Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment for the Requirement of a Doctorate Degree in Language Sciences

Cooperative Learning and Classroom Anxiety:
A Comparative Study between the Department of English in Boumerdes and that in Tizi Ouzou

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Defended on September 21th, 2019

To my beloved parents Zahra and Mohamed. Words cannot express how grateful I am for their everlasting encouragement and support, and for all the sacrifices they have made on my behalf throughout the years of my educational career.

Acknowledgments

This research project would not have been completed without the helpful contributions of the following people:

I owe a special note of gratitude to my thesis supervisor Professor Fodil Mohammed Sadek for the guidance, encouragement, and invaluable suggestions I received from him throughout the fulfillment of this work and related research.

A debt of gratitude is owed to second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou during the academic year 2015-2016. Without their cooperation, commitment, patience, and cheerfulness during the whole intervention, this work would have never been completed.

I am grateful to the members of the jury namely, Prof. Hamid Ameziane, Prof. Said Keskes, Prof. Fatma-Zohra Nedjai, Dr. Sadia Belkhir, and Dr. Nadia Idri for having accepted to read and evaluate this work. Their comments and suggestions have been invaluable.

Special thanks to Mrs. Benhammana Karima, head of the Department of English in Boumerdes University, for her kindness and permission to conduct this research.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the people who encouraged me through every step of this challenging journey.

Abstract

Anxiety is considered a negative factor that prevents students from communicating their ideas and developing their language proficiency. Reducing students' apprehension in the classroom can enhance their language learning experience and improve their communicative competence. In recent decades, cooperative learning has attracted the attention of researchers and educators due to its positive outcomes on students' performance. Thereby, this thesis aims to measure the levels of anxiety in oral classes and compare the effects of cooperative learning with the traditional instructional method on anxiety. Besides, the study attempts to determine the factors that may hamper the implementation of cooperative learning, and examine students' cooperative behaviors and their perceptions of cooperative work. To this end, four classes of second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou during the academic year 2015-2016 participated in the study. This fifteen-week quasi-experimental research involved two experimental classes introduced to cooperative learning and two control groups taught with the conventional lecture method. Three instruments were used to collect data: a modified version of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) anxiety questionnaire, classroom observation, and semi-structured interviews. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology was used to analyze the findings. The questionnaire was used as a pre-test and a post-test to ascertain the participants' level of anxiety. The pre-intervention findings indicated that the participants had a moderate level of anxiety. No statistically significant difference was found between the anxiety scores of the study groups. The post-intervention data showed significant reductions in the participants' levels of anxiety. However, no statistically significant difference appeared between the anxiety scores of the students who studied cooperatively and those who worked individually. Classroom observation and the interviews with fourteen students revealed the problems obstructing the integration of cooperative learning in oral classes such as students' resistance, classroom situation, and domineering group members. Despite their hostile reaction, the participants progressively displayed cooperative behaviors. Most of the interviewed students had favorable perceptions of cooperative learning and expressed their desire to work in cooperation more often. Therefore, instructors should be encouraged to use cooperative learning as part of their teaching.

Keywords: language anxiety, cooperative learning, traditional lecture method, comparative study, quasi-experimental design.

List of Abbreviations

A+SA: Agree and strongly agree

D+SD: Disagree and strongly disagree

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FLCAS: The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

LCDH: The Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis

M: Mean

N: Neither agree nor disagree/Neutral

SD: Standard deviation

SPSS: The Statistical Package for Social Sciences

STAD: Student Teams-Achievement Divisions

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<u>General Introduction</u>

Theoretical Background of the Study

There has been an increasing body of studies regarding individual differences in language classrooms. These differences can be attributed to the cognitive or to the affective side of the learner. With the alteration from the teacher-centered approach to the student-led model, researchers in the field of foreign language education started to consider the significance of affective variables in the language learning process. Among the emotional factors, anxiety plays a major role in determining students' success or failure in learning and speaking the target language. Therefore, language teachers are encouraged to pay attention to students' mental states and reactions in the classroom and adapt their teaching methods to students' learning styles, individual differences, and needs.

The construct of anxiety has been widely researched (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre, 1995; Philips, 1992; Scovel, 1978; Young, 1991a) in the last decades owing to its prevalent influence on language learning performance and achievement. These research studies have provided plentiful evidence for the existence of anxiety and its impact on the language learning process. In 1986, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope introduced their theory of *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety* in which they claimed that foreign language anxiety is a specific construct related to the foreign language learning process. In this sense, they developed an instrument, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), to measure this unique type of anxiety. This tool incorporates three interrelated anxiety constructs: communication apprehension (Fear of being unable to understand others and make oneself understood), test anxiety (Fear of failure in test situations), and fear of negative evaluation (Worry about leaving an unfavorable impression on others). In the present study, foreign language anxiety is measured based on the scores in a questionnaire in which three anxiety dimensions were included. To be more specific, anxiety refers to the FLCAS's items dealing

with the components communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Besides, the study integrates a third factor referred to as oral classroom anxiety (General feeling of anxiety and attitudes toward oral classes).

In recent decades, cooperative learning has gained importance amid researchers and educationalists. Johnson and Johnson, pioneers in cooperative learning research, stated that cooperative learning is more than just placing students in groups and asking them to work together. This type of learning requires students to work in small heterogeneous groups with the purpose to attain joint academic outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 68). Unlike traditional classes where students work competitively or individually, cooperatively structured classrooms encompass students who strive for their own and teammates learning. Students are linked in such a way that the group cannot succeed unless each member succeeds (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 71). Over the years, various cooperative learning models have been developed. In the present study, cooperative learning refers to what Johnson and Johnson (1999a) describe as a pedagogical practice that highlights positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, interpersonal and small group skills, and group processing.

Cooperative learning plays a significant role in enhancing students' performance and academic achievement. This educational approach encourages students' interaction and participation, allows for opportunities to use the target language, and creates a supportive classroom environment. Students tend to feel more comfortable because they know that their group members are there to provide help and encouragement. According to Artzt and Newman (1990), "Students who know that they can depend on other group members for help and support do not feel the anxiety often experienced by those who do not understand the work" (p. 452). Cooperative learning is believed to create a less anxiety classroom atmosphere compared with whole-class instruction. Therefore, it would be beneficial to delve into the effect of cooperative

learning versus individual learning on foreign language anxiety during classroom oral practice among EFL university students in Algeria.

Overseas, many studies have explored the impact of cooperative learning on foreign language classroom anxiety. These pieces of research have generated different conclusions. Contrary to what is happening abroad, little if no research has inspected the correlation between the two variables in the Algerian context to the researcher's knowledge. Hence, the present study is an attempt to contribute to the field of academic research by examining how the implementation of cooperative learning as an instructional strategy can influence the degree of foreign language classroom anxiety in Algeria. More specifically, the study aims to find out whether the application of cooperative learning compared with the traditional instructional approach will bring a significant reduction in the level of anxiety during classroom oral practice.

Statement of the Problem

Among the emotional states, anxiety is of noteworthy importance since it impedes language performance, proficiency level, and achievement. This affects particularly the speaking skill. Indeed, numerous studies have indicated that speaking in the target language is the most anxiety-inducing practice and the most threatening feature of the foreign language learning process (Horwitz et al., 1986; Liu, 2007; Subaşı, 2010; Von Wörde, 2003). Students can get highly anxious when asked to perform orally in front of the entire class. This problem exists among EFL students from beginner to advanced phases of language learning and can be experienced inside and outside the classroom environment.

As a teacher of Phonetics and Oral Expression, the researcher has noticed on many occasions the trepidation and uneasiness experienced by students when asked to produce spoken messages in English. From what the teacher-researcher has observed, students tend to remain silent, have difficulties to express themselves, experience self-doubt and frustration, and exhibit avoidance behaviors such as avoidance of interaction with both teacher and classmates,

avoidance of eye contact, postponing homework or coming to the class unprepared. Anxiety, in this case, is mostly debilitating because it precludes learners from speaking and communicating their ideas in English. In the Algerian context, English is a foreign language and serves restricted purposes in daily activities. Algerian learners of English have little or no exposure to the language outside the classroom. Consequently, in oral classes, they may experience some undesirable feelings such as fear of initiating speaking in front of the class, fear of making mistakes, and fear of leaving an improper impression and being negatively judged. These negative sensations may hinder students' engagement toward learning and speaking English. Therefore, it is important to search for classroom strategies that can diminish anxiety and create a favorable learning atmosphere where students can take risks, develop their communicative competence, and succeed in learning and speaking English.

One of the major challenges facing EFL teachers is the tailoring of classroom activities that allow students for opportunities to interact and practice speaking in a comforting and pleasant classroom context. Cooperative learning is viewed as a valuable classroom approach that can create such a reassuring and harmonious atmosphere in the classroom. Although the implementation of cooperative learning continues to proliferate worldwide, little attention is given to this educational approach in Algeria. Teachers tend to put students in groups without considering the key components of cooperative learning. When structuring cooperative learning, features like positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, interpersonal and small group skills, and group processing should be taken into account. Using unstructured traditional group work can do more harm than good. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to implement cooperative learning in oral classes with the aim to generate a less-threatening classroom environment where students can learn, communicate, and face challenges in the target language.

Research Objectives and Research Questions

The present thesis addresses the issue of how the integration of cooperative learning into the classroom setting influences the degree of anxiety experienced by second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. In other words, the study seeks to compare the amount of anxiety experienced by the sampled subjects before and after performing in cooperative learning groups and ascertain whether this student-centered philosophy compared with the traditional lecture method has an ameliorating effect on students' apprehension while speaking English in the classroom. More specifically, the following research objectives motivate the study:

1. To measure the levels of anxiety experienced by the study participants before and after the treatment.

2. To compare between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of the experimental and control groups.

3. To determine whether there is any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who work in cooperation and those who perform individually.

4. To describe the way the students in the experimental groups interact and cooperate with their group members.

5. To identify the obstacles that may hinder the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou.

6. To ascertain whether students perceive cooperative learning positively or negatively.

In regards to the aforementioned objectives, the present study is guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent do second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou experience anxiety in oral classes?

2. Is there any statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups?

3. Is there any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who work in cooperation and those who perform individually?

4. How do the students in the experimental groups cooperate with their group members?

5. What are the problems that may obstruct the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou?

6. What are students' perceptions of cooperative learning?

Research Hypotheses

Aligning with the above-mentioned study questions, the following research hypotheses are posited:

1. Second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou would experience anxiety during classroom oral practice.

2. The implementation of cooperative learning would bring about a statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental and control groups.

3. Some obstacles might hinder the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes.

4. Students' perceptions of cooperative learning would be negative owing to their long experience with competitive and individualistic learning.

Rationale and Significance of the Study

The study endeavors to explore the influence of cooperative learning compared with the traditional instructional approach on the degree of anxiety students experience in oral classes. Studies on the correlation between cooperative learning and foreign language anxiety reached contradicting conclusions and focused mainly on second/foreign language learners in American

and Asian contexts. At odds with what is happening abroad, fewer if no research in Algeria has investigated the role of cooperative learning in lowering the degree of anxiety in oral classes. In response to the research gap identified in the literature, the present study attempts to measure the degree of anxiety experienced by second-year EFL students enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou, and determine whether there is any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who are exposed to the cooperative learning model and those who are instructed through the traditional lecture method.

The originality of the study lies in the methodology used and the research context. To be more specific, to the present state of our knowledge, no research has examined the connection between cooperative learning and classroom anxiety using a quasi-experimental design and comparing between the departments of English in Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou Universities. This research work is significant in the sense that the findings may provide information about the amount of anxiety experienced by Algerian sophomores during classroom oral practice, contribute to the literature on the impact of cooperative learning on foreign language anxiety, and offer insights into the use of cooperative learning in oral classes. The output of the research could be of some interest to Algerian EFL teachers since it suggests ways to create a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere and provides guidelines to implement cooperative learning effectively.

Methodology

The current study involved four classes of second-year students preparing a License degree in English at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. This fifteen-week quasi-experimental research included two classes in each university: one as the experimental class where the participants performed various oral activities in cooperative learning groups, and the other as the control group where the students accomplished the same tasks individually. To answer the six study questions and test the validity of the four research hypotheses, a mixed

methodology that conglomerates quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis procedures was employed. The quantitative part consisted in a questionnaire administered to the participants in order to measure their level of anxiety before and after the treatment. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 24.0) was used to computerize and process the gathered data. Descriptive statistics including percentages, means, and standard deviations were used along with inferential statistics. Classroom observation and semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Participant observation was used to detect the way the students in the experimental groups cooperated with their group members and uncover the potential barriers to cooperative learning integration in oral classes. At the end of the treatment, fourteen students with different anxiety levels were invited to share their experiences and opinions toward cooperative learning in semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to treat the obtained data.

Structure of the Thesis

The whole thesis is organized around three main parts. To be more specific, the present thesis comprises a general introduction followed by three distinctive parts namely *Theoretical Background and Review of Related Literature*, *Presentation of the Methodological Approaches and Research Findings*, and *Discussion and Implications*.

Part One provides a review of the empirical literature and theories. It intends to guide and orient the reader about the research variables and theoretical issues relevant to the study. It is divided into two chapters. Chapter one reviews the theoretical basis of foreign language classroom anxiety. It provides the reader with an overview of the tricky anxiety construct. It begins with the role of affective variables in the foreign language learning process, then offers insights on how anxiety is viewed in psychology and describes the three anxiety categories discerned by psychologists namely state anxiety, trait anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. The chapter also introduces the concept of foreign language anxiety and discusses Horwitz et

al.'s (1986) theory of *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety* and the questionnaire they conceived. Moreover, it debates on the nature of the relationship between anxiety and foreign language learning, and reports the manifestations, the possible sources, and the impact of anxiety on the foreign language learning process. Furthermore, it explains the impact of anxiety on cognitive processing and the correlation between foreign language anxiety and speaking. As a final point, anxiety-alleviating strategies as recommended by several scholars are stated.

Chapter two sheds light on cooperative learning. It starts with the distinction between teacher-centered and student-centered classrooms, then defines cooperative learning conferring to the research in the area and compares it with competitive and individualistic learning environments. The chapter also explains the theoretical root of cooperative learning and discusses the essential elements of cooperative learning and types of cooperative learning groups. In addition, it states the dissimilarity between cooperative learning and other categories of group learning as well as the similarities and differences between cooperative learning and collaborative learning. Furthermore, it recounts the potential profits and drawbacks of this educational approach, provides suggestions regarding its implementation in the classroom, describes earlier studies on cooperative learning in Algeria, and outlines past research on foreign language anxiety and cooperative learning.

Part Two consists of two chapters. It portrays the methodological approaches and presents the study findings in chapters three and four. Chapter three is entitled *Research Design and Methodology*. It describes the sampling population in terms of age and gender, presents the data collection instruments, and explains the procedure used to gather the relevant data. The chapter also outlines the grouping techniques and the cooperative learning structures used during the treatment, portrays the intervention study, and clarifies the data analysis procedures.

Chapter four, called *Results*, is concerned with the presentation of the outcomes related to the six study questions and the four research hypotheses. It exhibits the statistical analysis of

the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire findings. Tabular and graphical representations of the relevant results are given. The chapter also provides a detailed description of the data gained from the classroom observation phase. In addition, this chapter reports the results of the interviews conducted with fourteen students from the experimental classes.

Part Three is subdivided into two chapters. It discusses the study findings and enumerates a series of pedagogical implications in chapters five and six. Chapter five is called *Discussion of the Findings*. As its name suggests, the chapter deals with the discussion of the outcomes presented in chapter four, provides answers to the study questions, and tests the validity of the research hypotheses. The results related to each research question are discussed, interpreted, and correlated with the existing literature.

Chapter six is about the implications of the study. Based on the findings of the present research, this chapter proposes some techniques and strategies to help lessen anxiety in oral classes. It also offers teachers with some suggestions in order to integrate cooperative learning successfully into their teaching.

The thesis ends with a general conclusion where the main findings are summarized. In addition, the strengths and limitations of the study are highlighted and suggestions for further research are provided.

To conclude, the introduction to the present thesis has summarized the background of the study, has stated the problem, study aims, research questions, research hypotheses, and rationale and significance of the study, has briefly explained the methodology used to carry out the research, and has provided an overall outline of the thesis. The subsequent portion of the thesis provides detailed descriptions of the concepts of *foreign language anxiety* and *cooperative learning* and presents a theoretical rationale for the study.

Part One:

Theoretical Background and Review of Related Literature

Chapter One: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

Introduction

In today's interconnected era, English is indisputably the language of science, technology, tourism, business, international communication, and education. With the advent of globalization, the ability to speak fluent and accurate English has become a noteworthy prerequisite. Consequently, a countless number of students engage in learning English with the purpose of getting good command over the target language.

Being aware of the importance of English in virtually all domains, the Algerian government introduced this subject in schools and universities and launched several reforms to improve the teaching/learning of English. Despite these efforts, Algerian learners have fewer opportunities to master English since the language serves limited purposes and is rarely used in social interactions. Algerian learners of English face numerous hurdles, particularly during classroom oral practice. They are often distressed and become forgetful. This psychological barrier to language learning, known as foreign language anxiety, is one of the most important emotional states accountable for students' negative attitudes toward learning the target language (Horwitz, 2001, p. 114).

In line with some researchers, foreign language anxiety is distinct from other forms of anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986), for instance, claimed that language classrooms are more stressful than any other classes because they require learners to perform and communicate in the target language, which may lead to reticence and panic (p. 128). Similarly, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a) asserted that anxious language students might experience undesirable feelings that do not arise in other classes such as ruminating over poor performance (p. 297). The foreign language learning process influences learners' emotional sphere, which may determine their outlooks toward learning and speaking the target language.

The present chapter is entitled *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*. This first chapter devoted to the review of the literature first discusses the general aspects of anxiety, the so-called state anxiety, trait anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Anxiety related to foreign language learning, known as foreign language anxiety, is defined and discussed along with its components. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale is described in detail. A modified version of this anxiety measure was used in the present investigation; thus, the other research studies that employed the scale and how they assessed its validity and reliability are appraised. In addition, anxiety symptoms, sources, and impact on the foreign language learning process are highlighted. Furthermore, the correlation between anxiety and the speaking skills is explained. Finally, some anxiety-alleviating strategies are presented.

I.1. Individual Differences in Language Learning

Learning a foreign language can be a challenging process for many students since it encompasses several cognitive and affective factors that influence performance and accomplishments. Early Second Language Acquisition research highlighted mainly the cognitive aspect of the learner such as intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning strategies. Birjandi and Alemi (2010) defined the cognitive domain as "the mental side of human behavior" (p. 44). Cognitive researchers focused predominantly on the mental processes involved in the language learning process and underestimated the role of the affective factors learners bring to the classroom.

From the 1970s onward, however, the emotional side of the learner including how it affects second language acquisition has gained importance among psychologists, applied linguists, and language teachers. According to Brown (2000), "Affect refers to emotion or feeling. The affective domain is the emotional side of human behavior, and it may be juxtaposed to the cognitive side" (p. 140). Both cognitive and affective variables contribute to individual differences in language learning and play a major role in determining students' academic

success or failure. Gardner's socio-educational model highlights the role of individual differences in second language acquisition. A schematic representation of this model is presented in Figure 1.
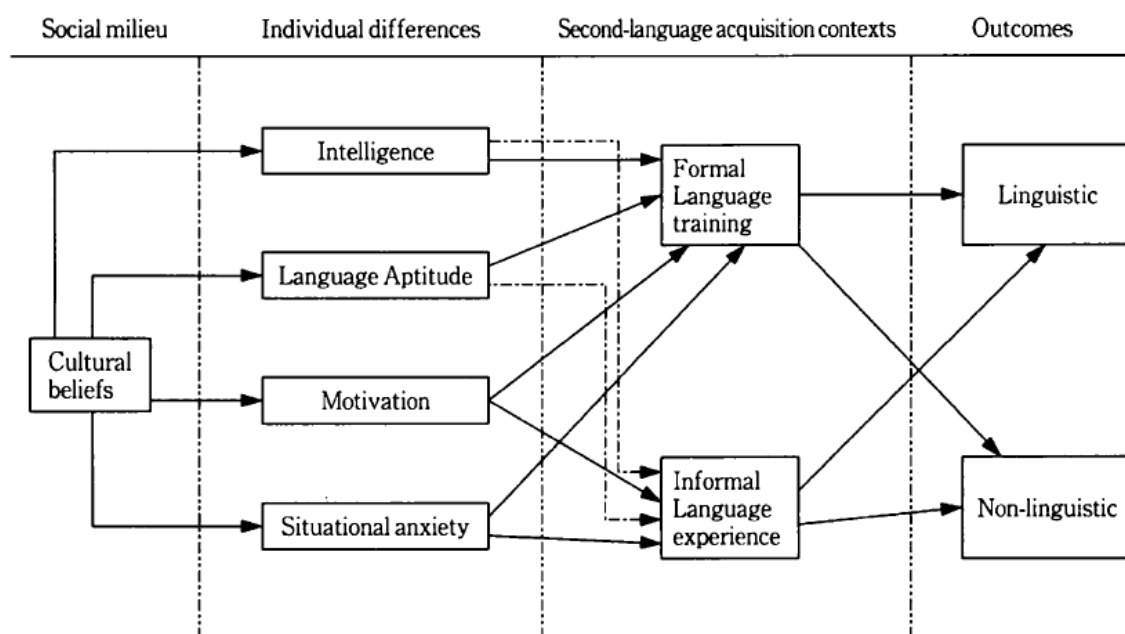
Figure 1. Schematic representation of the theoretical model (Gardner, 1979, in Gardner, 2001, p. 77).

As seen in Figure 1, four variables are involved in the process of second language acquisition: *social milieu*, *individual differences*, *second language acquisition contexts*, and *outcomes*. Social milieu refers to learners' cultural beliefs regarding language acquisition such as the belief that learning the target language is a demanding task. These cultural beliefs influence the role of individual differences. The latter encompasses two cognitive variables (intelligence and language aptitude) and two affective factors (motivation and situational anxiety). These four variables have a direct influence on language performance. To be more specific, students with high intelligence and language aptitude tend to be successful. Concerning the role of affective variables, motivation is seen as a driving factor that leads to better language learning achievement while anxiety is inhibiting and contributes to poor language performance. In the model, individual differences are related to both formal and

informal second language acquisition contexts. The formal context refers to the classroom environment whereas the informal context is any other setting where the target language is being acquired such as listening to the radio and watching movies. Gardner's socio-educational model also shows that both cognitive and affective variables have a direct effect on the formal context. Motivation and anxiety are more related to the informal context than do intelligence and aptitude because motivation and anxiety determine whether an individual would enter the informal situation. Intelligence and aptitude become involved only once the individual has taken part in the informal setting. Formal and informal second language acquisition contexts lead to linguistic outcomes like fluency and language proficiency and non-linguistic outcomes such as attitudes (Gardner, 2001, pp. 77-79).

Gardner revised the model and incorporated the notion of *integrative motive* within the individual differences component. In this new version, Gardner postulated that the levels of motivation are influenced by integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation. Integrativeness refers to learners' interest in the target language community, and attitudes toward the learning situation represent students' outlooks regarding the course, the teacher, or classmates (Gardner, 2001, p. 80). To measure the elements of the socio-educational model of second language acquisition, the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery was developed. This Likert questionnaire measures five different variables namely integrativeness, attitudes toward the language situation, motivation, language anxiety, and instrumental orientation (Gardner, 2001, p. 83).

Dörnyei (2005) described Gardner's theory as the dominant motivation model for over three decades and the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery as a useful assessment tool. However, the theory remained unchanged despite massive development in motivation research (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 71). In addition, Gardner's motivational theory "is not an elaborate model but a

schematic outline of how motivation is related to other ID [Individual Differences] variables and language achievement" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 68).

The role of affective variables in second language acquisition was also emphasized in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. The hypothesis embodies Krashen's view that some emotional variables may form a barrier that disrupts language acquisition. This obstacle, known as the affective filter, is a mental wall that precludes learners from acquiring the target language (Krashen, 1985, p. 3). Krashen (1982) mentioned three emotional factors that may interfere with the process of learning and the development of the affective filter: anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence (p. 31). Students with high affective filters face difficulties during language acquisition. More specifically, students with high anxiety, low motivation, and little self-confidence receive little input (Krashen, 1985, p. 3). For learners to reach comprehensible input, their affective filters need to be low throughout the language acquisition process. To lower students' affective filters and ensure a smooth flow of language acquisition, teachers should search for ways to allay anxiety, enhance motivation, and boost self-confidence.

In an action research project, Roberton (2011) attempted to identify the most effective teaching methods to reduce students' affective filters. Observations, interviews, and surveys were used to collect data. Throughout the intervention, the participants worked individually, in dyads or groups, or as a whole class. The outcomes revealed that collaborative learning settings and cooperative learning tasks compared with the whole class activities were more effective in slackening students' affective filters and improving their learning (Roberton, 2011, p. 53).

Among the emotional variables that affect language learning, anxiety is "the most powerful and negative predictor for students' performance in English" (Liu & Huang, 2011, p. 6). Therefore, it is important to look for ways to reduce anxiety. The present study is an attempt to investigate the effect of cooperative learning compared with traditional instruction on the levels of anxiety students experience during classroom oral practice.

I.2. General Anxiety

Owing to the ambiguous nature of anxiety, researchers were unable to provide a unified definition for this emotional variable. From a psychological standpoint, anxiety is "a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object" (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971; as cited in Scovel, 1978, p. 134). The notion of anxiety is characterized by fear and uneasiness that is not associated with a particular context. Even though anxiety and fear are both disagreeable emotional reactions, Spielberger made a distinction between the two constructs. According to Spielberger (1976), fear derives from "real objective danger in the environment" whereas the causes of anxiety may not be known (as cited in Stephenson Wilson, 2006, p. 41).

Concerning the symptoms of anxiety, Newth (2003) identified four major categories: *emotions*, *body responses*, *thoughts*, and *behaviors*. Emotions that accompany anxiety arousal include feeling fearful, tense, and frightened. Body responses refer to the physical manifestations of anxiety such as pounding heart, trembling, dry mouth, and dizziness. Thoughts associated with anxiety encompass difficulty concentrating on things not related to the source of danger and frightening dreams or nightmares. Anxiety coping behaviors involve getting reassurance from others and avoiding the feared situation, experience, place or people (Newth, 2003, pp. 6-7).

Anxiety is a common human feeling. All individuals experience anxiety at some point in their lives. In this case, anxiety is an occasional worry experienced in response to a stressful or dangerous event. For example, an individual may feel apprehensive before an important test or before taking an important decision. However, when anxiety persists, it becomes a chronic disorder. People with anxiety disorders experience excessive and uncontrollable worry that prevents them from living a normal life. There are several anxiety disorders. The broadest type is known as Generalized Anxiety Disorder. According to Newth (2003), people with

generalized anxiety disorder experience irrational worry about diverse daily matters such as money, health issues, family problems, and work difficulties (p. 24). They exhibit a variety of symptoms such as insomnia, muscle tension, tiredness, difficulty concentrating, and difficulty swallowing (Newth, 2003, p. 24). Anxiety disorders can also occur in a specific situation, for example, in social interactions. Social anxiety disorder, also known as social phobia, is characterized by "excessive fear of embarrassment/humiliation" (Newth, 2003, p. 22). People who suffer from social anxiety disorder fear negative evaluation and worry about doing or saying "the wrong thing" in public (Newth, 2003, p. 22). Fear of negative evaluation, which is a component of social anxiety, is described subsequently in this chapter.

I.3. Categories of Anxiety

Psychologists made a distinction between three anxiety perspectives: *state anxiety*, *trait anxiety*, and *situation-specific anxiety.*

I.3.1. State Anxiety and Trait Anxiety

State anxiety is a temporary condition related to a specific situation. Spielberger (1983) defined state anxiety as a transitory emotional reaction to a particular anxiety-inducing situation (p. 4) such as the apprehension experienced by learners when taking an important test (p. 6). According to MacIntyre (1995), state anxiety is an instantaneous reaction with instantaneous cognitive effects (p. 93). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) criticized the state anxiety perspective for "skirting the issue of the source of the reported anxiety" and for not asking participants to provide reasons for their emotional condition (p. 90).

When state anxiety is recurrent, it becomes a permanent condition. This category of anxiety, termed trait anxiety or global anxiety, is the tendency to be anxious in any given situation. As stated by Pappamihiel (2002), trait anxious people are nervous regardless of the situation (p. 330). Scovel (1978) referred to trait anxiety as "a more permanent predisposition to be anxious" (p. 137). That is, trait anxiety is an enduring personality aspect. MacIntyre and

Gardner (1991b) indicated that researchers such as Mischel and Peake (1982) and Endler (1980) contended that traits would be meaningless without being "in interaction with situations" (p. 88). In other words, the trait anxiety approach should allow the respondents to consider their reactions over various situations because some people are more predisposed to anxiety than others. State anxiety is viewed as a normal feeling whereas trait anxiety is considered as a personality ailment that necessitates therapy.

In order to measure the levels of state anxiety and trait anxiety, Spielberger developed the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory. This questionnaire comprises forty items answered on a four-point scale, twenty items for assessing state anxiety and twenty statements for measuring trait anxiety. The State Anxiety Scale choices are (1) *Not at all*; (2) *Somewhat*; (3) *Moderately so*; and (4) *Very much so*. State anxiety items include "I feel at ease" and "I am presently worrying over possible misfortunes" (Spielberger, 1983, p.72). The Trait Anxiety Scale alternatives, on the other hand, are (1) *Almost never*; (2) *Sometimes*; (3) *Often*; and (4) *Almost always*. Trait anxiety statements encompass "I am calm, cool and collected" and "I get in a state of tension or turmoil as I think over my recent concerns and interests" (Spielberger, 1983, p.73).

Spielberger's State-Trait Anxiety Inventory may not be appropriate to measure anxiety in all situations. Indeed, the scale endeavors "to define a personality trait of anxiety applicable across several situations, but this may not be the best way to measure anxiety in a language learning context" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, p. 254). Consistent with MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), Spielberger's inventory items are too general and not suitable to measure anxiety in language learning environments. The authors recommended the conception of appropriate scales to examine anxiety in language learning settings.

I.3.2. Situation-specific Anxiety

The third perspective, known as situation-specific anxiety, is similar to trait anxiety except that it arises in a specific context such as classroom participation or public speaking (MacIntyre

& Gardner, 1991b, p. 90). Situational anxiety is the likelihood of becoming apprehensive in a particular context. An individual may feel relaxed in one situation but anxious in another. To exemplify, an Algerian student may be anxiety-free when asked to speak in French. Nonetheless, the same student may experience anxiety when required to speak in English. According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b), the situation-specific anxiety perspective is advantageous because it describes the situation under consideration to the respondents (p. 91) and provides "more meaningful and consistent results" (p. 92). Nevertheless, this approach is disadvantageous because the researcher is responsible for defining the situation of interest in accordance with the purpose of the study (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b, p. 91). In the socio-educational model of second language acquisition, Gardner (2001) suggested that situational anxiety is related to language learning contexts (p. 78).

In spite of the fact that anxiety was classified into state anxiety, trait anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety, Zheng (2008) saw no clear distinction between the three approaches:

> The differences can roughly be identified on a continuum from stability to transience, with trait anxiety related to a generally stable predisposition to be nervous in a wide range of situations on one end, and a moment-to-moment experience of transient emotional state on the other. Situational anxiety falls in the middle of the continuum, representing the probability of becoming anxious in a particular type of situation. (p. 2)

I.4. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Theory

Anxiety interferes with many types of learning, for example science or mathematics, and it is only logical that it would also interfere with language learning (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125). The anxiety associated with language learning is known as *Second/Foreign Language Anxiety* or *Language Anxiety* for short. In their theory on language learning anxiety, Horwitz and colleagues (1986) suggested that language anxiety should be viewed as a situation-specific construct experienced in the context of the foreign language classroom.

I.4.1. Definition of Foreign Language Anxiety

In recent decades, the study of anxiety in language learning settings has received considerable attention. Even though anxiety is the most investigated psychological variable, it is the most misunderstood of them all (Scovel, 1978, p. 132) due to its intricacy and multi-faceted feature. Early research on the relationship between anxiety and foreign language achievement yielded mixed, perplexing, and confusing results (Phillips, 1992, p. 14; Scovel, 1978, p. 132). These studies viewed foreign language anxiety as a mere transfer of general forms of anxiety. That is to say, generally anxious individuals are susceptible to experience anxiety in language learning contexts. In a review of research on anxiety and language learning, Scovel (1978) attempted to explain the inconsistency of these conclusions. The author attributed the contradictory outcomes in early research to the use of diverse tools to measure anxiety. To be more specific, the anxiety measures used at that time were too general and unsuitable for the study of language anxiety. Accordingly, Scovel (1978) recommended researchers to specify the type of anxiety they want to study.

The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery was developed in order to measure elements associated with language learning including language anxiety. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) defined language anxiety as the apprehension experienced in a situation where the use of the target language is required. The authors distinguished between two types of anxiety: *language class anxiety* and *language use anxiety*. The former refers to the apprehension experienced in foreign language classroom environments whereas the latter represents the anxiety learners feel when they are asked to speak in the foreign language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993, p. 2).

In 1986, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope introduced their seminal paper *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety* in which they proclaimed, "second language research has neither adequately defined foreign language anxiety nor described its specific effects on foreign language learning" (p. 125). This article constitutes the keystone for the research in the area since it proposed a

definition of foreign language anxiety, described its symptoms, and offered a specific tool for its measurement. Their clinical experience with beginner foreign language students at the Learning Skills Centre in the University of Texas led the three researchers to propose a unique form of anxiety known as Foreign Language Anxiety. Consistent with Horwitz and her fellow researchers (1986), foreign language learning is a unique process that involves learners' self-perceptions, beliefs, and feelings specific to language learning settings (p. 128). They viewed foreign language anxiety as an amalgamation of different states of apprehension, negative thoughts, and inadequate feelings specifically associated with language classrooms. In line with Horwitz et al., foreign language anxiety is distinct from state and trait perspectives. They perceived it as a specific form of anxiety related to language learning environments. Likewise, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) conceived language anxiety as "the feeling of tension and apprehension" associated with speaking, listening, and learning in second language settings (p. 284).

Horwitz et al.'s theory not only recognized the distinctiveness of foreign language anxiety but also offered an instrument, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), for its measurement. Since the introduction of the FLCAS as a measure directly concerned with anxiety in language learning contexts, research on anxiety and language learning achievement produced consistent results (Horwitz, 2001, p. 114).

I.4.2. Components of Foreign Language Anxiety

In their theory of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, Horwitz and her colleagues (1986) offered a tripartite description of anxiety. To be more specific, the authors proposed three types of performance anxiety: *communication apprehension*, *test anxiety*, and *fear of negative evaluation*.

I.4.2.1. Communication apprehension

McCroskey (1977), a pioneer in communication apprehension research, defined this construct as the feeling of fear about actual or anticipated communication with an individual or a group (p. 78). Communicatively apprehensive individuals tend to fear and avoid social interactions. Scholarly research on communication apprehension used variously related terminologies such as *reticence*, *unwillingness to communicate*, and *shyness*. Communication apprehension and related constructs were used interchangeably in the literature until McCroskey made a distinction between the different concepts. According to McCroskey (1981), reticent individuals are "people who do not communicate effectively"; unwillingness to communicate denotes one of the reasons people may not want to communicate; and communication apprehension represents one of the factors leading to unwillingness to communicate (p. 7). To say it differently, communication apprehension is a subcomponent of reticence and unwillingness to communicate, with reticence as a global term and unwillingness to communicate as an intermediary construct (McCroskey, 1981, pp. 6-7). Shyness, on the other hand, originates from social anxiety, low social skills, or low self-esteem (McCroskey & Richmond, 1982, p. 460). Consistent with McCroskey and Richmond (1982), communication apprehension and shyness "form a genus-specie relationship" (p. 460). The authors explained that shyness is the genus and designates the predisposition "to be timid, reserved" whilst communication apprehension is the specie and indicates the predilection to act in a shy manner due to nervousness (McCroskey & Richmond, 1982, pp. 460-461). The relationship between the aforementioned constructs is an ongoing debate in the literature. Kelly (1982) claimed that these constructs are nearly indistinguishable and recommended researchers to focus their attention on "improving methods of identifying the problem and on improving treatment programs" (p. 112). Leary (1983), on the other hand, argued that these constructs are

"conceptually and empirically distinguishable" and that this distinction is vital to develop methods to identify the problem and improve treatment (pp. 305-306).

McCroskey (1981) divided communication apprehension into four levels along a continuum: *trait-like*, *generalized context*, *person-group*, and *situational*. Trait-like communication apprehension is a relatively enduring level of anxiety experienced in various interpersonal communication settings (McCroskey, 1981, p. 10). A person with elevated levels of trait-like communication apprehension feels nervous regardless of the circumstances including communication in foreign language classrooms. Generalized context communication apprehension, on the other hand, refers to a stable predisposition to experience anxiety in a specific situation (McCroskey, 1981, p. 10). That is, an individual with context anxiety may have heightened communication apprehension in a given situation and experience little or no apprehension in other contexts. Examples include public speaking, meetings or classes, small group discussions, and dyadic interactions (McCroskey, 1981, p. 10). A student, for instance, may experience high communication apprehension when performing in front of the class; nonetheless, the same student may feel comfortable during small group discussions. Person-group communication apprehension is experienced when communicating with a given individual or group of individuals across time. This type of apprehension is not a personality variable but triggered by the other participant(s) in the communicative situation (McCroskey, 1981, pp. 10-11). A student, for instance, may experience high anxiety when talking to the teacher or a group of classmates but feel relaxed when communicating with friends. Situational communication apprehension is a short-lived sensation experienced during a specific encounter with a specific individual or group (McCroskey, 1981, p. 11). An individual may be apprehensive when talking to a given person in a given situation, but as soon as that situation ends the individual is no longer nervous. For example, a student may experience anxiety when discussing an assignment with the teacher or when defending his/her thesis.

In order to measure the levels of communication apprehension, McCroskey conceived the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA) in 1970. The scale contains twenty-four statements, six items for each of the four communication contexts: group discussion, speaking in formal meetings, interpersonal interaction, and public speaking. All the items are answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The following are example statements from the PRCA.

 "**1.** I dislike participating in group discussion"

"**7.** Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in a meeting"

"**13**. While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous"

"**21.** I feel relaxed while giving a speech" (McCroskey, 1981, p. 44).

Horwitz et al. (1986) adapted the communication apprehension construct to describe a particular type of anxiety associated with second/foreign language classrooms. According to Horwitz and associates (1986), communication apprehension occurs when learners are unable to understand others and make themselves understood (p. 127). Learners with high levels of communication apprehension withdraw from communicative situations by fear of making mistakes or being unable to understand language input. As stated by Horwitz et al. (1986), "any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear or even panic" (p. 128).

Manifestations of communication apprehension may include difficulties in speaking in pairs, in groups, in public situations, or in listening to utterances (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127), and unwillingness to communicate in the target language (Aida, 1994, p. 157). Communication apprehensive students may be reluctant to communicate with teachers and/or peers and volunteer participation during classroom discourse.

Research has demonstrated that people who are talkative in their first language become silent when communicating in the target language. In a 1983 study, McCroskey, Fayer, and

Richmond compared between communication apprehension and self-perceived competence in both Spanish and English among Puerto Rican college students. The findings displayed low levels of Spanish communication apprehension and extremely high English communication anxiety. In other words, Puerto Rican students were relaxed in their native language (Spanish) and inhibited when communicating in a foreign language (English). McCroskey et al.'s study also revealed that highly communication apprehensive students tend to have low levels of self-perception in the target language.

I.4.2.2. Test anxiety

The second anxiety component identified by Horwitz et al. is *test anxiety*. In 1967, Liebert and Morris presented a two-component conceptualization of test anxiety. Consistent with Liebert and Morris, test anxiety comprises *worry* and *emotionality*. The former is the cognitive aspect of anxiety such as preoccupation about the consequences of failure whereas the latter is the affective dimension and includes autonomic reactions toward the test situation (Liebert & Morris, 1967, p. 975) such as sweating and trembling.

