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***The Impact of Foreign Language Anxiety  
on Students' Speaking Skill***  
***Case Study: Third-Year English Students  
at Amar Thelidji University of Laghouat.***

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for  
the Master Degree in English Language Teaching*

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# DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to: the light of my life my precious parents, to my only brother Mohamed Abdel Rachid, and of course without forgetting my dearest friends and every teacher in this university who taught me for reaching this level.

FOUZIA

I dedicate this work to the dearest people to my heart

To my parents

To my sisters: “Khaoula” , “Salima” and “Nafissa”

To my brothers: “Mohamed” and “Said”

To all my teachers

To all my friends

**Nadia**

# List of Abbreviations

**LMD:** License/ Master / Doctorate

**%:** Percentage

**FLA:** Foreign Language Anxiety

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**ESL:** English as a Second Language

**FLCAS:** Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

**FLCA:** Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

**LSC:** Learning Skills Centre

**FL:** Foreign Language

**L2:** Second Language

**CA:** Communication Apprehension

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## **Abstract**

Foreign language anxiety is considered as a major issue that most foreign language learners suffer from. The present study examines the impact of foreign language anxiety on the students' speaking skill. Furthermore, it aims also at discovering the sources and the effects of this phenomenon as well as to provide some strategies that may help to reduce it. This study relies on two tools of data collection: a questionnaire that was addressed to fifty third-year LMD students of Laghouat University, and an interview with three teachers. The findings of the study revealed that most of the third-year students suffer from anxiety especially when they tend to speak. Additionally, the findings indicated that there are many sources of anxiety that affect the students' learning process, such as communication apprehension, classroom environment, and fear of negative evaluation. The results obtained from the questionnaire and the interview confirm the hypothesis set for this research that is if learners cope with their anxiety, they will enhance their speaking skill. Furthermore, in an attempt to find some solutions, we suggest some strategies in order to help teachers to create comfortable atmosphere as well as to strengthen students' self-confidence.

## الملخص

يعتبر التوتر من أخطر المشاكل التي يعاني منها طلبة اللغات الأجنبية . يقوم هذا البحث بدراسة تأثير القلق المرافق لطلبة اللغات الأجنبية، كما تهدف هذه الدراسة لاستكشاف العوامل المسببة لهذا العائق والتأثيرات الناجمة عنه بالإضافة الى اقتراح بعض الحلول التي تساهم في الحد من هذا المشكل

اعتمدت الدراسة على منهجيتين مختلفتين: استبيان موجه لخمسين طالب سنة ثالثة ل م د بجامعة عمار تليجي ومقابلة مع ثلاث اساتذة من قسم اللغة الانجليزية . اظهرت النتائج أن اغلب الطلبة يعانون من هذا المشكل خاصة عندما يستوجب على الطالب تكلم اللغة امام اصدقائه وأساتذته ومن بين العوامل التي تؤثر على الأداء الكلامي للطلبة هو الخوف من التواصل ، الخوف من التقييم السلبي الذي ينتج عنه ضعف في الأداء، طبيعة القسم او المحيط الدراسي

تؤكد النتائج المتحصل عليها صحة الفرضية القائلة " إذا تمكن الطالب من التعامل مع هذا المشكل فان ادائه الكلامي سيتحسن " ومن أجل الحد من هذه الظاهرة قمنا باقتراح بعض الحلول التي تساعد الاساتذة من اجل مساعدة الطلاب للحد من القلق.

## Résumé

L'anxiété en langue étrangère est considérée comme un problème majeur pour la plupart des étudiants en langues étrangères. Ce travail examine l'impact de l'anxiété des langues étrangères sur l'habileté parlante des étudiants. En outre, il vise à découvrir les sources et les effets de ce phénomène ainsi que de proposer des stratégies qui peuvent contribuer à la réduction de cette anxiété. Pour collecter les données cette étude dépend de deux outils: un questionnaire adressé à cinquante étudiants de troisième année LMD au département d'anglais de l'Université Amar Telidji et des entrevues avec trois enseignants différents. Les résultats de l'étude ont révélé que la plupart des étudiants de troisième année souffrent d'anxiété surtout lorsqu'ils ont tendance à parler. En outre, les résultats indiquent qu'il existe de nombreuses sources d'anxiété qui affectent le processus des étudiants pour étudier, comme l'appréhension de la communication, l'environnement de la classe et la peur de l'évaluation négative. Les résultats obtenus à partir du questionnaire et de l'entrevue confirment l'hypothèse de cette recherche qui dit, si les apprenants font face à leur anxiété, amélioreront leurs capacités de parole. De plus, dans le but de trouver des solutions, nous proposons des stratégies pour aider les enseignants à créer une atmosphère confortable et à renforcer la confiance en soi des étudiants.

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## **General Introduction**

According to many students, the main objective of learning a foreign language is the ability to use it communicatively. However, speaking the foreign language is considered as a difficult task for the most part of students. This difficulty in speaking may come as a result of the impact of several factors. The affective factors are considered the most common one because they affect the students' learning and performance in the target language. Among many other affective factors, foreign language anxiety (FLA) has been a worthy subject to study in the last three decades. It is a major issue in foreign language learning that has great effects on students' learning.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Learning a foreign language is not an easy task particularly when it comes to the speaking skill. In order to acquire the target language, learners go through several steps and processes. Along these processes, a great difficulty is faced by a number of students when they learn the foreign language. This study deals with foreign language anxiety (FLA) and its negative impact on the students' speaking skill.

Anxiety is considered as one of the major obstacles that affect second language learning. The problem we are confronted with is that many third- year students, at Amar Thelidji University, still fear to speak in the front of their classmates and teachers. This research attempts to identify the reasons that make third-year students feel anxious as well as suggesting strategies that may help in reducing anxiety.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to shed light on the reasons that make third- year students feel anxious and how anxiety affects them negatively. In other words, the main goals of this research are:

- Making both teachers and students aware about the issue of anxiety.
- Explaining the negative effects of foreign language anxiety on the students' speaking skill.
- Suggesting strategies for teachers and students to overcome anxiety.

### **Research Questions**

To fulfil the purpose of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

- Why are some third-year students anxious while others are not in the same language classroom?
- How does anxiety affect students' speaking skill?
- What are the main strategies to be used by third-year students to overcome foreign language anxiety and develop their speaking abilities?

### **Hypothesis**

We hypothesize that maybe anxiety is related to the students' psychology, fear of negative evaluation, and lack of motivation. Thus, if the students get rid of their fear and the teachers support them, anxiety will be reduced. Moreover, if the students become aware of their difficulties of the speaking skill, they may find the appropriate solutions to overcome these problems.

### **Research Methodology and Tools**

Concerning data collection, two tools are adopted. The first one is a questionnaire devoted to a group of third-year students at the department of English in our university, Amar Thelidji. The main aim of this questionnaire is to investigate the students' attitudes towards the effects of foreign language anxiety. While the second one, it is an interview with four teachers from our department. The objective of this interview is to have a comprehensive image about the teachers' opinion towards the anxious students as well as anxiety itself.

Furthermore, both tools (questionnaire and review) intend to find solutions in order to minimise this problem.

## **Review of literature**

For a successful acquirement of the target language, the affective factors must be taken into consideration, such as attitude, motivation, and anxiety. Relating to this, a growing body of research has been conducted about anxiety and its relation to second/foreign language learning. In which, many scholars and researchers attempted to explore the effects of anxiety on second language achievements (Horwitz<sup>1</sup>, Horwitz<sup>2</sup> and Cope (1986), MacIntyre & Gardner (1991), Scovel 1991, Aida, (1994)...) )

What is anxiety? According to Collins Cobuild dictionary, it is “Feeling of nervousness or worry about something”, while the Oxford Advanced Learner’s dictionary defines it as “The state of feeling nervous or worried that something bad is going to happen” (qtd.in Toth 5 ). Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope defined foreign language anxiety as “ feeling a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to the classroom language learning process” (118).MacIntyre and Gardner, on the other hand, defined it as “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning” (284).

In 1977, anxiety had been divided by Kleinmann into two main types facilitating and debilitating anxiety. In this vein, many researchers agreed that “little anxiety can be motivating and beneficial in language learning, however once it passes a certain point it seriously impinges on the learner’s ability to focus, resulting in poorer performance”(qtd. in Humphries 66).

In 1986, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope created a new system in order to measure students’ level of anxiety. This theory is known by Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

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<sup>1</sup> Elaine k Horwitz : Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education.

<sup>2</sup>Micheal B Horwitz: Assistant Professor of Academic Strategies.

Scale (FLCAS). FLCA is defined as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 128). It consists of 33 items, in which 8 items are related to communication anxiety; while, 9 items are related to the fear of negative evaluation, and 5 items to test anxiety. As a result of the study, more than 30 % of the students have chosen either “strongly agree” or “agree” for the item number 26 “I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other class” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 129).

Although there has been much research conducted about language anxiety, there is still a lack of how language anxiety is experienced by advanced learners. Most language anxiety studies focused more on the reasons of anxiety and how it affects second language learning. However, there is still a lack of studies on investigating the strategies employed to overcome the language anxiety. This research will contribute in suggesting a number of strategies in order to reduce anxiety.

### **Structure of Dissertation**

The dissertation is divided into three main chapters. The first two chapters are related to the theoretical part while the third one is related to the practical part of the study.

The first chapter provides a general overview of the foreign language anxiety including definitions, types, and the main sources of anxiety. We conclude this chapter with the relationship between anxiety and the oral performance.

The second chapter deals with the general issues related to speaking skill. In which, we will be introduced to the importance, the main features, and the difficulties of the speaking skill. We will also have a look at the communicative competence and its main aspects (grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence). This chapter ends with some strategies that may help in enhancing the students’ speaking abilities.

The third chapter, as have been mentioned before, is related to the practical part of the research. It deals with the description and the analysis of the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview.

# **Chapter One**

## **Foreign Language Anxiety**

### **1.1 Introduction**

### **1.2 An Overview of Foreign Language Anxiety**

### **1.3 Definitions of Anxiety and Foreign (FLA)**

### **1.4 Types of Anxiety Language Anxiety**

### **1.5 Sources of Anxiety**

### **1.6 The Characteristics of Anxious Learners**

### **1.7 Measuring Foreign Language Anxiety**

### **1.8 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)**

### **1.9 The Relationship between Anxiety and Oral Communication**

### **1.10 Conclusion**

## **1.1 Introduction**

There has been much research conducted about the several issues related to the foreign language learning. Foreign language anxiety is considered as a major issue that the majority of foreign language learners suffer from. It may bring negative effect to language learning depending on how the learner deals with it. Arnold believes that “ anxiety is quite possibly the affective factor that most perversely obstructs the learning process. It is associated with negative feelings such as uneasiness, frustration, self –doubt apprehension and tension” (8). Therefore, anxiety can be considered as one of the obstacles that control students’ success in the foreign language learning.

Through this chapter, we will give a general view of foreign language anxiety. We will start first by presenting an overview of FLA. Then, we will move on to present the definition of anxiety in general and foreign language anxiety in particular. In addition, we will expose the causality relationship between anxiety and foreign language learning. After that, we will shift to the types as well as the sources of anxiety.

## **1.2 An Overview of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA)**

When anxiety is linked to second/ foreign language learning, it is referred to as “foreign language anxiety”, which is related to the negative emotions and reactions of students towards language acquisition. Foreign Language anxiety has become a great concern in second /foreign language learning research over the last three decades. In which, there have been a number of attempts to investigate the foreign language anxiety and its effects on second language learning achievement. Foreign language anxiety can occur if students are exposed to a number of negative experiences in a foreign language context.

Moreover, it can " make learners get discouraged, lose faith in their abilities, escape from participating in classroom activities, and even give up the effort to learn a language well” (Na 30). “Learners with high anxiety often perform at lower levels than those with

lower anxiety” (qtd. in Elaldı 220). Gardner hypothesises that “a construct of anxiety is not general instead is specific language acquisition context is related to second language achievement” (qtd. in Cassady 96). According to MacIntyre anxiety is “the transient emotional state of feeling nervous that can fluctuate over time and vary in intensity” (28).

According to MacIntyre and Gardner, language learning anxiety is too specific to be captured by general anxiety measures (qtd. in Woodrow 309). Therefore, there is a great deal of differences between language learning anxiety and other forms of anxiety. When it comes to the educational research, anxiety is usually classified into three types: trait, situation-specific, and state anxiety.

