

Students' Perceptions of Problems in Speaking Skills Across Public Schools in Afghanistan

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Abstract

In today's ever-changing world, the English language has been placed as one of the important language mediums of instruction in education. The Ministry of Education of Afghanistan has emphasized the importance of learning the English language and highlighted the dire need for it during school years. The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of both teachers and students regarding the factors affecting secondary school students in three central schools in Mihtarlam. A qualitative exploratory design approach was utilized in this study and the data was collected through interviews from 22 participants. The interview data was analyzed thematically through manual analysis, particularly segments; codes and themes were discovered based on the research objectives of this study. The findings revealed that most of the school students' speaking problems are lack of vocabulary, grammar, time management, the environment, large classes, and the use of L1 in the classroom.

Keywords: Speaking Skill, Problems, EFL Teachers, EFL Students

Introduction

In an increasingly interconnected world, the English language has become a vital tool for global communication, education, and professional advancement. Its importance is particularly pronounced in developing nations like Afghanistan, where English is viewed as a gateway to socio-economic development and international opportunities. Recognizing this, the Afghan Ministry of Education has integrated English into the national curriculum, making it a compulsory subject from grades four to twelve in public schools. Despite these efforts, students in Afghan public schools continue to struggle with English proficiency, particularly in speaking skills. This study aims to explore the factors contributing to these challenges, focusing on the perceptions of teachers and students in three central schools in Mihtarlam City, Laghman province.

Speaking, as one of the four core language skills, is often regarded as the most critical yet challenging to master (Ur, 1999). It is a productive skill that requires not only linguistic competence but also confidence, fluency, and the ability to convey ideas effectively (Aydoğan & Akbarov, 2014). However, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, including those in Afghanistan, face significant barriers to developing speaking proficiency. These barriers include psychological factors such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes; linguistic challenges like limited vocabulary and poor grammar; and environmental constraints such as large class sizes, over-reliance on the first language (L1), and insufficient opportunities for practice (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Bashir et al., 2011; Boonkit, 2010).

In Afghanistan, the challenges are compounded by systemic issues such as outdated curricula, inadequate teaching methodologies, and limited resources. While the government has invested in capacity-building programs for teachers and standardized textbooks, students' speaking performance remains alarmingly low. This discrepancy highlights the need for a deeper understanding of the factors hindering students' progress. Previous research has identified a range of issues, including psychological barriers, curriculum deficiencies, and the impact of teachers' teaching styles (Al Hosni, 2014; Souriyavongsa et al., 2013). However, there is a lack of localized studies examining these challenges within the Afghan context, particularly in public schools.

This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the factors affecting speaking skills among secondary school students in three central schools: Roshan, Shaheed Dr. Abdullah Laghmani, and Mihtarlamak High Schools. By employing a qualitative exploratory design, the study aims to uncover the root causes of students' speaking difficulties and provide actionable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of targeted interventions, ultimately enhancing students' English language proficiency and opening new avenues for future research in this area.

Literature Review

The ability to speak English fluently is a critical skill for EFL learners, yet many students struggle to achieve proficiency due to a range of interconnected factors. This review synthesizes existing research on the challenges affecting EFL learners' speaking performance, categorizing them into psychological, linguistic, environmental, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors. It also highlights gaps in the literature, particularly in the context of Afghanistan, to underscore the need for this study.

Psychological factors are among the most significant obstacles to speaking proficiency. Research consistently identifies lack of self-confidence, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes as major barriers to effective communication in English (Aras et al., 2022; Fitriani & Apriliaswati, 2015). Foreign language anxiety, characterized by feelings of nervousness and apprehension, disrupts the learning process and reduces oral performance (Gusman, 2020). Inhibition, or the reluctance to speak due to fear of criticism, further exacerbates these challenges, particularly in classroom settings (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Motivation also plays a critical role; students with low motivation or disinterest in English language learning often exhibit poor speaking performance (Songsiri, 2007). These psychological barriers are pervasive and require targeted interventions to address.

Linguistic deficiencies, such as weak vocabulary and poor grammar, are fundamental contributors to low speaking performance. Vocabulary, as the foundation of language proficiency, directly impacts students' ability to express themselves effectively (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005; Misbah et al., 2017). Similarly, inadequate grammatical knowledge limits students' ability to construct coherent sentences, further hindering their speaking skills (Al-Roud, 2016; Weaver, 1996).. The over-reliance on the first language (L1) in EFL classrooms exacerbates these issues, as it reduces opportunities for practicing English and reinforces linguistic dependency (Jalaluddin et al., 2008; Littlewood, 2007). Addressing these linguistic challenges requires a balanced approach that emphasizes both vocabulary acquisition and grammatical accuracy.

