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Exploring the Factors that Cause Oral Communication Apprehension

The Case of First Year Master Sciences of language Students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

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Declaration

I, Beghoura Samira, do herby solemnly declare that the work I have presented in this dissertation is my own, and has not been submitted before to any other institution or university for a degree. I also declare that a list of references is provided forward indicating all the sources the cited and quoted information.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work

To the soul of my beloved father who gave me faith, and to my dear mother whose heart is always tied with me.

To my Siblings whose constant support accompanied me throughout my educational career.

To Mr. AbdElrahman Ali Eid for his support and encouragement.

I also dedicate this work to Mr. Ibrahim Douida who has been of great help.

To all my friends with whom I went through life journeys and shared a lot of unforgettable memories.

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Abstract

As oral communication is the ultimate goal that EFL learners pursue to achieve, oral communication apprehension still creates a hindrance for the majority of them. Thus, the present research aims to investigate the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners. Additionally, it seeks to determine its impact on students' performance and the effective strategies to alleviate it. To address these issues a mixed-methods approach is adopted. Concerning the data collection tools and the population, the researcher employed an interview with eight (8) of EFL teachers and a questionnaire which addressed forty (40) first year master students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. As for the hypotheses, the researcher was not guided by them during the research journey since the research is exploratory and the hypotheses, in this case, is generated in form of results. The findings revealed that oral communication apprehension has negative effects on students' performance and highlighted different sources behind this problem which involve classroom related, topic of discussion related, student-related, teacher-related, and classmates related factors.

Keywords: Oral communication, Oral communication apprehension, EFL learners, Students' performance, Factors causing apprehension.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign language

EFLT: English as a Foreign Language Teaching

CA: Communication apprehension

OCA: Oral Communication Apprehension

SHS: Senior High School

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General Introduction

Introduction

English language has become the global language. it has an impact on every field including technology, education, politics, external dealings, and trade. In fact, it is the key tool to broaden and light up people's outlook in the world since it grants them access to unlimited world of knowledge. Therefore, there is a high demand to learn this hyper-powerful language.

The main aim of learning a foreign language is communication. Hence, speaking becomes of more interest to be learned and mastered among English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. In other words, speaking skill requires more consideration because learners evaluate their success in learning English on the basis of how effective and appropriate their oral transmitted messages are. Yet, achieving the goal of proficiency in this skill might be confronted by difficulties.

Recent research has found that all individuals experience the feeling of apprehension when speaking. As a consequence, researchers conducted studies seeking to investigate the root causes of oral communication apprehension. Different factors have been found to be the causes of this phenomenon according to the scenarios the individual is put in. However, there has not been a single report of the factors that cause communication apprehension among EFL students at Biskra University.

Statement of the Problem

Speaking skill plays an important role in the process of EFL learning. It is one of the crucial skills that EFL learners should prioritize and master because it is being regarded as the measure of English proficiency. However, it should be taken into consideration that there is a category of learners who are encountering problems; such as, shyness, nervousness, and fear of making mistakes when communicating orally.

This can discourage them from interacting with others. Eventually, they will not be able to practice the language properly.

Consequently, communication apprehension is considered as one of the obstacles that hinder the natural progress of the learning process among EFL learners. It prevents learners' real abilities from being released; abilities that enable the teacher to assess and evaluate them accordingly. This occurs; especially, in the oral classes where learners are expected to discuss issues, make oral presentations and role plays. This means that they become more exhibited to speak in front of others. Additionally, it can affect the life of the learners as a whole. Thus, it is worthwhile to find out the root causes that generate this problem.

1. Research Aims

The current study aims to develop aspects that are related to speaking skill. Also, it attempts to investigate the phenomenon of communication apprehension. Specifically, it will point out the factors that cause it in EFL classes. Moreover, it will explore the impact of oral communication apprehension on students' willingness to communicate and performance during oral activities. Furthermore, it will suggest effective strategies that cope with alleviating this problem, so that students will be engaged in the language learning process.

2. Research Questions

RQ 1: What are the factors that cause oral communication apprehension?

RQ 2: How can oral communication apprehension affect the learners' willingness to communicate?

RQ 3: What are the useful strategies that help to reduce this problem?

3. Research Hypotheses

The exploratory research is not hypothesis-driven. Its main focus is the objectives of the research not the assumptions. Therefore, it is also called hypothesis-generating-research. According to Darabi (2007), in the hypotheses- generating-research, the researcher is not concerned with testing hypotheses. That is to say, the hypotheses should not be formed from the beginning, but afterwards.

 "Not all studies have hypotheses. Sometimes a study is designed to be exploratory. There is no formal hypothesis, and perhaps the purpose of the study is to explore some area more thoroughly in order to develop some specific hypothesis or prediction that can be tested in future research." (Trochim and Donnelly, 2001, p. 30). Thus, in this study, the researcher will not be guided by hypotheses; but she is supposed to generate them.

4. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to shed light on the reasons behind the lack of participation in EFL classes and provides solutions to engage students in oral activities. Moreover, this research is useful because it looks for the different problems that students face in developing their speaking abilities; mainly, oral communication apprehension. Furthermore, it intends to find out the factors that cause this phenomenon in order to suggest effective strategies to alleviate it. Finally, this study is useful to researchers in the language teaching and learning field as it can provide them with valuable information to conduct further studies in order to enhance learners' oral communication.

5. Research Methodology

This study is conducted to investigate the area of oral communication apprehension and the main factors that cause it. Hence, the suitable research approach to tackle this issue is the mixed-methods as it includes the type of research that fits the nature of the research and offers the appropriate data collection instruments.

5.1. Population and Sample

❖ **Students**

The target population for this study is first-year master sciences of language students of Mohamed Khider Biskra University. It consists of (160 students), yet, forty (40) of them will be randomly chosen to participate in this investigation due to their large number.

❖ **Teachers**

From a population of fifty (50) EFL teachers at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, eight (8) of them will be chosen to provide this study with different views concerning oral communication apprehension, its root causes, and strategies to evade this problem.

5.2. Data Gathering Tools

The aim of this study is to explore the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among first-year master sciences of language students from the perspective of both students and teachers. Henceforth, the instruments that are used to collect data are unstructured interview with teachers as the main data gathering tool in addition to a semi-structured questionnaire submitted to students. On one hand, the teachers' interview will include questions that permit the researcher to explore the teachers' perspective towards oral communication apprehension, the reasons behind its

existence in EFL classes, and the way they deal with students who suffer from it. On the other hand, the students' questionnaire will contain questions about the effect of oral communication apprehension on their performance, and the factors contributing to this issue as well as the tricks they use to reduce it.

5.3.   Data Analysis

As mentioned before, the mixed-methods research will be adopted to conduct this study. Therefore, the analysis will be descriptive for the interview. However, for the questionnaire, some statistics will be done (counting percentage).

6. Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation consists mainly of three chapters. The two initial chapters are devoted to the theoretical part whilst the third sheds light on the practical part. Firstly, the first chapter is devoted to the overview of oral communication and communication apprehension. It consists of two sections. The first section is about oral communication. it reviews its nature, importance, and the difficulties faced by learners when learning it in addition to a brief history about communicative competence. The second section is dedicated to communication apprehension. It covers its definition, types, symptoms, and strategies to reduce it. Additionally, it determines the impact of oral communication apprehension on the learners' willingness to communicate

Secondly, the second chapter suggests the main possible factors contributing to OCA among EFL learners. To begin with, it displays the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among language learners. On one hand, it introduces the internal factors that include personal, linguistic, paralinguistic, psychological, and cognitive factors. On the other hand, it identifies the external factors which are

comprised of the teacher's teaching strategies, seating arrangements, lack of discipline rules, and cultural divergence in communication norms.

Thirdly, the third chapter is devoted to the study framework. To be precise, it presented a brief literature review about the research methodology. Then, it shifted to data analysis and interpretation, in addition to the discussion and summary of the study findings. Finally, the research highlighted series of recommendations for students, teachers, policy makers, and future research.

1. Chapter One:

Oral Communication and Oral Communication Apprehension:

Revising the Related Review of Literature

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Chapter One:

Oral Communication and Oral Communication Apprehension: Revising

the Related Review of Literature

Introduction

Oral communication is considered a crucial part when learning a foreign language. In other words, most English language learners seek to improve their ability in speaking since it is the most required skill in professional fields. Yet, a number of learners suffer from communication apprehension, which hinders their learning process as well as affects their academic achievements negatively.

This chapter will consist of two sections. The first section will be about oral communication. First, it reviews the nature and the importance of oral communication. Also, it will introduce oral communication difficulties in learning a foreign language that might be faced by the student. Then, it will display a brief history about communicative competence and will point out its components. Additionally, it will determine the impact of oral communication apprehension on the learners' willingness to communicate. The second section will be about oral communication apprehension. First of all, it will provide the definition of oral communication apprehension; as well as, its main types. Then, it will identify the signs and the symptoms of the apprehensive individual. Finally, it suggests a number of strategies to handle this phenomenon and its effects on learners' performance and assessment.

1.1. Oral Communication

1.1.1. Nature of Oral Communication

Oral communication is important because it is one way that maintains someone's contact with others. In this case, Byrne (1986, p. 8) referred to it as a "two-way process between speaker and listener (or listeners) and involves the productive skill of speaking and the receptive skill of understanding (or listening with understanding)". In other words, oral communication denotes the interaction that occurs between two or more peoples via exchanging spoken words. It includes the transmission of coded messages by the speaker in which the listener must decode them in order to achieve successful communication.

Oral Communication takes different forms such as face-to-face meetings, speeches, telephonic conversations, and teleconferences. Thus, the participants must take into consideration the pitch, intonation, rate, and vocal quality as the main basics of effective oral communication (Flormata, 2003). Similarly, Byrne (1986) stated that the goal of teaching a foreign language is achieving proficiency when communicating orally. This acquires the learner to have a complete knowledge about grammar, vocabulary, and phonology. However, there should be a balance between these elements and certain features such as key sounds, weak forms, basic stress, intonation patterns in the area of reception as well as production.

1.1.2. Importance of Oral Communication

Oral communication is a significant part of learning a language as said by Ur (1996, p. 120), "people who know a language are referred to as 'speakers' of that language". Therefore, the students' success in learning a foreign language is measured

by their capacity to perform well in oral communication. As for the advantages of oral communication, Ali (2018) assumed that:

- It's quick and prompt since it gives the speaker and the listener (listeners) the opportunity to provide each other with the feedback directly.

- It promotes the mutual exchange of thoughts, information, understanding, and support because of the close contact.

That is to say, oral communication facilitates the process of conveying and receiving messages in quick, clear, and precise manner.

1.1.3. Students Oral Communication Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning

Oral communication is the main goal of EFL learners. Yet, it proves to be a challenging task. Thus, it is noticed that a number of students do not master this skill as it should be because of some difficulties that hinder the process of learning. These hindrances include lack of motivation, language interference, and the environment in which the process of learning occurs.

1.1.3.1. Lack of motivation

Motivation plays a crucial role in foreign language learning. In this path, Song (2005) declared that "Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long term goals, and that there are no appropriate curricula and teaching techniques that ensure student achievement".

To simplify, students' abilities have nothing to do if they lack motivation. Even the most talented people start procrastination, feel lost, and finally stop pursuing their goals if they become demotivated. Indeed, learning a language is a long-term goal; additionally, there is no single curriculum or teaching technique that completely

guarantees the students' language acquisition without being enthusiastic, which makes of motivation a key factor.

Since oral communication occupies a great part of learning language, Lack of motivation can negatively affect students' oral communication. Consequently, teachers should adopt certain policies that create students' self-confidence and involve them in oral activities during the oral sessions in order to improve their communicative abilities.

1.1.3.2.   Learning Environment Influence

The environment in which the learning process occurs affects learners' oral communication efficiency. For example, the large number of students in the classroom prevents the participation of most of them in activities.

Moreover, the significance of the approach used and the types of exposure provided to students should be taken into account. Formal exposure is concerned with following the traditional approach that focuses on the conscious knowledge of rules which proves to play a minor role in the actual mastering of the language. Efforts are made to guarantee the comprehension of the grammars and vocabulary of the target language. Yet, the problem of the minimum ability to communicate through the language still persists among many students (Dulay et al., 1982). One can deduce that the main concerns of teaching language in traditional approaches are grammar and vocabulary whereas the role of oral communication is neglected.

Furthermore, the classroom climate is one of the main aspects that are related to the learning environment. Also, students' expectations as well as emotions developed toward the teacher, all affect the learning environment either positively or negatively (Ramírez, 1995).

1.1.3.3.   Linguistic Interference

Another problem that disturbs EFL learners to communicate effectively during oral activities is language interference. Basically, "language interference or language switching occurs when two language communities are in contact" (Dulay et al., 1982, p. 98). For more explanation, interference comes from the level of similarities and differences between the mother tongue and the language being learnt in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

According to Vintoni (2016), the language interference could be positive or negative transfer of the linguistic knowledge. If there are more similarities, then the transfer is positive which facilitates the process of the language learning. In contrast, if the differences are more; here, the transfer is negative, and the language becomes more difficult to be learnt. An example of the negative interference is the pronunciation of the /p/ sound in which a number of students pronounce it as /b/ sound.

1.1.4. Brief History on Communicative Competence

Linguists such as Chomsky (1957, 1965) overlooked the study of communicative patterns and systems of language. Rather, he emphasized on the knowledge of abstract linguistic rules. After that, Hymes (1970) comes to criticize the narrowness of Chomsky's theories and propose a new one. He argued that the speakers possess an ability that goes further than grammatical competence since they form part of a given community or culture. As a result, he coined the term communicative competence (CC) and insisted that scholars should focus on it since it enables speakers to use language effectively.

Hymes (2003) referred to CC as "abilities in a broad sense, beyond grammar" (p. 321); the knowledge of the appropriate language use to a given context without

neglecting the knowledge of grammar rules. His definition takes into account four elements

- Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;

- Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;

- Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;

- Whether (and to what degree) something is in factually done, actually performed, and what is its doing entail (Hymes, 1972, p. 281)

Therefore, his main concern was studying what is beyond the structure of isolated sentences; the rules of speaking within a community.

1.1.5. Components of Communicative Competence

The concept of CC has had a far-reach influence in the world. Consequently, researchers attempted to develop this conceptualization and define the specific components that construct it. According to Segni (2019), nowadays, the literature suggests a model which received a general agreement among researchers and consists of five sub-competencies.

1.1.5.1. Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence is also known as language performance. According to Nordquist (2020), it is defined as the subconscious rules that govern speech. In other words, linguistic competence refers to the speaker's lexical, morphological, orthographical, syntactical and phonological knowledge of the language.

1.1.5.2.   Pragmalinguistic Competence

Another component of communicative competence is pragmalinguistic competence. Kasper and Rose (2001) affirmed that pragmalinguistic refers to the resources for conveying communicative acts and relational and interpersonal meaning. Such resources include pragmatic strategies such as directness and indirectness, routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts (p. 2). For instance, the language you are using with your friend is not the same as the language you are using when speaking with your teacher.

1.1.5.3.   Sociopragmatic Competence

This competency is concerned with what is socially and culturally accepted in a given context. Kasper and Rose (2001) defined it as "the social perception of underlying participants' interpretation and performance of communicative action" (p. 2). That is, what is appropriate in certain social community can be inappropriate in another.

1.1.5.4.   Strategic Competence

The fourth competency is known as strategic competence. According to Rabab'ah (2004), it refers to learners' ability to compensate for the deficiencies in their linguistic knowledge during communication. In other words, it is the speaker's ability to utilize clues strategies to handle the problems that occur when speaking. An example of that is paraphrasing when explaining, miming when the word is not known.

1.1.5.5.   Discourse Competence

The last component of communicative competence is discourse competence. It refers to knowledge of achieving coherence and cohesion in spoken or written texts. This requires the knowledge about the different genres of discourse. An example of this

is generic structure patterns which include storytelling and gossiping (Eggins & Slade, 1997)

1.2. Oral Communication Apprehension

1.2.1. Definition of Communication Apprehension

Research on communication apprehension (CA) has been ongoing for a long time. Consequently, various definitions have been yielded by different scholars. For instance, Horwitz and Cope (1986, p. 127) stated that communication apprehension is "a type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communicating with people". To simplify, Horwitz and Cope regarded communication apprehension as a sort of shyness which demonstrates when the individual is put in a situation where s/he has to get in touch with other people. Equally, Horwitz (2002) considered CA as a type of social anxiety/ phobia; when CA reaches its highest level, it becomes a social phobia.

However, the most widely accepted definition is the one that is provided by McCroskey (1977, p. 78) who defined communication apprehension as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons". Although the definitions may vary, it is noticed that they all involve ideas such as fear, distress, anxiety, shyness, and discomfort when getting in touch with others.

1.2.2. Types of Oral Communication Apprehension

In recent literature, scholars proposed two components of oral communication apprehension. On one hand, there is state anxiety which was described as tentative feelings, including tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry and activation of the autonomic nervous system (Spielberger et all. 1970 as cited in Byrne & Rosenman, 1990). On the other hand, there is trait anxiety. According to Gridon (2013), it refers to

negative feelings of fears and worries that the person encounters throughout different situations. The difference between the two types, here, is that state anxiety is instant, yet trait anxiety takes place in many contexts.

However, in the most recent conceptualization of communication apprehension, McCroskey, (2001) suggested four levels of communication apprehension as a new division. Each level has a number of characteristics that are extracted from the two components. Thus, the old dichotomy becomes no longer reliable, and the classification used, nowadays, is trait-like CA, context-based, audience-based, and situational anxiety.

1.2.2.1.   Trait-like Communication Apprehension

Before going further explaining trait-like communication apprehension, it is important to differentiate between the terms: trait-like and true trait. According to McCroskey, Richmond, and Davis (1986), trait-like refers to the personality characteristics that may change. In contrast, true trait means the individual's features that remain as they are, like the eye colour and the height.

Trait-like CA is an urge to avoid interacting with others regardless of the situation, audience, and context. As shown in McCroskey (1984, p. 16) definition, "Trait-like CA is viewed as a relatively enduring, personality-type orientation toward a given mode of communication across a wide variety of contexts". An example of this is when the teacher asks an apprehensive student to participate in a classroom discussion, or work in pairs, or prepare a presentation, or any other situation that takes them out of their comfort zone and makes them communicate with others. Consequently, every environmental stimulus, such as events or other statements are portrayed as a threat from the student's perspective.

1.2.2.2.   Context-Based Communication Apprehension

The context of discourse, generally, comprises of time, place, participants, and topic. However, these elements may affect communication negatively and generate a sort of anxiety what is known as context-based CA. In this vein, McCroskey (1984) affirmed that context-based CA is "a relatively enduring, personality-type orientation toward communication in a given type of context" (p. 16). That is to say, context-based CA is when someone is put in a specific context that disable him or her from interacting with others and expressing his or her ideas, thoughts, and feelings comfortably. For instance, the fear of public speaking is one of the examples that can be considered as context-based CA.

This level of communication apprehension is a result of certain factors that are novelty, formality, and uncertainty.

1.2.2.2.1.   Formality

Since apprehension is connected to formality, it usually arises from the adversarial relationship between the interlocutors. According to Chibane (2019, p. 18) as the formality of the context increase, the apprehension prompts more. For example, some individuals can hold perfect conversations and deliver impressive speeches in less formal contexts, but when they are exposed to more formal contexts such as job interviews, they become less capable of well-performing.

1.2.2.2.2.   Uncertainty

The second factor that may contribute to having context-based CA is uncertainty. It refers to the contexts in which people cannot handle the flow of information. The occurrence of this prompts their anxiety because it gives them a sort

of hesitation about what to do and how they should react. This idea can be supported by Brown's saying; "we all fear what we do not understand." (Brown, 2009, p. 31).

1.2.2.2.3. Novelty

Another aspect that causes context-based CA is novelty. According to Chibane (2019, p19), "In communications environments that are new to us, anxiety becomes more of a problem, even for those who are normally comfortable speaking in public". Most people experience anxiety when they are exposed to contexts that are unfamiliar with. Then, tension starts to rise and communication becomes more of a concern. This does not only occur with communication apprehensive people, but it also happens to people who are usually comfortable with public speaking.

1.2.2.3.   Audience-Based Communication Apprehension

People might have apprehension about performing in front of certain spectators, which is referred to as audience-based CA (Leitenberg (ed), 2013). This kind of fear might appear either because of the large size of the audience or status or unfamiliarity. For instance, students feel less apprehensive during speeches in front of their classmates when they get to know each other.

1.2.2.4.   Situational Communication Apprehension

The communication apprehension level might be increased because of the situation the speaker is put in. Kelly and Watson (1989) defined situational CA as "the experience of fear on occasion, but not necessarily in the same type of situation each time". (p. 62). So, they refer to this type as "occasional anxiety" which occurs in distinct situations.

1.2.3. Symptoms of Oral Communication Apprehension

Scholars have mentioned a number of signs that appear in the individual when feeling apprehensive as shown in the table below.

- **Intense fear before and during the performance**
- **Heightened physiological arousal (autonomic nervous system and endocrine system reactivity)**
- **Subjective reactions to arousal (unrelated to the intensity of arousal)**
- **Hypervigilance to bodily reactions**
- **Sense of loss of control**
- **Catastrophic thoughts**
- **Fear of revealing anxiety**
- **Dread of visual scrutiny**
- **Fears may not dissipate with experience**
- **Shift of attention and diffusion of concentration and energy**
- **Powerful mind-body interrelationship**

Table 1.1 Characteristics of Communication Anxiety

(adopted from Horwitz, 2002, p. 10)

To shed enough light to the previous symptoms, it is conventional to classify them into psychological, physiological, and physical symptoms.

Firstly, symptoms that are not measured physically are classified as psychological. Hence, according to Horwitz (2002, p. 9), psychological symptoms include feeling of inhibition, yet, the physiological ones involve rise in the blood levels of neurotransmitters such as epinephrine (adrenaline)or norepinephrine, blood pressure increases and body temperature drop. Whereas, physical symptoms vary from nausea, dizziness, dryness in the mouth, clammy hands, sweating, faster heart beats, quivering voice, a sensation of butterflies in the stomach, and other symptoms (Lindberg, 2020).

1.2.4. Strategies to Reduce Oral Communication Apprehension in the Classroom

Different strategies are used to prevent oral communication apprehension. Friedman (1980, pp. 21-23) suggested a set of rules that should be implemented to create a healthy classroom. For instance, he assumed that students should practice oral activities gradually from the least threatening like group work to giving a speech as a more threatening activity. Besides this rule, other rules that are manifested and summarized in the following three strategies which help students handle their apprehension.

1.2.4.1. Skills Training

Lack of communicating skills can rise the CA level. Kelly (1984) affirmed that people who suffer from CA feel anxious because they lack the skill to communicate competently. Therefore, students must be provided by specific skills training that focuses on their talking with acquaintances via different classroom activities.