Trait anxiety is a relatively stable personality trait. Similarly to trait anxiety, situation-specific anxiety is related to a person who is anxious in a particular situation. It refers to the uneasiness that experienced by learners while they tend to speak in some learning contexts. State anxiety, on the other hand, is a temporary condition experienced at a particular moment (Woodrow 310). According to Horwitz, Horwitz and cope’s measurement, foreign language anxiety consists of three components: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Woodrow 310).

Therefore, anxiety negatively affects second language learning. MacIntyre and Gardner suggest that anxiety causes many potential problems for FL students because it can interfere with the “acquisition, retention and production of the new language” (86).

### **1.3 Definition of Anxiety and Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA)**

#### **1.3.1 Definition of Anxiety**

Before dealing with foreign language anxiety, we should first know what anxiety means in general. Etymologically, the word “anxiety” is a noun form of the adjective “anxious”. According to Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, the word “anxious” derives from a Latin word “angere” “to choke” which means to strangle, or to distress (qtd. in

Nafti 22). Whereas, the Concise Oxford Dictionary gives four meanings: “state of being anxious-troubled, uneasy in mind; concern about the future; earnest desire (as in anxious to please or to succeed); morbid state of excessive uneasiness” (qtd. in Nafti 22).

Although anxiety is difficult to be defined in a single manner, a clinical psychologist, Stanly. R, brings a complete description of anxiety in which he states that anxiety is “the tense, unsettling anticipation of a threat, a feeling of suspend uneasiness. It is distinguished from fear in that fear persists only while the threatening situation prevails” (qtd. in Nishimata 7). Academically speaking, anxiety has been a focus of research in foreign language education since the early 1970s (e.g., Aida 1994; Dörnyei 2005; Horwitz 1986; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope 1986; Horwitz & Young 1991, Scovel 1978).

### **1.3.2 Definition of Foreign Language Anxiety**

Foreign language anxiety, which is a “complex and multidimensional phenomenon” (Young 434), has been defined as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz , Horwitz and Cope 127). According to the already existing knowledge on language anxiety, anxiety in learning is experienced by learners at all levels. For example, Mak reports that “learners feel anxious when they tend to speak in front of their fellows in the classroom” (qtd. in Gopang, Bughio and Pathan 28). Rebecca Oxford indicates that foreign language anxiety (FLA) or the experience of anxiety occurs when an individual is working towards attaining a foreign language (qtd. in Arnold 58)

Anxiety is “the subjective feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning” (MacIntyre and Gardner 284). On the other hand, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope state that “anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (125).

## **1.4 Types of Anxiety**

Anxiety is described by Scovel as "a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object" (qtd. in Huang 1520). Anxiety, as a result, occurs in response to a particular situation or stimulus. It is mainly related to the psychology of the individual. Anxiety is classified into many types: Trait, state, specific-situation anxiety. It has also debilitating and facilitative forms.

### **1.4.1 Trait Anxiety**

Trait anxiety is defined as "A constant condition without a time limitation" (Levit 11). In another definition by Spielberger, trait anxiety refers to:

*Relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness, that is, to differences between people in the tendency to perceive stressful situations as dangerous or threatening and to respond to such situations with elevations in the intensity of their state anxiety reactions.* (qtd. in Tóth 6)

Individuals who experience trait anxiety are anxious in different kinds of situations and they are generally nervous. Thus, trait anxiety is a characteristic or a stable feature of individuals' personality.

### **1.4.2 State Anxiety**

State anxiety, on the other hand, "is [a] state or condition of the organism that varies in intensity fluctuates over time" (Spielberger 12). Therefore, state anxiety occurs as a response

to a definite situation at a particular moment. It may appear during tests, public speaking, and conversation with native speakers. Unlike trait anxiety, state anxiety is a fleeting and not a part of the personality. State anxiety, according to Spielberger, refers to the “transitory experiences tension, apprehension and activation of the autonomic nervous system in certain situation” (qtd. in Tóth 6).

Accordingly, Trait anxiety “is based on the assumption that here is a relatively stable predisposition of an individual to exhibit anxious feelings in every situation, whereas state anxiety is referred to as apprehension with a temporal reference point, i.e., apprehension a person develops at a given moment” (qtd. in Demir 9).

### **1.4.3 Situation-Specific Anxiety**

The third type of anxiety is referred to as Situation-specific anxiety. According to MacIntyre & Gardner, it “can be seen as trait anxiety limited to a given context” (qtd. in Huang 1520). Thence, this type of anxiety appears in a particular type of situation, such as during tests (test anxiety), solving mathematics problems (math anxiety), or when speaking a second language (language anxiety).

According to Oh, foreign language anxiety is considered as a “specific situation anxiety [that] student experience in classroom which characterised by self-centred thoughts, feelings of inadequacy, fear of failure, and emotional reactions in the language *classroom*” (qtd. in Nazeer, Pathan and Khan ). Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope state that foreign language classroom anxiety is a typical situation-specific.

### **1.4.4 Debilitative V. Facilitative Anxiety**

As anxiety has a negative or devastating effect on foreign language learning, it may have a positive effect. This kind of anxiety has been referred to as facilitating anxiety, while the negative anxiety is called debilitating one. The latter has a negative impact on the

students' performance in the target language. Students with high levels of anxiety tend to avoid participation as well as to involve in the classroom activities.

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope claim that "as long as foreign language learning takes place in a formal school setting where evaluation is inextricably tied to performance, language anxiety is likely to continue to flourish" (131). Debilitative anxiety may interfere with the student's ability to concentrate while he prepares for exams. Whereas, facilitating-anxiety "motivates the learner to 'fight' the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approval behavior" (Alpert and Haber 139).

Thus, anxiety here pushes the learner to do more efforts to reduce the negative effect of it. As a conclusion, anxiety plays both debilitating and facilitating roles, MacIntyre and Gardner state, "foreign language anxiety can interfere with learners' efforts to learn a language and it can also 'interfere with the acquisition, retention and production of the new language" (86).

## **1.5 Sources of Anxiety**

Anxiety as a phenomenon can affect most of the people, no matter what age, gender or race are. In order to clarify the phenomenon, even more, MacIntyre describes anxiety as a "negative emotional reaction and the feeling of worry when learning a second language" (qtd. in Čiček 9). Accordingly, Anxiety is experienced by individuals who are not fully proficient in the use of the target language.

Many researchers attempt to study anxiety within the language acquisition, in general, and in the classroom situation in specific. The Anxiety that is experienced in the classroom is known as Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) (qtd. in Nimat10). According to MacIntyre and Gardner, " Foreign Language Anxiety, or more precisely, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) is considered to be a situational anxiety experienced in the well-defined situation of the foreign language classroom" (Nimat 10).

In the view of the general negative impact of anxiety on second language learning, it is important to examine the possible sources of language anxiety. The central sources of language anxiety, according to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope are communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety (4).

### **1.5.1 Fear of Negative Evaluation**

Fear of negative evaluation refers to learners' stress when they feel that their language is going to be evaluated by others. In other words, it refers to the learners' worry towards the negative judgement of others (teachers and classmates). Making mistakes according to the anxious is unacceptable because they consider it as a risk, especially in front of their teachers and classmates.

As a result of fear of negative evaluation, students may avoid the involvement in the classroom activities. In Aida's opinion, "students with fear of negative evaluation might sit passively in the classroom, withdrawing from classroom activities that could otherwise enhance their improvement of the language skills" (qtd. in Worku 13).

### **1.5.2 Communication Apprehension (CA)**

In spite of the modern teaching methods and techniques, apprehension still exists in foreign language classrooms. Communication apprehension has a prominent effect on students' communication competence. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope define communication apprehension as 'a type of shyness characterised by fear or anxiety about communication with people' (128). Generally, Learners who fear to speak in front of other people are likely to be less able to improve their communication skill. Thus, communication apprehension occurs when language learners interact with others in foreign languages.

### **1.5.3 Test Anxiety**

Test anxiety refers to a "type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure in a test" (Worku 11). That is to say, when students experience the pressure of fear of failure,

they cannot perform well during tests. These students might have a bad image or experience from either language class or other situations. According to the learners who fear tests (test anxiety), the foreign language process and especially oral production is considered as a source of threat rather than an opportunity to improve their communicative competence and speaking skills (qtd. in Abderrezzag 11).

#### **1.5.4 Competence V. Performance**

The other element that may be considered as a major source of anxiety is related to the relationship between competence and performance. In this vein, Chomsky states that:

*Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal Speaker - listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-communication, who knows its (the speech community's) language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of this language in actual performance. (qtd.in Hemerka 14)*

The majority of foreign language students share the same aim, which is to communicate in the target language. Among all the language skills, speaking is considered the most important one when it comes to the evaluation of the learner's effective ability to use the language. Lower speaking performance is a major problem that faces foreign language learners. However, poor performance does not mean that any of them is incompetent. There are many proficient students but they are not good when it comes to the oral performance.

In order to understand such issue, we need to understand the relationship between competence and performance.

Language competence includes “the linguistics or grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistics competence and what might be called as textual competence (662 Astuti). On the other hand, language performance can be realized through the students’ application of the language competence or knowledge in the variety of the classroom activities. However, there are some cases when competence develops before the performance or the opposite. Thus, it is not necessary to judge competence through the performance or the communication competence of the learner.

The affective side of the learner strongly affects the learners’ oral performance. In this vein, Cohen & Norst state that “language and self/identity are so closely bound; if indeed they are not one and the same thing, that a perceived attack on one is an attack on the other” (qtd. in Tóth 39). Among these affective factors we have: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. The latter (anxiety) is the most important of these affective variables.

According to Price’s report of interview with ten highly anxious ex-foreign language students, “all the learners felt that speaking language in the class had been the greatest cause of anxiety” (qtd. in Phillips 4). Therefore, the gap between competence and performance is mainly linked to the learner’s affective side.

## **1.6 The Characteristics of Anxious Learners**

Learning a foreign language means acquiring new techniques that are used in the target language. So, the learner of any foreign language faces some difficulties when using it. Consequently, the teacher can notice some signs of their faces or behaviour that show that they are anxious, and are not likely to behave in a normal way. According to Spielberger et al “language anxiety is the fear that an individual feels when he has to use a second or a foreign

language in which he is not fully proficient”( qtd.in Abbedrrezzag 12). Anxious students should aim at continuing a speaking activity, despite making errors. For example, the teacher should provide a relaxed atmosphere so that the students will have an opportunity to continue speaking despite making mistakes.

Spolsky claims “although anxious learners try harder to be successful, anxiety plays its debilitating role on their performance and achievement” (qtd.in Maatar 20). Anxious students are characterised by a number of features or characteristics which make them different from other learners; it is preferable for teachers to identify learners in their foreign language classrooms who suffer from anxiety.

Oxford identifies several observable signs of foreign language anxiety. She classifies these signs into the following:

### **1.6.1 General Avoidance**

General avoidance is one of the common signs that can be seen in most of the anxious students. It can be noticed among the students through the following actions: escaping classes, being careless, coming late, avoiding participation, lack of volunteering, passive, and seem unable to answer even the simplest questions (66).

### **1.6.2 Physical Actions**

Physical actions are considered as another sign of anxiety. They can be observed in different actions such as, shaking, body movements, sweating, nervously touching objects, stammering, and “being unable to reproduce the sounds or the intonation of the target language even after repeated practice”( qtd. in Achbi and Sebaà 27)

### **1.6.3 Physical Symptoms**

As result of anxiety, many students may experience actual physical symptoms. For instance: a headache, back pain, muscle aches, weight changes, and “feeling unexplained pain or tension in any part of the body” (qtd in in Achbi and Sebaà 27).

### **1.6.4 Other Signs of Language Anxiety**

There are also other signs which can take it into consideration in language anxiety for instance: avoiding conversation with others, lack of eye contact, random answers, weird behaviours (exaggerated smiling, laughing, nodding, joking), and excessive self-criticism.

### **1.7 Measuring Foreign Language Anxiety**

There are many students who show a kind of negative emotions before attending the foreign language class. In which, they have to gather enough courage in order to enter. These feelings are mainly related to anxiety. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope state that “Anxious students may avoid studying and in some cases skip class entirely in an effort to alleviate their anxiety” (127).

