

DEDICATION

In the name of ALLAH, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All the Praise is due to ALLAH alone, the sustainer of all the worlds

I dedicate this work;

- ❖ *To the only person with the exception of Allah nothing is more important;
To the pearl of my life to the happiness that I can never ever feel without to the Sun
which enlightens life darkness: "MOM"*
- ❖ *To the soul that lighted my way: My Father*
- ❖ *To my lovely sisters: Amel & Djouhra*
- ❖ *To my dear brothers: Djamel & Abdennour & Abdelhak, their wives, & Fateh*
- ❖ *A special thank to my dearest brother who stand by my side in each step and plays the
role of a real father: Djamel*
- ❖ *To my sweeties nieces & nephews: Rihab, Amdjed Nedjm Eddine, Wail Waliy Eddine,
Rafik Mohamed Elamine, Raid Siradj Eddine, Insaf, Malek, Abrare, Asma, Anis,
Maysoun, Hadjer, Fateh, Ahmed, Rajaa, and Mohamed Attaher "TiTo".*
- ❖ *To my grandmother: Alhaja Fatma.*
- ❖ *To all my big family "Uncles & Aunts" mentioning uncle Zian; their sons and
daughters, & to the dearest people to my heart. As well, to those who love me.*
- ❖ *To my friends without exception.*
- ❖ *I cannot ignore mentioning my best friends; Yasmine, Sorya, Manel, Fatima, Hannene
& Soulaf.*
- ❖ *To my best supervisor for her sincere guidance: Mrs. BENCHAREF Sakina.*

Acknowledgements

Our deep thank is for respectful supervisor, **Mrs. Benchref Sakina** firstly, for accepting the supervision of this dissertation and secondly, for her sincerity in guiding us through the right path.

We would like, also, to thank teachers and students “Brahim & Boubaker & Yasmine” who provided us with reliable sources that helped us in achieving the goal of our dissertation.

As well, a great thank to all the teachers whom taught us during our five years at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra, English department.

A special thank to our family in supporting completing our studies with love and patience.

We are grateful to all people who contributed in completing our research.

Abstract

This dissertation which is under the title “The effect of anxiety on learners’ performance in oral class” aims at proving that anxiety is one of the main causes of learners’ weak performance and lack of speaking and participation in classrooms. This study aims as well at finding solutions and strategies to reduce learners’ anxiety and to make them active participants in class. The present research is based on the hypothesis that that foreign/second language learners’ oral performance would be affected negatively if they feel anxious. The present research contains two parts; a theoretical part which contains an overview of speaking and anxiety, a practical part devoted to the analysis of results. A descriptive method has been adopted because it is qualitative in nature, helps us in terms of time and tools, and it suits the topic. Then, we have focused on investigating the causes that make students feel anxious which lead them to passivity and lack of participation by using the questionnaire as a research tool. One questionnaire has been given to a sample of third year LMD students at Mohamed Kheidher University of Biskra in order to gather information about anxiety and its effect on students’ oral performance in class. Moreover, a second questionnaire has been designed for teachers of Oral Expression in order to gather their opinions about anxiety and what strategies they use to overcome it. The analysis of both questionnaires proved the hypothesis: If foreign language learners are anxious, that would affect their oral performance negatively.

List of Tables

Table 01: Teachers' Academic Degree.....	31
Table 02: Period of Teaching Oral Expression.....	32
Table 03: Teachers' Opinion About the Importance of the Speaking Skill in Learners' Evaluation of Their Success.....	33
Table 04: Teachers' Evaluation for Their Students' Speaking Level.....	34
Table 05: Method Used in Teaching Oral Expression.....	35
Table 06: Teachers' Relationship with their Students.....	36
Table 07: Causes that Make Learners Avoid Speaking.....	37
Table 08: Teachers' Observation of Their Students' Feeling of Anxiety.....	38
Table 09: The Effect of Anxiety Learners' Speaking Performance.....	39
Table 10: Students' Gender Distribution.....	43
Table 11: Students' Choice to Study English.....	43
Table 12: Students' Opinion about Speaking English.....	44
Table 13: Relation between Learning and Speaking English.....	45
Table 14: Students' Problems in Speaking.....	46
Table 15: Problems Faced by Students When Speaking English.....	47
Table 16: Oral Expression Course' Atmosphere.....	48
Table 17: Most Interesting and Motivating Oral Activities.....	49
Table 18: Teachers' Frequency in Correcting Students' Oral Errors.....	50
Table 19: Teachers' Interruption to Students When Making Oral Mistakes.....	50
Table 20: Evaluation of Students' Relationship with Their Oral Expression Teachers.....	51

Table 21: The Extent of Oral Expression Course Assistance in Improving Students' Oral Performance.....	52
Table 22: Students' Feeling during the Oral Expression Course.....	53
Table 23: Students' Causes of Uncomfortable Feeling.....	54
Table 24: Students' Feeling When Speaking in Front of the Class.....	55
Table 25: Students' Feeling of Anxiety When Asked to Perform Without Previous Preparation.....	56
Table 26: Students' Feeling of Nervousness before an Oral Exam.....	57

List of figures

Figure 01: Teachers' Academic Degree.....	31
Figure 02: Period of Teaching Oral Expression.....	32
Figure 03: Teachers' Opinion About the Importance of The Speaking Skill in Learners' Evaluation of Their Success.....	33
Figure 04: Teachers' Evaluation For Their Students' Speaking Level.....	34
Figure 05: Method Used in Teaching Oral Expression.....	35
Figure 06: Teachers' Relationship with Their Students.....	36
Figure 07: Causes That Make Learners Avoid Speaking.....	37
Figure 08: Teachers' Observation of Their Students' Feeling of Anxiety.....	38
Figure 09: The Effect of Anxiety Learners' Speaking Performance.....	40
Figure 10: Students' Gender Distribution.....	43
Figure 11: Students' Choice to Study English.....	44
Figure 12: Students' Opinion about Speaking English.....	45
Figure 13: Relation between Learning and Speaking English.....	46
Figure 14: Students' Problems in Speaking.....	47
Figure 15: Problems Faced by Students When Speaking English.....	47
Figure 16: Oral Expression Course' Atmosphere.....	48
Figure 17: Most Interesting and Motivating Oral Activities.....	49
Figure 18: Teachers' Frequency in Correcting Students' Oral Errors.....	50
Figure 19: Teachers' Interruption to Students When Making Oral Mistakes.....	51
Figure 20: Evaluation of Students' Relationship with Their Oral Expression Teachers.....	52
Figure 21: The Extent of Oral Expression Course Assistance in Improving Students' Oral Performance.....	53
Figure 22: Students' Feeling during the Oral Expression Course.....	54
Figure 23: Students' Causes of Uncomfortable Feeling.....	55

Figure 24: Students' Feeling When Speaking In Front of the Class.....56

Figure 25: Students' Feeling of Anxiety When Asked to Perform Without Previous Preparation.....57

Figure 26: Students' Feeling of Nervousness before an Oral Exam.....58

Contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgement.....	II
Abstract.....	III
List of Tables.....	IV
List of Figures.....	VI
Content.....	VIII
General Introduction.....	01
1. Significance of the Study.....	01
2. Statement of the Problem.....	01
3. Aim of the Study.....	02
4. Hypothesis.....	02
5. Research Questions.....	02
6. Limitation of the Study.....	02
7. Research Methodology.....	03
7.1. Research Method and Data Gathering Tools.....	03
7.2. Sample of the Study.....	03

Chapter One: Speaking Performance in Oral Class

Introduction.....	04
1. Definition of Speaking Skill.....	04
2. Types of Speaking Skill.....	05
2.1. Formal Speaking.....	05
2.2. Informal Speaking.....	06
3. Functions of Speaking.....	06
3.1. Talk as Interaction.....	06
3.2. Talk as Transaction.....	07
3.3. Talk as Performance.....	08
3. a. Participation.....	09
3. b. Interaction.....	09
3. c. Fluency.....	09
3. d. Confidence.....	09
3. e. Communication Strategies.....	10
4. Obstacles that Face Students when Speaking.....	10