In foreign language classrooms, students experience test anxiety as a response to previous poor test performances and cultivate negative stereotypes about test situations (Chan & Wu, 2004, p. 293). As described by Aydin (2009), test anxiety is "a fear of failing in tests and an unpleasant experience held either consciously or unconsciously by learners in various situations" (p. 129). In other words, test anxiety is a conscious or unconscious nervousness over academic evaluation. Test-anxious students may have idealistic beliefs and feel that anything less than a full mark is a failure (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127). This feeling of apprehension magnifies when oral performance is assessed. Horwitz et al. (1986) maintained that oral tests may provoke both test anxiety and communication apprehension concurrently in anxious students (p. 128). In a study about anxiety and speaking, Young (1990) incorporated the item "I think I can speak the foreign language pretty well, but when I know I am being graded, I

mess up" into the anxiety-measuring questionnaire in order to determine students' reactions toward test situations. The findings revealed that fifty-one percent of the respondents agreed with this statement (Young, 1990, p. 543).

According to Young (1991a), students with low self-perceived ability level are more likely to experience test anxiety compared with learners who have high ability levels (p. 427). However, Phillips's (1992) study about the effect of language anxiety on students' oral test performance and attitudes revealed that both high and low ability students viewed oral testing as an "unpleasant experience" and acknowledged their frustration regarding their inability to say what they "knew" (p. 19). Phillips's investigation demonstrated that even students with higher ability level could experience test anxiety.

As far as the causes of test anxiety are concerned, Birjandi and Alemi (2010) mentioned lack of preparation, procrastination, poor time management, ineffective study habits, thinking about previous poor test performances, worrying about other students' performances, and the negative consequences of failure (p. 47). Young (1991a) found that students get highly nervous when the test involved elements not discussed in the classroom (p. 429). In an interview with five Japanese college students in the United States, Ohata (2005a) identified two sources of test anxiety that included worry about the negative consequences of getting bad grades and time constraints (p. 11). Besides, some testing techniques trigger anxiety. In a review of the literature on test anxiety and foreign language learners, Aydin (2009) indicated that Oh (1992) found that cloze tests and think-aloud procedures heighten test anxiety (p. 132). Furthermore, Saha's (2014) study with EFL learners in Bangladesh exposed various sources of test anxiety. The author classified them into seven categories: 1) learners' attitudes (for example, competitive outlook), 2) teachers' approach (such as unhelpful and threatening behavior while invigilating), 3) proficiency level (like memorizing without understanding), 4) parental beliefs (high expectation for success), 5) environmental issues (tight atmosphere in exam hall), 6) testing

procedure (indirect testing and testing without face validity), and 7) trait anxiety (general weakness in learning English) (Sacha, 2014, p. 195).

Test-anxious students may experience some physical symptoms like rapid heartbeat, trembling, anorexia (Aydin, 2013, p. 68), sweating, headache, stomachache, aching muscles, and clammy and trembling hands (Birjandi & Alemi, 2010, p. 47; Nemati, 2012, p. 97). They may also get panicky prior to tests and worry about the results and the negative consequences of failure (Aydin, 2013, p. 68). In addition, test anxiety may have diverse effects on test performance such as difficulty to understand the test questions and suffering from mental blocks during the test and remembering the right answers only once the exam is over (Birjandi & Alemi, 2010, p. 47). Undeniably, test anxiety has hazardous effects on highly anxious students in the sense that it impairs performance and leads to academic failure. In a study with one hundred thirty-three Indian students, Joy (2013) measured the levels of anxiety in relation to pre-exams, during exams, and post-exams. The findings indicated that anxiety is detrimental to test performance at any stage. Consistent with the outcomes, test anxiety is more damaging prior to and during test situations because these stages are directly related to test scores.

In order to allay test anxiety, Phillips (1992) recommended teachers to establish a relaxed environment, acknowledge students' fears, help learners develop realistic expectations, teach the use of anxiety-alleviating strategies, and employ cooperative-group testing (pp. 20-21). Aydin (2009), on the other hand, highlighted the importance of training teachers and examiners "during their pre-service and in-service education programs on the methods to relieve test anxiety" (p. 134).

I.4.2.3. Fear of negative evaluation

The third aspect of classroom anxiety emphasized by Horwitz et al. is *fear of negative evaluation*. Watson and Friend (1969) defined this construct as "apprehension about others' evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the

expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (p. 449). This facet of anxiety stems from a person's conviction of being negatively evaluated, which may lead him/her to avoid others' evaluations and evaluative situations. Fear of negative evaluation may occur in any social evaluative situation such as job interviews or public speaking rather than being restricted to test-taking situations (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128).

In foreign language classrooms, students' performance is continually evaluated by both teacher and peers. Language classrooms are cradles for fear of negative evaluation where teachers and students are the critical board of judges. Learners with high levels of fear of negative evaluation are concerned about making an improper impression. Aida (1994) explained that students with fear of negative evaluation are usually silent and passive and avoid participation in language activities (p. 157). In extreme cases, students may miss the class by fear of exposing themselves to the critical judgment of others preventing them from progressing (Aida, 1994, p. 157). Students who fear negative judgment display avoidance and withdrawal behaviors. Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) noted that people with fear of negative evaluation and those who suffer from communication apprehension are very much alike in the sense that both seldom take the initiative to talk and interact with others (p. 563).

In an attempt to explore the sources of fear of negative evaluation, Idri (2014) used a mixed methodology and involved first-year students of English enrolled at the University of Bejaia (Algeria) during the academic year 2006-2007. Idri assumed that fear of negative evaluation originates from classroom interaction, language proficiency, error correction and evaluation. At first, classroom observation was used during three months whose analysis revealed the existence of fear of negative evaluation. After this phase, the researcher developed a questionnaire and administered it to one hundred fifty-seven participants. The findings showed that the main factors leading to fear of negative evaluation were language proficiency, error correction and evaluation. To reinforce these findings, Idri interviewed eleven students. The

outcomes indicated that the participants' fear of negative evaluation was significantly higher during teacher-learner interaction than during interaction with peers. In addition, the interview participants confessed that the teacher's error correction approach, their low language proficiency, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation intensified their fear of being negatively evaluated. The use of a Before/After Design demonstrated that the participants experienced fear of negative evaluation before exams but felt no apprehension after the examination period.

In spite of the fact that communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation are significant aggregates of foreign language anxiety, Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that anxiety is more than just the fusion of these three aspects. They consider foreign language anxiety as a combination of feelings, beliefs, and behaviors related to the foreign language learning context. According to Horwitz and her fellow researchers, foreign language anxiety is a unique variety of anxiety completely different from the apprehensions experienced in other courses (p. 128). The likelihood of making mistakes, being embarrassed, and being assessed critically is much greater in language classrooms than in other lectures such as science or philosophy.

I.4.3. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Since anxiety is an essential factor that affects the foreign language learning process, it is vital to identify anxious students in language classrooms (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). In 1986, Horwitz et al. not only acknowledged foreign language anxiety as a specific construct that is independent of other types of anxiety but also developed an instrument, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), to capture learners' anxiety specific reactions. This test aims to identify anxious students and measure their anxiety levels in foreign language classrooms. The questionnaire comprises thirty-three question items answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree", "agree", "neither agree nor disagree", "disagree",

and "strongly disagree" assessing the degree of communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in the classroom. These are some question items from the FLCAS:

 "**1.** I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class".

"**8.** I am usually at ease during tests in my language class".

"**31**. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language". (Horwitz et al., 1986, pp. 129-130).

Horwitz and her co-workers (1986) piloted the scale with seventy-eight beginner students learning Spanish at the University of Texas. The study revealed that many students experienced substantial amounts of anxiety while speaking in the classroom and that this nervousness affected their language performance. The findings also indicated that "students with debilitating anxiety in the foreign language classroom setting can be identified and that they share a number of characteristics in common" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 129). Horwitz et al. (1986) affirmed that the FLCAS is a useful tool since it helps to identify anxious students and determine the reasons for their apprehension in language classrooms.

Since the introduction of Horwitz et al.' s theory of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, the FLCAS was extensively used in research studies (for example, Aida, 1994; Chan & Wu, 2004; Liu, 2007; Pérez-Paredes & Martinez-Sánchez, 2000-2001; Subaşı, 2010; Von Wörde, 2003). This five-point Likert questionnaire was used in its original form (Aida, 1994), translated into different languages in order to assess anxiety among language learners of different nationalities and proficiency levels (Chanprasert & Wichadee, 2015), and adapted to suit the different EFL settings (Tóth, 2008).

Even though the FLCAS is acknowledged as a valid and reliable tool to measure anxiety (Aida, 1994; Tóth, 2008), Ganschow and Sparks (1996) questioned its validity and asserted that Horwitz et al.'s questionnaire measures language skills rather than anxiety levels. Ganschow and Sparks (1996) estimated that, "60% of the questions involved comfort level with expressive

or receptive language. Several additional questions (15%) involved verbal memory for language and speed of language processing (12%)" (p. 200). Other researchers such as MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), Aida (1994), and Pérez-Paredes and Martinez-Sánchez (2000-2001) challenged the components of foreign language anxiety. MacIntyre and Gardner's (1989) study about anxiety and second language learning supported communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation as components of foreign language anxiety but rejected the test anxiety constituent. MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) proposed that test anxiety represents a general anxiety problem rather than a factor specifically associated with foreign language learning (p. 268) and recommended further testing regarding the foreign language anxiety model (p. 273). In another study, Aida (1994) used Horwitz et al.'s theoretical model to study foreign language anxiety among American students learning Japanese. The study findings partially supported the validity of Horwitz et al.'s anxiety questionnaire. The results exposed four constructs instead of three and refuted the test anxiety element. The components of foreign language anxiety proposed by Aida included speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, fear of failing in class, comfortableness in speaking with Japanese people, and negative attitudes toward the Japanese class. Aida suggested that test anxiety, which is one of the three anxiety constituents introduced by Horwitz and colleagues, is not a factor that contributes to foreign language anxiety. Aida (1994) proposed that since test anxiety is not specific to foreign language learning, the items reflecting on test anxiety should be excluded from the FLCAS (p. 162). In spite of the fact that Aida's study did not support the test anxiety component, the FLCAS yielded an internal consistency of .94 compared to .93 in Horwitz et al.'s study. Aida (1994) sustained that the findings of her investigation demonstrated that "the FLCAS is a reliable tool regardless of whether the language is a European Western language" (p. 158). Likewise, Pérez-Paredes and Martinez-Sánchez (2000-2001) reduplicated Aida's study and examined Horwitz et al.'s theory among one hundred ninety-eight Spanish students learning

English. As in Aida's investigation, the analysis of the FLCAS generated four factors. Pérez-Paredes and Martinez-Sánchez (2000-2001) asserted that the FLCAS elements are far from being clear and recommended future research to clarify the foreign language anxiety construct and establish its components (p. 347). Despite these challenges, Trang (2012) indicated that:

> …since the introduction of Horwitz et al.'s FLCAS as an instrument to measure anxiety levels, the FLCAS has been widely used in language anxiety research, and the problem of inconsistent research findings has been considerably solved, which has strengthened its reliability. (pp. 72-73)

This is why the teacher-researcher selected this anxiety measure to assess the degree of anxiety experienced by second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou during classroom oral practice.

I.5. Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning

In the last few decades, the nature of the relationship between anxiety and foreign language learning has been widely debated. Sparks and Ganschow (1995) raised the question of "which came first, the anxiety or the language problem?" (p. 237). Consequently, various scholars attempted to answer the question of whether anxiety is the cause or the result of poor language achievement. The issue is debatable amongst two groups of researchers: Sparks and Ganschow on one side, and MacIntyre and Horwitz on the other side.

In order to shed light on the relationship between language anxiety and achievement, Ganschow and Sparks developed the *Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis* (LCDH), which postulates that students' deficits are based on the difficulties they encounter with their native language codes including the phonological, orthographical, syntactic, and semantic features (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996, p. 201). The basis of the LCDH is that learners' native language difficulties, rather than affective variables, are the main source of their differences in foreign language achievement (Sparks & Ganschow, 1995, p. 235). Sparks and Ganschow (1995) reported that, "A third individual might have native language difficulties that impede his or her performance in listening to, speaking, reading, and/or writing the FL, but this language problem

may or may not lead to state anxiety in FL learning situations" (p. 236). Consistent with Sparks and Ganschow, affective variables such as foreign language anxiety are the result rather than the cause of poor native language skills. Since the LCDH takes into account both first and foreign language abilities, Ganschow and Sparks (1996) criticized the fact that Horwitz et al.'s theory of foreign language classroom anxiety does not evaluate students' native language skills to ascertain whether anxious students have difficulties when learning a foreign language (p. 200).

To test their hypothesis, Ganschow and Sparks (1996) investigated the relationship between anxiety, native language skills, and foreign language aptitude among one hundred fifty-four high school foreign language learners. The administration of the FLCAS disclosed three anxiety groups: high-anxiety, average-anxiety, and low-anxiety. The findings revealed that low-anxious students had stronger native language skills, demonstrated higher foreign language aptitude, and scored higher on the final foreign language grade. The authors concluded that the findings of their study support the hypothesis that "language variables differentiate good and poor foreign language learners and that high, average, and low levels of anxiety may be a consequence of these language skill difference" (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996, p. 207).

MacIntyre (1995) strongly contested the LCDH. As a response to Sparks and Ganschow's study, MacIntyre (1995) asserted that the LCDH focusses exclusively on cognitive abilities and ignores the potential effects of emotional factors on aptitude and achievement. The theory also disregards the social and communicative aspects of language learning (MacIntyre, 1995, p. 95). MacIntyre (1995) contended that the LCDH failed to demonstrate the causal role of anxiety and other emotional variables in creating individual differences in foreign language achievement (p. 96).

To strengthen this position, MacIntyre (1995) reported evidence based on MacIntyre and Gardner's (1994b) experimental research work about the relationship between anxiety and

performance. In the study, seventy-two students learning French were assigned into three experimental classes and one control group. In the experimental groups, anxiety was intentionally induced through the introduction of a video camera at different learning stages (input, processing, and output). The control group was not exposed to the camera. The findings revealed that anxiety in the experimental groups intensified when the camera was introduced and "deficits in vocabulary acquisition were observed" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b, p. 1). The study outcomes supported the view that anxiety is a cause of less satisfactory performance and refuted the LCDH claim that anxiety is a mere consequence of poor language ability.

Another response to Sparks and Ganschow was articulated by Horwitz (2000) who wondered, "If foreign language anxiety is based on first language ability, why do learners experience anxiety in their second language but not their first?" (p. 257). Horwitz (2000) discarded the ideas proposed by the LCDH and noted that it is implausible for a third of students to have first language deficits (p. 257). In addition, the author argued that first language difficulties are not always the cause of anxiety since advanced and successful students report foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, 2000, p. 257). Furthermore, in her paper *Even Teachers Get the Blues: Recognizing and Alleviating Language Teachers' Feeling of Foreign Language Anxiety*, Horwitz (1996) found that many language teachers experience language anxiety. Therefore, it would be astonishing that people with language deficits would decide to become language teachers (Horwitz, 2000, p. 257). In her review of the literature on language anxiety and achievement, Horwitz (2001) maintained that anxiety is a cause of poor language learning (p. 112). This view supports MacIntyre and Gardner's (1991a) conclusion that anxiety has deleterious effects on language learning and production (p. 302). Besides, most studies (For example, Aida, 1994; Horwitz et al., 1986) that employed the FLCAS recounted a negative correlation between anxiety and language performance.

Despite the aforementioned arguments, researchers are still debating on the role of anxiety whether it is the cause or the consequence of poor language performance. The issue is unresolved (Horwitz, 2001, p. 121) because anxiety is "very complex and difficult to measure" (Phillips, 1992, p. 20).

I.6. Manifestations of Foreign Language Anxiety

Owing to the ubiquitous influence of anxiety on the foreign language learning process, teachers should identify anxious students in the classroom. Foreign language anxiety research has exposed a number of signs exhibited by anxious students. Some symptoms are apparent and observable while others are internal and imperceptible. Even though anxiety manifestations vary from one individual to another, anxious students encounter similar difficulties when learning a foreign language influencing their physiology, psychology, behavior, and cognition.

Physiological manifestations of anxiety may involve rapid heartbeat rate, muscle pain, dry mouth, excessive sweat, headaches, nausea, dizziness, insomnia, shortness of breath, blood pressure, blushing, disturbed appetite, and changes in body temperature. Language learners feel palpitations and sweat when performing in foreign language classrooms (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 126). Von Wörde (2003) identified some physical anxiety reactions such as "'headaches'; 'clammy hands, cold fingers'; 'shaking, sweating'; 'pounding heart'; 'tears'; and 'foot tapping, desk drumming'" (p. 8). Some of the participants' comments included "my stomach gets in knots" and "I get all red" (Von Wörde, 2003, p. 8).

The psychological symptoms of anxiety may arise from feelings of fear, nervousness, worry, and shyness. In the case of high anxiety, the emotional signs may comprise depression, and uncontrollable laughing or crying. When describing their reactions toward oral exams, Phillips's (1992) students reported being "nervous", "intimidated", "tense", "confused", "worried", and "dumb-founded" (p. 19). Horwitz et al.'s (1986) students "spoke of 'freezing' in class, standing outside the door trying to summon up enough courage to enter, and going

blank prior to tests" (p. 128). Horwitz et al.'s (1986) students further stated some psychophysiological symptoms including "tenseness, trembling, perspiring, palpitations and sleep disturbance" (p. 129).

The behavioral symptoms of anxiety may involve fidgeting, pacing, avoidance of interaction and eye contact with both teacher and classmates, and cutting the class or coming to the classroom unprepared. Horwitz and her colleagues (1986) conveyed some forms of avoidance attitude like "missing class and postponing homework" (p. 126). In an interview with Young (1991b), Terrell proclaimed that students tend to laugh nervously, avoid eye contact with the teacher, or joke (pp. 16-17). According to Leary (1982), these reactions serve as an image-protection for the learner (as cited in Young, 1991a, p. 430).

Anxiety may also have an impact on mental processes. The cognitive symptoms of anxiety can be noticed in the difficulty to concentrate on the task, negative self-talk, comparing oneself to others, and difficulty to organize thoughts, process and retrieve information. Anxious learners also forget previously learned materials due to the effect of anxiety on memory. Horwitz et al. (1986) asserted that apprehensive students "have difficulty concentrating, become forgetful" (p. 126).

Besides the aforementioned anxiety manifestations, Von Wörde (2003) reported some "internal and functional" symptoms. These signs are epitomized in the following declarations "I just completely blank out and everything is like a jumble in my head"; "the time bomb was ticking in here"; and "people start flipping through the book, they don't know" (Von Wörde, 2003, p. 8).

I.7. Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety may stem from various sources. In an extensive review of language anxiety research, Young (1991a) offered six potential sources of foreign language anxiety: "1) personal and interpersonal anxieties; 2) learner beliefs about language learning; 3)

instructor beliefs about language teaching; 4) instructor-learner interactions; 5) classroom procedures; and 6) language testing" (p. 427).

Personal and interpersonal anxieties may involve low self-esteem and competitiveness (Young, 1991a, p. 427). Low self-esteem can be associated with language anxiety particularly during the early stages of foreign language learning where students possess poor communicative skills. Krashen (1980) asserted that students with low self-esteem are more sensitive about what the teacher and classmates may think rather than focusing on the task. This, in turn, may lead to anxiety (as cited in Young, 1991a, p. 427). Anxiety may also arise due to the competitive atmosphere of language classrooms. In one study, Ohata (2005a) examined the nature of language learning anxiety from the perspective of five Japanese learners of English. In-depth qualitative interviews were used to detect probable sources of anxiety. The results disclosed a negative correlation between competitiveness and language anxiety. Language learners get apprehensive when they compare themselves to their fellow students, find themselves less proficient, and blame themselves for their low levels and capacities. In order to address personal and interpersonal anxieties, Foss and Reitzel (1988) recommended instructors to have their students express their fears then write those worries on the board. This can help students realize that they are not the only ones suffering from anxiety (p. 445). Once students have recognized the existence of anxiety and understood that it is a common problem in language classrooms, they can search for strategies to lower it.

Another great contributor to foreign language anxiety is learner beliefs about language learning. In a study about beginner foreign language students' beliefs about language learning, Horwitz (1988) found that some learners believed that two years is sufficient to gain language fluency (p. 286); some viewed language learning as a matter of translating words (p. 288); others considered pronunciation and speaking with a native-like accent as the most important aspect of foreign language learning (p. 289); and a substantial percentage of students were

concerned about the correctness of their utterances (p. 292). These pre-conceived ideas about language learning may originate from the perfectionist nature of some language learners and may contribute to anxiety and irritation in the classroom. Foreign language anxiety arises when students have erroneous beliefs, particularly when "beliefs and reality clash" (Young, 1991a, p. 428). Young (1991a) explained that if beginner foreign language students believe that pronunciation is the most significant part of the language learning process, they would eventually get irritated when they discover the reality of their flawed pronunciation (p. 428). To deal with students' erroneous beliefs about language learning, Horwitz (1988) advised teachers "to discuss with their own students reasonable time commitments for successful language learning and the value of some language ability even if it is less than fluent" (p. 286).

Instructor beliefs about language teaching may also be associated with classroom anxiety. Some teachers think that a constant error correction approach results in better performance; some perceive their role in the classroom as authoritative figures rather than facilitators; and others believe that they should do most of the talking and avoid implementing pair or group work by fear of losing control of the class (Young, 1991a, p. 428). In addition, teachers' pressure to give an immediate answer magnifies students' uneasiness. In this case, learners cannot answer because they need time to reflect, process the information, then produce a response. In a nutshell, a totalitarian way of teaching such as controlling, intimidating, and strictness may contribute to language anxiety. Teachers' recognition of such erroneous beliefs may constitute an important step to mitigate anxiety (Tanveer, 2007, p. 17).

Instructor-learner interactions may be another source of classroom anxiety. Even though many foreign language learners think that some error correction is necessary (Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1990), they usually cite the teacher's harsh error correction approach as an anxiety-inducing factor (Young, 1991a, p. 429). Students may feel anxious not only because of the error correction itself but also due to the instructor's manner of correction. In Consequence,

they may feel demotivated and intimidated by the teacher's critics. In addition, learners' apprehension may be due to their fear of responding incorrectly and appearing "dumb" in front of the class (Young, 1991a, p. 429). Therefore, Young (1991a) advised teachers "to assess their error correction approach as well as their attitudes toward learners" (p. 432). Young's (1990) subjects suggested that some teacher characteristics such as being friendly, relaxed, patient, and supportive help to diminish anxiety (p. 550).

As far as classroom procedures are concerned, spontaneous speaking activities in front of the class may evoke anxiety. Indeed, more than sixty-eight percent of Young's (1990) subjects confessed being more comfortable when they did not have to get in front of the class to speak (p. 543). In her article, Young (1991a) referred to Koch and Terrell's study where one-half of the participants cited oral presentations, oral skits, and oral quizzes as their most anxiety-producing experiences (p. 429). The following statements expressed by highly anxious students illustrate the way some learners feel during classroom oral practice, "When I'm in my Spanish class I just freeze! I can't think of a thing when my teacher calls on me. My mind goes blank", and "I feel like my French teacher is some kind of Martian death ray. I never know when he'll point at me!" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125). Thus, it is vital to provide students with a less threatening classroom atmosphere where they can take risks and express their ideas freely. Anxiety associated with classroom procedure can be reduced by allowing students to work in pairs and play games more often, and by designing classroom activities according to students' needs (Young, 1991a, p. 433).

Young (1991a) also viewed language testing as a possible source of anxiety. Language learners get apprehensive about some test formats. To be more specific, test anxiety may manifest itself when students have inadequate knowledge about the test items and question format. In addition, students may feel anxious when the test does not involve the materials covered in the classroom which they spent hours studying (Young, 1991a, p. 429). In her review

of the literature, Young (1991a) also referred to Daly's assertion that many learners feel nervous when they face new, abstruse, or highly evaluative situations (p. 429). Young (1991a) explained that, "In language testing, the greater degree of student evaluation and the more unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the more the learner anxiety is produced" (p.429). To decrease anxiety associated with language testing, Young (1991a) proposed the development of "fair tests that accurately reflect in-class instruction" (p. 433).

Anxiety may also arise due to the perfectionist nature of some language learners. In one study, Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and perfectionism. The researchers introduced the FLCAS to seventy-eight learners of English enrolled at the Universidad de Atacama in Chile. Based on their scores on the FLCAS, the four most anxious and the four least apprehensive students were interviewed. The participants were initially involved in videotaped oral interviews then were asked to reflect on their own performances as they watched themselves interact in the videotaped conversations. The findings suggested that anxious language learners and perfectionists may share some characteristics such as higher standards for their English performance, a greater tendency toward procrastination, more worry over the opinions of others, and a higher level of concern over their errors (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, p. 568).

In another study, Von Wörde (2003) attempted to identify the factors that may cause anxiety among students who attended French, German, and Spanish classes. The most frequently cited sources of anxiety were incapability to understand both spoken and written messages in the target language, speaking in front of peers, fear of negative evaluation, pedagogical and instructional practices such as being called upon to speak in "seating order", fear of being reprimanded by the teacher for making mistakes, and the presence of native speakers in the classroom (Von Wörde, 2003, pp. 5-6). In addition, some teacher characteristics

such as "very intimidating", "apathetic", "condescending", "nasty", "very stern and mean", and "obnoxious" contributed to students' uneasiness in the classroom (Von Wörde, 2003, p. 6).

In the Turkish context, Subaşı (2010) investigated the potential sources of anxiety during oral practice among fifty-five learners of English enrolled at Anadolu University during the second term of the academic year 2003-2004. The results indicated that Turkish students were apprehensive when they were unable to communicate effectively and express their ideas smoothly in English. Negative self-assessment also contributed to students' discomfort in speaking classrooms. Student experience high anxiety when they feel that they are not competent enough to attain success. Besides, fear of negative evaluation fostered students' nervousness. Students who fear negative judgment "remain silent and do not participate in the classroom activities" (Subaşı, 2010, p. 43). Competitiveness was another cause of students' dread. Students experience high anxiety when they compete with one another and find themselves less proficient. Other sources of anxiety included immature vocabulary and grammar, boring and uninteresting teaching procedures, and error correction. The following statement expressed by one of Subaşı's respondents illustrates the way he/she felt toward the teacher's constant error correction, "If a teacher interrupts to correct a mistake, I get confused and forget what to say next" (p. 44).

In a review of foreign language anxiety research and Asian studies on anxiety, Tseng (2012) offered some factors that may cause anxiety for ESL/EFL learners within and out of the classroom. This encompassed parents' and teachers' pressure to obtain good marks, lack of self-confidence in one's capacities to learn English, fear of making mistakes and losing face, preconceived beliefs that English is a difficult subject, and fear of foreigners and their behavior (Tseng, 2012, pp. 83-84).

To sum up, anxiety should not be viewed "as a simple, unitary construct, but as a cluster of affective states, influenced by factors which are intrinsic and extrinsic to the foreign language

learner" (Scovel, 1978, p. 134). In other words, anxiety manifestations may be attributed to intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Intrinsic sources of anxiety are related to the characteristics of the language learner and may include low self-esteem, competitiveness, mistaken beliefs about language learning, perfectionism, and negative self-assessment. The extrinsic sources of anxiety may encompass teacher characteristics and classroom procedure.

I.8. Impact of Anxiety on Foreign Language Learning

Scholars and practitioners questioned the influence of anxiety on the language learning process. Besides state, trait, and situational perspectives, language specialists distinguished between debilitating anxiety and facilitating anxiety (Scovel, 1978).

Debilitating or harmful anxiety obstructs the language learning process and contributes to poor performance. According to Scovel (1978), debilitating anxiety "motivates the learner to flee the new learning task; it stimulates the individual emotionally to adopt avoidance behavior" (p. 139). Similarly, Krashen (1982) theorized that anxiety heightens the affective filter and renders learners less responsive to language input. Consistent with Krashen, anxiety is debilitating and speaking in front of the whole class provokes the highest anxiety, which raises the affective filter and prevents learners from fully utilizing comprehensible input. In addition, Horwitz et al. (1986) claimed that students with high anxiety avoid conveying difficult messages in the foreign language (p. 126). Harmful anxiety is related to negative beliefs and difficulties in language performance.

Besides the deleterious effect of anxiety on language learning performance and achievement, researchers distinguished a facilitating aspect. This positive facet of anxiety, known as facilitating anxiety, is helpful and promotes language learning. Scovel (1978) indicated that facilitating anxiety "motivates the learner to fight the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behavior" (p. 139). Facilitating anxiety can be a source of motivation for the learner to focus on the task.

This dichotomy shows that not all anxiety is detrimental to language performance. Classroom anxiety has a twofold influence on language achievement. It may be harmful in the sense that it hinders performance and leads to failure; as it may be helpful i.e. it facilitates foreign language learning and motivates learners to perform language tasks. According to Scovel (1978), facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety work "in tandem, serving simultaneously to motivate and to warn" (p. 138).

The existence of facilitating anxiety is debatable amongst researchers. One of the questions discussed during Young's (1991b) interview with Krashen, Omaggio Hadley, Terrell, and Rardin was whether there are positive aspects to anxiety in the language learning context. The four language specialists agreed on the existence of a positive side to anxiety. Krashen declared:

> Yes, there is something called facilitative anxiety. My hypothesis is that facilitative anxiety has a positive effect on language learning, not on language acquisition. Facilitative anxiety may, in general, have a positive effect on tasks that require conscious learning. Language acquisition, however, appears to work best when anxiety is zero, when it is directed somewhere else, not on language. (as cited in Young, 1991b, p. 7)

Krashen explained that anxiety has a positive influence on language learning but not on language acquisition. MacIntyre (1995) stated that language anxiety is facilitating only when the task is simple. Once a given task is too difficult, anxiety becomes debilitating (p. 92). Most language researchers ignore the benefits of moderate anxiety that motivates learners to achieve their goals. To date, the existence of facilitating anxiety is still a source of many debates.

Although some scholars found a positive aspect to anxiety (for example Aydin, 2013), the majority of research studies demonstrated that foreign language anxiety is a devastating factor that hinders language performance, proficiency level, and achievement. Von Wörde (1998), for instance, found that one third to one-half of language students experienced debilitating anxiety (p. 52). Liu (2006) noted that, "the more anxious the students were in oral English lessons, the worse they performed in class" (p. 22). In a similar vein, Zheng (2008) affirmed that the language learning process could be a traumatic experience resulting in low self-esteem and little

self-confidence (p. 5). In one study, Chan and Wu (2004) investigated foreign language anxiety among EFL elementary school students in Taiwan. Data were collected from six hundred and one participants by means of questionnaires. From their scores in the questionnaires, eighteen highly anxious students were interviewed. The results unveiled a significant negative correlation between anxiety levels and language learning achievement.

More recently, researchers have investigated another type of anxiety. These inquiries disclosed an insignificant correlation between anxiety and performance. That is to say, anxiety is present in language classrooms but has no effect on performance. To illustrate, Kondo (2010) studied the link between language anxiety and proficiency in a speaking test among Japanese learners of English. The outcomes demonstrated that anxiety in the speaking test was only a poor predictor of English proficiency. In another study, Tóth (2011) examined foreign language anxiety among advanced-level language students. The findings exposed an insignificant correlation between anxiety and language proficiency. In a more recent study, Tsai and Li (2012) looked at the relationship between test anxiety, foreign language reading anxiety, and English reading proficiency. An insignificant level of reading proficiency between Low Anxiety Testees and High Anxiety Testees was found.

The relationship between anxiety and performance can be explained by the Yerkes-Dobson Law, which is graphically represented by a U-shaped curve (Stephenson Wilson, 2006, p. 45). According to the Yerkes-Dodson Law, moderate anxiety enhances performance. When anxiety levels are too high, performance declines. At this point, anxiety hinders language performance. The curve also indicates that very low anxiety levels are damaging to performance. The relationship between anxiety arousal and performance is illustrated in Figure 2.
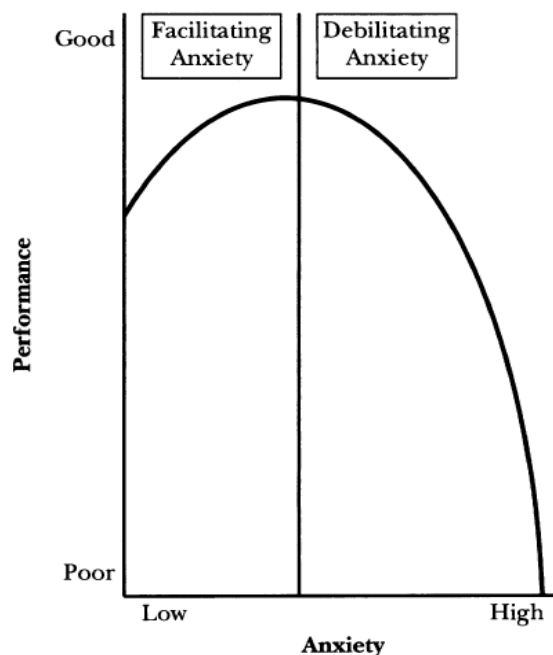
Figure 2. The relationship between anxiety arousal and performance (MacIntyre, 1995, p. 92).

I.9. Anxiety at the Three Language Learning Stages

Tobias (1986) presented a model that deals with the effect of anxiety on cognitive processing during the learning process. He suggested that the model separates the learning process into three components: input, processing and output, and that anxiety can be detrimental at any stage. By applying Tobias's three-part model, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) found that language anxiety is a prevalent phenomenon that occurs in the three learning phases. They described the influence of anxiety on cognitive processing as "pervasive and subtle" (p. 301). Likewise, MacIntyre (1995) stated that, "language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can interfere with each of these by creating a divided attention scenario for anxious students" (p. 96).

Input is the first stage of language learning and involves learners' first exposure to a given stimulus. Krashen (1985) considered the input stage as the basic phase of language learning. He developed the *Input Hypothesis* in an attempt to explain how second language acquisition takes place. Krashen (1985) asserted that, "Speech cannot be taught directly but emerges on its own as a result of building competence via comprehensible input" (p. 80). According to

Krashen, learners acquire a new language only when they are exposed to comprehensible input and when they have low affective filters that allow the input to be obtained. Whatever the level of the learner, the input is i+1 where i represents the actual level of competence and 1 is the new information (Krashen, 1985, p. 80). Figure 3 shows how a second language is acquired.

Filter

Input → - - - - → **Language acquisition device** → **Acquired competence**
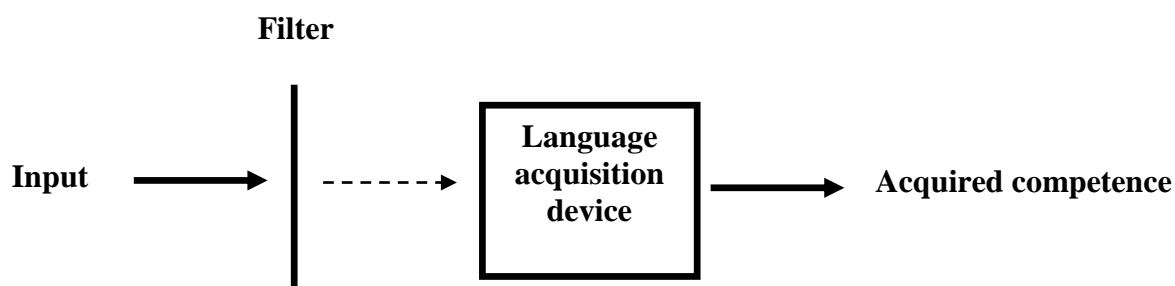
Figure 3. Operation of the "affective filter" (Krashen, 1982, p. 32).

Anxiety at the input stage (input anxiety) refers to the uneasiness experienced when students encounter new vocabulary items in the target language (Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, & Daley, 2000, pp. 474-475). Learners with high levels of input anxiety may ask the teacher to repeat sentences or may have to reread materials in the foreign language many times in order to compensate for the missing input (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, p. 286). Input anxiety can cause miscomprehension of the message leading to unsuccessful communication.

The processing stage includes all the cognitive operations students perform in order to encode, organize, and store language input (Tobias, 1986, p. 2). Anxiety at the processing stage (processing anxiety) refers to the "apprehension students experience when performing cognitive operations on new information" (Bailey et al., 2000, p. 475). Students with high amounts of processing anxiety may have difficulties to understand the incoming message or learn new items in the foreign language (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, p. 287). Processing anxiety can also be detrimental to the memory processes that are utilized to solve a given task (Tobias, 1977; as cited in Bailey et al., 2000, p. 475).

Researchers like Leary (1990) and Levitt (1980) found a recursive or cyclical relationship between anxiety, cognition, and behavior (as cited in MacIntyre, 1995, p. 92). These three constructs occur one after the other and influence each other. Figure 4 demonstrates that anxiety, cognition, and behavior are mutually interrelated.
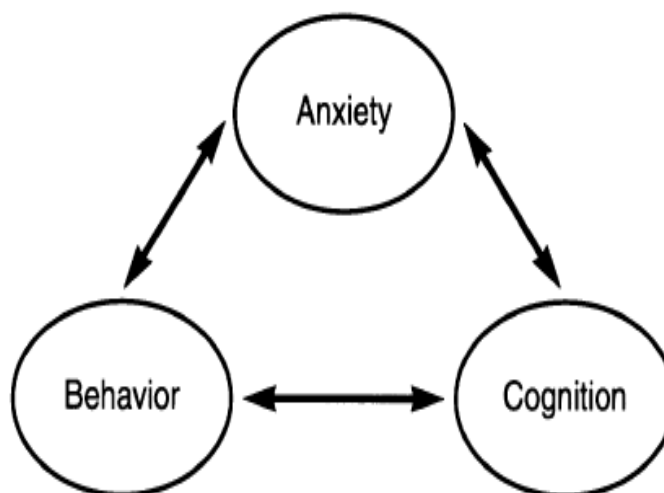
Figure 4. Recursive relations among anxiety, cognition, and behavior (MacIntyre, 1995, p. 93).

MacIntyre (1995) illustrated this mutual relationship as follow:

> A demand to answer a question in a second language class may cause a student to become anxious; anxiety leads to worry and rumination. Cognitive performance is diminished because of the divided attention and therefore performance suffers, leading to negative self-evaluations and more self-deprecating cognition which further impairs performance, and so on. (p. 92)

According to MacIntyre (1995), students experience anxiety when they are asked to answer a question in the target language. Due to the divided attention, cognitive operation diminishes. This, in turn, leads to negative self-evaluation and damaged performance.

The output stage "encompasses students' performance on any evaluative instrument after instruction" (Tobias, 1986, p. 2). Anxiety at this stage (output anxiety) refers to the nervousness students experience when requested to demonstrate their ability to express what they have learned (Bailey at al., 2000, p. 475). Students with output anxiety may have difficulties to retrieve vocabulary items, use correct grammar rules, or answer questions (Khan & Zafar, 2010, p. 200). Communication apprehension is more likely to appear at the output stage. Students

with high output anxiety may not be able to express themselves and communicate with others in the target language.

In a study about anxiety and output performance, Li (2015) used the FLCAS in order to measure the anxiety levels of ninety-two university second language learners. The findings disclosed two anxiety groups: high anxiety and low anxiety. The researcher then asked the participants to recall as many English words beginning with *b* as they could think in two minutes. Beforehand, Li divided the two groups of learners into two subgroups. Half of the high apprehensive students and half of the low anxious learners were asked to write down at least ten words. In order to escalate the level of anxiety, the other subgroup was queried to recall an average of forty words. The results demonstrated that anxiety leads to deficits in vocabulary output performance. Nonetheless, Li (2015) found that "some level of language anxiety may not be as debilitative as traditionally believed" (p. 31).

Anxiety arousal at the output stage depends upon the effective completion of the preceding stages, input and processing. Consistent with MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a), the three language learning stages are interdependent in the sense that each stage hinges on the successful completion of the previous one (p. 288). Difficulties to produce an output may be caused by problems encountered at the input or processing stages (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, p. 288). In order to measure anxiety at each stage, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) developed three scales. Here one statement from each scale:

"I get flustered unless French is spoken very slowly and deliberately" (Input Anxiety Scale)

"I am self-confident in my ability to appreciate the meaning of French dialogue" (Processing Anxiety Scale)

"When I become anxious during a French test, I cannot remember anything I studied." (Output Anxiety Scale) (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a, pp. 304-305).