1.2.4.2. Classroom Activities

Tolerant teachers use different methods to enhance their students' communication skills. "The aim of communicative activity in class is to get learners to use the language they are learning to interact in realistic way and meaningful ways" (Scrivener, 2011, p. 151). In other words, classroom activities provide the learner with the environment in which they can use language and improve their communicative efficiency. These activities include role-plays, classroom discussions, storytelling, information gap, and other activities.

1.2.4.3.   Systematic Desensitization

According to Sellnow (2004), systematic desensitization is an effective treatment that helped more than eighty percent of people to overcome many types of fears, including CA. It involves desensitization in evoking the stimuli; so that, the individual sequentially becomes less apprehensive about oral communication. She added that it can be applied alone or with the help of someone else. An example of this is the pyramid below.
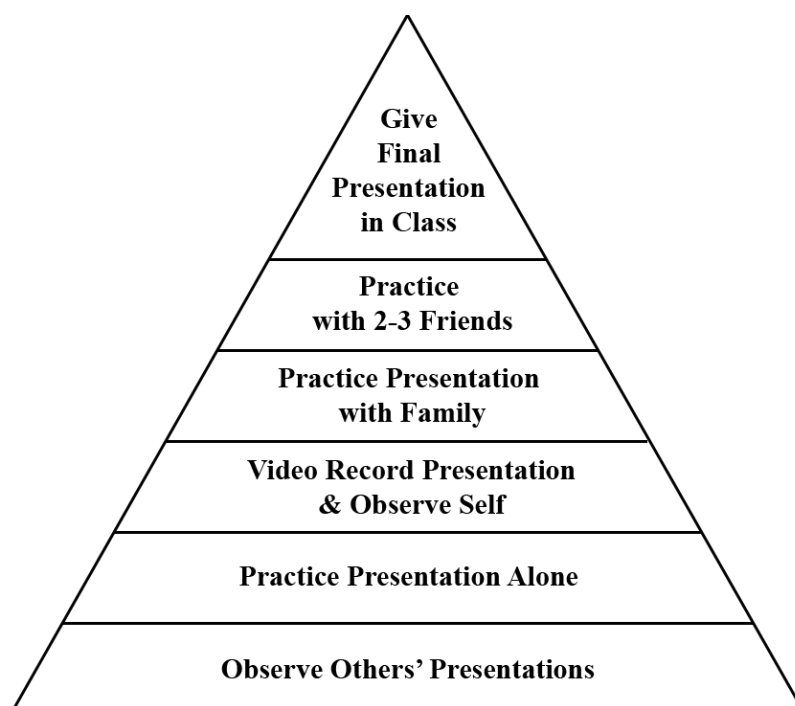
Figure 1.1 An Example of Reducing Oral Communication Apprehension Using Systematic Desensitization Method

Figure 1.1 shows how to gradually reduce learners' apprehension when having a presentation. It includes different steps from the less difficult (presentation with family) to more difficult (give a final presentation in class).

1.2.5.   The Effect of Oral Communication Apprehension on EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate and Performance

Fear of communicating affects EFL learners' performance negatively. Its consequences can be divided into internal and external effects. On one hand, the internal

effects involve disruption, fright, being inadequate, and possibly being [stupid] (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). On the other hand, they added the external effects that include avoiding communication and not answering questions; as well as, giving minimal communication. Avoiding participation or responding to teachers' questions can be a cause of the uneasiness that an apprehensive student feels when speaking.

Conclusion

Communicative efficiency defines someone's proficiency in language learning. Thus, learning a foreign language requires practicing through interaction with others. Consequently, teachers have to follow certain strategies to improve their students' oral communication such as involving them in different oral communication activities. However, the effective mastery of this skill cannot be achieved if the students suffer from communication apprehension because this category of learners avoid communication. But there are different techniques that can be used either by the teacher to reduce their students' apprehension or by the students themselves. That is important because if they keep withdrawing from participation, this will affect their learning progress negatively, and eventually their academic achievements.

This chapter consisted of two sections. The first section was about oral communication. it shed light on its nature, importance, and the difficulties faced by learners when learning it in addition to a brief history about communicative competence. The second chapter was dedicated to communication apprehension. It covered its definition, types, symptoms, and strategies to reduce it. Additionally, it determined the impact of oral communication apprehension on the learners' willingness to communicate

2. Chapter Two

Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension among EFL Learners:

Revising the Related Review of Literature

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Chapter Two:

Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension among EFL

Learners: Revising the Related Review of Literature

Introduction

It is considerably alarming that there is a number of EFL learners who suffer

from OCA. The stress that is felt by learners when communicating with others can be

an unfortunate inhibitor to success. This problem has attracted the attention of many

researchers. As a result, the need to identify its root causes has been their primary goal.

This chapter will suggest the main possible factors contributing to OCA among

EFL learners. To begin with, it will display the factors that cause oral communication

apprehension among language learners. On one hand, it will introduce the internal

factors that include personal, linguistic, paralinguistic, psychological, and cognitive

factors. On the other hand, it will identify the external factors which are comprised of

the teacher's teaching strategies. Furthermore, it will provide the sources of feedback

and its types, as well as, seating arrangements that are regarded as a cause behind OCA.

Finally, it will review the lack of discipline rules and cultural divergence in

communication norms as factors of OCA.

2.1. Factors Causing Oral Communication Apprehension among language learners

Different views have been yielded to be the root causes of oral communication

apprehension with different classifications. Bastida and Yapo (2019) found that

Students' self-evaluation, linguistic competence, cultural background, previous

stressing experience, training and exposure, appearance, and audience evaluation are

considered to be the causes of oral communication apprehension.

Equally, a study conducted by Amara (2018) revealed that the reason behind oral communication apprehension is the contribution of instructional and psychological factors to the situation. However, in this chapter, the researcher will divide them into internal and external factors as follows.

2.2. Internal Factors

2.2.1. Personal factors

2.2.1.1. Gender differences in oral communication apprehension

McCroskey et al. (1982) stated that the studies conducted on communication apprehension usually fail to find any relationship between gender and communication apprehension. However, Bakan (1966) assumed that the distinction between gender emerges in all cultures and has a crucial role in molding someone's psychological life. In this track, Davis (2012) found that females have a higher level of communication apprehension than males. One may conclude that there's a relationship between gender and communication apprehension.

2.2.1.2. Learning Styles

Reid (1995) defined learning style as "the individual habitual and preferred way of absorbing, processing and retaining new information and skills" (p. viii). Learning styles determines how the learner interacts in learning situations (Armstrong, Peterson, & Perkins, 2012). Thus, it is necessary for students to be aware of their learning styles. As approved by Yockey (2015), learning styles affect the amount of anxiety experienced by learners. In other words, the students who are aware of their learning styles demonstrate less apprehension in view of the fact that it permits the teacher to plan the right teaching strategies and select the appropriate teaching materials.

Meddas (2019, pp. 16-17) defined visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles as follows:

2.2.1.2.1. Visual Learners

Visual learners are referred to as spatial learners in which they prefer to learn by looking at and seeing things. They use images, colors, charts, and maps to organize information and communicate with others.

2.2.1.2.2. Auditory Learners

Auditory learners are those who process and retain information through listening and repeating. They are good at remembering things that they are told. Conversations and hearing stories are their ideal way of learning in addition to music and video clips.

2.2.1.2.3. Kinesthetic Learners

Tactile learners are those who prefer to learn by carrying out physical activities. For kinesthetic learners doing is equal to learning. They learn primarily through the sense of touch. They need to wiggle, shake their bodies, and move while learning.

2.2.1.3. Anxiety and Introversion-Extroversion

when talking about the relationship between apprehension and introversion-extroversion, it is important to look at Eysenck's PEN model. The model focuses on three factors. Firstly, psychoticism which is a personality typified by aggressiveness and interpersonal hostility. The second is extraversion and the third is neuroticism which refers to emotional stability.
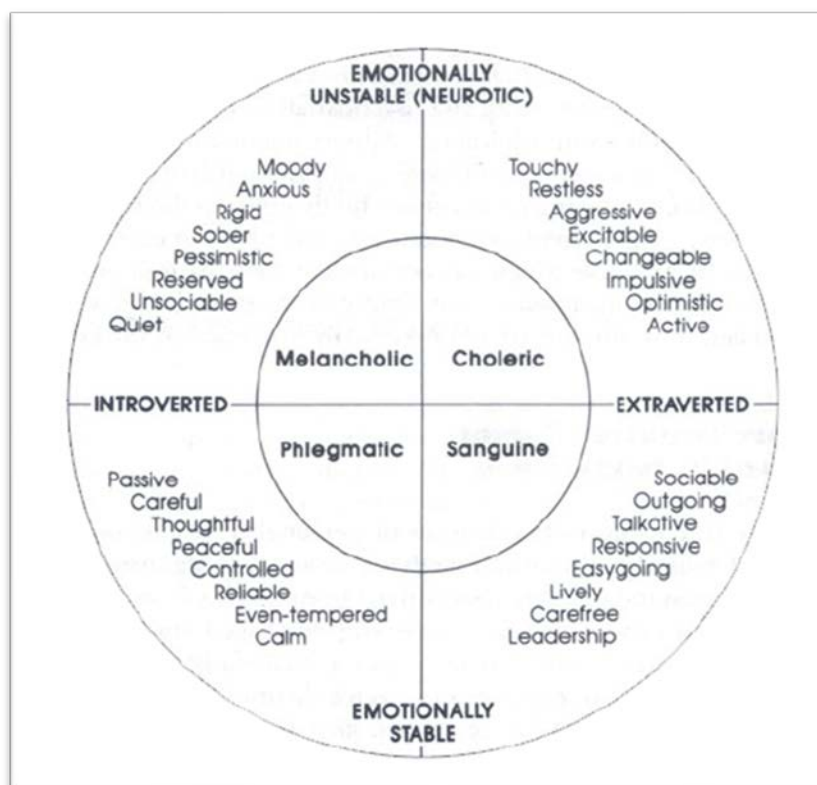
Figure 2.1 Eysenck's Personality Model

(Retrieved from: El-Nasr, Bishko, Zamitto, Nixon, Vasiliakos, & Wei, 2009, n.p)

The two-dimensional chart, the horizontal line representing introversion-extroversion and the vertical line representing the emotional stability-instability, describes the effect of each of the two factors on personality. As seen, anxiety is mentioned in the upmost left quarter. That is to say, the more the personality shifts towards introversion, the more the tendency to exhibit anxiety increases.

2.2.1.4. Lack of motivation

Motivation is the driving force that pushes the learner to achieve their goals. Harmer asserted that "the desire to achieve some goal is the bedrock of motivation and, if it is strong enough, it provokes decision to act." (2007, p. 20). In other words, the lack of motivation denotes the absence of desire which is the main reason for failure and depression. This was supported by Thaher (2005) as she stated that students'

achievements are influenced by their motivation towards learning. So, if the teacher creates a boring atmosphere, students will lose interest in what they are dealing with.

2.2.2. Linguistic Factors

According to the communicative approach, learners need both fluency and accuracy in order to speak a foreign language. These criteria are seen as the cornerstones of assessing speaking in a foreign language and they are complementary in accomplishing a given task. In that sense, some learners tend to be apprehensive when they do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge (Ellis, 2015).

2.2.2.1. Fluency

Learners seek to foster their oral fluency because it is the main characteristic of the speaker's performance. Hedge (2002) considered fluency as a term that is related to verbal production and defined it as someone's ability to connect the units of speech easily without having pauses or stammering, or hesitating. Therefore, if fluency is not realized when speaking, the speaker will not be able to deliver information. Basically, this will cause communication breakdowns and the listener's loss of interest.

2.2.2.2. Accuracy

Accuracy is the second criterion that assessment of oral performance is based upon. According to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), Accuracy is the degree to which the produced speech is correct in relation to the rule system of the target language. Henceforth, learners should take into consideration the grammatical structure, vocabulary pronunciation, and completeness of the language form when speaking.

 2.2.2.3. Grammar

According to Hughes (2002), grammatical accuracy refers to the correct usage of the learner's grammatical structure including the length and the complexity of utterances as well as the ability to use the subordinating clauses. Yet, there is a distinction between the grammar of speech and the one of writing in which Thornbury (2005, p. 21) summarized the features of spoken vis-a-vi written grammar in the following Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 The Distinction between Written Grammar and Spoken Grammar
(Retrieved from Thornbury, 2005, p. 21)

Written Grammar	Spoken Grammar
Sentence is the basic unit of construction	Clause is the basic unit of construction
Clauses are often embedded (subordination)	Clauses are usually added (co-ordination)
Subject + verb + object construction	Head + body + tail construction
Reported speech favored	Direct speech favored
Precision favored	Vagueness tolerated
Little ellipsis	A lot of ellipsis
No question tags	Many question tags
No performance effects	Performance effects, including: • hesitations • repeats • false starts • incompletion • syntactic blends

2.2.2.4. Vocabulary

When students attempt to express what they want to say, they fail in performing well-formed utterances since they lack the knowledge of word classes. In this context, Harmer (2001) asserted that "within word classes there are a number of restrictions. A knowledge of these allows competent speakers to produce well-formed sentences." (p. 21). For instance, in the case of synonyms, students utilize words inappropriately because words do not carry the same meaning in all contexts. Thus, achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary should be prioritized to produce accurate sentences and have successful communication.

2.2.2.5. Pronunciation

To speak effectively, students need to ameliorate their pronunciation accuracy. Redmond and Vrchota (2007) stressed learning the right pronunciation of words based on the assumption that "It is imperative that you use the correct word in the correct instance and with the correct pronunciation" (p. 104). Then, they defined it as the way words should be uttered in order to be accepted and understood. Therefore, students have to focus on some issues during the accurate pronunciation stage such as word and sentence stress and intonation.

2.2.3. Paralinguistic Factors

Paralanguage is an aspect of communication. It involves non-verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions along with the volume, speed, and intonation of the voice. The use of non-lexical elements of communication in oral sessions reduces the feeling of communication apprehension (Uştuk and Aydin, 2016). Consequently, if the learners lack knowledge about the vocalics, this may lead them to experience a level of communication apprehension.

2.2.4. Psychological Factors

2.2.4.1. Shyness

Shyness is a global feeling that is experienced by many either in regular, or professional, or academic situations. Pilkonis (1977) referred to shyness as "a tendency to avoid social interactions and to fail participating appropriately in social situations" (p. 596). This definition explains student avoidance of participating in oral activities which leads them to be misunderstood by teachers. In other words, some teachers see shy students as incompetent in speaking which aggravates the attribution of oral communication apprehension. This view was supported by Mahdi's saying "general personality traits such as shyness, quietness, and reticence, together constitute communication apprehension". (2018, p. 6)

2.2.4.2. Foreign language Anxiety

Foreign language Anxiety is a controversial issue that attracted a considerable number of researchers and scholars. Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) defined it as feelings of apprehension and stress related to language learning situations. In other words, leaners who face this kind of problem feel anxious whenever they are exposed to any learning context such as examinations, classroom discussions, or even the simplest demanded tasks like expressing themselves.

A study conducted by Manipuspika (2018) revealed the students who have a high level of anxiety have difficulties in dealing with the language learning process and tend to have a low desire to speak. To simplify, suffering from a high level of anxiety, which implies apprehension when learning a foreign language, refrains students from getting engaged in speaking tasks.

2.2.4.3. Low Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a crucial element that students need to continue their learning journey. Richards and Schmidt (2002) defined it as "a person's judgment of their own worth or value, based on a feeling of 'efficacy', a sense of interacting effectively with one's own environment" (p. 475). Regarding that the level of self-esteem can affect communication, one concludes that low self-esteem is seen as a factor of oral communication apprehension. In this vein, McCroskey, Richmond, Daly, and Falcione (1977) argued that "lowered self-esteem is associated with high oral communication apprehension and must be considered in the delineation of the communication apprehension construct" (p. 274).

2.2.5. Cognitive Factors

2.2.5.1. Interest

The inappropriate selection of either the topic, the materials, or the strategy by the teacher has negative outcomes on the learner. According to Fariadian, Azizifar, and Gowhary (2014), uninteresting topics result in English language apprehension in communication among learners. Therefore, teachers must employ effective strategies and carefully choose the materials as well as the discussion topics in order to give the students the opportunity to comfortably and freely participate in oral classes.

2.2.5.2. Language Comprehension

"Comprehension is the ability to understand something" (Comprehension, 2019). Therefore, communicating without comprehending the topic can be problematic, especially when it comes to learning a foreign language. In some cases, it may lead the learner to face psychological problems. Similarly, Aeni, Jabu, Rahman, and Strid (2017) claimed that students' lack of background knowledge about the topic leads the

students to be apprehensive. For example, when the learners are put in a situation where they are not able to make sense of the content because they have never read or heard about the topic, they will be put in a dilemma; so, they will experience apprehension to some extent.

2.2.5.3. Language Aptitude

According to Canale & Swain (1980), Language learning aptitude is the ability to develop aspects of communicative competence. They added that this capacity differs from one learner to the other. Thus, when learners perform better than others, others may face problems such as the fear of being judged as poor level learners. Eventually, they might develop a sort of apprehension that will hinder them from expressing their thoughts confidently.

2.3. External Factors

2.3.1. Teacher's Teaching Strategies

A number of teachers stick to one strategy all the time despite the fact that it may not be suitable for all students, taking their individual differences into consideration. This impacts the students negatively as well as refrains them from participation which leads to quite students and non-interactive classroom. Equally, Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (1992) stated that "of the four types of grouping, individual, pair, and group work are of especial value in ensuring that each and every learner has optimum opportunity for oral practice in using language, going beyond what is possible in class work" (p. 3). Henceforth, in order to build a strong communication skill among students, teachers should utilize varied strategies.

2.3.1.1. Individual work

Individual wok is getting the students to perform a task on their own. "Group vs. Individual Projects: Which Is Best?" (2018) mentions that "students can work at their own pace". That is, this type of strategy allows students to get more comfortable taking action. However, this may not be the case for extroverts who may feel isolated because there will be less interaction; as stated in "Group vs. Individual Projects: Which Is Best?" (2018), it hinders communication.

2.3.1.2. Collaborative Learning

Collaborative activities in general involve students working in pairs and small to larger groups. Also, it promotes students' social interaction and negotiation skills as supported by Heller (2010). Although this strategy is very beneficial, in "Group vs. Individual Projects: Which Is Best?" (2018), it was affirmed that quite students struggle to work in groups. Thus, collaborative works cannot function effectively in instances where there is a personal difference.

2.3.2. Audience Feedback

Audience feedback is a significant cause of communication apprehension. De Guzman & Ocampo (2017) found out that speaking in front of the audience or even the idea of doing that makes students feel uneasy and apprehensive. This holds students back from performing in a good manner; especially, when the audience looks serious or is highly critical. Moreover, worries to make mistakes, look foolish in front of others, or be judged as unattractive were the students' fears regarding public speaking as reported by Katz (2017).

2.3.2.1. Sources of Feedback

2.3.2.1.1. Teacher's Feedback

There are cases when the teacher's feedback becomes destructive rather than constructive. According to Young (1991), teachers' corrective feedback cause anxiety for learners. Teacher's feedback in relation to apprehension has two aspects. The first one is when the teacher humiliates his students who commit errors. The second aspect is when the teacher praises certain students aside from the rest; consequently, students who didn't receive approval and admiration expressions might feel apprehensive and discouraged to participate. Henceforth, students will not benefit from the teacher's feedback if it causes anxiety to them (Renko, 2012).

2.3.2.1.2. Peers' Feedback

There is a significant relationship between oral communication apprehension and peer feedback. In other words, it is noticed that students are reticent in speaking inside the classroom in presence of their peers despite the fact that teachers ignored this as a reason that causes communication apprehension (Amara, 2018). In this view, Bastida and Yapo (2019) suggested that "This was a factor that explained some SHS (Senior high school) students valued peer input and evaluation more than the suggestion of the teachers" (p. 16). That is to say, students feel apprehensive and refrain from participating in oral activities when they are scrutinized by their peers.

2.3.2.2. Types of feedback

2.3.2.2.1. Constructive VS. Destructive feedback

Son (2016) made the difference between constructive and unconstructive feedback. On one hand, constructive feedback helps grow and develop individual's skills by praising their performance; whereas, with destructive feedback, students are

supposed to receive the feeling that their performance and abilities are not appreciated. For example, constructive feedback involves supportive expressions such as "well done!". Yet, unconstructive feedback can include a direct attack on the individual such as saying 'you are wrong!'. Therefore, constructive feedback positively impacts the individual whilst destructive feedback could bring apprehension to the students and hinder them from participating anymore in the future.

2.3.2.2.2. Immediate VS. Delayed corrective feedback

Immediate feedback is a "feedback provided to an individual about a targeted behavior during or immediately the specific as act" (Randolph & Brady, 2018, p. 299). To clarify, immediate corrective feedback is the type of feedback that the student receives immediately during the task performance. On the other hand, delayed corrective feedback is the correction that is made at the end of the activity, without interrupting the student (Barros, 2014). For instance, while the student gives a presentation, the teacher keeps correcting the mistakes immediately after they are made whereas delayed corrective feedback is letting the students until s/he finishes his/her performance then corrects his mistakes.

2.3.3. Seating Arrangements

Seating arrangement is an aspect of classroom arrangement that affects the learners' learning process. In this track, Moore and Glynn (1984, p. 233) found that a student's location in the classroom is related to the number of the questions received from the teacher; this may influence the students' opportunity to respond and thus to learn. That is, when the teacher asks questions, the students' sitting place could be an obstruct for them to respond to these questions, eventually to learn.

One of the benefits of opting for a suitable seating arrangement is that it has the potential to prevent the problems of students' disruptive behavior (Pace and price, 2005).   This implies the significance of implementing a satisfactory seating arrangement in handling the problem of disruptive behaviors such as bullying which results in apprehension among students. To sum up, the selection of unfitting seating arrangement has a negative impact on students' achievements as well as their psychological status.

2.3.4. Lack of Classroom Discipline Rules

Discipline is the key component to effective classroom management. "Discipline is defined as the practice of teaching others to obey rules or norms by using punishment to correct unwanted behavior" ("Classroom Discipline: Definition & Strategies," 2017). To simplify, classroom discipline is the set of rules that might be developed by teachers in order to maintain a proper classroom atmosphere.

In a study conducted by Wilkins (2008), she found out that discipline is among the school characteristics that influence students' attendance and academic achievement. That is, classrooms without enough discipline will negatively affect the students' performance as well as achievement. Furthermore, it creates an uncomfortable environment that increases students' tendency to experience apprehension and avoid participation.

Rogers (2011, pp. 3-4) classified classroom discipline into three different categories; preventative, supportive, and corrective.

2.3.4.1. Preventative Discipline

preventative discipline is adopting plans to establish the type of consequences that follow an undesired behavior (Charles, 2005). An example of students'

misbehavior is disobeying the teacher. So, to prevent the disruption from occurrence, the teacher establishes rules and guidelines which reflect the idea of preventative discipline.

