# CHAPTER 5

## Conclusions and Recommendation

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the major findings of the study and provides conclusions. It also presents the contributions and limitation of the study. Finally, the chapter makes suggestions for further research.

This study aimed to explore the use of the HPBL modelin a speaking classroom in a Libyan university. The study was conducted to examine how the HPBL model motivates Libyan undergraduates to speak English language, and ultimately how it can lead to speaking achievements. To achieve that, a case study research design was adopted. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using different tools. The qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations and students' interactions during the HPBL process. The quantitative data were collected through questionnaires. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The summary of the major findings of each research question is presented in the following section.

### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The first research question investigated how the HPBL was implemented in a speaking classroom. The data were collected through observation and obtaining the students' and lecturers' views and perceptions through semi-structured interview. The findings revealed that many of the participants had no prior knowledge and experience of HPBL which affected their participations in the HPBL process. This is because HPBL or any collaborative learning approach were not implemented in the school. Generally, in the Libyan context, mostly teacher-centred traditional method of teaching was adopted. As the result, it took them sometime before they could get use

to the HPBL process. For instance, the researcher had to organise a workshop to explain the HPBL process to the lecturers. The researcher also explained to the students their roles and those of the lecturers, and even demonstrated the HPBL prior to the actual implementation of the process. The workshops were found to be very useful to the teachers especially the one without any prior experience of PBL. In addition, findings in this study revealed cogently that prior knowledge plays a crucial role in the beginning of the implementation of HPBL. Also, when the PBL class was first introduced both students and lecturers faced tremendous difficulty, but as they become dogged and persistent, the difficulties gradually withered away, giving way to confidence and countenance of working independently among the students.

Despite some of the challenges faced by the participants such as time constraint, lack of prior experience, and limited or insufficient resources, the findings of the research question revealed that both the lecturer and the student participants had positive perceptions and experiences of the HPBL process. This includes the designing of the HPBL materials and process, the introduction of students into the process, the lecturers' and students' perceptions of their roles and the overall effectiveness of the HPBL in speaking classroom.

The findings of the second research question revealed that the HPBL model motivated the students to speak English language. Specifically, the results of the questionnaire showed that the majority of the students (66.7%) have indicated moderate level of motivation after going through the HPBL lessons. Also, 20.0% of the students had high level of motivation to speak English. Only 13.3% of the students showed low level of motivation. However, there are some negative instances where some of the students find it challenging to speak English language. For example, as indicated in item 15 of the questionnaire, about 40% of the students reported finding it very challenging to communicate with foreign speakers. In addition, more than half of the students show that they rarely speak English outside their classrooms as indicated by item 12 of the questionnaire.

Furthermore, the findings of the research question revealed various factors that motivated the students to speak English language in the HPBL process. This includes familiarity with the given topic, peer collaboration, tutor supports, and class presentation.

Finally, both observation and interview findings of the third research question showed that the hybrid PBL approach improves Libyan EFL learners' language achievement in the speaking classroom. Specifically, it is revealed that the HPBL course has improved the speaking ability of the students more especially; it enhances fluency, grammar, comprehension, vocabulary, confidence level, intonation skills and pronunciation.

## 5.3    Contribution of the Study

The study contributes to the field of EFL teaching and learning by providing empirical findings on the effectiveness of the HPBL modelin developing students' speaking skills especially in the Libyan context. The study provides EFL instructors with a learning approach which could be used to develop students' speaking and other skills such as language skills, problem-solving, critical thinking and self-directed learning skills.  This study clearly unearthed how the HPBL can be implemented, how to use HPBL to motivate Libyan Arab EFL learners and how HPBL is a relevant approach to that EFL context (refer to Chapter 1 &2). The study has revealed that the interactions during the HPBL process allowed the students to share ideas, help one another and learn from one another. As a result, they improve their speaking achievement. This shows the effectiveness of the HPBL in motivating the students and remedying the undergraduates' problems concerning speaking English language. There are other contributions of the study particularly in Arab countries. It provides an easy way for both the lecturers and students to discover the potentialities of the students. From this practice, students will know that they can do it themselves hence a radical demystification of the ability to speak English among Arabs. Another implication is the uncovering of huge opportunity for students to constantly practice of speaking English in their classroom which many Arabs EFL learners lack. In addition, the HPBL model provides an effective way for instructors to successfully deliver their lessons and improve students speaking performance better than the traditional approach used in the Libyan context, as some lecturers have limited access or awareness of new learning approaches that are effective in motivating students to speak English.

