is to provide an overview of the main obstacles encountered by school leavers at IPHS Campus when it comes to speaking English fluently and accurately. The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To identify the difficulties encountered by school leavers when speaking English.
2. To explore the factors and root causes of the difficulties, and the factors influences on their studies.
3. To make them aware and understand by different and easy techniques to fulfill their studying target and objectives.
4. To give them a proper guidance and good practice ways and to make them confident to overcome the struggles in their speaking skills.

By achieving these objectives, the research background provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by school leavers in speaking English fluently. These insights can develop learners in developing effective strategies to support students in their English speaking skills.

Research Problem, English is considered the most widely spoken language globally, and it has become a vital tool for communication as second language. In today's globalized world, the ability to speak English fluently has become a necessity for school leavers who seek to pursue higher education or employment. In Sri Lanka speaking skills of English as a foreign language or second language to the most learners although they study English since their school age. However, second language learners often face difficulties in mastering English speaking skills, which can hinder their academic performance and future career prospects.

The purpose of this study is to examine the specific difficulties encountered by second language learners of school leavers in speaking English skills and how these difficulties affect their academic performance and future employment opportunities. The study will explore the reasons behind these difficulties and identify potential solutions to overcome them.

The research problem in this study is the lack of comprehensive understanding of the specific challenges faced by school leavers in speaking English. Different levels of student in language proficiency have different kind of struggles.

The objectives were successfully achieved by finding answers for the following research questions

1. What are the factors encountered by school leavers when speaking English?
2. What are the root causes of the difficulties, and how to identify the factors on their studies?

3. How to make them aware of the challenges and the backdrop factors?
4. How to make them overcoming the struggles to feel confident and to fulfill their studying target and objectives?

The research problem and question aim to identify the specific challenges faced by these learners and explore the ways to address them to improve their proficiency in the language. The study seeks to contribute to the development of effective strategies to support second language learners in improving their speaking skills in English.

The anticipated outcomes of this research are as follows, identification of the common challenges faced by school leavers in speaking English. This research finding hopefully can help the students to comprehend about their challenges in speaking English, so they would able to evaluate themselves by own after knowing the disabilities. Understanding the factors contributing to these challenges. Identifying their difficulties and the root causes notify the students their inabilities and reason in the backdrop this clarity can fix the basic point of challenging part in speaking English.

Insights into the impact of these challenges on the overall proficiency of school leavers in English. The students can identify their difficulties and how the root causes affect their speaking skills. Recommendations and suggestions to the educators, and students to address these challenges and causes effectively. It would make easy to find out the challenges in students and to persuade them to overcome in appropriate ways which make the studies smoother in efficient and effective manner.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative research is often referred to as an open model that emphasizes the importance of context and the subjective experiences of participants. It aims to understand and describe various aspects like events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, and how individuals or groups think. It involves real-life situations where the researcher actively engages with students during teaching to gather genuine and reliable data. The researcher, by being personally involved, also explores speaking difficulties and observes what students do in the classroom. The main focus is on collecting fact how people act and react to grasp the meaning better in the observations.

This research was conducted in five stages with the instruments and techniques of data collection such as structured questionnaire, practical test, semi-formal interview and qualitative observations. Every technique mentioned above to find out and to know their perceptions and facts of the participants' challenges in speaking English as a foreign language.

## **Sample Setting**

This research is conducted at IPHS Campus, Akkaraipattu. The institution is one of the best private institutions in the region and famous for providing construction related studies namely Quantity Surveying, Civil Engineering, CAD & BS and MEP QS from certificate level to degree programmes depending on the

modules besides some other field courses such as Business Management, Information Technology, and Hospitality Management etc. under national and international qualification bodies such as TVEC, OTHM and Gatehouse Awards. Professional English course is one of the courses and it is followed by many school leavers with different levels of language knowledge and ages to acquire spoken English for a better career entry. The sample number of students taken to this research was 20 out of 24 students by filtering with a questionnaire responses that shows the necessary students which consisted with varied competency levels. The participants' varied language backgrounds and proficiency levels add depth to this study, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the course's effectiveness in providing to the linguistic needs of a diverse student group. By examining the experiences of students across different proficiency levels, this research aims to provide insights into the course's impact on language acquisition and its potential implications for career preparation.

### Research Design

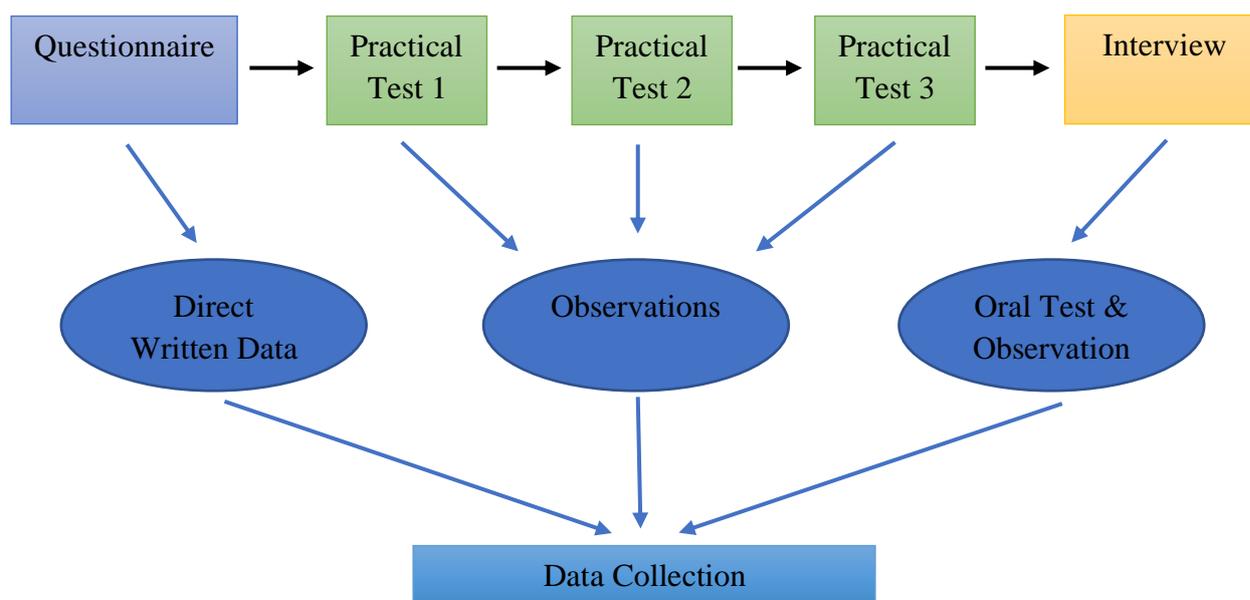


Figure 1: Research Design

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Questionnaire   | - Provides direct and obvious fact and data collection                      |
| Practical Tests | - A clear observation that finds out deeper and more challenges and factors |
| Interview       | - Individual capacity and instant responses bring more information          |

### Research Procedure and Intervention

The research procedures are as follow, First of all, the instruments were prepared and finalized to be used in the research. This research was conducted in five stages with the instruments and techniques of data collection such as

structured questionnaire, practical test, semi-formal interview and qualitative observations.

At the first step of this intervention, the students were provided a questionnaire to collect data information through overall responses which give open statements and direct factors about the status of every individual. The first questionnaire approach allowed to analyze fresh ideas about the strength and weakness and the state of their capability in spoken language.

Then the practical test like a speech or discussion were conducted in three various topics. In this practical test the deep observation technique was intensively used throughout the task that they performed to identify the various kinds of difficulties and their root causes that consisted of explicit and implicit aspects. Every individual underwent with some sorts of challenges every time in different tasks.

And finally a semi-formal interview which brought out the real instant responses, the difficulties and the fluency in interacting with people spontaneously. It was an adaptable opportunity to observe the students individually to find out the factors and the backdrop of their speaking skills.

After concluding this research the students were made aware of the direct indirect difficulties and the reasons behind the weakness. And the techniques and tips to overcome those challenges also was discussed for their future advancement.

