

**Promoting the speaking skill: a comparative study  
between group work classes in Fujairah English and  
Non-English speaking schools**

**تطوير مهارة التحدث: دراسة مقارنة بين حصص العمل الجماعي في  
المدارس الناطقة بالإنجليزية وغير الإنجليزية بالفجيرة**

**By**

**Student Name: Khalid Sayed Shalaby Ali**

**Student ID number: 90070**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of MEd in TESOL

Faculty of Education

Dissertation Supervisor

Professor: Amanda Howard

March 2012

## DISSERTATION RELEASE FORM

Student Name	Student ID	Programme	Date
Khalid Sayed Shalaby Ali	90070	TESOL	March 2012

<b>Title</b> Promoting the speaking skill: a comparative study between group-work classes in Fujeirah English and Non-English speaking schools
--

I warrant that the content of this dissertation is the direct result of my own work and that any use made in it of published or unpublished copyright material falls within the limits permitted by international copyright conventions.

I understand that one copy of my dissertation will be deposited in the University Library for permanent retention.

I hereby agree that the material mentioned above for which I am author and copyright holder may be copied and distributed by The British University in Dubai for the purposes of research, private study or education and that The British University in Dubai may recover from purchasers the costs incurred in such copying and distribution, where appropriate.

I understand that The British University in Dubai may make that copy available in digital format if appropriate.

I understand that I may apply to the University to retain the right to withhold or to restrict access to my dissertation for a period which shall not normally exceed four calendar years from the congregation at which the degree is conferred, the length of the period to be specified in the application, together with the precise reasons for making that application.

<b>Signature</b>  Khalid Sayed Shalaby Al
---

## Abstract

This study mainly investigates the Arab students` speaking behaviour within small group work activities in English and Non-English Speaking Schools (ESS and NESS). The Non-English Speaking Schools here refer to Arab schools. The purpose is to examine whether that speaking behaviour differentiates from a context to another or not and why. Such major issues were explored through this study as the students` oral participation in class, their perspectives towards what they need and what they should do themselves to be competent speakers, as well as their attitudes towards small group work as a motivating approach for speaking. To achieve these objectives a mixed method research paradigm including class observation, questionnaires and interviews was adopted. The point was to cover the topic from all sides and create a superior research. The findings showed a discrepancy in speaking behaviour between the English and Arab group work contexts in terms of the students` oral participation and the teachers` teaching strategies. It was revealed that ESS students have more speaking and critical thinking abilities than students in Arab schools. Also, the findings showed the ESS teachers` more awareness in conducting group work activities than teachers in Arab schools too. However, the role of group work in promoting speaking was determined by all participants.

إن هذه الدراسة تُحقق بشكل أساسي في الأداء الكلامي للطلاب العرب المتواجدين بالمدارس الناطقة بالإنجليزية وغير الإنجليزية, والمراد بالمدارس غير الإنجليزية في هذه الدراسة هي المدارس العربية, ولقد تم هذا التحقق من خلال إلحاق الطلاب بأنشطة العمل الجماعي المصغر. فالهدف الأساسي هو معرفة ما إذا كان هذا الأداء الكلامي يختلف من بيئة لإخرى وماهي الأسباب التي تقف وراء ذلك. ولقد تضمنت هذه الدراسة العديد من القضايا الجوهرية مثل المشاركة الشفهية للطلاب بالصف, ووجهات نظر الطلاب تجاه ما يحتاجونه وما يجب عليهم القيام به بأنفسهم لكي يكونوا متحدثين أكفاء, إضافة إلى مواقفهم تجاه العمل الجماعي المصغر كإسلوب محفّز على الكلام. و لتحقيق هذه الأهداف تم تبني الإسلوب البحثي المتعدد المشتمل على الملاحظة الصفية والاستبيانات و المقابلات , وذلك لتغطية البحث من كافة الجوانب وخلق دراسة بحثية متميزة. ولقد أسفرت نتائج البحث عن وجود اختلافاً جوهرياً بين المدارس الإنجليزية والعربية من حيث المشاركة الشفهية للطلاب وكذلك استراتيجيات التعليم لدى المعلمين بتلك المدارس . ولقد كشف هذا الاختلاف عن قدرات كلامية وتفكيرية نقدية بشكل أكبر لدى طلاب المدارس الإنجليزية و كذلك عن وعي أكبر لدى معلميهما في كيفية إدارة العمل الجماعي المصغر عن نظيراتها في المدارس العربية. ومع ذلك فلقد ظهر توافق تام في المواقف والآراء من قبل جميع المشاركين حول الدور المحوري للعمل الجماعي المصغر في تطوير مهارة التحدث .

## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the pure souls of my brother Magdy, mother, father and sister, who are still living in my heart and blood. I will never ever forget their everlasting love and support to me. May God bless their souls.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express appreciation to my dissertation supervisor Dr. Amanda Howard who has guided and supported me all the time. I cannot forget also to thank all the professors who taught me at the British University in Dubai for what they offered from support and encouragement. My gratitude also goes to my colleagues who helped me during my long journey of academic study. Thanks you all.

My deepest appreciation and love go to my great wife (Um Ahmed), my children (Alaa, Menah, Ahmed and Maryam) and my brothers (Mohsen and Ezzat) whose prayers accompanied me everywhere and who sacrificed much for me with time and effort. Last, my best of thanks go to my brother`s Magdy`s family members (Um Mohamed, Israa, Salama, Mohamed, Marwa and all the relatives for their interest.

## Table of contents

Chapter One (Introduction)	1
1.1 The importance of speaking	1
1.2 Students` speaking problems as seen by the researcher	2
1.3 The effectiveness of group work in students` speaking	3
1.4 Research objectives and questions	4
1.5 The research method	4
Chapter Two (Literature Review)	5
2.1 Introduction to literature review	5
2.2 The general factors of speaking deficiency	6
2.3 The effect of fear, vocabulary and assessment over speaking	8
2.4 The speaking relationship with other skills	11
2.5 The NS and NNS teachers` language authority	12
2.6 The teacher and student-centered approaches	13
2.7 The benefits and supporting theories of small group work	14
2.8 The previous theoretical and empirical studies	16
2.9 A close summary	17
Chapter Three (Methodology)	18
3.1 Introduction to methodology	18
3.2 The research background	19
3.3 The research and reasons for it - qualitative or quantitative or mixed	20
3.4 The research instruments	21
3.4 Methods of data analysis	22
3.5 The chronological stages of the research	23

Chapter Four (Results)	26
4.1 Observation findings	26
4.2 The questionnaire results	28
4.3 Interviews feedback	33
4.4 Pearson`s correlation system	33
4.4 A close summary	34
Chapter Five (Discussion)	35
5.1 Introduction to discussion	35
5.2 Inconsistent group work classes	35
5.3 Students` speaking problems	38
5.4 Additional insights	39
5.5 Comparative discussion with other findings	41
5.6 Limitations	42
Chapter Six (Conclusion)	43
6.1 Summary	43
6.2 The implications of the study	44
6.3 Recommendations related to speaking obstacles	45
6.4 Recommendations to teachers	46
References	47
Appendices	54

# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1 The importance of speaking

With the corresponding spread of English as a world language used widely in education and everyday's real life situations, learners have become required to be competent speakers, to express themselves, to behave socially and culturally in any communicative context, to use speech sounds, stress and intonation, to organize thoughts and select the appropriate utterances due to the social setting. Therefore, one of the long term goals of the UAE English language instruction as an example, has become to enable students to interact naturally in English. Group work approach may be seen as a method that possibly encourages the students to speak.

Much has been said about the importance of speaking and its influence. Speaking has been defined as the primary source of learning, to the extent that minimizing the classroom talk may handicap the learners to share the processing knowledge (O' Keefe 1995). It is a unique and complicated skill that enables the speaker as an information processor to transform intentions and thoughts in a fluent and articulated speech (Levelt1989:1). It enables the speaker to take decisions regarding what to say, when and how (Bygate1987:6). It empowers the speakers to present ideas in a democratic process since "free speech is a hallmark of democracy" (Verderber et al. 2011:6). It comes at the forefront of communication, because it is an untrained facility which is possible for all people who can speak and use the bodily movement (Andrews2011:183). Speaking has been deemed also as "the most important part of an EFL course" (Knight1992:294) and the most observable among other types of participations including listening, reading, writing and also physical or body language (Tsou 2005).

Concerning the speaking influence, Baker and Westrup (2003:5-6) elucidate that speaking has a positive impact on students educationally and professionally. Educationally, it reinforces students' grammar, vocabulary, and functional language, allows them to experiment the language in different contexts, improves their English level and provide them with the opportunity to study in an English speaking country. Speaking is also a medium to study other subjects like Math and Science and obtain success in examinations. Professionally, speaking enables learners to maintain better future careers and gain promotion, since governments and companies currently only appoint the staff who can speak English naturally and communicate efficiently.

## 1.2 Students` speaking problems as seen by the researcher

Based on my long experience in English teaching in Fujairah (UAE), I noticed that most of the 12<sup>th</sup> Arab graders, particularly the UAE ones, who represent the majority of population in NESS (Non-English Speaking Schools) or Arab schools, are still unable to speak English naturally in and out of class, although they have been learning English for about 14 years in the context of group work. On the other hand, there is a growing claim among people in the UAE that Arab student who go for studying at ESS (English speaking schools) always become more competent English speakers in terms of fluency and accuracy, because of being learned by native speakers (NS) teachers and also among students from different first language background.

The students in Arab schools always face problems in communicating with others or expressing themselves in the target language, so they rather remain silent and show passive participation in class. When they are invited to speak, the students` speaking performance mostly does not exceed the word level and in the best cases it takes the form of short sentences which lack accuracy and fluency. Students often speak haltingly with a lot of pauses, repetitions, errors, so they use exaggerating amount of non-verbal symbols to compensate the lack of speaking ability. This problem has obviously come into the surface definitely with the 12<sup>th</sup> Arab graders, because they are on one step distance to join the university education which requests them to study most subjects in English and communicate efficiently with almost native speakers` instructors.

On asking students about the reasons of their speaking reluctance, anecdotal evidence suggests that teachers focus much more on teaching grammar and vocabulary than speaking, maximize their talking time, prefer to speak the local Arabic language, always make fun of students` spoken errors and only pay more attention to the speakers from brilliant students. Other students consider that the text and practice books never meet their expectations as they contain many lessons which are irrelevant to daily life events, focus more on such other language skills than speaking and also lack the sense of motivation. Others admit that they rather remain silent in class either because they are unconfident of their language ability in terms of structural and lexical knowledge, not in a good rapport with their teachers and classmates or because they do not tend to speak in public or get face to face with the audience, as they get more stressed.

### 1.3 The effectiveness of group work in students` speaking

Hamzah and Ting (2010) supported the above reasons when they identified that students` lack of speaking ability, linguistic awareness of grammar and vocabulary, concentration and motivation, always prevent them from interactive spoken communication. Further, some teachers neither provide students with the sufficient input nor give speaking activities the required attention due to time constraint, the desire to complete the syllabus in time, being involved in non academic duties or preparing material for lessons. In addition, the fixed seat arrangement merely encourages individual and pair work and decreases the student`s language practice.

Real life communicative environment and interactive student-centeredness in classrooms where teachers should use authentic activities and meaningful tasks through students` group work, can bolster the students` communication capabilities. “The focus is on cultivating communication abilities in listening and speaking” (Rapley 2010:34). Argumentative oral group discussions can make students share ideas, contribute equally to achieve the task purpose and this can be reinforced by such things as stimulations or realistic items, pictures, and stories, which widen the students` imagination and encourage them to speak more (Kayi2006). Hence, Baker and Westrup (2003:7-9) suggest that teachers should train learners to speak within a regular language practice. They have to motivate students by making lessons interesting, allowing them to participate, involving them in lessons through a variety of activities, using texts and materials which are relevant to students` needs and also finding interesting ways to help them study exam materials. Furthermore, teachers need to encourage students to conduct a real communication practice around their lives and allow students to select the topics of discussion. Moreover, teachers should create a positive environment and urge students to use language outside school.

Long and Porter (1985) identify that small group work increases the students` language practice and improve their language quality. Milson (1973:1-8) describes group work as the group whose members have a common goal that requires a contribution from each individual. Members depend on constant meeting and interaction seeking for co-operative effort, skilled leadership, sense of belonging to one another and assigning roles for each member in this joint effort. Through group work, learners know each others, strengthen personal and social relationship, develop their humanistic and social features and fulfill academic achievements.

## 1.4 Research objectives and questions

### 1.4.1 The overall goal of this research paper:

This paper aims to investigate the Arab students' speaking behavior within small group work activities, in two different teaching and learning contexts which are English and Non-English Speaking Schools (ESS and NESS), taking into account such factors as the teachers' nationality (NS or NNS), their professional development as well as the students' first language background, cultures, prior knowledge and the classroom learning context.

### 1.4.2 The following sub-objectives will be supportive to the investigation area:

- 1- To explore the quantity and quality of students' oral participation and communication.
- 2- To identify the students' perspectives about speaking problems and group work benefits.
- 3- To provide the teachers and students with the rationale for carrying out group work in class by determining the potential implication of group work activities on students' speaking, social and critical thinking performance.

### 1.4.3 A. The main research question:

To what extent does the Arab students' speaking behavior differ from a group work class to another in English and non-English speaking contexts?

### B. The underlying sub-questions:

1. How do students participate in terms of speaking performance and communication?
2. What are the students' views concerning speaking problems and group work benefits?
3. Do teachers and students have a complete appreciation about what group work is and what it entails?

## 1.5 The research method

This paper will be a mixed method research combining between the quantitative and qualitative traditional paradigms. Thus, the methods of data collection will include class observation, questionnaire surveys and interviews with teachers and students in Fujairah ESS and NESS schools. The point is to create an integrative study and answer the research questions.

