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Empowering learners' strategies to overcome language anxiety in EFL speaking performance.

Case Study of First Year EFL Students of the University of Biskra

A Dissertation submitted to the Department of English and literature in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's degree in sciences of the language.

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Dedication

In the name of Allah , most Merciful, Most compassionate

I dedicate this work toTo my dearest father,

Throughout my life, you have been my guiding light and a source ofunwavering support.

Your love, wisdom, and strength have shaped me intothe person I am today. You have been there for me in every challenge,offering gentle guidance and encouragement along the way.

On this special day, I want to express my deepest gratitude and love for you,Dad. Your presence in my life is a true blessing, and I am forever thankful foryour love, support, and guidance. You are my hero and role model.

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May Allah bless you all, thank you.

Abstract

Foreign language anxiety is considered as a very important issue that most foreign language learners suffer from. The present study examines the issue of foreign language speaking anxiety, and it aims to realize two main objectives. First, it aims to identify the effects of anxiety on students' speaking performance, second, it aims to look for effective strategies that learners can use in order to decrease anxiety and enhance foreign language speaking performance. The study depends on two main data gathering tools: a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire is administered to sixty (60) students of first year LMD of English at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University. The interview is done with eight (8) teachers of the department of English teaching different English modules at Mohamed Kheider Biskra University. The findings of the study illustrate that most foreign language students tend to be anxious in speaking situations more than the other situations like listening, reading and writing. There are different factors that lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety which hurdle their learning and their speaking performance. The outcomes also show plenty and diverse strategies that learners can depend on to minimize foreign language speaking anxiety and that can lead to students' better speaking performance. The findings prove the hypothesis which states that if students recognize the challenges they face in speaking English as a non-native language and learn effective strategies for reducing speaking anxiety, they can overcome their anxiety and improve their performance.

Keywords: *anxiety, biskra university, first year, speaking, strategies.*

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a foreign language.

FLL: Foreign Language Learning.

FL: Foreign Language.

LMD: License/ Magister /Doctorate.

RQ: Research Question.

Q: Question.

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General Introduction

Background of the study

In the process of learning English as a foreign language, there are four essential skills that need to be mastered: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Among these skills, speaking holds a particularly significant role as it is a productive skill that plays a crucial role in communication.

Through speaking, individuals are able to convey ideas, express feelings, and exchange information, making it an important skill, especially in the era of globalization. However, for foreign language learners, practicing speaking English can be challenging. It is especially difficult for students who do not use English as their primary mode of communication. Some students may have numerous ideas to express but struggle to articulate them effectively. On the other hand, some students face difficulties in communicating and often experience anxiety-related issues.

The speaking anxiety refers to the fear, nervousness, or worry learners feel when speaking in front of others or in unfamiliar English situations. This anxiety significantly affects EFL learners' ability to learn and use English, as it can undermine their confidence and lead them to avoid speaking opportunities.

To overcome speaking anxiety, EFL learners can employ various strategies that can help to cope with this problem. These strategies aim to help learners develop greater confidence, improve their speaking skills, and enhance their overall language learning experience. By understanding and utilizing these strategies, learners can effectively reduce speaking anxiety and perform better in the classroom.

The present study aims to investigate the strategies employed by learners to reduce anxiety during speaking performances in the classroom. By gaining insights into these

strategies, we can better support EFL learners in their journey to overcome speaking anxiety, thereby facilitating their language learning progress.

Statement of the problem

Public speaking often induces anxiety, a feeling exacerbated for language learners. Overcoming this anxiety presents a significant challenge. When learners grapple with anxiety during speaking engagements, it obstructs effective communication, stunts language acquisition, and diminishes their overall learning journey.

Thus, EFL learners employ various strategies during classroom or study sessions. These methods directly influence students' speaking performance and alleviate their English-speaking anxiety. Hence, our research delves into identifying the root causes of foreign language anxiety and identifying strategies learners can employ to mitigate this emotional hurdle.

Review of the literature

Many studies and research papers have talked about how students deal with feeling nervous when they speak English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the classroom. Some of these studies explain how students manage their anxiety during speaking activities.

In 2018, Rio Pratama conducted research on how students deal with anxiety in public speaking classes. The aim was to discover strategies to overcome anxiety in such classes at the English Education Study Program of Tanjungpura University of Pontianak, Indonesia.

The research focused on one student, Mr. X, who had experience with speaking anxiety and used various strategies to cope. Methods included personal interviews, observations, and narrative inquiries. The findings highlighted that practicing, staying calm, visualizing success, using gestures, and relying on note cards were effective strategies to manage anxiety in public speaking classes.

In Djaith's study(2016) titled "The Impact of Learning Anxiety on EFL Learners' Speaking Skill," she used a questionnaire and classroom observation to collect data. The

research uncovered that many English learners experience anxiety, particularly when speaking. Additionally, the study revealed various factors contributing to this anxiety, such as fear of communication, test anxiety, and worry about negative evaluation, all of which hinder learning and result in poor performance. Furthermore, the findings supported the research hypothesis: if learners manage their anxiety, they can improve their speaking skills.

In Singham and Adam's (2017) thesis article titled "An analysis of students' anxiety in speaking," the focus was on understanding the reasons behind students' speaking anxiety and exploring strategies to address it. Through qualitative research involving interviews and questionnaires, they identified several factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety in the classroom. These factors included a lack of familiarity with tasks, fear of making mistakes, low motivation, difficulty understanding instructions, lack of confidence, and limited English proficiency. Moreover, the study highlighted various strategies students employ to overcome speaking anxiety.

These strategies encompassed seeking support from peers, thorough preparation, relaxation techniques, adopting positive thinking approaches, and, in some cases, acceptance of the situation (resignation). This research sheds light on the multifaceted nature of speaking anxiety among students and provides insights into effective coping mechanisms to enhance their speaking skills.

Marlia (2018) conducted a study called "Reducing Students' Speaking Anxiety through Peer Group Activities." She wanted to help students feel less nervous when speaking, improve their speaking skills, and understand how anxiety affects their speaking ability. To do this, she used different methods like questionnaires, speaking tests, interviews, and observations. Marlia found that when students did activities together in groups, their anxiety about speaking went down, and they got better at speaking. She also discovered that when students felt less anxious, they tended to speak better. She identified two main reasons why students felt anxious about speaking: language difficulties and other things not related to

language. Marlia saw that speaking anxiety had different effects on students. Sometimes it pushed them to speak better, but other times it made them freeze, stammer, or feel scared.

To deal with this, students prepared well, avoided looking directly at others, and asked their friends for help. Overall, students liked doing activities together in groups. They found them useful, fun, interesting, and a new way to learn English.

Marlia's study suggests that group activities can be a helpful way to reduce speaking anxiety and improve speaking skills among students.

In conclusion, after a comprehensive review of the literature by various scholars, it is evident that numerous studies have explored strategies to address students' anxiety in the EFL classroom. All the aforementioned strategies present viable options for mitigating this issue and enhancing the overall learning experience.

Significance of the study

Based on what we have noticed among students and the negative effect of anxiety on them, it is important to conduct a research on this issue. This investigation seeks to raise the awareness about the great effect of anxiety on EFL learners, and what strategies they are used to overcome this issues

Research questions

RQ1: What is the effect of anxiety on student's speaking performance?

RQ2: How can learners reduce their anxiety while speaking?

Hypothesis

If first-year English students at Biskra University recognize the challenges they face in speaking English as a non-native language and learn effective strategies for speaking, they can reduce their anxiety and improve their performance.

Aims of the study

Our research aims are to:

To identify the effect of anxiety on student's speaking performance.

To find out strategies that can help first-year English students overcome their anxiety, actively participate in classroom discussions, and improve their speaking skills.

Research Method

To answer our research questions and test our hypothesis, we will use a mixed method approach. This means we will focus on understanding and describing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking anxiety in the classroom, as well as the strategies that learners use to overcome it. Instead of using numbers and statistics, we will gather detailed information and insights through methods such as interviews and questionnaires. This approach will help us gain a deeper understanding of EFL speaking anxiety and how learners cope with it.

Data collection methods/ tools

In this study, we will be using two different tools to collect information. The first tool is an interview that will be designed for first year teachers . We will use this interview to understand how anxiety affects students' ability to speak in front of others. The second tool is a questionnaire, but this time we will ask students about the strategies they use to deal with anxiety.

Population and sampling

Our research focuses on first-year EFL students at the University of Mohamed Kheider of Biskra, at the Faculty of Letters and Languages, specifically in the English Department, where English is taught as a foreign language. We will select this context because it provides us with participants we need for our study. We are going to randomly choose 60 students as a sample in this study. These students often experience anxiety when they have to speak English. By investigating their experiences, we aim to understand and address their language anxiety to enhance their English learning journey.

Structure of the dissertation

This research is organized into three chapters.

The first chapter reviews the literature on how the speaking anxiety among EFL learners impacts their performance. The second chapter delves into strategies learners use to reduce speaking anxiety. Finally, the last chapter focuses on practical aspects, including findings from questionnaires and data analysis gathered in the field.

Chapter One

EFL SPEAKING ANXIETY

Chapter One

Introduction

In the process of learning English as a foreign language, students can encounter a variety of difficulties, especially when they speak in front of an audience. The most common difficulty is anxiety, which hinders them from developing their speaking proficiency. Speaking anxiety is a common psychological phenomenon observed among non-native English language learners. It refers to the fear and nervousness experienced by students when they speak in front of their classmates. This chapter is about foreign language speaking anxiety. We will define foreign language anxiety and the speaking skill, explore the speaking function and its relationship with anxiety, examine the causes of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking anxiety, discuss its effects and types, and identify the symptoms of speaking anxiety.

Foreign language anxiety

Anxiety is a crucial issue that can make it difficult for students to do well in the learning process. It's a feeling of being uncomfortable and worried. Recently, many studies have focused on anxiety when learning a foreign language. Different researchers, scholars, and psychologists have looked at it in different ways.

American Psychological Association (2020) defines anxiety as "Anxiety is a psychological condition characterized by excessive and persistent feelings of worry, fear, and apprehension, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as restlessness, increased heart rate, and difficulty concentrating".

Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986) define Foreign language anxiety as the feelings of fear, nervousness, or discomfort that people experience when they are using or trying to learn

a language that is not their native language (as cited in Liu, 2019). This shows that foreign language anxiety highlights the emotional responses of fear, nervousness, and discomfort that individuals may encounter when they engage in activities involving a non-native language. These feelings can arise during both the use and learning of a foreign language.

When speaking about foreign language anxiety in the classroom, according to MacIntyre & Gardner (1991), it is the emotional strain and unease that individuals may encounter when they find themselves in situations involving the use or learning of a second or foreign language (as cited in Dewaele, 2010). Based on this definition, learners can feel stressed and apprehensive in contexts where they are using or acquiring a language that is not their native tongue. For Young (1990), "Foreign language anxiety refers to the feelings of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language learning, due to various factors such as fear of negative evaluation, social comparison, or performance anxiety" (as cited in Cheng, pp. 417-446).

Moreover, Aida (1994) viewed foreign language anxiety as "a complex psychological construct that involves feelings of uneasiness, worry, and self-doubt experienced by individuals when communicating in a second or foreign language" (as cited in Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, & Daley, 2003). In addition, Young (1991) defines foreign language anxiety as "the anxious feelings and physiological arousal experienced by learners when engaged in second or foreign language activities" (as cited in Zhang, 2016).

Ely (1995) claimed that foreign language anxiety is when people feel really stressed and uneasy when they are learning a second or foreign language. This can make it harder for them to learn the language and do well in using it. Individuals experience stress and unease while learning a second or foreign language, which can have a negative impact on their language learning progress and performance.

Based on the definitions above, Language anxiety is when students feel scared or worried when they are learning a new language. It can make them feel stressed, especially when they have to speak the language. Dealing with this anxiety is hard for students, and it can make it harder for them to learn the language well.

Definition of the speaking skill

The Speaking skill is the most important skill to acquire foreign or second language learning. Among the four key language skills, speaking is deemed to be the most important skill in learning a foreign or second language. There are several definitions of speaking that have been proposed by some experts and researchers.

Bygart in Al-Roud (2016) defines speaking skill as the capacity to effectively communicate thoughts, ideas, logic, and feelings to others through spoken language, ensuring that the intended message is conveyed clearly and received positively by the audience. Speaking skill, involve not only conveying information but also expressing emotions and reasoning. It emphasizes the significance of clear and effective communication in achieving successful interaction with listeners. The ability to articulate thoughts and ideas orally is crucial for effective interpersonal and professional communication, as it allows individuals to express themselves confidently and engage in meaningful conversations.

Gert and Hans(2008) claimed that "through speaking, people have an intention that needs to be understood by both the speaker and the audience" (p. 207). In addition to (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 76) define the speaking skill as "the ability to convey ideas, thoughts, and information verbally in a coherent and effective manner."

According to Brown (1984), speaking is a way of communicating where exchange and understand information. It involves listening, speaking, and understanding what is being

said. Leong et al.(2017) also mentioned that speaking is not just about talking, but it can also involve using body language and facial expressions to convey information. This helps ensure that the listener understands the speaker's message clearly. In simpler terms, speaking is the act of sharing information through words or non-verbal cues.

Penny (1996) define speaking as the most crucial skill for foreign language learners because they want to be able to speak it fluently. (As cited in Fernanda Kurniawan,2016)When teaching and learning a language, it's essential to focus on speaking. Taking speaking courses gives students chances to practice speaking the new language.

According to Brown (2007)effective communication in interactive language functions relies heavily on social contact, where the significance lies not onlyin the verbal content but also in the manner of delivery, encompassing bodylanguage, gestures, eye contact, physical proximity, and other nonverbalcues. These nonverbal signals play a crucial role in capturing the listener'sattention and thus contribute to enhancing the overall effectiveness ofcommunication. Moreover,Tarigan(1990) define the speaking skill as “Speakingis the ability to pronounce articulation of sounds or words for expressing,stating and convey thoughts, ideas and feelings and quot”.(as cited in ariska,2019,p.24)

In summary, speaking is seen as the most important skill when learning a new language. It means being able to express your thoughts, ideas, and feelings clearly using words. It is not just about sharing information, but also about speaking confidently, having meaningful conversations, and using body language. So,Language learners who want to speak fluently taking speaking courses helps them practice and get better.

