

التعليم

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

UNIVERSITE MOULOU D MAMMERI TIZI-OUZOU

FACULTE DES LETTRES ET DES LANGUES

DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS



كلية

Domaine : Lettres et Langues Etrangères

Filière : Langue Anglaise

Spécialité: Sémiotique Sociale et Linguistique Appliquée

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master in English

Title:

**Enhancing English Language Students' Speaking Skill Through
Overcoming Anxiety.**

**The Case of First Year Students in the Department of English at
Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-ouzou.**

Presented by:

Mr. MUSTAPHA OUHADJ

Mr. OUMAHAMED REZKI

Supervised by:

Ms. ROZA AIMEUR

Board of Examiners:

Chair: Ms. KAMILA AMMOUR (MAA) Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.

Supervisor: Ms ROZA AIMEUR (MAB) Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.

Examiner: Ms AMEL BENAÏSSA (MAA) Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.

Promotion: September, 2016

De série:

D'ordre:

Laboratoire de Domiciliation du Master : Etude des Langues et Cultures Etrangères

Dedication

*I dedicate this humble work to my mother, father and dearest brothers.
Without their moral support and help, I will never ever succeed.*

Mustapha

*I dedicate this simple work to my parents, brothers, sisters, and my
grandmother Fatma.*

Rezki

Acknowledgements

Above all, we thank God for his help

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supervisor

Ms. ROZA AIMEUR

For her constant help, precious suggestions, valuable advice, and support

We must acknowledge the participants, who have willingly shared their precious

Time and for collaboration in the answering of the questionnaire and interview

We are immensely grateful to one and all, who directly or indirectly,

Have lent their Hand in this

Humble work, for the continuous encouragement,

And for sharing their pearls of wisdom.

Our sincere gratitude, thanks and appreciation to the board of examiners who accepted to evaluate and criticize this work.

*We would like to thank our teachers of the department English for their guidance and help since our first days in **Mouloud Mammeri** University.*

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

MMUTO: Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou

QCA: Qualitative Content Analysis

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract

The present study investigates the issue of foreign language speaking anxiety in the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzoou. It aims to realize two main objectives. First, it aims to explain the causes that lead to students' foreign language speech anxiety and hinder their speaking performance. Second, it aims to investigate the effective strategies that teachers and learners can use in order to decrease anxiety and enhance students' foreign language speaking performance. To achieve this purpose we rely on Horwitz et al theory (1986). Besides, this study relies on two main data gathering tools: a questionnaire and an interview. The former is administered to seventy-seven first year students of English at MMUTO. The latter is conducted with six teachers of oral expression from the department of English at MMUTO. The findings of the study illustrate that most foreign language students tend to be anxious in speaking situations more than the other situations like listening, reading and writing. There are different factors that lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety which hurdle their learning and their speaking performance.

General Introduction

General Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The ability of speaking a second/foreign language is one of the most important issues for foreign language learners. Therefore, students who are engaged to learn English as a foreign language (EFL) need endeavor effort in order to speak it, but not with the same degree of speaking their mother tongue because of the interference of various factors like affective ones (anxiety and frustration) during the learning process. For this purpose, teachers try to provide EFL learners with a suitable environment such as studying in laboratories and using various activities that aim to ameliorate students' level.

However, most students do not take part in speaking activities. Teachers observe that their students' level increases just in listening, writing and reading skills, but they still have difficulties in the speaking skill. For instance, teachers are frustrated when arriving at the speaking stage because their students cannot produce a simple sentence. Furthermore, even foreign language students wonder why they cannot express their ideas freely, why they have difficulties in communication and why they cannot speak fluently like others.

Nevertheless, researchers noticed the existence of the affective variable 'learning anxiety', which hinders students to take part during the lessons and influences their speaking fluency negatively. For this reason, the present work attempts to investigate the factors of anxiety and the link between anxiety and the speaking skill.

Aims and Significance of the Study

Anxiety is considered as one of the most important issues which tends to have a considerable negative effects on foreign language learners. For this purpose, our research attempts to reach two important objectives. First, we focus on the exploration of the focal causes of anxiety that make first year students of English at MMUTO very anxious and prevent them

to speak fluently. Second, we aim to look for the appropriate strategies that help both teachers and students in order to reduce anxiety and promote the students' speaking skill.

The significance of this investigation lies in the fact that it is an exploratory research about the factors of anxiety and the appropriate strategies that may reduce it at the level of the department of English at MMUTO. So, knowing the causes that lead to students' speech anxiety may help in finding ways to reduce it, and its reduction may assist in enhancing students' speaking performance.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This work attempts to give answers for the following questions:

- 1- Do first year students in the department of English at MMUTO experience foreign language anxiety?
- 2- To what extent does anxiety affect negatively the speaking skill of the first year students in the department of English at MMUTO?
- 3- What are the focal factors that cause students' anxiety?
- 4- How can both teachers and first year students in the department of English at MMUTO overcome or reduce this phenomenon in order to enhance the students' speaking skill?

To answer our research questions, we advance the following hypotheses:

- 1- First year students in the department of English at MMUTO experience anxiety.
- 2- First year students in the department of English at MMUTO are affected negatively by anxiety.
- 3- First year students in the department of English at MMUTO can overcome or reduce the negative effects of anxiety by knowing the main factors and adopting the appropriate strategies that help them to escape from the anxiety circle.

Research Techniques and Methodology

The purpose of this research is to investigate the focal factors that cause students' anxiety and to suggest some strategies that help them to escape from it. Therefore, to achieve this we rely on the theory proposed by Horwitz *et al* (1986). In this research, we will opt for the descriptive and explanatory methods to figure out some information about the problems from which first year students in the department of English at MMUTO suffer. The reasons behind the use of these methods are due to the nature of the work. First, the description of the problem of anxiety does not demand an experiment to select the experimental method. Another reason that leads us to choose the descriptive method is that in previous studies about the issue of anxiety, all researchers used the descriptive one for gathering students' opinions, and diaries. As for the explanatory method, it will help us to explain why this phenomenon occurs and to predict future occurrences. Explanatory studies are characterized by research hypotheses that specify the nature and direction of the relationships between or among variables being studied. Finally, the choice of this method can also be justified by the fact that this research methodology can provide us with consistent and comprehensive information and valid results without consuming time.

Concerning the research sample, we find it necessary to choose a sample from the whole population of the first year students in the department of English at MMUTO through random sampling process. This is in order to avoid subjectivity and serve the scope of the study as well. Besides, it is sufficient to deal just with the sample of seventy seven students selected randomly from the whole population. First year students are selected for the purpose of exploring and collecting their views about anxiety and knowing whether they use strategies to reduce it or not. Teachers of oral expression are also selected to know the extent to which anxiety influences negatively students' speaking skill.

In order to answer the research questions, test our hypotheses and obtain the information required for our study, we rely on two main tools: the questionnaire and the interview. The questionnaire is administered to first year students in the department of English at MMUTO. The fundamental reason behind the choice of this instrument in this study is that the questionnaire is a very important research tool that may help us to gather a huge amount of information in a short period of time and it is more useful in helping us to get a better understanding of students' difficulties in learning English and the main factors causing anxiety for them and its influence on their communication. Concerning the interview, it is directed to teachers of Oral Expression in order to know the extent to which anxiety is related to the speaking skill in comparison with other skills.

Structure of the Dissertation

The overall structure of this dissertation follows the traditional-simple model. It consists of a general introduction, four chapters and a general conclusion. The first chapter is the 'Review of the Literature'. It reviews the theoretical foundations which are closely related to anxiety and aims at exploring and exposing different works done on this particular subject in order to clarify the notion of anxiety and more particularly the speaking skill. The second chapter is called 'Research Design'. It describes the methodology adopted for the study as well as the procedures of data analysis and data collection. The third chapter is entitled 'Presentation of the Findings' in which the results are figured out by using different tables and diagrams. The fourth and the last chapter is labelled 'Discussion of the Findings' whose function is to discuss the findings of the study and gives answers to the research questions. Finally, this dissertation ends with a general conclusion which summarizes the whole work.

Chapter One
Review of The Literature

Chapter One: Review of the Literature

Introduction

Anxiety is one of the major problems which hinders the process of second/foreign language learning. Many researchers studied anxiety as a psychological phenomenon starting from the 1970s to the present day. Although they depend on different perspectives, they look for the same result, which is exploring and presenting beneficial explanations for this phenomenon. Based on earlier research, in this chapter, we attempt to clarify the issue of foreign language anxiety. We begin by presenting the definition of anxiety. Then, we present the types of anxiety, and its main symptoms including psychological, behavioral, and physical symptoms. After that, we try to define the speaking skill, its significance and its aspects. Also, in this chapter, we try to give a clear insight about the foreign language anxiety and the definition of speech anxiety. To clarify these elements, we rely on Horwitz et al theory (1986).

I. Anxiety

I.1. Defining Anxiety

One of the widespread definitions of anxiety is that of Scovel (1978 cited in Brown, 2007:161), who states that '*Anxiety is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry*'. From this definition, we can say that anxiety is related to all humans' feelings. Anxiety also has been defined by different scholars as Fletcher and Langley (2009: 35), who claim that it is a '*natural feeling experienced by everyone when facing situations which are unusual through different changes and events in life such as the death of a close family member or changes at work or home*'. Therefore, we can say that this phenomenon can be experienced at any moment in our life. Anxiety was also explained in terms of the Human Evolution Theory. From this perspective, Darwin (1872 quoted in Wilson, 2006:41) thought of anxiety as '*an emotional reaction that is aroused when an organism feels physically under threat*'. Referring to Darwin's theory of evolution, Twenge (2002, Cited in

Wilson, 2006: 41) confirms that '*emotions are flexible in that they serve a specific purpose for the survival of the individual. Anxiety and fear primarily serve to warn of potential danger and trigger physiological and psychological reactions*'.

Spielberger (1983, cited in Brown 2007:161) defines anxiety as '*the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system*'. Anxiety is controlled by humans' nervous system. The arousal of this system leads to anxiety, which is reflected in feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry (ibid).

I.2. Types of Anxiety

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991: 31), anxiety has three types: Trait anxiety, State anxiety, and Situational Specific Anxiety.

I.2.1. Trait Anxiety

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), trait anxiety is more long lasting and stable and occurs in a variety of situations. It is personal and some people are generally anxious about many things. In fact, some people may feel anxious whereas others feel relaxed. For example, some learners may feel at ease in written exams, but may feel anxious in oral exams. According to Spielberger, *et al.* (2005), trait anxiety is a general characteristic of an individual's personality. Individuals who experience trait anxiety tend to have an attitude and reaction which reflects their ability to understand the nature of certain environmental stimuli and stressful situations as more or less difficult or threatening. People who develop more trait-anxiety are much more prone to reacting to a large level of stimuli, and will be more able to worry in less dangerous and hard situations (Spielberger, *et al*, 2005).

