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The Effect of Anxiety on EFL Learners' Oral Performance

A Thesis Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Master* in Didactics

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Date: ………….

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Signature:…………….

Dedication

Praise is to Allah who has granted me the power to accomplish this work.

I dedicate this work to

My parents. I am indebted to all you have done for me. Thanks a lot for your love, care and support. This work would not have come to light without you.

To my dear sisters Sanaa, Radjaa, and my brothers Tarek and Alaamay Allah bless them all.

To my lovely grandparents.

To my uncles and aunts.

To all my extended family and friends for their love and kindness.

To all my colleagues at El Bachir El Ibrahimi Secondary School.

To all my dear pupils.

And finally, to all those wonderful people who have stood by my side in my tough moments and never stopped supporting me.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The current study aims to examine the effect of anxiety on EFL learners' oral performance. In light of this, we hypothesized that if EFL students' speaking anxiety is reduced, they will be able to communicate confidentially in their classrooms. To achieve the above objective, we conducted a semi-structured interview with five (5) oral expression teachers from the English Department at Saida University, submitted a questionnaire to sixty (60) second-year students from the same department, and conducted a classroom observation. The results indicated that (86.67%) of the participants get anxious during oral expression sessions due to their teacher's direct questions (44.23%), their fear of negative evaluation (34.62%), lack of self-confidence (9.62%), discussion (7.69%), or the oral presentation (3.85%). They also demonstrated that teachers employed various techniques to alleviate their students' anxiety and improve their oral performance such as preparing dialogues, creating a supportive environment, offering low-pressure practices, providing constructive feedback, and many others. Therefore, these findings confirmed our hypothesis. This research is significant because it sheds light on the pervasive issue of speaking anxiety among EFL learners and offers practical strategies that can be implemented to enhance their communicative abilities. By addressing this critical aspect of language learning, the study contributes to the development of more effective teaching practices that can lead to better educational outcomes. In conclusion, a list of recommendations such as encouraging extensive practice, developing communicative competence, creating a relaxed atmosphere, selecting relevant topics, and others was presented to teachers and students to overcome or reduce anxiety intensity on second-year students.

Keywords: Anxiety, EFL students , oral performance.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

C A: Communication Apprehension

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DM: Direct Method

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

L2: Second Language

LMD: License, Master, Doctorate

General Introduction

In EFL classrooms, there are many difficulties that face students and hinder their language learning process. Speaking anxiety is one of those problems that negatively affect their performance in many aspects as participation, oral presentation, scores, and self-confidence due to several factors such as test and communication anxiety, fear of negative evaluation and many other reasons. Therefore, to help students gain a better academic achievement, teachers need to take into consideration this issue by providing solutions that enhance EFL learners speaking skill and reduce their anxiety.

Like other university students, second-year students of the English language at Saida University suffer from lots of problems regarding the language skills. In speaking, they experience a kind of anxiety when they speak in front of an audience or even in small groups. This anxiety can manifest in physical symptoms like sweating, trembling, rapid heartbeat, and others. Accordingly, the current study sheds light on the causes and impacts of anxiety on students' speaking skills and equips both teachers and students with strategies to reduce this problem.

This study investigates the relationship between anxiety and speaking skills, specifically focusing on the following aspects: the psychological factors (such as self-esteem, perfectionism, and past experiences), social factors (as peer pressure, audience size, and social expectations), situational factors (e.g., classroom presentations, public speaking events), and biological factors (e.g., heart rate, sweating) and their influence on anxiety levels. It also sheds light on its impact on students' performance and provides some solutions to reduce it, including presentation skills training, the use of technology, peer support groups, environmental adjustments, and others.

The present study aims at exploring the issue of students' anxiety in oral performance. More specifically, it seeks to know how language learners experience anxiety in their language learning. It also intends to find out the factors leading to language anxiety and the strategies that both students and teachers use to decrease anxiety in oral performance.

This research aims to answer the following questions:

- What is the impact of anxiety on EFL students' oral performance?
- What are the causes of anxiety on EFL students' oral performance?
- How can anxiety in English speaking classes be reduced?

Based on these questions, the researcher suggests the following hypothesis:

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-If EFL students' speaking anxiety is reduced, they will be able to communicate confidentially in their classrooms.

In this research work, we used a mixed methods approach to investigate and address this problem. We held a semi-structured interview with five oral expression teachers at the department of English, Saida University. In addition, we distributed a questionnaire to 60 second-year students from the same university to find out their opinions about the impact of anxiety on their speaking skills. Moreover, we conducted a classroom observation with the same sample of students (Group 1). Therefore, we observed the learners' behaviors and analyzed them to find out whether there is a link between the problem of anxiety and their performance.

Regarding the dissertation's structure, it consists of three chapters. The first chapter covers the literature review or the theoretical part of this study. It is divided into two parts: the speaking skill and anxiety in oral performance. The first part concerns with the speaking skills definition, its importance and elements, types of speaking tasks, characteristics of speaking performance, and the approaches that are commonly used to teaching this productive skill. The second part deals with the definition of anxiety and its types, the causes of anxiety in oral performance and the techniques used by both teachers and students to alleviate oral performance anxiety.

The second chapter is concerned with the research methodology. It includes two main parts: the first part is about the theoretical background of research, its approaches and tools. The second part incorporates the description and aims of each data gathering tool, specifies the target population of the study, summarizes the structure and content of each tool, and tackles the limitations encountered during the research process.

The last chapter is entitled 'data analysis, discussion and recommendations' and it consists of three parts. The first part focuses on

the data analysis of each tool and the second one tackles the discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions. The last part provides the recommendations and general implications that can be implemented to overcome the problem being discussed and find solutions that may develop learners' speaking performance and reduce their anxiety.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Chapter One: Literature Review

1. Introduction

Speaking is an important skill in learning English language as it serves as a mean for expressing ideas and feelings. Consequently, it emerges as a primary focus for both teachers and learners who aim to improve the English communication skills and be fluent speakers. In the first part of this chapter, we firstly discuss the nature of speaking skill and its importance in classroom. Then, we provide its elements and the various types of tasks and activities that teachers can use to introduce the speaking lessons. After that, we focus on the features of speaking performance, including fluency, accuracy, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Next, we highlight on the approaches that are commonly adopted to teaching this productive skill.

In the second part of this chapter, we discuss the concept of anxiety from different perspectives. We also define anxiety as a common phenomenon within the foreign language learning process to enhance the reader's comprehension of the research topic. In addition, we address different forms of anxiety by offering detailed descriptions for each type. Moreover, we discuss the causes of anxiety in foreign language oral performance. Furthermore, we discuss the strategies for reducing speaking anxiety. Finally, we conclude by listing the roles of both EFL teachers and students in reducing speech anxiety.

1.1. Part One: The Speaking Skill

1.1.1 Definition of Speaking Skills

Among the English language four skills, speaking stands as a fundamental element of communication. It has garnered various definitions from numerous researchers and scholars. Chaney and Burke define speaking as "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of the context" (1998, p.13). This means that the communication process involves creating and exchanging meaning using both verbal symbols which are words and non-verbal cues such as body language, gestures, and facial expressions in different situations and settings.

Speaking serves as an interactive mode of communication which holds equal importance alongside literary skills in both native and second languages. Hence, learners must cultivate the ability to speak with confidence to successfully handle basic transactions (Bygate, 1987). In the same line of thought, Hedge (2000) claimed that speaking plays a significant role in shaping judgements about others. The way individuals express themselves

verbally, including factors such as clarity, confidence, and effective communication, becomes a key criterion for forming opinions about them. More importantly, the ability to speak well and confidently is a crucial factor in influencing the impressions people have of each other during their initial interactions.

Speaking has always been considered a demanding and challenging skill to be mastered. In this light, Bouzar (2019) mentioned that "Speaking as a skill constitutes a real hurdle to overcome by the teacher . In other words, the teacher has to find appropriate procedures to help the learner with while the latter has to find a way to master the language"(p.70).Mastering speaking as a language skill poses a significant challenge for both teachers and learners. Teachers must develop effective teaching procedures to assist learners in honing their speaking abilities. Simultaneously, learners need to actively engage in the language-learning process, seeking ways to overcome hurdles and truly master the language through consistent practice and application of taught skills.

1.1.2 Importance of Speaking in Classroom

Effective speaking is a cornerstone of communication as it enables individuals to produce ideas, convey emotions, and build connections. In classroom contexts, students acquire knowledge in phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary to proficiently engage in spoken communication with teachers, aiming to learn English accurately and exchange diverse perspectives with classmates. Celce-Murcia (2001) argued that speaking is the primary tool for interaction. This is why many EFL students prioritize the speaking skill, recognizing the societal value placed on fluency and language mastery. Ur (1996) concurred with this view:

> All of the four language skills, speaking appear to be inherently the most crucial. Individuals proficient in a language are referred to as "speakers" of that language; as if speaking includes all other kinds of knowing. And many if not the most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak. (p.120)

In this quote, the author emphasizes the perceived significance of speaking among the three remaining language skills. Being labelled as "speakers" implies a comprehensive understanding of the language, suggesting that speaking encompasses various forms of language knowledge. Additionally, the observation that many language learners are primarily focused on acquiring speaking skills underscores the intuitive importance placed on spoken communication in language learning.

Haozhang (1997) stated that teachers of speaking skill should focus on improving the students' oral production. Thus, they had better select activities that maximize individual

language use. Chaney (1998) declared that oral communication instruction has long been neglected due to the misconception that spoken communication competence develops naturally over time and that the cognitive skills involved in writing automatically transfer to analogous oral communication skills.

1.1.3Elements of Speaking

Developing ESL /EFL speaking skills involves speakers knowing and mastering some elements. Within this context, Harmer (2001) stated that the ability to communicate in English assumes the possession of the necessary elements required for oral expression as follows:

1.1.3.1Mental/ Social Processing

The essential processing skills for speaking include the following:

- Language Processing: It refers to the learners' or speakers' ability to mentally organize language in a coherent manner, ensuring that other interlocutors comprehend the intended messages. Moreover, speakers must be adept at recalling words and phrases from memory for use during interactions with others.

- Interacting with others: In numerous speaking scenarios, interaction involves two or more interlocutors. Consequently, an adept speaker not only listens and comprehends others' speech but also responds by either taking turns or facilitating others to do so.

- Information Processing: This concerns the swift mental processing of information; speakers need to be prepared to respond promptly when they receive information from others in a conversation.

1.1.3.2 Language Features

Effective spoken communication requires the following elements:

- Connected Speech: English speakers use connected speech to produce more fluid sounds, transcending isolated phonemes. Within connected speech, these sounds are subject to modification, omission, addition, or weakening.

