



**An-Najah National University  
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**THE EFFECT OF DEBATES ON ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE SPEAKING COMPETENCE OF  
NINTH-GRADE LEARNERS FROM  
TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES IN THE  
NORTHERN GOVERNORATES**

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**This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Methods of Teaching English, Faculty of Graduate Studies, An-Najah  
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**2026**

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## **Dedication**

To the righteous martyrs, you are the unquenchable light, you are the true meaning of sacrifice and immortality, to our steadfast people in Gaza and the Gaza Strip, who patiently formulate a dream of pride and dignity, I dedicate my effort and work to you, for my writings are nothing but a drop in the sea of your giving.

To my soul, which carried the burdens of days, was patient with stumbling blocks, and stayed up all night. Patience and determination were its title, and persistence was its path. I dedicate this effort to my dear child, the little one in my heart, who inspired me to continue this work with patience and determination.

To my dear father, my first support, my dream companion since my first steps, to the one who taught me that success can only be achieved through perseverance, to the one who waited to see me stand here with pride and love, I dedicate my effort to you.

To my beloved mother, whose prayers have never been absent from me, to the one who planted peace in my heart, you have always been my safe haven

To my dear husband, my partner in the path, who supported me when I lost my way, who believed in me when I doubted myself.

To my dear sisters, my lifelong companions, the flowers of my days, who were the support and help that illuminated my days, no matter how heavy my worries w

To all of you. I dedicate this message with all the love in my heart and all the loyalty in my soul.

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I cannot fail to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who supported me, stood by me during this journey, and offered me a helping hand in a word or in an invitation. I wish you all the best wishes and the highest meanings of gratitude and thanks.

## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that I submitted the thesis entitled:

# THE EFFECT OF DEBATES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPEAKING COMPETENCE OF NINTH-GRADE LEARNERS FROM TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES IN THE NORTHERN GOVERNORATES

I declare that the work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

**Student's Name:** Naheda Labbeb Ahmad Ineira

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**Date:** 20/01/2026

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# **THE EFFECT OF DEBATES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPEAKING COMPETENCE OF NINTH-GRADE LEARNERS FROM TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES IN THE NORTHERN GOVERNORATES**

**By**  
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## **Abstract**

The English language is considered one of the most important languages in the world, as it ranks first among the languages of the entire world. With the development of science and work, it has become an urgent need for the individual to possess, in addition to the individual's possession of speaking skills, which is an important factor in learning and practicing the language. the researcher set out to study the impact of debates on the speaking proficiency of ninth-grade students from the perspective of teachers in the northern governorates. Here lies the role of debates as an interactive teaching strategy that contributes to developing linguistic fluency and language skills, building confidence and enhancing critical thinking among students.

The study relied on the descriptive analytical approach. Data were collected using the questionnaire as a quantitative tool, and the researcher relied on the interview tool as a qualitative tool. It was distributed to a sample of English language teachers who teach the ninth grade in four governorates in Palestine (Nablus, Jenin, Qabatiya, and Jericho). The sample consisted of 147 male and female English teachers, and three teachers who were interviewed. The quantitative data was analyzed using the SPSS v28 program to extract mean and standard deviations, where is the qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic analysis method.

The results of the study in both instruments showed that teachers' attitudes towards using debate to develop students' speaking proficiency were weak. This decrease is due to several factors, including the density of the curriculum and lack of time, the large number of students in the classes, the lack of training of teachers to use this type of strategy, the students' weak level of speaking, and the shyness to participate and present their ideas to their colleagues.

In light of these results, the researcher recommended the necessity of integrating debate into classroom classes, and providing training programs for teachers to qualify them to use debates because of their positive impact on developing speaking competence.

**Keywords:** speaking competence, debate, ninth-grade

# Chapter One

## Introduction and Theoretical Background

This chapter presents the study and its background, states of the problem, aim and objectives, the significance, the questions,, the limitation, and Operational definitions.

### 1.1 Introduction

In light of the rapid progress in various areas of life, language has become the basic and most important tool for communication. If it is considered one of the basic characteristics of the individual, it serves as a bridge that allows him to communicate, learn, and express himself, his ideas, identity, and culture, as well as learn about world events (Rao, 2019; Sabbah, 2015). English is considered the most widely used language in the world, which made learning and teaching it a necessity, especially for non-native speakers, as it is an international language for communication and knowledge exchange. Mastering the English language also opens up broad horizons and multiple scientific and academic opportunities, and speaking and practical practice are among the most successful ways to acquire communication skills (Balzhanova & Fomich, 2019; Rao, 2019; Wulandari, 2017; Sabbah, 2015).

The English language consists of four basic skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening). Speaking skills are one of the four most important skills because, through them, speech and sentences are produced to communicate with the other party. The skill of speaking can be face to face to an interface, through social media, or by giving speeches and lectures to the public, all of which require the individual to have the skill of speaking.

Alhabbash said: "Speaking is an important skill because one of the keys in communication in English is the ability to speak. When students master the skill of speaking, they can have a conversation with others, give ideas, change information and can have a discussion with others to know the situation that occurs in the world" (Alhabbash, 2012, p. 13).

In addition, Sabbah (2015) said, "Speaking is an interactive process to build the meaning that includes the production of information, receipt and processing" (p. 2). Accordingly, speaking skills are one of the most difficult English language skills. It is a fruitful skill. It takes a student to produce sentences and phrases immediately, you may find that the

student has a stock of vocabulary in the English language but when speaking as a beginner. From the foregoing, the researchers believe that the skill of speaking revolves around the speaker's ability to communicate ideas, opinions, feelings, sensations, inappropriate phrases and connotations to others, using eloquent, sound and expressive language.

"Most of our learners have a weakness in communicating their ideas and ideas somewhat well in the individual task and also unable to participate effectively in the discussion of the group" (p. 13). Students may not have enough vocabulary to produce sentences and words to communicate their ideas. Students lack self-confidence, courage and motivation to express their ideas and opinions to others. Students may be ashamed if they make a mistake. Or because the English language for students is essentially weak and students cannot organize speech well (Fuad, 2018; Wulandari, 2017; Alhabbash, 2012).

Therefore, there are many modern methods and strategies that teachers can adopt in the semester to enhance students' efficiency in speaking and improve students in the English language. Alyan (2013) argues that "success in learning the language is measured in terms of learners' ability to have a conversation with the interlocutors in the target language" (Alyan, 2013, p. 227). One of these strategies that the teacher can adapt to address talking about student students is a debate strategy.

The debate strategy is one of how students can express their ideas and participate. It can improve students' speaking skills. The teacher's strategy must be motivational and interesting to encourage students to speak confidently (Boudjatat & Zaik, 2020; Alyan, 2013; Alhabbash, 2012).

Debate is one of the most effective speaking activities in encouraging students to develop their communication skills. The discussion strategy involves involving students in various groups to discuss different issues, which stimulates their thinking, especially when they are asked to defend their opinions and positions in front of others. This strategy allows for the active participation of all students, not just those who play a direct role in the debate (Boudjatat & Zaik, 2020; Sabbah, 2015).

Teachers adopt this strategy because it motivates students to talk and share their ideas in a more enjoyable and effective way with their colleagues compared to traditional

methods. In addition, this strategy arouses their curiosity and attention towards the topic at hand, and encourages students to research, read and read additional texts in the English language. This contributes to enhancing their critical thinking and increasing their vocabulary (Fuad, 2018).

"The discussion is the process of presenting the idea or opinion that two parties are trying to defend their idea or opinion. The discussion can be used brilliantly to enhance the English language speaking" (Hermawan, 2018, p. 3).

The discussion strategy is important because it supports active and effective learning and enables the student to participate in dialogue and opinion talk about many topics and adopt the student's personality away from the traditional methods that did not include students. It is a developed order to develop the student's thinking by attracting different views to the student's attention (Wulandari, 2017; Sabbah, 2015; Alhabbash, 2012). The use of discussion in teaching is a strategy to improve verbal communication and thinking skills (p. 3).

With rapid progress in science and knowledge, an active and effective educational environment is necessary for the teaching process, and because of the increasing negative effects of traditional education in Palestine. Alhabbash (2012) "It was found that there are many secondary teachers who still use traditional methods of teaching. Teachers only give and explain the subjects, provide an example and give exercises. This is not only because there is no vocabulary but also the lack of effective interaction strategies" (p. 13). "The skill of speaking to some extent does not give adequate attention, and new methods should be adopted to improve this skill" (Al-Tamimiy, 2017, p. 11).

Teachers must provide students with strategies that enable them to grow and develop English-speaking skills. Students at the high basic level enjoy the ability to discuss orally and participate and produce speech. Therefore, teachers must arrange students with the skill of conversation. The researcher will use the discussion strategy in this study to know its influence and effectiveness on students' efficiency in speaking English (Lubis & Siregar, 2021; Wulandari, 2017; Sabbah, 2015; Alhabbash, 2012).

In response to the above, it is clear that many previous studies have proven the possibility of developing learners' speaking skills through the debate strategy. Based on the

recommendations of specialized researchers, there is a clear call to train learners in the skill of speaking, as it is the factor that regulates their speech and enables them to correctly express their thoughts and feelings. Experts also highlight the need for diversification and innovation in teaching strategies and the use of specialized methods and approaches to train learners in effective speaking skills, ensuring the participation of all students and motivating them to interact practically during teaching. This study came as an attempt to reveal the extent to which learners' competence in speaking English improved when using the debate strategy.

## **1.2 Theoretical background**

Debate is considered an effective educational method in teaching and teaching all types of knowledge. Debate, technically speaking, is the art of dialogue or insightful consideration and logical thought by two sides or groups of interlocutors on a topic that is subject to controversy and discussion in order to reach a consensual vision after presenting arguments. In the end, it is an art that is intended to defend an opinion with compelling argument and clear evidence.

Although the debate method has a good educational impact in various types of science and knowledge, in the field of learning other languages, it is considered an effective teaching method for developing students' abilities in the basic skills of the language, most notably the skill of speaking, in addition to listening, reading, and writing.

Debate is considered an effective educational activity to develop students' verbal skills, because it provides a real opportunity for students to practice speaking skills, through which students use different linguistic varieties, resort to their linguistic repertoire, and also use non-verbal means of communication such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and changing features in order to express their perspectives and convictions. What enhances the success of using this method in raising students' abilities in speaking skills is the students' prior knowledge of the subject and their preparation for what they will speak, which increases their self-confidence and makes them more fluent while speaking.

According to Ariani (2019) debate and continuous training clearly contributed to developing students' speaking abilities. Debate is considered a good way to include students who are reserved or abstain from speaking in the classroom, either due to shyness or poor language achievement.

Debate is considered an effective classroom activity that supports an active learning style within the classroom, away from the traditional method of delivery and lecture, which makes the student's debate style an effective focus in the educational situation by integrating it into a series of tasks in which he begins to collect information, think, and participate in order to support his position and strengthen his arguments for the other party.

This study is based on Vygotsky's theory and Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of linguistics. Both theories emphasize the importance of communication and interaction in learning the English language. These are aspects that are directly related to the role of debate strategy in developing learners' speaking competence.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) points out the importance of social interaction and cooperation with others, which plays an important role in the learner's linguistic and cognitive development. Learning occurs first at the social level among learners and then moves to the individual level. In this study, the debate strategy provides a rich and effective environment for linguistic communication between learners, enabling learners to interact, engage, discuss, and exchange ideas and dialogues. This, in turn, enhances linguistic proficiency and develops other abilities, such as critical thinking, analysis, and self-expression, all of which are essential elements in the speaking skill.