The Speaking function

(Ariska, 2019) says that Effective communication through speaking is crucial for individuals as it serves multiple purposes such as expressing opinions, emotions, and sharing knowledge in social interactions. Developing proficient speaking skills requires consistent practice through various courses. Actually, from infancy humans possess the innate potential for speaking, evident when started to make sounds. Unlike listening, reading, and writing, speaking stands out as the fundamental mode of human interaction, necessitating continual practices to master. Celce and Murcia (2001) argue that the speaking proficiency is synonymous with language proficiency for many, given its foundational role in human communications (as cited in Ariska, 2019)

The relationship between speaking and anxiety

Speaking is considered an important skill for effective communication in any language, especially for non-native speakers (Mukhlash Abrar et al, 2022). It involves using language correctly and understanding social norms (Nunan, 2003; Nunan, 2009; Hinkel, 2005). However, learning to speak a new language can be challenging, and learners often experience anxiety when trying to express their thoughts. Research has consistently shown that language anxiety and speaking ability are closely connected. For example, Horwitz et al. (1986) found that learners often feel anxious when speaking in a foreign language. Price (1991) also discovered that students in her language class felt anxious about speaking in front of their classmates (as cited in Mukhlash Abrar et al, 2022). Furthermore, Palacios (1998) demonstrated that speaking caused the most anxiety among foreign language learners (as cited in Mukhlash Abrar et al, 2022). These studies clearly demonstrate that speaking and anxiety are linked, with speaking leading to anxiety for learners of a foreign language.

Symptoms of the speaking anxiety

Some English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners have to speak in front of the class, they may show unusual behaviors because they feel anxious about speaking in public. According to Ochs (1991), there are certain signs of anxiety that can be observed in the way they speak and their body language:

- Voice: The anxiety can affect their voice. They may speak too quickly or too slowly to try and hide their nervousness. Their voice might tremble, sound flat or unemotional, or even become strained.
- Oral effect: Learners may pause frequently or have trouble finding the right words. They might repeat the same word over and over again.
- Mouth and throat: When speaking to a large audience, students may have difficulty taking normal breaths. They may breathe very slowly or hardly at all.
- Facial expressions: Speaking anxiety can be seen on the speaker's face. They may make grimaces or anxious gestures. They also tend to avoid eye contact by rolling their eyes.
- Arms and Hands: Students's hands and arms may become sweaty, fidgety, stiff, or restless.
- Body Movement: Nervous speakers often display body language gestures such as frequent body movements, fast steps, or shuffling their feet.

To sum up, those observable behaviors are the indicators of nervousness and discomfort experienced by students while speaking in public. These behaviors can have significant impact on learner's performance and communications abilities.

Types of anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of being nervous, tense, and fearful, often accompanied by physical changes in the body. However, language learning anxiety is a specific kind of anxiety that arises from having inadequate language skills. It leads to difficulties in speaking a language that is not one's native language (Abdullah, Altun, & Hama, 2022). According to Naser and Nijr (2019) discussed various types of anxiety that can arise when students feel nervous about speaking a language, as categorized by Horowitz (2001): trait, state, and situation specific anxiety .

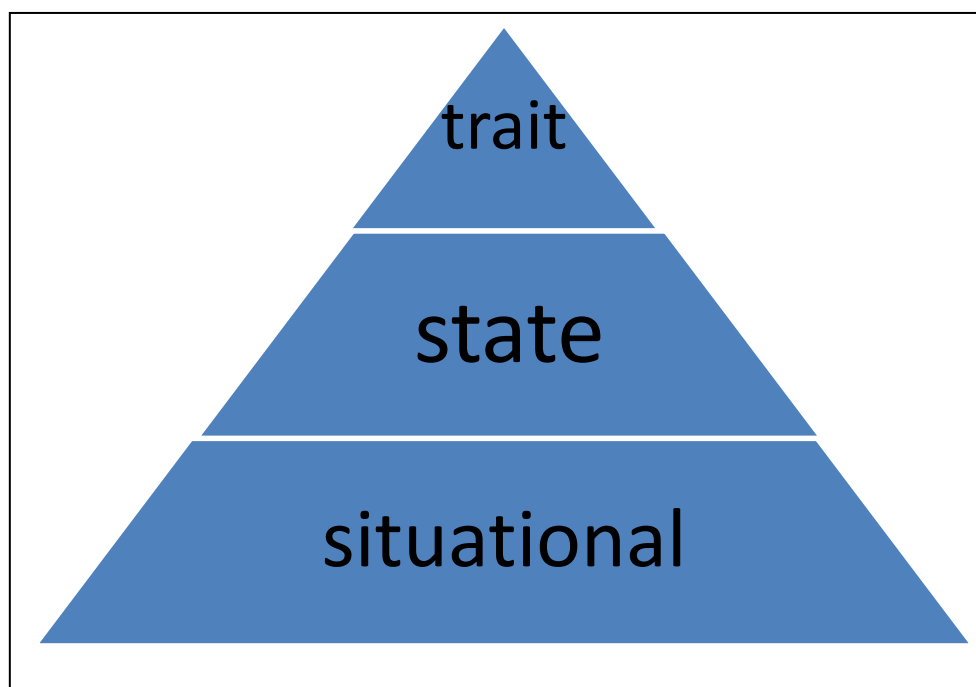


Figure 01: The pyramid represents the three types of anxiety

Figure 01: refers to the three levels of feeling anxious starting with trait anxiety which is considered as the highest level of anxiety. Unlike trait anxiety, state anxiety is moment to moment feeling apprehension . It occurs in a particular time in a situation. At last, situational specific anxiety is being uncomfortable in a specific situational.

Trait anxiety

Trait anxiety refers to a person's inherent tendency to worry, regardless of the situation they find themselves in (Abdullah, Altun, & Hama, 2022). According to Worde (1998), trait anxiety is a permanent condition and an integral part of an individual's personality (as cited in Marwan, 2016). Language anxiety is a significant concern for language learners. Anjaniputra (2018) states that learners who feel anxious about learning a foreign language may struggle to enjoy their studies. Anxious learners tend to avoid situations that make them feel worried (Pappamihel, 2002). Trait anxiety is a stable personality trait unaffected by the environment (MacIntyer, 2017). Trait anxiety is an inherent aspect of a person's personality, it remains constant over time. Moreover, trait anxiety can negatively impact cognitive performance and lead to memory difficulties (cited in Abdullah, Altun, & Hama, 2022). In all, Trait anxiety is when someone naturally worries a lot, no matter what is happening. It is a part of their personality and can make it harder for them to think and remember things.

State anxiety

Spielberger (1983) defines State anxiety as a brief reaction to a specific trigger.

Anxiety in this context is a temporary reaction to specific events or situations (as cited in Zdena Kráľová, 2016). Also Spielberger (1983) says that state anxiety happens when someone feels like a situation is dangerous. It means feeling anxious only in certain situations, like before a test. In addition, Endler and Kocovski (2001) state anxiety is a temporary psychological condition characterized by feelings of unease, apprehension, and increased physiological arousal. It is not a long-lasting or chronic state but rather a response to specific situations or events. State anxiety is a changeable state that varies based on individual experiences and the context in which it occurs. Cattell and Scheier (1961) define state anxiety as a temporary condition where you feel more worried, tense, and restless. Moreover

(Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970). State anxiety refers to a short-term emotional condition marked by sensations of worry, stress, and discomfort.

In general, state anxiety is a temporary form of anxiety that arises in specific situations or events. It causes feelings of uneasiness, increased physical activation, and worry. Unlike trait anxiety, which is more constant and natural state anxiety can vary and is influenced by personal experiences and the surrounding circumstances.

Specific situational anxiety

Situation specific anxiety is when someone feels anxious in a specific situation. (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991) This type of anxiety is different from general anxiety because it is focused on particular circumstances, like taking a test, speaking in public, or writing exams. Situation-specific anxiety means that some people feel more anxious in certain situations. Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that when it comes to learning foreign languages in classrooms, the specific anxiety people experience is because learning languages in that setting is different and special (ascited in Dilek Cakırcı, 2016). In addition to Spielberger (1983) define it as "Situation-specific anxiety refers to a temporary and context-dependent experience of anxiety in response to particular situations or events" (as cited in Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125).

According to (Sarason, 1984) Situation-specific anxiety means that some people are more likely to feel anxious in certain situations and at specific times. They may experience anxiety in response to particular circumstances or events (As cited in Zeidner, 1998, p. 253). Situation-specific anxiety is a common experience where individuals may feel more anxious in particular situations compared to others. For example, someone might feel anxious before giving a presentation in front of a large audience but feel relatively calm in other everyday

situations. Another example could be feeling anxious when taking a test or exam but feeling fine during regular class discussions.

Causes of EFL learner's speaking anxiety

Some EFL learners struggle to express themselves and participate in classroom discussions due to their fear of public speaking. This anxiety negatively affects their performance and communication abilities. According to different scholars and researchers, there are several factors that cause speaking anxiety are as follows:

Fear of negative evaluation

Learners may experience anxiety due to the fear of being negatively evaluated by their peers or instructors. This fear stems from the concern that their speaking performance will not meet the expectations of others, which can lead to feelings of embarrassment or shame (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). For example, learners may worry about making grammatical errors, using incorrect pronunciation, or having difficulty expressing themselves fluently. The fear of negative evaluation can create a sense of pressure and self-consciousness during speaking activities, contributing to anxiety.

Lack of confidence

A lack of confidence in one's speaking abilities can contribute to speaking anxiety. Learners who doubt their language skills or feel insecure about their pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar may experience increased anxiety when required to speak in a foreign or second language (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). Lack of confidence can make students feel anxious and uncomfortable when speaking a language that they are not confident with.

Previous negative experiences

Learners who have had past negative experiences or received criticism in speaking activities may develop anxiety as a result. Negative feedback, ridicule, or feeling embarrassed in past speaking situations can create a lasting impact on learners' confidence and increase their anxiety when faced with similar situations in the future (Scovel, 1978). These negative experiences may include instances where learners made mistakes, struggled to express themselves, or faced judgment from others. The fear of repeating those experiences can result in heightened anxiety and hinder learners' willingness to engage in speaking activities.

Fear of public speaking

According to Hadley (1992), many students feel anxious when they have to perform in front of their classmates. Horwitz and Young (1991) added that anxiety arises when students are learning a new language and need to speak up. Students experience the most anxiety when they have to speak in front of their teachers and classmates during foreign language classes. Kenneth and Melvin (2008), as cited in Hsu, Tsu-Chia (2011), stated that people often feel more nervous when they are on stage and afraid of interacting with the audience. Specifically, when the audience remains silent, speakers become more anxious and may forget what they wanted to say. Kurtus (2001) claimed that people often feel anxious when they have to speak to a group because they fear looking foolish or unintelligent in front of their peers and important individuals. They worry that their mind will go blank or that their lack of speaking skills will lead others to have a lower opinion of them. Being humiliated can greatly damage a person's self-esteem and confidence (as cited in Fernanda Kurniawan, 2016). Researchers agreed that certain students experience fear when they have to speak in front of a group of people, particularly when speaking in a foreign language.

The effects of anxiety on learner's performance

Anxiety is a prevalent psychological phenomenon that significantly affects various aspects of an individual's life, including academic performance. One particular area where anxiety can have a detrimental effect is in student speaking performance. (Smith, 2018)

Fluency and Coherence

According to a study by Johnson and Smith (2019), anxious students often experience speech disruptions, such as hesitations, pauses, and repetitions, which can hinder the flow of their speech. These disruptions not only affect the students' own comprehension but also make it challenging for their listeners to follow their ideas, resulting in reduced communication effectiveness. Anxiety can greatly impede students' fluency during speaking tasks. When students experience high levels of anxiety, their thoughts may become disorganized, and they may struggle to find the right words to express themselves coherently.

Accuracy and Vocabulary Use

Lee and Chang (2020) suggests that anxiety can lead to a decrease in lexical richness and complexity in students' spoken language, further compromising their overall speaking performance. Anxiety can negatively impact students' accuracy and their use of appropriate vocabulary. When students are anxious, they may experience difficulties retrieving information from memory and accessing their language resources effectively. As a result, they may make more grammatical errors, such as incorrect verb tense usage or word order, and struggle to find precise and varied vocabulary to express their ideas.

Physical Symptoms and Psychological Impact

Anxiety-related physical symptoms, such as rapid heartbeat, trembling, sweating, and shortness of breath, can exacerbate the negative effects on students' speaking performance. These symptoms can intensify the students' feelings of distress and discomfort, making it even harder for them to focus on their communication goals. Moreover, the psychological impact of anxiety can extend beyond the immediate speaking task. Students who repeatedly experience anxiety during speaking activities may develop long-term negative attitudes and beliefs about their speaking abilities, leading to decreased self-confidence and increased anxiety in future speaking situations (Brown & Jones, 2021).

Confidence and Engagement

Thompson et al. (2017) found that anxious students exhibited decreased engagement, reduced eye contact, and limited interaction with their peers, which can further hinder their speaking performance and overall growth. Anxiety can significantly undermine students' confidence and engagement during speaking tasks. Students who experience high levels of anxiety may become excessively self-conscious, constantly worrying about negative evaluation or judgment of their peers or instructors. This self-consciousness can lead to avoidance behaviors, where students actively try to avoid speaking situations or withdraw from active participation in class discussions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has focused on foreign language speaking anxiety, particularly in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning. We have explored the definition of foreign language anxiety and the speaking skill. It has been established that speaking anxiety is a common psychological phenomenon experienced by non-native English language learners, characterized by fear and nervousness when speaking in front of others. Then, we have mentioned the relationship between speaking and anxiety, highlighting how anxiety can hinder the development of speaking proficiency. Also, we defined the causes of EFL speaking anxiety, including factors such as fear of negative evaluation, lack of confidence, previous negative experience and Fear of public speaking. Furthermore, we have discussed the effects of speaking anxiety on learner's performance, including fluency and coherence, accuracy and vocabulary use, confidence and engagement. It has been recognized that speaking anxiety can hinder language learners from reaching their full potential and impede their overall language acquisition. Lastly, the chapter has addressed different types of speaking anxiety, acknowledging that students may experience varying degrees and manifestations of anxiety when speaking in a foreign language. These types include trait, state and specific situational anxiety. Overall, this chapter highlights the significance of understanding and addressing foreign language speaking anxiety in order to create a supportive and conducive learning environment.

Chapter Two
Learners' Strategies to
Overcome Language Anxiety

Strategies to Overcome Language Anxiety in EFL Speaking Performance

Chapter Two

Introduction

Speaking anxiety, also known as communication apprehension, is a common challenge that many language learners face when trying to express themselves orally. The fear of making mistakes, being judged by others, or simply not being able to convey ideas fluently can significantly hinder one's ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language. However, by employing appropriate learning strategies, learners can reduce speaking anxiety and develop their speaking skills with greater confidence and proficiency.

In this chapter, we will shed light on the learner strategies for reducing language anxiety in more detail, including the definition of learning strategies, types of learning strategies, and the teacher's role in reducing students' language anxiety.

A definition of strategy

Strategies encompass various approaches used to tackle problems or tasks, operational modes employed to achieve specific objectives, and deliberate frameworks designed to regulate and manipulate specific information (Brown, 2001, p. 210). According to Saville-Troike (2006) defines strategies as the behaviors and techniques individuals employ in their endeavors to acquire knowledge (p. 91). The process of selecting strategies is typically a conscious decision made by learners, but it is significantly shaped by factors such as their motivation, cognitive style, and personality.

