

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**  
**MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**  
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**Some Psychological Factors that Hinder Students' Participation  
in Learner-Centered EFL Oral Classroom Activities**

**Case Study:** First Year LMD Students of English, University of Biskra

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master Degree in  
English: Sciences of the Language

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**Academic year: 2014/2015**

## *Dedication*

*To my dearest father who educated me well*

*To my lovely mother who encouraged me a lot*

*To my closet friends: Hala, Kalthoum, Meriam, Radia,*

*wafa, Ibrahim, Amina and salma*

*To everyone who helped me*

*To all those who love me*

*And Without any exception I dedicate this work*

## **Acknowledgment**

First of all, I would like to thank Allah for giving me the power and capacity to complete this work.

Then, the most important thank is for my family: my parents, my sisters and my brothers, for their support and patience.

Next, I owe a very special thank to my supervisor Mrs. S. Messaibi for her valuable guidance and detailed comments and suggestions on the improvement and the quality of this work, and also for her friendly encouragement and kindness. Working with her in a motivating and unstressed atmosphere allowed me to finish this work in the limited time.

Subsequently, I'm really indebted to my colleague Miss. R. Bentaib who is always beside me whenever I need her. I would also like to thank all my classmates for the nice time we spent together helping each other.

Finally, I have to express my sincere gratitude to first year students (2014/2015) of the English department of Mohamed Khaider university of Biskra for their help and seriousness in completing the questionnaire. Also, a special thank should go to all teachers of oral expression module who were so helpful and kind to collaborate in this research.

## **Abstract**

The present study investigates the psychological factors that hamper EFL first year students at the English department of the University of Biskra from being active in learner-centered oral classroom activities. Throughout this study, we hypothesize that if students are helped by their teachers to control their psychological factors, the level of their participation will be increased and henceforth their English speaking skill will be developed. As a method of research, the descriptive method has been used to confirm the hypothesis. As a tool, the study has used two questionnaires for gathering data. The findings of Students' questionnaire as well as teachers' questionnaire revealed that most of the students suffer from different psychological factors which make them prefer to participate in some activities more than others. Moreover, among all the mentioned different factors in the study, fear of making mistakes is the most responsible factor in hampering students' oral performance. Finally, from the results of the study, recommendations are suggested about how first year EFL students' psychological barriers can be controlled and, their level of oral proficiency can be improved.

## **List of Abbreviations**

**CBA:** Competency Based Approach

**EFL:** English as Foreign Language

**EFLs:** English as Foreign Language Learners

**FD:** Field Dependence

**FI:** Field Independence

**FL:** Foreign Language

**FLL:** Foreign Language Learning

**L1:** First Language

**L2:** Second Language

**LC:** Learner-Centered

**LCA:** Learner-Centered Approach

**LMD:** License Master Doctorate

**OE:** Oral Expression

**SL:** Second Language

**SLL:** Second Language Learning

**Vs:** versus

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## **General Introduction**

With the rising importance of English language over the world and with the emergence of the communicative approaches; many people, especially Algerian people, want to be able to speak English, as a foreign language, very well for different purposes.

Evidently, practice makes perfect. Therefore, in the field of teaching foreign languages, the oral expression module offers an opportunity for EFL learners to develop their oral proficiency through different classroom activities such as role plays, group discussion, oral presentation..., etc. In all these activities, the learner is the center. Learners should be the active element in the classroom whereas the teacher should work as a facilitator of the learning process.

Specifically talk, at the university, EFL first year students are regarded as the important basis for a good start in developing their English speaking skill through the whole next educational years. However, according to many teachers and researchers, EFL learners can hardly engage in the speaking classroom activities; and more importantly their level of oral proficiency is far from being satisfactory. This is due to many different factors. Besides to the pedagogical and linguistic factors, different researchers argued that psychological factors have the most negative influence on EFL learners' activeness in the oral classroom activities.

For that reason, the present study seeks to describe some of these factors which hamper EFL first year students' oral performance in the oral expression classrooms at the University of Biskra. Besides to that and more importantly, it searches for solutions to help them to control their psychological factors.

## **1. Statement of the problem**

Most often, EFL students can hardly engage in the classroom activities because of the psychological factors which are among many other factors. Particularly, EFL first year students are considered as the most affected category that face serious difficulties in expressing themselves orally. In the language classroom and more particularly in the oral expression module, first year students very often show signs of, anxiety, apprehension, and reticence to speak and take part in the classroom activities. Evidently, there are many different psychological factors which hinder EFL adults' activeness and creativity in the learner-centered oral classroom activities; and as a consequence first year students' oral proficiency is far from being satisfactory.

## **2. Research questions**

The research seeks to answer the following questions:

- To which extent do psychological factors have a negative impact on EFL first year students' participation in the oral expression classroom activities?
- Which is the most psychological factor that may hinder their participation?
- What are the best strategies that teachers and learners can adopt to overcome such factors?

## **3. Hypothesis**

In this study we hypothesize that:

- EFL first year students will enhance their level of oral proficiency if they are helped by the teacher to control their psychological factors within oral expression classrooms.

#### **4. Significance of the study**

Although many researches have been conducted for different aims within the field of learners' psychology in different levels, the main aim of this study is to shed some light on the main psychological factors which impair, in particular, first year students' full participation in the oral expression classrooms. Moreover, after indentifying the effects of these factors, this study aims at suggesting some guidance for the teachers to help their learners in support of taking control over their psychological factors and henceforth to enhance their level of oral proficiency.

#### **5. Objectives of the study**

The present study seeks to achieve four main objectives which are the following:

- To remind the teachers as well as the learners that EFL language classrooms, in particular oral classes, are learner-centered.
- To make the learners more aware about the negative effects of these factors on their level of oral proficiency.
- To identify the most effective psychological factor among the others in hindering students' performance.
- To suggest some effective strategies and techniques for the teachers to promote their students' activeness in the oral classroom activities.

#### **6. Research methodology**

In order to describe the phenomenon, i.e., learners' psychology, and then to analyze the data gathered about this phenomenon and finally to answer the research questions, the research methodology that is used is descriptive. This type of research methodology gives more in depth insight about the factors that lets' human being behave in such a way (Kothari,

2004). Therefore concerning the nature of the tackled subject, descriptive method is the appropriate way for investigating the hypothesis of the research.

## **7. Research Tools**

In order to have answers about the research question and to achieve the intended objectives, two questionnaires are designed as the best tool for gathering data about the effects of students' psychology on their oral performance and teachers' attitude towards their students' psychology. A questionnaire is designed for EFL first year students at Mohamed kheider university of Biskra and another questionnaire is designed for teachers of oral expression module.

## **8. Population and sampling**

The representative population of this study is EFL first year students at the English department of Mohamed Khider University, Biskra. Due to the huge number of the population, the sample consists of fifty (50) students who are chosen randomly from (500) students to be given a questionnaire. Besides to that, for making the research significantly worthy, five teachers who teach first year students oral expression module are also given a questionnaire.

## **9. Structure of the work**

The present dissertation consists of three chapters. Chapter one and two are devoted to the literature review. Chapter one reports the importance of mastering English speaking skill and the need for practicing it through learner-centered oral expression classroom activities. The second one is devoted to the independent variable of the study which is the psychological factors of EFL adult learners. Finally, description of the study procedures, the analyses of the findings and the recommendations are presented in the third chapter.

## Chapter One: Speaking Skill and Learner-Centered Oral Activities

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## **Chapter One:**

### **Speaking Skill and Learner-Centered Oral Activities**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the fact that speaking skill is like any other humans' skills that can be mastered only through practice. Therefore, the level of EFL learners' oral proficiency can be enhanced through many different oral classroom activities in which the learner should be the center.

First, the importance of speaking skill, the goal behind teaching it in EFL classrooms, and the importance of integrating the four skills in oral expression (OE) classes are explained in this chapter. Second the two key features of English oral proficiency, which are the ultimate aim for most EFL learners, are defined. Third, teacher's role and learner's role are clarified under the concept of learner-centered approach whose tenets are enlightened as well. Finally, some oral classroom activities, in which the learner should be the center, are presented and described.

#### **1. The Importance of Speaking Skill**

Nowadays, for most EFL learners; speaking skill is the most required skill that they want to develop and master. As Richards and Renandya (2002) asserted: "A large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking" (p. 201). This willingness came from the view that language is a means of communication. Lazaraton (2001) argued that, for most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication (p.103). Thus speaking is the skill, if not the only skill, that fits this function. As Ur (2012)

declared that of all the four skills, speaking seems intuitively the most important. People who know a language are referred to as “speakers” of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing (p.117).

Generally, people talk to convey messages, to express feelings, and to make others do things for them. For Thornbory (2005), there are two main purposes for speaking. People speak to convey information and facilitate the exchange of goods or services. In this case, speaking serves as a transactional function such as phoning to book a table at a restaurant. Also, they speak to establish and maintain social relations. Here, speaking serves as an interpersonal function such as a conversation between friends that takes place at the restaurant. Specifically talk, in the field of teaching and learning English as a foreign language, all learners prefer strongly to master these two aspects with regard to the cultural and social circumstances. Thus, speaking skill is a crucial skill in learning or teaching foreign languages. It is like any other kind of human’s skills which can be developed and mastered only through practice.

Therefore, realizing the high importance of speaking skill made EFL specialist to search and establish the best instructional methods, materials, activities, that can help teachers to teach that skill hence to help learners to speak competently.

## **2. The Goal for Teaching Speaking**

Generally speaking, the teaching of speaking has had a chequered history (Bygate, 2009, p.402). In the few past decades, speaking skill was approximately neglected. Linguists and FL teachers paid little attention to this skill in the traditional methods such as grammar translation method. Their focus was on teaching grammar, translating written texts from L2 to L1, memorizing dialogues, and repeating after the teacher. As Richards (2008) mentioned in his

book that methodologies of 1970s were totally based on all what was related to sentence-based, drill-based, and repetition-based.

However, with the rising value of communication in the modern era, people tend to focus on the ability to speak a foreign language fluently instead of just reading or writing it. By the emergency of the communicative language teaching approaches, speaking skill has been given more importance and emphasis in designing syllabuses. Richards (ibid) states that grammar-based syllabuses were replaced by communicative ones built around notions, functions, skills, tasks; and fluency became a goal for speaking courses. Therefore, EFL teachers aim at providing the most significant communicative activities that can help EFL learners speak competently not only inside the classroom but also in real life situations.

First of all, what is meant by ‘teaching speaking’? According to Nunan (2003), it is to teach EFL learners to:

- Produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns
- Use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.
- Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter.
- Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.
- Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.
- Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which are called as fluency.

(Cited in Kayi, 2006, para.2).

According to Harmer (2007), teaching speaking can be beneficial for three reasons. Firstly, it gives students occasions for speaking the FL. to known people namely teachers and classmates within the classroom. Secondly, in teaching speaking, students are given tasks where they take the advantage to express their knowledge freely, in order, for them, to diagnose their strengths as well as their weaknesses. Thirdly, teaching speaking makes all of



the kept information about language grammar structures practiced away by learners that, surly, lead them to speak fluently and without difficulty (Cited in Bouchareb, 2010, p.18).

Consequently, the goal of teaching speaking skill is to be able to communicate efficiently. Learners should be able to make themselves understood through using their current pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary appropriately in a natural way.

### **3. Integration between languages kills**

In addition to what has been discussed previously, it is worthy to mention the kind of the relationship that exists between speaking skill and the other language skills. English, as any other language, has four macro-skills which are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The four skills are interrelated. Harmer (cited in Liao, 2009, p.12) argued: “one skill cannot be performed without another”. More specifically, most often, while teaching one of the four skills, an integration of one or all of the other skills might be occurred. For instance, while students speak or read, others are listening. Also, we cannot finish a writing task without reading it aloud for the teacher or the classmates. Thornbury (2005, p.70) illustrated that reading aloud is the natural next step between writing and speaking. In fact, he claimed, reading aloud is a useful tool for the appropriation of spoken language. Zhang claimed that (2009, p.33):

Since the listening skill is already a natural complement to any true speaking activity, adding speaking opportunities to a reading or writing lesson automatically allow students to integrate at least three skills. This integration has many advantages, as it adds variety encompasses students’ different strengths, and creates interactive possibilities by focusing on both productive and receptive skills. In addition, the interesting topics associated with reading and writing lessons lend them-selves well to speaking tasks.

Since the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are interrelated and interacted with each other; Byrne (in Liao, 2009, p.12) suggested that the four basic skills should be taught inclusively rather than separately. He argued about the importance of integrated skills activities:

- a) They provide opportunities for using activities naturally, not just practicing it.
- b) Many pair and group work activities call for a variety of skills sometimes simultaneously, in order to involve all the learners
- c) Students seem to learn better when they are engaged on activities more than one skill.

Accordingly, the importance of integrating the four language skills in the classroom activities will raise learners' proficiency levels and enable advanced language learning. Consequently they will be well prepared for the real life situations where all four skills are, absolutely, integrated.

## **4. Oral proficiency**

The focus of the communicative approach is on enhancing communication between learners or teacher-learner. Therefore, fluency and accuracy are both needed to accomplish successfully this goal. Hence, spoken language proficiency involves being able to produce fluently and accurately.

### **4.1. Fluency**

Fluency means to speak like native speakers. It is the natural flow of utterances. Thornberry (2005) proposed some features of fluency. He stated that speed is a factor, but it is not the only one. Pausing is equally important because all speakers pause to draw breath. Another significant feature, he added, in the perception of fluency is the length of run (the number of syllabuses between pauses). He states that the longer the runs, the more fluent the

speaker sounds. Also, Richards, Platt, and Weber ( cited in Brown, 2003, p. 1) define fluency as follows: "the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions" . Jones (2007, p.18) also defined fluency as:

Fluency doesn't mean speaking really fast without hesitating. It's being able to express yourself despite the gaps in your knowledge, despite the mistakes you're making, despite not knowing all the vocabulary you might need. It means hesitating in such a way that others keep listening and wait for you to continue, rather than finishing your sentences for you...The opposite of fluency is being tongue-tied and embarrassed when speaking English – or not speaking at all. Fluency goes hand in hand with confidence, and it takes time to develop.

Accordingly, EFL learners can sound like native speakers by using a number of tricks or as Thornberry (2005, p.7) named them "production strategies". One of them is the ability to fill pauses. The most common pause fillers are 'uh' , 'um' and 'ok' or by uttering some expressions such as "I mean" or " you know" ; also repeating words is a strategy show the ability of being fluent.

Therefore, fluency is very important for proficiency level in English; and without doubt, all EFL learners wish to achieve this level. Fluency can be reached and enhanced only through practice. For that teachers should provide their learners with activities which allow them to train their tongues to sound like native speakers. Nevertheless, oral proficiency cannot be completed successfully without the precise and accurate use of linguistic forms. As Brown (2003) expressed: "I feel that fluency can best be understood, not in contrast to accuracy but rather as a complement to it" (p.1).

## 4.2. Accuracy

Indeed, with the raising value of communication, EFL learners and even EFL teachers have started to focus more on the aspect of fluency, which means for them to speak with speed. Consequently, they neglect the aspect of accuracy despite its high importance in the spoken discourse. Being important, De Jong and Van Ginkel (in Jones, 2007) agree on its importance for being proficiency. They refer to a model of language proficiency that distinguishes between two dimensions of oral proficiency:

- The linguistic knowledge dimension ( grammar and vocabulary )
- The dimension of channel control ( pronunciation and fluency)

According to Jones (2007), accuracy in oral speech production refers to good knowledge and use of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and correct pronunciation (p.8). Similarly, Omaggio (in Stein, 1999) states that the term accuracy relates to correct use of linguistic structures (grammatical accuracy), appropriate use of register (sociolinguistic accuracy), precision of vocabulary (semantic accuracy), and proper use of cohesive devices (rhetorical accuracy) (p.2). Accordingly, we deduce that accuracy means to speak without making, too much, mistakes at the level of language structure in order to be understood by others.

In addition, accuracy can be achieved by EFL learners also through practice. Therefore, teachers' job is also to provide their learners with activities which promote students to practice specific features of language, for example grammatical and lexical features, and to practice only in brief sentences, not in extended discourse such as discussions. This can give EFL learners some practice in the target language form; where error correction and increased accuracy are remarked. However teachers should not focus more on this language aspect from the side of assessing it, and error correction should be implicitly.

All in all, being proficient means speaking fluently without committing, too much, mistakes. It is important for our students to learn to use English both fluently and correctly. Therefore, Oral proficiency can be achieved and developed by assigning students topics to discuss and encouraging them to participate in various speaking tasks.

## **5. Learner-Centered Oral Expression Classroom**

Since the speaking skill has been given its importance in foreign language teaching methodologies, particularly in our context which is based on the competency based approach (CBA), learners and teachers have exchanged their roles. In other words, FL classrooms became learner-centered.

### **5.1. An Insight in the Learner-Centered Approach**

Previously, FL classrooms were teacher-centered. Teachers' role was prominent in the classroom while learners had a receptive role. In addition, Mokoginta (2013, p.241) states that learners were characterized by passiveness, lack of autonomy and limited capacity of creative and critical thinking. Consequently, there was an absence of proficiency development in the students. Nevertheless, learner-centered approach (LCA) emerged to counter the traditional teaching approach.

LCA means putting learners in the center of the learning process. This concept has emerged from the constructivism's principles. Constructivists such as Piaget and Vygotsky consider learning as reconstruction rather than transmission of knowledge. The idea is that learners construct their knowledge better when they are actively taking part in a meaningful interaction. According to Savignon (cited in Nonkukhetkhong, BaldaufJr and Moni, 2006), during 1970s-1980s the impact of learner -centeredness in language teaching was evident with the development of communicative approaches which shifted the attention of the teaching-

learning processes from language form to language function, or to language use in accordance with the needs of learners.

Moreover, Holmes (2004) questioned in his book: “Who is the most important person in the classroom?” He answered, “The student is the important person and the others [i.e., stockholders and teachers] are there to serve the students’ need to learn...” (p.5). In short, he added, we need to do what the students need and not make them do what we need.

Brands and Ginns mentioned in their book some of its principles:

- Learners are responsible for what and how they learn
- The encouragement of learners’ engagement to realize learning experience
- The learning subject are expected to contain topics related to the learner’s need
- The shift of teachers’ function toward the role of being facilitating the learning process
- The enhancement of collaboration between learners

(Cited in Mokoginta, 2013, p.241)

To sum up, key components of the learner -centered classroom are first placing more responsibility in the hands of the students to manage their own learning, and second, teachers taking roles as facilitators of the learning process rather than being the source of knowledge. Going deeply, what is exactly learner’s and teacher’s role in the LC oral expression module?

### **5.1.1. Teacher’s Role**

Within this new shift, EFL teachers have found themselves working as facilitator, motivator, and feedback giver. Crandall (1999) stated that the shift that occurred in education decreases some of traditional teachers’ routine such as asking questions, giving instructions,

and enforcing discipline. On the other hand, it increased other activities such as praising, giving feedback, providing assistance and encouraging student initiative, and communication.

#### **5.1.1.1. Facilitator**

In this new paradigm, EFL teachers are seen as facilitator and guide rather than as the main source of knowledge. Students can't be "taught"; they can only be helped to learn (Jones, 2007, p.25). Therefore, teacher should prepare his/her students for the tasks through facilitating and making them clear. As Jones (ibid) claimed that before students begin working together, we need to help prepare them (p.26). He added that besides introducing relevant vocabulary and useful phrases we need to make sure they know exactly what they are supposed to be doing and why, as well as how long they have for the activity.

Deeply speaking, teachers are required to support their students who are required to be as researchers. That means that, helping them to work and think independently through checking dictionaries, using the internet, and buying or borrowing books. In addition, helping learners to discover and develop their ways of learning by knowing each one's personality and, besides, helping them to interact through giving them the opportunity to work in groups, in pairs or with the teacher. Moreover, raising their awareness to learn from their errors through allowing them to try and retry. In the oral expression classroom context mode, according to Nunan (2004) opportunities for genuine, real-world-type discourse are frequent and the teacher plays a less prominent role, taking a back seat and allowing learners all the space they need. (p.69). however, teachers may find difficulties with their new role, since their where used to work as the authority's person in the class and talk most of the time. Therefore, according to what has been discussed, making the teacher work as facilitator is by no means a simple job. It requires a total change.