I.10. Foreign Language Anxiety and the Speaking Skill

Learning a foreign language goes beyond the mere memorization of its linguistic and syntactic structures. The goal of foreign language learning is to develop the ability to use the language effectively in real communicative contexts. This emphasis on speaking was brought to the fore by the Communicative Approach that stressed the importance of developing learners' communicative competence. The contemporary model of the communicative competence perceives communication as the uppermost function of any language. In today's globalized era, this need for communication in languages other than one's mother tongue is more important than ever. However, speaking in the target language differs from communicating in one's native tongue. When using a foreign language, "a speaker has to look for suitable lexis, has to construct an appropriate syntactic structure and needs to use a comprehendible accent, plus the demanding tasks of thinking and organizing ideas and expressing them at the same time" (Tanveer, 2007, p. 3). When communicating in the target language, the interlocutor may face a lack of grammatical knowledge and may have difficulties to retrieve the appropriate vocabulary to construct utterances. In language classrooms, speaking entails risk-taking and learners may get frustrated when they fail to use fluent and accurate language.

As confirmed by a large body of literature, speaking in the target language is the most anxiety-inducing skill (Horwitz et al., 1986; Liu, 2007; Subaşı, 2010; Von Wörde, 2003). The majority of anxious students confess that speaking in the target language is a traumatic experience. Young (1991a) proclaimed that foreign language students suffer from some anxiety reactions toward speaking in the classroom including "distortion of sounds, inability to reproduce the intonation and rhythm of the language, 'freezing up' when called on to perform, and forgetting words or phrases just learned or simply refusing to speak and remaining silent" (p. 430). The same author quoted an anonymous language learner's frustration when asked to speak in a foreign language classroom "I dread going to Spanish class…I hate when the teacher

calls on me to speak. I freeze up and can't think of what to say or how to say it…" (Young, 1990, p. 539).

Horwitz et al.'s (1986) students attested that they experience low anxiety during drills or when they are given time to prepare their speeches, but they "freeze" during spontaneous speaking activities like role-plays (p. 126). Nearly half of the participants (49%) agreed with the FLCAS item 9 "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class"; 33% opted for item 27 "I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class"; and 28% concurred with item 24 "I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students". Meanwhile, 47% of the participants rejected item 18 "I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 129). Besides, oral test contexts are anxiety-provoking. Horwitz and associates (1986) affirmed that students who worry about making mistakes feel that they are everlastingly evaluated and view every single correction as a failure (p. 130). Oral test anxiety may trigger learners' difficulties to retrieve previously learned material (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 126). Horwitz et al. (1986) concluded, "Since speaking in the target language seems to be the most threatening aspect of foreign language learning, the current emphasis on the development of communicative competence poses particularly great difficulties for the anxious student" (p. 132).

In Young's (1990) study about students' perspective on anxiety and speaking, the majority of the participants confessed being more comfortable when they came to the classroom "prepared" and when they were not "the only person answering a question" (p. 544). In addition, Young's (1990) students indicated that they "prefer to be allowed to volunteer an answer instead of being called on to give an answer" (p. 544). As regards to oral exams, the majority of students admitted that they would feel less apprehensive if they had more oral practice in the classroom (p. 544). The most anxiety-breeding classroom participative activities

among Young's (1990) students included performing a prepared dialogue in front of peers, oral presentations or skits, speaking in front of the class, and spontaneous role-plays (p. 547).

Von Wörde's (2003) participants felt overwhelmed when they were called on to respond even if they had time to prepare their performances beforehand. They also acknowledged their sensitivity to both teacher's and peers' evaluation. One of the students admitted, "I don't want to be the focus of attention so that my errors are put on display" (Von Wörde, 2003, p. 5).

In another study, Liu (2007) examined the construct of language anxiety in oral English classrooms. The findings revealed that Chinese students get highly anxious when they are required to speak or give individual oral presentations in front of others. The results from the FLCAS indicated that half of the participants (50%) agreed with item 9 "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class" and 33.4% rejected item 18 "I feel confident when I speak English in class" (Liu, 2007, p. 126). Liu's survey study also exposed some causes of speaking anxiety. Immature vocabulary appeared to be one of these causes. One of the participants claimed that, "I am a little afraid of speaking English because my vocabulary is poor …" (p. 128). Poor English proficiency was also a source of anxiety among Liu's students, as evidenced by this comment, "I'm a little afraid of speaking English, because my speaking English is poor" (p. 129). Poor preparation was another anxiety-driving factor in Liu's survey. The participants confessed that they felt less apprehensive and more confident to speak when they were given time to prepare their performances. Fear of making mistakes and being laughed at also contributed to speaking anxiety. One of the students indicated, "I like to speak English, but when I am in front of others, I will be nervous and can't say any words, because I am afraid others will laugh at me if I make some mistake" (p. 130). In addition, Liu's participants attributed their anxiety in oral classrooms to their fear of being the focus of attention. Many language learners experience anxiety when they are asked to respond individually in front of the whole class. One of the learners recognized, "I am often nervous when speaking English in

front of others, because I think too many eyes were gazing at me. My God!" (p. 130). Another anxiety source associated with the speaking skill was learners' inability to express their ideas. One of Liu's informants admitted, "I feel nervous when speaking in front of others because I'm afraid I would speak no thing and only stand there embarrassedly" (p. 131). Other anxiety-provokers among Chinese learners included lack of practice, fear of losing face, fear of being unable to follow and understand others, and memory disassociation (Liu, 2007).

In the Algerian context, Maatar (2011) looked at the impact of language anxiety on academic achievement among second-year students of English enrolled at the University of Skikda. Various data collection instruments and analysis procedures were used. The results showed that the participants reported different levels of anxiety. To be more specific, the study outcomes revealed that 27% of the participants displayed high anxiety, 59% experienced medium anxiety, and 14% had low anxiety (Maatar, 2011, p. 96). Among the anxiety categories on the FLCAS, communication apprehension ranked first with a mean score of 3.64 (Maatar, 2011, p. 97). 80.4% of the students panicked when they had to speak English without preparation. The same percentage (80.4%) denied the fact of being comfortable around native speakers of English. In addition, 78.4% of the participants felt non-confident when speaking English in class, and 58.8% were unsure about their abilities to speak English. Moreover, 58.8% of the students agreed with the item "I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students", and 57% concurred with the statement "I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class" (Maatar, 2011, p. 98). The findings also indicated that the in-class speaking activities that generated high anxiety were giving oral presentations in front of the class (Mean=3.96) and being called on to answer questions in English (Mean=3.90) (Maatar, 2011, p. 112).

In a 2013 study, Melouah investigated foreign language anxiety in oral English classes among thirty first-year students enrolled at the University of Blida, Algeria. In order to measure

the levels of anxiety exhibited by the participants, Melouah used Horwitz et al.'s FLCAS. The findings revealed that 56% of the participants experienced anxiety in oral classes (Melouah, 2013, p. 71). Melouah (2013) described the effect of anxiety on oral performance as "pervasive" and "debilitative" (p. 71). Concerning the sources of speaking anxiety, 58% of the respondents were afraid to interact in the classroom; 54% were worried about the perception of others; 51% had low self-confidence and self-esteem; 43% were concerned about their language proficiency; 29% feared negative error correction; and 15% were terrified to speak with native speakers (Melouah, 2013, p. 71).

In another study conducted in Algeria, Khaloufi Sellam (2016) explored anxiety in EFL speaking classes among third-year students enrolled at the University of Annaba. To collect data, the researcher used a modified version of the FLCAS and a self-scale. The results indicated that 51.56% of the students felt unsure when speaking English (p. 130) and 57.80% trembled and sweated when called on by the teacher (p. 136). The study findings revealed that the students experienced anxiety not only during oral sessions but also before attending the oral class. Indeed, 53.12% of the respondents felt insecure and tense when they were on their way to the oral English class (p. 135) and 54.68% felt like not going to the oral class (p. 136). In addition, the self-scale outcomes showed that 48.43% of the participants experienced anxiety, 14.06% reported high anxiety, and 4.68% were over-anxious (Khaloufi Sellam, 2016, p. 140).

In order to lessen foreign language speaking anxiety, Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) suggested the establishment of a supportive classroom environment. In a classroom-based study conducted in Greece, Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) examined the characteristics of anxious learners with the aim to implement classroom interventions to lower speaking anxiety. The researchers also aimed to propose some strategies that may help language teachers to relieve learners' anxiety. The study involved fifteen third grade students and used semi-structured interviews, group discussion, and direct observation. The findings revealed that six participants

experienced speaking anxiety due to fear of negative evaluation and low ability in relation to peers. In order to reduce speaking anxiety, Tsiplakides and Keramida implemented project work and established a learning community and a supportive classroom atmosphere. This caring classroom environment can be created by explaining to students that mistakes are universal in all language learners (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009, p. 41). Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) concluded their article by referring to oral production as a potentially stressful situation for some students and advised language teachers to help their learners overcome this feeling of distress (p. 43).

The above-mentioned studies demonstrated that language anxiety has a devastating effect on oral production. Therefore, the establishment of a safe environment is necessary to encourage language learners to participate in classroom oral communicative activities. The present study aims to create a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere through the implementation of cooperative learning.

I.11. Ways to Reduce Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is negatively correlated with speaking in the target language. The way to reduce language anxiety can be a dilemma for many teachers. Consequently, numerous scholars searched for ways to help language teachers create a non-threatening learning environment where students can develop their communicative competence.

The Natural Approach, developed by Krashen and Terrell, puts more emphasis on communicative skills and less on grammatical accuracy. The learning environment should be as stress-free as possible in order to lower the affective filter and allow the input to be acquired. Comprehensible input is presented in the target language and students do not produce an output until they feel ready to do so (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p. 58). Error correction is kept to the minimum and teachers endeavor to debate topics of students' interest (Krashen, 1982, p. 139). In sum, the Natural Approach aims to provide learners with comprehensible input, maximize

interaction and communication, and minimize anxiety. However, more than one-half of Koch and Terrell's students attested that some Natural Approach activities like oral presentations and oral skits intensified their anxiety (as cited in Young, 1991a, p. 429).

Horwitz et al. (1986) suggested that, "In general, educators have two options when dealing with anxious students: 1) they can help them learn to cope with the existing anxiety provoking situation; or 2) they can make the learning context less stressful" (p. 131). In order to allay anxiety, teachers should center their attention on students' personality characteristics and what happens in the classroom. They should identify anxious students in the classroom and help them reduce their apprehension and succeed in learning the foreign language. Horwitz and associates (1986) encouraged teachers to build "support systems" to detect anxiety sources (p. 131).

One of the probable sources of anxiety is fear of negative judgment. In consequence, many students remain silent during classroom oral practice. The majority of Young's (1990) subjects confessed that they would not be so self-conscious about speaking in class if it were commonly understood that everyone makes mistakes (p. 544). This implies that teachers can reduce anxiety by explaining to their students that mistakes are part of the language learning process and that everyone makes mistakes (Young, 1991a, p. 432).

Phillips (1992) offered several anxiety-assuaging strategies related to classroom oral practice as well as oral testing. The author encouraged teachers to discuss anxiety with their students and explain that anxiety is a common feeling among language learners. Teachers should also let their students know that they understand their concern about "appearing anxious" during oral exams and help them build "realistic expectations" about how long it takes to learn a foreign language and how making mistakes is normal and natural (Phillips, 1992, p. 20). In addition, Phillips counseled teachers to help their students to find ways to cope with anxiety during language learning and language testing. As a final recommendation, testing students in pairs or small groups may dispel anxiety (Phillips, 1992, p. 21).

Aida (1994) spurred teachers to create "a friendly, supportive atmosphere" and help learners develop "effective study and learning strategies" (p. 164). In addition, Aida indicated that students appreciate teachers who are able to identify anxious learners and who endeavor to search for ways to alleviate their apprehension (p. 164).

Gregersen and Horwitz's (2002) study about language learning and perfectionism focused mainly on anxious and non-anxious language learners' reactions toward their oral performance. The authors advised teachers to help their students "control their emotional state" during classroom oral practice by allowing them to picture themselves as calm when making mistakes (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, p. 569). Additionally, teachers can ease students' apprehension over error making by encouraging them to keep talking (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, p. 570).

These scholarly sources can guide language teachers and help them create a favorable learning environment where students can practice and develop their communication skills. Nevertheless, these theoretical assumptions dealt mainly with the general practice of the teacher instead of developing specific classroom activities that allow learners more oral practice. In addition, these studies focused mainly on experimental groups and neglected the inclusion of control groups to compare the results with traditional instruction. To fill in the gap, the present study attempts to implement cooperative learning in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou and investigate its influence on foreign language anxiety, and for better reliability, the results from the experimental groups are compared with those of the control groups.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature related to foreign language anxiety in terms of concept, components, manifestations, sources, and impact on the foreign language learning process. From this review, it can be concluded that a considerable number of students report anxiety reactions and that anxiety has a significant deleterious effect on students' oral performance.

Therefore, teachers should tailor activities that provide students with opportunities to practice speaking in a less stressful context. Cooperative learning activities are believed to create a relaxing and reassuring environment in the classroom. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to probe into the effect of cooperative learning on foreign language speaking anxiety. The subsequent chapter provides an overview of cooperative learning and explains its nature, its theoretical root, its elements, and its potential profits.

<u>Chapter Two: Cooperative Learning</u>

Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, foreign language anxiety is negatively linked with speaking in the target language. In consequence, many pieces of research explored ways to reduce this multi-faced construct and create a relaxing classroom atmosphere. Von Wörde's study (2003), for instance, explored students' perspectives on foreign language anxiety. The findings indicated that a sense of community might be effective to reduce students' apprehension. Von Wörde's (2003) participants felt "more self-conscious" (p. 6) when they were alone with no friends. That is, working in pairs or small groups may help reduce classroom anxiety.

In recent years, there has been a shift from traditional instruction where the teacher is the center of attention and the transmitter of knowledge to learner-centered classrooms where students are expected to seek, analyze, and construct their knowledge with the help of the teacher. With the shift in language education from the teacher to the learner, cooperative learning emerged as part of the student-centered approach and became one of the most disseminated teaching/learning paradigms. Many countries around the globe employ this instructional method to teach different academic subjects, including languages. The present study strives to create a low-anxiety classroom environment through the implementation of cooperative learning.

The present chapter, entitled *Cooperative Learning*, first states the dissimilarities between teacher-centered and learner-centered philosophies. Then, cooperative learning is conceptualized and contrasted with other instructional methods. To provide a better understanding of cooperative learning, its theoretical fundament is explained, the basic elements that shape it are discussed, and the differences between cooperative learning and other categories of learning groups are clarified. This chapter also spots the light on some of the

merits and limitations of cooperation, offers guidelines to implement cooperative learning, and discusses research on cooperative learning in Algeria and research findings on the correlation between cooperative learning and foreign language anxiety.

II.1. Teacher-centered versus Student-centered Classrooms

For decades, classroom instruction was dominated by traditional teaching methods embedded in the behavioristic learning theories. Behaviorists view learning as an alteration in the learners' behavior in response to a particular stimulus and ignore the existence of any mental activity during the learning process (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008, p. 21). The role of a behavioristic teacher is that of a knowledge transmitter, while learners are passive recipients of his/her input. In these teacher-centered classrooms, the instructor is the only designer of the learning activities, the organizer of the content, and the assessor of the amount of learning, while students are just recorders of what has been taught (Wright, 2011, p. 93).

In recent decades, however, researchers in the field of language teaching and learning shifted their attention from the traditional approach based on the behavioristic principles to a new instructional method rooted in the constructivist theory. Contrary to behaviorism, the constructivist approach views learning as an active construction of knowledge and students as "the center of the educational enterprise" (Wright, 2011, p. 93). Students take full responsibility for their educational development and construct their own learning with the help of the teacher who is merely a guide. In these student-centered classrooms, learners "are expected to choose their own learning goals and activities… Their teachers, at the same time, are expected to be able to gauge and tailor activities to students' different learning styles" (Ravitch, 2007, p. 131).

Besides differences in the role of both teachers and students, the two models vary in the way students work. Traditional classes involve students who work individually and competitively on a given task. Conversely, the student-centered approach encourages learners to take part in group activities (Jabbour, 2013, p. 86). Students are actively involved in the

lesson and interact with one another. Consequently, the learning process becomes rewarding, enjoyable, and less stressful (Al-Zu'be, 2013, p. 25).

Teacher-centered classrooms are quiet whereas learner-centered classes are noisy and busy (Al-Zu'be, 2013, p. 25). Since traditional classrooms involve students who work individually on assignments, the classroom is quiet and controllable. In contrast, the new teaching approach is characterized by active interaction and exchange of information between students. In consequence, the teacher may face difficulties to manage the classroom chaos.

The purpose of assessment is another distinction between traditional instruction and the new teaching paradigm. The teacher-centered approach views assessment as a separate component. That is to say, the teacher delivers information then students are assessed. The purpose of assessing students is to check their understanding of the lessons. On the contrary, in the learner-centered model, teaching and assessment are intertwined in the sense that assessment is done at the same time than teaching (Al-Zu'be, 2013, p. 25). Unlike the traditional approach, the new instructional method uses assessment as a way to promote and diagnose learning (Al-Zu'be, 2013, p. 25) rather than generate grades.

The way students' learning is tested is a major variation between the two pedagogies. The traditional teaching method tests learning "indirectly by use of objectivity scored exams" (Good & Brophy, 2003, as cited in Al-Zu'be, 2013, pp. 25-26). Students are judged on final exam performance and are expected to replicate the teacher's information. On the other hand, the student-centered approach uses portfolios, performances, papers, and projects to test learning (Good & Brophy, 2003, as cited in Al-Zu'be, 2013, pp. 25-26).

It should be noted that teacher-centered instruction has many advantages. The instructor can convey a large amount of knowledge in a short period of time, use assessment procedures easily and quickly, and decide about the organization and the pace of teaching. Nonetheless,

this teaching model precludes the development of students' critical thinking and reinforces passive instruction (Ayele, Schippers, & Ramos, 2007, p. 119-120).

The learner-centered approach, on the other hand, takes into account the different learning styles, promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, allows the instructor to use a variety of assessment methods, and encourages students' participation and interaction (Ayele et al., 2007, p. 120). Nevertheless, like any other teaching method, the learner-centered pedagogy has its own flaws. Teachers may be reluctant to implement it fearing to lose control of the classroom. Students may be unwilling to learn and work under this approach. In addition, this classroom instruction is time-consuming and difficult to integrate into large classes (Ayele et al., 2007, p. 120).

In the last few decades, the learner-centered philosophy gained much popularity in higher education. Within this new approach, much concern is paid to cooperative learning. According to Wang (2007), the cooperative learning model is "highly student-centered" (p. 24). Figure 5 illustrates the difference between traditional classrooms and cooperative instruction.
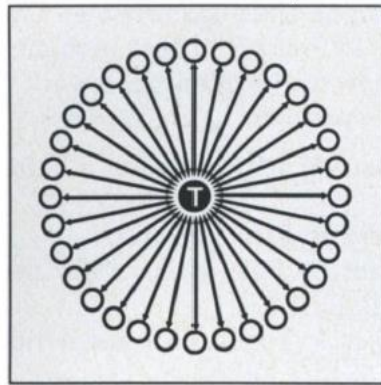
Fig. 1. Teacher-centered classroom
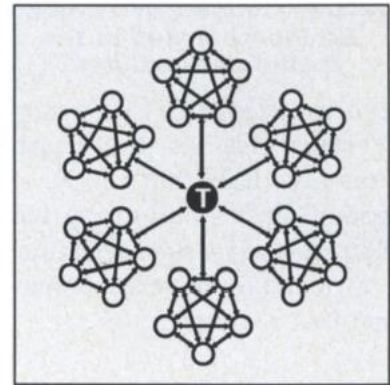
Fig. 2. Cooperative-learning classroom

Figure 5. The difference between teacher-centered classrooms and cooperative learning instruction (Artzt & Newman, 1990, p. 449).

The figure on the left is a picture of a more traditional classroom with the teacher as the main actor; and students who sit, listen to the teacher, and work alone on assignments. The

figure on the right portrays a cooperative instruction where students are organized so they can work in groups to complete a given task, while the teacher observes the groups as they are working.

II.2. Conceptualizing Cooperative Learning

Slavin (1991) stated that, "There was once a time when it was taken for granted that a quiet class was a learning class, when principals walked down the hall expecting to be able to hear a pin drop" (p. 71). Traditional instruction involves students who work individually and silently on assignments. Still, with the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching, these quiet traditional classes were substituted by classrooms where students interact and promote each other's learning. Such a supportive and interactive environment is shaped by cooperative learning. A plethora of research highlighted the miscellaneous benefits of cooperative learning on both teachers and students.

But what is really cooperative learning? And what distinguish it from other classroom instructional processes? To answer these questions, David Johnson and Roger Johnson, pioneers in the area of cooperative learning since the 1970s, opposed cooperation to competition and individualism. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994), teachers can structure lessons so that students "can compete to see who is 'best', they can work individualistically toward a goal without paying attention to other students, or they can work cooperatively with a vested interest in each other's learning as well as their own" (p. 1). Consistent with the Johnson brothers, the learning environment can be competitive, individualistic, or cooperative.

In competitive classrooms, students work against each other to reach a goal that not all students can achieve (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2014, p. 87). To say it differently, students attain their goals if and only if their classmates fail to accomplish their own (I swim, you sink; I sink, you swim). Students are evaluated on a norm-referenced basis (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 87) which implies grading them from the best to the worst. According to Bayat (2004),

competitive learning environments lead to anxiety and the development of poor communicative skills (p. 18).

In an attempt to shun the use of competition in their classrooms, teachers tried to familiarize their students with another way of learning, referred to as individualism. In individualistic classrooms, students work alone to accomplish learning goals that are independent of the objectives of other classmates (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 87). Students are evaluated on a criterion-referenced basis that entails assessing them according to a set of standards where their scores do not affect the grades of their fellow students (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 1). Competitive and individualistic learning are based on the premise that students perform better when they are in competition and isolated from their peers. These two classroom instructions continued to dominate the realm of teaching until the 1970s. Due to the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching that puts emphasis on the importance of group work, teachers became motivated to engage their students in cooperative group learning.

Cooperative learning allows students to motivate, encourage, and support each other's learning. It is a popularized classroom strategy favored by many educators who view it as a solution to most educational problems. Over the years, many definitions of cooperative learning were formulated. Johnson and Johnson (1999a), for instance, conceptualized cooperative learning as "the instructional use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p. 73). The cooperative learning enterprise involves students who work in small mixed-ability groups and strive for outcomes that will benefit all group members (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 68). Students are fully responsible for the construction of their teammates' knowledge as well as their own with the help of the teacher who is simply a guide and a facilitator.

Many research studies have compared between the effectiveness of competition, individualism, and cooperation. In a meta-analysis study, Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson,

Nelson, and Skon (1981) looked at the impacts of cooperation, cooperation with intergroup competition, competition, and individualistic goal structures on achievement and productivity. The findings revealed that cooperation is more effective than competition and individualism in promoting higher achievement. The results also showed that cooperation with intergroup competition produced higher achievement than competitive and individualistic efforts. According to Bayat (2004), cooperation with intergroup competition shrinks anxiety, increases interaction, and boosts self-confidence (p. 18).

To conclude, compared with competitive and individualistic structures, cooperative learning results in "(a) higher achievement and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological health, social competence, and self-esteem" (Li & Lam, 2005-2013, p. 6). Unlike competitive and individualistic learning, cooperation highlights the importance of communication and interaction among students and generates less anxiety (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1991, p. 37). Despite the advocacy and popularity of cooperative learning, classroom practices are still dominated by competitive interaction patterns. The majority of learners prefer competition to cooperation (Li & Lam, 2005-2013, p. 5).

II.3. Theoretical Root of Cooperative Learning

The foundation of cooperative learning can be found in the Social Interdependence Theory. Social Interdependence is not a brand new theory. Its origin goes back to the 1900s with the Gestalt psychologist Kurt Kufka who first noted that interdependence varies among group dynamic members. In the 1930s and the 1940s, one of Kufka's colleagues, Kurt Lewin, refined this idea and proposed that interdependence is the heart of group work and that the state of tension among members motivates them to achieve their joint goals. During the 1940s, Morton Deutsch, one of Lewin's students, extended his teacher's idea and developed Social

Interdependence Theory. The Johnson brothers expanded Deutsch's theory and established techniques for teachers (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 16).

Social interdependence is an important constituent of any cooperative work. It takes place when the goal accomplishments of individuals are influenced by one another's actions (Johnson & Johnson, 1987; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). Deutsch (1949, 1962) distinguished two types of social interdependence: positive and negative (as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). Positive interdependence exists when group members share mutual goals. To be more specific, students attain their goals if their group mates also reach their own. Positive interdependence results in promotive interaction i.e. students encourage and promote each other's learning. Positive interdependence facilitates students' goal achievement and enhances interaction. Negative interdependence, on the other hand, prevents group members from achieving their goals and impedes interaction. Students accomplish their goals if their fellow students fail to attain their own. Negative interdependence results in oppositional interaction i.e. students compete against one another to determine who is the best (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). In this case, group members are graded on a norm-referenced basis rooted in the competitive approach. According to social interdependence theorists, cooperation is a result of positive interdependence among individuals' goals while competition is an outcome of negative interdependence. No interdependence is a product of individualistic goal structures. No interdependence exists when students attain their goals regardless of whether their classmates accomplish their goals or not. The goals of each individual are unrelated to the goals of his/her peers. No interdependence results in the absence of interaction. To say it differently, students work individually without any exchange with their classmates (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366).

According to Deutsch (1949, 1962), each type of interdependence results in psychological processes (as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). The psychological processes associated with positive interdependence or cooperation are substitutability, positive cathexis, and inducibility. Substitutability refers to "the degree to which actions of one person substitute for the actions of another person" (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). Substitutability is the shift from self-interest to a common motive. Positive cathexis is "the investment of positive psychological energy in objects outside of oneself, such as friends, family, and work" (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). Students are motivated to invest efforts in order to reach the same goals than the individuals with whom they are working. Inducibility can be defined as "the openness to being influenced by and to influencing others" (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). Students are receptive to the idea of being influenced by group mates. Negative interdependence or competition creates opposite psychological processes which are non-substitutability, negative cathexis, and resistance to influence (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). In this context, students struggle for their interests so they can succeed at the expense of their peers. The lack of social interdependence results in the absence of substitutability, cathexis, or inducibility (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). However, students' interests and motives to win are still sustained.

In his theory of social interdependence, Deutsch focused mainly on three variables: interdependence, interaction patterns, and outcomes. The Johnsons and other researchers extended Deutsch's theory by studying other variables such as psychological health and self-esteem. These research studies compared cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts. The results suggested that five elements shape cooperation: positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, the appropriate use of social skills, and group

processing (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 366). Figure 6 provides an overview of Social Interdependence Theory.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│            Social Interdependence            │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
         ↓                  ↓                  ↓
┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
│ Positive         │ │ Negative         │ │ No               │
│ Interdependence  │ │ Interdependence  │ │ Interdependence  │
└──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
         ↓                  ↓                  ↓
┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
│ Promotive        │ │ Oppositionnel    │ │ No Interaction   │
│ Interaction      │ │ Interaction      │ │                  │
└──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
         ↓                  ↓                  ↓
┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
│ Psychological    │ │ Psychological    │ │ Psychological    │
│ processes        │ │ processes        │ │ processes        │
│ Positive Cathexis│ │ Negative Cathexis│ │ No Cathexis,     │
│ Substitutability │ │ Non-Substitut-   │ │ No Substitut-    │
│ Inducibility     │ │ ability          │ │ ability,         │
│                  │ │ Resistance to    │ │ No Inducibility  │
│                  │ │ Influence        │ │                  │
└──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
         ↓                  ↓                  ↓
┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
│ Outcomes         │ │ Outcomes         │ │ Outcomes         │
│ High Effort to   │ │ Low Effort to    │ │ Low Effort to    │
│ Achieve          │ │ Achieve          │ │ Achieve          │
│ Positive         │ │ Negative         │ │ No Relationships │
│ Relationships    │ │ Relationships    │ │ Low Psychological│
│ High Psychological│ │ Moderate        │ │ Health           │
│ Health           │ │ Psychological    │ │                  │
│                  │ │ Health           │ │                  │
└──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
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Figure 6. Overview of social interdependence theory (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008; in Johnson et al., 2014, pp. 89-91).

Social Interdependence Theory has been applied to participants from different cultures, social classes, backgrounds, and age. The findings bared its validity, generalizability, and positive outcomes. Compared with competitive and individualistic learning, cooperation results

in higher achievement and greater productivity, long-term retention, higher intrinsic motivation and expectations for success, higher level of reasoning and creative thinking, greater transfer of what is learned within one situation to another, and more positive attitudes toward the task and school (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 371). Cooperative learning also leads to positive relationships including interpersonal attraction (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 372) and liking among group members (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 20). In addition, students who work cooperatively are psychologically healthier and have higher self-esteem than those who work competitively and individualistically (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 372). Moreover, cooperative learning tends to strengthen personal ego, self-confidence, and autonomy. Students have the chance "to share and solve personal problems, which increases an individual's resilience and ability to cope with adversity and stress" (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 73).

Social Interdependence Theory is "compatible with the nature of cooperative learning" in which students work together through face-to-face promotive interaction in order to reach shared learning outcomes (Tran, 2013, p. 105). Teachers are, thus, encouraged to engage students in cooperative work for maximum outcomes.

II.4. Basic Elements of Cooperative Learning

According to Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1998), "not all group efforts are cooperative" (p. 28). Placing students next to each other and ordering them to work together is not cooperative learning. The literature contended that cooperative learning is productive only under certain conditions. Johnson et al. (1991) maintained that effective cooperation requires the presence of five essential elements: (1) positive interdependence, (2) Face-to-face promotive interaction, (3) individual accountability, (4), social skills, and (5) group processing (p. 16).

II.4.1. Positive Interdependence

When it comes to cooperative learning, positive interdependence is of primary importance. Positive interdependence creates the sense that group members either "sink or swim together" (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 16). The gain of each member is correlated with the gains of teammates. To be more specific, students are linked in such a way that the group succeeds if and only if each member succeeds (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 16). If one fails, all fail. During cooperative efforts, each student has a dual responsibility: learn the assigned material and make sure that all group members do likewise (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 16). This dual responsibility is known as positive interdependence. Each team member has a unique contribution to make to the joint efforts (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 17). Without the participation of each member, the team cannot hope to succeed.

The cooperative strategy *Student Teams-Achievement Divisions* (STAD), developed by Slavin, illustrates positive interdependence. In STAD, students first study the material during a whole class lecture and then they are assigned to mixed-ability groups to work on the material initially presented by the teacher. Students work in groups, ensure that all their teammates have grasped the material, and prepare them to do well during the upcoming quiz. After class presentation and team discussion, students take an individual test on the presented material. The quiz points are then compared to students' past scores to determine their improvement. In order to recognize group accomplishments, the quiz points are summed to form team scores (Slavin, 1991, p. 9). STAD mirrors positive interdependence in the sense that the success of a cooperative group depends on the attainment of each member during the quiz.

Johnson and Johnson (in press) identified three types of interdependence: *outcome*, *means*, and *boundary* interdependence (as cited in Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2007, p. 23). Outcome interdependence refers to a goal or a reward. Students cooperate or compete in order to reach desired goals. There is no cooperation or competition if outcome interdependence is missing.

Means interdependence encompasses resource interdependence (students split the learning resources so that each member has a portion of the information needed to accomplish the assignment), role interdependence (each member is allotted a specific role), and task interdependence (group members divide the workload). Boundary interdependence defines which individuals and group members are interdependent with whom. In other words, boundary interdependence entails "abrupt discontinuities among individuals that segregate individuals into separate groups" (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 23).

According to Johnson et al. (1991), positive interdependence can be established in various ways. First, *Positive Goal Interdependence* exists when students work toward a mutual goal. It is achieved when learners perceive that they cannot attain their goals unless their group mates also reach their own. Second, *Positive Reward Interdependence* means that team members receive a joint reward when the group's goals are achieved. Positive reward interdependence can be structured by providing students with a group grade for the team performance, individual scores ensuing from quizzes, and bonus points when group members accomplish the tests criterion. Third, in *Positive Resource Interdependence*, each student is provided with a portion of the resource and group members have to combine the information if they want to complete the assignment and reach the group goals (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 17). The cooperative procedure *Jigsaw II*, created by Slavin, is a fine illustration of positive resource interdependence. Jigsaw II requires students to work in groups of four to five members. Each member is assigned a piece of the material to study. Students with the same portion of information get together in "expert groups" to discuss the material and then return to their original groups to teach what they have learned to their teammates. Finally, the teacher assesses students individually and forms team scores based on improvement as in STAD (Slavin, 1991, p. 11). Fourth, in *Positive Role Interdependence*, each team member is allotted a complementary role necessary for the completion of an assignment. Role interdependence can

be structured by assigning students interconnected roles such as reader, recorder, checker of understanding, encourager of participation, and elaborator of knowledge. The checker, for instance, has to ask his/her teammates to clarify the material being learned (Johnson et al., 1991, pp. 17-18). These roles state the accountability of each team member for the accomplishment of the joint assignment.

II.4.2. Face-to-face Promotive Interaction

Positive interdependence results in promotive interaction. The latter involves "individuals encouraging and facilitating each other's efforts to achieve, complete tasks, and produce to reach the group's goals" (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 18). Face-to-face promotive interaction provides group members with abundant verbal interaction where they can communicate, exchange ideas, and foster each other's understanding and achievement. Through face-to-face interaction, group members can explain and teach what they know to their partners, encourage each other to learn, link current knowledge with previous learning (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 7), resolve conflicts, take collective decisions, and improve their communication skills. Consistent with Liang (2002), the quality of group interaction depends on students' grades, their ability to provide one another with feedback, and their willingness to share learning and life experiences (p. 33). To obtain meaningful face-to-face interaction, Johnson and Johnson (1999a) advised teachers to form groups of no more than four members (p. 71). According to Johnson et al. (1991), promotive interaction is mainly characterized by group members who

1) offer each other effective help and support;

2) exchange the required resources;

3) provide each other with constructive feedback to improve future performance;

4) challenge one another's conclusions and reasoning;

5) promote efforts to reach shared outcomes;

6) influence one another's efforts to learn;

7) are motivated to strive for joint benefits;

8) trust each other; and

9) experience less stress and anxiety (p. 30).

II.4.3. Individual Accountability

Individual accountability is another essential element of cooperative learning. It creates the sense that, "If you do not work, you do not eat" (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 19). This aspect of cooperation makes every student responsible for a part of the outcome that cannot be completed unless all group members participate. Individual accountability occurs when "the performance of each student is assessed, the results are given back to the individual and the group" (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 19). In order to ensure the accountability of every team member, Johnson et al. (1991) recommended teachers to test individual performance (p. 20). Individual assessment determines which group member needs help and encouragement to complete the task (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 19). In order to guarantee high levels of individual accountability, group size should be small (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 20). Smaller group size permits the teacher to recognize individual participation and allows students to communicate, exchange information, and make decisions.

The cooperative approach STAD enhances not only positive interdependence but also individual accountability. Similarly, the cooperative strategy *Numbered Heads Together* highlights teamwork, positive interdependence, and individual accountability (Kagan, 1989-1990, p. 13). In this structure, students work in groups of four members to discuss a question asked by the teacher. Group members are expected to help one another understand the question and ensure that everyone can answer it appropriately. Once students have developed a group answer, the teacher randomly asks one group member to respond. Numbered Heads Together randomly examines students by asking any member to present the group's work orally to the

rest of the class. This random examination is an effective way to structure individual accountability (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 20).

II.4.4. Social Skills

Engaging unskilled students in cooperative learning does not result in successful cooperation (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 21). Effective cooperation occurs only when students possess and use the required interpersonal and small group skills. Such skills include leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication, and conflict-management (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 71). In order to work effectually with others, students need to know how to communicate and listen attentively to one another, provide effective leadership, make the right decisions, trust each other, and know how to manage conflicts.

Not all students are born with the ability to work and interact with others. Therefore, teachers should understand the importance of teaching social skills (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 21). Johnson and Johnson (1996) suggested four levels of cooperative skills: *forming*, *functioning*, *formulating*, and *fermenting* (p. 2). Instructors should start teaching forming skills. Such skills require students to stay with their respective groups, be noiseless while working on the task, take turns, and call teammates by their names. These basic skills are indispensable for successful cooperative work. Functioning skills help group members to develop and maintain effective working relationships. This includes sharing ideas, providing directions to stay on the task, and encouraging participation. Formulating skills are the cognitive skills that stimulate learners to use a higher level of thinking and develop strategies to understand and retain information. Formulating skills comprise the ability to connect past and present knowledge. Fermenting skills encompass those skills needed to reconceptualize prior learning, cognitive conflict, and conclusions. At this level, students need to learn how to handle disagreements. For example, they should learn to criticize ideas not people (Johnson & Johnson, 1996, p. 2). For a successful implementation of cooperative learning, teachers should provide students with

opportunities to see the need and importance of the skill, understand what the skill is and when to use it, practice and role-play the skill, process their efficiency of using the skill, and persevere in practicing the skill (Johnson & Johnson, 1996, pp. 2-3). Slavin (2011) suggested that group activities like role-plays and modeling can be used to teach interpersonal and social skills (as cited in Tran, 2013, p. 103).

II.4.5. Group Processing

The last requirement for effective cooperative work is group processing. Group processing occurs when team members reflect on the positive and negative aspects of their performance and make decisions on what to ameliorate or continue. This aspect of cooperative learning provides group members with opportunities to discuss how well they are achieving their goals with the purpose to find a way to improve the effectiveness of the contribution of each member to the completion of the group's goals (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 22). Group processing renders learning easy, eradicates unhelpful actions, and improves social skills (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 24). For an effective group processing, teachers should provide group members with sufficient time to reflect on their actions, remind the students to use their social skills, and clearly state the purpose of processing (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 8).

Johnson et al. (1991) identified two levels of processing: small-group and whole-class (p. 23). In order to structure small-group processing, the instructor should provide the groups with some time at the end of each session to reflect on their actions as cooperative teams. Small-group processing allows group members to maintain a good working relationship, enables the development of social skills, guarantees that group members receive feedback, ensures students' cognitive and metacognitive thinking, affords ways to celebrate accomplishments, and provides opportunities for interaction (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 23). Besides small-group processing, teachers should occasionally incorporate whole-class processing. This can be achieved by observing the groups as they are working on the task, use a formal observation

sheet, and take notes on each group. At the end of the lecture, the teacher can conduct whole-class processing to share his/her observations with the entire class (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 24).

The aforementioned elements form the basis of cooperative learning and differentiate it from competitive and individualistic approaches. Teachers need to know how to integrate these components into the classroom in order to design lessons with a cooperative essence, adjust cooperative learning to their needs and students, and interfere in malfunctioning groups in order enhance performance (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 24).

II.5. Types of Cooperative Learning Groups

Cooperative learning can be structured in diverse ways. Johnson and colleagues (2014) identified three categories of cooperative learning groups: *formal cooperative learning*, *informal cooperative learning,* and *cooperative base groups* (p. 104).

II.5.1. Formal Cooperative Learning Groups

Formal cooperative learning groups are assembled for at least one class period. Students can work within the same teams for several weeks in order to reach shared learning outcomes (Johnson et al., 1991, p. iv) such as completing a project. Students joint efforts and work on the task until it is achieved and their outcomes assessed. In formal cooperative learning classrooms, instructors assume several roles. First, they make a number of pre-instructional decisions such as setting both academic and social skills objectives, determining group size, selecting the grouping technique, allocating roles to group members, and deciding about the classroom arrangement and the material required to complete the task. Second, they explain the task and positive interdependence. In other words, they clarify the assignment and the way to accomplish it, structure positive interdependence and individual accountability, and define the social skills needed for the completion of the task. Third, they monitor students' performance and intervene in groups to provide assistance and resolve conflicts. They move around the class, gather data on how group members interact and use social skills, and intervene when necessary. Fourth,

they assess students' learning and contributions. After the completion of the assignment, they provide the groups with opportunities to discuss how well they have achieved their goals, find a way to improve their future performances, and celebrate accomplishments (Johnson et al., 2014, pp. 104-105). Student Teams-Achievement Divisions, explained previously, is an example of a formal cooperative learning structure.