4.1.Redundancy.....	10
4.2.Colloquial Language.....	10
4.3.Intonation and Stress.....	11
4.4.Rate and Delivery.....	11
4.5.Limited Practice Time.....	11
4.6.Anxiety.....	11
5. Effects of Anxiety on Speaking.....	12
Conclusion.....	14

Chapter Two: Learners' Anxiety in Class

Introduction	15
1. Definition of Anxiety.....	15
2. Types of Anxiety.....	17
3. Sources of Anxiety.....	18
3.1.Less Proficient English	18
3.2.Students Fear of Mistakes and Derision.....	18
3.3.Large Class Size	19
3.4.Unwillingness to Take Risks	19
3.5.Low Tolerance of Ambiguity	20
3.6.Competitiveness.....	20
4. Components of Anxiety	21
4.1.Test Anxiety	21
4.2.Communication Apprehension	22
4.3.Fear of Negative Evaluation	22
5. Relationship between Anxiety and Learners' Academic Achievement.....	23
6. Improving Students' Performance by Reducing Anxiety.....	24
Conclusion.....	25

Chapter Three: Field Work

Introduction.....	26
1. Teachers' Questionnaire.....	26
1.1.Aim of the Questionnaire.....	26
1.2.Sample of the Study.....	26
1.3.Description of the Questionnaire.....	26

1.4. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire.....	27
2. Students' Questionnaire.....	38
2.1. Aim of the Questionnaire.....	38
2.2. Sample of the Study.....	38
2.3. Description of the Questionnaire.....	38
2.4. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire.....	39
Conclusion	55
General conclusion	56
Recommendations.....	57
Bibliography	58
Appendixes.....	60

Chapter One

Speaking Performance in Oral Class

Chapter Two

Learner's Anxiety in Class

Chapter Three

Field Work

Appendices

General Introduction

Learning is a process of adding a new knowledge into an existing one which is the opposite of the "Acquisition Process". This latter ushers to the innate human ability that is born with and enables him to acquire a new knowledge. Concerning learning the English language, there are many issues that face learners and may create a wall which prohibits them from achieving their goals. One of those problems that face learners is anxiety. It is considered as one of the most negatively influential variable which prevents learners from successfully learning a foreign language. Anxious students may have difficulty in learning in the first place, difficulty using or transferring knowledge, and difficulty demonstrating their knowledge on tests. The mastery of speaking in English is a priority for many foreign language learners because it helps them be not anxious learners while performing and presenting orally. Learners often evaluate their success on how well they have improved in their spoken language proficiency.

1. Significance of the Study:

Any research done for the sake of science is worthy and important just as our work which needs to be tackled because it sheds light on one of the most difficult problems that face both teachers and learners: Anxiety. Anxiety prevents learners from participating in class, performing in a good way, and speaking the target language.

2. Statement of the Problem:

In this study, we will shed light on one of the main problems that face the learners while participating and performing in oral class which is anxiety. It is considered by many scholars as one of the main causes of lack of participation and weak performance in class. The problem occurs because some of students at Mohamed Keidher University of Biskra seem passive and do not even try to speak and participate during the oral expression's session only because they feel anxious.

3. Aims of the Study:

As a follow to previous works and studies, we aim to investigate the learning process in general besides a more detailed description of causes concerning the lack of speaking. This work also aims at proving that anxiety is one of the main causes of learners' weak performance and lack of speaking and participation in classrooms. Furthermore, we aim to find solutions and strategies to reduce learners' anxiety and make them active participants in class.

4. Hypothesis:

The present research is based on the following hypothesis that should be tested and verified through:

- If foreign language learners are anxious, that would affect their oral performance negatively.

5. Research Questions:

- Do English as Foreign Language learners' avoid performing and speaking in oral class because they are anxious?
- Why don't EFL learners participate in class?
- How can teachers decrease learners' anxiety?
- What is anxiety?
- How can anxiety affect the students' performance?

6. Limitations of the Study:

This research is limited to a sample of 40 students to represent the population of third year LMD students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. We know that it is not representative but because of time constraints and in terms of practicability, it is more judicious to work with a limited number. It is also limited to oral expression teachers because our research is concerned with the learners' performance in oral class. So, we need to tackle especially with them. It is limited, as well, with the speaking skill because cases of anxiety in other skills are very rare.

7. Research Methodology:

7.1. Research Method and Data Gathering Tools:

We intend to use the descriptive method because it is qualitative in nature, it helps us in terms of time and tools, and it suits the topic. Then, we will focus on investigating the causes that make students feel anxious which lead them to passivity and lack of participation by using the questionnaire as a research tool. The questionnaire will be given to a sample of third year LMD students of Biskra University in order to gather their information about anxiety and its effect on their oral performance in class. We will also submit a questionnaire for teachers of oral expression module in order to gather their information about anxiety and what strategies they use to overcome it.

7.2. Sample of the Study:

In our research, we are actually going to work with third year LMD students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. At all levels anxiety exists, but in third year every one claims it as a problem; that is why, we opted this particular year. The total population of the third year LMD students of English division is 402. 40 students will be chosen randomly to represent our sample because we could not work with this big number of students. We will also submit questionnaires to 6 teachers of oral expression.

Introduction

This study aims at shedding light on anxiety felt by learners while speaking the foreign language in class. If that panic exists in the students' oral performance, they will face hard time in acquiring the English language or even speaking it. Therefore, in-class activities make them particularly uncomfortable, afraid and anxious which build a great wall between them and the English language. If speaking skill has to be defined, it must be described as the hardest skill among the four. Speaking as a productive skill is divided into formal and informal. Speaking unlike the other skills is the soul of foreign language learning, but it has been somewhat overlooked in teaching and assessment for a set of reasons. This chapter describes speaking skill and its types, mentioning the function of speaking and obstacles that face learners while talking. At the end, the concept of anxiety will be discussed in relation to speaking.

1. Definition of Speaking Skill

Speaking is a process of oral language production. It is one of the traditional 'Four Skills' involved in using a second language, and as such is usually viewed as the most complex and difficult skill to master. (Tarone, 2005, p. 485 as cited in Hinkel, 2005)

Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), 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: ; and many if not most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak.

(Ur, 1996, p.120)

Similarly, Luoma (2004) argues that speaking is a difficult skill even to assess; he declares: "Speaking is also the most difficult language skill to assess reliably. A person's speaking ability is usually judged during a face-to-face interaction, in real time, between an interlocutor and a candidate."

Furthermore, Lebrun (2008 as cited in Council of Ministers of Education, 2013, p.17) states, “Speaking is identified as the language modality most frequently used by teachers, who must master various speech registers, including formal and informal styles of speech.”

Richards (2008) says, “Speaking in traditional methodologies usually meant repeating after the teacher, memorizing a dialogue, or responding to drills, all of which reflect the sentence-based view of proficiency prevailing in the audiolingual and other drill-based or repetition-based methodologies of the 1970s.”

Moreover, “Speaking is the means by which one’s presence and participation are declared”. (Reda, 2009, p.32) As well, he stated that speaking is a way of being engaged in students’ learning. Furthermore, Palmer (as cited in Reda, 2009, p.66) claims, “speaking . . . is a way of buttressing our self serving reconstructions of reality.”

In addition, Crystal (1995, p. 292) argues, “Speech is time-bound, dynamic, and transient. It is part of an interaction in which both participants are usually present and the speaker has a particular addressee (or several addressees) in mind.”

2. Types of the Speaking Skill

Speaking, in general, can be performed in two ways: formal and informal way. Formal speaking, as it is known, is spoken in formal places; school and office with strangers and people with higher status for instance. However, informal speaking is as someone speaks with his/her friends, colleagues or family members.

2.1. Formal Speaking

Newton and Nation (2008) say that formal speaking is affected by all the performance described conditions of planning, time pressure, and standard of performance. As well, Brown (1981) (as cited in Newton & Nation, 2008, p.121) mention that formal speaking helps language learning in representing a new use of English for most learners and thus requiring them to focus on language items that are not as well represented in other uses of the language.