2.3.4.2. Supportive Discipline

The second type of discipline is supportive discipline. It refers to "the strategies which seek in such a way that a positive classroom atmosphere is maintained" (Wilson & Kendall-Seatter, 2013, p. 191). To clarify, supportive discipline is adapted to provide students with suggestions to change unwanted acts or behaviors. For example, the teacher shows an expression of anger when the students misbehave.

2.3.4.3. Corrective Discipline

After the repeated attempts to redirect the student behavior fails at supportive discipline, the teacher moves on to corrective discipline. According to Charles (2005), corrective discipline referred to the outcomes of violating the rules. Thus, it can include; for instance, preventing the student from attending the lecture for the rest of the semester.

2.3.5. Cultural Divergence in Communication Norms

Individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds may vary in the way they communicate. Therefore, students from different cultural references may feel insecure to participate in oral activities. McCroskey (1980) and Bond (1984) put seven factors that could be a reason for communication apprehension. Among these factors, they mentioned cultural divergence in communication norms. This was proven in a study conducted by Munz and Colvin (2018) who found that there is a relationship between oral communication apprehension and the student's cultural identity.

Conclusion

OCA is a serious hindrance to students' academic achievements as well as their learning process in general. The review above discussed a considerable number of variables that affect speaking English in EFL classrooms which in turn could be a factor that causes OCA. Basically, what negatively influences the students' communicative competence, contributes to OCA. Some of the causes are associated with the students' themselves; that is the internal factors. Yet, the others are related to students' environment and students' backgrounds which are summarized under the title of external factors. It is clearly important to know the factors that cause OCA in order to find out the suitable strategies to overcome this obstacle.

This chapter suggested the factors that cause OCA among EFL learners. Initially, it presented the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among language learners. On one hand, it displayed the internal factors which were composed of personal, linguistic, paralinguistic, psychological, and cognitive factors. On the other hand, it identified the external factors which included the teacher's teaching strategies. Furthermore, it provided the sources of feedback and its types, as well as, seating arrangements that are regarded as a cause behind OCA. Finally, it reviewed the lack of discipline rules and cultural divergence in communication norms as factors of OCA.

3. Chapter Three

Fieldwork and Data Analysis

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Chapter Three:

Fieldwork and Data Analysis

Introduction

Oral communication apprehension is a crucial issue that the majority of students suffer from. Thus, in order to find out the effective strategies used to overcome this problem; it is interesting to find out the root causes that contribute to this problem.

This chapter will be devoted to the practical part that is divided into two parts. The first part will present the theoretical background of the research methodology of the conducted study. Then, the second part will deal with exploring the factors that cause oral communication apprehension using two different types of instruments; namely, a written interview with EFL teachers and a questionnaire that addresses first-year master students. Moreover, it will present a detailed analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. Furthermore, it will discuss and synthesize the findings. Finally, it will present the resulted findings concerning the factors that contribute to oral communication apprehension.

3.1. Research Methodology

To pursue a research project, the researcher has to follow a set of academic steps that are called research methodology.

3.1.2. Research Approach

Hoadjli (2018, p. 33) stated that "research approaches are plans and procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation". To simplify, the research approach is the

roadmap that presents the strategic information of the research. According to him, there are three types of approaches; quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods.

Dörney (2007) argued that quantitative and qualitative researches differ in terms of the purpose of the study and the relevant research questions. Then, he further explained his view by arguing that in quantitative studies, the more the purpose and the research questions are specific, the better. Albeit, in qualitative researches, they tend to be vaguer and broader. In other words, quantitative researches deal with examining the relationship between variables and measuring data using statistics (Creswell, 2014); such as correlational researches whilst the qualitative approach, like exploratory researches, attempts to explain, investigate, and understand a specific phenomenon.

When the researchers are faced with a research problem that cannot be handled by either of the approaches, they should combine both of them; that is mixed-methods approach. According to Creswell (2014, p. 3), "A study tends to be more qualitative than quantitative or vice versa. Mixed methods research resides in the middle of the continuum because it incorporates elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches".

3.1.3. Research Approach for this Study

This study aims to determine the factors that contribute to OCA. Thus, the adopted approach is mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) as it is the appropriate one for the nature of the undertaken study. Moreover, it enables the researcher to explore teachers' and students' ideas about how OCA can affect students' willingness to communicate.

3.1.4. Research Design/ Strategies

The key element of organizing research is the research design. Therefore, it should be well selected. According to Hoadjli (2018), "research strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a specific goal" (p. 40). That is, it is the overall strategy that the researchers adopted to accomplish their study. He added that the researcher should consider three questions; whether it is suitable, feasible, and ethical in order to decide which strategy he should use. There are various types of research designs. Bhattacherjee (2012) put a series of research designs including field survey, experimental studies, cross-sectional field survey, longitudinal field survey, focus group research, action research, and case study research.

A case study (small-scale-study) was adopted as a research design for this study. According to McLeod (2019), case studies help to generate new ideas that might be tested by others; that is, they are mostly used in exploratory researches which is the type of this research.

3.1.5. Sampling and Population

3.1.5.1. Teachers

From about fifty (n=50) teachers of English division at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, the researcher worked with six (n=8) teachers who were chosen randomly. They teach different levels and different subjects in order to gather different views concerning the factors that cause OCA among EFL learners.

3.1.5.2. Students

The target population of this study was Master One EFL students (sciences of language) at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. There are two main reasons for choosing this population. Firstly, first year master students have studied oral expression

for three years and they are still dealing with oral activities such as oral presentations and classroom discussions. Secondly, they are taking courses that are related to communication; for instance, communicative competence and its components.

Therefore, from a population of about (n=160) students, forty (n=40) students were chosen randomly.

3.1.6. Data Collection Methods

Walliman (2006, p. 83) referred to data collection methods as "raw materials" that researchers need to answer the relevant research questions. In this vein, Kabir (2016, p. 202) defined data collection as "the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes". When combining the two definitions, one can deduce that data collection methods can be defined as the tools and the means used by the researcher to gather the necessary information and measure them in order to accomplish a study. Henceforth, it is important to select the appropriate instruments depending on the nature of your study to maintain the validity and reliability of your research.

Hamada (2019, p. 52) stated a number of data collection tools, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations, and quasi-experiments. In this study, the researcher adopted two instruments. A semi-structured interview was held with EFL teachers. To make the data more accurate, a questionnaire was submitted to collect data from first year master students.

3.1.6.1. Interview

The interview is a means of collecting data. Kabir (2016) defined it as the process of asking questions and receiving responses. It can be held through the

telephone or other electronic devices such as computers when the interviewees are not available for the interview to be held face-to-face. He added that it can be structured, semi-structured, and unstructured.

3.1.6.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a type of data collection tools. According to Hamada (2019), it is a series of questions that are divided into sections, in addition to the researcher's personal information. Those questions could be open-ended, close-ended, or mixture of both and they are the key elements that determine the type of the questionnaire either structured, or unstructured, or semi-structured.

3.1.7. Data Analysis Procedures

The researcher analyzed the collected data through the use of statistics (counting percentages) with the questionnaire. On the other hand, with the interview, she used descriptive statistics; regarding the nature of the questions, to find out the factors that can give rise to OCA among EFL learners.

3.2. The Interview

The researcher used the interview as the main data collection tool. It was unstructured, administrated to EFL teachers at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. It aimed to collect teachers' opinions about the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners.

3.2.1. Description of the Interview

The interview was designed to investigate the causes of oral communication apprehension from EFL teachers' perspectives at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. It consisted of thirteen (13) questions. Firstly, the researcher gathered interviewees' personal information such as their educational degree and their teaching

experience. Then, they were asked about the importance of oral communication and the different activities they implement to improve their students' communicative competence, in addition to the main difficulties that their learners face when speaking.

After that, they were requested to provide a definition for oral communication apprehension as it is one of the difficulties that learners face. In the same path, teachers were asked to what extent their learners suffer from this problem and how can this problem affect their students' performance. Besides, the researcher aimed to find out the observed symptoms and the strategies they use to help their students overcome this issue. Moreover, the purpose of this interview is to know teachers' opinions about the factors that cause oral communication apprehension. Finally, the researcher left the interviewees an open space where they add their suggestions and comments if they have.

3.2.2. Aim of the Interview

The aim of the under-investigated study interview is to collect teachers' views about the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among EFL students. Additionally, it sought to know its effects on students' oral performance and find out effective strategies to reduce it.

3.2.3. Piloting and Validation

After designing the interview, the researcher, with the consent of the supervisor, chose one teacher to do the piloting stage. Because of the spread of the pandemic, the piloting took place online. While doing the interview, we observed that the teacher answered all the questions and did not give any remark concerning them. Thus, we concluded that there were no ambiguous, repeated, incomprehensible, and lengthy questions which is the main purpose of piloting.

3.2.4. Administering of the Interview

Because of the quarantine that has been imposed by the authorities due to the spread of the corona virus, the researcher faced difficulties in making face-to-face interviews with teachers. Henceforth, she intended to hold it online through having a live chat with the interviewees; she sent them emails inviting them to the interview, but she received no replies. Consequently, she adopted another solution which is holding a written interview through google forms platform; again, the researcher sent invitations via email to fill the form and provide answers

3.2.5. Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Interview

This interview was used to collect data from EFL teachers about the factors that cause oral communication apprehension. After that, the data were analyzed and interpreted to reinforce the research.

Item 01: Teacher's Degree

Since teaching at university is not exclusive to doctors only, the researcher asked this question to know the teachers' degrees whom she worked.

Table 3.1 Teachers' Degree

Option	Number
Doctorate	**2**
Magister	**5**
Master	**1**
Total	**8**

From the illustrated data above, it is noticeable that the majority of teachers (n=5) have a magister degree, while three (n=2) teachers have a doctorate degree. However, only one teacher (n=1) has a master's degree. This is advantageous since it gave the opportunity to collect data from teachers with different degrees.

Item 02: Teachers' Experience in Teaching EFL

From this item, the researcher sought to have an idea about teachers' experience in teaching EFL at university. To facilitate the analysis, the researcher provided the interviewees with three choices.

Table 3.2 Teachers' Experience in Teaching

Option	Number
1-3 years	**1**
4-8 years	**3**
More than 8 years	**4**
Total	**8**

From teachers' responses, it is observed that the majority of teachers (4) have been teaching EFL for a long time (more than 8 years); whereas, three teachers (n=3) have been teaching EFL from 4-8 teachers. Yet, only one teacher (n=1) has been teaching EFL from 1-4 years. This is beneficial for the researcher that it helps her to collect valuable data from teachers with a variety of EFL teaching experiences at the university level.

Item 03: The Importance of oral communication

The researcher asked this question to collect teachers' opinions about the importance of oral communication.

Teacher 01: It is the vehicle of thoughts and emotions. communication allows learners to practice their skills and improve their fluency.

Teacher 02: The world view of teaching/ learning approaches now is functionalist rather than structuralist. As far as the national approach being followed in Algeria, COMMUNICATION is the most prominent goal in the

curriculum since it represents our basic need to fulfill our goals and exchange benefits.

Teacher 03: It is the way a learner conveys messages, expresses his thoughts and ideas, and interacts with others. It is the goal of learning a language.

Teacher 04: Speaking is one of the essential skills that need to be improved. No one can learn a new language theoretically through (grammar, phonetics, culture, etc.), unless, one exposes what he/she learned through speaking.

Teacher 05: Language itself is a means of communication, so if there is no communication, no learning will take place.

Teacher 06: The most important goal of learning a foreign language is to become communicatively competent.

Teacher 07: Communication includes cultural aspects that are highly needed to learn a foreign language adequately.

Teacher 08: It is the main purpose of learning any language.

All teachers agreed on the necessity of oral communication when learning a foreign language. (75%) of teachers affirmed that it is the ultimate goal of learning a foreign language. Teacher (1) stated that it is "the vehicle of thoughts and emotions"; that is the way the individual transmits any kind of information and ideas, and interact with each other as stated by (teacher 3).

Moreover, (teacher 7) added an important point; communication is linked to the culture which is a part of learning a foreign language. In other words, language has to be used in a way that it should be culturally accepted in a given context because what

is appropriate in a certain community can be inappropriate in another. This includes values, basic assumptions, and behavioral conventions.

Furthermore, (25%) of teachers asserted that learning a foreign language is not about knowing the structure of the language such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and other components, but rather the appropriate use of language in real contexts. This means being communicatively competent. Hence, communication is essential since it determines to what extent the individual succeeded in learning a foreign language.

Item 4: The Different Activities that Teachers Implement to Improve their Students' Communicative Competence

Through this item, the researcher aimed to find out the different activities/ tasks that teachers implement to improve their students' communicative competence.

Teacher 01: I use a variety of activities; dialogues, conversations, storytelling, debates and discussions, presentations, and activities. As for the most effective activity, it depends on the learner's needs and style. In general, conversations are very helpful because it breaks the walls of shyness and fear when communication. Also, it creates self-confidence.

Teacher 02: Exploring authentic materials, public speaking, debates, storytelling, role-playing/ theater projects, simulation of real-life situations (e.g., job interviews), cross-cultural communication tasks, games. I consider arguing as the most effective because it develops their critical thinking in addition to language competence and performance

Teacher 03: It is not really the activity that develops students' communicative competence, but rather the way teachers lead their learners to go through different thinking levels so as to feel enough involved in the learning process.

The same activity can work with a teacher and completely fail with another. Concerning the consensus and what scholars said, methods like role play, suggestopedia, and materials like audiovisual aids, songs… All help build the learners' communicative competence. But again, only one correctly implemented and properly employed. I consider any activity in which learners feel they have more freedom to express and create as the most effective one.

Teacher 04: This depends on different factors such as the students' level, the objective of the lesson, but I believe the most important is to present language in a contextualized manner. Therefore, activities such as role-plays are linked to authentic situations that would be fruitful.

Teacher 05: Debates, role plays, speaking games can all be effective activities. Teachers should use a variety. Learners have different learning styles, so one activity can work with one student but not with another.

Teacher 06: sharing opinions, choosing topics, arguing, educational gaming, storytelling… depending on the nature of the class and the lesson, but the teacher should vary activities.

Teacher 07: Debates with arguments, Pro/cons activities, opinion shows, vocabulary building. This year, I focused on teaching North American idioms. The activities were designed to find the exact proverb hidden under every 4-5 sentences orally in a very quick manner. The result was great, there were hot discussion and competition.

Teacher 08: class discussion, role-plays, dialogues, oral presentations. When having a discussion in class, students are asked to give their opinions by arguing agreeing, disagreeing, suggesting, advising, etc. Moreover, discussion requires

interaction and exchanging views. Thus, students communicate with another spontaneously.

Teachers above shared with us the different tasks and activities that might help in ameliorating their students' communicative competence. They include role-plays, classroom discussions, public speaking, debates story-telling, and other activities. However, (teacher 3) pointed out that it is not the activity that helps the learners to improve their communicative competence; instead, the way the activity is implemented by the teacher. Here, s/he stated that "The same activity can work with a teacher and completely fail with another". However, (teacher 4) affirmed that choosing the activity depends mainly on the students' level and the objective of the lesson. He added that the activity should be related to real-life situations.

When the interviewees were asked about the most effective activity, they had different opinions with different justifications. For instance, (37.5%) of teachers claimed that the most useful activity is conversations and arguing. It helps students to overcome shyness and fear, as well as it creates an interactive competitive classroom which is the aim of EFL learning classes in order to develop students' critical thinking and communicative skills. As for (teacher 4) gave role-plays as one of the successful activities since it is related to authentic situations.

On the other hand, the rest of the teachers had other views. For example, (teacher 3) considered that the activity which the students like and feel that they are able to express themselves freely and comfortably is the most effective activity. Yet, (25%) of teachers highlighted that teachers should vary in their activities and no activity is more effective than other, depending on students' learning styles since some activities can work with some students, but not others, in addition to the objective of the lesson.

Item05: Students' Reaction to Implementing Oral Presentation in Class

The goal of this item is to identify how students feel about implementing oral activities such as oral presentations from the teachers' perspective.

Teacher 01: It is not easy but I believe it is very helpful. It improves soft skills and breaks the wall of shyness and fear when communicating

Teacher 02: Some students like them and others do not .Anxiety and self-confidence play a role in this.

Teacher 03: Their reaction .depends on the content of the activity .Some are attractive while sometimes others are bored.

Teacher 04: The majority does not really enjoy and appreciate this activity especially for those shy and anxious students or those of average or weak level.

Teacher 05: Very motivated. Except for the fact that learners are categorized into different types; Activists, reflectors. Usually, the activists are the most motivated to lead the oral presentation .

Teacher 06: It is such a motivating activity, yet, it may cause some self-confidence issues and anxiety.

Teacher 07: They do not like it. The job of presenting their work in public speaking may produce anxiety and fear. They know that they have to be competent and face their classmates' remarks and questions.

Teacher 08: Generally positive, enjoy oral presentation due to its vivid content and its ability to reach their comprehensive skills.

From what the interviewed teachers demonstrated above, that the majority of teachers which represent (50%) consider oral presentation challenging, motivating, and effective activity; yet; it does not work with all students. In fact, it builds a sort of self-confidence among students and improves their ability to express their thoughts and ideas freely while discussing or arguing. However, it results in problems for those who have shyness, anxiety, and low self-esteem issues. Thus, some students like it, and others do not as was said by (teacher 2). As for (teacher 4), s/he stated that the activists are the most students' type who usually prefer oral presentations.

Teacher (3) affirmed that the success of this activity is ensured by the content of the presentation. So, if the topic is interesting and can be handled by the student to find the relevant information about it, it will be motivating. Yet, if it would seem hard for them to search for different sources, it will be boring.

On the other hand, (25%) of teachers admitted that the majority of students does not like this activity because they feel nervous when performing in front of their peers. The fact that they are less good at speaking leads them to have the fear of being negatively judged, criticized, or humiliated by either their teacher or classmates. As a result, they prefer the alternative activities that permit private evaluation.

Teacher (8) has a totally different opinion. s/he pointed out that his/ her students react positively to oral presentations. To simplify, they appreciate the implementation of oral activities because it gives them an idea about how to defend and support their claims. Also, it creates a clear, powerful, and detailed image of the content.

All in all, the adoption of oral presentations might be successful but not with all students. It depends on the students' preferences and personalities in addition to the

level of the students' speaking skills, as well as the audience's feedback. Therefore, good mentoring of the presentation skills makes students fully engaged and vice-versa.

Item 06: Speaking Difficulties that EFL Learners Face

This item aimed to identify the main speaking difficulties that EFL learners face during their learning process.

Teacher 01: The flow of ideas, clarity, precision, hesitation, and shyness.

Teacher 02: Fear to make mistakes. Lack of self-confidence, Anxiety-shyness, Demotivation- on interest about the topic lack of knowledge about the topic lack of vocabulary, Interference of the mother tongue.

Teacher 03: Generating ideas, finding suitable lexical items for specific ideas in addition to anxiety and shyness

Teacher 04: Shyness, less linguistic courage, bullying sometimes, stress, anxiety

Teacher 05: Lack of vocabulary, lack of background information, and psychological issues such as shyness.

Teacher 06: Convincing and fine-tuning the speech to the audience.

Teacher 07: Students face many difficulties. But very often is due to the lack of practice, shortage of vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Teacher 08: Fear of errors, shyness, lack of technology use in the session.

Despite the different problems that teachers provided, they can be classified into three categories. To begin with, (75%) of teachers claimed that students have linguistic problems such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency which results in stuttering,

stammering, and sudden blocks while speaking. This can be due to the interference of the mother tongue as stated by (teacher 2) or lack of practicing the language as said by (teacher7).

Secondly, Students who suffer from psychological problems like shyness, fear of making mistakes, anxiety, and stress face problems in learning speaking skills because learning speaking is based on interaction. In other words, if there is no interaction, the process of speaking learning will not occur. The third category is personal difficulties. This can be related to motivation interest and the students' background knowledge to generate ideas.

Aside from the above classification, (teacher 8) revealed that the lack of technical equipment utilization; for instance, watching videos in oral sessions, leads to regressing the students' level in speaking skill. In short, speaking problems are major challenges to speaking proficiency. Thus, it is a responsibility to look for solutions to foster the development of EFL learners' speaking skills.

Item 07: Meaning of Oral Communication Apprehension from EFL Teachers' Perspective

From this item, the researcher aimed to know how teachers define oral communication apprehension from their own perspective.

Teacher 01: The inability to communicate with ease and the breakdown of communication.

Teacher 02: It is an anxiety-related to the oral expression of thoughts.

Teacher 03: It is a subjective perception of oneself based on the reaction of the audience and their judgment.

Teacher 04: It is a kind of anxiety or fear that a learner feels when he has to communicate/ interact. It is a psychological state of fear and anxiety a learner experiences in an oral communication situation (public speech).

Teacher 05: It is a problem highly based on anxiety related to oral communication; particularly, when a student shows that fear towards communicating or speak up his ideas out loud either due to an inner fear (psychological problem) or a real fear related to the others.

Teacher 06: Any hindrance from communicating ones' ideas effectively.

Teacher 07: The fear of making mistakes in English which makes it harder to learn it.

Teacher 08: The inability to keep up in a conversation due to groundless tension or anxiety

Although teachers defined oral communication, each one from his/her perspective, one can infer that oral communication apprehension is the anxiety that is related to communicating orally. Yet, some teachers added valuable information. For example, (teacher 2) stated that it manifests in the breakdowns of language that occur in communication. Additionally, (teacher 3) said that oral communication apprehension is linked to someone's self-esteem based on the audience's reaction. Moreover, (25%) of teachers agreed that it is a psychological problem while (teacher 4) added that it is situational speaking anxiety. Furthermore, (teacher 7) highlighted that this issue affects English learning negatively and it is a result of the fear of making mistakes.

From the teachers' responses, one can deduce that oral communication apprehension is a psychological problem that the individual face when s/he is exposed

to communicate with others in which s/he experiences a certain level of anxiety. Also, it is associated with the audience, situation, and fear of making mistakes.

Item 08: To What Extent Students Suffer from Oral Communication Apprehension

This item is designed to know to what extent students suffer from oral communication apprehension.

Teacher 01: Often

Teacher 02: Many of them encounter this problem

Teacher 03: Most of them have difficulties carrying on a full conversation.

Teacher 04: Most students may face this issue with slightly complicated topics.

Teacher 05: To a normally expected degree.

Teacher 06: Nearly half of my classes suffer to a good extent from it.

Teacher 07: Most students suffer from such problem so they avoid tasks where they have to speak.

Teacher 08: To some extent. Some students find it difficult to express themselves clearly.

The majority of teachers; (62.5%) of teachers, admitted that most of their students suffer from oral communication apprehension which implies their awareness about this issue. However, (teacher 5) said that her/his students face this difficulty to a normally expected degree whilst (teacher 6) affirmed that half of he/his classes have this problem. As for (teacher 8), s/he stated that her/ his students find difficulties when speaking which reflects oral communication apprehension. Consequently, teachers

should be acquainted with this issue and know the effective strategies to help their students to overcome it.