### **Progress Of The Procedure**

The procedure and the process of the methodology were carried out as follows

1. Planning: The stages of the intervention, instrument and techniques were decided, every instrument and technique was organized and structured with appropriate tasks and tests.
2. Questionnaire: A questionnaire with relevant question was given to collect the ideas and factors.
3. Practical test: Following three different topic speeches and discussion were given to the sample students to observe their performance and the strength and weakness.
  - a. Self-introduction
  - b. Favourite social media platforms/application
  - c. Unforgettable day/ moment
4. Semi-formal interview: consists of the questions of
  - a. Personal data such as name, age, native place, current status and future goals
  - b. Hobbies, favourites. likes and dislikes and dreams/ wishes
  - c. The difficulties in speaking English and cope up ways
  - d. General questions (Eg: Advantages, disadvantages of social media / online studies)
  - e. This or that, Never have I ever questions
  - f. Life motto/ best motivation always use.

Each student was asked different pattern of questions that showed the spontaneity and individuality in speaking skills

### **Instruments & Techniques Of Collecting Data**

This study on challenges in speaking English by school leavers employs diverse research instruments and techniques hold significant roles. The research employed a multiple approaches, utilizing instruments such as questionnaires, speech practical tests, observation and interviews to gather comprehensive insights. The main roles and importance of the instruments for the data collection and the way how the instruments improved the research objective will be discussed below.

#### **Questionnaires**

The questionnaire serves as a vital tool for capturing challenges faced by school leavers in speaking English. Questionnaires serve as valuable tools for understanding the direct idea of the challenges. By collecting qualitative data, dominant factors and patterns, providing the primary issues that need attention can be identified. This approach allows for a systematic analysis of the difficulties faced by students transitioning from school to the professional workplace. The questionnaire consists of questions to provide their strength and weakness, the engagement and necessity in speaking English, study and social background, factors that hinder their speaking ability.

#### **Speech Practical Tests**

The incorporation of speech practical tests adds a direct dimension to the investigation. Speech practical tests offer the data actual spoken English proficiency and the difficulties. These tests provide a practical insights of linguistic and non-linguistic capabilities. Following three practical test different topic speeches and discussion were given to the sample students to observe their performance and the strength and weakness. Test 1, Self-introduction, Test 2, Favourite social media plate foam/application, Test 3, Unforgettable day/moment. This practical speech and discussion technique offers a practical scale of the real-world challenges encountered during verbal communication, enabling a more accurate assessment of the skills that require improvement.

#### **Observation**

Observation plays a crucial role in capturing subtle aspects of language challenges that may not be easily quantifiable and obvious to everyone. Through direct observation, we aim to identify accuracy in verbal communication, language usage, and contextual challenges. This qualitative technique enhances the depth of our analysis, allowing for a more holistic understanding of the complicated dynamics involved in spoken language difficulties. Naturalistic, structured and overt observation were carried out throughout the research process depending on the context and tasks.

#### **Interviews**

Interviews, on the other hand, provide a deeper exploration of individual experiences on personal challenges and perspectives of school leavers facing

English language challenges. This qualitative technique provides a platform for participants to express their perspectives, offering rich, contextual insights into the emotional and social dimensions of language barriers. By incorporating interviews, the research was aimed to improve, giving voice to individual struggles and aspirations.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Literature Review**

#### **a. Underlying Theory In Speaking Skills**

The theory behind this research is based on the importance of speaking skills in second language acquisition. The communicative approach emphasizes the role of input and output in language learning, and the concept of language anxiety is also considered. The study aims to identify effective strategies for improving second language learners' speaking skills in English.

#### **Nature Of Speaking**

Speaking is the most needed and crucial skill among the four skills in English. Speaking is an important skill to communicate or convey messages, express ideas and feelings with others. Numerous students seek to acquire English language skills in order to enhance their career prospects and effectively interact with others. The ability to speak fluently is crucial for articulating thoughts and emotions verbally. Proficiency in English also enables students to effectively convey their ideas and access the latest information in various fields such as science, technology, and healthcare etc.

There are seven types of speaking: imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, extensive, transactional, and interpersonal. These types vary in length and complexity, from simple repetition to maintaining social relationships Brown (2001). Having good speaking skills can increase a student's possibility of pursuing higher education, seeking an employment, and advancing in their career. This highlights the significance of speaking skills in communication, as it is a highly demanded skill (Westrup, 2003), The most crucial aspect of learning a second or foreign language is becoming proficient in speaking, and success is determined by the ability to engage in conversations during language instruction (Nunan, 1995). The statement says that the proficiency in speaking English is determined by comprehension of the language understanding in conversations.

A common objective for many learners is the ability to communicate with friends, colleagues, visitors, and even strangers in a language understood by both parties. The effectiveness of learning English is obvious and measurable through one's speaking proficiency and the quality of their communication. Success in mastering English is reflected in how well individuals can articulate themselves and engage in effective verbal interactions (Luoma 2004).

Speaking is a productive skill (Siahaan 2008).It means English proficiency is determined by the ability to understand and communicate effectively in conversations. When speaking, we produce language in the form of sound with meaning, allowing us to communicate with others. By mastering the components

of a language, we can ensure that our message is understood by the listener. Speaking is a tool of communication (Fulcher 2003). The teaching, learning process of speaking skill has a crucial role in language usage as a tool for communication. Speaking skills involves the accuracy and fluency of students' speech, as it is a way of expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas to others. The effectiveness of this skill depends on the ability of the speaker to convey their ideas through spoken language and for others to understand the ideas. Therefore, the success of communication is dependent on the speaker's proficiency in delivering their message (Lynch, 2017).

An English teacher should focus on both accuracy and the fluency when teaching speaking skill. Talking chip, teaching technique was applied by (Syafryadin, 2020) to make students motivated to speak English since the technique can make students to,

1. be active in speaking classes
2. explore the way coordinate in group
3. get a platform to speak in English

To effectively teach speaking skills, an English teacher must prioritize the accuracy and fluency of their students' speech. This involves ensuring grammatical accuracy in spoken language and promoting a comfortable speed of speech. Although students have been taught English since junior school up to Senior High School, it cannot be guaranteed that students can speak English in accuracy and fluency (Alwasila, 2000).

Public speaking defines that a speaker addressing the audience, delivering an organized speech in order to persuade, inform or entertain the listeners. It is a structured act of presenting information to a group with the intention of influencing, informing, or providing entertainment. Engaging in this task helps students to develop confidence in speaking before a public audience, and regular practice is effective in alleviating anxiety associated with public speaking (Fitzgerald 1999).

Speaking involves highlighting the significance of balancing fluency and accuracy in effectively conveying ideas and emotions to others. To ensure successful communication, speakers must focus on essential elements such as vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, and grammar, which contribute to the accuracy of their speech. At some point, correction becomes crucial in improving accuracy. Speakers should be mindful of both fluency and language elements to ensure that their message is easily comprehensible to the audience (Riddle 2002). Speaking is utilized twice as frequently as reading and writing in our interactions (Rivers 1981).

### **Difficulties In Speaking Language**

Speaking difficulties are struggles that make anyone lack in speaking proficiency. Difficulties are defined as needing skill or more effort, not easy, causing trouble, full of problems, difficult to understand/perform. We can say that speaking difficulties are full of problems that appear when someone speak or to understand the spoken language. Speaking is one of a skills that selecting

appropriate vocabularies/ words and sentence structure according to the suitable audience, social setting, situation, context and subject matter. Speaking difficulties hinder students to speak in foreign language with a flow. These difficulties are obstacles to the learners that make them disappointed in speaking competence. Hence, mastering speaking skills requires proficiency in both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects in speaking activity

Language performance of the students may be hindered by difficulties with language, which could include issues with grammar/rule, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These problems are related to linguistic factors. Some other issues that may occur when start speaking are shyness, anxiety, lack of motivation, lack of confidence, fear of making mistake etc. Those reasons belong to psychological factors (Doris and Jesica, 2007). Some of the psychological factors such as shyness, anxiety, fear of making mistake, and the difficulties like that hinder learners while speaking English. It shows that the success of the student in speaking performance doesn't only depend on linguistics knowledge but also caused by psychological factors (Juhana, 2012). In speaking 20.70% difficulties caused by psycholinguistics causes and by linguistics causes approximately 19.59%. (Fitriani, 2015). SMU High school graduates should have already attained proficiency in the four English skills, but the research revealed that their competence in English is still lacking. Despite the implementation of communicative language teaching, which prioritizes the use of language in practical contexts and social interactions, the outcome is still unsatisfactory (Yusuf and Sewoyo 1997).