Horwitz and her assistants attempt to measure the students’ anxiety level while learning the language in the classroom. These attempts resulted in an instrument called “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale” (FLCAS). According to Horwitz (1986), “This self-report measure assesses the degree of anxiety, as evidenced by negative performance expectancies and social comparisons, psychophysiological symptoms, and avoidance behaviours” (p. 559).

### **1.8 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)**

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale is designed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope in order to examine the riskiness of foreign language anxiety on seventy-five university students (thirty-nine males and thirty-six females ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-seven) from four introductory Spanish classes (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope.129). The experience took place at the Learning Skills Center (LSC) at the University of Texas.

FLCAS consists of 33 Linkert-type items ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’ (see appendix I). It includes the three main sources of anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation in the foreign language classroom.

The results of FLCAS indicate that the majority of students are afraid of speaking a foreign language. And this can be shown through the students' choices to following statements :“I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class” (statement 1) 51 %, “I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class” (statement 9) 37%, “I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class” (statement 27) 28%, “I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students” (statement 24) 25% . Moreover, they reject statements like “I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class” (statement 18) 43%.

Although FLCAS gains success, it is criticised. There are four points in the theory that are challenged: the first point to mention is the direction of the causal relationship between FLA and language learning difficulties. Sparks and Ganschow state that “one cannot discuss anxiety without inferring a cause” (qtd.in Trang 71). The second one is the important role of FLA, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope give much attention to foreign language anxiety and its effects on the foreign language achievement, while others considered it “as either being independent of or having little effect on foreign language achievement”(Trang 71). This view is supported by Argaman and Abu-Rabia who claim that “if students with high language anxiety obtained significantly low grades in every foreign-language skill, the real problem may not be the anxiety but a lack of ability in the foreign language arising from a totally different origin” (qtd.in Trang 72).

The third point that is challenged is related to one of FLA sources (communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety). Test anxiety is considered as a general anxiety problem rather than being linked to foreign language learning (Trang 72). While, the fourth point questioned by many theorists is the validity of the FLCAS.

Despite the previous mentioned critics of the FLCAS, it plays an important role in the foreign language anxiety studies.

## **1.9 The Relationship between Anxiety and Oral Communication**

Communication is the primary need for mankind since the origin of man. The main aim of all languages is to help humans to communicate with each other, to convey their thoughts, to read and to write. In recent years, a major concern arises in the study of the relationship between anxiety and oral communication, especially among students.

As has been mentioned before, foreign language anxiety is one of the main effective factors that affect the learners' performance in the foreign language. It is extremely experienced by students as they perform activities that require productive skills (speaking and writing). Research shows that anxiety is a significant issue in foreign language classrooms especially in terms of its strong relationship to the speaking skill. MacIntyre says that anxiety influences "both language learning and communication processes" (24).

For many students, the major source of anxiety is the speaking skill, especially when it comes to speaking in front of their classmates and teachers. So, foreign language anxiety has a debilitating effect on the students' speaking skill or the oral production of the foreign language. This kind of anxiety is referred to as foreign language speaking anxiety.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

To sum up, in this chapter we have discussed the general issues that are related to foreign language anxiety. We have started with an overview of foreign language anxiety. Besides, we have dealt with anxiety's definition, types (trait, state, situation-specific and debilitating Vs. Facilitative anxiety) and the sources that are classified into three: fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension and test anxiety. Then we moved on to the main characteristics of anxious learners. The last point in the chapter was about the relationship between anxiety and oral communication.

## **Chapter Two**

### **General Overview on Speaking Skill**

**2.1 Introduction**

**2.2 Speaking Skill's definition**

**2.3 The Importance of Speaking in Learning Foreign/ Second Language**

**2.4 The Main Features of Speaking Skill**

**2.5 Communicative Competence**

**2.6 The Speaking Difficulties**

**2.7 The Negative Effects of Anxiety on Students' Speaking Skill**

**2.8 Strategies that Help to Lower Students' Anxiety Conclusion**

**2.9 Conclusion**

## **2.1 Introduction**

Using the target language communicatively is the main aim of EFL/ESL students. Moreover, speaking efficiency is considered as a crucial part of foreign language learning. However, being able to communicate effectively is not an easy task. For many students, speaking skill, among all the other foreign language skills (writing, reading, and listening), is considered as the most difficult one to be mastered. Furthermore, learners are often evaluated through their success in speaking the target language fluently, Nunan assumes that “to most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language” (39).

This chapter deals with the general issues related to speaking skill. We will start with providing some definitions as well as highlighting the importance of speaking skill. Then, we will have a general view of the main features of speaking skill. After that, we will move on to the communicative competence. Furthermore, we will deal with the main difficulties of speaking skill in addition to the negative effect of anxiety on it. Finally, we will have a look at the main strategies that may help to reduce student’s anxiety.

## **2.2 Speaking Skill’s definition**

According to Oxford Dictionary, speaking “is the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in spoken language”. While Florez defines it as “an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and perceiving and processing information” (2). Moreover, Widdowson argues that “speaking is simply the physical embodiment of an abstract system in the usage sense involving the manifestation of the phonological system or of the grammatical system of language or both” (59).

Speaking is one of the productive skills (writing and speaking). It is a tool of communication among people. Through speaking, people express themselves, share their thoughts and ideas. In this vein, Lindsay and Knight state that:

*We speak for many reasons- to be sociable because we want something because we want other people to do something . . . To respond to someone else, to express our feelings or opinion about something, to exchange information, to refer to an action or event in the past, present, or future, the possibility of something happening, and so on. (58)*

According to Chaney, speaking is “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts” (13).

### **2.3 The Importance of Speaking in Learning Foreign/ Second Language**

When it comes to foreign language learning, the ability to communicate effectively in the target language is the main purpose of the students. According to Widdowson, “the ultimate aim in language learning is to acquire the communicative competence” (67). Besides, Richards has assumed that: “The mastery of speaking skills in English is of priority for many second or foreign language learners” (19).

Mastering the oral performance can contribute in enhancing one’s personal life. It is also important for career success. Thus, due to its importance, speaking skill is considered as the most demanded skill in foreign language learning. Ur states that “of all the four skills,

speaking seems institutively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as ‘speaker’ of the language, as if speaking included all other kind of knowing’. (12)

## **2.4 The Main Features of the Speaking Skill**

Speaking does not require the linguistic competence only (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary), but it also requires the sociolinguistic competence in which the learner needs to understand “when, why, and in what ways to produce language” (Nunan 216) Therefore, in order to speak the target language effectively, learners have to take into consideration the main features of speaking skill.

### **2.4.1 Fluency and Accuracy**

Fluency and accuracy are the most important features of foreign language proficiency. In which, they are considered as useful measures of the performance in the second language. Generally speaking, accuracy refers to the ability to produce correct sentences with correct grammar and vocabulary, while fluency is related to the ability to produce language easily.

#### **2.4.1.1 Fluency**

As the students’ level of proficiency in the target language is mainly measured through their speaking abilities, fluency is viewed as a major feature of the oral performance. Fluency has been defined by Byrne as “[...] the ability to express oneself intelligibly [...] reasonably accurately and without too much hesitation” (qtd.in Christiansen 7). According to Tricia, “Fluency relates to the production and it is normally reserved for speech. It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate showiness, or undue hesitation” (54). Therefore, fluency is related to the students’ ability to speak the target language in a smooth way without any hesitation.

#### **2.4.1.2 Accuracy**

Accuracy is the other important element that should be taken into account in the speaking skill. Accordingly, learners should not be fluent only but accurate also. Accuracy in speaking is related to the proper grammatical usage, vocabulary, and pronunciation. According to Skehan “accuracy” refers “to how well one’s speech is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language” (qtd.in Ellis and Barkhuizen 139). As a consequence, accuracy and fluency must go hand in hand. Accuracy has three main aspects:

#### **2.4.1.2.1 Grammar**

Grammar is considered as a major factor that should be well mastered by students in foreign language learning (English). According to Oxford dictionary, grammar refers to the whole system and structure of a language or of languages in general, usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology and sometimes also phonology and semantics.

When it comes to the oral performance, grammar is regarded as the basis of speaking proficiency. Furthermore, grammar can enhance the accuracy of speaking skills. According to Hughes, the grammatical accuracy refers to the range and the appropriate use of the learners’ grammatical structure, which involves the length and the complexity of the utterances in addition to the ability to use the subordinating clauses (qtd. in Kouicem 32-33).

#### **2.4.1.2.2. Vocabulary**

Being accurate in terms of vocabulary is related to the appropriate choice of words according to the speaking situations. Neuman & Dwyer, define vocabulary as “words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)” (qtd. in Alqahtani 24). Without an efficient range of vocabulary in the target language, students will be unable to express themselves and understand the others. Therefore, vocabulary is the key to an operative communication.

#### **2.4.1.2.3 Pronunciation**

In order to communicate appropriately and accurately, students must have a good pronunciation. The latter is considered as an important element of the speaking proficiency. Busa states that “pronunciation is the fundamental factor in making speech intelligible when speakers from different linguistic backgrounds interact” (qtd. in Yenkimaleki and Heuven 83). Mispronunciation may result in misunderstanding. As a result, students should know the important areas of pronunciation including syllables, stress, linking and intonation. This will help them to develop their pronunciation as well as their speaking abilities.

## **2.5 Communicative Competence**

Communicative competence is related to the knowledge that makes people able to use the foreign language effectively. According to Canale and Swain, communicative competence is referred to as:

*A synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse. (qtd. in Pawlak 53)*

Distinctly, they, Canale and Swain, classify the communicative competence into grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence.

### **2.5.1 Grammatical Competence**

grammatical competence refers to the acquisition of lexical, morphological, syntactical, and phonological features of the language. Therefore, it is related to the knowledge that enables people to produce different sentences in a foreign language.

### 2.5.2 Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic competence includes learning the pragmatic aspect and the sociolinguistic knowledge. Sauvignon defines sociolinguistic competence as “An understanding of the social context in which language is used” (qtd. in Pawlak 54). Thus, students must be aware of the cultural values and norms of different societies because what is acceptable in one culture, it might be unacceptable in another one. Besides that, they must take into consideration the age and gender of the other side. “Since different situations call for different type of expressions as well as different beliefs, views, values, and attitudes, the development of sociolinguistic competence is essential for communicative social action” (Yano 77).

### 2.5.3 Discourse Competence

Discourse competence refers to how the utterances are linked together. According to Sauvignon, discourse competence is “An understanding of how utterances are strung together to form a meaningful whole”. It has two main aspects:

- 1) **Coherence:** refers to the logical connection. According to Oxford Dictionary, Coherence means the quality of being logical and consistent.
- 2) **Cohesion:** relates to how the meanings of utterances are linked.

### 2.5.4 Strategic Competence

Strategic competence plays an important role in a successful communication. According to Yano, strategic competence is:

*To do with the knowledge of verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdowns such as self-Correction and at the same time to enhance the effectiveness of communication such as recognizing discourse structure, activating background knowledge, contextual guessing, and tolerating ambiguity.*<sup>78</sup>

On the other hand, Sauvignon defines it as “a language user’s employment of strategies to make the best use of what s/he knows about how a language works, in order to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning in a given context” (qtd. in Pawlak).

## **2.6 The Speaking Difficulties**

Speaking is the most difficult aspect to be mastered when it comes to foreign language learning. In this vein, Brown and Yule proclaim that: “Spoken language production, learning to talk in the foreign language is often considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of language learning” ( 25). In fact, there are several factors that affect negatively the speaking skills.

### **2.6.1 Linguistic Difficulties**

As has been mentioned before, the linguistic competence plays a crucial role in the speaking skill proficiency. Linguistic competence includes the mastery of these elements: grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. If any aspect of them is missed, it will lead to a poor oral performance.

#### **2.6.1.1 Lack of Vocabulary**

There are many students who face a difficulty when they want to express themselves in a foreign language because they could not find the appropriate words and expressions. As a

consequence, students will be less engaged or they will avoid participation in the speaking activities classes.

### **2.6.1.2 Pronunciation Difficulty**

A lot of students have a difficulty in pronouncing a foreign language as a result of many reasons:

- Lack of practice.
- The effect of the mother tongue on the second language.
- Being taught by none- native speakers.

Students' poor pronunciation makes them avoid speaking in front of their classmates and teachers.

