

**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**IMPROVING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS'  
SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH ORAL REFLECTIONS**

**MASTER THESIS**

**ANWAR GHILAN**

**NICOSIA**

**NOVEMBER 2019**

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**Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa kurt**

**NICOSIA**

**NOVEMBER 2019**

## Approval of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences

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Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of  
Master of Arts.

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

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This is to certify that we have read this thesis submitted by Anwar Akram Ghilan titled " Improving English as a Foreign Language Students' Speaking Skills Through Oral Reflections" and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this study

Full Name: Anwar Akram Ghilan

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my father and my mother who supported me throughout my entire educational life. I hope I will be able to support them in the future and return the favor for them.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**ABSTRACT****IMPROVING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS'  
SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH ORAL REFLECTIONS****ANWAR GHILAN****MA Programme in English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt November 2019, 125 pages**

This study investigates the effect that oral reflections might have on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills. The study was implemented at one of the universities in North Cyprus on six English Language and Literature (ELL) department first-year students. The researcher used a quasi-experimental one group pre-test post-test design to find out the differences between the pre-test and post-test scores and supported the study by questionnaires to find out students' perceptions toward using oral reflections in improving their speaking skills. The study was implemented through the use of a mobile application named Podbean which gave students the chance to upload their podcasts and reflect on. The collected data was analyzed using the SPSS version 20 by descriptive statistics, Related Samples Wilcoxon Signed Ranking test was employed to compare the results of the pre-test and post-test. The results indicated that the students' performance in the post-test had really improved compared to the pre-test and the students' perceptions were mostly positive regarding the use of oral reflections.

**Keywords:** Oral reflections, Reflective learning, Podcasts, English as a Foreign Language



## ÖZET

### YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENCİLERİNDEN YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN YABANCI DİLİ İNGİLİZCE GELİŞTİRİLMESİ

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İngilizce Öğretmenliği Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans Programı

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Bu çalışma, sözlü derinlemesine düşünmenin, öğrencilerin konuşma becerileri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktadır. Çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki Üniversite lerin birindeki İngiliz Dili Eğitimi ve Edebiyatı bölümünde bulunan altı tane birinci sınıf Yİİ öğrencileri üzerinde gerçekleştirildi. Araştırmada, ön test ve son test puanları arasındaki farkları bulmak için, yarı deneysel bir gruba ön test son test tasarımını kullanmıştır. öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini geliştirmek için sözlü derinlemesine düşünceleri kullanmaya yönelik algılarını bulmak için de anket çalışması yapılmıştır. Çalışma, öğrencilere podcast'arını yükleme ve yansıtma şansı veren Podbean adlı bir mobil uygulama kullanılarak gerçekleştirildi. Toplanan veriler SPSS 20 programıyla çözümlendi. Araştırmacı, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Testini, ön test ve son test sonuçlarını karşılaştırmak için kullandı. Çalışma sonuçları, öğrencilerin sınav sonrasındaki performanslarının, sınav öncesi performanslarına göre geliştiğini göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sözlü yansımalar, Derinlemesine düşünerek öğrenme, Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce, Podcast.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**TEFL:** Teaching English as a Foreign Language

**SPSS:** Statistical Package for Social Sciences

**IELTS:** The International English Language Testing System

**CALL:** Computer-Assisted Language Learning

**ELT:** English Language Teaching

**MALL:** Mobile Assisted language learning



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents detailed information about the background and the purpose of the study, the research statement and questions, the problem statement, the significance of the study and the limitations.

#### **Background of the Study**

English language learning and teaching have become an arousing demand for all students in the current century and therefore more research is needed on the methods and strategies that help students to learn better and acquire all language skills. The developing age that we live in requires methods and strategies that correspond to the arousing needs and interests of the students. English language skills are divided into receptive skills, which are reading and listening, and productive skills, which are speaking and writing.

This study is mainly concerned with one of the productive skills, which is speaking. Speaking is defined according to Nunan (2003) as a productive skill that consists of systematic verbal utterances that carry out a meaning. Speaking is often seen as a scale to evaluate language learning and most of the students are concerned about this particular skill. Richards (2008) stated that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language and foreign-language learners. Even on the local and global context speaking has become the main requirement. In the current age we are living in there are many educational institutions, like universities and schools, which are interested in developing the communicative skills because many work institutions all around the world are more interested in applicants who can listen and speak English more than they need for

writing or reading English (Kulawanit et al., 2005 as cited in Janudom & Wasanasomsithi, 2009). According to Samad and Fitriani (2016) in this global era, being able to speak English is essential for people to communicate with the global community. Unfortunately, according to Sawir (2005), most of the current teaching activities are more concerned in teaching students how to read and how to compose paragraphs and write essay papers and there is less emphasis on teaching listening and speaking. According to Meskill and Warschauer (2000), the core of the entire Language teaching program should emphasize on uplifting the students' communicative ability to enable them to communicate in the target language fluently and freely. There are many reasons lying behind students' low level in speaking. According to Lum (2015) some reason for the students low level in speaking is that the current teaching methods provide limited opportunities for students to speak and large class size also can cause a problem of participating opportunities alongside with the dominance of the traditional teacher-centred approach that gives more time to practice reading and writing and teaching grammar with less emphasis on both the speaking and listening skill.

According to Duong (2014), there are many different aspects of speaking skills, which are vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy.

The first is vocabulary, which is defined as what expresses the content of certain ideas and phrase them into understandable units to avoid any kind of misunderstanding, in other words, vocabulary is labelling the ideas to define objects, actions and all sort of things. According to Horby (1989), the level of any language acceptance is determined by the number of words, so your vocabulary competence determines your level of understanding the language.

The second is grammar, which is defined as the set of rules that manage the arrangement and correlations of words in a sentence (Brown, 2000). Grammar helps to join the units of language to help the speaker or the writer to phrase his mind and ideas into words.

The third is pronunciation, which is defined as the process of saying the word in its exact manner which plays a very important role in the speaking process. According to Nation and Newton (2009), pronunciation can be defined as a sound that must have the features of good articulation like intonation, voicing and stress. So pronunciation is how close a speaker must be to the original pronunciation of the word enable the listener to understand what is he trying to say.

The fourth is fluency, which means talking with a flow base without having many pauses and being able to convey the message to the listener. Yingjie (2014) states that fluency is the ability to speak in a smooth and effective way to convey the exact words without taking too much time. Great fluency skills help in having a normal conversation and enhances communication skills. To consider someone as fluent he/she must possess some features as they were presented by Thornbury (2005), having some long pauses but not often, and pauses should not distract the conversation or disconnect the flow of speech.

The fifth is accuracy, which refers to composing a speech with understandable words, correct structure, well use of syntax, and great use of the language with relatively limited mistakes without committing a hesitation in interaction. The importance of accuracy lies in its value to create an impression towards the way he/she conveys the message to the others.

Other than the above-mentioned aspects of speaking, speaking has been categorized into two skills. According to Brown (2004), the micro and macro skills in speaking should be taught to students. The micro skill can be defined as producing small chunks of language like phonemes, morphemes, collocations, words and phrasal units. This skill has a role on the sentence level, which is concerned with the ability to produce sentences. but, macro skill is more related to larger elements related to the individual who speaks the language, such as function, cohesion, style, discourse, nonverbal communication, and strategy options. Therefore, it highlights the speaker's communicative function during communication.

Learning strategies have been a topic for research since the 1970s and the research on this topic changed our understanding of the educational process. According to Reiss (1985), the emphasis on foreign language teaching shifted from teacher to student.

The most important finding for this research on this topic is that the students' proficiency level has improved in specific skills areas. (Wenden & Rubin 1987; Chamot & Kupper 1989; Oxford & Crookall 1989; O'Malley & Chamot 1990; Oxford et al., 1993). These studies supported the theory that when students implement learning strategies, it gives them the chance to develop their sense of responsibility towards their own learning and promotes their self-confidence.

Students need some help to figure out their appropriate learning strategy and how to implement it especially poor students and the ones who are responsible for guiding students and putting them in the right direction are teachers. According to O'Malley et al. (1985), it is not a difficult thing to identify the learning strategies of good learners which

may be taught to poor learners in order to develop their ability in learning a second language.

Reflective learning strategies can be of great help in promoting the students' autonomy and help them to be independent learners who had been a dream of many teachers for a long time. If learners have the desire to use language communicatively in an efficient way, they should have self-reliance, self-confidence, and independence to be able to achieve a variety of social, psychological and discourse roles (Little, 1999). According to Benson (2006) to achieve autonomy, the students must be given some freedom. So the question how can we achieve autonomous learning. Most of the students are used to be just as passive learners in their classes and the teacher does all the talking. A shift in the teaching process must be done to enable the learners to be in charge of their own learning and in this matter the teachers' role comes in to guide the learners for lifelong learning and one way to do so is through teaching them how to reflect on their own learning process and what kind of reflection they should use to reflect on each skill in order to develop his or her skills in it.

Having autonomous learners cannot be achieved by telling the learners that you will do everything, but rather it can be achieved through the teacher implementing activities that enable learners to take the initiative for their own learning. For example, giving the opportunity for learners to devise their own homework, decide what to read and reflect on their performance (Dam, 2000).

Despite the many studies that were done on reflection and its importance on the learning process, most of the research focuses on reflection on writing and little or no emphasis on reflection on speaking. Similar to the studies that were done on reflection

through keeping a learning diary and how it may help in improving students' writing skills (Dam, 2000), research on reflection through keeping voice recordings and how it may help in improving students' speaking skills was implemented. This research addresses the problem of having little research on oral reflection despite its extreme benefit in the learning process, where most of the previous studies were done on written reflection.

### **The Problem of the Study**

Most of the students no matter what level they are, seem to have a common problem when it comes to learning English which is having a low level of speaking and not being able to keep up the same as the other language skills. Many reasons lie behind students' low level of speaking. One of those reasons is that a great share of the class time is invested in teaching students the reading and writing skills and very little share is allocated for teaching the speaking and listening skills, despite their extreme value for the students (Alhamroni, 2009). Another reason for students' low level of speaking skills is that teachers are using the same methods of teaching over and over again but it seems that it is with no use when it comes to improving students' speaking skills. For these reasons, teachers feel that their efforts are worthless, which most of the time leads them to allocate more time on teaching the other language skills and giving just a very limited time for students to practice this skill. Giving very limited time for practicing speaking is not enough for mastering such a very difficult skill like speaking because speaking is a skill that needs lots of time and effort alongside with self-confidence to be improved. We can state that there are many integrated factors that affect speaking, that teachers often tend to ignore their existence. One example of these factors is students' anxiety when it comes to

doing certain tasks related to speaking like to speak in front of their classmates (Horwitz, et al., 1986; Brown, 2007; Zheng, 2008). Therefore, this study investigated the effectiveness of a new method of learning beyond the traditional teaching and learning methods to develop students' speaking skills.

### **The Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of implementing a new method of reflection on improving students' speaking skills. The researcher investigated the effect that oral reflections may have on students' speaking skills. The same as the studies that were done on reflective writing through keeping a diary, this study implemented oral reflections through audio recording and publishing it in a form of podcasts. The students reflect on their learning classes and some of their daily life practices. The researcher also investigated students' perceptions of oral reflections through podcast recording.

In the current study, the participants were students who study at the English Language and Literature Department at one of the biggest universities in Northern Cyprus. This particular university was chosen because of its high ranking and the researcher had access to information and participants. The students in this university are diverse, some of them are Turkish, some are Cypriots and others are from different countries. The students who participated in this study were first-year undergraduate students. Some of the students were Turkish and others were of various nationalities. The teaching staff was diverse, some of them are Cypriots and others are from different countries. The university properties are designed to suit students' educational needs. The university provides them with English courses in which instructors use communicative and learner-centred approaches. However,

the speaking skill seemed to be neglected to some extent and the students' and teachers' main interest is on exams.

As a result, in order to achieve the main aim of the study, the researcher tried to answer the following research questions.

### **The Research Questions**

In order to fulfil the aim of the study, two research questions have revealed:

1. How does oral reflection affect English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills?
2. Do oral reflections significantly influence EFL students' speaking proficiency?
3. What are EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards practicing oral reflections through audio blogs?
4. Does the audio blogging environment affect EFL students' speaking skills?

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study can be reflected through three major points. Firstly, according to some of the previous studies in the field of language learning, mastering speaking is not an easily achievable task for most of the students including English as a Foreign Language (EFL) department students. Richards (2008) states that learning



speaking skills are considered to be a very challenging task for learners. There is a need to find out new methods that ease students' learning.

Secondly, the speaking skill is often overlooked by English teachers and most of the class time is spent on teaching the other skills. There is a need for new teaching strategies that provide students with more opportunities to practice speaking outside of the classroom.

Thirdly, most of the teachers are stuck within the box of traditionalism and in the evolving age that we are living in, the needs and interests of the students are changing because of the fast-evolving technology which made it a must to insert the technology into the educational system so this study is expected to find out the effectiveness of implementing oral reflections through inserting a form of technology into the language learning field.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Like all studies, this study also has some limitations. First, the findings of the study cannot be generalized because they can change with different participants and different settings. This study was conducted with six students from the English Language Teaching (ELT) and literature department at one of the biggest universities in Northern Cyprus. Secondly, the data were collected from only six students. A higher number could have revealed different findings also, it should be noted that this study was limited to only first-year students. Thirdly, the study was implemented at the end of the study year which may have affected students' performance in the pre and post-test because of their preparation for the final exams. Fourthly, the researcher used only a questionnaire to measure students'

perceptions towards podcasts which do not depict their specific feelings and ideas regarding podcast recording. Finally, the treatment period was six weeks. A longer period could have changed some of the participants' opinions and we might have had different results regarding the effectiveness of podcasts.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This study is mainly concerned with finding out whether oral reflections significantly affects English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skill. Therefore, this chapter attempts to review the literature in this matter and provide a complete overview of this topic. In order to achieve this target, related literature will be presented on five main points. First, the information about the speaking skill and the challenges that students face to acquire this skill. Second, investigating the use of technology for language education and learning and recent studies on the use of technology in language learning. Third, the history of podcasting and the recent studies conducted on this form of implemented technology and learners' perceptions of educational podcasting. Fourth, investigating the relationship between language learning strategies and reflection. Finally, Learners' Perceptions of Oral Reflections through Podcasts Implementation.