Item 09: The Symptoms of Oral Communication Apprehension

The goal of this item is to determine the observed symptoms/ signs of oral communication apprehension.

Teacher 01: Startling, inability to speak, short and incomplete answers.

Teacher 02: Nervousness, tense, do not prefer to work in groups, even when they do solo work, they pretend doing it. Generally, are afraid to express their ideas.

Teacher 03: Lack of participation and interaction, anxiety- fear- stress, discomfort when asked to answer/ speak, sometimes tears-total mute (refusal/ impossibility to pronounce a word), sweat, shy and nervous smiles, making long pauses- or keeping repeating the same sentence.

Teacher 04: Boredom, loss of interest, confusion, anxiety.

Teacher 05: Shaking, sometimes crying for girls, anger, sweating, total silence.

Teacher 06: Fidgeting, avoiding eye contact, withdrawing.

Teacher 07: Shyness, confusion, anxiety, low concentration.

Teacher 08: Lack of participation, hesitation while speaking, the use of gestures, blushing, and shaking.

Teachers gave shared common symptoms that may be observed on the students when they are expressing their thoughts orally. When students feel apprehensive, they may show discomfort, boredom, and loss of interest in the adopted oral activity which

results in a lack of participation. In addition to that, they may have speech skill deficiencies like startling, giving short answers, or making pauses when they are speaking.

Also, sweating, shyness, and nervousness are signs that indicate that the student is having oral communication apprehension. Likewise, (teacher 2) asserted that apprehensive students avoid working either in groups or solo which means they avoid the interaction. To conclude, the provided symptoms above may distract the learner while performing; therefore, s/he keeps silent and does not communicate with others to evade the embarrassment.

Item 10: The Factors that Cause oral communication apprehension

This item is designed to look for the root causes that contribute to oral communication apprehension among EFL learners from the teachers' perspective.

Teacher 01: Most factors are related to the way we present the content or the activities. Others are related to the learners' level and motivation to learn.

Teacher 02: Crowded and unequipped classrooms. Rigid syllabi and teachers' teaching methods. Learners' negative attitude and level. Repeated and topics' difficulty.

Teacher 03: Non-comfortable environment (noise-small class-not well lighted- not clean…), negative competition between student: very good students have the advantage, so weak/ introvert or shy students will feel non-important and ignored, bullying (some students may laugh at / make others), difficult topic to deal with/no enough knowledge/background about it, the teacher obliges(in a rude way) a student to speak in class when this latter is not ready, lack of preparation/or knowledge of a student about the topic to discuss.

Teacher 04: Lack of confidence, overbearing teacher, noisy/silent room, lack of knowledge/vocabulary on the subject.

Teacher 05: Low self-confidence, social and emotional issues, lack of linguistic competence.

Teacher 06: Shyness, anxiety, embarrassment, fearing mistakes.

Teacher 07: The wrong atmosphere in class, less motivated teacher, careless teacher, health issues in learners that the teacher might not know, sensitive topics such as gender topics, taboos, ethnic topic.

Teacher 08: Lack of rehearsal, lack of training and expertise, lack of tolerance, lack of research.

From the aforementioned responses, the factors that cause oral communication apprehension can be divided into classroom-related, discussion topic related, student-related, teacher-related, and classmates related factors. In the first place, classroom-related factors include crowded and unequipped classes as stated by (teacher 2). For more details, (37.5%) of teachers mentioned that the atmosphere in the class like small, noisy, and not well-lightened classes are regarded as factors of oral communication apprehension.

Equivalently, (37.5%) of teachers introduced the topic of discussion as a source of oral communication apprehension. It involves a difficult topic that students do not have enough knowledge to deal with; as well as, sensitive topics such as gender topics, taboos, and ethnic topics. Henceforth, teachers should carefully select topics of discussion; on the other hand, students also must extend their knowledge through reading.

Along with that, all teachers spoke about student-related factors. They stated that shyness, anxiety, low self-confidence, introversion, and fear of making mistakes

are issues that lead the learner to feel less important and ignored. Not to mention that lack of linguistic and paralinguistic competency leads to breakdowns in communication which refrain students from participating. Additionally, personal factors, as the lack of motivation, have a negative impact on learners' learning process.

Similarly, in some cases, teachers might be a source of oral communication apprehension. Teacher (3) said that there are some teachers who force their students to participate while they are not ready which embarrasses them. Equally, (teacher 4) yielded that overbearing teachers, in addition to less motivated and careless teachers as (teacher 7) added, make students apprehensive. Also, (teacher 1) assumed that the way teachers present the lesson; to exemplify, teachers' teaching strategies and materials might put students under stress.

On the same track, (teacher 3) assigned that one of the reasons behind oral communication apprehension is student's classmates. She said that some students laugh and make fun of others when speaking; consequently, they quit getting engaged in oral tasks. To conclude, teachers and students must be well informed about the reasons of oral communication apprehension with the aim of applying the right strategy to overcome this obstacle.

Sub-Item: The Most Dominant Factor that Causes Oral Communication Apprehension

The goal of this item is to determine the most dominant factor that causes oral communication apprehension.

Teacher 1: Lack of self-confidence. Some students are not quite sure of their capacity to express themselves and they fear others ' judgments. So, when speaking they show hesitation, pauses, and even severe voice shaking.

Teacher 2: Fearing errors. fear causes psychological confusion and stress which leads to this problem.

Teacher 3: Student related. Learning a new language is a challenge that depends on tow variables motivation and confidence. This means that everything stems from the student's within (whether he is able to learn a new language or not). The primary problem stems from the student per se, yet, this does not mean that the other factors cannot affect but they are facultative.

Teacher 4: Maybe the impact of peers' reactions (bullying). Even if students may seem sensitive to the teacher remarks and feedback, they seem to be more affected by the way their classmates perceive them. Peers can be cruel by laughing at/ teasing the anxious students and making his answers/ opinions. This 'poor' student would feel rejected/ bullied / not supported and would lose confidence.

Teacher 05: Teachers' method and the learners' negative attitude. Learners need to assume responsibility because it is impossible for the teacher to know what goes inside of forty learners' minds.

Teacher 06: No one is. They all can be of the same level of danger EXCEPT the Teacher Carelessness and lack of training to deal with such serious situations. I always stress the importance of the psychological side of Teacher Training. In my opinion and drawing from my personal experience, there are many less trained (untrained) teachers who were recruited and still have years of teaching. It's a real issue. The first step in solving a problem is to recognize where the problem really is. And the problem is not always in learners.

Teacher 07: Vocabulary and teacher. Teachers can guide and help make sure that it is a safe learning environment. When students feel safe to fail, they open up much more.

Teacher 08: Teacher related factors. The teacher is the one responsible for monitoring the classroom and the learners, so, it fully depends on his abilities and the way he lectures.

Teachers gave distinguished answers concerning the most dominant factor that causes oral communication apprehension. Firstly, (62.5%) of teachers claimed that students related factor is the most factor that affects students' performance. They stated that apprehensive students lack self-confidence and have fear of making errors in front of their peers which creates confusion when speaking. In addition to that, some students do not have sufficient vocabulary that enables them to express their thoughts fluently.

According to (37.5) of teachers, teachers are responsible for creating a comfort zone that motivates students to get involved during oral activities. It all depends on the way s/he lectures and the strategies s/he uses. Thus, the most dominant factor that causes oral communication apprehension is teacher-related factors.

However, (teacher 4) yielded that classmates related factors are the most effective ones. S/he supported her choice saying "Even if students may seem sensitive to the teacher remarks and feedback, they seem to be more affected by the way their classmates perceive them". For instance, if the student's peers make fun of the way s/he speaks, eventually, s/he will have oral communication apprehension.

Even though, (teacher 6) assigned that all the factors have the same level of danger. Yet, a careless teacher might have a negative impact on students. Hence, teachers should be well trained, particularly, training that is linked to their psychological aspect.

From the teachers' answers, one can deduce that the majority of them pointed out that student-related factors are the most dominant factors that cause oral communication apprehension.

Item 11: The Effect of Oral Communication Apprehension on Students' Performance

This item aimed to identify the effect of oral communication on the students' oral performance.

Teacher 01: It hinders communication.

Teacher 02: Hugely, this fear will turn into a phobia that will prevent them from learning or speaking language effectively.

Teacher 03: It hinders and affects oral performance negatively. That fact that students are afraid to speak in class, they, consequently, do not practice speaking. Therefore, they cannot develop their oral performance and learn from their mistakes.

Teacher 04: If not solved at the very beginning, learners can carry it in them forever and it can even have an impact on their very personal life, Job, marriage, friendship.

Teacher 05: It makes them speak more slowly and it makes their thoughts get muddied.

Teacher 06: It is an obstacle between them and good performance, a full message might not be conveyed which would cause a lack of understanding or a misunderstanding.

Teacher 07: It affects, in a direct way, their communicative competence.

Teacher 08: It certainly has a negative impact.

All teachers agreed that oral communication apprehension has a negative impact on the learner. However, some teachers added important notes. Teacher (3) stated that the fact that oral communication apprehension holds students back from participating and practice their speaking prevents them from developing this skill. Aside from the academic field, according to (teacher 4), this issue affects the student's whole life as a job and marriage.

To sum up the above responses, oral communication apprehension affects the student's communicative competence; it causes breakdowns when using language which leads to a lack of understanding between the interlocutors. Additionally, it has an impact on the life of the individual in general that it hinders her/him from showing their real abilities.

Item 12: Strategies Used by Teachers to Help Their Students Overcome Their Oral Communication Apprehension

This item is designed to shed light on the strategies that are used by teachers to help the students overcoming their oral communication apprehension.

> **Teacher 01:** Trying to be friendly and understanding. I often talk privately to anxious students and find out the source of apprehension so that I can help them.

> **Teacher 02:** Varying the activities, getting them involved, boosting their motivation.

> **Teacher 03**: installing a safe/ non-threatening/non-stressful atmosphere, motivating students to interact and share ideas about interesting topics, using humor, tolerating mistakes, increasing students' self-confidence and self-esteem through encouraging cooperative work, using communicative games, using praise, varying activities, and techniques

Teacher 04: I try my best to create a suitable atmosphere for them to be themselves and avoid shyness and formality setting issued like stress and working for marks. The Fun Way could be a great method to solve this problem if implemented by the right teacher. Remember, a shy teacher can't solve shyness issues in his class. An angry teacher, an anxious teacher, an arrogant teacher... All same thing.

Teacher 05: Start off with easy questions and sometimes get them to use their home language to get them started.

Teacher 06: Using supporting expressions. Engaging them in role-playing in order to overcome OCA.

Teacher 07: provide them with pre-speaking activities, warm-ups, vocabulary games which can create a lively atmosphere for learning and provide students with the right input needed for oral production.

Teacher 08: Explain that it's a natural feeling to feel a bit stressed out - and that is even necessary as a sign of alertness to do good, tolerate their own mistakes and self-tolerance in general, I give them examples of very good speakers who make mistakes, tell them that they need to talk about something they love, are passionate about, and rehearse at least five times.

Teachers presented various strategies that might be useful to help students control their speaking apprehension. They alluded that they boost students' motivation through being friendly and using supportive expressions. Moreover, they attempt to create a suitable atmosphere by variating activities and dealing with interesting topics. Furthermore, using a sense of humor could be beneficial. Besides, (teacher 4) pointed out that arrogant, shy, and anxious teachers cannot handle this problem. As a result,

although there are different strategies that teachers can implement to help their students to alleviate their apprehension; yet, they should be humble, and wise in using them.

The Following Item: Teachers' Suggestion or Comments

Through this item, the researcher aimed to gather teachers' suggestions and comments. All of them provided supportive expressions. However, some of them added some notes that might help in reducing oral communication apprehension. Teacher (2) asserted that "the choice of the activities couple with interesting content is the key motivate students". That is, to reduce the amount of apprehension, the teachers should motivate students through selecting the appropriate activities and interesting topics.

Teacher (3) pointed out that the role of the teacher is to have a close eye on students who suffer from a psychological issue such as oral communication apprehension and use motivational strategies. Another suggestion by (teacher 6), s/he to succeed in learning a foreign language, the learner should think positively, be confident, and open-minded. Additionally, (teacher 7) claimed that creating an interactive competitive classroom reduces oral communication apprehension.

3.6.7. Discussion and Interpretation of the findings

Teachers provided a wide range of data that enables the researcher to answer the relevant research questions of this study. From the teachers' responses, we deduced that oral communication is the essence of English as a foreign language teaching (EFLT). Therefore, teachers implement various activities to create an interactive classroom that helps in ameliorating their learners' communicative competence. Among these tasks, oral presentations, which teachers consider beneficial since they help students to practice their speaking skill. Also, they boost their self-confidence. Yet, they are challenging task for many since they cause them apprehension.

Additionally, teachers complained as their students face problems in speaking including linguistic, psychological, and personal difficulties. Particularly, oral communication apprehension, which is regarded as one of the psychological issues that prevent students from participating in oral activities and obstructs them from developing their speaking performance. Teachers referred to oral communication apprehension as the anxiety that the individual experience while communicating orally. Then, they pointed out its symptoms which involve discomfort, loss of interest, speaking deficiencies, and other symptoms.

More importantly, they affirmed that factors derived from the environment, the topic of discussion, students themselves, teachers, and classmates can be reasons behind oral communication apprehension. However, the majority of teachers agreed that the student-related factors which are divided into personal, linguistic, psychological are the most dominant causes of this phenomenon.

In the same vein, teachers suggested a set of strategies that might help students to reduce their speaking apprehension due to its negative impact on their performance. These strategies include being friendly and humble, creating a suitable atmosphere, besides varying activities.

To sum up, oral communication apprehension affects the students' performance negatively. This problem can be caused by the environment, teachers, student herself/himself, or classmates. Yet, there are variety of strategies that help to alleviate it.

3.2.6. Summary of the Qualitative Results

The aim of this research is to spotlight the challenges encountered by EFL learners when communication; mainly, oral communication apprehension. Moreover, it attempts to determine its impact students' willingness to communicate and

performance during oral activities. Furthermore, it seeks to find out its root causes and the effective strategies to cope with it.

What is noticeable in the yielded data that are obtained from teachers' interview is that teachers admitted that their students suffer from speaking difficulties. These difficulties include oral communication apprehension. Moreover, they believed that the student himself/herself is the main source this problem. However, other sources like the environment, teachers, and classmates might contribute in aggravating this issue.

Furthermore, teachers affirmed that oral communication apprehension has negative impact on student' performance. Thus, they suggested that being friendly and humble, creating a suitable atmosphere, talking to apprehensive students in private besides varying activities might help to overcome this problem.

3.3. The Questionnaire

The second tool that the researcher adopted was a semi-structured questionnaire. It aimed to gather EFL students' feedback about the factors that contribute to OCA and suggestions to overcome this obstacle.

3.3.1. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was the second data collection instrument. It was addressed to first-year English master students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. Forty (40) participants from different groups were chosen randomly to answer it. It is divided into five sections. These sections consisted of twenty-four questions (open-ended and close-ended questions), arranged in a logical way.

First of all, the first section is about the student background information. It comprises of two (2) items. After that, it comes the second section which consists of three (3) items focused on oral communication. Next, the third section that contains

four (4) items attempting to obtain information about classroom participation apprehension. Next, the fourth section is divided into five (5) parts, including eleven (11) items that attempted to find out the correlated reasons behind oral communication apprehension. Finally, the fifth section is composed of four (4) items focused on the strategies used to reduce oral communication apprehension.

3.3.2. Aim of the Questionnaire

The ultimate goal of this questionnaire was to collect data from EFL first year master Sciences of the Language students at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. It was used as a data collection tool to find out the difficulties that students face while communicating. Also, it attempted to check the level of oral communication apprehension among them. In addition to that, it sought to find out the root causes of this problem and the strategies that might be used to overcome it.

3.3.3. Piloting and Validation

After designing the first draft of the questionnaire, the researcher pre-used it to verify the validity before the distribution. It was submitted to the supervisor, two students from the targeted population, an EFL teacher, and a PhD student. The main aim of the piloting stage is to check the difficulty and the ambiguity of the questions, in addition to the attractiveness of the layout and the length of the questionnaire.

Due to the spread of the pandemic, the questionnaire was submitted to the supervisor via email as a word document. As for the rest, it was submitted using google form, sending its link via Facebook on April 19th. A common remark has been made about the questionnaire that it is very long since it contains forty questions in addition to some other remarks. Therefore, the researcher created a new draft and minimized the number of questions, as suggested, to twenty-four questions.

After that, the researcher re-sends it to the supervisor, two students from the targeted population, and a Ph.D. student to revise it and give their remarks. All of them agreed that the questions were comprehensive, the layout was attractive; and more importantly, the length was suitable. A suggestion has been made about question number nineteen (19) that it should be modified from "Which of the following teacher's related factors cause you oral communication apprehension?" to "Which of the following teacher-related factors cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners?". This has been taken into consideration while designing the final draft.

3.3.4. Administering the Questionnaire

Taking into consideration the current world circumstances and the suspension of schools because of the spread of Coronavirus disease, the researcher distributed the questionnaire online as a survey on google forms. She posted the link to it on Master One sciences of language students Facebook group at the department of English at Biskra University in May 11th. Eventually, the researcher received forty-six (46) responses. Then, she selected forty (40) which were thought as the clearest and the most completed answered, with the consultation of the supervisor who stated that the size of the sample should not be less than twenty percent of the whole population.

3.3.5. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

The researcher designed this questionnaire to gather students' views mainly about the factors that cause oral communication apprehension. Then, she analyzed, interpreted them to generate new ideas.

Section One: Personal Information (from item 1 to item 2)

This section was designed to focus on the background information of the students, including gender and the reason why they chose to study English at University.

Item 01. Students' gender distribution

This item illustrates the respondents' gender distribution (Female or Male).

Table 3.3 Students' Gender Distribution

Option	Number	Percentage
Female	35	87.5 %
Male	5	12.5%
Total	40	100%
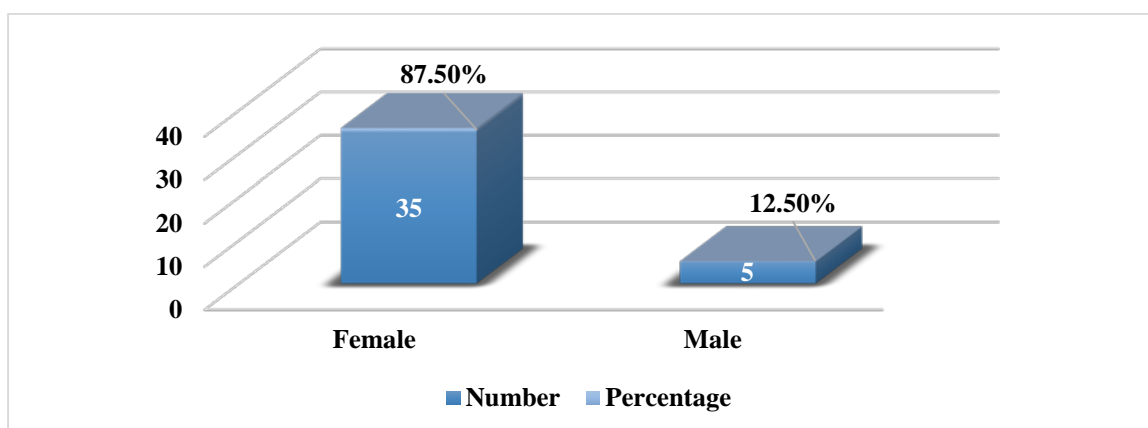
Figure 3.1 Students' Gender Distribution

Table (3.3) demonstrates the students' gender distribution of the sample. The results displayed show that the majority of students were females (35) who represented (87.50 %) study English as a foreign language; whereas, only 5 students who represented (12.5 %) were males. This means that the number of females is seven times more than males. One can deduce that females are more interested in learning English than males.

Item 02. Students' choice of studying English at the University

This item sought to identify if choosing to study English at university was the students' own choice, their parents' choice, or someone's' suggestion.

Table 3.4 Students' Choice of Studying English at University

Option	Number	Percentage
Your own choice	34	85 %
Your Parents' choice	4	10 %
Someone's suggestion	2	5 %
Total	40	100 %
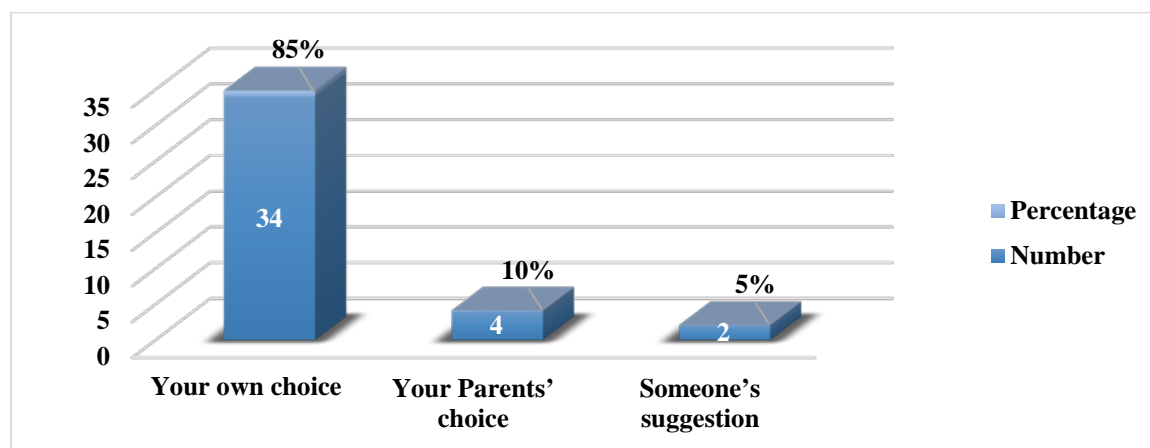
Figure 3.2 Students' Choice of Learning English at University

It is clearly seen that choosing to study English at university was a personal choice for the vast majority of students (85%). This implies the interest of learning English among students and the high demand for this language. For the rest of the sample, (10%) chose to study English following their parents' desire, whilst only (5%) opted for it based on someone's suggestion. One can deduce that the majority of students were not imposed to study English at university.

Sub-Item. Students' Justification

As a sub-item, the researcher asked the students whose choice of studying English was their own for the reason behind that.