### 5.3.1    Pedagogical Contribution

It is worth initially starting by stating that teachers ought to appreciate that language learning, especially oral production by EFLs, is a potentially stressful exercise for some students, and that the "tension and discomfort related to language learning call for the attention of the language teaching profession" (Horwitz, 2001: 122). The findings of the study show that the HPBL model can be used to develop Libyan undergraduates' speaking performance. Thus, the study has some implications for instructors and policy makers for the proper implementation of the approach in order to improve the undergraduates' speaking skills.

The findings reveal that the interactions during the HPBL process allowed the students to share ideas, help one another and learn from one another. As a result, they improve their speaking achievement. This shows the effectiveness of the HPBL in motivating the students and remedying the undergraduates' problems concerning speaking English language.

In the same vein, many factors helped in improving the students' speaking skills. One is the ill-structured problems which are related to their real-life situation. It was easier and more motivating for them to generate more ideas for discussion when they are familiar with a topic. The students revealed that their familiarity with one another also helped them to discuss freely during the process. This made them to actively get involved in the discussion which necessitated them to pay attention to their peers in order to make their respective contributions. Therefore, there are important implications for instructors. Instructors or lecturers should consider students' level of understanding, interest and real-life experiences while formulating ill-structured problems because it would motivate students as they see the link between the problem and their lives. This is because the ill-structured problems are one of the main components of the HPBL modelwhich learning revolves around.

Another implication for instructors is that, they should allow students to select those they are more familiar with as their group members during the HPBL process. This would help them to freely participate in the discussions and help in avoiding conflict or domination by some students during the group discussions.

The study revealed that the tutors used various strategies to prompt and to engage the students during the HPBL process. In addition, the students also use prompts similar to support their group members. For example, the findings revealed

that some of the participants could not express themselves freely but with anxiety at the beginning of the PBL process. This was because some were not used to speaking in English for a long time in public, while others had no confidence in what they would say because they were afraid it might be wrong. However, with the tutor facilitation, for example, by encouraging the participants to speak; that there is nothing like right or wrong answer in the HPBL approach, and by pushing them for explanation, the students were able to overcome their anxiety. This shows that if the HPBL modelcould be adopted in the Libyan context, it would provide a better alternative to the traditional method of teaching, and open a new chapter in the annals of teaching and learning speaking English in Libya.

It is revealed from the findings that some of the students were not familiar with the HPBL approach, as a result, it was difficult for them to cope at the beginning. Therefore, while implementing the HPBL approach, instructors should help students by explaining the importance of every step of the process.

An obvious implication here is that the HPBL process provides an easy way for both the lecturers and students to discover the potentialities of the students. From this practice, students will know that they can do it themselves hence a radical demystification of the ability to speak English among Arabs. Another implication is the uncovering of huge opportunity for constant practice of speaking English provided by HPBL to Arabs. So apart from the primary objective of pushing the Arab student to regurgitate speaking in English, the HPBL has indicated much in terms aiding the students to discover themselves and be resolute in persisting through whatever personal means to be proficient in English and to depend less on the teacher.

Normally it is the nature of the students to avoid attempting to express themselves in English because of what they thought as an accompanying shame associated with speaking with faulty grammar or pronunciation. So they always try to hide the inadequacies by speaking just in Arabic. If they do not express those mistakes nobody will 'see' those mistakes and correct them. So they continued to be deficient. But one implication noticed in this HPBL trial is the students learn to pay less attention to the shame of speaking wrong English by pouring out what is their best including the mistakes. Through this process others who are a bit more proficient correct them sometimes with laughs and joke. Gradually they become less afraid of attempting to express themselves even with mistakes.

Another implication drawn from the finding is that the HPBL model is an effective way for instructors to successfully deliver their lessons and improve students speaking performance better than the traditional approach used in the Libyan context, as some lecturers have limited access or awareness of new learning approaches that are effective in motivating students to speak English.