II.5.2. Informal Cooperative Learning Groups

Teachers can also engage students in informal cooperative learning. Informal cooperative learning groups have a limited lifespan since they last from a few minutes to one classroom meeting (Johnson et al., 1991, p. v). Students work cooperatively on short assignments in order to fulfill joint learning goals. Teachers can structure these cooperative groups at any moment (Johnson et al., 1991, p. v) in order to check students' understanding and afford extra practice. Informal cooperative learning can be structured to make students more attentive to the material to be learned, set a favorable learning atmosphere, help students set their expectations on what the lesson will be about, guarantee students' cognitive processing on what is taught, and provide closure to the lecture (Johnson et al., 1991, p. v; Johnson et al., 2014, p. 105). The teacher's role in informal cooperative learning is "to ensure that students do the intellectual work of organizing material, explaining it, summarizing it, and integrating it into existing conceptual structures" (Johnson et al., 1991, p. v; Johnson et al., 2014, p. 105). For effective implementation of informal cooperative learning, teachers should follow a specific procedure. First, they form groups of two to three students and ask a question that entails four to five minutes discussion. This interaction allows group members to construct knowledge together and have an overview of the lecture. Second, they split the session into 10-15 minutes segments. After each part, they ask students to engage in cooperative work to answer a question in about three minutes. During the three-minute discussion, each student provides an answer to the question, shares it with a partner(s), and listens to his/her partner(s)' responses, then they

incorporate the answers and come up with a cohesive explanation. In order to ensure individual accountability, instructors should ask students at random to summarize the group's findings. Teachers should also structure group processing and recompense students' hard work. Eventually, they provide students with 4-5 minutes to recapitulate what they have learned, prepare the homework, and have an insight about the next session's topic (Johnson & Johnson, 2008, pp. 30-31). Think-Pair-Share, for instance, is an informal cooperative learning structure. This short activity requires students to formulate individual ideas, share them with a peer, and then with the rest of the class.

II.5.3. Cooperative Base Groups

Cooperative base groups are "long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership" (Johnson et al., 1991, p. vi). Cooperative base groups last at least one semester. They provide learners with opportunities to help, encourage, and support each other's academic progress and success (Johnson et al., 1991, p. vi). In addition, they support peer relationships and boost students' motivation and self-esteem. Students are committed and accountable for educating their group mates. The role of base group members is to ensure each other's progress, contribute to the group's success, and help each other complete the task (Johnson & Johnson, 2008, p. 31). The teacher's role, on the other hand, is to form heterogeneous groups of three to four members, schedule regular group meetings, assign each base group a specific task during the meeting, ensure an effective implementation of the five elements of cooperation, and have students process on the groups' actions (Johnson & Johnson, 2008, p. 31).

According to Johnson et al. (2014), the three categories of cooperative learning groups are complementary and can be integrated into a single classroom meeting. The instructor starts the session with a base group meeting that lasts five to ten minutes where group members check each other's homework and make sure that everyone completed it and understood it. The

teacher then introduces informal cooperative learning where he/she explains the purpose of the lecture. Afterward, formal cooperative learning is used to accomplish an assignment related to the session's topic. As the end of the class approaches, the teacher uses informal cooperative learning, recapitulates the accomplishments of the session, and gives insights into how the session's assignment is related to the task of the subsequent classroom meeting. The instructor ends the session with base group learning where students consult to discuss what they have learned and prepare the assigned homework (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 106).

II.6. Cooperative Learning and Other Categories of Group Learning

Not all group learning involves cooperative efforts (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 68; Johnson et al., 1998, p. 28). Consistent with Johnson and Johnson (1999a), group work can either enhance or hinder learning (p. 68). Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the type of group learning they integrate into the classroom. The Johnsons (1999) distinguished between four categories of learning groups.

Pseudo learning group refers to a learning approach where students are allotted to work in groups but they are not eager to do so. Group members compete, hide information from one another, and mislead each other. Students view each other as competitors rather than allies who work toward joint outcomes. In this context, students would reach better attainments if they worked alone (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 68).

Traditional classroom learning group is a grouping technique where students are demanded to work in teams and accept feeling obliged to do so. Students interact with one another seeking information; nonetheless, they have no intention to share what they know with the rest of the group. Students seek a free ride since outcomes are evaluated and rewarded based on individual efforts. According to Johnson and Johnson (1999a), "more hard working and conscientious students would perform better if they worked alone" (p. 68). Both pseudo

learning groups and traditional classroom learning groups feature team members striving for different learning outcomes and individual rewards.

Cooperative learning group is characterized by students who work together, and help and encourage one another to accomplish identical learning goals. Team members make decisions for the group's benefit and help to maximize each other's learning and understanding. Individual accountability is checked frequently to ensure the contribution of each member to the group success. This type of group learning leads to higher achievement for all team members (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 68).

High-performance cooperative learning group meets all the elements of cooperative learning. The difference between cooperative learning groups and high-performance cooperative learning groups lies in the level of commitment of each student toward teammates and group success. Nevertheless, "Few groups ever achieve this level of development" (Johnson & Johnson, 1999a, p. 68). Compared with pseudo learning groups and traditional classroom learning groups, both cooperative learning groups and high-performance cooperative learning groups provide learners with more opportunities to learn and succeed.

In a nutshell, traditional group work is highly unstructured in comparison with cooperative learning. Assigning students into groups does not ensure that they will cooperate. Structured group work goes beyond placing students in teams. In other words, cooperation necessitates group members to work toward a common end, to be interdependent and individually accountable, and to use social skills. Figure 7 shows how the previously mentioned categories of learning groups influence team performance.
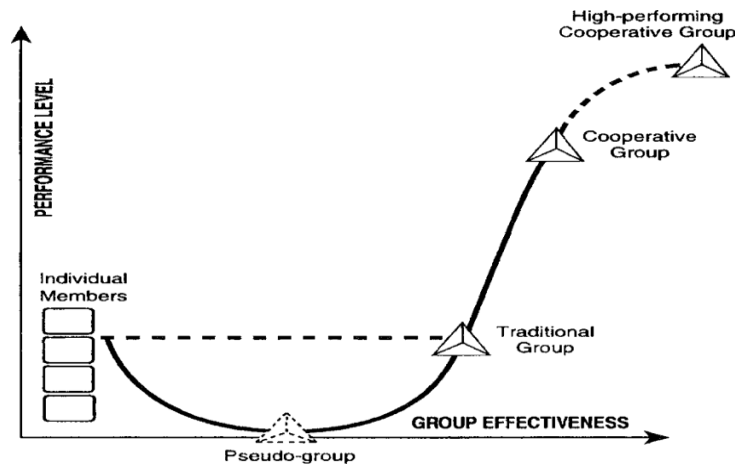
Figure 7. The learning group performance curve (Johnson & Johnson, 1999b, p. 25).

Figure 7 demonstrates that group structure influences the way groups perform. Placing students in learning groups and telling them to work together does not guarantee successful cooperation. Without even realizing, teachers may structure traditional classroom learning groups instead of cooperative learning groups (Johnson & Johnson, 1999b, pp. 25-26). For effective cooperative work, teachers should structure positive interdependence and individual accountability.

II.7. Cooperative Learning and Collaborative Learning

Even if cooperative learning and collaborative learning are built on the premise of group-based learning, they are two distinct instructional approaches. Scholars like Panitz (1996), Oxford (1997), Prince (2004), Paulus (2005), and Dooly (2008) made clear distinctions between cooperation and collaboration.

Consistent with Panitz (1996), collaborative learning is a personal way of life of interaction between group members in any social situation while cooperation is a way of structuring the exchange between people and helping them reach their goals. Collaborative learning is characterized by students who come together, for example, to discuss a lecture. In cooperative work, on the other hand, students are held accountable for their own as well as their teammates' learning and success. As said by Panitz (1996), collaborative learning is a learner-centered instruction where students are responsible for their actions. In other words, they form the

groups, decide about the way to conduct the activity, and select the material needed to complete the task. Conversely, cooperative learning is a teacher-centered approach (Panitz, 1996) in the sense that the instructor is in charge of the class and decides about the topic to be covered and the material to be used to accomplish the assignment. The teacher is also responsible for the formation of heterogeneous groups, the organization of positive interdependence, and the teaching of social skills. In short, collaborative learning highlights student-to-student interaction while cooperative learning is characterized by students who work in small heterogeneous groups under the supervision of the teacher.

Oxford (1997) sustained that cooperative learning and collaborative learning are two distinct communicative strands. In Oxford's view, cooperative learning is a social cognitive strategy whereas collaborative learning refers to a social constructivist philosophy. The purpose of cooperative learning is to develop learners' social and cognitive skills, while the goal of collaborative learning is the acculturation of students into a learning community. The cooperative learning strand highlights positive interdependence and individual accountability. Collaborative learning, on the other hand, is a social act. To say differently, learners engage in the negotiation of meaning and the construction of new knowledge with the help of a more capable member (teacher or peer) (Oxford, 1997, pp. 443-444).

In accordance with Prince (2004), collaborative learning is a peer learning approach that encloses other types of learning comprising cooperative learning (p. 223). In other words, cooperative learning is a subset of collaborative learning. Collaborative learning emphasizes the role of interaction between group members, whereas cooperative learning stresses the structural properties introduced by the Johnsons (Prince, 2004, p. 223). During cooperative efforts, students work together to promote each other's learning. Conversely, collaboration is active learning with peers where students negotiate efforts themselves. Students are responsible

for their learning and success. In sum, positive interdependence and individual accountability differentiate cooperative learning from collaborative learning.

Paulus (2005) stated another difference between the two learning approaches. Cooperative learning is characterized by students who divide the work so it can be completed individually. Every team member is assigned a particular role and contributes his/her share of the work toward the joint efforts. In contrast, collaborative learning portrays students who work together through face-to-face interaction (Paulus, 2005, p. 112).

Dooly (2008) contributed to the debate and explained that, "Collaboration is more than co-operation. Collaboration entails the whole process of learning" (p. 21). According to Dooly, the two instructional models diverge in the level of teacher's authority in the classroom. To say it differently, in the cooperative learning model, the teacher is still in charge of the class since he/she sets the activities, forms the groups, and assesses both individual and group performances. On the contrary, collaborative learning gives students full responsibility to construct their learning (Dooly, 2008, p. 21).

Even though cooperative learning and collaborative learning are two different group learning approaches, they are strikingly similar. Dooly (2008) claimed that, "The basis of both collaborative and cooperative learning is constructivism" (p. 21). The role of the learner in both models is the active construction of new knowledge based on the existing information. Emphasis is placed on learners who actively seek information and take full responsibility for their learning (Dooly, 2008, p. 21). The teacher is no more a knowledge-transmitter but a facilitator of students' learning. In addition, both paradigms highlight mutual social interaction, active learning, and positive relationships among group members.

II.8. Benefits of Cooperative Learning

In recent years, great efforts have been devoted to the study of cooperative learning. Many exploratory research works have evidenced the effectiveness and positive outcomes of this educational approach.

Face-to-face promotive interaction is a significant aspect of cooperative learning. Through interaction, students can negotiate comprehensible input and convey intelligible output. Cooperative learning provides students with abundant opportunities to interact with one another and exchange ideas before sharing them with the entire class. Vygotsky (1978) stressed the importance of interaction and socialization in the development of the child's cognitive processes. Such development occurs in two stages: first on the social level when the learner is assisted by a more capable other to complete the task, and then on the individual level when the learner completes the assignment with no guidance (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). This transfer happens within the Zone of Proximal Development which states the difference between what learners can do individually and what they can do with the assistance of a more knowledgeable person (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Vygotsky emphasized the role of a more competent partner to promote learner's cognitive development. Indeed, interaction with proficient learners can help weak students in the sense that they can get more knowledge, support, and help. Vygotsky (1978) highlighted the social nature of learning and the importance of cooperation in promoting students' cognitive processes (p. 90).

Cooperative learning generates a supportive and motivational classroom atmosphere. As said by Dörnyei (1997), cooperative learning creates "a special motivational system" that invigorates learning (p. 487). In addition, Zhang (2010) affirmed that interaction, the use of reward, and the allotment of specific roles motivate insecure students to learn and succeed (p. 82). In a study, Liang (2002) examined the impact of cooperative learning methods on EFL high school students' language learning and motivation toward learning English. One

experimental group and one control class were involved. Liang used numerous methods to collect and analyze data (testing, motivational questionnaires, interviews, observations, and content analysis). The results showed that the cooperative group outperformed the traditional class in terms of linguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and non-verbal communicative competence. Liang (2002) highlighted three reasons for the positive outcome of cooperative learning on oral communicative competence in the experimental group: "(1) the increase of student talk through comprehensible input, interaction, and output; (2) the incentive structures of positive reinforcement; and (3) the supportive and communicative learning context" (p. 124). The study also revealed that the use of cooperative learning enhanced the participants' motivation toward learning English.

In another study, Liao (2006) looked at the effect of cooperative learning on motivation, class strategy use, and grammar achievement among EFL freshmen students at a private university in Taiwan. The study was quasi-experimental and involved one experimental class and one control group. A questionnaire, a proficiency test, and an achievement test were used to collect data. The results demonstrated that the experimental class displayed higher motivation than the whole-class group. The findings also uncovered the positive influence of cooperative learning on strategy utilization and English grammar achievement.

Johnson and Johnson (1999a) upheld that, "Extraordinary achievement comes from a cooperative group, not from the individualistic or competitive efforts of an isolated individual" (p. 67). Cooperative learning, when correctly implemented, results in higher achievement. Özsoy and Yildiz (2004) studied the influence of the cooperative model *Learning Together* on mathematics achievement among seventy seventh-grade pupils enrolled at a Turkish primary school. The researchers used an experimental design in which the participants were assigned to one experimental class and one control group. Pre-tests and post-tests were used to collect data.

The results indicated that the students in the experimental group obtained higher achievement than those in the traditional class.

Cooperative learning creates a positive classroom climate where students feel comfortable and relaxed. This non-threatening learning environment can help learners overcome their communication apprehension and express themselves freely in front of the class (Slavin, 1995; as cited in Al-Yaseen, 2014, p. 92). Students are given time to prepare their answers before presenting them to the teacher and classmates; consequently, their anxiety and fear of failure may assuage (Zhang, 2010, p. 82). In addition, working in cooperation "provides important incentives that strengthen motivation and alleviate anxiety" (Guskey, 1990, p. 38). In a similar perspective, Artzt and Newman (1990) stated that anxiety decreases when students help and encourage one another to learn (p. 452). In order to investigate the effect of cooperative learning on chemistry anxiety, Oludipe and Awokoy (2010) opted for a quasi-experimental study which included two classes from two senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Besides the Chemistry Anxiety Scale, the researchers used two lesson notes to collect data: one for the cooperative learning group and the other for the teacher-fronted class. The pre-test showed that both groups experienced high chemistry anxiety. Nevertheless, after introducing cooperative learning to the experimental group, the post-test revealed a reduction in the levels of chemistry anxiety. In the control group, however, the post-test displayed an increase in the degree of anxiety.

Cooperative learning offers students with a caring learning environment where they can improve their oral proficiency. In one study, Talebi and Sobhani (2012) probed into the effect of cooperative learning on English oral proficiency among forty students enrolled in the IELTS speaking classes at IELTS Centre Institution in Mashhad, Iran. The participants were assigned to two experimental and control groups. The experimental group was introduced to cooperative learning whereas the control group was not. In order to assess students' oral proficiency at the beginning and the end of the course, Talebi and Sobhani conducted an oral interview. By

comparing the performance of each group on the oral interview, the authors found that the mean score of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. The experiment showed that the implementation of cooperative learning improved students' oral proficiency.

Cooperative learning also develops language competence and social skills (Klimovienė & Statkevičienė, 2006), allows more opportunities for communication (Zhang, 2010), and enhances students' motivation to participate (Drakeford, 2012). Oxford (1997) asserted that compared with competitive and individualistic efforts, cooperative learning is more effective in "promoting intrinsic motivation and task achievement, generating higher-order thinking skills, improving attitudes toward the subject, developing academic peer norms, heightening self-esteem, increasing time on task, creating caring and altruistic relationships, and lowering anxiety and prejudice" (p. 445). In sum, cooperative learning is a powerful instructional method since it helps learners in many ways.

II.9. Limitations of Cooperative Learning

Many research studies bared the huge potential of cooperative learning and recommended its implementation in language classrooms. However, cooperative learning is not a magical formula that can solve all educational problems. Like any teaching method, cooperative learning has drawbacks. After discussing the advantages of cooperation, it seems only fair to introduce some of its limitations.

In one study, Wang (2007) compared cooperative classrooms with the traditional teaching method. The researcher opted for a qualitative approach in which interviews, observations, and reflective journals were used to collect data. The study exposed numerous pitfalls of cooperative learning including, "free-rider effect, the unified course schedule, and the difficulties of designing meaningful activities, managing noisy and chaotic classroom, grouping the students, facing attendance rate or distracted students and evaluate a vast of students' test grades" (Wang, 2007, p. 28).

Cooperative learning is not easy to implement and control. It may even impede learning rather than facilitate it if the teacher fails to monitor the groups appropriately. If cooperative learning is not well-structured, some group members do most or all the work while others seek a free ride and seize the opportunity to utilize their teammates' efforts to abstain from working on the task. This phenomenon is known as the free-rider effect. Besides, Taqi and Al-Nouh (2014) found that high performers tend to dominate the groups (p. 62). In other words, less proficient students are left aside and their contributions ignored. This results in unequal participation and students' inactivity. In this case, "Some students get praise for doing very little work while others do most of the work" (Taqi & Al-Nouh, 2014, p. 56). For effective cooperation, teachers should structure positive interdependence and individual accountability. To evaluate the degree of individual accountability, teachers should observe and monitor the groups when working on the task. Yet, when it comes to evaluation, teachers face the dilemma of whether grading individual contributions or group performance. Basta (2011) recommended the utilization of individual scores instead of group grades. Basta (2011) explained, "It is clear that defaulting members will be given lower marks than the rest of the group" (p. 139).

Another impediment facing the use of cooperative learning is teachers' reluctance to integrate it into their teaching. Teachers' unwillingness to use cooperative learning may be due to their fear of losing control of the class and being unable to manage the noise (Taqi & Al-Nouh, 2014, p. 56). Teachers who view their role as classroom leaders find it difficult to give authority to students by fear of facing a chaotic classroom. In addition, teachers who studied under the traditional paradigm may reject the idea of using cooperative learning owing to their preconceived ideas that the teaching/learning process is based on competitive and individualistic efforts. Moreover, cooperative learning implementation is time-consuming. Some teachers may refuse to use this model by fear of not having enough time to cover the curriculum in its entirety.

Grouping students is another problem that may occur during cooperative learning application. Cooperation is an opportunity for students to make new friends and develop their social skills. However, when the teacher assigns group tasks, most students prefer to work with individuals whom they are familiar with. Consistent with Johnson et al. (1991), student-selected groups tend to be homogeneous in terms of ability level and result in unfruitful learning. To solve the problem, Johnson and colleagues (1991) advised teachers to form the groups (p. 61). Basta (2011) recommended the use of random grouping rather than allowing students to work with adjacent peers (p. 139). Additionally, conflicts can easily arise when students work together especially when they are not acquainted with one another. In this case, the teaching of social skills is of paramount importance. On the word of Árnadóttir (2014), students "should possess the skills needed to find a way to work with students they may dislike" (p. 35).

Students' unwillingness to participate contributes to the failure of cooperative learning implementation. Competitive students are not always ready to work in cooperation and help others learn. In addition, cooperation is not for the timid. Learners are different and have different ways of learning. When designing cooperative learning activities, teachers should pay attention to students' learning styles and differences. For example, they should pay attention to introvert and extrovert learners. Oxford (2003) stated that extroverts "want interaction with people and have many friendships" whereas introverts like solitude and have few friends (p. 5). To say it differently, extroverts like group work while introverts like to work individually. Therefore, teachers should acknowledge learners' variations in order to meet their needs and render language learning effective and enjoyable.

The use of the mother tongue is another weakness of cooperative learning. When engaged in cooperative work, students tend to use their native language to complete the task. Wang (2007) noticed that, "students usually communicated with teammates in Chinese far more times than in English in class" (p. 27). Students use their first language while involved in cooperative

work because it is easier for them to communicate in their mother tongue than in the target language (Taqi & Al-Nouh, 2014, p. 56).

II.10. Guidelines for Cooperative Learning Implementation

Cooperative learning application is a delicate operation. For cooperative learning to be successful, teachers should consider several guidelines. According to Al-Yaseen (2014), five factors require the attention of the instructor: group size, group formation, teacher's role, students' role, and assessment of individual and group performances (p. 96).

Group size is an essential factor to consider when implementing cooperative learning. Teachers should keep the group size small in order to allow equal participation among members. Overcrowded groups usually result in complete anarchy, unequal participation, passive behavior, and less communication and interaction among team members. Árnadóttir (2014) advised teachers to acquaint students with pair work first before allocating them to groups (p. 21). The optimal group size fixed by most researchers is four members. Macpherson (2000-2007) explicated that, "When you have four in a group, you can have pairs working together at times and four working together at other times. There are six different pair combinations possible in groups of four" (p. 11). With that size, teachers can easily structure positive interdependence and individual accountability. In addition, group members can communicate and interact, listen to one another's suggestions, and exchange ideas.

Group formation can be a challenging task. When integrating cooperative learning into the classroom, teachers can be confronted with the problem of whether using homogeneous or heterogeneous grouping. Most researchers in the area of cooperative learning recommend the use of heterogeneous groups composed of high, medium, and low achievers (Felder & Brent, 2001; Johnson et al., 1991). The heterogeneity of the groups is important when structuring cooperative learning and can benefit both high and low achievers. To be more specific, working in mixed-ability groups enables high-achieving students to review the previously learned

material by explaining it to low-achieving group mates. Less academically able students, on the other hand, are provided with opportunities to understand the material covered in the classroom, learn from their group members, expand their knowledge, and foster their achievement. Besides group formation, teachers should decide about the groups' lifespan. Johnson et al. (1991) advised teachers "to allow groups to remain stable long enough for them to be successful" (p. 61). Instructors can, for instance, use cooperative base groups where heterogeneous teams work together for an entire semester or year.

Cooperative learning redefines the role of teachers in the classroom who "act as observers of how each group and each member is functioning. They offer support when needed and facilitate the process by explaining the task and intervening to solve the group conflicts" (Belmekki & Kebiri, 2014, p. 29). In cooperative classrooms, educators assume several roles instead of just being providers of knowledge. To be more specific, they set the objectives, decide about the content, and teach social skills. In addition, they form small heterogeneous groups, plan and explain the task, structure positive interdependence and individual accountability, monitor the groups while working on the task, and intervene to provide assistance and resolve conflicts. Furthermore, they evaluate students' performance using criterion-referenced system and allow group members to reflect on their actions as cooperative teams (Johnson et al., 1991).

Unlike the traditional paradigm where students act as passive vessels, cooperative classrooms alter their role to active participators and autonomous learners (Zhang, 2010, p. 82). Students are "no longer expected to simply show up and listen to a lecture while taking notes when relevant. They now explore the material on their own while working with their peers" (Árnadóttir, 2014, p. 19). In cooperative learning groups, team members motivate, help and encourage each other to learn, and provide one another with constructive feedback. In addition, they use social skills such as listening and valuing each other's ideas and resolving conflicts.

Moreover, each group member is responsible for completing the assignment and ensuring that his/her group mates participate, complete the task, and understand the material being studied. In order to promote cooperation, teachers should divide the load among members and assign complementary roles.

The success of a cooperative team depends upon the success of each member. This means that students are accountable for their learning as well as the learning of their group mates. In order to evaluate the quality of learning during cooperative efforts, Johnson et al. (1991) recommended teachers to appraise students as individuals and as members of a group. Johnson et al. (1991) claimed that, "For cooperative learning to be successful, the learning of group members must be evaluated by a criterion-referenced system" (p. 69).

II.11. Research on Cooperative Learning in Algeria

The present study is an attempt to integrate cooperative learning in oral classes with the aim to reduce anxiety. Introducing a new teaching approach like cooperative learning in the Algerian educational context can be a challenging process since classroom instruction is typically teacher-centered and learning is oriented toward competitive and individualistic efforts. In spite of these limitations, some local researchers looked at the effect of the cooperative approach on English language learning in Algeria.

In one study, Habi (2010) probed into the effect of cooperative learning on second-year secondary school pupils' participation in EFL classrooms. In order to investigate the issue, Habi administered questionnaires to both teachers and pupils and conducted a focus group interview with learners. Teachers' questionnaire intended to explore their position toward cooperative learning whereas students' questionnaire was designed to examine pupils' opinions toward group tasks. In addition, the focus group interview allowed the researcher to understand how learners perceive their levels. The findings unveiled students' limited participation during group activities. This unequal participation among group members is due to the free-rider effect and

lack of structure while implementing cooperative learning. This implies that teachers use traditional group work which encourages competition and individualism rather than cooperative learning where positive interdependence and individual accountability are structured.

Within the same year, Zourez (2010) endeavored to discover whether teachers of Written Expression at the University of Constantine incorporate cooperative learning into their teaching. The study also examined students' attitudes toward cooperative learning. Two questionnaires were administered to second-year students and teachers. The results of the teachers' questionnaire disclosed their attempt to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere. Students' questionnaire, on the other hand, revealed their positive attitudes toward learning writing in cooperation. Furthermore, the findings exposed teachers' limited use and understanding of cooperative learning. Zourez (2010) concluded, "Teachers in the department of English, Constantine University, use group work in their teaching. However, it seems that they are not so enlightened about this relatively new technique in the field of teaching" (p. 95).

In another study conducted at the University of Constantine, Benghomrani (2011) looked at the effect of cooperative learning on students' performance in English tenses. Sixty-four second-year students preparing a License degree in English were assigned into one experimental class and one control group. The experimental class was taught according to cooperative learning principles, whereas the control group received the same instruction based on competitive and individualistic learning. A pre-test and a post-test were used to collect the relevant data. After six weeks of instruction, the post-test indicated that students in the treatment group performed better when using English tenses compared with the subjects in the control group.

In their action research project, Belmekki and Kebiri (2014) explored the enhancement of grammar competence through cooperative learning among thirty-eight second-year students of English enrolled at the University of Tlemcen. Data collection tools comprised a pre-training

test, a post-training test, and a questionnaire. The post-test showed that cooperative learning enhanced the participants' grammar competence. The analysis of the questionnaire demonstrated that 80% of the subjects "consider their level in grammar better" (Belmekki & Kebiri, 2014, p. 32). Concerning students' attitudes toward cooperative learning, "92.10% consider the process 'Enjoyable' and 'Exciting'" (Belmekki & Kebiri, 2014, p. 32). Belmekki and Kebiri (2014) found that, "Training students to work in cooperative groups was a fruitful matter" (p. 32).

In a more recent study, Boudehane (2015) implemented Slavin's Students Team-Achievement Divisions (STAD) to enhance the writing achievement of second-year students of English enrolled at the University of Constantine. Fifty students assigned to one experimental class and one control group were involved in the study. STAD was applied five times for three months. The findings indicated that, "STAD method can be of great help for students to boost their writing skill" (Boudehane, 2015, p. 62).

Although these studies showed that cooperative learning has positive effects on students' language learning achievement, there is a gap regarding its effect on classroom anxiety among EFL university students and the way it is perceived and implemented in the Algerian context. Thereby, this thesis aims to address this gap.

II.12. Cooperative Learning and Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety plays a crucial role in the foreign language learning process. Several research findings bared the negative relationship between anxiety and language learning achievement (for example, Chan & Wu, 2004). Consequently, various researchers looked for ways to reduce this multi-faced construct. Some of these studies acknowledged the effectiveness of cooperative learning in dwindling anxiety. Johnson et al. (1991), for instance, asserted that, "Cooperation typically produces less anxiety and stress and more effective coping strategies to deal with anxiety than does competition" (p. 37).

In one study, Nagahashi (2007) studied the impact of cooperative learning on foreign language anxiety among thirty-eight freshmen students enrolled in English for Academic Purposes course at Akita University, Japan. The study used structured cooperative learning activities by providing a supportive and non-threatening learning environment. To gather data, Nagahashi used Horwitz et al.'s FLCAS and a post-intervention questionnaire. The outcomes showed that cooperative learning activities might be effective to reduce students' apprehension and develop their language proficiency.

In another study, Yeh (2008) scrutinized the association between cooperative learning and anxiety among nine students enrolled in an EFL cram school. The researcher assumed that cooperative learning could lower foreign language anxiety. To test this hypothesis, Yeh used a peer evaluation sheet and a communication apprehension questionnaire. The results demonstrated that a cooperative language learning setting might help learners to cope with communication apprehension.

In the Thailandish context, Suwantarathip and Wichadee (2010) investigated the effect of cooperative learning on anxiety and proficiency among forty EFL sophomore students enrolled at Bangkok University during the second semester of 2009. Besides the FLCAS, the study employed two proficiency tests and a semi-structured interview to collect data. Suwantarathip and Wichadee found that engaging students in cooperative tasks decreased anxiety and increased language proficiency.

In a 2011 study, Khader probed into the effect of cooperative learning on oral communication apprehension among sixty-eight learners studying the social studies course at Petra University, Jordan. This quasi-experimental study included two classes randomly allotted to one experimental class and one control group. The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension, developed by McCroskey, was used to measure the degree of anxiety. After the administration of the pre-questionnaire, the experimental group was subjected to the use of

cooperative learning while the control group was instructed through the traditional teaching method. After three months, a post-questionnaire was applied in both groups. The findings demonstrated that the students in the experimental group experienced less communication apprehension compared with the students in the control group.

More recently, Ma (2013) inquired the influence of cooperative learning on foreign language anxiety among Chinese non-English freshmen. Two classes were involved in the study: one as the control class instructed with the traditional way of teaching and the other as the experimental class introduced to the cooperative learning method. The FLCAS was applied in both groups to measure the levels of anxiety before and after the treatment. The findings revealed that cooperative learning reduced not only communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation but also feelings of general anxiety.

The abovementioned studies suggested that the incorporation of cooperative learning in the classroom may lead to the reduction of foreign language anxiety. Other research findings, however, unveiled an insignificant correlation between cooperative learning and foreign language anxiety. Duxbury and Tsai (2010), for instance, inspected the relationship between foreign language anxiety and cooperative learning among three hundred eighty-five students in three Taiwanese universities and one university in the United States. The researchers used the FLCAS, the Style Analysis Survey, along with ten questions. At South Dakota University, in the United States, the results showed no correlation between anxiety and cooperative learning. Among the three southern Taiwanese colleges, only one school bared a significant connection. It was the only school with a Taiwanese teacher. Duxbury and Tsai (2010) concluded:

> Cooperative learning does not have an ameliorating effect on foreign language anxiety. At the same time, it is still important that cooperative learning should be an integral part of most language classrooms. It enables students to use the target language more often, encourages communication with others in the language, creates an environment for stimulating classroom activities, and gives variety to language learning. (p. 12)

In another inquiry, Öztürk and Denkci Akkaş (2013) looked at the impact of cooperative learning on anxiety and motivation in multilevel adult classes. The eight-week intervention study involved one control class and one treatment group. In the control class, a pre-test and post-test design was used, whereas in the experimental group Jigsaw and team reward strategies were employed. The FLCAS and the Foreign Language Motivation Questionnaire were used to gather data. The findings indicated that cooperative learning does not have a significant influence on anxiety and motivation in multilevel adult classes.

Conclusion

In recent years, educational researchers have explored ways to develop learners' autonomy in the classroom. In this sense, cooperative learning emerged as part of the learner-centered approach. Cooperation promotes interaction and equal participation among group members. Unlike the traditional teaching method, cooperative learning allows learners to be active participators in constructing their knowledge and achieving their goals. Cooperative learning is advantageous in many ways: socially, psychologically, and academically. However, for cooperative learning to reach this level of development, its basic components should be properly incorporated in the classroom.

Overseas, research on cooperative learning has shed light on its potential profits on the language learning process. In Algeria, the number of studies devoted to cooperative learning is limited due to the teacher-centeredness of the educational context. In addition, research on the correlation between cooperative learning and foreign language anxiety yielded contradicting outcomes. Therefore, this quasi-experimental research is an attempt to contribute to the body of literature by implementing cooperative learning at the departments of English in Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou universities with the aim to understand its effect on anxiety during classroom oral practice. The subsequent part of the thesis describes the methodology used to carry out the present research and reports the research findings.

Part Two:

Presentation of the Methodological Approaches and Research Findings

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This quasi-experimental study delved into whether the incorporation of cooperative learning into the classroom would lead to the reduction of students' apprehension during oral practice. In order to answer the study questions and test the validity of the research hypotheses, an intervention with cooperative learning and conventional-lecture method was conducted at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. The present chapter, devoted to the methodological approach, describes the sampling population and data gathering tools, depicts the data collection process and the intervention design, and portrays the data analysis procedures.

III.1. Research Sites and Subjects

Permission to conduct research was obtained from M'Hamed Bouguerra University of Boumerdes and Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou. In each research site, two classes of second-year students out of eight were allotted to the teacher-researcher: one as the experimental group introduced to the cooperative learning approach, and the other as the control class instructed with the conventional lecture method. The participants were subjected to the treatment of cooperative learning and traditional instruction during a ninety-minute per week speaking class for fifteen weeks.

The study participants were second-year students of English as a foreign language. The choice of the subjects fell on second-year students for two reasons. First, while considerable research focused mainly on the measurement of anxiety levels during the early stages of language learning (for example, Horwitz et al., 1986; Idri, 2012), very little is known about the amount of anxiety in more advanced learners. Therefore, the present study aimed to contribute to the literature by examining the degree of anxiety experienced by second-year EFL students in Algeria. Second, the participants had already taken two semesters of speaking classes, so

they were expected to be more capable to share their experiences and express their feelings in comparison with first-year students. What follows are descriptions of the participants in each research site.

Boumerdes University had a total enrolment of three-hundred seventeen second-year EFL students during the academic year 2015-2016, with an average class size of approximately thirty-nine students. The sample encompassed forty-seven students: twenty-four students in the experimental group and twenty-three students in the control group. Table 1 encapsulates the basic information about the participants in Boumerdes University.

Table 1

Demographic Data about the Participants in Boumerdes University

Variable	Category	Experimental group		Control group	
		Number of students	*%*	*Number of students*	*%*
Gender	Male	9	37.5	7	30.4
	Female	15	62.5	16	69.6
Age	20	8	33.3	11	47.8
	21	8	33.3	6	26.1
	22	6	25.0	2	8.7
	23	0	0	2	8.7
	24	0	0	1	4.3
	25	1	4.2	0	0
	35	1	4.2	0	0
	Unknown	0	0	1	4.3

Among the twenty-four students in the experimental group, nine students were male (37.5%) and fifteen students were female (62.5%). The control group, on the other hand,

comprised twenty-three students, seven males (30.4%) and sixteen females (69.6%). Owing to students' strike that lasted until December 2015, the intervention study in Boumerdes University did not begin until January 2016. In terms of age, the participants in the experimental group were between twenty and thirty-five, with an average age of 20 years. Ages in the control group fluctuated between twenty and twenty-four, students' average age was 20.9 years.

Tizi Ouzou University had a total enrolment of two-hundred sixty second-year students during the academic year 2015-2016. A typical enrolment in Tizi Ouzou classrooms was between twenty-eight and thirty-three students. The sample population comprised fifty-three students, twenty-six students in the experimental group and twenty-seven students in the control group. Table 2 summarizes the respondents' demographic data in Tizi Ouzou University.

Table 2

Demographic Data about the Participants in Tizi Ouzou University

Variable	Category	Experimental group		Control group	
		Number of students	*%*	*Number of students*	*%*
Gender	Male	4	15.4	5	18.5
	Female	22	84.6	22	81.5
Age	19	3	11.5	4	14.8
	20	16	61.5	17	63.0
	21	6	23.1	3	11.1
	22	1	3.8	2	7.4
	23	0	0	1	3.7

In the experimental group, twenty-two students were female (84.6%) and four students were male (15.4%). The control group, on the other hand, comprised twenty-two female students (81.5%) and five male students (18.5%). When the investigation started in November

2015, the participants' age in the experimental group ranged from nineteen to twenty-two, with an average age of 20.19 years. Students in the control group ranged in age from nineteen to twenty-three, with an average age of 20.22 years.

The whole research sample embraced one hundred participants. The majority of the subjects were female, thirty-one in Boumerdes University and forty-four in Tizi Ouzou University. To be more precise, three-fourths of the students were female (75.0%) and one-fourth were male (25.0%). In terms of age, more than half (52.0%) of the participants were twenty years old when the intervention began.

III.2. Data Collection Instruments

In order to gather the relevant data to address the study questions and test the validity of the research hypotheses, a mixed methodology was employed. Mixed methodologies involve the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. In this study, three data collection tools were used: a modified version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) anxiety questionnaire, classroom observation and teaching journals, and semi-structured interviews. What follows are detailed descriptions of each instrument.

III.2.1. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

In order to measure the levels of anxiety in oral classes, a modified version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) open-ended questionnaire, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), was used. This anxiety measure contains thirty-three statements with which respondents express the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each item. In other words, the FLCAS is a five-point questionnaire that proposes Likert category answers ranging from "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Neither Agree nor Disagree", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree". The scale items are "reflective of communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 129).

To suit the participants' language learning context and the purpose of the study, some adjustments were brought to the original FLCAS. Instead of thirty-three items, the questionnaire used in the present study comprised twenty-six statements. Since the researcher was also the teacher, the items reflecting on students' apprehension while communicating with English native teachers were excluded in the new version. Besides, since the current thesis focuses on the trepidation students experience during speaking activities, the humiliation they go through while performing in English in front of the entire class, and their attitudes toward oral classes, some items were eliminated while others were added to better illustrate the construct of anxiety in oral classes. Furthermore, the expression "oral class" constantly substituted the expressions "language class" or "foreign language class" used in the original scale. For example, the FLCAS item 1 "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class" was changed to be "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in the oral class". In order to avoid any confusion with French, which is also a foreign language in Algeria, the expression "foreign language" used in the original FLCAS was replaced by the word "English". For example, the item "I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do" was modified to be "I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do" (See Appendix 1).

Horwitz and associates along with subsequent research studies have acknowledged the validity and reliability of the FLCAS. The internal consistency of the original scale was .93, and the test-retest reliability over eight weeks yielded an r =.83 (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 129). According to Dörnyei (2003), researchers should "strive for a questionnaire that has appropriate and well-documented reliability in at least one aspect: internal consistency. This attribute refers to the homogeneity of the items making up the various multi-item scales within the questionnaire" (p. 110).

The study anxiety questionnaire was subjected to a reliability assessment using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. Dörnyei (2003) claimed that when the Cronbach's alpha values do not exceed .60, it is a warning sign that a questionnaire is an unreliable tool (p. 112). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the twenty-six item scale was .87 and the reliability test over fifteen weeks yielded a value of .88. This indicates that the reliability of the instrument is satisfactory.

III.2.2. Classroom Observation and Teaching Journals

Classroom observation and reflective teaching journal notes were used to collect qualitative data. According to Sanaei (2016), observation "can be regarded as a powerful instrument, to the extent that the researchers could attain an in-depth perception of their participants' performance" (p. 906). Classroom observation was used from the very first session in order to detect students' anxious behaviors during classroom oral practice. It also aimed to determine the way the students interacted in cooperative learning groups, discover whether they put into practice the five components of cooperation portrayed by the Johnson brothers, and compare the attitude they displayed at the beginning and the end of the treatment. In addition, classroom observation was used to identify the problems that may hamper cooperative integration into the oral class. The observation phase lasted fifteen weeks during which observation notes were taken and recorded in reflective teaching journals. Throughout the intervention, the teacher-researcher was a participant observer. Participant observation allows the researcher or the observer to interact directly with the subjects and their environment, and to record all the relevant features to his/her inquiry. The teacher-researcher was a participant observer in the sense that she was in constant contact with the participants and took notes of any changes that ought to be brought to the structure of the cooperative learning tasks.

III.2.3. The Interview

The administration of the post-questionnaire was followed by interviews with students from the experimental groups. The rationale behind the use of interviews is to gather in-depth data for a primary research project (Driscoll, 2011, p. 164). Ohata (2005b) proclaimed that, "The process of interviewing provides participants with opportunities to select, reconstruct, and reflect upon details of their experience within the specific context of their lives" (p. 141). Given the fact that one of the objectives of the study is to ascertain the complexities of the participants' viewpoints, thoughts, and experiences while performing in cooperative learning groups, an interview appeared quite suitable. To this end, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted to get supplementary data about the research variables. First, interviews were used to investigate students' perspectives on foreign language speaking anxiety. Second, this data gathering tool was employed to examine students' perceptions of cooperative learning. Each interview comprised eight open-ended questions. Four questions explored the anxiety construct from the students' standpoint. The first part of the interview aimed at highlighting the most and the least anxiety-inducing speaking situations in the classroom, the possible sources of students' apprehension, and the strategies that might be applied to reduce its debilitating effect. The four remaining questions endeavored to examine students' opinions and experiences with cooperative learning. The objectives of the second phase of the interview were to learn how the students felt about performing in cooperative learning groups, determine the positive and negative aspects of working in cooperation, and uncover whether they prefer cooperation to individual learning (See Appendix 2). The open-ended nature of the questions allows the respondents to provide in-depth information about their experiences and permits the researcher to obtain rich data (Turner III, 2010, p. 756).