I.2.2. State Anxiety ('Here-and-Now' Experience)

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991:31), the second type is state anxiety, which is '*the here-and-now experience of anxiety as an emotional state*'. This entails that state anxiety

is an apprehension experienced at a specific moment in time. Baily and Nunan (1996) state that it refers to anxiety in a specific temporary phenomenon or particular situation such as language classroom. Generally, high levels of state anxiety are particularly harmful. It can even hinder the person's tendency to engage in adaptive behavior aimed to end and overcome this feeling. For example, an exam question makes the learner bored and very disturbed emotionally and hence very much anxious about his/her future.

Accordingly, we deduce that state anxiety is a temporary anxiety that learners may experience at a transient moment of time as a result of specific conditions or stimuli such as an important test. Unlike trait anxiety, state anxiety is not permanent, and it diminishes over time.

I.3.3.Situational Anxiety

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991:31), the third type called situational-specific anxiety '*goes deep through the specific forms of anxiety that occur consistently over time within a given situation*'. The examples of situation specific anxiety can be public speaking, writing examinations, performing mathematics, or participating in a foreign language class. Both (2010) argues that situational anxiety is a kind of anxiety experienced in certain situations .For instance, taking a test or speaking in public are seen as anxieties experienced in certain well-defined situations. Spielberger *et al.* (2005) claim that this type focusses on the general orientation and certain situations of anxiety. For example, when EFL students speak in front of their classmates or their teachers. In other terms, students do not find themselves capable to be proficient in a foreign language speaking passage. Thus, this may give birth to what is called situational anxiety. In this context, Ellis (1994:691) claims that situational-specific anxiety '*consists of the anxiety which is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation*'.

To conclude, trait and situation-specific anxiety are permanent types of anxiety. Trait anxiety is considered as a feature of ones' character which is experienced in any situation while

situation-specific anxiety occurs within a specific situation. However, state anxiety is a temporary anxiety that occurs in a specific moment of time and decreases over time.

Anxiety can have also debilitating and facilitative types. Alpert and Haber (1960, cited in Brown, 2007: 162) argue that stress can be a good motivator. For example, it may keep a person alert and provide him with motivation. This positive anxiety is called facilitating anxiety. It does not inhibit the preparation for tests and exams, and can motivate the learner to learn and succeed. In fact, this type of anxiety helps him/her to improve the progress of learning and performance. According to Scovel (1978, cited in Ellis, 1994:482), facilitating-anxiety keeps the learner motivated and fights the new information and pushes him/her to do more efforts to reduce the negative impact of anxiety. However, some stress can have devastating effects and can lead him/her to forget several issues during an exam. This negative anxiety is called debilitating anxiety.

I.3. Anxiety Symptoms

Peters Myer, Diane (2008) classifies anxiety symptoms into three types: physical symptoms, psychological symptoms, and behavioral symptoms. Physical Symptoms consist of shallow (weak) and hyperventilation (quick and deep) breathing, intense rush of adrenaline (a hormone that causes blood pressure to rise) and other stress hormones, pounding heartbeat, heart palpitations and sweating. They also include shaky limbs and trembling, body and muscle tension, dry mouth, headaches, nausea, diarrhea, and/or vomiting, skin eruptions, hives and rashes, fatigue, and eating and sleeping problems. Psychological Symptoms include feeling overwhelmed, loss of concentration, feeling out of control, hopelessness, anger, and shame. As for behavioral symptoms, they include angry outbursts and tantrums, refusal to go to school or to do homework, inability to sleep, curtailment of activities, avoidance of social situations, places and certain people.

II. Foreign Language Speech Anxiety

II.1. The Speaking Skill

Speaking is a crucial part in foreign/second language teaching-learning. Different definitions have been given to the speaking skill: Irzeqat (2010:6) states that '*speaking is the core of learning languages since speaking a language means knowing that language*'. According to the Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2009: 414), speaking is '*the action of conveying information or expressing ones' thoughts and feelings in spoken language*'. In other words, through speaking people can transact information and even share their ideas with others. In addition to the above definitions, Brown *et al.* (1994, cited in M. A. C. Florez, 1999: 1) consider speaking '*as an interactive process of constructing, receiving and processing information*'. For example, in a conversation, we find a speaker and a hearer interacting about a given subject. That is, the speaker provides the hearer with information and the hearer (receiver) processes them in a manner in which he can understand what is said by the speaker. Chaney (1998: 13) notes that speaking is '*the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal or non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts*'. In this case, we can understand from this definition that in speaking situation, people can use either verbal or non-verbal signs in order to construct knowledge and at the same time share it. Mackey (1978: 263) adds that '*speaking is the most complex linguistic skill, since it involves thinking of what is to be said while saying what has been thought*'. That is, the problem that most learners face while speaking is how to transmit the idea as it is rather than saying it in the way of how it was thought. Because of the existence of anxiety in foreign language learning, speaking is affected by this phenomenon.

II.2. The Aspects of the Speaking Skill

The two factors which could determine the success of English are accuracy and fluency. They are the fundamental criteria to measure both linguistic ability and speaking/communicative competence respectively in language use (speaking skill).

II.2.1. Fluency

Hector (1991:12) asserts that fluency in daily speech means '*speaking rapidly and well*', whereas in the field of language learning and teaching it means '*speaking rapidly and smoothly, not necessarily grammatically*' (ibid). Schmidt (1992, cited in Remova *et al*, 2008:13) says that fluent speech is '*automatic, not requiring much attention or effort*'.

Thornbury (2000, cited in Remova *et al*, 2008: 13) also claims that fluency depends on '*a stored bank of memorized chunks and having the ability... to retrieve these chunks at speed*'. Or in other words, fluency is related to the use of words which exist in the mind. So, persons who have the capacity to bring (get back) those words which exist in their memory quickly can reach fluency.

Kormos (2006, cited in Remova *et al*, 2008:13) argues that fluency is '*understood from two different angles: global oral proficiency and the ability to produce talk smoothly within the time constraints of real-life communication*'. Kormos (2006) relates fluency to the ability to produce talk smoothly within time constraints of real-life communication. Thus, he adopted the definition of fluency from Lennon (2005, cited in Remova *et al*, 2008: 13) who states that the word fluency can be related to five concepts which are: '*rapid, smooth, accurate, lucid and efficient translation of thought or communicative intention into language under the temporal constraints of processing*'.

II.2.2. Accuracy

According to J. C. Richards.*et al*. (1992: 204), in second/foreign language teaching, accuracy refers to '*the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences*'. However, J. Harmer

(2001: 104) points that accuracy involves the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, which are considered by Thornbury (2000) as three criteria that most teachers rely on in the assessment of learners' command of the linguistic system. Therefore, to be accurate in oral production, to be understood and to gain interest of their interlocutors, learners should pay attention to correctness and completeness (no space to fragment sentences) of the language form; they should master the use of:

1- *Vocabulary*: which means that learners should learn words and know their meanings, their use, also they should be able to distinguish between word classes as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, or know their functions as determiners, particles, preposition, etc. Mastering vocabulary helps learners to be able to select and use the appropriate words, utterances and expressions in a conversation context.

2-*Grammatical structures*: refer to the rules of word order, tenses, etc. This means that learners should know how sentence elements are used and work together such as morphemes, phonemes, words, phrases, clauses, etc.

3-*Correct pronunciation*: production of sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures and intonation (the rise and falling of the voice) of the language (Thornbury, 2000).

II.3. Foreign Language Anxiety

In foreign/second language learning contexts, anxiety is called second or foreign language anxiety and it has been given many definitions. Irzeqat (2010: 2) states that '*foreign language anxiety is associated with sentiments of fear, uncertainty, disturbance, and worry in accordance with situations where the language is learned such as English in foreign language classrooms*'. That is, foreign language anxiety is related to learners' feelings in classroom. In their seminal article 'Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety', Horwitz, *et al.* (1986:128) provide a definition of anxiety peculiar to language learning. They state that foreign language anxiety is '*a distinct*

complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process'.

The uniqueness of language learning lies in the fact that learners are required to perform in a language that they do not fully master. It lies also in the fact that learners are much more criticized and negatively evaluated than in other subjects because of the chances of making mistakes in the language class are much greater. In other words, foreign language anxiety is considered as a combination of different states of apprehension and worry associated with foreign language learning. Learners experience it as a result of their perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about language learning.

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), anxiety in classroom is represented through learners' behavior such as anxious learners cannot perform well in role play activities and they forget previously learned material. They are also less likely to volunteer answer because they avoid participation and speaking in front of class. To put it simply, anxiety varies in foreign language learners according to their individual characteristics. This entails that what makes one learner anxious may not provoke anxiety for another learner.

II.3. 1. Definition of Speech Anxiety

Foreign language speaking anxiety is also called speech anxiety, stage fright, speech fright, and public speaking anxiety. Language is a system of communication. For that reason, it is evident that communication own an important role in learning any language. To practise speaking is therefore a central part of English lessons in schools today. However, to make students speak the target language is not always easy and there can be several different reasons as anxiety. Therefore, researchers provide various definitions to speech anxiety. Kanar (2011: 292) defines speech anxiety as '*a stress that results from having to speak in front of a group*'. Wrench *et al.* (2009: 55) believe that the following story represents a state of an anxious learner expected to give a speech in the classroom:

During Jaso's first semester teaching, he had a student who ended up in the hospital because of her anxiety. The student was preparing for her first speech in a public speaking class. As she was preparing the speech, she grew more and more anxious and finally had a panic attack and stopped breathing. If her husband had not been with her and rushed her to the hospital, it is very likely that she may have died. The doctors eventually had to medicate her, so that she could give her speeches in the class.

Speaking anxiety creates low self-confidence which makes students remain quiet in all situations, even if they have the capacity to express themselves and knowledge that is worth hearing. Lightbown and Spada (2006) also discuss speaking anxiety and how it can affect language learning. They argue that anxiety is something that is more likely to depend on special situations and circumstances that can make one feel uncomfortable as, for example, an oral presentation in front of a larger group of people. To conclude, we can say that speech anxiety is a panic that can affect people negatively in a given situation as speaking in front of group or in class.

III. Theoretical Framework

The purpose of our work is to investigate the main factors that cause students' anxiety and try to find the appropriate strategies to overcome it. Therefore, to achieve our objectives, we rely on the theory proposed by Horwitz *et al.* (1986). They theorize that foreign language anxiety in the classroom can be attributed to three performance anxieties: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

III.1. Communication Apprehension

Horwitz *et al.* (1986:127) define communication apprehension as '*a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people*'. They claim that there are other situations which indicate this phenomenon like speaking to one person or group (oral communication anxiety) which can be caused by self-esteem. According to Allwright and Bailey (1991: 178), self-esteem is the way that an individual feels about himself/herself, it is determined by how to evaluate abilities, feelings of being accepted and valued by others. As a

result, lack of self-esteem is a major psychological factor that hinders EFL learners to speak the language.