Therefore, there are many advantages of the HPBL model to Libyan lecturers. It would give them the opportunity to engage all their students and allow the students to participate actively in the learning process. Lecturers can easily monitor the students' in the class. Lecturers of other language skills such as reading, writing listening, and other non-language areas can also implement HPBL in their classes. Lecturers need to see their students as knowledge constructors not only as receivers to enable them develop their skills in the HPBL process.

### 5.3.2    Contributions for Policy Makers

Policy makers like the government and school administrators have roles to play to ensure a successful implementation of alternative teaching strategies like the HPBL modelin the Libyan context. The following are some of the areas policy makers need to contribute.

Conducive classroom and other facilities should be provided. For example, in a HPBL classroom, students sit in a round-table facing one another. This is unlike in the Libyan context where lecturers stand in front of the students in a class. Therefore, school administrators should provide conducive learning environments for such alternative methods like HPBL to thrive.

School administrators should train lecturers on how to facilitate students' learning effectively in the HPBL approach. This could be done through organising workshops and seminars. In HPBL, poor facilitation only leads students to lack direction in their discussions (Tan, 2004).

In addition, policy makers, schools' managements and lecturers should provide learning resources such as the Internet and library materials to enable students to conduct self-directed learning. Finally, Ministries of Education that are in control of primary and secondary schools could also recommend HPBL for teachers. They

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should organise workshops and conferences, as the case may be, for thorough orientation and practical demonstration of the HPBL modelfor teachers.

### 5.4.3  Theoretical Contribution

Theoretically, the study lends support to the theory used in guiding the study, the Constructivist Learning Theory. The study gives more weight to the constructivism theory that promotes collaborative learning. The students worked collaboratively with the support of the tutors who motivated them and improved their speaking performance. The students were able to build new knowledge and develop their cognitive abilities from their previous knowledge through social interaction and the use of ill-structured problem.  Throughout, the findings of this study showed the collaborative social learning environment in HPBL encouraged the participants to engage in discussions trying to solve ill-structured problems. The discussions among them helped them to overcome their anxiety and come out with real and practical solutions to the ill-structured problems which forced them to practice speaking English and strengthen their capability and command of English language. The implication of the findings of this study is relatively an extension of the Constructivist theory, in that in their attempt to construct their own world in their own way, this study notices the participants become highly motivated. So fusing 'motivation' as an integral construct of the constructivist theory explains the theory better. Thus, the study extends the constructivist theory by showing how the HPBL model motivates learners to develop speaking skills in a learning environment, as the roles of the teacher are not completely neglected since students are motivated by minimal role of lecturing in the process of learning.

Finally, the study adds to the growing body of literature on EFL teaching and learning by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of HPBL in developing students' speaking abilities, most especially in the Libyan context.

## 5.5     Limitations of the Study

This study set out to achieve the objectives stated in the introduction, but it is not without some limitations. First, the study was conducted with small number of participants, only 2 lecturers and 30 students enrolled in an undergraduate English programme in a university in Libya. Nonetheless for all purposes in qualitative inquiry that can be adequate, but to fully describe the Libyan situation a sample from various universities will be required in a well-funded, large scale study.  The study was also conducted with only first year students of a Libyan public university who were only part of Libyan students; there will be need to consider other levels of the students in a more funded research.

The study was conducted for only one semester. For more information about the HPBL process a longitudinal design can make the findings more robust and more encompassing. In addition, only speaking classroom was selected for the study. This is only part of the English courses offered in the Libyan institutions. There can be more revelation if writing class and comprehension classes are considered for HPBL processes. Finally, the study used an intact class and did not consider other variables such as gender, age, educational background, which may give different findings. It is well known in research demographic variables do account for differences or predict certain differences in social science and educational studies.

## 5.6     Suggestions

Sequel to the findings of this study and alluding to cogent literature in the PBL subject, the following suggestions become imperative:

1)      Libyan universities should adopt the PBL approach in teaching English speaking, largely due to the tremendous potential for motivating Arab learners it has as discovered in this study. So the Ministry for Higher Education in Libya should consider revising English course curricula in accordance with the PBL approach.