## Chapter Two: Literature review

Key Words: speaking deficiency, social anxiety, knowledge proficiency, assessment criteria, teacher- centered, student-centered

### 2.1 Introduction to literature review

This literature review aims to shed the light on two major research components which are complementary and consequent to each others. The first component includes the problematic factors that may influence speaking negatively, while the second deals with the resolution of speaking problems through adopting the proper use of small group work in the learning context. Throughout this review such other relevant issues which may affect speaking in the context of group work are embedded, as the speaking quantity and quality, speaking and other skills, speaking assessment, the teacher and student centered strategies as two contradictive but complementary teaching methods and also the role of native or non-native speakers teachers in conducting speaking activities within small group work. The end of this review attempts to show the great impact of genuine group work in developing the students 'speaking behaviour.

As for the speaking problems, this review starts by introducing speaking as a complicated cognitive and social process due to such psychological and non-language proficiency factors (fear, anxiety and lack of vocabulary knowledge) as well as the urgent demand for finding consistent assessment criteria that encourage the students` speaking skills and fit the variety of contexts, examiners, examinees and test purposes, to achieve accuracy, validity and comprehensibility. The review also focuses on the speaking cyclical relation with the rest of other skills involving reading, writing and listening.

More importantly, this review reveals the real conceptualization of such classrooms` teaching strategies as teacher-centered, lecture based and group work classes. It displays the researchers` different perspectives towards the advantages and disadvantages of teacher-centered and group work strategies. It clarifies the misconception around the real concept of lecture-based classes and how it can be either teacher-centered or student-centered. It illustrates the factors that may affect cooperative work negatively. In addition, this review demonstrates the extent to which group learning was supported through sound pedagogical arguments, psycholinguistic rationale and such learning theories for Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky and others.

## 2.2 The general factors of speaking deficiency

According to my long teaching experience, I noticed that many English teachers do not own a clear and perfect understanding about what speaking is and which factors do really prevent students from speaking. Those teachers think of speaking as just scattered utterances used in a variety of contexts without knowing exactly the nature and characteristics of these utterances. Hence, teachers presumably should know deeply about these issues to enhance the students' speaking skills and behaviour.

Overall, Speaking has been defined as “ the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts” (Chaney and Burk1998:13). This definition corroborates that speaking is not just a word, but it is a cognitive and social process that takes place between speakers and listeners in a certain context in which the spoken utterances as words, phrases and sentences are not enough to transfer a clear spoken message, but other non-spoken symbols as body posture, gestures and facial expressions are required.

The speaking inability reasons have been seen by many authors and researchers as not only the students' responsibility but also in association with other partners as teachers and the language context. Although Worde (2003) encapsulated the speaking reticence factors in relation to the teachers, the learners and nature of the condition including lesson plans, teaching materials and the language structures; most of these factors are perceived as more teacher-related than the learners'. Even, the learners' related factors seemed to be a natural consequence to the teachers' traditional type of teaching, the lack of teaching methods and the language knowledge ability. In addition, some of these factors which are psychologically related like fear and anxiety, seem to be natural reactions to the teachers' social misbehavior and teaching performance in class.

However, there are some other learners' related factors which are derived from communicating by using a language which is not the learner's native language. This seems to be challengeable, since the speaker has to learn some complex mental operations in order to be competent to speak naturally “Any performance in L2 is likely to be challenge an individual's self concept as a competent communicator” (Horwitze et al 1986:128). Further, some learners get frustrated for

being under sustainable evaluation in every utterance they produce. A third factor, learners might lack the aptitude or desire to improve their language.

Most researches after the year 2000 seem to be more distinguished, overwhelming and deeper in their handling to the issue of speaking difficulties in classrooms than the researches before. Those researches are mostly influenced by the permanent conflict between traditionalism and modernism in teaching speaking, between practicing English as a subject material and using it as a means of communication, further to other complementary relevant issues as the teachers' low proficiency skills and the learners' psychological reasons. For example, Rapley (2010) came up with an emphasis that grammar translation and teacher-centered methods mostly lead to such negative results towards speaking, as to what happened among Japanese high school students in 2003. That's, further to other reasons as the teachers' poor speaking skills, the students' low English proficiency, their fear of making mistakes and losing face during the lesson, the grammar translation based tests, the lack of motivational factors as variety, the rare of creativity, physical movement and large classes of mixed level students. Kayi (2006) also demonstrates that conducting speaking activities has always been ignored or at least has not received the worthy attention since many traditional teachers used to deal with it as no more than a repetition of drills instead of focusing on the promotion of the students' communicative skills. Donald (2010) shows that instructors used to teach English as an academic subject rather than a communicative language, and also they used to have a pre expectation that learner can use the target language without taking into their account the learners' lack of fluency.

On the other hand, the researches before the year 2000 are merely focusing on such single issues including the instructor's un relaxed error correction attitude (Young1990 and Al-Zadjali2000), the need for teachers to be stimulated to find an away to assess the students' speaking skills conveniently (Knight1992) and the teacher' negative thoughts and false beliefs in classrooms. For example, some teachers think wrongly that occurring silence in class is an indication to non-productive lessons, and that quick teaching is the success itself (Tsui1996). Based on this misconception, teachers tend to maximize their talk, control everything in a managerial mode, never allow students to have wait-times to think before speaking, but play the part of the learners by correcting errors or move to other learners without considering the ignored learners.

## 2.3 The effect of fear, vocabulary and assessment over speaking

### 2.3.1 Fear and anxiety

During my long years of English teaching, I exposed to many cases of students who have good language abilities; however they were reluctant to participate orally because of fear and worry. Those students express fear and anxiety over speaking than any other language skill. Hence, teachers currently find themselves scurrying to find new ways to get their students to speak in the foreign language and to adopt authentic activities that encourage communication without fear. Young (1990) and Horwitz (1986) state that students' fear and anxiety always emerge from either the fear of making mistakes, so as not to risk self esteem when they publicize their errors and lose image or because it is a second language which stands as a stumbling stone against their speaking performance. Hence, this phenomenon should be examined so closely.

Concerning fear of public speaking, Spijck (2011:3-24), describes fear as "a very natural reaction to a threatening situation". This phobia almost gets worse when it hinders people from functioning normally. Fear of public speaking particularly, happens when fearful speakers cannot speak and address the audience. Thus, Spijck goes on to suggest five techniques to overcome this problem as: cognitive restructuring (replacing negative thoughts with positive ones), the imaginary exposure (non-real mental exposure to fearful situations), mind mapping (organizing information to fit the human brain), visualization (visualizing the event before its happening to build up positive tension) and progressive muscle relaxation as (yoga breathing). Orman (1996) has also placed other principles as to realize that speaking is not stressful; to be sure that audience wants you to succeed, to have humor and not to transfer a mountain of information.

Regarding anxiety, Young (1990) returns students' anxiety to such psychological factors as communication apprehension, the non-desire to be spot lighted, making errors, risk self-esteem and social anxiety involving shyness and stage fright. Young continues by suggesting debilitating language anxiety through voluntary responses, small group work and postponing error correction. This error correction which is emphasized by (Donald 2010) as valuable, should not be via a harsh manner. Teachers should accept all contributions to create a supportive atmosphere (Johnson 1995:154). Although this might be motivating, it is assumed to be done in the initial stages of language learning otherwise, the language accuracy will be endangered.

### 2.3.2 The role of vocabulary knowledge in speaking

As a teacher, I used to deal with students who cannot speak naturally even through the group work context. That simply because those students do not own the vocabulary knowledge that help them to do so. Hence, this study highlights the significant role of vocabulary in speaking and the way to measure this knowledge. Overall, vocabulary has been described as “the largest single element in tackling a new language” (McCarthy1991:64), it is also one of the required sub-goals in the language classroom (Nation 2001:1) and also “one of the essential and fundamental components of communication” (Levelt1993 cited in Koizumi 2005:1). Although these definitions reflect the paramount importance of vocabulary in speaking performance, only a few studies focused on the relation between vocabulary and speaking because of the difficulties in collecting and analyzing the spoken data (Fulcher1997:81 cited in Koizumi2005:2).

Vocabulary knowledge has been handled in different ways. For instance, Nation (2001:7-21) has conceptualized vocabulary on the basis of tokens (counting each word even the occurred ones), types (counting each word but not the repeated ones), lemmas (counting head words with their inflected and reduced forms), word families (head words, inflected forms and related derived words through affixes). But research on measuring vocabulary size has been poorly done (Nation1993c cited in Nation2001:8). Thus, vocabulary gets classified in terms of the high frequency, low frequency, the academic and the technical words. Another classification type is according to size (number of words with primary meanings) and depth (word aspects as associations). Both vocabulary size and depth affect speaking performance in terms of fluency, accuracy, syntactic and lexical complexity. Thus, Nation (2001:20) and Koizumi (2005:2) recommend learners to know the connections among words, to have larger and deeper vocabulary knowledge to produce better performance and show lexical ability.

In a differentiation between speaking performance and ability, McNamara (1996:54) demonstrates that performance is what can be observed, whereas ability is what listeners can infer from that performance. This performance is affected by language users and the language task. It is either prepared or spontaneous and consists of production (forming messages), conceptualization (putting messages in forms) and articulation (pronouncing and expressing them). These processes are always monitored and controlled in parallel and automatically.

### 2.3.3 The speaking assessment process

The question which always triggers in my mind as a teacher is, how to realize the students' speaking abilities and skills without assessment. This assessment has been seen as a key player in teaching speaking since "if you want to encourage oral ability, then test oral ability" (Hughes 2003:44). Knight (1992) also confirms that speaking assessment is a basic demand, as it provides information to teachers and students about the progress made, the work to be done and indicates that "any difficulties in testing oral skills lead teachers into using inadequate oral tests". Hence, many teachers are reluctant to test speaking since they may lack the confidence in the assessment validity, facilities, the well designed tests and the non-consistency derived from different occasions, examiners, examinees and contexts. Luoma (2004:1-19) emphasizes that speaking assessment is challenging since testers have to care for such facets as the context, accuracy, fluency and the probability of subjectivity. Speaking assessment used to be unfair and deprive participants from showing their skills, thus, developers should work on the assessment validity and form a clear understanding about speaking as a social situation based activity.

Assessing grammar while speaking has received challenging perspectives. Hughes (2003:172-173) corroborates that testing grammar is unthinkable to be denied because it is the core of language ability and also to encourages students to learn grammar. However, this should be in separate since the new shift in education is to assess the English skills. Another view emphasizes that grammar and vocabulary should be assessed but only in such planned formal situations as lectures where the speech is textually linked and the speakers are more competent and confident (Ochs1979 cited in Luoma2004:12). On the other hand, Knight (1992) explains that assessment criteria should include such aspects as grammar, vocabulary, accuracy, pronunciation segments, intonation, fluency, conversational skills, turn taking, cohesion, conversation maintenance, non-verbal language and teachers should deem the purpose of the test, the circumstances and the observation restrictions. This led some teachers to adopt the holistic assessment technique due to the inability to infer the learner's mental abilities. "as we cannot observe directly mental characteristics like grammar knowledge... we should simply assess the learner's (observable), success in performing authentic language tasks" (Knight 1992:300). However, we need to infer these mental abilities to know why learners behaved badly in some certain situations, also because any general performance should have inferences.

## 2.4 The speaking relationship with other skills

Although this study focuses primarily on the students' speaking in the context of group work, this can never be separable from the other English skills. The relationship between speaking and the rest of English language skills including listening, reading and writing has been interpreted in different ways as in (Andrews2011 and Adler1997).

Andrews (2011:183) demonstrates that the English four skills are related to each others in terms of being receptive as in listening and reading, and productive as in speaking and writing. However, speaking is also in a complementary relationship with writing and reciprocal with listening. Concerning the relationship between speaking and writing definitely, Andrews goes on to say that speaking can be adopted as a rehearsal to writing; this happen when students share ideas through pair or group work discussions to be developed and transmitted at the end into writing. Writing also can be a rehearsal to speaking as in making a speech and producing oral narrative or advertisement. Dialogic speech for instance invites response in spoken and written. Based on the transformation between different means of communication, day by day English practice takes place, thus, teachers should involve speaking in lesson plans before, during and after writing.

Adler (1997:3-8), also illustrates that communication with others can never be fulfilled distinctively without involving the English four skills. He categorizes the English four skills into two parallel pairs including writing and reading that go together in one pair and speaking with listening in another pair. Each skill in each pair is complimentary to the other; for instance, writing gets no where without reading and the unskilled readers can never ever produce effective writing. Similarly to speaking and listening, since no speakers without listeners and vice versa.

However, the relationship between speaking and listening differs remarkably from writing and reading. In reading and writing one can go back over the material, revise it for improvement, whilst in speaking and listening he has no chance to do so, since going back over what one said will be confusing. The time span in speaking and listening begins and ends together as they occur in talk as a two-way task, unlike reading and writing which can be dealt with separately. As a consequence, any attempt for improvisation in speaking and listening should be later on.

## 2.5 The NS and NNS teachers' language authority

First and foremost, this study has no wish to explore the NS and NNS debate but to highlight this issue as one of the factors that presumably influence the students' speaking productivity through collaborative work. Overall, it is widely known that NSs represent the origin of language as it is their native language and so they are better than NNS teachers in terms of fluency and accuracy. Anyway, the native speaker has been defined as the "one who speaks the language as his/her first language" while the non-native speaker as the "one who speaks that language as a second or a foreign language" (Braine 2010:9). The term native bears implicitly such positive connotations as fluency, cultural affinity and sociolinguistic competence whereas the term non-native signals marginalization and stigmatization in terms of the language ability. However, other aspects as culture, first language, experience, knowledge, development and personal characteristics should be considered.

Braine (2010:1-7) demonstrates that the issue of NS and NNS English teachers seems to be sensitive and politically incorrect to deal with. However, this issue currently is met by such contradictive perspective in terms of supporters and opponents. Initially, there is a hypothesis that NS and NNS are two different species in terms of language proficiency and the teaching behavior and this is quite clear in the market of jobs where NS are required roughly. Braine continues by justifying the sustainable big demand for NS English teachers especially in the non-English speaking countries as China and Japan, due to the strong tendency of ESL students there to be learned by NS English teachers. There is a common acceptance that "NNS teachers are second in knowledge and performance to native speaker (NS) teachers" who are superior in terms of the authority on language as ideal informant (Chomsky 1969 cited in Braine 2010:2-3). This superiority which was challenged as a fallacy by Phillipson (1992) who believes that NS abilities can be instilled in NNS who are qualified to teach English even if they do not share the same culture "language is no longer synonymous with the teaching of culture" (Phillipson 1992 cited in Braine 2010:3). Additionally, Edge (2010:111-112) condemns defining people in a negative way, refuses the boundaries between NS and NNS which is not for the advantage of language teaching. Edge points out that the teacher's outcome is the only way to judge NS or NNS, since NNS may produce a more well trained presentation than NS.