The challenges that students face in learning English can be divided into linguistic and non-linguistic problems. Linguistic problems refer to difficulties such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, while non-linguistic problems are related such as shyness, nervousness, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes when speaking. The researcher recognizes that both types of obstacles can hinder language learning (Taiqin, 1995).

Learning English is a challenge for individuals from poor families and rural areas due to limited access to English-speaking environments and materials. These individuals often lack exposure to English and have limited opportunities to practice the language outside of the classroom. Many researchers agree that this is a common challenge across various contexts (Fernando, Raja 2011, Selvi 2011 and Verghese 2011). The main obstacle for students to learn English is the contrast in Tamil syntax, vocabulary and pronunciation etc. between English and Tamil. This denoted that the linguistic structure is a difficulty. However, he admits that there are other social factors that contribute to the difficulty of learning English. He also notes that a lack of effort, insufficient exposure, fear, hesitation, and the influence of one's native language are all significant challenges either (Khan, 2011).

Difficulties in speaking a language are not solely related to linguistic factors such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Non-linguistic factors such as fear of making mistakes, shyness, and anxiety can also impact language performance. Mastery of speaking skills requires proficiency in both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects, including the ability to select appropriate words and sentences according to the social contexts, audiences, situations, and topics.

Therefore, it is important for language learners to address their own both linguistic and non-linguistic difficult factors in order to overcome speaking difficulties and achieve proficiency in the target language. Further research is needed to identify effective strategies for addressing these challenges and promoting successful language learning outcomes.

A research (Ester Maji, Udi Samanhudi, Maryanti E. Mokoagouw, 2022) study on difficulties in speaking English by students SMKN 3 Sorong aims at finding mainly two things;

1. The main challenges encountered by students when speak English,
  - a. Linguistic factors, such as
    - 1) Lack of grammatical knowledge
    - 2) Poor vocabulary
    - 3) Poor pronunciation
  - b. Psychological factors, such as
    - 1) Shyness
    - 2) Low Confidence
    - 3) Anxiety
    - 4) Lack of motivation
    - 5) Mother tongue usage
    - 6) Fear of making mistake.
2. The causes of those difficulties faced by students.
  - a. L1 and L2 Differences
  - b. Lack of Practice.

Linguistic factors were found to be the main cause of difficulties in speaking English among students. This is because language acquisition becomes harder as one gets older and students learn English as a foreign language in a classroom setting, limiting their exposure to English. Psychological factors, such as confidence and anxiety, can be addressed through other subjects in the classroom and do not significantly impact English speaking class. The study identifies the major causes linguistic differences between L1 (Papuan Malay and Indonesian) and L2 (English) as the main cause of difficulties in speaking English among students, affecting their pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Lack of practice is another significant factor.

Similarly Ayu Hana Fahira (2022) found that eleventh grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Kradinan Madiun face difficulties in speaking English due to lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fear of mistakes, and shyness. To address these issues, the teacher implements group work to improve vocabulary, uses the repeating technique for pronunciation, and creates a supportive learning environment to boost students' confidence and concentration in speaking English. These solutions aim to increase vocabulary knowledge, train students not to be embarrassed when speaking in English, improve pronunciation through repetition, and create a comfortable atmosphere where students feel supported and confident in their learning.

Furthermore researcher Heriansyah (2012) identified five problems and causes related to speaking a language, under "Speaking problems faced by the English department students of Syiah Kuala University" topic that,

1. Not courage; caused by being afraid of mistakes and feeling no/less confidence to speak;
2. No/less confidence ; caused by being afraid of errors/mistakes
3. Being afraid of speaking ; caused by being afraid of errors/mistakes
4. Nervousness of speaking;
5. Not familiar of talking in classroom due to the fear of making mistakes.

The difficulties are within themselves. Less confident, afraid of making mistakes and shyness are psychological factors which hinder students' ability to speak. To overcome these challenges, the researcher suggests creating an English club, encouraging students to speak, and providing more opportunities for practice with peers.

## **2. Data Findings And Analysis**

### **Findings Of The Questionnaire**

The findings of the research questionnaire are based on multiple aspect formulated research questions in order to identify the challenges students encounter in the English speaking skills and overcoming these challenges. To gather primary data, the students were provided questionnaires in English and explained in Tamil expected to reply in one of the convenient language. The aim was to test the students' perceptions of the second language speaking skills. The questionnaire distribution targeted mix of 11 male and 13 female student, providing their insights on the challenges and coping mechanisms within this programme.

### **Analysis Of Participant's Proficiency In Language Skills**

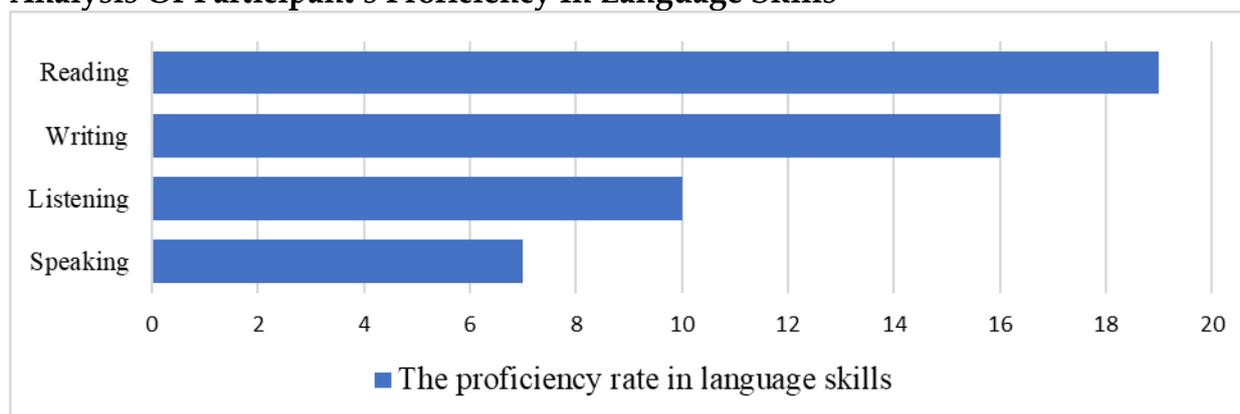


Figure 2: The proficiency rate in language skills

Above Figure 1 shows that for a multi-response question (A respondent can choice multiple options at a time) was provided to 24 respondents and resulted 52 selection responses of evaluating themselves in what skills they are adroit at / very good, out of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in. Reading skills set the highest rate among the four skills, as giving 17 responses (79.2%), the 7 responses (29.2%) as lowest rate of the table denotes the speaking skills. It clearly shows that

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in language study speaking a second language is complicated for majority of the learners to acquire whereas they can read confidently and they are able to write and listen in manageable ways.