The interview was directed to fourteen students from the cooperative learning classes. Since each experimental class comprised seven heterogeneous teams, one student from each

group was interviewed. The participants were informed about the aim of the interview and that the findings would be used for research purposes. They were also told that the gathered information would be anonymous and confidential. After asking for the participants' permission, the tape recorder was used to audiotape their confessions. Recording interviews allows the researcher to quote the respondents directly (Driscoll, 2011, p. 164). The students were interviewed during their free time. The interview participants' characteristics are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Characteristics of the Interview Participants

Participant	Gender	Group	Interview date	Interview time
01	Female	The Survivors	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	10:40-11:00
02	Male	The Eagles	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	11:05-11:30
03	Female	The Winners	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	11:35-12:05
04	Female	Masterpiece	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	12:30-12:50
05	Female	Undefeated Pearls	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	13:30-14-00
06	Female	Trust Worthy	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	14:05-14:25
07	Male	The Strangers	Sunday, May 22nd, 2016	14:30-14:50
08	Female	The Winners	Thursday, May 26th, 2016	11:10-11:30
09	Female	The Warriors	Thursday, May 26th, 2016	11:35-12:00
10	Female	The Four Girls	Thursday, May 26th, 2016	12:00-12:30
11	Female	The Award Hunters	Tuesday, May 31th, 2016	12:35-13:00
12	Female	The Wind Takers	Tuesday, May 31th, 2016	13:30-14:00
13	Female	The Survivors	Wednesday, June 1st, 2016	9:00-9:20
14	Male	Madaba	Wednesday, June 1st, 2016	9:30-9:50

As seen, one student from each cooperative team was interviewed amounting the number of the participants to fourteen. The first seven interviewees were from Boumerdes University while the remaining participants were from Tizi Ouzou University. Among the fourteen students, eleven participants were females and three were males. In Boumerdes University, all the interviews were conducted on Sunday, May 22nd 2016 starting from 10:40 until 14:50 with a lunch break at 12:50. The students chose this day to conduct the interviews because it was their only free afternoon during the week. The students had two lectures in the amphitheater from 8:00 to 11:10. Owing to the absence of one teacher, the second lecture was not held. Consequently, the first interview was conducted at 10:40. In Tizi Ouzou University, on the other hand, the participants were interviewed in about a week period stemming from Thursday, May 26th to Wednesday, June 1st 2016. However, the interview phase lasted three practical days. Since it was the examination period, it was difficult to prearrange meetings to conduct the interviews. All the interviews were conducted in English with an interview length fluctuating between twenty minutes and half an hour depending on the participants.

III.3. Data Collection Procedure

At the beginning of the academic year 2015-2016, the modified version of Horwitz et al.'s Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale was applied in both experimental and control groups (Pre-questionnaire). The questionnaire was first piloted with another group of second-year EFL students before its administration to the participants. The purpose of the piloting phase was to ensure the clarity of the statements to the informants. All the tricky items found during the pilot stage were adjusted in the main phase. The final version was administered to the participants and was completed in the classroom. The students were asked to be honest while answering the questionnaire since there was no correct or wrong answer. After the completion of the pre-questionnaire, the students in the experimental groups were exposed to a ninety-minute lecture using cooperative learning for fifteen weeks. Cooperative learning was

implemented in two phases. During the first six weeks of the treatment, the students performed in informal cooperative learning groups where they worked together for a few minutes or a class period. This phase aimed to acquaint the students with cooperative learning, allow them to work with different students each time, and transform the traditional classroom into a cooperative one. During the second phase, groups with stable membership were formed where students worked together for several weeks. In the control groups, students performed the tasks individually. Throughout the intervention, classroom observation was used to detect students' anxious behaviors and the way they cooperated. At the end of the treatment, the anxiety scale was applied in both experimental and control groups (Post-questionnaire). The results of the post-questionnaire were analyzed, interpreted, and compared with those obtained in the pre-questionnaire with the purpose to divulge any modifications in the participants' levels of anxiety. In order to examine the participants' perceptions of cooperative learning, fourteen students with different anxiety levels were invited to share their opinions and experiences.

III.4. Study Design

The present research is quasi-experimental because it lacks the key feature of random assignment. In other words, the teacher-researcher used pre-existing groups and did not control the allotment of the participants into experimental and control groups as it is the case for true experiments. The study involved two experimental classes and two control groups that have already been formed by the administration. When the individual subjects are not randomly assigned by the researcher to experimental and control groups, the procedure is known as a quasi-experiment (Creswell, 2014). In quasi-experiments, "the researcher undertakes his study with groups that are intact, that is to say, the groups have been constituted by means other than random selection" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 274).

The quasi-experimental design adopted in this study is the pretest-posttest nonequivalent control group design. Quasi-experiments that use pretest-posttest nonequivalent groups are

research designs having an experimental class and a nonequivalent control group that are given a pretest. The experimental group is then exposed to the treatment whereas the control group receives no treatment. After the intervention, each of the study groups is given a posttest. In this design, the participants are not randomly assigned to groups but constitute naturally formed groups like classrooms. Since there is no random assignment, the groups are considered nonequivalent. However, the assignment of the treatment to one group or the other is expected to be random and under the investigator's control (Campbell & Stanley, 1963, p. 47). This design aims to compare between the two groups and determine whether the participants who received the treatment improved compared with those who did not receive any treatment. Table 4 portrays the quasi-experimental design used in this study.

Table 4

Pretest-posttest Nonequivalent Groups Design

Group	Number of students	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Boumerdes experimental group	24	Yes	Yes	Yes
Boumerdes control group	23	Yes	No	Yes
Tizi Ouzou experimental group	26	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tizi Ouzou control group	27	Yes	No	Yes

The present study involved four pre-existing classes of second-year students of English randomly allotted to two experimental classes and two control groups. The pre-questionnaire (pretest) was administered to both experimental and control groups. The participants in the experimental classes were exposed to the treatment of cooperative learning, whereas the students in the control groups were taught through traditional whole-class instruction. After fifteen weeks, the post-questionnaire (posttest) was applied in each of the study groups. The results of the experimental groups were then compared with those of the control groups.

The current research is comparative in the sense that it assesses the significance of the difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups. In addition, it seeks to determine whether there are any significant statistical differences between the anxiety scores of the students who work in cooperation and those who perform individually. Furthermore, the study includes a comparison of the anxiety levels of the study groups. To be more specific, it compares the anxiety scores of the students who are enrolled at the University of Boumerdes with the anxiety scores of the students who are registered at the University of Tizi Ouzou. Inferential statistics such as t-tests and one-way ANOVA were used to compare the anxiety mean scores.

The intervention study lasted fifteen weeks. One hour and a half speaking class was held once a week for fifteen weeks. Owing to the winter holiday break, first term examination period, spring holiday break, students' strikes, different celebrations, and second term examination period, it was difficult to extend the study.

III.5. The Grouping Techniques Used during the Intervention

During the whole intervention, the teacher-researcher neither allowed the students to choose their group mates nor grouped them according to their sitting position. Since the teacher-researcher was not acquainted with any student, random grouping was used during the first six weeks of the treatment. The purpose of random grouping was to get both teacher and students to know each other and initiate students to cooperative learning. Three grouping techniques were used. The first technique, recommended by Ramírez Salas (2005), consisted in allotting numbers to students and grouping them according to the assigned numbers. All students with number 1, for instance, were grouped together. The second grouping technique asked the students to write their names on small sheets of paper. In order to form pairs or groups, the teacher just called names at random. The third technique asked the teacher to bring some pictures with different themes that matched the number of students in the classroom. The

teacher then handed each student a picture and asked him/her to search for the student(s) with the same theme. Students with the same picture were grouped together. From week one to week six, the teacher-researcher observed the students as they performed the different tasks and got to notice who the quiet and shy students were and who the talkative ones were. From week seven to week fifteen, heterogeneous grouping was used. In other words, groups with stable membership composed of students with different gender, ability levels, and learning styles were formed. Johnson et al. (1991) advised teachers to "maximize the heterogeneity of students, placing high-, medium-, and low-achieving students in the same learning group" (p. 60).

III.6. The Cooperative Learning Structures Used during the Intervention

Cooperative learning is a generic term that refers to numerous methods for organizing and conducting classroom instruction (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000). In other words, there are numerous cooperative learning structures. The paragraphs below portray the cooperative strategies implemented in the experimental classes.

Three-Step Interview, developed by Kagan, was the first cooperative structure introduced to the experimental groups. As its name suggests, the approach comprises three steps. During the first step, students interview one another in pairs in a group of four members then alter their roles during the second phase. During the third and final stage, the pairs share their findings with the group (Kagan, 1989-1990, p. 13). Kagan's cooperative method is simple and easy to implement (Árnadóttir, 2014, p. 26). According to Árnadóttir (2014), the Three-Step Interview creates a relaxed classroom environment and can be used with language students who experience cooperative learning for the first time (p. 27).

Another pair work structure used during the treatment was *Think-Pair-Share*. Think-Pair-Share is a simple three-step cooperative learning approach. This technique requires students to reflect silently and individually on a topic provided beforehand by the instructor or to think about an answer to a question. Then, students are paired to share and discuss ideas. At last, the

pairs are asked to communicate their thoughts to the rest of the class (Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2010, p. 53). This approach provides students with ample time to formulate their answers; consequently, their self-confidence may be enhanced and their anxiety may be alleviated.

For a group activity, the four-step cooperative approach *Numbered Heads Together* was used. The instructor forms groups of four members, assigns a number of 1, 2, 3, 4 to each, and asks a question. Group members confer with one another to make sure that everyone knows, understands, and can answer the teacher's question aptly. The teacher then calls out a number at random and the student with that number from each team is expected to give the group's response (Kagan, 1989-1990, p. 13).

Another cooperative learning approach used in this study was *Co-op Co-op*, which places emphasis on the formation of heterogeneous groups. Co-op Co-op is characterized by students who "work in groups to produce a particular group product to share with the whole class; each student makes a particular contribution to the group" (Kagan, 1989-1990, p. 14). The process goes through several stages. During the first and the second stages, a whole class discussion is held and heterogeneous groups are formed. Next, each group selects a topic related to the classroom discussion and identifies the subtopics so that every team member has a unique contribution to make to the group product. At the fifth phase, each group member investigates his/her part of the work individually. During the sixth and seventh steps, group members go back together to share their findings, produce a report, and plan their presentation. After the planning phase, the groups present their projects to the rest of the class. The ninth and final step is the evaluation of the groups' projects (Slavin, 1995; as cited in Árnadóttir, 2014, p. 31).

Developed by Johnson and Johnson, *Learning Together* is the most widely used cooperative learning model. The majority of the activities used in the present research were based on this model. Learning Together involves students working in small heterogeneous

groups of four to five members. All group members are interdependent, individually accountable, work toward the same end, and discuss how well they are cooperative and how well they are achieving their goals. The groups are praised and rewarded according to their final product.

III.7. Description of the Intervention

This quasi-experimental research lasted fifteen weeks. Since the participants were in different study groups during their first year at the university, cooperative learning was introduced through icebreaker activities. The purpose of using icebreakers was to get students to know each other's names and interests. In addition, icebreakers help students to integrate into a group environment, encourage cooperation, and develop social skills. The first two weeks of the treatment were devoted to the use of two icebreakers, namely *Three-Step Interview* and *Spot the Lie.* What follows are detailed descriptions of the activities used during the intervention.

Week One: Three-Step Interview.

Objectives: Help students know each other in an easy-going way, familiarize them with cooperative learning, and teach active listening.

Kagan's cooperative approach Three-Step Interview was introduced to the experimental groups during the first classroom meeting. At the beginning of the session, the new classroom procedure was demystified. In order to explain the importance of cooperation, the teacher wrote on the board the proverb "Two heads are better than one" and asked the students to guess the meaning. Afterward, the five elements of cooperation introduced by the Johnson brothers were explained and their significance was highlighted. The teacher then presented and clarified Kagan's cooperative structure, formed groups of four members, and invited teammates to interview each other in pairs. Each interviewer had to find the name, hobbies, and three interesting facts about his/her partner. The teacher emphasized the importance of active

listening such as keeping eye contact with the interlocutor and asking clarifying questions. While students were working on the task, the teacher moved around the class to observe their interactions and provide help when necessary. After sharing their findings with the group then with the whole class, the students were asked to select the most interesting fact. The student who introduced the fact was elected the best interviewer. Three-Step Interview reflects individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, and the use of social skills. Kagan (1989-1990) explained:

> In Three-Step Interview, each person must produce and receive language; there is equal participation; there is individual accountability for listening, because in the third step each student shares what he or she has heard… Three-Step Interview is far better for developing language and listening skills as well as promoting equal participation. (p. 13)

In the control groups, Three-Step Interview was substituted by individual introductions. To say it differently, each student was asked to introduce himself/herself to the rest of the class. At the end of the first classroom meeting, the pre-questionnaire was applied in both experimental and control groups.

Week Two: Spot the Lie.

Objectives: Familiarize students with one another and teach turn-taking.

Spot the Lie was the second icebreaker activity used in this study. The teacher introduced the task to the students by exposing three personal facts, two events are true and one is not. The class was invited to guess which of the three facts is not true. The students were then asked to do the same and think about three events about themselves that were not known by their classmates, two facts must be true and one should be a lie. Groups of three members were formed to discuss the facts. Each student had to persuade the other members that the lie was true. Once again, the teacher stressed the importance of social skills like active listening and turn-taking. Students were informed about the significance of involving everyone in the task, listening attentively to others, and not interrupting them while speaking. After ten minutes, the teacher brought the class back together, asked each student to expose his/her personal facts to

the rest of the class, and had his/her group members vote on which one they thought was the lie. At the end of the session, the class was invited to elect the best lie and the best liar. This activity encourages communication between group members and allows them to know each other better. In addition, this game is fun, promotes interaction, and develops social skills.

In the control classes, the students did not work in teams. Each student was asked to think about three personal facts then share them with the whole group. The class asked questions then voted on which of the three facts was the lie.

Week Three: Song Discussion.

Objective: Practice active listening and turn-taking.

Incorporating songs in language classrooms proves to be beneficial. Songs comprise manifold instances on how to experiment with the English language and offer learners with opportunities to improve their vocabulary and their knowledge of the target culture. For this reason, the teacher opted for a song discussion during the third week of the treatment. The choice of the song fell on *Another Day in Paradise* by Phil Collins. At the beginning of the session, students were provided with a worksheet (See Appendix 3) and were asked to listen to the song, complete the blanks, and then answer comprehension questions. For this assignment, the cooperative approach *Think-Pair-Share* was used. As the song was playing, each student completed the gaps and reflected individually on the comprehension questions. The teacher then randomly paired the students to exchange ideas and moved around the class to see if everyone was engaged in the activity. After ten minutes, the pairs shared their responses with the rest of the class. The pair discussion familiarized the students with the theme of the song, *homelessness*. Afterward, the same pairs were asked to discuss statements about homelessness, debate on whether they are "true" or "false", and justify their responses. In addition, the pairs were requested to think about two causes of homelessness and suggest two solutions to this plight (See Appendix 4). After a few minutes, the teacher brought the class back together to

share ideas and debate on the truthfulness or the wrongness of the statements. The song discussion and the incorporation of Think-Pair-Share permitted the students to practice active listening and turn-taking. Throughout the session, equal participation, face-to-face interaction, and social skills were highlighted.

In the control groups, the participants reflected individually on the questions then a whole classroom debate was conducted to discuss the statements. At the end of each session, the class was invited to sing. The purpose was to allow the students to escape from the typical classroom activities and practice intonation and pronunciation.

Week Four: Proverbs.

Objectives: Help students understand the language of proverbs and structure positive interdependence and individual accountability.

During the fourth week of the intervention, some proverbs were introduced to the students. It is important to teach proverbs to EFL learners because they are among the cultural aspects par excellence, and that native speakers use them frequently in their daily conversations. As a starting point for the course, some proverbs were presented to the students. A discussion of the meaning and how these proverbs are used in conversation was held. In addition, the students were asked to give examples of proverbs from their native language and explain the meaning. The experimental classes were then divided into groups of four members, and the cooperative structure *Numbered Heads Together* was incorporated. The essence of this cooperative approach was explained and the importance of the participation of each member to the group success was emphasized. Each group was provided with a task card that required the members to explain the moral of an English proverb and find the equivalent of a French proverb in English (See Appendix 5). The purpose of the second task was to raise students' awareness that many English proverbs have a French origin and help them realize that proverbs do not usually translate word for word. The students were informed that the activity would be transformed into

a competitive game and that the teams would be awarded points for any correct answer. The teacher moved around the class to check students' participation. After ten minutes, the teacher called a number at random and the student with that number from each team was invited to explain the moral of the allotted English proverb. For the second question, the teacher selected another number and invited the students to give the equivalent of the French proverb in English. Classroom discussion and correction were then held on the wrongly guessed proverbs. Numbered Heads Together is reflective of positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, and social skills. In the control groups, the students worked individually then classroom discussion and correction were conducted.

Week Five: Idioms.

Objectives: Learn how to use idioms effectively and develop students' social skills.

Like proverbs, idioms are worthwhile teaching because they are commonly used in spoken English. Teaching idioms is teaching fluency as well. For this reason, the teacher decided to introduce some idioms describing health to the participants. At the beginning of the session, the teacher displayed pictures that illustrated idioms in a literal way and asked the students to guess the meaning. The teacher then explained that idioms are commonly used expressions that cannot be understood from the meaning of their individual words, gave examples of the displayed idioms in context, and asked the students to guess the meaning. Students understand idioms when they hear others use them. Therefore, in order to provide an example of how idioms are used in conversation, the students were asked to listen to a recording from BBC Learning English in which the idiomatic expression "A bitter pill to swallow" was discussed. The students were then handed a text filled with idioms and were asked to locate the idioms and determine the meaning (See Appendix 6). The cooperative approach *Think-Pair-Share* was implemented. The students first reflected individually on the text, and then they were randomly paired to discuss the idioms. During the last stage, the pairs shared their answers with the entire

class. This cooperative strategy is effective in developing students' cognitive thinking. It reflects individual accountability and promotive interaction. It also develops students' social skills and helps them respect differences and each other's ideas. The second assignment required the pairs to write a conversation using two idioms discussed during the lecture. The teacher walked around the class to provide assistance. After ten minutes, the pairs were asked to act the dialogues they wrote before the entire class. This was a good opportunity for the students to practice using idioms.

In the control groups, the students reflected individually on the text then classroom discussion and correction were conducted. Afterward, each student was asked to write a story using two idioms discussed during the course and share it with the rest of the class.

Week Six: Slangs.

Objectives: Raise students' awareness of the differences between formal and informal spoken English and structure positive interdependence.

Speaking is the most challenging skill for students to acquire. Oral discourse is characterized by the use of nonverbal signals, stress, intonation, rhythm, and colloquialisms. The latter include idioms and slangs. Slangs are features of informal spoken English. Students need to learn some of these expressions because many of them are used in movies, television shows, media, and informal conversations. Therefore, during the sixth week of the intervention, the teacher decided to teach the most frequently occurring slangs in American English. To do so, the students were asked to watch two scenes from the television show *Hawaii Five-0*. The first scene portrayed a formal conversation during which the use of slangs was scarce. The second dialogue was abundant with slangs. The students were asked to reflect on the videos and discuss the differences in language between the two scenes. The aim was to raise their awareness of the differences between formal and informal spoken English. The teacher then explained that the conversational expressions used in the second dialogue are called *slangs*. To

cement students' understanding, the meaning of each slang was provided. Afterward, groups of three students were formed and each member was given one slang to research (See Appendix 7). The activity was transformed into a competitive game during which the teams were awarded points for any correct answer. Thus, in order to succeed, group members had to work together and help one another accomplish the task. This activity mirrors the element of cooperation known as positive interdependence. The second task required the groups to write a dialogue using three slangs introduced during the lecture and share it with the rest of the class.

In the control groups, the students worked individually and classroom discussion and correction were then held. Concerning the second assignment, the students were paired according to their sitting position and were asked to write a conversation using two slangs discussed during the course and act it in front of their peers.

Week Seven: Storytelling.

Objectives: Enhance students' imagination and social skills and structure individual accountability.

During the seventh week of the intervention, the students in the experimental classes were assigned into groups with a stable membership. Each treatment group encompassed seven heterogeneous teams of three to four members. Each group was invited to consult and choose a name that best represented the team members. In Boumerdes University, the groups were referred to as *Masterpiece*, *The Eagles*, *The Strangers*, *The Survivors*, *The Undefeated Pearls*, *The Winners*, and *Trust Worthy*. In Tizi Ouzou University, the students suggested the following names: *Madaba*, *The Award Hunters*, *The Four Girls*, *The Survivors*, *The Warriors*, *The Wind Takers*, and *The Winners*. Henceforth, each group was referred by its appellation.

For their first assignment, the groups were asked to write a story with a moral. It was an opportunity to check students' understanding of the proverbs discussed in a previous lecture. The teacher divided the load so that every member had a specific role to perform. In a group of

four members, for instance, one student was responsible for the construction of the introductory part; the second member was supposed to imagine the main events; the third student had to picture the end of the story; and the last member had to explain the moral of the group's story. The teacher informed the students that intergroup competition would be incorporated, and that the teams would receive bonus points for their performances during the intervention. The team that would accumulate higher points would receive a reward at the end of the treatment. The teacher moved around the class to check participation and provide help. After twenty minutes, the groups were asked to share their stories with the rest of the class. At the end of the session, a whole class processing was conducted and feedback was offered on each story. This activity allowed the students to be individually accountable, interact with one another, and use their imagination and social skills. In the control classes, each student was requested to construct a story and share it with the whole class.

Week Eight: Oral Presentations.

Objectives: Allow the participants to structure positive interdependence and individual accountability, practice giving feedback, and probe topics of interest.

The eighth week of the intervention was devoted to oral presentations during which the cooperative strategy *Co-op Co-op* was introduced to the experimental groups. A whole classroom discussion was first conducted during which the students agreed on what they wanted to investigate. During the classroom discussion, the students in Tizi Ouzou University decided to research the different celebrations among cultures. The students in Boumerdes University, on the other hand, opted for intercultural nonverbal communication. In the next step, each team chose a topic related to the classroom discussion, identified the subtopics, and divided the workload. Afterward, each group member conducted an individual investigation on the chosen subtopic. Group members then came back together to share their findings and prepare the presentation. During a three-hour classroom meeting, the groups presented their projects to their

peers. Peer-review was then incorporated. The class asked questions and commented on the positive and negative aspects of each presentation. The purpose of integrating peer-review was to offer students a chance to provide their classmates with constructive criticism and learn how to accept it positively. At the end of the session, the best presentation was awarded bonus points. Co-op Co-op permitted the students to learn how to be interdependent and individually accountable. In the control groups, individual presentations substituted cooperative projects.

Week Nine: Everyday English.

Objectives: Involve the students in everyday conversation role-plays and introduce the group processing element of cooperative learning.

Role-plays are brilliant ways to get students to perform real-life situations, use ordinary language, and practice social skills. Role-plays are communicative activities in which students work in pairs or small groups to act out roles within scenarios. According to Ur (1996), role-plays denote "all sorts of activities where learners imagine themselves in a situation outside the classroom[…], sometimes playing the role of someone other than themselves, and using the language appropriate to this new context" (p. 131). During role-play activities, the teacher provides students with clear instructions presented in role cards and time to prepare their performances. Using role-plays in the classroom can be beneficial for students. Ladousse (1987) listed six special reasons for using role-plays in the classroom which are:

1. Role-plays expose students to a wide range of functions, structures, and vocabulary. They allow students to practice speaking in any situation.

2. During role-play activities, students are required to use and develop the skills needed to maintain social relationships.

3. Role-plays bring the real world into the classroom by enabling students not only to acquire a set of phrases but also to learn how interaction might occur in different real-life contexts.

4. Role-plays encourage shy students to participate in the classroom by providing them with a mask. Hiding behind another character and playing different personalities may help students become comfortable and overcome their shyness.

5. Role-plays are fun, stimulate students' imagination, and create an enjoyable atmosphere for learning.

6. Role-plays develop students' fluency, promote interaction in the classroom, boost motivation, encourage peer learning, and allow teachers and students to share the responsibility of the learning process (pp. 6-7).

Therefore, during the ninth week of the treatment, the students were asked to perform different situations related to everyday conversations. Each cooperative group was given a role-playing card. The situations included *at the restaurant*, *at the hotel*, *arguments between neighbors*, *may I go to a party?*, *visiting the doctor*, *shopping for groceries*, and *at a wedding* (See Appendix 8). The load was divided so that every group member had a specific role to perform. Example dialogues and some useful expressions were provided to each group to help them accomplish the task. The groups were given time to prepare the role-plays before performing in front of the whole class. At the end of the session, the group processing element of cooperative learning was introduced to the students. Each group was handed a group processing form to reflect on the team performance (See Appendix 9).

In the control classes, the students were grouped according to their sitting position and were asked to perform the task. Group work was used in the control classes in order to contrast it with cooperative learning and observe the way students interacted in both learning groups. In the experimental groups, team members worked together and encouraged one another to perform because they knew that the success of the group depended on the successful performance of every member. Since the control groups were unfamiliar with cooperative efforts, each student strived for the success of his/her performance.

Week Ten: Classroom Debate.

Objectives: Learn how to express opinions, agreement and disagreement, and enhance students' conflict management skills.

The use of debates in the classroom can help students improve their speaking and teamwork skills. Debates are interactive activities in which two opposing groups of students express their opinions about a given topic and present a set of arguments to defend their point of view and persuade others. Alasmari and Ahmed (2013) advised teachers to use debates as icebreakers, particularly during the first classroom meeting where students suffer from communication anxiety. The authors further stated:

> Debating can be used brilliantly to boost up students' speaking in English… Use of debate, speech and conversation in EFL classes will first of all drive out students' fear about English language. Moreover, regular practice of debate, speech and conversation will improve their fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary. (Alasmari & Ahmed, 2013, p. 148)

At the beginning of the session, some vocabulary was reviewed such as how to express opinions, agreement, and disagreement. The teacher then explained the assignment and the way to proceed. The position of each cooperative team during the debate was allotted arbitrarily. The purpose of having students support opinions that are not their own was to help them develop their fluency and oral communication skills. Complementary roles were assigned to each member including leader, recorder, reporter, and timer. The leader had to organize the group's ideas and ensure that each team member had an argument to convey during the debate. The role of the recorder was to take notes on the opposing team's opinions. The job of the reporter was to summarize the group's position on the topic. The timer was responsible for reminding his/her teammates about the time limitation. Before each debate, the teacher reminded the students about the importance of listening to the opinions of others and evading spiteful comments. Each debate was organized around three rounds. During the first round, each team was given five minutes to present their arguments and two minutes to ask clarifying questions to the opposing team. The second round was an opportunity for each team to summarize their opponents'

arguments and state what was wrong with their position. The third and final round saw the reporters summarize their team's position and state the strongest argument. After each debate, the class was invited to ask questions and select the most convincing team. The winning teams were awarded bonus points. At the end of the session, each team was handed a group processing form to reflect on their actions during the debate. Debates help students to learn "how to divide the points among themselves and follow team strategies. Through practicing debating, students will learn the skills of English language and the art of interpersonal relationship" (Alasmari & Ahmed, 2013, p. 149). Well-structured debates mirror positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, and the use of social skills.

Each of the control classes was broken into two groups and the position of each team was randomly assigned. As a moderator of the debate, the teacher reminded the teams about time limitation, summarized each team main points, provided feedback, and selected the winning team.

Week Eleven: Interviewing Plane Crash Survivors.

Objectives: Assess students' creativity, enhance their interviewing and oral communication skills, and encourage interaction.

During the eleventh week of the intervention, the students were asked to play the role of reporters and conduct interviews for news stories. Each team was given a copy of an article entitled "Back from the Dead!" (See Appendix 10) which reported a plane crash during which no survivors were found. After the crash, however, two people were discovered in the jungle assuming to be plane crash survivors. *Daily Planet* sent two of its reporters to interview the survivors. Depending on the group size, one or two students in the cooperative teams played the role of the reporter whereas the two other members were the survivors. Reporter's and survivor's role cards were handed to each team (See Appendix 10). Group members consulted to prepare their spoken interventions. While the students were working on the task, the teacher

moved around the class to check participation and provide help. Each team was then invited to perform. Small-group and whole-class processing were incorporated, and the most creative performance was awarded bonus points. This investigative journalist activity mirrors positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, and social skills.

In the control classes, pair work substituted group performances. In other words, the students worked in pairs: one student was the reporter and the other was the survivor.

Week Twelve: Job Interview.

Objectives: Set an atmosphere of positive interdependence, encourage individual accountability, raise students' awareness on the importance of interviewing skills, prepare them for their first job interview, and provide them with some tips and guidelines on how to convince a prospective employer to hire them.

Making a good impression and having strong interviewing skills and a relaxed attitude are important in today's employment world. During the twelfth week of the treatment, the students were familiarized with the world of employment. The purpose of the lecture was to offer students a chance to practice their interviewing skills by preparing a job interview role-play with their group members. The job interview lecture lasted two classroom meetings. At the beginning of the first session, the teacher wrote some vocabulary on the board such as *cover letter*, *applicant*, *employer*, *curriculum vitae*, and then asked the teams to consult in order to guess the theme of the lecture and the meaning of the words. Afterward, the students watched two videos portraying job interviews then worked with their teammates to answer comprehension questions. The lecture focused on explaining the purpose of a job interview and the do's and don'ts for job interviewing. The session was also an opportunity to expose the most common questions asked during a job interview and provide advice on how to answer them. After supplying the students with the necessary guidelines, the teacher asked them to prepare a job interview role-play. They were given complete freedom to choose the job they

wanted to apply for. In the subsequent classroom meeting, the students in the experimental groups performed the job interview role-play with their teammates. Two members were the job applicants and one or two students were the employers. Small-group and whole-class processing were incorporated. Job interview role-play mirrors the elements of cooperative learning like positive interdependence and individual accountability.

In the control groups, the students performed the task in pairs. To say it differently, one student was the employer and the other was the job applicant.

Week Thirteen: Advertising.

Objectives: Set an atmosphere of positive interdependence, encourage the accountability of each group member, enhance students' creativity and communication skills, and enrich their vocabulary.

During the thirteenth week of the intervention, the students were asked to write and perform a script for a one-minute commercial to be played in a famous British television channel and use promotional ideas to persuade and inform. The students were given carte blanche to choose the product they wanted to advertise. Beforehand, the teacher wrote some words on the board such as *slogan*, *flyer*, *publicity*, *sales pitch*, and asked the students to guess the theme then deduce the meaning of the words. Afterward, the cooperative teams were asked to discuss the importance of advertisement in business and think about two disadvantages and two means of advertising. A whole classroom discussion was then held. In the subsequent session, the students in each cooperative group performed their script, informed their peers about the benefits of the product, and endeavored to persuade them to buy it. After each performance, the teacher corrected language mistakes, offered feedback, and allowed the class to comment and ask questions. The most creative performance was awarded bonus points and a certificate. At the end of the session, the groups were handed a group processing form to reflect on their actions as cooperative teams. This activity reflects positive interdependence, individual

accountability, and group processing. In the control groups, the students performed the task individually.

Week Fourteen: Alibi.

Objectives: Encourage discussion, interaction and the use of social skills, and build positive interdependence and individual accountability.

Alibi is a classroom game during which students perform different roles in order to investigate a crime. At the beginning of the session, the students were informed that two crimes have been perpetrated: the first one was a murder and the second was a bank robbery. The teacher wrote on the board the date, the time, the place, and the nature of both crimes. To make the situations more realistic, the teacher made the crimes locally specific. In order to solve the crimes, each student was assigned a specific role. For the first crime, for instance, the group of investigators comprised a detective, a medical examiner, a forensic scientist, and a prosecutor. The group of suspects encompassed a criminal(s), his/her accomplice(s), and a lawyer. The game also included a group of witnesses. The teacher explained that the criminal(s) was seen near the crime scene and that the police would like to question both witnesses and suspects. In order to help the students perform the task, a list of words and expressions used during police investigations was provided (See Appendix 11). This assignment required the cooperative teams to work together in order to prepare a coherent and creative performance. After agreeing on a scenario, the group of investigators prepared the questions and evidence; the group of suspects prepared their story and agreed on an alibi for the time of the crime; and the witnesses prepared their testimony. The teacher moved around the class to check students' participation and provide guidance. After thirty minutes, the teacher brought the class back together and asked the students to perform. The investigators started their performance by exchanging information about the nature of the crime, the evidence collected on the body and/or at the crime scene, the analysis of fingerprints and DNA, and the checking of surveillance cameras.

Afterward, the detective started to question both witnesses and suspects. After collecting the necessary evidence, the police arrested the suspects and brought them to justice. During the trial, the lawyer defended his/her clients while the prosecutor tried to prove the guiltiness of the suspects. The teacher, who played the role of the judge, pronounced the verdict and closed the session. Small-group and whole-class processing were incorporated at the end of the session. Alibi is an activity that reflects positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, and social skills.

Each control class was divided into two teams. The first one investigated the murder while the second team investigated the bank robbery. The students chose the roles they wanted to perform. The teacher moved around the class to see if everyone was involved in the activity, provide help, and resolve conflicts.

Week Fifteen: Television Show.

Objectives: Involve the students in a creative role-play and incorporate the elements of cooperative learning.

For their last assignment as cooperative teams, the groups were asked to write a television show script and perform it in front of the class. The groups had free rein to imagine the script, but they were encouraged to be creative in order to attract the attention of the viewers. In the subsequent classroom meeting, each group performed the script in front of the class. The most creative performance received bonus points and a Best-Award Certificate. The television show role-play reflects positive interdependence. In other words, the success of the group performance depended on the successful performance of every team member. This activity also mirrors individual accountability in the sense that every team member had a specific role and contributed to the group performance. Face-to-face promotive interaction and the use of social skills such as listening to each other and agreeing on the script were also highlighted. The groups' last performance was videotaped. The videos were displayed in the succeeding

classroom meeting during which the groups were invited to reflect on their performances. Afterward, the students were asked to complete the post-questionnaire. At the end of the session, the team that had accumulated higher bonus points was elected the best cooperative team and each member received a reward.

Like the experimental classes, the students in the control groups were asked to write a script for a television program. However, instead of group performances, the students were requested to perform individually. Some suggestions for television shows were provided like newscasts, weather forecasts, cookery, and sportscasts.

III.8. Data Analysis Procedures

The study sample comprised one hundred second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. In order to proceed with the present investigation, a quasi-experimental methodology including four classes was adopted: two experimental groups subjected to the cooperative learning approach and two control groups taught through the traditional method. Three instruments were utilized to collect the relevant data: a modified version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS, classroom observation and teaching journal notes, and semi-structured interviews. In order to answer the research questions, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in data analysis.

III.8.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

The first research question was investigated quantitatively. In order to determine the level of anxiety in oral classes, the anxiety scale was administered to the participants and the gathered data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 24). Descriptive analysis was used to compute the percentages, the means, and the standard deviations in order to explore the degree of anxiety experienced by the participants before the treatment. Then, independent samples t-test was utilized to compare the anxiety scores of the

experimental class and control group in each research site. Afterward, the ANOVA test was applied to evaluate the difference between the anxiety scores of the study groups.

The second study question was also investigated quantitatively. At the end of the treatment, the anxiety questionnaire was applied in both experimental and control groups. The findings were analyzed and compared with those obtained before the treatment using the SPSS program. In order to find out whether students' apprehension reduced after their exposure to the cooperative learning approach, the pre-intervention and post-intervention data of the experimental groups were compared using paired t-test. The same test was performed in order to compare between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety mean scores of the control groups.

Likewise, the third question was answered from a quantitative standpoint using inferential statistics. In order to discover whether there is any significant difference in the anxiety levels of the students who worked in cooperation and those who performed individually, independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the post-intervention anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in each research site. To compare the anxiety mean scores of the study groups after the treatment, one-way ANOVA was applied.

III.8.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

The fourth study question was investigated qualitatively. In order to detect the way the participants interacted in cooperative learning groups, the experimental classes were observed for fifteen weeks. The observation phase allowed the teacher-researcher to record and compare the cooperative behaviors students exhibited at the beginning and the end of the treatment. The observations were recorded in reflective teaching journal entries. The observation notes were then reviewed and the information generated was described qualitatively.

Similarly, the fifth research question was examined qualitatively. In order to determine the problems that may impede the integration of cooperative learning in oral classes, classroom

observation was used. Throughout the intervention, the teacher-researcher scrutinized students' behavior and the classroom condition and took notes of any perceived problem related to cooperative learning application. The observation data were then studied and described qualitatively. Besides classroom observation, interviews with fourteen students were conducted in order to shed light on the problems they encountered when engaged in cooperative learning activities. Students' answers were analyzed thematically.

The sixth question was answered qualitatively. In order to explore students' perceptions of cooperative learning, seven students from each experimental class were invited to share their experiences and opinions in semi-structured open-ended interviews. Upon the completion of the interviews, the audiotapes were listened to several times to guarantee the accurateness of the participants' declarations. Students' responses were then transcribed and the obtained data were treated using thematic analysis. In other words, the transcripts were coded and organized into themes. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail" (p. 79). In other words, thematic analysis is the process of coding data and generating themes by ascertaining correlations among the participants' answers. Thematic analysis is a flexible and accessible approach for early-stage researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, it is a useful method for summarizing a large set of data and identifying similarities and differences among data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In order to guide novice researchers to conduct thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke published an article in 2006. The authors identified six key stages for doing a thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework is highlighted in Table 5.

Table 5

Phases of Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006)

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarization with the data:	Reading and rereading the data, and taking notes of initial ideas.
2. Initial coding:	Coding data in a systematic way, and collating data pertinent to each code.
3. Generating potential themes:	Categorizing the different codes into potential themes.
4. Reviewing themes:	Refining initial themes, checking the themes in relation to the coded extracts (phase 1) and the overall data set (phase 2), and producing a thematic map.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	Final analysis and generation of the report.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed description of the data gathering tools, the data collection process, the intervention study, and the data analysis procedures. The aim of detailing the methodology is to allow upcoming researchers to replicate the study. The study findings are provided in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

The primary goals of the present thesis were to measure the degree of anxiety experienced by second-year students of English in oral classes and investigate the correlation between foreign language anxiety and cooperative learning. To this end, the design included two experimental classes and two control groups at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. The study endeavored to answer the following research questions:

Q1. To what extent do second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou experience anxiety in oral classes?

Q2. Is there any statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups?

Q3. Is there any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who work in cooperation and those who perform individually?

Q4. How do the students in the experimental groups cooperate with their group members?

Q5. What are the problems that may obstruct the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou?

Q6. What are students' perceptions of cooperative learning?

A mixed methodology was used to address the study questions and test the validity of the research hypotheses. The study employed an anxiety measure, classroom observation plus reflective teaching journal notes, and semi-structured interviews to collect the relevant data. This chapter presents a thorough analysis of the findings.

To begin with, the present chapter defines some terms related to data analysis. It also displays the scores obtained from the anxiety scale and incorporates tables that recapitulate the outcomes. Besides, it integrates figures to illustrate differences in the degree of anxiety experienced by the participants. Furthermore, it draws attention to the results obtained from the

classroom observation phase and teaching journals. As a final step in the analytical procedure, the findings gained from the semi-structured interviews with fourteen students from the experimental groups are presented.

IV.1. Questionnaire Findings

IV.1.1. Data Analysis Glossary of Terms

Before proceeding with the analysis of the questionnaire findings, clarifications of some terms related to data analysis are necessary.

ANOVA: analysis of variance is a statistical procedure used to assess the mean differences of more than two groups. It compares the variability within and between groups to ascertain whether any differences among the means subsist (DeCoster, 2006, p. 16).