They add that the special communication apprehension permeating foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge. In this context, we find for example, little control of grammar rules, lack of vocabulary, and pronunciation mistakes. That is, a person can witness a situation in which he finds difficulties to understand others and make themselves understood due to this deficiency. In addition, MacCroskey (1976:1) defines communication apprehension as a '*broad-based fear of anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons*'. Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) claim that people who typically have trouble in speaking in front of groups are likely to experience even greater difficulty speaking in a foreign language class where they have little control of the communicative situation and their performance is constantly monitored.

III.2. Test-Anxiety

Test anxiety occurs when learners receive negative concepts as an evaluation to their poor performance in the previous tests, which can result from the lack of preparation and linguistic difficulties (lack of vocabulary, pronunciation mistake, and grammar mistakes). Those concepts and evaluations might have unpleasant test experience from either language class or other subjects. Then, learners transplant the unpleasant feeling to the English class unconsciously. As Young (1991 cited in Chan and Wu, 2004: 293) claims, learners with low levels of oral proficiency are more affected by test anxiety than those with high levels of proficiency. Consequently, they experience more language anxiety in high evaluative situations.

According to Horwitz *et al.* (1986), test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety, in which the learners feel the fear of failure and doing badly in a test. Learners who experience test anxiety consider the foreign language learning process and especially oral production as a

threatening situation rather than an opportunity to improve their communicative competence and speaking skill (ibid).

III.3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Horwitz, *et al.* (1986:127) define fear of negative evaluation as an '*apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively*'. For example, lack of preparation and practice can lead learners to experience fear of negative evaluation. The latter can lead also to what is called fear of risk taking in situations where learners think that others will give them negative evaluations. Fear of negative evaluation is not restricted only to test-taking situations, but also to other evaluative situations such as interviews for getting jobs or speaking the second language in class. Horwitz *et al.* (1986) claim that fear of negative evaluation is a very common factor that makes learners more anxious about their performance since they will be evaluated either by their teachers or peers.

In brief, communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are the main conceptual foundations of language anxiety that hinder learners and affect their communicative abilities because those components are more related to the speaking skill.

Conclusion

Foreign language speaking anxiety has been studied by many researchers who provided it with different names and definitions. All these names refer to one thing which is anxiety that people may face when they are required to speak. This chapter has highlighted the issue of anxiety which has been studied from different angles. In addition, we have mentioned the types of anxiety and its symptoms which are: physical, behavioral and mental symptoms. Moreover, this chapter has included definitions of foreign language speech anxiety, speaking skill and its aspects. This chapter has also reviewed the underlying framework of Horwitz, *et al.* (1986). On the basis of all these points tackled in this review of literature, we attempt to investigate the

causes of anxiety and the strategies that my help first year students in the department of English at MMUTO get rid of it.

Chapter Two

Research Design

Chapter Two: Research Design

Introduction

This chapter describes the techniques and the procedures of data collection and data analysis. It is divided into two sections: The first section is entitled '**Procedures of Data Collection**'. It includes the method used in this study, followed by the description of the place of investigation and the sample population. Moreover, it describes the tools (questionnaire and interview) used for data collection. The second section is entitled '**Procedures of Data Analysis**'. It presents the methods used in the analysis of the data.

I. Procedures of Data Collection

I.1. Research Method

In this dissertation, we have opted for the explanatory method and the descriptive one. The latter involves '*collection of data in order to test hypothesis or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study*' (Gay 1976, cited in Adanza, 1995: 39). Travers (1978, cited in Adanza, 1995: 39) states that: '*the descriptive method aims is to describe the nature of situation as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the causes of particular phenomena*'. Whereas the explanatory method aims to explain why phenomena occur and to predict future occurrences. For those reasons, we chose these two research methods. In this research study, we have followed both quantitative-qualitative approaches because we need to investigate this topic by using mixed method design. Angouri (2010: 46) says that quantitative and qualitative methodologies '*arguably contribute to a better understanding of the various phenomena under investigation*'.

I.2.Context of Investigation and Sample Population

This research is conducted in the department of English at MMUTO, and the target population under investigation is first year students. They consist of four hundred and forty (440)

students divided into two sections, each section contains seven groups. We distributed our questionnaire to 77 students of both sections, who are selected randomly. Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) say that anxious students are commonly found in foreign language classrooms at least at the first level at the university. For this reason, we think that first year students' category is the appropriate one for our study since they are supposed to be new at the world of university. Besides, the six teachers who participated in the interview are tutors of the oral module. Two reasons were behind including those teachers in this study: first, to have more reliable and in-depth data because of their experience in teaching, second, to gain further guidance in order to ensure that our research was being conducted suitably.

I.3. Data Collection Tools

In order to gather data for our research, we have relied on two main instruments. We have designed a questionnaire for first year students in the department of English at MMUTO. Also, we have conducted a semi structured interview with six teachers who teach oral expression for first year students in the department of English at MMUTO.

I.3.1. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

One of the instruments that we have used in collecting data is the questionnaire. The latter is a research technique which is used in sample surveys or censuses to collect demographic data (gender, age...etc.) and to elicit reports or facts, attitudes and other subjective state (Nunan 1986: 143). In addition, a questionnaire is a valuable research tool for gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. According to the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (2010: 478), '*a questionnaire is a set of questions on a topic or group of topics designed to be answered by a respondent*'. The reason behind the choice of this tool is that it can provide us with a great amount of information in a short period of time. In this regard, Brown (1988: 3) states: '*The advantage of [the questionnaire] is that substantial amounts of information can be collected in a relatively short time*'.

Through this questionnaire, we aim to discover the existence of anxiety in learning the foreign language. Besides, we intend to know the causes that may lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety, and the negative effects of anxiety on their speaking skill development. In addition, our main goal is to discover ways that can help students cope with their speaking anxiety, and some strategies that teachers can do to assist them. The students' questionnaire contains twenty four questions. It is divided into four sections: The first section is entitled '**Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning**' and aims to discover the existence of anxiety in the participants' foreign language learning. The second one is entitled '**Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**'. It aims to explore the effects of foreign language anxiety on the participants' speaking skill in comparison to the other skills. The third one is entitled '**Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**'. Its purpose is to recognize the causes that lead to the participants' foreign language speaking anxiety. As for the fourth one called '**Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**', it aims to know the importance of reducing foreign language speaking anxiety in promoting the participants' speaking performance and the appropriate ways to reduce it.

I.3.1.1. Piloting the Questionnaire Addressed to Students

The pilot work has been done in order to pretest our questionnaire. We have conducted this operation in order to check if students can understand the terms used in the questionnaire and to ensure that the questions can be answered. Besides, it aims to check if there is a wrong interpretation on the part of learners. Our pilot study was in a form of a questionnaire. We told the students to ask us if they do not understand something in the questionnaire. After modifying some questions, we have obtained the main questionnaire which is composed of twenty four questions. So, the piloting stage permitted us to make changes and clarify some questions in the questionnaire in order to make it understandable and easy to answer by the first year students.

I.3.2. Teachers' Interview

The other instrument that we have used in addition to the questionnaire is the interview. More precisely, we have opted to use the semi-structured interview. According to Catherine Dawson (2007: 29-30), the semi structured interview is the one in which '*the researcher wants to know specific information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews*'. To do this, the same questions need to be asked in each interview. However, the researcher also wants the interview to remain flexible so that other important information can still arise (ibid). The interview was done with six teachers from the department of English at MMUTO. These teachers teach the oral Module. To record the interview data, we used an audio recorder (mobile phone). The use of this apparatus helped us to remember the details reported by teachers. Also, it helped us to be organized and get the answers from the teachers as they were reported.

Via this interview which contains twelve (12) questions, we aim to know about the issue of foreign language speaking anxiety and its existence through the views of teachers. Besides, we intend to know the awareness of teachers about this phenomenon and get their suggestions about the appropriate ways to decrease students' foreign language speaking anxiety.

II. Procedures of Data Analysis

Data analysis stands as a process in which the researcher transforms the raw data collected into useful information that allow him/her to reach the objectives of the research study. For this reason, we use two techniques in the analysis of our results: statistical and descriptive content analysis. We have chosen these two techniques because of the fact that our research findings are both quantitative and qualitative.

II.1. Statistical Analysis

The analysis of the questionnaire includes the close-ended and the open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions which contain numerical data are calculated with the help of a

computer program named Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20. This computer program is mainly used in social sciences helping in the description of statistical analysis and the presentation of quantitative data (Landau and Everitt, 2004). Our results are presented in tables and diagrams.

II.2. Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative Content analysis (QCA) is a method that we use in our investigation to analyze the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the interview. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005: 1278), QCA *'is a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of the text through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns'*. This means that QCA is intended to analyze texts and interpret the meaning of texts. Thus, the data of the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview, which are related to the opinions and attitudes (open-ended questions) of both teachers and students will be analyzed relying on the analysis of the personal production of the participants on the questions. That is, we will attempt to deduce the intended answers of the participants, describing their points of views and opinions on the research topic in a written form.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have shown the way through which our data will be collected and analyzed. We have selected a questionnaire as a main research tool for English language students and a semi-structured interview as a secondary tool for English language teachers in the department of English at MMUTO. We have designed two techniques for the data analysis: statistical analysis and qualitative content analysis. In addition, we have discussed the manner in which the data will be presented once they are arranged and analyzed.

Chapter Three

Presentation of the Findings

Chapter Three: Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the presentation of the findings obtained from the questionnaire administered to first year students in the department of English at MMUTO and the interview conducted with their teachers of oral expression. It is divided into two sections. The first section covers the presentation of the results of the questionnaire, while the second one comprises the results obtained from the interview. For the sake of organization and clarity, the outcomes are presented in percentages and displayed in tables and diagrams.

I. Results of the Students' Questionnaire

I.1. Section One: Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning.

Question One: Do you think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult?

	Yes	No	Total
Number	45	32	77
Percentage	58.4%	41.6%	100%

Table (01): Students' Opinions about Learning English as a Foreign Language.

We can see from this table that the number of the students who think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult is 45 (58.4%) and those who think that learning English as a foreign language is not difficult is 32 (41.6%).

Question Two: If yes, is anxiety among the causes of your English language learning difficulties?

	Yes	No	No Answer	Total
Number	60	11	6	77
Percentage	77.9%	14.3%	7.8	100%

Table (02): Students' Perceptions about whether Anxiety is Among the Causes of their English Language Learning Difficulties.