The learning environment and teaching methodologies significantly influence students' speaking abilities. Large class sizes, for instance, limit individual speaking opportunities and reduce student participation (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Ur, 1999). Outdated curricula and textbooks, often misaligned with students' proficiency levels, further hinder speaking development (Noom-Ura, 2013; Souriyavongsa et al., 2013). Teachers' teaching styles and competencies also play a crucial role. Ineffective teaching strategies, such as excessive teacher talk and lack of student engagement, have been shown to negatively affect speaking skills (Al Hosni, 2014; Hassan, 2014). Additionally, insufficient homework and assignments deprive students of opportunities to practice and reinforce

their speaking skills (Eshankulovna, 2022; Qasemi, 2020). These factors highlight the need for curriculum reform and teacher training to create a more conducive learning environment.

Family involvement and socio-economic background also significantly impact students' speaking performance. Students from educated families or higher socio-economic backgrounds often perform better in English due to greater access to resources such as private tutoring, language classes, and English-speaking environments (Portes & Hao, 1998; Smith & Naylor, 2001). Conversely, students in remote areas or from disadvantaged backgrounds face additional challenges, including limited exposure to English and fewer opportunities for practice (Qasemi, 2020). Furthermore, cultural attitudes toward English as a subject can influence students' motivation and effort. For instance, some students view English as less important for their future careers, leading to neglect of the subject (Murray & Christison, 2010). These socio-cultural factors underscore the need for inclusive educational policies that address disparities in access and opportunity.

While existing research provides valuable insights into the factors affecting EFL learners' speaking performance, there are notable gaps in the literature. Most studies focus on psychological and linguistic barriers, with limited attention to the role of socio-cultural and environmental factors. Additionally, the majority of research has been conducted in developed or non-Afghan contexts, leaving a significant gap in understanding the challenges faced by students in Afghanistan. The Afghan educational context, characterized by limited resources, large class sizes, and socio-political challenges, presents unique barriers to English language learning that have not been adequately explored. This study aims to address these gaps by investigating the perceptions of teachers and students in Afghan public schools, providing a localized perspective on the factors affecting speaking performance.

Methods and Material

3.1. Research Design

This study is based on a qualitative research design along with an exploratory approach. Such design is employed to deeply explore the factors that contributed to the low performance of schools in the English language across public schools in Afghanistan. Qualitative design is used to gather in-depth information and ideas from the respondents (Creswell, 2000) .

3.2. Research Procedure

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The research procedure began with the selection of a qualitative research design, incorporating an exploratory approach to delve into the difficulties of secondary school students' speaking skills in Mihtarlam, Laghman Province. Utilizing unstructured interviews as the primary research tool, the interview was facilitated with both teachers and students to elicit their perceptions of the factors influencing students' speaking proficiency. The interview questions were developed in close collaboration with the main supervisor of this study.

3.2. Research Tools

The main research tool used in this study is the unstructured interview. An unstructured interview is a free-flowing conversation between a researcher and a participant. The interviewer has a broad research question that guides their interest in conducting the interview, but the interview questions are not decided beforehand (Erickson, 1985). Interview questions were developed for both teachers and students to gain their perceptions of the factors affecting secondary school students' speaking performance in the center of Mihtarlam, Laghman Province. The interview questions were developed based on the objectives of this study. The interviews were conducted with teachers and students in Pashto language and later translated into the English language for the data analysis.

The interview questions were accurately designed under the guidance of the esteemed professor at the English Department of Kabul University of Education. Interview questions were developed in line with the objective of this study and reviewed with the latest literature. The qualitative research tool should be reliable and valid for gathering data intended to support the objectives of a study. At the meantime, Experts who are English language professors at Laghman University and have prior experience in teaching and learning established the validity and reliability of this study, particularly they assures the reliability of the interview question by doing face validity. The researchers also considered the trustworthiness of qualitative data.