Descriptive statistics: refer to the statistical procedures used to describe, summarize, and display data. "…they consist of visual displays such as graphs, and summary statistics such as means" (Hole, 2000, p. 1).

Independent samples t-test: is a statistical test used to compare the mean scores of two independent groups (Greasley, 2008, p. 133). For instance, independent samples t-test can be performed in order to determine whether there are any significant differences between the anxiety mean scores of male and female students.

Inferential statistics: denote a category of statistics used to test the statistical significance of the findings. They refer to "the various statistical tests used for comparing two or more groups of subjects within an experiment" (Hole, 2000, p.1).

Mean: is the average of a set of values. To calculate the mean, sum up all the values and divide them by the number of scores (Greasley, 2008, p. 133).

Paired t-test: is a statistical test used to compare the mean scores of one group of participants in two distinct situations (Kim, 2015, p. 544). For example, paired t-test can be used to compare the mean scores of a group before and after a specific intervention.

P-value: probability value is the likelihood that the results of a study are occurring by random chance. It ranges from 0 to 1 determining the level of statistical significance. A p-value of .05 or less indicates that the data are statistically significant and not different by chance (Greasley, 2008, p. 134).

Standard deviation: measures the spread of data in a distribution. It shows how spread out the values are from the mean. Patel (2009) explained, "The larger the standard deviation, the farther away the values are from the mean; the smaller the standard deviation the closer, the values are to the mean" (p. 5).

Statistical significance: is the likelihood that the data of a given study did not occur randomly or by chance (Greasley, 2008, p. 134).

IV.1.2. Results for the First Research Question

To determine the participants' level of anxiety before the treatment, the modified version of the FLCAS was applied in both experimental and control groups. The study questionnaire contains twenty-six items answered on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree (5), agree (4), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1) for the positive statements (1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, and 26). Before conducting any statistical analysis, the negative items (2, 5, 7, 12, 19, and 24) were reverse scored. To be more specific, in the reverse-worded statements, "strongly agree" rates 1 point, "agree" 2 points, "neither agree nor disagree" 3 points, "disagree" 4 points, and "strongly disagree" 5 points. The high scores signal high anxiety and vice versa.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 24.0) was used to analyze the questionnaire data. This software is essentially designed for statistical analysis and utilized to compute descriptive statistics (for example, means, standard deviations, and percentages) and inferential statistics (for example, t-tests). To ascertain the degree of anxiety experienced by the participants, descriptive statistics were used to compute the percentages and the mean of each

item. The interpretation of the anxiety mean scores is based on Chanprasert and Wichadee's (2015) specific ranges that are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Anxiety Scores Interpretation

Mean scores	Anxiety levels
1.00-1.50	Very low
1.51-2.50	Low
2.51-3.50	Moderate
3.51-4.50	High
4.51-5.00	Very high

IV.1.2.1. Pre-questionnaire findings in Boumerdes University

Table 7 reports the results of the pre-questionnaire in Boumerdes University. It outlines the percentages of students who agreed and strongly agreed with the item (A+SA), the combinational percentages that indicate disagreement with the statement (D+SD), the percentages representing the neutrality of the participants (N), and the mean score (M).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for the Pre-questionnaire Items in Boumerdes University

Item	Experimental group				Control group			
	A+SA	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*	*A+SA*	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*
1	66.7%	33.3%	0%	3.38	56.5%	13.0%	30.4%	3.52
2	29.2%	62.5%	8.3%	3.46	34.8%	60.9%	4.3%	3.26
3	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%	3.50	65.2%	21.7%	13.0%	3.57
4	62.5%	33.3%	4.2%	3.33	60.9%	34.8%	4.3%	3.13

5	75.0%	12.5%	12.5%	1.96	69.6%	21.7%	8.7%	2.26
6	66.7%	20.8%	12.5%	3.63	65.2%	26.1%	8.7%	3.52
7	33.3%	29.2%	37.5%	3.08	30.4%	56.5%	13.0%	3.30
8	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	3.29	43.5%	30.4%	26.1%	3.30
9	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%	3.08	47.8%	43.5%	8.7%	3.09
10	70.8%	16.7%	12.5%	3.67	43.5%	39.1%	17.4%	3.17
11	8.3%	79.2%	12.5%	1.83	13.0%	78.3%	8.7%	1.74
12	29.2%	62.5%	8.3%	3.50	30.4%	56.5%	13.0%	3.48
13	20.8%	62.5%	16.7%	2.54	39.1%	60.9%	0%	2.61
14	79.2%	20.8%	0%	3.79	65.2%	30.4%	4.3%	3.43
15	45.8%	25.0%	29.2%	3.38	47.8%	13.0%	39.1%	3.35
16	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	3.17	47.8%	30.4%	21.7%	3.26
17	16.7%	79.2%	4.2%	2.33	30.4%	56.5%	13.0%	2.70
18	66.7%	29.2%	4.2%	3.58	60.9%	26.1%	13.0%	3.39
19	79.2%	8.3%	12.5%	2.04	65.2%	13.0%	21.7%	2.30
20	29.2%	62.5%	8.3%	2.79	34.8%	56.5%	8.7%	2.87
21	66.7%	29.2%	4.2%	3.46	56.5%	21.7%	21.7%	3.39
22	29.2%	70.8%	0%	2.71	26.1%	60.9%	13.0%	2.65
23	70.8%	12.5%	16.7%	3.67	56.5%	13.0%	30.4%	3.52
24	25.0%	54.2%	20.8%	3.46	21.7%	65.2%	13.0%	3.48
25	41.7%	45.8%	12.5%	2.96	34.8%	56.5%	8.7%	2.74
26	50.0%	45.8%	4.2%	3.08	39.1%	47.8%	13.0%	3.04

From Table 7, it can be seen that the top anxiety statements among the students in the experimental group in Boumerdes University were item 14 "I can feel my heart pounding when

I'm going to be asked to speak in the oral class" (M=3.79); item 10 "I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting" (M=3.67); item 23 "I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me" (M=3.67); item 6 "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the oral class" (M=3.63); and item 18 "I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in the oral class" (M=3.58).

The analysis of the pre-questionnaire in Boumerdes University uncovered that the participants in the treatment group experienced some anxiety manifestations such as beating heart when it comes to speaking in front of the whole class. Indeed, 79.2% of the students felt their hearts pounding when called on to speak in the oral class whereas 20.8% did not. As reported in previous studies (Aydin, 2013; Birjandi & Alemi, 2010; Nemati, 2012; Von Wörde, 2003), anxious students tend to experience some physical anxiety reactions when they are asked to speak in front of their peers. Physiological anxiety symptoms are indications of students' discomfort and uncomfortableness in the classroom. While 70.8% of the students stated that they get upset when they do not understand what the teacher is correcting, only 16.7% of the participants were not concerned about their inability to understand teacher's corrections. The findings indicated that students tend to feel disturbed when dealing with the teacher's feedback. Teacher's error correction approach can have an impact on the level of anxiety students experience in the classroom. 70.8% of the respondents were tense and nervous when they had to discuss unfamiliar topics while 12.5% reported no anxiety. Asking students to discuss topics in which they have little or no knowledge can be anxiety-provoking for many students. 66.7% of the students claimed that they start to panic when they have to speak without preparation in the oral class while 20.8% had an opposite view. Researchers like Chan and Wu (2004), Horwitz et al. (1986), and Liu (2007) conveyed similar results. Insofar as anxiety symptoms are concerned, 66.7% of the subjects reported being nervous and confused when they speak English

in the oral class. About 29.2% of the respondents rejected item 18. Highly anxious students tend to feel very self-conscious and disoriented when speaking English in front of the class.

As it is demonstrated in Table 7, the top anxiety statements among the control group in Boumerdes University were item 3 "I tremble when I know that I am going to be asked to speak in the oral class" (M=3.57); item 6 "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the oral class" (M=3.52); item 23 "I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me" (M=3.52); and item 1 "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in the oral class" (M=3.52).

Consistent with the findings, 65.2% of the participants trembled when they knew that they were going to be called on to speak in the oral class while 21.7% did not experience this anxiety reaction. Besides increasing heart rate, researchers (Aydin, 2013; Horwitz et al., 1986; Von Wörde, 2003) found that shaking arms, legs, or hands are physical symptoms commonly associated with anxiety. When asked about their feelings during spontaneous speaking activities, 65.2% of the students indicated that they get nervous when the teacher asks them to speak without allowing time for preparation whereas 26.1% opposed the idea. Like the students in the experimental group, the participants in the control class experienced anxiety when they had to discuss unfamiliar topics. Indeed, 56.5% of the respondents got nervous when they had no knowledge about a topic they had to discuss. About 30.4% of the students were indecisive while 13.0% rejected the statement. The pre-questionnaire outcomes in Boumerdes University revealed that students' apprehension was mainly due to the lack of preparation and the discussion of unfamiliar topics. More than half of the respondents (56.5%) concurred with item 1 and acknowledged their lack of confidence in their abilities to speak English. These students were uncertain and insecure when speaking in the oral class. This entails that students with low self-confidence feel inferior and fretful that the teacher or more proficient peers would judge them negatively. Only a small percentage (13.0%) felt confident and sure about their abilities

while 30.4% were neutral. The level of self-confidence plays a crucial role in increasing or decreasing the degree of anxiety in the classroom.

The participants in both groups indicated that they get panicky when they do not understand what the teacher is saying in English (Item 4). Horwitz et al. (1986) reported three manifestations of communication apprehension: oral communication anxiety, stage fright, and receiver anxiety. The third manifestation refers to the "difficulty… in listening to or learning a spoken message" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127). In the present study, a substantial percentage of students confessed to being anxious about listening. 62.5% of students in the experimental group and 60.9% of the participants in the control group were concerned about their inability to understand language input. These students were uneasy in front of the teacher's use of new vocabulary items and fretted about their incapacity to comprehend the conveyed message. As far as shyness is concerned, the students in both groups supported item 16. Half of the participants (50.0%) in the experimental group and 47.8% in the control group felt shy about speaking English in the oral class. Shyness is a personality characteristic that can escalate the feeling of anxiety and preclude students from taking an active part in classroom speaking activities. Another source of anxiety reported by the participants in Boumerdes University was limited vocabulary knowledge (Item 21). 66.7% of the students in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control class were threatened by their lack of vocabulary. To express their thoughts and ideas, students need to have sufficient vocabulary knowledge. Restricted vocabulary repertoire can generate speaking anxiety and prevent students from communicating their ideas. The participants also acknowledged their lack of confidence during speaking activities. Indeed, 62.5% of the students in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control class rejected statement 12 "I feel confident during classroom oral practice". When it comes to giving oral presentations in front of the class, 54.2% of the students in the experimental group and 65.2% in the control group professed being insecure and uncomfortable (Item 24). It would appear

that students with low self-confidence, speaking in the oral class could be a frightening event. The above-mentioned statements are reflective of communication apprehension.

When it comes to fear of negative evaluation, the participants in both groups rejected item 2 "I do not worry about making mistakes in the oral class". Indeed, 62.5% of the students in the experimental group and 60.9% of the participants in the control class recognized their concern over error making. These students wanted to make a proper impression and worried that the teacher and classmates may notice their mistakes. In a study about *perfectionism*, Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) found that highly anxious students were concerned about their errors and feared negative evaluation. Speaking English before the entire class puts students in vulnerable situations and increases the likelihood of making mistakes and being exposed to the negative judgment of others. Highly anxious students view mistakes as a weakness and a threat to their ego rather than a chance to enhance their linguistic and communicative skills. However, the participants in both classes rejected item 13 "I am afraid that my teacher of speaking is ready to correct every mistake I make". 62.5% of the students in the experimental group and 60.9% of the subjects in the control class were not worried about the teacher's harsh error correction. These students were not anxious about receiving the teacher's immediate corrective feedback. In fact, they expected the teacher's corrections and believed that this would help them improve their oral English proficiency. Concerning students' perception of their ability level, 45.8% of the students in the experimental group and 47.8% in the control group felt that their classmates speak English better than they do (Item 15). These students had negative self-perception and worried about their ability level compared to others. Negative self-perception may lead to embarrassment, anxiety, and unwillingness to take part in classroom discourse. In addition, 45.8% of the students in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control group rejected the item "I am afraid to be criticized by both teacher and peers during classroom discussions because of my poor English proficiency". These students were not afraid to become subjects of

ridicule during classroom discussions. Nonetheless, 41.7% of the students in the treatment group and 34.8% in the whole-class group endorsed statement 25. Students with low English proficiency feel apprehensive about speaking and hide from the eyes of the teacher and classmates. A low level of English proficiency can lead to frustration and anxiety and can prevent students from taking part in classroom discussions. Moreover, the participants disagreed with item 20 "I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English". 62.5% of the students in the treatment group and 56.5% of the respondents in the whole-class group did not fear the mockery of their fellow students. Furthermore, 70.8% of the respondents in the experimental group and 60.9% of the participants in the control class rejected item 22 "I worry that my broken English pronunciation would cause jokes when I want to bring up a question".

As for oral classroom anxiety, 50.0% of the students in the experimental group and 43.5% in the control group endorsed item 8 "In the oral class, I can get so nervous when the teacher asks me to answer a question that I forget things I know". Highly anxious students become forgetful of the things they know. In this case, anxiety is debilitating because it leads to poor oral performance. In addition, the students concurred with item 19 "When I'm on my way to the oral class, I feel very sure and relaxed" (M=2.04 in the experimental group, M=2.30 in the control group), and disagreed with statement 17 "I feel more tense and nervous in the oral class than in other classes" (M=2.33 in the experimental group, M=2.70 in the control group). A great number of students did not experience anxiety before attending the oral class. Indeed, 79.2% of the subjects in the treatment group and 65.2% of the participants in the control class were sure and relaxed when they were on their way to the oral class. The pre-questionnaire findings showed that 79.2% of the experimental group students and 56.5% of the control group participants did not experience more anxiety in the oral class than in other courses. This could entail that the participants were more likely to experience higher anxiety when taking a listening

comprehension course or a writing composition class than when speaking in the oral class. This could also mean that the students experienced the same level of anxiety when attending all their courses. What is worth mentioning is that the participants' attitudes toward oral classes were positive. A considerable number of students supported item 5 "It would not bother me at all to take more oral classes" (M=1.96 in the experimental group, M=2.26 in the control group), and rejected statement 11 "I often feel like not going to the oral class" (M=1.83 in the experimental group, M=1.74 in the control group). As seen in Table 7, 75.0% of the participants in the experimental group and 69.6% of the students in the control class admitted that it would not bother them to take additional oral classes. These students would not feel disturbed if extra oral sessions were scheduled. Only a small percentage of students (8.3% in the experimental group and 13.0% in the control class) felt like not going to the oral class.

The pre-questionnaire findings in Boumerdes University suggested that the participants' fear of communication was higher than their worry over negative judgment. Oral classroom anxiety was comparatively low. Table 8 presents the means and standard deviations for the questionnaire anxiety dimensions.

Table 8

Anxiety Dimensions on the Pre-questionnaire in Boumerdes University

Anxiety dimension	Experimental group		Control group	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Communication apprehension	3.44	.19	3.35	.17
Fear of negative evaluation	3.13	.42	3.06	.35
Oral classroom anxiety	2.42	.61	2.60	.62

Note. M=mean; SD=Standard deviation

Table 8 portrays the participants' levels of anxiety in Boumerdes University regarding communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and oral classroom anxiety. Among

the scale items, eleven statements reflect communication apprehension (1, 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, 18, 21, 23, 24, and 26) and nine items mirror fear of negative evaluation (2, 3, 9, 13, 14, 15, 20, 22, and 25). The six remaining items (5, 7, 8, 11, 17, and 19) belong to the category of *oral classroom anxiety*.

The results divulged that the mean scores for the communication anxiety items were 3.44 in the experimental group and 3.35 in the control group, with a standard deviation of .19 and .17 respectively. The mean scores for fear of negative evaluation were 3.13 in the experimental class (SD=.42) and 3.06 in the control group (SD=.35). Concerning oral classroom anxiety, the experimental class reported a mean score of 2.42 with a standard deviation of .61, whereas the control group's mean score was 2.60 and the standard deviation was .62. Among the three anxiety dimensions, communication apprehension ranked first followed by fear of negative evaluation. Students who suffer from communication apprehension find it difficult to communicate in English especially when they possess poor communicative skills. Successful communication requires language users to possess grammatical competence, pragmatic competence, and intercultural communicative competence. Oral classroom anxiety was relatively lower than the aforementioned anxiety varieties as it is demonstrated in Figure 8.
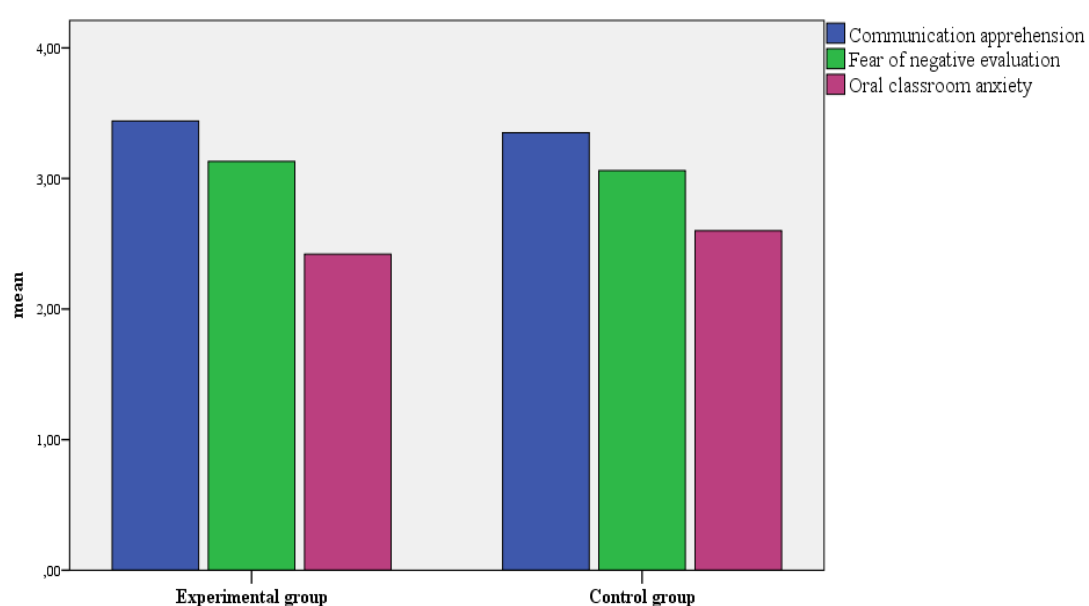
Figure 8. Anxiety dimensions on the pre-questionnaire in Boumerdes University

The scores of each student were calculated to determine the levels of anxiety. Based on their scores on the pre-questionnaire, the participants were categorized into three anxiety groups. Table 9 outlines the number and percentage of students in each category.

Table 9

Anxiety Levels in Boumerdes University before the Treatment

Anxiety Group	Experimental group		Control group	
	Number of students	*Percentage*	*Number of students*	*Percentage*
Low	6	25.0	6	26.1
Moderate	13	54.2	10	43.5
High	5	20.8	7	30.4
Total	24	100	23	100

The findings indicated that the number of highly anxious students in the control group was greater than in the experimental class. 30.4% of the students in the control class reported high anxiety compared to 20.8% in the experimental group. The results also revealed that 26.1% of the students in the control class and 25.0% of the participants in the experimental group experienced mild anxiety. Most of the participants in Boumerdes University (54.2% in the experimental group and 43.5% in the control group) experienced anxiety at a moderate level. At the time of the intervention, the participants were enrolled in their second year and had already taken speaking classes during their first year at the university. Therefore, medium anxiety was predictable.

To determine whether there is a significant difference between the anxiety levels of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University, independent samples t-test was conducted to compare between the means of the two groups before the treatment. Table 10

displays the yield of this inferential statistical test. Its output entails two segments: *Group Statistics* and *Independent Samples t-test*.

Table 10

Independent Samples T-test on the Pre-questionnaire in Boumerdes University

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety scores	Experimental	24	3.1026	.65150	.13299
	Control	23	3.0803	.70012	.14599

Independent Samples t-test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Upper	Lower
Anxiety scores	Equal variances assumed	.102	.751	.113	45	.910	.02230	.19717	-.37482	.41941
	Equal variances not assumed			.113	44.410	.911	.02230	.19748	-.37559	.42018

Group Statistics provides information about the number of the participants (N), the mean, the standard deviation, and the standard error of the mean of each group. The mean represents the overall anxiety score of each of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University before the intervention study. In the treatment class, the overall anxiety mean score was 3.1026 with a standard deviation of .65150 and a standard error of the mean of .13299. In the control group, the anxiety mean score reached 3.0803 with a standard deviation and a standard error of the mean of .70012 and .14599 respectively. To know whether the difference between the anxiety mean scores of the two groups was significant, one needs to examine the statistical significance presented in the second portion of the test.

The second part of the t-test presents Levene's test for equality of variances, t-test for equality of means, and confidence interval of the mean difference. Levene's test for equality of variances gives the (f) value and the significance (Sig.). T-test for equality of means provides information about the *t* statistic obtained, the degrees of freedom (df), the two-tailed level of significance, the mean difference, and standard error difference. 95% confidence interval assesses the actual difference between the two means. The second section of the t-test comprises two distinct outputs. The first one, equal variances assumed, proposes that the variances in the two groups are equal. Equal variances not assumed, on the other hand, hypothesizes that the variances in the two samples are unequal. The significance level (Sig.) of Levene's test determines which t-test results to use. If Levene's test is not significant (p >.05), an equal variance is assumed. If the level of significance for Levene's test is .05 or less, the groups' variances are not equal and the results of the second line of the table (Equal variance not assumed) are used. In the present study, the significance level for Levene's test was .751, which is above .05; therefore, equal variances were assumed and the results of the first row were used. The results of the t-test for equality of means demonstrated that the *t* obtained was .113 with 45 degrees of freedom and was significant at the .910 level. A significance value of .910 specified that there was no statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University. In other words, both groups experienced the same amount of anxiety before the beginning of the intervention study. The confidence interval estimated that the actual difference between the anxiety means of the two groups was between -.37482 and .41941. Figure 9 illustrates the insignificant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University before the treatment.
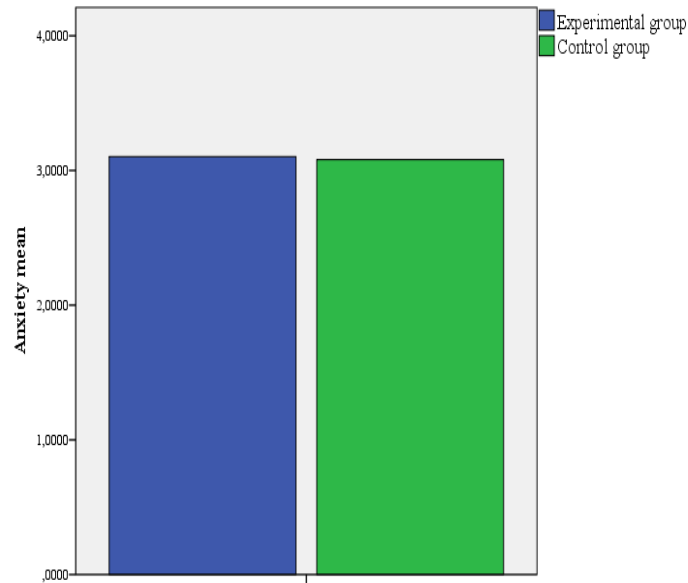
Figure 9. Anxiety levels in Boumerdes University before the treatment

Figure 9 exhibits the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University before the beginning of the treatment. It clearly shows that no significant difference subsists amongst the two groups regarding the anxiety they experienced in speaking classes.

IV.1.2.2. Pre-questionnaire findings in Tizi Ouzou University

Table 11 exposes the results of the pre-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University. This includes the percentages that indicate agreement, disagreement, and neutrality of the students with the questionnaire items. It also displays the mean for each of the twenty-six scale statements.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for the Pre-questionnaire Items in Tizi Ouzou University

Item	Experimental group				Control group			
	A+SA	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*	*A+SA*	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*
1	46.2%	26.9%	26.9%	3.23	44.4%	29.6%	25.9%	3.19
2	30.8%	57.7%	11.5%	3.42	33.3%	48.1%	18.5%	3.22

3	65.4%	26.9%	7.7%	3.54	59.3%	25.9%	14.8%	3.44
4	50.0%	46.2%	3.8%	3.00	48.1%	37.0%	14.8%	3.15
5	69.2%	19.2%	11.5%	2.23	51.9%	33.3%	14.8%	2.56
6	69.2%	19.2%	11.5%	3.58	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%	3.67
7	34.6%	53.8%	11.5%	3.12	37.0%	37.0%	25.9%	3.00
8	46.2%	34.6%	19.2%	3.19	66.7%	18.5%	14.8%	3.63
9	38.5%	42.3%	19.2%	2.92	33.3%	51.9%	14.8%	2.81
10	57.7%	26.9%	15.4%	3.42	63.0%	25.9%	11.1%	3.44
11	3.8%	88.5%	7.7%	1.77	19.2%	76.9%	3.8%	2.19
12	26.9%	46.2%	26.9%	3.19	29.6%	37.0%	33.3%	3.22
13	38.5%	53.8%	7.7%	2.65	29.6%	66.7%	3.7%	2.63
14	65.4%	26.9%	7.7%	3.62	55.6%	22.2%	22.2%	3.52
15	46.2%	30.8%	23.1%	3.31	70.4%	22.2%	7.4%	3.67
16	46.2%	42.3%	11.5%	3.04	48.1%	37.0%	14.8%	3.26
17	7.7%	69.2%	23.1%	2.27	18.5%	70.4%	11.1%	2.41
18	57.7%	34.6%	7.7%	3.27	63.0%	29.6%	7.4%	3.48
19	65.4%	15.4%	19.2%	2.31	55.6%	25.9%	18.5%	2.59
20	30.8%	61.5%	7.7%	2.65	29.6%	66.7%	3.7%	2.67
21	53.8%	30.8%	15.4%	3.42	48.1%	33.3%	18.5%	3.33
22	30.8%	53.8%	15.4%	2.65	30.8%	50.0%	19.2%	2.81
23	61.5%	23.1%	15.4%	3.58	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	3.52
24	23.1%	50.0%	26.9%	3.23	25.9%	51.9%	22.2%	3.30
25	42.3%	50.0%	7.7%	2.92	23.1%	50.0%	26.9%	2.77
26	42.3%	42.3%	15.4%	3.12	51.9%	37.0%	11.1%	3.30

The items that attracted the highest mean scores among the students in the experimental group in Tizi Ouzou University were item 14 "I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be asked to speak in the oral class" (M=3.62); item 6 "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the oral class" (M=3.58); item 23 "I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me" (M=3.58); and item 3 "I tremble when I know that I am going to be asked to speak in the oral class" (M=3.54).

The analysis of the pre-questionnaire data in Tizi Ouzou University revealed that the students in the experimental group felt their hearts pounding when asked to speak in the oral class. 65.4% of the students actually experienced this negative sensation while 26.9% did not. The results corroborate the findings reached in Boumerdes University. 69.2% of the respondents submitted that they start to panic when they have to speak English without preparation while 19.2% did not experience anxiety when asked to speak spontaneously. The students who endorsed statements 6 and 14 were outstandingly anxious when they were asked to speak English in front of their classmates. They were shy, feared to be the center of attention while speaking English, and worried about negative evaluation (Chan & Wu, 2004, p. 304). In addition, 61.5% of the participants felt nervous when discussing unfamiliar topics while 23.1% experienced no apprehension. 37.5% of Liu's subjects reported the same apprehension, as evidenced by this comment "if the topic is difficult, we will be anxious and nervous because we can't express our ideas freely" (Liu, 2007, p. 131). Another physical anxiety reaction reported by the students in the experimental group was trembling. 65.4% of the participants confessed that they tremble when they know that they are going to be called on to speak in English. 26.9% of the students did not experience this negative anxiety reaction. Physiological manifestations of anxiety, such as faster heartbeat rate and trembling, were highly noticeable among the students in the experimental group in Tizi Ouzou University.

The highest mean scores in the control group were item 15 "I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do" (M=3.67); item 6 "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the oral class" (M=3.67); item 8 "In the oral class, I can get so nervous when the teacher asks me to answer a question that I forget things I know" (M=3.63); item 23 "I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me" (M=3.52); and item 14 "I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be asked to speak in the oral class" (M=3.52).

The greatest fear among the participants in the control group was to be less competent than their fellow students. 70.4% of the students constantly compared themselves to their peers and got frustrated when they found themselves inferior and less competent. They lacked self-confidence and fretted about negative evaluation. Similarly, more than half of Chan and Wu's (2004) subjects got upset when they found that their classmates spoke English better than they did. In addition, highly anxious students "commonly report to counselors that they 'know' a certain grammar point but 'forget' it during a test or an oral exercise..." (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 126). This was the case for 66.7% of the students who confessed to being nervous when the teacher asked them to answer a question. This nervousness produced deficits in their output performance and precluded them from remembering and retrieving the newly gained information. 18.5% of the students did not suffer from output anxiety. Like the participants in the experimental class, the students in the control group got panicky when they had to speak English without prior preparation (66.7%), when they had to discuss unfamiliar topics (55.6%), and had negative physical anxiety reactions such as rapid heartbeat rate (55.6%). It seems that feeling one's heart pounding during oral sessions is a sensation experienced by the students in Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou universities. In addition, being unprepared for the speaking task and having no opinion or idea about a topic during classroom discussions appeared to be the most anxiety-provoking factors among the study participants.

The participants in Tizi Ouzou University fretted about their inability to understand the teacher's input. They endorsed item 4 "It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in English" (50.0% in the experimental group and 48.1% in the control group) and statement 10 "I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting" (57.7% in the experimental group and 63.0% in the control group). These students had preconceived ideas and believed that in order to understand English they must comprehend every word that was uttered (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 130). Besides, 50.0% of the students in the experimental group and 51.9% of the participants in the control class rejected item 24 "I feel confident and relaxed when giving oral presentations in front of the class". Making oral presentations is an anxiety-arousing activity for many students. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), anxious students tend to feel very self-conscious when asked to speak English in public. Difficulty in speaking in public, or stage fright, is another manifestation of communication apprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127). Moreover, more than half of the participants (57.7% in the experimental class and 63.0% in the control group) reported being nervous and confused when speaking English in the oral class (Item 18). Furthermore, the students expressed their lack of confidence in their abilities to speak English as they agreed with item 1 "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in the oral class". This is another statement indicative of communication apprehension. Like the students in Boumerdes University, the participants in Tizi Ouzou University admitted being shy about speaking in the oral class (46.2% in the experimental group and 48.1% in the control class). Shy students fear embarrassment and negative judgment. Consequently, they evade speaking and taking part in classroom activities. Immature English vocabulary appeared to be another cause of anxiety in oral classes. Indeed, 53.8% of the students in the experimental group and 48.1% in the control group concurred with item 21 "I get panicky to speak English due to my limited vocabulary". Restricted vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in aggravating students' anxiety in oral classes.

As for the statements indicative of fear of negative evaluation, 57.7% of the students in the experimental group and 48.1% in the control group disagreed with item 2 and acknowledged their fear of committing mistakes during oral sessions. Fear of making mistakes, mainly insignificant ones, is one of the factors leading to the development of anxiety in oral classes. Students' sense of anxiety intensifies when the teacher and peers identify their mistakes. However, more than half of the students enrolled at the University of Tizi Ouzou (53.8% in the experimental class and 66.7% in the control group) did not fear teacher's harsh error correction (Item 13). These students considered mistakes as a natural part of the language learning process and expected teacher's correction. Still, more than one-third of the participants in the experimental class (38.5%) and 29.6% of the students in the control group endorsed statement 13. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), "These students seem to feel constantly tested and to perceive every correction as a failure" (p. 130). In addition, 42.3% of the students in the experimental group and 51.9% in the control class rejected item 9 "It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in the oral class". These students did not experience embarrassment and discomfort when volunteering answers during oral activities. Moreover, half of the participants (50.0% in the experimental group and 50.0% in the control group) were not afraid to be criticized by the teacher and peers during classroom discussions owing to their poor English proficiency. These students were not anxious to participate in classroom discussions and were not afraid to be negatively evaluated because they had poor English proficiency. Furthermore, the participants in Tizi Ouzou University were not afraid that their classmates would laugh at their mistakes and joke about their flawed pronunciation. Nonetheless, 30.8% of students in the experimental class and 29.6% of the respondents in the control group supported statement 20 "I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English", while 30.8% of the students in each group agreed with item 22 "I worry that my broken English pronunciation would cause jokes when I want to bring up a question". Anxiety, in this case, represents a threat

to self-image. Students with high anxiety and low self-esteem fear negative evaluation. Consequently, they remain silent or "seek refuge in the last row in an effort to avoid the humiliation or embarrassment of being called on to speak" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 130).

Concerning oral classroom anxiety, 53.8% of the students in the experimental group and 37.0% in the control class rejected item 7 "I don't understand why some students get so anxious in oral classes". These students knew that anxiety is a universal feeling among foreign language students and understood why some of their peers felt apprehensive when speaking in the classroom. In addition, the students endorsed statement 19 "When I'm on my way to the oral class, I feel very sure and relaxed" (M=2.31 in the experimental group, M=2.59 in the control group), and rejected item 17 "I feel more tense and nervous in the oral class than in other classes" (M=2.27 in the experimental group, M=2.41 in the control group). While 65.4% of the respondents in the experimental group and 55.6% of the students in the control class felt sure and relaxed before coming to the oral class, 15.4% of the participants in the treatment group and 25.9% of the subjects in the whole-class group reported uncertainty and anxiety. Compared to other courses, the oral class did not provoke more anxiety among the participants in Tizi Ouzou University. Indeed, 69.2% of the students in the treatment group and 70.4% in the control class rejected statement 17. It has to be noted that like the participants in Boumerdes University, the students in Tizi Ouzou University had positive outlooks toward oral classes. The students in both groups supported statement 5 "It would not bother me at all to take more oral classes" (M=2.23 in the experimental group, M=2.56 in the control group), and disagreed with item 11 "I often feel like not going to the oral class" (M=1.77 in the experimental group, M=2.19 in the control group). The fact of taking more oral classes did not bother the participants in Tizi Ouzou University. However, 19.2% of the students in the treatment group and 33.3% of the participants in the control class denied the fact that it would not bother them to take extra

speaking classes. Besides, the majority of the participants (88.5% in the experimental group and 76.9% in the control class) did not have the intention to cut the oral class.

It seems that students' fear of communication was greater than their fear of negative evaluation. The results reached in Tizi Ouzou University support the findings obtained in Boumerdes University. Table 12 displays the means and the standard deviations in relation to the questionnaire dimensions.

Table 12

Anxiety Dimensions on the Pre-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University

	Experimental group		Control group	
Anxiety dimension	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Communication apprehension	3.28	.19	3.35	.15
Fear of negative evaluation	3.07	.39	3.06	.40
Oral classroom anxiety	2.48	.55	2.73	.51

Note. M=mean; SD=Standard deviation

As shown in Table 12, the participants in both groups suffered from moderate levels of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Though, among the two anxiety constructs, communication apprehension ranked first with a mean score of 3.28 (SD=.19) in the experimental group and of 3.35 (SD=.15) in the control group followed by fear of negative evaluation with a mean score of 3.07 (SD=.39) in the experimental class and of 3.06 (SD=.40) in the control class. The findings indicated that the levels of communication apprehension were slightly higher than fear of negative evaluation. Oral classroom anxiety was relatively lower in the experimental group with a mean score of 2.48 (SD=.55). The participants in the control group experienced oral classroom anxiety at a moderate level. Figure 10 exhibits the difference between the anxiety mean scores of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and oral classroom anxiety in each group.
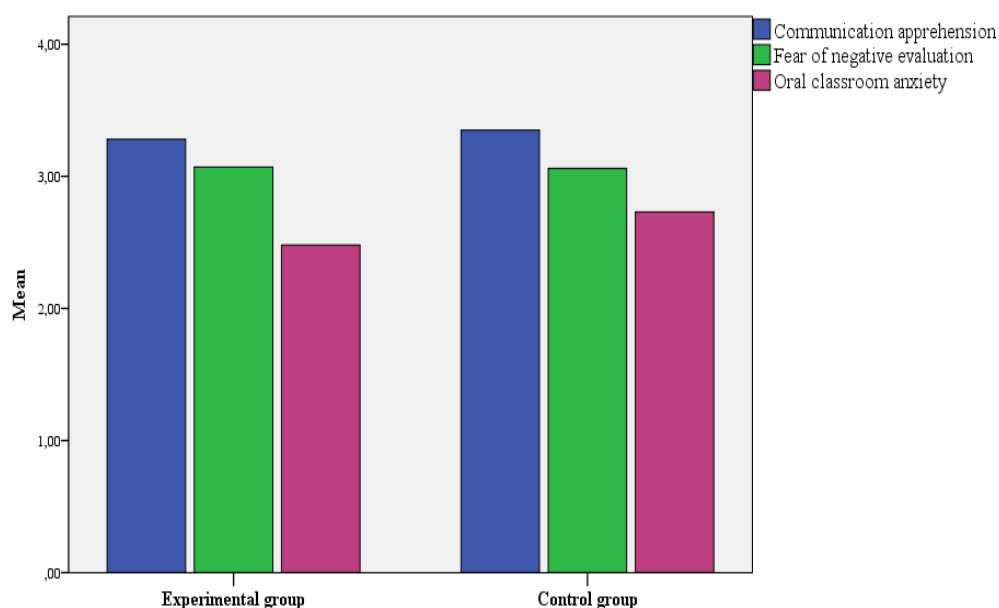
Figure 10. Anxiety dimensions on the pre-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University

The analysis of the pre-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University disclosed three anxiety groups: low anxiety, moderate anxiety, and high anxiety. The number and percentage of students in each group are provided in Table 13.

Table 13

Anxiety Levels in Tizi Ouzou University before the Treatment

Anxiety Group	Experimental group		Control group	
	Number of students	*Percentage*	*Number of students*	*Percentage*
Low	1	3.8	3	11.1
Moderate	21	80.8	19	70.4
High	4	15.4	5	18.5
Total	26	100	27	100

Consistent with Table 13, the number of highly anxious students in the control class was higher than in the experimental group. 18.5% of the subjects in the control group actually reported high anxiety compared to 15.4% in the experimental class. The results also

demonstrated that only a small portion of students was in the low anxiety category (3.8% in the experimental class and 11.1% in the control group). The degree of anxiety experienced by the majority of the participants was relatively moderate. The pre-questionnaire findings revealed that the majority of the participants in both research sites felt medium anxiety in oral classes. A moderate level of anxiety was not surprising because it was not the first time that the participants had taken speaking classes.

In order to check whether the participants in Tizi Ouzou University were at the same level of homogeneity in terms of anxiety before the treatment, independent samples t-test was performed to compare between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group. The t-test outcomes are shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Independent Samples T-test on the Pre-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety	Experimental	26	3.0251	.42412	.08318
Scores	Control	27	3.1099	.48530	.09340

Independent Samples t-test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
									Upper	Lower
Anxiety scores	Equal variances assumed	.044	.836	-.676	51	.502	-.08471	.12539	-.33643	.16702
	Equal variances not assumed			-.677	50.536	.501	-.08471	.12506	-.33584	.16642

The overall mean score for each group in Ouzou University is provided in the group statistic segment of the independent samples t-test outcome. The output demonstrated that the anxiety mean in the experimental group was 3.0251 (SD=.42412) as opposed to 3.1099 (SD=.48530) in the control group. Levene's test for equality of variances produced a significance value of .836. This indicates that the difference between the variances was not significant; therefore, equal variances were assumed. T-test for equality of means yielded a p-value of .502 (greater than .05) implying that the difference between the two means was insignificant. This means that both groups had the same level of anxiety. 95% confidence interval indicated that the true difference between the means lied between -.33643 and .16702. Figure 11 provides a clear visualization of this insignificant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in Tizi Ouzou University before the treatment.
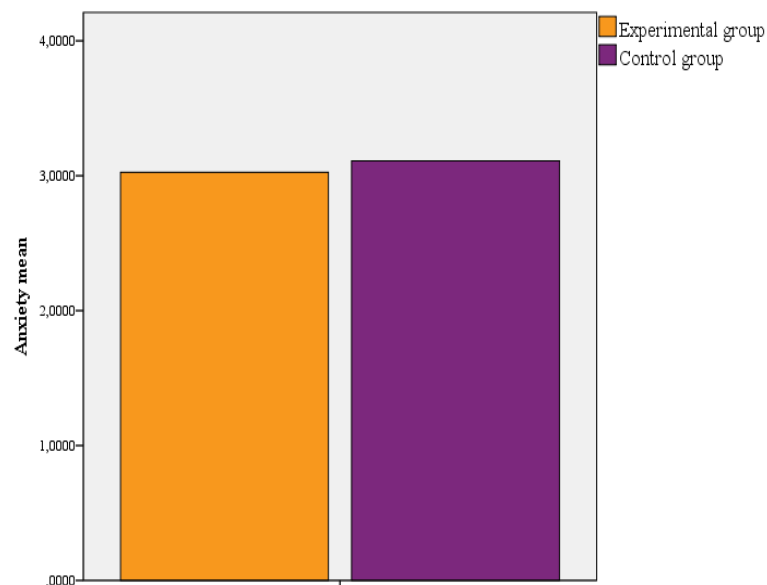
Figure 11. Anxiety levels in Tizi Ouzou University before the treatment

Figure 11 shows no significant difference between the experimental class and control group in terms of anxiety levels before the treatment. However, the students in the control group were a little more apprehensive (M=3.1099) compared with the participants in the experimental class (M=3.0251).