## 2.6 The teacher and student-centered approaches

Dealing with the teacher-centered approach in this review aims to illustrate the pernicious impact of this approach on minimizing the students' speaking quantity and quality from one hand, and to show how it is unworthy if compared to the group work teaching method on another hand. Chaudron (1988:118) illustrates that the quantity and quality of student interaction with teachers is always influenced by many factors as the teacher's selectivity of his speech in NS and NNs classes, the variability in addressing learners, the questioning pattern he uses, the characteristics of his feedback based on error correction, the nature of negotiation and others. For instance, in the learner-centered context, students are exposed to foreign language learning environment that encourages their aural skills, learn by doing to get more involved in learning and within task based learning to achieve more communicative competence. Learners also contribute to language learning since "the more learners contribute in L2 classroom, the more they are likely to learn" (Hitotuzi 2005:10). They are not interrupted by a sudden harsh feedback which is provided later, learn in small groups to experiment the target language and asked by open ended questions which give more than one possible answer. Learners often deal with authentic material like newspapers and magazines to be exposed to the target language, know about events and think critically (Ministry of education and culture, Namibia 1999 cited in Hosseini 2005:99).

By contrast, the teacher-centered has been defined by (ESL Glossary) as the "Methods...where the teacher decides what is to be learned, what is to be tested, and how the class is to be run". Schreiner (2011) describes teacher-centered classroom as a context in which the educator is just a lecturer who presents a lot of information and to gain more benefit from teacher-centeredness, students should be attentive and follow the teacher's directions and procedures carefully. Nath and Cohen (2011:318-319) emphasize also that teacher-centered is a traditional lecture approach which focuses on the teacher and subject material rather than the learners' needs. However, some lectures appear to be student centered if they are more interactive. Cooperative learning can also be teacher-centered when the teacher controls everything, so it all depends on the task implementation. As a result, Hitotuzi (2005) confirms that teacher-centered approach does not necessarily mean that teacher's amount of talk is more than the learners, but it happens when the lesson is much more focused on teacher than learners.

## 2.7 The benefits and supporting theories of small group work

### 2.7.1 Small group learning (SGL)

Small group work has been described as a valuable instructional approach which facilitates the learning process, provides opportunities for learners to explore the new content, creates positive interaction, process information, obtain new knowledge and skills, increase motivation, confidence in one's social skills and academic achievement (Johnson, Johnson and Holubeck1994 cited in Brothers2009:3). Donald (2010) states that small group discussion creates a sense of security and non-threatening in the teaching environment as students feel more self-esteemed as they contribute and rehearse in the discussion rather than in front of the instructor or class. Winter (1999:1-2) emphasizes that students who work in small groups learn more than what is taught and that small group work in and out of class develops the students' critical skills, as it enables them to solve problems and make decisions.

Brothers (2004) states that small group work benefits cannot be obtained unless teachers apply Johnson and Johnson's (1999) model of SGL principles "PIGS" which stands for positive interdependence, individual accountability, group interaction and social skills. Teachers should also explain the purpose of SGL exercise, monitor the groups without being invasive and assess by using grade which may decrease intrinsic motivation or average score (Nilson1998; Ledlow1994 cited in Brothers 2009:6-8). Whether formal or informal, cooperative or collaborative, group size should not go beyond five and be diverse in terms of learning styles, race, gender and personalities, as self selected always stray from the objectives and cliques.

Although Hancock (2004) consolidates Johnson and Johnson (1999) principles of group work, he assures that peer orientation as a personality factor acts as a key player in the success of group work. Peer orientation is "the extent to which students work collectively to complete academic tasks" (Jacob 1999 cited in Hancock2004:159). Hancock demonstrates that students with high peer orientation tend to be more motivated and response more favorably than the low peer observation ones. The accommodators who learn by concrete information are with high peer orientation than assimilators who perceive information abstractly, since the former like to work in groups, share ideas and work in challenging situations, while the later works alone within lecture-oriented classrooms and prefers to deal with things rather than people.

### 2.7.2 Group work benefits

An impressive body of research has found that cooperative learning where students work in mixed ability groups can be an effective instructional method. According to Long and Porter (1985), the use of group work in EFL and ESL classrooms has long been supported by sound pedagogical arguments and a psycholinguistic rationale which arises from the structure of the tasks and the nature of negotiation work. Based on the sound pedagogical arguments, group work can increase the quantity of language practice opportunities, improve the quality of students talk, individualize instructions, create positive climate and raise the students` motivation. The teacher`s predominant mode of instruction through the teacher-led classes minimizes students opportunities to use language practically. By contrast, in group work students can produce more language practice, cohesive and coherent sequences of utterances, take on roles and adopt positions, practice a range of language functions and also solve problems through inferences, hypothesis and suggestions. Group work can also address such individual differences which the lockstep fails to do as students` age, sex, personality, cognitive style, cultural background, and first language background. In addition, group work activities encourage the shy and highly stressed students who feel insecure when they are invited to speak publicly, to be more self-confident and set free from the requirement of accuracy. Hence, it is emphasized that independent learning maximizes students` motivation to speak. Further, it is unthinkable to ignore that teacher`s modified speech by using less complex sentences, avoiding idiomatic expressions and the use of two-way task helps group members to obtain more information.

In the same line, Pauk and Owens (2010:195-196) explains that group work enables students to benefit from their classmates explanation and encourages each student to be responsible for the success of all (swimming or sinking together). Group work also strengthens the sense of obligation in each member, as groups do not work unless every one pulls his or her weight and motivated students to study. Further, group work bestows students the opportunity to tackle new ideas and issues from multiple angles and this reinforces the students` critical thinking abilities. Frey et al (2009:1-3) point out that group work motivates learners to locate the information, to summarize the findings in writing, to explain the task content, to consolidate the knowledge among peers, prepare students to be independent learners, increase self esteem, improve relationships and enhance the social and educational skills.

### 2.7.3 Group learning supporting theories

Group learning is the holistic approach in teaching and learning which contributes to students' academic, social success and develops their thinking abilities since it provides them the opportunities to comprehend, understand, apply and evaluate language through social context. (Hosseini2010). Social group interaction has been espoused by the following theories:

	Theory	Theorist	Year	Hosseini2010	Content
1	Cognitive	Dewey	1938	p. 231	Well designed group work in a meaningful context make students generate new strategies, and challenge the new ideologies.
2	Socio-Cognitive	Piaget	1973	232	Social discussions motivate discussants to reason their thoughts via assimilation, accommodation, adaptation and equilibrium
3	Social	Vygotsky	1981	233	Social interaction develops the individuals' cognitive and language ability through heterogeneous groups and challenging tasks.
4	Andragogy	Knowles	1970 1984	234	Adult learners should be treated as accountable since, "the attainment of adulthood is self directing individuals" (Brookfield1986:192).
5	Motivational	Slavin	2000	245	Learners should receive the same rewards and grades regardless the members' contributions to bolster motivation for further cooperation.
6	Input hypothesis	Krashan	1985	237/238	Swain (1993:6) averred that learners need to reflect their output and this can be through group negotiation.

### 2.8 The previous theoretical and empirical studies

Based on my extensive reading, it was noticed that the drastic shift in teaching speaking from the teacher-fronted method into the student-centered one, and the impact of oral group work on the students' speaking performance has widely received an increasing amount of theoretical and empirical studies which enriched this area of investigation.

The following examples of theoretical studies show up the group work merit via stating its positive implications in terms of being supported by sound pedagogical arguments and psycholinguistic rationale (Long and Porter1985), being urged by such social and cognitive learning theories for Piaget and others (Hosseini2010), showing the necessity of applying Johnson's (1999) model of principles including positive interdependence, individual accountability, group interaction and social skills (Brothers2010), illuminating that small group

work enhances students` critical skills (Winter1999), comparing it to teacher-centered approach as in (Hitotzi2005 and Schreiner2011). Further to other studies which identify the speaking issues in relation to the oral testing difficulties and the need for consistent assessment criteria (Knight1992), the speaking relation with other skills (Adler1997), further to its connection with vocabulary (Koizumi2005) and assessment (lumoi2004).

The empirical studies have dealt with speaking in relation to group work as either an essential element or in association with other aspects. (Hamzah and Ting2010) is a good model as it investigates directly the role of group work in enhancing speaking. It was also located in an Asian country, and this might be insightful in terms of the similarity in nature among Asian people in Malaysia and UAE. It is also a mixed method research with valid and a plenty of influential data findings. Such other studies dealt with speaking in relation to other associate aspects as language anxiety (Young1990) which highlights the probable factors that influence students` fear and anxiety over speaking, Peer-orientation (Hancock2004) which emphasizes that students with high peer orientation are more motivated to work collaboratively, students` beliefs (Al-Zedjali2000), the Asian students` reticence (Taiwanese and the Japanese) to speak English (Donald2010 and Tsou2005 and Rapley2010). Some studies were mixed-method (Hamzah2010, Tsou2005 and Al-Zedjali2000), others are quantitative and depend on questionnaires as (Young1990), while others are qualitative and rely on interviews and filmed data (Donald2010).

## 2.9 A close summary

Although teacher-centered approach is not always recommended to be used a lot in classrooms, it can be utilized in non-conversational lessons and also as a complement to group work discussions. This review shows that not all lecture-based classes can be teacher-centered and so, not all cooperative classes can be student centered, as it all depends on the learning context in relation to the lesson`s objectives, nature and focus. Last but not least, this literature review demonstrates the extent to which group learning was supported through sound pedagogical arguments, psycholinguistic rationale and such learning theories for Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky and others who explored the genuine positive impact of group work on learners socially, cognitively, motivationally, sociologically and others. SGL or small group work definitely, whether formal or informal, is dealt with as the best instructional teaching method.

## Chapter Three: Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction to methodology

As mentioned briefly in the introduction chapter, this paper will be a mixed method research gathering between the quantitative and qualitative paradigms. The point is to substantiate the validity of results, answer specific research questions, draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in a single research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). Thus, the methods of data collection are class observation, questionnaires and interviews with teachers and students. As for classroom observation, five group work classes will be observed in four of Fujeirah secondary schools representing public and private, male and female, English and non-English speaking schools. The observation target is not just to examine the quantity and quality of language` interaction in class but also to capture things that cannot be obtained through questionnaires or interviews. Next, a set of questionnaires will be administered to the students directly after the observation process. This will be a three pages questionnaire representing three sections or axes with a total 30 Likert- questions which range from strongly agree, agree, uncertain, strongly disagree and disagree. The purpose is to recognize the students` needs and duties to be competent speakers and their attitudes towards group work benefits. Last, a number of semi-structured interviews will be conducted with teachers and students. The point is to investigate the interviewees` feelings and elicit from their tones and facial expression what can`t be obtained during class observation and questionnaires. The research data will be collected and analyzed systematically through the statistical software (SPSS), which uses descriptive statistics to display the properties of the students` answers through extracting the frequencies and percentages. Also, there will be a use of correlation coefficients (Pearson's correlation coefficient  $r$ ). The rational is to study the correlation between independent and dependent variables. These strategies will be used for the statistical relevance of the level of measurement with the descriptive variables of the questionnaire items. Based on the data analysis, discussions and conclusions will be drawn.

## 3.2 The research background

### 3.2.1 Subjects, places and existing practices

The selectivity of students was on the basis of the school type whether English or non-English. For example in the non-English schools (Arab schools), all students are Arabs from different nationalities including Egyptians, Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinians, Omanis and Sudanese. But the more increase in number is for nationals (UAE) than non-national. They were all in grade 12, and their ages range from 17 to 18 years. The students` classrooms are either male or female but not mixed due to the culture of the UAE community. By contrast, in English speaking schools, the students are mixed between male and female, from different first language backgrounds including Arabs and non-Arabs. The non-Arabs in ESS are from different nationalities involving British, Canadian and Indian. They are in grade 9 and their ages range from 15 to 16. The NESS students were studying English (debates about different issues (e.g. the use of cell phones in class – the school uniform), while the ESS students were studying History (The USA and USSR conflict over Cuba Island). Teachers also vary according to their culture, experience, qualifications and first language background (native and non-native). For example, in NESS there were 4 male and female English teachers from Arab nationalities (UAE, Egypt Jordan, and Palestine) whose ages range from 25 to 55 years. Some of them had BA while others were MA and Dissertation students. On the other hand, the ESS teacher is a native speaker from the UK. It was chosen to compare between group work classes in the ESS and NESS classes to see which context is more productive in terms of speaking interaction and well implemented group work.

#### The taken and abandoned intentions:

The “taken intentions” refers to what was intended by the researcher and was done, while the “abandoned intentions” means what was intended to be done but did not happen. For example, it was intended to visit teachers from different experience, qualification and first language background to see the extent to which these factors affect the students` speaking productivity and group work implementation. While, it was determined to record the class observation as a video tape, but this notion was left since it possibly causes some stress for teachers and students. Also, it was thought for a while to conduct the research empirical procedures in the researcher`s school, but this was also ignored to avoid falling in bias on dealing with colleagues.

### 3.3 The research and reasons for it – qualitative, quantitative or mixed

As mentioned before, this research investigates the Arab students' speaking behaviour within group work classes in English and non-English speaking schools as two different teaching and learning contexts. Hence, there was a need to see the teaching and learning performance through class observation, to know about the students' perspectives within questionnaire surveys and to elicit the teachers and students' feelings towards speaking problems and group learning benefits through interviews. The point from using these instruments is to form a complete understanding about the study and make the findings more valid and objective through a mixed method research.