- Expressive Devices: Native English speakers use phonological rules proficiently to convey meanings. This involves manipulating pitch and stress in specific parts of their utterances, varying volume and pace, and conveying emotions through a range of physical and non-verbal signals.

- Lexis and Grammar: When learners convey certain language functions, they often resort to repetitive lexical patterns. In such instances, the teacher's responsibility is to provide them with a variety of phrases conveying diverse functions, enabling them to across different communication stages with others.

- **Negotiation Language:** It is useful for learners who often seek clarification during conversations. Consequently, teachers play a crucial role in providing learners with the requisite expressions for seeking clarification from others. Additionally, learners must successfully articulate their thoughts to ensure clarity, particularly when they perceive that their interlocutors may not have fully understood them.

1.1.4 Types of Speaking Tasks

Speaking skill teachers always look for the best tasks and activities to enhance their learners' oral performance. These tasks are integral components of language learning, promoting active engagement and practical language use. Common forms of speaking tasks are discussed below.

1.1.4.1 Information-Gap Activities

The information gap activity is an interactive task in which two individuals, one possessing specific information and the other lacking it, engage in a dialogue. This communicative approach is used for the purpose of exchanging information, with the goal of facilitating meaningful interactions either between students or between the teacher and the student. In this light, Baker (2009) defined it as "a situation where one person knows something which other does not" (p.2). This kind of tasks certainly motivates students share information, get excited and create competitive learning environment.

Bygate (1987) described how the process of information gap activity works:

Students work in pairs, and one with each part. The material consists of fictitious graphics, charts, or tables to be completed. The information to be transmitted is present in pictorial or note form on the speaker's page, and is communicated either when asked for by one's partner, or because the speaker deduces that if he has the information, his partner does not. Activities include instructions (directions), descriptions, comparisons, and narrations. (p.76)

In this process, students work in pairs, each having different but complementary information. The materials typically include fictitious graphics, charts, or tables that require completion. The information to be transmitted is initially present only on the speaker's page in

pictorial or note form. The communication occurs either when the partner explicitly asks for information or when the speaker deduces that if they possess certain information, their partner likely does not. The activities within this process require different language functions, such as giving directions, providing descriptions, making comparisons, and narrating events.

1.1.4.2 Dialogues and Role Plays

A dialogue is a form of conversation where the participants are heard and collectively considered for answers and brainstorming (Mercer & Howe, 2012). Teaching this type of speaking activities involves the following principles:

-Collective: Teachers and learners work together as a group to address the task collectively;
Reciprocal: Teachers and learners engage in active listening, share their perspectives, and are open to considering alternative points of view;
Supportive: Learners freely express their ideas without fear of humiliation for incorrect answers, fostering the development of a shared understanding;
Cumulative: Teachers and learners collaboratively build upon each other's ideas, creating a chain of interconnected thoughts and contributions;
Purposeful: With specific goals in mind, teachers strategically plan and facilitate dialogic teaching. Alexander (2008)

Role-play is an effective speaking activity where the teacher assigns roles to students, prompting them to adopt different personas and use language in diverse situations. Qing (2011) stated that "Role plays provide learners with the opportunity to examine, understand, and acquire knowledge which will assist and better facilitate intercultural communication" (p.38).In brief, role plays are considered as a dynamic and interactive method for learners to explore, comprehend, and apply knowledge related to intercultural communication. By actively participating in these simulations, learners can develop the skills and awareness needed to navigate the complexities of communication across diverse cultural contexts.

Additionally, Tutyandari (2005) confirmed that the role-play would seem to be the ideal activity in which students could use their English creatively and it aims at stimulating a conversational situation in which students might find themselves and give them an opportunity to practice and develop their communication skill.

1.1.4.3Activities Using Pictures

A picture is defined by Sinclair (1987) as a visual representation or image created through painting, drawing, or photography, and presented on a flat surface. Using pictures is

useful because of their obvious visibility to learners. In addition, Byrne (1980) mentioned that pictures can encourage students' discussion and interpretation of the subject matter. Moreover, Moore (1982) pointed out that pictures have the potential to inspire students' imaginations.

Designing tasks that use pictures helps students generate numerous sentences quickly. According to Ur (1996), when groups repeat the task with a second picture, they consistently produce more sentences than in the initial attempt. Additionally, Ur suggested that this activity is effective for all levels from elementary to advanced ones.

1.1.4.4 Storytelling Task

In learning English speaking, storytelling is a good strategy to be applied to students because it can entertain and arouse their enthusiasm in the learning process, so that they can learn with pleasure and are motivated to pay more attention to the material presented by the teacher. Students actively engage in the learning process through the use of stories. They follow the plot closely and later recount it to their peers based on the story told. This task not only encourages logical thinking but also enables students to anticipate the storyline and extract the true meaning of the story being told (Davies, 2007).

In another side, Thornbury (2005, p.95) stated that "storytelling is a universal function of language and one of the main ingredients of casual conversation". Thus, storytelling in casual conversation is a universal linguistic function that captivates attention, conveys meaning, builds connections, emphasizes points, and serves as a means of cultural transmission.

To sum up, we can say that storytelling is an activity in which students share personal anecdotes about themselves, their friends, or family, as well as recount experiences, discuss books they've read, or describe places they've visited. Conversely, their classmates engage by asking various questions to delve deeper into the narrative.

1.1.5 Features of Speaking Performance

Speaking performance includes different key features that contribute to effective communication. These features are: fluency, accuracy, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and others.

1.1.5.1 Fluency

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Fluency is the main feature of the speaker performance so that teachers always work on developing their learners' oral fluency. Hedge (2000) defines it as "responding coherently within the turns of the conversation, linking words and phrases, using intelligible pronunciation and appropriate intonation, and doing all of this without undue hesitation." (p.261). Fluency in English entails the ability to speak and understand the language with minimal hesitation, effortlessly and at a swift pace. Similarly, Lennon (1990) added that it is the rapid translation of ideas into communication without any hesitation. This means that fluent speakers have the ability to speak the language easily and smoothly without any hesitation. In addition, they can engage in any oral task with a reduced level of anxiety as reported by Brown (2007), "fluent speakers can participate in any conversation with a high degree of fluency"(p.407).

1.1.5.2 Accuracy

Speaking is a complex process that requires the appropriate use of many language features to be understood by people. Accuracy as one of those features is important to test someone's linguistic ability. According to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, p.139), it is "how well one's speech is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language". In other words, the proficiency of one's speech is determined by how well it aligns with the grammatical and linguistic rules of the language being spoken. Moreover, Richard (2006) declared that accuracy is the creation of correct examples of language use. Thus, accuracy in language use refers to the ability to create correct examples that align with the grammatical, syntactical, and lexical rules of a given language. It involves producing sentences and expressions that are free from errors and mistakes.

1.1.5.3 Grammar

Grammar is the foundation for any language as it provides the essential rules for constructing meaningful utterances and sentences. In other terms, acquiring vocabulary, mastering pronunciation, and understanding language is meaningless without the correct use of grammar. Kroeger asserted that "the term grammar is often used to refer to the complete set of rules needed to produce all the regular patterns in a given language"(2005, p.5). Hence, the concept of grammar is frequently used to encompass the comprehensive set of rules required to generate all the consistent patterns in a specific language. This includes guidelines for sentence structure, word order, verb conjugation, and other linguistic elements that collectively govern the proper construction of meaningful and grammatically correct expressions in that language.

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As grammar constitutes the basis for learning languages, its proper use in all skills is important to convey ideas accurately and fluently. In this context, Thornuby (2005) distinguished between spoken and written grammar in the table below:

Table 1.1

Spoken and written grammar (Thornbury, 2005, p.21)

Written Grammar	Spoken Grammar
Sentence is the basic unit of construction	Clauses is the basic unit of construction
Clauses are often embedded (subordination)	Clauses are usually added(coordination)
Subject + verb +object construction	Head +body +tail construction
Reported speech favoured	Direct speech favoured
Precession favored	Vagueness tolerated
Little ellipsis	A lot of ellipsis
No question tags	Many question tags
No performance effects	Performance effects such as: - Hesitation - Repeats - False starts - Incompletion - Syntactic blends

1.1.5.4 Vocabulary

Vocabulary serves as a fundamental element of the speaking skill in language acquisition. It plays a fundamental role in communication and is essential for expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively. Simply, Lewis (1993) defines it as words in language used to deliver meaning. Hence, vocabulary is words used by people to convey meaningful messages. Similarly, Thornuby (2005) stated that "Spoken language also has a relatively high proportion of words and expressions" (p.22). As spoken language often includes a higher number of words and expressions, it is important to learn vocabulary and select the appropriate words in a given situation so as to send and receive accurate utterances.

1.1.5.5 Pronunciation

In oral communication, pronunciation pertains to how words are spoken, adhering to the phonological rules of the language. According to Harmer (2001), it encompasses the manner in which sentences are articulated. For Louma (2003), "Pronunciation is the sound of speech can refer to many elements of the speech stream, such as individual sounds, pitch,

volume, speed, pausing, stress and intonation" (p.11).It also shows how sounds differ by the use of stress, rhythm, and intonation in the production of speech.

In the process of teaching and learning speaking, pronunciation is the way that helps students produce clear utterances when speaking (Kline, 2001). Dalton and Seidhofer (2001) defined pronunciation in two senses. Firstly, it involves both the production and reception of important sounds. Secondly, it covers the speaking acts, influenced by the manner and context in which these sounds are produced. In summary, pronunciation is not only about the physical production of sounds but also about how these sounds are received and how they shape the act of speaking within specific contexts.

1.1.6 Approaches to Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking skills involves teachers use various methodologies and strategies to match all the learners' needs and to enhance their oral communication skills. The most commonly adopted approaches, including: the direct approach, the indirect approach, indirect plus approach, and the communicative approach.

1.1.6.1 The Direct Approach

The Direct Method (DM) is also known by natural method or conversational method. It has been popular since it enables students to communicate in the foreign language. Its focusing on everyday language, and using questions and answers lays an emphasis on teaching oral language. The major objective of this method is associate meaning and the target language directly through the use of realia, pictures or pantomime (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

This approach, as outlined by Dornyei and Thurrell in 1994, is a systematic language learning program. It involves breaking down language skills into small, specific components (micro skills) and includes strategies for effective communication. The program emphasizes exposure to the target language (language input) and follows processes that lead to fluent speaking. It is informed by the analysis of spoken language, insights from second language acquisition research, and the study of discourse or how language is used in context. Overall, the goal is to guide learners through a structured process that results in fostering the cultivation of proficient speaking skills in the desired language.