Table 3.5 Students' Justification for Choosing to Study English at University

Option	Number	Percentage
It is the lingua-franca	3	8.82 %
You like it	15	44.12 %
You need it	5	14.71 %
All of them	6	17.48 %
More than one answer	4	11.76 %
Others	1	2.94 %
Total	34	100 %
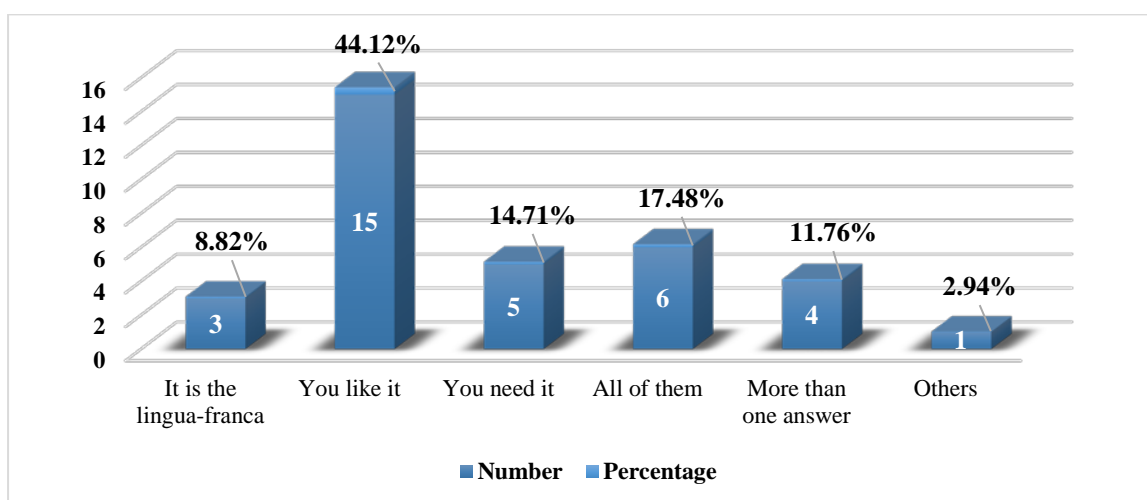
Figure 3.3 Students' Justification for Choosing to Study English at University

Sub-Question. Students' justifications of "Your own choice"

The respondents who answered with "your own choice" were asked to identify the reasons behind that. It is noted that the majority (44.12%) chose to study English because they like it, while less than half of the previous percentage (11.76%) chose more than one answer, excluding the ones who opted for all of the answers which represent (17.48%). Aside from that, (14.71%) chose to study the English language based on their needs. As for the rest of the percentage, it is divided into (8.82%) for the respondents who selected "It is the Lingua-Franca" answer. In addition to (2.94%) who went for the "others" option; and mentioned that they chose to study English to get

more job opportunities which can be classified under the umbrella of "I need it" answer. As a conclusion, English is an important and interesting language.

Section Two: Oral communication (From Item 3 to Item 5)

This section focuses more on oral communication. Mainly, its aim is to gather students' views on the importance of oral communication. Moreover, it gathers information about the English speaking difficulties that could be faced by the learners.

Item 03. Students' Views on the Importance of Oral Communication

This item aimed to know the students' opinions about to what extent they think that oral communication is important.

Table 3.6 Students' Views on the Importance of Oral Communication

Option	Number	Percentage
Very Important	34	85 %
Important	6	15 %
Not Important at all	0	0 %
Total	40	100 %
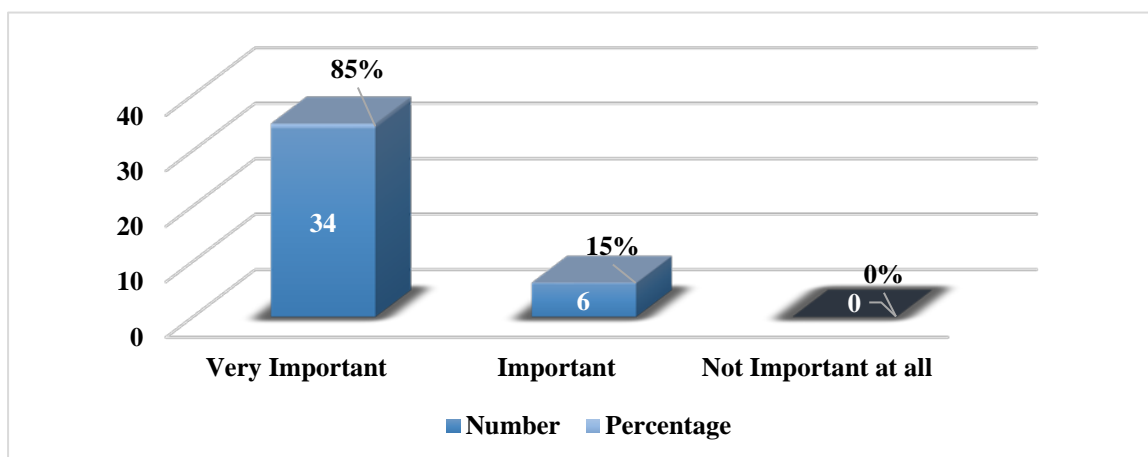
Figure 3.4 Students' Views on the Importance of Oral Communication

What is noticeable in the table (3.6) above is that the majority of students consider oral communication very important (85 %). For the rest 15 %, they opted for

important. However, none of them has selected the "not important at all" option. This clarifies the students' awareness about the goal of learning a foreign language that is speaking it.

Sub-Item. Students' Justification of their Answers

As a sub-question, students were asked to justify their answers concerning the importance of oral communication. To begin with, the majority who believe that oral communication is very important claimed that it is one of the basics of learning a foreign language. As stated by some that a good mastery of language means being fluent and accurate when speaking it. Additionally, it is very needed in the academic and professional fields since students should interact with their teachers and classmates and workers should interact with their job-colleagues. Another valuable justification is that oral communication permits the individual to transmit messages more effectively and quickly to the receiver; as one of the respondents mentioned "oral communication is more flexible than written one".

As for the ones who argued that oral communication is important, they gave a commonly shared justification. They see that oral communication is not the only way through which people can exchange ideas and express feelings. Instead, they can use written communication to do so; especially that oral communication might not be comfortable for some people like introverts and shy people.

Item 04. The Evaluation of Students' Speaking Performance

Through this item, the researcher aimed to have an idea about how students evaluate their speaking performance.

Table 3.7 The Evaluation of Students' Speaking Performance

Option	Number	Percentage
Poor	3	7.5 %
Average	20	50 %
Good	15	37.5 %
Excellent	2	5 %
Total	40	100 %
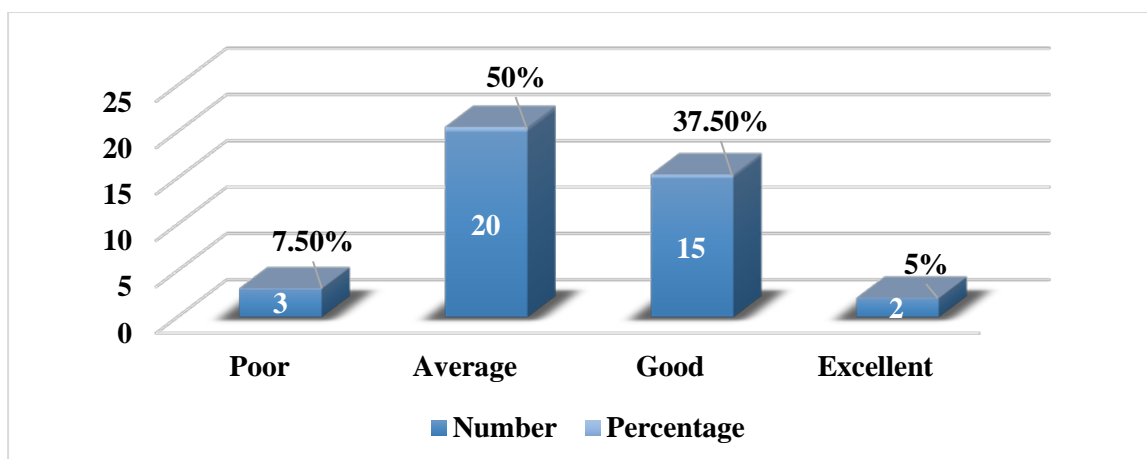
Figure 3.5 The Evaluation of Students' Speaking Performance

The results shown above affirm that the highest percentage (50%) refers to the students who considered their level in speaking performance as average. After that, it comes to those who chose a good level of speaking which represent (37.5%). Whereas, (7.5%) evaluate themselves as poor speakers. Nevertheless, only (5%) of the sample considered their speaking performance as excellent. Since the vast majority of students did not achieve excellence in speaking performance, one can conclude that they have problems in ameliorating their communicative competence.

Item 05: The difficulty of Speaking English as a Foreign Language

This item aimed to collect students' opinions on whether they find speaking English as a foreign language difficult or not.

Table 3.8 The Difficulty of Speaking English as a Foreign Language

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	28	70 %
No	12	30 %
Total	40	100 %
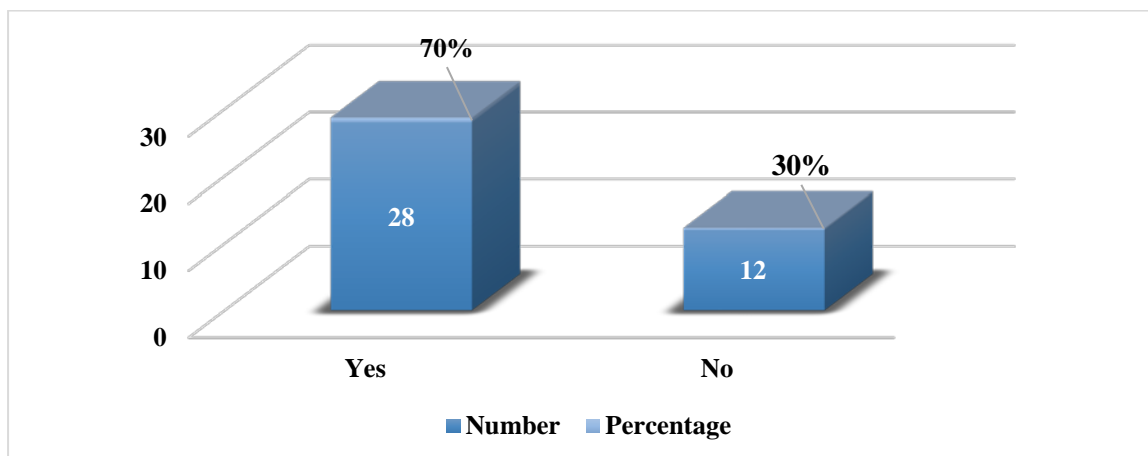
Figure 3.6 The Difficulty of Speaking English as a Foreign Language

The table (3.8) above reveals that more than half of the sample (70%) face difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language. Contrariwise, only (30%) are not encountered by problems. As a result, the majority of students face difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language which reflects the fact that they do not master this skill as it should be.

Sub-Item. Kind of Difficulties that EFL learners Face

After determining the number of students who experience difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language, the researcher asked the respondents to determine the kind of difficulties they are confronted with. She gave them a series of choices from which they can opt for more than one.

Table 3.9 Kinds of Difficulties that EFL Learners Face

Option	Number	Percentage
You do not know what to say.	2	7.14%
You know what to say but you do not know how	6	21.43%
You know what to say and how to say it, but you cannot say it.	8	28.57%
You do not know how to use body language.	2	7.14%
More Than One Answer	8	28.57%
All of them	2	7.14%
Total	28	100
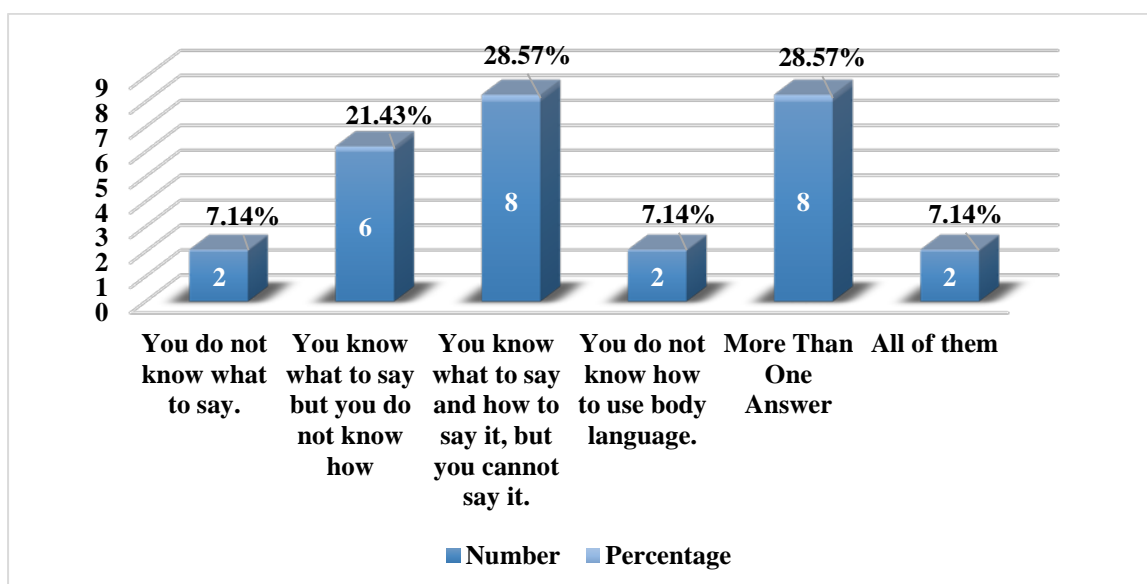
Figure 3.7 Kinds of Difficulties that EFL Learners Face

To sum up the yielded data in the table (3.9), it is noticeable that the highest percentage (28.57%) chose more than one answer. An equal percentage to the previous one (28.57%) claimed that they know what to say and how to say it, but they cannot say it. Here, it is suggested that oral communication apprehension might be the reason behind that. Yet, "all of them" option depicted the lowest percentage (7.14%), in addition to "you do not know what to say" and "you do not know how to use body language" options. However, (21.43) claimed that they know what to say but they do

not know how to say it. This could be because they have a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge.

Section Three: Classroom Participation Apprehension (From item 6 to item 9)

The foci of this section are to prove the existence of the oral communication apprehension phenomenon among students. Also, it sought to spotlight the symptoms of this problem.

Item 06: Student's participation in oral classroom activities

The goal of this item is to determine how often students participate in oral classroom activities.

Table 3.10 Students' Participation in Oral Classroom Activities

Option	Number	Percentage
Always	6	15 %
Sometimes	20	50 %
Rarely	14	35 %
Total	40	100 %
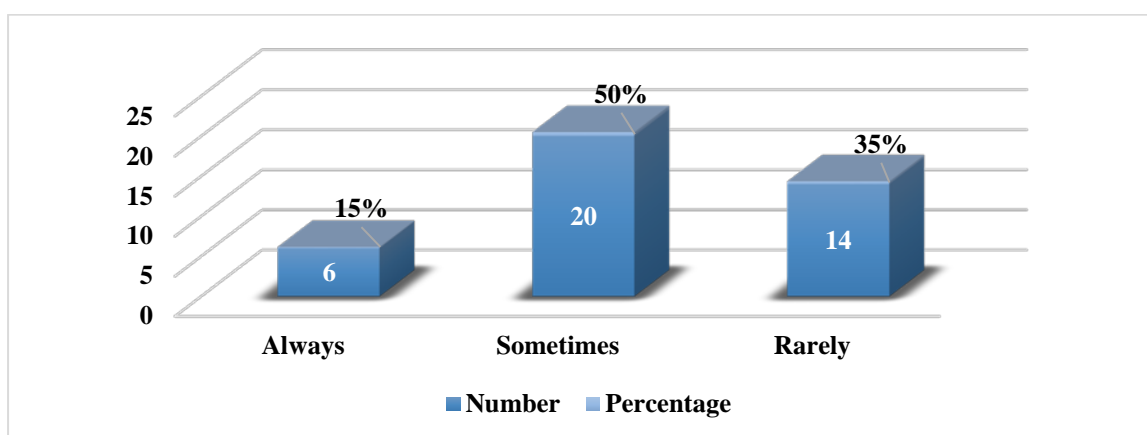
Figure 3.8 Students' Participation in Oral Classroom Activities

The results displayed in the table (3.10) above show that the majority of students who represent half of the sample (50%) sometimes participate in classroom oral activities. However, (35%) declared that they rarely take part classroom activities,

which means that they avoid participation in oral activities. On the other hand, (15%) said that they always get engaged whenever they have oral activities. This indicates that either they are good and fluent speakers or they are high self-confident that they do not worry about making mistakes in front of others.

Item 07: Students' Feeling When They Are Asked to Speak English in Class

The researcher, in this item, intended to find out how students feel when they are asked to speak English in class as the following table represents. Then, she asked them to provide a justification for their answer whatever it was.

Table 3.11 Students' Feeling When They Are Asked to Speak English in Class

Option	Number	Percentage
Apprehensive	29	72.5%
Comfortable	11	27.5%
Total	40	100%
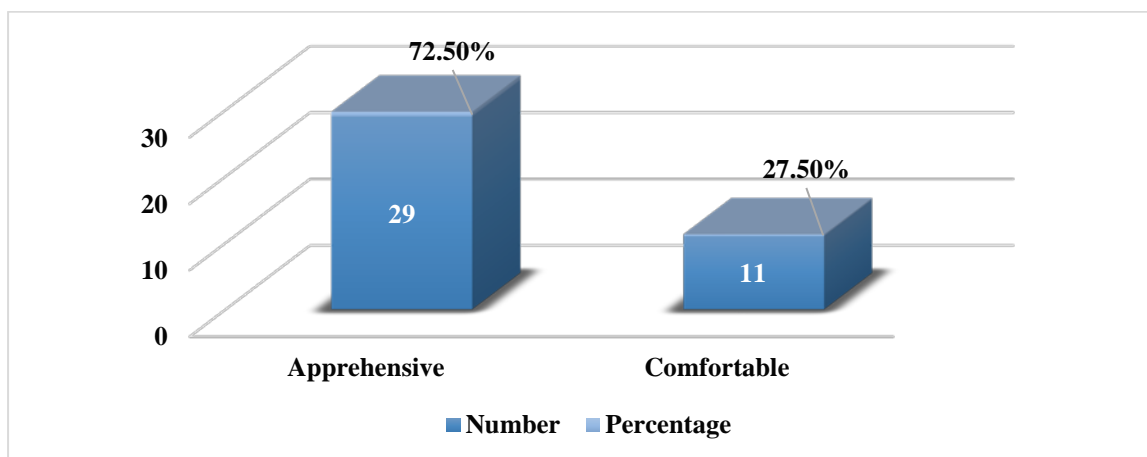
Figure 3.9 Students' Feeling When They Are Asked to Speak English in Class

The results obtained from the above question indicate that the majority of students (72.5) feel apprehensive when they are asked to speak English in class; therefore, they have problems in speaking. However, the minority which represents

(27.5%) said that they can speak English in class comfortably whenever they are exposed to.

Sub-Item. Students' Justifications to their Answers

To gather more data about how students feel when they are asked to speak English in class, the researcher requested a justification for the respondents' answers. On one hand, the majority of students who answered with "apprehensive" said that they feel so because they lack confidence; especially when they are not familiar with the topic of discussion or the audience. Moreover, some respondents claimed that anxiety, shyness, and fear of making mistakes and committing errors in front of others are obstacles that hinder them from getting involved in oral discussions. Other respondents argued that teachers' and peers' feedback is a source of nervousness.

One of the respondents stated that finding the appropriate vocabulary and falling in the trap of grammatical mistakes makes him/her apprehensive when speaking in class. Eventually, a number of students highlighted the fact that speaking a foreign language requires efforts which might build a sort of pressure over the speaker; consequently, they do not verbalize their ideas as they organized them in their minds. Also, being an introvert person for some makes it difficult to express their thoughts comfortably.

On the other hand, students who answered with "comfortable" shared common justifications. They claimed that they master speaking skills very well; thus, they feel comfortable sharing their thoughts with others. As for those who have no enough linguistic and paralinguistic knowledge about the language, they stated that they are convinced by the idea that they are learning, and they do not mind making mistakes in front of their classmates.

Item 08: Students' Apprehension When They Are Giving a Presentation

This item aimed to know if students feel apprehensive when they are giving a presentation, giving them two options.

Table 3.12 Students' Apprehension When They Are Giving a Presentation

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	33	82.5%
No	7	17.5%
Total	40	100%
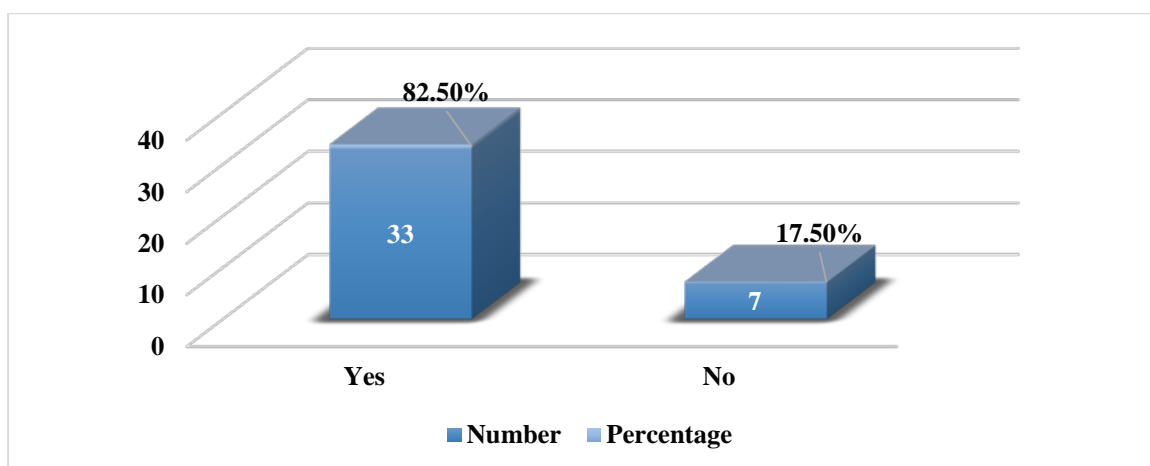
Figure 3.10 Students' Apprehension When They Are Giving a Presentation

It is noticeable that the majority of students (82.5%) feel apprehensive when they are giving a presentation. Consequently, they have stage fright. In contrast, the lowest percentage which represent (17.5%) of the sample feel comfortable when performing and delivering speeches in front of others.

Item 09: The Symptoms of Oral Communication Apprehension

This item is measured with a dichotomous-type response scale. The students were asked to indicate whether the suggested symptoms apply to them when they are giving a presentation or not.