Mixed method research has been defined as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches...in a single study” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004:17). This combination arises from the belief that both of them are useful and important. This mixed method has also been seen by (Hesse-Biber 2010:4-5) as a multi methods or a rich field since it gathers between the qualitative data including words, pictures and narrative with the quantitative numerical data in a way that allows the researcher to generalize the results for future studies. However, the terms mixed methods and multi methods have been confused with one another since multi methods indicates to the use of more than one quantitative method to measure a personality trait (Compbell and Fiske 1959 cited in Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003:10). Anyway, this mixed method enriches the study conclusions, enables the researcher to full understand the research problem, aids in the development of the research project, unifies the advantages of quantitative and qualitative paradigms, bridges the schism between them in a third one, meets the needs of current dynamic research world to multiple methods, gains solid understanding and possibly produces a superior research.

This does not mean that mixed method research is immune from criticism because it may not provide perfect solutions; for example the quantitative method disregard the researcher as a part from the social group, whilst, the qualitative method supports relativism which hinders the systematic standards for judging research quality. However, this method attempts to fit together the insights of quantitative and qualitative research into a workable solution and superior product.

## 3.4 The research instruments

### 3.4.1 Class observation

Actually, much has been said about the value of class observation as “to share the same experience as the study subjects and understand better why they acted in the way they did” (Bell1999: 13). Classroom observation has been described as the method through which we can record and evaluate what’s going on within classrooms, to achieve different purposes as to learn from other educators, to be able to describe the instructional practice and improve the instruction (Helaine2011). It is also an opportunity to see real-life teachers in real-life teaching situation and give a reflection (Bilash2009).Therefore, five English class observations were conducted in four of Fujairah ESS and NESS secondary schools, to examine the students` speaking interaction in terms of quantity and quality, motivation, social relations and critical thinking abilities. That will through comparing and contrasting between the group work in the ESS and NESS contexts.

### 3.4.2 Questionnaire surveys

Although the questionnaire`s quality of information is related to the quality of questions which require from students to have a high reading and writing ability, the questionnaire is still quick and easy to administer, to obtain a big amount of information in a short time and allow for the selected representatives of population to present the findings to be described, analyzed and compared (Ngo2010). According to (Bell1999:13) the questionnaire`s questions are always asked in the same circumstances to the selected population and aim to covers 100 percent of the population. Additionally, the questionnaire benefits depend on how well it was designed and whether or not it succeeded to provide useful information on respondents` attitudes and values. (Burton and Bartlett2005:100). This questionnaire aims to obtain much information about the students` needs and duties to become competent speakers as well as their perspectives towards group work activities.

### 3.4.3 Interviews

Interviews are defined as the way through which the “skillful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do” (Bell1999:135). For instance, the interviewees` voice tones, their facial expressions, hesitations

and miming always transfer certain significant implications which cannot be touched through questionnaires. Mckenzie (2007) explains that although interviews do not fit all circumstances, interviewing is still a very useful means of inquiry for interviewers and interviewees; for example it helps the researcher to probe the questions that ascertain their motives and intention, to be flexible while ordering questions and to carry out depth inquiry. On the other side, it enables the interviewee to raise new issues, give long responses and check what is meant by a question. Powney and Watts (1987:27-28) explain that due to the growth of education research, interviewing has widely used as a useful means to gather people`s views through a direct oral interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. More importantly, the data based on this conversation may be affected negatively by the interviewer`s bias, errors and other factors as who is talking, to whom and how, so the interviewer must be well trained and sophisticated. Despite being subjective, interviews can put flesh on the bones of the questionnaire responses.

### 3.5 Methods of Data analysis

Data was collected and analyzed systematically through the statistical software (SPSS) which has been seen by Einspruch (2005:1) as “one of the most popular computer data analysis”. It offers a variety of flexible tools which can be used to maintain a range of data analysis tasks. It also uses descriptive statistics to display the properties of the students` answers through extracting the frequencies and percentages. Mead (2011) demonstrates that SPSS is a powerful tool for managing and using the research data as it allows for the researcher to control over the data, solve research problems, and practice a wide range of analytical functions which deepen the data and test hundreds of variables. Further, (Pearson's correlation coefficient  $r$ ) will be used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between two variables (Urdan2005:87). According to (Cohen1988), the strength or relationship between two variables becomes large when it is 0.5, moderate when it is 0.5-0.3, small if it is 0.3-0.1, but anything smaller than 0.1 is trivial. While anything above 5 transforms the correlation degree from large to perfect.

### 3.6 The chronological stages of the research

According to the research chronological stages, the class observation data will be collected first, followed by the questionnaires and finally comes the interviews` data collection. These data collection were piloted by the research tutor and also by a colleague who is specialized in teaching at tertiary education. Based on their feedback, such amendments have been made.

Because that is the process, class observation was divided into three stages, which are before, during and after class observation. Before class observation, short meetings were held with the observed teachers to inform them about the nature of research, to know about the task that teachers are going to carry out in class, its objectives and the way of managing and structuring. During class observation two different observation sheets were used. The first observation sheet (see appendix1) is the researcher`s own design which measures as a first eye the group size, the groups` seating arrangement, students` motivation, interaction, verbal and non-verbal language and critical thinking abilities. The second observation sheet is called the researcher`s assistant (see appendix2). It represents “Johnson and Johnson (1999) Model`s of group work principles. It was completed immediately after the group task, by one student from each group (researcher assistant) to assess as a second eye the students` communication during close group work. Those observation assistants were chosen due to the teachers` perspectives about the best students who can perform this role.

The questionnaire (see appendix3) was designed by the researcher and according to (Hunt2011) characteristics in terms of being simply and clearly worded, neatly arranged and easily tabulated, further to avoiding the double negatives and blare-led questions. This questionnaire was proof read by a number of skilled academic language specialists involving the research tutor, MA colleagues and teachers. The ambiguous items were highlighted and either reworded or deleted. A sample of questionnaires was experimented on a few of students to foresee the process before it happens, avoid any forthcoming un expected problems and assure that all questions mean the same to all respondents. The questionnaire items were translated into Arabic to facilitate the process of understanding. Because the research topic is based on three dimensions related to the learners` needs and duties to be competent speakers, further to their attitudes toward group work benefits, this questionnaire had to be divided into three sections. Each section was initiated by a

guiding incomplete sentence that leads participants to understand the significance from each section. For example; Section A, dealt with the students` perspectives about what they need to be competent speakers (teacher`s duties). The aim of this section was to increase the students` awareness towards what their teachers should do to contribute to their speaking promotion. Section B, handled the students` opinions regarding what they should do themselves to empower their speaking ability. The purpose was to put students in a face to face confrontation with themselves, to identify the short comings in their speaking behavior, to develop the sense of self assessment and this would be the first step to go forward in the direction of language repair and success. Section C showed the students` views concerning the pivotal role of group work in developing their speaking, social and thinking skills. This section aimed to attract the students` attention towards small group work activities as an effective approach in enhancing the oral language proficiency. The students` feedback in this section definitely acts as a rationale to adopt this approach. Each section includes 10 Likert-scale questions with an overall total 30 for the 3 sections. They all range from strongly agree, agree, undecided, strongly disagree, and disagree.

Stimulated recall interviews were held with a group of students who represent their classrooms. Group interviews allow the researcher to explore the insights of interviewees and to investigate a series of issues in a thorough manner. Also, when students speak in groups they all encourage each others. Data generated through a group of interviewees is richer and deeper than that obtained from one to one interview (Thomas et al.1995 cited in Rabiee 2004: 626), since it could provide a range of ideas and feelings and show the difference in perspectives among the group`s individuals. The interviews were conducted with five observed teachers (see appendix 4) and a few selected students (see appendix5). Eight prepared multiple-choice questions were asked and some other additional questions used on the spot, to investigate opinions and elicit feelings about speaking difficulties and group work merit. The interviews with teachers focused on students` problems in speaking and the factors that influence group work while conducting speaking activities. On the other hand, the interviews with students focused on their perspectives towards their teachers` performance, group work roles, social relation as well as their critical skills.

As for the ethical considerations, despite being allowed from the educational zone to visit schools (see appendix 6) and conduct the empirical study, the participants were given a brief idea about the nature of the questionnaire, its topic, purpose, components and how to deal with. They were told about their right to withdraw at any time. More importantly for them was to realize how their feedback is influential in the field of education since many decisions based on this feedback might be taken. Further, participants were assured that no harm or penalty would happen or threaten their future since the whole process is for academic purposes and the given feedback will be anonymous and confidential. In addition, participants were promised to know about the research progress and the work that is needed until the research findings` stage comes.

## Chapter Four (Results)

As mentioned previously, this study investigates the Arab students' speaking behaviour through small group work activities in English and non English speaking contexts.

### 4.1. Observation findings

#### 4.1.1 The results based on the researcher's observation sheet:

Based on the observation findings, there was a discrepancy between the ESS and NESS teaching and learning contexts. This discrepancy involved students and teachers' behavior, further to group work implementation. It was as the following:

As for the students' talk, in the ESS group speaking context, the amount and variety of students' talk among Arab and non Arab dyads was found to be significantly greater than in NESS, as students could produce more talk nearly empty from grammatical and lexical errors, present cohesive and coherent sequences of utterances, high quantity and quality of language and appeared as good conversational partners. In addition, the students' high mental skills, intimate relations and equal participation between males and females, Arabs and Non-Arabs with no apathetic students were identified. Perhaps, the only negative point was finding few shy and introverted students. Whereas, the NESS students' talk was hesitant, halting, full of pauses and lacked the required fluency and accuracy. Even their responses did not reflect a genuine mental and language ability.

Concerning the teacher's performance, there was a superiority in conducting group work speaking activities in ESS than NESS, in terms of applying Johnson and Johnson's (1999) model of group work principles. The ESS native speaker teacher showed a good command and well perception of group work implementation regarding group size (4 members), face to face seating arrangement. She used a variety of teaching aids including pictures, wall sheets, video and audio material, hand- outs and other realistic things to maximize students' oral participation. She also used such critical questions in different forms around a historical event which is the cold war between US and USSR over Cuba Island definitely during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The point was to stimulate the students' abilities of inferences and analysis. Examples of these questions:

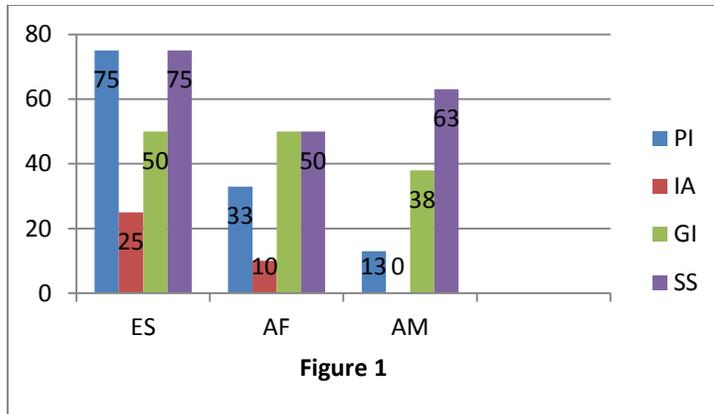
“Does the USSR have the right to interfere in this crisis? How did you know? Based on Kennedy and Khorshoof video speeches, which one of them was convincing to you? What do the wings in the picture imply?” Besides, the teacher could provide students acceptable wait-times to think before speaking. She also corrected speaking errors through modeling and in a non-harsh and indirect way. She was non-centered in class which means that she was dynamic and movable in every spot in class. By contrast, in NESS group discussions such negative points were identified as the teacher`s maximized talking time, the traditional teaching aids that were only confined on board, markers and course books, the use of text-related questions that encourage only memorization and the direct error correction without giving any wait times for students to think before speaking. Although Arab teachers were motivated, they seemed more traditional and teacher centered. Perhaps the only exception among them was teacher M who showed a reasonable understanding of group work implementation at least in terms of size and seating arrangement. That might be returned to his more awareness of group work approach as a dissertation student.

#### 4.1.2 The results based on the researcher assistant` sheet:

The following (table1) shows some information about the researcher assistants:

School	Grade	Gender	Assistants` number.	Symbols
Non English	12	Arab Males	8	AM
Non English	12	Arab Female	10	AF
English	9	Arab-English	4	AE

The below chart provides the observation findings obtained due to the researcher`s assistant use of second observation sheet (see appendix2). As mentioned before, the researcher assistants were a few students selected as representatives of their groups. This selectivity depended mainly on the teacher`s perspectives about those students, because they are the only ones who know about their students` abilities to practice these roles. The researcher assistant role was to act as a second eye to observe and convey his evaluation about the group members` participation to the researcher. The point was to make the researcher fully aware of the actions that he could not see during close group work activities.



The above chart confirms the ESS students` more superiority in conducting group work speaking activities due to Johnson and Johnson`s (1999) model of group work principles. This model involves positive interdependence (PI), individual accountability (IC) group interaction (GI) and social skills (SS), followed by the AF (Arab Male) and then the AM (Arab Female) students. On the other hand, the AM students showed more social skills than the AF ones. The findings have been taken only according to the percentage of excellent rank.

## 4.2 The Questionnaire results

### A. The analysis Frame

As discussed early, data was analyzed by calculating the percentages of students, who strongly agreed, agreed, uncertain, strongly disagreed and disagreed. The statistical software (SPSS) was used to give descriptive statistics and display the properties of the described answers as the following:

1. The extraction of frequencies, percentages and total of both.
2. Using (Pearson's correlation coefficient  $r$ ) to find out the relationship among variables.
3. These strategies were used for the statistical relevance of the level of measurement for the descriptive variables of the study in questions

### B. Independent Variables

Independent variables consist of demographic, social, economic characteristics that have been measured in this study according to the format contained in Table (2).

Distribution of the sample was according to the type of school, grade, gender and nationality:

Variables	School	Gender	Grade	Nationality	Frequency	Percent
1	Non- English	Female	12	Arab	45	47.87
2	Non-English	Male	12	Arab	30	31.92
3	English school	M & F	9	Arab	12	12.76
				Non-Arab	7	7.44
				Arab & Non	19	20.20
	Total schools	M & F	12 & 9	Arab & Non	94	100.0

The above table lists the three types of schools in which the questionnaire was administered as the following: Arab female school (AF), Arab male school (AM) and finally the English speaking school including mixed Arabs and non Arabs together (MA and MN). The table illustrates the discrepancy among these schools in terms of grade, gender, nationality, frequency and finally the percent.