### **2.6.1.3 The Grammatical Errors**

The lack of mastering the grammatical rules in the foreign language makes students unable to improve their oral ability. As a result, students will prefer to remain silent rather than embarrassing themselves by producing wrong structures. As Davies and Pearse claim: "Many people do not like speaking in front of large groups of people. This is especially true in a foreign language, because we may worry about producing utterances with many errors or oddities in them" ( 82).

### **2.6.2 Inhibition**

Inhibition is related to the feeling of shyness and fear of making mistakes while speaking. Xiuqin claims that "Students often feel frightened at the idea of making mistakes and receiving negative evaluations from the peers" (35). This will prevent them from the speaking in the class as well as reduce the development of their communicative skills. According to UR, "Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face,

or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts” (111). Thus, inhibition is one of the barriers that prevent students from improving their speaking abilities.

### **2.6.3 Mother Tongue Use**

Many students tend to speak in their mother tongue while discussing activities with their classmates in the classroom. During the oral performance, students use the mother tongue when they couldn't express themselves. Baker and Westrup argue that “Barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language.” (12). Thence, each time the student does not find the appropriate vocabulary, he will replace it by its synonym in the mother tongue. This will contribute in reducing the students' speaking abilities.

### **2.6.4 Poor Listening Practice**

Listening skill has a significant role in improving the speaking skill proficiency. In order to communicate effectively in the target language, the student must be able to understand what he hears. Anderson and Lynch state that “For the L2 learner in conversation, he needs to be skilled as both speaker and listener” (15). Furthermore, through listening, students learn how to pronounce words correctly in the target language. However, Poor listening practice reduces the students' speaking proficiency.

### **2.6.5 Psychological Barriers**

The psychological barriers can be classified into the following:

#### **2.6.5.1 Learners' Differences**

Language is the mean we use in order to convey meanings and ideas from one mind to another, and the acquisition of any language remains one of the most interesting aspects of human development. Academically speaking, every learner in a classroom acquires and processes information in a unique way that makes one learner differ from the others. Learners

are not the same; they are different in their family background, learning sequences, motivation towards learning and so on. These factors constitute the cause and nature of learners' differences. It is now a proven fact that different people learn differently, and psychologists have attempted through the years to spell out the traits of different types of learners.

Generally speaking, learners are not the same towards learning the language. In which, each learner has his own styles and strategies that affect foreign language acquisition. The following learners' differences are playing an essential role or a part in influencing foreign language acquirement:

### **2.6.5.2 Motivated and Unmotivated Learners**

Learners' motivation has an important role in the learning process. According to Ellis “motivation and attitudes are important factors, which help to determine the level of proficiency achieved by different learners” (13). So, motivation is an essential factor for the accomplishment of a particular activity. Hall states that “it is difficult to imagine anyone learning a language without some degree of motivation” (134). So that, teacher has to recognise the importance of motivation in the teaching process.

The success or failure of the students depends on their motivation in achieving the target language. So, there are two types of motivated students: intrinsically motivated students and extrinsically motivated students. Intrinsic students are those students who participate actively in classroom tasks. Obviously, this kind of students is the most involved one in learning new academic concepts. When learners are internally stimulated to learn, they gain an extensive understanding of new constructs. This kind of motivation comes out of the individual himself. Whereas, extrinsic students are those who present a task or assignment in order to receive some kind of reward or to avoid some kind of punishment.

The other type of learners is the unmotivated learners, these learners are able to read some of the writings, yet rarely complete the task. They may speak the language but they fail

to apply skills consistently in the classroom. Here, the teacher may play an important role in motivating these learners in order to succeed in their learning process.

In the most studies of motivation, the relationship between motivation and second language achievement was the most common one. Thus, motivation has several effects on students' learning and behaviour.

### **2.6.5.3 Introverted and Extroverted Learners**

Personality of the learner is another important element that can be considered as an influential matter in foreign language acquisition. “There are two types of personality dimensions which are relevant to the study of anxiety in learners: introversion and extraversion. Introversion refers to the learners’ tendency to cope with stress and emotions” (qtd. in Abderrezzag 13). In one side, introverted learners tend to be anxious most of the time. In addition, they are always passive, isolated, sad, shy, stressed and angry at anything. In the other side, extroverted learners are less anxious, more active, friendly, and comfortable

Consequently, there are two different types of learners: extroverted and introverted learners. Extroverted learners those who are proficient and active than the introverted, they manage their activities in a comfortable manner and can engage easily with other learners and participate freely during a classroom discussion. Furthermore, these learners learn better when they work in groups because they like to exchange and communicate their ideas and opinions with others. Myers<sup>3</sup> and Myers<sup>4</sup> (1995) define extroverts as:

*The after thinkers, they cannot understand life until they have lived it. Their attitude is relaxed and confident, they expect the*

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<sup>3</sup> Myers : Isabel Briggs Myers (1897 – 1980) was an American author and co-creator of a personality inventory known as the [Myers–Briggs Type Indicator](#) (MBTI)

<sup>4</sup> Myers: Peter Briggs Myers, Isabel’s son, American scientific agency administrator.

*waters to prove shallow, and plunge readily into new and untried experiences. Minds outwardly directed, interest and attention following objective happenings, primarily those of the immediate environment. Their real world therefore is the outer world of people and things (77)*

In this quotation, Myers and Myers give further information about the extroverts. According to them, the extroverts are very social and they enjoy being part of a conversation as well they are good learners and often work well with others. However, introverted learners like to study alone and don't participate with others while discussion. They prefer listening and talking, then thinking of what has been already said.

According to many researches that examine the personality variables, extraversion was beneficial for the acquisition of oral skill. Thus, the performance will be strengthened and enhanced; besides creating an opportunity to develop their communicative competence inside or outside the classroom setting. Yet, extroverted and introverted learners do not learn in the same manner; each learner adopts an approach to learning that makes him feel at ease.

<b>Extraversion</b>	<b>Introversion</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prefer the outer world of people and thing to reflection.</li> <li>➤ Active.</li> <li>➤ Gain energy from others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prefer reflection and the inner world of action</li> <li>➤ Prefer writing to talking.</li> <li>➤ May enjoy social contact but need to recover from it.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Want to experience things in order to understand them.</li> <li>➤ Work by trial and variety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Want to understand something before trying it.</li> <li>➤ Like a quiet space to work in.</li> </ul>
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**Table 01: Differences between extraversion and introversion**

(Myers and Myers 17)

## 2.7 The Negative Effect of Anxiety on Students' Speaking Skill

Language anxiety is one of the most well-known obstacles in the learning process. It can obstruct the learners' acquisition of the new language. So, there is a common consensus that anxiety has negative effects on foreign language learning, specifically, on the speaking skill as Chang, Horwitz, and Schallert report that "speaking is the most anxiety-provoking aspect in a second language learning situation"( 420). This means, the majority of foreign language learners feel anxious and stressed during the speaking sessions.

Students who experience anxiety will have difficulties in their learning process.

When a student is anxious, of course, he will make more mistakes. The more mistakes he makes, the more anxious he will be, and thus, he is not going to perform well during speaking skills. In order to understand more about the effects of anxiety on the speaking skill, we will present some aspects that may affect it.

### 2.7.1 Learning Process

Speaking anxiety has negative effects on the students' learning process especially in their participation, concentrating in the class; it can affect the ability of receiving information. Learning as a cognitive activity is based on encoding, storing and retrieval steps. Thus, each of these steps can be disturbed by anxiety because of its negative impact on one's attention

and concentration. In order to raise learning efficiency, teachers should create a space of motivation and challenges and try to make a suitable situation for learning so that students during learning process can use their working memory.

### **2.7.2 The Practice of the Target Language and the Development of the Speaking Skill**

Foreign language anxiety is one of the main factors in the learning process that prevent foreign language learners' from good performance. Anxiety can be a serious barrier to student's abilities especially its negative effect on student's speaking skill. From this, Anxiety has an effect on the students' speaking skill. Anxious students tend to avoid classroom participation, and are unwilling to take risks, they are apprehensive and worried. These behaviours interfere with the learning process. Several studies results proved that high anxious learners have a low speaking ability. The problem is seen in their oral output such as in their pronunciation and the interference of their mother tongue. Thus, those anxious students will be prevented from many opportunities to practice the target language.

### **2.7.3 Self-Confidence**

Self-confidence is the belief that you can successfully perform a desired behaviour. Several studies focused on how anxiety can affect the student's self-confidence. These studies showed that self-confidence is a significant factor in language learning. According to a research conducted by Aydin to in order to identify the main sources of anxiety among Turkish students, the results indicate that "anxiety prevents learners from speaking the target language and reduces their self-confidence" (qtd.in Achbi and Sebaà 38). So, anxiety can cause to students a bad judgment about themselves in which, they think that they are unworthy, incompetent, powerless and unable to engage in the activities. It is true that anxiety is a natural human reaction; however, once should get rid of it in order to gain more self-confidence.

## **2.8 Strategies that Help to Lower Students' Anxiety**

Feelings of anxiety, apprehension and nervousness are commonly experienced by second/foreign language learners in learning to speak a second/foreign language. These feelings are considered to exert a potentially negative and detrimental effect on communication in the target language. So, knowing that foreign language anxiety exists and that it can have negative effects on the learning process, teachers here, play an important role in helping students who are experiencing anxiety to encourage them to make mistakes and explain that they are a normal and necessary part of the learning process. There are various strategies that teachers can carry out with their students in efforts to reduce anxiety levels.

### **2.8.1 Cooperative learning**

Cooperative learning is one of the effective strategies that can reduce the students' anxiety. This strategy means forming small groups of students having different backgrounds and ability levels. These groups work together to complete various language tasks. "Numbered Heads Together" is an example of this strategy in which students work together in groups of four, with each student assigned a number. Then, the teacher calls on a number to respond to a question after the group have worked together to find the answer.

As a result of this activity, we notice that the students feel less anxious when they have group members to help them, and they feel safe because it is less threatening to share a group response than an individual response (Suwantarathip and Wichadee 53). This strategy builds a sense of community in the classroom and students will be more comfortable and relaxed.

### **2.8.2 Creative Drama**

Creative drama is another strategy that can be helpful for anxious students to develop confidence when speaking the target language. This strategy involves "setting the scene, giving students different roles to play, and engaging them in the task" (Gustafson 40). As a result of this strategy, students will enjoy learning; furthermore, they will feel more

comfortable in taking risks and practicing the language (Gustafson 40). According to Reyes and Vallone, creative drama activities, such as role playing and theatre games, may help in reducing the students' anxiety and encourage spontaneous communication (qtd. in Gustafson 40).

### **2.8.3 Self-encouragement**

Self-encouragement can be considered as one of the main strategies that help in lowering anxiety levels. Therefore, the students must learn how to encourage themselves.

There are some positive statements that students can say to themselves such as:

- I understand a lot of what is said in the target language.
- It's okay if I make mistakes because they help me to learn.
- If I practice speaking a lot, my pronunciation will be better.

(Gustafson 41)

Many students expect rewards and encouragement from others without considering that encouragement from the self can be very powerful. Setting goals and rewarding oneself can be an effective way of improving attitude, confidence, and motivation in regards to the language learning process. Self-encouragement is needed to deal with the risk of these uncomfortable moments and push forward.

These were some of the suggested strategies that can help to overcome or at least to minimise students' anxiety; of course, there are many other solutions that can be also effective.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter was devoted to the speaking skill. We gave a general overview about speaking skill including its definition, importance, features and difficulties. Moreover, we have dealt with communicative competence and its main parts: Grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. By the end, we have tried to give some strategies that may help to overcome foreign language.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Field of Work**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

#### **3.2 Participants**

#### **3.3 Tools of Research**

#### **3.4 Data Description and Analysis**

#### **3.5 Conclusion**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is related the practical part of the study. It is associated with the students' and teachers' point of a view about the effect of anxiety on students' speaking. In order to achieve reliable results; we will adopt the descriptive method. We will tackle first with the participants chosen, then we will move to describe the tools that we adopted (questionnaire, interview). After that, we will shift to the analysis of the findings.

### **3.2 Participants**

The sample consists of 50 third-year students of English. These students were chosen randomly including 23 males and 27 females. The students' age ranged from 22 to 24 years old. Besides, three teachers who were asked to participate in the interview. We have chosen teachers who have different backgrounds and experiences in teaching.