### **5.1.1.2. Motivator**

The most important role can an EFL teacher adapt, besides to the role of being a facilitator, is being a motivator. Motivation is crucial concept in a foreign language teaching classrooms where the learner is the heart of the learning process. Therefore, teachers are responsible for motivating students to react in accordance with the principles of the LCA. In other words, they should motivate them to take charge of their own learning. That means that to develop their autonomy towards learning. Because when students feel responsible of their learning, there will have an intrinsic motivation to learn. Thus, this can be as a second challenge for the teacher.

To achieve the LCA ultimate goal, encouraging learner's autonomy, the teacher has between hands many techniques. First of all, he/she should motivate all his/her students to participate in all tasks through creating an enthusiastic atmosphere without a negative judgment. Second, giving them the opportunity to choose the activities and topics that suit their learning styles and their interests will surely encourage them to participate and speak. Even more importantly, Lamp (2009) declares:” This may be achieved by offering opportunities to learners to identify and discuss their own strengths and weaknesses” (p.85). Also making them to work in pairs and groups will motivate them to speak and help each other.

All in all, being a motivator is a crucial role. It requires from the teacher to take in to account many things such as the environment, the materials, and learners' learning styles and needs. Teachers should do more efforts than in the past to motivate their students to be always excited to talk and participate in the OE classrooms.



### **5.1.1.3. Feedback Giver**

In addition to the two aforementioned roles, the third role that an EFL teacher can adapt in the oral expression (OE) classes is feedback giver. Feedback is important and needed after each task.

Therefore, teachers need to be very sensitive in the way they do it (Ur, 2012, p.89) because, as he claimed, the kind of the feedback (either positive or negative) can affect the relationship between the person who corrects and the person who is corrected. Thus, the positive feedback is the more required in the OE classes. As Nunan (1989) stated in his book, according to the behaviorists, positive feedback is much more effective than negative feedback. Because positive feedback lets students know that they have performed correctly, and it increases their motivation through praise. Besides to that, teachers should take in to account that when learners speak, their primarily focus is on what to say and not on how to say. For that, Thornbury (2005) suggested that teachers' feedback should be on students' fluency and the message that they want to deliver more than accuracy.

Moreover, McInnis & James (cited in Oliver, Yeo and Tucker, 2012) talked more specifically about the relationship between first year EFLLs and feedback. They said: "First year students in particular need early feedback on their performance" (p.3). Indeed, this stage is so important for EFL learners; since teachers' feedback can act as a motivator or demotivator factor for the continuity of EFL learners' participation. Furthermore, Oliver, Yeo and Tucker (2012) advocated that students need to know that a large part of teacher's role is to provide feedback on their progress towards achieving the learning outcomes. For that they suggested that teachers should be very specific with them about how much and what form of feedback they can usually expect, and when

Generally speaking, acting as feedback giver is also a crucial role in the LC oral classrooms. It demands from the teacher to do more efforts to help learners to complete tasks (Haley and Austin, 2004).

### **5.1.2. Learner's Role**

On the other hand, in the LC oral classrooms, the learner is required to do most of the work. He/she should be an active learner in the class. More precisely, the learner is responsible for his/her learning to develop autonomy and skills in learning how to learn, as Nunan (1989, p.80) provided in his book. Therefore, learner has the possibility to decide what and how to learn. Moreover, Nunan 1988 (in Nunan, 1989) went deeply in describing the role of the learner within this approach. He reported that since learners will be involved in decisions on content selection, methodology and evaluation, curriculum development becomes a collaboration effort between teachers and learners. However, a total responsibility cannot be given especially, in our case, for first year student. Learners are not supposed to make major decisions from the start; but firstly a range of support should be provided for them to do so (Oxford, 1999). In addition learners need to take the lion part of the classroom talk through carrying out the oral classroom tasks and benefiting from each opportunity to interact.

To sum up, both teacher's and learner's roles are important for the implementation of LCA in the OE classrooms. As Nunan (2004, p.67) argued: "Teacher roles and learner roles are two sides of a coin". He added that the learners' more active role in the classroom requires the teacher to adopt a different role.

## **6. The Importance of Authenticity**

In fact, learning a foreign language is not just for the sake of learning its grammatical rules. However, the goal of learning it is to be used in its context. Therefore, EFL learners need to know how to use English appropriately i.e. in accordance with its social and cultural rules. Yang (2010) claimed: “In spite of giving the student correct ways to learn English, oral English classes should be made full use of to construct natural and authentic environment for the student to speak English” (p.341). Consequently, authenticity is needed to achieve learner’s goal that is oral proficiency.

Generally, Kramsch (cited in Samaranayake, 2010, p.14) views authenticity as the ability of a person to behave or think like a target language group in order to be recognized and validated by them. Specifically, Halley and Austin (2004) talked about “authentic interaction” (p.8). They, generally, stated that it is in which problem-posing, inquiry and creative solution are possible for the learner to understand how language functions to present various perspectives on the world. Specifically, they added, it is explained as the learner’s involvement in purposeful social action using language that potentially offers them opportunity to transform their reality. Besides to that, Lee (cited in Rose, 2006) makes a difference between what she calls ‘text authenticity’ and ‘learner authenticity’. For her, text authenticity is the origin of the materials and learner authenticity refers to the learner’s interaction with the materials. Guariento and Rorly (in Rose, 2006) express learner authenticity in terms of learner engagement with a task, and affirm that it is the engagement which creates the authenticity, regardless of the materials themselves.

Authenticity in relation to English language teaching seems as positive and important because it offers a way of bridging the gap between the classroom and the real world. Accordingly, Yang (2010, p. 341) claimed that classrooms should act as a bridge to the

outside world rather than as a linguistic quarantine station where learners are protected from the risks involved in having to engage in genuine communication.

It is true that classrooms cannot act as where native speakers and real communication are founded. However, teachers still have a chance to let students feel that they are performing tasks as in the way it should be. For that, Yang (2010) provided some ways that can help authentic context in English oral classrooms.

First of all she proposed to change the class organization by making it more cooperative through opting for pair and group works which are a good way to improve students' oral English level. She added that students are allowed to break the classroom rules by standing up and moving around while doing speaking tasks. Then she proposed for doing 'scenario task' which is derived from role playing. According to him, scenario is a problem-oriented, open-ended task similar to real life situation where participant must pay attention to the appropriateness of their words. They must take into account different social status, different sex, age, the social role they are playing and some other factors. Secondly, she called for changing classroom instructions through opting for one of the LCA's principles which is "low-structure" situations where learners are provided with numerous options and a great deal of autonomy. Thirdly and more importantly, she advised for using authentic materials which may represent some of the real life situations. She reported:

In oral English teaching classroom, learners are strongly encouraged to use authentic materials. They should have access to genuine language drawn from a wide variety of contexts, including TV and radio broadcasts, conversations, discussions and meetings of all kinds, talks, and announcements. They read magazines, stories, printed material and instructions, hotel brochures and airport notices, and a wide range of other messages. This practice helps them cope successfully with genuine communication outside the classroom (p.341).

Interestingly, tackling this point from another side, authentic materials are very important in supporting EFLs' information and motivating them to interact. As Nonaka (cited in Samaranayake, 2010) argued that materials does not only provide learners with a wide range of useful and relevant information but also can play a crucial part in enhancing learners' motivation; thus, facilitate language acquisition.

Consequently, authenticity is very important in English OE classrooms since there is a small chance to meet and interact with native speakers. It gives some insight about what and how native speakers speak English in natural situations. Hence, EFL oral expression teachers are supposed to provide such authenticity in their classes.

## **7. Kinds of Oral Classroom Activities**

There are many types of LC activities which can be performed in the OE classrooms and address all different kinds of learning styles and personalities. El Karfa (cited in Ramirez, V., 2010, p.29) proposed in his work some learner-centered activities that include:

Problem-solving activities in which learners are presented with a scenario and asked about their opinions, experiences, and what they would do in a particular situation. Role plays and simulations in which learners are assigned to play a role in a certain social situation. Opinion-gap activities, learners share or defend their attitudes or preferences about an idea with their partners.

According to Thornbury (2005), oral classroom activities are called 'communicative tasks' where learners use the language to speak and to interact. Moreover, others divided these communicative tasks into two kinds which should be combined in the OE classes. These activities are: structured output activities, which allow for error correction and increased accuracy such as information gap, and communicative output activities that give students opportunities to practice language use more freely such as role-play (Teaching Speaking, n.d.). Going deeply, Thornbury (2005) claimed that these communicative tasks should fulfill

two important language learning needs: they should prepare learners for real-life language use, and they should encourage the autonomization of language knowledge. Richards (2008) also asserted about the kind of the oral classroom activities. He said: “teachers should take into account the very different functions that speaking performs in daily communication and the different purposes for which our students need speaking skills” (p.20). Therefore, when designing the communicative tasks, OE teachers should take into consideration the elements of speaking syllabus which Thornbury (2005, p.117) provided them in his book. These elements are:

- Spoken grammar: heads, tails, ellipsis, discourse markers, etc.
- Pronunciation features: stress, intonation, rhythm, chunking, etc.
- Communication strategies: paraphrasing, appealing for help, formulaic, etc.
- Conversational routines as: opening, closing, interrupting, etc.
- Conversational rules and structures: turn taking, adjacency pairs, etc.
- Speech acts as: inviting, requesting, complimenting, etc.
- Registers: formal and informal language
- Scripts: greetings, telephone language, etc.
- Genres: telling stories, jokes, making a speech, interviews, etc.
- Situations: at a ticket office, at the bank, in a restaurant, etc.
- Cultural factors: politeness, gestures, etc.

Moreover, Thornbury (ibid) suggested necessary conditions that should be met in speaking activities for success in language learning. These conditions are: productivity, interactivity, challenge (i.e. complexity, neither high nor low), safety (risk taking), and authenticity. In other words, OE classroom activities are characterized by active engagement with others, problem solving, and encourage learner centeredness and learner autonomy.

Furthermore, LC oral classroom activities should be aimed either on developing fluency or accuracy, or even more both of them.

Going to the point, Lazaraton (2001) stated that in oral classes, teachers may or may not be given a text book or materials to teach oral skills. Therefore, OE teachers should choose or even create the appropriate activities that keep a balance between accuracy and fluency. In fact, there are many useful LC oral activities in which EFLLs can engage and practice the language either in pairs, in groups or sometimes individually.

### **7.1. Warm-Up Activities**

Interestingly, it is worthy to start with warm-up activities which are almost neglected by OE teachers. They are very important at the beginning of each session, especially for first year students and particularly in the first months of their school year. Holmes (2004) gave a definition to warm-up activities. He said: “They are lower intermediate classroom activities that can help the teacher and the students to get to know one-another, in an easy and relaxed atmosphere (p.9). The purpose is to get the students stimulated, relaxed, motivated, attentive or otherwise engaged and ready for the classroom lesson (Crookes and Chaudron, 2001, p.33). Simply, Warm up activities allows learners to cope with the new situation, to feel good and to relax. Alternatively, warm up activities can be called ‘icebreakers activities’.

Warm-up activities are short in nature. Holmes (2004) suggested that starting with an activity to introduce the people in the class to each other let the classroom atmosphere more intimately. This can be done through interviewing students each other; and then each student introduces his/ her partner to the class. Moreover, in such activities, OE teachers may provide their learners with new vocabularies, expressions, or idioms, etc. which EFLLs may use them later on. Therefore, teachers should be clever in such activities to stimulate the students to

participate through asking them about the, synonym, antonym, or meaning in a brainstorm way which can guarantee their engagement. Furthermore, in such activities, students may tell jokes, talk about yesterday's movie, or they can even suggest what they want to do for today or for tomorrow. Holmes (ibid) suggested in detail in his book many examples of warm-up activities such as twenty questions for the teacher, hangman, find someone who..., etc. which OE teachers may choose from and use them in their classes.

## **7.2. Role-Play**

For many students, Role-play is usually an enjoyable activity in which students can take an active part through act different roles in the real life. Budden (2006) defines role-playing as any speaking activity in which you act either as someone else or put yourself into an imaginary situation. Role-play is very useful activity for EFL learners to practice the spoken form. Snarski (cited in Merchi, 2013, p.33) states that role-plays help less talkative students to speak, improve communicative competence, promote cooperative learning, and provide practice for real life. Simply, According to littlewood (cited in Merchi, 2013 p.21) role plays can encourage Students 'oral fluency, and train them for specific situation which tend to develop their communicative abilities.

There are a whole range of role plays which teachers can suggest and students can perform. At the beginning teachers can provide their learners with handouts or cards which contain dialogues of role-plays to be read aloud in front of the class, of course, after the students have chosen their roles and the members that they want to perform with them. This type of role play can be used particularly with EFL first year students since they were not familiar to be put in the spot i.e. to perform in front of their teacher and classmates. Another type of role play is performing famous stories. Learners may read any English story they want. Then they should practice it for many times before performing it in the class. In



addition, for making it attractive and more livelier learners can bring its accessories if it requires, and this can motivate them to do their best. This type of role play can be performed with confidence since learners are given a time for practice. As an advanced stage, learners can create their own role plays focusing on a number of functions which students need to use for Different real situations and contexts such as asking for a menu in a restaurant, giving directions, asking for more information about something, checking into hotel, or shopping, etc. At this phase learners would be more autonomous and, thus, they would be more motivated to participate since the work is from their own creation.

### **7.3. Oral Presentation**

Oral presentation is another kind of LC oral classroom activities. Emden and Beker (cited in Zitouni, 2013, p.11) stated that developing the abilities to speak to an audience is one of the greatest benefits you'll ever get from your time in further or higher education. Through oral presentation, EFLLs can enrich their information, they can enhance the four skills at once, they can motivate and help each other, and they can develop their autonomy.

In this kind of activities, students are required to stand up in the front of the class to inform or persuade their colleagues in limited time about any topic which they have enough information about it (Zitouni, 2013). In Oral presentation students can talk about a range of topics that they prefer in different forms for example making a report about phenomenon, giving summary of an interesting, book or film, or doing a project about famous persons or places.

Presentations can be carried out by groups or individuals. However working in group is more beneficial. Because the work is going to be divided and each student can take a part to work on to present it in a good way. In addition, students can support their presentation with

audio-visual aids if it requires for making it more exiting and motivating. At the end, oral presentation should be completed by answering the audiences' questions if there are.

Going deeply, oral presentation does not mean only to speak about a topic in front of others. However, a good oral presentation has some characteristics should be followed. Chivers and Shoolbred (in Zitouni, 2013, p.12) claim that in order to prepare and deliver a presentation, there are some characteristics, which are important to make it effective:

- Careful planning and preparation
- Good time management
- Relevant and interesting content
- Good communication skills
- Appropriate use of technologies
- Clear supporting documentation
- A suitable audience participation

In addition, teachers can assist their students in this kind of oral classroom activities through grouping learners, managing time for each presentation, suggesting topics for the ones who do not know what to talk about. Also handing out guidelines for good presentations can be effective and helpful for the students.

Therefore, through using oral presentation activity, students will be given an opportunity to improve their level of English proficiency and even learn how to give presentations in the correct way since it is used in the real life.

#### **7.4. Discussions**

Discussions are merely the prominent activity in OE classes. It can be integrated with other activities consciously or unconsciously. According to Lazaraton (2001, p.106) they are

probably the most commonly used activity in the oral skills class. He explained that generally students receive a topic through a reading, listening passage or videotape then they discuss it in form of groups or pairs to come out with a result, solution, agreement, or the like.

Moreover, since human beings are by nature interested to find solutions to their problems, problem solving discussions are the very well-known format of discussion activities. In such activities, the students are going to discuss, think and create solutions to certain problems through using English. All in all, in such activities, students can enjoy, create, think, and even more they can enhance their autonomy. Therefore, teachers should take advantage of this peculiarity through incorporating such activities in the OE classes.

In classroom discussions, the students are grouped and each member has a specific job to do. Lazaraton (ibid) claimed about this idea by reporting that grouping or pairing may be necessary to ensure a successful discussion outcome. For that reason, he suggested, each person should have a specific responsibility in discussion whether it be to keep time, take notes, or report results. By the end of the discussion, members or representatives of each group are required to present the outcome to the class.

Additionally, while groups are discussing; the teacher may join to them to contribute and not to control. Here, the teacher is considered as a learner.

Importantly, in order to make a useful discussion, pair or group discussions need to be based on objectives that are lay down by the teacher. Lazaraton (ibid) believes that students need to be clear about *what* and *why* they are discussing, and *what outcome* is expected (p.106). In other words, students may get bored and start to talk in their first language if they just discuss without specific aim. Besides to that, providing challenging instructions such as the discussion is limited to fifteen minutes, the best ideas will be written in the board, or the

most organized group will be rewarded, will allow students to do their best to be involved to accomplish the task.

More importantly, since discussions are LC activities, students need to be given an opportunity to choose topics that they want to discuss. According to Green, Christopher and Lam (in Lazaraton, *ibid*), students will be more involved and motivated to participate in discussions if they are allowed to select discussion topics and evaluate peers' performance. This idea, they added, is in line with the principle of students taking responsibility for their own learning.

However, there are some discussion topics that can be suggested by the teacher in which first year EFL learners can be motivated to debate and discuss in a funny way. One of the famous topics is called 'Balloon Debate'. Thornbury (2005) explained it besides to other format of debates and discussions in details in his book. In short, balloon debate is based on the idea that famous passengers are dangerously overloaded in a hot-air balloon and at least one of the passengers has to be thrown out. In this case students in pairs are required to discuss why someone should be sacrificed and others should be saved. In addition, Rooks (cited in Lazaraton, 2001) published two books '*let's starttalking*' and '*non-stop discussion workbook*' which can be helpful for EFL teachers. They contain many excellent ideas for interesting and provocative discussion that can be modified to suit learners at different ability levels.

### **7.5. Language Games**

It means to practice the language through games. It is a favorable activity for both students and teachers because it is an easy and enjoyable way to speak English. Mora and Lopera (cited in Leo and Cely, 2010, Para. 1) stated that "Games and fun activities have

always been one of everybody's favorite things to do in a class ". In addition, it is the strategy that all FL teachers use to motivate students to develop the level of their oral proficiency.

There are many language games that can be grouped under one name that is information gap activity. This latter is a common language game in OE classes. For Thornbury (2005) information-gap is a classic task that requires from the students to bridge the gap through using language. In an information gap activity, one person has certain information that must be shared with others in order to solve a problem, gather information or make decisions (Neu&Reeser, in Raptou, 2001, Para. 2). Generally, it can be performed in pairs. One has information that the other does not have and then the partners should share these information (Kayi, 2006, Para. 7). Thus, it is more related to asking questions and answering them. Importantly, participation is guaranteed because the task cannot be accomplished without the contribution of each member.

Information-gap activity can be considered as a funny activity where students can practice the language in an amusing way. One example of an information gap task is 'spot the difference'. Another is an activity where one student is given a picture, and must describe it to another student, who creates a drawing from the description. Further examples are students sharing information to complete a class timetable, and an activity where students must share information about their families and then draw each others' family trees (Wiki, 2013, Para. 2).

Additionally, Wright, Betteridge and Buckby(cited in Leo and Cely, 2010) suggested many different kinds of games that are useful in order to encourage the students' participation, and develop the students' speaking skills. Some well-known games are:

- *Picture Games*: They involve comparing and contrasting pictures, considering differences or similarities and possible relations between pictures.