The Direct Method incorporates the practice of recording spoken language to identify areas where students may need improvement. It involves analyzing authentic speaking transcripts to understand the characteristics of proficient speakers, distinguishing between

non-native and native speech, and identifying areas for improvement in students' speaking abilities (McCarthy, 1991).

Nonetheless, it faces criticism for potentially overemphasizing skills and strategies, neglecting linguistic aspects, and teaching extraneous functional language for specific contexts.

1.1.6.2 The Indirect Approach

An indirect approach to the teaching of speaking is one in which oral competence is acquired incidentally as a bi-product of engaging in communicative tasks. According to Brown (2007), it constitutes a component of certain language teaching methodologies, including the Audio-lingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching. It is supposed that meaningful classroom interactions are considered essential for the development of students' speaking proficiency.

Regarding the features of this approach, it emphasizes authentic communication tasks, task-based learning, role-playing, language games, and simulations. It prioritizes fluency over accuracy initially, uses multimedia resources, encourages negotiation of meaning, and considers the socio-cultural context of language learning (Maley & Duff, 1982; Pica,1994; Richards & Rodgers, 2001)

Nevertheless, critics argue that the indirect approach lacks structure and may be more suitable for advanced EFL students. However, it can cater to students' eagerness to practice speaking skills they already possess proficiency in.

1.1.6.3 The Indirect Plus Approach

The Indirect Plus Approach combines learner-centered instruction, language immersion, interactive tasks, and the teaching of speaking as discourse (Thornbury & Slade, 2006). Upon closer examination, it bears resemblances to both the Principled Communicative Approach (Celce-Murcia et al., 1997) and Willis' Task-Based Approach (1996).

These approaches emphasize targeted language input, exposure to authentic spoken language, and conscious reflection through systematically sequenced activities. Explicit teaching is strategically incorporated at key points during the lesson. The core elements include the rearrangement of exposure, instruction, and practice. Additionally, teaching begins with collaborative discussions between teachers and students regarding concerns, needs, and abilities, shaping the conversational content.

The implementation of this approach is noted to require extensive teacher practice and skill development, as highlighted by Gibbons (as cited in Thornbury & Slade, 2006). It relies on learner-centred training and substantial motivation for collaborative decision-making in the classroom. Despite these considerations, Thornbury (1998) observes a prevalent focus on grammar in classrooms and textbooks, posing challenges for the effective application of conversational approaches.

1.1.6.4 The Communicative Approach

The Communicative Approach is a language teaching methodology that emphasizes the use of the target language in the classroom. It addresses teaching goals, student language acquisition, classroom activities, and the roles of teachers and students. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a subset of this approach, focuses on two key components: meaning and interaction, promoting language learning through meaningful communication and interactive activities (Littlewood, 1981; Nunan, 1989).

According to Richards and Rodgers (1999), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) aims to foster linguistic competence in a new language. It is concerned with "what to teach" by emphasizing language functions in diverse contexts, each requiring specific grammar and vocabulary. The "how to teach" aspect of CLT asserts that students acquire language functions through opportunities to enhance their communicative competence, as highlighted by Harmer (1998). In essence, CLT achieves its goals, including grammatical and sociolinguistic competence, through encouraging students to actively develop communicative skills in the EFL classroom.

Concerning the major characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching Approach, they are summarized as follows:

• Language serves as a framework for conveying ideas and concepts.

• The core purposes of language revolve around social interactions and effective communication.

• The structure of language mirrors its practical and communicative applications.

• Language is not solely defined by its grammatical and structural elements, but also by its functional and communicative aspects, as observed in discourse (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.71).

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In summary, the CLT approach is characterized by its focus on language as a means of expressing meaning, prioritizing interaction and communication as primary language functions. It emphasizes the connection between language structure and its functional, communicative usage, and recognizes discourse as a key illustration of functional and communicative meaning.

1.2 Part Two: Anxiety in Oral Performance

1.2.1 Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety is the feeling of discomfort and nervousness experienced by learners, which varies based on their self-confidence and educational level. This psychological problem refers to "the state of feeling nervous or worried that something bad is going to happen"(Hornby et al., 2000, p.48). Similarly, Carlson (2001) defined it as a mental health issue that is observed through the expectation of danger in a particular situation. Besides, anxiety is "a complex affective concept associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry" (Scovel, 1978, p.134). Hence, anxiety manifests as a complex emotional condition marked by a blend of unease, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and worry.

1.2.2 Types of Anxiety

Anxiety is often viewed as a multifaceted phenomenon with distinct components. Three key distinctions frequently emphasized include: 1) State-Trait Anxiety, 2) Facilitating-Debilitating Anxiety, and 3) Situation-Specific Anxiety.

1.2.2.1 State-Trait Anxiety

Spielberger (1972) introduced the concept of state anxiety. Simply, it means "the emotional reaction or pattern of response that occurs in an individual, who perceives a particular situation as personally threatening irrespective of the presence, or absence of objective danger" (p.189). In essence, state anxiety highlights the subjective nature of the perceived threat and the resulting emotional response. Additionally, he asserted that the intensity of state anxiety varies among individuals and can fluctuate over time. This indicates that it is not a permanent condition, although it may disrupt students' oral performance, it is not as harmful as trait anxiety.

Trait anxiety has been seen as a harmful type of anxiety and "a constant condition without time limitation" (Levitt, 1980, p.11). Thus, it represents a general tendency for a person to experience anxiety across various situations and over an extended period. In the same line of thought, Macintyre and Gardner (1991) characterized trait anxiety as a persistent

sense of anxiety, where learners experiencing this type of anxiety tend to feel highly apprehensive even in situations that are objectively non-threatening.

1.2.2.2 Facilitating-Debilitating anxiety

Anxiety is categorized by Kleinmann (1977) into facilitating and debilitating types, with facilitating anxiety beneficial for performance and debilitating harmful to it, affecting foreign language learning differently. Debilitating anxiety obstructs learning, while facilitating anxiety supports and accelerates progress. Furthermore, Scovel (1978) explained that facilitating anxiety motivates learners to confront new experiences, and encourages them to seek approval behaviour. It makes them use additional efforts to prevent their anxious feelings. On the other hand, debilitating anxiety is associated with completing simple tasks. It compels students to escape from learning tasks in an attempt to conceal their apprehension and emotionally pushes them toward adopting avoidance behaviours (Horwitz et al., 1986).

The distinction between these anxiety types may align with the consistency of anxiety levels, where a low anxiety state corresponds to facilitating anxiety, and a high anxiety state corresponds to a debilitating effect. They might occasionally neutralize each other, potentially not significantly impacting learners' scores. In general, these dual effects of anxiety can manifest interchangeably to enhance or hinder language accomplishments (Bailey &Nunan, 1996). So, the teacher's responsibility is to help students maintain an optimal level of anxiety, neither too high nor too low; because an appropriate level of anxiety plays a positive role and can motivate students to save their efforts in the learning process.

1.2.2.3 Situation-Specific Anxiety

The situation-specific anxiety is based on the fact that the personality difference conception of anxiety, by its nature, deemphasizes the situational determinants of anxiety (Dörnyei, 2005; Endler, 2000& Leary, 1982).Therefore, this perspective suggests that an individual's inherent personality characteristics play a more substantial role in their experience of anxiety than external factors do.

Foreign language students experience anxiety due to various factors, including the environment, teacher, content, social context, communication style, and class tasks. Teachers' teaching methodology, favouritism, and feedback are major causes of anxiety. In this sense, Price (1991) claimed that teachers play a significant role in increasing or decreasing student's anxiety. They should offer encouragement, support, and attention without excessive criticism, ensuring students feel supported and understood.

In brief, situational anxiety usually occurs in response to new situations or changing events, often leading to panic attacks or extreme anxiety. It can be triggered by crowds or major life changes, such as college entrance.

1.2.3 Anxiety and Oral Performance

Anxiety is the most essential variable in the foreign language learning process that hinders learners' performance, particularly in speaking skills. It serves as a substantial cognitive and physical barrier, hampering learners' ability to fully engage in unfamiliar language situations. Language anxiety refers to the apprehension experienced by learners when using a second or foreign language, exacerbating difficulties in speaking proficiency (Spielberger &Vagg, 1995).

In studies examining classroom anxiety, it's evident that many foreign language learners experience a high rate of anxiety, particularly during speaking activities, leading to disengagement or minimal engagement. Speaking skills are often perceived as the most anxiety-inducing aspect of the foreign language learning environment, as emphasized by Price (1991) who identified oral presentations as a major factor of anxiety in classroom. Furthermore, Macintyre et al. (1998) introduced the notion of willingness to communicate, which refers to the learner's readiness to engage in discourse using the second language (L2) at a given time and with specific individuals. Anxious students, accordingly, tend to refrain from volunteering answers in the classroom and demonstrate hesitancy in expressing their opinions in the target language.

In language education and psychology, it has been suggested that foreign language anxiety is associated with oral performance. (Horwitz et al., 1986). According to the cognitive perspective on language acquisition, learners are seen as autonomous individuals who actively process the language data available to them to refine their existing hypotheses, often with limited attention. In this framework, anxiety, cognition, and behaviour are interconnected in a cyclical manner, where each element influences the others (Macintyre, 1995). In other words, learners may experience anxiety and worry when faced with situations requiring responses in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class, as their reduced attention can lead to weaker performance.

The various symptoms of foreign language anxiety highlight its significant impact on the learning process overall, especially when it pertains to speaking skills. According to Leary (1982), observable signs of anxiety in learners include squirming in their seats, fidgeting,

playing with their hair, clothes, or other objects, and displaying general nervousness. Additionally, some students may experience rapid heartbeats, nervousness, and sweating, indicative of the stress associated with speaking in front of a group.

Numerous studies and experiments conducted in both second and foreign-language contexts consistently demonstrate a negative relationship between anxiety and speaking skills. Allwright and Baily (1991) stated that higher levels of anxiety among learners correspond to poorer performance in speech skills. Consequently, researchers and educators view foreign language anxiety as a barrier to language learners' success in the learning process. However, it remains unclear whether increasing anxiety inhibits learners from enhancing their speaking skills or if deficiencies in speaking skills trigger anxiety (Allwright & Baily, 1991).

1.2.4 The Causes of Anxiety in Oral Performance

The causes of anxiety in oral performance can be attributed to several factors: communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, lack of motivation, and negative self-perceptions.

1.2.4.1Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) is characterized as a form of shyness typified by feelings of fear or anxiety during interpersonal communication. It encompasses apprehension arising from the realization that one may struggle to comprehend others and effectively express oneself (Horwitz et al., 1986). McCroskey (1977) suggested that communication apprehension (CA) pertains to an individual's fear or anxiety levels concerning actual or anticipated communication with others. Within this framework, learners' speaking anxiety may fluctuate depending on specific contexts, termed context-based apprehension, which encompasses scenarios such as participating in meetings, speaking in groups, and listening to spoken messages.