### **3.3 Tools of research**

In order to investigate the impact of foreign language anxiety on the speaking skill among students of English at Amar Thelidji University, two tools have been adopted. The first one is a questionnaire devoted to third-year students. This questionnaire is composed of 22 questions (see appendix II) in which the first two questions are related to the personal background of the student. While, the questions from 3 to 16 are closed questions in which the student has multiple choices while answering. The rest of questions (17- 22) are open-ended questions which require short answers. The main aim of this questionnaire is to study the effect of anxiety on third-year students.

The second tool is an interview with three English teachers at Amar Thelidji University. The teacher's interview consists of three (3) main questions (see appendix III). The first question is about the main reasons that make students feel anxious. The second one is about the signs of the anxious student that the teacher notices. While, the third question is related to the cases in which anxiety is more likely to occur. The last one is about the

solutions that the teacher suggests in order to reduce or overcome anxiety. The aim of this interview is to discover the reasons that make the students feel anxious as well as to find solutions to this problem.

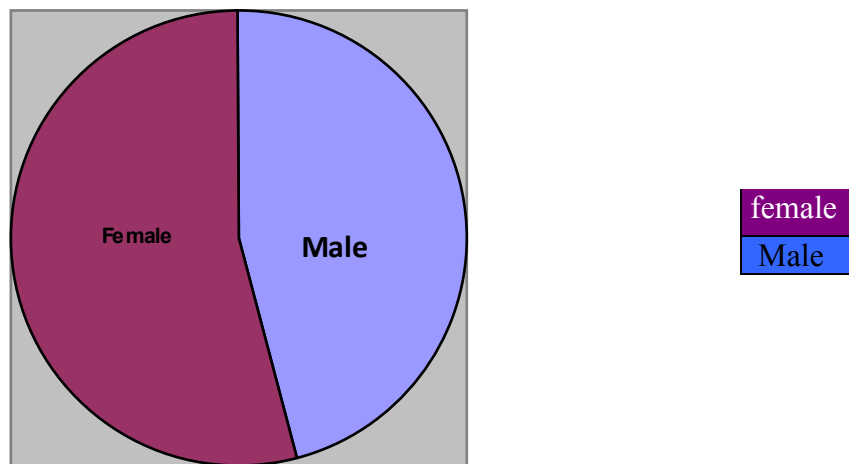
### 3.4 Data Description and Analysis

#### A/ Students' Questionnaire

##### 1. Gender

Gender	N° of Students	Percentage
Male	23	46 %
Female	27	54 %

**Table 2: Students' Gender**



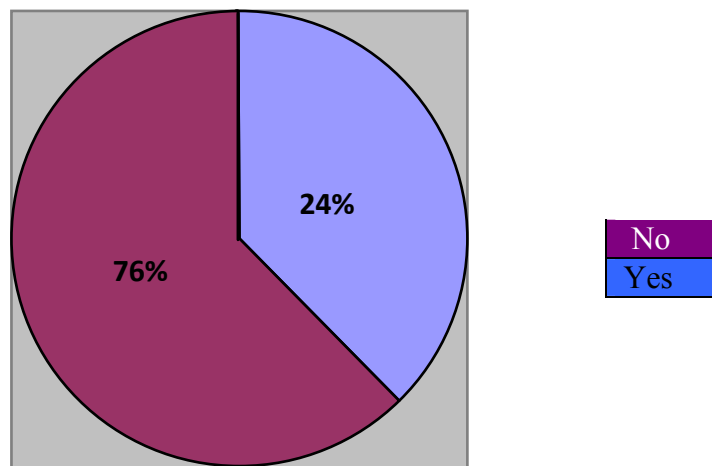
**Figure 1: Students' Gender**

The table above indicates that the number of females (54 %) is more than the number of males (46%). The aim of specifying gender is to discover who are more anxious males or females. After analysing the findings of the questionnaire, we have found that female students were more anxious than male students. In which, the number of female students who were confident was 18% while male students was 26 %.

### 3. Do you think English is difficult to learn?

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	12	24 %
No	38	76 %

**Table 3: English in Terms of Difficulty**



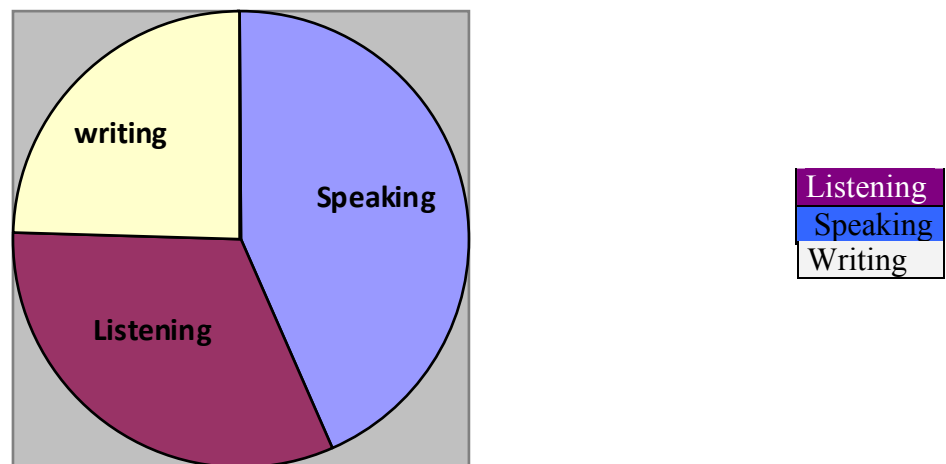
**Figure 2: English in Terms of difficulty**

Figure 2 represents the students' situation towards learning English as a foreign language in terms of difficulty. The majority of students (76 %) argued that they had not face any difficulty in acquiring English. Whereas, the minority of students (24 %) considered that learning English as a difficult task. Through these results, we may conclude that learning English as foreign language is not a difficult task according to student

#### 4. In your opinion, which skill is the most difficult to be mastered?

Skills	N° of Students	Percentage
Speaking	20	40 %
Listening	17	34 %
Writing	13	26 %
Reading	0	0 %

**Table 4: The Most Difficult Skills**



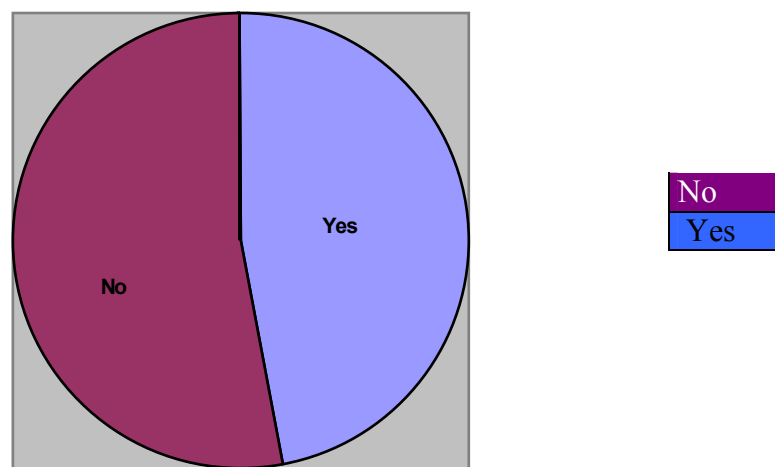
**Figure 3: the Most Difficult Skills**

This question aims at discovering which skill is the most difficult to be mastered according to students. After analysing the findings, speaking skill was the most difficult one with a percentage of 40%. The other difficult skill according to students was the listening skill (34 %). As we have seen in the second chapter, listening and speaking skills go hand in hand in which listening skill has a great impact on the speaking proficiency. Therefore, poor listening reduces students' speaking ability. While, the easiest skill according to students is reading (see table 3).

### 5. I feel confident when I speak in English.

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	24	48%
No	26	52%

**Table 5: Students' self confidence**



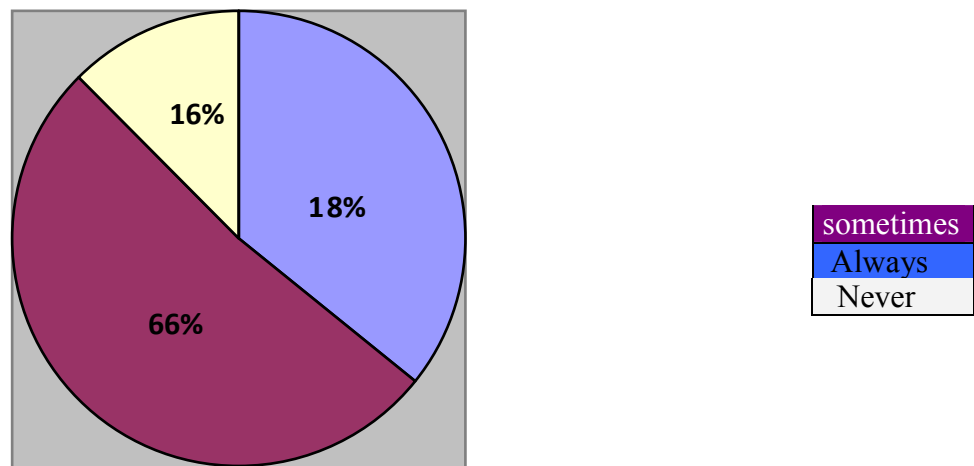
**Figure 4: Students' Self confidence**

Students' self-confidence plays a major role in learning the foreign language, especially in the oral performance. Figure 4 indicates that more than the half of students (52%) are not confident while they speak English. Maybe these students do not believe in their own abilities and they may fear of being evaluated in a negative way. In contrary to these students, self-confident students are more relaxed while they speak the foreign language. Accordingly, students with high level of self-confidence are usually less anxious than those who are n

### 6. I participate in the oral classroom activities.

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Always	9	18 %
Sometimes	33	66 %
Never	8	16 %

**Table 6: Students' Involvement in the Oral Classroom Activities**



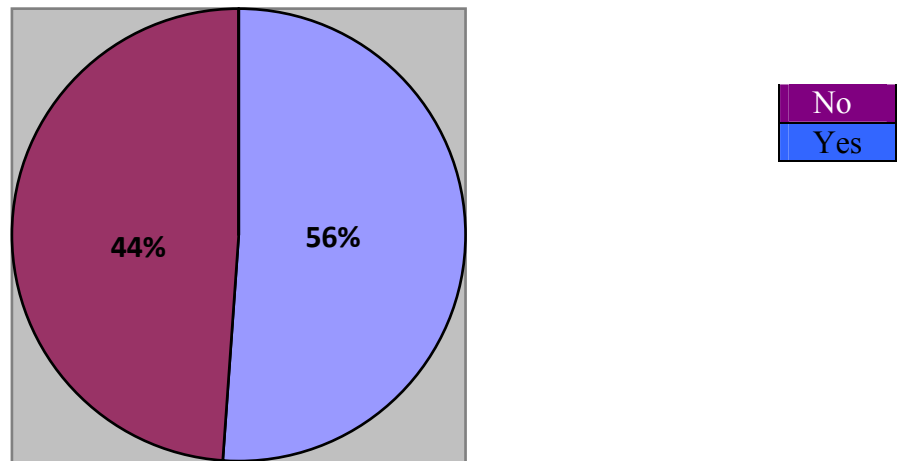
**Figure 5: Students' Involvement in the Oral Classroom Activities**

The aim of this question is to see whether the students do interact in the classroom oral activities or not. According to the findings (see table 6), 66 % of students reported that they do sometimes participate in the oral classroom activities. This may indicate that their participation is associated with the topic discussed; hence, if the subject matter attracts the student's attention, he will interact with his teacher and classmates. As shown in table 5, 18% of students always participate in the classroom oral activities, whereas 16% of them do not participate or take a part of the oral activities.