We notice from this table that a large number of students (77.9) reported that anxiety is among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties are 60 (77.9%). Only 14.3%

reported that anxiety is not among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties, and the number of those who provided no answer is 6 (7.8%).

Question Three: Do you feel anxious when you enter English language Classes?

	Yes	No	Total
Number	62	15	77
Percentage	80.5%	19.5%	100%

Table (03): Students' Feelings when Entering the English Language Classes.

The results show that sixty-two students feel anxious when they enter English language classes with the percentage of 80.5%. Fifteen students (19.5%) answered with 'No' which means that they are at ease in English language classes.

Question Four: If yes, to what extent does anxiety affects negatively your foreign language learning?

A. High Extent B. Average Extent C. Low Extent D. No Answer

	A	B	C	D	Total
Number	12	37	6	22	77
Percentage	15,6%	48.1%	7.8%	28.5%	100%

Table (04): Students' Opinions about the Extent to which Anxiety Affects their Learning of English.

It seems from the table that the number of the students who reported that anxiety has an average extent in affecting their foreign language learning is more than the others (high extent, low extent).

I.2. Section Two: Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Question five: What do you think about Speaking the English Language?

	Easy	Difficult	Total
Number	12	65	77
Percentage	15.6%	84.4%	100%

Table (05): Students' Opinions about Speaking the English language.

The table illustrates that the number of the students who think that speaking the English language is easy is 12 (15. 6%), and those who believe that speaking the foreign language is difficult are 65 (84. 4%).

Question Six: In the English oral class, how do you speak?

A. I speak confidently B. I feel nervous when I start speaking

C. I sit at the back and keep silent D. I do not feel motivated to speak

	A	B	C	D	Total
Number	5	47	13	12	77
Percentage	6.5%	61%	16.9%	15.6%	100%

Table (06): Students' Speaking Level in the English Oral Classes.

The results indicate that forty-seven (61%) of students declare that they feel nervous when they start speaking in the English oral classes. Thirty students (16. 9%) opted for the answer (D) which means 'they sit at the back and keep silent'. Twelve students (15. 6%) answer that they do not feel motivated to speak in the English oral classes. Finally, only five students (6. 5 %) assert that they speak confidently.

Question Seven: If you have difficulties in speaking the foreign language, do you consider anxiety a cause of these difficulties?

	Yes	No	No Answer	Total
Number	57	15	5	77
Percentage	74%	19.5%	6.5%	100%

Table (07): Students' Opinions about if Anxiety is a cause of their Difficulties in Speaking the Foreign Language.

This table demonstrates that 74% of students consider anxiety as a cause of their difficulties in speaking the foreign language. However, fifteen students (19. 5%) do not consider it as a cause of their foreign language speaking. The number of the students who provided no answer is 5 (6. 5%).

Question Eleven: Anxiety embarrasses you to volunteer answers in your language class.

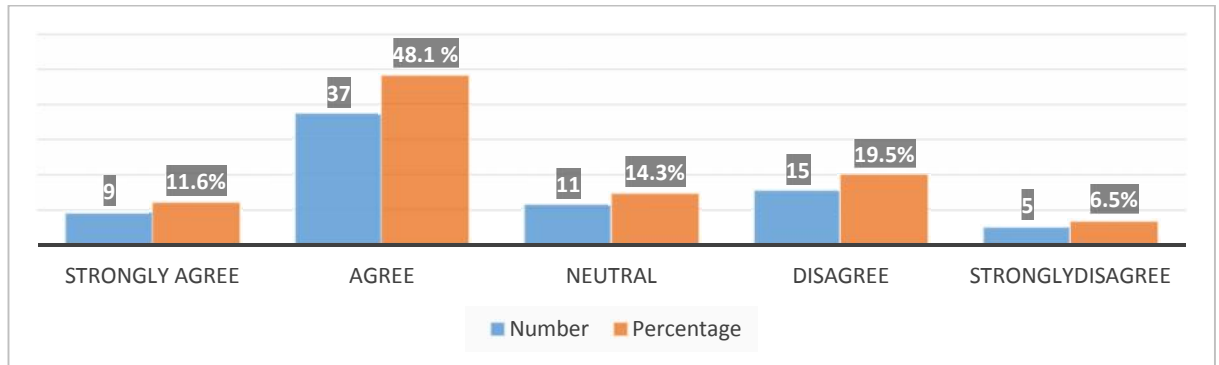


Diagram (01): The Effects of Anxiety on Students' Answers in the Class

The diagram shows that nearly half of students (48.1%) agree that anxiety embarrasses them to volunteer answers in their foreign language class. Nine students (11.6%) strongly agree, the number of those who are neutral is 11 (14.3%). That is, this category is neither for the answer agree nor disagree. Those who disagree are 15 (19.5%), and those who strongly disagree are 5 (6.5%).

Question Twelve: In the oral tasks, where do you feel more anxious?

A. Role Plays

B. Free Discussions

C. Oral Presentations

	A	B	C	Total
Number	19	23	35	77
Percentage	24.6%	29.9%	45.5%	100%

Table (11): Students' Perceptions about the Oral Tasks in which they Experience more Anxiety.

The results clearly demonstrate that nearly half proportion of students (45.5%) feel more anxious in oral presentation, 29.9% of students feel more anxious in free discussion role. Lastly, only 24.6% of students opted for the first choice

I.3. Section Three: Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety.

Question Thirteen: You never feel quite sure of yourself when you are speaking in your foreign language classroom.

A. Strongly Agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

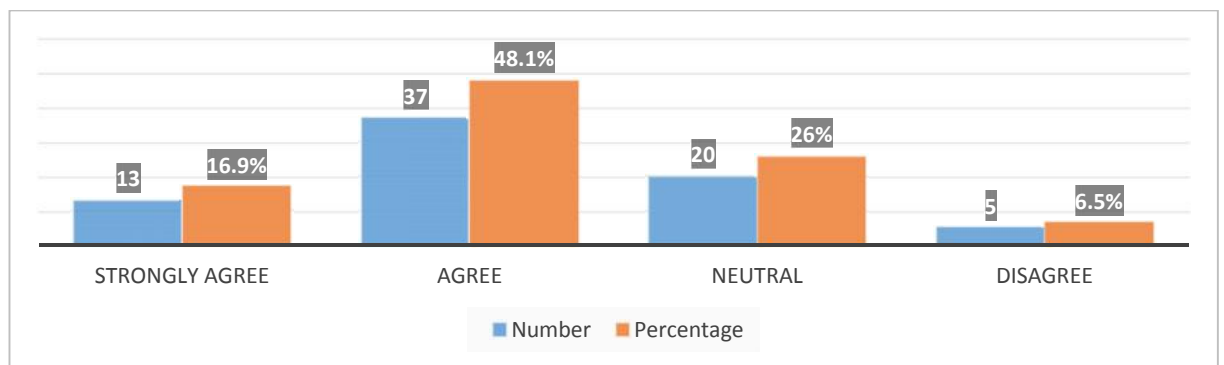


Diagram (02): The Uncertainty of Speaking the Foreign Language in the Class.

This diagram shows that 16.9% of students are strongly agree about their uncertainty to speak the foreign language in the class and thirty seven of them (48.1%) agree. 26% of students are neutral, and those who disagree are five (6.5%). On the other hand, the number of the students who do not provide us with answer is inferior, with the rate of 2.5%.

Question Fourteen: You start to panic when you have to speak without any preparation in language class?

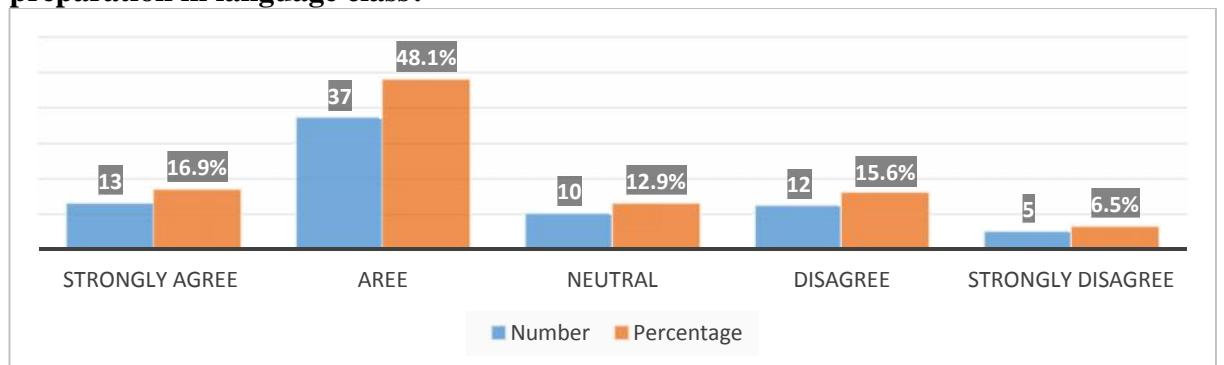


Diagram (03): Students' Difficulties in Speaking English without Preparation.

The results reveal that a high proportion of students (48.1%) agree that they start to panic when they have to speak without any preparation in language class. The percentage of the students who are strongly agree is 16.9%, and the percentage of those who are neutral reached 12.

9%, while the number of the students who disagree is 12 (15.6%), Only 6.5% of students opted for the answer (E) 'strongly disagree'.

Question Fifteen: You are afraid that your language teacher is ready to correct every mistake you make.

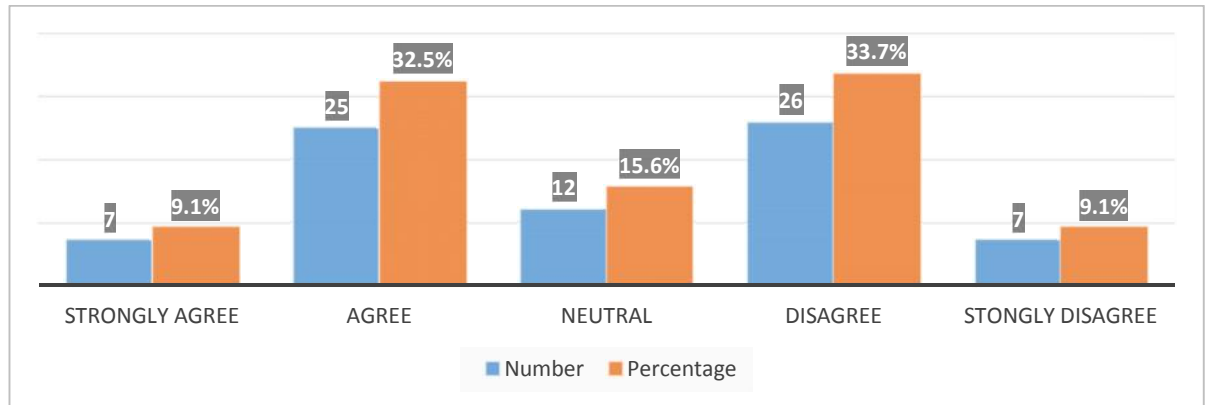


Diagram (04): Students' Perceptions about the Teacher's Correction of their Mistakes.