According to MacIntyre, “learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning”. It highlights the active role of students in their own learning process. Learning strategies refer to the deliberate actions and approaches that students employ to optimize their learning experience and improve their understanding and retention of

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information. These strategies can encompass a variety of techniques, methods, and behaviors that students adopt to enhance their cognitive processes, problem-solving skills, information processing, and overall learning outcomes.

Therefore, Oxford (1990) defines learning strategies as specific actions that learners take to make learning easier, more enjoyable, self-directed, effective, and applicable to new situations. These actions are purposeful and personalized, allowing learners to actively participate in creating an ideal learning experience. By using these strategies, learners can improve how they understand and remember information, as well as how they apply what they have learned in different situations. It also helps them feel more in control of their learning and find pleasure in the learning process.

Scarcella and Oxford (1992) describe learning strategies as specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques employed by students to enhance their own learning. These strategies encompass a range of activities, such as actively seeking out conversation partners for language practice and providing self-encouragement when faced with challenging language tasks (p.63). By engaging in these purposeful and targeted actions, learners take an active role in their learning process, seeking opportunities to practice and improve their language skills while motivating themselves to overcome difficulties. These strategies play a crucial role in enhancing learning outcomes and facilitating the development of language proficiency.

Additionally, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) state that learning strategies refer to the unique cognitive processes, behaviors, and actions employed by individuals to acquire fresh knowledge. These strategies are deemed crucial in the context of language learning as they serve as instrumental mechanisms for cultivating communicative competence. The utilization of suitable language learning strategies not only enhances proficiency but also fosters a heightened sense of self-assurance. Moreover, Wenden says: "learning strategies are the

Strategies to Overcome Language Anxiety in EFL Speaking Performance

various operations that learners use in order to make sense of their learning ". So learning strategies are the student's abilities to respond and manage their learning in appropriate way.

Cohen (1998) defines language learning strategies as ‘the often-conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information’ (Oxford, 1989, p.4). These strategies are particularly useful in the learning or use of a second or foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about that language (Oxford, 1989, p.4). This concept is also discussed in Hong Shi (2017).”

According to Rubin (1975) learning strategies can be broadly defined as the methods or tools employed by a learner in order to acquire knowledge. Rubin categorized learning strategies into two main types: those that directly contribute to the learning process, and those that indirectly facilitate learning. Under the category of direct learning strategies, she identified six distinct types (clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning, and practice). Additionally, Rubin classified indirect learning strategies into two types (creating opportunities for practice, production tricks)(as cited in Griffiths, 2004).

O'Malley et al(1985), defines learning strategies as the actions or processes employed by learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retrieval, or utilization of information. This definition was originally put forth by Rigney (1978). In order to create a classification system with distinct and non-overlapping categories, O'Malley and his colleagues developed their own taxonomy, identifying 26 strategies that were grouped into three categories: metacognitive strategies (related to knowledge about learning), cognitive strategies (specific to particular learning activities), and social strategies. The metacognitive and cognitive categories align approximately with Rubin's indirect and direct strategies. However, the

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inclusion of the social mediation category represented an important recognition of the significance of interactive strategies in language learning.(as cited in Griffiths, 2004) .

To sum up, learning strategies are gaining widespread recognition in education. They are known by different names like learning skills, learning-to-learn skills, thinking skills, and problem-solving skills. Essentially, learning strategies refer to the methods students use to learn a wide range of subjects.

Types of language learning strategies

Language learning strategies are techniques and approaches that language learners use to enhance their acquisition and mastery of a new language. Researchers have classified these strategies into various categories based on different frameworks.

Oxford (1990) proposed a more detailed classification model of language learning strategies based on the synthesis of the previous work on good language learning strategies and her classification is “the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies” (Ellis, 1994, p. 539). She divided language learning strategies into direct strategies and indirect strategies.

Direct strategies

Direct language learning strategies involve actively engaging with the target language and require mental processing of the language. These strategies can be categorized into three groups, each employing a distinct approach and serving specific purposes.

Memory strategies

The memory strategy in language learning involves techniques such as grouping or using imagery to aid in the storage and retrieval of new information. Its main functions are to

Strategies to Overcome Language Anxiety in EFL Speaking Performance

help learners store important information they hear or read in the target language and expand their knowledge base. These strategies also assist learners in recalling information from memory when they need it for understanding or producing language.

Memory strategies are based on simple principles like organizing information, creating associations, and reviewing. They assist language learners dealing with the challenge of retaining and retrieving verbal material for effective communication. Additionally, the memory strategy of structure reviewing facilitates the transition of information from factual knowledge to the level of practical skill.

Memory strategies can be divided into two categories: creating mental linkage, applying images and sounds

- **Creating mental linkage**

Within this category, three fundamental strategies serve as the foundation for other memory strategies: grouping, associating, and utilizing context.

- **Applying images and sounds**

Four strategies encompass the use of visual imagery and auditory cues in memory retention. These strategies are: employing imagery, utilizing keywords, employing semantic mapping, and representing sounds in memory.

Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies are crucial in language acquisition as they allow learners to comprehend and generate new language using various techniques, such as summarization and deductive reasoning. These strategies are diverse, encompassing activities like repetition, expression analysis, and summarization. Despite their diversity, cognitive strategies share a common purpose of manipulating and transforming the target language for learners. They are

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also widely favored by language learners and considered essential in the language learning process (Oxford, 1990, p. 45).

Cognitive strategies fall into two sets: practicing and creating Structure for input and output .

- **Practicing**

There are five practicing strategies, among which practicing naturalistically is likely the most prominent. These strategies include repetition, formal practice involving sound and writing systems, recognizing and utilizing formulas and patterns, as well as engaging in naturalistic practice.

- **Creating structure for input and output**

Three strategies facilitate the creation of structure, which is essential for both understanding and producing language in a new language acquisition process. These strategies include note-taking, summarizing, and highlighting.

Compensation strategies

Compensation strategies, such as guessing or using synonyms, enable language learners to communicate despite their significant knowledge gaps. These strategies are particularly beneficial for beginners and intermediate learners as they help overcome limitations in all four language skills. Additionally, even advanced users can find compensation strategies valuable when they encounter unfamiliar expressions, struggle to understand something clearly, or face implicit or intentionally vague meaning.

These strategies can be categorized into two groups: intelligent guessing in listening and reading, and reducing limitations in speaking and writing.

- **Guessing intelligently in listening and reading**

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Two strategies that aid in intelligent guessing involve utilizing two distinct types of clues: linguistic clues and non-linguistic clues.

- **Reducing limitations in speaking and writing**

There are three strategies employed to minimize limitations in speaking and writing. While some of these strategies are specifically designed for speaking, others can be applied to both speaking and writing. These strategies include switching to the mother tongue, getting help and selecting the topic.

Indirect strategies

Indirect strategies are approaches that support and facilitate language learning without directly involving the target language. These strategies are applicable to all four language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing, and can be beneficial in various language learning situations. There are three types of indirect strategies:

Meta-cognitive strategies

Meta-cognitive strategies go beyond cognitive methods and enable learners to coordinate their own learning process. They are crucial for successful language acquisition, involving actions such as organizing, setting goals and objectives, considering the purpose, and planning language tasks. These strategies assist learners in arranging and planning their language learning in an efficient and effective manner. One particularly significant meta-cognitive strategy is seeking practice opportunities, which requires learners to take personal responsibility in actively seeking opportunities to practice the language, usually outside of the classroom. Meta-cognitive strategies encompass two specific approaches: centering one's learning and evaluating one's learning.

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- **Centering one's learning**

This pair of strategies assists learners in directing their attention and efforts towards specific language tasks, activities, skills, or materials. By employing these strategies, learners can establish a clear focus for their language learning endeavors. The strategies involve paying attention and delaying speech production in order to prioritize listening skills.

- **Evaluating one's learning**

Within this collection, there exist two strategies that support learners in assessing their language proficiency. One strategy entails actively recognizing and learning from errors, while the other involves evaluating overall progress. These strategies are known as self-monitoring and self-evaluating, respectively.

Affective strategies

The term affective refers to emotions, attitudes, motivations, and values. The impact of these affective factors in language learning cannot be overstated. Language learners can exert control over these factors by utilizing affective strategies. The emotional and attitudinal aspect of learners is probably one of the most significant influences on the success or failure of language learning. Proficient language learners often possess the ability to manage their emotions and attitudes towards the learning process effectively.

Affective strategies include two strategies: lowering your anxiety, and encouraging yourself .

- **Lowering your anxiety**

Three strategies for reducing anxiety are provided, each consisting of both a physical and mental components. These strategies include employing techniques such as progressive relaxation and deep breathing, utilizing music, and incorporating laughter as a means of alleviating anxiety.

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- **Encouraging yourself**

These three strategies are particularly important for language learners, especially those who rely on the encouragement. They include making positive affirmations, taking calculated risks, and rewarding oneself. It is crucial for learners to remember and consistently apply these strategies.

Social strategies

Language is a social phenomenon that involves communication among individuals. Learning a language, therefore, entails engaging with others, making social strategies crucial in this process. Social strategies facilitate language learning through interactions with others, contributing not only to improved language skills but also to enhanced self-esteem and social integration. In the realm of language learning, social strategies offer numerous advantages, including increased satisfaction for both students and teachers, heightened motivation to learn, more opportunities for language practice, valuable feedback on language errors, and a broader range of language functions utilized. Social strategies include two strategies: asking questions and empathizing with others

- **Asking Questions**

This set of strategies involves seeking assistance from individuals such as teachers, native speakers, or more proficient peers to obtain clarification, verification, and correction. The strategies involve asking for clarification and verification, as well as requesting correction when needed.

- **Empathizing with others**

The cultivation of empathy in language learners can be facilitated through the utilization of two strategies: fostering cultural comprehension and cultivating an awareness of others' thoughts and emotions.

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In summary, Effective language learning strategies lead to increased motivation and self-assurance. By instructing learners on various strategies, their belief in their own abilities and inclination towards independent learning can be strengthened, enabling them to assume responsibility for their own educational progress. It is crucial for teachers to offer learners access to appropriate learning strategies and resources, demonstrate these strategies through modeling, and provide guidance to facilitate learners' advancement and attainment of academic accomplishments.

Table 01: Classification of language learning strategies according to different researchers.

Researcher	Classification					
Stern (1975)	Planning Strategy	Active Strategy	Empathic Strategy	Formal Strategy	Experimental Strategy	
	Semantic Strategy	Practice Strategy	Communication Strategy	Internalization Strategy		
Naiman et al (1978)	Active task approach	Realization of language as a system	Realization of language as a means of communication	Management of affective demands	Self-monitoring	
Rubin (1987)	Direct Strategies			Indirect Strategies		
	Learning Strategies		Communication Strategies		Social Strategies	
	Cognitive Strategies	Metacognitive Strategies				
O'Malley & Chamot (1990)	Cognitive Strategies		Metacognitive Strategies		Social/Affective Strategies	
Oxford (1990)	Direct Strategies			Indirect Strategies		
	Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
Wenden (1991)	Cognitive Strategies		Self-Management Strategies			

Anxiety is a detrimental emotion that can cause students to feel less assured about their performance in the classroom. In this instance, each student possesses a technique to reduce their anxiety when speaking English. According to Brown (2000,p.113), strategies refer to particular approaches or methods employed to address a problem or task, operational procedures aimed at attaining a specific goal, and deliberate plans for managing and

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manipulating specific information. According to Tanveer (2007), the primary concept for alleviating anxiety is to create a language classroom environment that is less formal and more enjoyable. In such an environment, students should feel comfortable making mistakes without appearing or sounding unskilled. It is crucial for teachers to be friendly and incorporate fun activities into their classes, rather than being strictly and indifferent towards their students. In fact, teachers should demonstrate awareness of the presence of anxious students and show empathy towards them (Liu, 2009).

According to Kondo & Ling (2004, p. 262), they identified five strategies for reducing language anxiety in English speaking. Their research focused on investigating tactics used to cope with language anxiety, with the goal of developing a typology of strategies employed by students to manage and alleviate anxiety. They categorized these strategies as the "Five-Cluster Solution," which includes Preparation, Relaxation, Positive Thinking, Peer Seeking, and Resignation.

- **Preparation**

Preparation involves taking steps to effectively manage an upcoming challenge or task by improving learning and study strategies. It can be seen as a behavioral approach, as it focuses on the behavioral aspects of language learning that contribute to successful performance in the classroom. By employing these strategies, students are expected to enhance their perceived mastery of the subject matter, thereby reducing anxiety related to language classes. Preparation encompasses actions and processes aimed at getting ready for an event, test, or responsibility.

Some common elements of preparation include using English regularly, dedicating time to studying, seeking assistance from friends, consulting dictionaries, asking questions to the teacher, mentally practicing English, actively listening to the teacher, striving for

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improved performance, establishing a daily habit of studying English, self-preparation, careful reflection on areas of difficulty, thorough reading, focusing during class, reviewing material prior to being called upon by the teacher, and so on.

- **Relaxation**

Relaxation is distinguished by its emotional nature, as it focuses on easing physical tension associated with heightened emotions. It encompasses strategies aimed at alleviating somatic symptoms of anxiety. Relaxation techniques restore equilibrium to the body, reducing stress and anxiety hormones while enhancing blood circulation to the brain. Relaxation is a mentally engaged process that induces a state of bodily relaxation. Common practices of relaxation include taking deep breaths, finding inner calmness, closing one's eyes, pretend to be calm, gentle moving the body, touching one's hair, engaging in hand movements, and observing the time.

- **Positive thinking**

Positive thinking involves efforts to suppress or modify problematic thought patterns associated with language learning. Its primary function is to alleviate the cognitive processes that contribute to students' anxiety. Positive thinking encompasses the ability to shape our perspective on life and our self-perception. These strategies aim to shift attention away from stressful situations and redirect it. Towards positive and pleasant stimuli, providing relief to anxious students. Examples of positive thinking include fostering self-confidence, embracing enjoyment of the lesson, maintaining belief in oneself, adopting a relaxed mindset, affirming our ability to succeed, engaging in prayer, not to think of the consequences, affirming our lack of anxiety, enjoy the English language, entertaining humorous thoughts, visualizing ourselves performing exceptionally well, utilizing anxiety as a motivational force, not taking things too seriously, and so on.

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- **Peer Seeking**

Peer seeking involves students actively seeking out fellow classmates who appear to be experiencing difficulties in understanding the class material or managing their anxiety. The recognition that others are facing similar challenges can serve as a means of emotional regulation through social comparison. Common actions associated with peer seeking include reminding oneself that problems that are difficult for oneself are likely difficult for others as well, acknowledging that others may also be feeling anxious, actively searching for classmates who are struggling to comprehend the content, and engaging in conversations with friends in close proximity.