### The Analysis Of Language Proficiency Required For The Participants

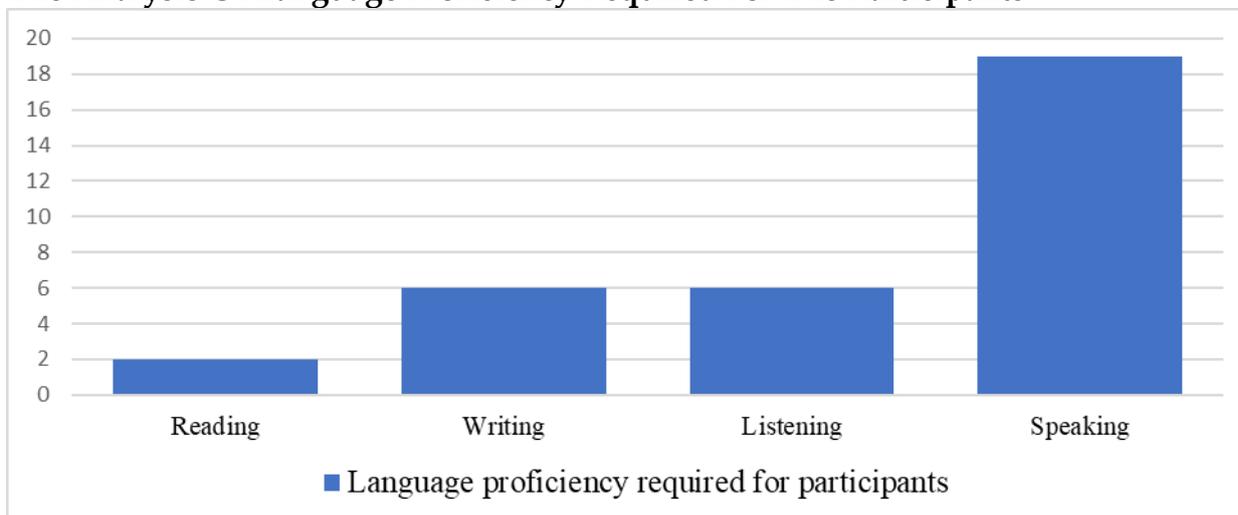


Figure 3: Language proficiency required for participants

Another multi-response question on what skill/s do you want to improve more, the respondents gave 19 responses out of 33 total responses (57.6%) say that speaking skills have to be improved more while Listening and Writing gained 6 responses per each and reading gained 2 responses only. The chart gives even more clear idea that most of the second language learner in English tends to possess speaking skills rather than other skills.

### The Analysis Of Confidence Level To Start A Conversation In English And Participants' Rating For Their Own Speaking Skills

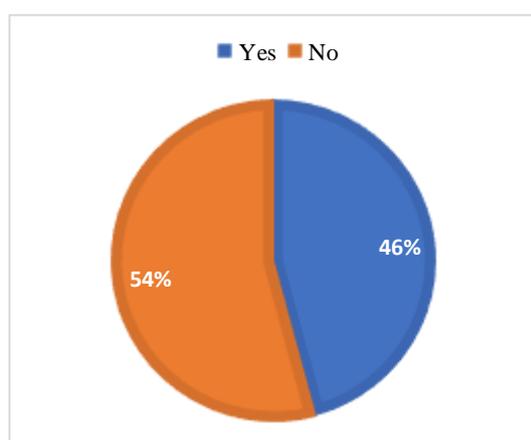


Figure 2: Confidence to start a conversation in English

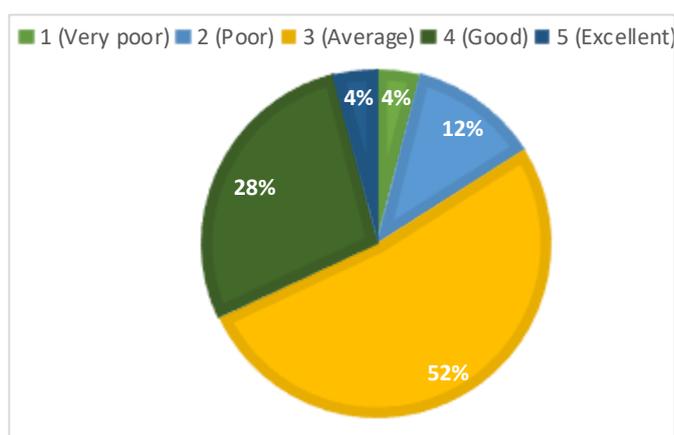


Figure 3: Confidence to start a conversation in English

Figure 4 shows the confidence of the students to initiate a conversation in English. Around 54% of the students were not confident enough to start an

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interaction in English, at the same time the rate of the participants' speaking skills is shown in Figure 5, around 68% of the participants are in average, poor and very poor status including 52% average cases.

### The Frequency Of Participants Engage In English Conversations

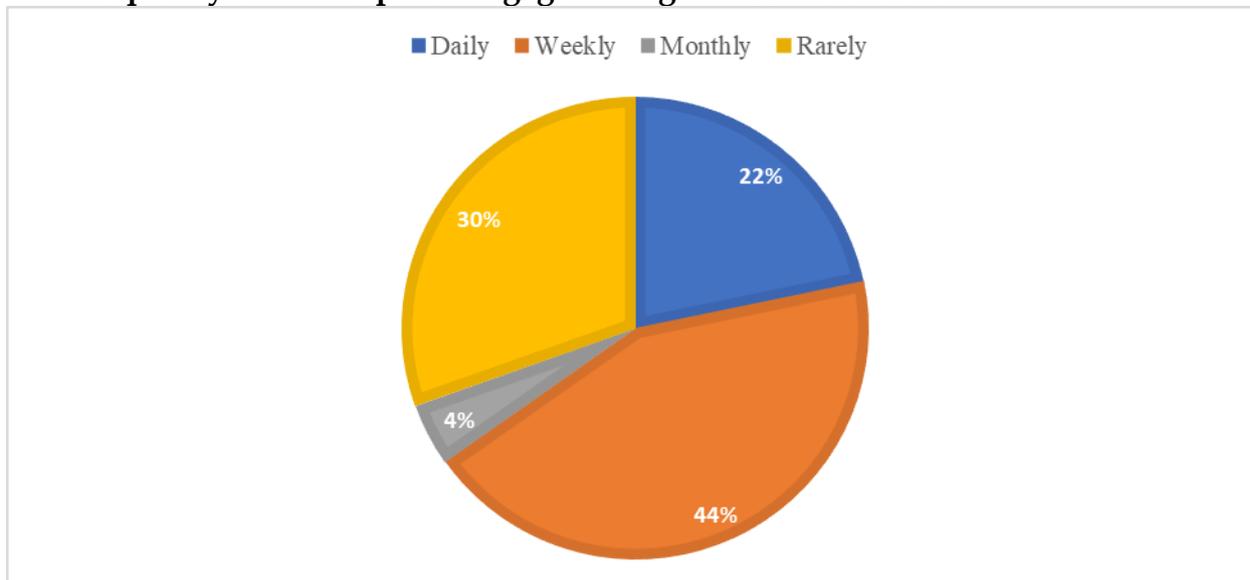


Figure 4: The frequency of participants engage in English interaction outside of educational context

Above pie chart Figure 6 illustrates that the frequency of participants engage in English conversations outside of class room. Majority 44% of the participants, converse in English weekly, 4% of them engage monthly, 22% of them communicate rarely and 30% only engage in a daily basis communication in English. This chart shows the chances or opportunities the participants get to involve in second language speaking acquisition.

### The Challenges/Difficulties Faced By The Learners In Speaking English

No	Statement	Levels
1	Grammar and tense issues	Very High
2	Lack of vocabulary knowledge	Very High
3	Nervousness, fear and shyness	High
4	Low self confidence	High

Table 1: The challenges/difficulties that students face

#### Grammar And Tense Issues

The most common challenges that students expressed difficulties related to, were grammar and tense usage. It says challenges in constructing grammatically correct sentences and appropriately using verb tenses, indicating a need for targeted language instruction and practice. The school curriculum insists of

teaching grammar which turns some students to find grammar difficult area eventually this misconception misleads the learners struggle with this linguistic difficulty which hinder their speaking skills.

### **Lack Of Vocabulary Knowledge**

Respondents highlighted a lack of vocabulary as a significant obstacle to communicate with others. Students struggle to find the right words appropriate vocabularies or phrases when expressing themselves in an interaction,

Sometimes learners could not able to appear the word in communication but get reminded after leaving the conversation. It emphasizes the importance of vocabularies and strategies in language learning.