#### Speaking

Speaking is defined as the process that aims to convey one's message to the other. Therefore, in order for a person to be considered as a successful communicator, he or she needs to master specific elements related to this process, like communicative competence,

grammar, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation (i.e. intonation, stress, and pitch), accuracy, comprehension and gestures (Khamkhien, 2010; Jondeya, 2011).

According to Jondeya (2011), speaking goes beyond choosing the right patterns of rhythm and intonation, but it includes choosing the right inflections to convey the intended message.

Based on the previous definitions for speaking, the researcher can define speaking as the process of interacting, sharing and conveying one's message to the other by having an ability to speak in an accurate and fluent way besides being able to comprehend the spoken language and to understand its' denotations and connotations.

Recently, the English language has become an integrated part in all different fields of life and mastering its four language skills became a must in order to be able to get engaged in mass interaction. Morozova (2013) stated that having a good knowledge of English became the main requirement for world mass interaction.

Speaking is considered to be the main factor in the communication process. Al Masri (2012) argues that speech is one-way human beings connect with each other. Among the four language skills, speaking is considered to be the most frequently used, when it is compared to reading and writing, it's used twice much as they are used in daily life interaction (Mohammadipour & Rashid, 2015). According to Ur (1996), compared to the other skills, speaking is the most important skill.

In the EFL context, when looking back to the strategies and methods that are used in teaching speaking we notice that none of them are actually working. We can tell that from the students' low level of speaking skills. Teachers have dedicated more time and

effort for teaching this skill in a communicative context. Almasri (2012) argues that “great speakers are not born, they’re trained”.

Morovaza (2013) states that, for achieving effective interaction, students' speaking abilities need to be improved. Moreover, she points out that teachers should teach EFL learners on how to promote their communicative ability in speaking. Khamkhien (2010) highlights that “speaking is the most important skill in learning a second language or a foreign language” (p. 184). He also states that having the ability to interact in English has become the main requirement in all countries, because, in this era, English becomes the medium for interaction in all sectors, in both local and global context.

Nomass (2013) points out that more language support is needed to achieve EFL knowledge. EFL students need to have more opportunities to practice the language, which can be done by giving them more activities that promote their language use. According to Aungwatanakun (1994) as cited in Oradee (2012), in foreign language teaching and learning, speaking is considered to be the most difficult skill and the most essential skill because of its indispensable role in communication.

### **The Challenges that Students Face in Learning Speaking Skill**

There are many challenges that need to be overcome to improve EFL students' speaking skills. Zhao (2002) points out that most EFL learners have this dominant idea that speaking in English is difficult and they lack proficiency when it comes to oral communication.

In Malaysia, students suffer from a lack of practice in EFL speaking classrooms (Singh, 2013). In addition, Thornburgh (2006) points out the role of motivation and lack of fluency in speaking skills. He also states the vital role that English speaking proficiency

plays in the students' speech in the class. Dives (2013) mentioned that it is a difficult task for non-native speakers to speak in English because of many reasons like shyness to speak, lack of motivation or confidence and the high anxiety level in the classroom. He pointed out that, in order for achieving a successful overcoming for these challenges, students need to speak English on a daily bases with either their instructors or classmates.

Furthermore, Ur (1996) stated some more factors that influence EFL students speaking skills like: not having the ability to express themselves, the crowded classrooms which limits the participation opportunities, shyness and the fear of making mistakes and some students feel more comfortable to communicate with their classmates in their native language in a monolingual or bilingual classrooms (as cited in Al-Hosni, 2014).

Khamkhien (2010) indicates some more factors that affect English speaking skills: speaking in English is not an easy achievable task due to lack of motivation to speak in English outside of the classroom, the students relying on the teacher to speak and they just listen, and some learners have negative attitudes regarding the foreign language. Park and Lee (2005) explored the relation that ties second language learners' anxiety, self-confidence, and the students' speaking performance. The sample of the study was one hundred and thirty-two learners from Korea. The findings revealed that the anxiety level effects students speaking performance in a negative way. Another study related to this matter was Tanveer (2007), who investigated the factors that lie behind the students' anxiety and its impact on speaking skills. The findings showed that, when students feel stress and anxiety, they stop learning.

To find out possible solutions to this factor Boonkit (2010) study investigated the factors that promote speaking performance and he found out that the appropriate use of

activities can decrease students' anxiety level. His findings also revealed that, when students are given the choice to choose a topic to talk about, it also increases their confidence.

Another factor that affects students speaking skills is the difficulty in implementing an English class using only English as a mean of instructions and communication. Misbah and Najat (1988) implemented a study in this context to find out the difficulties in using English as medium of instruction and communication. The obtained results revealed that learners have many struggles when English is used as a mean of instruction. Many participating teachers stated that their learners do not possess the required level of English to understand the instructions. Also, the findings reported that many learners had serious obstacles in understanding the content of the lesson without referring to their first language.

According to Urrutia and Vega (2010), there are many other factors that can significantly affect students speaking skills, like lack of vocabulary and diffidence.

The study indicated that self-confidence, class environment, cooperation, and vocabulary knowledge enhance students speaking skills.

Acquiring a certain skill and neglecting the others is not a possible thing to do in language learning because there are some skills which are very much related like speaking and listening. According to Bozorgian (2012), there is a very close relationship between listening and speaking. He stated that there is a direct relation between these two skills.

Tuan and Mai (2015) sum up the challenges that students face in learning speaking into some points as follows: inhibition, low participation, lack of topical knowledge and the use of the mother tongue.

The first problem is inhibition, which arose in the class when students want to say something or answer a question but they fear to make a mistake or they fear to get laughed at or criticized by the other students. Littlewood (2007) states that students feel more inhibition in a language class more than the other classes.

The second problem is that students often tend to say that they ran out of ideas and they have nothing to say on the topic or they are not excited about the topic. Rivers (1968) supports this. He thinks that the blame in these problems lies on the teacher because of the topic selection which they even do not have information about it in their mother tongue. Other researchers who support the idea are Baker and Westrup (2003). They stated that it is not an easy thing for learners to speak on a topic that they do not know what to say about or know which vocabulary or grammar structure to use to express it.

The third problem is that having a crowded classroom, especially a speaking class, causes low participation because each student will have a very limited time to talk and some students may dominate the whole class and do all the talking while others do not have the chance to say anything.

The last problem happens in the monolingual classroom as students tend to speak in their mother tongue because its easier for them to express their ideas (Tuan & Mai, 2015). According to Harmer (1991), this happens when the teacher asks a question that they have limited vocabulary to express; they use their mother tongue and also it feels more natural for them to speak in it. If teachers do not set instructions for the class to speak in English only, they will continue using their mother tongue to talk to their classmates.



## **Language Learning Strategies and Reflection**

Learning strategies are considered as an inseparable part of the educational process. Many researchers wrote in the learning strategies field and among those researchers, there were some pioneers in this field like Rubin, (1987), Oxford, (1990) and O'Malley and Chamot, (1990). Learning strategies are often defined as the processes which are selected either consciously or unconsciously and implemented by the learner to learn a certain task (White, 1999 as cited in Hurd & Lewis 2008).

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), learning strategies are certain ideas or behaviors that learners use to assist them to learn and comprehend new information. Oxford (1990) also defines learning strategies as certain actions taken by the students to promote their own learning, to ease their learning process, to make it faster and more entertaining.

Rubin (1987), (as cited in Zare, 2012) classifies language learning strategies into three main groups learning strategies, communication strategies, and social strategies. Learning strategies include all the things that are related to learning (cognitive) and the strategies that are related to the learning process (metacognitive). Cognitive strategies involve memorizing, monitoring and practice. Metacognitive ones involve setting goals, planning, and self – management. There are some strategies that are not directly related to language learning like communication strategies because their main focus is related to the process of being engaged in conversations or explaining the speaker's intention.

We can say that communication strategies are more used by the speakers to cope with the difficulties faced in communication. While social strategies refer to the activities that learners engage in to practice the knowledge. Oxford (1990) also points out that

learning strategies are specific actions taken by learners to improve their learning to make it easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable.

There has been another classification of the learning strategies by Oxford (1990) in which are divided them into two main categories with sub-categories.

1) Direct strategies

1. Memory strategies: They include strategies that help learners to retrieve and store information.

2. Cognitive strategies: It include strategies like summarizing or deductive reasoning, they help learners to understand and produce new language by different means.

3. Compensation strategies: They include strategies like using synonyms or guessing, they give chance to learners to understand the language despite the existence of large gaps in knowledge.

2) Indirect strategies: They are a kind of strategies that are not directly related to language learning, but they support learning.

1. Metacognitive strategies: They involve setting goals, planning, evaluation, and self – monitoring.

2. Affective strategies: They enable learners to manage their emotions, motivations attitude. They equip learners with the skills needed to lower their anxiety and improving their self-motivation.

3. Social strategies: They help learners to learn through being engaged in their surrounding environment and interacting with people.

Among the above-mentioned strategies, this research is more concerned in a specific subcategory which is the metacognitive strategies. They belong to the indirect strategies because there are many studies that link the metacognitive knowledge with learning speaking. Zhang and Goh (2006) investigate the relationship between students' metacognitive awareness of speaking and strategy knowledge.

Another reason for this interest is that the metacognitive skills contain planning, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation, which are related to reflection.

### **Planning**

This strategy is concerned with defining the specific nature of the task, the resources available, requirements needed, and the need for further aids (Oxford, 1990). So, this strategy is very helpful in determining what should be done for a certain task in order to have the expected outcome for the task.

### **Self-monitoring**

This strategy is more concerned with the students' conscious decisions to monitor their learning and detect their own errors (Oxford, 1990). They are expected to pay more concentration on what they are saying and be able to find their own errors and make the necessary adjustments to correct them.

### **Self-evaluation**

In this strategy, learners are expected to evaluate what has been achieved and to draw judgment on their practices whether they were good or bad or to which degree they were good or bad. In order to do so there are many ways like recording an audio recording tape while they are practicing speaking and listen to it in a later time to find out to which degree they sounded like a native speaker. Doing an interview or telephone conversation and count how many times you repeat certain words or phrases or being asked to repeat something. Having an interview with a native speaker and notice their facial expressions during speaking: do they seem confused, alienated or involved in the conversation? By doing it more than one time students can notice if they have improved since the previous time or no (Oxford, 1990).

Nowadays, reflection has become an integrated part of the teaching and learning process. According to Pollard (2002) since a long time ago reflective teaching has been a widespread concept among professionals in the field of education.

When reviewing the literature on reflection we notice that reflection had a long history in the process of learning and teaching language. Reflection can be defined as the person's ability, to sum up, the things he had encountered in the past or the things that are happening now based on his/her own experiences and already acquired information to help in correcting his/her future actions (Pisapia, 2009). Oxford English Dictionary (1994) defines the word reflection as 'the action of turning back or fixing the thoughts on some subject; meditation, deep or serious consideration'

According to Schon (1988) reflection is people's attempt to make sense of the largely unordered and chaotic world in which they operate. Through learning reflection, the learners will be able to establish working schemas which in turn will help them in future practices (Schon, 1983). Reflection in the Language learning process passes through many stages and it also takes many different shapes. Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2010) state that:

“reflective teaching has been considered, in the literature in English language teaching in particular, as a substantial tool for student-teachers and teachers to use to understand the complex contexts of the English language and the social conditions that influence its teaching ” (p.41).

Reflective learning is the process, which lies somewhere around the notion of learning and thinking. We reflect in order to learn something, or we learn as a result of reflection. Reflective learning is a term stands for the intention to learn as a result of reflection (Moon, 2013).

According to Schön (1983 & 1987), there are two types of reflection which are reflection in action and reflection on action. Reflection in action is more concerned in the action itself and it can be noticed as a response to an unexpected event. On the other hand, reflection on action can be seen after an action takes place. According to Hall (1997), there are three levels of reflection on action. The first can be called descriptive which is more concerned with providing reasons for why certain actions have happened to pursue a higher level of good practice. This kind of reflection rarely occurs (Al-issa & Al-bulushi, 2010). According to Strampel and Oliver (2007) students who are able to do this kind of reflection are in their first steps to begin to understand the materials presented to them.

The second level is named as deliberate (Hall, 1997). In this level of reflective students can look at the situation from a critical perspective by making second judgments on their experiences and making use of their prior knowledge (Al-issa & Al-bulushi, 2010). In this level, students are able to show a level of understanding and be able to implement the newly gained knowledge (Strampel & Oliver, 2007). The students show this cognitive ability by being able to make the differences between the parts, dissolving different materials into their basic components and decide the connections between these different parts and what relates them to each other.

The third level has a critical nature (Hall, 1997), where students can make evaluations of their own learning and make future decisions (Strampel & Oliver, 2007). According to Al-issa & Al-bulushi (2010), the students at this level are able to display a deep level of learning and developing an ability to judge the value of existing ELT context from those three perspectives which leads them to make further enhancements. All of the above-mentioned levels each one completes the other therefore students who are trained on these levels should be able to move from one level to the other.

Reflection provides the students with the opportunity to be in control of their own learning and also it raises their feeling of responsibility. Zimmerman (1990, p. 4) defines autonomous learners as being “aware when they know a fact or possess a skill and when they do not”, “actively seek out information when needed and take the necessary steps to master it”, and “accept greater responsibility for their achievement outcomes”.