2)      It is imperative to also categorically mention that any change from traditional approach to PBL should not be abrupt; or else the programme is bound to crash because neither the students are used to the PBL approach nor their

lecturers. Change must employ the HPBL model which is a mixture traditional method and PBL, in a gradual and highly transitory manner.

3) Any introduction of the HPBL model must in the first instance involve series of workshops for lecturer with intensive practice of the PBL module. Students must also be exposed to a workshop first before commencing the new approach.

4) Appropriate and adequate learning facilities should be provided in English learning environments. This could be in form of providing adequate learning resources in libraries and easy access to online learning resources. Other infrastructure includes the provision of PBL type furniture in English classes like round tables where small groups of students can sit face to face with one another in a PBL discussions.

5) Lecturers must try to create a perception of them among students as autonomy-supportive teachers. Particularly, they can achieve autonomy support by trying to take the viewpoints and perspectives of their students. This they will do by giving variety of opportunities of choices, and also by being receptive to students' ideas and questions thereby making learning relevant and keeping students always eager to speak. Lecturers ought not to be authoritative as this discourages students to attempt to voice out their views thereby rendering them timid. Experimental studies depicted that authoritative or controlling commands or instructions like "you must", "you have to," affected deep learning, study performance, and study persistence negatively, while on the flipside teaching instructions such as "you can" or "you might" cultivate positive effects on learning. Learners in the setting of autonomy-supportive contexts also viewed study activities as more fun and useful (Wijnia, Loyens, & Derous, 2011 ).

6) The tasks or ill structured problems of PBL should be meaningful and challenging. This is when the design of study activities and meaningful tasks can hike intrinsic motivation. How meaningful a task is can be promoted by making them personally relevant for learners. The ill-structured problems employed in PBL mostly describe a phenomenon which can be observed in the students' daily life; hence students could perceive the problem or learning

tasks as meaningful. Meaningfulness of the tasks are also associated with increased student interest and therefore better learning.

7) Lecturers' positive feedback to students: Positive feedback from lecturers to students can positively influence students' intrinsic and autonomous motivation. In this case the evaluation of student's attempts or performance should focus on the individual improvements among them that takes their effort into account. In the PBL curriculum under study some evaluations are formative (i.e., with no course credit associated with it) and can provide students with positive feedback without consequences (Wijnia, Loyens, & Derous, 2011; Pintrich, 2003).

8) Due to the fact that foreign language speaking anxiety mostly in the English classroom may root from the fear of making errors and the resultant fear of sustaining negative evaluation from colleagues on the one hand, and students' perception of low ability as compared to their peers, It is suggested here that lecturers may want to consider the intervention of informal atmosphere in the HPBL lessons i.e. the creation of a friendly classroom atmosphere is important, since it can provide both anxious and non-anxious students alike with manifold opportunities to use language in a non-threatening way. It is argued here argue that the best step in reducing students' anxiety is to practically have them participate in speaking tasks. Thus direct, on the spot correction in speaking activities should be avoided, since it can undermine students' confidence.  The friendly atmosphere makes for a supportive classroom in which language errors are considered as natural on the way to vibrant language acquisition. The process should literally be without overcorrection which has the disadvantage of moving students' attention away from communication. Once the ideal of friendly and supportive classroom is achieved, and language errors are psychologically granted as natural among the students, they will overcome their perception of low ability and fear of negative evaluation.

9) To stimulate students further, inferences from this study suggest the lecture should at all costs avoid any behavior capable of being considered as a threat to the students' social image which can further be a potential source of anxiety. For instance, information about individual students' oral presentation scores

must be kept private and not announced to the whole class. That is if there is individual assessment. The situation is less embarrassing if it is group score.

10)   Simplifying the processes of collaboration among students: Lecturers should strive to make the processes of collaboration easy for students. Cooperative or collaborative learning especially in a language speaking course could help students to feel more connected to their peers, and, consequently, positively influence their motivation, effort, and persistence all the way through. Collaborative learning has been established to have more effect on students' learning when small groups work towards a common goal, and when there is individual responsibility and accountability Students, when they work together, they naturally encourage one another. Simple as it may seem, collaboration is not an easy thing to achieve. One important strategy to achieving smooth and effective collaboration among students is by allowing them to choose their group members themselves, this way the process becomes natural. This process ensures cohesion among group members and promotes understanding and the spirit of working well in the PBL groups.