The diagram reveals that the number of the students who are strongly agree is 7 (9.1%). That is, they are afraid when the teacher is ready to correct their mistakes. Twenty five (32.5%) students agree that they are afraid when the teacher is ready to correct their mistakes. Those who are neutral are 12 (15.6%), those who are disagree are 26 (33.7%). However, seven (9.1%) students strongly disagree.

Question Sixteen: You are afraid that the other students will laugh at you when you haven't prepared in advance.

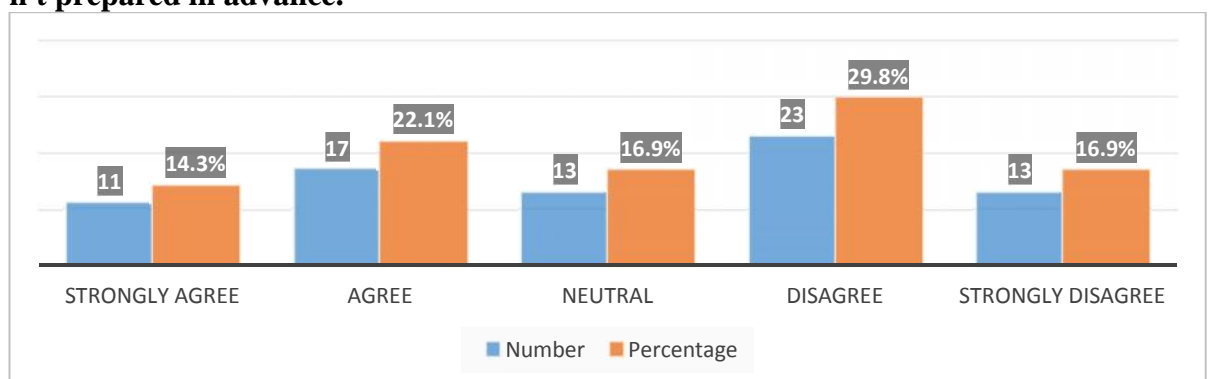


Diagram (05): The Influence of Peers on Other Students in the Class

The results shows that 14.3% of students are strongly agree that they are afraid that the other students will laugh at them when they have not prepared in advance. 22.1% 'agree' with

this item as well. Only 16.9% chose (C) 'neutral'. 29.8% opted for the choice (D) that is, 'disagree'. Lastly, 16.9% opted for the choice (E) 'strongly disagree'.

Question Seventeen: Which of the following factors may cause your fear of speaking:

- A. Lack of Vocabulary and Pronunciation B. Lack of Preparation and Practice**
C. Fear of Being the Focus of Attention

	A	B	C	Total
Number	27	10	40	77
Percentage	35.1%	13%	51.9%	100%

Table (12): Students' Causes of their Speech Anxiety.

As shown in the table above, 51.9% opted for the choice (C) that they experience the fear of speaking in the classroom. 13% are for (B). 35.1% chose (A) meaning that they are afraid to take part in speaking owing to the factor of being the focus of attention.

If there are other causes, please state them?

Some students provided us with other causes of their speaking anxiety which are: low level of grammar, fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation, lack of motivation and self-confidence. previous bad experience (test anxiety).

Question Eighteen: Do you worry if your classmates speak English better than you?

- A. Always B. Often C. Sometimes D. Rarely**

	A	B	C	D	Total
Number	34	25	6	12	77
Percentage	44.2%	32.4%	7.8%	15.6%	100%

Table (13): Students' Opinions toward Different levels between Students.

The table above shows that most students always worry especially when their classmates perform more than they do and their number is 34 (44.2%). The number of those who think that they often worry when the exuberant students speak is 25 (32.4%). Concerning the number

of those who think that they are sometimes worry is 6 (7. 8 %) and those who are rarely worry when the others speak English better than them are 12 (15. 6%).

Question Nineteen: Do you worry about grammatical mistakes when you speak English?

	Yes	No	Total
Number	60	17	77
Percentage	77.9%	22.1%	100%

Table (14): Students’ Opinions about their Grammatical Mistakes.

The table shows that the majority of students (77. 9%) are worry about their grammatical mistakes when they speak English. Only 22. 1% of students do not worry about their grammatical mistakes when they speak English.

Question Twenty: Do you feel anxious when you are going to speak in front of a group? If yes, why?

	Yes	No	Total
Number	60	17	77
Percentage	77.9%	22.1%	100%

Table (15): Students’ Anxiety when Speaking in Front of Groups.

The results show that sixty students (77. 9%) selected ‘ Yes ’ and only seventeen said ‘No’ (22. 1%), they do not feel anxious when they are going to speak in front of their mates.

The majority of first year students answered this question with ‘yes ’. For them, the things that make them anxious when they are going to speak is the fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation.

1.4.1. Section Four: Reducing Foreign Language Speaking.

Question Twenty One: In order to enhance your speaking performance, reducing your anxiety is:

A. Very important B. Not Important C. Less Important

	A	B	C	Total
Number	61	10	6	77
Percentage	79.2%	13%	7.8%	100%

Table (16): The Importance of Reducing Anxiety to Enhance Students' Speaking Skill

The table demonstrates that the majority of the students (79.2%) who think that reducing their anxiety is very important to enhance their speaking performance.

Question Twenty Two: What do you prefer your teacher to do when you make mistakes?

**A. Correct your mistakes indirectly B. Correct your mistakes directly
C. Ignore the mistakes**

	A	B	C	Total
Number	6	65	6	77
percentage	7.8%	82.4%	7.8%	100%

Table (17): Students' Suggestions for Reducing their Anxiety.

The table shows that the number of the students who prefer that their teachers correct their mistakes indirectly is 6 (7.8%), while the students who prefer their teachers correct their mistakes directly is 65 (82.4%). Lastly, only 7.8% opted for the choice (C).

Question Twenty Three: What do you suggest to reduce your anxiety?

The majority of the students (75.32%) answered to this question. Only 24.68% of students did not respond to this question. The ways that the participants think they can follow in order to reduce their anxiety are summarized as follows: practise, preparation, developing

self-confidence and self-esteem, avoiding fear of making mistakes, practising positive self-talk, avoiding fear of being the focus of attention.

Question Twenty Four: What do you expect from your teacher to help you overcome your anxiety?

The majority of the students (79.22%) responded to this question. Only 20.78% of the students did not respond to this question. Those who answered this question reported a variety of needs from their teachers. These needs are summarized as follows: creating a relaxed atmosphere, motivating students, providing students with the opportunity to speak, avoiding negative evaluation of the learners.

II. Results of the Teachers' Interview

1. Have you noticed that some of your students are reluctant to speak the foreign language?

All the teachers answered this question by "yes". Some of them claimed that many of their students are reluctant to speak and others claimed that only some of them are reluctant. In addition, there are some teachers who used some special expressions when answering this question like "yes, many learners", "sure", and "of course".

2. Some researchers believe that anxiety is the affective factor which influences more the foreign language learning. Do you agree with those researchers or do you have another affective factor that influences language learning?

Teachers have different opinions about this question; some of them agree with the statement 'some researchers believe that anxiety is the affective factor which influences more the foreign language learning', and there are others who disagree. Those who agree use utterances like "Yes, anxiety is the affective factor which influences more the foreign language learning", "It is the major one for the majority", and "yes, it is the main reason". While those who did not agree provide us with other factors like motivation and attitudes.

3. Do your students experience learning anxiety? How do you observe this issue? Can you describe it?

All teachers agree that anxiety is one of the major problems that faces their students while speaking. Concerning the description of anxiety, most teachers describe it in this way; the students refuse to speak because they are afraid of making mistakes. While the other teachers go further and say that the majority of their students hesitate to take part in oral classes due to their linguistic deficiency.

4. Do you think that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills?

The majority of teachers answered by “yes”. The teachers claim that anxiety is related more to the speaking skill than the other skills because speaking is spontaneous and the speaking skill is a suitable situation which enables teachers to recognize the anxious learners.

5. Do you think that the high level of some students (exuberant students) may create stress on other students?

All teacher agree that brilliant students affect negatively the other students because the exuberant ones speak fluently while the others find difficulties even to form a simple sentence. In addition, the students with a low level in English are afraid to speak in front of brilliant ones because of their limited amount of vocabulary, little control of grammar, pronunciation mistakes, etc.

6. What are the causes that you think are responsible for generating students’ speaking anxiety?

The respondents provided various causes of their students’ foreign language speech anxiety. These causes are: shyness, lack of vocabulary, lack of preparation and practise, inappropriate atmosphere, severe teachers and their mistreatment, lack of self-confidence and fear of making mistakes.

7. Through your teaching experience, is communication apprehension (fear of communication in front of the others) one of the causes that may hinder students to participate in oral sessions?

The majority of teachers answer in the following way: 'yes', we think that students are afraid to participate in the oral classes because of the bad teaching process that some teachers do. In addition to this, some teachers do not boost their students and make them participate. While, the other teachers do not provide an answer to this question.

8. In your opinion, do you think that the teachers' negative evaluation causes learning anxiety for EFL learners?

When analyzing the teachers' answers, we find that all of them agree that negative evaluation creates a great influence on the students' performance because teachers prefer to evaluate their students directly and they do not pay attention to the feelings of their students. Besides, other teachers comment that negative evaluation can create a huge complex inside students' feelings, so this may lead students to isolate themselves and be silent all the time.

9. Do you think that students' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced?

All the respondents agreed that students' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced. They used special terms like "*absolutely*", "*of course*", "*definitely*". The respondents' agreement and their significant terms show that they are sure that learners' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced.

10. Do you think that providing your students with indirect correction rather than direct one may help them to get rid of anxiety in the classroom? In other terms, how do you correct your students' mistakes? Please, explain.

Here some teachers answered that direct correction is the appropriate one to enhance their students' speaking skill because assessing students directly may help them to be aware of their mistakes. More importantly, this may lead them to learn from the previous mistakes and take it as a lesson in the future. Whereas, the rest of the teachers prefer the indirect correction because they believe that it helps their students to ameliorate their speaking performance.

11. Do you think that establishing a Learning Community and a Supportive Classroom Atmosphere may reduce the problem of anxiety?