Table 3.13 The Symptoms of Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Yes		No		Total	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
My heart beats very fast.	33	82.5%	7	17.5%	40	100%
My hands tremble.	19	47.5%	21	42.5%	40	100%
I tend to be brief.	24	60%	16	40%	40	100%
My thoughts become confused and jumbled.	31	77.5%	9	22.5%	40	100%
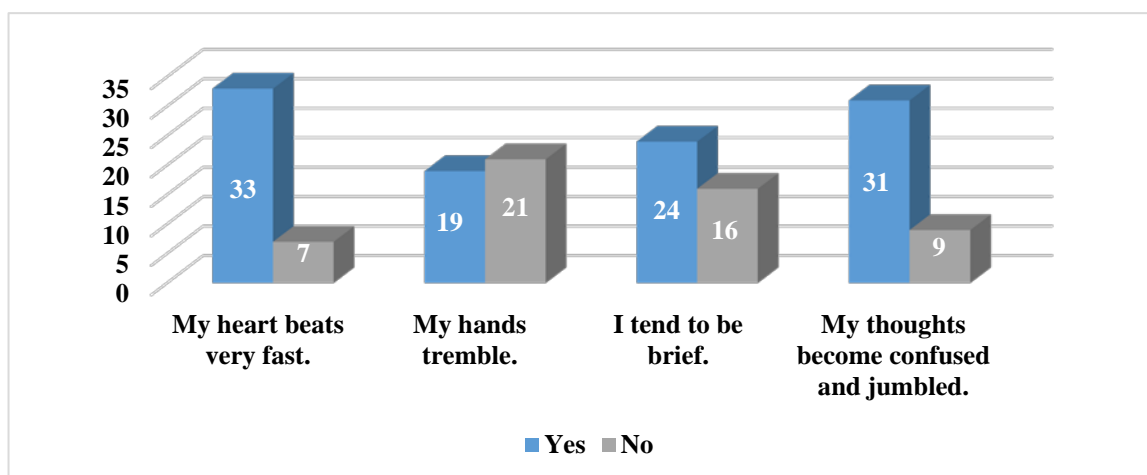
Figure 3.11 The Symptoms of Oral Communication Apprehension

To simplify the illustrated data above, (82.5%) pointed out that one of the symptoms that affect their performance is the heart pounding. However, only (17.5%) claimed that they have a natural heartbeat while presenting. Another observable symptom that is hands trembling. Here, (47.5%) of the sample answered with "yes" whereas (42.5%) selected the "no" option.

Students were also asked if they tend to be brief in such a situation. (60%) of students represents those who only speak about the main ideas in order to avoid the pressure they are put under because of the apprehension. Yet, (40%) refers to those who speak comfortably about all the ideas as they have already planned. Similarly, (77.5%)

of respondents said that their thoughts become confused and jumbled when giving a presentation; however, (22.5%) highlighted that they do not suffer from such a problem. As a result, all the suggested symptoms apply to the majority of students, except the hands' tremble as the majority selected "no".

Section Four: Factors Contributing to oral communication Apprehension

The main goal of this section is to explore the different factors that cause oral communication apprehension from the students' perspectives.

Part One: Classroom Related Factors

Item 10. Classroom Related factors that cause Oral Communication Apprehension

This item aimed to highlight the main classroom-related factors that contribute to oral communication apprehension among students.

Table 3.14 Classroom Related Factors That Cause Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Lack of discipline rules	5	12.5%
Students' large number	19	47.5%
Classroom Arrangement	3	7.5%
More than one answer	8	20%
All of them	2	5%
Others	3	7.5%
Total	40	100%
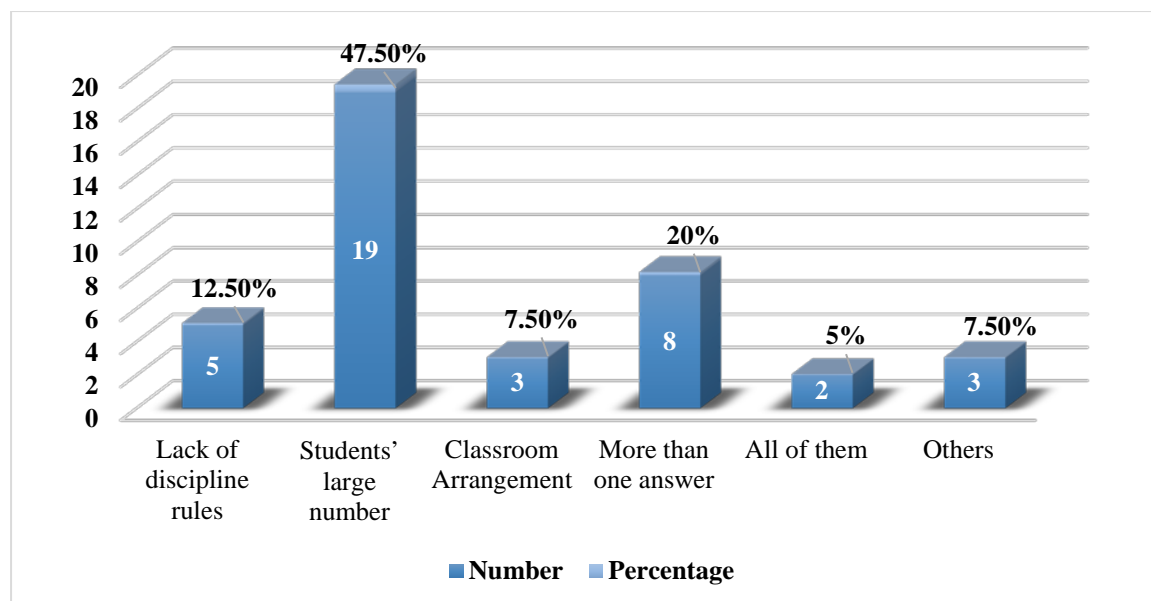
Figure 3.12 Classroom Related Factors that Cause Oral Communication

Apprehension

The results above in the table (**3.14**) demonstrate that the majority (47.5%) of the students considered the large number of students as the main classroom-related cause of oral communication apprehension. On the other hand, (20%) selected more than one answer, except those who opted for all the answers who represent (5%). However, (12.5%) claimed that they are affected by lack of discipline rules. Yet, (7.5) chose lack of discipline. As for the rest of the sample, (7.5), they went for others. They stated that none of the classroom factors bring them apprehension, but other factors that are related to their own selves. Consequently, the classroom, in some cases, affects the students' performance in oral tasks negatively that it causes them apprehension.

Item 11: The knowledge about the topic of discussion

This item sought to indicate if students have ever been in a situation where they have no prior knowledge about the discussion. Then they were asked to identify what they do in such situations.

Table 3.15 Prior Knowledge about the Topic of Discussion

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	27	67.5%
No	13	32.5%
Total	40	100%
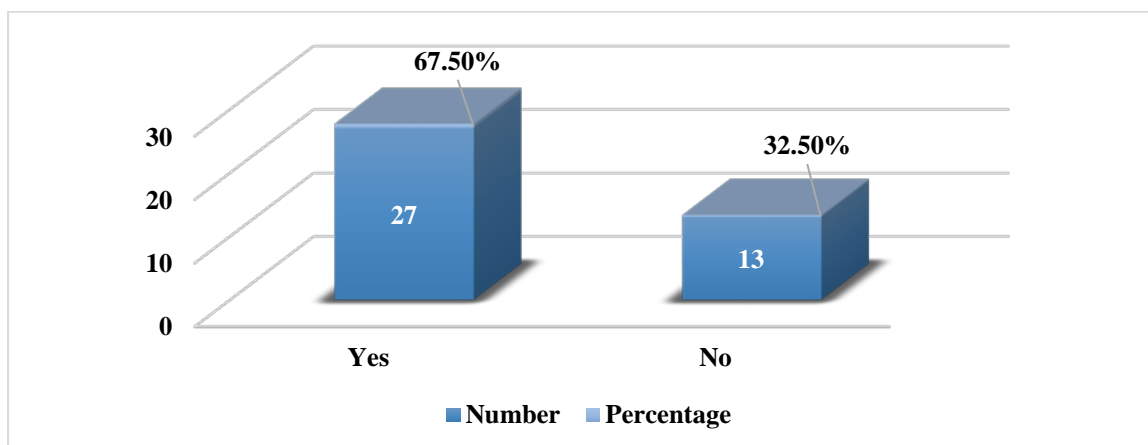
Figure 3.13 Prior Knowledge about the Topic of Discussion

The obtained results show that more than half of the sample (67.5%) affirmed that they have been put in a situation where they have no prior knowledge about the topic of discussion. Contrariwise, (32.5%) claimed that they have never faced such problem.

Sub-Item. Students' Behavior When They Have No Prior Knowledge about the Topic of Discussion

As a sub-question, students who have experienced a situation where they have no prior knowledge about the topic of discussion were asked to identify what they do in such situations. Initially, the majority of students said that they tend to improvise. In other words, they ask questions, listen to what the teacher and other students say, then formulate their own conclusions. In other cases, a number of students consider it a positive thing because it permits them to process information that has been already given by others about the topic and bring the discussion into their safe zone.

On the other hand, others admitted that this creates a sort of anxiety to them, so they do not participate and keep silent throughout the session. Also, they try not to show that they have no idea about the discussion to the teacher to avoid the embarrassment. In addition to that, for some, they use the technique of "eye contact avoidance" with the teacher to evade him/ her questions. Even if s/he asks them, they copy what others have said or, simply, tell the teacher that they do not have information about the discussion.

Part Three: Students related factors

a) Linguistic Factors

Item 12: Students' Speech Skill Deficiencies

This item attempted to gather information about whether students have speech skill deficiencies.

Table 3.16 Students Speech Skill Deficiencies

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	4	10%
No	36	90%
Total	40	100
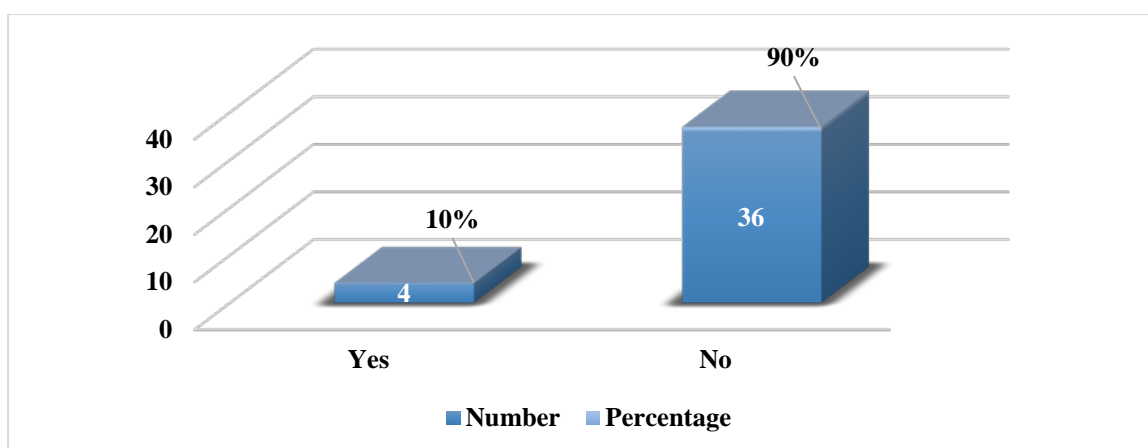
Figure 3.14 Students' Speech Skill Deficiencies

It can be seen from the table (3.16) above that the vast majority of students (90%) have speech skill deficiencies which lead to breakdowns in language when

communicating, eventually feeling apprehensive while speaking. In contrast, (10%) of the respondents depicted the students who have no problems.

Sub-Item. The Type of Students' Speech Skill Deficiencies

To gather more information about the linguistic factors that contribute to oral communication apprehension, the researcher asked the respondents to determine what kind of speech deficiencies they suffer from.

Table 3.17 The Type of Students' Speech Skill Deficiencies

Option	Number	Percentage
Lack of fluency	**5**	**13,89%**
Lack of accuracy	**2**	**5,56%**
Lack of vocabulary	**6**	**16,67%**
Lack of grammar knowledge	**2**	**5,56%**
Poor Pronunciation	**4**	**11,11%**
More than one answer	**14**	**38,89%**
All the answers	**3**	**8,33%**
Total	**36**	**100%**
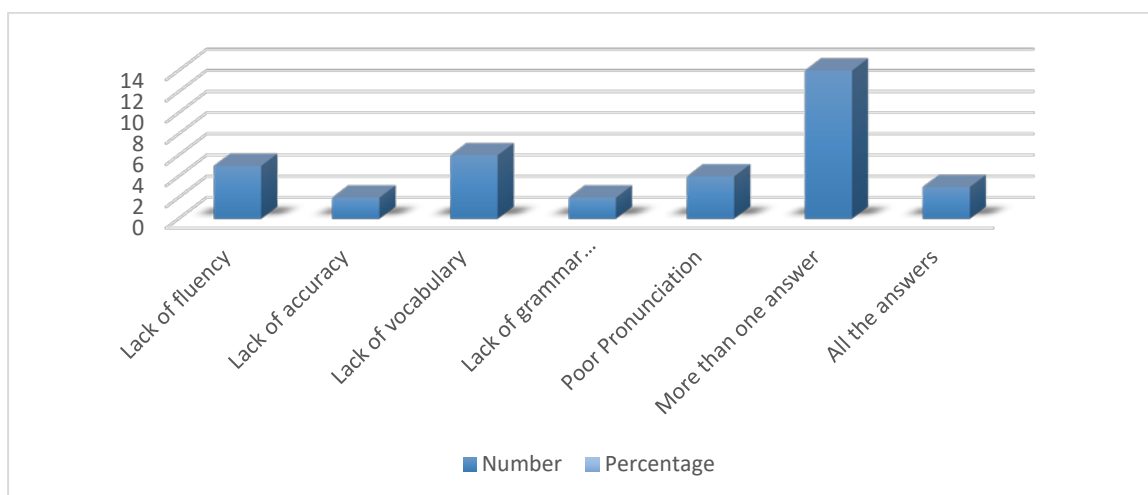
Figure 3.15 The Type of Students' Speech Deficiencies

The results obtained from the above sub-question show that the majority of students (38.89%) selected more than one answer, excluding the ones who opted for all the answers who represent (8.33%). However, (16.67%) said that their vocabulary is

not rich as it should while (13.89%) of the students affirmed that they lack fluency when they speak. On the other hand, (11.11%) of the respondents went for poor pronunciation; Whereas, (5.56%) selected Lack of accuracy and grammar knowledge. The assumption that could be raised here is that students do not master the speaking skill well which can be a source of oral communication apprehension.

b) Personal Factors

Item 13: Students' Learning Styles

This item aimed to collect data about students' learning styles and to know how this can affect their language learning process. The researcher suggested three types of learning styles.

Table 3.18 Students' Learning Styles

Option	Number	Percentage
Auditory	8	20%
Visual	22	55%
Kinesthetic	10	25%
Total	40	100%
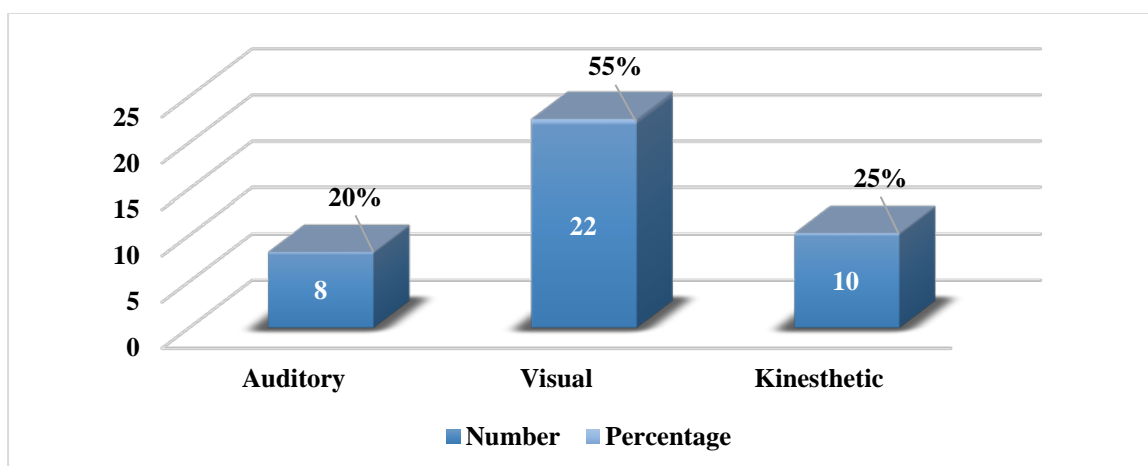
Figure 3.16 Students' Learning Styles

From the table above, it is noticeable that more than half of the students (55%) are visual learners. Yet, (25%) of them prefer to learn by doing things. However, (10%)

tend to learn through listening. One can deduce that learning styles differ from one individual to another.

Item 15: Students' Behavior When the Teacher Use Strategies/ Materials that Do Not Fit their Learning Style

The researcher asked this question to know the students' behavior when the teacher uses strategies/ materials that do not fit their learning style. To start with, they said that they feel bored, distracted, and less interested in the lecture so they lose concentration and become uninvolved. Moreover, they asserted that they feel unsatisfied and they cannot grasp as much information as they want. Thus, they avoid participation as well as become less motivated and nervous. Even though, a number of students confirmed that they try to adapt in such situations since they have no other choice. Thus, they take notes and ask questions if they did not understand some incomprehensible points.

Item 16: The Students' Perception of How People Assess the Way They Look

This question sought to know if the students' performance is affected by how people assess the way they look.

Table 3.19 The Students' Perception of How People Assess the Way They Look

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	24	60%
No	16	40%
Total	40	100%
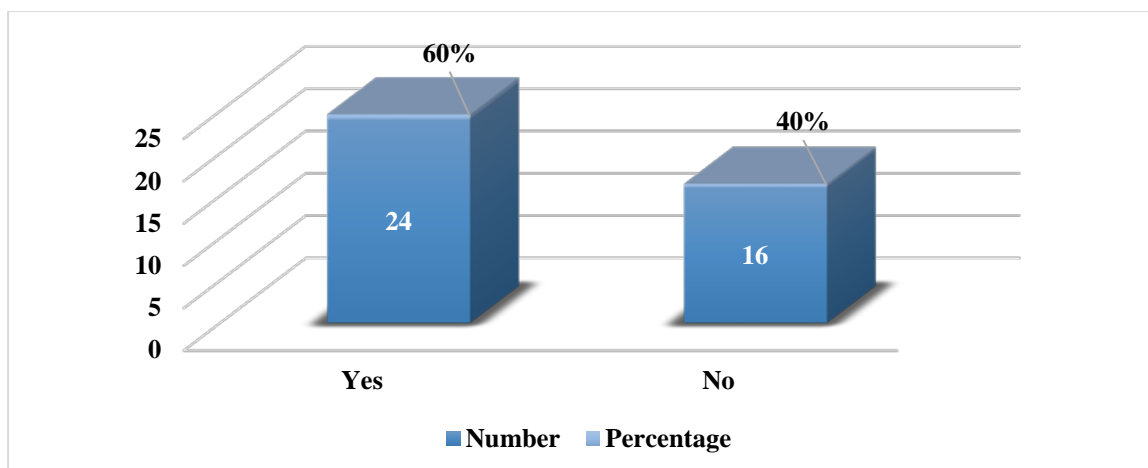
Figure 3.17 The Students' Perception of How People Assess the Way They Look

The results shown in the table above demonstrate that more than half of the questioned students (60%) affirmed that their performance is affected by how people assess the way they look. Nevertheless, (40%) of respondents asserted that they do not give attention to how people look at them. Therefore, the physical appearance can be a source of apprehension in some cases.

c) Psychological Factors

Item 17: Students' Psychological Problems

The goal of this question is to know if students suffer from psychological problems that may affect their speaking learning.

Table 3.20 Students' Psychological Problems

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	28	70%
No	12	30%
Total	40	100%
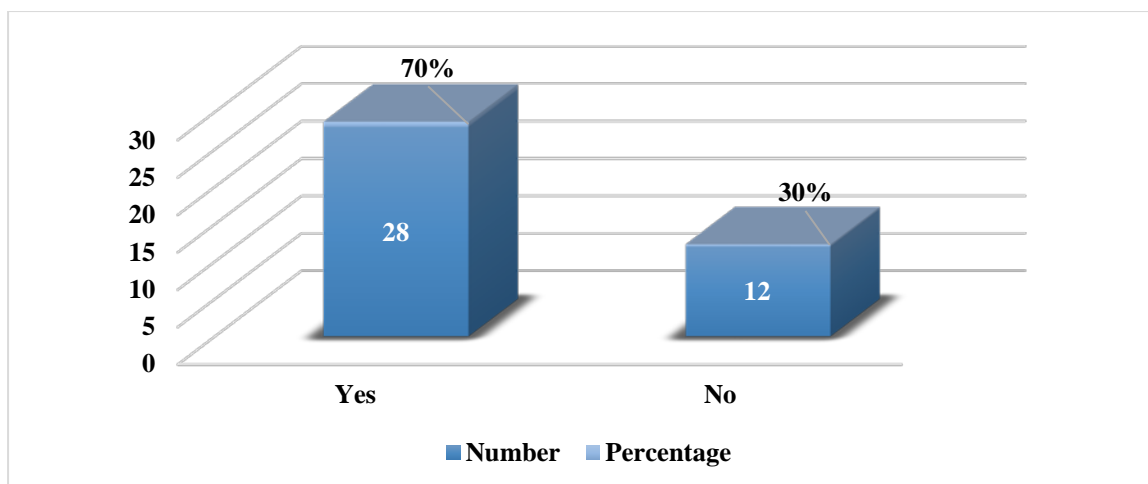
Figure 3.18 Students' Psychological Problems

From the table above, it is noticeable that more than half of the sample (70%) suffers from psychological problems that hinder the students' learning process. Whereas (30%) refers to those who are not affected by psychological problems that may affect their speaking learning process negatively. These results explain the reason why the majority of students do not participate always which results in speech skill deficiencies (**Item 12**).

Types of Students' Psychological Problems

To collect more data about students' psychological problems, the researcher asked the respondents to indicate what type of problems they are suffering from.

Table 3.21 Types of Students' Psychological Problems

Option	Number	Percentage
Anxiety	3	10.71%
Low self-esteem	4	14.29%
Introversion	2	7.14%
Shyness	3	10.71%
More than one answer	15	53.57%
All of them	1	3.57%
Total	28	100%
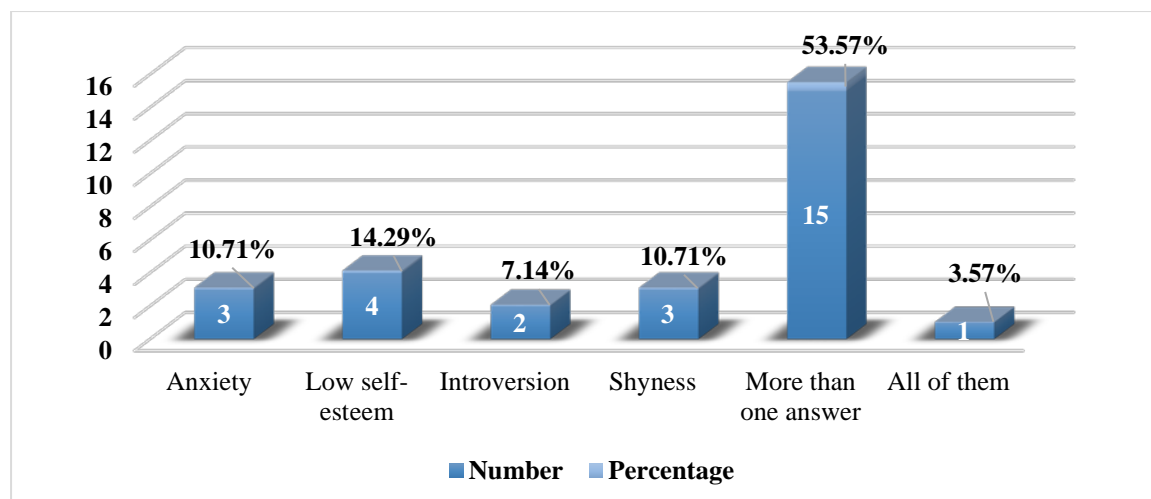
Figure 3.19 Types of Students' Psychological Problems

The table above shows what type of psychological problems students have. It is observed that the majority of students (53.57%) selected more than one answer. Yet, only (3.57%) which represents one respondent opted for all the answers. However, (14.29%) claimed that they have low self-esteem whilst (10.71%) said that they are anxious and shy students. The rest of the students (7.14%) chose introversion as their main psychological problem. This makes clear why students avoid participating, so only the minority of them get always involved when they have oral activities (**Item 12**)

Item 18: Student Related Factors that Cause Oral Communication Apprehension

This question aimed to determine the most student-related factors that cause oral communication apprehension.