As for Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of linguistics, it confirms that language is a social system based on interaction and communication between individuals, and that language acquisition occurs through its use in real, meaningful contexts. The debate strategy is consistent with this trend, as it provides an interactive environment that enables learners to practice the language through organized dialogue, discussions, exchanging opinions, and defending different points of view. During debates, learners listen to the language in its natural context and respond to it with purposeful linguistic production, which contributes to developing their proficiency in English speaking skills and enhances their ability to communicate effectively.

### **1.3 Literature review**

This chapter deals with previous literature and studies related to the subject of the current study, by reviewing a group of local, Arabic, and foreign studies that dealt with the debate strategy and its role in developing the skill of speaking the English language, the most important results reached by previous studies, and revealing similarities and differences with the current study.

#### **Local Studies**

Sabbah (2015): This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using debates in developing speaking skills among English majors at the University of Palestine. The sample of the study was represented by (20) English major students (one group) from the University of Palestine in Gaza. The researcher relied on the (pre and post) test as a tool to collect data, which consisted of two questions for 10 minutes. The researcher used Wilcoxon Test to analyze statistically the results of the (pre and post) test. The results show there are statistically significant differences between the (pre and post) tests. The researcher noted there are differences in Pronunciation, Grammar, and Vocabulary skills after the use of debates as a strategy for teaching speaking skills. This study recommended teaching English speaking through debates.

Alyan (2013): This study aimed to investigate the problems of oral communication problems encountering English major students: perspectives of learners and teachers in Palestinian EFL University Context. The researcher relied on the qualitative approach in the application of his study. The sample of the study was represented by 20 students and 6 senior teachers at a large Palestine University in Gaza. The researcher used the interview tool as a qualitative tool for data collection, and analyzed the data from the participants' interviews. The results of the analysis revealed that the students have problems with pronunciation and their vocabulary is limited, and the main problem was oral communication, and they lack self-confidence when speaking. The pedagogical implications of the study were of significant value to EFL university teachers who are interested in developing learners' oral communication skills.

Ashqar (2021): This study aimed to find out the role of using classroom discussion techniques in improving students' speaking skills from the point of view of English language teachers at the secondary level in public schools in the Nablus area. The

researcher used the descriptive approach in analyzing the data of the study tool. The researcher used questionnaires and personal interviews as two methods to collect data. The questionnaire was distributed to 57 male and 65 female English language teachers in the Nablus area. Interviews were conducted with 15 secondary school teachers in the Nablus area. The results of the study showed that English language teachers agree positively on the importance of the role of classroom discussions in improving students' speaking skills.

Alhabbash (2012): The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of online classroom discussion and English speaking skills among 12th graders in Gaza City. The study sample consisted of male students from the science branch at Abu harAlgefary Secondary School, where three sections were randomly selected and divided into three Groups : An experimental group for classroom discussion that included 25 students, an electronic discussion group that included 15 students, and a control group that included 25 students. The classroom discussion and electronic discussion experiment continued for 40 classroom sessions.

The results showed statistically significant differences in the level of speaking skills between students who learned using the classroom discussion strategy and students who learned using the traditional method, in favor of the classroom discussion group. The results also revealed statistically significant differences in the level of speaking skills between students who learned using electronic discussion and those who learned in the traditional way, in favor of the electronic discussion group. In light of these results, the study recommended the necessity of employing classroom discussion and electronic discussion strategies in teaching the English language because of their positive impact on improving students' speaking skills. The researcher also suggested conducting more studies on the impact of classroom and electronic discussion on different dimensions of learning the English language.

Ahmed & Mohammed (2021) This study aims to examine the effect of discussion activities on improving students' divorce speaking skills. Research observation was used as a data collection tool. The study was conducted during the first academic year 2019-2020. The sample size was 20 English language teachers and 40 female students in the joint year at Al-Jouf University. The researcher used the descriptive analytical approach

and the results showed that many types of discussion activities were not used despite their importance in encouraging the performance of speaking skills, and that using various discussion activities contributes to enhancing the learning of the English language for students and increasing their motivation and fluency in speaking in front of others, which leads to improving their speaking skills.

Hammad (2020): This study examined the effect of using oral presentations on the speaking skills of female students at Al-Aqsa University. And on their academic performance in the course of English language teaching methods, in addition to the effectiveness of this strategy in reducing stress and anxiety associated with speaking. The researcher relied on a variety of research tools to measure results, including an international standardized test (ILETS) to measure speaking, a course-specific achievement test, an open questionnaire to explore female students' opinions, and a tool to measure speaking anxiety.

The sample consisted of 60 students, divided equally into two groups: an experimental group that received its education through oral presentations, and a control group that received its education in the traditional way through lectures. The results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on both the speaking and achievement tests, in addition to a clear decrease in anxiety levels. The students also expressed positive satisfaction and appreciation for the learning experience through oral presentations, which contributed to enhancing their interaction and self-confidence. These results indicate the use of an active teaching strategy such as oral presentations in language learning environments not only to improve language skills, but also to strengthen the behavioral and psychological aspects associated with them.

Ahmed, Sawalmeh & Ramadan (2024): This study aims to explore the effectiveness of using "digital narratives" in improving speaking skills among tenth grade students at Nabi Saleh Secondary School. The study relied on a mixed approach that combined quantitative and qualitative methods, where a pre- and post-test was applied to one group of students, in addition to open applications and questionnaires to measure their experiences and attitudes towards using technology. The results showed a noticeable improvement in students' speaking skills, which indicates the effectiveness of the digital novel as an educational tool. The students' performance was evaluated through precise

criteria that included pronunciation, grammar, choice of vocabulary, fluency and content. In addition, the students expressed positive experiences with this educational method, as it helped them express themselves in creative ways and enhance their proficiency in speaking the English language.

The study relied on the SMAR model, which shows how technology can move from a mere auxiliary tool to a means to completely redefine education. The digital novel was considered a step towards enhancing creativity and motivating students, especially if it is linked to realistic stories that reflect their social and national experiences.

In a gesture to link the results of the study to the Palestinian reality, the researcher suggested incorporating stories that represent the steadfastness of Palestinian children in Gaza, considering that these stories will enhance students' interaction and involvement in the educational process in a deeper way, because they start from their reality and reflect their strength in facing crises.

Al-Muhtaseb (2015): This study dealt with the reality of teaching, learning, and evaluating the skill of speaking the English language in Palestinian universities, as this skill, despite its interactive importance, is still largely marginalized in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in Palestine, whether from an educational or research perspective.

In this study, the researcher relied on the descriptive method, which combines quantitative and qualitative methods. Data was collected through questionnaires distributed to 152 students, and others to teachers of speaking skills, in addition to semi-structured interviews and class notes. The data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages, in addition to Calculating averages and standard deviations.

The results of this study showed several negative aspects in the reality of teaching speaking skills, the most prominent of which is that most students do not make enough effort to develop their oral level, and that the method of evaluating them is limited to individual oral presentations instead of relying on interactive dialogue activities. The results also revealed that the majority of teachers do not use clear standard assessment tools such as "rubrics," despite their claim to apply modern strategies such as continuous learning and task-based learning.

Despite applying this strategy, the success in improving students' fluency was only moderate. Teachers attributed this challenge to several obstacles, including overcrowding in classrooms, lack of time available for oral classes, lack of technological media, and students' lack of readiness for oral classes.

In light of these results, the study recommends the need to enhance cooperation between students, teachers, and English language departments in universities in order to raise the level of students' fluency in speaking and achieve better results in teaching oral skills.

Assaf & Yunus (2021): This study aims to shed light on one of the most prominent obstacles facing students of English as a foreign language, which is speaking anxiety during extemporaneous speech. Despite the general recognition that anxiety constitutes a real obstacle to oral performance, previous studies have not provided sufficient evidence. Or a clear explanation of the specific reasons that lead to this type of anxiety Especially in the context of extemporaneous speech, which requires the student to think and speak without prior planning.

In this study, the researcher followed a qualitative approach using the method of individual interviews to collect in-depth data about the feelings and experiences of students. Five students from the English language major at Al-Quds Open University were selected intentionally, based on specific criteria that ensure their representation of the target group. The aim of these interviews was to understand their personal experiences with extemporaneous speech and the factors that make them feel anxious when speaking without preparation. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which is a method used to extract recurring patterns or themes within qualitative data.

The most prominent results of the study showed that there are four factors that contribute to speaking anxiety during extemporaneous speech among students, which are lack of vocabulary, shyness, misuse of grammar, and fear of making mistakes. Therefore, the study recommends the need to provide safe and supportive learning environments and focus on developing students' language skills and self-confidence and reducing the pressures associated with oral performance. It also encourages the use of activities such as debates and free conversation to improve fluency and reduce anxiety when speaking.

## **Arabic Studies**

Boudjatat & Zaik (2020): This study aimed to investigate the effects of classroom controversy in developing the skill of speaking English as a foreign language, and an investigation of students' and teachers' perceptions of the impact of debates on enhancing speaking skills. This research is concerned with oral English courses to improve learners' speaking skills. The researchers used a questionnaire tool to collect data, and they conducted two questionnaires on 60 second-year students from LMD, and 6 teachers at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia - Jijel. The researchers adopted the descriptive approach in the application of this study. It was found that debate is a useful technique to enhance the speaking skill of students and the role of teachers should be required in this case.

Al-Tamimi (2017): This study aimed to study the effect of debates on improving English language skills, improving speaking skills: Implications for using debatable topics in English classes, and study the attitudes of students at the university level as well. The researcher's sample was represented by 70 students from the Faculty of Education - Hadhramout University. The researcher adopted the experimental method in applying the study. The researcher used the experimental group, which was taught by using the debate strategy, and the control group, which was taught by using the regular method used in the college. The researcher used the test and the questionnaire as tools for data collection. The researcher used the sample t-test to analyze the data statistically. The results revealed that debate skills have a positive effect on the development of students' speaking skills and attitudes. The researcher recommended the use of this strategy for both teachers and subsequent researchers.

Daif-Allah & Khan (2016): This study aimed to verify the impact of open discussion sessions on enhancing the oral communicative abilities of Saudi English language majors at Buraydah community college. The study sample consisted of 35 students and 11 English language teachers. The researchers relied on the quantitative and qualitative approach in applying the study, by using semi-structured survey questionnaires interviews and speaking tests (pre and post) as tools for collecting quantitative and qualitative data. The researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics in analyzing the data.

The results of the study indicated the perceived need to develop English speaking skills as a foreign language, as their oral communication abilities increased significantly to meet their needs and interests. The results of the post-test revealed a significant development in the students' speaking abilities due to the open discussion sessions that provided a comfortable and worry-free learning environment, and enhanced the learners' self-confidence. This study provided a framework with techniques and procedures that helped teachers to teach speaking skills more efficiently the researchers recommended incorporating Social Network Sites and visual cues to enhance students' interaction and participation outside the college borders.

Al-Tamimi & Attamimi (2014): This study examines the effectiveness of collaborative learning in English-speaking classrooms and improves the speaking skills and attitudes of Yemeni students. A quasi-experimental broken time series design was used by 60 students enrolled in Undergraduate English at Hadra Mout University in Yemen. Data from the current study were collected at several points before and after the end of the experiment to determine the effectiveness of collaborative learning for the speaking skills and attitudes of the sample. In fact, the sample speaking skills were first evaluated by an oral English test before and after some collaborative learning activities. Next, a questionnaire was given to the sample using five Likert scales before and after the course to determine the student's attitude towards the use of co-op learning in English lessons. The data were analyzed using simple and inference statistical methods such as mean, standard deviation, pair sample test, effect size, etc.