- *Sound Games*: There is a demand for the listeners to contribute through imagination. This inevitably leads to individual interpretations and interactions as well as the need to exchange points of view and to express ideas and opinions.
- *Word Games*: These games are used for spelling, meanings, using words for making sentences, words in contexts and word for categorizing according to grammatical use. Students, in many cases, have to communicate in full sentences, give new ideas and argue at the same length.
- *Memory Games*: These games measure the players' ability to remember different events which, in turn, leads to discussion, in which opinions and information are exchanged.

Moreover, while students aim at accomplishing the task, they are going to practice and to memorize the English language rules. That means that, students can practice grammar and learn new vocabularies and expressions through these games. As evidence, Raptou (2001) asserted in her study that the Information gap activities can also reinforce vocabulary and a variety of grammatical structures taught in class. They allow students to use linguistic forms and functions in a communicative way.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, according to many researchers speaking skill is the more desired skill which the majority of EFL learners want to develop more. Being very important, EFL oral expression classrooms need to be more LC classes. Consequently, this latter has led to a big exchange in teacher's and learner's roles. The teacher has become the facilitator of the learning process while the learner has become the responsible for his/her learning. Thus, the level of EFL learners' oral proficiency depends on their engagement in several oral classroom activities on condition that these activities should simulate the real life situations.

**Chapter Two: The Effects of EFL Learners' Psychology on Their  
participation in LC oral classroom activities**

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## **Chapter Two:**

### **The Effects of EFL Learner's Psychology on Their participation in LC oral classroom activities**

#### **Introduction**

Since success or failure in Second Language Learning or Foreign Language Learning (SLL/FLL) depend on learner's variables, this chapter makes the link between EFL learners' psychology and their participation in LC oral classroom activities. It discusses how much the psychological factors influence learners' engagement in the OE classroom activities and, therefore, their English oral proficiency.

First, this chapter reviews literature about how human beings learn in general and FLL in particular. Second, the relationship between learner autonomy and the psychology of learning is discussed. Subsequently, maturation which has a big effect on FLL is reported. Afterward, some psychological factors are mentioned; and their effects on students' participation in LC oral classroom activities are explained too. To come to an end, teaching the affective learning strategies to help FL learners to overcome their psychological problems are, very importantly, included.

#### **1. Psychology of Learning**

Obviously, human beings learn in different ways. Therefore, there is no agreement exists on how learning occurs. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, psychologists have viewed the learning process from many different angles. Studies in the field of the psychology of learning provide us with clear answers which tackle the question of how individuals learn. Nevertheless, all these approaches have a unique contribution in the field of SLL and FLL.



For instance, Xiangui (2005) examined, in his article, the three well-known learning theories particularly in the domain of learning second and foreign languages. He stated that in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, behaviorism was the dominant learning theory. Behaviorists such as B.F. Skinner considered learning as changes in the observable behavior of a learner made as a function of events in the environment. Then, in the 1970s there was a shift in considering learning as an observable behavior to more abstract process such as memory and motivation. This view was under the principles of the cognitivism. As a reaction to this latter, sociocultural theory has appeared in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to emphasize the importance of social context in human development. It viewed learning as a result to the verbal interaction between novices and experts in the environment. In addition, it assumed that knowledge has to be constructed and cannot be taught.

Additionally, humanism came later on to stress the uniqueness of individuals and the difficulties that psychology has had in treating individual persons with proper regard for their unique properties (Fenstermacher and Soltis, 2004, p.31). The humanist Maslow argued that learning must be understood as the result of an interaction between the person's needs and the unique "life space" of every person. Rogers (Cited in Fenstermacher and Soltis, 2004) developed Maslow's idea to concern language learning. He said:

This is learning that is filled with personal involvement; the whole person is in the learning event, rather than being a passive absorber of whatever the teacher dispenses. It is learning that is self-initiated. It is pervasive; it influences every aspect of the learner's being. It is evaluated by the learner, not by the teacher or by tests. It is rooted in meaning, which is to say that the learning has personal meaning for the learner; it advances the learner's power to understand and influence events that are important in his or her life (p.31).

However, in connecting psychological learning theories to FLL, constructivism and humanism has the greatest influence in shaping the tenets of learner-centered approach (LCA). Based on Constructivists' views like Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget and humanist's views like Carl Rogers, learning a foreign language can be successfully achieved through active and free engagement in the classroom activities by the learner to fulfill his/her needs. Thus EFL learning process demands from the learner a full participation in the classroom in harmony with high motivation which is the key concept in determining the success of FLL process.

## **2. Learner Autonomy and the Psychology of Learning**

Autonomy means to act independently. Autonomy, as one of the most important principles of LCA, is very often related with constructive learning theories. An important reference for this point is George Kelly's personal construct theory (1963, cited in Schluchlenz, 2003, Meister, 2003) in which He argued that peoples' theories and constructs in the life are seen as a result of an autonomous learning. According to Kelly, learning involves learners making their own sense of information or events. "Learners are actively involved in constructing their own personal understanding of things, and this will be different for different people." (Williams and Burden 1997, in Meister, 2003, p.34)

Schluchlenz (2003) explained more the implication of education and learning in the personal construct theory saying that learning can be facilitated if learners are helped to become aware of and understand their existing personal construct systems and if they are encouraged to assume control of psychological processes. That means that, successful learning comes from teacher's help in fostering learners' consciousness of their potential abilities to control their own learning as well as their psychology.

Moreover, learner autonomy, as Fenner (1998) affirmed in her résumé, is a cognitive as well as a metacognitive process (cited in Meister, 2003, p.35). That means that, she clarified,

on the one hand, students have to learn the foreign language; on the other hand, they have to become aware of their own learning and have to learn how to learn. Accordingly, students need help and encouragement to be aware of their personal ways of learning and have to become in charge for it. Consequently, learning is seen as an individual process in which learners become actively involved.

### **3. Maturation and its Influence on Foreign language Learning**

In fact, learning a foreign language in a late age can be positive and negative in the same time. Adult learners are more cognitively matured. They have critical minds. This can help them more in apprehending what they are learning and how they can realize their goals. Nevertheless, this gift may work as a barrier towards learning a FL. Concerning public self-image, matured learners become more sensitive. Adults are unlike children. They are bothered about making mistakes and laughed at by their classmates and teachers.

Going deeply, Shumin (1997) illustrated the negative effect of maturation on FL learners' speaking ability. He reported that:

Adults, unlike children, are concerned with how they are judged by others. They are very cautious about making errors in what they say, for making errors would be a public display of ignorance, which would be an obvious occasion of losing face in some cultures such as in China. Clearly, the sensitivity of adult learners to making mistakes, or fear of losing face, has been the explanation for their inability to speak English without hesitation.(p.5)

Accordingly, EFL matured learners may show signs of awkwardness and inhibition due to their greater cognitive maturity. More specifically, because of their fear of losing face which can decrease their opportunities of engagement in speaking activities, adult learners may show poor performance within the OE classrooms. Hence, matured learners' level of English oral proficiency will be diminished.

#### **4. The Effects of Some Psychological Factors on Learner's Participation**

Realizing the high importance of mastering speaking in English particularly with the emphasis on fluency, EFL learners are required to do extra-efforts than before. In addition to the view that speaking is the most difficult to master, according to Hinkle (cited in Nazara, 2011, p.29) learners have started, consequently, to feel more anxious about being proficient. Moreover, although many researches have been conducted to assist learners to master speaking skill, many EFL learners still face obstacles that hinder them from participating in all OE classroom activities and thus hamper them from being orally proficient.

In other words, learners prefer to participate in some oral activities than others or even they are reluctant to participate due to many different psychological factors. Garden and MacIntyre (Cited in Hadi, 2012, p.30) define affective factors as the “Emotionally relevant characteristics of the individual that influence how he/she will respond to any situation.” Oxford (in Shumin, 1997, p.3) reported that the affective side of the learner is probably one of the most important influences on language learning success or failure. Hence, psychological factors should be taken into account because it can impact the FL learning process either negatively or positively.

Going deeply, due to the psychological factors, EFL learners may express resistance and reluctance towards OE classroom activities. Hence, opportunities for practicing speaking will diminish and this will result to speaking failure, as Thornbury (2005) claimed.

In the OE classrooms, learners may experience different psychological factors due to different factors which can be the environment, the teacher, the activities, the setting, or even him/herself. Some of the affective factors related to L2 or FLL are anxiety, lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence, shyness, lack of interest, learning styles, and many others.

#### **4.1. Language Anxiety**

Language anxiety can be considered in the high rank among the other factors. According to Brown (in Shumin, 1997, p.3), L2 or foreign language learning is a complex task that is susceptible to human anxiety which is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, and apprehension. In Oxford (1999, p.59), Gardner and MacIntyre reported that language anxiety is fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the SL or FL. Therefore, language anxiety is a negative concept which refers to a kind of state of discomfort associated with learning a new language.

In fact, all human beings, particularly at the beginning of their activities in different domains, show signs of anxiety which can be diminished over time. Regarding the signs of language anxiety, Oxford (1999) listed them in three categories which are: general avoidance such as lack of volunteering, physical actions such as lack of eye contact, and self-criticism. However, Oxford (ibid) reported that for some students language anxiety can become a part of their personality trait rather than a state. Thus, she said: “It can harm learners’ performance” (p.62). This type of learners, generally, has negative self - concept, and they often underestimate the quality of their speaking skill.

Deeply speaking, language anxiety can be more arise in EFL oral expression classrooms since speaking is the most skill that provokes anxiety to EFL learners more. In this case, it is “situation- specific anxiety” (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986, cited in Maouche, 2010, p.10). Specifically talk, some learners can be anxious if they perform in front of their classmates such as in role-plays and oral presentation or if they talk and the others look to them as in classroom discussions. In other words, they become anxious if they are put in the spot. Moreover, first year students may experience anxiety more than the others since they were used, before they enrollment to the university, to be passive. Therefore, learners may need time

to become comfortable with their new responsibilities and roles. Furthermore, Language anxiety has a persistent impact on OE classroom activities. It can hamper learners' performance, make them reluctant to participate, make them not to be understood, and even more let them lack self-confidence, and consequently hinder the development of their oral proficiency. As an evidence, Oxford (1999, p.60) indicated that anxiety damages language learners' achievement "indirectly through worry and self-doubt and directly by reducing participation and creating overt avoidance of the language."

However, oxford (1999) claimed that anxiety can be helpful in some ways such as keeping students alert. Many language researchers and psychologists (Scovel (1978), Horwitz et al. (1986), Summy (1992), cited in Maouche, 2010, p.9) argue that moderate anxiety can be helpful and facilitate the learner's performance, and it can be as a motivator and lead to better oral performance through motivating learners to adopt a strategy and to be willing to confront the new learning task.

#### **4.2. Motivation**

Concerning SL or FL learning, Motivation is a crucial element in determining the success or failure of the learning process. Many researchers and teachers find that motivation is as one of the crucial factors that influence the rate of success of second language and foreign language learners (Dornyei, 1998). Motivation provides a positive push to initiate learning the SL/FL. And moreover it is very necessary to sustain the long and often boring learning process (Kimhachandra, 2010). Learners with sufficient motivation can achieve a working knowledge of an L2, regardless of their language aptitude or other cognitive characteristics. Without sufficient motivation, however, even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language (Dornyei, 2001, p.5).

Motivation has two forms. Intrinsic motivation concerns behavior performed for its own sake in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction such as the joy of doing a particular activity or satisfying one's curiosity. That means that, students show a willingness to participate in the activities without imposition from the outside. Extrinsic motivation involves performing a behavior as a means to an end, that is, to receive some extrinsic reward (e.g. good grades) or to avoid punishment (Deci and Ryan 1985, cited in Dornyei, 2001, p.11). That means that, students engage in the activities not for the sake of accomplishing it but for outside objectives.

Obviously, the two are totally different; but both of them are needed for the success of EFL learning process. Nevertheless, according to many language researchers and psychologists, intrinsic motivation is considered the most important and the most needed for long term objectives.

Deeply speaking, EFL students' performance in the OE classroom activities is the most affected module by the level of motivation. In view of the fact that motivation is unstable factor in the classroom, Students' motivation may decrease over time (Dornyei, 2001, p.19). lack of motivation may happen because of many factors such as the bad relationship with the teacher, the unorganized classroom, the uninteresting activity or topic, the learner's state like tiredness, illness, hungry, and even the time especially in the afternoon, etc. consequently, those factors may decrease students' motivation and even more may prevent students' engagement in the OE activities. Hence, this can lead to the hindrance of EFL learners' oral proficiency.

For that reason, increasing and directing student motivation is one of the teacher's responsibilities. Ur claimed that the teacher has a crucial role to play in increasing motivation to learn. For that, he (2012, p.11) suggested three main ways that influence learners' motivation

- By taking every opportunity to show them how important it is for them to know English
- By fostering their self-image as successful language learners
- And by ensuring that classroom activities are interesting

In the other hand, Ford (1992, cited in Dorneyi, 2001, p.25) shaped another idea about how humans could be motivated. He said:

There are no magic motivational buttons that can be pushed to make people want to learn, work hard, and act in a responsible manner. Similarly, no one can be directly "forced" to care about something. . . Facilitation, not control, should be the guiding idea in attempts to motivate humans.

This view goes in accordance with the principles of LCA. Therefore, EFL learners' motivation can be increased if teachers work as facilitator of the learning process; and give learners the whole control over their learning. According to Ford, facilitation is the key to motivation and, thus, to successful learning.

### **4.3. Self-Confidence**

Self-confidence as a part of self-esteem, which means the good image that a person has about him/herself, is a person's confidence to perform specific task successfully and link closely to initial task engagement, persistence, and achievement. Coopersmith (cited in Acosta, 2007, p.120) defines it as "The evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. In other words, it means the belief that the learner has about his/her own abilities to carry out an activity.

Being confident is one of the most important aspects in learning SL/FL. A student with self-confidence, even with low linguistic competence, means that he/she is not shy of being



ridiculous or fear of making mistakes when participating in the classroom activities. More specifically, Heyde (cited in Acosta, 2007) studied the effects of self-confidence on the performance of an oral production task; and she found that self-confidence associated positively with performance on oral production measures. As a result, the study comes out with the importance of self-confidence as a variable in second language learning process. At this point, self-confidence is considered as a motivating factor.

On the other hand, we can find a student who is linguistically competent but he/she lacks self-confidence to perform a task or even share his/her opinion by using English. For instance, some students have the tendency to compare themselves with their classmates; then they start to underestimate their abilities if they are better than them, in their opinion. That means that, lack of self-confidence comes from learners' doubts about their own abilities. Therefore, this can result on a low performance and consequently on a low level of EFL learners' oral proficiency.

Going deeply, the majority of EFL first year students may lack self-confidence to perform or participate in the oral classroom activities since it is their first time to do so. Jones (2007) in his book *The Student-Centered Classroom* claimed that Students who have never worked together before may lack confidence. Moreover, some students may also lack confidence if they are not well prepared in advance for the task in particular during a spontaneous conversation. Furthermore, students who lack confidence they prefer to avoid challenges and risk taking of criticism. Therefore, their chances of speaking in English will be reduced and their level of oral proficiency will be affected negatively.

For that reason, students with low level of self confidence need a lot of support and encouragement from the teacher to let them feel confident. As a motivating technique to enhance students' confidence, teachers can suggest topics through which they can work collaboratively as to talk, even in their L1, about personal experiences, or to discuss about

something in common. Moreover, Jones (ibid, p.15) claimed that preparation of the task or even over-preparation is needed for maintaining high self-confidence. Furthermore, he reported that the more successful the activities they participate in, the more confident students will become. That means that, learners who meet with success in old experiences gain more *self-confidence*. He concluded: “such confidence can only be built by having students work together, so that when they have to talk with strangers in English in real life, they’ll feel less scared and they’ll be more prepared for real conversations” (P.15).

#### **4.4. Fear of making mistakes**

It is well-known that through errors we learn. However, EFL learners consider mistakes as something forbidden should be not committed. Their fear of making mistakes, especially when they talk using English, comes as a result of their emphasis on accuracy more than fluency. They think that, they have to speak with a correct grammar or they will be laughed at by their classmates. Additionally, in some cases students’ reluctant can be due to of being continually corrected by the teacher for every mistake they make. Moreover, Fear of making mistakes is more related to lack of confidence. Students with low level of confidence often fear of laughing at or fear of losing face in front of their classmates.

Many studies investigated the relationship between fear of making mistakes and EFL learners’ performance. They found that fear of making mistakes can have a negative *impact* on learners' *performance* .That means that, their opportunities to speak can be diminished. As a consequence, learners’ level of oral proficiency will, obviously, hinder.

More precisely, Ur (2012, p.118) reported about the difficulties that actually inhibit the student from talk. More precisely, he informed about students’ fear of making mistakes as one of many problems. He says:

Unlike the other three skills' activities, speaking requires some degree of real-time exposure to an audience. Students are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom because they are worried about making mistakes, scared of criticism or losing face...

Accordingly, EFL learners prefer to keep silent all the time to avoid committing mistakes particularly during activities in which he/she is not pre-prepared or which involve a degree of Improvisation. While other learners hesitate to answer any question unless they are completely sure it is correct in meaning and grammar. Moreover, honor learners, as Doyle (2008) called them, fears to take the risk of making mistakes in order to not lose face. He stated that error will reveal that they might not be as smart as they want their peers [or even their teachers] to think they are.

Consequently, making errors should be taken seriously by the teachers. This does not mean that all learners' mistakes should be corrected. However, the teacher should teach his students that errors are keys for language learning. More importantly, teachers' feedback should focus more in getting students' message across in a fluent way regardless of its accuracy, as Nation (cited in Hue, 2010) argued.

#### **4.5. Shyness**

According to Cheek, shyness is "a temporary emotional reaction triggered by encountering new people and situations" (1989, cited in Manning and Ray, 1993, p.179). Cheek (ibid) refined this definition, stating that shyness is the tendency to feel tense, worried, or awkward during social interactions, especially with unfamiliar people. Manning and Ray (1993) claimed that shyness and self-confidence clearly are not total states to which people are assigned in a permanent way. For instance, they explained, some people are shy on some occasions and not on others; while others are shy most of the time. Therefore, they

concluded, shy people probably are shy only at certain times and under certain circumstances (ibid, P.189). Generally, shyness is a situational and occasional feeling of embarrassment.

In the case of EFL, Shyness is an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English class (Juhana, 2012, p.101). Accordingly, she added, this indicates that shyness could be a source of problem in students' performance in the classroom especially in the class of speaking. More than that, over shyness may hinder the students from accomplishing their ultimate goals of learning English. In details, Shy students may prefer some activities such as pair discussion in which they are not required to stand up to talk or to play ridiculous roles and all the eyes are on them.

More importantly, first year students are the most category that may be exposed to shyness because they are unfamiliar with the activities of the OE classrooms. Nevertheless, for some student, eventually, shyness can be overcome over time. However for some students, it is considered as a real problem. In this case, shyness can be viewed as a trait which can be difficult to be overcome.

Regardless to what have been mentioned, possible solutions can be founded by the teacher whose role to assist his/her students is very important. Students involved in Johana's study (2012) revealed that their feeling of shyness needs to be solved through motivating them by the teacher to be more confident to speak. Accordingly, Chinmoy (cited in Juhana, 2012) argued that teachers should encourage the students in order to realize that shyness in language learning is not a good thing because it will prevent them from improving their speaking. Chinmoy (ibid) illustrated that if students can see shyness as a bad thing, they will be in a position to try and to overcome it.

#### **4.6. Lack of Interest**

Sometimes silence in EFL oral classrooms can be due to insufficient information, lack of vocabulary or uninteresting topic. This latter can have the most negative effects on students' participation and, henceforth, on their level of oral proficiency.

According to Lehman and Schraw (2009), Interest, in general, increases motivation, engagement, and persistence. Therefore, we deduce that lack of interest decreases motivation, engagement, and persistence which are very important elements in SL/FL learning process. Mitchell (1993), in Lehman and Schraw (2009, p.512), also argued about this point; saying that interest increases active learning as well as the reverse.