Table 3.22 Student Related Factors that Cause Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Linguistic factors	17	42.5%
Personal factors	3	7.5%
Psychological factors	20	50%
Total	40	100%
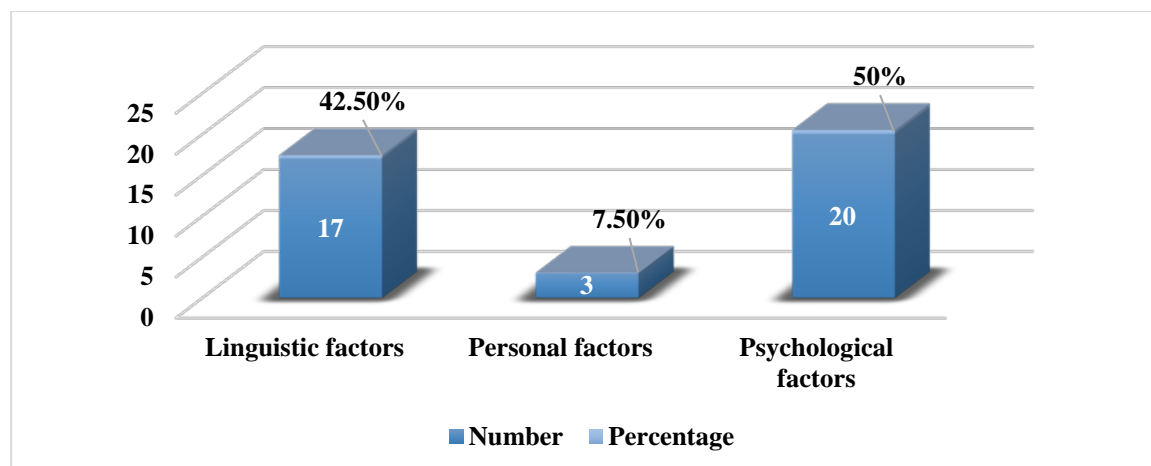
Figure 3.20 Students Related Factors that Cause Oral Communication Apprehension

The table above indicates that half of the students (50%) consider psychological problems as their main cause of oral communication apprehension. However, (42.5%) opted for linguistic factors. Yet, (7.5%) of respondents selected personal factors. Consequently, the most student-related factor that causes oral communication apprehension is psychological problems that learners face during their learning process.

Part Four: Teacher Related Factors

Item 18: Teacher Related Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension

This item sought to find out the teacher-related factors that cause oral communication apprehension.

Table 3.23 Teacher Related Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Teacher's teaching strategy	14	35%
Teacher's oral tasks	9	22.5%
Teacher's feedback	1	2.5%
More than one answer	9	22.5%
All of them	5	12.5%
Others	2	5%
Total	40	100%
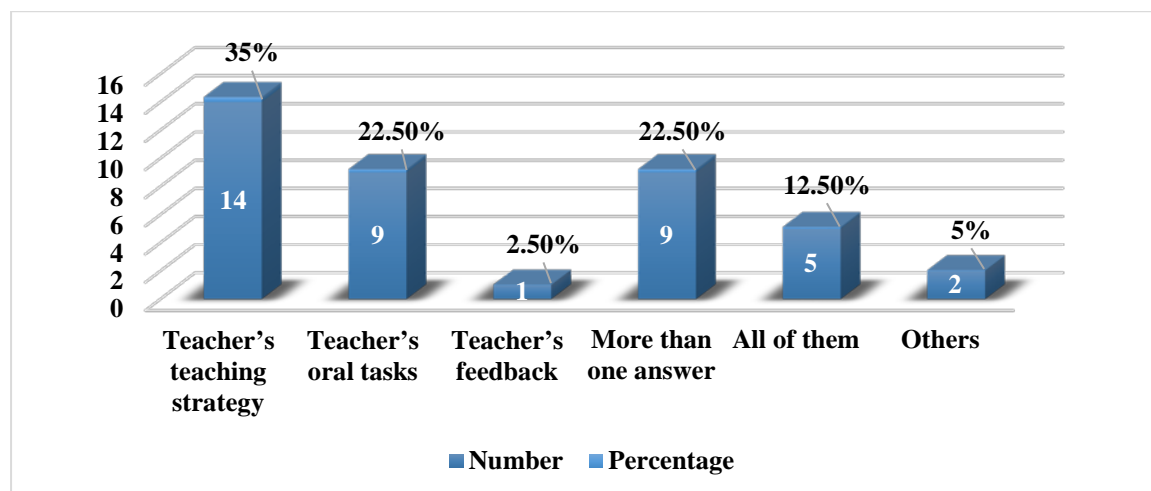
Figure 3.21 Teacher Related Factors That Cause Oral Communication Apprehension

Statistically speaking, as an individual selection of the teacher-related factors that cause oral communication apprehension (35%) of the students selected teacher's teaching strategies. Moreover, (22.5%) refers to those who chose the teacher's oral tasks, as well as those who opted for more than one answer. furthermore, (12.5%) said that all the suggested factors cause them oral communication apprehension while (5%) of the respondents claimed that there are other factors affecting them. One stated that the teacher's time in talk brings him/her apprehension, without giving a further explanation to this factor. Another said that teacher's forcing him/her to participate makes him/her apprehensive.

As for the rest of the respondents who represent (2.5%), s/he selected the teacher's feedback. As a result, the majority of Mohamed Khider University of Biskra teachers use constructive feedback rather than distractive since teacher's feedback depicted the lowest percentage. However, they should vary in their teaching strategies, taking into consideration the individual differences because this factor depicted the highest percentage.

Part Five: Classmates Related Factors

Item19: Peers as a Factor of Oral Communication Apprehension

This item is measured with a Likert-type response scale. The students were asked to indicate whether the suggested statements apply to them.

Table 3.24 Peer as a Factor of Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
The fear of being judged by my class-mates holds me back from participating.	16	40%	13	32.5%	11	27.5%	40	100%
I feel apprehensive when I am being criticized by my classmate.	14	35%	13	32.5%	13	32.5%	40	100%
I feel apprehensive when other students perform better than me.	16	40%	19	47.5%	5	12.5%	40	100%
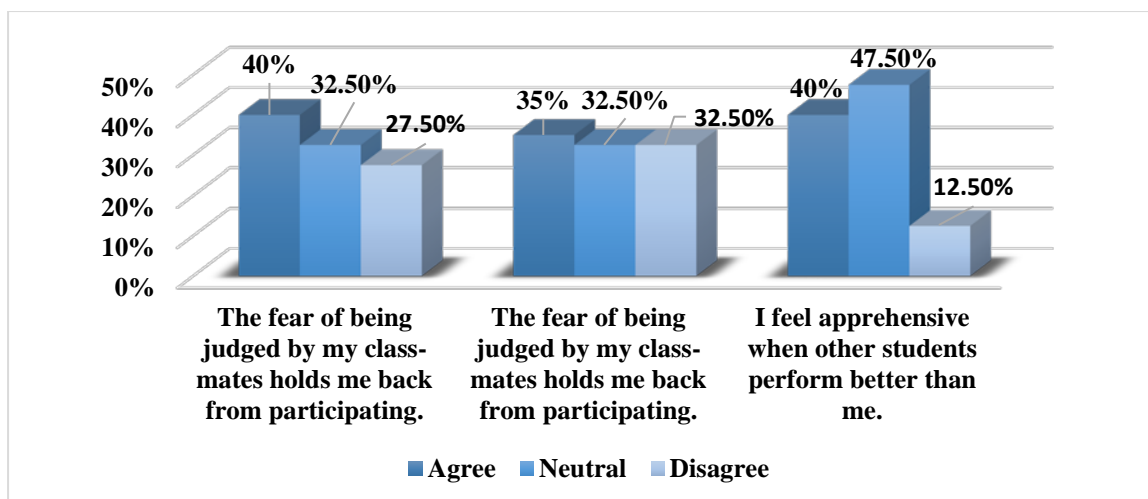
Figure 3.22 Peers as a Factor of Oral Communication Apprehension

To simplify the yielded data above, a considerable number of students (40%) agreed that their fear of being judged by their classmates holds them back from participating. However, (32.5%) selected "neutral". Yet, (27.5%) pointed out that their peers' evaluation does not refrain them from getting engaged in oral tasks.

Similarly, when the students were asked if they feel apprehensive when their classmates criticize them, the majority of students (35%) opted for "agree". In contrast, the rest of the sample was divided equally between "neutral" and disagree"; (32.5) for each option.

In the same vein, feeling apprehensive when other students perform better got (40%) of the population for those who chose "agree", whilst the majority of respondents (47.5%) claimed that they are neutral. Whereas, only (12.5%) represents those who selected "disagree".

To sum up the above results, one can observe that the disagreement with the statements depicted the lowest percentage with all of them. One can deduce that peers' negative evaluation and judgments can be a cause of oral communication apprehension.

Item 20: Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension

This item aimed to find out the most commonly related factors that cause oral communication apprehension among students.

Table 3.25 Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Classroom Related Factors	3	**7.5%**
Student Related Factors	15	**37.5%**
Topic Related Factors	5	**12.5%**
Teacher Related Factors	7	**17.5%**
Peers Related Factors	10	**25%**
Total	40	**100%**
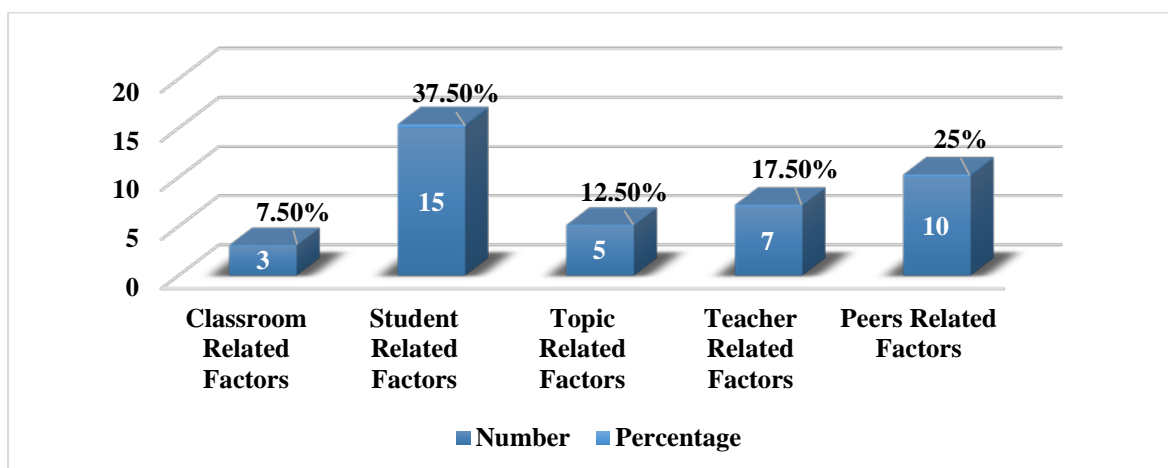
Figure 3.23 Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension

The table **(3.25)** above demonstrates that student-related factors got (37.5%). While, (25%) highlighted that their classmates are the reason behind their oral communication apprehension. However, (17.5%) proved that they are affected by teachers related factors. Yet, (12.5%) of the respondents selected topic related factors. Whereas, the rest of the respondents (7.5%) considered classroom factors as the main cause of oral communication apprehension. Henceforth, the most common source of

oral communication apprehension is the student himself/herself including the personal, linguistic, and psychological factors.

Section Five: Strategies Used to Reduce Oral Communication Apprehension

This section was designed to spotlight the effect of oral communication apprehension on students' performance. Additionally, it aimed to find out the most useful strategies/ tricks that are utilized by teachers and by students themselves to reduce the effect of this problem.

Item 21: The effect of Oral Communication Apprehension on Students' Performance

This item sought to gather students' views on whether oral communication apprehension affects students' performance or not. Then, students were asked to provide a justification to their answer.

Table 3.26 The Effect of Oral Communication Apprehension on Students' Performance

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	39	97.5%
No	1	2.5%
Total	40	100%
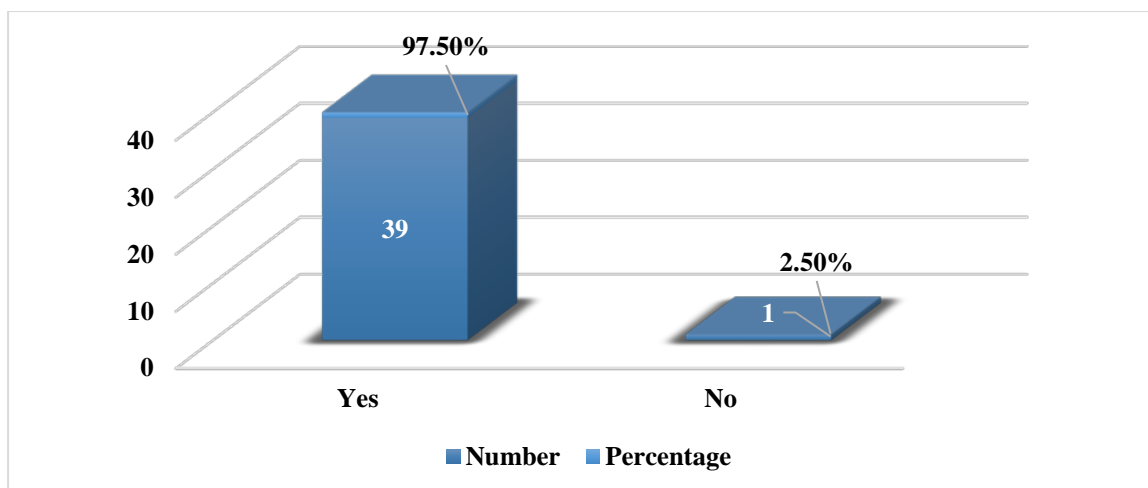
Figure 3.24 The Effect of Oral Communication Apprehension on Students'

Performance

The results reveal that (97.5%) of students agreed that oral communication apprehension affects students' performance. Contrariwise, (2.5%) of the respondents went for "no". This implies that the majority of students experienced a level of oral communication apprehension which affected them negatively.

Sub-Item. Students' Justification

To gather more information about the effect of oral communication apprehension on students' performance, the researcher asked the respondents to justify their answers. First of all, the student who disagreed with the idea that oral communication apprehension affects students' performance negatively gave no justification to his answer. On the other hand, the rest of the sample who went for "yes" provided valuable justifications.

Firstly, students asserted that it prevents them to communicate their thoughts effectively. In other words, it makes them forget what to say, stutter, mispronounce words, and sometimes stop speaking in the middle of the conversation or presentation. As stated by one of the respondents, "it is an obstacle that neither guarantees the flow

of communication nor makes you feel that you are understood by others even if the student has great ideas".

Moreover, they highlighted that it affects the students' concentration negatively. Thus, they become unable to achieve the needed task which in turn affects their academic achievements. Also, as long as students are apprehensive, they feel shy and anxious. As a result, they become less motivated to participate, and gradually, they start avoiding participation and reduce their talk time in oral activities which affects their performance negatively.

To conclude, oral communication apprehension affects students' performance negatively. Furthermore, students consider it a hindrance that holds them back from achieving success. Therefore, students and teachers should look for effective strategies to overcome this problem.

Item 22: The Strategies Used by Students to Reduce their oral communication Apprehension

The goal of this item is to point out the techniques used by students to reduce their oral communication apprehension.

Table 3.27 The Strategies Used by Students to Reduce Their Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
You control your breathing.	**5**	**12.5%**
You exercise immediately before you talk.	**18**	**50%**
You accept the fact of being apprehensive	**6**	**15%**
More than one Answer	**5**	**12.5%**
All of them	**1**	**2.5%**
Others	**5**	**7.5%**
Total	**40%**	**100%**
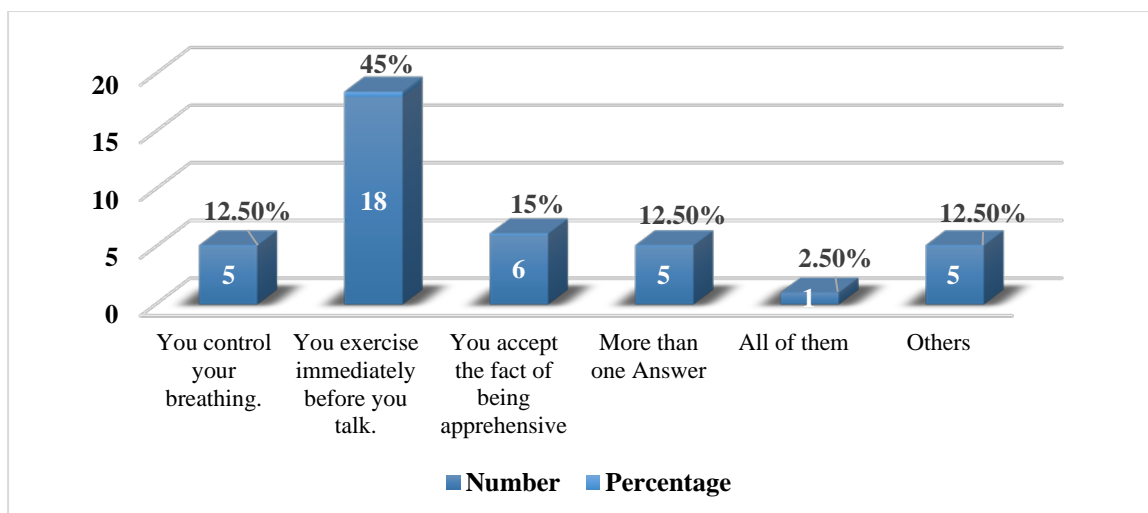
Figure 3.25 The Strategies Used by Students to Reduce Their Oral Communication

Apprehension

It is noticeable that the majority of students (45%) exercise immediately before they talk to avoid the feeling of apprehension while speaking. Whereas (15%) claimed that they accept the fact that they are apprehensive. However, (12.5%) of the students refers to those who went for "you control your breathing". Contrarywise (12.5) of the respondents chose "more than one answer", and "others".

For the ones who selected "others", one of them said that s/he writes what s/he wants to say in a piece of paper, if s/he has time, then verbalize it after training on it. Another affirmed that s/he strongly presses on the pen when s/he is obliged to speak. On the other hand, one asserted that s/he imagines herself/ himself alone in the class and no one will judge her/him. The last one admitted that s/he remembers that there are haters that want her/ him to fail which motivates her/him to do her/ his best.

As for the rest which represents (2.5%) of the sample, opted for all the suggested strategies. As a result, one can deduce that there are different strategies used by students to handle their apprehension while speaking.

Item 23: Teachers' Strategies to Reduce their Students' Oral Communication Apprehension

This question aimed to determine the strategies used by teachers to reduce their students' oral communication apprehension. The researcher suggested five options to select their answers from

Table 3.28 Teachers' Strategies to Reduce their Students' Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
By implementing different oral tasks	1	2.5%
By giving positive feedback	10	25%
By using a sense of humor	3	7.5%
My teacher does not use any technique	10	25%
More than one answer	15	37.5%
Others	1	2.5%
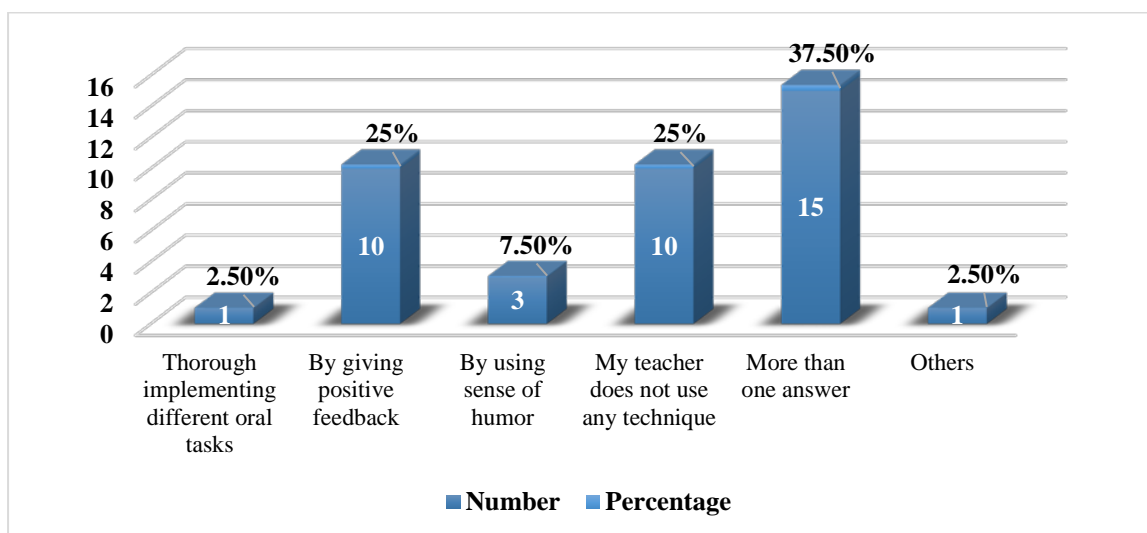
Figure 3.26 Teachers' Strategies to Reduce Students' Oral Communication Apprehension

The majority of respondents (37.5%) selected more than one answer. Yet, (25%) claimed that their teacher gives them positive feedback; equally, the same percentage

admitted that their teachers do not use any technique. This implies teachers' ignorance about this problem. Whereas, (7.5%) went for using a sense of humor. However, (2.5%) refers to those who ticked the "through implementing different tasks" and "other" options. As for the student who chose "others", s/he stated that s/he had three years of oral expression in which teachers interact with the students who interact with them. Thus, s/he feels less important than them. Henceforth, one can conclude that not all teachers know about the problem of oral communication apprehension.

Item 24: The Effectiveness of Desensitization Technique to Overcome Oral Communication Apprehension

This item sought to identify students' opinions on the effectiveness of Desensitization technique in overcoming oral communication apprehension. After that, they were requested to further explain their answers.