### **Nervousness Fear And Shyness**

Second language learners often face difficulties in speaking English due to nervousness, fear, and shyness. Nervousness fear and shyness happens as psychological barriers affecting students' ability to speak English confidently. Fear and anxiety, both difficult psychological obstacles, hinder the learning process. These emotional barriers hinder fluency and limit social interaction.

### **Low Self-Confidence**

Low self-confidence was identified as a factor hindering effective English communication. Low self-confidence and self-esteem pose significant challenges for second language learners in speaking English and that doesn't allow the smart learners to communicate. These emotional barriers can result in hesitancy to express ideas, fear of making mistakes, and unwillingness to engage in verbal communication.

### **The Reasons And Factors Of The Difficulties**

No	Statement	Levels
1	Lack of exposure in school	Very High
2	Insufficient practice	High
3	Ineffective teaching methods in private studies	High
4	Afraid of being judged	High

*Table 2: The factors behind their difficulties in speaking English*

### **Lack Of Exposure In School**

One of the primary challenges caused by the limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Most to them pointed out the reason behind their inability was lack of exposure in school. School is the first prioritized place where all the students spend time more, and they feel school taught to score marks in term tests and examinations only not to improve all the skills especially speaking skills was neglected to be improved. Because school curriculum often prioritize reading and writing skills over speaking skills. As a result, school leavers may not receive sufficient speaking practice, leading to difficulties in expressing themselves orally.

Many students lack opportunities to practice speaking English in real-life situations, leading to a lack of confidence and fluency. This issue is particularly prevalent in non-English-speaking countries. And this reason leads the students face difficulties in future as well.

### **Insufficient Practice**

Insufficient practice is a crucial drawback of second language learners striving to acquire spoken English skills. Classroom activities that encourage speaking, such as group discussions, role-plays, and presentations, are essential for developing speaking skills. But when the absence of the practice will eventually lack their fluent speaking skills. Without consistent practice, learners struggle to attain fluency, delaying their ability to express thoughts seamlessly. This limited opportunities in diverse linguistic situations slows them of the adaptability required for effective communication.

And inadequate practice contributes to a restricted vocabulary, hindering learners from speaking ideas precisely. Poor pronunciation habits may also form in the absence of regular linguistic exercises. Moreover, the psychological impact cannot be overlooked, as insufficient practice raises insecurity and weakens confidence of the learners in their language abilities, further worsening the difficulty they experience in speaking English.

### **Ineffective Teaching Methods In Private Classes**

Some private English classes miss to contribute the students in right way, and ineffective teaching methods effects significantly to the challenges faced by second language learners in spoken communication. When instructors fail to employ pedagogical approaches that prioritize practical speaking skills with right technique and strategy, students may struggle to develop the necessary fluency and confidence.

In some cases, a focus on memorization or grammar drills may dominate interactive and communicative exercises. This approach can result in a lack of exposure to real-life language use, hindering learners from directing authentic conversational situations. Moreover, if instructors do not emphasize the application of learned concepts in practical contexts, students may face difficulties in effectively expressing themselves. Inadequate attention to pronunciation and communication strategies further increase the problem.

### **Afraid Of Being Judged**

Some second language learners struggle to speak English confidently due the factor of being judged and ridiculed/mocked by superiors or the people surrounded by. This anxiety is caused by a concern about making errors or being perceived as less proficient by native speakers or peers. The fear of judgment and making fun of them often leads to self-consciousness, preventing learners from expressing themselves freely. Anxiety about pronunciation, grammar mistakes, or using the wrong vocabulary can paralyze communication efforts. And the fear of being mocked by others also stops them to communicate independently. This fear

may be increased in environments where learners perceive a high expectation for linguistic accuracy. As a result, students may choose to remain silent rather than risk potential judgment, hindering their language development.

### **Results Of Practical Test And Observation Finding**

Three practical tests consist of pair discussions, individual speeches were conducted to 20 selected students. The first simple practical test of a self-introduction pair discussion and standing speech in front of class colleagues, were conducted to evaluate their levels. Their flaws and mistakes in the first attempt were corrected then given a second chance to rectify those mistakes that they previously did in each of the pair work and the standing speech tests. Then collected their feedback on last two attempts about every task on which attempt showed their ability stronger, made them more confident and less imperfection to speak.

Then they were given two days with different topic to present in the class (speech) on "Favourite social media platforms/application" and "Unforgettable day/ moment". These practical tests are analyzed by the observation such as naturalistic observation, structured and overt observation techniques. The different findings results from the finding gained from questionnaires are provided below.

### **More Difficulties Identified From The Practical Test With Observation**

No	Difficulties	Level
1	Difficulty in understanding	High
2	Less fluent	High
3	Mother tongue influences	High
4	Articulatory disorders or diseases	Very low
5	Pronunciation and accent	Low

*Table 3: The challenges/difficulties faced by the learners in speaking English*

### **Difficulty In Understanding**

A difficulty in understanding other speakers in the English language can impact one's own speaking skills. Effective communication involves a mutual relationship between listening and speaking. When individuals struggle to comprehend the spoken English of others, it hinders their exposure to diverse language structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation too. This limited understanding of others language leads not to respond or to stop conversation. Additionally, the frustration and self-doubt resulting from difficulties in understanding may weaken confidence, further avoiding the individual's willingness to engage in spoken communication.

### **Less Fluent**

Students noted challenges in fluency, indicating difficulties in maintaining a smooth and continuous flow of speech. They feel several break or absence of

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words in sentence construction ruin their communication. The challenge of being less fluent is a common difficulty for second language learners in speaking English. This difficulty shows as disruptions, hesitations, or the inability to maintain a smooth flow in communication. Learners may struggle to convey sentences together coherently, impacting overall conception.

### **Mother Tongue Influences**

The influence of Tamil as a mother tongue can impact English speaking skills in several ways. Pronunciation variations, differing phonetic structures, and distinct intonation patterns in Tamil may contribute to challenges in accurately imitating English sounds. Grammatical structures and sentence formation contracts can also differ between the two languages, affecting the construction of English sentences. Additionally, the influence of Tamil communication styles might influence the tone, formality, and use of language in English communication.

### **Articulatory Disorders Or Diseases**

Articulatory diseases such as stuttering, aphasia etc. can impact the speaking skills of second language learners by affecting the physical aspects of speech production. These conditions may hinder the proper coordination and movement of articulatory organs, such as the tongue, lips, and vocal cords. As a result, individuals may struggle with pronunciation, intonation, flow speech and overall clarity when speak a second language. Not only in speaking skill but also it makes some personal poor confidence issue, stress and extra anxiety etc. The challenges in accurately producing sounds and forming words can prevent effective communication and language acquisition for second language learners with articulatory disorders.

### **Pronunciation And Accent**

Difficulties in pronunciation and accent are common challenges in English speaking skills for non-native speakers. Pronunciation involves correctly producing the sounds of English words, while accent refers to the distinctive way a person speaks, influenced by their native language. Mispronunciations can lead to misunderstandings, affecting effective communication. Some students mispronounce the basic word such as face and purse, write and ride etc. Challenges may arise due to differences in phonetic systems between English and the speaker's native language, resulting in the improper articulation of certain sounds. Additionally, varying stress patterns and intonations can impact the natural flow of speech.

### **More Reasons And Factors Behind Their Difficulties Collected From The Practical Test With Observation**

No	Factors or causes	Level
1	Level of interest or purpose	Very High

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2	Personality	High
3	Lack of peers	Low
4	Education background	High
5	Family background	Low

*Table 4: The factors behind their difficulties in speaking English*

### Level Of Interest Or Purpose

Personal interest and the sole purpose of learning a language can significantly impact the speaking skills of second language learners. When learners have a genuine personal interest in the language, such as a passion for the culture, literature, or connections with native speakers, their motivation tends to be intrinsic which leads to more sustained and enthusiastic engagement with the language.