Going deeply, in the tenets of LCA, topics in the OE classrooms activities should be in relation to the learners' needs and interest. Lehman and Schraw (2009) argued that Students who are interested in a topic or activity are more likely to engage and persist (p.511). Indeed, students will be motivated to participate in the OE classrooms if topics and activities are chosen by them. Moreover, Thornbury (2005) argued that the greater the familiarity, the easier the speaking task (p.25). Hence, familiarity with the topic can motivate EFL students to speak. Thornbury (ibid) included not only familiarity with the topic; but he incorporated also familiarity with the genre and interlocutors.

Furthermore, according to Ur (1981, p .5) providing interesting topics to motivate EFL learners to speak is important but it is not enough. The most important is to provide the students with the real aim for talk. Ur put forward the following:

The first thing to do to encourage fluency is to bring interesting subjects of conversation to the classroom. This latter is, for most teachers, seen as the central focus of classroom discussion. But for him [the student] it is certainly important, but not central: the crux is not “what” to talk about, but “why” you

need to talk about it. This means that, students need a reason to speak more than they need something to speak about.

Therefore, based on what has been discussed, lack of interest in the OE classroom can make the student get bored and express apathy. Consequently, students' opportunities to interact within the speaking activities can be reduced. More than that, the students may turn to do other things and start to speak in their L1. Hence, their speaking proficiency can be hampered.

#### **4.7. Learning Styles**

According to Kuhn (2009), learning styles mean the differences between individuals' processing capabilities which lead to significantly different learning requirements (p.575). Relating this to FLL, it means students' preferred way, in accordance with their distinct characteristics, in learning the target language. Keefe (1979, cited in Schluchlenz, 2003, p.27) suggested the following definition:

...the characteristic cognitive, affective and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment... Learning style is a consistent way of functioning, that reflects underlying causes of behavior.

Kuhn (2009) and the supporters of the learning styles theory argued that in order for individuals to be successful learners, instruction needs to be matched to the individuals' learning preferences. That means that, the degree of learners' performance in the OE classroom activities can be also affected by their learning styles. Thus, teachers should know their learners' preferred learning styles because this awareness will help the teacher to provide the most appropriate activities to suit all learning styles that the class encompasses.

Learning style encompasses a range of models. It includes learning preferences (for example, visual versus auditory learners), personality traits (e.g., extraverts Vs introverts learners), and cognitive styles (e.g., field dependence Vs field independence).

#### **4.7.1. learning Preferences**

According to Oxford (2001), learning preferences refer to the physical, perceptual learning channels with which the student is the most comfortable (p.360). Oxford explained four main areas of learning preferences or as she named them “sensory preferences”. For visual learners, speaking activities should be accompanied with visual stimulus. For them, oral activities without any visual support can reduce their opportunities to participate in such activities. On the contrary, auditory learners are comfortable with “unembellished” classrooms. That means that, they are motivated by classroom interactions in role plays, discussions and similar activities. In addition, song games, audio-taped conversations or reading aloud conversations is helpful in stimulating them to participate in the OE classroom activities. On the other hand, kinesthetic (movement-oriented) and tactile (touch-oriented) like the activities in which they are required to move such as role plays and language games. For them, sitting in their places and discussing for an hour is not preferable.

Regardless of their different characteristics, an individual may possess not only one sensory preference. Dornyei (2005, p.141) said that the different sensory preferences do not exclude each other. He exemplified that some learners are both auditory and visual, but they usually display slight preferences, or modality strengths, one way or the other.

#### **4.7.2. Personality Traits**

Personality traits mean learners' psychological tendencies and behaviors (Rebin, 2010, p.11). Many previous studies highlighted the relation between learners' personality traits and their oral performance in the target language. Educational researchers have identified four

categories of personalities which can be founded in the learning process. However, extroversion and introversion is the most investigated variable in personality traits.

#### **4.7.2.1. Extroverts Vs Introverts**

First of all, these two terms are contradictor in nature. Eysenck (cited in Rebin, 2010) explored the physiological difference between the two. He claimed that the difference is in the cortex arousal level in the brain of the extroverts, which is low, and the introverts, which is high. Therefore, extraverts tend to seek stimulation from the environment while introverts attempt to seek a reduction of stimulation (ibid, p.17).

On the other hand, the psychological point of view on the difference between extraversion and introversion is as Brown (1993, cited in Rebin, 2010, p. 18) stated: "Extraversion is the extent to which a person has a deep-seated need to receive enhancement, self-esteem, and a sense of wholeness from other people as opposed to receiving that affirmation within oneself". However, introversion is the opposite.

Moreover, in the literature review about this point, there is no general agreement about the effects of personality styles on oral performance. Oxford and Ehrman (in Oxford, 2001) found a significant positive correlation between students' personality traits and their FL oral proficiency. While some researchers found significant negative correlations.

Nevertheless, in all these researches (Rossier, 1976; Dewaele and Furnham, 2000; Vogel and Vogel, 1986; cited in Rebin, 2010), extraverts were found to be more proficient than introverts. In details, extraverts benefit from being communicative and adventurous, which gives opportunity for more L2 practice, thus they are more successful in oral performance. However, introverts do not behave as extraverts do, and they are rather reserved which may affect their level of oral proficiency. According to Abali's study (2006, cited in Rebin, 2010),



it was found that while introverts had a tendency to ask questions, extraverted students were tending to launch most of the activities, initiate new ideas, and make restatements.

### **4.7.3. Cognitive Styles**

According to Keefe (1979, cited in Wyss, 2002), cognitive style is the way that each individual adopt to learn or to solve a problem depending on his/her cognitive abilities and personality traits. Educational researchers (Riding and Rayner, 1998, cited in Dornyei, 2005) have identified many types of cognitive styles. Nevertheless, field dependence (FD) and field independence (FI) have been most extensively studied and have had the widest application to educational problems (S. Soozandehfar& M. Souzandehfar, 2011, p.4). Findings of many studies in the field of SL/FL learning and teaching show a significant relationship between the two aforementioned types and learners' attainments and performance in the class.

#### **4.7.3.1. Field Dependence Vs Field Independence**

Kuhn (2009) and many other researchers (Witkin, 1969; Genesee and Hamayan, 1980; Hansen and Stanfield, 1981, cited in Kuhn, 2009; and Naiman et al., 1978, cited in S. Soozandehfar& M. Souzandehfar, 2011) state the difference between the two terms. Field dependent individuals are considered to be social learners who benefit from collaboration and extrinsic motivation, whereas field independent individuals are considered to be autonomous learners who are intrinsically motivated and work best on their own. Based on the specification mentioned here for the two types, it can be supposed that each one of the two types have its own strategies in learning how to speak the target language.

However, according to the aforementioned research, field independence, in particular, has been found to correlate positively and significantly with SL/FL learning in general. That means that, specifically talk, the rate of Independent learners' engagement in the LC oral classroom activities is high. In details, while dependent learners prefer to rely on the teachers' guidance

and they do not engage unless they are asked by the teacher, independent learners prefer to take the responsibility to engage and take the advantage of any opportunity to communicate; or even they create it if it is possible. On the other hand, it has been found that dependent learners can develop their level of oral proficiency due to their preference of working in pairs and groups rather than individually. Thus, in the OE classrooms, dependent students can take advantage from the activities that demand more collaboration.

## **5. Affective Learning Strategies**

Generally speaking, good SL/FL learner is the one who regularly use certain types of learning strategies (Naiman et al., 1975; Rubin, 1975; cited in Oxford, 2001). Zimmerman and Pons (1986, cited in Oxford, 2001) reported that students who frequently employ learning strategies enjoy a high self-efficacy (p.363). This means that, there is a positive effect of language learning strategies on EFL learning outcomes.

Affective learning strategies are one of many strategies which SL/FL learners can use for enhancing achievement and, particularly, developing proficiency in speaking (Robbins, 1996; cited in Oxford, 2001). Specifically talk, despite all the psychological factors which may hinder EFL learners' engagement in the OE classroom activities, learners can gain control over these factors via the affective learning strategies. Certainly, this can be achieved with the help of the teacher.

Affective learning strategies concern the ways in which learners interact with other learners and native speakers or take control of one's own feelings on language learning (Essay, 2013, para.8).according to Oxford (1990) and O'Malley and Chamot (1990), they involve taking control of the emotional conditions and experiences that shape one's subjective involvement in learning (cited in Dornyei, 2005, p. 169). In other words, they are concerned with managing emotions, both negative and positive. For instance, lowering anxiety levels

with relaxation techniques, rewarding oneself for good performance, talking about feelings as discussion topics, and using deep breathing or positive self-talk (Oxford 1996, cited in Oxford, 2001) are kinds of affective strategy that EFL learners can use in the OE classrooms.

Importantly, the teacher has an active role in developing students' affective learning strategies. "Helping students to develop their own affective learning strategies is just like teaching them how to fish" (Essays, 2013, para.6). According to Oxford (2001), skilled teachers help their learners develop an awareness of learning strategies and enable them to use a wider range of appropriate strategies (p.362). That means that, learners can take control and responsibility over their learning if they are taught and helped to use these strategies freely and correctly. Encouraging students, creating positive atmosphere, working collaboratively and cooperatively, and knowing learners' preferred styles can assist the students to control the psychological barriers in the OE classrooms. Al-Badi (2006, cited in Ramirez and Restrepo, 2012, p. 12) emphasized that:

It is essential that greater awareness is created among teachers of the effect that learners' views of their own abilities have on their motivation to speak English. By being encouraging and supporting, and helping learners believe in their own potential, teachers have a key role to play in enhancing learner motivation and enabling them to develop not just their oral skills in English but their proficiency in the language generally.

Moreover, students can, consequently, not only improve their English proficiency but also enhance their sense of responsibility in learning English (Essays, 2013, para.6).

Furthermore, as an effective technique, getting students to take a questionnaire about their psychology and then discussing the results with them can be beneficial for teachers and students to find out solutions to the psychological problems as well as to adapt OE classroom's activities according to the different learning styles within the classroom.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, according to previous studies, it becomes obvious that students' psychological factors affect, in general, their performance in OE classroom activities and, in particular, their English oral proficiency. For that reason, EFL students need a help from the teacher to control the negative psychological factors as well as to promote the positive ones. Therefore, as a means to do so, affective learning strategies should be taught to EFL students in order to use them to overcome any psychological problem that hinders their oral performance.

## Chapter Three: Field of Investigation

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## **Chapter Three:**

### **Field of Investigation**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter is designed to answer the questions of the study concerning the negative impact of the psychological factors of first year EFL students of the English department in the University of Biskra on their participation in OE classroom activities in which the learner is the center. In addition, this chapter is carried out to propose solutions to manage these factors and to make the students take control over their learning.

Since it is the only means through which students' psychology can be checked and teachers' attitudes toward students' psychology can be recognized, the data were gathered by questionnaires, one for the students and the other for the teachers. The findings obtained from the two questionnaires are analyzed and, moreover, pedagogical recommendations are suggested.

#### **1. Students' questionnaire**

##### **1.1. Description of the questionnaire**

This questionnaire is designed for first year EFL students at the English department of Biskra University of the academic year 2014-2015. Students' questionnaire had been administrated to seven (7) students in order to be piloted first. Then, it had been re-administrated to fifty (50) students who have been chosen randomly to give all the members of the population an equal chance to contribute in this questionnaire. This latter seeks to investigate the effects of different psychological factors that hinder students' participation in LC oral classroom activities. This questionnaire involves different types of questions: closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire is composed of '29' questions which are categorize under two (2) sections.

Section one is about students' background. It is interested in gathering general information about the participants. It involves six (6) general questions. On the other hand, section two goes deeply in gathering information about the participants. It is divided in to two (2) parts. Part one speaks about student's attitude towards oral expression activities. It contains twelve (12) different questions. Part two investigates student's psychology and its effects on his/her participation in the OE classroom activities. Importantly, part two seeks to collect, in detail, information about how the students can manage these psychological factors. It includes eleven (11) different questions.

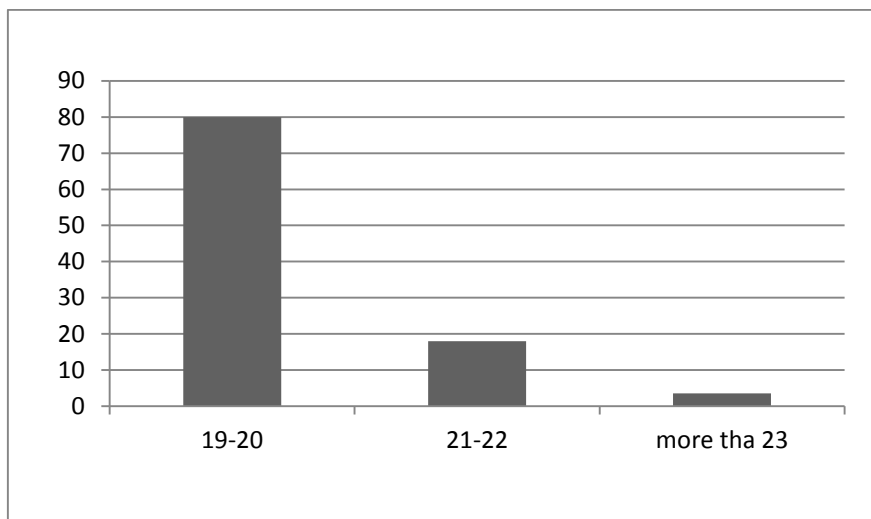
## **1.2. Analysis of the results**

### **1.2.1. Section One: General Information**

#### **1. Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>19-20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>21-22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>More than 23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total number</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1:** Students' age



**Figure 1: Students' age**

The table presents the age of the students. Students' age is between 19 and more than 23 years old. It shows that the majority (80%) are between 19 and 20 years old. That means that, this category did not repeat the year and they are regularly attending their classes. The rate of the second category is (18%). It represents those who repeated the year either in the high school or in university. The last category (2%) represents the aged learners who may learn English as a second diploma or stopped their study years and now they are carrying on.

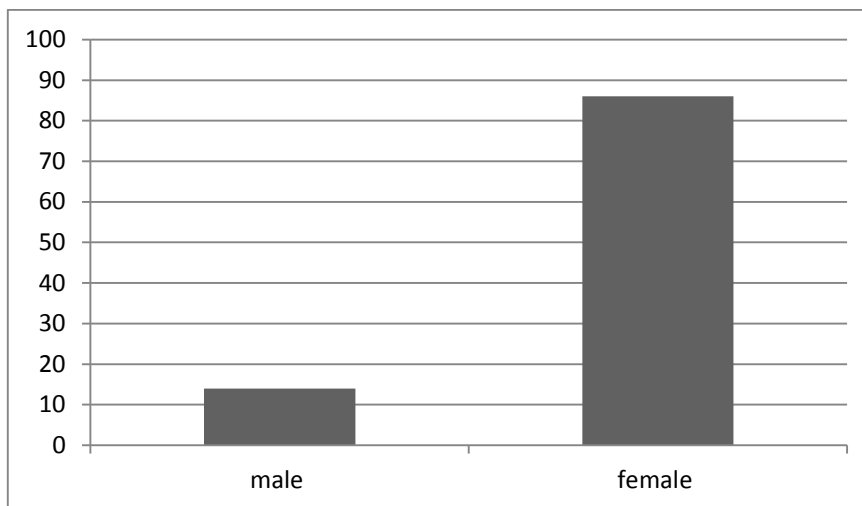
**2. Gender :**

- a. Male
- b. Female

sex	Responses	Percentages
Male	7	14%
Female	43	86%
Total	50	100%

**Table 2: Students' gender**





**Figure 2:** Students' gender

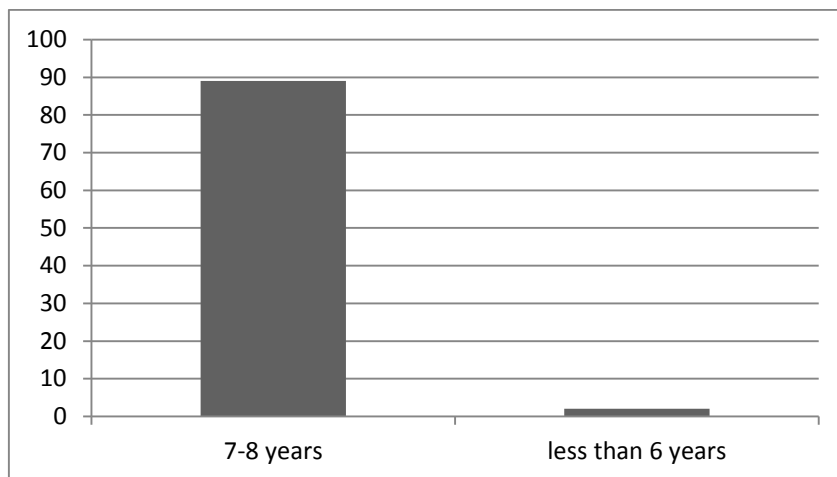
The table shows that the majority of students (86%) are girls whereas (14%) from the sample population represents boys. This means that girls are more interested in studying foreign languages, in particular, English language.

**3. How long have you been learning English?**

- a. 7-8 years
- b. Less than 6 years

Number of years	Responses	Percentages
7-8 years	49	98%
Less than 6 years	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3:** Duration of learning English



**Figure 3:** Duration of learning English

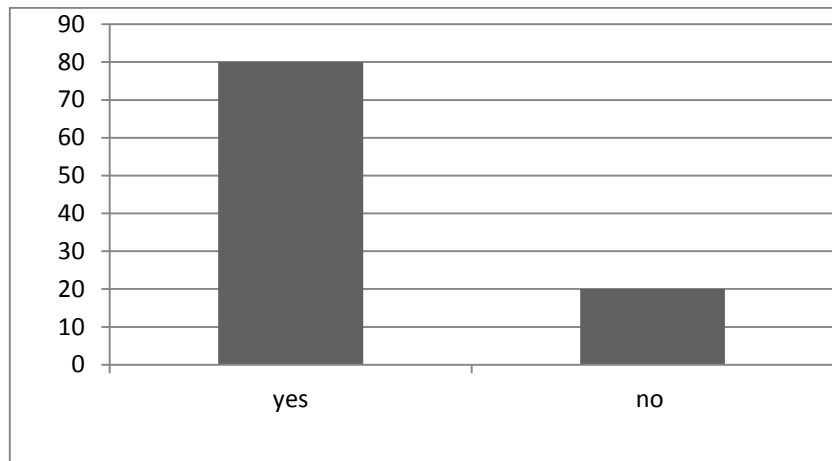
The results show that (98%) from the sample of population are adapted with learning English since (7-8) years whereas (2%) of the students have little experience in learning English. This may be because of their discontinuity in their learning process.

**4. Was English your first choice?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4:** English as first choice to be studied



**Figure 4:** English as first choice to be studied

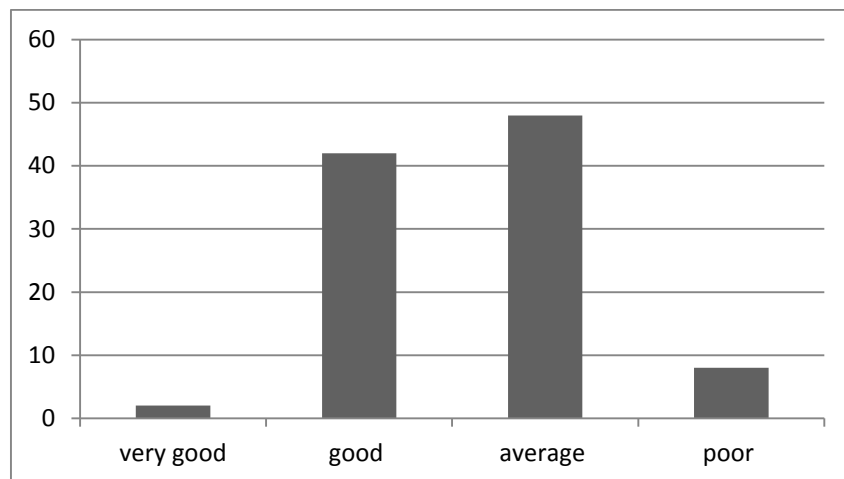
Statistics prove that (80%) of the students have chosen English as a first choice which can work as a motivational factor for mastering English. On the other hand, for 10 students (20%), studying English was not their first choice this can be due to administrative orientation or due to their general average which did not allow them to study the desired field.