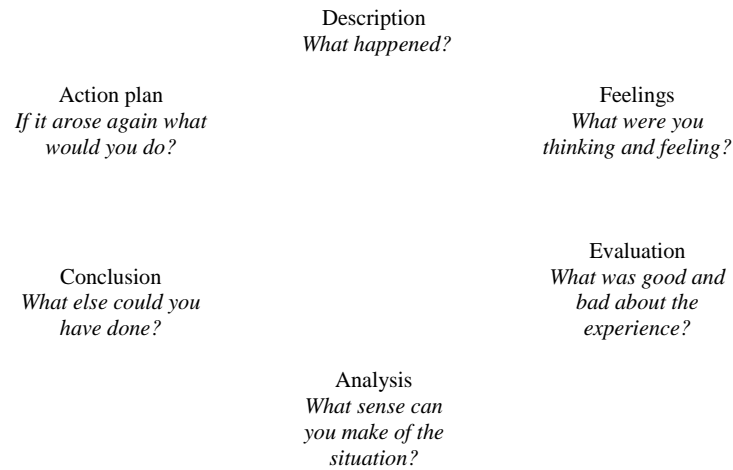
Many researches have highlighted the importance of self – confidence and it's effect in promoting learning (Brown, 2007; Gass & Selinker, 2008; SavilleTroike, 2006) According to Brown (2007), success is an inseparable part of self- confidence and students

knowledge of their own self- efficacy. Vitanova and Miller (2002) asserted that all learners must possess the ability to analyze their own weaknesses and strengths and be able to implement the strategies that enable them to gain more confidence in speaking. These kinds of actions are named as self-reflection which is considered to be a metacognitive learning strategy. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) state that the metacognitive strategies are those strategies that are applied to link the learning process with the steps to be taken for planning it. Also, it includes monitoring the production and making evaluations when the activity is completed.

Reflection is considered as an extremely useful technique in the learning process because it illuminates the wrong steps in the previous experiences and provides a solid base to build on for future practices (Raelin, 2001).

Unlike ordinary learners, reflective learners tend to be more self-aware and self –critical; they tend to be more open to criticism and accept different opinions. They even seem to be more curious to discover all sorts of things and try to use different approaches and keep track of their own learning and know their strengths and weaknesses points (Bozkurt, 2008).

Gibb's (1988) reflective cycle " Figure1. The steps that should be followed in a reflective situation".



*Figure 1. Gibb's (1988) Reflective Cycle*

When tracing back the history of blogging, According to a study by Lou, Wu, Shih and Tseng (2010) they found that high school students' performance in Chinese language writing skills has been improved and most of the students showed positive attitudes towards blogging.

Another form of blogging is the use of reflective diaries, which give the chance for learners to think back of their own learning activities in a personal way. Learners learn best when they have time to look back on their previous practices. Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod, and Rosen (1975) stated that learners learn better when they write about the recent information they acquired.

In relation to blogging, podcasts are a type of reflective audio blogging. Comac (2008) stated that his results displayed a positive experience by the users in using audio blogs for English language learning. Davis & McGrail (2009) reported that the feedback provided by teachers to the fifth-grade bloggers using podcasts, improved their proof-



revising skills and it also affected their attitudes to be more responsible and provide feedback for their peers using the same way (podcasts).

Relating reflection to learning is continued to be studied by many researchers (Ferry and Ross- Gorden, 1998; McAlpine and Weston, 2002). According to Moon (1999), reflection is not integrated into all forms of learning, but rather in some forms of learning.

## **Technology**

Technology is not a concept that can be defined in one or two words because it involves many integrated things like multimedia, Computers, the internet, artifacts, videotapes, online chat rooms and interactive audio conferencing (Zhao, 2003). A number of the above-mentioned strategies had been adopted by the field of language education in order to have better outcomes for the educational process and because of the increasing demands and needs of the students because technology has become a great motivation for learners (Gütl, Chang, Edwards, & Boruta, 2013; Martínez, 2010; Yang & Chen, 2007) unlike the traditional teaching methods which have become with no interest for most of the learners.

The help of the internet, mobile devices, tablets and the many other forms of technology help in bringing a form of authenticity into the classroom (Adair-Hauck et al., 1999; Carter & Nunan, 2001; Zhao, 2003). According to Meskill (1996), the materials that technology provides gave students the chance to be responsible for their own learning. Another positive side for technology is that it eliminates the distances when it comes to communication which in turn helps learners to communicate with native speakers and be exposed to the authentic environment of English. Despite the many positive points for technology, it can be with no benefits at all if it was not implemented successfully and guided by the teachers and researchers. Zhao (2003) stated regarding this issue the following statements: A specific form of technology has a great benefit, but it can with no use until it is used properly, regardless of its value it may have zero impact on the educational process. Therefore, the effectiveness of the user is more important than the technology itself. (p. 8) for these reasons, the teacher should pay great attention when integrating technology in the classroom to guarantee its effectiveness.

Today's students tend to feel more motivated to technology-related language learning activities because they provide more opportunities to practice language and upgrades their learning strategies (Mrozek, 2012). According to Cherney (2008), technology promotes active learning and enhances the students learning experiences which makes them achieve the expected outcome. According to a study done by Chen (2011) when investigating the student's attitudes and excitement toward inserting technology in the second language classroom, the results have shown that the students were motivated and it also enhanced their engagement and course satisfaction. With relation to podcasts technology, many studies asserted the importance of using podcasts in improving and promoting student attitudes toward pronunciation (Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Lord, 2008; Hunke, 2011; Saine, 2012). Taking into consideration the problems faced by students in learning to speak, podcasts gives more open ground for students to promote their language abilities in an environment where English is not often displayed to people either in speaking or listening (Ivy 2011; Tavales & Skevoulis, 2006). Podcasts enable students to do self- reflection and it also makes them learn by themselves without any kind of pressure by the teacher because the student himself is the initiative in the process. According to Little (2005) podcasts helps in improving students' participation and it promotes autonomous learning also it widens their metacognitive awareness through the self – assessment strategies which makes them capable of correcting their mistakes. According to Oscarson (1989) self-assessment is what the students see from their own perspective. Also, it can be considered as an extremely important tool to develop students' ability to understand that the learning process is not an action that starts and finished, but its a continuous process (Schon 1983, Gould & Taylor 1996).

Based on some statements from many researchers, podcasts do not only improve listening skills but it also enhances many other language areas like pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (Chan et al., 2011; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005).

Therefore, new methods are being implemented to ease the process of learning speaking in light of the technological advancement. Inserting technology in EFL classrooms became a must in order to motivate students and take them out of the traditional teaching methods. EFL instructors realized that it would be more suitable if students learned to speak in a communicative context rather than learning it through grammar rules. This is due to the fact that grammar doesn't teach students how to use it in real-life usage. Richards (2008) argues that students should be able to make use of the language in the real world rather than learning how to compose grammatically correct sentences.

### **Recent Studies on Technology and Language Learning**

Many researchers wrote in the field of integrating technology with language learning (Chinnery, 2006; Coryell & Chlup, 2007; Meskill & Anthony, 2007).

According to a study done by Yang and Chen (2007) to explore the attitudes of the students towards learning the language in a technological environment. The results of the study showed that students presented positive attitudes towards learning English through activities like e-mailing, Web-based courses, English homepage design, video-conferencing, and chat room discussions. However, some low-level students needed more time to adapt to the new environment. Similar to the previous study, there was a study by Wan (2011) that investigated EFL learners' perceptions of the use of weblogs as a new way

for language learning. The results of the study showed that they provide an entertaining, interactive and educational method for language learning that may have a big future in the long run.

One more study was conducted by Öz (2014) in Turkey to investigate EFL students' and teachers' perceptions of the use of the interactive whiteboard in the classroom which the findings revealed that it affected both teachers' and student's perceptions toward teaching and learning English in a positive way. However, the results also revealed that more training is needed for teachers to make the best of this technology.

### **Podcasting**

Many researchers define the word podcasts as a series of media files which can be automatically downloaded through subscription to an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed (Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013; Cebeci & Tekdal, 2006; Chan et al., 2011; O'Brien & Hegelheimer, 2007) podcasting is the act of recording files and uploading them to the internet, generally podcasts refer to audio files but sometimes it can refer to videos and it is called (vodcasts) (Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013).

When reviewing the literature on podcasts we find that they have many advantages. One advantage that it's very easy to do it and it does not require any expensive types of equipment because most of the students already have their mobile phones or computers and they can use it whenever they feel like it and use it to enhance their language skills (Abdous, Camarena, & Facer, 2009).

One more advantage of using podcasts is that it is flexible and portable because it can be accessed at any time and from any device. They allow for multitasking and time-shifting (Chan et al., 2011; Heilesen, 2010; Thorne & Payne, 2005).

According to McGarr (2009), there are three main purposes behind the use of podcasts for education which are giving a chance for flexibility in learning, breaking the boundaries of traditional classrooms and improving students' learning experiences.

Another reason for this implementation is that students are not really engaged in the speaking exercises implemented by the teacher and they often lose interest, find themselves bored, and just want the class to finish. This study takes the students out of that boring routine and helps them to learn on their own and motivate them to keep up implementing this method in their ongoing lifelong learning without having a teacher to keep telling them what to do and how to improve their speaking level. When tracing back the history of foreign language teaching and learning speaking had always been a difficult skill to acquire by students and for teachers to teach. Rashtchi (2001, as cited in Sze, 2006) mentions that Podcasts can provide a common ground and innovative media that can meet both the students' and the classrooms' needs.

Despite the many advantages of podcasts, like any other thing it may lose its benefit if it was used inappropriately. Cross (2013) mentioned some recommendations to avoid any unwanted results. He asserted on the point of guiding students on how to use the podcasts because they may not be aware of their importance or even how to use it. The guiding that the teachers provide help students to make the best out of it.

Many students are very smart when it comes to technology, however, they have a low level at school. According to Heilesen (2010) students, frequent use of podcasts to

improve language skills may help students who are interested in technology to develop better study habits. Dlott (2007) investigated the effect of students' recorded podcasts on their language abilities. The sample of the study were elementary students. They show a high level of excitement as their recordings are going to be listened to by other people, like their families or friends. During the implementation of the experiment, the students did not only record themselves but they also wrote comments on each other's podcasts. The findings of the study revealed that recording podcasts formed a great way to enhance their language ability and also it was a great source of motivation. Similarly, Al Quasim and Al Fadda (2013) conducted a study with EFL students in higher education. The students participated in creating their own podcasts in an experiment of six weeks were the results showed that podcasts could improve both students' listening and speaking skills in a much better way than traditional classroom teaching. These studies revealed the positive effect that podcasts have on students' autonomy, self- confidence, and motivation.

Another advantage that could be added to podcasting is personalization, which is a choice that podcasts provide for each learner to learn at his own base and learning style. McRae (2010) defines personalized learning as the kind of learning that enables learners to learn based on their learning styles and specific needs.

Arousing the inner motivation for students to take the lead in their own learning makes it much easier for both teachers and students and gives more fruitful results.

There are many ways to facilitate autonomous language learning, among these ways is Computer-Assisted language learning (CALL) and its branch Mobile Assisted language learning (MALL), they are considered as effective tools in promoting autonomous learning (Benson, 2004; Lee, 2005; Murphy, 2006).

Nowadays teaching speaking is required to be both attractive and interactive and among the trends in MALL, podcasts have proven to be an effective tool in enhancing learners' abilities inside and outside of the classrooms (Rosell-Aguilar, 2013).

Before the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there was not much interest in CALL because of the belief that it could play only a very small roll in teaching English (James, 1996), but nowadays because of the widespread of the internet and the improvement in the technological section, the trend MALL became very popular and gave easy access to podcasts to everyone (Hawke, 2010).

There are many ways that technology can be exploited to improve students' speaking skills. McQuillan (2006) mentioned some tasks that help in improving oral production, like interviewing native speakers, making talk shows and having an audio diary. In relation to this field, Tavales and Skevoulis (2006) suggested that learners should be engaged in listening practices by making audio recordings by themselves or for native speakers, which may help in improving their grammar, pronunciation, and intonation.

To have an idea of whether the use of oral reflections through podcasts motivate students or no. There was a study conducted by Chan et al. (2011) in which he implemented a podcast project to enhance classroom teaching for Chinese and Korean EFL students. The findings of the study revealed that despite the students knowing that this project is not compulsory, 85 % of Chinese learners and 96% of Koreans used them.

To find out what was the motivation for students to use podcasts, there was the study of Bolliger, Supanakorn and Boggs (2010) in which they investigated the influence of podcasting on learners' motivation in the online environment. The findings showed that learners had an average degree of motivation and a noticeable difference was detected due



to some variables based on gender, class standing, and prior learning experiences.

However, in another study done by Ducate and Lomicka (2009) in which they investigated the effect of podcasting on students speaking skills especially pronunciation skills their findings did not reveal any statistically significant enhancement on students speaking skills.

Camarena and Facer (2009) explored the effectiveness of using podcasts in eight language literature courses at an American university. The findings showed that there is a statistically significant improvement on students' study habits and learning skills. When it comes to university students, there were some studies that investigated the effect of podcasts on learners speaking skills. Among these studies, there was the Facer, Abdous, and Camarena (2009) study of two university second language learning courses with a sample that included 18 advanced level French learners and 30 elementary level Italian learners. The findings were positive regarding the improvement of the students' writing, comprehension, reading and speaking skills.

Fitria, Vianty, and Petrus (2015, p. 64-65) mention that podcasts provide a significant contribution when it comes to improving students' speaking skills. Also the idea of podcasting had been discussed by Dan Schmit, an instructional technology expert in the College of Education at the University of Nebraska, which is reflected in his statement as follows: "Educators areas starting points to see how podcasting can help students' vocabulary, writing, editing, public speaking, and presentation skills. Students can also learn skills that will be valuable in the working world, such as communication, time management and problem-solving". (Schmit, as cited in Borja, 2005, p. 8).