On the other hand, when there is purpose of learning a language, like meeting academic requirements or job demands may be extrinsic which can drive initial efforts, it might not sustain the same level of commitment in the long term. Learners with a sole purpose may focus more on meeting specific standards rather than genuinely engaging themselves in the language.

In speaking skills, those with a personal interest tend to grasp conversations for the joy of communication, making mistakes, and cultural exchange. But the learners with a purpose may view speaking as a task to fulfill, potentially impacting their willingness to engage in verbal expression. Personal interest adopts a more holistic approach to language learning, positively influencing speaking skills over time.

### Personality

The personalities of shyness, introversion, or unsociability can also influence the speaking skills of second language learners. Shy or introverted individuals may struggle with limited practice opportunities, as their reserved nature often prevents involvement in social interactions. This anxiety when attempting to speak in a second language and hindering the willingness to take linguistic risks.

Moreover, difficulty initiating conversations and a preference for loneliness can limit exposure to diverse language contexts for speaking. Active participation in discussions and social interactions is crucial for language learning, but introverted behavior may hinder such engagement. The reduced interaction with native speakers further impedes progress, as these learners may be less likely to seek out opportunities for immediate feedback and exposure to authentic language use.

### Lack Of Peers

The absence of peers can affect the speaking skills of second language learners in several ways. Interacting with peers plays a crucial role in language development, offering opportunities for real-life communication and practice. Without peers, learners may lack a supportive environment to engage in

conversations, leading to limited exposure to colloquial language, slang, and cultural distinctions. And lack of peers act as lack of motivation too, which may lead to lose the interest.

Additionally, peer interactions provide a platform for feedback and correction. When peers are absent, learners miss out on valuable input that helps refine pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Social anxiety or fear of judgment might also hinder speaking confidence when there are no peers to create a comfortable and collaborative learning atmosphere.

### **Education Background**

An individual's education background influences the difficulties they face in speaking English as a second language. Those with a limited formal education may encounter difficulties overall language proficiency. On the other hand, individuals with a strong educational foundation may struggle with advanced English-speaking skills if their prior education focused more on written language than oral communication. Majority says since most of the good grade students in their O/Level and A/Level perform well. In contrast the medium or low level grade students and the drop out after O level studies perform in a state of not satisfactory. And different educational systems and teaching methodologies can contribute to differences in speaking abilities among second language learners as well.

### **Family Background**

Family background can significantly influence the language learning experience for second language learners, contributing to difficulties in speaking English. Students from the families where English is not the primary language may face challenges in exposure to the language outside of formal education. Limited opportunities for conversing in English within the family environment can obstruct the development of speaking skills.

Additionally, cultural factors may play a role, with certain families placing less emphasis on English proficiency or having different language priorities. The lack of familial support or encouragement in practicing English conversation can lead to reduced confidence in speaking. In contrast, learners from families where English is spoken regularly may have a linguistic advantage, experiencing a more natural integration of the language into their daily lives.

### **Findings From The Semi-Formal Interview**

A semi-formal interview: consists of the questions of personal data such as name, age, native place, current status and future goals, hobbies, favourites, likes and dislikes and dreams/ wishes, the difficulties in speaking English and cope up ways, general questions (Eg: Advantages, disadvantages of social media / online studies), this or that, never have I ever questions, life motto/ best motivation always use. Each student asked different pattern of questions that showed the spontaneity.

### Analysis From Semi-Formal Interview

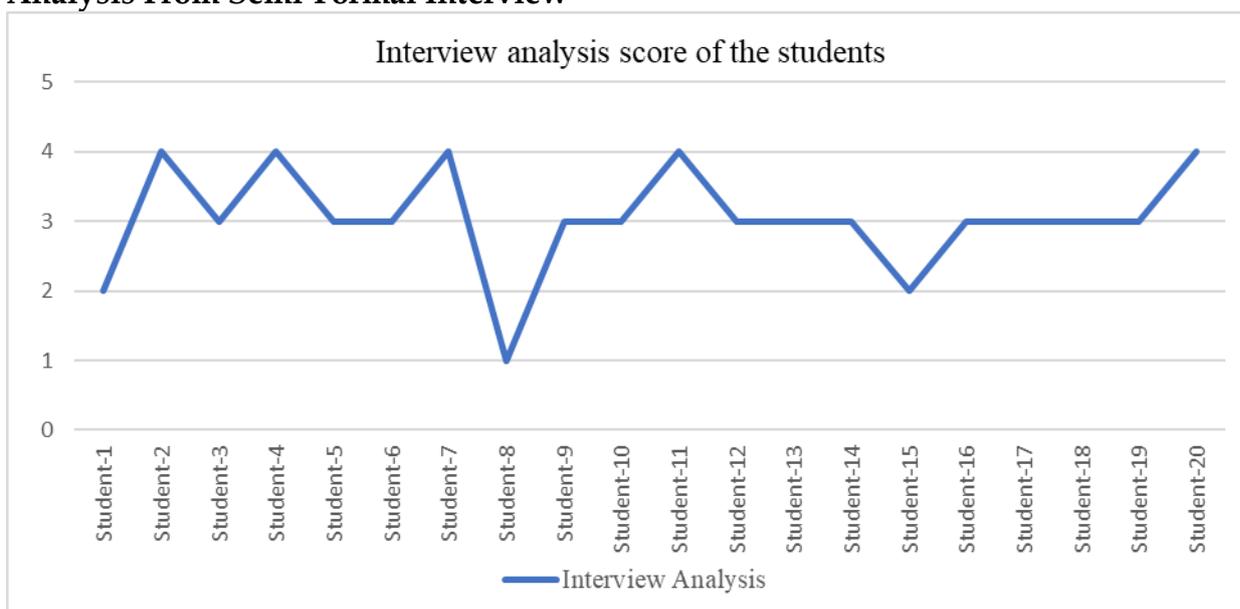


Figure 5: The score analysis from the interview

The interview analysis involved obtaining ratings from 20 individual students to measure their skills in speaking English. Each student was interviewed and provided a rating on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating the lowest and 5 the highest. The ratings received from the students reflect their responses in the interview.

The ratings range from 1 to 5, with Student-2 and Student-7 giving the maximum rating of 4, while Student-8 provided the lowest rating of 1. The majority of students (12 students) gave ratings in the middle range rate 3. These ratings provide a portrait of the varied responses among the students, and further insights from the interviews would help in understanding the specific aspects influencing their ratings.

### Research Analysis

This research analysis investigates into the difficulties encountered in speaking English skills faced by school leavers. Investigating this to provide comprehensions into the difficulties in speaking language proficiency, factors that influences behind the challenges and the solutions and ideas to overcome as well.

The difficulties/challenges	
1	Linguistic difficulties
1.1	Grammar and tense issues
1.2	Lack of vocabulary knowledge
1.3	Pronunciation and accent

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<b>2</b>	<b>Non-linguistic difficulties/ Personal difficulties</b>
2.1	Nervousness, fear and shyness
2.2	Low self confidence
2.3	Less fluent
2.4	Mother tongue influences
2.5	Difficulty in understanding
2.6	Articulatory disorders or diseases

Table 5: Classified chart of the difficulties/challenges

<b>The reasons/ factors</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Educational factors</b>
1.1	Lack of exposure in school
1.2	Ineffective teaching methods in private studies
1.3	Education background
<b>2</b>	<b>Psycholinguistics factors</b>
2.1	Insufficient practice
2.2	Level of interest or purpose
2.3	Afraid of being judged
2.4	Personality
<b>3</b>	<b>Environmental factors</b>
3.1	Lack of peers
3.2	Family background

Table 6: Classified chart of the reasons/ factors

### The Difficulties Encountered By Learners

The data collected from the questionnaire, practical test, observation and interview, were classified into mainly two categories of difficulties in speaking skills faced by school leavers as linguistic difficulties and non-linguistic difficulties as below.

#### Linguistic Difficulties

Linguistic difficulties in challenges faced in speaking English refer to the obstacles related to language structure, vocabulary, and usage that individuals encounter when attempting to communicate in English. These difficulties can manifest in various ways.