**5. Is your level of English:**

- a. Very good    b. Good    c. Average    d. poor

Options	Responses	Percentages
Very good	1	2%
Good	21	42%
Average	24	48%
Poor	4	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5:** Students' level of English



**Figure 5:** Students' level of English

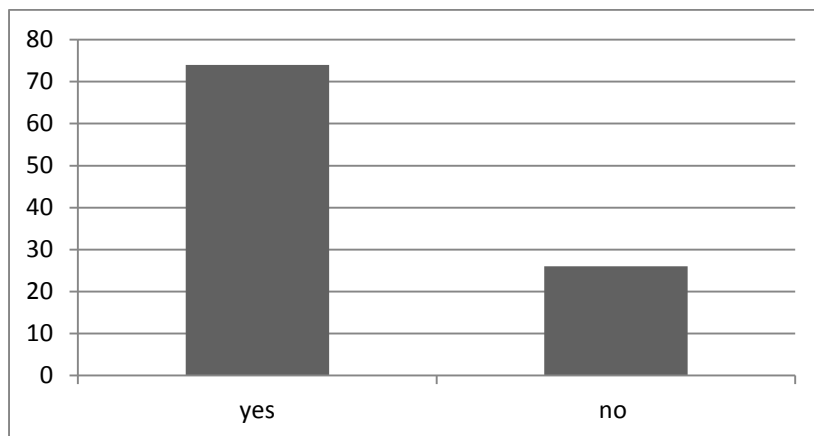
The analysis of the results demonstrates that the majority (48%) of the students have an average level. Then the second category with (42%) has a good level in English; while those with poor level represent the third category with (8%). The last category with (2%) is very good at English.

**6. Does your level enable you to express yourself orally?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>74%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6:** Students' level of English and expressing themselves orally



**Figure 6:** Students' level of English and expressing themselves orally

The table shows that the majority (74%) of the students, with regard to their level in English, can express themselves orally while (26%) of the sample, their poor level, do not allow them to express themselves orally.

### 1.2.2. Section two

The second section tries to go deeply to investigate the correlation between students' psychology and their attitudes towards OE classroom activities.

#### 1.2.2.1. Part one: student's attitude towards OE classroom activities

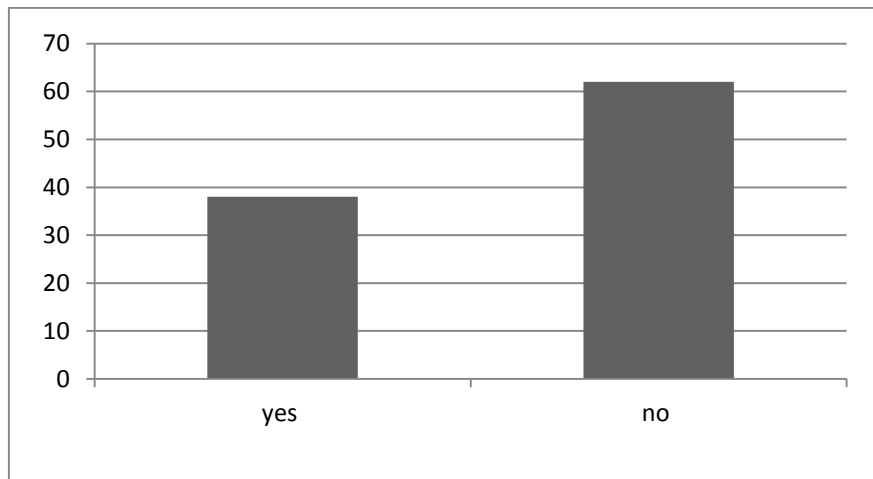
#### 7. Which skill do you prefer to master better?

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

Options	Responses	Percentages
Listening	16	32%
Speaking	18	36%
Reading	6	12%
Writing	10	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 7:** Students' preferred skill to master





**Figure 8:** Students' attitudes towards the difficulty of speaking

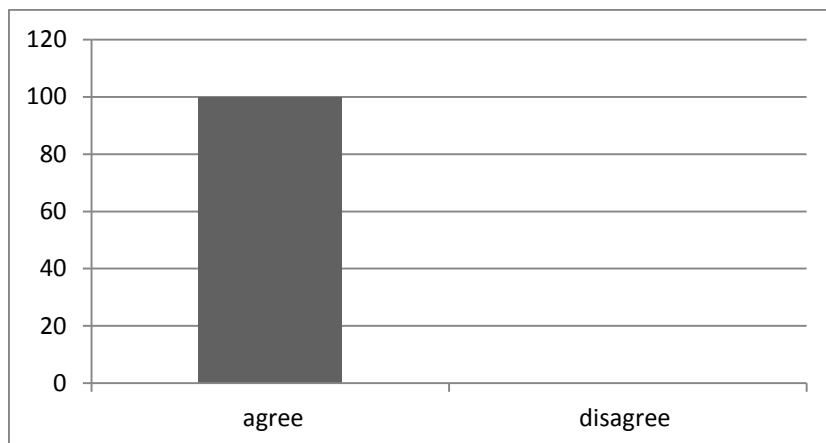
The results revealed that more than the half (62%) of the sample of the population say that speaking skill is not difficult to be mastered. However, the rest (38%) say that it is difficult to be mastered. The reasons behind the latter saying are: mispronunciation, spontaneity, disorder of the ideas, nothing to say, and face to face speaking which cause shyness for some students.

**9. Do you agree that in order to master speaking English you have to practice it?**

- a. Agree
- b. Disagree

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9:** Students' opinion about practicing speaking skill to be mastered



**Figure 9:** Students' opinion about practicing speaking skill to be mastered

The statics show that the entire sample (100%) agrees that in order to master speaking skill they have to practice it.

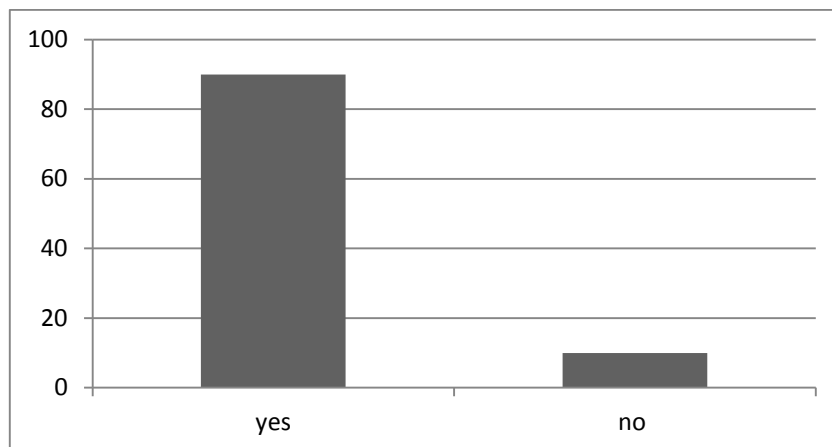
**10. Do you like oral expression module?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 10:** Students' attitude toward Oral Expression module





**Figure 10:** Students' attitude toward Oral Expression module

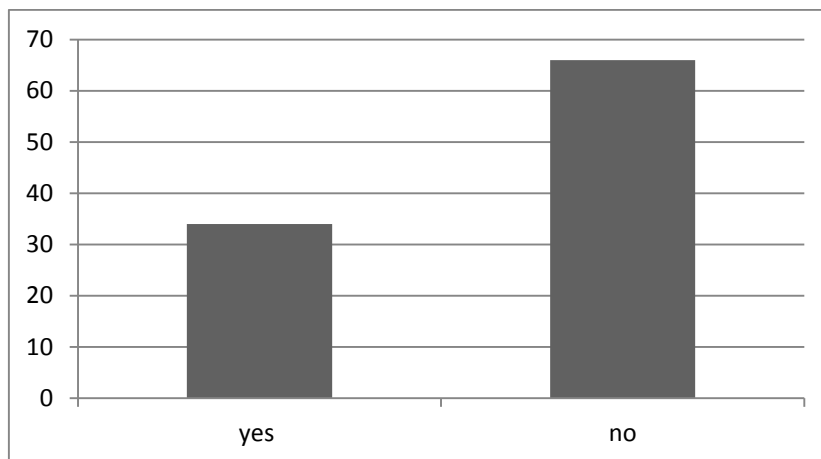
The largest percentage (90%) represents those who like to attend oral expression module. Therefore, this like can work as a motivational factor to develop speaking skill. On the other hand, the rest of the sample (10%) say that they dislike OE module because of the repetition of the same activities i.e. discussion activities and role plays. In addition to the dislike of the teacher, they added that this module demand more hard work.

**11. In your opinion is it enough three sessions per week for oral expression module?**

- a. Yes            b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 11:** Students' opinion about time allotment of OE module



**Figure 11:** Students' opinion about time allotment of OE module

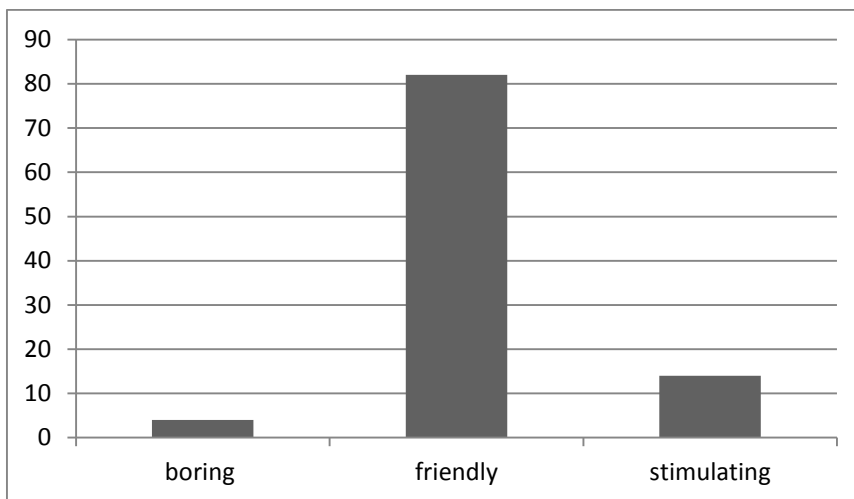
The results revealed that more than half (66%) of the sample of the population reported that three sessions are not enough to practice speaking. For that, they suggested to be four (4) sessions per week. On the other hand, 17 students (34%) stated that it is enough three sessions per week to practice English. That means that the first category is more likely to develop their speaking.

**12. How would you describe the atmosphere of your oral expression class?**

- a. Boring      b. Friendly      c. Stimulating

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Boring</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Friendly</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>Stimulating</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 12:** Describing the atmosphere of OE classroom



**Figure 12:** Describing the atmosphere of OE classroom

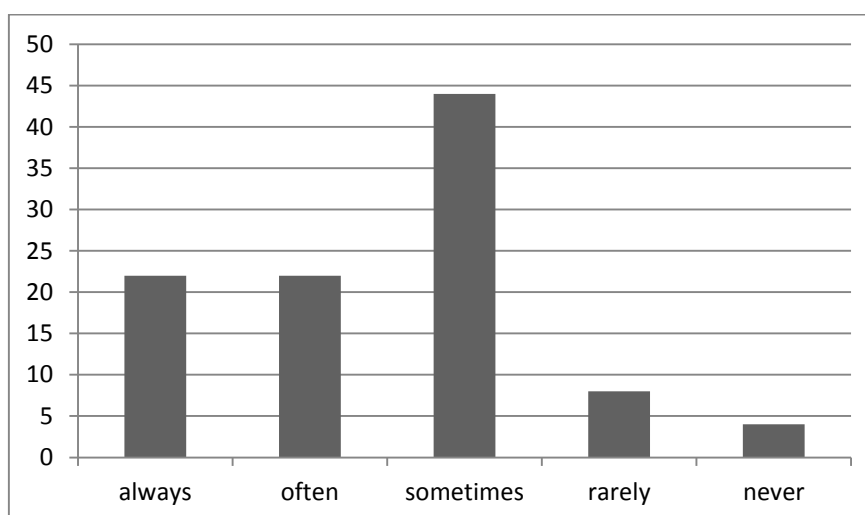
This question aims at deducing if the atmosphere of the OE classroom motivates the students to be active or not. Accordingly, the results show that the largest percentage (82%) goes to the friendliness of the atmosphere. This means that (41) of the students feel safe in attending the OE class. Other students (14%) described it as stimulating which means that it is more than being friendly. For them, it works as a motivational factor to participate and interact. However, for the rest of the students which represent (4%), the atmosphere of the OE classroom is boring which, clearly, can decrease their motivation.

**13. How often do you participate in the oral expression class without being asked by the teacher?**

- a. Always      b. Often      c. Sometimes      d. Rarely      e. Never

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Always</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Often</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Rarely</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 13:** Frequency of students' participation in OE classroom



**Figure13:** Frequency of students' participation in OE classroom

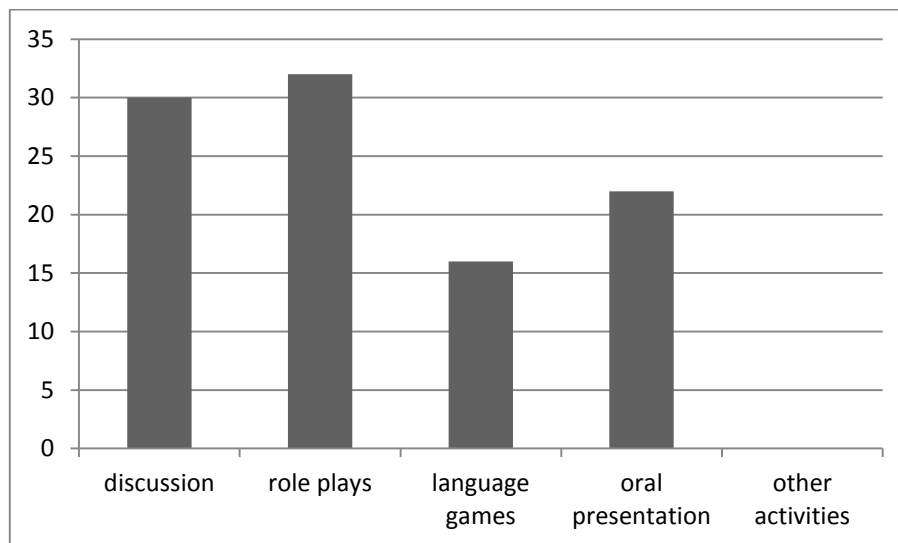
Most of the students (44%) sometimes participate without being asked by the teacher while those who reported that they participate autonomously are (22%). in addition the same percentage (22%) of the students often participates without being invited. This can be considered as an autonomous learning. On the other hand, (8%) of the students are rarely engaged while the rest which represent (4%) of that sample do not engage unless are asked by the teacher.

**14. Which activity do you like most and always participate in?**

- a. Discussion   b. Role plays   c. Language games   d. Oral presentation   e. Other activities

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Role plays</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Language games</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Oral presentation</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 14:** Students’ preferred activity



**Figure 14:** Students’ preferred activity

The percentages show that (32%) of the students prefer to participate in role plays more than the other activities because it is a lively and funny activity as well as it requires only memorization of the roles. In addition, for some others their preference goes to their love of acting. Besides to that, discussion activities are preferred by (15) students (30%) of the sample because it gives opportunity to all students to talk, present, and exchange their views

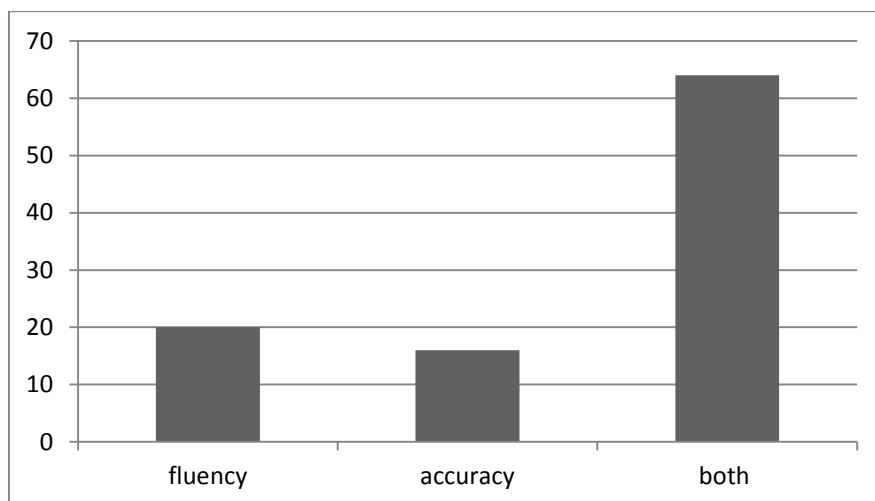
about their preferred topics. As a third preferred activity, oral presentation has been chosen by (22%) of the sample. For them, it is an easy task which require preparation in advance and memorization as well as reading from the paper from time to time. The last category which represents (16%) of the whole sample prefer language games activities for the reason that it is easy and funny.

**15. When you speak, do you focus more on:**

- a. Fluency      b. Accuracy      c. Both

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Fluency</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Both</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 15:** Students' focus while speaking



**Figure 15:** Students' focus while speaking

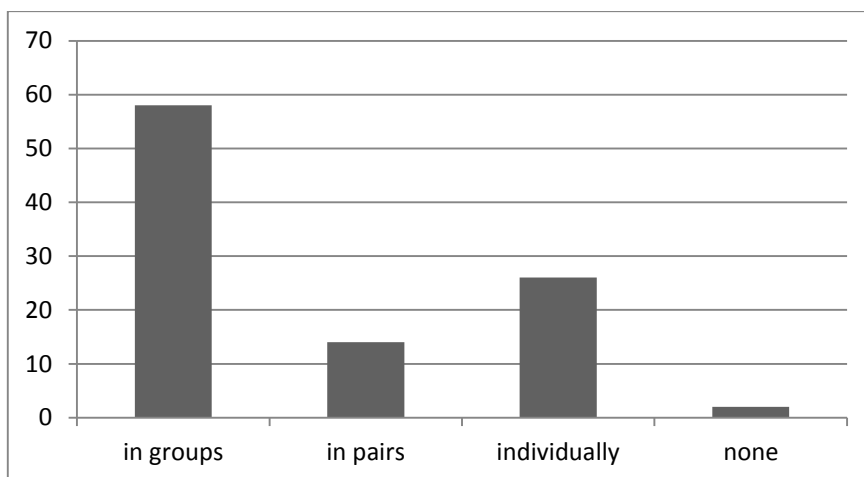
The table shows that more than the half of the students (64%) emphasizes on being accurate as well as fluent while (20%) of the student focus more on being fluent than accurate. however, the rest of the sample (16%) are more cautious about the accuracy of their speaking.