Furthermore, through the use of podcasts, teachers can have an opportunity to keep in contact with their students outside of the classrooms which promotes learning beyond any fixed schedule (Bongey, Cizadlo, & Kalnback, 2006, p. 350-367). It provides a friendly and relaxed environment for students to use it whenever they feel like it and it also, provides privacy and eliminates any kind of frustration that students might have when speaking in the classroom among their classmates because they can create their podcasts using their PC or their mobile phones. Rosell-Aguilar and Fernando (2015) wrote: “The podcast was a convenient and easy to use format” ( p. 32)

Also according to Lum (2015) podcasts help in uplifting students' self-confidence and help them to identify their own errors and monitor their own improvement in all aspects of speaking. In addition, it equips them with a more positive attitude toward recording themselves and reflect on their own improvement.

Regardless of these many studies on podcasting effect, Hegelheimer and O’Bryan’s (2009) study stated that podcasts can be a beneficial tool in SLL, yet more research is needed in this matter to have a clear understanding of this new form of learning strategy. Also in the field of MALL, Burston’s (2013) study makes it clear that there are not many studies directly related to the effect of the use of podcasts on foreign language learners' speaking skills.

### **Learners’ Perceptions of Oral Reflections through Podcasts Implementation.**

According to the already mentioned studies, implementing oral reflections through podcasting may be an effective learning tool. However, this is not enough because students have to accept it also to be proven as an effective tool in learning. Heilesen (2010) states “increasing student acceptance of podcasting as a useful tool for studying may help

improve the academic environment” (p. 1066). Many studies have been implemented to find out students' perceptions of podcasting (Chan et al., 2011; Farshi & Mohammadi, 2013; Hasan & Hoon, 2012; Lee & Chan, 2007; Edirisingha et al., 2007). Most of the studies' findings showed that students' perceptions were generally positive to this kind of technology. The students felt motivated and attracted to learn languages through podcasts because of the flexibility that it provides, unlike the traditional classroom environment.

According to Kavaliauskienė and Anusienė (2009), learners feel more relaxed and motivated when learning a language without the observation of the teacher and peers. They also emphasized the encouragement that is aroused out of self-evaluation of achievements and being responsible for your own learning.

Rahimi and Katal (2012) also added to the literature in their study that investigated the relationship between students' readiness and perceptions of podcasting. The results revealed that students' perceptions are affected by their attitudes towards technology and the internet.

Finally, there were not many studies in Turkey on oral reflections through podcasting, except for Başaran (2010), which investigated the students' self-efficacy in language learning and the effect of podcast use on the change in their self-efficacy through an experimental study that lasted for twelve weeks. The findings revealed that students' self-efficacy perceptions of learning English significantly improved.

To sum up, the studies related to this field revealed that oral reflections through podcasting are a new strategy for language learning and it has a promising future. Most of the researchers state that more research is needed on this form of reflection to have a firm grasp of its entire aspects.

The literature review shows that speaking skill is not an easy skill to acquire for many learners. In today's age and the availability of technology made it easy to exploit it in the educational process through the use of podcasts, which are available for everyone through their mobile devices. Using oral reflection to practice speaking through podcasts can be an extremely helpful way to improve students speaking skills. Oral reflections are a form of language learning strategy that can be implemented through the use of podcasts, which are considered to be a promising language learning tool for many learners to develop their speaking skills through implementing reflections.

In light of the above-mentioned information, the next chapter will give detailed information on the methodology of the study alongside with the setting and participants, research design, treatment, instrument and finally data collection procedures and data analysis.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The chapter provides information on the methodology of the study and it is divided into eight sections as follows: research design, context, participants, procedures, data collection instrument, data analysis procedures, reliability and validity, and ethical considerations. The first section presents the information related to the research design, the second section provides detailed information on the place and the setting of the study in general, the third section provides information on the participants and their demographic information, the fourth section gives information on the steps that have been followed regarding each phase of the study, the fifth section provides information regarding the instruments that have been used to collect the data, the sixth section describes how the data were inserted to be analysed, the seventh section gives insight into the factors that have been taken under consideration to ensure validity and reliability, the last section illustrates the ethical concerns that have been considered before implementing the study.

#### **Research Design**

In order to answer the research question, the researcher should select a suitable method that answers the research questions. Then, he has to make a decision and know for sure that this is the right method to implement such research (Kajornboon, 2005). The researcher decided that using quasi- Experimental; One-group Pretest-Posttest design would be the most suitable way to answer the research questions and the researcher also used two questionnaires to support the findings of the study. One group study design is

considered as one of the most frequently used quasi-experimental research designs in which a single group of research participants or subjects is pretested, given some treatment or independent variable manipulation, then post-tested. If the pre-test and post-test scores differ significantly, then the difference may be attributed to the independent variable. Ary et al. (2010) mention that an experimental study aims to find out the effect that systematic manipulation of one variable has on another variable. In other words, experimental research is a kind of research that is used to investigate the existence of a relationship between the cause and the effect of a situation where the effect caused by the independent variable on the dependent variable is observed. It is considered to be a very effective method for providing specific details and results. In this research, the independent variable is students' practicing oral reflections and the dependent variable is English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' improvement in speaking skill.

### **Participants**

The participant of the study were first-year students enrolled in the English Language Literature (ELL) program at one of the universities in North Cyprus. To have a better understanding of the students' level of English the study provides a description of the minimum requirements for being enrolled in the English department. At the beginning of the study year, all the undergraduate students who seek to pursue an English related field must present an acceptable level of English. This level is evaluated through a proficiency test they submit at the preparatory school before being enrolled in their desired department.

Students who are able to score 60 or above out of 100 passes the exam and can complete their registration and start attending their classes, but for the ones who fail the

exam are placed in appropriate levels at the preparatory school depending on their score. After completing the assigned levels they can take the exam again and if they pass they can complete their registration and enrol in their departments. Six students volunteered to participate in this study. The students study in the English language literature program and their levels were described according to their speaking class teacher as follows: 2 of them were low level, two were average and two were high. The participants were named as follow: participant1, participant2, participant3, participant4, participant5, participant6. All the participants' identities along with their personal information were kept anonymous for confidentiality purposes.

The selection of the sample class was not a random procedure because the researcher asked one of the speaking courses professors to assign a class that the study could be done in, but the choice of the participants was voluntary. The participants were given a pre-test and a post-test to find out their level in speaking and to explore the possibility of finding out influence for oral reflections on students' speaking skills at the English language department at one of the universities in Northern Cyprus. The test used in the pre-test and post-test was the IELTS speaking section test.

Table 1

*Demographic Information of the Participants*

Age	Male	Female
19		1
20		1
18		1
19	1	
21		1
20		1
Total= 6	1	5

**Instruments**

The data was collected through four instruments. The first instrument was the pre-test, the IELTS speaking test (see Appendix E), which was in three parts. The first part of the test consisted of the examiner introducing himself and checking the candidate's identification. Then continued as an interview. The second part entitled "students long turn", which tests students' language proficiency and gives them the chance to express themselves. The third part is entitled "two-way discussion", in the form of a discussion related to a topic in daily life which provides students the chance to express their argumentative skills. The exam intended to measure students' speaking skills in four different aspects, fluency, and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation.



The second instrument was the treatment phase which is the 12 reflective audio recordings along with the students' reflective comments and teachers' provided feedback.

The third instrument was the post-test, which was conducted after the treatment stage to see whether there was any significant improvement in the students speaking skills.

The fourth instrument was the questionnaire, the first questionnaire was conducted in the post-test session to find out EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards practicing oral reflections through audio blogs. The second questionnaire was also conducted in the post-test session to find out the effects of audio blogging environment on EFL students' speaking skills.

### **Ethical Considerations**

To start the data collection, the researcher sent the questionnaire and application form to the Ethics Review Board of NEU. The study and the questionnaire were assumed applicable and the study was approved by the committee (see Appendix B). The researcher sent the proposal for the Ethics committee and after a month of evaluation, written permission was obtained. Once it was obtained, the researcher also obtained verbal approval from his supervisor to start the data collection. Since the participants were over 18 they had to sign a written consent form by which they agreed to participate voluntarily in the study (see Appendix B). All the participants were informed that their names and personal information would be kept confidential and all the obtained data would be used for research purposes only.

## Procedures

On the assigned date for the academic year 2018-2019, the researcher went to the intended university to start the study. As the first step, he had a meeting with the sample class teacher who gives the speaking course for the selected class and informed him of all the related information for the study. The second step was providing students with detailed information for the reasons behind implementing this study. As the students were over 18 years old, permission was obtained from them through a consent form prior to starting the study (see Appendix B). The third step was to provide the class with overall information regarding the experiment process in order to choose the volunteers from the class. After that, the researcher had a meeting with the participants of the study and gave a detailed explanation to them about the study procedures and set dates for the pre and post-test. The information provided to the students was that a pre and post-tests were going to be administered in the form of audio recorded interviews to measure their speaking skills abilities. They were also informed that the IELTS speaking test was going to be used in both the pre and the post-test and after the pre-test a six-week treatment period was going to be conducted through an application, which was chosen to be as a platform for the experiment. The application is called Podbean (<https://www.podbean.com>) and can be accessed through their desktops and mobile phones, but the researcher recommended the use of the application because it could be accessed by everyone through their mobile phones and had more features than the website, like commenting and posting. They were asked to download the app and create personal accounts on it and upload voice recordings twice a week then reflect on their learning classes and some of their daily life activities through some questions to guide them in the reflection process (see Appendix C). The students were given written instructions on how to download the app and create their own

personal accounts (see Appendix D). To make it easier for the students, the researcher divided the experiment into 4 phases and briefed the participants regarding each phase and the procedures to be followed in each stage. **The first phase** was the implementation of the pre-test, **the second phase** was the treatment phase. **The third phase** was the implementation of the post-test. The fourth phase was the distribution of the questionnaire. In the **first phase**, the researcher assigned a date and time for the pre-test and gave detailed information on the pre-test which was as follows:

1. The pre-test and post-test was the IELTS speaking test <https://www.ieltsessentials.com/global/prepare/freepracticetests/speakingpracticetests> (see Appendix E)
2. The IELTS speaking test was divided into three parts as follow (see appendix F):

The first part was entitled "introduction and interview". This part of the test begin with the examiner introducing himself or herself and checking the candidate's identification. It then continues as an interview. The second part is entitled "students' long turn", this part tests the students' language proficiency and gives them the chance to express themselves. The third part is entitled "two-way discussion", this part is in the form of a discussion related to a daily life topic which gives a chance to students to express their argumentative skills.

**The second phase** was divided into four steps:

- 1- They were going to make audio recordings twice a week and publish them on the app.
- 2- After doing each audio recording they were asked to listen to it and write a reflective comment regarding the language and content.
- 3- At the end of each week the teacher provided language and content feedback for each student, individually.
- 4- After each week they were asked to read the teacher's feedback regarding their language and content then make use of it in their following podcasts.

In the **third phase**, a post-test was going to be implemented, which was the same as the pre-test. At the end of the meeting, the researcher and the students exchanged their contact information in order to keep up and continue with the experiment.

On the assigned date for the pre-test, which was after one day from the meeting, the researcher made sure that the class environment was relaxing and there were not any disturbing factors that might affect students' speaking. The researcher provided a detailed explanation for the pre-test in order to facilitate students' understanding of the questions and not to have pauses in the audio recordings or to start the test one more time. Then it was conducted and recorded in a form of audio-recorded interviews, each recording was from 9 to 12 minutes. After the pre-test, the researcher kept in contact with the students via WhatsApp. The researcher provided students with written instructions in the form of a text message on WhatsApp (see Appendix D). The researcher also gave detailed information on how to create an account on the podcast platform Podbean.

Every participant made his own personal account on the application and the researcher had his own account also and added the students to be able to view their podcasts. However, the students were given instructions not to add each other on the application for research purposes related to the environment, so they could not listen to each other's podcasts. The experiment lasted for ( 6 weeks) as it was described earlier in the third phase of the experiment in which the participants uploaded two recordings in each week which made it 12 recordings in total for each participant (See Appendix I)

In the **fourth phase**, on the second assigned date for the experiment, the post-test was implemented having the same provided environment as the pre-test.

After implementing the post-test the researcher distributed the first and second questionnaires (See Appendix H) on the participants and collected them during the same session.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

For the first and third research instrument, the data analysis was carried out through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20, which was used to implement the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test. The test investigated if there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results. For the fourth research instrument, the research used descriptive analysis to analyse the questionnaire response frequencies. Due to the small number of participants (SPSS) was not carried out for the questionnaire results.

## **Validity**

Ary et al. (2010) define validity as "the extent to which scores on a test enable one to make meaningful and appropriate interpretations" (p. 24). The study was conducted on one group of students from a speaking course. To achieve the aims of the study, a pre-test was given to the students and after the treatment period, a post-test was given for the students. Concerning the validity of the test, both the pre and post-test were IELTS speaking tests which are standard proficiency tests designed by IDP Education alongside the British Council and Cambridge Assessment English. In this way, systematic sources of error in testing, which Ary et al. (2010) consider to be the root of validity problems, were prevented. Therefore, the test used to examine students' speaking performances is thought to be a valid instrument.

## **Reliability**

According to Creswell (2009) reliability refers to the consistency of measurement over time. The main goal is to measure the chosen consistency research instrument which should provide valid scores (Creswell, 2008). As testing was used as the main instrument for collecting the data, two raters were asked to evaluate the Students IELTS speaking test to ensure that participants were graded in a reliable way. The raters gave scores from 1 to 9 based on analytical assessment scale (see Appendix G) for the following criteria: Fluency and coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range and Accuracy and Pronunciation. Inter-rater reliability was implemented. Inter-rater reliability refers to statistical measurements that determine how similar the data collected by different raters are. A rater is described as someone who is measuring performance or skill. A rater might be a job

interviewer, a psychologist or a scientist. To achieve validity the raters must have close scores in the measured skill and in case of a lack of consensus they should review their scoring and know where the error is and correct it to have an acceptable level of consistency (Alleydog, 2019). After implementing the inter-rater reliability, the results showed that the percentage of reliability between the raters was 75% or more which was proven to be reliable (Stephanie, 2016).