Brown (as cited in Newton & Nation, 2008, p.122) states that formal speaking has several important features:

- It is transactional. That is, its purpose is to communicate information rather than to maintain social contact as it is the case with most interactional speaking.
- It involves taking a long turn. That is, it is not usually presented as a dialogue but requires speaking for several minutes in a comprehensible and organized way.
- It is influenced by written language. Often it will involve speaking from notes and will involve academic vocabulary.
- The speaking is done in the learner's "careful" style in a clear and deliberate way with opportunity for the speaker to monitor the production.
- It often needs teaching as it is a skill that is not a part of typical language use.

Additionally, Tillitt & Bruder (1985) say "formal speech is characterized by embedding (building information into sentences, also characteristics of written language) and a tendency toward more complete sentences as opposed of fragments."

2.2. Informal Speaking

The second type of speaking is considered as 'Informal speaking' which is according to Tillitt & Bruder (1985) "characterized stylistically by omissions, elisions, reductions, and, sometimes, a faster speaking rate."

3. Functions of Speaking

In order to categorize the speaking functions within human communication, a number of efforts have been made. Brown and Yule (as cited in Richards, 2008, p. 21) differentiated between three functions of speaking: Talk as interaction; talk as transaction; talk as performance. Each of them is rather dissimilar from the other, concerning its form and function. Richards (2008) explained the three functions of speaking as follow:

3.1. Talk as Interaction

Talk as interaction refers to the meaning of a conversation, as well as, it illustrates communication which provides social function. A person enjoys communicating with others and likes making relations with them that is why he/she makes connection, talks, and greets other while meeting them. Talk as interaction focus more on how speakers can involve

themselves in an interaction. Formality and informality in exchanging dialogues depends on the situations.

Richards (ibid) summarizes the main features of talk as interaction as follows:

- Has a primarily social function
- Reflects role relationship
- Reflects speaker's identity
- May be formal or casual
- Uses conversational conventions
- Reflects degrees of politeness
- Employs many generic words
- Uses conversational register
- Is jointly constructed

3.2.Talk as Transaction:

“Talk as transaction refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done. The message and making oneself understood clearly and accurately is the central focus, rather than the participants and how they interact socially with each other”. (ibid) In such transaction,

...talk is associated with other activities. For example, students may be engaged in hands-on activities (e.g., in a science lesson) to explore concepts associated with floating and sinking. In this type of spoken language students and teachers usually focus on meaning or on talking their way to understanding. (Jones, 1996; Richards, 2008, p. 24)

Richards (2008, p. 25) mentioned some examples of talk as transaction:

- Classroom group discussion and problem-solving activities
- A class activity during which students design a poster
- Discussion needed computer repairs with a technician
- Discussion sightseeing plans with a hotel clerk or tour guide
- Making a telephone call to obtain flight information
- Asking someone for directions on the street

- Buying something in a shop
- Ordering food from a menu in a restaurant

As well, he stated the main features of talk as transaction:

- It has a primarily information focus.
- The main focus is on the message and not the participants.
- Participants employ communication strategies to make themselves understood.
- There may be frequent questions, repetitions, and comprehension checks.
- There may be negotiation and digression.
- Linguistic accuracy is not always important.

3.3.Talk as Performance

Talk as performance, as a third type of talk, means speaking in public. i.e., conveying information, thoughts, or feelings...etc to an addressees. For instance, classroom presentations, public announcements, and speeches.

Talk as performance, according to Richards (ibid), tends to be in the form of monolog rather than dialog. It often follows a recognizable format (e.g., a speech of welcome), and is closer to written language than conversational language. Examples of talk as performance, as stated by Richards (ibid), are:

- Giving a class report about a school trip
- Conducting a class debate
- Giving a speech of welcome
- Making a sales presentation
- Giving a lecture

Finally, he declares the main features of talk as performance which are:

- A focus on both message and audience
- Predictable organization and sequencing
- Importance of both form and accuracy

- Language is more like written language
- Often monologic

On another hand, Bowman, Burkart and Robson, (1989) suggest that the role of speaking involve participation, interaction, fluency, confidence, and communication strategies. These are developed in the following points.

3. a. Participation

Although suitable activities are chosen for students, the majority of them are going to participate in class. Nevertheless, despite the hard work teachers do to involve their students, a number of them may oppose to their teacher's efforts. There are ways of making students feel relaxed. For instance, making classes fun, making sure that students realize that the teacher covers the school syllabus, introducing interactive speaking activities with personal subjects. Increasing trust between teachers and students in a classroom takes time.

3. b. Interaction

When the teacher offers chances to students to interact with each other concerning what is significant to them, this will encourage their interaction in class. Teachers should be aware of the sensitive situation of adolescent students and know how to work with them. One way of helping them is to generate occasions for them to speak out, as well, to be heard.

3. c. Fluency

Fluency takes a main concern in the communicative approach. It is the sense of language gaining. There may be mistakes and repetitions, but no extended break in the flow of speaking. Teachers are attempting to make their students exchange their personal thoughts and words via speaking activities. They have changeable expression despite their total awareness of the sense that they want to express. But, in fact, teachers are not able to provide them with the precise language which they necessitate to make a real communication. Consequently, their students won't be precise all the time, although this not significant, only if they are capable to be understood.

3. d. Confidence:

The majority of foreign language learners' dislike the feeling when making fool of themselves by making mistakes which means that they lack self-confidence. They feel so for the reason that they are out of control and the way they are in their native language.

3. e. Communication Strategies:

Managing a conversation and active listening are the most important communication strategies that learners are supposed to know that they need to develop them. Managing a conversation must be woven through the lessons. If the learners want to construct the confidence they need to communicate with, they must be a good listeners in English conversations. Using active listening strategy is helpful for students who feel shy. Everyone employs these strategies when speaking. Teacher's duty here is making their students aware of these strategies and then to helping them to make use of these strategies when speaking English.

4. Obstacles that Face Students when Speaking

When communicating and speaking in front of others, speakers face some difficulties that may make them avoid talking with others; such as redundancy, colloquial language, intonation and stress, rate and delivery, and anxiety. These are developed in the following points.

4.1. Redundancy

Butler and Silliman (2002) define redundancy as repeating the essence of an idea over a prolonged set of exchanges. They state that, at the same time, the repetitions are never identical; rather they are structured to contain the variation (in wording, materials, etc.) needed to ensure attention and motivation. According to Brown (2000, p. 270), the speaker has an opportunity to make meaning clearer through the redundancy of language. And learners can capitalize on this feature of spoken language. For him, the spoken language is redundant not like the written one.

4.2. Colloquial Language

In this point, Brown (2000, p. 270) cites that teachers have to make sure that their students are reasonably well acquainted with the words, idioms, and phrases of colloquial language and that they get practice in producing these forms.

4.3. Intonation and Stress

According to Brown (2000, p. 271), stress, intonation, and rhythm is the most important characteristic of English pronunciation. As well, he stated that the stress rhythm of spoken English and its intonation patterns convey important messages.

4.4. Rate and Delivery

One more characteristic of fluency that faces foreign language speakers is rate and delivery. Brown (2000, p. 271) says that one of the teachers' tasks in teaching spoken English is to help learners achieve an acceptable speed along with other attributes of fluency.

4.5.Limited Practice Time

The teacher's goal is to provide as much opportunity as possible to their students to speak which means group work activities. In addition to teacher's support and practice, learners will become familiar to move to groups rapidly.

4.6. Anxiety

Brown (2007) states that we cannot term the meaning of anxiety easily and in only one statement despite our knowledge about it and our emotions of apprehension that we were familiar with in some cases before. Then, he mentioned that Spielberg (1983, p.1) defined anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system."

Many researchers made under the reason of knowing whether anxiety is one of the causes of poor performance in second language learning. Sparks and Ganschow (Sparks & Ganschow, 2001; Sparks, Gangschow, & Javorsky, 2000) and their colleagues (as cited in Brown, 2007, p.163) maintain that language anxiety is an outcome of foreign language obstacles.