3.3. Research Population and Sampling

While conducting research, all the elements in the population including people, objects, events, and concepts are included (Creswell, 2012). Adejimi et al. (2022) add that in the population the group of people settling in a particular location, which describes the limitations within which the study findings are suitable and generalized. The population of this study is comprised of all ($n=20$) in-service English language teachers and ($n=940$) students from three public schools (Roshan, Shaheed Dr. Abdullah Laghmani, and Mihtarlam) in the center of Mihtarlam. The sample size for

this study consisted of 22 respondents (teachers and students) from three central schools in the Mihtarlam city of Laghman province. Out of (n=20) teachers, 12 of them were systematically selected and (n=10) students from 19 classes were conveniently selected for the study. The sample was selected to explore their perceptions of the problems that students are encountering, and they can represent the overall population of the three schools.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data from the interviews was thematically analyzed. The interview data from the English language teachers were thematically analyzed followed by the students. The researcher explored codes, segments, and major theses were discovered to support the objectives of this study. Finally, this study explored the main factors affecting students' speaking performance in three central schools in Mihtarlam.

3.5. Research Ethics

This study is conducted based on research ethics guidelines. Indeed, conducting qualitative research, particularly through in-depth interviews with 22 respondents, necessitates strict research ethics. To collect data from the respondents in schools, a permission letter was provided from the chancellor office at Laghman University in order to suggest the concerned department and schools to in data collection. Informed consent was also provided to both teachers and students before the actual interview in which the purpose of the study was described. The participants were asked for their volunteering interview, and the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity affirmed.

Results

4.1. Teachers and Students Perception of Speaking Skill

Based on in-depth interviews conducted with teachers and students at three governmental central schools—Roshan, Shaheed Dr. Abdullah Laghmani, and Mihtarlamak. Most of the teachers and students revealed identical perception about the factors affecting students speaking performance which are detailed discussed below:

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4.3. Students' Problems in Speaking Skill

After critically analyzing the interviews from the respondents, the second major problems that students are encountering in speaking skill are weak vocabulary, grammar, timing management, environment, large classes, uses of L1 when speaking in English language and overloading teaching.

4.3.1. Weak Vocabulary

The first problem toward students' speaking skill is that most of the students are confronting problem in vocabulary i.e. they do not have basic vocabulary that is why they do not show significant performance in speaking the English language. The words and vocabulary used thorough out the textbooks are more complex than their understanding level and caused them to have low vocabulary and avoid them to speaking in the English language.

[R1] "At first, we did not know how to read, or understand grammar and lack of vocabulary caused us not to speak in the English language."

[R4] "Most of the students do not understand the basics of the English language i.e. grammar, listening, vocabulary, and writing."

4.3.2. Grammar

The second problem that hampers students' speaking performance is low knowledge grammar skill. It is reported that most of the students are facing problem in learning and practicing grammar, particularly they are confronting correct uses of parts of speech, tenses, active, passive, and direct and direct speech. Lack of practice in activities related to the grammar within textbooks are tough and they cannot practice them during the class and as a part of the home works and assignment that is why most of them face problems in utilizing grammar in speaking skill. Following are the response taken from the participant during the interview:

[R7] "We don't know how to read, understand grammar and lack of vocabulary caused us not speak in English language."

[5] "Our teacher does not teach us effective grammar...."

4.3.3. Time Limitation

Both teachers and student revealed that limited timing for teaching and learning also caused students not to practice and learn the speaking skill. It is said that given time and duration for teaching English language is very short in which students cannot practice it. In addition, the time allocated for English period is 40 minutes that is very less for practicing and teaching English language that results in low performance of students in it. Following are the response taken from the participant during the interview:

[R20] “The teaching hour for our English subject is very short in which are taught about 40 minutes and we cannot improve our speaking skill”.

[R 21] “Some of teachers who come to the class, first they take attendance, sometimes they ask previous lesson then remaining time is not very limited in which teachers only write the topic of lesson and two or three key points on the board then there is no time to practice the lesson”

4.3.4. Environment

It is revealed that teachers and students' perception of speaking related problem is considered as the ineffective English language environment. It is resulted that the absence of encouraging conditions for practicing English speaking within the school environment. This lack of dedicated spaces or conditions for language practice poses a significant challenge for students aiming to enhance their spoken English skills. It is also indicated that the unsuitability of the classroom environment for practicing English language skills is not effective. Students express frustration over the lack of opportunities to practice assignments with teachers or classmates, which negatively affects their ability to speak English confidently. In addition, a social factor to the challenges highlighted that the negative affect of classmates such as making fun of students attempting to speak English. The fear of ridicule and shyness prevent students from practicing, creating a discouraging environment for language development. Following are the response taken from the participant during the interview:

[R5] “There is no effective environment for practicing English speaking in the school.”

[R2] “There is no place to practice English language.”