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, also discusses these findings in relation to the literature related to the topic of research. The analysis was guided by the following research questions:

- 1- How do oral reflections affect English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills?
- 2- Do oral reflections significantly influence EFL students' speaking proficiency?
- 3- Does the audio blogging environment affect EFL students' speaking skills?
- 4- What are EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards practicing speaking through oral reflections?

#### Effects of Oral Reflections on EFL Students' Speaking Skills

To answer the first research question, the researcher used the one-sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The results showed that the students' scores in the pre-test differed significantly from the students' scores in the post-test.



Table 2 shows the positive and the negative ranks of the participants in the pre-test and the post-test. It shows that there was a positive ranking for 6 participants with a mean rank of 3.50 and 0 negative rankings with a mean rank of .00, which indicates that all the participants' scores have improved in the post-test. We can deduce from the positive ranking that students' speaking skills in the post-test had improved due to oral reflections.

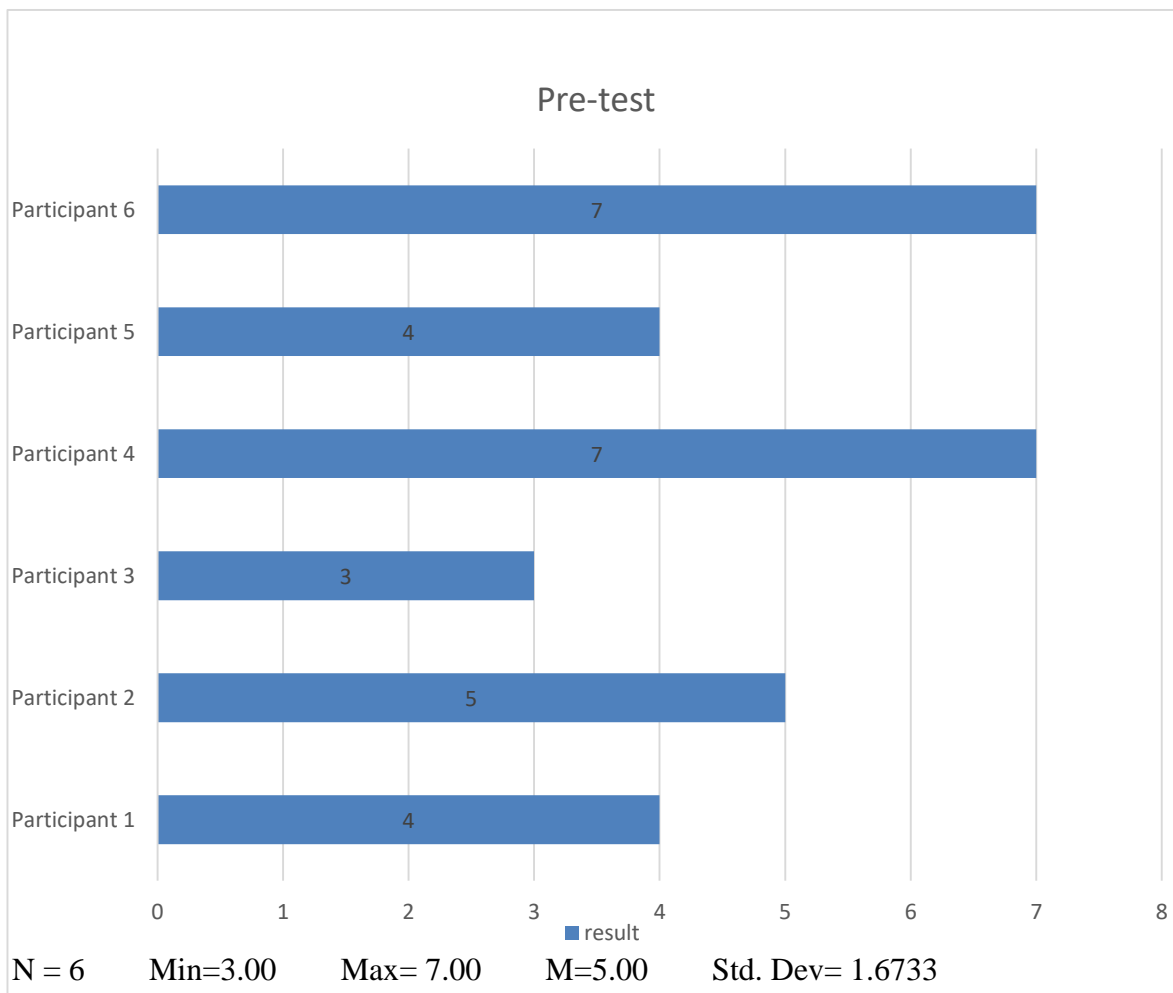
Table 2

*Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Post-test – Pre-test Test Summary.*

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	0a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	6b	3.50	21.00
Ties	0c		
Total	6		

Note: a. Post-test < Pre-test.  
 b. Post-test > Pre-test.  
 c. Post-test = Pre-test.

Figure2 illustrates the results of the pre-test results. The results of the analysis showed that the pre-test mean was (M= 5.00) with a standard deviation (SD= 1.6733) where (Min=3.00) and (Max= 7.00). We realize from the post-test scores that students' scores had improved significantly when it is compared to the pre-test.

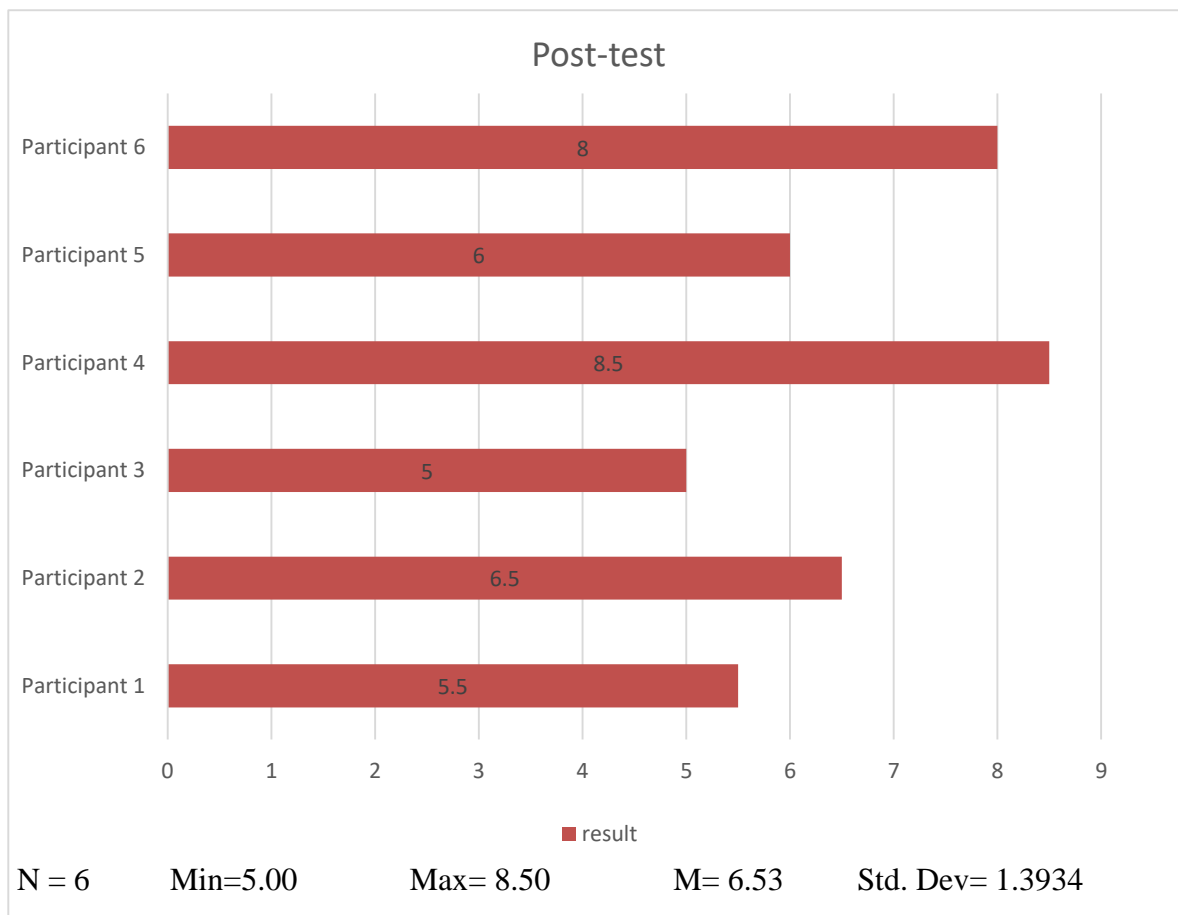


*Figure 2. Pre-test results*

Key: M= Mean    Std. Dev. = standard Deviation N= Number of students

Min= Minimum    Max= Maximum

Figure 3 illustrates the results of the post-test. The results of the analysis showed that the post-test mean was (M= 6.53) with standard deviation (SD= 1.3934) where (Min=5.00) and (Max=8.50). We realize from the post-test scores that students scores had improved when it is compared to the pre-test.



*Figure 3. Post-test results*

Key: M= Mean    Std. Dev. = standard Deviation N= Number of students

Min= Minimum      Max= Maximum

### The Influence of Oral Reflections on EFL Students Speaking Proficiency.

The one-sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test was implemented to test the null hypothesis  $H_0$  which assumes that the median of differences between the Pre-test and Post-test equals 0, in other words,  $H_0$  assumes that the difference between the scores of the participants' pre-test and post-test are not statistically significant. The test results showed that the P-value was lower than 0.05, thus the null hypothesis was rejected at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Wilcoxon signed-Ranked Test indicated that post-test scores were statistically significantly higher than pre-test scores ( $Z = -2.232$ ,  $P = 0.026$ ). comparison between pre-test and post-test results is illustrated in figure 4.

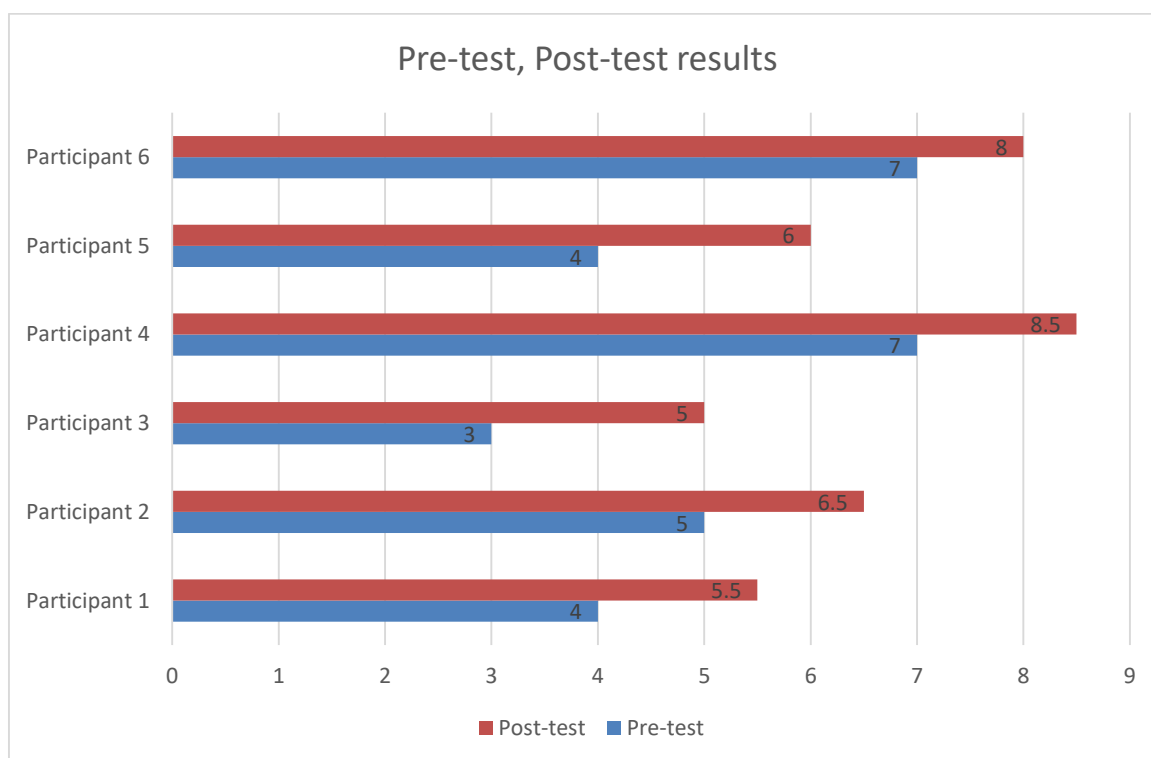


Figure 4. Pre-test and Post-test results comparison

The value of the test criterion  $Z$  in the one-sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test and the  $P$ -value are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

*One-sample Wilcoxon signed-rank test results*

Total N	6
Test Statistic	21.0
Z	-2.23
Standard Error	4.70
Standardized Test Statistic	2.23
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test) (P)	.026

### **The Effects of Audio Blogging Environment on EFL Speaking Skills.**

The participants' responses in terms of device, time and place were collected after the post-test was implemented through a questionnaire and were used to analyze their podcasts recording preferences. Descriptive analysis was run in order to calculate frequencies and percentages.

#### **Device Preferences**

Table 4 illustrates the descriptive analysis of the device preference. The results show that 66.6 % of the participants preferred recording their podcasts using their mobile phones, whereas 16.6 % of them used their desktops to make their recordings, also 16.6% of them preferred using tablet pc for their podcasts. Table 4 shows that using an MP3 player was not a preferred recording method. The students' preference for mobile phones

may refer to its mobility which we can be deduced from this preference that flexibility and mobility environment are considered as an effective factor in the students learning.