**7. I do not feel comfortable when I speak in front of my classmates and teachers.**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	28	56 %
No	22	44 %

**Table 7: Students' Feeling toward Presenting in the Front of Others**



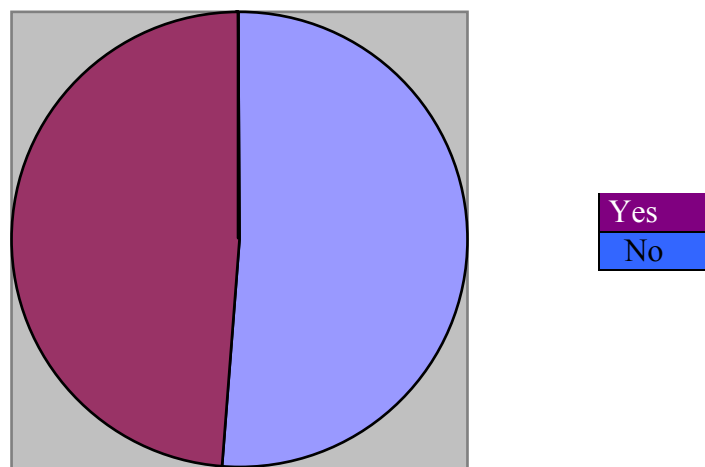
**Figure 6: Students' Feeling towards Presenting in the Front of Others**

According to the data in table 7, less than the half of students (44 %) feel comfortable when they speak in front of their colleagues and teachers. Therefore, most of students (56%) find it a stressful thing to speak or to express themselves in front of their classmates. We may consider that as one of the main reasons of anxiety.

**8. I do not worry when I make mistakes in the oral performance.**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	22	44 %
No	28	56 %

**Table 8: Students' Position towards Making Mistakes**



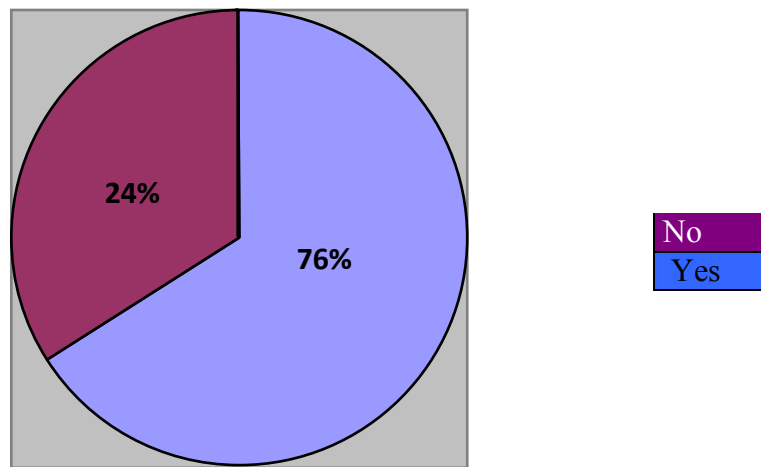
**Figure 7: Students' Position towards Making Mistakes**

Through figure 7, we notice that 44% of students do not worry about making mistakes while they perform in the target language. Whereas, the majority of students (56 %) have a negative attitude towards making mistakes while they speak English. Students' fear of making mistakes is mainly linked to their fear of teacher's negative evaluation and comments. If the student continues worrying about making mistakes, he will never improve his language.

### 9. I feel nervous when I know that the teacher will ask me to present

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	38	76 %
No	14	24 %

**Table 9: Feeling Nervous towards the Teacher Questions**



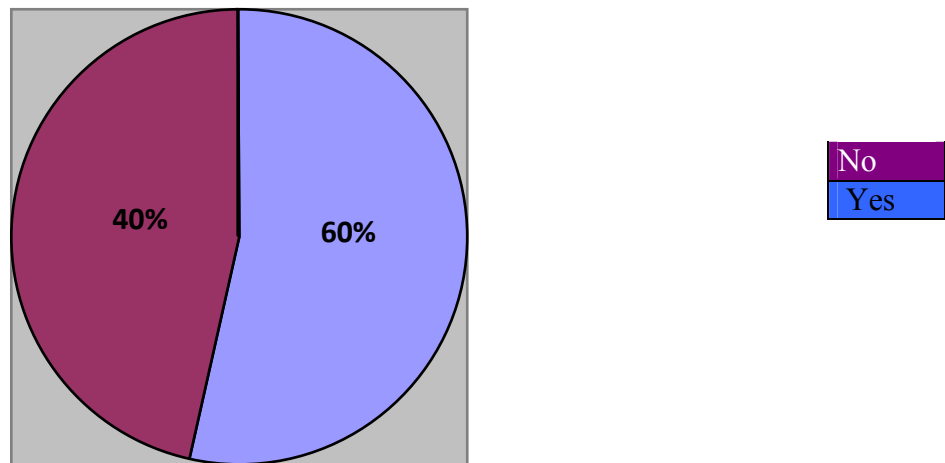
**Figure 8: Feeling Nervous towards the Teacher Questions**

The results in figure (8) show that (76%) of the students feel nervous towards the direct questions of the teacher. Therefore, the teacher should give time to the students in order to answer correctly. Whereas, the rest of the students (24%) said they do not feel nervous towards the teacher's questions. So as a result, here we emphasise on what we have mentioned in chapter one about fear of negative evaluation and its effect on student's participation in the classroom. Hence, the teacher here should create a friendly atmosphere that encourages the students' participation.

**10. It will be embarrassing if I make mistakes when I am speaking in English**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	30	60 %
No	20	40 %

**Table 10: Students' Embarrassment while Making Mistakes during Speaking.**



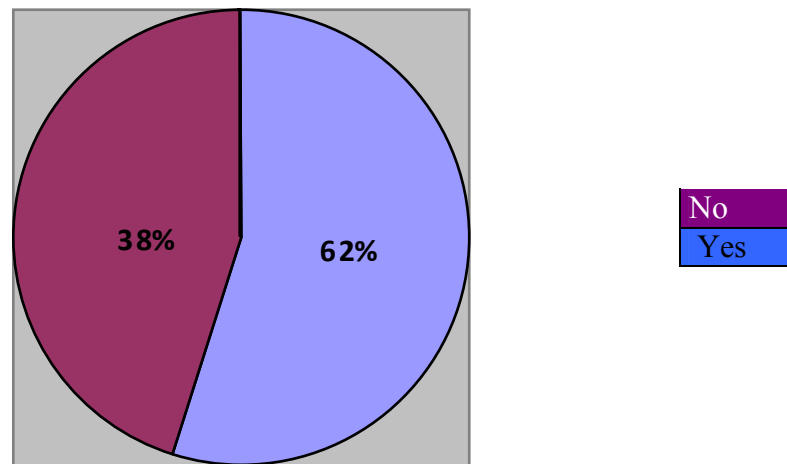
**Figure 9: Students' Embarrassment while Making Mistakes during Speaking.**

This figure shows that 60% of students said they feel embarrassed and not comfortable during speaking a foreign language especially when they make mistakes. Maybe this feeling comes as a result of many causes such as the reaction of their classmates. Besides, 40% of them said they do not feel embarrassed if they make mistakes because they may consider committing mistakes as a way for better learning. From this answer, we may say that the student should take risks to learn better otherwise he/she will not learn.

### 11. I can't speak without preparation

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	31	62%
No	19	38 %

**Table 11: Students' Speaking Without Preparation**



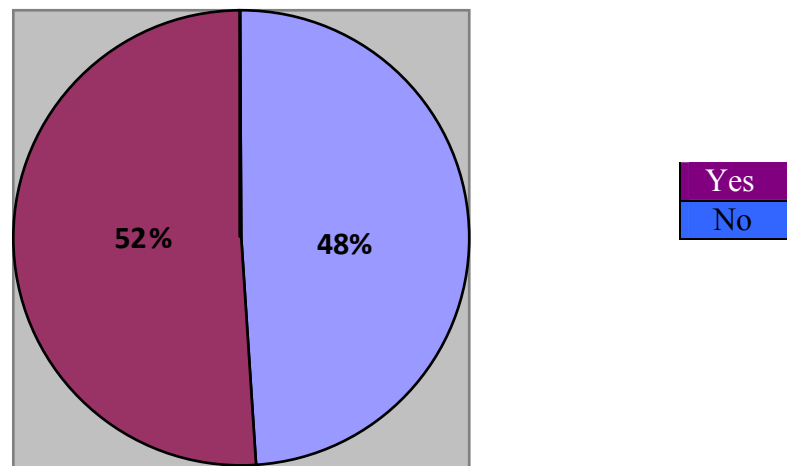
**Figure 10: Students' Speaking Without Preparation**

Through figure (10), we notice that the highest percentage of students (62%) assumed that “yes we can't speak without preparation and readiness”, which means that they are not going to answer and participate if they are not prepared well. However, (38%) of the students said they can speak freely even without preparation, which means they have the courage to say anything comes to their minds without fear. We can say that the majority of the students had the panic feeling when asked to speak without any previous preparation. This is related to what is known as communication apprehension in public speech.

**12. I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I make mistakes**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	26	52 %
No	24	48 %

**Table 12: Fear of Others' Laughing**



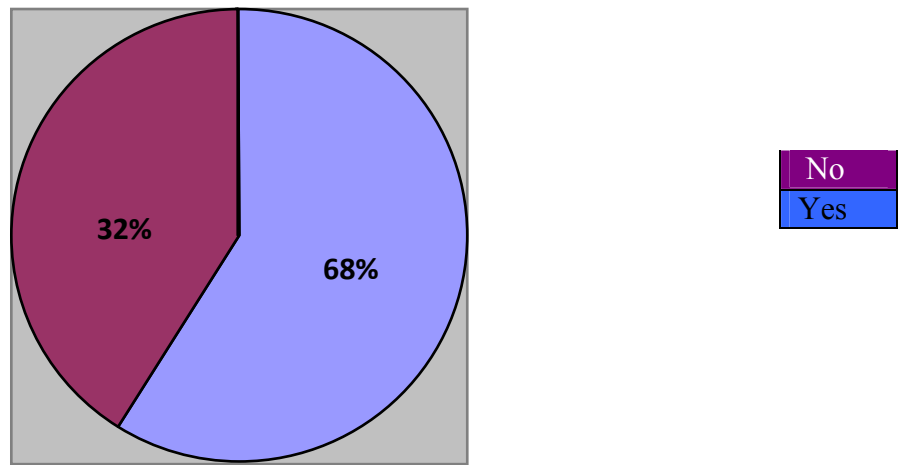
**Figure 11: Fear of Others' Laughing**

The table above shows that (52%) of the students fear from others' laughing on them if they commit any mistakes. Whereas, (48%) of them said they do not care of others' laughter. This question shows that there are students can not support being in a position to be laughed on, so that, they will adopt the avoidance behaviour and they will not participate much in the given tasks which lead to a low speaking skill.

### 13. I feel anxious before presenting even though I am well prepared

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	34	68 %
No	16	32 %

**Table 13: Feeling Anxious despite Preparation**



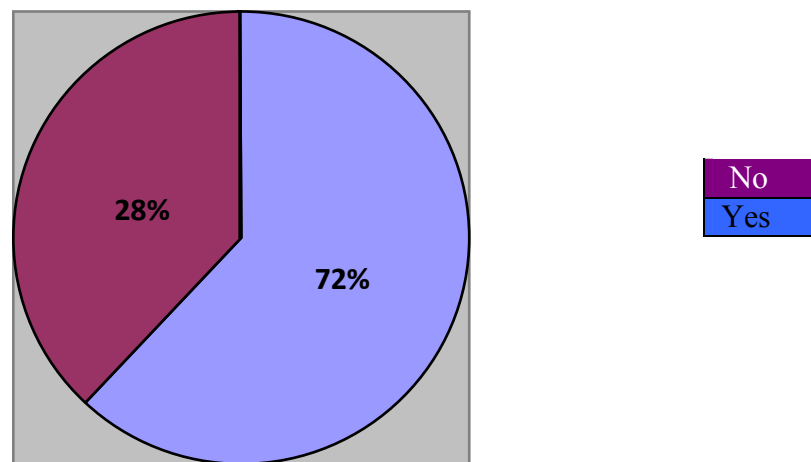
**Figure 12: Feeling Anxious despite Preparation**

As shown in this figure, 68% of the students are feeling anxious even though of their good preparation and this is something normal that related to the psychology of the learner. In this situation, the students may have the feeling of anxiety that makes his heart pounding when he is going to present. Besides, 32% of the students said that don't feel anxious while presenting. The students should prepare well before presenting a task to guarantee the success of the presentation.