The results showed that students' speaking skills and attitudes improved significantly after the introduction of collaborative learning techniques. Based on the results, researchers recommend that teachers should benefit from using CL when teaching English. This can improve students' speaking skills and attitudes.

### **Foreign Studies**

Azizah (2018): This study aims to find out the extent to which the discussion style affects the development of English speaking skills in the eleventh grade from Sman 2 Campa-Maros. The researcher used pre- and post-testing to collect data, as the study sample consisted of 27 students in the eleventh grade. It was found that the students had obtained sufficient results in the pre-test, and after using the discussion strategy and conducting

the post-test, it was found that there was a noticeable progress in the students' grades and an improvement in their speaking skills. The results showed that the results of the post-test were higher than the results of the pre-test and that the discussion style contributed to improving the speaking skills of the eleventh grade students.

Hermawan (2018): The researcher's goal in this study is to know the effect of the use of debate technique in increasing students' speaking ability (Pre-Experimental Research at the Eleventh Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Pallangga) Which focuses on vocabulary, pronunciation and terminology. The researcher relied on the quasi-experimental method. The researcher used the test tool. The researcher designed the pre-test, the processing and the post-test. The data was collected through the pre-and post-test. The sample of the study was consisted of (40) male and female students from the category SMA Negeria 1 Pallangga to conduct the study.

There was a big difference in the results of the students between the pre and post -test, the results of the post-test were higher than the results of the pre-test and this was proven by the value of the t-test. The researcher concluded that the use of the debate technique can increase the students' ability to speak in the eleventh grade of SMA Negeria 1 Pallangga, and this technique has an effect on improving the students' pronunciation and vocabulary.

Syamdianita & Maharia (2019): This study aimed to answer two research questions: What are the perceptions of English language (EFL) students in the bachelor's stage regarding the use of debates in conversation classes. The second question is how bachelor's students see debate as helping them improve their speaking skills. To answer these two questions, the researcher used the mixed approach, where a questionnaire and an interview guide were used as research tools. The sample consisted of 63 students from the fifth semester in the English Department. The results showed that students had positive attitudes towards using debate in conversation classes. They were able to use the skill of speaking effectively and well. It turns out that debate contributes to developing good conversation skills such as pronunciation, divorce, grammar and vocabulary.

Solano & Padilla (2017): This study aimed to investigate the use of debate to enhance speaking skills in 12th-grade students at Unidad Educativa Particular Bilingüe Principito & Marcel Laniado de Wind. The researchers conducted this study adopting the quasi-

experimental method. They used the test tool (pre and post), and the classroom observation tool as tools for collecting data related to the subject of the study. This data helped the researchers conclude that debates can improve students' speaking skills. The results of the test showed that this strategy has an impact on improving students' rhetoric and visual communication. The researchers recommended that the debate technique be applied for longer periods.

Wulandari (2017): This study aimed to study students' perception of the use of debate activities in improving students' speaking skills in Sman 8 Yogyakarta. The researcher adopted the qualitative approach in his study. The study sample consisted of 8 members of the committee. The researcher used questionnaires, observation and interviews, the researcher made 3 observations on the debate activities. The researcher, distributed the questionnaire to 8 members of S Sman 8 Yogyakarta and interviewed them. It was found in this study that students have positive attitudes about using debate as an activity in improving speaking skills. Respondents agreed that the debate helped them learn many new English vocabulary, and taught them to speak regularly. The researcher recommended preparing the speech before speaking the language in front of the audience, but it gave them many advantages in improving their speaking skills.

(Tianame, Usman, & Muslem (2019): This study aimed to improve the quality of teaching and learning of speaking skills using debate techniques among tenth-grade students at SAMN Modal Bangsa School in Aceh Province during the 2017-2018 academic year. Twenty-seven students participated in the study, which was conducted using an action research approach in two phases, each of which included two training sessions.

The study included two types of data, quantitative and qualitative. The results of the first phase showed that the researcher's performance reached 70% and was classified as "good", while in the second phase it rose to 90% and was classified as "very good". The learner participation rate in the first phase was 75% and was classified as "average", while in the second phase it reached 95% and was classified as "excellent".

The pre-test results also showed that the students' average score was 55.55%, rising to 81.48% in the first phase and reaching 100% in the second phase, indicating that the success indicators were met. The survey results showed that the students expressed a desire to use the debate method as part of their speaking skill learning process.

The study concludes that the use of the debate method contributes to improving teachers' performance in teaching speaking skills, increases learners' interaction and participation in the classroom, and helps in clearly developing their speaking skills.

Aziz & Kamiliah (2020): The purpose of this study is to use discussion Student speaking skills and how much discussion contributed Aspects of speaking ability. It was a qualitative study design as a behavioral study. Eleven students in the fifth semester of the Faculty of English have completed the survey. The data was collected through a survey questionnaire that included yes or no questions and needs questions. Overall, students considered discussion to be a good learning activity. Respondents felt that the discussion helped improve, Their speaking skills encourage courage. As students argue, other benefits of debate included building courage to discuss voluntarily, building self-confidence, learning new vocabulary, and thinking critically.

Bohari (2019) : This study aimed to investigate the effect of small group discussions on improving speaking skills among seventh grade students at SMA Plus NW School. The study was conducted using the quasi-experimental approach and a quantitative method through pre- \_ post-testing for one group ( one -group pretest - posttest). The study group consists of eleventh grade students at SMA Plus Munirul Arifin NW School Praia in academic year 2018/2019. Each class consists of 28 students, for a total of 95 students. In this study, the researcher chose one class, which is the eleventh class, which consists of 28 students. The most important results reached by the researcher indicated that the results of the post-test are higher than the average results of the pre-test. This confirms that using debates in small groups is more effective than traditional education. Accordingly, debates are an effective method for improving the speaking skills of eleventh-grade students in the school.

Khansir (2020): This article discussed the application of the discussion method in enhancing knowledge of the English language among learners of English as a foreign language in Iran. This article aimed to find out whether the discussion method improves students' knowledge of the English language. The researcher relied on the semi-applied experimental method because he applied the discussion strategy and then knew its impact on their level of knowledge of the language English.

The researcher relied on the method of observation and practical application of the method of discussion, which was through tests or practical performance of students. The sample was about 100 students registered in five semesters. The most important finding of the researcher is that the discussion method can be an incentive to increase knowledge of the English language among learners of English as a foreign language.

Moreira Mejía & Alcívar Loor (2023): This study aimed to find out the effect of using group discussions as a strategy to promote fluency in speaking English as a foreign language classes at the Ecuadorian University. Therefore, I aimed to collect the experiences of various university lecturers to find out whether using group discussions is beneficial for students' speaking fluency. The qualitative approach was adopted in applying the study. The sample consisted of five lecturers from the same university who were selected using the purpose sample method. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The results showed that discussions play a role in promoting fluency speaking, although there are some challenges when applying this strategy.

Kuliahana & Marzuki (2023): This study aimed to determine the effect of group discussions on developing the speaking skills of students in the English Department at UIN Datokarama Palu University. Data were collected using questionnaires, field notes, and speaking tests during 6 classes in the second semester. The study sample consisted of 22 students. The results showed that 11 students achieved success and 11 students did not. After using improvements such as entering open-ended questions, 18 students achieved success, and only 4 students failed. The important result is that students' speaking skills can be developed through group discussion techniques.

Destira (2021): This study aimed to find out the effect of debate technique and vocabulary knowledge on students' speaking skills. The study relied on the quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design.

The group consisted of 65 students, 32 of whom were in the experimental group and 33 in the control group. The sample was selected using the cluster random sample technique. Tests were used as a data collection tool to assess students' knowledge of skills and vocabulary. The most important finding of the results of this study was that the debate technique was more effective than the traditional method in improving students' skills.

Students had limited knowledge of vocabulary, whether they learned through the debate technique or the traditional technique, and their level of speaking skill would be affected.

Baso (2016) This study aimed to find out the students' speaking skills using the debate technique. The researcher relied on a quasi-experimental design, and used the test and students' audio recording as a data collection tool. The study sample consisted of 85 eleventh-grade students at SMA Perguruan Tinggi Islam Makassar. Using the purpose sampling technique, one row was selected for pre- and post-testing. The most important results reached are that the debate technique contributed to improving students' speaking skills.

Erlangga, Arvianti & Arochman (2025): This study aimed to investigate the effect of debate on learning English as a foreign language. It aimed to investigate the occurrence of ambiguous language patterns in EFL student debates. The study was based on discourse analysis and collected data from transcripts of debates of 24 fourth-semester students at Aava University, Indonesia. One of the most important results reached was that 261 cases of ambiguous language were monitored out of 9,317 words spoken. For debates to be more effective, language skills must be improved. Teaching students discussion strategies without resorting to ambiguous language.

Lubis, Asnawi & Pinem (2020): This study aimed to reveal the communication skills of English language students through debate classes. The qualitative approach was used through a case study. 9 students with three different levels were selected 3 with high communication skill, 3 with medium communication skill, 3 with low communication skill.

Data were collected using careful observation, and the results showed that highly skilled students were able to achieve listening, asking questions, and active interaction. In short, students who are enthusiastic about participating in debate activities can enhance their communication skills smoothly using the English language.

According to Desita, Supardi, & Suhartono (2017): The aim of this research was to improve students' ability to speak by giving opinions and responding using the debate technique. The researcher relied on the descriptive approach in applying the study. The sample consisted of eighth grade students, section B, At SMPN 7 Sungai Raya School,

there are 26 students. The researcher used field notes and memoirs as a tool to collect data. The researcher monitored the students' activity within the class, and based on that, he recorded the problems he encountered during the application. The most important results reached by the researcher are that the debate technique improved students' ability to speak. Their ability to give opinions and respond has improved.

According to Miranti (2021): This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of using debate in learning English speaking skills among eleventh grade students. In this study, the researcher relied on the quasi-experimental approach in designing a pre- and post-test. Data were collected using (interview) speaking test. The sample consisted of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students at Ma As'Asdiyah No.17 Babu'e School. It appeared that the results of the post-test (7.73) were higher than the results of the pre-test (6.80), which remains the case that the use of debate contributed to improving speaking skills, especially for novice students.

### **Conclusion of the previous studies**

Previous studies (Arabic, local, foreign) have shown the effect of using debates and class discussions in teaching the English language. It turns out that this strategy has an effective role in developing learners' speaking skills. Previous studies have shown that using a debate strategy contributes significantly to improving multiple aspects of speaking skills, such as fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, use of grammar, and increasing vocabulary. Previous studies indicated that students who participated in debate activities showed an improvement in their self-confidence, and their desire to participate in class and interact with their colleagues and teachers in the classroom increased.

Previous studies have also shown the positive impact of debates on linguistic aspects. They played an important role in enhancing critical thinking and logical analysis skills. They helped students express themselves, their opinions, and ideas in an organized manner and present and defend arguments. Previous studies indicated that presenting logical and exciting topics for discussion in the classroom made learners more motivated to discuss them, and created an active learning environment based on cooperation and positive competition.

Previous studies have unanimously agreed that there are positive attitudes by teachers and learners towards the use of debates in the classroom. It has an enjoyable and effective educational tool compared to traditional methods that rely on memorization and

indoctrination. Most studies have recommended incorporating debates into classroom activities. Training teachers on how to use it to suit the learners' linguistic levels and needs.