In EFL contexts, learners experiencing communication apprehension often encounter discomfort and a lack of confidence in oral situations. Furthermore, they may perceive that their oral efforts are constantly under scrutiny (McCroskey, 1977). Macintyre and Gardner (1991) suggest that speaking apprehension arises from negative self-concepts fuelled by past negative experiences and difficulties in effectively conveying information to others. Consequently, communication apprehension plays a significant role in foreign language anxiety, adversely impacting the language learning process and impeding students' success in oral communication.

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1.2.4.2 Test Anxiety

Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety that stems from a fear of failure (Horwitz et al., 1986). It is experienced either before or during test situations. It manifests as a physiological state wherein learners feel exaggerated worry, anxiety, and discomfort before or during test-taking. This condition poses important obstacles to both performance and the learning process. On this ground, Hill and Wigfield (1984) reported that "anxiety and achievement share significant variance, so high test-anxious individuals have an increased likelihood to perform poorly if a task is to be evaluated" (p.105). This means that anxiety negatively impacts performance outcomes, particularly in evaluative situations such as tests.

Putwain and Best (2011) conducted a study investigating test performance among elementary children, identifying various factors contributing to test anxiety. Their findings revealed that external pressures from examiners significantly influenced students' performance. Specifically, when learners experienced high-pressure situations, their achievements suffered, and they reported higher levels of test anxiety and apprehensive thoughts compared to low-pressure ones. This indicates the influence of external factors, such as examiner behaviour, on students' test anxiety levels and performance outcomes.

1.2.4.3 Fear of Negative Evaluation

The term fear of negative evaluation is broader than test anxiety as it may exist in any social or evaluative context. It is "the prospect or presence of interpersonal evaluation in oral or imagined social settings" (Macintyre, 1995, p.93). This concept is often associated with social anxiety, where individuals may be particularly sensitive to the perceived evaluation of their actions and behaviours in interpersonal interactions. Fear of negative evaluation is simply defined as the concern about how others perceive and judge oneself. It includes actively avoiding situations where evaluation might occur and having a heightened expectation that others will judge them negatively (Watson & Friend, 1969).

The fear of negative evaluation intensifies during the EFL oral expression sessions. Students may feel anxious about being assessed by their peers or the teacher, resulting in ineffective communication marked by numerous errors. Macintyre and Gardner (1989) emphasize the importance of making mistakes in the learning process. However, for many learners, this fear stems from an increased awareness of the difficulties in maintaining a positive social image while communicating orally in a new language. Consequently, learners who fear negative evaluation rarely initiate conversations and engage minimally in

interactions. They tend to appear inactive in the classroom, avoiding tasks that could enhance their speaking skills. In extreme cases, these students may even choose to leave the classroom altogether (Ely, 1986).

1.2.4.4 Lack of Motivation

In the language learning process, motivation serves as the driving force that urges learners to engage with the language, persist in their efforts, and overcome challenges. Weiner (1992) stated that motivated learners are those who consciously invest significant effort in pursuing something they value, energizing them and providing direction in their learning journey. Indeed, motivation is widely recognized as one of the fundamental keys to success in learning. When students are motivated, they tend to achieve greater outcomes and accomplishments.

Lack of motivation plays a crucial role in triggering anxiety. Of course, this constitutes a serious problem for both teachers and students in language classrooms. According to Ornstein (1995), the absence of motivation can cause students to feel anxious, apprehensive, and depressed to speak or to learn a new language. Therefore, if students don't believe their efforts will improve their performance, they won't be motivated to work hard. Motivation can be influenced by factors such as the perceived difficulty of a course or past discouraging experiences. Additionally, if students attribute success solely to innate talents rather than effort, they may lack motivation to work hard. Ultimately, language learning demands time and effort, and when learners lose interest and desire to learn, their results suffer.

1.2.4.5 Negative Self-Perception

The perception and misperception of one's abilities significantly influence the learning process. Disregarding one's capabilities can hinder learners from reaching their goals, as overestimating the challenges ahead and underestimating their chances of success may occur. Laine (1987) defines self-concept as encompassing an individual's thoughts, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and values regarding themselves as an object. Learners experiencing anxiety about speaking may struggle to focus on language tasks due to persistent negative thoughts about their learning difficulties.

Anxious learners often have negative self-perceptions and tend to underestimate their speaking abilities. Young (1999) suggests that anxiety correlates with thoughts of failure and a pessimistic view of one's fluency in the language. Consequently, speaking in front of peers becomes a common source of anxiety, especially for those with limited proficiency in foreign

languages. Fear and anxiety during activities such as answering questions can cause students to focus on negative thoughts, impairing cognitive performance and leading to lower-than-expected oral performance. Therefore, teachers should enhance students' self-confidence by emphasizing positive experiences in the foreign language rather than focusing on negative ones.

1.2.5 Strategies for Reducing Oral Performance Anxiety

It's vital for teachers and students alike to address oral performance anxiety to create a supportive learning environment. Implementing effective strategies is a key to boosting students' confidence, improving their performance, and reducing stress for both educators and learners. Providing teachers and students with these strategies can contribute to a more positive and productive classroom atmosphere. By equipping both teachers and students with practical tools and techniques, such as relaxation exercises, positive self-talk and constructive feedback mechanisms, they can collaboratively address and mitigate oral performance anxiety. This cooperative approach ensures that all stakeholders are actively involved in creating a positive and empowering educational experience.

1.2.6. The Role of EFL Teacher in Reducing Speech Anxiety

Teachers play a crucial role in reducing students' speaking anxiety as it significantly impacts their learning and performance. Implementing interventions and providing tips can help minimize anxiety levels:

Creating a relaxed classroom: Creating a relaxed atmosphere in foreign language classrooms is a successful way of reducing anxiety among learners. Dornyei (2001) emphasized that teachers need to create a pleasant and supportive classroom environment, which serves as a motivational tool for learners to feel more comfortable communicating in a foreign language. By prioritizing the development of a relaxed atmosphere, teachers can effectively alleviate student anxieties, thereby fostering better results in foreign language classes.

Additionally, teachers should create a pleasant atmosphere in foreign language classrooms by being tolerant with students' mistakes as this makes them comfortable to taking risks without embarrassment or criticism. Moreover, teachers with a good sense of humour and relaxed attitude create a comfortable learning environment for students (Dorneiy, 2001). Therefore, personalizing the classroom environment and using games and music can create a supportive atmosphere and encourage students to use the target language at ease.

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Teacher-Student Relationship: Building a positive teacher-learner relationship is crucial for successful learning, as it influences the classroom climate, student performance, and engagement. According to Pianta (1999), establishing psychologically close relationships between teachers and learners provides students with a sense of security in the classroom environment, ultimately reducing anxiety levels and leading to improved academic achievements.

Furthermore, a strong teacher-student relationship is important for student success because it fosters motivation, comfort, and academic competition. In a similar vein, Birch and Ladd (1997) further emphasized that students who fostered closer relationships with their teachers exhibited better academic adjustment compared to those with conflicted teacher-student relationships. Therefore, cultivating positive and supportive relationships fosters students' sense of competence and motivation, leading to a learning environment free from fears or anxieties.

Varying speaking activities: Teachers can lower their students' speaking anxiety by using different speaking activities. According to Harmer (2001), using simulations in the classroom can effectively reduce students' speaking anxiety by enhancing their self-confidence. Simulations, similar to role plays but more intricate, allow students to bring props to create a realistic setting. In simulations, students assume various roles, alleviating the pressure of speaking solely for themselves and thereby reducing the sense of responsibility associated with speaking activities.

Brainstorming is another type of speaking activity that allows students to generate quick and free ideas on a selected topic, either individually or in groups, depending on the context. Dunn and Kenneth (1972) clarified that this strategy is useful in a way that students can share their ideas without any fears. Teachers can also incorporate real-life communication activities, such as sharing ideas about events and collaborating in discussion groups to find solutions. These activities can effectively decrease students' speaking anxiety and boost their motivation and self-confidence.

Group work: Foreign language teachers mainly depend on this strategy to reduce speaking anxiety among their students. In this context, Dornyei (2001) suggested that cooperative environments foster positive attitudes, self-esteem, and confidence. They typically have positive emotions, resulting in lower levels of anxiety and stress compared to other instructional formats. They also promote cohesion within the class group.

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In contemporary language teaching methodologies, group interaction is considered an essential step towards fostering learners' communicative competence. Tsui (2001) asserted that students' collaboration reduces anxiety and improves oral performance and learning outcomes. Indeed, students in cooperative situations motivate each other, assist, and support each other's participation, fostering unity and shared goals among them.

1.2.7 The Role of EFL Students in Reducing Their Speech Anxiety

In EFL contexts, students play a great role in diminishing their speaking anxiety by understanding its impact on oral communication and coping strategies. As suggested by researchers, the following are some tips to assist students in managing their anxieties:

Practice and preparation: Extensive practice and preparation are very important for learners to cope with oral performance anxiety. This helps them develop self-esteem in speaking and minimizes their anxiety level. According to Kanar (2011), "Preparation and practice are the keys to feeling confident about giving a speech or presentation" (p.293). Through preparation and practice, students become more familiar and comfortable with the material, which boosts their confidence in delivering a compelling speech or presentation.

Positive self-talk: Positive self-talk, as described by Young (1999), is an effective strategy for students to alleviate their speaking anxiety. This technique involves reassuring oneself with affirmative statements such as, "I can handle this," "Just relax," and "Take a deep, slow breath, and I'll start as I rehearsed."Bassett (1985) emphasized the importance of learners ceasing negative thinking patterns. He advocated for the substitution of pessimistic, despondent thoughts with compassionate, respectful, and comforting ones. This shift in mindset involves actively replacing detrimental thoughts with more affirming and supportive ones, fostering a more constructive internal dialogue conducive to learning and personal growth.

In conclusion, by engaging in positive self-talk, students can empower themselves to confront their anxiety and approach speaking tasks with confidence and composure. This reframing of thoughts can lead to improved performance and reduced feelings of apprehension.

Relaxation techniques: These strategies should be performed by students before delivering their speech to decrease anxiety. Bryan (2001) highlighted various relaxation techniques to manage speaking anxiety. One such approach involves deep breathing coupled with the relaxation of muscles, which can contribute to a sense of comfort and ease. Additionally, the

use of visualization as a means of relaxation is specifically tailored to addressing speaking anxiety. Moreover, Lloyd (2010) reported that relaxation techniques involve using mental imagery to visualize oneself as confident and proficient while speaking a foreign language. All in all, by adopting these techniques, learners can gain better control over their speaking anxiety, facilitating a more confident and effective performance.