#### 14. During Speaking in English, I forget things I know.

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	36	72%
No	14	28%

**Table 14: Forgetting Words during Speaking**



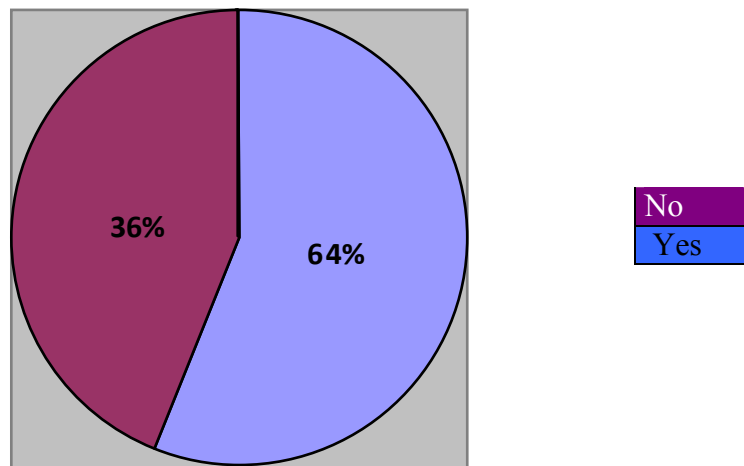
**Figure 13: Forgetting Words during Speaking**

Figure 13 shows that the majority of the students (72%) say that they forget and lose words during speaking English. Others stated that (28%) they can speak without forgetting anything. These answers may be considered as an indication of some students' lack of self-confidence on one hand, while, on the other hand it may be considered as a sign of students' self-confidence. The nervousness with the lack of memorization seems to be as a negative point of hesitation, lack of confidence.

**15. I start sweating, shaking and loosing words when I speak English in public**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	32	64 %
No	18	36%

**Table 15: Students' Different Feelings while Speaking English**



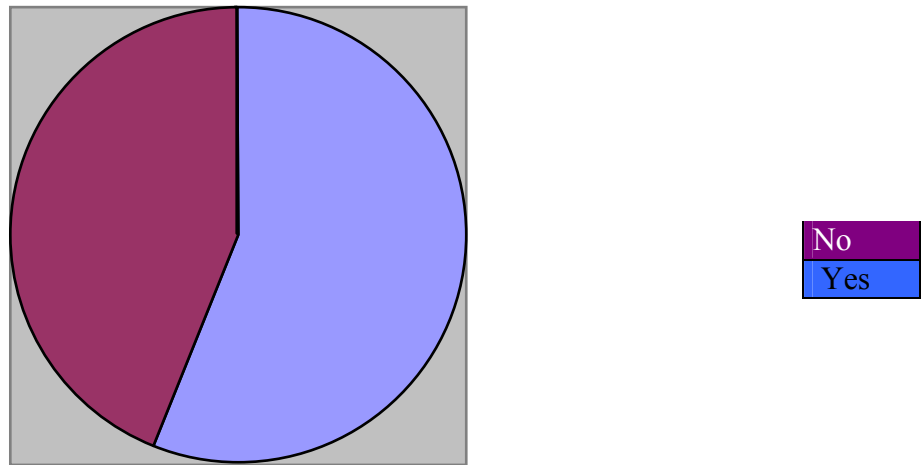
**Figure 14: Students' Different Feelings while Speaking English**

From the table above we see that 64% of the students admit that they start sweating and shaking during speaking. By contrast, 36% reported that they do not feel like that. One may assume that they are afraid to make errors; something held to be inevitable in foreign language learning. Some students may have poor control of English; furthermore, they have some resistance factors which prevent them from volunteering in the class. These students we see them often occupy the back seats of the classroom.

**16. I can speak English fluently but I get nervous when I speak it in front of my classmates and teachers**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	32	64%
No	18	36%

**Table 16: Fluent Students' Position Towards Speaking**



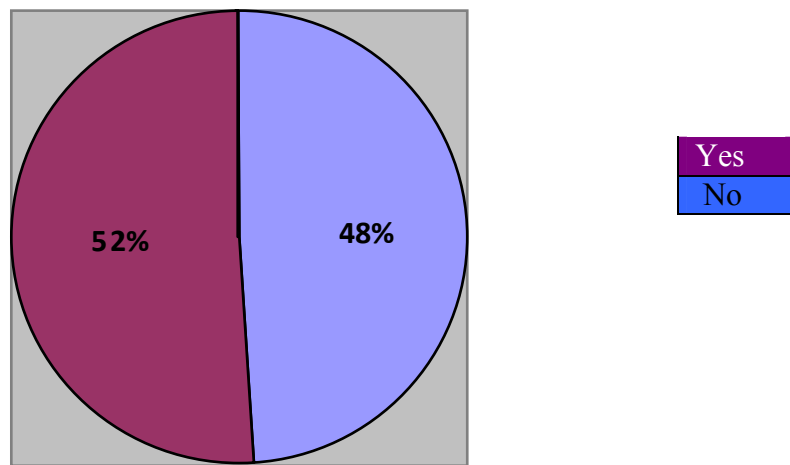
**Figure 15: Fluent Students' Position Towards Speaking**

Considering the figure above, we notice that 64% of the students said that they despite of their fluency in speaking English, they still have the feeling of stress and uneasiness. However, 32% of them said they don't feel stressed while speaking. Table 16 indicates that the majority of students feel nervous although they are well speakers in the oral English class. Here we may say that anxiety can affect the students' control over speaking English.

**17. I think that my classmates can speak English better than me.**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	26	52 %
No	24	48 %

**Table 17: Students' Level of Confidence**



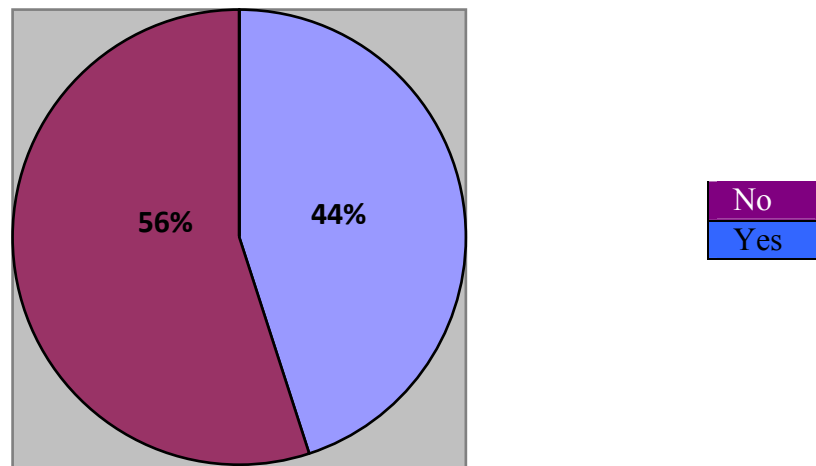
**Figure 16: Students' Level of Confidence**

Regarding figure16, 52% of students feel that the other students speak English better than they do. Whereas, 48% disagreed with that .we may conclude that the anxious learners become noticeable with the high percentage indicating their fear of being less able to speak than their colleagues. This fear may lead them to become shy in which they may avoid any given task trying to find any reason to escape participation and to hide from the teacher's eyes.

**18. Do you feel anxious when you speak to a native speaker? Why?**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	22	44 %
No	28	56%

**Table 18: Students' Feeling while Speaking to a Native Speaker**



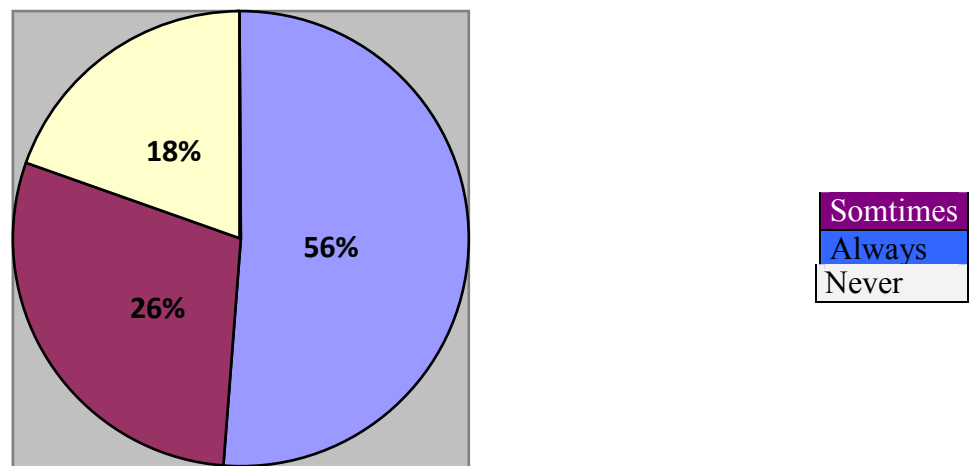
**Figure 17: Students' Feeling while Speaking to a Native Speaker**

Table 18 shows that the majority of students (56%) do not feel anxious when they speak to a native speaker. According to many of them, speaking to a native speaker is more comfortable than speaking to those who belong to their society in which, native speakers focus on the message received rather than the grammatical rules. Whereas, 44 % of students feel anxious when they speak to native speakers in which many of them stated that they are not proficient enough to carry out a conversation with foreigners.

**19. Do you avoid speaking in the classroom? Clarify.**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Always	28	56%
Sometimes	13	26%
Never	9	18%

**Table 19: Escaping Speaking in the Classroom**



**Figure 18: Escaping Speaking in the Classroom**

As it is shown in table 19, 56 % of students avoid speaking in classroom. After analysing the findings, we have found that they avoid speaking for various reasons such as, fear of making mistakes, loosing words, feeling shy. Other students reported that they sometimes avoid speaking based on the basis of the subject matter. Only few number of students (18%) who do not escape speaking in the classroom.

**20. In your opinion, what are the main reasons that make students feel anxious while speaking?**

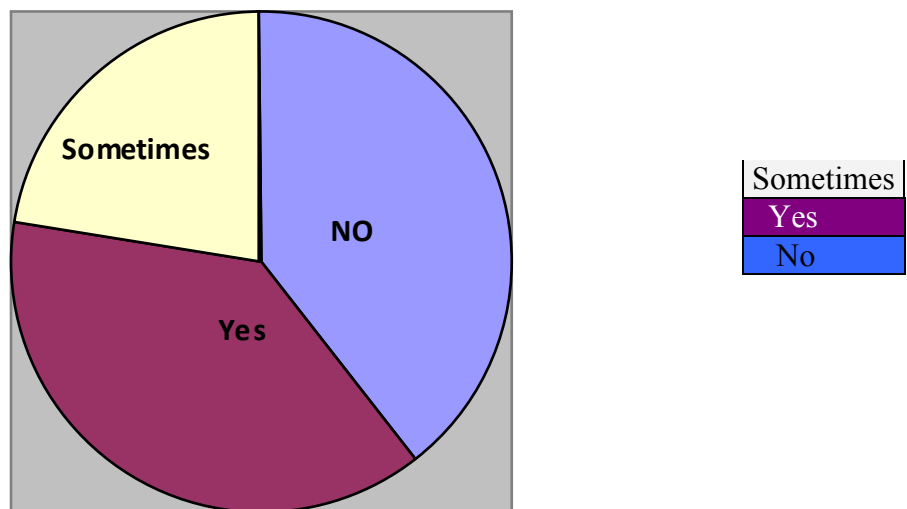
The aim of this question is to know students' points of view about the main reasons that make them feel anxious. According to many of them, the teacher is considered the main

reason of being anxious, and this is through his negative feedback toward students' mistakes (see appendix IV). While, others assured that the main reasons that make students feel anxious are lack of confidence, fear of mispronunciation, fear of others' critics, fear of making grammatical mistakes, lack of practice, and the classroom environment.

**21. Are you encouraged to speak in the classroom? Clarify.**

Students' answer	N° of Students	Percentage
Yes	15	30
No	22	44
Sometimes	13	26

**Table 20: Students' Encouragement to Speak**



**Figure 19: Students' Encouragement to Speak**

Findings in table 20 show that (30%) of students are encouraged to speak in the classroom. While, (26%) of students are sometimes encouraged in which many of them stated

that their encouragement depends on the topic, the teacher's personality, and the methodology adopted by the teacher. Therefore, the majority of students (44%) are not encouraged to speak in the classroom. They mentioned some reasons which are:

- Poor pronunciation.
- Discouraged by the teachers.
- Being anxious.
- Lack of proficiency.
- Uncomfortable environment.

## **22. In your opinion, what are the main strategies to overcome anxiety?**

The aim of this question is to take into consideration the students' opinion about the strategies that may help them to reduce or overcome their feeling of anxiety. Among the strategies they have suggested:

### **For teachers**

- Teachers should take into account the students' level.
- Teachers must treat students equally.
- Teachers must encourage students to speak.