4.3.5. Large Classes

Based on interviews data gathered respondents about speaking problems of students, it is revealed that crowded classrooms are also considered as one the barriers that negatively affected students speaking performances. Large numbers of students in one class can negatively affect students speaking performance. It is stated that there are 40-60 students per class in which teaching

and learning English is more problematic compared to small classes. In the meantime, students narrated that due large classroom and the increasing numbers of student avoid them to participate in the class so they practice their speaking skill that is their speaking is negatively affect. Following are the response taken from the participant during the interview:

[2] “We cannot practice our speaking activities due to the excessive noise increased from crowd of students in our classroom.”

[11] “There is no chance of participation in the classroom activities due to large classroom.”

4.3.6. Uses of L1 in the Classroom

Excessive use first language L1 in the classroom is a problem that linked to the students' oral performance. In most cases teacher teach English language in Pashto language. When a teachers described a key term, grammatical point, of restate of the concept of passage he describes everything in Pashto language rather than the English language. It is also reported that most of the students prefer to use their first language to communicate or pass a question related to the English activity, which is negatively affecting their speaking performance. Following are the response taken from the participant:

[R4] “Most of the teachers' and students use their first language in the classroom that is why our English practice is neglected.

[R10] “Sometimes, in our English language period, both teachers and students use their first language in the classroom rather than English language.”

4.3.7. Overloading Teaching

It is discovered that one the detrimental factors that affects students speaking skill is teaching of many periods by the English teachers. Every teacher is obliged to teach six periods in a day, which an overloaded teaching and they teachers become very frustrated and bored. Sometimes, at the second period they feel very tired that they cannot utter one single word so teaching with such load is a great problem to both teachers and students. Thus, students' oral performance is negatively affected. Following are the response taken from the participant:

[R5] “Our teachers are teaching six hours every day in which they get bored and frustrated and cannot teach English effectively and no classroom activities are conducted.”

[R1] “We teach English language every day, we teach every day up to six period which is beyond our energy and also students centered learning approach cannot be implemented and there is no opportunity for us to improve students speaking skill”

Discussion and Conclusion

This section reports the main discoveries of the study, which focuses on how the respondents perceive the speaking abilities of secondary school students from Roshan, Dr. Abdullah Laghmani, and Mihtarlamak High Schools in Laghman province. Through the analysis, two significant patterns were identified, which highlighted certain issues, which are discussed below. In addition, the chapter concludes with a brief summary, limitations, and recommendations for future research and practice.

5.2. Students' Problems in Speaking Skill

Both teachers and students have identified low vocabulary, grammar, and unsuitable learning environments as the major problems faced while learning English language speaking skills. These issues are discussed in detail below. According to various studies, self-effort and effective learning strategies are key factors in improving English speaking skills (Alderman, 2013). However, some students struggle with laziness (Chang, 2010; Trawiński, 2005),, absenteeism, and lack of classroom participation (Alharbi, 2015),, and concerns about future employment prospects (Murray & Christison, 2010). These factors are major causes of problems that many students encounter while learning to speak English.

5.2.1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to a single word or a group of words that have a particular meaning. It is essential to know the meaning of words, and it can be of two types; oral and print (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005). However, the primary problem that students face is their low vocabulary skills. They lack basic vocabulary, which affects their ability to speak English fluently and perform well. The vocabulary used in textbooks is often complex and beyond their understanding level, leading to low

vocabulary and reluctance to speak in English. The lack of fundamental vocabulary among teachers and students is a significant issue that needs to be addressed.

This study underscores that the language used in textbooks is often more complex than the learners' understanding level. Moreover, the identified gap in vocabulary has a direct impact on speaking performance. When individuals lack the necessary words to express their thoughts and ideas, they are likely to struggle and hesitate during oral communication (Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023). This can lead to an unwillingness to participate in spoken English activities. The vocabulary challenge appears to have a cascading effect, with low proficiency leading to avoidance of speaking in English. This avoidance, in turn, further hampers the development of speaking skills, as regular practice and exposure are crucial for improvement. Similarly, a study has shown that achieving fluency in speaking is not an easy task. Students are not only expected to use correct grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary but also use the language correctly in terms of words (Fitriani & Apriliaswati, 2015). At the same time, it is stated that speaking problems occur when students encounter a word they do not know, a form of a word they don't know how to use, or are unable to express their intended meaning, which is why they fail to speak properly (Hinkel, 2005). This result supports the findings of a previous study that found that the most significant challenge faced by ESL learners was having a limited vocabulary in the English language.