- **Resignation**

Resignation refers to the state in which students exhibit a lack of motivation to address or alleviate their language anxiety. When students express resignation, they demonstrate a determination to downplay the significance of their anxiety by avoiding confronting the issue. Common manifestations of resignation include giving up, crying, not paying attention in class, accepting the situation without trying to improve it, becoming inactive or tired in class like sleeping, not trying to resist or fight against the anxiety because they think it will not make a difference, and just trying to endure the situation without taking any action to change it.

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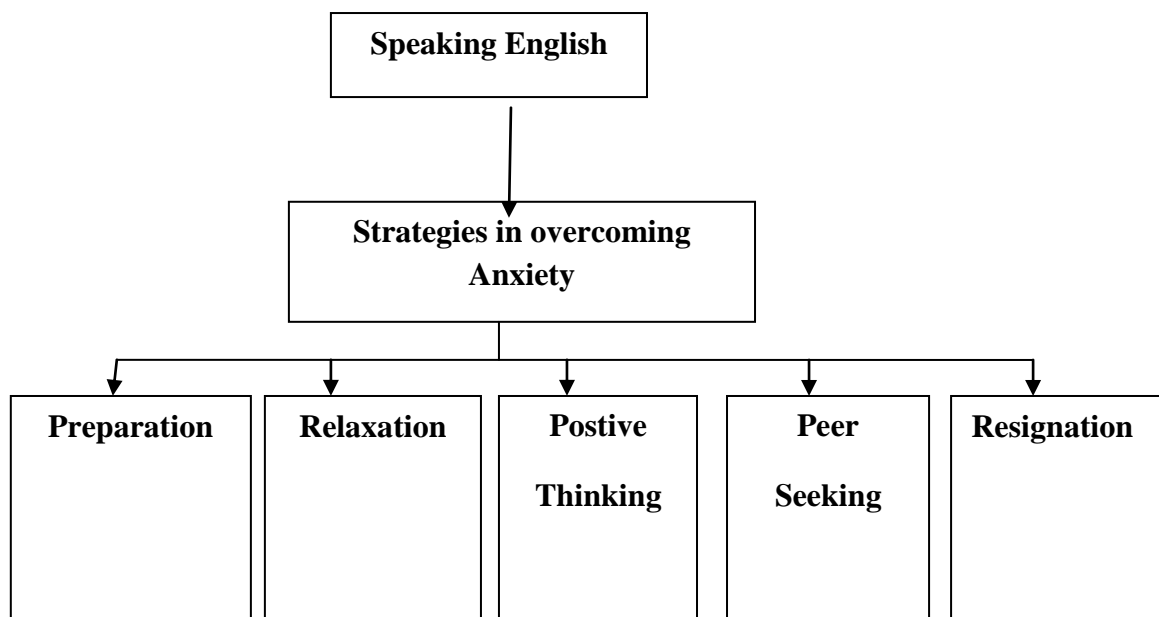


Figure 02: Kondo and ling's classification of the five types of student strategies to overcome anxiety in speaking English.

The teacher's role in reducing speech anxiety in Foreign LL

To alleviate anxiety and assist students in coping with it, numerous research studies have consistently put forth similar recommendations emphasizing the crucial role of teachers in reducing students' speaking anxiety. Teachers are advised to implement interventions aimed at supporting anxious learners, given the significant influence of speaking anxiety on students' learning and speaking abilities. The following suggestions outline tips that teachers can employ to minimize students' speaking anxiety levels:

- **Relationship in the classroom**

Teachers can employ various strategies to establish a classroom culture that reduces students' language anxiety. One effective strategy is fostering a strong teacher-student relationship, which plays a crucial role in creating a safe and supportive learning environment (McCown et al., 2010; Curry & Maher, 2020). According to McCown et al. (2010), a positive student-teacher relationship promotes interaction and encourages students to speak English

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without fear of making mistakes. Teachers who engage with students in a positive manner can help them overcome their hesitation and improve their speaking skills (Curry & Maher, 2020)

Building this relationship can be facilitated through the use of humor, positive body language, and non-verbal approval. Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) suggest that incorporating humor, addressing students by their first names, maintaining eye contact, and displaying positive body language can foster meaningful connections between teachers and students. Additionally, these practices, along with humor, positive body language, and non-verbal approval, can reduce language anxiety and enhance student motivation to develop their speaking abilities. Curry and Maher (2020) also highlight the importance of humor, creating a friendly and relaxed classroom atmosphere, and demonstrating patience in language teaching. Implementing these strategies can increase students' willingness to participate in speaking tasks, which ultimately aids in reducing language anxiety.

- **Feedback**

In the context of creating a classroom culture to alleviate language anxiety, feedback plays a crucial role in addressing students' concerns and facilitating their speaking development (Yasuda & Nabei, 2018). According to Fu and Hassajni (2016), feedback refers to information, reactions, or opinions provided by individuals or systems regarding a specific process, product, or performance. It serves multiple purposes in reducing Language anxiety and is an essential component of communication and learning as it helps evaluate and enhance performance. Firstly, feedback assists learners in identifying specific areas for improvement in their language skills. By providing feedback, teachers and students can identify challenges or misconceptions that learners may face, allowing them to gain conceptual clarity and focus their efforts on effectively addressing those difficulties. Feedback from both teachers and peers is valuable in supporting learners' coping strategies and promoting the development of their spoken English skills (Inada, 2021). Targeted feedback helps alleviate Language anxiety

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by offering learners a clear path for improvement and guidance in their language learning journey.

- **Scaffolding**

Goh (2017) defines scaffolding as an instructional strategy or support system that facilitates learning and encourages independent thinking and problem-solving skills in students. It involves cognitive modeling, which entails explaining the necessary steps for task completion. The provision of scaffolding is crucial in fostering students' speaking development. When teaching spoken English, scaffolding can take the form of prompts, sentence frames, or vocabulary aids to assist students during speaking activities. These scaffolds not only alleviate the cognitive load on students but also equip them with the necessary tools to express their ideas with greater confidence (Farida & Rozi, 2022). As students gain proficiency and become more comfortable with speaking, the level of support can be gradually reduced, empowering them to communicate independently (Goh, 2017). Additionally, effective utilization of scaffolding techniques, coupled with cultivating a constructive attitude toward errors and providing continuous support, allows educators to establish a conducive learning environment that motivates students to embrace challenges and actively participate in speaking tasks (Farida & Rozi, 2022). By incorporating scaffolding into the teaching of spoken English, students can enhance their language skills, develop fluency, and gain the confidence required for effective communication in real-life situations, while also reducing language anxiety.

- **Supportive and captivating classroom activities**

Teachers play a crucial role in helping students improve their speaking skills and reduce language anxiety by implementing supportive and captivating classroom activities. It is important to align speaking activities with students' interests in order to enhance their motivation to engage in English conversation (Curry & Maher, 2020). By incorporating

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materials and tasks that are relevant to students' preferences and incorporating topics that resonate with their interests, teachers can create a sense of relevance and motivation, thus alleviating Language anxiety. To promote student participation and reduce language anxiety. Curry & Maher(2020) advocate for the design of fun and interactive activities that inspire students' desire to communicate effectively in English, ultimately boosting their confidence and speaking proficiency. Additionally, Inada (2021) emphasizes the significance of considering students' interests, reactions, feelings, and learning styles when designing classroom activities and selecting teaching techniques. By incorporating materials and approaches that resonate with students, teachers can sustain their enthusiasm for speaking English, leading to a reduction in Language anxiety .In summary, teachers can create an engaging classroom environment and foster student participation by aligning activities with students' interests and preferences. By using engaging materials and providing opportunities for active participation, teachers can significantly contribute to the development of students' speaking skills while reducing speaking anxiety.

- **Journal writing**

Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) explore the advantages of expressing concerns verbally and engaging in journal writing as strategies for managing language anxiety. They also highlight coping mechanisms such as preparation and positive thinking. Recognizing shared fears among students can help alleviate language anxiety and enhance their comfort level in speaking within the classroom. Journal writing, in particular, serves as an effective tool for students to acknowledge and address their emotions. Inada (2021) asserts that integrating journal writing into the classroom can be valuable in helping students identify and understand their language anxiety. This practice not only enables students to gain insights into their anxieties but also assists in developing more realistic expectations regarding their speaking proficiency. Consistent with scholarly research, Inada's study suggests that adopting

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a student-centered approach through journal writing allows teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the origins and triggers of language anxiety. By comprehending the underlying factors contributing to language anxiety, teachers can create a supportive and relaxed learning environment that enhances students' motivation to participate in English-speaking activities.

Pedagogical Aspects

McCown et al. (2010) contribute to the discussion on reducing language anxiety by presenting three pedagogical aspects that can be integrated into the English language classroom. These aspects include delayed response, error correction, and creating a predictable classroom environment, which provide effective strategies to promote student participation and alleviate language anxiety. The authors emphasize the importance of delayed response as a strategy to reduce language anxiety and encourage student engagement in speaking activities. By allowing sufficient time for students to formulate their responses and shifting the focus away from individual performance, teachers can create a supportive and inclusive speaking environment. This approach not only alleviates pressure on individual students but also promotes equal participation and a positive classroom atmosphere. Regarding error correction, McCown et al. (2010) highlight the significance of focusing on both the form of the desired contribution and the content of students' responses. Instead of simply categorizing utterances as correct or incorrect, instructors should provide constructive feedback that addresses both linguistic accuracy and content. This approach guides students towards improvement while maintaining their motivation and self-confidence. Additionally, the authors advocate for creating a predictable classroom environment in terms of expectations for involvement, rather than making specific tasks or an activity order predictable, which could lead to student boredom. By establishing clear expectations for

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student participation and engagement, instructors can foster a supportive and stimulating learning environment that enhances student confidence and active involvement.

Cooperative Learning

According to Vellayan et al. (2021), integrating cooperative learning methods presents an additional and efficient approach to improving students' speaking skills and addressing language anxiety. Cooperative learning methods involve instructional strategies that prioritize collaboration, active participation, and shared responsibility among students (Johnsson & Johnsson, 2011). By adopting a cooperative learning approach, a supportive climate of mutual assistance, interaction, and positive interdependence is cultivated among group members.

Vellayan et al. ,(2021) argue that the incorporation of cooperative learning leads to six positive outcomes: increased academic achievement, a student-centered learning environment, enhanced student accountability and responsibility for their own learning and that of their peers, greater engagement in active learning practices, development of interpersonal and interactive skills, and ultimately, heightened confidence and motivation among students. These findings are particularly relevant for addressing Language Anxiety because cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to engage in meaningful interactions and practice their speaking skills within a supportive and collaborative setting (Johnsson & Johnsson,2011).

Tsou et al. (2006) highlight the use of collaborative storytelling as a specific way to incorporate cooperative learning, where students work together to create stories. By engaging in collaborative storytelling, students can enhance their speaking proficiency through collaborative communication in English during the construction of stories. Through cooperative learning, students can reduce Language anxiety by sharing their language learning journey with peers, receiving support and feedback, and developing confidence in

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their ability to communicate effectively in the target language. Therefore, incorporating cooperative learning methods represents a valuable approach for both enhancing students' speaking skills and mitigating Language anxiety in the language classroom.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, learning strategies refer to the various approaches and techniques that learners employ to enhance their learning experiences and outcomes. These strategies can be categorized into direct strategies, which include memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies, and indirect strategies, which comprise meta-cognitive, affective, and social strategies. Direct learning strategies involve the use of specific techniques to enhance memory retention, cognitive processes, and compensatory mechanisms.

On the other hand, indirect learning strategies are centered around metacognition, emotions, and social interactions. When it comes to overcoming speaking anxiety, learners can employ several strategies. Preparation involves thorough practice and familiarization with the topic or content, while relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or visualization, can help reduce anxiety levels. Adopting positive thinking involves reframing negative thoughts and building self-confidence. Peer seeking allows learners to seek assistance and support from classmates or language partners, while resignation refers to accepting and managing anxiety rather than trying to eliminate it entirely. The role of the teacher is crucial in reducing students' speaking anxiety. A positive and supportive relationship in the classroom creates a safe and comfortable learning environment, allowing students to feel more at ease when speaking. Providing constructive feedback helps students improve their speaking skills and boosts their confidence. Scaffolding techniques, such as breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps, can help students gradually build their speaking abilities. Engaging and captivating classroom activities encourage active participation and reduce anxiety.

Journal writing can serve as a reflective tool for students to express their thoughts and feelings about their speaking experiences. Pedagogical aspects, such as clear instructions, well-organized materials, and appropriate pacing, contribute to a conducive learning

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environment. Lastly, incorporating cooperative learning activities promotes peer interaction and collaboration, providing additional support and reducing anxiety. By utilizing various learning strategies, learners can overcome speaking anxiety and enhance their speaking skills. The teacher's role is vital in creating a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters confidence, provides guidance, and offers opportunities for effective language practice. By employing these strategies and leveraging the teacher's support, learners can gradually reduce their speaking anxiety and improve their overall oral communication abilities.

Chapter Three

Field Work

CHAPTER THREE: FIELD WORK

Introduction

After presenting the literature review about student's foreign language speaking anxiety in the first chapter and learners' strategies to overcome language anxiety in the second chapter; the present chapter represents the field work which mainly devoted to the interpretation of the results gathered from the teacher's interview and student's questionnaire.

Students' Questionnaires

One of the instruments that we have used in collecting data is a questionnaire. Through this questionnaire, we aim to discover the existence of anxiety in learning the foreign language. Besides, we intend to know the causes that may lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety, and the effects of anxiety on their speaking skill development. In addition, our main goal is to discover the students' strategies in reducing their speaking anxiety. The questionnaire was distributed to sixty participants from the whole population of First year LMD students of English at Mohammed Khider University of Biskra. The students' feedback questionnaire contains three sections. The first section is entitled "Background Information" aims to obtain information about the participants such as their gender, attitudes towards English, etc. The second one is entitled "English as a foreign language speaking anxiety" aims to discover the existence of anxiety on the participants' speaking performance. The third one is entitled "Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety" aims to know the students' strategies for reducing foreign language speaking anxiety in promoting the participants' speaking performance .