In short, the results of previous studies show that debate represents a successful and effective teaching strategy that contributes to improving learners' speaking skills in the English language. It provides a fun and stimulating learning environment that enhances learners' linguistic, cognitive and social abilities, making it a promising option in teaching foreign languages.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

Speaking skill is considered one of the most important basic skills that must be mastered in teaching the English language. It reflects the learner's ability to communicate, produce speech, and express his ideas to the other party. From here, the idea of this study emerged through the researcher's personal experience in teaching the English language to public school students in the northern governorates. I found a noticeable weakness in the speaking skill of learners in English language classes, as stated in the study "secondary school students may face challenges in optimizing their critical thinking and speaking capabilities, impacting overall learning achievements" (Ahmed, Sawalmeh, & Ramadan, 2024, p. 18).

As was also shown in a study Hammad (2020), while the researcher was conducting an interview, it was found that students have problems and weaknesses related to speaking skills, for example, problems related to cohesion, organization, and visual communication during speaking practice.

The book (English for Palestine) for grades one to nine states that 25% of the time taught in the subject should be allocated to developing learners' speaking skills" (Afana, 2012, p. 5). Despite the development of methods for teaching the English language, some teachers tend to use traditional methods in teaching the English language, and this in turn weakens the learners' speaking competence.

Most studies that dealt with the effect of debates on speaking competence focused on different educational stages and diverse cultural environments. there are rare studies that have dealt with the subject of debates in the Palestinian context, especially from the

teachers' perspectives who are considered the primary and important party in implementing the strategy. Hence, this study came in response to the need to develop the competence of English speaking skills among learners in the northern governorates, and to contribute to enhancing English language learning practices in the Palestinian environment.

### **1.5 Aims of the Study**

The present study aims to achieve the following objects:

1. To determine the views of English language teachers regarding the role of using debate strategy in developing the speaking competence of ninth-grade students in the northern governorates.
2. To examine the role of the debate strategy in developing language learning and communication skills among ninth-grade students in the northern governorates.
3. To examine to what extent the debate strategy helps develop the English speaking competence of ninth-grade students from the teachers' perspectives.
4. To study the differences in teachers' responses to the role of using debates in developing speaking competence among ninth-grade students in the northern governorates.

### **1.6 Objective of the study**

This study mainly aimed to reveal the effect of the debate strategy in improving the competence of English speaking skills among ninth- graders students from teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates.

### **1.7 Questions of the Study**

What is the effect of the debate strategy on English language speaking competence of ninth -grade learners from teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?

- What's the role of the debate strategy in promoting English language learning and communication skills amongst ninth -graders in the northern governorates?
- To what extent does the debate strategy helps to improve the speaking competence of ninth- graders from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?

- What are teachers' responses to use the debate strategy in improving the speaking competence of ninth- graders from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?

### **1.8 Importance of the Study**

This study examines the impact of debates on English speaking competence of 9<sup>th</sup>-grade English language learners from teachers' perspective the northern governorates. There are several forms of debate strategy that teachers can adopt to improve students' competence in speaking English. Such as, scaffolding. According to Oweis & Karani (2021) "debating is a collaborative concept that mandates students of the same team to work together, it also requires individual effort on the part of each student outside the classroom as well" (Oweis & Karain, 2021, p. 3333).

This study is to be useful for both the students, the teachers, and future researchers:

#### **Students**

This study can help students to develop their English language skills and encourage them to produce speech and communicate with their peers. It can also help students increase their vocabulary and thus encouraging them to share their thoughts and opinions with others with confidence. It can enable students to become English speaker in the future. This study could help to enhance students' ability to learn English skills and pronunciation.

#### **Teachers**

Teachers can use this study as an opportunity to apply the debate strategy within classes as a modern, fun, away from traditional routine methods to help improve student's speaking skills.

#### **Future researchers**

The results and materials of this study could be a research reference for many future successful researchers to take advantage of and build on information when conducting several scientific research.

## 1.9 Limits the study

This study is limited to the following:

**Locative limits:** This study is limited to ninth-grade students (males and females) in government schools in the northern governorates.

**Temporal limits:** This study was conducted in the academic year (2024-2025).

**Human Limits:** The study population consists of all English language teachers who teach ninth-grade students in government schools.

**Topical limits:** This study focuses on investigating the effect of using debate strategy on developing speaking competence among ninth -grade students from the perspectives of English language teachers in the northern governorates.

## 1.10 Definition of terms

### Definition of Speaking Competence

The researcher discovered a number of resources that explain and define speaking.

According to Roni (2021) "speaking is a planned and unplanned activity. also mentioned that we learn to speak by speaking (Roni, 2021, p. 172).

According to Ashifa (2023) " speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving, preparing and processing information. speaking is the production of a voice of words" (Ashifa, 2023, p. 7).

According to Ariani (2019) " Speaking is a way to bring a message from one person to another to interact with them. Communication will not be running well without speaking" (Ariani, 2019, p. 9).

According to (Hermawati, 2018; Walandari, 2017) concluded that speaking was an important skill in the interaction between the speaker and the listener when providing information or asking for an opinion through oral communication.

According to Le & Duc (2022) "speaking is the process of building and sharing through the use of verbal and non - verbal symbols in a variety of contexts" (Le & Duc, 2022, p. 133).

Based on the previous definitions of speaking, the researcher considers speaking is the most important aspect of language learning. It is a productive skill. This allows learners to practice and apply vocabulary, as well as speak fluently. It allows learners to express opinions and thoughts and share it with other orally. Operational speaking competence is defined as the ability that learners demonstrate in oral expression in the English language fluently, accurately, and clearly, and includes using appropriate vocabulary and linguistic structures, proper intonation, organizing ideas logically and presenting them, and interacting with others verbally.

### **Definition of Debate**

There are different definitions of debates that are mentioned by the researcher "debate is a powerful speaking activity that gradually forces students to improve their communication skills. Debates are best suited for intermediate and advanced students who have been instructed on how to prepare for them. Debate as a communicative and interactive technique is a fun activity to try in the classroom to Improve students' communication skills" (Fuad, 2018, p. 14).

According to Firmansyah & Vegian (2019) "Debate is a recognized method of interactive and representative argument aimed at persuading the audience" (Firmansyah & Valat, 2019, p. 892).

A debate is a public speaking event in which opposing viewpoints are presented and argued. Debate can be held on a real or simulated issue. The learners' roles ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of the issue to defend their position. Debate is an activity that is used to gain a better understanding of the topic. It is carried out by two groups. Each group is made up of three or five students. It is divided into two groups: "pro" and "contra." Debate instills confidence and motivates students to express their opinions and respond to arguments in English (Fuad, 2018, p. 13).

According to Alasmari & Ahmed (2013), "Debate is an excellent activity for language learning because it engages students in a variety of cognitive and linguistic ways. In addition to providing meaningful listening, speaking and writing practice, debate is also highly effective for developing argumentation skills for persuasive speech and writing " (Alasmari & Ahmed, 2013, p. 147).

According to Laisouw (2019) " Debate is a method of interactive and representational argument, Debates is a border from of argument than logical argument, which only examines consistency from axiom, and factual argument which only examines what is or is not the case, or rhetoric which is an a technique of persuasion" (Laisouw, 2019, p. 17).

Based on previous definitions, the researcher defines an operational definition of debate in this study that debate is an intellectual language confrontation between two or more speakers on a particular subject within a specified time, each party seeks to present ideas and arguments to prove and defend its point of view.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Methodology of the Study**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the study design, variables of the study, study population and sample, study tools, indicators of validity and reliability, and study procedures.

#### **2.2 Study design**

The researcher used the descriptive analytical method, which is one of the most important scientific research methods, as it is usually used to describe and explain phenomena, in addition to analyzing them critically with the aim of achieving the objectives of the study or determining the reasons for their occurrence. In other words, the mixed research method (mixed method) was employed to achieve the objectives of the study.

The quantitative and qualitative descriptive approaches were adopted due to their suitability and relevance to achieving the objectives of the study and answering its questions. Both approaches were used together in order to form a comprehensive picture of teachers' perspectives on using debates to develop students' speaking competence.

The researcher adopted the quantitative approach as the main approach in collecting data, while the qualitative approach was used as a supporting approach for the data collected quantitatively, to ensure the validity of teachers' answers in the questionnaire.

#### **2.3 Study variables**

- Independent variables: The use of debates in teaching the English language.
- Dependent variables: English speaking competence among ninth-grade students.
- Demographic variables: gender, years of experience.

#### **2.4 study Population**

The study population consists of all English language teachers in public schools in the four northern governorates : Nablus, Jenin, Qabatiya and Jericho, and their number is (292=N) male and female teachers. During the 2025/2024 academic year, data on the number of teachers was obtained from a supervisor in Jenin education, which was taken from the general education department.

## 2.5 Study sample

The study sample includes (n=174) English language teachers in schools in the northern governorates, specifically in four districts : Nablus, Jenin, Qabatiya and Jericho. To achieve the purpose of the study, a representative sample of 60% was chosen from each of the four districts of Nablus, Jenin, Qabatiya and Jericho, so that the total sample size becomes 174 male and female teachers.

Three English language teachers from the ninth grade were also intentionally selected to conduct the interview, with the aim of supporting and interpreting the results of the questionnaire.

Teachers' responses were collected online by sending the questionnaire via an electronic link on Google Form to English language teacher groups via social media platforms, to which the teachers answered directly. The respondents' glands reached 174 male and female teachers, equivalent to 60% of the study population. The demographic distribution of the sample is shown in the following table.

**Table (2.1)**

*Sample Distribution*

<b>Demographic variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Gender		
Male	137	78.7
Female	37	21.3
Total	174	100.0
Years of Experience		
Less than 3 years	37	21.3
3-5 years	17	9.8
6-10 years	76	74.7
More than 10 years	44	25.3
Total	174	100.0
Have you taken courses on the use of in-class debates		
Yes	90	51.7
No	84	48.3
Total	174	100.0
Have you ever taught English to the ninth grade previously or are you teaching it now?		
Yes	48	27.6
No	126	72.4
Total	174	100.0
Which directorate of education do you currently work in?		
Nablus	55	31.6
Jericho	10	5.7
Jenin	65	37.4
Qabatiya	44	25.3
Total	174	100.0

## **2.6 Instruments of the study**

To accomplish the primary goal of the study and to provide answers to the study questions, the researcher used the quantitative representational approach. The data was collected using an electronic questionnaire designed on Google Form and sent to English language teacher groups via social media platforms, and the teachers, in turn, answered it directly. The researcher also relied on the interview as a supporting tool, as interviews were conducted with three English language teachers studying the ninth-- grade, with the aim of collecting qualitative data that contributes to collecting and interpreting the results of the questionnaire.

### **2.6.1 First Instrument: Questionnaire**

The study tool (questionnaire) was distributed to English language teachers via an electronic link as the main tool for collecting data. The questionnaire consists of four domains that contribute to answering the study questions and 28 elements, with the number of elements varying in each domain. The first domain: Its elements relate to the dependent variable, which is the effect of using the debate strategy on English speaking competence. The second domain : Elements revolve around the independent variable, which is the role of debate strategy in enhancing the learning of English language and communication skills. The third domain focuses on the independent variable, which is teachers' perspectives on the effect of using the debate strategy in improving English speaking competence. The fourth domain focuses on the dependent variable, which is teachers' responses to using the debate strategy to improve English speaking competence in the classroom.