Table 4

*The device preference.*

Device	F	%
Desktop / laptop computer	1	16.7
MP3 player	0	0
Mobile phone	4	66.6
Tablet pc	1	16.7
Total	6	100

Key: F= Frequency    %= percent

## Location Preferences

Table 5 illustrates the descriptive analysis of the location preference. The results show that 66.6% of the students prefer to record their podcasts at home, whereas 33.3% of them preferred to make their podcasts when they go out for long walks on the road, but none of the participants showed a preference for recording at the university campus. We can deduce from the students' preference form home environment that audio blogging environment affects students' performance in the speaking skill because normally the home environment has the features of calmness and low anxiety levels which turned out to promote their speaking skills because they choose it as the most preferred location for recording.

Table 5

*The location preference.*

Location	F	%
Home or dormitory	4	66.7
University	0	0
On the road	2	33.3
Total	6	100

Key: F= Frequency    %= percent

### Podcast Recording Time Preferences

Table 6 results illustrate the descriptive analysis for time preference. The results show that most of the students' preferred time to make their recordings is when they allocate special time for recording, which we can deduce from it that students prefer to have a quiet and relaxing environment to make their recordings.

In short, we can say that students' preferences for device, location and time give us a clue that having a suitable environment can help students to promote their speaking skills.

Table 6

*Descriptive analysis for the time preference*

Time	F	%
While going home	0	0
While doing university-related tasks	2	33.3
Allocating special time for recording	3	50
While waiting for someone	1	16.7
Others	0	0
Total	6	100

Key: F= Frequency    %= percent



## **EFL Students' Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Practicing Speaking Through Audio blogs.**

After collecting the questionnaire responses, descriptive analysis was applied to analyze their responses to answer the research question.

The questions were divided into three categories; ease of use, enjoyableness, and effectiveness of podcasting in language learning.

### **Ease of Use**

Table 7 shows a summary of the findings related to the ease of use category. The first and second items investigated learners' perceptions regarding the ease of accessing podcasts and making recordings. The results reported similar results for the two items as 83.3% agreed that it was easy for them to use podcasts, and 66.6% of them agreed that it was possible to use podcasts everywhere and every time.

The third and fourth item results also were positive regarding how to handle this form of technology as 83.3% disagreed not knowing how to handle this form of technology, and 100% of the students agreed that using the platform gave them easy access to their podcasts.

In short, we can state that most of the participants agreed on the ease of recording the educational podcasts.

Table 7

*Frequency Distribution of Responses to Ease of Use Items*

Questions		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. It is easy to record the podcast audio files.	F	0	1	0	3	2
	%	0	16.7	0	50	33.3
2. Using podcasts is possible everywhere and every time.	F	0	1		3	2
	%	0	16.7	0	50	33.3
3. I don't know how to handle this new technology	F	4	1	1	0	0
	%	66.7	16.7	16.7	0	0
4. Accessing the platform eased the process of viewing my podcasts.	F	0	0	0	1	5
	%	0	0	0	16.7	83.3

Note. N= 6 %= percentage F= Frequency

### Enjoyableness of Podcasts.

Table 8 shows the summary of the findings related to the enjoyableness of Podcasts. The responses to the fifth item showed that 83.3% of the participants agreed that they enjoyed recording podcasts where only one student show disinterest in podcasts. The sixth and eight-item results also showed that students find recording podcasts are interesting and fun, as 83.3% agreed that they enjoyed recording podcasts, and also 83.3% disagreed that podcasts bring them no fun. Whereas for the seventh item the students were not sure about it were 50% of them agreed that they will continue recording podcasts in the future and 50% disagreed that they will continue recording podcasts in the future.

Table 8

*Frequency Distribution of Responses to Enjoyableness of Podcasts Items*

Questions		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I enjoy recording podcasts.	F	0	1	0	2	3
	%	0	16.7	0	33.3	50
2. I don't think recording podcasts is interesting	F	2	3	1	0	0
	%	33.3	50	16.7	0	0
3. I will continue recording podcasts in the future.*	F	1	2	0	2	1
	%	16.7	33.3	0	33.3	16.7
4. Podcasts bring me no fun at all	F	4	1	1	0	0
	%	66.7	16.7	16.7	0	0

Note. N= 6 %= percentage F= Frequency

### **Effectiveness of Podcasts in Language Learning**

Table 9 shows a summary of the findings related to the effectiveness of podcasts in language learning category. Responses to the ninth, tenth, eleventh, thirteenth and fourteenth items were mostly positive. 83.3% agreed that recording podcasts had made them more motivated to learn the language, and the same percentage of the participants also agreed that podcasts are useful for language learning. For the eleventh and thirteenth items, the students' responses were also positive were 83% of them agreed that recording podcasts is very important for improving English speaking skills and they showed that they are more open to learning through podcasts.

Item twelve responses were neither positive or negative, the students' responses were uncertain whether they had used their time productively by recording the podcasts, 50% of the students agreed that recording podcasts was a productive use of their time. However, 100% of the students in item fourteen agreed that they will recommend their friends to learn English through podcasts.

Table 9

*Frequency Distribution of Responses to Effectiveness of Podcasts in Language Learning Items.*

Questions		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Recording English podcasts made me more motivated to learn the language.	F	0	1	0	2	3
	%	0	16.7	0	33.3	50
2. Podcasts are useful for language learning.	F	0	0	1	3	2
	%	0	0	16.7	50	33.3
3. Recording podcasts is effective for improving speaking skills.	F	0	0	1	1	4
	%	0	0	16.7	16.7	66.6
4. Recording podcasts was not a productive use of my time.	F	2	1	1	1	1
	%	33.3	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7
5. After working with English podcasts, I am more open to learning through podcasts in the future	F	0	1	0	3	2
	%	0	16.7	0	50	33.3
6. I would recommend that other students who want to learn English record podcasts.	F	0	0	0	2	4
	%	0	0	0	33.3	66.7

Note. N= 6 %= percentage F= Frequency

## Discussion

The study aimed to find whether oral reflections through the use of podcasts improve students' speaking skills. When the researcher completed all the data analysis, the study findings revealed that students' speaking skills in the post-test had really improved significantly. In other words, the students' speaking skills had improved in a positive way by the use of oral reflections. The treatment period had an effect on students speaking skills in many ways. It can be inferred that the results of the treatment had a positive effect on the students' speaking skills in terms of fluency and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. As it was mentioned before in the research background, the students encountered many problems in speaking performance. They lacked the ability to express ideas, produce appropriate vocabulary, produce correct pronunciation and speak fluently. However, after implementing the treatment, it had been found that most of these problems were solved, especially their fluency and pronunciation because the recordings gave them the chance to reflect on their own learning and self-correct their mistakes.

As for oral reflections, based on the analysis of the pre-test and post-test, oral reflections proved to have a significant value on students' speaking skills. As we all know people use many ways to convey their ideas and feelings in many other ways not just writing, such as using oral production which is not less important than writing, but despite oral reflection applicability, it seems that there is a gap in the literature on oral reflections and many of the previous studies were limited to written reflection. Written reflection had been investigated and it had been found to be effective in “linking the academic and personal domains” (Carroll & Mchawala, 2001 p.50).

We can deduce from the findings of the study that oral reflections improved students' speaking skills. Students managed to reflect on their own podcasts through writing reflective comments and listening to their previous recordings each time, which gave them the chance to improve many aspects of their speaking. They managed to identify their weaknesses and work on it for better improvement in their upcoming recordings. These findings are in line with Huang (2012) study which mentions that in this learning context self-reflection plays a role as a mediational tool that individual learners can use to internalize their learning through critical thinking, self-assessment, and self-direction in ways that contribute to speaking development. Reflection triggered learners' awareness and perceptions that enabled them to display more attention to their own learning process. In line with the purpose of implementing this study, there were many previous studies that explored the use of different reflection modalities (Huang, 2010). Dantas-Whitney's (2002) study found out that audiotaped journals enhanced students' self-direction and self-awareness. The study stated also that students began to show responsibility for constructing connections between their personal experience and course content, they revealed their interest towards certain areas in the curriculum which they wish to explore in more detail and their interest to learn more strategies that they can use to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning.

It can be also be deduced from the findings of the study that oral reflections provided a useful way to explore affective variables over time. As Luria (1982) stated, “self-regulation is realized through the [participant's] expanded [talk]” (p. 103). Oral reflections did not only provide a tool for learners to evaluate their performance and plan for the next step, but it also provided opportunities for the appearance of self-guidance, a

process in which learners perform self-assessments and plan specific courses of goal-oriented actions (Huang, 2012).

Learning through reflection can offer questions regarding the experiences we possess and how can we make use of it and reflect on it and it also gives us an insight into the changes that we implement in our lives which in turn can provide a deeper sense of learning and experience (Pavlovich & Collins and Jones, 2009).

It can be concluded from the previous findings that reflection is considered a promising tool for learning and it is not limited only to students, but it extends to teachers and student teachers. It provides the ultimate education because you learn from your own mistakes for better improvement, which limits the chances of duplicating the same mistake more than one time. Rogers (2001) states that “Perhaps no other concept offers higher education as much potential for engendering lasting and effective change in the lives of students as that of reflection” (p. 55).

Taking into consideration the finding of this study, which indicated that oral reflections had a significant effect on students' speaking skills, one could argue that the improvement in learners' oral language production may refer to learning in general and it is not necessarily related to their spoken reflection (Huang, 2012).

As for the tool implemented for oral reflections, it had been found to be a very effective tool for oral reflections as perceived from students' questionnaire results. This result was consistent with Bustari, Samad and Achmad (2017), which found that it is flawless that implemented podcast media can increase students' speaking skills, where the result showed statistical significance. Also, the result corresponds with the findings of



Fitria, Vianty, and Petrus (2015) which explains that podcasts were very useful for gaining better achievement in speaking.

According to Rosell-Aguilar (2013), the results of their study showed that students in the students-made podcast group outperformed the students in the other groups in the speaking skill. The results of the study are also in line with Facer et al.'s (2009) study, as they found out that using podcasts can enhance students speaking skills. A similar study that was implemented by Shih (2010) found that the use of video blogs can improve students speaking skills. However, according to a study done by Stockwell, his finding revealed that regardless of the many positive sides that podcasts may have, it lacks an important element of language learning which is interaction. Countering this claim, Rosell-Aguilar (2013) argues that podcasts can be used in an interactive environment by using it in pair and group work activities. Furthermore, Ducate and Lomicka's (2009) study results revealed that incorporating podcasts within language teaching procedures can have a much more positive effect on the students that enables them to be engaged in a meaningful and contextualized activities rather than the traditional drilling and error correction tasks.

Regarding the effects of audio blogging environment on EFL speaking skills. The questionnaire responses were used to find out learners' preferences in terms of the device, time and location. It has been found that most of the learners prefer to listen to the podcasts on their mobile phones more than any other device. These results contradict with Lonn and Teasley (2009) in which they found that students preferred to use their desktops for podcasts or laptops rather than using mobile phones. The reason for this contradiction may refer to the technological advancement because 10 years passed after that study and technology is evolving every day and having easy access to the internet is not bounded now by the device.

According to Cebeci and Tekdal (2006), podcasting gives flexibility because it is not bounded by a classroom. However, the results of the questionnaire revealed that the participants of the study did not make use of this privilege and preferred to make their podcasts at home or in their dormitory where they allocate a specific time to make the recordings.

Regarding EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards practicing speaking through audio blogs in terms of ease of use, enjoyableness, and effectiveness in language learning. Data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed and evaluated in the light of literature. As for the ease of using podcasts, participants reported that recording and accessing the podcasts was easy for them as they were already familiar with this form of technology. However, few students provided a negative response regarding how to handle this form of technology.

When it comes to the enjoyableness of podcasts most of the participants agreed that they enjoyed recording podcasts which correspond with the findings of the studies of Al Qasim and Al Fadda (2013) and Li (2010) whose participants also found learning through podcasts brought them much pleasure and excitement. However, students had neutral opinions regarding whether to continue using podcasts in the future or no. which may refer to the university's work pressure and not having enough time to allocate to continue practicing podcasts.

When it comes to the effectiveness of podcasts in language learning, the questionnaire results revealed that most of the participants' responses were positive regarding that podcasts were very effective in language learning. These results are in line with the previous studies in this topic that revealed that podcasts motivate them for language learning (Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013; Chan et al., 2011; O'Brien &

Hegelheimer, 2007). These positive responses are also in agreement with results of many studies that found podcasts have a positive effect on language learning and improved their listening and speaking skills (Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013; Ashraf et al., 2011; Li, 2010). According to some other studies in this field, podcasts did not only improve students speaking skills but it also improved other language skills, for example, Abdous et al. (2009) mention that students found educational podcasts useful not only for oral and aural skills but also for vocabulary and grammar knowledge. In line with this point, Chan et al. (2011) mention that podcasts effects learners speaking skills and listening comprehension positively. Taking under consideration the findings of this study and the related literature findings, it can be concluded that podcasts can be an effective tool in language learning and it can promote a variety of skills if it was used based on specific pedagogical goals and specific instructions on how to use it to match these goals.

Although most of the students had positive perceptions of podcasts their answers were neutral regarding whether the use of podcasts was a productive use for their time or no. This result may have several reasons behind it since the experiment was implemented at the end of their term, they may have thought that spending their time on other course-related tasks like exams worth their time more than podcasts because most students are interested in having high marks. Another reason may be that they might have needed more time to realize the importance of podcasts to their language learning because six weeks may not have been enough for them to be convinced that podcasts are important for their learning. The assumption was built on a similar study done by Ince (2015) in which one of his study limitations suggested that if the treatment period had taken more than 6 weeks, students' perception could have changed regarding some aspects of podcasts.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION, PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the answers to the research questions, the conclusion, pedagogical implications, and recommendations for further studies.