Minimizing fear of making mistakes: It is a strategy used by students to mitigate speaking anxiety. Bassett (1985) suggested that a certain degree of fear regarding mistakes can be beneficial for learners, as it can motivate them to improve their performance. However, when this fear becomes excessive, it can lead to problems. Therefore, learners need to understand how to manage their worries, as excessively negative thoughts about making mistakes can diminish students' self-confidence.

To minimize this problem, students should know that committing mistakes is an integral aspect of the learning journey, rather than a demonstration of weakness. In this scope, Bassett (1985) asserted that "mistakes are opportunities for growth nothing more" (p.39). Mistakes should be viewed as valuable opportunities for growth rather than mere indications of failure because when we make mistakes, we are presented with the chance to learn from them, understand our weaknesses, and improve ourselves.

1. Conclusion

The first part of this chapter has dealt with various aspects of the speaking skill in language education. We began by defining speaking skills and highlighting their significance in the classroom. Exploring the elements of speaking, we examined mental and social processing as well as language features crucial to effective communication. The discussion extended to different types of speaking tasks, such as information-gap activities, dialogues, role plays, activities using pictures, and storytelling tasks. We also explained the features contributing to speaking performance, including fluency, accuracy, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of speaking, we addressed the importance of balancing fluency and accuracy in language acquisition. Furthermore, we presented various approaches to teaching speaking, spanning from the conventional Direct Approach to the contemporary Communicative Approach, with intermediate variations such as the Indirect Approach and the Indirect Plus Approach falling in between.

The second part of this chapter provided a thorough explanation of anxiety within the EFL context of oral performance. It provided concise definitions of this psychological issue

and categorized it into distinct types, including state-trait anxiety, facilitating-debilitating anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. It also outlined the causes of anxiety in oral performance, covering communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, lack of motivation, and negative self-perceptions.

Moreover, this part outlined effective strategies for reducing oral performance anxiety. Furthermore, it highlighted the pivotal role of EFL teachers in reducing their learners' speech anxiety and emphasized the responsibilities of EFL students in actively addressing and minimizing their anxiety levels.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

2. Introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology adopted. It is made up of two parts. The first part presents the theoretical background. It defines research, the research methods, and the research tools. The second part presents the fieldwork where we describe the research design and display the population and sample for each data gathering tool. Besides, it provides the description and aim of using these tools. Finally, it highlights some of the limitations that the study encounters.

2.1. Part One: Theoretical Background

2.1.1 Definition of Research

In science, research is the diligent systematic enquiry into nature and society to validate and refine existing knowledge and to generate new knowledge. It has several characteristics, including relevance, conceptions of research, research orthodoxies, theoretical orientations, and ethical framework (Naidoo, 2011, pp. 47-48). So, research is a systematic and rigorous investigation aimed at understanding natural and social phenomena, validating existing knowledge, and producing new insights.

By the feature of relevance, the research should address important questions and real-world problems. Conceptions of research are the beliefs and approaches about what constitutes valid research. Research orthodoxies refer to the established and widely accepted practices and standards within the scientific community. Theoretical orientations present the frameworks or paradigms that guide research questions, hypotheses, and interpretations. The last feature which is the ethical framework means the moral principles governing the conduct of research.

2.1.2. Quantitative Research Approach

Quantitative research is generally used to measure issues through the production of numerical data or data that can be translated into usable statistics. This type of research is interested in investigating how and why phenomena vary. It often uses statistical models and analyses to produce objective analytical data. Researchers collect mainly quantitative data for such analysis. Hypotheses in quantitative research are designed to be tested with quantitative data; providing responses that are suitable for straightforward quantitative analyses (Barnham, 2015).

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2.1.3. Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research, also named exploratory, is used to discover patterns in ideas and views. It typically addresses what, how, and why questions and focuses on the collection of qualitative data rather than quantitative ones. Examples of qualitative data include free-form text answers to questionnaires and recorded interviews. This approach involves more in-depth methods to acquire detailed information. Researchers gather and analyze data using techniques such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and focus groups (Yilmaz, 2013). They may ask open-ended questions or use other strategies, such as framing, projective techniques, and exercise mapping (Barnham, 2015).

2.1.4. Mixed Method Research Approach

Mixed methods refers to "research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study" (Tashakkori& Creswell, 2007, p.4). The mixed method is an inclusive approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative techniques within a single study. Adopting this approach involves the researcher gathering information through various qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) and quantitative (e.g., surveys, experiments) methods and the data from both methods are combined to provide a more complete understanding of the research questions. Finally, conclusions are made based on the integrated data, using the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data.

2.1.5. Semi-structured Interview

A semi-structured interview is a data-gathering tool that depends on asking questions within a predetermined thematic framework. These questions are not set in order or phrasing. In research, this instrument is often qualitative and it is generally used as an exploratory tool in the realm of marketing and social sciences (Tegan, 2022). In short, a semi-structured interview is a qualitative data collection method that involves asking questions and allowing flexibility in the order and phrasing of these questions. It is often used as an exploratory tool in various research fields like marketing and social sciences.

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2.1.6. Questionnaire

According to Sreejesh et al. (2014), a questionnaire is essentially a structured series of questions submitted to respondents to be answered. It is accompanied by detailed instructions on the order and selection criteria. This tool is widely used across different research fields, including survey research and experimental design, offering researchers a systematic framework for collecting and analyzing data. In brief, a questionnaire is a structured series of questions used in various research fields and provides a systematic framework for data collection and analysis.

2.1.7. Classroom Observation

A classroom observation refers to a systematic act of watching and recording a teacher's performance in their classrooms. This quantitative method evaluates teacher behaviour and proficiency by observing them in action (Torsh, 2019). All in all, classroom observations are a systematic method of observing and measuring a teacher's actions in their learning environment.

2.2. Part Two: Field Work

2.2.1. Research Design

A research design is a detailed blueprint outlining the research methods and techniques to be used for data collection and analysis, which the researcher must prepare in advance to facilitate the research process (Loucif, 2022).To attain the research objectives and answer the previously mentioned research questions, we used three tools, including a semi-structured interview, a questionnaire, and a classroom observation. First, we conducted interviews with teachers of oral expression at Saida University to examine their views about the impact of anxiety on learners' speaking and their strategies to help students overcome this issue. We also distributed a questionnaire to second- year students from the same university to determine their perception towards the factors leading to speaking anxiety. Finally, we conducted a classroom observation to watch both teachers' and students' performance in oral class.

2.2.2. Population and Sample of the Study

The sample size of this study which is taken from the total population, represents 5 teachers selected randomly, in addition to (60) pupils from the chosen population. After collecting data, the data will undergo two methods of analysis; statistical analysis using Excel

to analyze quantitative data. On the other hand, qualitative data will be examined through thematic/ content analysis.

The sample is detailed in the following table:

Table 2.2: Participants' Division and Sampling

Participants	Total number	Male	Female
Teachers	5	1	4
Pupils	60	13	47

2.2.3 Description and Aim of the Interview

This interview seeks to explore the teachers' views of the effect of anxiety on their learners' oral performance and what they usually do to reduce this psychological issue. It is a face-to-face interview with oral expression teachers who have enough experience with both comfortable and anxious students. It is a powerful technique that helps us get accurate information from the interviewees. It consists of seven (07) questions about the challenges that teachers face while teaching speaking skills, the causes behind students' speaking anxiety, how they deal with anxious students, and the common strategies they use to help them overcome this problem.

2.2.4. Description and Aim of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to find out the students' perceptions towards the factors that push them to be anxious during the oral expression sessions. It includes 15 questions varying between yes/no questions, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions. It is divided into three sections as follows:

The first section includes four questions about the student's personal information, including their age, BAC branch, the choice to study English at university, and their cognitive and affective factors for studying English. The second section covers four multiple-choice questions about the participants' views of the speaking skill and their feelings when they are asked to speak in class. The last section consists of seven questions; one of them is an open-ended question and two are yes/no questions, while the others are multiple-choice ones. It deals with students' English language anxiety causes and solutions.

2.2.5 Description and Aim of the Classroom Observation

The classroom observation was carried out to see the different aspects of the course. We will notice the teaching and learning process, teacher performance, student

behaviour, and many other factors. The observation was conducted with second-year students of English at Saida University from 21ˢᵗApril to 30ᵗʰApril 2024. The results obtained were collected, analysed and validated.

The researcher was conducting non-participant observation which means that she simply sat in the class to observe the teaching and learning process. She relied on an observation checklist to gather data and took notes during the observation. In addition, the researcher used field notes to help complete the observation checklist and ensure that the observation was conducted in a controlled setting.

In the classroom, the researcher observed the teaching and learning process to find out how many students feel anxious when they speak and how the teacher helps them reduce their anxiety. From the observation checklist and notes made, the researcher can determine the effect of anxiety on those students' oral performance.

2.3 Limitations of the Study

The present study as all studies has some limitations. First, there is a lack of resources in the library and the difficulty of accessing some useful paid resources and e-books. Second, time was limited to address this issue deeply and thoroughly. Third, the participants were non –cooperative.

2. Conclusion

The current chapter provides an overview of the research methodology used in the study. It defined some key concepts such as research, research methods, and the tools used in this work. It also described the data-gathering instruments used to test the validity of the research hypothesis and answer the already stated research questions. Additionally, it determined the target population of the study. At the end of this chapter, we outlined the research limitations.

Chapter Three:
Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

3. Introduction

The current chapter is dedicated to describing, interpreting, and analyzing data obtained from teachers' interviews, students' questionnaires, and classroom observations. Through these data collection methods, our aim was to investigate students' attitudes regarding the impact of anxiety on their oral performance, as well as to observe their behaviours and analyze them to find out whether there is a connection between anxiety and students' performance. Additionally, our objective was to understand how teachers addressed speaking anxiety in their classrooms. This chapter also includes a discussion of the analyzed data in relation to the research questions and hypothesis. It ends up with a set of recommendations that may help teachers, students, and researchers who are interested in the same area of study.

3.1. Part one: Data Analysis

3.1.1 Teachers' Interview Analysis

Q 1-How long have you been teaching English?

This question aimed to know the experience of the interviewees in teaching English because the more teachers are experienced the more they provide thorough insights and perspectives on the topic. The results revealed that the majority of teachers (four teachers) have taught English for more than 10 years, whereas only one of them has an experience of less than 5 years. This indicates that the insights provided are likely to be well-informed, drawing from years of practical experience in addressing challenges related to anxiety in EFL learners' performance.