Many students could experience anxiety in oral classes because, in teaching, they are asked to speak up in front of their colleagues, present and perform orally. Both too much and too little anxiety may hinder the process of successful second language learning. (Brown, 2007, p.163)

5. Effects of Anxiety on Speaking

Number of studies, made by numerous researchers about anxiety established that speaking communication is affected harmfully by anxiety. And “it is expected that students with high language anxiety levels fear speaking in class.” (Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer, 2011, p. 204) Lucas, Phillips, and Price (as cited in Woodrow, 2006, p.312) stated that much focus has been on the relationship between the skill of speaking in a foreign/second language and anxiety. In addition, Woodrow (2006) mentioned that the major significant aspect into foreign/second language anxiety is in the relationship between anxiety and performance in the foreign language. Moreover, according to MacIntyre (as cited in Woodrow, 2006), numerous studies have found that this anxiety is negatively related to language performance with some researchers claiming it is one of the strongest predictors of foreign language success. As well as, Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer (2011) argued that “Their feelings of nervousness, stress and anxiety are a significant obstacle in the development of language proficiency, especially their performance abilities, such as speaking.”

Pachler and Rodondo (2007, p. 60) say:

Ur (1996) gives a comprehensive list of factors that are common to successful speaking activities, including: learners talk a lot; participation is evenly distributed; motivation is high; meaningful information is being communicated. It could be argued that the first two of these factors are in turn influenced by the extent to which learners feel comfortable about speaking and uninhibited by any feelings of anxiety.

Thus, Tseng (2012, p. 84) suggests several ways for both learners and instructors to reduce speaking anxiety; he states that if the learners want to overcome their feeling of anxiety, they need to apply the following ways:

- Learners need to observe what may cause the feeling of anxiety. They have to know that the fears are groundless and unnecessary and comprehend that anyone could make mistakes while learning because they must be positive. Moreover, it is essential to be aware that perfection is an impossible goal to be achieved.
- ‘How to relax’ is needed to be taught by students. As much as learners feel relaxed, anxiety disappears. They must feel comfortable when sitting in the class. Making practices and exercises for their muscles, before or while studying, with taking long and slow breath for seconds exchange anxious energy with a positive one .
- Students may know what they want to say.
- Learners must focus on the message not on which surrounds him and have not care about people’s thinking of them when making mistakes. Furthermore, instead of focusing on what may people think, they have to bear in mind their success in communication.
- They are needed to have knowledge of their classmates. Knowing someone well, will ease speaking with him/her.
- The same, which is stated before, for the instructor. Through greetings, asking questions, and participating.
- Learners who need to reduce their anxiety have to seat in the front of the classroom in order to make speaking easier, especially with the teacher.
- They need to gain experience in order to build confidence, since this latter will be increased if they speak English more.

As well, he stated that if the teacher needs to aid their learners’ anxiety reduction, he/she may employ the following suggestions:

- Teachers may exhibit genuine concern for their students and their language learning.
- They need to provide a warm classroom atmosphere.

- They have to provide students with a maximum of speaking time in a non-threatening environment.

Conclusion

Speaking anxiety is seen as a novel and emerging area within foreign language research and studies. Nowadays, anxiety is one of the topmost emotional happenstances a person could ever have. General anxiety is the extreme concern about everyday things, thoughts and principles. It is an impractical concept made by human brain. Today professional interest in the development of students' speaking proficiency is considerable. This concern with oral competence, however, may be intensifying high levels of foreign language anxiety experienced by some learners. We face challenges when speak in foreign language; that is why we needed to conduct a research on identifying the causes and consequences of anxiety on oral performance. We also need more and better ways to teach students to speak freely without hesitation or afraid. The chapter above present's data to model Speech techniques and strategies tackle in details the speaking skill and the anxiety factor in performing.

Introduction

All students especially university students undergo some levels of study, marks, and interaction with use of English language anxiety such as having new experiences, environments, knowledge, challenges and situations. Anxiety is a real phenomenon tackled by numerous researchers and scholars because it has been noticed that anxiety has remarkably affect the learners' performance. The effect of study anxiety has been acknowledged by students and teachers separately: Students through their learning carrier (low average) and teachers through their observation about the students' avoidance to perform in any kind of oral performance. This chapter includes many parts starting from anxiety definitions according to many scholars to the different types of anxiety and its sources; for example, less proficient English, students' fear of making mistakes and derision, large class size, unwillingness to take risks, etc. moreover, the components of anxiety would be undertaken as well as the relationship between anxiety and learners' academic achievement. Last of all, the chapter would tackle several strategies to improve students' oral performance by reducing anxiety.

1. Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the emotional factors that face students and correlates negative insights on them. Therefore, numerous studies made by several researchers to identify the term anxiety. MacIntyre (1999, p.27 as cited in Dörnyei, 2005, p.199) defines anxiety as “worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language.” Castle, Kulkami & Abel (2006), for instance, argue that anxiety is a common human experience, and ranges in depth and an intensity. Besides, Mayer (2008, p.4) defines anxiety as a state of intense agitation, tension, and dread, occurring from a real or perceived threat of impending danger. He also mentioned that anxiety is a mind-body reaction that occurs instantaneously, and its effects are felt physiologically, behaviorally, and psychologically all at the same time. Furthermore, he stated that the experience of anxiety is unique for each person, but it does have general physical and emotional characteristics.

Two years later, Williams (2010, p.26) in his study about anxiety, mentions that the words ‘stressed’, ‘hassled’, ‘tense’ and ‘worry’ all describe a situation of anxiety. As well, he said that if someone tends to worry about a lot of things in life, he/she feels stressed: This is called anxiety. On the other hand, he points out that anxiety is a normal feeling (emotion) that can be helpful even though it can make feel unpleasant. For example, a small amount of anxiety can help motivate some people to prepare for events such as interviews and exams, and even in crossing the road. Moreover, he stated that anxiety is also helpful in situations of sudden danger, where it helps people to respond and get away as possible. Yet, he added that it becomes a problem when people feel anxious in situations that are not danger at all.

According to Chastain’s diary (as cited in Riasati, 2011, p.908), anxiety can be defined as a state of uneasiness and apprehension or fear caused by the anticipation of something threatening. Similarly, MacIntyre’s diary (as cited in Riasati 2011, p.908) views anxiety as a feeling of worry and emotional reaction that arises while learning or using a second language.

Additionally, Oxford’s diary (as cited in Xiuqin, 2006, p.37) points out: “...language anxiety ranks high among factors influencing language learning“. Furthermore, anxiety is defined as “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic system“(Horwitz, Horwitz& Cope; as cited in Xiuqin, 2006, p. 37).

Similarly, Gaskell (2007) states:

Anxiety is a natural survival mechanism. But if it gets out of control, it means something isn't working properly in our lives. This could be because one or more of our essential needs aren't being met well, or in balance or because the innate resources which were designed to help us meet our needs (such as our imagination) aren't functioning as they should, for any of a variety of reasons.

Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer (2011, pp. 200 -201) state: “anxiety is described as an emotion often produced in response to stress; it is a normal reaction like anger or joy.” As well, they state that Pekrun (1992) defines anxiety as “a socio-psych-biologic phenomenon experienced as a foreboding dread or threat resulting from the individual’s appraisal of a situation and their capacity to deal with.”

All in all, anxiety is associated with feelings of fear, stress, uncertainty, uneasiness, and worry about coming things or situations. It has been considered by many researchers as a negative factor in learning a foreign language, especially in learning to speak. Numerous researchers found that anxiety is not easy to define and has two main types.

2. Types of Anxiety

State and Trait anxiety are considered by many researchers as the most well-known types of anxiety. Riasati (2011), in his research and study about anxiety, states that anxiety can be divided into those two types. Trait anxiety, in one hand, “is the tendency of a person to be nervous or feel anxious irrespective of the situation he/she is exposed to.” (p. 908) He adds that such anxiety is a part of a person’s character and hence is permanent and difficult to get rid of. Moreover, he mentioned that a person who is trait anxious is likely to feel anxious in a variety of situations. And once anxiety becomes a trait one, it will hinder language learning. As well, Dörnyei (2005, p.198) says “Trait anxiety refers to a stable predisposition to become anxious in a cross-section of situations.”