### C. Dependent variables:

The following dimensions were used as heading variables in the questionnaire 3 sections.

1. The first dimension in section (1) is (To be a competent speaker, I need...), has been answered through the axis A and extends from paragraphs 1-10.
2. The second dimension in section (2) is (To be a competent English speaker, I should.) has been answered through the axis B and extends from paragraphs 11-20.
3. The third dimension in section 3 is (Group work activities can ...) has been answered through the axis C and extends from paragraph 21- 30.
4. The correspond to all options include 5 of the Likert scale, namely: strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Uncertain (UN) Strongly Disagree (SD) Disagree (D).
5. To ensure its credibility, the tool has been proof-read and piloted by a number of specialists and their feedback were perfectly considered.

### D. Statistical Analysis:

The following is the questionnaire findings including 3 sections with regard to four types of students involving Arab male students (AM), Arab female students (AF), Mixed Arab male and female (MA), and Mixed non-Arabs (MN). Each table lists the items of the questionnaire along with the percentage of the students who agreed strongly, agreed and uncertain. The highlighted

items here refer to the maximum percent achieved by one of the four groups. In addition, the percent of strongly disagree and disagree was mentioned under each table as it was very tiny.

The questionnaire feedback- Section 1 – Table (3)

[Section1] To be a competent English speaker in class I need ....	AF Arab School			AM Arab School			MA English school			MN English school		
	SA	A	U	SA	A	U	SA	A	U	SA	A	U
1- to be given more speaking practice in class	77.8	22.2		66.7	30.0	3.3	25.0	66.7	8.3	57.1	28.6	14.3
2- to be always encouraged to speak	68.9	31.1		63.3	33.3	3.3	25.0	66.7	8.3	85.7	14.3	
3- to be gently treated on making mistakes	73.3	26.7		66.7	30.0	3.3	16.7	66.7	16.7	85.7	14.3	
4- to learn about interesting current events	35.6	42.2	22.2	46.7	50.0	3.3	33.3	58.3	8.3	57.1	28.6	14.3
5- to learn within small group work activities	28.9	60.0	11.1	66.7	30.0	3.3	41.7	33.3	8.3	85.7	14.3	
6- to know about the purpose and function of task activities before working on	40.0	37.8	17.8	50.0	40.0	10.0	50.0	41.7	8.3	85.7	14.3	
7- to be given hallenging speaking activities encouraging participation	60.0	37.8	2.2	80.0	20.0		41.7	41.7	16.7	51.4	28.6	
8- to be given tasks that encourage interaction	48.9	46.7	4.4	63.3	33.3	3.3	41.7	41.7	16.7	71.4		28.6
9- not learn much material in a short time	62.2	33.3	4.4	36.7	26.7	20.0	41.7	50.0	8.3	85.7	14.3	
10- to receive the meaningful feedback to keep on track	80.0	20.0		66.7	30.0	3.3	58.3	41.7		85.7	14.3	

Note: The percent of strongly disagree (SD) and disagree (D) was as follows: Arab female schools [item (6) 2.2% for SD and 2.2% for D] – Arab male school [item (9) 3.3% for SD and 13.3% for D] –16.7% of Arab male and female in English speaking school disagree to learn within group work activities.([item5]

Generally, the highest percent of strong agreement and agreement above shows that students (mixed Arabs and non-Arabs) in the English school have more complete appreciation towards what they need to be competent speakers than the male and female students in Arab schools. In English school the non-Arab students confirm that competent speaking depends mainly on such assisting factors that should accompany group work (item6), as encouragement (item2), gentle treatment on making mistakes (item3), knowing about the task purpose and function (item6), adapting material and time (item9), and receiving meaningful feedback (item10). While the NESS Arab female students strongly agreed up on their need to be given more speaking practice in class (item1), whereas the NESS Arab male students agreed strongly to be given challenging speaking activities that encourage participation (item7). This may reflect that female students in Arab schools are not provided the full opportunity to share orally. Contrary to the Males in Arab

schools whose main concern probably was how to prove their adulthood through dealing with challenging tasks. Concerning the agreement percent, the ESS Arab students were the highest with 80% percent of the items, followed by the NESS Arab female students who agreed to learn in groups through tasks that encourage participation.

The questionnaire feedback- Section 2 – Table (4)

[Section2] To be a competent English Speaker in Class I should ....	AF Arab School			Am Arab School			MA English school			MN English school		
	SA	A	U	SA	A	U	SA	A	U	SA	A	U
11-overcome communication Apprehension	86.7	13.3		90.0	6.7	3.3	33.3	66.7	8.3	85.7	14.3	
12- be confident of myself and my abilities	91.1	8.9		90.0	6.7	3.3	58.3	66.7	8.3	85.7	14.3	
13- focus more on meaning than form	60.0	40.0		46.7	33.3	20	50.0	66.7	16.7	71.4	14.3	14.3
14- consider errors as part of my learning	80.0	15.6	4.4	53.3	43.3	3.3	33.3	58.3	16.7	71.4	28.6	
15- set free from shyness and isolation in class	80.0	17.8	2.2	80.0	16.7	3.3	41.7	33.3	8.3	85.7	14.3	
16- interact positively with my classmates	80.0	20		73.3	26.7		33.3	41.7	8.3	85.7	14.3	
17- be ready to share in oral discussions	64.4	33.3	2.2	63.3	36.7		41.7	41.7	8.3	85.7	14.3	
18- be able to suggest, infer and disagree	62.2	28.9	8.9	66.7	30.0	3.3	41.7	41.7	16.7	71.4	28.6	
19- listen attentively to teachers instructions	66.7	33.3		66.7	33.3		33.3	50.0	8.3	85.7	14.3	
20- accept flexibly peer/teacher correction	77.8	22.2		76.7	20.0	3.3	58.3	41.7	8.3	71.4	14.3	14.3

Note: The Arab male and female in English school expressed only strong disagreement (SD) toward item (13) with the percent of 3.3%.

The above findings show that the ESS non-Arab students are still in the forefront in terms of strong agreement up on what they should do themselves to be competent speakers such as setting free from shyness, interacting positively and sharing in oral class discussions (items 15-16-17), further to listening attentively to teachers (19) and the ability to suggest, infer and disagree during the task (18). While the NESS female students agreed strongly up on the need to be self confident (12) and consider error correction as part of learning (14). Whereas, the NESS male students agreed strongly that they need to overcome communication apprehension (90%). On the other hand, the ESS Arab students still achieve the highest percent in terms of agreement.

The questionnaire feedback- Section 3 – Table (5)

[Section3] Group work can ----- ....	AF Arab School			Am Arab School			MA English School			MN English School		
	SA	A	U	SA	A	U	SA	A	U	SA	A	U
21-encourage students social interactions	48.9	40.0	11.1	86.7	10.0	3.3	66.7	25.0	8.3	85.7	14.3	
22- enhance social skills like leadership	35.6	46.7	17.8	66.7	30.0	3.3	33.3	50.0	16.7	85.7	14.3	
23- ensure equal participation for each member	42.2	44.4	13.3	66.7	30.0	3.3	41.7	25.0	16.7	71.4	14.3	14.3
24- create a mutual responsibility between the individual and the group	37.8	44.4	15.6	66.7	26.7	6.7	25.0	58.3	16.7	85.7	14.3	
25- empower students critical thinking skills	53.3	35.6	8.9	76.7	23.3		33.3	50.0	16.7	85.7	14.3	
26- be seen as non threatening environment	53.3	42.2	4.4	66.7	30.0	3.3	25.0	50.0	25.0	71.4	28.6	
27- help adult learners to be self directed and attain their commitment to adulthood	40.0	44.4	15.6	63.3	33.3	3.3	33.3	58.3	8.3	42.9	28.6	28.6
28- bestow democracy up on group students	55.6	42.2	2.2	56.7	33.3	6.7	33.3	41.7	25.0	57.1	14.3	28.6
29- helps students generate quantity of language or more negotiation output	55.6	35.6	8.9	70.0	30.0		41.7	41.7	16.7	85.7	14.3	
30- create positive attitudes towards the content and openness to new perspectives	46.7	51.1	2.2	73.3	23.3	3.3	41.7	50.0	8.3	85.7	14.3	

Note: The percent of strong disagreement and disagreement were as follows: [The Arab female school (24) 2.2% D – Arab male school (28) 33.3% SD, which means that AM do not care much about democracy– Arab in English school (23) 16.7% D], which means that MA in English school do not care about the equal participation of each member.

The findings above reflect the ESS non-Arab students` more awareness towards group work benefits, since they see that group work not only increases the students` language quantity and ensures equal participation among members (29-23) but also enhances their social skills (22), creates mutual responsibility between the individual and the group members (24), empowers critical thinking skills (25), creates democratic and positive climate for learning (30-28). On the other hand, the NESS Arab male students agreed strongly that group work can encourage social interaction and help adult learners to be self directed (21 and 27). Concerning the percent of agreement, the ESS Arab students still score the highest rate in 70% of the items except 3 items in which the NESS Arab female agreed that group work encourage social interaction (21), ensure equal participation (23) and bestow democracy up on members (28).

### 4.3 Interviews` feedback

#### A. Teachers` interviews feedback

Due to the teachers` interviews responses (see appendix4), it has been found out that all teachers were consistent that group work increases the language quantity and quality (item3), that teachers` reluctance to carry out group work emerge from their belief that group work is a waste of time and that it hinders them from finishing the material on time (item 5). However, there were some differences as Arab teachers saw that speaking is equal in importance to other skills while NS teachers see it more important (item1). Arab teachers admitted that students` speaking problems are because of their shyness, lack of speaking opportunity, proficiency and vocabulary while the NS teacher deemed it due to the lack of modeling and communication (item 2). Last, Arab teachers showed that group activities are influenced by size, speaking opportunities and group formation (mixed ability), whilst, NS see it depends on the outcomes.

#### B. Students` interviews feedback

Based on the students` interviews answers (see appendix 5), the following has been found: First, the Arab female and male students in Arab schools (AF and AM), see that teachers are always as experienced and motivated during teaching, while the students in English school(Arabs and non Arabs), see their teacher as not only experienced but also interactive. Second, the male and female students in Arab schools summarized their speaking problems in shyness and vocabulary while the ESS students see that proficiency is the main problem. Third, regarding practicing roles while group work, the findings show that ESS students practice roles, suggest and infer more than Arab students in ESS. Also, it has been identified that all students feel this intimate relation. Arab students in both schools agreed that shyness is a big problem, but they expressed less satisfaction concerning intimate relations in class than the NESS students.

### 4.4 Pearson`s correlation system

The relationship between variables was investigated by using Pearson Correlation to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship among these variables. The study findings revealed that there is a strong relationship between the encouragement to speak English (item2) and many other variables. For example, students get more encouraged to speak when they are

given more speaking practices ( $r = 0.81$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item1), when they are treated gently on making mistakes ( $r = 0.83$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item3), when they learn in small groups ( $r = 0.48$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item5), when they are given challenging tasks ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item7), when interactive tasks are given ( $r = 0.67$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item8), on receiving meaningful feedback ( $r = 0.71$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item10), when overcome communication apprehension ( $r = 0.66$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item11), on taking error correction process as a part of learning ( $r = 0.75$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item14) and on overcoming shyness ( $r = 0.73$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 94$  (item15). This confirms that group work is not enough alone to stimulate students to speak but there should be such other assisting factors as mentioned above. More surprisingly, the correlation among variables in this study were all positive as there were no negative correlations.

### A close summary

The following issues were identified briefly through research findings:

Class observation figured out a discrepancy in conducting group speaking activities between ESS and NESS, as the ESS students showed more quantity and quality of negotiation, more social and thinking skills. While the teacher applied Johnson's (1999) group work principles effectively.

The questionnaire findings revealed that ESS students have more awareness towards their needs and duties for enhancing speaking, and more positive attitudes regarding the potential implications of group work in teaching speaking. The ESS students assured that speaking competence is associated with other factors beside group work as dealing with errors gently, setting free from shyness, believing that group work increases oral participation, enhances the social and thinking skills and creates a democratic and non-threat climate for speaking. By contrast, the NESS students specified merely two needs for competent speaking as the need to be given challengeable activities and more speaking practices, whereas their duties represented in confidence, overcoming communication apprehension and accepting errors as a part of learning.

During interviews, teachers and students got agreed concerning the potential implication of group work in increasing the students' talk, and in considering shyness, vocabulary, teaching material and modeling as the speaking problems. However, the ESS teacher showed more appreciation to speaking and group work but in association to other assisting factors.

## Chapter Five (Discussion)

### 5.1. Introduction to discussion

As discussed before, this study aimed to investigate the Arab students' speaking behaviour through group work activities in English and Non-English speaking schools (ESS and NESS), as two different contexts with regards to the teachers, students and classroom learning contexts. The focus in this study was not to show group work as a replacement for the lockstep mode of instruction but as a complement, because the lockstep mode can be utilized for some purposes as non- conversational lessons and in presenting new information to students in class. Another thing, this study does not assess students' speaking through counting speech acts, moves and the language repair but to show the speaking superiority by focusing on the communication for meaning rather than form, to stress exclusively on the negotiable language used and ensure that lessons contain a sizeable portions of communications even with errors. Anyway, through class observation, questionnaires and interviews, three major issues were identified involving the teachers' inconsistency in conducting group work classes, the problems that hinder speaking participation ( shyness and proficiency), further to the participants' positive implications towards involvement in small group work.