Q 2- How long have you been teaching the oral expression module?

The purpose of asking about the duration of teaching an oral expression module is to know the teachers' level of experience, which can influence learners' anxiety levels and oral performance outcomes. The results showed that only one teacher had a teaching expertise of 2 years; two of them said it was 5years, while two others reported that it extended to 10 years. Therefore, our sample is mixed between novice and experienced teachers. This diversity in experience levels among the teachers underscores the need to consider a range of teaching backgrounds when examining the effect of anxiety on EFL learners' oral performance.

Q 3- What challenges do you face while teaching this module?

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This question seeks to identify the common hurdles faced by oral expression teachers and understand how these challenges relate to learners' anxiety levels and language learning outcomes. All the informants answered that they faced many problems when teaching speaking skills. Two teachers claimed that overcrowded classes, insufficient time and equipments make it difficult for them to meet every student's needs. However, the majority of them (three teachers) found difficulties with the lack of motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety among students when it comes to speaking. Despite the varying opinions, the findings indicated that anxiety stands out as the primary factor hindering the development of speaking skills.

Q 4- Do you have anxious students in your classes? If yes, how do you recognize them? How do you describe their level of anxiety? and how to deal with them?

All teachers without exception said that they have anxious students in their classes. This is justified by the inherent complex nature of language learning environments. Concerning how teachers recognize anxious students, the informants reported different symptoms. Three interviewees stated that the most frequent symptoms are avoiding participation, poor pronunciation, and hesitation. One teacher said that sitting at the end of the class and using mobiles or something else instead of talking are clear signs of speaking anxiety. Another teacher asserted that a low tone of voice and body shaking are among the symptoms.

Regarding how teachers characterize anxiety levels, the findings showed that four teachers have reported that the level of their students' anxiety is medium, while only one teacher claimed that they have a high level of anxiety. Therefore, the majority of teachers noticed the existence of anxiety in their classrooms, and this makes it very difficult for learners to be comfortable in their learning context.

The results unveiled that the participants have different ways of how to deal with anxious learners. Their answers are reported as follows:

Teacher 1: As a remedy, I begin with administering a diagnostic test and facilitating introductions among students and their teacher. Besides, I try to foster collaborative work in small groups and pairs as it helps not only in reducing anxiety and stress but also enhances students' confidence and participation.

Teacher 2: In fact, the degree of anxiety of those students determines the type of strategy that fits that case.

Teacher 3: Well, I evaluate the impact of anxiety on students' performance through different activities, and then I address each issue encountered within the activity.

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Teacher 4: I usually let them free to choose whatever topic they want, form groups or pairs and ensure active collaboration by monitoring interactions. More importantly, my focus is on encouraging speech regardless of accuracy.

Teacher 5: Generally, I engage in one-on-one conversations with my students at the end of the sessions to identify the root causes of their anxiety. In pair or group work, I give priority to pairing students with their close friends and mates rather than with unfamiliar peers.

Q5-Based on your teaching background, do you notice any differences in the oral presentations of students when they know that they will be evaluated or graded?

All the teachers interviewed agreed that there is a difference in the oral presentation of their students when they know that their oral presentation will be evaluated. They justified that when students are aware of being evaluated, they may face greater anxiety or stress that leads to changes in their speaking behaviour. This can appear as hesitancy, self-consciousness, or a very focus on avoiding mistakes. Moreover, the desire to perform well under evaluation may cause students to adopt a more formal or rehearsed style of speaking, rather than expressing themselves naturally. Overall, the awareness of evaluation creates a different psychological and emotional state for students, which can impact their oral presentation.

Q6-What are the reasons behind students' speaking anxiety?

Inquiring about the reasons behind students' speaking anxiety serves the purpose of understanding the underlying factors contributing to this phenomenon in the context of EFL learning. By identifying these reasons, we can develop strategies to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance students' oral performance. So teachers' answers are reported as follow:

Teacher 1: Actually, there are a lot of factors that make learners anxious when they speak. Firstly, inadequate vocabulary and limited exposure to the English language hinder learners' ability to speak freely. Additionally, deficiencies in grammar or pronunciation can undermine their confidence and engagement in speaking activities. Moreover, the fear of receiving negative feedback or criticism from peers further inhibits students from speaking openly. Furthermore, the learning environment plays a crucial role, with a lack of encouragement and acceptance of mistakes impeding speaking fluency.

Teacher 2: Many reasons lead to speaking anxiety, including individual learning styles, and the stress of being examined when unprepared. Besides, learners' negative attitudes towards the module or teacher can cause anxiety, particularly when these perceptions are shared among peers.

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

Teacher 3: Sometimes, speaking anxiety might be a natural state of mind, i.e., some people are naturally anxious. However, it could come from their apprehension about making mistakes in front of peers, and the fear of being corrected or interrupted by the teacher.

Teacher 4: Well, for me, being uninterested in the topic being discussed, and the teacher's teaching strategies are the main causes of speaking anxiety among EFL learners.

Teacher 5: I think that anxiety may arise from a combination of personal, psychological, and environmental factors. Also, learners' educational and family backgrounds, the topic of discussion and individual competence levels can contribute to feelings of anxiety when speaking.

Q7- What strategies do you commonly use to help students overcome their speaking anxiety?

This question intends to gather insights into effective interventions used by teachers in the context of EFL learning. By identifying these strategies, we aim to develop recommendations for decreasing speaking anxiety and promoting improved oral performance among students. In light of this, teachers mentioned different strategies as follows. They said that they usually tend to ask students who present to prepare dialogue and act out roles. They create a supportive and encouraging learning environment where students feel safe to take risks and make mistakes. They also provide opportunities for students to practice speaking in low-pressure settings, such as small group discussions or pair work, before engaging in larger class presentations.

Additionally, they offer constructive feedback and praise students for their efforts. Others suggested the information gap activity as the most comfortable speaking activity. Lastly, they integrate activities that incorporate mindfulness or relaxation techniques to help students boost their confidence and motivation and manage their anxiety levels during speaking tasks. Overall, by using these strategies students gradually build their speaking skills and confidence over time.

3.1.2 Students' Questionnaire Analysis

Section One: Background Information

1- Age

Figure 3.1

Age Distribution of Students

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations
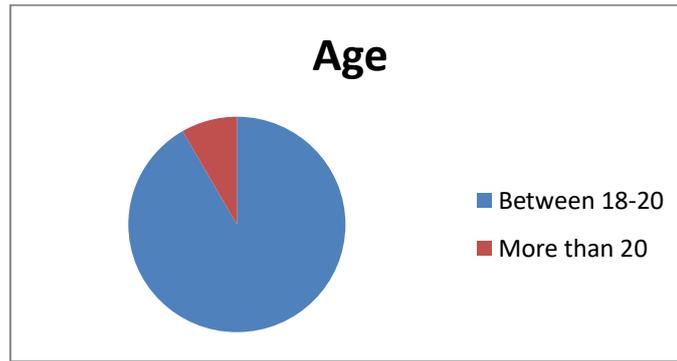
Table3.3

Distribution of Students by BAC Branch

Age	Frequency	Percentage %
Between 18 and 20	55	91.67
More than 20	5	8.33
Total	60	100

Based on the results displayed in the table above, the majority of second-year students (91.67%) fall within the age range of 18 to 20 years. This shows that they are young and in line with the typical age range for undergraduate students. In contrast, (8.33%) of the sample are older than 20 years. This suggests that there is a minority of students who may have taken a different educational path or entered university at a later stage in their lives, possibly due to various reasons such as gap years, career changes, or other personal circumstances.

2- Your BAC branch is :

Figure 3.2

Students' BAC Branch Distribution

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

BAC Branch

- Letters and Languages
- Letters and Philosophy
- Science
- Others
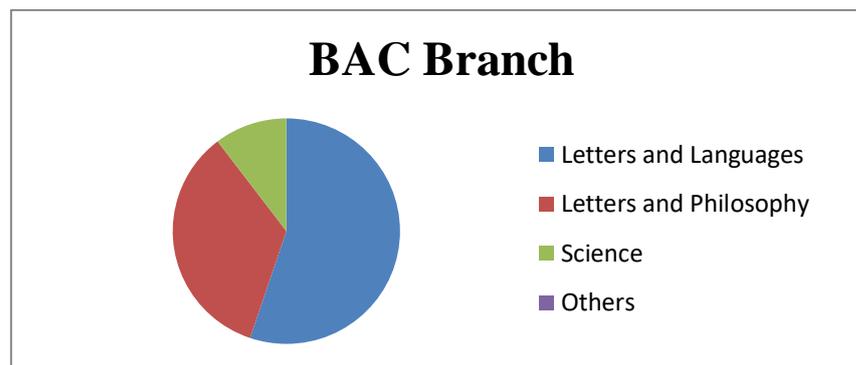
Table 3.4

Students' BAC Branch Distribution

Responses	Frequency	Percentages %
a-Letters and Languages	32	53.34
b-Letters and Philosophy	20	33.33
c-Science	6	10
d- Others	2	3.33
Total	60	100

As shown in the table above, the majority of respondents (53.34%) belong to the "Letters and Languages" branch. This demonstrates their significant interest in linguistic and literary studies. Besides, (33.33%) of them are enrolled in the "Letters and Philosophy" branch. This indicates the students' engagement in philosophical and humanities-oriented disciplines. In addition, (10%) of the informants are from the scientific fields, while (3.33%) of them are related to other branches.

3- Your choice to study English as a foreign language is:

Table 3.5

Students' choice to study English at university

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a-Personal choice	58	96.67
b- Imposed choice	2	3.33
Total	60	100

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The data presented in the table indicates that the majority of our sample (96.67%) expressed satisfaction with their decision to study English at the university. This means that their choice was made by will without external influence. This result can signify several aspects about these participants: they possess intrinsic motivation and a genuine desire to acquire proficiency in the language, they recognize the global importance and popularity of English, especially among Algerian youth, or they may have opted for English due to its favourable outcomes in the BAC exam. Furthermore, some students have chosen English with aspirations of becoming teachers, viewing proficiency in the language as essential for future employment opportunities. However, only two participants (3.33 %) were imposed by the administration.

4- If personal, why?

Table 3.6

Students' Cognitive Versus Affective Factors for Studying English

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a- Cognitive	40	68.97
b- Affective	18	31.03
Total	58	100

Among the 58 students who have chosen to study English autonomously, we have 40 of them refer to this personal choice as a cognitive factor. This indicates that a significant portion of students are motivated by factors related to the intellectual benefits of studying English. These reasons may include perceived career opportunities, academic advancement, or cognitive development since learning a new language can stimulate cognitive abilities such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and linguistic aptitude, which may appeal to students seeking intellectual growth. Conversely, a smaller portion of respondents (31.03%) indicated affective reasons for their choice. These reasons are more emotionally driven and may be personal interest or passion, cultural appreciation, or social connections.