Spielberger and Sarason (1966) claim that “trait anxiety refers to a motif or acquired behavioral disposition because of which a human being perceives a wide variety of subjectively unthreatening situations as threatening, causing disproportional overreaction to such situations.” (Quoted in Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer, 2011, p. 201)

State anxiety, on the other hand, is defined as “a situation-specific trait anxiety; that is, an individual suffering from state anxiety will manifest a stable tendency to exhibit anxiety, but only in certain situations”. (Phillips, 1992, p.14) According to Phillips (1992), state anxiety appears to be inversely associated with performance in second language learning although the relationship is generally modest. In addition, Dörnyei (2005) defines state anxiety as “The transient, moment-to-moment experience of anxiety as an emotional reaction to the current situation.” Nonetheless, Spielberger and Sarason (1966) state that “The state type denotes subjective and conscious feelings of apprehension and tension accompanied by stimulation or activation of the autonomous nervous system.” (As cited in *ibid*)

Furthermore, Riasati (2011) argues that state anxiety is nervousness or tension at a particular moment in response to some outside stimulus. As well, he added that this type of anxiety occurs because learners are exposed to a particular situation or event that is stressful to them. He also stated an example of that, saying that there are some learners who feel anxious if they are called by the teacher to speak in the classroom. According to him, the good thing about this type of anxiety is that diminishes over time as the learners get used to the new environment or feel comfortable with the teacher. Accordingly, to differentiate between the two types ; he said that although state anxiety can prevent a learner from showing his/her full potential, it is not as harmful as trait anxiety. As well, according to Dörnyei (2005, p.198.199) “the degree of state anxiety interferes with the level of trait anxiety in a person.”

3. Sources of Anxiety

Learning anxiety can be attributed to numerous factors. Young suggests that personal and interpersonal anxiety, learner beliefs about language learning, classroom procedures, and language testing are the main sources of anxiety (cited in Riasati, 2011, p.908). However, Xiuqin (2006) identifies some other causes of anxiety that can be summarized as follow:

3.1. Less Proficient English

Students have a problem in recognizing teacher’s talk when presenting the lesson in classroom and as a consequence, they could not answer the questions that the teacher asks to him. Loosing face is the cause that inhibits students from asking for repetition, even if they want to do so. Consequently, they keep quiet, as well, they avoid eye contact with the teacher just to hide that they do not understand.

3.2.Students Fear of Mistakes and Derision

Most of time, students feel afraid to make mistakes in front of their classmates in order to prevent their negative evaluation. They try to avoid being in such a situation through keeping silent. Moreover, they suppose that they can be good speakers of the English language by applying it outside the classroom. Students cannot keep themselves away from making mistakes in English classrooms. Nonetheless, preventing several of the topics to be spoken in class is a result of students’ fear of making mistakes and being laughed at by their peers.

3.3. Large Class Size

Students who feel anxious while speaking in front of the whole class, their level of anxiety will be increased in large class size. Students will attempt to stay away from speaking on the majority of chances because the feeling of losing 'face' in front of a large number of classmates and the teacher is intolerable. Large class size generates obstacles for students whom feel anxious. Yet, this is a dilemma that cannot be simply fixed in the university at the present time. Reducing the amount of students' anxiety by trying to create further enjoyable and relaxed atmosphere is the best way.

Also, Sato (2003) agreed on the idea that large class size tends to limit learners' speaking. Supporting his stating, as an example, that in a classroom with 40 learners when the teacher need to set up speaking activities, this require being too noisy. Consequently, this noise may interrupt others learning next to them. He added another problem of large classes "is that teachers may not be able to monitor all the students in student-centered interactions, and sometimes problems of discipline makes doing so more difficult."

3.4.Unwillingness to Take Risks :

Students' breakdowns can be avoided, as well; they could perform greatly if they are willing to take risks in speaking. Risk-taking is considered as unreasonable. The students' capability to cope with the problems which face them when they want to speak could disappear with their unwillingness to take risks. Thus, they have a great fear of the activities that necessitate spontaneous answers. They reflect that they will make fools of themselves by risk-taking.

Likewise, Barkley (2010, p.122, 123) says:

It is also important to help students feel comfortable in speaking up and saying what they truly think, believe, and feel. This is challenging because many students are afraid to take this risk, fearing that their comments might be viewed as wrong or stupid. If English is not their primary language, students may fear that they will use the language incorrectly, say the wrong word, or speak with an accent.

3.5. Low Tolerance of Ambiguity

Approximately, all learners want from the teacher an obvious clarification for everything in addition to stating rules for them to be followed. Nonetheless, since there is so much ambiguity about the meanings in learning the English language, this also adds to their anxiety and uneasiness.

Intolerance of ambiguity also has its advantages and disadvantages. A certain intolerance at an optimal level enables one to guard against the wishy-washiness referred to above, to close off avenues of hopeless possibilities, to reject entirely contradictory material, and to deal with the reality of the system that one has built. But intolerance can close the mind too soon, especially if ambiguity is perceived as a threat; the result is a rigid, dogmatic, brittle mind that is too narrow to be creative. This may be particularly harmful in second language learning.

(Brown, 2007, p.127)

3.6. Competitiveness

Students are always consciously or unconsciously competing with their classmates. This competitiveness and the feeling of being unable to attain a desired image in front of the teacher and their peers also makes them feel anxious and frustrated. If they are not sure they can outdo their peers, they will keep silent. They believe they will not lose 'face' if others are unable to evaluate their speaking skills. Their self-perception as incompetent speakers prevents them from actively participating in classroom activities. (Xiuqin, 2006)

In another hand, according to Tseng (2012, pp. 83-84) there are five important causes of anxiety among the language learners which consist;

pressure by parents and teachers to get good grades at school in English, lack of confidence in their ability to learn English, fear of making mistakes and subsequent punishment or ostracism, i.e., fear of losing face for not being perfect, conditioning in childhood to believe that English is an

extremely difficult language to learn, and fear of foreigners and their behaviors.

In brief, we could mention that there are six sources of anxiety; less proficient English, students fear of making mistakes while speaking, speaking in front of large class size, students' unwillingness to take risks, low tolerance and ambiguity, and competitiveness. As anxiety has sources and types, it has also components that we are going to state next.

4. Components of Anxiety

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) made a valuable contribution to theorizing and measurement in language learning anxiety. They considered anxiety as comprising three components: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. (Cited in Woodrow, 2006)

4.1. Test Anxiety

Anxiety is considered to have a significant relation to educational performance, mainly in the form of test anxiety. Consequently, Ayres and Bristow (2009) argued that test anxiety is viewed as a special part of general anxiety. In this context, Isaac and Orit (as cited in Ayris & Bristow, 2009) suggested that anxiety is an extreme fear of performing poorly on examinations and it is a common form of anxiety among students. Such anxiety arises during evaluation situations or events. It can be explained as an affect or feeling of apprehension or fear and discomfort together with cognitive difficulties. Indeed, McDonald (as cited in Ayres & Bristow, 2009, p. 69) states:

Test anxiety is closely related to negative emotions; it is because when one's performances are being evaluated, an emotional reaction will appear. Therefore, during the evaluation, one may feel uneasiness, distress, or fear if one is not prepared and not confident with his or her abilities to perform well. However, if one is well prepared and very confident with himself or herself, the opposite feeling will arise.

Nevertheless, Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer (2011, p. 203) claim "test anxiety is defined as 'a situation-specific form of trait anxiety' (Zohar, 1998: 330) that pushes an individual to react to threatening situations with psychological, physiological and behavioral responses that are sometimes debilitating.

Moreover, Zainder (as cited in Spielberger & Sarason, 2013) mention that anxiety is:

[...] one of the key villains in the ongoing drama surrounding psycho-educational testing consequently, test anxiety may limit educational or vocational development, as test scores and grades influence entrance to many educational and vocational training programs in modern society.

4.2. Communication Apprehension

The communication apprehension refers to the ability of students to speak the language. It is, according to Ohata (2005), relevant to second/foreign language learning context. Moreover, MacIntyre and Gardner (as cited in Ohata, 2005, p. 4) point out that communication apprehension seems to be augmented in relation to the learner's negative self-perceptions caused by the inability to understand others and make oneself understood. Such feeling of uneasiness often goes along with the fear of negative evaluation.