### **For students**

- Practising English outside the classroom.
- Self-encouragement.
- Students must work hard on developing their skills.
- Listening to music, watching videos, contacting native speakers.
- Students must be confident.
- Students must read daily in order to rich their vocabularies.
- Remember that all men make mistakes.

## **B/ Findings of the Teachers' Interview**

**Q1:** In your opinion, what are the main reasons that make students feel anxious?

According to the teachers' point of views (see appendix V), the main reasons that make the students feel anxious are:

- Lack of competence.
- Teachers' negative attitudes towards the students' speaking skill.
- Lack of self-confidence and feeling shy.
- Lack of practice.
- Classroom environment.
- Students' fear of making mistakes

**Q2:** Can you tell us about the signs of an anxious student?

Relating to this question, teachers identified several signs of anxiety that they have noticed among their students. Among the physiological signs, we have red faces, avoiding eye contact, and shaking hands. Concerning the psychological signs, that have been mentioned by the teachers, we have: keeping silent for a while before answering, repeating the same words, sitting in the back, and isolated. In addition, they do not interact or take a part in the classroom activities.

**Q3:** When is anxiety more likely to occur?

Concerning this question, teachers gave different answers based on their experience and their fields of teaching. According to teacher A, "it depends on module first, for example, there are students who are more interested in the technical or literature modules than the civilisation modules. Besides, the lecture itself, if the lecture is interesting, the student will be more involved". On the other hand, teacher B claims that "when the students are asked to answer directly in the classroom without preparation".

**Q4: According to your teaching experience, what do you suggest as solutions to reduce anxiety?**

For this question, teachers have suggested different solutions that may help in decreasing anxiety among the students. Among these solutions:

- Teachers must show their students at the first year level how to deliver an effective oral presentation.

- The student must be confident.

- The teacher should not neglect or ignore students' participation.

- Creating comfortable and friendly atmosphere.

- Encouraging the students to speak in all modules.

- Making challenges between students through debating activities.

- Making the students work in groups.

- The teacher should focus on all students in order to make them feel that they are equal and no one is inferior or superior.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview, we may conclude that in order to reduce anxiety and enhance the students' speaking skill, both teachers and students should make efforts. In which, the teachers should create a relaxed atmosphere. Furthermore, they must adopt the appropriate methods, techniques, and the type of activities that may engage the anxious students within the classroom activities; such as group work, learner centred strategies, and workshops. While, the students, on their part, should be aware of the difficulties they face. Moreover, they must be confident and work hard on developing their skills.

## **General Conclusion**

## **General Conclusion**

The current research is conducted to discover the relationship between language anxiety and speaking skill among EFL students. Our work aimed at investigating how anxiety can affect the students' learning process. In order to gather relevant data for this study, two main tools were used (a questionnaire for third-year students and an interview with different teachers). The findings have shown that anxiety has a great impact on the students' speaking skill. Moreover, it has been confirmed that speaking was the most aspect that provoked anxiety.

The present study was a total of three chapters; the first and the second chapters were related to the descriptive part in which they included some theoretical issues that had a relation to language anxiety. While the third chapter dealt with the practical part of this study. The first chapter gave a general idea about anxiety including definitions of both anxiety and foreign language anxiety. Also, we had a look at the main sources and types of anxiety. Among anxiety types we have: trait, state, and situation-specific anxiety. The main three sources of anxiety are fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and lack of motivation. Concerning the characteristics of anxious learners, we have physical actions, general avoidance, and physical symptoms. Moreover, through chapter one we have been introduced to one of the main instruments to measure the students' anxiety level in the classroom which was foreign language classroom anxiety scale.

On the other hand, the second chapter dealt with the speaking skill and its features (fluency, accuracy, grammar, pronunciation...), importance, difficulties, in addition to the learners' differences. After that, we have tackled with the negative effects of anxiety on students' speaking skill. Furthermore, we have provided some helpful strategies to overcome foreign language anxiety.

While the third chapter was concerned with the analysis of the obtained data gathered from teachers' interview and students' questionnaire. The findings indicated that the main reasons of anxiety are: the teachers' negative attitudes towards the students' mistakes, classroom environment, fear of negative evaluation, lack of practice...Based on the findings the suggested solutions in our study were: a comfortable atmosphere must be created by the teachers; moreover, they must adopt the appropriate methods and techniques in order to involve the anxious students within the classroom activities. On the other hand, the students must be confident and they must practice the language outside the classroom.

Overall, the obtained results confirmed our hypothesis that anxiety had a strong relation to the students' psychology, fear of negative evaluation, and lack of motivation. Moreover, the most stressful skill for students in our sample was speaking in front of others. After analyzing the teachers' interview, we have found that anxiety is something common in all students; however, if they try to cope with it in the classroom and work on improving themselves, they will perform confidently.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class	11	51	17	20	1
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	11	23	15	3	12
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	5	16	31	29	19
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	8	27	29	20	16
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign Language Class.	15	47	12	16	11
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	7	19	31	32	12
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	13	25	20	28	13
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	5	35	19	20	21
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	12	37	19	28	4
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	25	17	12	28	15
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	5	17	36	37	47
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	9	48	11	25	7
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	0	9	19	57	15
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	5	12	17	51	15
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1	31	28	37	3
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	5	37	17	24	16
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	19	28	19	23	12
18. I feel confident when I speak in the foreign language class.	1	28	24	43	4
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	0	15	31	40	15

20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	5	27	19	37	12
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	4	12	8	48	28
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	3	12	19	44	23
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	12	19	25	31	13
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	3	25	19	47	7
25. Language class moves so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.	16	43	11	28	3
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other class	13	25	19	31	12
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	5	28	28	31	8
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	3	27	40	24	4
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	3	24	24	43	7
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language.	9	25	32	32	1
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	3	7	20	53	17
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	5	23	20	41	11
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	5	44	7	31	3

**SA**= strongly agree; **A**= agree; **N**= neither agree nor disagree; **D** = disagree; **SD** = strongly disagree.

## Appendix II

### Questionnaire

Dear students, we want you to answer these questions that are related to the impact of language anxiety on the speaking skill. This questionnaire aims at investigating the reasons as well as the impact of anxiety on third year students' speaking skill .So, please be honest while answering these questions to guarantee the success of this investigation.

Thank you in advance for your help

#### 1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. Your age is .....

3. Do you think English is difficult to learn?

Yes

No

4. In your opinion, which skill is the most difficult to be mastered?

Reading

Writing

Listening

Speaking

5. I feel confident when I speak in English.

Yes                      NO

6. I participate in the oral classroom activities.

Always                      sometimes                      never

7. I do not feel comfortable when I speak in the front of my classmates and teachers.

Yes                                      no

8. I do not worry when I make mistakes in the oral performance.

Yes                                      no

9. I feel nervous when I know that the teacher will ask me to present

Yes                                      no

10. It will be embarrassing if I make mistakes when I am speaking in English

Yes                                      no

11. I can't speak without preparation

Yes                                      no

12. I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I make mistakes

Yes                                      no

13. I feel anxious before presenting even though I am well prepared

Yes                                      no



21. Are you encouraged to speak in the classroom? Clarify

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22. In your opinion, what are the main strategies to overcome anxiety?

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## **Appendix III**

### **Teachers' Interview**

1. In your opinion, what are the main reasons that make students feel anxious?
2. Can you tell us about the signs of an anxious student?
3. When is anxiety more likely to occur?
4. According to your teaching experience, what do you suggest as solutions to reduce anxiety?

## Appendix IV

### Samples of students' answers:

A/

20. In your view, what are the reasons that make the students feel anxious while speaking?

We do not practice English. The teachers use just the traditional way. They speak too much in the class and don't give us the opportunity to practice what we have learnt.

20. In your view, what are the reasons that make the students feel anxious while speaking?

The teacher is the main reasons that make the student feel anxious because there are some teachers who make the student feel that they did a huge mistake and make them

## **Appendix V**

### **Feedback of the teachers' interview:**

**Teacher A:**

**Date: April 11, 2017**

**Interviewers:** Djaaroune Fouzia & Hemiani Nadia

**Title:** The Impact of Foreign Language Anxiety on Speaking Skill

**Interviewee:** Mr. Aribi

**Q:** Interviewer

**A:** Interviewee

**Q1: In your opinion, what are the main reasons that make students feel anxious?**

**A1:** One of the main reasons is the lack of competence in which the students do not master the speaking skill

- The second reason is that the students are not involved in an environment that encourages speaking
- The third reason is that, sometimes the teacher takes a negative attitude towards the student's speaking through interrupting, discouraging his ideas or giving bad comments. Consequently, the students will be less interested in expressing his ideas.
- The fourth point or reason is related to the student himself. For instance, if the student has a problem with his pronunciation, he will feel shy and avoid speaking.

**Q2: Can you tell us about the signs of an anxious student?**

**A2:** He does not interact with his classmates and teacher.

- He usually sits in the back.

Among the physical signs:

- Red face
- He Avoids eye contact.

**Q3: When is anxiety more likely to occur?**

**A3:** It depends on module first, for example there are students who are more interested in the technical or literature modules than the civilization modules. Besides, the kind of lecture itself if the lecture is interesting, the student will be more involved. Therefore, if the teacher creates more convenient atmosphere, the student will feel less anxious

**Q4: According to your teaching experience, what do you suggest as solutions to reduce anxiety?**

**A4:**

- The student must be confident
- The teacher should not neglect or ignore students' participation.
- The teacher should not give bad comments because as long as this is student; therefore, making mistakes is not a crime
- He has to create a friendly at

**Thank you**

**Teacher B:**

**Date:** April 11, 2017

**Interviewers:** Djaaroune Fouzia & Hemiani Nadia

**Title:** The Impact of Foreign Language Anxiety on Speaking Skill

**Interviewee:** Mr. Beredda.

**Q1: In your opinion, what are the main reasons that make students feel anxious?**

**A 1:**

- The majority of students lack self-confidence and they feel shy.
- They are not encouraged enough to speak or to participate in the classroom
- Students' fear of making mistakes
- Lack of practice

**Q2: Can you tell us about the signs of an anxious student?**

**A2:**

- They keep silent for a long time.
- They think for a while before answering then they hesitate in saying sentences and words.
- Sometimes they repeat the same pattern without going further.
- Shaking hands and trembling.
- Red faces.

**Q3: When is anxiety more likely to occur?**

**A3:** When the students are asked to answer directly in the classroom without preparation

**Q4: According to your teaching experience, what do you suggest as solutions to reduce anxiety?**

**A4:** According to my experience in teaching, I have noticed that there are many master as well as third year students, who are expected to have a good level in presenting, do not know the norms and measures of delivering a good presentation. Therefore, teachers must show their students at the first year level how to deliver an effective oral presentation.

- Creating comfortable atmosphere.
- Encouraging students to speak in all modules.
- Make challenges between students through debating activities.
- Make the students work in groups.
- The teacher should focus on all students in order to make them feel that they are equal and no one is inferior or superior.

Thank you for choosing  
me as one of your  
interviewees.

**Teacher C:**

**Date: Mai 3, 2017**

**Interviewers:** Djaaroune Fouzia & Hemiani Nadia

**Title:** The Impact of Foreign Language Anxiety on Speaking Skill

**Interviewee:** Mr. Mkhaneh Yousef

**Q1: In your opinion, what are the main reasons that make students feel anxious?**

**A1:** Most of my students feel anxious when they are not following the lesson. Sometimes they feel anxious because of other reasons that are not related to the classroom situation.

**Q2: Can you tell us about the signs of an anxious student?**

**A2:** An anxious student is an individual who is not calm, who is talking to his classmates and sometimes using his phone instead of paying attention to the lesson.

**Q3: When is anxiety more likely to occur?**

**A3:** Anxiety cannot be linked to a single situation or reason as it is triggered by many factors. Yet, I do believe that anxiety occurs generally when the connection between the teacher and student is broken. In other words, when the student is no longer feeling at ease within the walls of the classroom.

**Q4: According to your teaching experience, what do you suggest as solutions to reduce anxiety?**

**A4:** As a humanistic teacher, I do believe that if the students like the teacher, they would also like the module he/ she teaches and consequently avoiding any possible anxious situations. It is vital to provide a friendly atmosphere in the classroom so that students feel at ease to learn and express themselves with no restrictions.