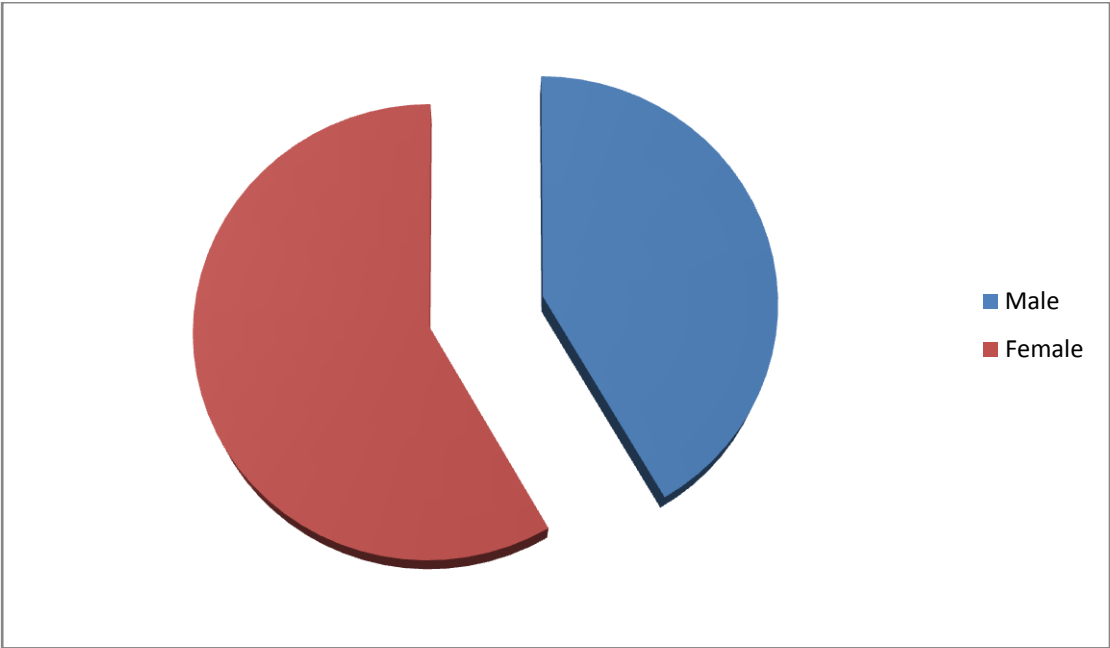
Results' Analysis

Section one

Q1: Students' Gender

Table 02: Students' Gender

	N	Percentage
Male	25	41.67 %
Female	35	58.33 %
Total	60	100%



Pie01: Students' Gender

Table 1 reveals that out of the total sample, 58,33% (35 individuals) are females, while 41,66% (25 individuals) are males. This indicates that our study includes both male and female students, with a higher representation of females. The information obtained from this table has implications for our study, as it enables us to explore the presence of anxiety within one gender or across both genders. Additionally, it is important to consider the gender distribution in our population, with females outnumbering males, as it can impact the

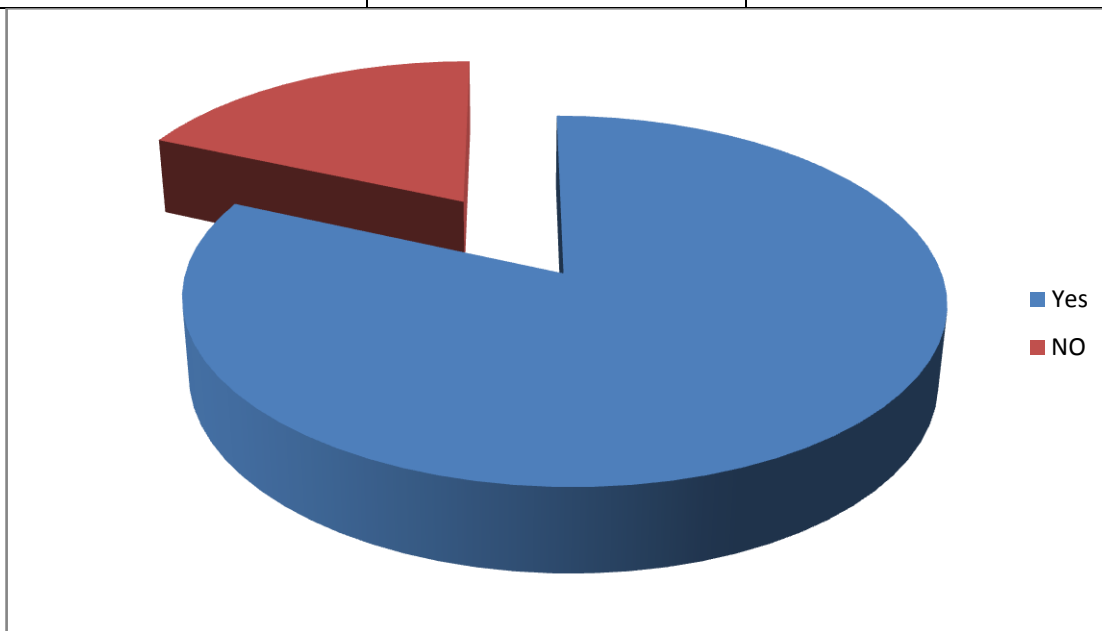
Strategies to Overcome Language Anxiety in EFL Speaking Performance

outcomes and findings of our study. So, we can notice that females are more interested to learn the English language than males.

Q2: Was it your choice to study English?

Table 03: Student's choice of studying English language

	N	Percentage
Yes	49	81.67 %
No	11	18.33%
Total	60	100%



Pie02: Student's choice of studying English language

Table 2 shows that 81.66% of the students said that studying the English language was their own choice, while 18.33% indicated that it was not their choice. The fact that a majority of students (81.66%) stated that studying English was their own choice suggests that they have a personal interest or motivation to learn the language. This could be due to various reasons such as recognizing the importance and relevance of English in today's globalized world or career aspirations that require English proficiency. On the other hand, the 18.33% of students who indicated that studying English was not their choice may have different circumstances or preferences. It's possible that they have external factors influencing their

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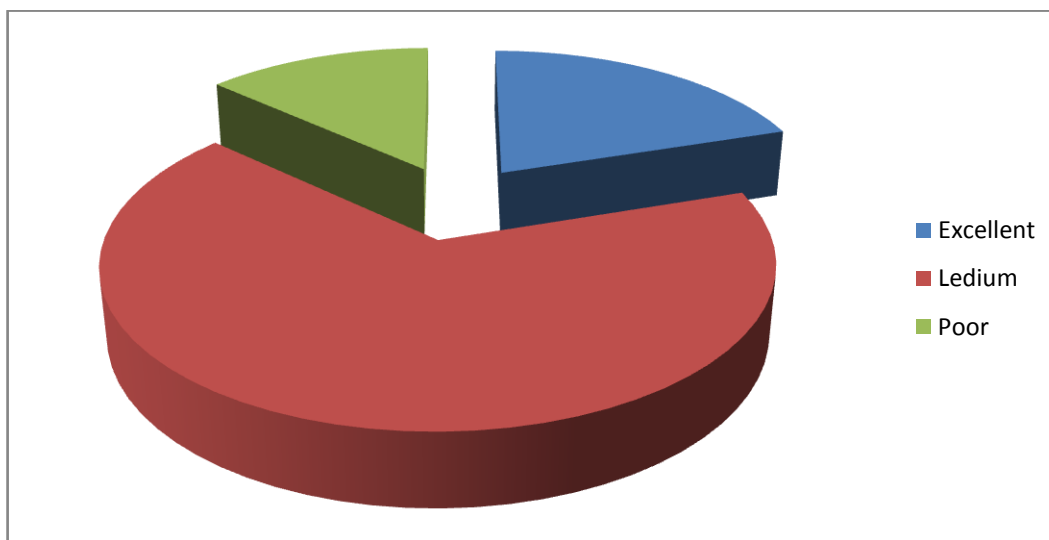
language learning decisions, such as school requirements or limited options.

Overall, these results highlight the diversity of students' choices and motivations when it comes to studying English.

Q3:How do you find your level in English?

Table 04: Student's level in English

	N	Percentage
Excellent	12	20%
Medium	40	66.67%
Poor	08	13.33 %
Total	60	100%



Pie03: Student's level in English.

Based on the responses from the 60 students who asked to evaluate their levels in the English language, it appears that the majority of the students (66.66%) rated their English level as medium, while a significant portion (20%) rated it as excellent. A smaller percentage (13.33%) considered their English level to be poor, this may be as a result of the lack of self-confidence.

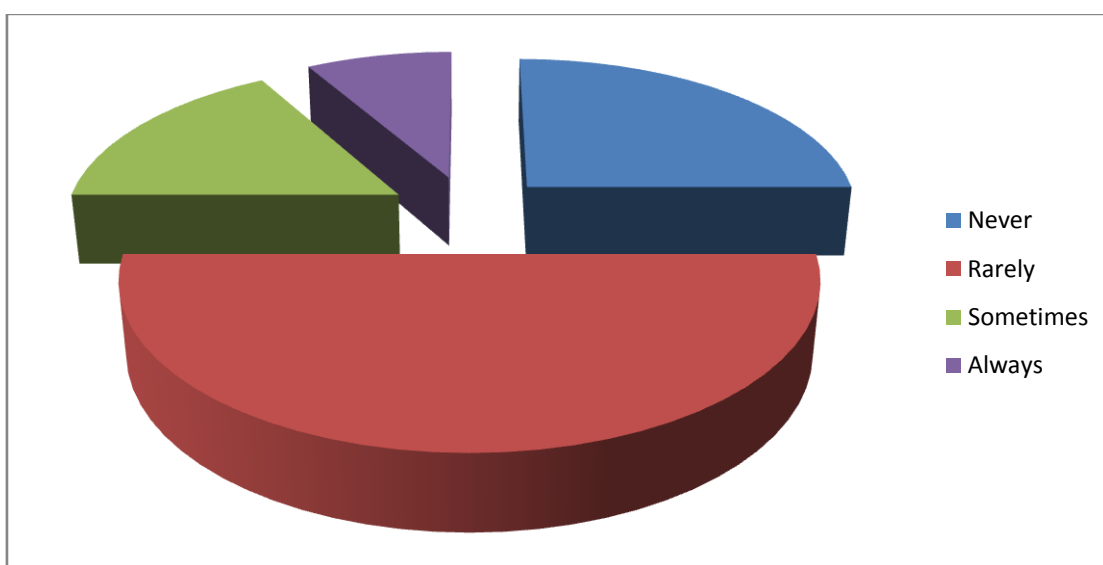
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Section two

Q1: How often do you participate in your oral classroom?

Table 05: Student's participation in oral class

	N	Percentage
Never	15	25%
Rarely	30	50 %
Sometimes	10	16.67%
Always	05	08.33
Total	60	100%



Pie04: Student's participation in oral class.

It is clear from the results of table 4 that most of the students (50%) rarely participating, indicating a significant lack of involvement in class activities. This could be due to various factors such as shyness, disinterest, or feeling uncomfortable speaking up in class. While (8,33%)of students say "always" participating This indicates that a small minority of students participate in class activities consistently. However, A slightly larger percentage of

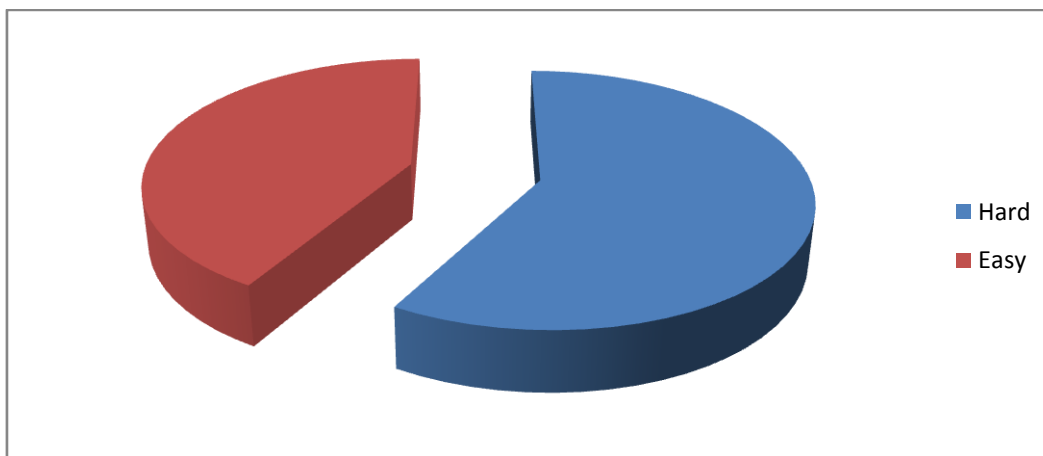
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students participate sometimes(16,66%) suggesting they engage with class activities periodically but may not consistently contribute and only (25%) of them reported never participating in class activities. This is a concerning finding as it suggests a substantial portion of the class is disengaged or facing significant barriers to participation.

Q2: What do you think about speaking English as a foreign language?

Table 06: Student's attitude toward speaking the English as a foreign language

	N	Percentage
Hard	35	58.33 %
Easy	25	41.67%
Total	60	100%



Pie05: Student's attitude toward speaking the English as a foreign language

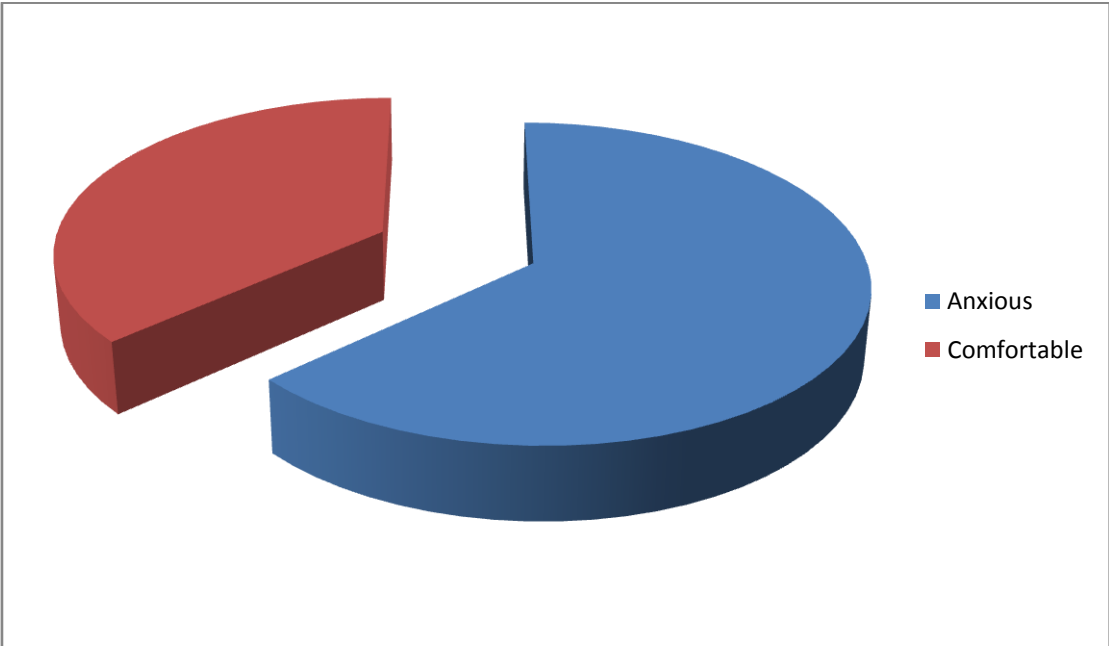
Table (5) shows the number of students who answered that speaking the English language is a hard task and who do not. Most of the students (58,33%) think speaking English as a foreign language is hard whereas(41,66%)of them find it easy . As the result shows that for many students speaking English feels manageable, but there is also a significant number who struggle with it. This might be due to various reasons like different learning styles, exposure to English, or how it is taught. It is essential to provide support and resources to help those who find it hard so everyone can feel confident speaking English.