Nonetheless, it is defined as “the apprehension’ level that has a relation with predictable communicative result with another person or community or ‘the fear or anxiety an individual feels about orally communicating.” (Daly, 1991, p. 3) (as quoted in Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer, 2011, p. 202). MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, as well, mention “communication apprehension seems to be augmented in relation to the learner's negative self-perceptions caused by the inability to understand others and make oneself understood.” (Cited in *ibid*)

4.3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Watson and Friend (as cited in Ohata, 2005, p.4) characterize the fear of negative evaluation as an apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and expectations that others would evaluate oneself negatively. As well, Gardner and MacIntyre (as cited in *ibid*) note that such feeling of apprehension can be characterized by “derogatory self-related cognition, feelings of apprehension, and physiological responses such as increased heart rate.” Ohata (2005) adds that even in small group discussions, for instance, some learners might feel anxious for fear of negative evaluation from their peers, possibly resulting in being quiet and reticent, contrary to their initial intention to participate. In addition, Bailey, Cohen and Norst (as cited in *ibid*) state that such psychological dilemmas of L2 learners between willingness to speak up in the classroom and fear of losing their self-

esteem in front of others seems to be a ubiquitous phenomenon in second/foreign language classroom setting.

Moreover, Watson & Friend (1969: 450) (as cited in Pawlak, Waniek-Klimczak, and Majer, 2011, p. 203) say that the fear of negative evaluation is described as ‘an apprehension about others’ evaluations, evaluative situations’ evading, and that others would make a negative assessment to them. Consequently, Kitano (2001) proposes that learners who have the fear of being evaluated negatively experienced a high anxiety levels. (Quoted in *ibid*)

To sum up, test anxiety deals with students’ fear of being tested. The second component which is the communication apprehension refers to the students’ ability to communicate in the target language. The last component has to do with students’ fear of being evaluated by their teachers.

5. Relationship between Anxiety and Learners’ Academic Achievement

Foreign language learners’ anxiety plays an important affective role in second language learning which, unfortunately, leads to a negative impact on their academic achievement. According to Dörnyei (2005, p198) most scholars would agree with Arnold and Brown’s (1999, p.8) conclusion that “Anxiety is quite possibly the affective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process.” Elkhafaifi, 2005 (as cited in Wei & Yodkamlue, 2012, p.76) states that reducing students’ anxiety and providing a less stressful classroom environment might enable teachers to help students improve both their English proficiency and course grades. Moreover, Wei and Yodkamlue (2012) say that FL classroom anxiety is widely considered as a factor to be reduced because of its debilitating nature that enervates one’s participation in classroom activities.

According to Sato (2003, p. 8), it is broadly known that anxiety harmfully affects second language achievement. In other words, he claimed that there is a negative relationship between anxiety and L2 achievement. Moreover, he stated an example of Clément, et al (1994) which identifies three different types of second language-related learner anxiety; classroom anxiety, test anxiety, and use anxiety. Thus, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993, p.6) (as cited in Dörnyei, 2005, p.6) concludes that the outcomes of their study about language anxiety propose that students whom have the feeling of anxiety, their levels of verbal production will lowers.

6. Improving Students' Performance by Reducing Anxiety

Anxiety, associated with feelings of fear, stress, uncertainty, uneasiness, and worry about coming things or situations, has a negative effect on foreign language learners' performance. Hence, there are numerous researchers whom have agreed on the idea that anxiety should be reduced to improve students' performance and that anxiety has a negative effect on their performance. As Dörnyei (2005, p198) argues that there is no doubt that anxiety affects second language performance." Moreover, Sato (2003, p. 8) claims that "It is clear from the literature that reducing anxiety enhances students' learning to speak."

As a consequence, Wei and Yodkamlue (2012) mention that researchers such as Kondo (1997), Zheng (2003), Marwan (2007), Iizuka (2010), etc have proposed various pedagogical suggestions for anxiety reduction. For instance, what teachers can do to help students reduce or manage FL anxiety. In terms of classroom organization, teachers are expected to make a cooperative classroom atmosphere, so as to motivate learners and make them interact and work together, as well to increase their communication to each others. This could help teachers make active students without the feel of anxiousness and apprehension. In addition, to get classroom with low anxiety, the teacher may set up group work activities.

Nevertheless, Greer (1999, p. 189) (quoted in Sato 2003, p. 9) identifies a key means of lowering anxiety: "when students see what is expected of them, it is likely that they will fall into a rhythm, their anxiety will decrease, and they will become more motivated." In other words, when the students recognize, before, what the teacher anticipates, they are going to be more interested which means, consequently, that students believe in their capability and commonly their feeling of anxiety reduces.

In addition to these researchers' suggestions for anxiety reduction, Sato (2003, p. 14,16) suggests two valuable techniques for lowering anxiety and increasing communication which consist the appropriate error correction which can decrease students' feeling of anxiety and increase meaningful classroom connections very much; he says "The literature argues that appropriate error correction will take into the account the fact that fluency causes errors as a natural process of improvement", and group work which can do the same with the first technique and says "The literature argues that group work creates a comfortable atmosphere and the intimate community necessary for learners to take risks in speaking." And as he stated then, "group work allows students to take the initiative in controlling their communicative

activities, thus, reducing anxiety, facilitating responsibility, creating community, and smoothing the progress of fluency as a result.”

We deduce that researchers argued that teachers should reduce the level of their students’ anxiety in order to improve their speaking performance. As well, we conclude that when the teacher lets students know what they will produce in the next session, uses appropriate error correction, and cooperative learning (group work) creates a relaxed and a non-aggressive atmosphere that leads to anxiety reduction as well as the encouragement of students’ speaking in class.

Conclusion

Learners face a great amount of anxiety in the field of language enquiry. This is resulted from factors like difficulty of subject, the fear to be embarrassed, low performance in front of colleagues, identity crises, even it might be a cultural shock, and external problems i.e., out of the ground of learning, in increasing anxiety. Moreover, keeping the feeling of anxiety could harm students’ oral performance. Individuals with high anxiety intensities have experience hard time during the oral performance in class. Researchers found that many obstacles of anxiety while study processes such test anxiety, mathematic anxiety, language anxiety, social anxiety, family anxiety and library anxiety. Anxiety is not only due to the lack of study motivation or to insufficient skills, but is also due to confusion about courses and negative experiences in previous study classes (embarrassment, awkward and humiliation moments). Previous studies found regarding anxiety disorders among students such as exam anxiety, but no studies about potential sources of study anxiety among university student. Generally, study anxiety aimed individual perceive any anxiety indications because of difficult situation while study process.

Introduction

Concerning the two previous chapters, we spoke firstly about speaking and performance in oral class and then about learners' anxiety in class. The coming chapter is the field work. We have chosen the questionnaire as a tool to gather enough and helpful information about the discussed topic. Moreover, in order to investigate the impact of anxiety on learners' performance in oral class, we intend to use the descriptive method because it is qualitative in nature. In our research, we have dealt with the speaking skill as a second variable and more particularly on students' performance in oral class. Therefore, we have chosen a sample of six Oral Expression teachers to work with. On the other hand, we have designed a questionnaire to third year LMD students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra because anxiety exists at all levels.

1. Teachers' Questionnaire

1.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

The salient aim of this questionnaire is to investigate how can anxiety affect learners' performance in oral classes taking into consideration that it is seen as an obstacle that face students when they want to speak. As well, the questionnaire aims at knowing the causes of students' anxiety depending on their teachers' opinions, and what these latter may do to reduce their students' feeling of anxiety in class. Besides, which strategies/techniques teachers can use to motivate their students.

1.2. Sample of the Study

In our research, we actually worked with six Oral Expression teachers as a sample and submitted a questionnaire for them to be filled with their reliable answers about their students' anxiety and its effect on them while performing in oral class.

1.3. Description of the Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire consists of fourteen questions divided into three parts. The first part is about general information; teachers' academic degree, period of teaching in University, and period of teaching Oral Expression course. The second part is about oral performance and it consists of six questions. The third part is about anxiety in oral class. It contains four questions. Last of all, we added another part for teachers' further suggestions.