5.2.2. Grammar

The second major problem that hampers students' speaking performance is the grasp of proper grammar skills. If learners do not know the rules of grammar, they will never be able to communicate using English effectively (Weaver, 1996). Scholars such as Al-Roud (2016); Evans & Green (2007); Spolsky (2008) claimed that poor grammar and weak vocabulary caused students to have low performance in English speaking.

According to a recent study, many students struggle with learning and understanding English grammar. Specifically, they have difficulty with parts of speech, tenses, active and passive voice, and direct and indirect speech. The lack of grammar-related activities and practice in their textbooks makes these concepts difficult to grasp during class or while completing homework. As a result, many students struggle to apply proper grammar rules when speaking. This is consistent with findings from Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2016), who noted that grammar can be challenging for students who do not learn the structures simultaneously. Furthermore, some students have difficulty using certain English words correctly while speaking, which can be attributed to a lack of understanding of proper tense usage (Boonkit, 2010).

Recognizing and tackling the obstacles to practicing grammar skills could play a pivotal role in improving students' ability to apply grammatical rules in their speech. It would be beneficial to investigate potential solutions that can improve grammar learning and application in spoken language. This could entail introducing more interactive and practical exercises in the classroom, providing additional resources for self-paced practice, or exploring innovative teaching methods that make grammar more accessible and enjoyable for students (Moore et al., 2019).

5.2.3. Timing Management

Teachers and students have reported that the limited time allocated for teaching and learning English has negatively affected students' ability to practice and become fluent in the language. The duration for teaching the English language is very short, and students and teachers cannot practice or teach properly. This lack of sufficient practice opportunities may compromise students' speaking skills, which require regular and interactive practice. Two studies have also shown that students often complain about not having enough time to enhance their speaking performance in the classroom, leading them to rely on rote memorization (Al-Jamal & Al-Jamal, 2014; Khan & Ali, 2010). A study by Mulenga and Lubasi (2019) supports this concern, as it highlights the importance of regular and interactive practice for improving speaking skills.

5.2.4. Environment

According to a recent study conducted at Jawzjan University in Afghanistan, both teachers and students feel that the lack of an encouraging English-speaking environment is a major obstacle to improving their language skills. The study found that students face difficulties expressing themselves effectively due to the absence of suitable conditions for practicing English within the school environment. English language teachers who teach various subjects at the university also face challenges in helping their students improve their spoken English skills, as dedicated spaces for language practice are nonexistent (Qasemi, 2020). . This lack of resources and support makes it difficult for both teachers and students to overcome these obstacles and develop their language proficiency (Warschauer, 2000).

It has been concluded that the classroom environment is not suitable for practicing English language skills, which frustrates both teachers and students. The lack of opportunities to practice speaking assignments with teachers or classmates has a negative impact on their ability to speak English confidently. This finding is similar to Gan (2012), which highlights insufficient

opportunities to speak English during lectures and tutorials, as well as poor environments for spoken communication in English outside of class, as contributing to the range of problems faced by EFL students worldwide. Additionally, teachers and students express frustration over the lack of chances to practice speaking assignments with one another. A study further emphasizes that the inadequacy of the classroom environment for practicing English language skills is a major concern (Young, 1991)..

Our research has highlighted a social aspect to the challenges faced by students learning English. We found that classmates who make fun of those attempting to speak English have a negative impact on language development. This creates a discouraging environment where students are afraid of being ridiculed and become shy, which prevents them from actively practicing. Lack of good colleagues and classmates to practice with can also inhibit the improvement of language abilities, leading to pervasive silence (King, 2011).

5.2.5. Large classes

After analyzing the interviews conducted with both teachers and students, it has been found that classes with 40-60 students face more difficulties in teaching and learning English as compared to smaller classes. In larger classes, teachers find it challenging to conduct activities mentioned in the textbook, and students have fewer opportunities to practice English related activities like role-playing. In addition, teachers cannot implement a student-centric learning approach in such classes, and most of their time is spent in maintaining the attendance sheet. Due to the large number of students, teachers hardly get a chance to check their assignments and provide feedback. As a result, students' speaking skills are negatively impacted due to the larger classroom size.