### 5.2 Inconsistent group work classes

The NESS observation findings reflect the most Arab teachers' (NNS) unjustified strong commitment to the traditional method of instruction which takes different names as the teacher-led, teacher-fronted or lockstep. This culture and school of teaching which allow for teachers to take a series of actions that go against the modernized teaching strategies as predominating instruction, lecturing, focusing on grammar, asking questions of the whole class, leading drills work and non-giving speaking the required attentions. This is confirmed by many recent and past studies which handled the negative effect of lockstep mode on conducting speaking activities. This approach which looks at speaking as a repetition of drills, focuses on the form rather than communication (Rapley2010, Key 2006, Donald 2010, Schreiner 2011, Hamzah and Ting2010). In addition to the lockstep's attempt to confiscate the students' aptitude to learn independently, allow for the teacher to teach for testing rather than for learning and to be shown as the only one who decides what to teach, how to teach and when (Fanselow1977). On the other hand, the

students' inability to organize thoughts and select the appropriate utterances due to the situation reflects the students' non-use and interest to the importance of speaking in class. This goes against what has been mentioned about the importance of speaking skill as an interactional, unique and primary source of learning (Bygate1987, Levelt1989 and O'Keefe1995), or its role as the most fundamental, observable and the forefront of communication among other skills, in helping speakers educationally, professionally and make them decision makers (Knight1992, Tsou2005, Baker and Westrup2003 andVerderber2011).

On the other hand, the ESS distinction in conducting group speaking activities rather than NESS, was due to the teacher's use to a variety of resources, providing students the opportunity to speak in a non harsh and meaningful feedback, the students' ability to interact positively, the students' coherent and cohesive sequence of utterances including describing pictures, analyzing video clips and giving inferences about historical events as the conflict between US and USSR over Cuba island. These findings as evidence justify the extent to which teachers and students influenced, familiarized, and harmonized by the use of this strategy in teaching speaking. This also copes with what has been mentioned in literature review by (Long and porter1985) about the role of group work in increasing the language practice opportunity, addressing individual differences, promoting positive climate, solving problems and changing the individual practice talk. Long and Porter continue by explaining that face to face small group work which acts as a natural setting in which students could infer, suggest, hypothesize, synthesize, summarize and disagree. In addition to other positive contributions in terms of speaking motivation, language quantity and quality, independent learning, confidence (Hitotuzi2005, Pauk and Owens2010, Frey2009, Brother2004 and Hosseini2010).

### The superiority of NSs/NNSs group dyads

The superiority of the ESS group dyads including Arabs and non Arabs over the Arabs only (NNSs), in producing meaningful speaking during group work observation, emphasizes that the group work speaking activities which gather between Arabs and non-Arabs can be more effective than other activities which are confined only on Arabs. The point is that the mixed first language group dyad can produce more language authority, fluency, accuracy and competency. According to literature review, this was indicated to in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century by some

researchers such as Brutton and Samuda (1980) who explained that gathering between NS and NSS in one group work dyad may help both types of learners to obtain more language accuracy, protect them from inaccurate grammar and enable them to exchange experiences and cultures. It can be more productive also when it is through two-way tasks (Daughy and Pica1984). Other researchers like Braine (2010) supported the importance of having NSs with NNSs in the teaching and learning contexts. Braine illustrates that the current growing demand for NS instructors than NNS in some Asian countries and the students` desire to be learnt by NS instructors, Possibly because dealing with NS teachers may force the non-native learners to communicate in English as there will be no other alternative to communicate but to do so. The combination between NS and NNS teachers and students also may succeed more when NSs teachers modify and simplify the target language speech to NNSs through avoiding idiomatic expressions, using less complex utterances, high frequency vocabulary, slower the delivering rate and shaping conversation through questions, clarification requests, confirmation and comprehension checks, repetitions and rephrasing. Hence, NNS students will learn more language better (Krashan1980), understand some forms as phonological, syntactic and lexical, produce new forms (input output), and will be given the opportunity to negotiate the new input.

Although the above findings assert the value of having mixed group work between NS/ NNS for the increase of the language quantity, quality and the motivation to speak, other perspectives for some researchers condemned this. Those researchers considered dealing with NS and NNS as different species a big fallacy (Edge 2010 and Phillipson 1992), others believed that learning among only NNS can offer genuine communicative practices although it cannot provide more accurate grammar (Porter 1985), others saw NNS/NNS communication may help learners to learn more through a non threatening context to produce more comprehensible negotiation (Varonis and Gass 1983). Anyway, it seems unthinkable to generalize the fact of NS/NNS superiority over NNS/NNS, as this needs many empirical studies in different areas.

## 5.3 Students` speaking problems

The following are some extracts taken from the students` interviews about speaking problems:

“I am afraid to make mistakes”: Anonymous male learner

“I am scare [sic] to speak with people in English all the time”: Anonymous male.

“I don`t have enough vocabulary”: Anonymous female

“I sometimes shying [sic]”: Anonymous female

The above extracts reveal that the most observable speaking problems that hinder students from speaking can be summed up in two major factors which are communication apprehension (fear, anxiety and shyness) and the lack of vocabulary knowledge. These problems were noticed during class observation, questionnaires and interviews feedback.

### 5.3.1 Communication apprehension (shyness, fear and anxiety)

The ESS and NESS learners consistent views about shyness, fear and anxiety as stumbling stones against efficient speaking emphasizes that communication apprehension is something common among all human beings and is not linked with the learners` first language background as native or non native. Although communication apprehension is a natural phenomenon, it can be changed into a phobia when it hinders learners from participation. This can be a reaction to error correction process or teacher`s negative evaluation. Thus, teachers currently scurry to find new ways to help students overcome this problem and get them involved in speaking practice.

Talking about communication apprehension in this study stresses what has been mentioned in many theoretical and empirical studies. Communication apprehension has always been depicted as a natural reaction to the teacher-centered approach (Rowe 1974 and Joanna and Pasty1983). For example, when the students take pauses before beginning to respond, try to know the answer or make errors, teachers hurry up to interrupt him, rephrase the question or ask another student. In other studies apprehension was deemed as a sort of fear of making mistakes, risk self esteem and lose image (Young1990 and Horwitz1986), as also a natural reaction results from either the non desire to be spot lighted (Spijck2011), or from the harsh manner of error correction and extended wait times (Donald2010). This led Johnson (1995) to call for accepting all contributions, Spijck (2011) and Orman (1996) to suggest such techniques as using progressive muscles as yoga, using humor, minimize the teaching material and others.

### 5.3.2 The lack of vocabulary knowledge

First and foremost, it is unbelievable to find an interactive group work speaking activity without having students with solid vocabulary background. The point is that vocabulary is considered one of the main tools of group interaction. Based on the interviews` feedback with NESS Arab students, it was found out that lack of vocabulary is one of the main reasons behind their speaking reticence. This copes up with what has been said by other researchers about the importance of vocabulary as one of the essential components of communication (levelt1993). Further to other definitions of vocabulary importance by (McCarthy21991 and Nation 2001), Vocabulary has been described by (Schoebottom2012) as the key to understand what students hear or read and be able to communicate with others. Hence, students are needed to build up a large background of vocabulary. Talking about vocabulary leads to probe some questions about which words students should learn, whether the choice should be useful or useless, related to the course books or to other authentic material and the way to teach these words through pictures, writing definitions, example sentences and finally how to assess students` vocabulary. Based on the literature review, many researchers exposed to the issue of vocabulary in terms of classification. For example, vocabulary could be classified through counting them in the form of tokens, types, lemas and word families (Fulcher1997 cited in Koizumi2005), according to the low and high frequency, academic and technical words or due to size and depth to have a larger and deeper vocabulary knowledge and to produce well speaking performance (Nation 2001 and Koizumi2005). Anyway, however the way of teaching vocabulary, or how to assess this paramount speaking component, English instructors should stress on increasing the students` vocabulary and help them use vocabulary in real life communicative situations.

### 5.4 Additional insights

This study confirms that classroom observation as a key player in developing the teachers` performances. When teachers are observed by other eyes, they can get an objective feedback and recognize their teaching mistakes that should be repaired. On the other hand, when teachers observe others, they take from their advantages, learn how to make a reflection and take decisions. Hence, it is a mutual beneficial process.

Although the ESS group speaking activities in this study were student-centered than the others in NESS which were teacher-centered, this does not guarantee that all group work classes can be successful or better than the lockstep, as it all depends on such factors involving the teacher`s experience, talking time, motivating activities, teaching material, resources, and sense of humor. Additionally, group work classes should not be perceived as a replacement for teacher-led classes but as a complimentary one, since teacher-led method can be utilized in certain educational situations as story-telling, narrating personal experiences and asking for clarification.

According to interviews, the NS teachers appreciate speaking more than other skills possibly because their teaching classes depend mainly on speaking debates and oral discussions, contrary to NNS who are still influenced by the pre dominant mode of instruction.

The NS teachers` comprehensive and deeper insights towards the speaking issues, probably because they own a well teaching background derived from sustainable reading, their keenness for self development and openness to the outer world of education.

This study emphasizes that group work is not just to collect students in a disorganized way, ask them to do the task together without assessing the group members or make sure they participate equally, but it needs such other supporting factors as motivation, warm social relations via gentle treatment on making mistakes and providing feedback over a reasonable amount of life-related teaching material.

The NESS Arab female students` desire to be provided motivating speaking practice opportunities, to gain self confidence, overcome fear, make use of error correction and to be able to provide noticeable interaction, possibly arises from the teacher-centered context in which students always get deprived from the right to speak views. On the other hand, the NESS adult Arab male learners` needs for challenging tasks within social group interaction or to overcome the fear of speaking, presumably results from the teacher`s harsh error correction method. This error correction which can be done without much anxiety through modeling which simply means to repeat the correct version of what the students are attempting to say. In modeling, students are not spotlighted in front of their peers but feel in peace of mind.

## 5.5 Comparative discussion with other findings

The role of small group work in promoting speaking has been researched thoroughly through a number of theoretical and empirical studies from the past to now. However, handling this investigation area involving methods and findings, differentiated entirely, based on the discrepancy between the two periods in terms of thinking cultures.

The recent study findings for example, came to emphasize that ESS Arab and non Arab group work dyads (NNS and NS) can produce a natural and intimate setting for genuine communication and more supportive environment where face to face students can present cohesive and coherent sequences of utterances. Contrary to the NESS context, through which only Arab group work dyads (NNS/NNS) produce pseudo communication. The findings also substantiate such up-to-date research findings which came approximately after 1990, as they first emphasizes (Hamzah2010) findings concerning the students and teachers positive attitude towards the value of group work activities in promoting speaking. Second, these findings assert (Young1990) when clarifying that students` anxiety while speaking is not exclusive on the belief that it is a second or a foreign language, but also due to the fear of speaking in confrontation with the audience and be spot lighted. Also, they reinforce (Donald2010) that students` reticence to speak results from the fear of losing face and the comprehensibility of the input, thus modifying error correction method and providing extended wait times develops the learners` communicative performance in classrooms. Third, these findings attract our attention to the importance of motivation for learning cooperatively and confirm (Hancock2004) that to be motivated or not motivated, it all depends on the peer orientation amount in students. In other words, students with high peer orientation tend to be more motivated to learn in groups more than other students with low peer orientation. Fourth, they highlight (Tsou2005) that allowing students to participate in class lead to the improvement of their speaking proficiency. Last, the findings show that teacher`s poor speaking abilities may be an obstacle in developing speaking.

However, other studies did not correspond to this study findings as they saw that NNS/NNS communication can produce more genuine communication and negotiation than NS/NNS (Doughty and Pica1984), generate greater frequency of negotiation, create non-threatening

context (Varonis and Gass 1983) and more practice opportunities (Porter 1983). This contradiction may be emerged from the difference in the way of handling. For instance, these studies did not concentrate on measuring speaking according to meaningful communication but due to the form. Some empirical studies focused on measuring the groups' language quantity by counting the number of speech acts and moves due to a special category system designed for the study, by measuring the quality of language in terms of pursuing the variety of moves and speech acts, the grammatical and lexical errors and also false start (Long, Adams, McClean and Castaons 1976 cited in Long and Porter 1985). Other studies stressed on the interactional features involving the amount of language repair (confirmation and comprehension checks), communication strategies (verification of meanings, defining requests, frequencies of assistance appeals as (Taron 1981).

## 5.6 Limitations

Having stated the above findings, there were nevertheless some limitations in this study:

This study was carried only in a part of the UAE which is Fujairah and this makes results only valid for the respective schools. Also, to make the findings more reliable, more responses should be collected and more time should be allocated.

The superiority of ESS students (Arab and non Arab) in terms of agreement and strong agreement in the questionnaire, probably because the non Arabs acculturate to work in groups, within social interaction. Hence, the combination between Arabs and non Arabs in one teaching context probably instills in the Arab learners the love for cooperative learning. Contrary to the NESS Arab male and female students who might be more anxious due to learning English as a second language or due to the traditional teaching strategies and thoughts.

The fixed seating arrangement in classrooms might make students unfamiliar, unmotivated and not enthusiastic with group work. Further, the students' desire to have their mistakes corrected, may originate the students' reinforced belief that improvement comes through error correction.

## Chapter six (Conclusion)

### 6.1 Summary

As mentioned previously, this research topic was based on my long experience in teaching ESL to the 12<sup>th</sup> graders in non-English public schools (Arab schools). It was noticed that students are unable to speak English naturally in class despite learning English for about 14 years in the context of group work activities due to the teachers' claim. This created my big sense of curiosity and challenge to know about the reasons that stand behind the Arab students' speaking reticence. In addition, I got eager to know whether this lack of oral participation is also found in other Arab female schools and in other English speaking ones, since the picture gets clearer when there is comparing and contrasting. Thus, it was determined to visit classes in a number of Fujairah schools involving English and non-English, male and female to observe the students' oral participation, the teachers' conduct of group work practices as well as the educational context including technology, teaching material, and aids. The point was to evaluate the situations there closely, intensively and holistically. In addition, questionnaires and interviews were used after observation to know about students and teachers' perspectives towards speaking problems, group work benefits. The purpose was to gather more research data and obtain what cannot be reached through observation to maintain a superior research.

The research findings could possibly be summed up in the following:

- 1) The Arab students' speaking behaviour within group dyads in ESS included more language fluency, accuracy and critical thinking abilities than others in NESS.
- 2) Although most Arab teachers are experienced and enthusiastic in teaching, they do not have the genuine background about group work implementation.
- 3) The students' speaking problems could be classified into different types involving psychological as in shyness, fear of speaking publicly, instructional as in the teacher-centered approach and contextual as in the fixed seating arrangement, the teaching span and classroom interrelations.