1.4. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

Question 01: Your academic degree

License	00	0%
Magister/Master	06	100%
Doctorate	00	0%
Total	06	100%

Table 01: Teachers' Academic Degree

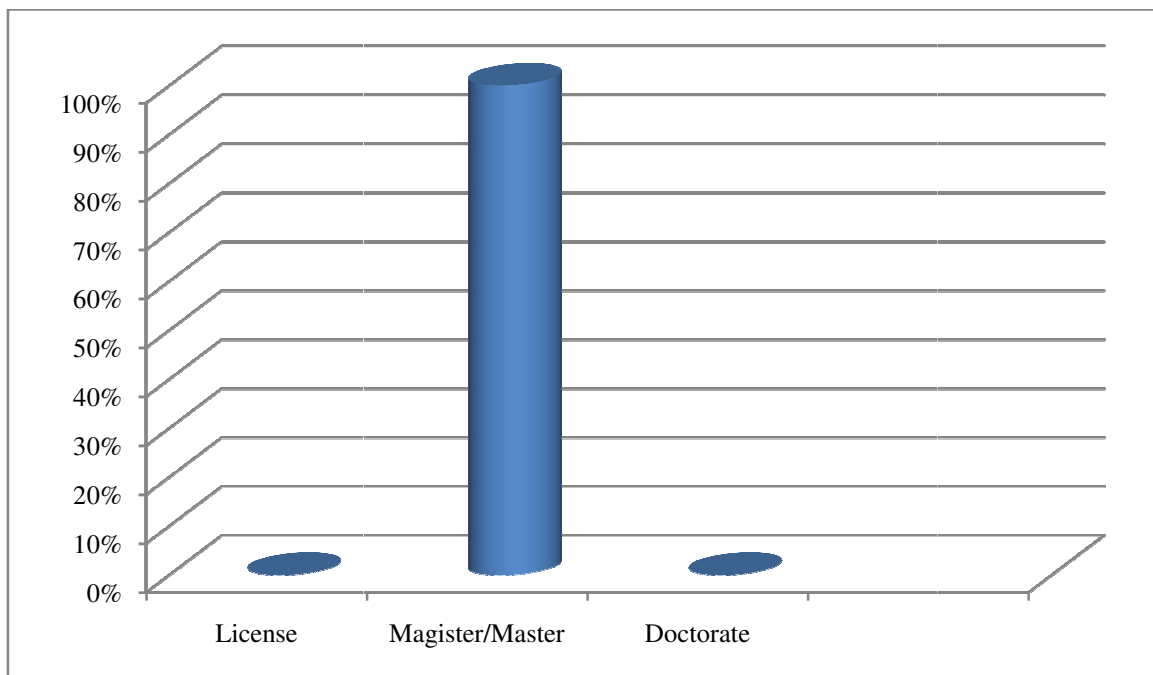


Figure 01: Teachers' Academic Degree

The first question was about teachers' academic degree; license, magister/master, or doctorate. The majority of teachers whom have answered our questionnaire have a magister/master degree. Their experience and the degree they hold let us believe on their suggestions and consider it as very reliable. As well, their evaluations and observations of learners' needs and requirement would help us in investigating the aim of this research.

Question 02: How long have you been teaching in university?

Teachers' years that they spent in teaching for the most was a long period around 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, and 12

Question 03: How long have you been teaching Oral Expression?

10 years	1	16.50%
8 years	1	16.50%
5 years	2	33.50%
4 years	2	33.50%
Total	6	100%

Table 02: Period of Teaching Oral Expression

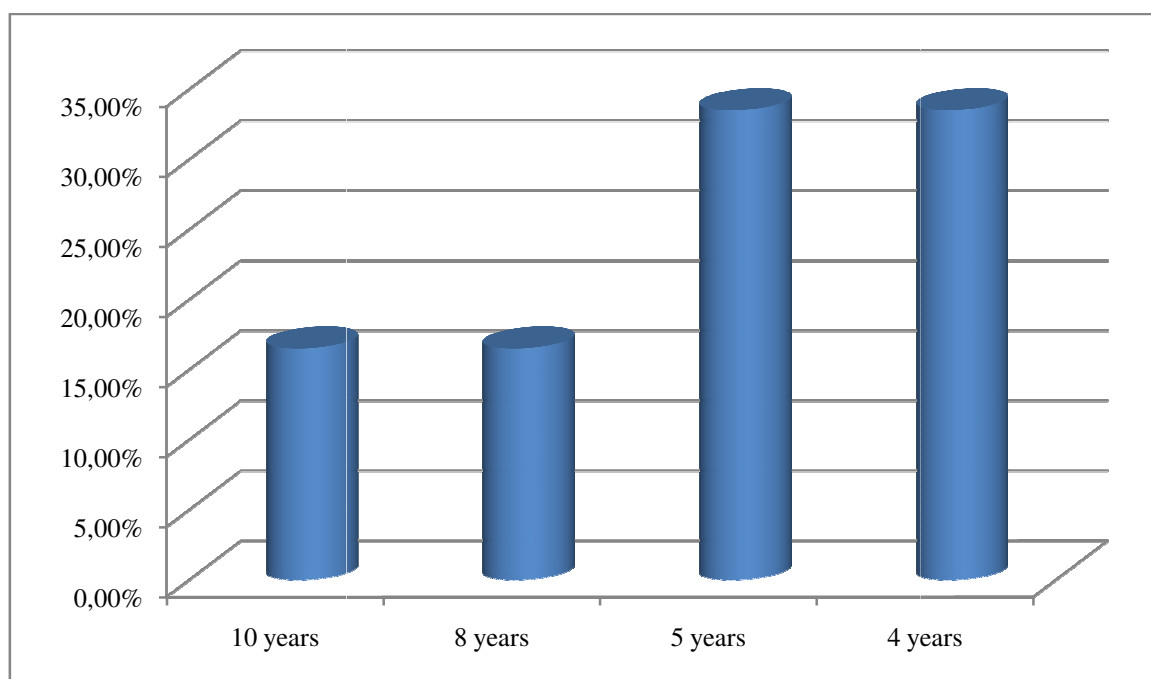


Figure 02: Period of Teaching Oral Expression

The majority of teachers who have answered our questionnaire are experienced in the domain of Oral Expression. 33.50% of teachers who answered our questionnaire have been teaching Oral Expression for five years, and the same proportion for them taught it four years. Nevertheless, for teachers who taught Oral Expression eight and ten years take a percentage of 16.50%.

Section One: About Oral Performance

Question 01: Speaking is the skill by which learners evaluate their success in learning a foreign language, agree or disagree?

Agree	3	50%
Disagree	3	50%
Total	6	100%

Table 03: Teachers' Opinion about the Importance of the Speaking Skill in Learners' Evaluation of Their Success

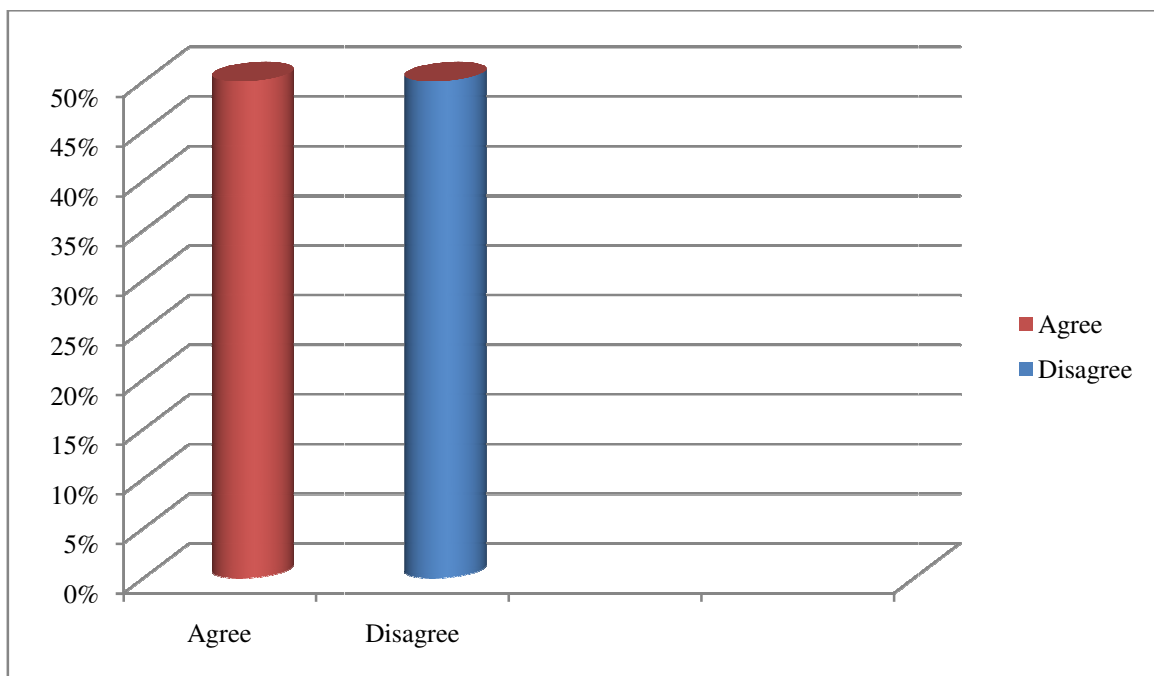


Figure 03: Teachers' Opinion about the Importance of the Speaking Skill in Learners' Evaluation of Their Success