The majority of the teachers provide the following instructions: teachers should be comprehensive, tolerant and should make their students to be at ease in the classroom. Also, they should give equal opportunities to all students in order to express themselves. Furthermore, teachers should avoid any harsh remark and behavior that will make the students stressed and feel uncomfortable. Whereas, the other teachers provide the following answer; treating students in a harsh way may lead to be conscious about their studies and to prepare well.

12. What are the strategies that you think you have to do in order to reduce your students' speaking anxiety?

The respondents suggested different strategies that they may follow in order to reduce their students' speaking anxiety. These strategies are: motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, giving them time to prepare and organize their ideas, creating a relaxed atmosphere, accepting their mistakes, providing them with an authentic context, managing disruptive behaviors, varying tasks and activities to involve all of them, giving them the opportunity to participate, etc.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results obtained from the two tools: questionnaire and interview. From the results we obtained, it is clear that the majority of first year students in the department of English at MMUTO are affected negatively by anxiety which is one of the major causes that hinders their speaking skill. In addition, the majority of the teachers said that knowing the causes of anxiety may help to supply their students with appropriate strategies to cope with this phenomenon and at the same time help them to improve their speaking skill.

Chapter Four

Discussion of the Findings

Chapter Four: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss and interpret the results obtained from the questionnaire administered to first year students and the semi-structured interview conducted with the teachers of oral module. The results are, in fact interpreted and discussed in relation to the framework proposed by Horwitz et al and the literature presented in chapter one and they aim at answering the research questions and confirm or refute the hypotheses stated in the general introduction. Therefore, this chapter will be divided into two sections. The first one deals with the discussion of the data of the questionnaire. As for the second one, it interprets the results of the semi-structured interview conducted with the teachers.

I. Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire

I.1. Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning

The results of the first part of the questionnaire show important facts about anxiety and foreign language learning. From the analysis of the first question relating to students' opinions about learning English as a foreign language, it is revealed that 58.4% think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult (see table 1). This means that the majority of first year students find difficulties to speak the English language because of the existence of different factors or affective variables (lack of motivation and the existence of anxiety).

The result of question two dealing with students' perceptions of whether anxiety is among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties reveals different percentages. More than half of the respondents (77.9%) report that anxiety is among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties. On the other hand, the number of students who reported that anxiety is not among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties is 11 (14.3%). Based on these results, we can say that the participants consider learning English as a foreign language as a difficult task, and they trust their abilities to learn it. However, anxiety gets in

their way of learning and makes it difficult for them. According to Horwitz, *et al.* (1986:128), foreign language anxiety is '*a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process*'. Consequently, we can consider anxiety as one of the factors that contributes to the participants' foreign language learning difficulties.

As we progress in our analysis to the findings of this part, a large number of students affirm that they feel anxious when they enter English language classes. This shows that students experience anxiety when they enter English language classes. According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), anxiety in the classroom is represented through learners' behavior such as anxious learners cannot perform well in role play activities and they forget previously learned materials. They are also less likely to volunteer answers because they avoid participation and speaking in front of class. Therefore, this result confirms our hypothesis cited in the general introduction which states that first year students in the department of English at MMUTO experience anxiety. To put it simply, anxiety varies in foreign language learners according to their individual characteristics. This entails that what makes one learner anxious may not provoke anxiety for another learner.

Concerning question four dealing with students' opinions about the extent to which anxiety affects their learning of English, the results reveal that nearly than a half of our respondents (48. 1%) assert that anxiety has an average extent. This percentage can give us an idea that anxiety affects the majority of the participants; some of them are aware of its effects and others are not. We figure out that anxiety influences most of the participants' foreign language learning, but with various extents.

I.2. Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

The second part of our questionnaire deals with foreign language speaking anxiety. The results illustrated in table (05) demonstrate that the majority of students (84. 4%) confirm that

speaking the foreign language is a difficult task. We can deduce that anxiety affects the foreign language learning of the majority of the participants as it is mentioned in table (4). It is possible that anxiety is the cause of their speaking difficulty. This point supports our perception that speaking is difficult for most foreign language learners.

As we progress in our analysis to the findings of this part, 61% of the students declare that they feel nervous when they start speaking in the English oral classes. Thirteen students (16. 9%) opted for the answer 'they sit at the back and keep silent'. Twelve students (15. 6%) answer that they do not feel motivated to speak in the English oral classes. Finally, 6. 5 % of students assert that they speak confidently. From these results, we can say that first year students do not have the same level when they speak in oral classes. Regarding students' speaking level in the English oral classes, Brown (2007:166-167) distinguishes between two (2) types of learners: extraverted and introverted learners. He believes that extraverted learners are more proficient and active than the introverted ones, they behave in an extraverted manner and can engage easily with other learners and participate freely during a classroom discussion. Moreover, they can learn best when they work in groups, and learn by trying to discover things by themselves instead of watching or listening to others when they have difficulty in understanding; they prefer to exchange their ideas with others.

As displayed in table (07), 74% of first year students of English at MMUTO consider anxiety as a cause of their difficulties in speaking the foreign language, and the participants who do not consider anxiety as a cause of their foreign language speaking difficulties are 15 (19. 5%). For instance, one student said '*anxiety is one of the causes that hinders me to speak in the class*'. From these results, we deduce that anxiety affects negatively speaking the foreign language of the majority of the participants. This means that anxiety is one of the causes of the participants' speaking difficulties. This proves our opinion about considering anxiety as a cause of the learners' foreign language speaking difficulties.

Moreover, as regards the skills in which students witness more anxiety, the results show that the highest percentage of students (68. 8%) feel more anxious in speaking. It seems that the majority of our participants tend to feel more anxious in speaking. We can say that the speaking skill is the most affected one by anxiety for our sample participants in comparison with the other skills. In this respect, Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) in their investigation under the title 'Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale' assert that anxiety is one of the affective variables that hinders students to speak well in class. They confirm this conclusion especially when they gathered their data. They found that all the students feel more anxious in speaking. For instance, some students answered with '*I tremble when I know that I am going to be called to participate in language class*', and the others answered by saying '*I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class*'.

Our results in table (09) reveal that the majority of the participants achieve better in written tests with the percentage of 64. 9%, and the percentage of those who achieve better in oral tests is 35. 1%. This result confirms MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) assumption that trait anxiety is more long lasting and stable and occurs in a variety of situations. It is personal and some people are generally anxious about many things. In fact, some people may feel anxious whereas others feel relaxed. For example, some learners may feel at ease in written exams, but may feel anxious in oral exams. According to table (8) which shows that the majority of the participants feel more anxious in speaking, we deduce that students' low achievement in oral tests is due to their speaking anxiety.

The results displayed in table (10) show that a large number of the students consider themselves as usual anxious speakers with the percentage of 59. 7%. In addition, the participants who perceive themselves as high anxious speakers (14. 3%) are less than those who perceive themselves as low anxious speakers with the percentage of 19. 48%. Therefore, we figure out that most of the participants experience the feeling of anxiety, but with various levels.

Diagram one reveals that the majority of first year students agree that anxiety embarrasses them to volunteer answers in their foreign language class and this category is represented by the percentage of 48. 1%. These outcomes signify that the majority of the participants experience this feeling of embarrassment when volunteering answers in class. Their embarrassment may be due to their anxiety. This view confirms the second hypothesis advanced in the general introduction that first year students in the department of English at MMUTO are affected negatively by anxiety. Consequently, we find that volunteering answers is one of the causes of the students' foreign language anxiety that prevents them from speaking and participating in the class.

The results obtained in table (11) show that the highest proportion of first year students of English (45. 5%) at MMUTO feel more anxious in oral presentations. Since in oral presentations learners are obliged to speak in front of the whole class, we can say that the participants' great anxiety in oral presentations is due to the stress of being obliged to speak and being the focus of attention of their peers and teachers. This result supports the concept provided by Wrench, *et al.* (2009: 59) which is 'teacher apprehension'. They explain that learners who have this apprehension are less interested to approach to teachers. For example, they avoid listening and even to communicate with their teacher and they are more likely to be dissatisfied with the classroom environment. This teacher apprehension mainly affects learners' willingness to communicate and to express their ideas freely. Generally, all learners have a common fear from speaking with their teacher especially, those with low levels or low self-confidence. So, this fear of speaking in front of ,the teacher or mates is related to the learner personality and the teacher ways of teaching. For instance, some teachers treat their students in a harsh way in the class.

I.3. Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

In the third part of the students' questionnaire, we investigated many important points. Actually, our findings demonstrated in diagram (2) show that most first year students (48. 1%) of English at MMUTO agree about their uncertainty to speak the foreign language in the class. The percentage above gives us the idea that the majority of the first year students lack confidence and what we call self-esteem makes them feel unsure about themselves in speaking the foreign language. This point is well-explained by All-wright and Bailey (1991: 178) who argue that self-esteem is the way that the individual feels about himself ,it is determined by how to evaluate abilities, feelings of being accepted and valued by others. As a result, lack of self-esteem is a major psychological factor that hinders EFL learners to speak the language. In other words, lack of confidence is one of the causes of the participants' speaking anxiety.

Our results displayed in diagram (3) show that students agree that they start to panic when they have to speak without any preparation in the language class and this number of students represent the highest percentage (48. 1%) in comparison with the other participants. The reached results lead us to rely on the explanation provided by Kanar (2011:239) who says that '*Speech anxiety is usually the results of not being prepared*'. She claims that being unprepared when giving a presentation may lead to students' anxiety. We deduce that being unprepared is one of the sources that generate the participants' speaking anxiety.

As to the results obtained from the item ' Participants' perceptions about the fright because of the teachers' corrections of their mistakes ', it is revealed that the highest percentage (32. 5%) of first year students agree that they are afraid when the teacher is ready to correct every mistake they make. This result leads us to deduce that another cause that creates participants speaking anxiety is the fear of their teachers' corrections or evaluation. In this respect, Horwitz, *et al.* (1986:127) define fear of negative evaluation as '*apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would*

evaluate oneself negatively'. Also, students are afraid that their teachers may assess them in a harsh way. So, this mistreatment can lead to what is called test anxiety. According to Horwitz *et al.* (1986), test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety, in which the learners feel the fear of failure and doing badly in a test. We deduce that the majority of students do not take part in the learning process due to their fear of being evaluated negatively by their teachers in class.

Our results in the last diagram also reveal that the highest proportion of first year students agree that they are afraid that the other students will laugh at them when they have not prepared in advance. This big problem may keep them silent and they do not communicate in English. This point is explained well by As Liu (2007) who reports in his study that learners feared of doing mistakes in front of their mates and being laughed at them. Therefore, this may provoke stress and anxiety during the performance or discussion. Besides, Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) claim that people who typically have trouble in speaking in front of groups are likely to experience even greater difficulty speaking in a foreign language class especially when they did not prepare in advance. So, this may lead them to be afraid of taking part in the learning process (communication apprehension). That is, students prefer to be silent all the time than to take the risk to participate in the class in order to avoid what the other thinks on them.