## 6.2 The implications of the study

This study may offer important contributions to the educators, students, curriculum designers, researchers, theoreticians and also those who are in charge in the ministry of education. As for educators, the study contributes to their understanding of the students' speaking reticence factors, the rationale for using group work and the best way to implement it in class. Concerning students, the study revives their positive implication towards group learning activities where they can share notions, views and strengthen their speaking, social and cognitive skills. It helps those who came from passive participation background and enables the students to talk about their beliefs. Regarding the curriculum designers, the study attracts their attention to the value of speaking as the most productive skill in the oral form, further to the need for more group work to stimulate the students' speaking abilities and the inevitability of reshaping the activities in a way that fits students' desire of speaking. Concerning the responsible people in the ministry of education, the study invites them to reconsider such influential issues that influence students' speaking as the classroom size which affects the students' seating arrangement. In addition, there is a need to distribute students among classes fairly due to their language levels, since it is unthinkable to have classes with many excellent levels and others with low learners. On the other hand, researchers should attempt to identify the personality and situational variables that foster students' success in group work. For theoreticians, the study contributes to the research as it attempts to develop a conceptual model of speaking deficiency and may lead to a better understanding of its complex construct.

This study also emphasizes that group work not only can improve the students' speaking proficiency but also create the students more positive attitudes towards group speaking. The study shows that teachers and students beliefs can be aligned together and this mutual understanding clarify the reasons of students' reticence to speak and modify their perception towards oral participation. It also helps the current foreign language learning experience of reticence to be improved and the greater learning outcomes can be achieved.

### 6.3 Recommendations related to speaking obstacles

Based on the interviews` discussion, it has been found out that:

1. Shyness is the most essential factor that hinders Arab students in ESS and NESS from oral participation, hence teachers are recommended to take such urgent actions to help students overcome shyness. Small group work can be a resolution to this problem but in association with such other assisting factors as motivating students to speak, accepting all contributions and avoiding the harsh error correction process through modeling.
2. Finishing the teaching material on time, has been stated also as a speaking deficiency factor. Although the Arab teachers` culture is to be committed to the teaching material, teachers should be selective, add or delete in the teaching material according to the students` needs, to cope up with the modern teaching strategies. Additionally, the teaching material is not a Bible, and teachers have to use such supplementary and authentic materials as magazines, newspapers, stories and others which may contribute to the students` speaking achievement. Further, teachers should realize that speaking is an important skill and should be cared for side by side with other skills.
3. The lack of speaking opportunity has been indicated to as a factor of speaking reticence. In other words, students stated that they are not provided the sufficient opportunity to share orally in class. In the light of this, teachers should bear in mind the students` right to speak, express views, give commentaries and so on, but at the same time instructors are recommended to stop frustrating students through error correction harsh feedback.
4. The lack of vocabulary knowledge has been considered also as a main difficulty that stands against students` speaking. Thus, teachers have to enrich the students` vocabulary wealth in terms of size (number) and depth (word associates and derivatives). Teachers also should focus on how to teach vocabulary items in relation to using realistic things.
5. Fundamentally, it is recommended to combine between the Arab and non Arab students in our public schools, since this will be of a high value for both in terms of exchanging cultures, perspectives, thinking strategies, social intimate relations. This combination was supposed to be taken place long time ago since learners whosoever are human beings who may own common beliefs, feelings regardless their different nationalities or first language backgrounds. This gathering or combining should be within a standardized curriculum that keeps the whole learners` desires into consideration.

## 6.4 Recommendations to teachers

Initially, instructors must have a clear understanding and complete appreciation about the factors that lead to their students' speaking reticence in class. From time to time, they should reconsider their teaching strategies in a way that fits students' needs and meet their expectations. Teachers should help learners to be more willing to use the target language by investigating practices and effects. Hence, the study results suggest the following:

1. The traditional concept of speaking in Arab schools should be changed from just producing scattered meaningless utterances into further horizons involving the ability to behave socially and culturally well in any communicative context, bearing in mind the rules of speaking and the social setting.
2. Speaking should be valued more due to its pivotal contribution in achieving the educational and professional progress such as reinforcing vocabulary, grammar, functional language, studying other subjects and getting better careers.
3. Teachers should perceive that group work cannot work by itself but in association with other assisting factors as using authentic and meaningful activities and using realistic things like pictures and stories which widen students' imagination and create positive environment.
4. Teachers have to be aware of the genuine purpose of group work tasks as reinforcing the sense of belonging, self accountability and social relations.
5. Students should be allowed to work in small groups rather than immediate speaking and making the input more comprehensible by recasting the target language. Interest is one step ahead of conducting successful group work.
6. Teachers may want to be aware of anxiety reducing strategies. Thus, speaking activities should be appropriate to students' level and interest, speaking performance should not be on the spot and teachers' attitude towards error correction should be friendly.
7. Teachers have to offer learners the opportunity to participate orally in class, use such pedagogical strategies that encourage students' spoken participation as modeling language form rather than correcting errors directly.
8. Teachers should identify the speaking personalities and the variables that foster students' motivation such as peer orientation which plays an essential part in students' motivation.

## References

- Adler, M. J., (1997). *How to speak How to listen: a companion to the classic bestseller how to read a book*. New York: Touchstone Rockefeller Center.
- Al-Zadjali, K. A., (2000). Student`s beliefs` about learning to speak English. *Muscat Region*, pp 122-131.
- Andrews, R., (2011). *Re-framing literacy: Teaching and learning in English and the language arts*. New York: Routledge.
- Baker, J and Westrup, H., (2003). *Essential Speaking Skills: a handbook for English Language teachers*. London: Continuum.
- Bell, J (1999) *Doing Your Research Project: a guide for first-time researchers in education and social science* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Buckingham: OUP
- Bilash, O., (2009). *The value of observation* [online]. Available from: <http://www2.education.ualberta.ca/staff/olenka.Bilash/best%20of%20bilash/observation.html> [Accessed 18 December20011].
- Braine, G., (2010). *Nonnative speakers` English teachers: Research, pedagogy and professional growth*. New York: Routledge.
- Brookfield, S. D., (1986). *Understanding and facilitating adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brothers, F. A., (2009). How to make small group learning work. CA: *Teaching for success* [online], pp 1-16. Available from: [http://www.marin.edu/WORD-PPT/TFS\\_HowToMakeSmallGroupLearningWork.pdf](http://www.marin.edu/WORD-PPT/TFS_HowToMakeSmallGroupLearningWork.pdf) [Accessed 11 October 2011].

Bruton, A and Virginia, S., (1980). Learner and teacher roles in the treatment of oral error in group work. *RELC Journal*, 11(2) pp 49-63.

Burton, D and Bartlett, S., (2005). *Practitioner research for teachers*. London: Sage.

Bygate, M., (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chaney, A. L and Burk, T. L., (1998). *Teaching oral communication in Grades K-8*. Allyn and Bacon.

Chaudron, C., (1988) *Second language classrooms: Research on teaching and learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Donald, S., (2010). Learning how to speak: Reticence in the ESL classroom. *ARECLS*,7 pp 41-58.

Doughty, C and Pica, T., (1986). Information gap tasks: do they facilitate second language acquisition? *TESOL Quarterly*, 20 (2) pp 305-325.

Edge, J., (2011). *The reflexive teacher educator in TESOL: roots and wings*. New York: Routledge.

Einspruch, E. L., (2005). *An introductory guide to SPSS for windows*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. California: Sage.

*ESL Glossary: definitions of common ESL/EFL terms. teacher-centered*. Available from: <http://bogglesworldesl.com/glossary/teachercentered.htm> [Accessed 22 Oct 2011].

Fanselow, J. F., (1977). Beyond “Rashomon” -conceptualizing and describing the teaching act. *TESOL Quarterly*, 11(1) pp 17-39.

Frey, N; Fisher, D and Everlove, S .,(2009). *Productive group work: how to engage students, build team work and promote understanding*. US: ASCD.

Hamzah, M. H and Ting, L.Y., (2010). Teaching speaking skills through group work activities: a case study in SMK Damai Jaya. *UTM* [online], pp 1-6. Available from:  
[http://eprints.utm.my/10255/2/Lu\\_Yee\\_Ting.pdf](http://eprints.utm.my/10255/2/Lu_Yee_Ting.pdf) [Accessed 21 June 2011].

Hancock, D., (2004). Cooperative learning and peer orientation effects on motivation and achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 97 (3) pp 159-166.

Helaine, A., (2012). The advantages of classroom observation. *e How family*[online]. Available from:[http://www.ehow.com/info\\_7841077\\_advantages-classroom-observation.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_7841077_advantages-classroom-observation.html)

Hesse-Biber, S. N., (2010). *Mixed methods research: merging theory with practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Hitotuzi, N., (2005). Teacher talking time in EFL classroom: Profile Issues in Teachers` Professional Development. *Profile Journal* [on line], 6 PP 97 – 106. Available from:  
<http://redalyc.uaemex.mx/redalyc/pdf/1692/169213801009.pdf> [Accessed 29 May2011].

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B and Cope, J., (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *Modern Language Journal*, 70 (2) pp125-132.

Hoseini, S. M. H., (2010). Theoretical foundations of “Competitive Team Based learning”. *Canadian Center of science and Education*, 3 (3) pp 229-244.

Hughes, A., (2003). *Testing for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hunt, K. B., (2011). *Characteristics of a good questionnaire* [online]. Available from:  
<http://www.drkenhunt.com/papers/question.html>

Joanna, W and Patsy M. L., (1983). Asking and answering in ESL classes. *Canadian Modern Language Review* , 40(2) pp 228-244.

Johnson, K. E. (1995). *Understanding communication in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, R. B and Onwuegbuzie, A. J ., (2004). Mixed Methods Research: a research paradigm whose time has come. *Education Researcher*, 33 (7) pp14 – 26.

Kayi, H., (2006). Teaching speaking: activities to promote speaking in a second language. *Internet TESL Journal* [online], 12(11). Available from: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kayi-TeachingSpeaking.html> [Accessed 17 May2011].

Knight, B., (1992). Assessing speaking skills: a workshop for teacher development. *ELT Journal*, 46 (3) pp 294-302.

Koizumi, R., (2005). *Relationships between productive vocabulary knowledge and speaking performance of Japanese learners of English at the novice level: a dissertation submitted to the University of Tsukuba In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy in linguistics* [online], pp 1-524. Available from: <http://www.tulips.tsukuba.ac.jp/limedio/dlam/B25/B2599596/1.pdf> [Accessed 22 may2011]

Krashen, Stephen D.,(1980). The input hypothesis. In: James, E. (ed.) *Georgetown Roundtable on Languages and Linguistics*. Washington: Georgetown University Press, pp. 168-180.

Levelt, W. J. M., (1989). *Speaking from intention to articulation*. USA: Massachusetts Institute of technology.

Long, M. H. and Porter, P. A., (1985). Group work inter-language talk, and second Language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19 (2) pp 207-228.

Luoma, S., (2004). *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, M., (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mckenzie, L., (2007). *Interviews in Education Research* [online]. Available from:

<http://www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk/resined/interviews/inthome.htm>

McNamara, T. F., (1996). *Measuring second language performance*. Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.

Mead, N., (2011). *Powerful tool for managing and using SPSS data* [online]. Available from:

<http://spss.en.softonic.com>

Milson, F., (1973). *An introduction to group work skill*. London: Routledge.

Nath, J. L and Cohen, M. D., (2011). *Becoming an EC-6 teacher in Texas: a course of study for pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) TEXES*. 2<sup>nd</sup>ed. Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Nation, I. S. P., (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ngo D., (2010). *Questionnaire Method* [online]. Available from:

<http://www.humanresources.hrvinet.com>

O`Keefe, V., (1995). *Speaking to think, thinking to speak: the importance of talk in the learning process*. US: Boynton/Cock.

Orman, M. C., (1996). *How to conquer public speaking fear* [online]. Available from <http://www.stresscure.com/jobstress/speak.html> [Accessed 18 August 2011].

Pauk, W and Owens, R. J. Q., (2010). *How to study in college: the book at a glance*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Powney, J and Watts, M., (1987). *Interviewing in educational research*. London: Routledge and Kegan.

Rabiee, F., (2004). Focus-group interview and data analysis. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 63 pp 655-660.

Rapley, D. J., (2010). Learning to speak English: Japanese junior high school student views. *The language Teacher*, 34(6) pp 33-40.

Rowe, M. B., (1974). Pausing phenomena: influence on the quality of instruction. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 3(2) pp 203-224.

Schreiner, E., (2011). Teacher-centered rules for a classroom. *E. How Education* [on line]. Available from: [http://www.ehow.co.uk/info\\_8571758\\_teachercentered-rules-classroom.html](http://www.ehow.co.uk/info_8571758_teachercentered-rules-classroom.html) [Accessed 28 July 2011].

Shoebottom, P., (2012). *The importance of vocabulary* [online]. Available from: <http://esl.fis.edu/parents/advice/vocab.htm>

Spijck, B.V., (2011). *Overcoming Fear of Public speaking (unique 21day programme)*. Netherlands.

Swain, M., (1993). *The output hypothesis: just speaking and writing aren't enough*. Modern Canadian Language Review.

Tarone, E., (1981). Some thoughts on the notion of communication strategy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15(3) pp 285-295.

Tashakkori, A and Teddlie, C., (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. California: Sage.

Tsou, W., (2005) Improving speaking skills through instruction in oral classroom participation. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38 (1), pp 46–55.

Tsui, A. B. M., (1996). Reticence and anxiety in second language learning. In: Bailey, K and Nunan, D. (eds) *Voices from the language classroom: qualitative research in second language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 145-167.

Urduan, T. C., (2005). *Statistics in plain English*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Varonis, Evangeline, M and Susan, G., (1983). “*Target language*” input from non-native speakers. Toronto: TESOL.

Verderber, R. F., Sellnow, D. D and Verderber, K. S., (2011). *The challenge of effective speaking*. 15<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Winter., (1999). Speaking of teaching: *Center for teaching and learning*, 10 (2) pp 1-4.

Worde, R, V., (2003) Students’ perspectives on foreign language anxiety. *Inquiry*, 8 (1) pp 1-16.