We observe from table (3) and figure (3) that teachers' opinion about the importance of the speaking skill in learners' evaluation of their success is equal. 50% agreed because they see that speaking can influence other skills. Moreover, as the first aim for learning is to achieve communicative proficiency, it is important to focus on speaking. In fact, when learners succeed to have a conversation and would be able to speak, they realize that they succeeded in learning the language. On the other hand, 50% disagreed that speaking is the skill by which learners evaluate their success in learning a foreign language simply because they think that

speaking is not the only important skill and language includes four skills to be mastered. As well as, according to them, being good speakers does not mean mastering the target language.

Question 02: How do you evaluate your students’ level in speaking?

Very good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Not so good	6	100%
Bad	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 04: Teachers’ Evaluation for Their Students’ Speaking Level

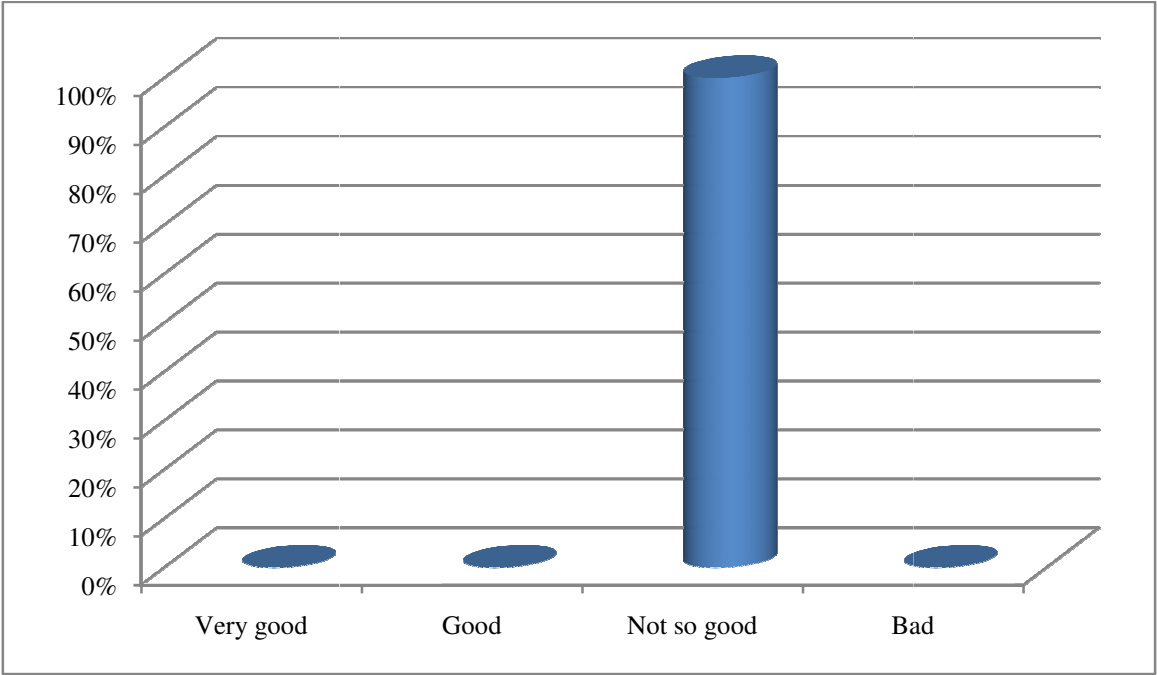


Figure 04: Teachers’ Evaluation for Their Students’ Speaking Level

Question 03: Which particular method do you use to teach Oral Expression?

Communicative approach	5	83%
No specific method	1	17%
Total	6	100%

Table 05: Method Used in Teaching Oral Expression

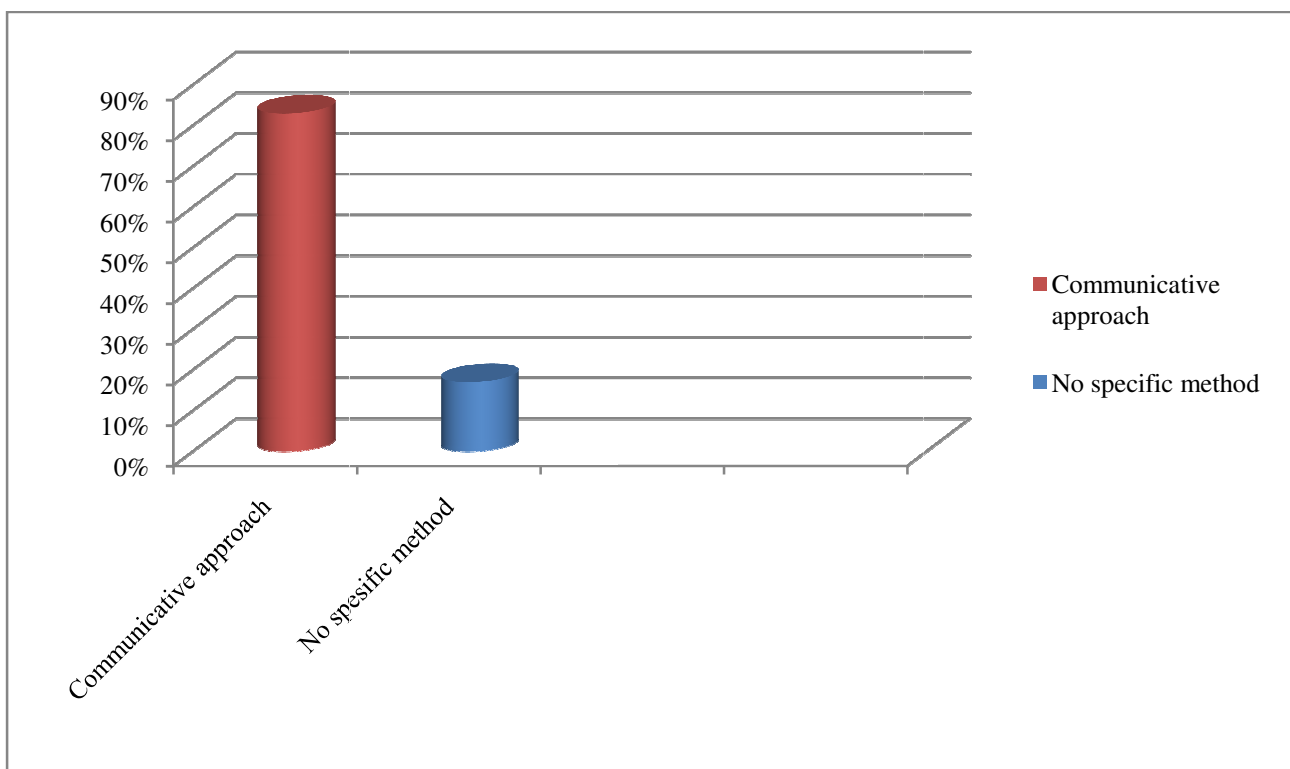


Figure 05: Method Used in Teaching Oral Expression

This questionnaire is about methods that teachers use to teach Oral Expression. It seems that most teachers use the communicative approach method with 83%. However, the other 17% of teachers do not follow a specific method, but they choose what works with their students' needs.

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ENGLISH DIVISION



The Effect of Anxiety on Learners' Performance in Oral Class

**Case Study of Third Year LMD Students of English at Mohamed Kheider
University, Biskra**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial Fulfillment for
the Requirements of Master Degree in Sciences of Language

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June 2015