**16. In oral classroom activities, do you prefer to work:**

- a. In groups      b. In pairs      c. Individually      d. None

Options	Responses	Percentages
In groups	29	58%
In pairs	7	14%
Individually	13	26%
None	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 16:** Preferred way of working in OE classroom activities



**Figure 16:** Preferred way of working in OE classroom activities

Since each way has its advantages and disadvantages, this question seeks to investigate the favorable way in performing OE classroom activities for the students. Therefore, the results reveal that the majority (58%) prefer to work in groups. The second category that represent (26%) of the sample choose to perform individually. May be due to their learning

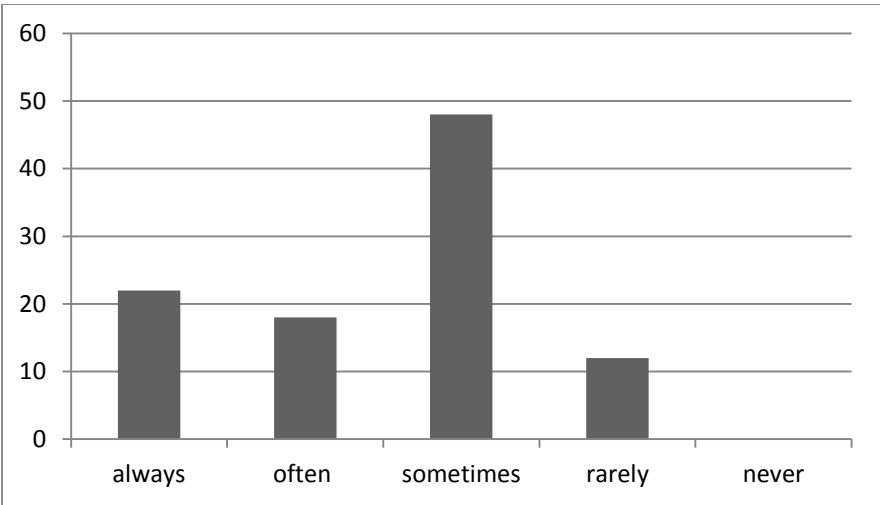
styles, working in a group and individually are the preferred ways for (42) students. While (14%) find themselves at ease if they work with their peers because of some reasons, the minority percentage (2%) represents those who work neither in one way or the other. Certainly, because of some problems, they prefer to stay passive.

**17. How often does your oral expression teacher provide you with a feedback after each activity?**

- a. Always    b. Often    c. Sometimes    d. Rarely    e. Never

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Always</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Often</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Rarely</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 17:** The frequency of teachers’ feedback



**Figure 17:** The frequency of teachers’ feedback



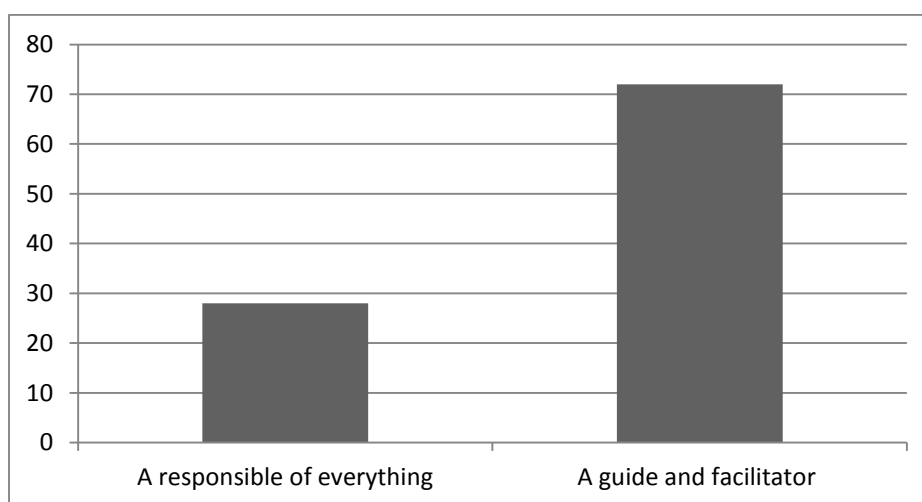
Since feedback works as a motivational factor, the answer of this question is needed to know the frequency of teachers' feedback in OE classes. Obviously, the results show that (48%) of the students sometimes receive feedback from their teacher, which can affect their frequency of participation. However, (22%) of the sample stated that they always receive feedback. This entails that their chance to regularly participate in the OE classroom activities is high. On the other hand, while (18%) often get a feedback, the rest (12%) of the sample reported that they are rarely given feedback. Thus, this can affect on them negatively.

**18. How would you describe your oral expression's teacher?**

- a. A responsible of everything      b. A guide and facilitator

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>A responsible of everything</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>A guide and facilitator</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 18:** Students' view about their teacher's role



**Figure 18:** Students' view about their teacher's role

This question seeks to know students' opinion about the role of their OE teacher. The results revealed that (28%) of them describe him/her as a responsible of everything. That means that, he chooses the activities, topics, members of the group, and even talks more than the students do. However, the majority (72%) declared that their OE teacher works as a guide and facilitator. This is in opposition to the first one.

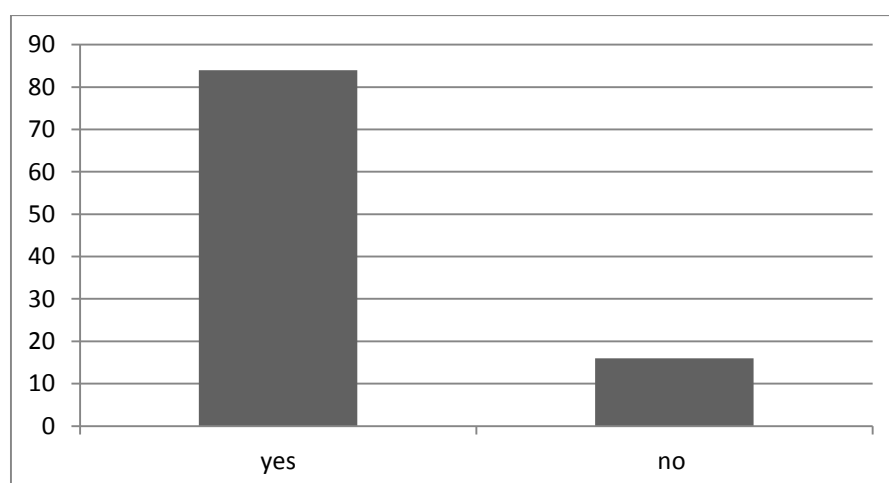
**1.2.2.2. Part Two: EFL Learners' Psychology in the Oral Expression Module**

**19. Did you find difficulties in the beginning of the year to cope with your new role in the oral expression module?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 19:** Any difficulties at the beginning



**Figure 19:** Any difficulties at the beginning

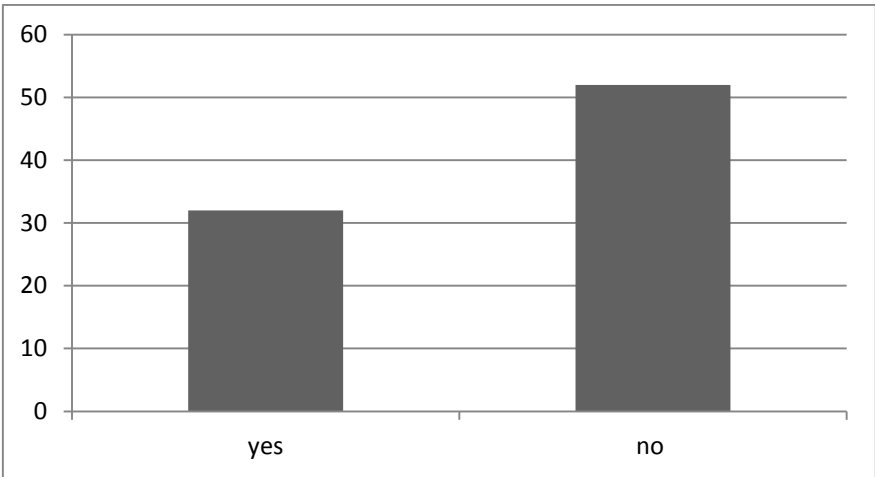
Statics show that the majority (84%) of the sample found difficulties at the beginning of the year to adapt with their new situation inside OE classrooms. However, (16%) of the sample did not face any difficulties.

**20. If ‘yes’, do you still find any difficulties?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

Options	Responses	Percentages
Yes	16	32%
No	26	52%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>84%</b>

**Table 20:** Still finding any difficulties



**Figure 20:** Still finding any difficulties

Investigating deeply, this question try to know if those who found difficulties at the beginning they still face those difficulties. Therefore, the results show that (52%) of them have overcome their difficulties while (32%) of them still encounter problems. in general, those problems are shyness, especially in role plays activities, which is the results of lack of self-confidence. Also, one of the problems occurs in discussion activities which require more spontaneity and risk of making pronunciation mistakes. In addition, limited vocabulary is

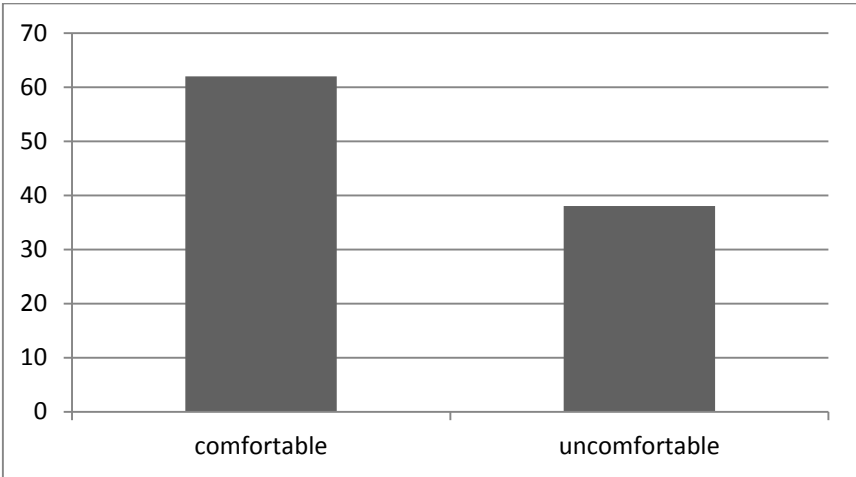
another problem for them. Besides to that, few students mention another problem which is listening difficulties especially in song games activities or authentic conversation.

**21. How do you feel when you participate in oral expression class in front of your teacher and classmates?**

- a. Comfortable
- b. Uncomfortable

Options	Responses	Percentages
Comfortable	31	62%
Uncomfortable	19	38%
Total	50	100%

**Table 21:** Students’ states during participation



**Figure 21:** Students’ states during participation

This question is about identifying students’ states, in general, during their performance. Consequently, we obtain the following results which show that (62%) of the students are comfortable through participation in the oral classroom activities whereas (38%) of the

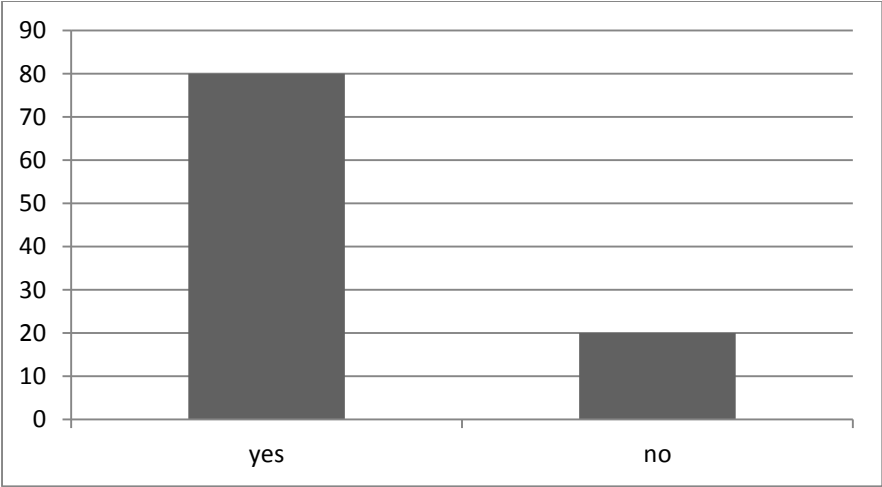
sample are not comfortable in doing so. Feeling uncomfortable can be the result of the high degree of anxiety and other psychological factors.

**22. Do oral classroom activities suite your learning styles?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

Options	Responses	Percentages
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%
Total	50	100%

**Table 22:** The fitness of students’ learning styles with the OE activities



**Figure 22:** The fitness of students’ learning styles with the OE activities

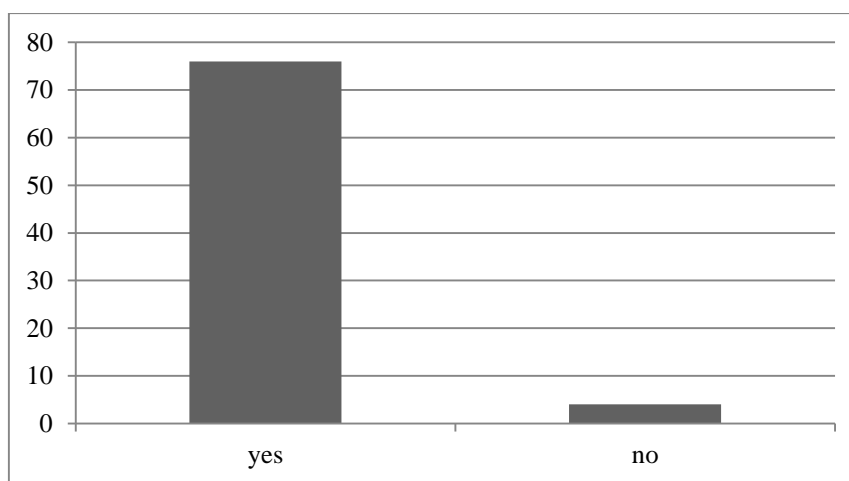
The graph demonstrates that the largest percentage (80%) of the sample state that Oral classroom activities fits their learning styles while (20%) of them reported that some of the activities do not fit their learning styles. Accordingly, we propose the following questions in order to investigate whether this fitness affect their motivation to participate or not.

**23. If ‘yes’, does this motivate you more to participate?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>80%</b>

**Table 23:** Motivation and the fitness of learning styles with the different activities



**Figure 23:** Motivation and the fitness of learning styles with the different activities

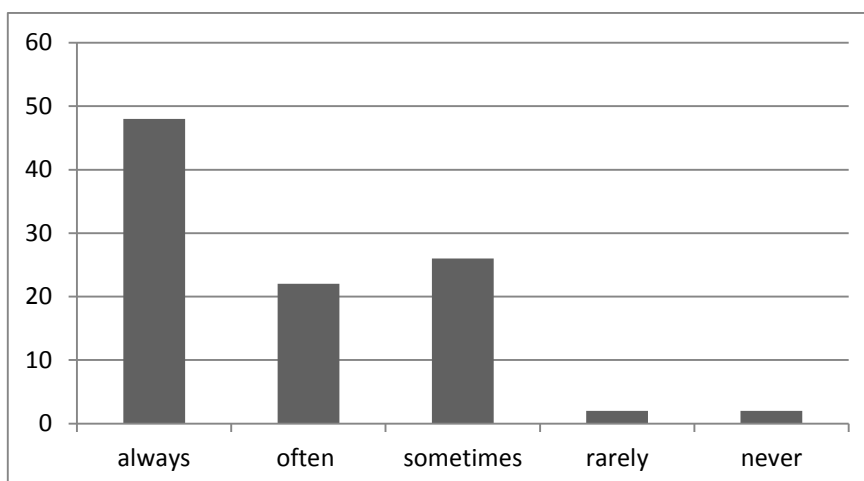
The statics show that for (76%) of (80%) of the students, consider that as a motivational factor to participate more while for the rest (4%) of the students, who said ‘yes’, it does not matter for them. Despite of that, we deduce that learning styles can affect students’ motivation to a certain degree.

**24. How often does your teacher motivate you to participate in oral classroom activities?**

- a. Always    b. Often    c. Sometimes    d. Rarely    e. Never

Options	Responses	Percentages
Always	24	48%
Often	11	22%
Sometimes	13	26%
Rarely	1	2%
Never	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table24:** The frequency of teacher’s motivation for the students



**Figure 24:** The frequency of teacher’s motivation for the students

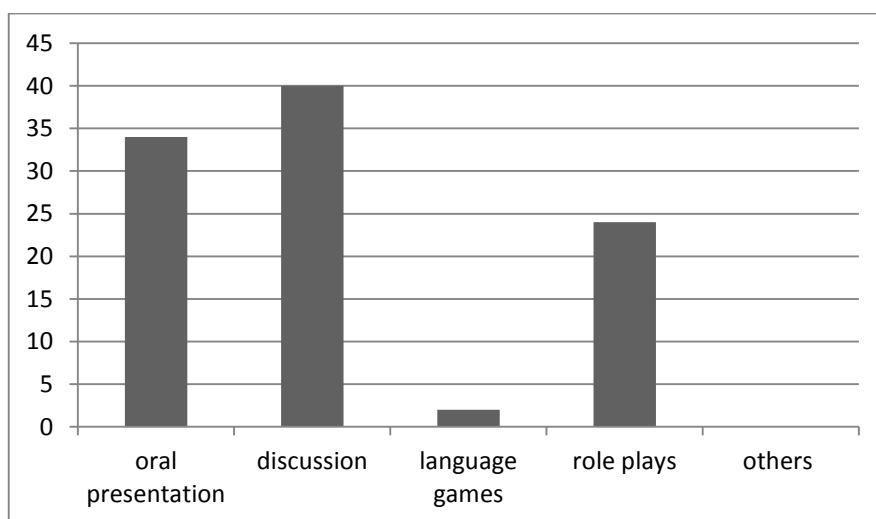
We deduce from the results that (48%) of the sample are always motivated by the teacher in many different sides. For the second category, (26%) of the students are sometimes motivated which can lead to negative effects on their rate of participation. On the other hand, while (22%) of the sample reported that they are often motivated, (2%) of the students are rarely motivated. In addition, the rest of the students which represent the minority (2%) stated that are never motivated.

**25. What kinds of oral classroom activities you found to be anxiety-provoking?**

- a. Oral presentation      b. Discussion      c. Language games  
 d. Role plays              e. Others

Options	Responses	Percentages
Oral presentation	17	34%
Discussion	20	40%
Language games	1	2%
Role plays	12	24%
Others	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 25:** The most anxiety-provoking oral activities



**Figure 25:** The most anxiety-provoking oral activities

This important question is asked to identify the most anxiety-provoking activity for the majority of the students. As a result, discussion tasks are on the top with (40%) then oral presentation tasks come the second with (34%), the third place goes to role plays tasks with (24%) and finally, language games tasks are considered as the less anxiety-provoking with (2%).

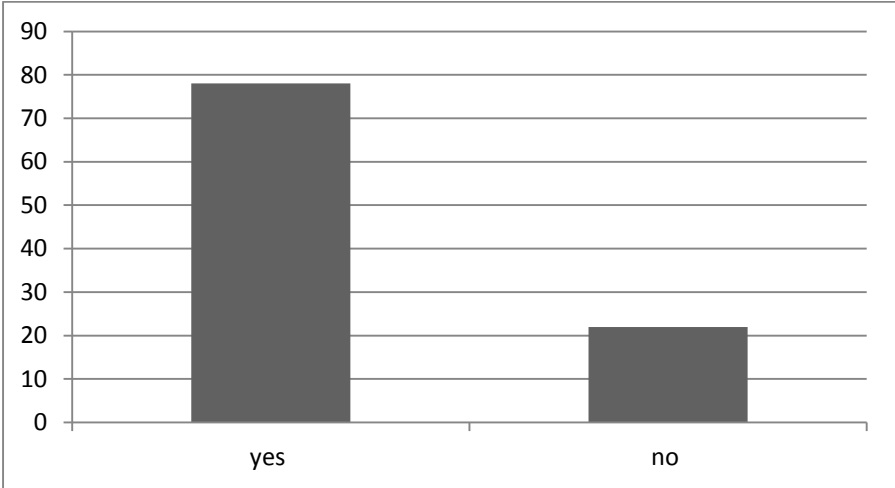


**26. Do psychological factors affect negatively your participation in the oral expression classroom activities?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

Options	Responses	Percentages
Yes	39	78%
No	11	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 26:** Students’ view on the effects of the psychological factors on students’ performance



**Figure 26:** Students’ view on the effects of the psychological factors on students’ performance

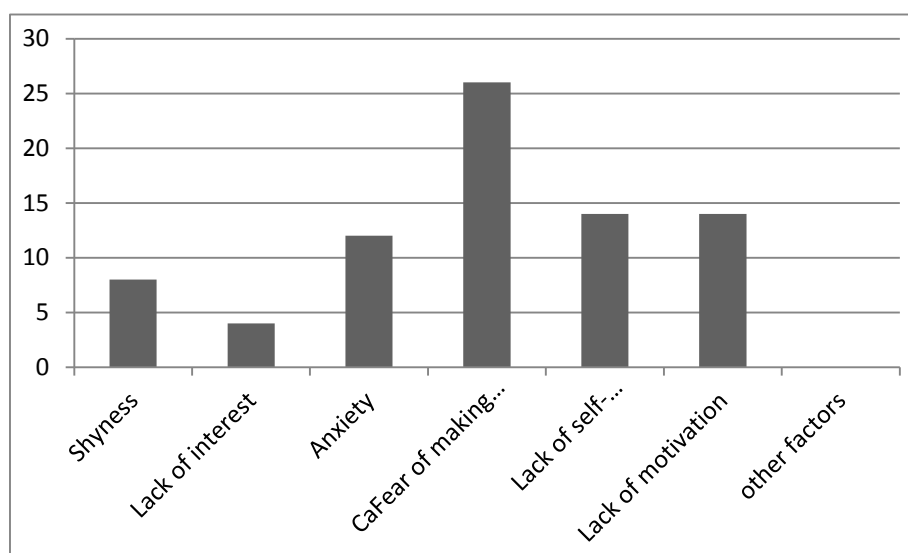
The statistics show that the largest percentage (78%) represent those who stated that the psychological factors can affect negatively their rate of participation in the OE classroom activities. However, (22%) of the sample are seen more confident by reporting that psychological factors have any effect on them. Consequently, this latter category is more likely to develop their oral proficiency than the other one.