The questionnaire contains a short introduction and some personal information. To assess the degree of agreement, the researcher designed a five-point Likert scale as follows:

- (Strongly agree) For those who agree with the item, the grade ranges between (5-4.20).
- (Agree) for those who agree to the item, and the grade ranges between ( 4.19-3.40).
- (Neutral) for those who take a neutral position, and the degree ranges between (3.39-2.60).

- (Strongly Disagree) for those who disagree with the item and the score ranges between ( 2.59-1.80).
- (Disagree) for They do not approve of the item and the grade ranges between (1.79-1.00).

### **Validity of the questionnaire**

The researcher verified the validity of the study tool (questionnaire) by presenting it to a group of experts / arbitrators who provided some comments on it. These comments included adding and modifying some paragraphs and questions, strengthening some verbs in the questions to make them more powerful, Correcting some grammatical errors. Modify some elements to make them more convenient to use. Merge some elements because of their similarity. After these amendments, the final version of the questionnaire was developed and began to measure teachers' perspectives about the effect of debates on English speaking competence.

### **Reliability of the Questionnaire**

The reliability of the study tool (questionnaire) was calculated using the internal consistency method through the Cronbach alpha coefficient, as shown in the table:

Cronbach's alpha stability results for the stability of the study tool:

**Table (2.2)**

*Case Processing Summary*

<b>Cases</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Valid	174	100.0
Excluded	0	0.0
Total	174	100.0

Noe: Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Table (2.3)**

*Reliability Statistics*

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
0.953	28

The table shows that the questionnaire has very high stability (Cronbach's Alpha 0.953) as the total value of the axis items is (0.95).

The internal consistency of the study tool (questionnaire) was examined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and the results showed a high degree of stability of (0.95). The Cronbach alpha test was chosen because it is one of the most common and reliable methods for measuring the extent of internal coherence of questionnaire elements, and it is also suitable for evaluating the reliability of tools that measure variables related to each other. This result indicates that the questionnaire elements are strongly interconnected and effectively measure the conceptual structure of the study variables, which reflects the reliability of the tool and its readiness for use in measuring teachers' perspectives about the impact of debates on developing English speaking competence.

### **2.6.2 Second Instrument: Interview**

The interview tool consisted of (8) open-ended questions, which the researcher had prepared in advance in a way that was appropriate to the subject of the study, and aimed to deepen understanding of the attitudes of English language teachers towards using debates to develop speaking competence among ninth- grade students. The interview sample was intentionally selected, as the interviews included (3) male and female English language teachers, with the aim of giving them the opportunity to express their opinions and educational experiences, and explain their points of view in more detail, in a way that supports the quantitative results.

The interview tool was applied through direct communication with teachers via phone calls, where the researcher conducted individual interviews with teachers at times appropriate to them, and the purpose of the study was explained to them before starting the interview, with an emphasis on the confidentiality of the information and its use for scientific research purposes only. The interviews provided teachers with the opportunity to present their personal experiences, freely discuss their opinions about the use of debates within the classroom, and the challenges they face during their application.

The researcher recorded the teachers' answers during the interviews, then classified and organized them according to the study questions. After that, the qualitative data was analyzed using the objective analysis method (Thematic Analysis), where the answers were reviewed, coded, and then the main axes that reflected the teachers' trends and

interpretations were extracted. These domain were presented supported by some quotes from the teachers' answers, which contributes to interpreting the questionnaire results and enhancing their credibility.

### **Validity of the interview Instrument**

The researcher verified the validity of the interview tool by presenting it to the academic supervisor, to ensure its suitability to the subject of the study and its objectives. The interview tool aims to identify English language teachers' attitudes towards using debates to develop speaking competence among ninth- grade students.

The researcher reviewed the teachers' answers during the interviews to ensure their consistency with the objectives of the study, and to ensure their effective participation, which enhances the credibility of the data resulting from this tool.

## **2.7 Data Analysis Process**

### **Statistical Analysis Methods for Questionnaire**

The questionnaire items were evaluated using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (5 = strongly Agree to 1 = strongly disagree), with the higher number indicating a high level of attitudes of English language teachers towards using debates to develop speaking competence among ninth-grade students in the northern governorates.

Descriptive statistics were used to estimate the reality of English language teachers' attitudes towards the contribution of debates to developing the speaking competence of ninth- grade students within the target sample using the following mean key (low = 1.79- 1.00, moderate= 2.60- 3.3.9, high = 4.20- 5 ).

In addition, the following statistical techniques were used: T analysis test, Cronbach's alpha coefficient using the SPSS v28 program.

### **Analysis Method for the Interview**

Data collected by the researcher from teachers via individual telephone interviews were analyzed using objective analysis (Thematic Analysis). In this process, the researcher carefully reviewed the participants' answers, and coded the most frequently repeated words, sentences, and ideas that reflected the teachers' attitudes and perspectives. These

symbols were then grouped into main Themes that reflect the study questions, with some themes divided into sub - themes to interpret the information in more detail.

After identifying the main and sub-themes, the researcher presented the teachers' answers taken from the interviews and interpreted them from her perspectives. This method allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' attitudes towards using debates to develop the speaking competence of ninth -grade students, while supporting and clarifying the results extracted from the quantitative tool.

## **2.8 Data Gathering process**

- At first, the ministry of education agreed to distribute the study tools (questionnaire) to the sample.
- After that, the researcher conducted an electronic questionnaire.
- The electronic questionnaire link was distributed to a sample of English language teachers in government schools via social media groups in the northern governorate.

In addition to the electronic questionnaire, the researcher relied on the interview as a qualitative supporting tool to collect additional data and interpret the questionnaire results. Closed interviews (yes / no) were conducted with three ninth-grade English teachers. These interviews helped to understand and clarify teachers' opinions more deeply about the impact of using debates on developing students' speaking competence, and supported the results of the statistical analysis of the questionnaire.

## **2.9 Study procedures**

- Before starting the study: The researcher wrote to the academic supervisor to determine the title of the study and agree on the lines they should follow.
- University approval: The researcher obtained official approval from An-Najah university/deanship of graduate studies regarding the study title and research plan.
- Determining the sample and the population: The researcher determined the study population and the study sample to which he will apply his study.
- Data collection: The researcher designed an electronic questionnaire and distributed it to the sample members via social media platforms to answer it.

- Statistical analysis: The researcher used statistical analysis software to analyze the data he collected from the electronic questionnaire.

## **2.10 summary**

It is obvious from the aforementioned presentation of the methodology used in this study that the researcher used the mixed approach with the aim of exploring the attitudes of English language teachers towards the effect of debates in developing speaking competence among ninth grade students in the northern governorates. The mixed approach was represented in the quantitative aspect through the (questionnaire) and in the qualitative aspect through the (interview), and the validity and reliability of the two data collection tools for each of them were verified.

The researcher used these two tools with the aim of obtaining descriptive statistics and measuring differences between participants with regard to the subject of the study, in addition to obtaining in-depth and comprehensive data about the phenomenon studied through the interview. This means that the questionnaire is the main tool in the study, while the interview is the supporting tool in arriving at the results of the study.

the main themes that the study addressed are: The first theme: The impact of debates on developing speaking competence among ninth grade students. Theme 2: The role of debates in enhancing language learning and developing communication skills. Theme 3: To what extent do debates contribute to developing English speaking competence. Theme 4: Teachers' attitudes and responses towards using debates in teaching

These topics were addressed through objective analysis and statistical processing of interview and questionnaire data together, with the aim of integrating them by obtaining in-depth data on the phenomenon of using debates to develop English speaking competence. While the questionnaire aims to describe the use of debates through closed questions, the interview was used to delve deeper into understanding the phenomenon, allowing the use of debates for education in a comprehensive and accurate manner.

## Chapter Three

### Findings of the Study

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the most important findings of the study. It displays the results of testing and answers to study questions, and also displays the results of data collected through the questionnaire tool.

#### 3.2 Answering the Questions of the Study (Questionnaire Results)

In this section, the researcher used descriptive statistical methods and appropriate tests in order to analyze the data of the questionnaire tool. The results were presented according to the study questions:

##### First question

What is the effect of debate strategy on English speaking competence of ninth -grade learners from teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?

To answer this question, the researcher used descriptive statistics represented by means and standard deviations for the paragraphs of the first dimension of the questionnaire, which reflects the effect of debates on the competence of speaking the English language.

**First domain:** effect on English speaking competence.

This dimension measures the effect of the debate on the competence in speaking English, and the table (3.1) displays the means and standard deviations for the paragraphs of this dimension, arranged in descending order according to the value of the means:

**Table (3.1)**

*Means and standard deviations of the effect of debate on English speaking competence are arranged in descending order*

Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking Debates activities help students overcome anxiety	174	2.14	1.129
Students demonstrate better critical thinking skills through debate participation.	174	2.02	1.048
Using debates increases students' overall speaking competence.	174	2.00	1.112
Debates encourage greater oral participation in class.	174	1.94	1.084
Debates enhance students' efficiency in spoken English.	174	1.84	1.121
Debates enable students express their ideas more fluently.	174	1.79	1.016
Total	174	1.955	1.09

Table (3.1) indicates that the overall degree of effect of debates on developing students' speaking competence was low from the teachers' perspectives. the average was Total (mean =1. 955) strongly disagree, with a standard deviation of (1.09 ) Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data of the first axis of the questionnaire study tool related to the effect of debates on developing speaking competence among ninth-grade students from the teachers' perspectives.

The data showed that the highest score was given to the item "speaking Debates activities help students overall anxiety" within the highest average score (mean = 2.14). Followed by the paragraph "Students demonstrate better critical thinking skills through debate partnership" with a mean score (mean = 2.02). The lowest score was for the item "Debates enable students express their ideas more slowly." With a mean score (mean = 1.79). It is clear from this that teachers notice some benefits of debates in reducing students' anxiety and developing skills Certain, such as critical thinking, although the impact of debates on fluency is still minimal. The results indicate that the majority of teachers rated the impact of debates on speaking competence as low, while a minority gave high ratings, reflecting the limited impact of debates on students' speaking competence from the teachers' perspective.

The researcher expected that teachers' perspectives would be about the effect of using debates in developing speaking competence at the intermediate level. However, the results in Table (3.1) showed that the majority of teachers rated the effect of debates on speaking competence as low, while a minority of teachers gave high ratings. and this is not consistent with the study's expectations. This difference may be due to the way teachers applied the debate strategy within the classes and their limited experience in using debate, or the lack of time allocated for debates in the class, which reduced their impact on the students' speaking competence.

**Second question:** What's the role of the debate strategy in promoting English language learning and communication skills amongst ninth-graders in the northern governorates?

To answer this question, the researcher used descriptive statistics represented by means and standard deviations for the paragraphs of the second dimension of the questionnaire, which reflects the role of the debate strategy in promoting English language learning and communication skills for students.

## Second domain: promoting English language learning and communication skills

In order to measure the extent of the impact of debates in enhancing English language learning and communication skills, the researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the data, and the results indicated teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates.

**Table (3.2)**

*Means and standard deviations in the effect of debates in enhancing English language learning and communication skills from the teachers' perspectives, arranged in descending order*

Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Debates reinforce the learning and retention of English language skills	174	2.12	1.060
Debate activities promote peer learning and collaboration.	174	2.06	1.113
Debates help students improve their English pronunciation.	174	2.01	1.115
Debates encourage students to use authentic language in meaningful contexts.	174	1.95	1.044
Debates enhance students' ability to organize their ideas when speaking.	174	1.90	1.070
Debates improve students' ability to speak in real-life situations.	174	1.85	1.092
Debates help develop students' communication abilities	174	1.84	1.072
Total	174	1.96	1.08

Table (3.2) shows that the level of effect of debates in improving English learning and communication skills from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates is low, as the total score retrieved (mean = 1.96) strongly disagrees.