#### Grammar And Tense Issues

The major issue that challenge the most of second language learners to

speak in English. Difficulties in grammar and tense issues in English speaking skills often lead to incorrect sentence structures and challenges in conveying precise meanings. Learners may struggle with verb conjugations, sentence formation, and maintaining grammatical coherence.

To overcome these challenges, consistent preparation through referring right effective grammar books, or resources, structured language exercises, engaging in practical conversations, and seeking feedback from language instructors can enhance understanding and application of grammar rules. Including some learning experiences, such as watching English-language content and reading extensively, further grammatical concepts, contributing to improved proficiency in spoken English.

### **Lack Of Vocabulary Knowledge**

Lack of vocabulary knowledge poses challenges in English speaking skills, challenging the ability to express thoughts and ideas effectively. Limited word choices may lead to repetitive language use and difficulty in conveying subtle meanings.

To defeat this challenge involves extensive reading, engaging in conversations, and actively learning new words. Building a strong vocabulary requires incorporating vocabulary-building exercises, using language apps, and maintaining a personal word journals, learning regular words in native language in English, exploring the new terms. By consistently exposing oneself to diverse English materials and practicing new words in context, learners can enhance their vocabulary and, subsequently, improve their proficiency in vocabulary for spoken English.

### **Pronunciation And Accent**

Difficulties in pronunciation and accent in English speaking skills can result in communication barriers due to misinterpretations or unclear communication. Non-native speakers may struggle with mastering English sounds and intonation patterns in the starting period until they become familiar. This factor hinders some learners to speak out their ideas fearing whether its level of correctness.

Fixing these challenges involves utilizing pronunciation guides, dedicated practice and engaging in language exchange with native speakers. Incorporating language apps, attending pronunciation classes, and consistently exposing oneself to authentic English speech through audio resources and conversations can significantly improve pronunciation and accent. Regular feedback and self-awareness in identifying specific areas of difficulty further contribute to refining spoken English proficiency.

### **Non-Linguistic Difficulties/ Personal Difficulties**

Acquiring proficiency in spoken English is not solely a linguistic attempts but also involves dealing with non-linguistic in personal challenges. Personal obstacles, such as nervousness, fear of making mistakes or facing judgment low self-confidence, less fluent, mother tongue influences, difficulty in understanding,

articulatory disorders or diseases, can hinder the development of confidence needed for effective communication.

### **Nervousness, Fear And Shyness**

Nervousness, fear, and shyness plays a major challenge in speaking English language as second language learners even those who adroit at language knowledge. These emotions often lead to anxiety about making mistakes, fearing judgment, and feeling self-conscious, resulting in hesitant speech and a lack of confidence.

The techniques to get rid of these challenges, learners can engage in regular practice, create a supportive and non-judgmental learning environment, and gradually expose themselves to English-speaking practical daily life situations. By developing a positive mindset, encouraging small achievement, and embracing mistakes as opportunities to learn not to be shame, individuals can build confidence and gradually overcome the shyness caused by nervousness, fear, and shyness. Moreover, patience and persistent approach, compiled with a focus on building self-assurance, can empower language learners to overcome the emotional barriers that may initially obstructed their spoken English proficiency.

### **Low Self Confidence**

Ability to speak English can be affected of low self-esteem, as it often leads to hesitation, self-doubt, and fear of making mistakes. Individuals with low self-confidence may avoid participating in conversations and perform poorly even they are capable enough, the lower confident learners mostly tend to avoid speaking English language.

Trying to face these challenges involves improving self-esteem through positive statements, setting and peers achievable language-learning goals, seeking positive feedback, and gradually exposing oneself to English-speaking environments. Joining language clubs, engaging in language exchange programs, and practicing with supportive language partners can also foster a sense of community and encouragement. Celebrating small achievements, acknowledging progress, and reframing mistakes as valuable learning opportunities contribute to the gradual restoration of confidence. Ultimately, a nurturing and patient approach to language learning, combined with efforts to boost self-confidence, empowers individuals to overcome the barriers posed by low self-esteem and speak English with increasing fluency and assurance.

### **Less Fluent**

Difficulties in less fluent English speaking skills often noticeable as hesitations, interruptions, and a lack of flow in communication. These challenges may result from insufficient practice, limited exposure to spoken English, or self-consciousness etc. To conquer these difficulties, individuals can engage in regular conversational practice, participate in language exchange programs, and involve themselves in authentic English content, such as video audio content, podcasts, and audiobooks. Consistent speaking exercises, repetition regular practices, and

gradually increasing the complexity of conversations contribute to improved fluency, allowing individuals to express themselves more confidently and seamlessly in spoken English.

### **Mother Tongue Influences**

Mother tongue influences can create challenges in English speaking skills, leading to pronunciation variations, different intonation patterns, and grammatical structure differences.

To defeat these difficulties involves conscious awareness of these influences and identify the differences the way how the first and second languages are spoken in unique pattern, targeted language instruction, and consistent practice. Engaging in English-speaking environments or with native speakers, and utilizing language learning tools can help to reduce mother tongue influences. Additionally, adopting a positive mindset, seeking honest feedback, and accepting diverse language experiences contribute to effective language acquisition, allowing individuals to navigate and overcome challenges associated with the influence of their mother tongue on English speaking skills.

### **Difficulty In Understanding**

Difficulty in understanding English speakers can stop from unfamiliar accents, rapid speech, and complex vocabulary. When second language learners don't understand what opponent speaks which may hinder to speak the responses as well.

The ideas for this, individuals can engage in active listening exercises, watch English-language content with subtitles, and gradually expose themselves to different accents. Moreover, participating in language exchange programs, conversing with native speakers, and seeking clarification during misunderstandings contribute to improved comprehension. Consistent practice, diverse exposure to spoken English, and a willingness to accept linguistic variations empower learners to overcome difficulties in understanding and enhance their overall proficiency in English speaking skills.

### **Articulatory Disorders Or Diseases**

Articulatory disorders or diseases are kind of difficulty English speaking skills by affecting the proper formation of speech sounds. Some individuals may struggle with pronunciation, stuttering resulting in reduced clarity and comprehension in speaking skills,

Not all this type of challenges can be fixed but it involves seeking professional speech therapy, practicing articulation exercises, and employing visual aids or speech therapy apps to reinforce correct sound production. Consistent and targeted intervention, along with patience and perseverance, can significantly enhance articulatory skills and promote clearer and more effective English communication.

### **The Factors Cause Difficulties To Speak In English**

The reasons, factors that influence the learners in speaking difficulties are classified into three categories of factors / causes of difficulties as linguistic factors, non-linguistic factors and environmental factors. And the solution or overcoming techniques also provided in each

#### **Educational Factors**

Educational factors play a pivotal role in the difficulties faced by second language learners in speaking English. Various levels of formal education impact language proficiency, with differences in instructional approaches contributing to challenges in overall communication.

#### **Lack Of Exposure In School**

Lack of exposure to English in school can delay English speaking skills as learners may not have sufficient opportunities to practice and engage with the language. To conquer this issue, school or educators can incorporate deep learning experiences such as conversational sessions, and speaking language-rich activities. Encouraging participation in extracurricular activities, such as drama or public speaking events, provides additional platforms for students to enhance their spoken English. Participating multimedia resources and interactive language apps in the curriculum can expose students to diverse accents and real-world language use, more comprehensive development of English speaking skills.

#### **Ineffective Teaching Methods In Private Studies**

Ineffective teaching methods in private institution and private classes can slow English speaking skills by not adequately addressing practical communication aspects and offering practical situation. To overcome this, learners can seek personalized instruction, choosing tutors or language programs with a focus on conversational skills. Joining diverse teaching materials, interactive exercises, and real-life scenarios into private studies enhances the effectiveness of language learning. Additionally, participation in language exchange programs or conversation groups provides valuable opportunities for practical application, reinforcing spoken English proficiency and overcoming the limitations of ineffective teaching methods in private studies.