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Q3: How do you feel when you are asked to speak in the classroom?

Table 07: Student's feeling when they asked to speak in class

	N	Percentage
Anxious	38	63.33 %
Comfortable	22	36.67%
Total	60	100%



Pie06: Student's feeling when they asked to speak in class

The results above show that 22 participants (36.66%) feel comfortable when asked to speak in class, while 38 participants (63.33%) feel anxious when asked to speak in a foreign language in class. The number of students who feel anxious when asked to speak in class is higher than the number of students who feel comfortable. From the results, we infer that students who feel comfortable when speaking in the classroom is due to their high level of self-confidence, while the majority of students who feel anxious to participate because

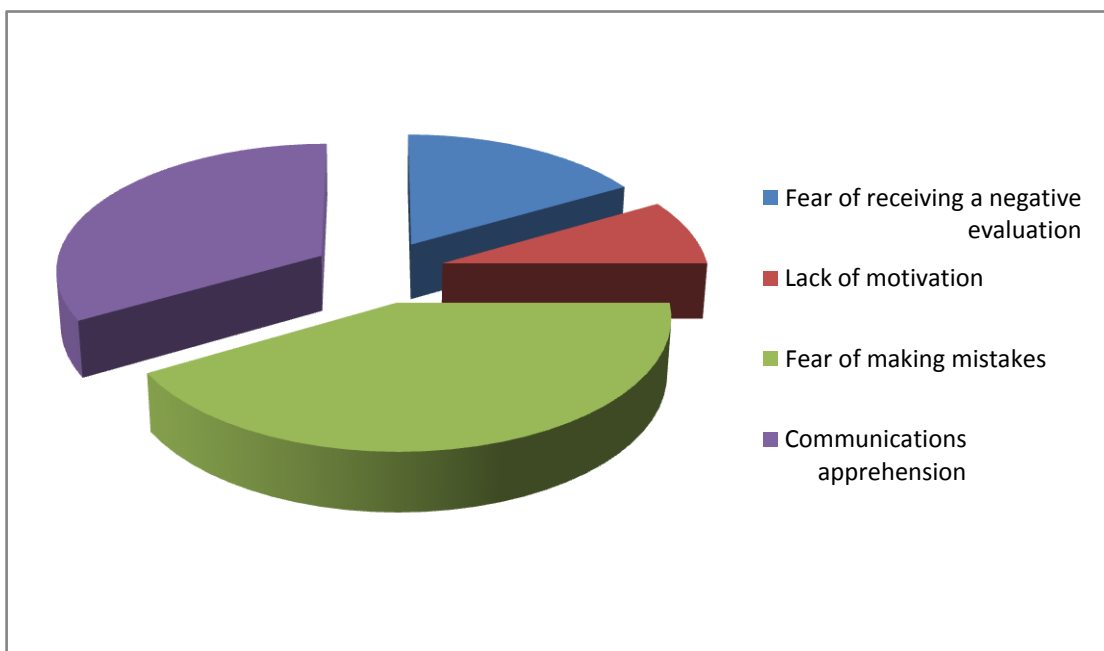
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anxiety restrains them from expressing their ideas, or because anxiety is a part of their personalities, leading them to refuse to take part in classroom discussions or speak at all.

Q4: If you feel anxious, is it because of:

Table 08: Student's causes of their speaking anxiety

	N	Percentage
Fear of receiving a negative evaluation	10	16.67%
Lack of motivation	05	08.33 %
Fear of making mistakes	25	41 %
Communication apprehension	20	33.33 %
Total	60	100%



Pie07: Student's causes of their speaking anxiety

Table (7) refers to the main cause of a student's speaking Anxiety, we asked them to choose the most effective cause for them. 25 participants (41%) chose Making mistakes, The largest percentage of respondents attribute speaking anxiety to the fear of making mistakes.

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The concern about saying something incorrect, stumbling over words, or forgetting important information can contribute to anxiety during speaking engagements. While 20 participants (33,33%) experience speaking anxiety due to general communication apprehension. This apprehension can arise from various factors, such as shyness, social anxiety, or past negative experiences in communication. Moreover, 10 (16,66%) students feel anxious when they speak the English language because of the fear of negative evaluation. Students experience anxiety due to the fear of being judged or evaluated negatively by others. The concern about how others perceive their speaking abilities and potential criticism can lead to heightened anxiety levels. In addition, only 5 (8,33%) participants attribute it to Lack of motivation. It could be that they do not find sufficient motivation or purpose in the speaking situation, resulting in decreased confidence and increased anxiety.

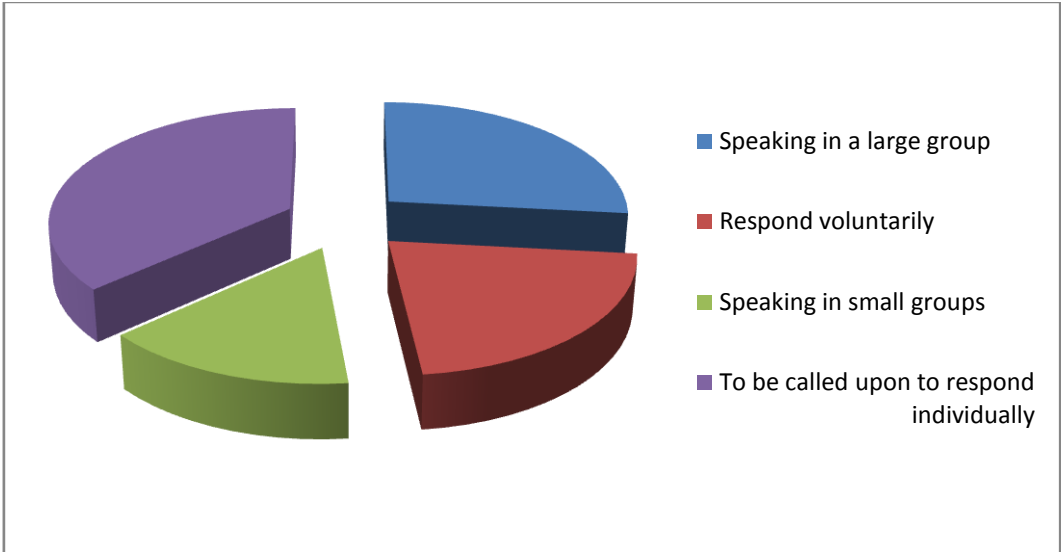
Overall, the analysis suggests that fear of negative evaluation, making mistakes, and communication apprehension are the primary causes of speaking anxiety based on the provided statistics. It's important to note that individual experiences may vary, and multiple factors can contribute to speaking anxiety in different individuals.

Q5: In which kind of speaking activities you feel more anxious

Table 09: Student's perception about the speaking activities in which they feel more anxious

	N	Percentage
Speaking in a large group	16	26.67%
Respond voluntarily	13	36.66%
Speaking in small groups	09	15 %
To be called upon to respond individually	22	21.67%
Total	60	100%

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Pie 08: Student's perception about the speaking activities in which they feel more anxious

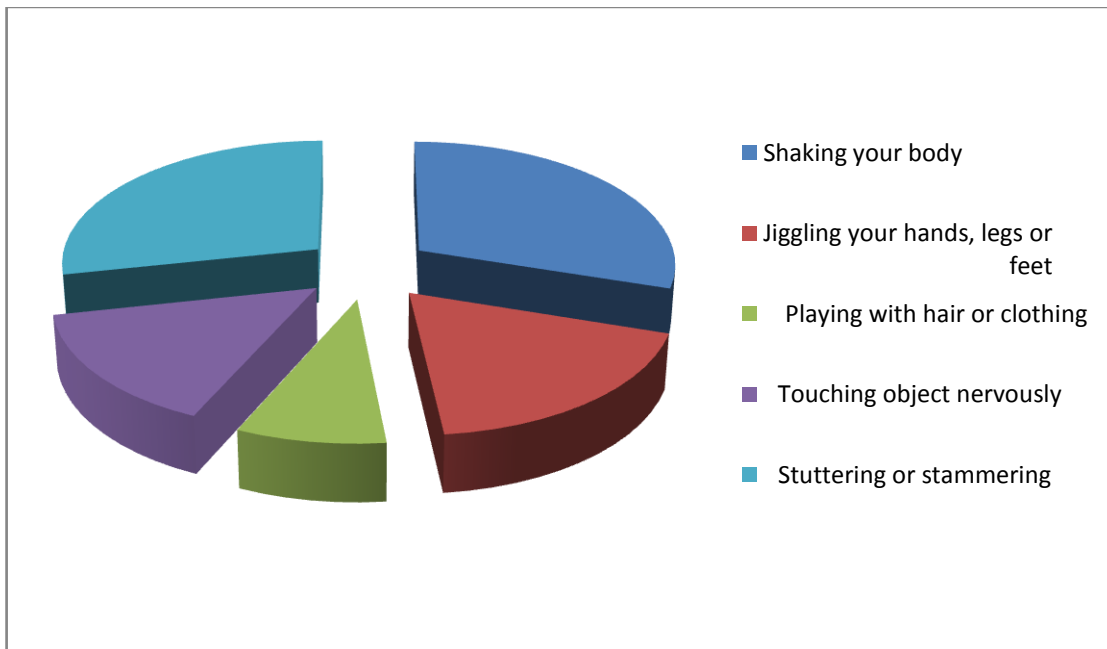
Table (8) shows clearly that Most students feel anxious when speaking to a large group(26,66%) or to be called upon to respond alone (36,66%). This shows that is the most Anxiety provoking for students. However, fewer students feel anxious when speaking in small groups (15%) or volunteering responses(21,66%). This suggests these situations are less scary. Educators can use this insight to make speaking activities less stressful for students.

Q6: Do you see any of the following behaviors in yourself while speaking in class ?

Table 10:The indicators of speaking anxiety

	N	Percentage
Shaking your body	18	30%
Jiggling your hands, legs or feet	11	18.34%
Playing with hair or clothing	05	08.33%
Touching an object nervously	09	15%
Stuttering or stammering	17	28.33%
Total	60	100%

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Pie09: The indicators of speaking anxiety

Based on the results, 30% of participants noticed that their bodies start shaking when speaking, while 28% of them responded that they experienced stuttering and stammering. Additionally, 18.33% of the participants reported jiggling their hands, legs, and feet. Furthermore, 8.33% admitted to playing with their hair and clothes. Moreover, 15% of students mentioned nervously touching objects .

The sub-question "others" aimed to reveal additional symptoms that students notice in themselves that were not mentioned in the questionnaire. Some students answered "all of them" and mentioned experiencing difficulty in finding words and feeling distracted.

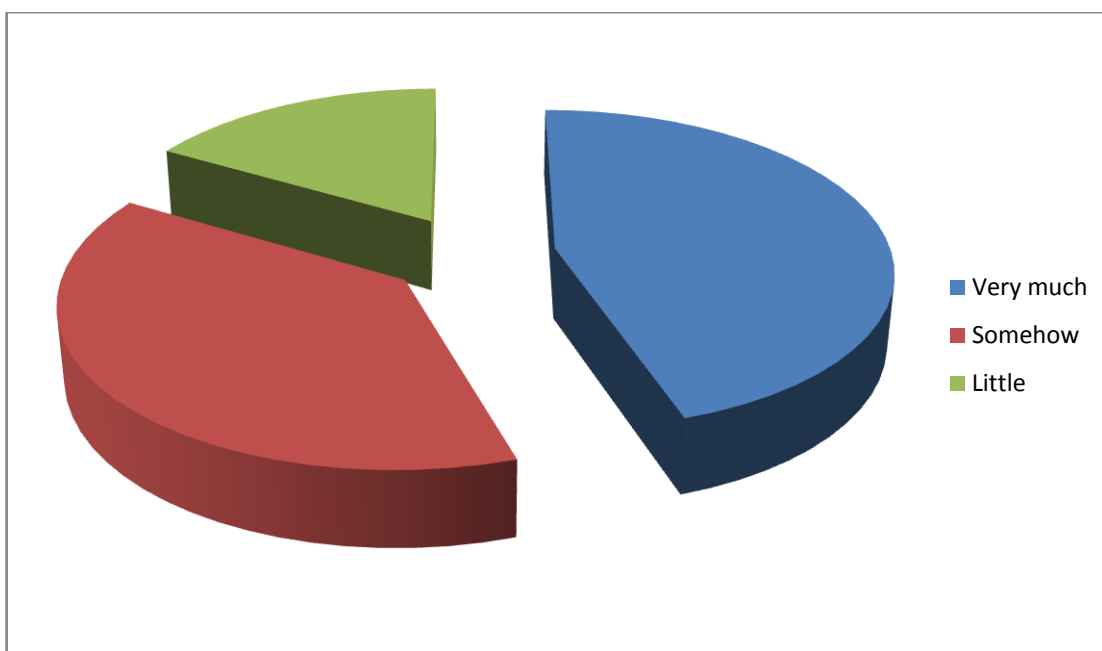
Overall, the results indicate that speaking anxiety has a noticeable effect on all students, leading to various behaviors.

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Q7: To what extent can anxiety affect EFL students' speaking performance ?

Table 11: The effect of anxiety on EFL speaking performance

	N	Percentage
Very much	27	45%
Somehow	23	38.33 %
Little	10	16.67%
Total	60	100%



Pie10: The effect of anxiety on EFL speaking performance

The findings reveal that most participants (45%) believe anxiety significantly affects their speaking performance, while (38.33%) consider it to have a moderate impact, and only (16.66%) think it has a low effect. This suggests that anxiety impacts the majority of students' performance. Some students explained:

- Anxiety hampers language learning progress.
- It discourages participation.
- It diminishes self-confidence.
- Anxious learners struggle to develop skills.