This reflects the limited awareness of the impact of this strategy within the classes. The highest mean score was given to the item "debates reinforce the learning and retention of English language skills" within the highest mean score (mean = 2.12). This indicates that teachers believe that debates contribute to consolidating students' language skills compared to other aspects and skills. Followed by the paragraph "Debate activities promote peer learning and collaboration." With a mean score ( mean = 2.06). This indicates that teachers believe that there is a noticeable impact of the role of debates in enhancing cooperation between students. The lowest score was for the item "debates help develop students' communication abilities" with a mean score (mean = 1.84). This item is considered the least influential.

Looking at the two standard deviation scores (1.04, 1.11), we see a clear difference between the two scores in teachers' perspectives about the effect of debates on developing speaking competence. This indicates that there is a difference in teachers' experiences or the extent to which this strategy is applied in their classes.

The study expected that teachers would see the role of debates in enhancing the English language and communication skills among ninth-grade students in in the northern governorates. The results of Table (3.2) showed that teachers' evaluation of the use of debates to enhance language and communication skills was weak, and this is not consistent with the study's expectations. This difference results from the difference in teachers' experiences and the difference in their application of debates within the classroom, or the lack of students' participation in debates, or the limited time allocated to applying debates, which affected teachers' evaluation of the role of debates in improving language and communication skills.

**Third question:** To what extent does the debate strategy helps to improve the speaking competence of ninth-graders from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?

**First domain:** effect on English speaking competence.

This dimension measures the effect of the debate on the competence in speaking English, and the table (3.3) displays the means and standard deviations for the paragraphs of this dimension, arranged in descending order according to the value of the means:

**Table ( 3.3)**

*Means and standard deviations of the effect of debate on English speaking competence are arranged in descending order*

<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
speaking Debates activities help students overcome anxiety"	174	2.14	1.129
Students demonstrate better critical thinking skills through debate participation.	174	2.02	1.048
Using debates increases students' overall speaking competence.	174	2.00	1.112
Debates encourage greater oral participation in class."	174	1.94	1.084
Debates enhance students' efficiency in spoken English.	174	1.84	1.121
Debates enable students express their ideas more fluently."	174	1.79	1.016
Total	174	1.955	1.09

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the third question of the study, and it was addressed using the first domain, which measures the effect of debates on speaking competence. The results related to the third question of the study, as shown in Table (3.3), show that the effect of debates on speaking competence from the teachers' perspectives was low, and the overall average was (mean = 1.955) strongly disagree, with a standard deviation (sta deviation = 1.09).

The results showed that the highest score was given to the Item "speaking Debates activities help students' overall anxiety" within the highest average score (mean = 2.14). Followed by the paragraph "Students demonstrate better critical thinking skills through debate partnership" with a mean score (mean = 2.02). The lowest score was for the item "Debates enable students to express their ideas more slowly." With a mean score (mean = 1.79). This indicates that teachers' perspectives about debates is that they have some benefit, even if it is small, in developing different skills in students, such as critical thinking and reducing anxiety and stress in them, although the impact of debates on speaking competence is still limited. The results indicated that the majority of teachers rated the impact of debates on speaking competence as low, while a minority of teachers gave high ratings. This reflects the limited impact of debates on speaking competence from the teachers' perspectives.

The study expected that teachers' use of the debate strategy would contribute to improving the speaking competence of ninth- grade students from teachers' perspective in the Northern Governorates. The results of Table (3.3) showed that the contribution of debates to developing speaking competence from the teachers' perspectives is low and that the impact of debates on developing speaking competence is limited from the teachers' perspectives. This is not consistent with the researcher's expectation, and this difference indicates the weakness of the actual application of debates within the classroom, the lack of training of teachers to use the debate strategy, the lack of time as well, and the size of the curriculum that limits the opportunities for students to practice speaking within the classroom.

**Fourth question:** What are teachers' responses to use the debate strategy in improving the speaking competence of ninth-graders from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?

The fourth question in the study, which examines teachers' responses and the challenges they face in using debates to develop speaking competence, was addressed by using the fourth domain in the questionnaire (teachers' responses and challenges) in addition to the third domain (teachers' perspectives ) to obtain a comprehensive and accurate view of teachers' perspectives and positions towards using debates in the classroom.

The fourth question of the study is related to both the fourth and third domain of the questionnaire, as shown below.

#### **Fourth domain: teachers' responses and challenges.**

In order to measure teachers' responses and the challenges they face in implementing the debate to develop English speaking competence. The researcher relied on the descriptive analytical approach. The domain address the most prominent obstacles facing teachers during the implementation of the debate. The results of this domain were shown from teachers' responses and challenges, as shown as in Table (3.4).

**Table (3.4)**

*Means and standard deviations of teachers' responses and challenges are arranged in descending order*

<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Sta. Deviation</b>
The Palestinian curriculum provides sufficient support for the use of debate.	174	2.83	1.193
The allocated class time is sufficient for conducting effective debates.	174	2.80	1.248
I encounter obstacles when applying debates in class.	174	2.31	1.068
I face logistical challenges that hinder the implementation of debates.	174	2.18	1.001
I prefer using debates as a method of teaching English.	174	2.16	1.035
Some students refuse to participate in debates due to shyness.	174	2.13	1.081
Total	174	2.402	1.13

The results of the table show that teachers' responses to the challenges associated with applying debate in developing English speaking competence were low and totaled (mean=2.402) strongly disagree. The highest average score was for the item "The Palestinian Curriculum Provides Sufficient Support for the Use of Debate" ( mean = 2.83). This indicates that teachers believe that the Palestinian curriculum contains, albeit in a simple way, spaces that can be used in conducting debates. Followed by the item

"The allocated class time is sufficient for conducting effective debts" ( mean = 2.80). This shows that most teachers face a time challenge. The lowest average score was for the item "Some students refuse to participate in debates due to shyness " ( mean = 2.13). This explains why shyness and their reluctance to speak in front of others are considered among the most prominent obstacles facing students and teachers in conducting debates within the classroom.

The researcher expected that teachers' responses to the use of debates to improve the speaking competence of ninth-grade students in the Northern Governorates would be positive. The results of Table (3.4) showed that teachers' responses to the application of debate within the classroom were low, and this also does not correspond to the researcher's expectation. The reason for this difference is the lack of time among teachers to apply debate within the classroom, and the inability of teachers to employ debate within the classroom due to their lack of training in using this type of strategy to practice it within the classroom. In addition to the students' shyness in participating, it limits their opportunity to practice speaking effectively in the classroom.

**Third domain:** teachers' perspectives, Table (3.5).

In order to measure teachers' perspectives in in the Northern Governorates on the use of debates in developing English speaking competence, the researcher used descriptive statistics, and the results of this dimension were shown from teachers' perspectives of English language, as shown in Table (3.5).

**Table (3.5)**

*Means and standard deviations from the teachers' perspectives are arranged in descending order*

<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Deviation</b>
I have received adequate training to implement debate activities effectively.	174	2.67	1.242
I regularly use debates as part of my English teaching practice.	174	2.44	1.083
The physical classroom environment supports debate activities.	174	2.41	1.148
The impact of debate on students' speaking abilities is sustained over time.	174	2.12	0.975
Students show measurable progress in English after participating in debates.	174	2.12	0.969
Students demonstrate improved oral performance after debates.	174	2.06	1.018
Debate is an appropriate strategy for ninth-grade students.	174	2.05	0.957
Debates are more effective than traditional teaching strategies for developing speaking skills.	174	2.01	0.991
Students are more motivated to speak when debates are used.	174	1.95	1.033
Total	174	2.203	1.05

The table shows that teachers' perspectives of using debates to develop speaking competence were low, receiving a total score of (mean = 2.203)strongly disagree. This indicates that teachers do not see a clear effect of debates in improving the competence of students' speaking skills, as expected theoretically. The highest mean score for the item was "I have received adequate training to implement debt activities effectively" ( mean = 2.67). This indicates teachers' awareness and understanding of the importance of training to improve the use of debates. Followed by the item I regularly use debates as part of my "English teaching practice." ( mean = 2.44). In fact, a percentage of teachers practice debates in their classes. The lowest mean score was for the item "Students are more motivated to speak when debts are used" (mean = 1.95). This reflects that motivating students is not seen as an important aspect of debates from the teachers' perspectives.

The standard deviation values (0.95, 1.24) show a noticeable variation in teachers' responses, and this indicates a difference in their experience or level of understanding of this strategy.

## **Findings of the Interview instrument**

In this section, the researcher presents the findings of the data gathered throughout the interview instrument as follows:

### **Theme 1: The effect of debates on developing English speaking competence.**

This section discussed teachers' opinions on the impact of using classroom debates on developing English speaking competence among ninth grade students. The interviews showed a difference in the positions of the participating teachers, as some of them expressed positive attitudes, while others expressed weak attitudes towards the effectiveness of this strategy within the classroom.

One teacher pointed out that debates contribute to developing students' speaking competence, as they provide them with an opportunity to express their opinions in English within an interactive context, and help them organize their thoughts and participate effectively in classroom discussions. He explained that these activities enhance students' self-confidence while speaking.

On the other hand, two teachers expressed weak positions regarding the impact of debates on developing speaking competence, explaining that applying them in the classroom faces a number of challenges. They pointed out that the limited time allocated to class and the disparity in language levels among students limit the effectiveness of debates as an educational strategy.

The teachers also explained that debates require a certain linguistic level among the students, in addition to prior preparation and additional effort on the part of the teacher, which may not always be available in the daily educational reality. In this context, one of the teachers stated that "debates require an advanced linguistic level among the students, in addition to the need for prior preparation on the part of the teacher, which may not be sufficiently available in the classroom classes."

## **Theme 2: The role of debates in enhancing learning the English language and developing communication skills.**

In the interview session, teachers discussed the role of debates in developing students' English language and communication skills, and differing opinions emerged about their effectiveness.

Only one teacher indicated that debates are an effective tool for enhancing English speaking skills, as they provide an opportunity to express their opinions, analyze issues, and develop critical thinking. This teacher also stressed that debates enhance students' self-confidence and encourage them to interact with their colleagues, which creates an active educational environment that focuses on the student and contributes to developing oral and verbal communication skills

On the other hand, two teachers refused to use debates within the classroom, explaining that there are several obstacles that prevent them from applying them effectively, namely:

1. Lack of sufficient knowledge of how to manage debates in the classroom.
2. Time restrictions that prevent allocating sufficient time for debate.
3. Limited educational materials to support the effective implementation of debates.

Despite their rejection, teachers indicated that they recognize the theoretical benefit of debates in improving communication and critical thinking skills, but they felt that their application on the ground is limited, which reflects the low impact of debates on their educational practice.

This analysis reflects that debates can be an effective way to enhance English language learning and develop communication skills, but their success depends on teachers' readiness, their knowledge of how to manage them, and the availability of appropriate time and resources within the classroom.

## **Theme 3: The extent to which debates contribute to mastering speaking the English language**

This section discussed teachers' opinions on the extent to which debates contribute to developing students' competence in speaking English in the classroom. The interviews showed a clear difference in the participating teachers' views on this role.

One teacher pointed out that debates contribute to developing English speaking competence, as they provide students with opportunities to express their opinions and use the language in communication situations within the classroom. He explained that these activities help students organize their thoughts, speak more fluently, and participate in classroom discussions, explaining this by saying:

“Debates give students a real opportunity to speak English and defend their opinions, which helps them improve fluency and confidence while speaking”.