27. if it is 'yes', Order these factors from the most to the less (put 1 to 6)

- a. Shyness      b. Lack of interest      c. Anxiety      d. Fear of making mistakes  
 e. Lack of self-confidence      f. Lack of motivation      g. other factors

Options	Responses	Percentages
Shyness	4	8%
Lack of interest	2	4%
Anxiety	6	12%
Fear of making mistakes	13	26%
Lack of self-confidence	7	14%
Lack of motivation	7	14%
other factors	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>78%</b>

**Table 27:** The order of the psychological factors from the most to the less



**Figure 27:** The order of the psychological factors from the most to the less

Going deeply in the investigation, this question is asked to know the order of these factors from the most affective to the less. The percentages show that most of the students (26%)

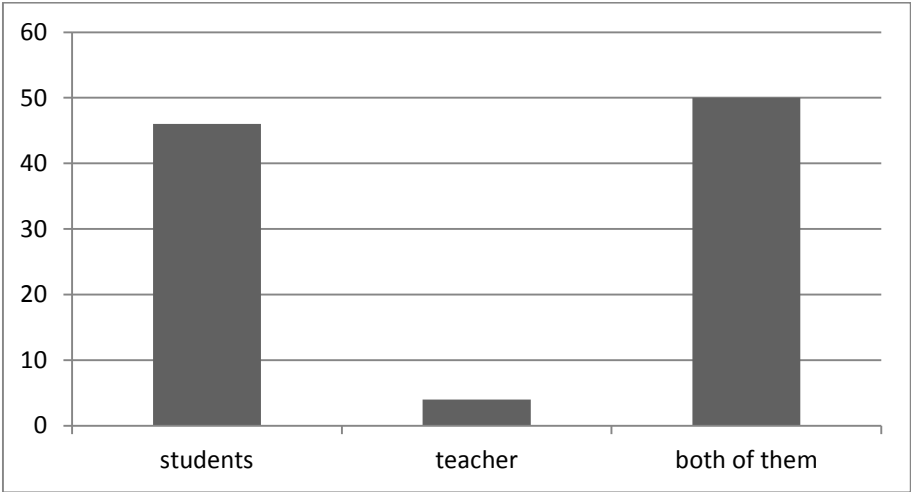
from (78%) of the students who said ‘yes’ suffer from the fear of making mistakes as the most affective factor among the others. Then lack of confidence and lack of motivation rank the second with (14%) for each one following by anxiety which have been chosen by (12%) of the students. Then, the one before the last is shyness ranking in the fourth place whereas lack of interest ranks the last with (4%).

**28. Who do you think have the big role to manage these factors?**

- a. Students themselves
- b. Teacher
- c. Both

Options	Responses	Percentages
Students themselves	23	46%
Teacher	2	4%
Both of them	25	50%
Total	50	100%

**Table 28:** Whose role to manage these factors



**Figure 28:** Whose role to manage these factors

In this question students are asked about their opinions about the responsible in overcoming such factors. Therefore, the results show that (46%) of the sample put all the responsibility on the students themselves while (4%) of them put it on the teacher. However,

half of the sample (50%) divided the responsibility between the students and the teacher. That means that students should do their best, certainly, with the help of the teacher to be able to control their psychological factors.

**29. In your own way, how could you manage your psychological factors?**

In doing their best to control these factors, students are asked to suggest the possible ways to do so. Therefore, their suggestions are summarized as following:

- Practice inside and outside the classroom
- Remembering always the goals behind studying English and doing the best in order to achieve the ultimate goal (i.e., increasing intrinsic motivation).
- Learn new words and expression to get more confidence during speaking.
- Well preparation and getting enough time for doing so before participation.
- Discussing with the classmates and the teacher about their psychological factors in order to be advised.
- Learning from our mistakes and remembering always that we are here to learn and believe that through mistakes we can learn.
- Self-talking such as standing in front of the mirror and keep talking can take off shyness and make the tongue untied.
- Encouraging ourselves by saying “I can do it”, also by appreciating everything we do and by not comparing ourselves with the others which can lead to the underestimation.

However, few students reported that they do not know how to manage and control their affective factors. Therefore, this category of students needs a lot of help from their teacher.

## **2. teachers' questionnaire**

### **2.1. Description of the questionnaire**

This questionnaire is designed for teachers in the department of English at the University of Biskra who teach oral expression to first year LMD students. It is about their attitudes toward the different psychological factors which their students can face and hamper their oral performance. For giving its reliability and validity, teachers' questionnaire had been also piloted by administrating it to two (2) teachers who collaborate with their opinions in enhancing it. Therefore, it was re-administrated to five (5) teachers who form the sample of the population. Members of the sample were chosen randomly to be given this questionnaire that consists of different types of questions (12 questions). In details, the questionnaire is divided into two sections.

Section one is about general information that can help us in knowing teachers' familiarity with the OE module. For that two (2) general question have been asked. On the other hand, section two is divided into two parts. The first part contains six (6) different questions which seek to investigate the role of the teacher in the OE classroom activities. The second one seeks to investigate deeply regarding teachers' attitudes toward their students' psychology. For that reason, this part contains the most important questions (4 questions) about teachers' ways in helping their students to control their psychological factors.

### **2.2. Analysis of the results**

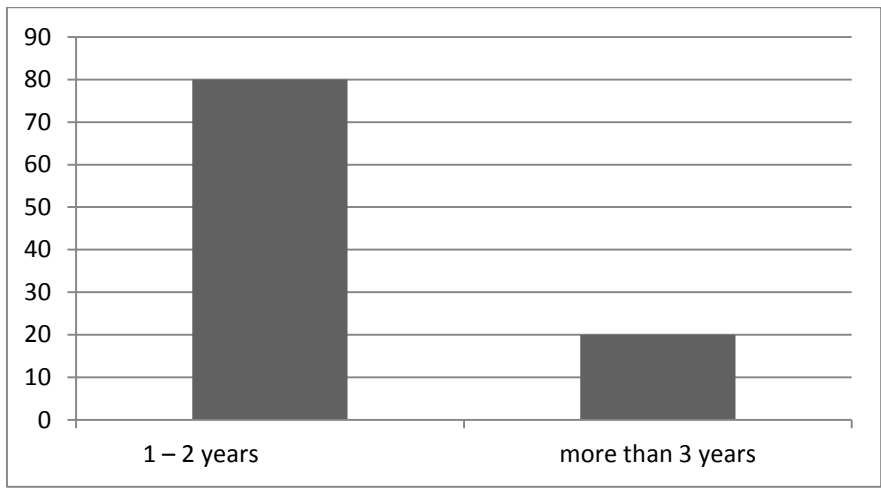
#### **2.2.1. Section one: General Information**

##### **1. How long have you been teaching oral expression module?**

- a. 1 – 2 years
- b. more than 3 years

Options	Responses	Percentages
1 – 2 years	4	80%
more than 3 years	1	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 29:** Teachers' experience



**Figure 29:** Teachers' experience

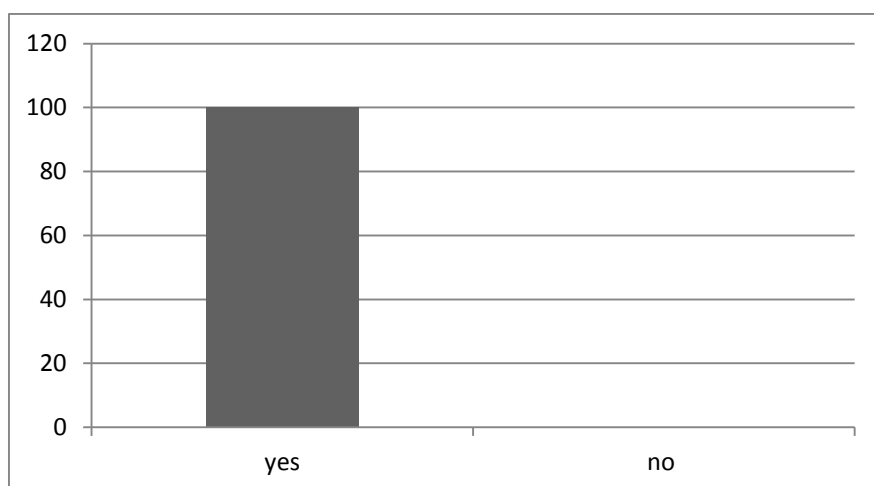
This question tries to check teachers' experience in teaching oral expression which can help the students in dealing with their psychology. In general, the table shows that (80%) of the teachers have a short experience which is between one and two years while (20%) of the sample were used to teach oral expression more than three (3) years.

**2. Are two sessions per week for teaching oral expression enough?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

Options	Responses	Percentages
Yes	5	100%
No	0	0%
Total	5	100%

**Table 30:** Teachers' view about the allotment of the OE module



**Figure 30:** Teachers' view about the allotment of the OE module

The statics of this question show that all of the teachers (100%) agree that three sessions are not enough to develop students' oral proficiency and more than three sessions per week is required.

## 2.2.2. Section Two

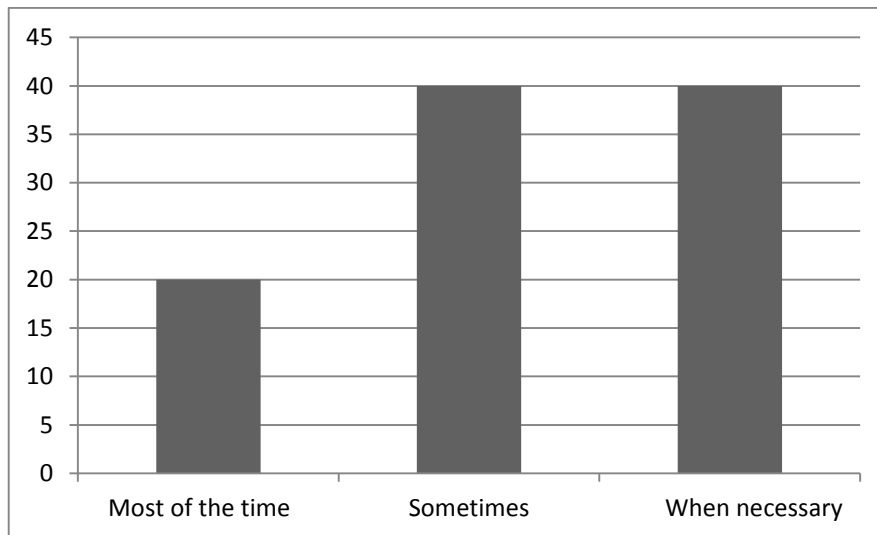
### 2.2.2.1. Part one:the role of the teacher in oral expression classroom

#### 3. In the class are you the one who talks:

- a. Most of the time      b. Sometimes      c. When necessary

Options	Responses	Percentages
Most of the time	1	20%
Sometimes	2	40%
When necessary	2	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 31:** Teacher's talk



**Figure 31:** Teacher's talk

The results of this question show that (40%) of the sample sometimes talk in the OE classroom while the percentage (40%) of the sample reported that they speak only when necessary. For instance, instructions of the activities should be explained and feedback should be provided, etc. However, the rest of the sample which represent (20%) stated that they speak most of the; which means that students' talk is minimized.

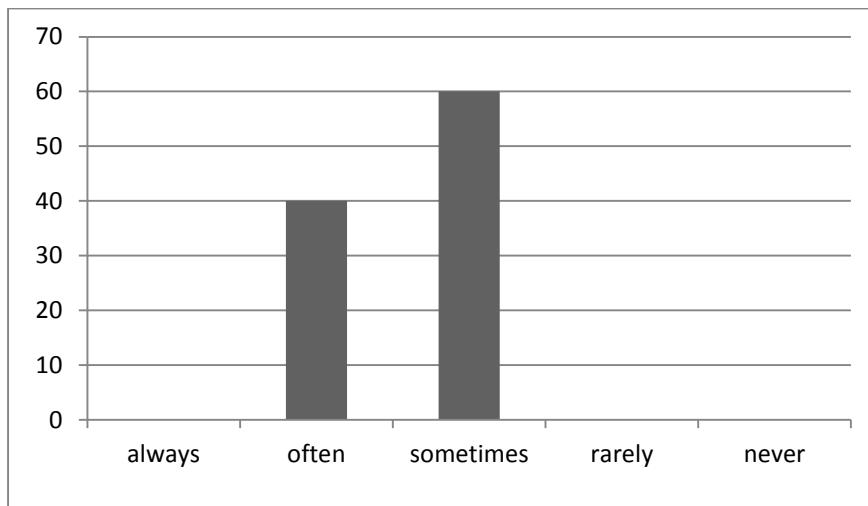
**4. How often do you give your students the chance to choose their activities and discuss topics that they want?**

- a. Always      b. Often      c. Sometimes      d. Rarely      e. Never



Options	Responses	Percentages
Always	0	0%
Often	2	40%
Sometimes	3	60%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 32:** The frequency of giving students control over their learning



**Figure 32:** The frequency of giving students control over their learning

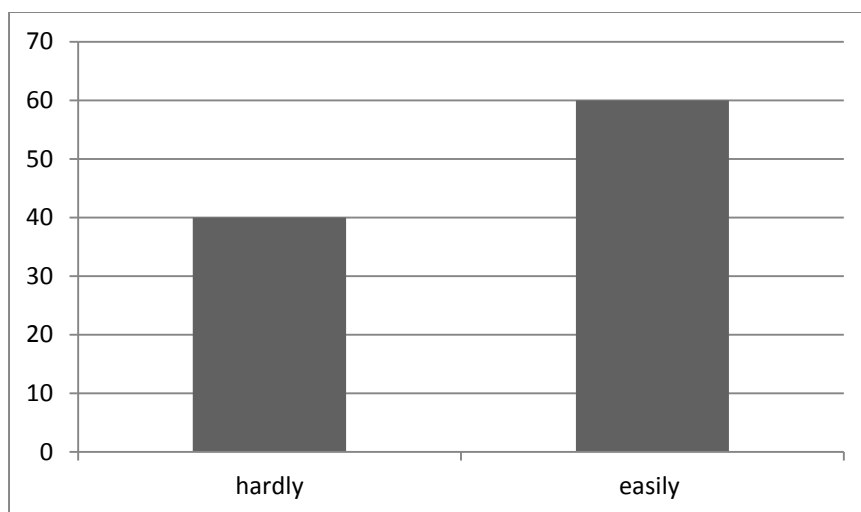
This question seeks to identify the frequency of giving students opportunities to choose the topics, the activities, the way, and the colleagues who they prefer to work with in the OE classroom activities. As a result, the statistics prove that (60%) of the sample sometimes give their students a chance to choose while the rest (40%) often give the students opportunities to do. Consequently, we deduce that OE teachers neither give a total control nor do not give it at all. It is somehow between. This is good to some degree in motivating the students to engage.

**5. Do the majority of your students participate:**

- a. Hardly
- b. Easily

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Hardly</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Easily</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 33:** The easiness and hardness of engaging students



**Figure 33:** The easiness and hardness of engaging students

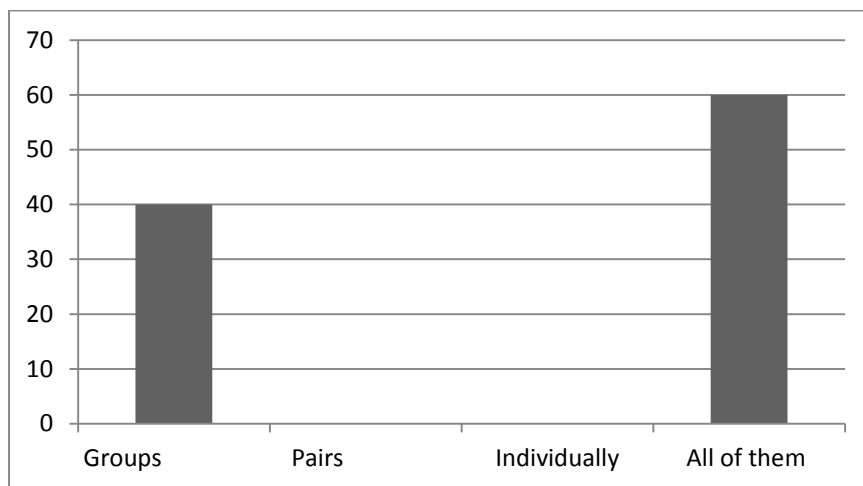
This question tries to identify teachers' opinion about their students' engagement in the oral classroom activities. Therefore, the results show that (60%) of the teachers argue that the majority of their students can easily engage in the speaking activities. this can be due to the high level of motivation. On the other hand, two teachers (40%) reported that their students are hardly engaged. This can be the result of lack of motivation from the teacher's side.

**6. Do you make your students work in:**

- a. Groups                      b. Pairs                      c. Individually                      d. All of them

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Pairs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Individually</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>All of them</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 34:** Ways for working to enhance the students' participation



**Figure 34:** Ways for working to enhance the students' participation

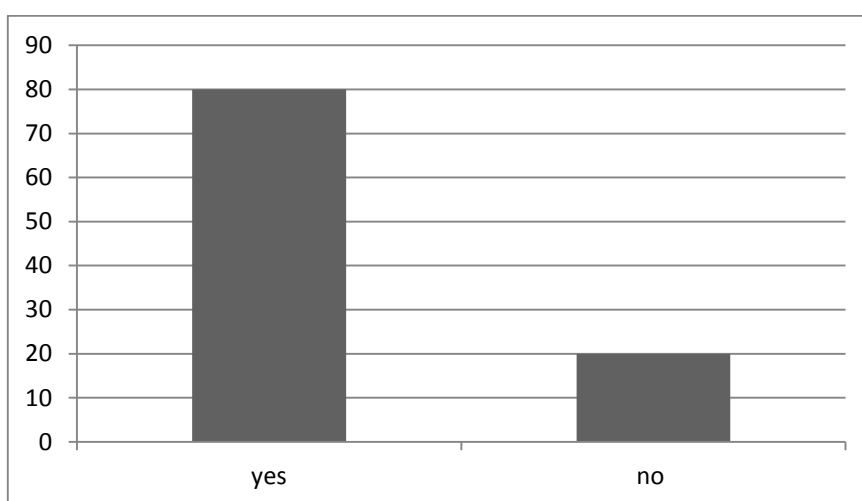
Since the way in which students work through is very important, this question is asked to identify the ways that teachers suggest to their students for working. As a result, two teachers (40%) prefer to collect their students in groups as a way for working while three teachers (60%) use all the ways (groups, pairs, individually) according to the requirements of the activity.