Section Two: Speaking Skill

5.Which of the following skills do you think is most important for EFL learners?

Table 3.7

EFL Learners 'Most Important Skill

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

Skills	Frequency	Percentage %
a- Speaking	25	41.67
b- Listening	18	30
c- Reading	5	20
d-Writing	12	8.33
Total	60	100

According to the findings, 25 respondents consider speaking the most important for them. It is clear that there is a strong emphasis on oral communication abilities in English language learning. Therefore, speaking skills are crucial for effective communication in both social and professional contexts. Then, 18 respondents think that listening is a very essential skill because it is fundamental for understanding spoken English, whether in conversations, lectures, or audiovisual media. After that, 12 students see writing as the most important skill due to its necessity in expressing ideas coherently, conveying information accurately, and engaging with written English in various contexts, including academic, professional, and personal communication. Finally, the least frequently chosen skill is reading(only five students) despite its role in language acquisition, vocabulary expansion, and cultural understanding.

6. What do you think of the oral expression sessions?

Table 3.8

Students' Perceptions of Oral Expression Sessions

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a- Interesting	33	55
b- boring	10	16.67
c- stressful	17	28.33
Total	60	100

As it is presented in the table, 33 out of 60 respondents found the oral expression sessions interesting. This means that these sessions are engaging, intellectually stimulating, and enjoyable. Thus, they contributed positively to the participants' learning experience, capturing their attention and fostering active engagement. 17 students reported feeling stressed during the oral expression sessions. This implies that they experienced feelings of

pressure, anxiety, or discomfort while engaging in oral expression activities. Consequently, factors such as performance expectations, fear of making mistakes or perceived judgment from peers or teachers may have contributed to this stress. By contrast, 10 participants expressed boredom as some aspects of the oral sessions failed to capture their interest or attention, possibly hindering their overall experience.

7- How often do you participate in oral expression sessions?

Table 3.9

Students' Participation in the Oral Expression Session

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a- always	35	58.33
b- sometimes	15	25
c- rarely	10	16.67
Total	60	100

The table above revealed that (58.33%) of the informants always engage in oral expression sessions. This signifies their strong commitment to active participation in oral communication activities. (25%) of them reported that they sometimes participate in oral sessions. Just (16.67%) of the respondents rarely participate in communication tasks due to different causes like scheduling conflicts, personal preferences, or perceived challenges with oral communication.

8.How do you feel when you are asked to speak in class?

Table 3.10

Students' Feelings towards Speaking in Oral Class

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a- Anxious	52	86.67
b- Comfortable	8	13.33
Total	60	100

It is obvious from the table that the vast majority of our sample (86.67%) felt anxious when asked to speak in class. So they experience apprehension or nervousness when they have the opportunity to speak in front of their peers and teacher. Nonetheless, only 13.33% of the students felt comfortable and confident in classroom verbal communication situations. In

this context, using strategies such as providing opportunities for practice, offering constructive feedback, and promoting a positive classroom atmosphere can help reduce students' anxiety and enhance their speaking proficiency over time.

Section Three: English Language Anxiety

9. Do you get anxious in oral expression sessions?

Table 3.11

Students' Anxiety Levels in Oral Expression Sessions

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a-yes	52	86.67
b-no	8	13.33
Total	60	100

The majority of students (86.67%)get anxious during oral expression sessions, while (13.33%) of them did not feel anxious in oral communication sessions. This means that anxiety is a natural psychological status faced by the majority of students while learning English as a foreign language.

10. How often do you get anxious while communicating in English?

Table 3.12

Frequency of Speaking Anxiety among Students

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a- Always	15	28.85
b- Sometimes	22	42.31
c- Rarely	7	13.46
d- Never	8	15.38
Total	52	100

This table presents data on the frequency of anxiety levels in English communication. We observe that (42.31%) of students sometimes get anxious while communicating in English. However, (28.85%) of them reported that they always experience anxiety. Fewer participants said that they rarely (13.46%) or never (15.38%) get anxious during English communication.

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

11- Is your speaking anxiety because of?

Table 3.13

Students' Speaking Anxiety Reasons

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a- the discussion	4	7.69
b- the oral presentation	2	3.85
c- direct questions	23	44.23
d- lack of self-confidence	5	9.62
e- fear of negative evaluation	18	34.62
Total	52	100

Following the table, direct questions emerged as the most common reason for speaking anxiety with a percentage of (44.23%). This is possibly owing to concerns about providing accurate responses or being put on the spot. (34.62%) of the students reported a fear of negative evaluation as a factor for their speaking anxiety. Hence, they worry about being judged or criticized by others for their speaking abilities. In addition, (9.62%) attributed their speaking anxiety to a lack of self-confidence. This indicates that they may struggle with low self-esteem or self-doubt, which can undermine their ability to speak confidently in classroom settings. Moreover, (7.69%) stated that they feel anxious when required to participate in group discussions. Only (3.85%) mentioned oral presentations because of their fears of public speaking or performance pressure.

12. What do you do to reduce your speaking anxiety?

Table 3.14

Students' Strategies to Reduce Speaking Anxiety

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a. I prepare myself	15	25
b. I motivate myself	28	46.67
c. I ask my teacher /classmates whenever I need help	10	16.67
d. I listen to native speakers	5	8.33
e. I do not find a solution to my anxiety	2	3.33
Total	60	100

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This question aimed to shed light on the various strategies students use to reduce their speaking anxiety. As displayed in the table, self-motivation is the most used strategy among students (46.67%). This shows that many students rely on internal sources of motivation to overcome their anxiety. Besides, preparation is the second common strategy since (25%) of students stated that they prepare themselves to reduce their speaking anxiety. After that, seeking support from peers or teachers is another strategy used by (16.67%) of learners to manage their speaking anxiety. In addition, listening to native speakers is the least used technique (8.33%). This indicates that exposure to natural speech patterns may be helpful for some students in controlling their anxiety. Finally, a small minority of respondents (3.33%) reported that they did not find a solution to their anxiety.

13. Does your teacher help in reducing your anxiety?

Table 3.15

Teacher Help in Reducing Students' Anxiety

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a-yes	50	83.33
b-no	10	16.67
Total	60	100

The results illustrate that most students (83.33%) answered with 'yes'. This shows that these students perceive their teachers as supportive in addressing anxiety-related concerns. On the other hand, (16.67%) of students replied with 'no', and this means that their teachers do not help them in reducing their anxiety. As a consequence, it seems that there is room for improvement in providing support to students who are experiencing anxiety.

14-If yes, How?

Table 3.16

Teacher's Techniques to Reduce Students' Speaking Anxiety

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
a-Varying speaking activities	12	24
b- Using a group work strategy	18	36
c-Creating a relaxed classroom atmosphere	11	22
d- Practicing positive error correction and	9	18

show understanding		
Total	50	100

The purpose of asking this question is to have an idea about the methods and strategies used by teachers to reduce their students' speaking anxiety. Based on the results shown in the table, group work strategy is the most commonly used method (36%) because collaborative learning approaches contribute to reducing students' speaking anxiety by providing support and encouragement from peers. Varying speaking activities is also a popular method with (24%). This implies that using a variety of speaking tasks helps reduce students' anxiety by offering different contexts and challenges. Additionally, (22%) of students said that their teachers create a relaxed classroom atmosphere that positively impacts their confidence in speaking. Only (18%) of the participants stated that practising positive error correction and showing understanding is a good strategy for reducing their speaking anxiety because constructive feedback and empathy help them feel more secure in taking linguistic risks.

15. What do you suggest for teachers to help you in reducing anxiety and enhancing speaking skills?

In this question, students suggested what they wanted from their teachers in order to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance speaking skills. They reported that building a teacher-student pleasant relationship makes them feel comfortable and motivated to learn effectively and show their abilities to their teacher. They also recommended that teachers should offer individual support and guidance and extra practice opportunities to students who require additional assistance with speaking skills. Besides, they mentioned that teachers had better rely on technology tools that facilitate speaking practice, such as language learning apps, interactive multimedia, or online speaking forums. Finally, teachers ought to promote self-reflection and self-assessment among students by encouraging them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement in speaking skills and setting goals for progress.

3.1.3 Classroom Observation Analysis

During the five sessions of oral expression that I attended with second-year students of English at Saida University(group 1), different topics were presented and discussed such as 'famous people', 'traditional marriage versus modern marriage ', 'Spinster ' and 'plays presentations'. They were such amazing and thorough sessions in which students acted, presented and expressed their viewpoints about different subjects. The whole number of students in this group was 21.The observation period has been extended one month, with two

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

sessions scheduled per week. The results of our observation are summarized in the following table:

Table 3.17

A Summary of Observation in Four Successive Sessions

Student's Percentage	Confidence	Participation	Non-verbal Cues	Response to Feedback	Communication Clarity	Fluency	Anxiety Triggers			
							Fear of Evaluation	Shyness	Peer Pressure	Speaking in a Foreign Language
5%									✓	
10%										
15%				✓						
20%										✓
25%	✓									
30%										
35%			✓							
40%								✓		
45%										
50%		✓								
60%					✓					
70%										
80%						✓	✓			
100%										

The table above includes the results of our observation of students' performance and behaviour during four oral expression sessions. We evaluate various speaking aspects such as confidence, participation, non-verbal cues, response to feedback, communicative clarity, and fluency as well as some anxiety triggers, including fear of evaluation, shyness, peer pressure, and speaking in a foreign language.

It is observed that the majority of students (80%) are not fluent speakers of English and they fear their teacher's evaluation. This apprehension stems from a lack of confidence in their language skills and the anxiety associated with being judged on their proficiency. Besides, (60%) of the participants do not show clear communication. This means that they struggle with effectively conveying their thoughts and ideas because they lack the necessary skills to articulate themselves clearly. In addition, half of the students (50%) are passive participants during the oral discussions and activities since they often remain silent and

reluctant to contribute. This of course will hinder their learning and development of oral communication skills.

Moreover, (40%) of the students feel too shy to speak, so they may feel discomfort when it comes to speaking up in class, which negatively affects their participation and engagement.(35%) of them struggle with effectively using verbal signals or cues during communication. In fact, verbal cues are essential for conveying meaning, maintaining conversation flow, and expressing thoughts and emotions clearly.(25%) of them lack self-confidence and have low self-esteem or doubt their abilities. This lack of confidence contributes to their reluctance to participate actively in oral class activities and their hesitancy to express themselves verbally.