#### Conclusion

The study was aimed to find out whether oral reflections through the use of podcasts significantly improve students speaking skills. Six students from the English language and literature department at one of the universities in North Cyprus volunteered to participate in the study. To answer the first and second research questions, the participants went through six weeks treatment period in which they were required to make two recordings each week and publish them on a platform and self reflect on their recordings. The students were given the IELTS speaking test as the pre-test and post-test. Each test was recorded and analysed by two experts. The results of the pre and post-test analysis revealed that oral reflections demonstrated positive fruitions on students' speaking achievement, which indicated that the treatment period had a positive impact on students speaking skills. In addition, the implementation of oral reflections through podcasts had a positive impact on students' autonomy and self-confidence. One example of learner autonomy is the students' ability to monitor and identify their own errors and make use of it for better improvements. The results revealed that learners use their prior knowledge and their reflections and make associations concerning their learning experiences. They

perform evaluative, comparative, causative and critical reflective acts when they associate their involvement in the process of their learning (Kurt, 2017).

For the third research question regarding the perceptions of students towards podcasts recording, a questionnaire was distributed on the students and the results revealed that most of the students had positive responses regarding the ease of podcasts, enjoyableness, and effectiveness in language learning. However, some students had negative responses regarding whether to continue using this technology in the future or no. These results may be explained by the shortness of the treatment period which may not have convinced the students of the importance of podcasts to their language learning. Finally, we can conclude that integrating oral reflections through the use of technology-related activities into the educational system had aroused a kind of motivation and passion for students to learn a language and it was found that it came with a great benefit to their speaking skills.

For the fourth research question regarding whether the environmental factor has an effect on students' speaking skills. The questionnaire results revealed that students were mostly on an agreement regarding some factors of the environment like having the preference of recording through the use of their mobile phones and doing it at their homes or dormitories which tells us that the environment had an effect on promoting students' speaking skill. If the responses were not compatible regarding most of the factors we would have concluded that the environmental factor has no effect whatsoever on students speaking skills.

## **Pedagogical Implications**

The findings of this study suggested that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills had significantly improved after applying six week treatment period due to oral reflections and according to the questionnaire results, most of the students had positive responses regarding the tool that was implemented for oral reflections in terms of ease to use, enjoyableness and effectiveness in language learning. According to the first questionnaire results, the students' responses showed that the environment factor played an important factor in improving their speaking skills in which most of the students preferred to do their recordings at home or in their dormitories and setting aside a specific time to do the recordings using their mobile phones. This new form of learning through the implemented technology provided flexibility for the students and gave them more chances to practice their language outside of the classroom. As the study suggests oral reflections through podcasts can be used to improve not only speaking skills but also other language skills, so school teachers and administration should consider incorporating this learning strategy into the educational process or giving it a formal form by integrating it into the school curriculum. Considering the fact that students at this age are more attracted to technology-related activities because most of them have their own mobile phones makes it easy to implement oral reflections through podcasts.

As viewed from the above discussion, the concept of reflective learning has many privileges that will help in improving the educational process when it is incorporated into today's higher education. Reflection can provide an effective tool that promotes professional and personal effectiveness, both of which are essential for the educational process, however, reflection is still perceived as a challenging learning tool for many educators to implement in the educational process (Rogers, 2001).

In order to implement reflection, a rich environment that includes supporting factors need to be provided. Seibert and Daudelin (1999) study mention some factors needed in the reflection process like effective feedback, autonomy, access to faculty and appropriate challenges. A well-planned preparation phase, as well as continuous attentiveness, need to be implemented (Boud&Walker,1993). The reflection process needs a change in the mindset of the faculty members and willingness to incorporate the different environmental factors.

Implementing reflection and inserting it into the education process is not considered to be a random process, but it has to be well planned and organized with specific goals. Hall, Ramsay, and Raven (2004) state that a well-designed educative process can aid students to immerge at a deep level of awareness than conventional methods. Learners need to be informed and know in detail what the process of ‘reflecting’ is composed of in order to be able to perform it properly (Kurt, 2017).

In order to implement oral reflections into the educational process. Hooks (1994) claims this requires an “engaged pedagogy” that involves a reciprocal exchange between teacher and student that goes further than just empowering students.

Various techniques are offered by many approaches on how to implement reflection and the steps needed to be followed in the reflection process were presented, which makes it challenging to determine the exact steps of reflection.

Educators need to be cautious when clarifying the process needed to implement the reflection process without complicating or oversimplifying it (Rogers, 2001).

Even though reflection is perceived as a challenging aim to be accomplished, increasing the use of reflection from both the faculty and students still a worthy objective to be achieved. Langer (1989) states that one cannot reflect on every single thing, but the

aim for both students and teachers should be to acquire the skills needed to make conscious decisions on what to reflect on.

If educators are willing to implement reflective practices to their teaching, some factors need to be taken into consideration as students' experiences, which is the source of knowledge and upon those experiences, they should develop techniques that help students to be reflective Rogers (2001). Loughran (1996) states that reflection enables learners to learn through their previous experiences due to the meaningful nature of the inquiry into that experience.

The question on how to develop a mentoring relationship under the current strict educational system remains. Educators need to wrestle with how to develop mentoring relationships that facilitate reflection in today's cost-conscious higher education environment (Rogers, 2001). One way to ease the mentoring relationship is to implement reflection in their interactions with students (Loughran,1996). Teachers need to provide the chances for the students to view them while implementing reflection both in the class and individual meetings (Rogers, 2001). Changing one's approach to rethink the present moment, changes the way he views the world around him, however, there are some different issues that need to be taken under consideration when implementing reflections. First, some students may lack the needed technological knowledge, which can be dealt with through some training sessions Abdous et al. (2009) point out that learners need training about how to use podcast platforms to subscribe, download, upload and make their audio files. The second issue is that some teachers also may lack the technical skills which can be dealt with through some training sessions provided by the school administration.

To reach these aims, the teaching stakeholders need to reveal the ambiguity of reflection and work on developing new strategies that will allow students to apply the



habits of reflection. In order for teachers to provide a model to be followed for the students, they need to have a full understanding of the concept of reflection and implement it in their personal and professional lives (Rogers, 2001). According to a study done by Sparks-Langer and Colton (1991) involving students in analyzing their own efforts can pave the way for future reflective practices. This approach may leave some burden of the faculty members and provides more opportunities for students to practice reflection as they are involved in evaluating their own personal efforts in reflection.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The findings of the study have shown a remarkable positive effect on students' speaking skills and most of the participants had positive perceptions regarding the use of oral reflections through podcasts in improving their speaking skills. Having finished this study and realizing its limitations on how it would have been implemented in a better way. The researcher presents some of his recommendations for further studies in this line of research.

Having more than six students as the study sample in further studies could provide more reliable and valid results. Also having more than six weeks of treatment period could provide more valid results regarding the effect of oral reflections on students speaking skills. Giving open-ended questions to support the questionnaire results could provide much more insight into students' perceptions toward the use of podcasts and give them more chances to express their feelings and opinions.

The study was aimed at finding out the effect of oral reflections on just speaking skills, but integrating more than one skill with speaking like listening could be done in further studies as it was seen from the literature that other language skills had improved

through the use of oral reflections. The students in the study did not listen to their partners' podcasts and they were not given the chance to interact with one another. They interacted only with the teacher, other studies may allow students to interact with each other and let them listen and comment on each other's podcasts.

The study focused on the use of oral reflections as an outclass activity, further studies may be conducted in class with the supervision of the teacher. The study provided students with the flexibility to record whenever and wherever they want to find out if the environment factor had an effect on their speaking skills. Other studies could be done using special conditions for recording the podcasts like doing it in class or at a specific time using a specific device.

Finally, other studies could be done to measure what specific speaking skills areas had improved more than the other like to measure the improvement in their fluency and coherence, lexical resource grammatical range and accuracy and pronunciation and compare the improvements.

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**APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX A

## The University Written Permission



YAKIN DOĞU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR ETİK KURULU

15.05.2019

Dear Anwar Ghilan

Your application titled “**Improving EFL Students Speaking Skills Through Oral Reflections**” with the application number YDÜ/EB/2019/332 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

**Note:** If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

## APPENDIX B

### Students' Consent Form.

#### Improving EFL students speaking skills through oral reflections.

#### Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

You are asked to participate in a research study that we are carrying out in order to find out whether oral reflections improve EFL students' speaking skills. The data collected through this study will be used to understand how students speaking skills in the English Language Teaching Department is going to be improved through oral reflections. If you agree to participate, we will ask you to make two audio recordings each week and upload them through a mobile phone app and you will be given a pre test and a post test as a form of interviews. All interview sessions will be audio-recorded and these recordings will be kept by the research team for 2 years after the completion of the study, after which they will be deleted from all of our databases. All interviews will be transcribed by anonymising any identifying information.

Please note that your participation in the study is voluntary and whether you agree to participate or not will have no impact on your grades for the courses you are/were enrolled in. The data collected during the course of this study will be used for academic research purposes only and may be presented at national/international academic meetings and/or publications. Your identity will not be revealed in any case to third parties and pseudonyms will be used in all observational and interview data. You may quit participating in this study at any time by contacting us. If you opt out of the study, your data will be deleted from our database and will not be included in any further steps of the study. In case you have any questions or concerns, please contact us using the information below.

Researchers Name: Anwar Ghilan

English Language Teaching Department, Near East University

Tel: +905338415139

E-mail: [anwarghilan0@gmail.com](mailto:anwarghilan0@gmail.com)

Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa kurt

By signing below, you agree to take part in this study.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

## The Reflective Questions.

1. What did you learn today? Explain.
2. What was the most and the least enjoyable parts of the lesson?
3. Was it easy or difficult?
4. Were you an active participant? How so?
5. What should you do to practice today's topic?
6. What is the most important thing you learned personally?
7. How can you better support and participate in future lessons?
8. What new information have you learned from this lesson?
9. If you were given the opportunity to change things you encountered today, what would you change?
10. What do you want to learn more about, and why?
11. How did you help the class today? What can you do next class to help other learners more?

**Daily life practices questions:**

1. How was your mood with others today and what things effects it?
2. What was your best moment today and how can you have more moments like it?
3. What did you do today for yourself and why is this important?
4. What were you most proud of during your day (things you have achieved like doing any kind of sport or helping a friend?)

## APPENDIX D

## Instructions

Hi my friend !!

It was really nice meeting you today.

I hope we can help each other in many ways.

These are the procedures to be followed in my study:

- 1- Download the app (Podbean).
- 2- Sign up using your gmail or Facebook.
- 3-Send me your account name.
- 4- when you make a podcast(audio recording) try to speak as much as you can.
- 5- Every recording must be within 4 to 8 minutes depending on your desire to speak more. ( if you are able to speak for just 4 or 5 minutes. It is fine don't worry )
- 6- Every recording must be entitled with the date. ( Ex: 20th. April )
- 7-You can record your self more than one time and publish only the one you think it's the best.
- 8-You must listen to your recording after recording it ( after few hours or after a day ) and write a comment on it( Ex: I think my voice is really low and I keep repeating certain words also I make lots of pauses. I will try to work on it in my next recording) write the date at the end of the comment.
- 9-You must see your previous comment before you make the new recording.
- 10-You can write your comment in English or your formal first language)
- 11-You must make two recordings each week. ( you can make a recording on your speaking classes or any other class you think its good for you to speak about)
- 12- I will provide you with feedback in a form of comments on your recordings.
- 13-I will send you the questions that will guid you in recordings ( the reflective questions )

If you need any help at all !!with downloading the app or if you faced any problems just text me.

## APPENDIX E

### IELTS Speaking Test

**IELTS™**

### SPEAKING: Band Descriptors (public version)

Band	Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks fluently with only rare repetition or self-correction;</li> <li>any hesitation is content-related rather than to find words or grammar</li> <li>speaks coherently with fully appropriate cohesive features</li> <li>develops topics fully and appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses vocabulary with full flexibility and precision in all topics</li> <li>uses idiomatic language naturally and accurately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a full range of structures naturally and appropriately</li> <li>produces consistently accurate structures apart from 'slips' characteristic of native speaker speech</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety</li> <li>sustains flexible use of features throughout</li> <li>is effortless to understand</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks fluently with only occasional repetition or self-correction; hesitation is usually content-related and only rarely to search for language</li> <li>develops topics coherently and appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide vocabulary resource readily and flexibly to convey precise meaning</li> <li>uses less common and idiomatic vocabulary skilfully, with occasional inaccuracies</li> <li>uses paraphrase effectively as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures flexibly</li> <li>produces a majority of error-free sentences with only very occasional inappropriacies or basic/non-systematic errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of pronunciation features</li> <li>sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses</li> <li>is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks at length without noticeable effort or loss of coherence</li> <li>may demonstrate language-related hesitation at times, or some repetition and/or self-correction</li> <li>uses a range of connectives and discourse markers with some flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses vocabulary resource flexibly to discuss a variety of topics</li> <li>uses some less common and idiomatic vocabulary and shows some awareness of style and collocation, with some inappropriate choices</li> <li>uses paraphrase effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a range of complex structures with some flexibility</li> <li>frequently produces error-free sentences, though some grammatical mistakes persist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is willing to speak at length, though may lose coherence at times due to occasional repetition, self-correction or hesitation</li> <li>uses a range of connectives and discourse markers but not always appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a wide enough vocabulary to discuss topics at length and make meaning clear in spite of inappropriacies</li> <li>generally paraphrases successfully</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a mix of simple and complex structures, but with limited flexibility</li> <li>may make frequent mistakes with complex structures though these rarely cause comprehension problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control</li> <li>shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained</li> <li>can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>usually maintains flow of speech but uses repetition, self-correction and/or slow speech to keep going</li> <li>may over-use certain connectives and discourse markers</li> <li>produces simple speech fluently, but more complex communication causes fluency problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>manages to talk about familiar and unfamiliar topics but uses vocabulary with limited flexibility</li> <li>attempts to use paraphrase but with mixed success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces basic sentence forms with reasonable accuracy</li> <li>uses a limited range of more complex structures, but these usually contain errors and may cause some comprehension problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot respond without noticeable pauses and may speak slowly, with frequent repetition and self-correction</li> <li>links basic sentences but with repetitious use of simple connectives and some breakdowns in coherence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is able to talk about familiar topics but can only convey basic meaning on unfamiliar topics and makes frequent errors in word choice</li> <li>rarely attempts paraphrase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces basic sentence forms and some correct simple sentences but subordinate structures are rare</li> <li>errors are frequent and may lead to misunderstanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a limited range of pronunciation features</li> <li>attempts to control features but lapses are frequent</li> <li>mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speaks with long pauses</li> <li>has limited ability to link simple sentences</li> <li>gives only simple responses and is frequently unable to convey basic message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses simple vocabulary to convey personal information</li> <li>has insufficient vocabulary for less familiar topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempts basic sentence forms but with limited success, or relies on apparently memorised utterances</li> <li>makes numerous errors except in memorised expressions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pauses lengthily before most words</li> <li>little communication possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>only produces isolated words or memorised utterances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot produce basic sentence forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech is often unintelligible</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no communication possible</li> <li>no rateable language</li> </ul>			
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not attend</li> </ul>			

APPENDIX F  
IELTS Speaking Test Parts

**Speaking sample task – Part 1**

**Part 1 *Introduction and interview***

*[This part of the test begins with the examiner introducing himself or herself and checking the candidate's identification. It then continues as an interview.]*

Let's talk about your home town or village.