Independent samples t-test bared no significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in each research site. To discover whether there were any significant differences in the degree of anxiety amongst the study groups, the overall mean scores were compared using one-way ANOVA. The results are exposed in Table 15.

Table 15

Comparison of the Anxiety Mean Scores of the Study Groups before the Treatment

Anxiety levels	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.114	3	.038	.118	.950
Within groups	31.166	96	.325		
Total	31.281	99			

The ANOVA table unveiled a significance value of .950, which is greater than .05. In this case, an equal variance was met. More specifically, the results indicated that the difference between the anxiety mean scores of the study groups was not statistically significant. This means that the participants enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou experienced more or less the same amount of anxiety prior to the beginning of the intervention. This insignificant difference between the anxiety scores is better illustrated in Figure 12.
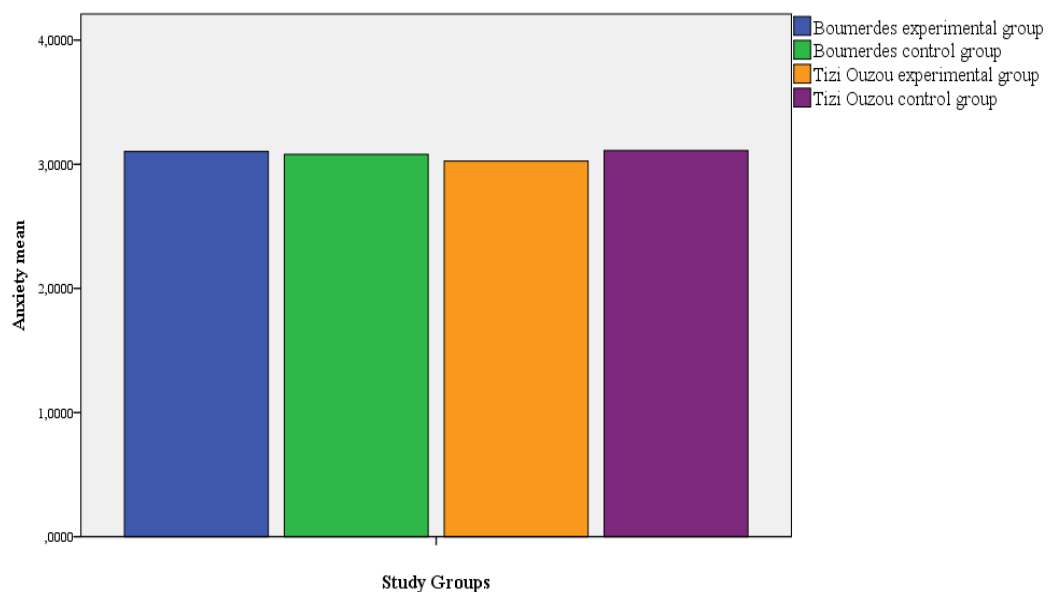
Figure 12. Anxiety levels of the study groups before the treatment

IV.1.3. Results for the Second and Third Research Questions

The first section of the analytical procedure revealed that the participants in both research sites felt moderate anxiety prior to the intervention study. After answering the pre-questionnaire, the experimental groups were exposed to the treatment of the cooperative learning approach for ninety minutes a week for fifteen weeks. The students performed numerous oral activities in cooperative learning groups. The control classes, on the other hand, were subjected to the traditional instructional method where students carried out the tasks individually. After fifteen weeks, both experimental and control groups answered the post-questionnaire. The findings were analyzed and compared with the data obtained in the pre-questionnaire.

IV.1.3.1. Post-questionnaire findings in Boumerdes University

Table 16 presents the results of the post-questionnaire in Boumerdes University. It displays the combinational percentages of students who agreed and strongly agreed with the scale items (A+SA), the percentages of students who disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statements (D+SD), the percentages representing the participants' indecisiveness (N), and the mean score (M).

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for the Post-questionnaire Items in Boumerdes University

Item	Experimental group				Control group			
	A+SA	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*	*A+SA*	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*
1	16.7%	70.8%	12.5%	2.21	17.4%	56.5%	26.1%	2.48
2	45.8%	45.8%	8.3%	2.88	47.8%	43.5%	8.7%	2.87
3	29.2%	62.5%	8.3%	2.58	8.7%	43.5%	47.8%	2.57
4	26.1%	60.9%	13.0%	2.39	13.0%	47.8%	39.1%	2.43

5	79.2%	20.8%	0%	2.00	66.7%	19.0%	14.3%	2.05
6	45.8%	50.0%	4.2%	2.88	47.8%	39.1%	13.0%	3.13
7	41.7%	33.3%	25.0%	2.92	65.2%	30.4%	4.3%	2.52
8	31.8%	63.6%	4.5%	2.50	31.8%	54.5%	13.6%	2.73
9	29.2%	58.3%	12.5%	2.50	34.8%	52.2%	13.0%	2.61
10	41.7%	54.2%	4.2%	2.92	60.9%	26.1%	13.0%	3.43
11	16.7%	79.2%	4.2%	1.96	18.2%	77.3%	4.5%	2.09
12	70.8%	16.7%	12.5%	2.17	72.7%	18.2%	9.1%	2.14
13	12.5%	83.3%	4.2%	1.96	39.1%	47.8%	13.0%	2.83
14	45.8%	41.7%	12.5%	3.08	17.4%	30.4%	52.2%	2.70
15	37.5%	41.7%	20.8%	3.00	52.2%	34.8%	13.0%	3.39
16	17.4%	78.3%	4.2%	2.13	21.7%	43.5%	34.8%	2.65
17	29.2%	54.2%	16.7%	2.63	18.2%	72.7%	9.1%	2.27
18	33.3%	58.3%	8.3%	2.63	34.8%	52.2%	13.0%	2.65
19	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	2.50	56.5%	17.4%	26.1%	2.43
20	4.2%	91.7%	4.2%	1.71	45.5%	54.5%	0%	2.82
21	41.7%	45.8%	12.5%	2.75	39.1%	39.1%	21.7%	2.96
22	13.0%	78.3%	8.7%	2.04	27.3%	59.1%	13.6%	2.55
23	33.3%	54.2%	12.5%	2.75	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	2.95
24	54.2%	29.2%	16.7%	2.67	45.5%	36.4%	18.2%	2.91
25	12.5%	66.7%	20.8%	2.04	4.5%	59.1%	36.4%	2.14
26	54.2%	25.0%	20.8%	3.42	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	3.05

As it can be seen in Table 16, the students in the experimental group endorsed statement 26 "I feel more anxious about speaking English individually than in groups" (M=3.42). Indeed,

54.2% of the students agreed and strongly agreed with the item. After being subjected to the treatment of the cooperative learning approach for fifteen weeks, it seems that many students in the experimental class felt less pressured when they performed with their group members than when they were singled out to speak in front of the whole class.

The item that attracted the lowest mean score among the participants in the experimental group was statement 20 "I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English" (M=1.71). 91.7% of the students were not anxious about their peers' negative judgment. In fact, the concern about their classmates' laughter and derision turned out to be the least of their apprehensions.

The findings demonstrated that the post-intervention scores were lower than those obtained before the treatment. Figure 13 compares the pre means and post means of the experimental group in Boumerdes University.

Figure 13. Comparison of the pre means and post means of the experimental group in Boumerdes University

The analysis of the pre-questionnaire showed that the top anxiety statements in the experimental group were items 14, 10, 23, 6, and 18. The post-intervention scores of these items were lower than those obtained in the pre-questionnaire. Indeed, the mean score of item 14

diminished from 3.79 to 3.08. The mean of statement 10 reduced from 3.67 to 2.92, whereas the score of item 23 decreased from 3.67 to 2.75. The mean scores of items 6 and 18 lessened from 3.63 to 2.88 and from 3.58 to 2.63 respectively.

Prior to the intervention study, 79.2% of the students agreed with item 14 while 20.8% rejected the statement. After the treatment, however, the percentage of students who felt their hearts pounding when asked to speak in the oral class reduced to 45.8%, whereas the percentage of students who did not experience this unpleasant sensation reached 41.7%. The pre-questionnaire outcomes revealed that 70.8% of the respondents got upset when they did not understand what the teacher was correcting, while the analysis of the post-questionnaire showed that 54.2% of the students had an opposing view. The percentage of students who opted for item 10 after the treatment was 41.7%. The percentage of students' agreement with item 23 was 33.3% in the post-questionnaire compared to 70.8% in the pre-questionnaire, whereas the percentage of their disagreement was 12.5% before the treatment and 54.2% after the intervention. 66.7% of the participants started to panic when they had to speak without preparation in the oral class and 20.8% did not. Nonetheless, after the intervention, half of the respondents (50.0%) were not panicky during spontaneous speaking tasks while 45.8% experienced anxiety. The degree of students' agreement with item 18 was 66.7% in the pre-questionnaire compared to 33.3% in the post-questionnaire. Before the treatment, 29.2% of the students were not nervous and confused when speaking English in the oral class. After the treatment, the degree of students' disagreement with item 18 was 58.3%. Even though the percentages of students' agreement with the aforementioned items were lower in the post-questionnaire, more than one-third of the participants opted for these statements after the intervention study.

Concerning the control group apprehension, 60.9% of the students supported item 10 (M=3.43) and admitted that they get upset when they do not understand the teacher's correction.

The amount of listening anxiety amplified when error correction was involved in the process. Elkhafaifi (2005) advised teachers to help students overcome their incorrect beliefs about understanding every word they hear (p. 215). In addition, 52.2% of the participants in the control class concurred with item 15 (M=3.39) and acknowledged their fear of being less competent than their fellow students. According to Chan and Wu (2004), "These students not only were apprehensive about others' evaluation but also anticipated that their classmates would evaluate them negatively" (p. 304).

The item that attracted the lowest mean score in the control group was statement 5 (M=2.05). The participants denied the fact that it would bother them to take more oral classes. 66.7% of the students had positive attitudes toward speaking classes and were ready to take extra sessions.

The post-intervention scores were lower than those gained before the treatment. Figure 14 compares the pre means and post means of the control group in Boumerdes University.
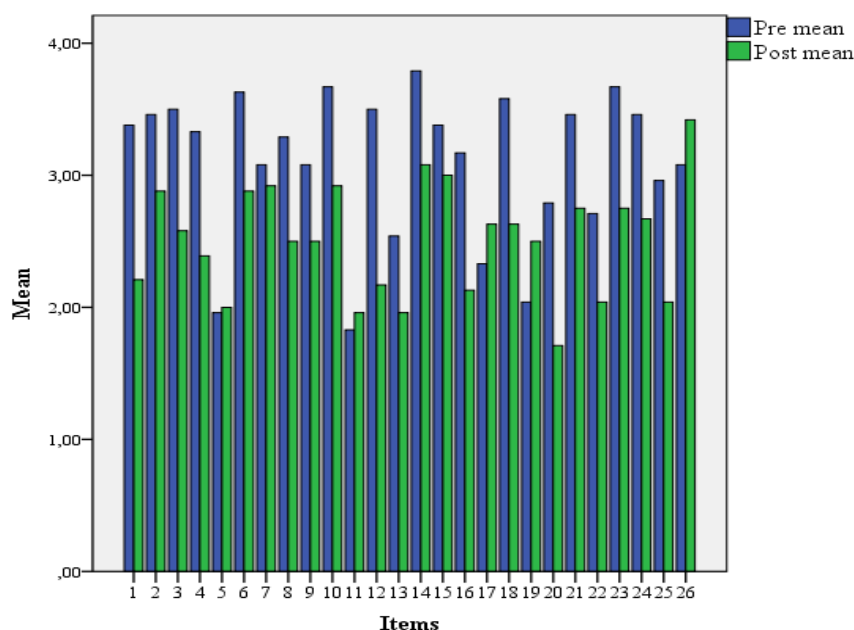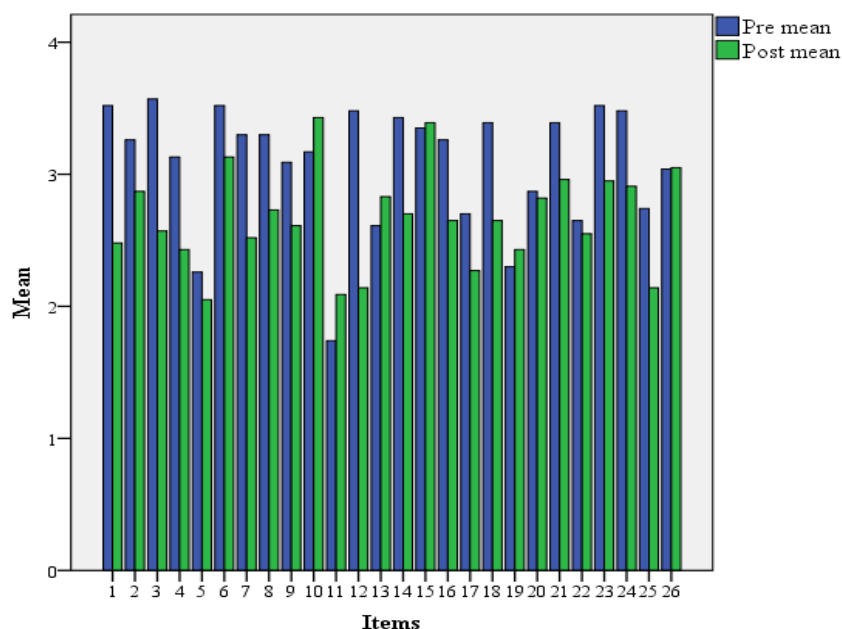

Figure 14. Comparison of the pre means and post means of the control group in Boumerdes University

The pre-questionnaire findings indicated that the highest mean scores in the control group in Boumerdes University were 3.57 (item 3) and 3.52 (items 6, 23, and 1). The post-intervention

scores of these items were lower than those got before the treatment. Indeed, the post-intervention mean scores were 2.57 (item 3), 3.13 (item 6), 2.95 (item 23), and 2.48 (item 1).

The percentage of students who trembled when they knew that they were going to be asked to speak in the oral class was 65.2% prior to the beginning of the intervention whereas 21.7% rejected statement 3. After the treatment, only 8.7% of the participants reported this anxiety reaction, while the percentage of students who disagreed and strongly disagreed with the item reached 43.5%. 47.8% of the respondents were neutral. The results of the pre-questionnaire demonstrated that 65.2% of the respondents got panicky when the teacher asked them to speak without preparation while 26.1% did not. The post-questionnaire findings, on the other hand, showed that the percentage of students who agreed and strongly agreed with item 6 was still considerable since 47.8% of the participants expressed their worry about speaking without preparation. The percentage of students who disagreed and strongly disagreed with item 6 was 39.1%. The percentages of students who agreed and disagreed with item 23 before the treatment were 56.5% and 13.0% respectively. The degree of students' agreement and disagreement with item 23 in the post-questionnaire was 36.4%. Before the intervention study, 56.5% of the students had little confidence in their abilities to speak English. At the end of the treatment, however, the same percentage (56.5%) of students felt quite sure of themselves when speaking in the oral class.

The pre-intervention findings showed that the students were unsure of themselves when speaking in the oral class (66.7% in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control group), experienced low self-confidence during classroom speaking activities (62.5% in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control group), and felt non-confident and uncomfortable when giving oral presentations (54.2% in the experimental group and 65.2% in the control group). The post-intervention findings, on the other hand, showed that the participants in Boumerdes University gained self-confidence. Indeed, the post-questionnaire outcomes

indicated that 70.8% of the students in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control group rejected the item "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in the oral class". In addition, 70.8% of the participants in the treatment group and 72.7% in the whole-class group supported the statement "I feel confident during classroom oral practice". Furthermore, 54.2% of the experimental group students and 45.5% of the control group participants were confident and relaxed when giving oral presentations in front of the class. These students experienced less anxiety and became more confident about their abilities to speak English in the classroom. Students with low effective filters have low anxiety and high self-confidence. Before the treatment, more than forty-seven percent of the students reported feeling shy about speaking (50.0% in the experimental group and 47.8% in the control group). After the treatment, however, 78.3% of the students in the experimental group and 43.5% in the control class denied being shy to speak in the oral class. The post-questionnaire data demonstrated that the students in Boumerdes University experienced less shyness. As the students became familiar with the teacher and classmates, they felt less shy to talk and express their ideas. When it comes to the lack of vocabulary, the pre-questionnaire results revealed that more than half of the participants (66.7% in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control group) were panicky to speak because they did not have enough English words to express themselves. After the treatment, 45.8% of the participants in the treatment group and 39.1% in the control group reported no anxiety or panic related to the lack of vocabulary. Nevertheless, more than thirty-nine percent of the students in Boumerdes University (41.7% in the experimental group and 39.1% in the control group) were still panicky to speak due to their restricted vocabulary knowledge. Before the intervention study, the students in both groups were concerned about their inability to understand teacher's input (62.5% in the experimental group and 60.9% in the control group). After the treatment, the percentage of students who suffered from receiver anxiety diminished to 26.1% in the experimental group and to 13.0% in the control group, whereas the percentage

of students who were not frightened when they did not understand what the teacher was saying in English reached 60.9% in the experimental group and 47.8% in the control group. These students were not anxious and fearful about their incapacity to understand language input. The aforementioned results suggest a reduction in students' communication apprehension.

Concerning fear of negative evaluation, the students in both groups rejected item 22 "I worry that my broken English pronunciation would cause jokes when I want to bring up a question" (78.3% in the experimental group and 59.1% in the control group). The pre-questionnaire data showed that the percentage of students who opposed item 22 was 70.8% in the experimental group and 60.9% in the control group. In addition, the students rejected item 25 "I am afraid to be criticized by both teacher and peers during classroom discussions because of my poor English proficiency" (66.7% in the experimental group and 59.1% in the control group). The degree of their disagreement with item 25 before the treatment was 45.8% in the experimental group and 56.5% in the control group. Furthermore, 58.3% of the students in the experimental group and 52.2% in the control group disagreed and strongly disagreed with item 9. The percentage of students who denied the fact of being embarrassed to volunteer answers in the oral class before the treatment was 37.5% in the experimental group and 43.5% in the control group. These students were not concerned to be humiliated and negatively evaluated by the teacher and fellow classmates. Concerning the teacher's corrective feedback, 83.3% of the students in the experimental group rejected item 13 compared to 62.5% before the treatment. Concerning the control group, 47.8% of the students were not afraid that the teacher of speaking would correct every mistake they made compared to 60.9% in the pre-questionnaire. The percentage of students who supported item 13 after the treatment was 12.5% in the experimental group and 39.1% in the control group. The students in Boumerdes University were not frightened to face the teacher's feedback. In fact, they anticipated the instructor's evaluation and viewed mistakes as a way to promote their self-growth. Regarding students' fear of making

mistakes, the pre-questionnaire findings indicated that 62.5% of the students in the experimental group and 60.9% in the control group were concerned about making mistakes in the oral class. After the intervention, students' fear of making mistakes was still significant since 45.8% of the students in the experimental group and 43.5% in the control group rejected the questionnaire item "I do not worry about making mistakes in the oral class". These students worried to appear incompetent in the eyes of the teacher and fellow classmates by committing insignificant mistakes. The percentage of students who concurred with item 2 after the treatment was 45.8% in the experimental group and 47.8% in the control group. The post-questionnaire findings imply that students' fear of negative evaluation diminished as well.

Oral classroom anxiety was at a low level. As before the beginning of the intervention study, the students had a favorable perception of the oral class. They did not display avoidance behavior and were willing to go to the oral class. In addition, they were not bothered by the fact of having more oral English sessions. Since Algerian learners of English have little or no exposure to the language outside the classroom, the students wanted extra speaking classes in order to have more oral practice. Moreover, they reported no anxiety before attending the oral class. The students felt secure and confident when they were on their way to the oral class. It has to be noted that more than half of the participants (63.6% in the experimental group and 54.5% in the control group) were not forgetful of the things they knew owing to their high nervousness in the oral class. Before the treatment, the percentage of students who did not suffer from output anxiety was 33.3% in the experimental group and 30.4% in the control group.

Prior to the beginning of the intervention study, the majority of the participants in Boumerdes University reported medium anxiety. In order to ascertain the degree of anxiety at the end of the treatment, the scores of each student on the post-questionnaire were computed. The findings unveiled four anxiety groups. Table 17 portrays the number and percentage of students in each category.

Table 17

Anxiety Levels in Boumerdes University after the Treatment

Anxiety Group	Experimental group		Control group	
	Number of students	*Percentage*	*Number of students*	*Percentage*
Very low	1	4.2	1	4.2
Low	10	41.7	8	34.8
Moderate	13	54.2	10	43.5
High	0	0	4	17.4
Total	24	100	23	100

The pre-questionnaire findings indicated that the majority of the respondents had moderate anxiety. After the intervention, however, the participants' levels of anxiety fluctuated between low and medium. Ten students (41.7%) in the experimental group reported low anxiety while thirteen participants (54.2%) had medium anxiety. In the control group, the number of low anxious students was eight (34.8%) while the number of medium anxious students was ten (43.5%). The analysis of the post scores revealed that the number of highly anxious students in each group diminished. The pre-questionnaire outcomes demonstrated that five students (20.8%) in the experimental group and seven students (30.4%) in the control class had high anxiety. The post-questionnaire data, on the other hand, showed that no student (0%) in the cooperative class was highly anxious while four students (17.4%) in the control group reported high anxiety. The same percentage of students experienced medium anxiety before and after the treatment (54.2% in the experimental group and 43.5% in the control group). The percentage of low anxious students before the treatment was 25.0% in the experimental class and 26.1% in the control group. After the treatment, the percentage of mild anxious students increased to

reach 41.7% in the treatment group and 34.8% in the control group. The post-intervention data also unveiled a fourth anxiety group. 4.2% of students in each group had very low anxiety.

The pre-questionnaire findings in Boumerdes University indicated that communication apprehension ranked first followed by fear of negative evaluation. The participants' fear of communication was predominantly due to the lack of prior preparation and the discussion of unfamiliar topics. In order to determine whether students' apprehension related to the three anxiety constructs diminished, paired t-test was performed. In addition, in order to answer the second study question and examine the impacts of cooperative learning and traditional instruction on the participants' levels of anxiety, paired t-test was applied in order to measure the significance of the difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores of the experimental class and control group. The t-test output is outlined in Table 18.

Table 18

Paired T-test Results in Boumerdes University

Anxiety dimension	Group	Pre mean	Post mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Communication apprehension	Experimental	3.4482	2.6291	.000
	Control	3.3545	2.7982	.002
Fear of negative evaluation	Experimental	3.1344	2.4211	.000
	Control	3.0633	2.7200	.033
Oral classroom anxiety	Experimental	2.4217	2.4183	.986
	Control	2.6000	2.3483	.211
Overall anxiety	Experimental	3.1026	2.5076	.000
	Control	3.0803	2.6772	.050

Table 18 illustrates paired t-test results. The mean scores of the anxiety dimensions in the post-questionnaire were lower than those obtained in the pre-questionnaire. For instance, communication apprehension mean scores lowered from 3.4482 to 2.6291 in the experimental

group and from 3.3545 to 2.7982 in the control class, that is a mean difference of .8191 and .5563 respectively. What is worth noting is that the paired t-test showed a significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of communication apprehension in both groups (P<.05). This means that the participants' fear of communication reduced significantly after fifteen weeks of instruction.

Concerning fear of negative evaluation, the findings indicated that the experimental group post mean was 2.4211 while the mean on the pre-questionnaire was 3.1344. The mean difference between the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire was .7133. The control group mean amounted to 3.0633 before the intervention while the mean in the post-questionnaire was 2.7200 i.e. a mean difference of .3433. As can be seen, paired t-test displayed a significant difference in fear of negative evaluation mean scores in each group. A significance level of <.05 implies that the participants' fear of negative judgment decreased significantly as well.

Oral classroom anxiety was relatively lower than communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Nevertheless, according to the statistics in Table 18, oral classroom anxiety scores in the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire were approximately at the same level. Oral classroom anxiety mean scores reduced from 2.4217 to 2.4183 in the experimental group and from 2.6000 to 2.3483 in the control group. The mean difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention score was .0034 in the treatment group and .2517 in the control group. Paired t-test exposed a p-value greater than .05 in both groups (.986 in the experimental class and .211 in the control group). This denotes a statistically insignificant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of oral classroom anxiety.

The participants' overall anxiety also diminished. The outcomes revealed that the experimental group post mean was 2.5076 compared to 3.1026 before the intervention study i.e. a mean difference of .595. The control class reported a mean score of 3.0803 in the pre-questionnaire and of 2.6772 in the post-questionnaire i.e. a difference between the two means

of .4031. In order to determine whether the levels of anxiety reduced significantly in each group, one needs to look at the statistical significance (Sig. 2-tailed). A significance level greater than .05 designates no significant difference between the group's means. A p-value < or =.05, on the other hand, specifies that the group's means are significantly different. In this study, a significance level of .000 in the experimental group and of .050 in the control class denotes a statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores. Judging from the p-value ($\leq$ .05), we can conclude that the participants in Boumerdes University showed a significant reduction in their levels of anxiety. Figure 15 illustrates the significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and overall anxiety in each group.
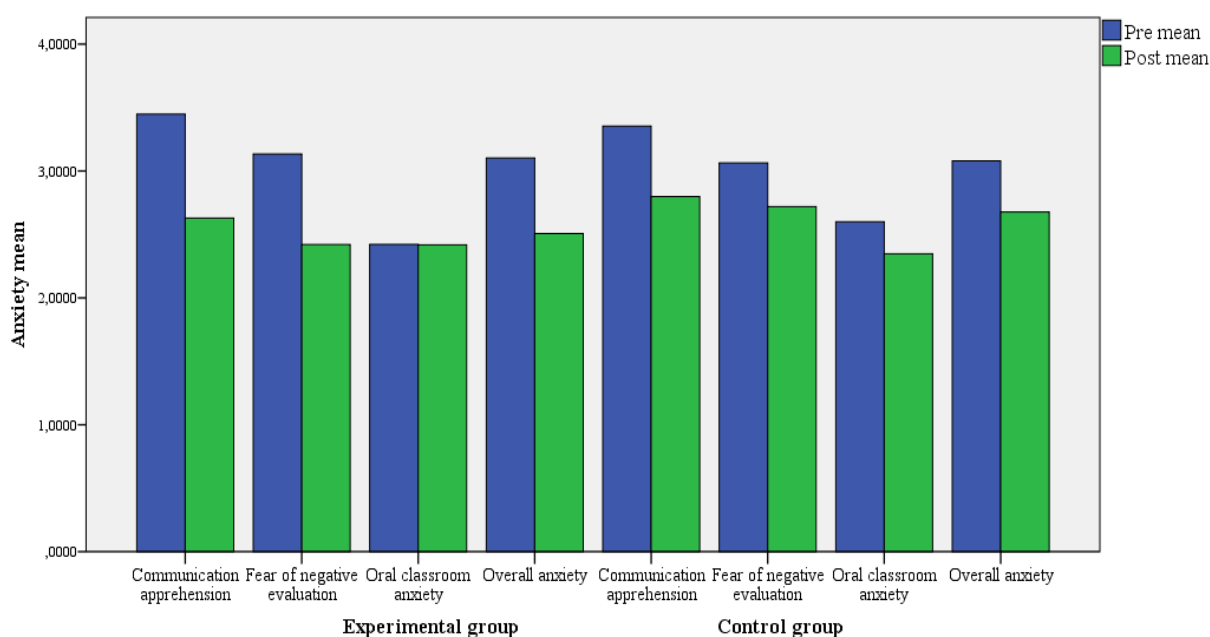
Figure 15. Comparison of the anxiety mean scores between the beginning and the end of the treatment in Boumerdes University

In order to answer the third study question (Is there any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who work in cooperation and those who perform individually?), independent samples t-test was conducted in order to assess the significance of the difference between the anxiety scores of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University after the treatment. The t-test outcome is given in Table 19.

Table 19

Independent Samples T-test on the Post-questionnaire in Boumerdes University

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety	Experimental	24	2.5076	.55866	.11404
scores	Control	23	2.6772	.78308	.16328

Independent Samples t-test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Upper	Lower
Anxiety scores	Equal variances assumed	1.717	.197	-.858	45	.396	-.16965	.19776	-.56795	.22866
	Equal variances not assumed			-.852	39.668	.399	-.16965	.19916	-.57228	.23298

Table 19 outlines the output of the independent samples t-test run to compare the anxiety scores of the cooperative group and the whole-class group after the intervention. As seen, the mean score of the treatment class was lower than that of the control group. The experimental class reported a mean score of 2.5076 and a standard deviation of .55866, whereas the control group reported a mean score of 2.6772 and a standard deviation of .78308. The mean difference between the two groups was -.16965. A statistical value of .396 implies that the difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group was not significant. The results in Boumerdes University unveiled an insignificant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who worked in cooperation and those who performed individually. More specifically, the findings indicated that both groups experienced the same degree of anxiety after the treatment. This insignificant difference between the anxiety scores

of the experimental class and control group in Boumerdes University is demonstrated in Figure 16.
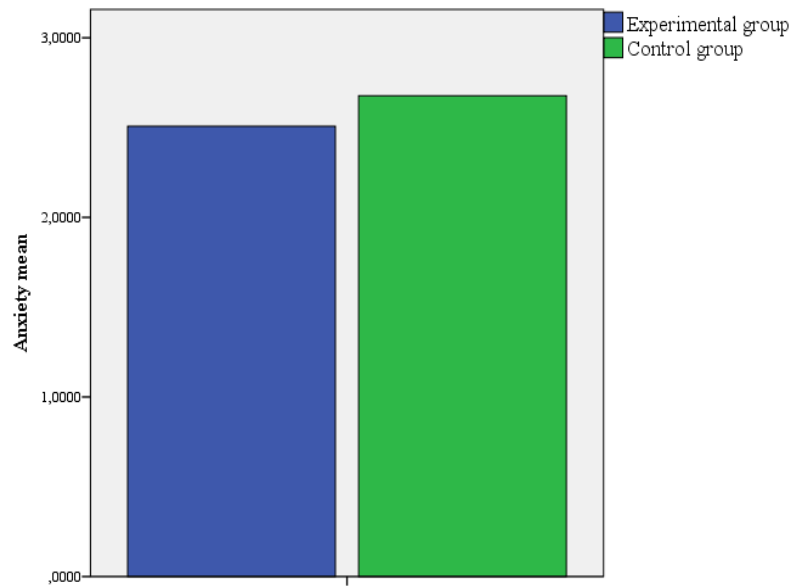
Figure 16. Anxiety levels in Boumerdes University after the treatment

IV.1.3.2. Post-questionnaire findings in Tizi Ouzou University

Table 20 presents the post-questionnaire outcomes in Tizi Ouzou University. This comprises the percentages of students' agreement, disagreement, and neutrality with the questionnaire items. The table also reports the mean score of each statement.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for the Post-questionnaire Items in Tizi Ouzou University

Item	Experimental group				Control group			
	A+SA	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*	*A+SA*	*D+SD*	*N*	*M*
1	26.9%	57.7%	15.4%	2.50	33.3%	48.1%	18.5%	2.67
2	53.8%	42.3%	3.8%	2.65	59.3%	25.9%	14.8%	2.52
3	34.6%	46.2%	19.2%	2.65	50.0%	26.9%	23.1%	3.38
4	34.6%	61.5%	3.8%	2.42	40.7%	40.7%	18.5%	2.96
5	61.5%	34.6%	3.8%	2.46	51.9%	25.9%	22.2%	2.59

6	50.0%	30.8%	19.2%	3.08	53.8%	34.6%	11.5%	3.15
7	50.0%	42.3%	7.7%	2.85	44.4%	37.0%	18.5%	3.04
8	46.2%	42.3%	11.5%	2.88	51.9%	37.0%	11.1%	3.26
9	38.5%	53.8%	7.7%	2.69	38.5%	53.8%	7.7%	2.73
10	52.0%	48.0%	0%	2.76	40.7%	33.3%	25.9%	3.04
11	15.4%	76.9%	7.7%	1.96	22.2%	77.8%	0%	2.15
12	69.2%	19.2%	11.5%	2.31	74.1%	18.5%	7.4%	2.22
13	30.8%	61.5%	7.7%	2.27	22.2%	63.0%	14.8%	2.52
14	50.0%	30.8%	19.2%	3.08	51.9%	40.7%	7.4%	3.11
15	46.2%	38.5%	15.4%	3.04	51.9%	25.9%	22.2%	3.30
16	40.0%	44.0%	16.0%	2.92	33.3%	66.7%	0%	2.70
17	19.2%	73.1%	7.7%	2.04	33.3%	63.0%	3.7%	2.63
18	38.5%	50.0%	11.5%	2.65	33.3%	63.0%	3.7%	2.74
19	53.8%	23.1%	23.1%	2.46	48.1%	29.6%	22.2%	2.67
20	23.1%	57.7%	19.2%	2.42	18.5%	77.8%	3.7%	2.19
21	34.6%	65.4%	0%	2.46	22.2%	63.0%	14.8%	2.48
22	26.9%	57.7%	15.4%	2.46	26.9%	65.4%	7.7%	2.62
23	56.0%	28.0%	16.0%	3.24	44.4%	44.4%	11.1%	3.00
24	44.0%	32.0%	24.0%	2.84	46.2%	34.6%	19.2%	2.73
25	30.8%	61.5%	7.7%	2.35	25.9%	63.0%	11.1%	2.37
26	50.0%	26.9%	23.1%	3.35	40.7%	44.4%	14.8%	2.89

Like the experimental group in Boumerdes University, the students in the treatment class in Tizi Ouzou University concurred with item 26 "I feel more anxious about speaking English

individually than in groups" (M= 3.35). Half of the participants (50.0%) agreed with the item. Cooperative learning allows equal and active participation, mutual help and support, and the sharing of the communicative burden. These features of cooperative learning may lead to a reduction of anxiety.

The item with the lowest mean score in the experimental group was statement 11 (M=1.96). Only 15.4% of the students felt like not going to the oral class. 76.9% of the participants did not display avoidance behavior and had no intention to skip the oral class.

The analysis of the post-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University demonstrated that the anxiety mean scores of the experimental group were lower than those gained in the pre-questionnaire. Figure 17 compares the pre mean and post mean of each item.
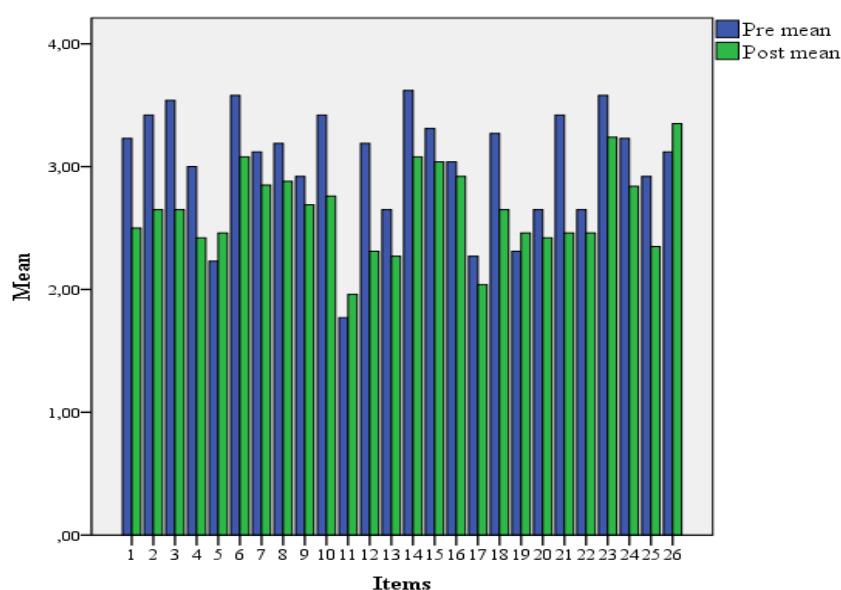
Figure 17. Comparison of the pre means and post means of the experimental group in Tizi Ouzou University

The items that attracted the highest mean scores among the students in the experimental group before the treatment were item 14 (M=3.62), item 6 (M=3.58), item 23 (M=3.58), and item 3 (M=3.54). After the treatment, the mean scores of these items were 3.08 (item 14), 3.08 (item 6), 3.24 (item 23) and 2.65 (item 3).

Before the treatment, 65.4% of the students in the experimental group felt their hearts beating fast when asked to speak in the oral class. After the treatment, half of the participants (50.0%) experienced this displeasing anxiety sensation. The percentage of students who did not experience a rapid heartbeat rate was 26.9% in the pre-questionnaire and 30.8% in the post-questionnaire. Lack of preparation was still a major source of anxiety for the treatment group in Tizi Ouzou University since half of the respondents (50.0%) started to panic when they had to speak without preparation in the oral class compared to 69.2% prior to the beginning of the intervention. Lack of preparation makes students feel anxious and less inclined to take part in classroom discourse. The percentage of students who were not panicky when the teacher put them on the spot by asking them to speak spontaneously was 30.8% after the treatment and 19.2% before the intervention. 56.0% of the respondents were apprehensive when they had to debate on unfamiliar subjects while 28.0% experienced no anxiety. The percentage of students' agreement with item 23 in the pre-questionnaire was 61.5% while the degree of their disagreement was 23.1%. Having no information or opinion about a topic to be discussed in the classroom prevents students from being active participants in the oral class. Item 14 mirrors students' worry over negative judgment while statements 6 and 23 reflect their fear of communication. The post-questionnaire findings indicated that the percentages of students who agreed and strongly agreed with these items were lower than those obtained in the pre-questionnaire. Nonetheless, the degree of their agreement with the statements after the treatment was still significant. 34.6% of the subjects trembled when they knew that they were going to be asked to speak in the oral class whereas 46.2% did not tremble. The percentage of students who experienced this anxiety reaction before the treatment was 65.4% compared to 26.9% who did not.

Anxious students experience some undesirable anxiety reactions and feel very self-conscious when called on to speak in English before the entire class. This was the case for

50.0% of the students in the control group who consented with item 3 (M=3.38) and admitted that they start to tremble when they know that they are going to be asked to speak English in front of their classmates.

Like the students in the experimental class, the participants in the control group rejected item 11 "I often feel like not going to the oral class". Indeed, 77.8% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. The control class reported a mean score of 2.15, which was at a low level.