On the other hand, two teachers expressed low attitudes towards the role of debates in developing speaking competence, explaining that applying them in the classroom faces several difficulties. They pointed out that the limited time allocated to the class session, the difficulty of managing the class during the implementation of debates, in addition to the disparity in language levels among students, limit the effectiveness of this strategy, as one of them stated that "implementing debates requires a lot of time and effort, and cannot be easily applied in all classes".

The two teachers also explained that debates require a certain linguistic level among the students, and prior preparation by the teacher, which may not be sufficiently available in the daily educational reality, which affects the extent of their employment within the classroom.

#### **Theme 4 : Teachers' attitudes and responses towards the use of debates in teaching**

This section examined teachers' attitudes and responses towards using debates as an effective teaching strategy in the classroom. The interviews showed a difference in the positions of the participating teachers, as a positive trend emerged among one teacher, compared to low trends among other teachers.

One of the teachers pointed to a positive trend towards using debates in teaching, explaining that it is an effective method for involving students in the educational process and developing their thinking and communication skills. He explained that debates encourage students to interact and help them express their opinions with confidence, which makes the lesson more lively and increases students' motivation to learn.

In the interviews, two teachers expressed low attitudes toward the use of debate, pointing to a range of challenges that affect their response to employing this method in the

classroom. They explained that debates require additional time for preparation and implementation, in addition to the need to train students on the mechanism of participation, which may constitute an additional burden on the teacher in light of the density of the curriculum and the lack of time.

The teachers also pointed out that some students do not have the courage or linguistic level to participate in debates, which leads to poor interaction within the class. They added that classroom management during the implementation of analogies can be difficult, especially in crowded classrooms, which reduces teachers' desire to use them on a regular basis.

Analysis of this theme shows that teachers' attitudes towards using debates are clearly influenced by classroom and organizational factors, and by the extent of the teacher's willingness to employ this teaching method within the classroom.

### **3.3 Summary of the Qualitative Results**

During the interview session, teachers explained the importance of debate as an educational tool in developing students' English speaking competence. Although the application of debates within classes is not always high, teachers have indicated that debates contribute to improving students' interaction, developing their ability to express their opinions, and organizing their ideas in an interactive way, as they provide a stimulating environment for communication and discussion among students.

## Chapter Four

### Discussion of the findings and Recommendations

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the basic results obtained from the data analysis process. The discussion raises whether the results of this study are consistent with previous studies or not. This chapter also presents the general conclusion of the study based on the results and discussion. In addition to a list of recommendations that benefit schools, teachers, and the Ministry of Education in enhancing the use of debates within classroom sessions to improve students' speaking competence.

#### 4.2 Discussion of the Quantitative Findings

##### 4.2.1 Results related to Question One

**What is the effect of the debate strategy on English language speaking competence of ninth-grade learners from teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?**

The results of the first question showed that the effect of using the debate strategy on the speaking competence of ninth-grade students in schools from the teachers' perspectives was low. This indicates that although teachers realize the importance of debate and its usefulness as an interactive educational strategy, its actual impact on speaking competence is limited in the current educational context. As stated in the paragraph:

- Debating activities help students overcome speaking anxiety.
- Students demonstrate better critical thinking skills through debate partnership.

Therefore, to ensure that debates have a greater impact on speaking competence, they should be regularly integrated into the curriculum, with debate activities planned in advance and ongoing teacher training provided, in addition to creating a classroom environment that encourages students to participate and express themselves freely.

The results of the current study revealed that English language teachers' perspectives on using the debate strategy to develop speaking competence were low. This decrease is due to the nature of the corresponding strategy, which requires prior organization. Careful planning, and providing sufficient time during the class to implement it. This is difficult to achieve in light of the density of the curriculum and the limited time available for

teaching. Organizing and implementing debates also requires the teacher to possess high linguistic skills, dialogue and discussion methods, and classroom control, and this makes some teachers reluctant to use them within their classes.

In addition, ninth-grade students face many psychological and linguistic challenges that reduce the effectiveness of debates in the classroom, including poor vocabulary, poor speaking fluency, lack of self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and shyness to participate and interact. These factors make students less involved in debates, which reduces their opportunities for linguistic participation and speaking and limits the impact of the debate strategy on speaking competence.

In addition to the educational and political factors that contributed to this low impact, such as the large number of students in the classes, the limited time allocated to lessons, the pressure on teachers to complete the curriculum, and the lack of clear instructions from the ministry of education to encourage teachers to implement debates in their classes, some teachers prefer to use traditional methods over interactive strategies such as debates. This is also due to the lack of training and support needed for teachers to implement debates effectively, which makes them less able to integrate them into the educational process on a regular basis.

The results of the current study indicate that the effect of using debates on speaking competence, from the teachers' point of view, was low. This is due to several factors related to the students' linguistic level and their ability to actively participate in debates within the classroom. These findings are supported by the study by Erlangga, Arvianti & Arochman (2025) which showed that students sometimes use ambiguous language during debates. This is explained by the fact that weak linguistic vocabulary and lack of linguistic fluency among students limit their benefit from the debate strategy, which reduces its impact on developing their speaking skills.

The results of the Lubis, Asnawi & Pinem study (2020) are also consistent, showing that students who were enthusiastic and motivated and participated in debates were able to improve their language abilities, while students who did not participate and were less skilled did not achieve similar results. This is consistent with the current study, which supports the idea that students' psychological and linguistic readiness actually contributes to influencing the effectiveness of debates on speaking competence. Therefore, the reason

for the low impact in the current study can be explained as being related to the variation in students' levels and self-confidence during participation in debates.

Accordingly, the results of the current study agree with previous studies in indicating that debates are effective in improving speaking competence if students have sufficient language skills, appropriate training for teachers, and motivating students to participate actively; otherwise, their impact will be limited, as appeared in the current study.

#### **4.2.2 Results related to Question Two**

##### **Question Two: What's the role of the debate strategy in promoting English language learning and communication skills among the ninth-grade in the northern governorates?**

The results of the current study indicate that the impact of debates on language learning and communication skills among ninth-grade students was low from the teachers' perspectives, and this reflects teachers' limited awareness of the importance and effectiveness of this strategy.

Analysis of the elements showed that teachers believe that debates contribute significantly to enhancing language skills and encouraging cooperative education, as stated in the two paragraphs:

- Debates reinforce the learning and retention of English language skills.
- Debate activities promote peer learning and collaboration.

While the debates help develop students' communication skills element is the least influential.

The results of the current study are partly consistent with the Destira (2021) study, which found that debate was more effective than traditional methods, but students' limited knowledge of vocabulary affected their level of speaking skills. This is consistent with the interpretation of the current study that students' linguistic level and ability to express themselves fluently limit the effectiveness of debates on speaking and communication competence.

The results of this study are partly consistent with Mejía & Loo's (2023) study, which reported that group discussions contribute to improved speaking competence. But it faces

challenges and difficulties in implementation. This supports the interpretation of the low impact of the current study as being related to teachers' experience, weak student participation, or limited time to implement classroom activities.

Regarding the role of debates in developing students' speaking competence, the results showed that teachers are aware of the importance and effectiveness of this strategy in encouraging students to speak and exchange opinions. However, this awareness was not reflected at the level of actual application within the class, which led to a decrease in their response. This can be explained by the fact that ninth-grade students suffer from shyness and hesitation in speaking English in front of their classmates, which limits the effectiveness of debate as an educational strategy. This interpretation is consistent with several studies that have indicated that anxiety, fear, and hesitation are the most prominent factors that hinder students' oral participation within the classroom, despite its theoretical effectiveness.

Accordingly, the results of the current study are consistent with previous studies that confirmed that debates are effective in improving language and communication skills if applied appropriately and with sufficient time for students and teachers; otherwise, their actual impact will remain limited.

#### **4.2.3 Results related to Question Three**

**Question Three: To what extent does the debate strategy help to improve the speaking competence of ninth- graders from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?**

The results of the current study indicate that the effect of the debate strategy on the speaking competence of ninth-grade students in the northern governorates from the teachers' perspectives was low. The results for the highest-rated items were related to reducing stress and anxiety among students and promoting critical thinking. While enabling students to express their ideas freely was the least influential element. The researcher explained this result by the weakness of the actual application of debates within the classes. There is little training for teachers to use this type of strategy. The lack of time and the large curriculum do not allow teachers to use any interactive activities and thus reduce the opportunities for students to practice speaking.

The results of this study are partly consistent with Aziz & Kamiliah's (2020) study, which found that debates help students calculate speaking competence, self-confidence, and critical thinking. They reflect the elements that received the highest rating in the second question in the current study. It supports Bohari's study (2019), which showed that using small group discussions is more effective than traditional methods, and this indicates that the effectiveness of debates depends on organizing and applying them effectively within the classroom. The Khansir study (2020) also confirmed that the debate strategy contributes to improving students' knowledge of the English language when applied and followed up in a practical way, and this supports the researcher's explanation that the weak practical application of debates affected the current results.

Accordingly, it can be said that the results of the current study are consistent with previous studies in that debate contributes to developing speaking competence if it is organized and followed up appropriately, with teachers trained and sufficient time allocated to implement it; otherwise, its impact remains limited.

#### **4.2.4 Results related to Question Fourth**

**Question Fourth: What are teachers' responses to use the debate strategy in improving the speaking competence of ninth-graders from the teachers' perspectives in the northern governorates?**

The results of the current study showed that English language teachers' responses to using the debate strategy to improve the speaking competence of ninth-grade students were at a low level. This result differs from many previous studies that support the effectiveness of debate in developing learners' speaking skills. The Tianamo & Usman, & Muslem (2019) study found that the use of debates contributed to improving students' speaking skills and effectively affected teacher performance and student participation, and led to a noticeable improvement in students' speaking test results. The Miranti (2021) and the Baso (2016) studies showed that debate is an effective strategy in developing speaking skills compared to traditional methods.

However, the lower teacher responses in the current study can be explained in light of the different educational context. Most of the previous literature focused on measuring the impact of debate on students within experimental or semi-experimental educational environments, while the current study addressed teachers' perspectives and the challenges

they face when implementing debate in their classroom sessions. This interpretation is consistent with what Mejía & Loor (2023) indicated, as the results of their study showed that discussion contributes to improving oral fluency, but it faces some challenges, including difficulty in implementing discussion within the classroom and a lack of time.

The results of the current study showed that students' shyness and hesitation are among the most common obstacles that limit the use of debates in the classroom. This is in line with the Aziz & Kamiliah (2020) study, which confirmed that effective participation in debates requires a level of boldness, courage, and self-confidence, and the most enthusiastic students are the most capable of developing their speaking skills.

Accordingly, it can be said that the results of the current study do not negate the effectiveness of debates in developing speaking competence. Rather, it indicates that its success depends on the availability of a set of supporting factors, such as training teachers to use them, allocating sufficient time within the class, and creating a safe classroom environment that encourages students to express themselves orally without shame or hesitation and motivates them to participate and interact, and this was confirmed by the study (Khansir, 2020).

The results of the current study also showed that the classroom environment does not provide sufficient support to implement debate regularly. Implementing debate requires providing an interactive educational environment that encourages dialogue, exchange of opinions, and pessimism of different points of view. In addition to training teachers to use debate in a way that suits students' levels. The low results of the study are due to the lack of training programs that are concerned with employing simple and effective learning strategies in teaching the English language, and this limits the ability of teachers to apply debate within the classroom.