## 5.7    Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the identified limitations of this study, the following recommendations are made for further studies: First, future research should be conducted with a larger number of students from public universities in Libya. This may give more definitive findings. Such a study is likely to reveal more themes and give more explanation to the themes already identified. In addition, more hidden angles to students' motivation can be unravelled. Second, students at lower levels such as diploma, secondary school, or primary school should be selected in further researches. This may give new findings as these categories of students also suffer from the traditional method of teaching. In order to make credible suggestions for the replacement of the traditional method of teaching, data from all sectors of the university system must be incorporated.

Future studies should use longitudinal approach. The HPBL model should be conducted for a longer period, more than one semester. This may also likely give different findings. In addition, the HPBL modelshould be implemented in learning

other language skills such as reading, writing and listen. Further research can also be conducted on such courses other than the speaking class. This approach can revolutionize the whole language learning sphere in the Libyan university system. The problem of students dropping from English compulsory courses will also be less, because of the evidence adduced for the effectiveness of PBL in improving the learning achievement of students. Future studies may consider other variables such as gender, age, educational background, with larger sample size. How these variables affect the HPBL process will provide specific dimensions of other factors that may bear on the effectiveness of the approach. Furthermore, the main variables of interest investigated in this study are the HPBL implementation, students' motivation because of HPBL and speaking achievement as a result of HPBL. Future studies should also investigate other related variables like lecturers' and students' attitudes to speaking English and to HPBL, students' anxiety in speaking English and how HPBL can remedy such anxieties. Studies can also investigate how teachers can best select the PBL idea or ill-structured problem because the whole PBL strategy lies on effectiveness of the ill-structured problem.

To fully establish strong support for the Constructivist Learning Theory the HPBL, there will be a need for experimental interventional or quasi experimental studies on HPBL on the Libyan undergraduate EFLs to decisively rule causality in a hypothesized path between HPBL intervention and students' motivation to speaking English and other English speaking achievements.

## 5.8    Conclusion

To cope with the challenges of the current global world, proficiency in speaking English language has become essential especially for undergraduate students. It plays an important role in successful learning for undergraduates, particularly English students. However, in the Libyan context, many undergraduates are not motivated to speaking English language. Thus, to develop the students' speaking skills, they need to be motivated. From the findings of this study it is concluded that HPBL provides a learning environment that motivates the students and develops students' speaking performance. Therefore, language instructors who wish to

improve their students' motivation and proficiency in speaking could incorporate HPBL into their speaking instruction following the steps provided in this study.

In addition, this study illustrated that introducing a subject matter in a challenging and meaningful way to students (by problems), coupled with implementing achievable deadlines through regular meetings by student as well as active group discussion and a sequential and alternating order of courses, may be beneficial for students' feelings of competence and development of speaking motivation and goal strategies.

Furthermore, employing strategies to help students overcome EFL speaking anxiety, foster motivation, and increase foreign language performance, lecturers should get to understand their students; specifically, their attitudes toward oral production. With meticulousness the should try to shed light on the possible reasons that underlie the students' low performance and the details of their unwillingness to engage in speaking activities in the English language. Here it is suggested that the teacher should double as facilitator and a researcher. By observing the individual student's difficulty in speaking English, the teacher can diagnose the individual student and design an appropriate facilitation approach to mitigate the different situations of the students.

Finally, this study depicts the importance of gradually introducing students to the student- centred teaching method, in terms of their autonomous motivation for learning and their achievement. Overall, HPBL in this study is a model undel the broader approach of PBL. Over the pure PBL it is observed here that HPBL has the advantage of apparently resulting in requiring less stringent preparations as obtained in pure PBL on the side of the teacher, but principally requires minimal changes in syllabus amendments, instead of drastic ones. Some strengths of HPBL over pure PBL identified  for both lecturers and students are that students got from the new model the opportunity to discover in their own ways and build frameworks of their knowledge. But for lecturers HPBL provides an opportunity for intellectual stimulation. Lecturers deliver lectures in the approach, as well as give students ample opportunity to approach learning collaboratively and independently.