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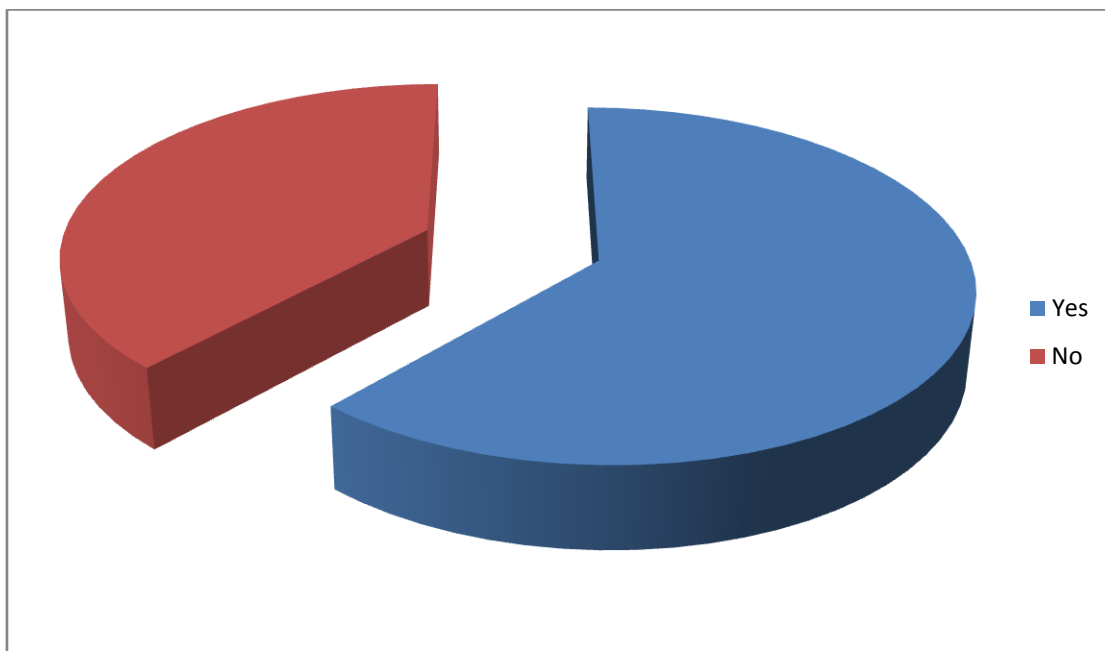
- They avoid using the language.
- Anxiety hinders effective communication, even with the right words.
- Overall, anxiety negatively influences students' performance.

Section three

1: Do you use specific strategies to overcome your anxiety?

Table 12:Students' strategies to cope with anxiety

	N	Percentage
Yes	37	61.67%
No	23	38.33 %
Total	60	100%



Pie11:Students' strategies to cope with anxiety

Based on the results ,most of the students (61,66%) said they use strategies to reduce anxiety, while a smaller percentage about(38,33%) said they do not. This means that a majority of the students are taking steps to manage their anxiety. It is a good thing that many students are aware of the importance of addressing anxiety and are actively doing things to deal with it. This can have positive effects on their performance. Overall, we can say that

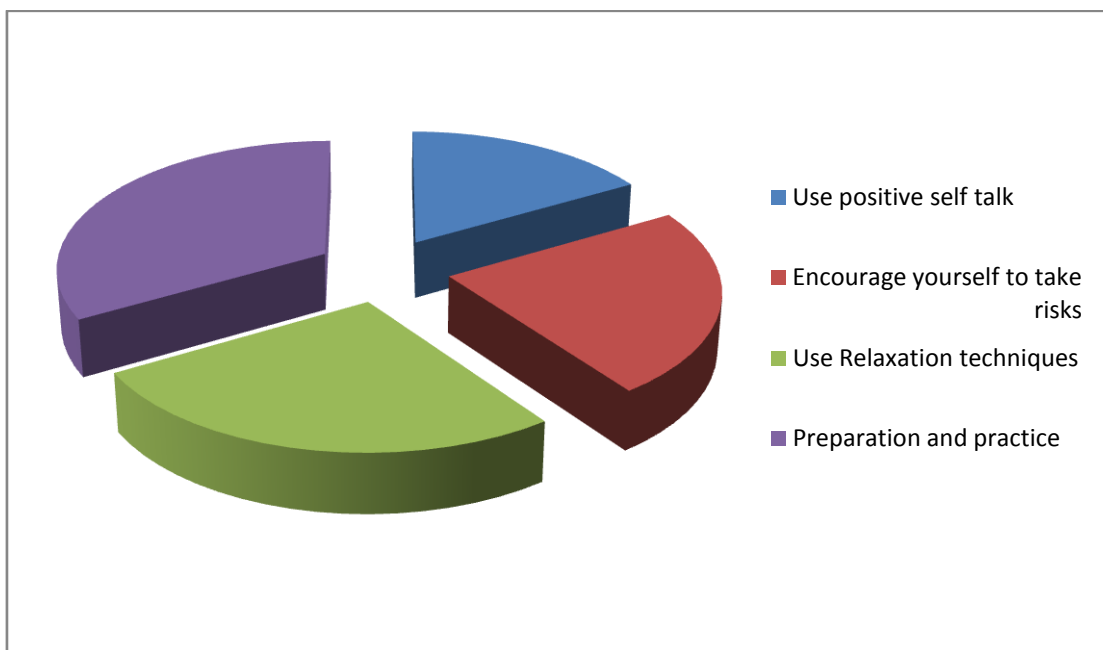
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many students are working on managing their anxiety using personal strategies to cope with this problem.

Q2: If yes, what do you do to reduce your anxiety?

Table 13: Student's techniques to reduce anxiety

	Level	Percentage
Use positive self talk	10	16.66%
Encourage yourself to take risks	14	23.33 %
Use Relaxation techniques	16	26.66 %
Prepare and practice	20	33.33 %
Total	60	100%



Pie12: Student's techniques to reduce anxiety

Based on the results, it appears that students employ various strategies to reduce anxiety. (16,66) Of the participants use Positive self-talk which involves using affirmations and optimistic statements to counter negative thoughts and promote a more positive mindset.

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This strategy can be effective in boosting self-confidence and reducing anxiety by shifting one's focus towards more constructive and encouraging thoughts. While (23,33%) Encouraging themselves to take risks some students believe in pushing their boundaries and stepping out of their comfort zones as a means of managing anxiety. By embracing challenges and being open to new experiences, individuals may develop resilience and a sense of empowerment, which can help alleviate. Moreover, (26.66%) of them use Relaxation techniques, it encompasses a variety of practices such as deep breathing, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and mindfulness. These techniques promote relaxation, reduce muscle tension, and calm the mind, which can be particularly beneficial in managing stress and anxiety. (33.33%) Use Preparation The highest percentage of students identified preparation as a means of reducing anxiety. This implies that many students find comfort and confidence in adequately preparing for tasks or situations that may induce anxiety. By being well-prepared, individuals may feel more in control and less anxious about potential challenges. Other students mentioned other technique that helps them to reduce their anxiety

Here are some of their responses:

- Employing deep breathing techniques as an effective method to alleviate stress.
- Utilizing note cards as a helpful tool for managing tasks or information.
- Engaging in conversation with others as a preparatory measure before giving a speech.

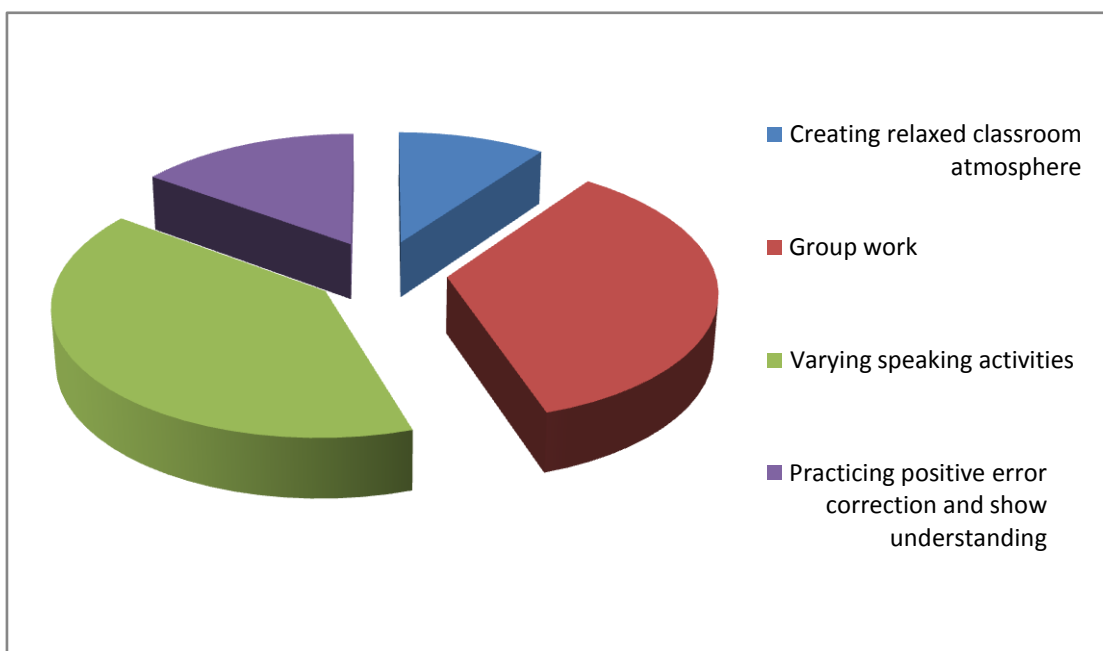
Collectively, these results highlight the importance of individualized approaches to managing anxiety. What works for one person may not be as effective for another. Therefore, it is crucial for individuals to explore different strategies and find what resonates with them personally.

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Q3: What do you want from your teacher to do in order to reduce your anxiety?

Table 14: Teacher's strategies to reduce student's anxiety

	N	Percentage
Creating relaxed classroom atmosphere	06	10%
Group work	21	35 %
Varying speaking activities	24	40 %
Practicing positive error correction and show understanding	09	15 %
Total	60	100%



Pie13: Teacher's strategies to reduce student's anxiety

Based on the responses from the students, it seems that there are a few key strategies that they believe would help reduce their anxiety. Creating a relaxed classroom atmosphere (10%), This suggests that students feel more at ease when the classroom environment is calm

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and supportive. Teachers can promote relaxation by fostering a positive and inclusive classroom culture, encouraging open communication, and providing a safe space for students to express themselves without fear of judgment. (35%) choose Group work, Collaborative activities can be beneficial for reducing anxiety as they allow students to work together, share responsibilities, and support one another. Group work promotes a sense of belonging and can help alleviate the pressure of individual performance. (40%) answered Varying speaking activities. Speaking activities in the classroom can be anxiety-inducing for some students. By incorporating a variety of speaking activities, such as small group discussions, presentations, role plays, and debates, teachers can provide opportunities for students to practice speaking in different contexts, which can help build their confidence and reduce anxiety over time. In addition (15%) of them choose Practicing positive error correction and showing understanding. It is important for teachers to provide constructive feedback and correction in a positive and supportive manner. Students may feel anxious about making mistakes, and a teacher who shows understanding and provides guidance rather than harsh criticism can help alleviate those anxieties and create a more supportive learning environment.

Overall, the students' responses highlight the importance of creating a positive, inclusive, and supportive classroom environment. By implementing strategies like these, teachers can play a crucial role in reducing students' anxiety and creating a conducive learning environment for all.

Results' discussion

The collected data from the questionnaire administered to first-year LMD English students indicates that anxiety plays a significant role in their learning of a foreign language, particularly in relation to the speaking skill. Speaking tends to be the most anxiety-inducing aspect compared to other skills. The majority of language learners attribute their speaking

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anxiety to factors such as communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and fear of making mistakes. Students generally believe that anxiety has a substantial impact on their classroom performance and overall achievement, hindering their language abilities and making it challenging for them to express themselves in the foreign language. To overcome speaking anxiety, learners employ various strategies that help them manage their anxiety and attain better outcomes. These strategies include engaging in positive self-talk, motivating themselves to take risks, utilizing relaxation techniques, and practicing and preparing beforehand. Additionally, students express a desire for a supportive classroom environment where strategies like group work, diverse speaking activities, and constructive error correction from teachers are employed to alleviate anxiety and promote language learning.

Teacher Interview

In addition to the questionnaire, we utilized interviews as another instrument in our study. The interviews involved eight teachers from the First year in the English Department at Mohammed Kheider University of Biskra. These teachers are responsible for teaching various English modules. Through this interview, consisting of twelve questions, our objective was to gain insights from teachers regarding the issue of foreign language speaking anxiety and its impact on students' speaking abilities in front of others. Furthermore, we aimed to assess the teachers' level of awareness about this phenomenon and gather their opinions on strategies employed by students to overcome foreign language speaking anxiety.

Results' Analysis

Q1: How many years have you been teaching English at the University?

Based on the interviews conducted with the teachers, we have discovered that their teaching experience in the field of English at the university ranges from seven to twenty five years.

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Therefore, we can classify these teachers as highly experienced in their profession. It is worth noting that their extensive experience in teaching English provides valuable insights into the phenomenon of foreign language speaking anxiety. Their diverse teaching backgrounds contribute to a comprehensive understanding of this issue and its implications for language learners.

Q2: What are the courses that you have been taught throughout your experience?

Based on the interviews with teachers of oral expression and other modules, we discovered that all of these teachers have experience teaching multiple modules. Some have taught oral expression along with other subjects, while others have focused on modules rather than oral expression. The subjects taught by these teachers include linguistics, grammar, written expression, study skills, civilization, literary texts and phonetics. By considering the various modules taught by these teachers, we can determine whether anxiety is specific to the oral module or it also exists in other modules.

Q3: How can you define the learner's foreign language speaking anxiety ?

According to the teachers involved in this study, based on their knowledge and experience, they unanimously defined foreign language anxiety as a psychological state characterized by an uncomfortable feeling when speaking a foreign language. All the interviewed teachers agreed that anxiety has detrimental effects on learning a foreign language, particularly when it comes to English in our specific case. Furthermore, one teacher stated that foreign language anxiety refers to the learner's hesitations and reservations using a foreign language, especially in classroom settings. Put simply, when students are required to engage in group work or activities that involve using the target language, they tend to hesitate and may even choose not to participate. Therefore, it can be concluded that anxiety has a negative impact on language performance.

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Q4: Have you noticed that some of your students are reluctant to speak a foreign language?

All the teachers said "yes" when asked this question. Some of them said that many of their students do not like speaking, while others said only a few of them are reluctant. Some teachers used special phrases like "yes, many students," "for sure," and "of course" when answering. The fact that the teachers responded positively and used those special phrases indicates that their students' hesitation to speak the foreign language is a big issue in their classes.

Q5: When did it happen?

Teachers in different fields have varying perspectives on language anxiety. To gather diverse opinions on the topic, the researcher selected interviewees from various modules. One of them mentioned that language anxiety arises when students face oral situations or engage in conversations. On the other hand, some teachers believe that language anxiety mostly occurs during presentations and when correcting tests. In both situations, individuals feel anxious because they try to anticipate the questions or outcomes, unsure of what to expect. This suggests that foreign language anxiety encompasses not only the fear of communicating with peers but also test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. We conclude that First-year students experience anxiety as they are just beginning to learn English as a foreign language.

Q6: How do you perceive the impact of anxiety on student speaking performance in your experience as a teacher?

The teachers mentioned various traits that they observed in their students. They noted that anxious students display signs such as self-doubt, trembling hands, sweating, stuttering, hesitation, difficulty pronouncing words, pausing while speaking, making errors, shyness, seeking clarification, trembling, having an unclear or soft voice, sitting at the back of the

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class, avoiding eye contact with the teacher, remaining silent, appearing calm, touching their nose, and avoiding attending class. These indications collectively demonstrate the presence of speech anxiety in foreign language classrooms and provide recognizable manifestations of this phenomenon.