Young, D. J., (1990). An investigation of students’ perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, 23(6) PP 539-567.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### The observer` observation sheets

#### The setting details:

Place	Grade	Gender	Number	Nationality
Non E school ( )	-----	B ( ) / G ( )	-----	Arab ( ) / Non ( )
E school ( )	-----	M ( ) / F ( )	-----	Arab ( ) / Non ( )

Note: T. Led = Teacher-led / Non = Non Arab students

Notice: The observer will check (√) in the appropriate box according to his observation

In a few items, the observer can check (√) in more than one box

Aspects	Examples	Observation Description
The Learning Context	Students` way of sitting	Individual ( ) – Pair ( ) – Group ( )
	Group size	Groups number [-----] - Group size [----] - Group shape [-----]
	Group choice	Teacher`s choice ( ) – Students` choice ( ) – Mix of both
	Task Type	One way task ( ) – Two way task ( ) – Both ( )
	Task characteristics	Meaningful ( ) – Purposeful ( ) - Meaningless ( )
	Task Time span	Sufficient ( ) – Insufficient ( )
	Content Material	Grammar based ( ) – Skill based ( )
	Daily Life Relatedness	Related ( ) – Unrelated ( ) –
	The Lesson`s Topic	Interesting ( ) – Uninteresting ( )
	The Teaching Aids used in the classroom]	[Board ( ) – Books ( ) – Video ( ) – Audio ( ) – Pictures ( ) Markers ( ) – Realia ( ) – Others ( ) e.g. -----]
Interaction Type	T ----- Ss ( ) - Ss ----- T ( ) – Ss ----- Ss ( )	
Classroom Climate	Motivation ( ) – non motivation ( ) – Others ( ) e.g., ----- -----	

Aspects	Examples	Observation Description
Teacher`s behavior	Questions` Types pauses on Ss responses Questions` Level Questions` Quantity Amount of Talk Task Instructions Teacher Position Sense of Humor Error Correction Sense of Motivation Rewards` kinds Teacher`s evaluation	aux. ( ) - wh. ( ) - mix ( ) – other ( ) e.g. ----- always ( ) – usually ( ) – sometimes ( ) – rarely ( ) – never ( ) descriptive ( ) – factual ( ) – critical ( ) – memorizing ( ) a few ( ) - medium ( ) - many ( ) - acceptable ( ) much ( ) – medium ( ) – little ( ) sufficient and clear ( ) - neutral ( )- insufficient and unclear ( ) Front- centered ( ) – Mid-centered ( ) – Movable ( ) high ( ) – middle ( ) – low ( ) – non ( ) always ( ) – usually ( ) – sometimes ( ) – rarely ( ) – non ( ) much ( ) – middle ( ) – little ( ) – non ( ) marks ( ) – words of praise ( ) – prizes ( ) – others ( ) - Non ( ) Accurate ( ) – Random ( ) – Ignored ( )
Students` behavior	Level of answers Amount of questions Questions` types Amount of talk Social Relations Decision making Self-confidence Participation Suggestions Proficiency level	word ( ) – sentence ( ) – long utterances ( ) – non ( ) many ( ) - moderate ( ) – a few ( ) – non ( ) text-related ( ) – critical ( ) – clarification ( ) – confirmation ( ) much ( ) – medium ( ) – little ( ) intimate ( ) – normal ( ) - non intimate ( ) – unclear ( ) Individual ( ) – Collective ( ) – Not existed high ( ) – intermediate ( ) – low ( ) – non-existed ( ) excellent ( ) – very good ( ) – fair ( ) – poor ( ) very noticeable ( ) – noticeable ( ) – un noticeable ( ) extremely high ( ) – high ( ) – acceptable ( ) – weak ( )

## Appendix 2

### The researcher assistant observation sheet

The setting details:

Student Observer`s Name: -----

Place	Grade	Gender	Number	Nationality
Non E school ( )	12	B ( ) / G ( )	-----	Arab ( ) / Non ( )
E school ( )	12	M ( ) / F ( )	-----	Arab ( ) / Non ( )

### Johnson and Johnson

#### Model of Group work Assessment

[PIGS]

Please tick (√) in the box you see the most appropriate:

Notice: EX = Excellent / V. G = Very Good / G = Good / M = Moderate / W = Weak

ممتاز

جيد جدا

جيد

متوسط

ضعيف

Principle	Explanation	Ex	VG	G	M	W
Positive Interdependence الاتكالية الايجابية	Each student was responsible for the success of every other member through adopting roles as spokesperson, recorder and verifier of information.  كان كل طالب مسؤولا عن نجاح العمل الجماعي وذلك من خلال تبني ادوار مثل الطالب المتحدث - الطالب المسجل - الطالبالمسئول عن التأكد من المعلومات					

Principle	Explanation	Ex	VG	G	M	W
Individual Accountability المسئولية الفردية	Each person was accountable for his/her share of participation where there were no apathetic learners or dominant ones. كل طالب تحمل مسئولية في المشاركة حيث لم يكن هناك طلاب متقاعسين او اخرين مهيمين					
Group Interaction التفاعل الجماعي	Students discussed, shared experiences, solved problems and encouraged each other الطلاب تناقشوا وتبادلوا الخبرات وشاركوا في حل المشكلات و شجع بعضهم البعض					
Social Skills المهارات الاجتماعية	Students showed such social skills as active listening, leadership, communication and decision making اظهر الطلاب بعض المهارات الاجتماعية مثل القيادة – التواصل – الاستماع الايجابي و صناعة القرار					

### Appendix 3

#### Questionnaire for grade 12 high school students

Dear student,

This questionnaire is an attempt to identify your perspectives towards the effectiveness of practicing speaking through group work activities. Please feel free to express your opinion by ticking (√) in the appropriate box. Your answers are confidential and highly appreciated.

عزيزي الطالب

إن هذا الإستبيان الغرض منه التعرف على رأيك فيما يتعلق بمدى فاعلية التعلم الجماعي في تطوير مهارة التحدث. لذا فإنك مدعواً للتعبير عن رأيك بحرية من خلال وضع علامة (√) أسفل الإختيار الذي تراه ملائماً. ونود إعلامك باننا نقدر لك مشاركتك في هذا الاستبيان ونكفل لك حق الاحتفاظ بسرية هذه الاجابات و شكرا

The setting details:

Student`s Name: (optional) -----

School / College	Grade	Gender	Nationality
Non-English H. school ( )	12	Boy ( ) / Girl ( )	Arab ( ) / Non ( )
English High school ( )	12	Male ( ) / Female ( )	Arab ( ) / Non ( )

=====

A	To be a competent English speaker in class, I need ----- لكي اكون متحدثا كفاء بالانجليزية فاتنا احتاج	Strongly. Agree أوافق بشده	Agree أوافق	Uncertain غير متأكد	Strongly Disagree لأوافق بشدة	Disagree لأوافق
1	to be given more speaking practice in class ان اعطى الفرصة لممارسة المزيد من التحدث بالصف					
2	to be always encouraged to speak ان يتم تشجيعي على التحدث داخل الصف					
3	to be gently treated on making mistakes ان تتم معاملتي برفق اذا ما ارتكبت اي خطأ					
4	to learn about interesting current events ان اتعلم بشأن اهم الاحداث الجارية المشوقة					
5	to learn within small group work activities ان اتعلم من خلال أنشطة العمل الجماعي المصغر					
6	to know about the purpose and function of task activities before working on. ان اعرف بشأن طبيعة الأنشطة الجماعية و الهدف منها					
7	to be given challenging speaking activities encouraging participation ان يتم اعطائي أنشطة تحدث تثير الدافعية و التحدي					
8	to be given tasks that encourage interaction ان يتم اعطائي مهام تشجع التفاعل المتبادل مع الغير					
9	not to learn much material in a short time ان لا اتعلم كم كبير من المادة العلمية في وقت قصير					
10	to receive the meaningful feedback to keep on track ان يتم منحي مردود تصحيح الاخطاء للسير قدما					

	To be a competent English speaker in class	Strongly.			Strongly	
B	I should ----- لكي اكون متحدثا كفاء بالانجليزية فيجب علي	Agree أوافق بشده	Agree أوافق	Uncertain غير متأكد	Disagree لاأوافق بشده	Disagree لاأوافق
11	overcome communication apprehension اتغلب على احساسني بالخوف من التواصل مع الاخرين					
12	be confident of myself and my abilities ان اكون دائما واثق من نفسي ومن قدراتي					
13	focus more on meaning than form ان اركز على التواصل وليس القواعد اللغوية					
14	consider errors as part of my learning. ان ادرك ان الاخطاء هي شي طبيعي في عملية التعلم					
15	set free from shyness and isolation in class ان اتحرر من الخجل الزائد والانعزالية داخل الصف					
16	interact positively with my classmates ان اتفاعل بشكل ايجابي مع افراد العمل الجماعي					
17	be ready share in debates and discussions ان اكون دوما مستعدا للمشاركة بالمناقشات والمناظرات					
18	be able to suggest, infer and disagree. ان اعرف كيف اقترح و استنتج واختلف في الرأي					
19	listen attentively to teacher`s instructions. ان استمع دائما باهتمام بالغ لارشادات وتعليمات المعلم					
20	be flexible and accept peer correction ان اكون مرنا و متقبلا للتبادل في تصحيح الاخطاء					

C	Small group work activities can ----- تستطيع أنشطة العمل الجماعي المصغر ان	Strongly. Agree أوافق بشده	Agree أوافق	Uncertain غير متأكد	Strongly Disagree لاأوافق بشده	Disagree لاأوافق
21	encourage students` social interactions تطور روح التسامح والتفاعل الاجتماعي بين الطلاب					
22	enhance social skills within communication تقوم بتطوير المهارات الاجتماعية من خلال التواصل					
23	ensure equal participation for each member تشجع على التساوي في المشاركة بين افراد المجموعة					
24	create a mutual responsibility between the individual and the group تخلق نوع من تبادل المسؤولية بين الفرد والجماعة					
25	empower students` critical thinking skills. ان تكون وسيلة لتقوية المهارات التفكيرية النقدية					
26	be seen as a non threatening environment ان تشكل بيئة تعليمية مريحة ومطمئنة للطلاب					
27	help adult learners to be self directed and attain their commitment to adulthood. تساعد الشباب المتعلم على ان يقود عملية التعلم بنفسه يثبت من خلاله مرحلة النضج التي يمر بها					
28	bestow democracy up on group students تمنح افراد المجموعة فرصة الديمقراطية و حرية التعبير					
29	helps students generate quantity of language or more negotiation output تساعد الطلاب على انتاج كم اكبر من الحوارات اللغوية					
30	establish a social and affective climate in which students are not feared. تخلق مناخا اجتماعيا دافقا يساعد الطلاب على المشاركة دون خوف او تهديد					

Appendix 4

Teachers` Interview questions

1. What do you think of English speaking in comparable with the other four skills?  
-----
2. Based on your experience, why are students inefficient in English speaking?  
-----
3. Do you think that group work can be an effective solution for this problem? Why?  
-----
4. Is group work influenced by such factors as size, difficulty and students` proficiency, etc?  
-----
5. Why are some teachers reluctant in carrying out speaking activities?  
-----

Appendix 5

Interview questions with Students

1. How did you feel in general towards the class and why?  
Satisfied ( ) – not satisfied ( ) – very satisfied ( ) – less satisfied ( )
2. How did you see the teacher in class?  
Motivated ( ) – interactive ( ) – patient ( ) – experienced ( )- others ( ) -----
3. Are you interested in speaking? ----- Why?  
to express myself ( ) – to get a good grade ( ) – to get a better job ( ) – to study abroad  
( ) to teach my young brothers ( ) – others ( ) -----
4. Do Ss practice social roles such as leadership, recorder, spokesperson ?
5. Do Ss suggest, infer, make decision or solve a problem?
6. Are there any intimate relations among students?

## Appendix 6

### A letter of field visits

<b>United Arab Emirates Ministry of Education Fujairah Education Zone Section curricula/Statistics &amp; Research</b>		دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة وزارة التربية والتعليم إدارة منطقة الفجيرة التعليمية قسم المناهج / الإحصاء والبحوث
		٧٧٤ / ٤٢٣ التاريخ : 2011 / 11 / 9 م
المحترمة السيدة الدكتورة / رئيسة قسم تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية بالجامعة البريطانية بدبي تحية طيبة وبعد،،،،،		
<b>الموضوع : زيارات ميدانية للباحث : خالد سيد شلبي</b>		
بناء على كتابكم الصادر بتاريخ 2011 / 5 / 3 م الخاص بالموضوع أعلاه ، تشهد إدارة منطقة الفجيرة التعليمية - قسم المناهج و البرامج التعليمية بأن الأستاذ : خالد سيد شلبي ( مدرس اللغة الانجليزية بمدرسة محمد بن حمد الشرقي للتعليم الثانوي ) قد قام بزيارة :		
➤ مدرسة أم المؤمنين للتعليم الثانوي		
➤ مدرسة مضب للتعليم الثانوي		
➤ مدرسة سيف بن حمد الشرقي للتعليم الأساسي و الثانوي		
➤ مدرسة أكاديمية الفجيرة		
في الفترة ما بين 2011 / 5 / 22 م إلى 2011 / 6 / 6 م حيث قام بعمل زيارات صفية و توزيع استبانات ، و إجراء مقابلات مع بعض المعلمين و الطلاب و ذلك تحقيقا لأهداف بحث رسالة الماجستير حول دور التعلم التعاوني في تنمية مهارة التحدث باللغة الانجليزية .		
شاكرين لكم حسن التعاون وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير		
مدير إدارة منطقة الفجيرة التعليمية جمعة خلفان علي الكندي		نسخة لكل من: = السيد المدير = السادة النواب = رئيس قسم المناهج والبرامج = منسقة البحوث = الملف = الصادر العام
منطقة الفجيرة التعليمية هاتف: 09/2233666 ، فاكس: 09/2221885 ، ص- ب: 62، الفجيرة - الإمارات العربية المتحدة Fujairah Education Zone, Tel: 09/2233666 ,Fax:09/2221885, PO Box:62, E- mail: fez@fez.gov.ae		

This is a letter of information issued by Fujairah Educational Zone about the field visits conducted by the researcher in some of Fujairah schools for his dissertation paper.