It is important to note that the classes in Afghanistan have a large number of students, with 40-60 students per class. This makes teaching and learning difficult. The reason for this is due to the lack of schools, infrastructure, and low teacher employment rates in the country. Unfortunately, there are limited studies on how this affects the students' English performance. However, in a study conducted in 2022 about the practices of oral participation among undergraduate students in Afghanistan, it was discovered that students' oral performance is negatively affected by the large number of students in the classroom (Atifnigar et al., 2022). Additionally, a key problem that lowers students' speaking performance is the large classroom size, where the number of students is above average (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Furthermore, a study conducted by (Le, 2019) found that in larger classes, each student has a short time to speak due to the sequential order of conversation, where only one student speaks at a time while the others listen.

According to reports, the large size of the class makes it difficult for teachers to engage students in interactive exercises, such as role-playing or practical applications of language skills. The findings also suggest that the traditional teacher-centered approach is more common in large classes. The constraints of the classroom size limit the implementation of student-centric learning approaches, where personalized attention and interaction are essential for language development. This limitation in teaching methodologies can negatively affect the overall language learning experience for students.

5.2.6. Uses of L1 in the classroom

One of the detrimental factors that affect students' speaking performance is the excessive use of the first language (L1) in the classroom. It has been observed that students' speaking performance is negatively affected by this practice, as both teachers and students tend to use their native language. In most cases, teachers use their native language as a medium of instruction, and students communicate in their first language, which is the main cause of their low oral performance. One notable observation is the use of Pashto by teachers during English language instruction, which may hinder students' language acquisition and fluency in English, as they are exposed to both languages simultaneously. Previous studies have shown that this issue is prevalent among EFL learners across the globe. For instance, a study revealed that most students do not use the English language in their daily lives and only encounter the target language within the school and classroom setting (Jalaluddin et al., 2008). Another study showed that most students prefer to use their local language instead of English in the classroom (Qasemi, 2020). Such difficulties are often observed in remote areas where students prefer to use their mother tongue to communicate in the classroom, which sometimes makes it difficult for them to speak in English with their teachers and classmates, leading to low speaking performance. This finding highlights the potential lack of immersion in the target language during classroom interactions (Khan, 2016). Language immersion is crucial for language development, and if students consistently resort to their native language, it can impede their progress in acquiring English-speaking skills. The negative impact on students' speaking performance due to the excessive use of the first language is a critical concern that needs to be addressed.

5.2.7. Overloading Teaching

The results of our study also revealed that most of the students fail in speaking skills due to overloading teaching upon teachers. This refers to the situation where educators, such as teachers

are burdened with excessive work responsibilities. This might include teaching many subjects, handling numerous students, and managing various administrative tasks. As mentioned before, due to the overloading curriculum of Afghanistan school authorities or obliged to fulfill the requirements of teaching subjects. They distribute as many subjects as they can to cover the credits assigned by the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan. Therefore, such overloaded teaching causes to fail students in their overall education achievements. Nevertheless, their English language is broadly affected. However, in the previous studies, there is extremely limited specific research conducted showing how interference of mother tongue affects students' speaking performance.

Conclusion

As per the main goals and objectives of this study, most students' speaking skills are negatively affected due to their low vocabulary, poor grammar, limited time for learning, unfavorable environment, large classrooms, excessive use of their native language, and overloading of teaching. The primary issue that students face is their low vocabulary, which hinders their ability to perform well in speaking English. The second major problem is the lack of proper grammar skills. Limited time for teaching and learning also contributes to the students' inability to practice and learn the English language effectively. It is concluded that the absence of conducive conditions for practicing English speaking within the school environment is a significant challenge. Crowded classrooms are also considered a significant barrier that negatively affects students' speaking performance. It is observed that students' speaking performance is negatively affected because both teachers and students use their native language. Finally, students' failure in speaking skills is attributed to overloading of teaching responsibilities on teachers, which burdens them with excessive work.

5.3.3. Suggestion for Future Researches

Every research entails some suggestions for future research so that forthcoming research can solve them. Following are some suitable suggestions provided based on this study:

Firstly, this study is centered on three schools in Mihtarlam, Laghman province. Future research may be conducted on other schools in the remaining districts of Laghman province to obtain further in-depth ideas to help relevant entities solve current problems that exist in schools.

Secondly, large-scale quantitative research is required to be conducted in public schools to solve students' English language performance, including all four integrated skills, since this is a vital issue

to be resolved. In addition, this study also provides the basic concept and understanding of a development questionnaire through which quantitative research can be made easier.

Thirdly, future researchers may also employ mixed-method research to deeply discovering the underlying problems in the English language.

Finally, key future research may be conducted to find effective solutions and strategies

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