The examination of table (12) shows that 35.1% of first year students of English experience the fear of speaking because the lack of vocabulary and pronunciation. This has been pointed out by Thornbury (2005: 22) who states that '*the spoken language also has a relatively high proportion of words and expressions*'. Thus, learning a foreign language requires a great knowledge of its vocabulary. The problem in our EFL classes is that many students often find some difficulties when they try to express what they want to say because they find themselves struggling their limited words and expression. In addition, pronunciation mistakes is one of the main factors that hinders the students from doing their speaking activities. This mainly leads to anxiety and avoidance. Krashen (1985) claims that learners in the contexts

where English is not spoken as a first language in the community cannot speak well and they cannot practice English out of class because they just listen to the spoken words only in the class. Therefore, these limitations of vocabulary and pronunciation hinder the first year students to participate in speaking activities.

Concerning the results obtained from the same question (17), some students provided us with other causes of their speaking anxiety which are: low level of grammar, the type of speaking activities, fear of making mistakes, lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, unfamiliarity with the topic, and teachers' discrimination between their students. These results inform us that the majority of the participants experience the feeling of anxiety. Based on the causes reported by the participants, we can say that there are many causes of students' speaking anxiety. Each participant has a cause or more than one which leads him/her to be an anxious speaker.

As regards the students' level in the class, the results show that 44. 2% of the students always worry especially when their classmates perform more than them. To clarify this result, we can rely on Ellis (1985) who argues that second language learners differ in a number of dimensions which have to do with personality, motivation, learning style, attitude, and age that may influence the process of second language acquisition (SLA), and he claims that individuals vary in the rate at which they learn or the level of competence. Therefore, this unbalanced level between students may lead some of them to avoid taking risk to answer the questions.

As displayed in table (14), 77. 9% of first year students of English worry about their grammatical mistakes when they speak English. They think that their teachers will blame them if they make mistakes. To explain this point, we rely on Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) who claim that fear of negative evaluation is a very common factor that makes learners more anxious about their performance since they will be evaluated either by their teachers or peers. That is, the scaring of making mistakes may limit students' role in the class since they are afraid to be

evaluated negatively by their teachers. Therefore, linguistic difficulties are one of the major factors of anxiety, and the little control of grammar rules lead to many problem in speaking. For that reason, learners avoid communication in the classroom.

Concerning the results obtained from question (20), 77.9% of first year students of English feel anxious when they are going to speak in front of a group. This is due to their communication apprehension. The latter is '*a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people*' (Horwitz, *et al*, 1986: 127). Horwitz *et al.* (1986) claim that there are other situations which indicate this phenomenon like speaking to one person or group (oral communication anxiety).

I.4. Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

In the final part of the students' questionnaire, we investigated many important points. Actually, our findings in relation to students' perceptions about the importance of reducing their anxiety to enhance their speaking performance show that 79.2% of first year students of English think that reducing their anxiety is very important to enhance their speaking performance. The large number of the participants who think that reducing their anxiety is very important to enhance their speaking performance signifies that the majority of the participants have great desire to reduce their anxiety. Therefore, if we look for effective procedures to reduce it, we may help anxious learners to enhance and promote their speaking performance. Moreover, we may understand from the small number of the participants who think that reducing anxiety is not important that they may have other factors which affect their speaking performance. Consequently, we can say that even if anxiety has a great effect on the speaking performance of the majority of the participants, there are other factors which may hinder the speaking performance of some learners like motivation.

Our findings about students' suggestions for reducing their anxiety demonstrate that 82.4% of first year students prefer that their teachers correct their mistakes indirectly. In this context, Lightbown and Spada (1999 cited in Tsiplakides, 2009:42) claim that we should avoid direct, on the spot correction in speaking activities, since it can undermine student's confidence, and because it discourages learners, especially anxious learners who aim at continuing their speaking activity. For example, a teacher should not intervene when the student speaks even if the student makes errors. So, when the student finishes his/her ideas the teacher will correct his/her mistakes indirectly not in a harsh way but in a soft way. That is, the teacher can use such expressions to encourage his/her students 'you can improve your level' or 'carry on in this way'.

The examination of the results obtained from question (23) show that 75.32% of first year students of English are aware about the issue of anxiety. So, most of them provided us with the following suggestions: practice, preparation, developing self-confidence and self-esteem, avoiding fear of making mistakes, practising positive self-talk, avoiding fear of being the focus of attention, and learning in groups with classmates. The great number of the participants who answered this question shows that they are aware of the effects of anxiety in hindering their speaking performance; it also shows that they are aware of the ways that they can rely on to reduce their speaking anxiety. Moreover, these results give support to our hypothesis which states that first year students in the department of English at MMUTO can overcome or reduce the negative effects of anxiety by knowing the main factors and adopting the appropriate strategies that help them to escape from the anxiety circle.

As to the results obtained from the last item, the majority of students reported a variety of needs from their teachers. These needs are summarized as follows: creating a relaxed atmosphere, motivating and encouraging students, choosing interesting topics and activities, providing students with the opportunity to speak, avoiding the correction of all learners' mistakes, being leader teachers rather than boss teachers, managing disruptive behaviors,

increasing students' self-confidence, giving advice for learners. All these results indicate that teachers may play a great role in creating learners' speaking anxiety as well as in reducing it. Therefore, to intensify these points, we rely on Tsiplakides (2009) who suggests the following interventions which were implemented in a variety of educational institutions to help learners overcome anxiety: project work, establishing a learning community and a supportive classroom atmosphere, teacher –students relations, providing indirect rather than direct correction, and teacher immediacy provision of praise.

II. Discussion of the Results of the Teachers' Interview

The second data instrument that we used in our research study is the interview that we conducted with teachers of first year students of English. The interview helped us to bring more details in our research.

The findings of the interview reveal important points that need further discussion. In fact, teachers of oral expression in our department claim that many of their students are reluctant to speak and others claim that only some of them are reluctant. In addition, there are some teachers who used some special expressions when responding to this question like “*yes, many learners*”, “*for sure*”, and “*of course*”. Teachers' positive responses and their special expressions show that their students' reluctance in speaking the foreign language has strong existence in their classes.

As concerns the teachers' opinions about if anxiety is the affective factor which influences more the foreign language leaning or there are other affective variables, teachers have different opinions about this question; some of them agree with the statement ‘some researchers believe that anxiety is the affective factor which influences the foreign language learning’, and there are others who disagree. Those who agreed used utterances like “*Yes, anxiety is the most affective factor*”, “*It is the major one for the majority*”, and “*yes, it is the main reason*”. While those who did not agree provided other factors like motivation and attitudes. From these

answers, we deduce that students' foreign language learning is affected by many factors. Anxiety is considered as one of the major factors that tend to have great influence on students' speaking skill.

Discussing teachers' answers about the issue of anxiety and how they observe it, teachers provided us with further details about this question. They agreed that their students witness anxiety especially when they speak in front of their classmates. All teachers agreed that anxiety is one of the major problems that faces their students while speaking. Concerning the description of anxiety, most teachers describe it in this way; the students refuse to speak because they are afraid of making mistakes. While the other teachers went further and said that the majority of their students hesitate to take part in oral classes due to their linguistic deficiency.

As concerns the question if anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills, all teachers of oral module in our department agreed that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills. They claimed that anxiety is related more to the speaking skill because speaking is spontaneous and the speaking skill is a suitable situation which enables teachers to recognize the anxious learners. These results show that anxiety exists within all the skills; however, it can be more noticeable in the speaking skill. The nature of this skill provokes students' foreign language anxiety since in speaking learners are required to express their ideas in front of others and are exposed to evaluations and judgments.

The results displayed in question five show that all teachers answered with 'yes'. That is, the high level of some students (exuberant students) may create stress on other students. Most of them argue that brilliant students affect negatively the other students because the exuberant students speak fluently while the others find difficulties to form a simple sentence. In addition to this, the students with a low level in English are afraid to speak in front of brilliant ones because of their limited amount of vocabulary, little control of grammar, pronunciation mistakes, etc. While the other teachers argued that their students are afraid from the negative

evaluation either by their teachers or by their classmates and they prefer to be silent and preserve their image.

The results obtained from item (6) show that the respondents provided various causes of their students' foreign language speech anxiety. These causes are: shyness, lack of vocabulary, lack of preparation, inappropriate atmosphere, sever teachers and their mistreatment, authority and seriousness, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, lack of interest to the foreign language, fear of making mistakes, and inability to express ideas. Based on these answers, we deduce that anxiety emerges due to various factors. Besides, we understand that the teachers of English at MMUTO are aware of the factors that lead to students' speech anxiety.

As mentioned before, one of the causes that may hinder students from participation in oral sessions is communication apprehension (fear of communication in front of the others). In fact, the majority of teachers think that students are afraid to participate in the oral classes because of the bad teaching process that some teachers adapt in their classes. In addition to this, some teachers do not boost their students and make them participate. For example, teachers do not ask for students' point of views, also they interrupt them while speaking and focus on their mistakes rather on their ideas about the topic. In this respect, Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) claim that the special communication apprehension permeating foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge. In this context, we find for example, little control of grammar rules, lack of vocabulary, and pronunciation mistakes. That is, a person can witness a situation in which he finds difficulties to understand others and make themselves understood due to this deficiency. In addition, MacCroskey (1976:1) defines communication apprehension as a '*broad-based fear of anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons*'. Horwitz, *et al.* (1986) add that people who typically have trouble in speaking in front of groups are likely to experience even greater difficulty speaking in a

foreign language class where they have little control of the communicative situation and their performance is constantly monitored.

The results obtained from question 08 show that teachers of oral expression in our department agreed that negative evaluation creates a great influence on the students' performance because teachers prefer to evaluate their students directly and they do not pay attention to the feelings of their students. Also, other teachers comment that negative evaluation can create a complex to the students, so this may lead students to isolate themselves and be silent all the time. To support this point, we rely on Horwitz, *et al.* (1986:127) who claim that fear of negative evaluation is '*apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively*'. For example, lack of preparation and practice can lead learners to experience fear of negative evaluation. The latter can lead also to what is called fear of risk taking in situations where learners think that others will give them negative evaluations. Fear of negative evaluation is not restricted only to test-taking situations, but also to other evaluative situations such as interviews for getting jobs or speaking the second language in class.

Concerning the results obtained from question (09), the results show that all the respondents agreed that students' speaking performance would be enhanced if anxiety is reduced. They used special terms like "*absolutely*", "*of course*", "*definitely*". The respondents' agreements and their significant terms show that they are sure that learners' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced.