Table 3.29 The Effectiveness of Desensitization Technique in Overcoming Oral Communication Apprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Very Effective	22	55%
Effective	18	45%
Not effective at all	0	0%
Total	40	100%
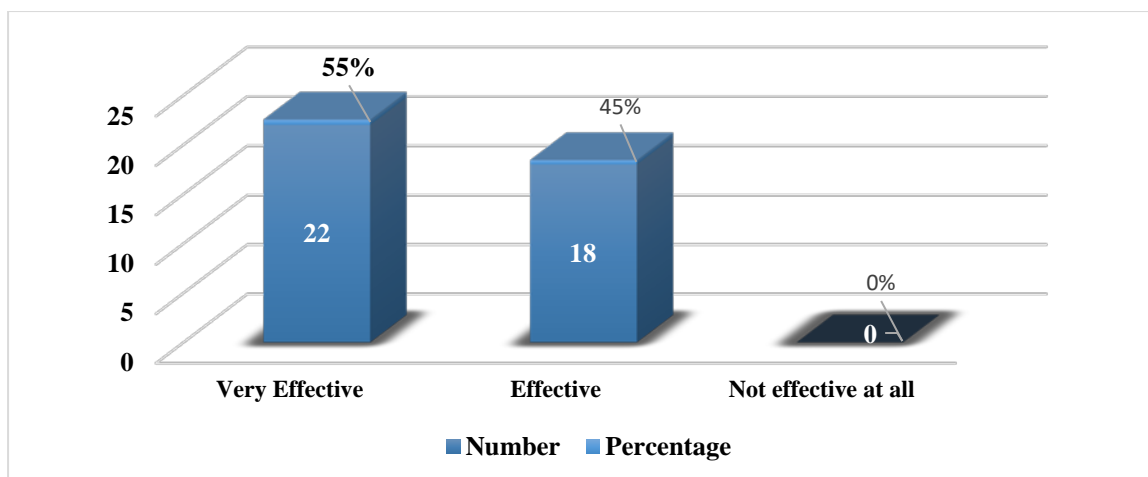
Figure 3.27 The Effectiveness of Desensitization Technique in Overcoming Oral Communication Apprehension

The illustrated data above **(3.29)** shows that more than half of the sample (55%) selected very effective. Also, "effective" got a considerable percentage (45%). In contrast, no one (0%) opted for "not effective at all". Hence, one can deduce that the desensitization technique can be useful to overcome oral communication apprehension.

Sub-Item. Students' Explanations

To get more information about students' views on the utilization of desensitization strategy to overcome oral communication apprehension, the researcher asked students to further explain their answers. The explanations that the researcher received from those who selected "very effective" and "effective" were nearly alike.

First of all, they argued that it is effective in the sense that it lessens gradually the degree of apprehension. Based on this, when students are faced with the problems they usually encounter while communicating, they gradually ameliorate the way they communicate, so they will get control over their apprehension. In other words, one gain self-confidence when s/he is exposed to an easy task which encourages her/him to do more difficult ones as noted: "It is like an allergy where you are exposed to small doses

of the incentive so as to adapt and build antidote to the illness". Others claimed that this can work successfully in EFL classes, yet in our setting, it might be difficult due to the large number of students.

3.3.6. Discussion and Interpretation

The analysis of students' findings provides various information and valuable responses that enable the researcher to explore a number of factors that cause oral communication apprehension. To start with, from the students' answers, learning English was their own choice based on some reasons. To mention some, the tendency to learn English was main reason of the majority, in addition to the fact that it is the Lingua-Franca and they need it.

Moreover, Students' responses highlighted that oral communication is very important. Although it is not an easy task since students face many difficulties; including they do not know what to say, they know what to say but they do not know how, they know what to say and how to say it but they cannot say it, they do not how to use body language. This implies the average level of students' speaking skills.

Furthermore, the respondents claimed that they feel apprehensive when they are speaking English in the classroom, especially when they are giving a presentation. According to them, this is due to some reasons such as peers' and teacher's destructive feedback, in addition to the lack of linguistic knowledge. Also, they agreed that hands trembling, heart pounding, thoughts jumbling, and tendency to be brief symptomize among them.

In the same vein, when students were asked about the classroom related factors that bring them apprehension, the majority of them chose students' large number. However, the lack of discipline rules and the classroom arrangement were not

exceptions. Thus classroom-related factors should be taken into consideration as one of the reasons behind students' oral communication apprehension.

Similarly, the majority of respondents have experienced such situations where they have no prior knowledge about the topic of discussion. They asserted that they feel anxious, confused, and become less motivated. Therefore, this leads to consider the lack of knowledge about the topic of discussion as a source of oral communication apprehension.

Likewise, Students' speech deficiencies like lack of fluency and accuracy put them under stress when they are speaking. Besides, psychological factors as shyness, anxiety, introversion, and low self-esteem are reasons behind students' oral communication apprehension. Equally, students stated that personal factors; particularly, learning styles make them anxious when the teacher uses materials and strategies that do not fit their own style.

In the same path, students affirmed that teacher's teaching strategies, oral tasks, teacher's feedback, are factors that cause oral communication apprehension to them. Henceforth, teachers are advised to use constructive feedback as well as different strategies. Additionally, the fact that they are judged and criticized by their classmates demotivate them to participate.

More importantly, when students were requested to give their opinions about the effect of oral communication apprehension on students' performance, they admitted that it has negative effects. Consequently, they attempt to overcommit using different strategies, including exercising immediately before talking, controlling their breath, accepting the fact of being apprehensive, and other strategies. Moreover, the awareness of teachers about this speaking difficulty also leads them to utilize various strategies to

help their learners; for instance, implementing different tasks, giving constructive feedback, using a sense of humor, in addition to other strategies.

To conclude, oral communication apprehension is a crucial issue that prevents learners from being active and engaged in oral activities. Eventually, it hinders their learning process, especially language is learned through oral communication and interaction. As has been proved by students, a number of factors affect this phenomenon and leads to aggravate its outcomes. Finally, they suggested to reduce it.

3.3.7. Summary of the Qualitative Results

The current study attempts to investigate the phenomenon of oral communication apprehension. Mainly, it will point out the factors that cause it in EFL classes. Moreover, it will explore the impact of oral communication apprehension on students' willingness to communicate and performance during oral activities. Furthermore, it will suggest strategies to cope with this issue.

Based on the results obtained from students' questionnaire, students proved the existence of oral communication apprehension in EFL classes. They admitted that this issue has a negative impact on them and cause them oral communication incompetency due to the lack of participation in oral tasks. Besides, they argued that the main reasons behind this issue are related to the environment which is the classroom, topic of discussion, students themselves, teacher, and classmates.

Additionally, the attained results showed effective strategies that might be utilized by teachers to reduce their students' oral communication apprehension. These strategies include creating suitable environment, giving positive feedback, implementing different tasks, and other strategies. As for students, they may rely on the

immediate exercise before speaking, or controlling their breath, or imagining themselves alone in the class.

3.4. Summary of the Findings

The main aim of this study is to have an idea about oral communication apprehension as an aspect that obstructs speaking skill development. Therefore, the researcher adopted a couple of tools. These are: an interview administered to EFL teachers as the main instrument and a questionnaire distributed among first-year master students to gain credible and valid results. More importantly, this study was conducted to explore the factors that cause oral communication apprehension in EFL classes, as well as, its effect on the learners' speaking skill. Moreover, it sought to provide strategies to help face this difficulty.

Both of the data collection methods provided approximately similar results that help answer the research questions and generate new assumptions concerning the factors that cause oral communication apprehension. Both teachers and students agreed on the negative impact of oral communication apprehension which might be derived from different sources.

First of all, they argued that classroom which portrays the environment in which the learning process occurs can be a reason for oral communication apprehension. Thus, teachers suggest creating a suitable classroom, taking into consideration the arrangement and discipline rules. In the same path, data from the two instruments confirmed that when students do not have sufficient knowledge about the topic of discussion, they feel apprehensive. More importantly, the study results showed that the student herself/ himself can a cause of oral communication apprehension. To simplify, students might have speech skill deficiencies which lead to communicating thoughts ineffectively. They also may be suffering from psychological problems such as fear of

making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, or personal issues like lack of motivation and learning styles. Equally, teacher's strategies and feedback which is classified under the category of teacher-related factors cause apprehension among EFL learners. The last factor is classmate-related factors. In other words, students feel apprehensive when they are judged or criticized by their classmates. Yet, this difficulty could be reduced by using different strategies, either by teachers or by students.

To conclude, the results obtained from the instruments answered the relevant research question and developed hypotheses concerning the causes behind oral communication apprehension. These factors can be derived from various sources classified into five categories that are classroom-related, topic-related, student-related, teacher-related, and classmate-related.

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the fieldwork. It consisted of two parts. On one hand, the first part shed light on the research approach, research design, population, sampling, and data collection methods. On the other hand, the practical part sought to generate new assumptions concerning the factors that cause oral communication apprehension through detailed data analysis, interpretation, and discussion of findings.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to highlight the speaking difficulties that EFL learners encounter. Particularly, oral communication apprehension that is regarded as a serious issue that has negative effects on students' perception towards interaction and participation during oral activities. Mainly, the study attempted to explore the root causes behind this phenomenon and raise new assumptions concerning the factors that cause oral communication apprehension.

In order to achieve the intended purpose of this study, the researcher adopted mixed-methods approach. Moreover, to get a reliable view on the factors that cause oral communication apprehension, she based her study on two data collection tools. Namely, an interview which has been conducted with EFL teachers; as well as, a questionnaire which has been administrated to first-year master sciences of language students at the department of English language. Both targeted populations belong to Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

The findings that resulted from the analysis and the interpretation of the gathered data revealed that there are different sources from which various factors can be gleaned; causing oral communication apprehension in EFL classes. These sources were divided into five categories which are classroom-related, topic of discussion related, students-related, teacher-related, and classmates-related factors. Furthermore, the obtained results showed that there is a variety of strategies that help reducing or, in some cases, overcoming this issue which can be implemented by both teachers and students.

To sum up, oral communication apprehension has significant negative impact on students' speaking skill development since it obstructs them from interacting and

using the language which is the pillar of learning any foreign language. The reasons behind this phenomenon are derived from distinct sources. Yet, it can be reduced by implementing certain tricks and techniques.

Limitations of the Study

- The spread of Corona Covid-19 around the world had a negative impact on the psychological state of the researcher which hindered her from smoothly accomplishing this work.

- The imposition of quarantine by authorities obstructed the meeting with the supervisor which disabled the effective discussion about the instructions.

- The suspension of studying prevented the researcher from having face-to-face interviews with teachers which led her to adopt written interviews.

- The researcher had some difficulties while designing the outline of chapter two since it contained more than one variable

Pedagogical Implications

- Oral communication apprehension is considered a grievous psychological harm that affects the learners' performance during oral activities which leads them to fail in EFL learning.

- Oral communication apprehension affects the students' willingness to communicate. Thus, it can be the reason behind the lack of participation in EFL classes.

- Numerous factors might contribute in aggravating the impact of oral communication apprehension. The main sources of these factors are the classroom, topic of discussion, students themselves, teacher, and classmates.

- To minimize the negative outcomes of oral communication apprehension, various strategies can be used by teachers such as creating suitable environment, giving positive feedback, implementing different tasks, and other strategies.

- Several trick can be used by students to reduce their apprehension when communicating; for instance, controlling their breath and exercising immediately before speaking.

- To ensure the effective communication among EFL learners, the teacher should increase learners' engagement in oral activities.

Recommendations for Teachers

- Teachers should pay more attention to teaching speaking skill and boosting their students' communicative competence.

- Teachers must be acquainted with the speaking difficulties that prevent students' progression in learning English.

- Teachers have to know that quiet students are not necessarily incompetent.

- Teachers must give an opportunity to apprehensive students to be a part of the learning process.

- Teachers must have an idea about the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners in order to apply the right technique to help them.

- Teachers should carry out different activities and create a suitable classroom atmosphere for apprehensive students to interact comfortably.

Recommendations for Students

- Students should not neglect the existence of oral communication apprehension issue and its highly negative impact on their willingness to communicate.

- Students must identify the reasons behind their oral communication apprehension which makes it possible to find out the most effective solution.

- Students have to take the initiative and participate in oral activities, especially when they know the correct answers, to boost their self-confidence.

- Students have to interact with their peers in order to overcome the problem of introversion and reticence.

- Students need to practice English outside classroom; using online chat rooms for instance, in order to raise their level in speaking.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

- Regarding the overcrowded classrooms, it is recommended to minimize the number of students per class to allow practicing English to be more effective. Also, that reduces the level of communication apprehension among students since it creates more comfortable environment.

- It is recommended to create strict rules concerning classroom discipline to avoid bullying and verbal violence among students.

Recommendations for Future Research

- In chapter one, the researcher talked about communicative competence and identified its different components which implies its significance in learning a foreign language. Therefore, studies should be conducted to gain more knowledge about the strategies that help teachers improve students' language.

- In chapter one, the researcher has searched for techniques that might be useful to overcome oral communication apprehension. Then, she found that systematic desensitization method could be effective. Henceforth, further research should be made on how this method could applied in EFL classes.

- In chapter two, the researcher pointed out the variables that contribute to oral communication apprehension. Consequently, future research must be conducted to find out the effect of each factor on learners' willingness to communicate.

- In chapter two, the researcher highlighted foreign language anxiety as a factor that cause oral communication apprehension. Thus, researchers must look for different strategies that help to alleviate this issue.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers,

This interview is an attempt to collect data for the accomplishment of a master dissertation. The main purpose of this interview is to explore "the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners". Indeed, we would be highly thankful for the information that you will provide us with. The responses you provide will remain anonymous and contribute to the achievement of research objectives.

Thank you for your effort, time, and collaboration.

Prepared By

Samira BEGHOURA

Supervised By

Mrs. Houda DJOUAMA

University

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

2019 - 2020

1. What is your educational degree?

    a) Classic ☐

    b) License ☐

    c) Master ☐

2. How long have you been teaching English?

    a)   1-3 years ☐

    b)   4-8 years ☐

    c)   More than 10 years ☐

3. In your opinion, why is communication important when learning a foreign language?

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4. What are the different activities that you give your students in the class and might help to improve their communicative competence?

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- Which one of these activities is more effective?

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- Justify your answer, please.

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5. How do students feel about implementing oral activities such as oral presentations in class?

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- Why?

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6. What are the main speaking difficulties most of your students face in class?

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7. Oral communication apprehension is one of the common difficulties that EFL learners face during their learning process. How can you define it?

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8. To what extent your students suffer from oral communication apprehension?

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9. What are the observed signs/ symptoms of communication apprehension among your students?

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10. What strategies/ tricks you use to help your students overcome their oral communication apprehension?

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11. How can communication apprehension influence students' oral performance?

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12. What are the factors you think they can cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners?

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- Which of the mentioned factors is more dominant?

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- Would you like to provide us with more explanation?

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13. We would be highly grateful for any further suggestions or comments.

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Appendix 2: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

This questionnaire is an attempt to collect data for the accomplishments ofa master dissertation about "Exploring the factors that cause oral communication apprehension among EFL learners" in Biskra University. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions by putting a (✓)in the appropriate answer and by giving full statements whenever it is necessary. Be sure that your responses will be anonymous and will be used for research purposes only.

"Thank you for your time, effort, and collaboration"

Prepared By

Samira BEGHOURA

Supervised By

Mrs. Houda DJOUAMA

University

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

2019 - 2020

Section One: **Personal Information**

Q1. Would you specify your gender please?

   a) Female ☐   b) Male ☐

Q2. Please, specify your age.

   a) 22-23 ☐

   b) 23-25 ☐

   c) More than 25 ☐

Q3. Choosing English as field of studying was:

   a) Your own choice ☐

   b) Your parents' choice ☐

   c) Someone's suggestion ☐

If it is your choice, is it because:

   a) It is the Lingua-Franca (the language of the world). ☐

   b) You like it. ☐

   c) You need it. ☐

Others, please specify.

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Section Two: **Oral Communication**

Q4. To what extent do you think that oral communication is important?

   a) Very important ☐

   b) Important ☐

   c) Not important at all ☐

Would you justify your answer, please?

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Q5. How can you evaluate your speaking performance?

a) Poor

b) Average

c) Good

d) Excellent

Q6. Is speaking English as foreign language difficult?

a) Yes   b) No

If yes, what kind of difficulties? (you can choose more than one option)

a) You do not know what to say.

b) You know what to say but you do not know how.

c) You know what to say and how to say it, but you cannot say it.

d) You do not know how to use body language.

Section Three: Classroom Participation Apprehension

Q7. How often do you participate in oral classroom activities?

a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Rarely

Q8. How do you feel when you are asked to speak English in class?

a) Apprehensive   b) Comfortable

Please, justify your answer.

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Q9. Do you feel apprehensive when you are giving a presentation in class?

a) Yes [   ]   b) No [   ]

Q10. Please, indicate whether the following symptoms apply to you when you are

giving a presentation or not by ticking the right answer.

Symptoms	Yes	No
1. My heart beats very fast.		
2. My hands tremble.		
3. I tend to be brief.		
4. My thoughts become confused and jumbled.		

Section Four: Factors Contributing to Oral Communication Apprehension

Part One: Classroom's Related Factors

Q11. Which of the following classroom's related factors bring you apprehension

when performing oral tasks?

(you can choose more than one option)

a) Lack of discipline rules. [   ]

b) Student's large number. [   ]

c) Your class arrangement. [   ]

If others, please specify.

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Part Two: Topic of Discussion's Related Factors

Q12. Have you ever been in a situation where you have no prior knowledge about the

discussion?

a) Yes ☐   b) No ☐

If yes, what do you do in that situation?

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Part Three: Students' Related factors

a) Linguistic factors

Do you have speech skill deficiencies?

a) Yes ☐   b) No ☐

If yes, what kind of deficiencies do you have?

a) Lack of Fluency (stammering, having sudden blocks, etc). ☐

b) Lack of Accuracy (you cannot organize your thoughts). ☐

c) Lack of Vocabulary. ☐

d) Lack of grammar knowledge. ☐

e) Poor pronunciation. ☐

b) Personal Factors

Q14. What type of learners are you?

a) Auditory (You learn through listening). ☐

b) Visual (You learn by seeing). ☐

c) Kinesthetic (You learn by doing). ☐

Q15. How do you feel when the teacher utilizes strategies/ materials that do not fit your type?

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Q16. Does your perception of how people assess the way you look affect your performance when speaking in front of your classmates?

a) Yes ☐   b) No ☐

c) Psychological Factors

Q17. Do you suffer from psychological problems which affect your speaking learning process?

a) Yes ☐   b) No ☐

If yes, please indicate which of the following problems you are suffering from? (You can choose more than one option.)

a) Anxiety ☐

b) Low self-esteem ☐

c) Introversion ☐

d) Shyness ☐

Q18. Which of the following factors affect your speaking performance most?

a) Linguistic factors ☐

b) Personal Factors ☐

c) Psychological Factors ☐

Please explain.

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d) Teacher's Related Factors

Q19. Which of the following teacher's related factors cause oral communication

apprehension among EFL students?

a) Teacher's teaching strategy (individual/pair/ group work) ☐

b) Teacher's Oral tasks ☐

c) Teacher's feedback ☐

If other's, please specify

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e) Classmates' Related Factors

Q20. Please, indicate whether the following statements apply to you by ticking the

right answer.

Statements	A	N	D
1. The fear of being judged by my classmates holds me back from participating.			
2. I feel apprehensive when I am being criticized by my classmates.			
3. I feel apprehensive when other students perform better than me.			

Q21. Which of the following factors affect you most?

a) Classroom's- related factors ☐

b) Student's- related factors ☐

c) Discussion topic's- related factors ☐

d) Teacher's- related factors ☐

e) Peers' -related factors ☐

Section Five: Strategies Used to Reduce Oral Communication Apprehension

Q22. Do you think that oral communication apprehension can affect the student's

performance negatively?

☐   ☐

a) Yes   b) No

Justify your answer please.

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Q23. What strategies you usually use to reduce your anxiety when participating in oral

activities?

a) You control your breathing. ☐

b) You exercise immediately before you talk. ☐

c) You accept the fact of being apprehensive. ☐

d) Others ☐

Give examples, please.

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Q24. How does your teacher help you overcome oral communication apprehension?

a) Through implementing different oral tasks. ☐

b) By giving positive feedback. ☐

c) By using Sense of humor. ☐

d) None of them ☐

If others, please specify.

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Q25. Knowing that Systematic desensitization is a type of behavioral therapy that helps people to overcome their fears gradually, including oral communication apprehension. In this strategy, people are exposed to perform tasks from the easiest to the hardest. To what extent you think that this technique can be effective?
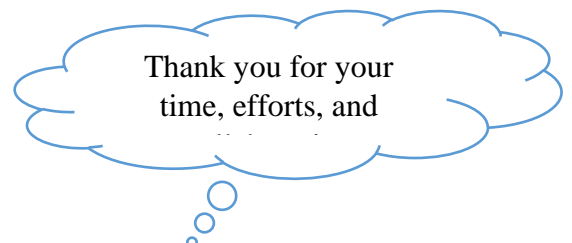
a) Very effective ☐

b) Effective ☐

c) Not effective at all ☐

Explain, please.

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If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free.

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Thank you for your time, efforts, and

الملخص

في حين أن التواصل الشفوي هو الهدف النهائي الذي يسعى متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية إلى تحقيقه، إلا أن التخوف من التواصل الشفهي لا يزال يخلق عائقًا أمام الغالبية منهم. ومن هذا المنطلق، يهدف البحث الحالي إلى التحقيق في العوامل التي تسبب مخاوف التواصل الشفهي بين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يسعى البحث إلى تحديد تأثير كلٍّ من هذه العوامل على أداء الطلاب والاستراتيجيات الفعالة للتخفيف من حدتها. في سبيل معالجة هذه القضايا تعتمد الباحثة نهج متعدد الأساليب. فيما يتعلق بأدوات جمع البيانات والفئة التي استهدفتها الدراسة، أجرت الباحثة مقابلة لثمانية (8) من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية واستبيانًا لأربعين (40) طالب ماستر في السنة الأولى بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. أما فيما يتعلق بالفرضيات، فلم تسترشد بها الباحثة خلال رحلة البحث حيث أن البحث استكشافيّ بينما الفرضيات، في هذه الحالة، يتم توليدها على هيئة نتائج. وكشفت النتائج أن التخوف من التواصل الشفوي له آثار سلبية على أداء الطلاب وسلطت الضوء على المصادر المختلفة وراء هذه المشكلة والتي تشمل العوامل ذات الصلة بالفصول الدراسية، وموضوع المناقشة، والمتعلقة بالطلاب، والمعلمين، وزملاء الدراسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التواصل الشفهي، التخوف من التواصل الشفهي، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، أداء الطلاب، العوامل التي تسبب القلق.