**7. Do you rely on videos and authentic materials in teaching speaking?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

Options	Responses	Percentages
Yes	4	80%
No	1	20%
Total	5	100%

**Table 35:** Relying on authentic materials in teaching speaking



**Figure 35:** Relying on authentic materials in teaching speaking

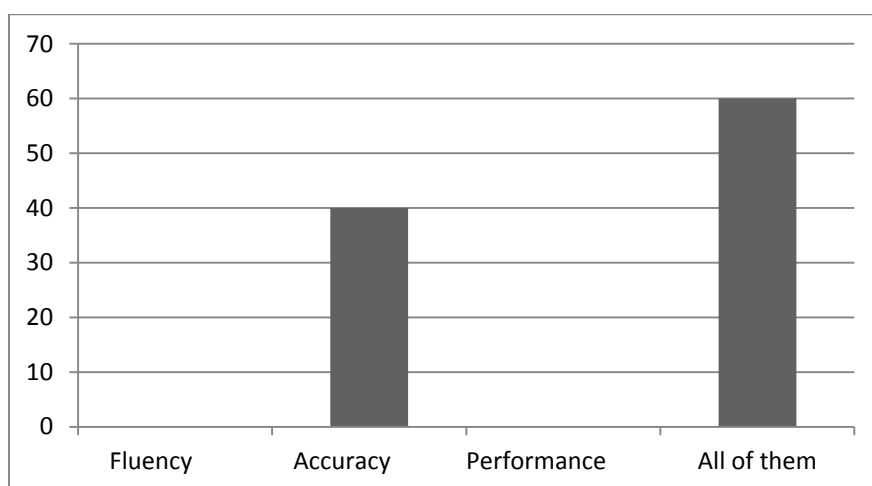
Since authenticity is very important in teaching speaking, this question is urgently asked to see to what extent teachers support their OE classrooms with authentic materials. Accordingly, the statics show that (80%) of the sample use authentic materials in their classes whereas (20%) of them do not rely on them. This latter result can, consequently, affect negatively on the students' level of proficiency.

**8. Your students receive feedback on:**

- a. Fluency      b. Accuracy      c. Performance      d. All of them

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Fluency</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Performance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>All of them</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 36:** The focus of the teachers' feedback



**Figure 36:** The focus of the teachers' feedback

This question is asked to identify the focus of teachers' feedback on students' performance. The table show that (40%) of the teachers emphases more on accuracy while providing feedback. This emphasis on accuracy can result on increasing the feeling of fear of making mistakes. On the other hand, the feedback of (60%) of the sample include all the aspects i.e. accuracy, fluency as well as performance.

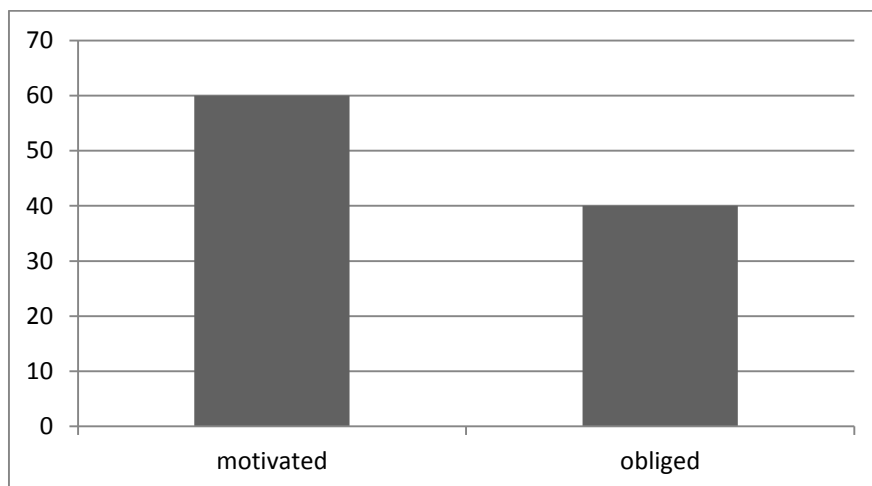
### 2.2.2.2.Part two: teachers' attitude towards EFL learners' psychology

#### 9. Do you think that your students participate because they are:

- a. Motivated                      b. Obligated

Options	Responses	Percentages
Motivated	3	60%
Obligated	2	40%
Total	5	100%

**Table 37:** Reason behind students' engagement



**Figure 37:** Reason behind students' engagement

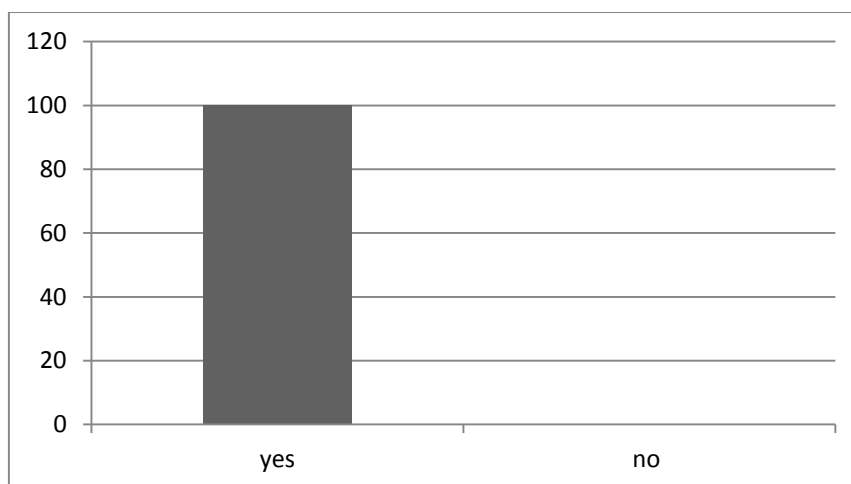
This question seeks to identify if the students participate because they are motivated or obligated. As the result, the table shows that (60%) of the teachers reported that their students participate because they are motivated. However, (40%) of them said that their students are obligated to do. As they explained, the students participate in the OE classroom activities just for getting good marks.

**10. Do you motivate your students to participate in the oral classroom activities?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

<b>Options</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 38:** Motivating students



**Figure 38:** Motivating students

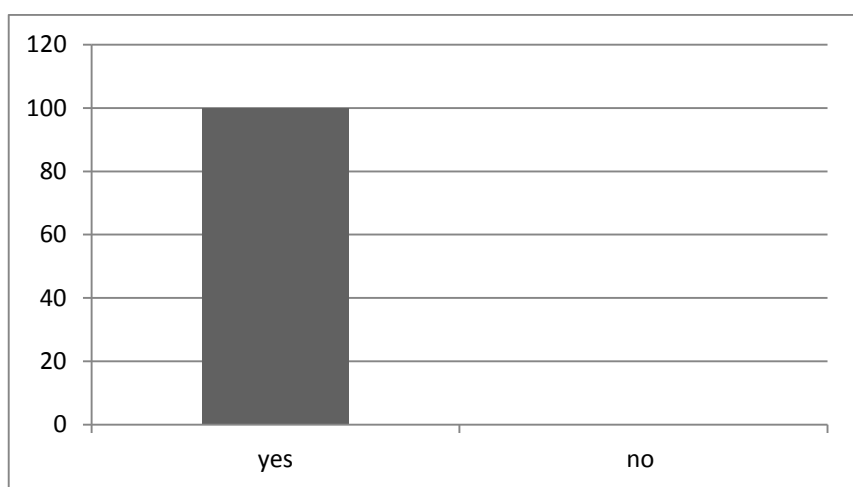
The results of this question prove that all of the teachers (100%) motivate their students to engage in the oral classroom activities.

**11. Do psychological factors have the most responsibility in hindering students' participation?**

- a. Yes                      b. No

Options	Responses	Percentages
Yes	5	100%
No	0	0%
Total	5	100%

**Table 39:** Teachers' view about the effects of the psychological factors



**Figure 39:** Teachers' view about the effects of the psychological factors

This question is about the effects of the psychological factors on hindering students' participation in the oral classroom activities in the view of their teachers. The results revealed that all of the teachers (100%) agree that psychological factors such as shyness, lack of self-confidence, fear of making mistakes and laughing at, etc. have the most effects on students' oral performance. Therefore, the following question is urgently asked to know how teachers could help their students to control or even overcome their affective factors.



## **12. What would you like to suggest for reducing such unhelpful factors?**

For helping their students to overcome the different negative psychological factors, teachers suggest some advices and techniques concerning themselves and their students. Teachers' suggestions are summarized as following:

- Providing interesting topics and giving them enough time to prepare to speak in front of their classmates.
- Helping them to learn from their mistakes and providing a positive feedback after each participation
- Giving them opportunities to choose their topics and activities
- Speaking about our previous experience as students (the problems and the solutions).
- More importantly, providing a friendly and motivating atmosphere for working and making it similar to the real life as much as we can.

## **3. Interpretation of the Findings**

To go over the main points, the findings from both the students' and the teachers' questionnaire have given us a deep insight concerning the two variables of this study. In general, the results indicate that the majority of EFL first year students suffer from many different psychological problems which hamper their participation in LC oral classroom activities and, therefore, their level of oral proficiency is far from being satisfactory.

Moreover, these factors make them prefer to perform in some oral classroom activities much more than others. Furthermore, with the concurrence of the majority of the students, teachers do their best in motivating their students and despite of the fact that the majority of first year students feel at ease in the oral expression module, statistics prove that fear of making mistakes is the most responsible factor in decreasing their rate of participation in

speaking activities. As evidence, this is due to the emphasis of teachers' feedback on accuracy more than fluency.

According to the obtained results, the majority of EFL first year students in fact face many different psychological factors which decrease their participation and hinder them from speaking during oral expression module. For that reason, the teacher's role as a motivator is very important. Accordingly, teachers have suggested different interesting and motivating strategies and techniques for assisting the students to control the psychological factors. More interestingly, there are some students who do not know how to solve their problems. For that, they require more help and support than others.

#### **4. Pedagogical Recommendations**

Coming to the most important part in this study, here some recommendations will be suggested for teachers to help their students to control the different psychological barriers in order to increase their rate of participation and henceforth to achieve high level in English oral proficiency.

- First of all, since first year students were used to be passive, from the first session, OE teacher should explain to his/her students their new roles and responsibilities to prepare themselves psychologically in advance.
- Besides to that, giving students large amount of control over what they need to learn and in what way, help them to be autonomous and less dependent.
- Since fear of making mistakes has ranked in the first place among all other factors, teachers should explain to their students that mistakes are part of learning. Besides, give more importance to the message of the students' utterances; and then a positive feedback should be delivered.

- Second, since discussion activities are considered as the most anxiety-provoking tasks, using group discussion instead of whole class discussion can lower the level of anxiety.
- Providing the students with some technical ways which can help them to control or even overcome the psychological barriers are strongly needed. For instance, self-talking in English in front of the mirror is a good technique to overcome shyness; and enriching students' vocabulary through extensive reading makes them more confident when speaking.
- Handing out a questionnaire to be filled about their problems and their wants and then discussing these problems with the teacher and classmates for finding solutions can help the teacher to know more about his/her students. For instance, recognizing students' learning styles, their strongest and weakest points and their interests can help the teacher in designing his/her objectives in each session.
- Moreover, strong motivation is required through explaining the main goal behind each task in order to make students' performance more purposeful and worthy. For instance, through clarifying that this task such as listening to an authentic conversation will make them more familiar with native speakers' expressions.

## **Conclusion**

In a nutshell, the outcome of the practical work revealed that students' reluctance to be active in the LC oral classroom activities is due to their psychological factors. In other words, this latter have a negative impact on EFL students' achievements. Therefore, teachers and students should collaborate to control or even overcome these factors to attain the ultimate aim that is high level of oral proficiency.

## **General conclusion**

The present study aims at investigating EFL first year students' psychological barriers which hamper their oral performance in LC oral classroom activities at Biskra University. For answering the questions of the study, this latter has been divided into three chapters. Chapter one and two are about the literature review of the two variables of this study whereas the third chapter is devoted to the field work.

For a deeper understanding of the subject, two questionnaires have been submitted to EFL first year students as well as teachers of the oral expression module. As a consequence, the analysis besides to what has been identified in the literature review provided worthy answers for the research questions. The findings showed that the majority of EFL first-year students suffer from different psychological barriers in which fear of making mistakes is considered as the most affective one on their tasks' preference and, moreover, on diminishing their chances for speaking. Finally, the study came out with significant guide lines for oral expression teachers in helping their students to control and overcome their psychological barriers and, thus, to enhance their level of English oral proficiency.

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# Appendices

# Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

We would be very grateful if you could answer the following questions for the sake of our study about different psychological factors that affect your participation and, consequently, your oral proficiency in the oral expression module.

Please, put a tick (✓) in the corresponding box and make full statements whenever necessary.

## Section One: General Information

Age: .....

Sex:        a- Male         b-Female

Q3: How long have you been learning English?.....years.

Q4: Was English your first choice?

a- Yes         b- No

Q5: Is your level of English:

- a. Very good.....
- b. Good.....
- c. Average.....
- d. Poor.....

Q6: Does your level enable you to express yourself orally?

a- Yes         b- No

## Section two:

### Part One: Student's Attitude towards Oral Expression Classroom Activities

Q7: Which skill do you prefer to master better? (Order them)

- a. Listening.....
- b. Speaking.....

- c. Reading .....
- d. Writing.....

Q8: Do you find speaking skill difficult to be mastered?

- a. Yes
- b. No

\*If yes, what are these difficulties?.....  
 .....  
 .....

Q9: Do you agree that in order to master speaking English you have to practice it?

- a. Agree.....
- b. Disagree .....

Q10: Do you like oral expression module?

- a. Yes
- b. No

\*If no say why: .....  
 .....  
 .....

Q11: In your opinion, is it enough three sessions per week for the oral expression module?

- a. Yes
- b. No

\*If no, give suggestions:.....

Q12: How would you describe the atmosphere of your oral expression class?

- a. Boring .....
- b. Friendly.....
- c. Stimulating.....

Q13: How often do you participate in the oral expression class without being asked by the teacher?

- a. Always.....
- b. Often.....
- c. Sometimes.....
- d. Rarely.....
- e. Never .....

Q14: Which activity do you like most and always participate in?

- a. Discussion.....
- b. Role plays.....
- c. Language games.....
- d. Oral presentation.....
- e. Other activities.....

Please, justify:.....  
 .....

Q15: When you speak, do you focus more on:

- a. Accuracy.....
- b. Fluency.....
- c. Both.....

Q16: In the oral classroom activities, do you prefer to work:

- a- In groups.....
- b- In pairs.....
- c- Individually.....
- d- None.....

Q17: How often does your oral expression teacher provide you with a feedback after each activity?

- a. Always.....
- b. Often.....
- c. Sometimes.....
- d. Rarely.....
- e. Never.....

Q18: How would you describe your oral expression's teacher?

- a- A responsible of everything.....
- b- A guide and facilitator .....

**Part Two: EFL Learners' Psychology in the Oral Expression Module**

Q19: Did you find difficulties in the beginning of the year to cope with your new role in the oral expression module?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q20: if 'yes', do you still find any difficulties?

- a. Yes
- b. No



If yes, what are they?.....  
.....

Q21: How do you feel when you participate in oral expression class in front of your teacher and classmates?

- a- Comfortable.....
- b- Uncomfortable.....

Q22: Do oral classroom activities suite your learning styles?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q23: If (yes), does this motivate you more to participate?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q24: How often does your teacher motivate you to participate in oral classroom activities?

- a. Always.....
- b. Often.....
- c. Sometimes.....
- d. Rarely.....
- e. Never.....

Q25: What kinds of oral classroom activities you found to be anxiety-provoking?

- a. Oral presentation.....
- b. Discussion.....
- c. Language games.....
- d. Role plays.....
- e. Others which are.....

Q26: Do psychological factors affect negatively your participation in the oral expression classroom activities?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q27: if it is 'yes', Order these factors from the most to the less (put 1 to 6)

- a. Shyness.....
- b. Lack of interest.....
- c. Anxiety.....
- d. Fear of making mistakes.....
- e. Lack of self-confidence.....
- f. Lack of motivation.....
- g. Or other factors: .....

Q28: Who do you think have the big role to manage these factors?

- a. Students themselves.....
- b. Teacher.....
- c. Both.....

Q29: In your own way, how could you manage your psychological factors?

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\*comments are welcomed:

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**Thank You for your collaboration**

## Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

We would be so grateful if you could answer the following questions for the sake of gathering information about the different psychological factors of EFL learners which affect the implementation of oral classroom activities in the oral expression module. In addition, your way in managing such factors in the classroom are going to be investigated too.

Please, put a tick ( ✓ ) in the corresponding box and make full statements whenever necessary.

### Section one: General information

Q1: How long have you been teaching oral expression module?

a. 1-2

b. More than three

Q2: Are two sessions per week for teaching oral expression enough?

a. Yes

b. No

### Section two:

#### Part one: the Role of the Teacher in Oral Expression Classroom

Q3: In the class are you the one who talks:

a. Most of the time.....

b. Sometimes.....

c. When necessary.....

Q4: How often do you give your students the chance to choose their activities and discuss topics that they want?

- a. Always.....
- b. Often .....
- c. Sometimes .....
- d. Rarely.....
- e. Never .....

Q5: Do the majority of you students participate:

- a. Hardly.....
- b. Easily .....

Q6: Do you make your students work in:

- a. Groups.....
- b. Pairs.....
- c. Individually.....
- d. All of them .....

Q7: Do you rely on videos and authentic materials in teaching speaking?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q8: Your students receive feedback on:

- f. Fluency.....
- g. Accuracy .....
- h. Performance.....
- i. All of them.....

**Part two: teachers' attitude towards EFL learners' psychology.**

Q9: Do you think that your students participate because they are:

- b. Motivated.....
- c. Obligated .....

Q10: Do you motivate your students to participate in the oral classroom activities?

- a. Yes .....
- b. No .....

Q11: Do psychological factors have the most responsibility in hindering students' participation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q12: What would you like to suggest for reducing suchnegative factors?

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**Thank you for your collaboration**

## الملخص

هذه الدراسة تتناول البحث عن بعض العوامل النفسية (كالقلق، الخجل، و انعدام الثقة بالنفس...) التي تعيق طلبة السنة الأولى لشعبة اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر (بسكرة) من المشاركة في مختلف تمارين حصص التعبير الشفهي التي يعتبر فيها المتعلم المحور الأساسي لعملية التعلم. من خلال هذه الدراسة افترضنا أن مشاركة الطلبة و نشاطهم سيتزايد في حصص التعبير الشفهي، و فضلا عن ذلك مهارة التكلم لديهم ستتطور و ذلك من خلال مساعدة الأستاذ لهم للسيطرة و التغلب على العوامل النفسية التي تحد من نشاطهم. لإثبات صحة هذه الفرضية قمنا بتوزيع استبيان لكل من الطلبة وأساتذة مادة التعبير الشفهي لطلبة السنة الأولى لجمع البيانات و دراستها. نتيجة تحاليل هذه الاستبيانات تظهر أن اغلب الطلبة يعانون من هذه العوامل النفسية التي تجعلهم يؤثرون المشاركة في بعض الأنشطة على البعض الآخر. بالإضافة إلى أن نتائج الدراسة تكشف أن أكثر العوامل النفسية تأثيرا على نشاط الطلبة هو الخوف من ارتكاب الأخطاء اللفظية و النحوية التي تضعهم في مواقف حرجة أمام زملائهم. في الأخير و استنادا لهذه النتائج، نقترح بعض التوصيات و النصائح التي من الممكن أن تساعد طلبة السنة الأولى في التغلب على هذه المعوقات و تحسين مهارة التكلم التي تعتبر الهدف الأساسي لأغلبية الطلبة.