As we progress in our study, the results obtained from question 10 demonstrate that some teachers answer that direct correction is the appropriate one to enhance their students speaking skill and to get rid of anxiety because assessing their students directly may help them to be aware of their mistakes. More importantly, this may lead them to learn from the previous mistakes. Whereas the rest of the teachers prefer the indirect correction because they believe

that it helps their students to ameliorate their speaking performance. For example, using such expression as ' carry on this way', ' that's right', ' I'm sure that you will improve your level '. Therefore, this kind of answers gives us the air that each teacher has his own method of correcting their students' mistakes. To strengthen this view, Lightbown and Spada (1999 cited in Tsiplakides, 2009:42) claim that we should avoid direct, on the spot correction in speaking activities since it can undermine students' confidence, and because it discourages learners, especially anxious learners.

As regards the results sorted out from question 11, all the participants provide the following suggestions: teachers should be comprehensive, tolerant and should make their students at ease in the classroom. In addition, teachers should give equal opportunities to all students in order to express themselves. Besides, teachers should avoid any harsh remark and behavior that will make the students stressed and feel uncomfortable.

When analyzing the teachers' answers about the strategies that they think they have to adopt in order to reduce their students' speaking anxiety, the respondents suggested different strategies. These strategies are: motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, giving them time to prepare and organize their ideas, creating a relaxed atmosphere, accepting their mistakes, providing them with an authentic context, managing disruptive behaviors, varying tasks and activities to involve all of them, giving them the opportunity to participate, avoiding immediate correction, making games, and trying not to oblige them to speak. These answers indicate that teachers are aware of their crucial role in reducing students' speaking anxiety. They also show that they are knowledgeable about the appropriate ways that can help their learners to get rid of their anxiety. Accordingly, we can say that teachers are capable to reduce the level of anxiety in their classes.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses the results obtained from our research instruments. It comprises two sections. The first is the discussion of the findings obtained from the students' questionnaire. The second one deals with the examination of the findings of teachers' interview. This chapter provides clear answers for the research questions of the study. In addition, the hypotheses stated in the general introduction are confirmed. Relying on the whole findings, we conclude that the majority of first year students of English at MMUTO experience anxiety. As concerns the results of teachers' interview, they indicate that teachers are aware about the causes of anxiety and its negative effects. More importantly, teachers of English at MMUTO use some strategies to help their students to get rid of this phenomenon.

Recommendations

For the purpose of reducing foreign language speech anxiety and achieving better learning and speaking performance, we provide some suggestions for both teachers and learners.

1. Teachers should create a friendly atmosphere to facilitate learning especially when holding conversations and free discussions.
2. Teachers should present lessons with simple and clear explanation and they have to raise their students' awareness about the negative impact of anxiety on their performance.
3. Teachers should avoid interrupting students while speaking to correct their mistakes and it would be more secure to correct mistakes at the end of students' performance.
4. Students should be aware that anxiety is natural and it can be controlled. Also, they should not be afraid of making mistakes because it is a part of learning process. More importantly, they should accept teachers' evaluation.
5. Foremost, learners have to practise the English language in order to increase their English proficiency and to reduce their anxiety as the saying says "Practice makes perfect".

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Foreign language anxiety is an important phenomenon that has a great influence on students' learning. Because of its importance, there have been numerous studies exploring it from different angles (its existence, its relationship with learners' achievements, etc). A plethora of research articles and books has been published on this subject. They helped us to deepen our understanding and enlarge our knowledge on this concept.

Due to the complexity of investigating this phenomenon in the context of MMUTO, our study, then, has adopted the theory provided by Horwitz, *et al* (1986). This framework provided us with crucial information to know the sources of anxiety.

To answer the advanced research questions and to check the hypotheses, we adopted the mixed method which consists of quantitative and qualitative researches. Both have been used for the data obtained from the questionnaire which is used as our instrument. The data of this technique are obtained from the first years students in the department of English at MMUTO. Moreover, we conducted a semi structured interview with six teachers of oral module in the department of English at MMUTO. For the quantitative data analysis, SPSS was used for obtaining statistical data. In addition to this, QCA was adopted to interpret the data gathered from the open ended questions of the questionnaire and the data of six interviews with teachers.

The current study reveals various outcomes concerning the relationship between anxiety and the speaking skill in comparison with the other skills as well as its causes, appearances on learners, and the appropriate strategies to reduce it. Foreign language anxiety affects negatively the learning of the majority of the first years students in our department. Both teachers and learners are aware of this matter, and they consider it as a major problem in learning the foreign language. Even though there are other factors that tend to influence students' foreign language learning, anxiety is considered by both teachers and learners as

the major affective factor affecting negatively the learning process. They assert that speaking the foreign language is the aspect mostly influenced by this phenomenon; consequently, anxiety tends to be more related to the speaking skill than the other skills. It hinders learners to develop their speaking skill which results in their poor speaking performance.

Students' speech anxiety is generated by several factors such as shyness, lack of vocabulary, lack of practice and preparation, inappropriate atmosphere, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, fear of making mistakes. Foreign language speech anxiety can be recognized by different signs like uncertainty of oneself, shaking hands, sweat, hesitation, mispronunciation, shyness, trembling, low voice, sitting at the back, avoiding eye contact with the teacher, silence, calm, touching their nose, and avoid attending class.

Learners can reduce their speech anxiety by preparing themselves well, practising the foreign language inside and outside the classroom, practising listening, developing their self-confidence, avoiding fear of making mistakes, practising positive self-talk, and avoiding fear of being the focus of attention. In addition, teachers can use some strategies that help their students to get rid of anxiety in their classes by motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, giving them time to prepare and organize their ideas, creating a relaxed atmosphere, accepting their mistakes, being leader rather than boss teachers, managing disruptive behaviors, varying activities to involve all of them, giving them the opportunity to participate and avoiding immediate correction. Trying to eliminate the causes that lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety can help them to enhance and promote their speaking performance.

Based on these results, we can say that the current study answers our research question. The findings of this study show that anxiety is highly related to the speaking skill more than the other skills. They also display different strategies that teachers and learners can use to conquer anxiety and help in enhancing foreign language learning and speaking performance.

Any research work certainly encounters certain obstacles that can prevent the achievement of the objectives. In our case, the major limitations are: limited time in distributing the questionnaire and the refusal of some teachers to make the interview.

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Appendices

Appendix 01

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Students,

This questionnaire investigates the causes of foreign language students' speaking anxiety and aims to find ways to reduce it in the department of English at MMUTO. The results of this research will be used only for an academic purpose, thus, we ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of your responses. So, feel at ease when answering the questions because your answers will be very useful in our research work. Please, give your answers sincerely to guarantee the success of this investigation. Read each of the following questions/statements carefully and tick () the right answers (You can tick more than one option). Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Section One: Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning

1. Do you think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult?

Yes

No

2. If yes, is anxiety among the causes of your English language learning difficulties?

Yes

No

3. Do you feel anxious when you enter English language classes?

Yes

No

4. If yes, to what extent anxiety does affect your foreign language learning?

High extent

Intermediate extent

Low extent

Section Two: Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

5. What do you think about speaking the English language?

Easy

Difficult

6. In the English oral class, how do you speak?

a. I speak confidently b. I feel nervous when I start speaking

c. I sit at the back and keep silent d. I do not feel motivated to speak

7. If you have difficulties in speaking the foreign language, do you consider anxiety as a cause of these difficulties?

Yes

No

8. You feel more anxious when you

Write

Read

Listen

Speak

9. You achieve better in

Written tests

Oral test ones

10. If you are an anxious speaker, you classify yourself as

High anxious speaker Intermediate anxious speaker

Low anxious speaker

11. Anxiety embarrasses you to volunteer answers in your language class.

SA A N D SD

12. In the oral tasks, where do you feel more anxious?

Role plays Free discussions

Oral presentations

Section Three: Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree N: Neutral (neither agree nor disagree) D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree.

13. You never feel quite sure of yourself when you are speaking in your foreign language class.

SA A N D SD

14. You start to panic when you have to speak without any preparation in language class.

SA A N D SD

15. You are afraid that your language teacher is ready to correct every mistake you make.

SA A N D SD

16. You are afraid that the other students will laugh at you when you haven't prepared in advance.

SA A N D SD

17. Which of the following factors that may cause your fear of speaking:

Lack of vocabulary and pronunciation Lack of preparation and practice

Fear of being the focus of attention

-If there are other causes, please state them.

.....
.....
.....

18. Do you worry if your classmates speak English better than you do?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

19. Do you worry about grammatical mistakes when you speak English?

Yes No

20. Do you feel anxious when you are going to speak in front of a group? If yes, why?

.....
.....
.....

Section Four: Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

21. In order to enhance your speaking performance, reducing your anxiety is

Very Important Less Important

Not Important

22. What do you prefer your teacher to do when you make mistakes?

Correct your mistakes directly correct your mistakes indirectly

Ignore the mistakes

23. What do you suggest to reduce your anxiety?

.....
.....

24. What do you expect from your teacher to help you overcome your anxiety?

.....
.....

Thank you

Appendix 02

Teacher's Interview

This interview is part of our research entitled '**Enhancing foreign language students' speaking skill through overcoming anxiety**' at Mouloud Mammeri university of Tizi-Ouzou. This interview investigates the causes of first year student's speaking anxiety and aims to find ways to reduce it in the department of English at MMUTO. The results of this interview will be used for an academic purpose. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

1. Have you noticed that some of your students are reluctant to speak the foreign language?
2. Some researchers believe that anxiety is the affective factor influencing foreign language learning. Do you agree with them or do you have another factor that you add as the most affective one?
3. Do your students experience learning anxiety? How do you observe this issue? Can you describe it?
4. Do you think that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills?
5. Do you think that the high level of some students (exuberant students) may create stress on other students?
6. What are the causes that you think are responsible for creating students' speaking anxiety?
7. Through your teaching experience, is communication apprehension (fear of communication in front of the others) one of the causes that may hinder students to participate in oral sessions?
8. In your opinion, do you think that teacher negative evaluation causes learning anxiety for EFL learners?
9. Do you think that student's speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced?
10. Do you think that providing your students with indirect correction rather than direct one may help them to get rid of anxiety in the classroom? In other terms, how do you correct your students' mistakes? Please, explain.

11. Do you think that establishing a Learning Community and a Supportive Classroom Atmosphere may reduce the problem of anxiety?

12. What are the appropriate strategies that you think you have to use in order to reduce your students' speaking anxiety? In other words, Finding 80% of your students experiencing 'anxiety', what would you do?

Thank you for your time and for your collaboration!