Q7: Do you think that Anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills?

All the teachers responded affirmatively, agreeing that anxiety is more closely associated with the speaking skill compared to other skills. They stated that speaking, being a spontaneous activity, allows teachers to easily identify anxious learners. These findings indicate that anxiety exists across all language skills, but it is particularly noticeable in speaking. The nature of speaking tasks triggers anxiety in students because they are required to express their thoughts in front of others and face evaluation and judgment.

Q8: Do you think that speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced?

All the respondents unanimously agreed that reducing anxiety would lead to an improvement in students' speaking performance. Their use of strong terms like "absolute," "of course," and "definitely" indicates their certainty in this belief. All teachers said yes, it is widely recognized that reducing anxiety can have a positive impact on students' speaking performance. When anxiety is lowered, students are more likely to feel comfortable, confident, and at ease when communicating in the target language. This increased sense of calmness and self-assurance enables them to express themselves more freely, leading to improved fluency, accuracy, and overall speaking proficiency. Additionally, reduced anxiety allows students to better access their language skills and think more clearly, resulting in clearer and more coherent communication. Thus, they also show that minimizing anxiety can play a crucial role in enhancing students' speaking performance.

Q9: What factors may lead to speaking Anxiety?

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The participants in the study identified several reasons for their students' anxiety when speaking a foreign language. These reasons include shyness, limited vocabulary, lack of preparation, an unfavorable learning environment, the seriousness and authority of the teachers, low self-confidence and self-esteem, disinterest in the foreign language, fear of making mistakes, and difficulty expressing ideas.

From these responses, we can conclude that anxiety arises from multiple factors. Additionally, it is evident that teachers are knowledgeable about the factors that contribute to their students' speech anxiety.

Q10: What Strategies that you noticed which the learners use to reduce their speaking anxiety?

All the teachers agreed that learners find preparation and practice to be highly effective in reducing speaking anxiety. When learners thoroughly prepare and practice before speaking activities, they feel more confident and less anxious. This includes rehearsing their speeches, practicing pronunciation, and becoming familiar with the content. By dedicating time and effort to these preparations, learners gain a sense of readiness and competence, which helps alleviate their anxiety. Additionally, teachers noticed that learners often use positive affirmations and self-talk as a strategy to build confidence and reduce anxiety. Learners remind themselves of their language abilities, strengths, and past successes, which boosts their self-belief and decreases anxiety. By focusing on their positive attributes and previous achievements, learners develop a positive mindset that enables them to approach speaking tasks with greater confidence.

Furthermore, they observed that learners utilize deep breathing exercises to manage their anxiety. Taking slow, deep breaths and exhaling slowly helps learners calm their nerves and reduce anxiety before and during speaking tasks. This breathing technique allows learners

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to regulate their breathing, promoting relaxation and a sense of control over their anxious feelings.

In conclusion, it can be inferred that each student may have their own unique strategies for reducing speaking anxiety. Teachers have a crucial role in recognizing and understanding these individual strategies, while providing the necessary support and guidance. By acknowledging and addressing learners' anxiety, teachers can create a supportive and understanding learning environment that helps students effectively manage their anxiety and build confidence in their speaking skills.

Q11: How do you typically address or support students who experience Anxiety during speaking tasks?

The interviewees provided a range of strategies to reduce students' speaking anxiety. These strategies include motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, allowing time for preparation and organization of ideas, creating a relaxed atmosphere, accepting mistakes, providing authentic contexts, managing disruptive behaviors, incorporating various tasks and activities to engage all students, offering opportunities for participation, avoiding immediate correction, incorporating games, and not pressuring students to speak. These responses indicate that teachers recognize their important role in reducing speaking anxiety and possess knowledge of effective approaches to help students overcome their anxiety. Consequently, it can be concluded that teachers are capable of decreasing anxiety levels in their classroom.

Q12: What do you advise anxious learners to do In order to decrease their speaking anxiety?

The respondents offered various suggestions to anxious learners on how to reduce their speaking anxiety. These suggestions included practicing the foreign language both inside

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and outside the classroom, focusing on improving listening skills, building self-confidence, and actively seeking opportunities to face audiences and accept constructive criticism.

These responses highlight that teachers also possess the capacity to alleviate students' speaking anxiety.

Results' discussion

After conducting interviews with experienced teachers who teach various English modules, several outcomes were derived. Anxiety is consistently observed in foreign language classes and is considered a major obstacle that negatively affects students' ability to learn a foreign language. It impacts various aspects of language learning, particularly the four skills. However, it significantly affects the speaking skill the most. This is because speaking requires students to express their ideas in front of an audience. Consequently, anxiety is more prevalent in oral courses compared to other courses, and it is easier to identify anxious students during speaking tasks than during listening, writing, and reading tasks. Several factors contribute to students' speaking anxiety, including shyness, limited vocabulary, lack of preparation, an unsuitable learning environment, strictness and authority of teachers, low self-confidence and self-esteem, disinterest in the foreign language, fear of making mistakes, and difficulty in expressing ideas. Anxiety has significant effects on learners' speaking performance and overall foreign language learning. It affects their performance, achievements, progress, and engagement in language learning, even if they are generally good learners. Anxious learners can be recognized through various signs, such as self-doubt, trembling hands, sweating, stammering, hesitation, mispronunciation, stopping mid-speech, making mistakes, shyness, seeking clarification, trembling, unclear speech, speaking softly, sitting at the back, avoiding eye contact with the teacher, silence, calmness, touching their nose, and avoiding attending class.

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Despite the negative impact of anxiety on students' learning and speaking performance, students can employ different strategies to overcome speaking anxiety. These strategies include preparation, practice, positive affirmations, and deep breathing exercises, which help build confidence and manage anxiety. Teachers play a crucial role in creating supportive environments that alleviate anxiety by providing motivation, allowing preparation time, fostering a relaxed atmosphere, and incorporating engaging activities. Additionally, teachers advise students to practice speaking both inside and outside the classroom, improve their listening skills, build self-confidence, and seek constructive feedback to actively confront and manage anxiety. Finally, if students adopt these strategies and technique they can control their anxiety.

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Conclusion

In summary, the data collected from first-year LMD English students' questionnaire and interviews with experienced teachers underscore the pervasive impact of anxiety on foreign language learning, particularly speaking. Both students and teachers recognize that speaking anxiety is a significant barrier to language acquisition, affecting students' classroom performance, overall achievement, and their ability to express themselves effectively. The primary sources of speaking anxiety include communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and fear of making mistakes, as well as personal and environmental factors such as shyness, limited vocabulary, lack of preparation, and unsupportive classroom settings.

The research highlights the importance of strategic approaches to managing and overcoming speaking anxiety. Students employ various techniques, such as positive self-talk, risk-taking, relaxation methods, and thorough preparation, to mitigate their anxiety. Additionally, the role of teachers is crucial in creating a supportive and encouraging learning environment. Strategies like group work, diverse speaking activities, and constructive feedback can significantly reduce anxiety and enhance language learning. Ultimately, by adopting these strategies and fostering a supportive classroom atmosphere, both students and teachers can address the challenges posed by speaking anxiety. This collaborative effort can lead to improved language performance, greater confidence, and more successful language learning outcomes.

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General Conclusion

This dissertation focused on strategies that learners use to overcome speaking anxiety in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classes. The primary aim was to investigate English speaking anxiety, a significant psychological challenge that many EFL students face when attempting to speak. Researcher's studies have shown that anxiety is a complex feeling requiring attention from students, teachers, and psychologists. Additionally, the study aimed to demonstrate the impact of anxiety on learners, particularly regarding speaking. It sought to identify and clarify strategies used by first-year English students to reduce their anxiety, engage in classroom interaction, and improve their speaking skills. These strategies can be crucial in overcoming the fear and anxiety associated with speaking a foreign language. The study confirmed our hypothesis: If first-year LMD students in the English branch at Biskra University are aware of their difficulties in mastering spoken English and possess effective speaking strategies, they can reduce their anxiety and achieve better results. Specifically, effective strategies can decrease anxiety.

We used a descriptive method to conduct this study, as it is the most appropriate for this topic. We aimed to describe the situation, provide information on the problem of anxiety, and suggest strategies to reduce it. The study was divided into three main chapters: The first chapter provided a general overview of EFL speaking anxiety, including the definition of foreign language anxiety, the speaking skill, the function of speaking, the relationship between speaking and anxiety, the causes, effects, types, and symptoms of EFL speaking anxiety. The second chapter explored learner strategies for reducing language anxiety in more detail, including the definition of learning strategies, types of learning strategies, and the teacher's role in reducing students' language anxiety. The third chapter analyzed data from both teacher interviews and student questionnaires.

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We sampled 60 first-year LMD students from the English section at Biskra University to identify their attitudes towards using strategies to cope with anxiety. We also surveyed various teachers of the English language department at Biskra University to explore the impact of anxiety on learners' speaking performance and investigate how teachers can help solve this problem.

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Recommendations

The primary significance of this study lies in its focus on examining the impact of anxiety on the spoken performance of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Additionally, it aims to provide strategies that students can employ to alleviate language anxiety. In conclusion, we propose the following recommendations for both teachers and students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, with the aim of reducing anxiety and enhancing oral performance in English.

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Recommendations for Teachers

1. Create a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves in the target language.
2. Incorporate various interactive and communicative activities into lessons to provide sufficient opportunities for students to practice speaking.
3. Break down speaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps to gradually build students' confidence.
4. Provide constructive feedback that focuses on students' efforts and progress rather than solely on errors.
5. Use relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing exercises or mindfulness activities, to help students manage anxiety during speaking activities.
6. Encourage peer collaboration and pair/group work to foster a sense of community and support among students.
7. Offer additional speaking practice outside the classroom through language clubs, conversation partners, or online language exchange platforms.

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Recommendations for Learners

1. Set realistic goals and acknowledge that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process.
2. Practice speaking English regularly, both inside and outside the classroom, to build confidence and fluency.
3. Start with low-pressure speaking opportunities, such as speaking with friends or participating in informal language exchanges.
4. Utilize resources like language learning apps, online videos, or podcasts to expose you to different accents and speaking styles.
5. Record yourself speaking and listen to the recordings to identify areas for improvement.
6. Seek opportunities to engage in real-life communication in English, such as joining conversation groups or participating in language events.
7. Develop a positive mindset and challenge negative thoughts or self-doubt related to speaking English.

Remember, reducing language anxiety is a gradual process, so it's important to be patient and persistent in implementing these suggestions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire in order to gather information needed for the accomplishment of our master dissertation. The main aim of this questionnaire is to shed light on the issue of foreign language anxiety and its impact on EFL students' oral performance and to raise awareness about learner strategies to reduce anxiety and achieve better oral performance in EFL classroom. Read each of the following statements carefully and tick (✓) your answer(s) in the corresponding box (es). Please, give your answers sincerely because it will be very useful in our research.

Section one: background information

You are:

- Male
- Female

Was it your choice to study English?

- Yes
- No

How do you find your level in English?

- Excellent
- Medium
- Poor

Section two: English as a foreign language speaking anxiety

How often do you participate in your oral classroom?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Always

What do you think about speaking English as a foreign language?

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- Hard
- Easy

How do you feel when you are asked to speak in classroom?

- Anxious
- Comfortable

If you feel anxious, is it because of:

- Fear of receiving a negative evaluation
- Lack of motivation
- Fear of making mistakes
- Communications apprehension

Other ?.....

In which kind of speaking activities you feel more anxious

- Speaking in a large group(s)
- Respond voluntarily
- Speaking in small groups
- To be called upon to respond individually

Other activities ?.....

Do you see any of the following behaviors in yourself while speaking in class?

- Shaking your body
- Jiggling your hands, legs or feet
- Playing with hair or clothing
- Touching object nervously
- Stuttering or stammering

To what extent can anxiety affect EFL students speaking performance?

- Very much
- Somehow
- Little

Section tree: Reducing the speaking anxiety

Do you use specific strategies to overcome your anxiety?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what do you do to reduce your anxiety?

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- Use positive self talk
- Encourage yourself to take risks
- Use Relaxation techniques
- Preparation and practice

Other ?.....

What do you want from your teacher help reduce your anxiety?

- Creating relaxed classroom atmosphere
- Enhance teachers student relationship
- Varying speaking activities
- Practicing positive error correction and show understanding

Other ?.....

Appendix 2

Teacher's Interview

- How many years have you been teaching at the University ?
- What are the courses that you have been taught throughout your experience?
- How can you define foreign language anxiety?
- Have you noticed that some of your students are reluctant to speak a foreign language?
- When does it happen?
- How do you perceive the impact of anxiety on student speaking performance in your experience as a teacher?
- Do you think that Anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills?
- Have you noticed any specific signs or symptoms of anxiety in students during speaking activities or presentation?
- What factors may lead to learner's Anxiety?
- What Strategies that you noticed which the learners use to reduce anxiety?
- How do you typically address or support students who experience Anxiety during speaking tasks?
- What do you advise anxious learners to do in order to decrease their speaking anxiety?

ملخص

يعد القلق اللغوي الأجنبية أمرًا مهمًا جدًا يعاني منه معظم متعلمي اللغات الأجنبية. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى تحليل قضية القلق اللغوي في اللغة الأجنبية، وتهدف إلى تحقيق هدفين رئيسيين. الهدف الأول هو تحديد تأثير القلق على أداء الطلاب في النطق، والهدف الثاني هو البحث عن استراتيجيات فعالة يمكن للمتعلمين استخدامها للحد من القلق وتعزيز أداء النطق باللغة الأجنبية. يعتمد البحث على أداتين رئيسيتين لجمع البيانات: استبيان ومقابلة. يتم توزيع الاستبيان على ستين طالبًا من السنة الأولى LMD في اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. يتم إجراء المقابلة مع ثمانية مدرسين من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية الذين يدرسون مواد السنة الأولى إنجليزية في جامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. توضح نتائج الدراسة أن معظم طلاب اللغة الأجنبية يحصل لهم القلق في حالات النطق أكثر في حالات الاستماع والقراءة والكتابة. هناك عوامل مختلفة تؤدي إلى قلق طلاب اللغة الأجنبية في النطق وتعوق تعلمهم وأدائهم في النطق. تظهر النتائج أيضًا استراتيجيات متنوعة يمكن للمتعلمين الاعتماد عليها للحد من قلق النطق باللغة الأجنبية والتي يمكن أن تؤدي إلى تحسين أداء النطق لدى الطلاب. تثبت النتائج الفرضية التي تقول إنه إذا أدرك الطلاب التحديات التي يواجهونها في النطق بالإنجليزية كلغة غير لغتهم الأم وتعلموا استراتيجيات فعالة للتقليل من قلق النطق، فيمكنهم التغلب على قلقهم وتحسين أدائهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السنة الأولى، الاستراتيجيات، الكلام، القلق، جامعة بسكرة.