- What kind of place is it?
- What's the most interesting part of your town/village?
- What kind of jobs do the people in your town/village do?
- Would you say it's a good place to live? (Why?)

Let's move on to talk about accommodation.

- Tell me about the kind of accommodation you live in?
- How long have you lived there?
- What do you like about living there?
- What sort of accommodation would you most like to live in?

## Speaking sample task – Part 2

### Part 2 – Individual long turn

#### *Candidate Task Card*

**Describe something you own which is very important to you.**

**You should say:**

**where you got it from  
how long you have had it  
what you use it for**

**and explain why it is important to you.**

You will have to talk about the topic for 1 to 2 minutes.

You have one minute to think about what you're going to say.

You can make some notes to help you if you wish.

#### *Rounding off questions*

- **Is it valuable in terms of money?**  
**Would it be easy to replace?**



### Speaking sample task – Part 3

#### Part 3 – Two-way discussion

Let's consider first of all how people's values have changed.

- What kind of things give status to people in your country?
- Have things changed since your parents' time?

Finally, let's talk about the role of advertising.

- Do you think advertising influences what people buy?

## APPENDIX G

## Raters Scores

		Pre-test results						Pre-test results			
1											
2		<b>Participant 1</b>					<b>Participant 2</b>				
3	Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		
4	Fluency and coherence	5	5	1	1	Fluency and coherence	6	6	1		
5	Lexical resource	4	4	1	2	Lexical resource	4	4	1		
6	Grammatical range and accuracy	4	3	0	3	Grammatical range and accuracy	3	4	0		
7	Pronunciation	4	4	1	4	Pronunciation	5	5	1		
8		Match	3		5		Match	3			
9		Total	4		6		Total	4			
10		IRR	75%		7		IRR	75%			
11		<b>Participant 3</b>					<b>Participant 4</b>				
12	Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		
13	Fluency and coherence	4	4	1	1	Fluency and coherence	7	7	1		
14	Lexical resource	4	3	0	2	Lexical resource	7	7	1		
15	Grammatical range and accuracy	3	3	1	3	Grammatical range and accuracy	7	6	0		
16	Pronunciation	3	3	1	4	Pronunciation	7	7	1		
17		Match	3		5		Match	3			
18		Total	4		6		Total	4			
19		IRR	75%		7		IRR	75%			
20		<b>Participant 5</b>					<b>Participant 6</b>				
21	Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		
22	Fluency and coherence	5	4	0	1	Fluency and coherence	6	6	1		
23	Lexical resource	4	4	1	2	Lexical resource	7	6	0		
24	Grammatical range and accuracy	5	5	1	3	Grammatical range and accuracy	8	8	1		
25	Pronunciation	4	4	1	4	Pronunciation	7	7	1		
26		Match	3		5		Match	3			
27		Total	4		6		Total	4			
28		IRR	75%		7		IRR	75%		Act	

		Post-test results						Post-test results			
30											
31		<b>Participant 1</b>					<b>Participant 2</b>				
32	Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		
33	Fluency and coherence	7	7	1	1	Fluency and coherence	8	7	0		
34	Lexical resource	5	5	1	2	Lexical resource	6	6	1		
35	Grammatical range and accuracy	5	4	0	3	Grammatical range and accuracy	5	5	1		
36	Pronunciation	5	5	1	4	Pronunciation	7	7	1		
37		Match	3		5		Match	3			
38		Total	4		6		Total	4			
39		IRR	75%		7		IRR	75%			
40		<b>Participant 3</b>					<b>Participant 4</b>				
41	Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		
42	Fluency and coherence	6	5	0	1	Fluency and coherence	8	8	1		
43	Lexical resource	4	4	1	2	Lexical resource	8	7	0		
44	Grammatical range and accuracy	4	4	1	3	Grammatical range and accuracy	8	8	1		
45	Pronunciation	5	5	1	4	Pronunciation	9	9	1		
46		Match	3		5		Match	3			
47		Total	4		6		Total	4			
48		IRR	75%		7		IRR	75%			
49		<b>Participant 5</b>					<b>Participant 6</b>				
50	Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		Assessmnet criteria	judge1	judge2	Agreement		
51	Fluency and coherence	7	6	0	1	Fluency and coherence	8	8	1		
52	Lexical resource	5	5	1	2	Lexical resource	7	7	1		
53	Grammatical range and accuracy	7	7	1	3	Grammatical range and accuracy	9	9	1		
54	Pronunciation	5	5	1	4	Pronunciation	8	8	1		
55		Match	3		5		Match	4			
56		Total	4		6		Total	4			
57		IRR	75%		7		IRR	100%		Act	

Pre-test (overall assessment)					post-test (overall assessment)				
participants	judge 1	judge 2	difference	Average	participants	judge 1	judge2	difference	Average
60 participant 1	4.25	4	4.12	4	2 participant 1	5.5	5.25	5.37	5.5
62 participant 2	4.5	4.75	4.62	5	3 participant 2	6.5	6.25	6.37	6.5
63 participant 3	3.5	3.25	3.37	3	4 participant 3	4.75	4.5	4.62	5
64 participant 4	7	6.75	6.87	7	5 participant 4	8.25	8	8.25	8.5
65 participant 5	4.5	4.25	4.37	4	6 participant 5	6	5.75	5.87	6
66 participant 6	7	6.75	6.87	7	7 participant 6	8	8	8	8

## APPENDIX H

## The First and Second Questionnaire

## Questionnaire 1

Personal Information

Please provide information by completing the blanks.

What is your gender?  Male  Female

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Study year \_\_\_\_\_

English Language level ( ) Excellent ( ) Average ( ) Poor

No	Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I prefer recording using my Desktop or laptop computer					
2	I prefer recording using my MP3 player					
3	I prefer recording using my Mobile phone					
4	I prefer recording using my Tablet pc					
5	I prefer recording at home or dormitory					
6	I prefer recording at university					
7	I prefer recording on the road					
8	I prefer recording while going home					
9	I prefer recording while doing university-related tasks					
10	I prefer allocating special time for recording					
11	I prefer recording while waiting for someone					

## Questionnaire 2:

### Personal Information

Please provide information by completing the blanks.

What is your gender?  Male  Female

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

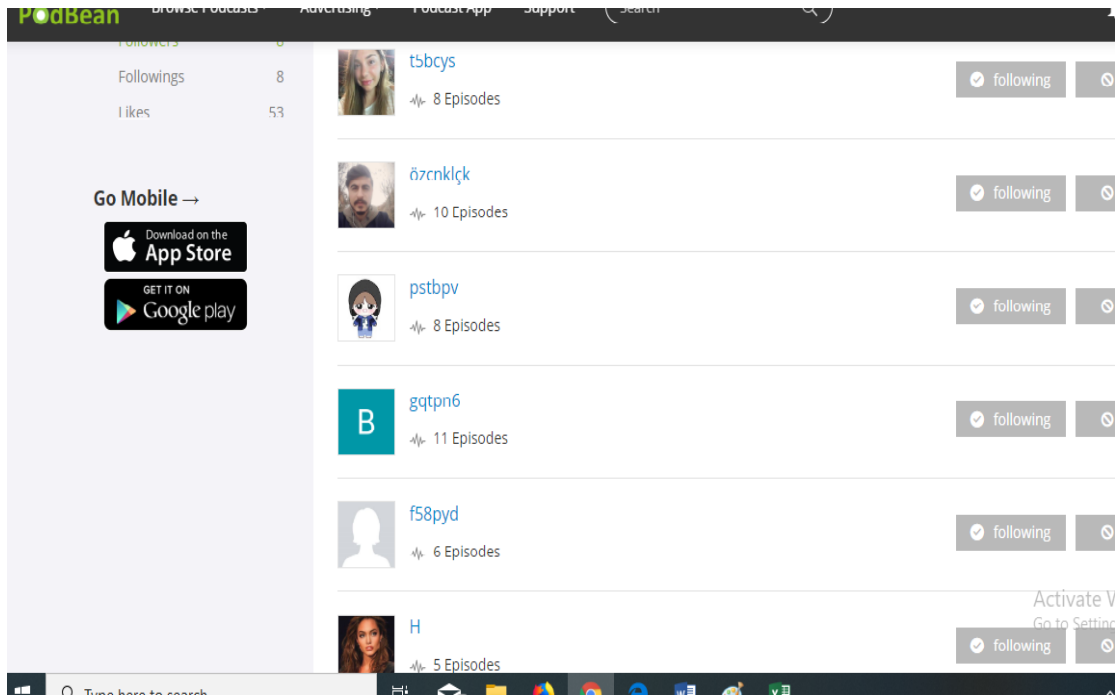
Study year \_\_\_\_\_

English Language level ( ) Excellent ( ) Average ( ) Poor

No	Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	It is easy to record the podcast audio files.					
2	Using podcasts is possible everywhere and every time.					
3	I don't know how to handle this new technology					
4	Accessing the platform ease the process of viewing my podcasts.					
5	I enjoy recording podcasts.					
6	I don't think recording podcasts is interesting.					
7	I will continue recording podcasts in the future.					
8	Podcasts bring me no fun at all.					
9	Recording English podcasts has made me more motivated to learn the language.					
10	Podcasts are useful for language learning.					
11	Recording podcasts are effective for improving speaking skills.					
12	Recording podcasts was not a productive use of my time.					
13	After working with English podcasts, I am more open to learning through podcasts in the future.					
14	I would recommend that other students who want to learn English to record podcasts					


## APPENDIX I


### Sample Pictures from Podbean Platform




vodafone TR 4G 12:46 AM %74


< Comments


 neuaudioblog  
3 months ago

0 


1- Great fluency skills.  
2- Try to focus more on the use of since and for.  
EX/ I stayed there for four days or I stayed there since Monday.  
3- Try to focus more on verb form.  
EX/ meet > met  
born > was born  
4- Try to have a look on the use of future tense. EX/ Will like it.  
5- Try to focus more on past simple when you express previous event EX/ waited , came  
6- Try to use intonation and stress more often.

 Nis 23, 2019 00:44

 t5bcys  
3 months ago



0 

In my recording i paused too much. I used singular noun but i said plural adjective. I think my pronunciation is not so bad but i used easy vocabularies. I need to improve my vocabulary.


Leave your comments 



vodafone TR 4G 12:46 AM %75

< Comments


 t5bcys 3 months ago 0 



I did was-were mistake but i think did not do mistakes about second state of verb. I did spelling mistake ( tango)

 May 1, 2019 13:44


 t5bcys 3 months ago 0 

I paused so much again. I did spelling mistakes. I did grammatical mistakes. I did mistakes about structure of sentence. I told the one word two times ( notes ). I did mistakes about to and from.

 Nis 26, 2019 01:47

 neuaudioblog 3 months ago 0 

1- Great fluency skills.  
2- Try to focus more on the use of since and for.  
EX/ I stayed there for four days or I stayed there since Monday.  
3- Try to focus more on verb form.  
EX/ meet > met

Leave your comments 

vodafone TR 4G 12:42 AM %77

## Comments

2- Keep up using the small silent pauses and avoid saying (aaaaa)  
3- Great uses for verb forms and tenses.  
4- It's better to say I love her so much not (much more)  
5- Try to talk about your life in general and at the same time answer some of the reflective questions. 😊

▶ May 10, 2019 20:32

**B** gqtpn6 3 months ago 0 👍

I can speak clearly and understandable but I sometimes do spelling mistakes. My accent is good. I am telling correct words while I am speaking. It is so normal period on my podcast.

▶ May 10, 2019 14:29

**B** gqtpn6 3 months ago 0 👍

My voice is good and understandable. I speak clearly and I like it. I think that it isn't whichever problem on my record. And I think I improving myself.

Leave your comments 😊



vodafone TR 4G 12:44 AM %77

< Comments

 pstbpv 3 months ago 0 

Often times I get confused, which makes me repeat my statement from time to time. I'll try to improve better. I took huge pauses because I was thinking of what to say. (12 May 2019)

 May 7, 2019 21:39

 neuaudioblog 3 months ago 0 

1- Great work until now, you have managed to decrease your (aaaa) voice and replace it with small pauses. 2- You need to work more on this and eliminate it completely. 3- You have to manage your speech by talking on each topic on a certain length. 4- Try to avoid repetition.

 May 3, 2019 17:10

 Spor yorumcularının neler söylediğine bakın.

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