Based on the above, it can be said that the low results of the study do not indicate the weakness of the strategy itself, but rather reflect the gap between its theoretical capabilities and its practical application in schools. This result confirms the need to create appropriate educational conditions for its effective application, and to provide professional support to teachers, which contributes to enhancing the use of debates as an effective tool for developing speaking competence among ninth-grade students.

### **4.3 Discussion of the Qualitative Findings**

The results of the interviews showed that the opinions of the participating teachers about the effect of using debates in developing speaking competence among ninth grade students were mixed. One teacher expressed a high evaluation of the role of debates in developing speaking competence, while two teachers provided a low evaluation and indicated that debates are not an effective method for achieving this goal.

The teacher, who rated the impact of the debates highly, pointed out that this strategy provides students with real opportunities to speak English, and enhances their ability to express and defend their opinions within an organized framework, which contributes to developing linguistic fluency and increasing self-confidence during oral communication. This positive opinion reflects the importance of debates as an educational tool based on linguistic interaction and practice.

On the other hand, the two teachers who evaluated the impact of debates to a low degree indicated that this strategy does not contribute effectively to developing students' speaking competence. This is due to several reasons, the most prominent of which are the students' weak linguistic level, the limited time allocated to class, in addition to the difficulty of managing debates within large classes. They also explained that some students face difficulty in oral participation, which leads to speaking being limited to a limited number of students without achieving a comprehensive benefit for all learners.

These results indicate that the difference in teachers' opinions reflects the reality of implementing debates within classrooms, as the effectiveness of this strategy depends on providing an appropriate classroom environment and an appropriate language level among students, in addition to the teacher's experience in organizing and managing debates. Therefore, the results of the study confirm that debates may be an effective strategy in developing speaking competence, but their success requires addressing the challenges facing their application within schools.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The results of the current study showed that using debates as an educational strategy to improve English speaking competence among ninth-grade students had a limited impact, with most results being at a low level. Despite the low level of general performance, debates are an effective educational method in providing students with the opportunity to dialogue, discuss, participate, and develop critical thought, albeit at a limited level.

These results indicate that debates may contribute to increasing students' interaction, participation and engagement in dialogue and conversation, and enhancing their integration into the educational process. However, implementing this strategy requires sufficient time, effort and preparation, in addition to preparing students appropriately to ensure their effective participation. The study also showed that the role of the teacher turns into a supportive and facilitating role for the learning process, which gives students greater responsibility for their learning, and allows them to express their ideas and communicate in a practical and interactive way.

Although the level of competence in students' speaking skills remains low, debates contribute to creating an interactive learning environment, and provide students with opportunities to participate and express their opinions freely, which enhances their educational experience and makes the learning process more enjoyable and motivating. These results are consistent with what previous studies have indicated, which confirmed that the use of educational activities such as debates supports the development of linguistic and social skills among students, and encourages them to integrate more into learning, even if the development is not rapid or has a significant impact.

In addition to the questionnaire results, the quantitative data were supported by the results of interviews conducted with three ninth-grade English teachers. The results of the interviews showed a difference in teachers' opinions about the effectiveness of the debates, as two teachers considered that the impact of the debates on developing speaking competence was low, while one teacher believed that the impact was high. These results contributed to explaining the general trend of quantitative results, as the results of the interviews supported the questionnaire's findings regarding the limited impact of debates, while indicating the existence of individual differences in teachers' views on the effectiveness of this strategy in classrooms.

## **4.5 Recommendations**

Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

### **4.5.1 Recommendations for teachers**

1. English language teachers are advised to integrate debates into the educational process, as this helps improve students' speaking competence and contributes to students' active participation in learning the English language.
2. The importance of providing a supportive and interactive classroom environment that encourages students to dialogue, exchange opinions, and oral participation without fear or hesitation, which contributes to reducing linguistic fear and anxiety among students while speaking English.

### **4.5.2 Recommendations for the Ministry of Education**

1. The ministry of education in Palestine must include appropriate debate techniques within the learning process. Especially in teaching the upper and secondary basic stages.
2. The ministry of education and Higher Education in Palestine must provide training courses for teachers on how to organize debates in an interactive way within classrooms.
3. The researcher recommends taking the conditions of the Palestinian educational environment into consideration when choosing and applying modern teaching strategies, given the lack of time and disparity in student levels, which affects the effectiveness of strategies such as debates

### **4.5.3 General recommendations**

1. To understand students' views on effective teaching strategies and lesson organization. Applied research should be conducted that focuses on the needs of students, their level of interaction and participation in debates.
2. The necessity of enhancing the use of debate strategy in teaching the English language, as it has an effective role in developing speaking competence among ninth-grade students.

3. The importance of providing a supportive and interactive classroom environment that encourages students to dialogue, exchange opinions, and oral participation without fear or hesitation, which contributes to reducing linguistic fear and anxiety among students while speaking English.
4. Researchers recommend conducting continuous research and studies on the role of debates in improving speaking competence. And their ability to communicate with various educational directorates in the West Bank.
5. Researchers are encouraged to study students' anxiety levels and explore new strategies to provide practical, interactive opportunities to practice English in class through debate.

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**Appendices**  
**Appendix (A)**  
**Teachers' Questionnaire**

**Questionnaire**

**Dear Instructor,**

This questionnaire is part of a Master's thesis titled *"The Effect of Debates on English Language Speaking Competence of Ninth Grade English Language Learners from Teachers' Perspectives at Nablus Schools "*. The aim of this study is to explore teachers' insights and experiences regarding the use of debate as a teaching strategy in English language classrooms. Your responses will provide valuable input for understanding how such strategies influence students' speaking skills. Please note that all information collected through this questionnaire will remain strictly confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes. We kindly ask that you answer the questions honestly based on your teaching experience. This research is conducted under the supervision of Dr. Nidal Jayousi.

**Part One: Demographic Information**

**1. Gender:** a. Male ( ) b. Female ( )

**2. Years of Experience:** a. Less than 3 years( ) b.3-5 years ( ) c.6-10 years D. More than 10 years ( )

**3. Have you taken courses on the use of in-class debates**

Yes ( )

No( )

**4. Have you ever taught English to the ninth grade previously or are you teaching it now?**

Yes ( )

No ( )

**5. Which directorate of education do you currently work in**

Nablus( )

Jenin ( )

Qabatiya( )

Jericho ( )

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**Part Two: Read the items below carefully and respond to each one by placing (√) next to the answer that corresponds to your response.**

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>First domain: effect on English speaking competence.</b>						
1	Debates enhance students' efficiency in spoken English					
2	Debates enable students express their ideas more fluently.					
3	Using debates increases students' overall speaking competence.					
4	Debates encourage greater oral participation in class.					
5	Debates activities help students overcome speaking anxiety					
6	Students demonstrate better critical thinking skills through debate participation.					
<b>Second domain: promoting English language learning and communication skills</b>						
1	Debates help develop students' communication abilities.					
2	Debates enhance students' ability to organize their ideas when speaking.					
3	Debates improve students' ability to speak in real-life situations.					
4	Debates help students improve their English pronunciation.					
5	Debates reinforce the learning and retention of English language skills.					
6	Debates encourage students to use authentic language in meaningful contexts.					
7	Debate activities promote peer learning and collaboration.					
<b>Third domain: teachers' perspectives</b>						
1	Debates are more effective than traditional teaching strategies for developing speaking skills.					
2	Debate is an appropriate strategy for ninth-grade students.					
3	The impact of debate on students' speaking abilities is sustained over time.					
4	Students show measurable progress in English after participating in debates.					
5	Students demonstrate improved oral performance after debates.					
6	Students are more motivated to speak when debates are used.					
7	I regularly use debates as part of my English teaching practice.					
8	The physical classroom environment supports debate activities.					
9	I have received adequate training to implement debate activities effectively.					

No.	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Fourth domain: teachers' responses and Challenges.						
1	I encounter obstacles when applying debates in class.					
2	I prefer using debates as a method of teaching English.					
3	The Palestinian curriculum provides sufficient support for the use of debate.					
4	Some students refuse to participate in debates due to shyness.					
5	I face logistical challenges that hinder the implementation of debates.					
6	The allocated class time is sufficient for conducting effective debates.					

## **Appendix (B)**

### **The interview**

#### Open interview questions

1. How do you evaluate the impact of using debates on developing English speaking competence among ninth grade students?
2. How do debates contribute to enhancing English language learning and developing students' communication skills in the classroom?
3. To what extent do debates contribute to improving students' competence in speaking English, in terms of organizing thoughts, fluency, and reducing hesitation during speech?
4. What is your tendency towards using debates as a teaching strategy in teaching the English language, and what are the most prominent challenges you face when applying them?



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الصف التاسع من وجهة نظر المعلمين في المحافظات الشمالية

إعداد

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قدمت هذه الرسالة استكمالاً لمتطلبات درجة الماجستير في أساليب تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية  
الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية في نابلس، فلسطين.

2026

# أثر المناظرات على كفاءة التحدث باللغة الانجليزية لدى طلاب الصف التاسع من وجهة نظر المعلمين في المحافظات الشمالية

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## الملخص

تعتبر اللغة الإنجليزية من أهم اللغات في العالم، حيث أنها تحتل المرتبة الأولى بين لغات العالم أجمع. مع تطور العلم والعمل، أصبحت حاجة الفرد ملحة لامتلاكه، بالإضافة إلى امتلاك الفرد لمهارات التحدث التي تعتبر عاملاً مهماً في تعلم اللغة وممارستها. ومن هنا انطلقت الباحثة لدراسة أثر المناظرات على كفاءة التحدث لدى طلاب الصف التاسع من وجهة نظر المعلمين في المحافظات الشمالية. وهنا يكمن دور المناظرات باعتبارها استراتيجية تعليمية تفاعلية تساهم في تنمية الطلاقة اللغوية والمهارات اللغوية وبناء الثقة وتعزيز التفكير النقدي لدى الطلاب.

واعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام الاستبيان كأداة كمية، واعتمد الباحث على أداة المقابلة كأداة نوعية. وتم توزيعها على عينة من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية الذين يقومون بتدريس الصف التاسع في أربع محافظات في فلسطين (نابلس، جنين، قباطية، وأريحا). وتكونت العينة من 147 معلماً ومعلمة للغة الإنجليزية، وثلاثة معلمين تمت مقابلتهم. وتم تحليل البيانات الكمية باستخدام برنامج SPSS v28 لاستخراج المتوسطات والانحرافات المعيارية، بينما تم تحليل البيانات النوعية باستخدام طريقة التحليل الموضوعي.

وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة في كلا الأداتين أن اتجاهات المعلمين نحو استخدام المناظرة لتطوير كفاءة التحدث لدى الطلاب كانت ضعيفة. ويعود هذا الانخفاض إلى عدة عوامل، منها كثافة المناهج الدراسية وضيق

الوقت، وكثرة عدد الطلاب في الفصول الدراسية، وعدم تدريب المعلمين على استخدام هذا النوع من الاستراتيجية، وضعف مستوى التحدث لدى الطلاب، والخجل من المشاركة وتقديم أفكارهم لزملائهم.

وفي ضوء هذه النتائج أوصت الباحثة بضرورة دمج المناظرة في الفصول الدراسية، وتوفير برامج تدريبية للمعلمين لتأهيلهم لاستخدام المناظرات لما لها من أثر إيجابي في تطوير كفاءة التحدث.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** كفاءة التحدث، المناقشة، الصف التاسع.