#### **Education Background**

A learner's education background and educational proficiency significantly affect English speaking skills. A solid educational foundation may provide a linguistic advantage, but individuals with varied educational backgrounds might face challenges in spoken English. The capability in the O/Level and A/level studies and the school education proficiency indirectly and directly affect their language acquisition.

By improving the knowledge and skills in language programs, addressing gaps in grammar and vocabulary, and promoting practical language use. Combining formal education with immersive experiences, such as language

exchange programs and interactive language apps, ensures a holistic approach. Encouraging consistent practice and exposure to diverse English-speaking environments aids in bridging the gap, fostering enhanced English speaking skills regardless of one's educational background and proficiency level.

### **Psycholinguistics Factors**

Psycholinguistic factors, including insufficient practice, level of interest or purpose, fear of judgment and personality significantly impact second language learners' difficulties in speaking English. These psychological barriers can hinder confidence and fluency.

### **Insufficient Practice**

Insufficient practice adversely affects English speaking skills by limiting exposure to language usage and hindering fluency development. When practicing factor slows eventually the speaking skills also slows down. Language speaking skills are not an overnight process, it needs more engagement and practices to acquire.

Practice can make anything perfect and the deeper learners engage in practice to s peak they can benefit more. Fixing this challenge involves incorporating regular speaking exercises, engaging in conversations with native speakers, and participating in language exchange programs, creating a language-rich environment, such as, listening to podcasts, and reading aloud, provides consistent opportunities for practice. By a regular practice in diverse language activities and maintaining an active approach to spoken English practice, learners can build confidence, enhance fluency, and overcome the impact of insufficient practice on their language proficiency.

### **Level Of Interest Or Purpose**

The level of interest or purpose highly influences English speaking skills. High interest provide motivation, positively impacting language acquisition and fluency rather than learning a second language for the sake of a sole purpose

Any lack of interest involves supporting language learning goals with personal interests, integrating engaging materials, and connecting language use to meaningful contexts. By emphasizing the practical application of English in areas of personal interest, individuals can enhance their speaking skills, maintaining a purpose-driven approach that sustains motivation and facilitates a more effective and enjoyable language learning experience.

### **Afraid Of Being Judged**

The fear of being judged/ teased by others can affect English speaking skills by creating anxiety and preventing confident expression. To overcome this challenge, creating a supportive and non-judgmental learning environment, where individuals feel encouraged and comfortable to practice without fear of criticism. Engaging in low-pressure language activities, such as language exchange programs or speaking clubs, self-practice rehearsing allows learners to gradually

build confidence. By emphasizing positive feedback, constructive encouragement, and creating spaces that prioritize growth over judgment, individuals can overcome the fear of being judged and enhance their English speaking skills with increased self-assurance and fluency.

### **Personality**

The personality of a learner significantly influences English speaking skills. Extroverted individuals may excel in social interactions but could struggle with precision, while introverted learners might face challenges initiating conversations. Overcoming these differences involves personalized language programs, balancing group and individual activities, and making a supportive environment that encourages both expressive and reflective learners. Adapting instruction to accommodate various learning styles, incorporating diverse speaking activities, and providing opportunities for both group collaboration and individual practice allows learners to develop well-rounded English speaking skills that cater to their unique personalities and preferences.

### **Environmental Factors**

Environmental factors, such as a lack of English-speaking peers, diverse family backgrounds and economic class differences, significantly impact the challenges faced by second language learners in developing English speaking skills. These factors shape linguistic exposure, support networks, and cultural contexts, influencing the overall proficiency in spoken English.

### **Lack Of Peers**

The absence of English-speaking peers can hinder a learner's English speaking skills by limiting opportunities for real-life practice and interaction. To face this challenge, learners can actively seek language exchange partners in person or online, participate in virtual language communities, and join language-related events or clubs. Utilizing language exchange apps, engaging in video conversations with native speakers, and incorporating diverse online resources can provide a simulated peer environment. This practical approach neutralize for the lack of local peers, offering consistent opportunities for spoken English practice, exposure to different accents, and developing conversational skills.

### **Family Background**

It impacts with factors such as parental language proficiency and language use at home influencing language development. And economical classes, regional factors too affect their language progress. To overcome potential limitations, families can actively integrate English into daily life, engaging in activities like reading English books together, and encouraging conversations in the language. Additionally, seeking external language resources, such as language clubs or online language-learning platforms, offers additional support, ensuring a more comprehensive language exposure for the learner and fostering an environment that supports the development of proficient English speaking skills.

The analysis highlights the difficulties and challenges and it causes faced by second language learners in English speaking, stopping from linguistic, psychological, and environmental factors. Addressing these complexities and providing appropriate instructions requires personalized interventions a comprehensive approach to develop effective speaking skills acquisition,

## **CONCLUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

The research exploring the difficulties encountered in speaking English among second language school leavers at IPHS Campus, Akkaraipattu reveals a depth information. Findings derived from appropriated research instruments, including questionnaires, practical tests, observations, and interviews, describe challenges faced by students. These challenges are categorized into linguistic difficulties such as grammar and tense issues, lack of vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation and accent and non-linguistic domains like nervousness, fear and shyness, low self-confidence, less fluent, mother tongue influences, difficulty in understanding, articulatory disorders or diseases difficulties with root causes of educational factors such as, lack of exposure in school, ineffective teaching methods in private studies, education background, psycholinguistic causes like, insufficient practice, level of interest or purpose, afraid of being judged, personality, and environmental influences involves Lack of peers, Family background identified as underlying contributors. The research not only reveals the complexities but also offers valuable insights. Techniques and suggestions gathered from the analysis provide a practical guide for learners and educators to overcome these challenges, developing a more effective and comprehensive approach to develop spoken English skills among second language school leavers.

### **Recommendation**

Identifying the difficulties encountered in speaking English among second language school leavers requires targeted recommendations for learners, educators and institutions. Firstly, curriculum design should prioritize practical language skills, integrating interactive and real-life communication exercises. Educators should receive training in developing a supportive environment that encourages regular spoken English practice, assigning peer-based activities and language exchange programs.

Moreover, the implementation of psychological support mechanisms, such as confidence-building workshops and counseling services, can significantly contribute to overcome psycholinguistic and personal barriers. Educational institutions or educators should collaborate with families, emphasizing the importance of language based activities, talks and games at home to reinforce classroom learning and instating to focus on their overall educational interest. In the digital age, the integration of technology, including language-learning apps and virtual language exchange platforms, can extend language exposure beyond the classroom, offering diverse and detail experiences. A versatile approach involving curriculum adaptation, educator training, psychological support, family

involvement, and technological integration is recommended to defeat the barriers. By implementing these measures, educational systems can enhance the spoken English proficiency of second language school leavers, ensuring their preparation for effective communication in diverse linguistic contexts.

### **Future Research**

A probable way for future research could focus on the long term effects of targeted interventions aimed at preventing the identified challenges faced by second language school leavers. This study could evaluate the continued impact of language programs, psychological support mechanisms, and inclusive learning environments over an extended period. Additionally, investigating the evolving linguistic and non-linguistic challenges as students' progress through various educational levels and encounter diverse language contexts could provide valuable insights.

Exploring the role of developing technologies in language acquisition, especially virtual language exchange platforms and interactive language apps, could be another hopeful area. Furthermore, studying the relationship between cultural factors and language proficiency might contribute to a more understanding of the challenges faced by second language learners. A comparative analysis across different educational systems and cultural contexts could enhance the validity of findings. Overall, future research should aim to improve and expand upon the strategies identified in this study, contributing to the continuous improvement of language education for second language school leavers.

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**Difficulties Encountered in English Language Speaking Skills Among Second Language Learners (A Study Based on School Leavers at IPHS Campus, Akkaraipattu)**

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATION**

L1	- First Language
L2	- Second Language
O/Level	- General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level
A/Level	- General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
ESL	- English as a Second Language
EFL	- English as a Foreign Language
IPHS	- Institute of Professional and Higher Studies