Furthermore, (20%) of the students do not like speaking in English as a foreign language. This demonstrates a lack of motivation and interest in using English for communication purposes.(15%) of them do not respond to their teacher's feedback, so they miss out on an opportunity for improvement and growth. Finally, (5%) of them experience pressure from their peers and this impacts their willingness and ability to participate actively in class.

3.2. Part Two: Discussion of the Results

In this study, we interviewed teachers, submitted a questionnaire to students, and conducted a classroom observation to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions.

The results obtained from the analysis of oral expression teachers' interviews showed that they faced various challenges including insufficient time and equipment, as well as a lack of motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety on the part of students. They also reported that anxiety is the primary factor that hinders their students' speaking skills and anxious students are identified through symptoms such as avoiding participation, poor pronunciation, and hesitation.

These findings highlight a complex interplay between external resource constraints and internal psychological barriers. The insufficient time and equipment represent systemic issues that require institutional support. Addressing these issues could involve extending the duration of oral expression courses, integrating more advanced technology, and providing professional development for teachers to maximize the effectiveness of the time and resources available. On the psychological side, student anxiety and lack of self-confidence point to the need for more supportive and nurturing learning environments.

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

In addition, they stated that anxiety levels are medium or high which makes it difficult for learners to feel comfortable in their learning context. To deal with anxious students and help them reduce their anxiety, teachers administer diagnostic tests, facilitate introductions, foster collaborative work, evaluate the impact of anxiety on performance, and engage in one-on-one conversations to identify its root causes. These results helped us to answer the research's third question (How can anxiety in English speaking classes be reduced?). This result is consistent with Mercer and Howe (2012) findings.

The findings of the students' questionnaire revealed that the majority of them consider speaking the most important skill and find the oral expression sessions interesting because through the mastery of communication skills they can convey their thoughts, feelings and emotions effectively. However, they usually feel anxious when asked to speak in class because of many factors, including direct questions, fear of negative evaluation, lack of self-confidence, and others.

Even though these factors are considered a normal state that every learner can be exposed to them, teachers should take them into their consideration in oral expression courses so as to limit their effects of students' speaking performance. These facts provided us with an answer to the second research question (What are the causes of anxiety on EFL students' oral performance?). In addition to that, they reported that they motivate and prepare themselves and ask their teacher or classmates whenever they need help in order to reduce this psychological problem. In fact, this data is aligns with Price (1991) findings.

The data obtained from the classroom observation demonstrated that anxiety affects students' confidence, participation, fluency, communication clarity, and other aspects. This emphasizes the critical role of addressing anxiety in improving students' oral communication skills. By understanding the nuanced ways in which anxiety manifests and influences various aspects of communication, teachers can tailor their instructional approaches to better support anxious students and create a more inclusive and effective learning environment. Through targeted interventions and ongoing support, they can help students develop the confidence and skills necessary for successful oral communication in academic and professional settings.Thus, these findings helped us to answer the first research question (What is the impact of anxiety on the EFL students' oral performance?).This fact goes in line with Bailey and Nunan (1996) studies.

3.3. Part Three: Recommendations and General Implications

Chapter Three: Data Analysis, Discussion and Recommendations

Drawing from the insights gleaned from the literature review and the factors investigated in this study, we put forth recommendations concerning the impact of anxiety on second-year university students' oral performance. These suggestions aim to provide guidance for syllabus designers, teachers, and students within the English department at the University of Saida.

-Teachers should encourage students to practice English extensively to reduce speech anxiety by helping them understand and expand their vocabulary through authentic materials and dictionaries used in oral communication activities.

-They should also encourage them to develop their communicative competence through extending training on role plays, performances, and games, as well as building strong relationships with society through daily debates using simple English idioms and engaging in conversations with families and society.

-They should create a relaxed classroom atmosphere to motivate students for oral activities, using games and humour, and fostering a positive teacher-student relationship to boost self-confidence.

-They should carefully choose topics based on student's interests and levels to motivate them to discuss without fear and make them comfortable.

- They should encourage students to discuss their learning challenges and work together to find suitable solutions.

- Students should understand that anxiety is a natural human feeling. Everyone can experience speaking anxiety, but it can be reduced over time.

-Students should also recognize that mistakes are an essential part of the learning process, so they shouldn't worry about making them.

-Researchers should conduct studies on the effect of anxiety on students' writing skills, exam oral performance, and vocabulary learning.

- Researchers should carry out longitudinal studies to track the development of anxiety in oral performance over time, starting from early education through to higher education and into professional settings. This could provide valuable insights into the persistence and evolution of anxiety and its impact on oral communication skills.

- Researchers have to conduct studies on how cultural differences influence the experience and expression of anxiety in oral performance. Comparative studies across diverse cultural

contexts could shed light on the cultural factors that contribute to anxiety and the effectiveness of different interventions.

-They can also investigate the role of technology in mitigating anxiety and enhancing oral performance.

-They ought to explore how factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, and language proficiency influence anxiety and oral performance.

3. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to analyze the data collected from teachers' interviews, students' questionnaires, and classroom observations to assess the impact of anxiety on students' oral performance and identify solutions to mitigate this psychological problem. The findings demonstrate that anxiety affects students' confidence, fluency, participation, communication clarity, and others. These findings confirm our hypothesis (If EFL students' speaking anxiety is reduced, they will be able to communicate confidentially in their classrooms).The chapter ends with some suggested recommendations for syllabus designers, teachers, and students.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study attempted to investigate the effect of anxiety on second-year students' oral performance. Its main objective was to find out both oral expression teachers' and students' perceptions of this issue. The research work was made up of three chapters. The first chapter reviewed the relevant literature on speaking skills and anxiety in oral performance. In the second chapter, we displayed the research methodology used in the study and the limitations of the research work. The last chapter covers the study's results, their analysis and discussion, and recommendations.

To accomplish the study's objectives and address the research questions, three data collection methods were used. Firstly, a semi-structured interview was conducted with five (5) teachers of oral expression at Dr. Moulay Tahar University, Saida. The results obtained from this interview showed that teachers faced various challenges while teaching oral expression module; especially controlling anxiety among students. Therefore, they suggested different strategies to help their students reduce the negative effects of this phenomenon.

We also submitted a questionnaire to sixty (60) second-year students from the same university to explore their opinions about the causes that lead them to be anxious when asked to speak in English. The findings revealed that there are different reasons behind their speaking anxiety such as direct questions and discussion, fear of negative evaluation, lack of self-confidence, and other factors. Moreover, they usually reduce this issue by motivating and preparing themselves and asking their teacher or classmates whenever they need help.

Furthermore, we attended five sessions with second-year students of English at Saida University (group 1) to get a real image of the effect of anxiety on their speaking skills. We observed that anxiety affects their confidence, participation, fluency, communication clarity, and other aspects. Thus, teachers should implement strategies that help students reduce anxiety and improve their speaking skills.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on anxiety in language learning and underscores the significance of holistic approaches to oral expression pedagogy. By prioritizing the psychological well-being of students and equipping them with the necessary skills and support systems, we can empower them to succeed not only in their academic endeavours but also in their personal and professional lives.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teachers' Interview

This interview is a vital component of a research study focused on examining the impact of anxiety on the oral performance of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The primary goal is to gather your insights and perspectives on this topic and draw upon your valuable teaching experience. The ultimate aim is to gain a deeper understanding of this topic and derive strategies to assist EFL learners in mitigating anxiety-related issues.

It is important to note that all information you provide will be kept anonymous and used solely for research purposes.

1- How long have you been teaching English?
2- How long have you been teaching the oral expression module?
3- What challenges do you face while teaching this module?
4- Do you have anxious students in your classes? If yes, how do you recognize them? How do you describe their level of anxiety? And how to deal with them?
5- Based on your teaching background, do you notice any differences in the oral presentations of students when they know that they will be evaluated or graded?
6- What are the reasons behind students' speaking anxiety?
7- What strategies do you commonly use to help students overcome their speaking anxiety?

Appendix B: Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

The present questionnaire serves as a data collection for a research work that aims to explore the influence of anxiety on learners' oral performance at the department of English, university of Saida. I would be really thankful if you could share your experience with us by answering the following questions. Your answers are very important for the validity of the research.

Please tick (√) to choose your responses.

Section One: Background Information

1**-**Age ☐

2**-**Your BAC branch is :

      a- Letters and languages ☐

      b- Letters and philosophy ☐

      c- Science ☐

      d- Others ☐

3**-**Your choice to study English as a foreign language is:

      a- Personalchoice ☐   b- Imposedchoice ☐

4**-**If personal, why ?

      a- Cognitive ☐   b- Affective ☐

Section Two: Speaking Skill

5.Which of the following skills do you think is most important for EFL learners ?

a- Speaking ☐   b- Listening ☐   c- Reading ☐   d-Writing ☐

6. What do you think of the oral expression sessions?

a- Interesting ☐   b-boring ☐ - stressful ☐

7- How often do you participate in oral expression sessions?

a- always ☐   b- sometimes ☐   c- rarely ☐

8.How do you feel when you are asked to speak in class?

a- Anxious ☐   b-Comfortable ☐

Section Three: English Language Anxiety

9. Do you get anxious in oral expression sessions? a- yes b ☐   ☐

10. How often do you get anxious while communicating in English?

 a- Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   c- Rarely   d- Never ☐

11. Is your speaking anxiety because of ?

    a- the discussion ☐

    b- the oral presentation ☐

    c- direct questions ☐

    d- lack of self-confidence ☐

    e- fear of negative evaluation ☐

12. What do you do to reduce your speaking anxiety?

a. I prepare myself. ☐

b. I motivate myself. ☐

c. I ask my teacher / classmates whenever I need help. ☐

d. I listen to native speakers. ☐

e. I do not find a solution to my anxiety. ☐

13. Does your teacher help in reducing your anxiety?

 a- Yes ☐   ☐

14-If yes, How?

a- Varying speaking activities ☐

     b- Using a group work strategy ☐
     c- Creating a relaxed classroom atmosphere ☐

d- Practicing positive error correction and show understanding ☐

15. What do you suggest for teachers to help you in reducing anxiety and enhancing speaking skills ?

 ………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………..

<div align="right">Thank you for your participation</div>

Appendix C: Classroom Observation Sheet

Instructor _____   Observer _____

Course _____   Number of students present _____

Date/time of observation _____   Location _____

Student'sPer centage	Confidence	Participation	Non-verbal Cues	Response to Feedback	Communication Clarity	Fluency	Anxiety Triggers			
							Fear of Evaluation	Shyness	Peer Pressure	Speaking in a ForeignLa nguage
5%										
10%										
15%										
20%										
25%										
30%										
35%										
40%										
45%										
50%										
60%										
70%										
80%										
100%										