The post-intervention scores of the control class were lower than those gained before the treatment. Figure 18 compares the pre mean and post mean of each item.
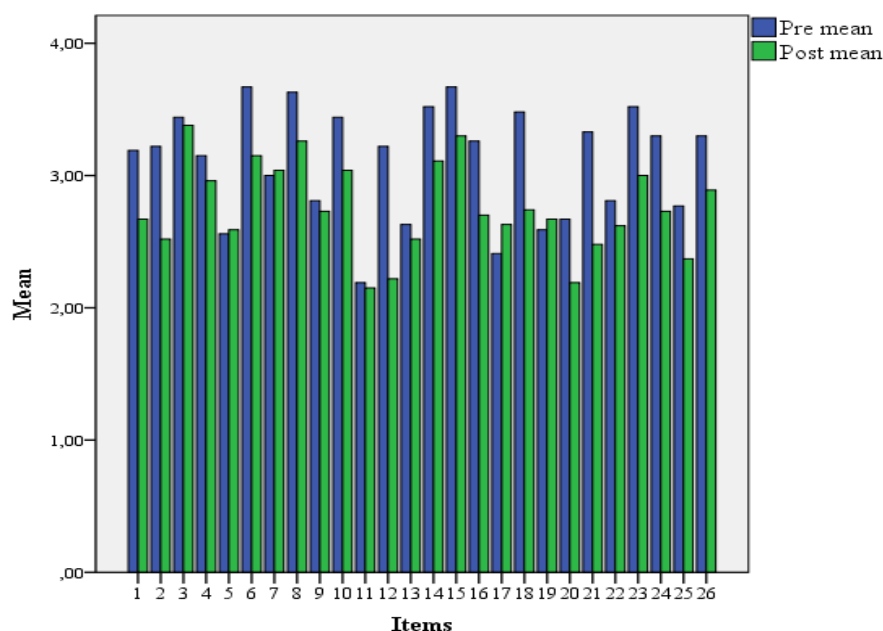
Figure 18. Comparison of the pre means and post means of the control group in Tizi Ouzou University

The top anxiety statements among the control group before the intervention study were statement 15 (M=3.67), statement 6 (M=3.67), statement 8 (M=3.63), statement 23 (M=3.52), and statement 14 (M=3.52). After the treatment, the mean scores of these items reduced to reach 3.30 (statement 15), 3.15 (statement 6), 3.26 (statement 8), 3.00 (statement 23), and 3.11 (statement 14).

Prior to the beginning of the treatment, 70.4% of the participants in the control group felt that their classmates spoke English better than they did. After the treatment, the percentage of students who considered themselves less competent than their peers was still substantial since more than half of the participants (51.9%) concurred with item 15. The percentage of students who disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement increased from 22.2% to 25.9%. Many students constantly compare themselves to their peers and assume that their English ability level is inferior. Such negative belief may obstruct the development of their language proficiency and may preclude them from taking part in classroom discourse. The pre-questionnaire findings revealed that 66.7% of the students felt nervous due to insufficient preparation whereas 22.2% did not. The post-questionnaire data indicated that 53.8% of the respondents were still apprehensive when the teacher asked them to speak without allowing prior preparation. The degree of students' disagreement reached 34.6%. The post-questionnaire findings in Tizi Ouzou University specified that spontaneous speaking activities were anxiety-provoking for the students in both experimental and control groups. 66.7% of the subjects could get so nervous when the teacher asked them to answer a question that they forgot things they knew compared to 18.5% who did not. At the end of the treatment, 51.9% of the students reported output anxiety while 37.0% did not. Output anxiety may interfere with the recovery of the studied materials and may prevent learners from speaking in the target language. 44.4% of the students were apprehensive when they had to discuss things unfamiliar to them compared to 55.6% prior to the beginning of the treatment. The same percentage (44.4%) reported no apprehension. More than half of the participants (51.9% after the treatment and 55.6% before the intervention study) suffered from a rapid heartbeat rate when called on to speak before the entire class. The percentage of students who did not feel their hearts pounding was 22.2% in the pre-questionnaire and 40.7% in the post-questionnaire. Accelerated heart rate is a physical anxiety reaction experienced by the students enrolled at the University of Tizi Ouzou.

Like the students in Boumerdes University, the participants in Tizi Ouzou University acquired self-confidence. Indeed, the pre-intervention data showed that 46.2% of the students in the experimental group and 44.4% in the control group were unconfident about their abilities to speak English. After the treatment, however, 57.7% of the students in the experimental group and 48.1% in the control group felt quite sure of themselves when speaking in the oral class. In addition, the percentage of students who felt confident during classroom speaking activities before the treatment was 26.9% in the experimental group and 29.6% in the control group. After the treatment, the majority of the students were confident during classroom oral practice (69.2% in the experimental group and 74.1% in the control group). Furthermore, the pre-questionnaire outcomes revealed that the percentage of students who felt confident and relaxed when giving oral presentations was 23.1% in the experimental group and 25.9% in the control group. The post-questionnaire findings indicated that 44.0% of the students in the experimental class and 46.2% in the control group felt self-assured and comfortable when giving oral presentations in front of the class. Before the treatment, more than fifty-seven percent of the participants in Tizi Ouzou University felt anxious and confused when speaking in the oral class (57.7% in the experimental group and 63.0% in the control group). After the treatment, 50.0% of the students in the experimental group and 63.0% in the control class were relaxed and unconfused when speaking English in the oral class. Concerning the degree of students' timidity, 44.0% of the students in the experimental group and 66.7% in the control class acknowledged being not shy to speak in the oral class. The percentage of students who did not experience shyness before the treatment was 42.3% in the experimental group and 37.0% in the control group, whereas the percentage of timid students was 46.2% in the treatment group and 48.1% in the control class. Before the treatment, the percentage of students who did not report communication apprehension owing to limited vocabulary was 30.8% in the experimental group and 33.3% in the control group. After the treatment, 65.4% of the students in the experimental group and

63.0% in the control group were not panicky to speak because they had a restricted vocabulary repertoire. This was probably because the students improved their English vocabulary knowledge. As for receiver anxiety, the pre-questionnaire outcomes demonstrated that 50.0% of the students in the experimental group and 48.1% in the control group concurred with item 4. The post-questionnaire data, on the other hand, showed that more than forty percent of the participants were not frightened when they did not understand what the teacher was saying in English (61.5% in the experimental group and 40.7% in the control group). Nonetheless, when it comes to the teacher's feedback, the students got upset when they did not grasp what the teacher was correcting (52.0% in the experimental group and 40.7% in the control class). Students become troubled when the teacher gives vague and unclear corrections. The way students are corrected can have an impact on the level of anxiety experienced in the classroom. The post-questionnaire findings in Tizi Ouzou University indicated a decrease in students' communication apprehension.

As for fear of negative evaluation, 53.8% of the students in each of the experimental and control group were not embarrassed to volunteer answers in the oral class. Before the treatment, the percentage of students who did not report discomfiture was 42.3% in the experimental group and 51.9% in the control group. In addition, 57.7% of the experimental group students and 77.8% of the control group participants were not afraid that the other students will laugh at them when they speak English. The pre-questionnaire outcomes indicated that more than sixty percent of the students were not concerned about peers' laughter and mockery (61.5% in the experimental group and 66.7% in the control group). Moreover, the students were not worried that their broken English pronunciation would cause jokes when they wanted to bring up questions (57.7% in the experimental group and 65.4% in the control class). The pre-intervention data revealed that the percentage of students who were not worried to be ridiculed because they had a flawed pronunciation was 53.8% in the experimental group and 50.0% in

the control group. These students did not believe that pronunciation is the most significant aspect of the language learning process and were not irritated by their imperfect English pronunciation. Furthermore, more than sixty percent of the participants in Tizi Ouzou University (61.5% in the experimental group and 63.0% in the control class) were not afraid of teacher's and classmates' criticism. In the pre-questionnaire, the percentage of students who were not afraid to be criticized by the teacher and classmates during classroom discussions because of their poor English proficiency was 50.0% in each group. The students who rejected statements 9, 20, 22, and 25 did not experience embarrassment, worry, and irritation when facing teacher's and classmates' evaluation. The students in Tizi Ouzou University were not concerned about making mistakes in the oral class (53.8% in the experimental group and 59.3% in the control group). Before the treatment, the percentage of students who were not worried about committing mistakes was 30.8% in the experimental class and 33.3% in the control group. In addition, the students in both experimental and control groups were not afraid that the teacher of speaking would correct every mistake they made (61.5% in the experimental group and 63.0% in the control group). The pre-questionnaire results showed that 53.8% of the students in the experimental group and 66.7% in the control group reported no concern regarding the teacher's immediate error correction approach. These students did not view mistakes as a threat to their self-esteem. In fact, they expected the teacher to provide corrective feedback and considered mistakes as a way to improve their linguistic and communication skills. The post-intervention outcomes showed a diminution in the levels of fear of negative evaluation.

Concerning oral classroom anxiety, the students reported positive attitudes toward oral classes. As before the beginning of the treatment, the participants in both experimental and control groups were not worried to attend additional oral sessions and had no intention to miss the speaking class. In addition, they felt confident and comfortable before going to the oral English classroom. Regarding the impact of anxiety on memory, the post-questionnaire

outcomes revealed that 46.2% of the students in the experimental group and 51.9% in the control group failed to recall the previously learned material when the teacher asked to answer questions verbally. Unlike the students in Boumerdes University, the participants in Tizi Ouzou University did not report a significant reduction in output anxiety.

The pre-questionnaire data demonstrated that the majority of the participants in Tizi Ouzou University had moderate anxiety. In order to determine the levels of anxiety after the treatment, the post-intervention scores of each student were calculated. The outcomes disclosed three anxiety groups. Table 21 exposes the number and percentage of students in each group.

Table 21

Anxiety Levels in Tizi Ouzou University after the Treatment

Anxiety Group	Experimental group		Control group	
	Number of students	*Percentage*	*Number of students*	*Percentage*
Low	12	46.1	9	33.3
Moderate	12	46.1	17	63.0
High	2	7.7	1	3.7
Total	26	100	27	100

The number of highly anxious students prior to the intervention study was four (15.4%) in the experimental group and five (18.5%) in the control class. After the treatment, two students (7.7%) in the treatment class and one student (3.7%) in the whole-class group actually experienced high anxiety. The pre-questionnaire findings revealed that the number of medium anxious students was twenty-one (80.8%) in the experimental group and nineteen (70.4%) in the control class, whereas the number of low apprehensive students was one (3.8%) in the cooperative class and three (11.1%) in the control group. At the end of the intervention, the experimental group encompassed twelve students (46.1%) in each of the mild and moderate

anxiety groups. In the control group, on the other hand, seventeen participants (63.0%) had medium anxiety while nine students (33.3%) reported low anxiety. Unlike in Boumerdes University, no student in Tizi Ouzou University experienced very low anxiety.

To answer the second research question, paired t-test was conducted to compare between the pre-intervention and post-intervention mean scores of the experimental class and control group in Tizi Ouzou University regarding communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and oral classroom anxiety. In order to explore the effects of cooperative learning and traditional instruction on the participants' levels of anxiety, the overall anxiety scores obtained in the post-questionnaire were compared with those in the pre-questionnaire. Paired t-test was applied to measure the significance of the difference between the participants' overall anxiety scores before and after the intervention study. The results are shown in Table 22.

Table 22

Paired T-test Results in Tizi Ouzou University

Anxiety dimension	Group	Pre mean	Post mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Communication apprehension	Experimental	3.2800	2.7755	.001
	Control	3.3509	2.7800	.000
Fear of negative evaluation	Experimental	3.0756	2.6233	.001
	Control	3.0600	2.7489	.003
Oral classroom anxiety	Experimental	2.4817	2.4417	.716
	Control	2.7300	2.7233	.937
Overall anxiety	Experimental	3.0251	2.6402	.016
	Control	3.1099	2.7573	.019

As shown in Table 22, the experimental class reported a communication apprehension mean score of 2.7755 compared to 3.2800 before the treatment i.e. a mean difference of .5045. The control group's score for communication apprehension reached 2.7800 in the post-

questionnaire compared to 3.3509 in the pre-questionnaire. The difference between the two means was .5709. Paired t-test displayed a p-value of .001 in the experimental group and of .000 in the control class. A significance level of < or =.05 entails a statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of communication apprehension. In other words, the students in both groups reported a significant reduction in the levels of communication apprehension.

As for fear of negative evaluation, the pre-intervention score of the experimental class was 3.0756 whereas the score of the control group was 3.0600. After the treatment, the experimental class and the control group reported a mean score of 2.6233 and of 2.7489, that is a mean difference compared to the pre-questionnaire of .4523 and of .3111 respectively. Both groups reported a significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of fear of negative evaluation (.001 in the experimental group and .003 in the control class). The findings suggested that the participants' worry over negative judgment reduced significantly as well.

The pre-intervention score of oral classroom anxiety was 2.4817 in the experimental group and 2.7300 in the control group. After the treatment, the cooperative class reported a mean score of 2.4417. The mean difference between the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire was .04. The mean score of the whole-class group was 2.7233 that is a mean difference compared to the pre-questionnaire of .0067. A significance value of .716 in the experimental group and of .937 in the control group indicates an insignificant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of oral classroom anxiety. This means that the students in both classes did not report a significant reduction in the levels of oral classroom anxiety.

Concerning the participants' overall anxiety, the post-intervention mean score in the experimental class was 2.6402 while the pre mean was 3.0251 that is a mean difference amounted to .3849. Concerning the control class, the students reported a mean score of 3.1099

in the pre-questionnaire and of 2.7573 in the post-questionnaire (A mean difference of .3526). A significance value of .016 in the treatment class designates a statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores. As evidenced by Table 22, there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of the control group. A significance value of .019 means that the participants' levels of anxiety lessened after learning through the routine method of instruction. The significance value indicated that the participants in Tizi Ouzou University showed a significant decrease in their levels of anxiety.

Figure 19 illustrates the significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and overall anxiety. The figure also portrays the insignificant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores of oral classroom anxiety.
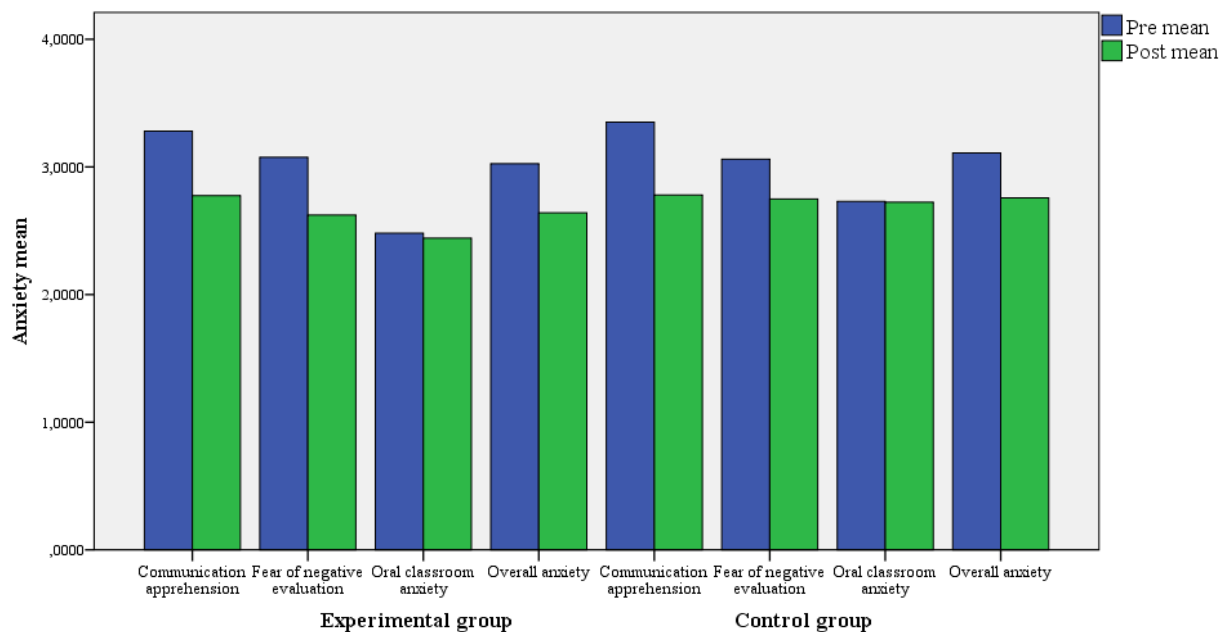
Figure 19. Comparison of the anxiety mean scores between the beginning and the end of the treatment in Tizi Ouzou University

Paired t-test indicated that the experimental class and control group in Tizi Ouzou University reported a significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores. In order to answer the third study question and test the validity of the second

research hypothesis (The implementation of cooperative learning would bring about a statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental and control groups), independent samples t-test was applied to compare between the post-intervention scores of the experimental class and control group in Tizi Ouzou University. The t-test outcome is presented in Table 23.

Table 23

Independent Samples T-test on the Post-questionnaire in Tizi Ouzou University

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety scores	Experimental	26	2.6402	.64759	.12700
	Control	27	2.7573	.52197	.10045

Independent Samples t-test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Upper	Lower
Anxiety scores	Equal variances assumed	2.799	.100	-.726	51	.471	-.11714	.16127	-.44089	.20662
	Equal variances not assumed			-.723	48.001	.473	-.11714	.16193	-.44271	.20844

As shown in Table 23, the anxiety mean score of the treatment group was 2.6402 and the standard deviation was .64759, whereas the control group's mean score was 2.7573 and the standard deviation was .52197. The mean difference between the two groups was -.11714. Independent samples t-test yielded a p-value of .471 suggesting an insignificant difference between the anxiety scores of the experimental class and control group. The p-value proved that the difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in

each research site was not statistically significant. This means that both cooperative and traditional classes had more or less the same level of anxiety after the intervention study. Therefore, the second research hypothesis was rejected. The insignificant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group in Tizi Ouzou University can be better seen in Figure 20.
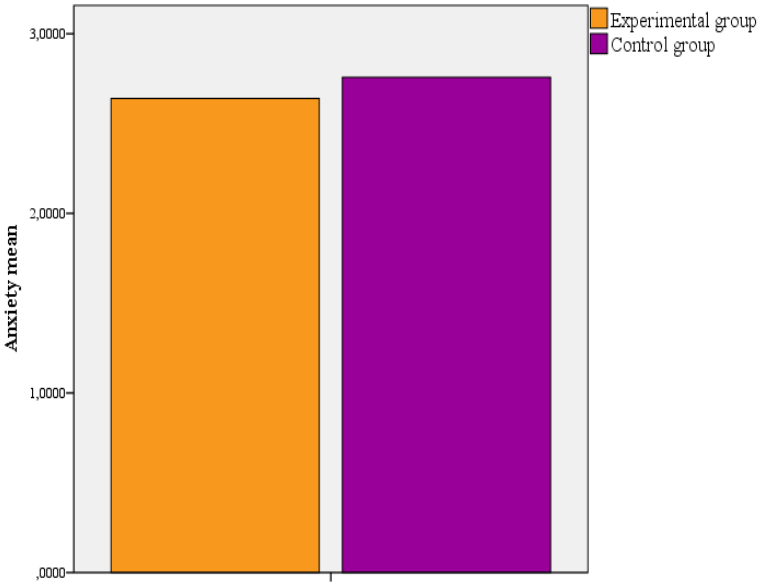
Figure 20. Anxiety levels in Tizi Ouzou University after the treatment

Independent samples t-test disclosed a statistically insignificant difference between the anxiety scores of the experimental class and control group in each research site. In order to find out whether there were any differences in the levels of anxiety of the study groups at the end of the treatment, one-way ANOVA was used to compare between the overall anxiety scores of the students registered at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. The output is exposed in Table 24.

Table 24

Comparison of the Anxiety Mean Scores of the Study Groups after the Treatment

Anxiety levels	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.817	3	.272	.684	.564
Within groups	38.237	96	.398		
Total	39.054	99			

One-way ANOVA produced a significance value of .564, which is greater than .05. This implies that the groups' variances were equal. In other words, the difference between the anxiety scores of the study groups was statistically insignificant. To be more specific, second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou had the same level of anxiety after the treatment. Figure 21 illustrates this insignificant difference between the anxiety scores of the study groups.
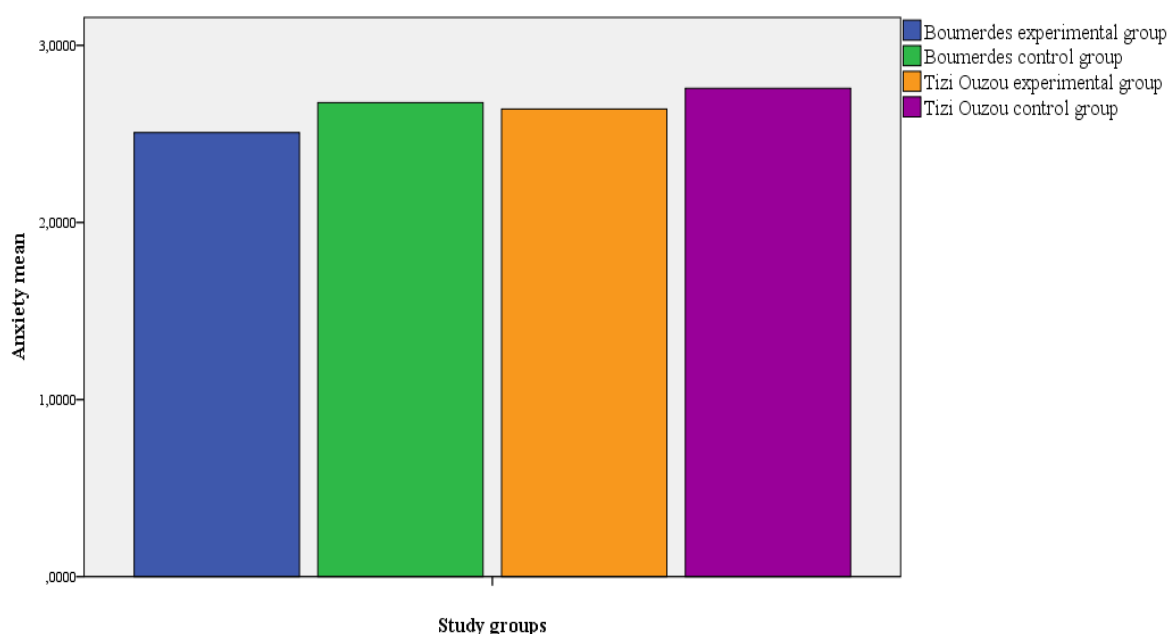
Figure 21. Anxiety levels of the study groups after the treatment

Figure 21 demonstrates that the difference between the anxiety scores of the study groups was trivial. Nonetheless, among the four classes, Boumerdes experimental group students

reported lower anxiety with a mean score of 2.5076 followed by Tizi Ouzou treatment class with a mean score of 2.6402. Tizi Ouzou control group students came out a little more apprehensive with a mean score of 2.7573.

IV.2. Classroom Observation Findings

This section is mainly descriptive. It aims to describe the data obtained from the observation phase. From the very first session, classroom observation and reflective teaching journal notes were used to collect supplementary data. The purpose of using classroom observation as a data collection instrument was threefold. First, classroom observation was employed to detect students' anxious behavior while speaking English in the oral class. Second, this data-gathering tool was used to record the way students interacted and cooperated with their group members. Third, it was utilized to detect any potential problems that obstructed cooperative learning implementation. Classroom observation took place for fifteen weeks. The teacher-researcher's role during the whole intervention was that of a participant observer and a facilitator of students' learning. In participant observation, the observer becomes a member of the group he/she is observing. Participant observation "gives an 'insider's' view and so there is less chance of the observed behaviour being misinterpreted as the observer is part of the group and engages in the same behaviours she or he is recording" (Norton, 2009, p. 107). Participant observation allows the observer or the researcher to detect the participants' demeanor and ascertain the way they interact with one another.

IV.2.1. Students' Anxious Behavior

Speaking English in the classroom can be a terrifying experience for many learners. Throughout her teaching experience, the teacher-researcher has noticed a bunch of anxiety signs displayed by anxious learners while attempting to speak English in the classroom. Some signs are observable and easy to detect while others are not. Identifying anxious students is an important step in helping them get rid of their apprehension. In order to detect students' anxious

behaviors, both experimental and control groups were observed and observation notes were taken. The observation phase took place in oral classes with four groups of participants. The number of students per class varied between twenty-three and twenty-seven amounting the total number of participants to one hundred. Table 25 highlights the number of students per group and the time allocated for each session.

Table 25

Number of Students per Group and Time Allotted for Each Session

Group	Day	Time	Number of students
Boumerdes experimental group (G1)	Tuesday	9:40-11:10	24
Boumerdes control group (G5)	Tuesday	13:00-14:30	23
Tizi Ouzou experimental group (G7)	Wednesday	8:00-9:30	26
Tizi Ouzou control group (G4)	Monday	14:00-15:30	27

Students experience performance anxiety when asked to speak, give oral presentations in front of their peers, or just respond to some questions (Omaggio Hadley, as cited in Young, 1991b, p. 16). Classroom observation demonstrated that some of the participants were hesitative and confused when called on by the teacher, tended to speak with a low quivering voice, and sporadically asked for help or interacted with the teacher and/or peers. In addition, at the beginning of the treatment, some of the students in the experimental groups were reticent to take part in cooperative activities. Uncertainty, self-consciousness, discomfort, uncomfortableness with teacher and peers, and reticent behavior might be indications of shyness. This may explain the participants' endorsement to the pre-questionnaire item 16 "I feel shy about speaking English in the oral class". Indeed, more than 46.2% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. Shyness is a personality characteristic that leads to students' hesitation and unwillingness to speak. According to Juhana (2012), "shyness could

be a source of problem in students' learning activities in the classroom especially in the class of speaking" (p. 101). Liu (2007) pointed out that shy and introvert students were more apprehensive when speaking English to the teacher or classmates while extroverts were more self-assured and less apprehensive (p. 131). Students' timidity may be attributed to their unfamiliarity with the teacher and/or classmates or to their fear of leaving an unfavorable impression.

From the observation, some of the participants engaged in different kinds of avoidance behavior. First, lack of eye contact with the teacher and/or classmates is a non-verbal cue pointing to anxiety. During oral presentations or when answering questions, some students tended to look the other way, to the floor or at the ceiling for instance, instead of facing the teacher or classmates. During the eighth week of the treatment, one of the students in Boumerdes control group turned away in order to face the board, started his presentation, and then suddenly stopped. This is a sign of extreme anxiety and stage fright. After some encouragement, the student turned away and resumed speaking. However, in order to avoid any kind of eye contact, he kept his head downward. By the end of the session, the student talked to the teacher and acknowledged his shyness and his fear of speaking in front of an audience scrutinizing his every move. The teacher then discussed the importance of overcoming his shyness and participating in the oral class. Three weeks after this observation, the student started to volunteer participation and make eye contact with the teacher and peers. As the students became acquainted with the teacher and classmates, they became more comfortable and did not avoid making eye contact. This improvement may be attributed to a reduction in the levels of anxiety. This observation is consistent with a study carried out by Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) who noticed that at the end of the school term students "were looking directly at the teacher more often and for more time" (p. 42). This change was accredited to the fact that students "felt more relaxed, and eager to take part in speaking tasks" (Tsiplakides & Keramida,

2009, p.42). The second kind of avoidance attitude noticed during the observation phase was students who sat at the back, evaded speaking, and kept a low profile. In this case, students chose to remain silent, avoided taking part in classroom conversations, and became passive listeners. This type of avoidance attitude was mainly observed in the control groups. The students in the experimental classes performed in cooperative learning groups where the participation of each member was expected.

It was also observed that during oral practice various students faced linguistic obstacles. To be more specific, they stuttered and seemed unable to find the right words to express themselves appropriately. In addition, in order to fill gaps in conversation or clarify their message, some students tended to code-switch into French or their native language. The reason might be their lack of knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary items to express their thoughts effectively in English. In fact, the pre-questionnaire findings showed that lack of vocabulary was a major source of anxiety in the oral class. More than 48.1% of the participants confessed being apprehensive about speaking owing to their limited vocabulary. After the treatment, the percentage of students who felt nervous about speaking English because they did not have enough vocabulary fluctuated between 22.2% and 41.7%.

Other observed anxiety manifestations included trembling hands and blushed cheeks. The former observation supports the pre-questionnaire findings where more than 59.3% of the participants endorsed item 3 "I tremble when I know that I am going to be asked to speak in the oral class". In addition, some students fidgeted while others played with their fingers, hair, or school supplies like pens.

However, as the students became familiar with the teacher and their fellow students, they became more involved in classroom discourse and their performance improved. Progressively, the participants became relaxed, engaged in interaction with the teacher and peers, and volunteered participation. They showed more enjoyment and motivation to participate in

classroom activities. All these observations might indicate a reduction in the participants' feelings of discomfort and anxiety.

IV.2.2. Results for the Fourth Research Question

In order to answer the fourth research question (How do the students in the experimental groups cooperate with their group members?), classroom observation was used with two experimental groups enrolled in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou. Each class was observed fifteen times during a weekly one and a half lecture.

The observation of the experimental group in Boumerdes University lasted from January 19th, 2016 until May 10th of the same year. Table 26 provides detailed information about the exact date and timing of each observation.

Table 26

Observation Timetable in Boumerdes University

Week	Date	Time	Lecture
01	January 19th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Three-Step Interview
02	January 26th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Spot the Lie
03	February 2nd, 2016	9:40-11:10	Song Discussion
04	February 9th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Proverbs
05	February 16th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Idioms
06	February 23rd, 2016	9:40-11:10	Slangs
07	March 1st, 2016	9:40-11:10	Storytelling
08	March, 8th, 2016	9:40-12:50	Oral Presentations
09	March 15th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Everyday English
10	April 5th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Classroom Debate
11	April 12th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Interviewing Plane Crash Survivors

12	April 19th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Job Interview
13	April 26th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Advertising
14	May 3rd, 2016	9:40-11:10	Alibi
15	May 10th, 2016	9:40-11:10	Television Show

As can be seen in Table 26, the intervention study in Boumerdes University did not begin until January 2016. This was due to students' strike that lasted from September until December 2015. The registration for the academic year 2015-2016 took place early January. From the table, one can also notice that the observation phase lasted nearly about four months. What is worth mentioning is that the second semester lectures and first term examinations were done at the same time. Owing to the delays in the program caused by the strike, the administration decided to carry on the lectures during the week and schedule two exams every Saturday.

In Tizi Ouzou University, classroom observation began on November 18th, 2015 and lasted until May 11th, 2016. Table 27 offers information about the date and timing of each observation.

Table 27

Observation Timetable in Tizi Ouzou University

Week	Date	Time	Lecture
01	November 18th, 2015	8:00-9:30	Three-Step Interview
02	November 25th, 2015	8:00-9:30	Spot the Lie
03	December 2nd, 2015	8:00-9:30	Song Discussion
04	December 9th, 2015	8:00-9:30	Proverbs
05	December 16th, 2015	8:00-9:30	Idioms
06	January 6th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Slangs
07	January 27th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Storytelling

08	February 3rd, 2016	8:00-11:00	Oral Presentations
09	February 10th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Everyday English
10	March 16th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Classroom Debate
11	April 6th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Interviewing Plane Crash Survivors
12	April 13th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Job Interview
13	April 27th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Advertising
14	May 4th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Alibi
15	May 11th, 2016	8:00-9:30	Television Show

As can be seen in Table 27, the intervention study in Tizi Ouzou University lasted about an entire academic year. Nonetheless, the observation phase took fifteen weeks as programmed by the administration. This was mainly due to winter and spring holiday breaks, the celebration of Yennayer that lasted two weeks, the first term examination period, students' strike, and the celebration of the Berber Spring on April 20.

Throughout the implementation of cooperative learning, observation notes were taken to report on whether the students displayed the five elements of cooperation introduced during the first classroom meeting. Classroom observation helped to compare students' participation and the attitude they displayed at the beginning and the end of the treatment. The observation also allowed the teacher-researcher to reflect on whether any modifications in the application of cooperative learning were required.

At the beginning of the intervention, the teacher-researcher noted that the participants in both research sites seemed to complain frequently about the new classroom procedure. During the first classroom meeting with the experimental groups, the teacher-researcher noticed that the majority of the students scarcely interacted with one another. The possible reason might be their unfamiliarity with each other. The teacher's mission was to help the students to be

acquainted with one another and familiarize them with cooperative learning. The participants were initiated to the cooperative learning approach through Kagan's *Three-Step Interview*. Since the majority of the students were unfamiliar with one another, this activity served as an icebreaker. After the formation of the groups at random, some of the participants started to grumble. Instead of completing the task, they asked whether they could work with friends. It is evident from their reaction that the participants tended to choose their partners during group work. In addition, some students confessed that they rarely took part in group activities during speaking classes. They used to work individually and discuss topics proposed by the teacher. Students' confessions are indications of their unfamiliarity with cooperative group work. Consequently, the teacher-researcher explained that the essence of cooperative learning is to make new acquaintances and learn how to use social skills in order to communicate and resolve conflicts. The students finally accepted to work with their allotted partners. However, it was observed that during the interview task some students were uncomfortable with one another. The role of the teacher during such situations was to intervene and to help the students break the ice and encourage them to make the first step toward one another.

Not all students find it easy to work within cooperative groups. During the third week of the treatment, the students were invited to listen to a song and then discuss questions in pairs. Some students refused to work with their assigned partners and confessed that they feel more comfortable working individually. The probable reason might be their shy nature. Shy students feel anxious and fear embarrassment. As a teacher and implementer of cooperative learning, the researcher had to create a safe environment and encourage these students to take part in group discussions. To achieve this purpose, the participants first worked in pairs or trios. In addition, the teacher explained that shyness is a problem that precludes students from developing their communicative skills and being open-minded to changes.

During the fourth week, the students were asked to discuss some English and French proverbs. After the formation of the groups, certain students started to protest and acknowledged their desire to work alone. Students' reservation from being actively involved in cooperative activities might be due to their competitive nature. In order to motivate the students to work with their teammates, the activity was transformed into a competitive game. Therefore, in order to gain extra points for their teams, group members had to exchange ideas and combine their efforts. It was observed that group members exchanged information and consulted each other to ensure that everyone knew the answers.

The same thing happened during the sixth week. Groups of three members were formed to discuss a set of three slangs. Some students expressed their desire to work individually. Once again, intergroup competition was incorporated. In addition, the merits of cooperative work compared with individual and competitive learning were emphasized. The teacher shared the findings reached by some researchers who compared the effectiveness of cooperation, individualism, and competition. Shimazoe and Aldrich (2010) recommended teachers to "embody the ideal of CL [cooperative learning] in students' eyes, and… communicate CL's contributions toward student learning existence by their deeds and demeanor" (p. 56).

During the first six weeks of the treatment, the students worked in informal cooperative learning groups. The purpose was to acquaint them with one another by working with different students, familiarize them with cooperative learning, and develop their social skills. During this period, it was observed that group members rarely supported and encouraged one another. In addition, some of the students dominated their groups and tried to impose their ideas. Thus, the teacher constantly reminded them about the importance of encouraging and supporting each other, exchanging ideas, listening attentively to one another, and working as teams and not as individuals.

During the seventh week of the treatment, the students were allotted into groups with a stable membership. Some of the participants started to complain and asked whether they could change the group and work with students with whom they are acquainted. The teacher told them that they had to accept others if they wanted to be accepted in return. Once again, she reminded them about the five components of cooperation and justified the way they were grouped. She explained that effective cooperation requires the collaboration of students with different gender, learning styles, and proficiency levels. The purpose of cooperative learning is to teach, encourage, motivate one another to learn, and use social skills. These students changed their minds and agreed to work with their assigned group members.

As the study advanced, the students began to show a more positive attitude toward cooperative learning. They were more accepting of their group mates and even seemed to enjoy the experience. They exchanged ideas, listened to each other's suggestions, helped one another to complete the different assignments, and encouraged one another to perform. What follows are illustrations of students' progress.

Most of the implemented activities required the contribution of all group members. For example, during the tenth week of the treatment, the cooperative teams were engaged in classroom debates during which each group member had to convey an argument. In order to win, group members had to combine their efforts and find strong arguments to support their position. It was observed that the students exchanged ideas, listened to each other's suggestions, and encouraged group members' participation during the debate. This is an example of face-to-face promotive interaction and the use of social skills. In another activity, the participants were asked to interview plane crash survivors. Intergroup competition was incorporated. Therefore, the participants had to be imaginative in order to earn extra points for their groups. It was observed that the students assigned a role to each group member and combined their efforts because they knew that if they did not swim they would sink. This is an illustration of positive

interdependence. During the fourteenth week, the students were asked to prepare creative role-plays during which they investigated crimes in collaboration with other cooperative teams. Group members quickly consulted one another, listened to each other's suggestions, divided the work, and started to prepare their performances. This portrays face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, and the use of social skills. During the last week of the intervention, the students were asked to write a script for a television show and then perform it in front of the class. After asking for students' permission, the teacher videotaped the performances. The videos were displayed during the succeeding classroom meeting during which group members reflected on the positive and negative aspects of the presentations and provided one another with feedback. This example illustrates group processing. However, conflicts can easily arise. This was the case in some groups where the members disagreed on the way to perform the different tasks. In such situations, the teacher had to intervene and help these groups resolve their conflicts and reach a consensus.

Based on the observations, the groups that showed more cooperation and commitment in Boumerdes University were *The Eagles*, *The Strangers*, *The Winners*, and *Masterpiece*. Group members helped, encouraged, and supported each other during the intervention. To give an example, at the beginning of the treatment, one of *Masterpiece's* members was very quiet, rarely took the initiative to talk, and avoided eye contact with both teacher and peers. However, after she started working with her group members, her attitude changed. She became active and showed more participation. This was mainly due to the encouragement provided by her teammates. It was also observed that the members of *The Eagles* did not get along with each other when they were first grouped. One member tended to dominate the group performances. Nonetheless, as time went by, *The Eagles* began to show equal participation among its members. They worked hand in hand, listened to each other's suggestions, and encouraged one another. Their hard work paid off when they were rewarded with a Best Award Certificate for

their creative performance in the television show role-play. *The Strangers* and *The Winners* displayed cooperative skills from the moment they were grouped. The incorporation of intergroup competition increased members' participation and cooperation. The intervention study in Boumerdes University ended with the victory of *The Winners*.

The observations in Tizi Ouzou University demonstrated that among the seven groups, four teams were actually cooperative. These groups were *The Award Hunters*, *The Survivors*, *Madeba*, and *The Wind Takers*. Group members showed equal participation, encouraged one another to perform and use English during group discussions, and provided each other with constructive feedback. In addition, it was needless to remind them to use social skills. The integration of intergroup competition motivated group members to work together in order to succeed. The winning team in Tizi Ouzou University was *The Survivors*.

Students' attitudes toward cooperative learning changed during the last six weeks of the treatment. The participants showed enjoyment in participating in cooperative tasks. These activities (including classroom debate, interviewing plane crash survivors, job interview, advertising, Alibi, and television show) required more commitment and creativity. Intergroup competition helped the students to excel and use their imagination. The students felt a sense of commitment to achieve their part, and had more opportunities to interact with their group mates, use their social skills, and learn new vocabulary. Compared with the traditional teaching method, the observations revealed that cooperative learning encouraged student-student interaction, increased participation, promoted positive attitudes toward English tasks, and developed students' sense of responsibility. Cooperative tasks were beneficial in the sense that they helped the participants to exchange ideas, acquire new vocabulary, and use their social skills.

IV.2.3. Results for the Fifth Research Question

Cooperation has positive effects on students' learning. Nevertheless, like any other instructional method, the integration of cooperative learning into the classroom is fraught with problems. Some are associated with the students, some with the classroom situation, and some with the teacher. The following provides answers to the fifth study question (What are the problems that may obstruct the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou?).

The biggest impediment faced at the beginning of the treatment was students' antipathy toward cooperative learning. At first, the students reacted to cooperative learning implementation by complaining and lobbying individual work. This was probably due to their competitive nature. In the Algerian educational setting, students are encouraged to compete to get higher grades and are rarely involved in real interactive activities. During the fourth week, the teacher-researcher wrote in the teaching journal "The students are not used to work in cooperation. Involving them in group efforts is challenging". In order to overcome students' hostility, researchers and experienced teachers recommended new cooperative learning practitioners to vent the merits of this approach. In the subsequent classes, the teacher highlighted the virtues of working under the cooperative learning approach on the personal and academic levels. The teacher also explained that this experience would be beneficial for them because they would certainly work in cooperation with people of different backgrounds and capacities during their professional lives. Besides, the incorporation of intergroup competition motivated group members to cooperate. Gradually, students' attitudes began to change as they showed more engagement and participation. In the twelfth week, the teacher-researcher reported the following observation "The students are more engaged and eager to take part in the cooperative tasks. It is good to see them work together and help one another". Nonetheless, it was not the case for all the students. It was observed that some groups did not cooperate well.

Certain students did not participate actively in the assigned tasks. In addition, in some situations, group members did not contribute in an equal manner.

It was difficult to train the students to adopt cooperative behavior. For instance, the teacher had to remind them about the importance of listening to others, respecting each other's viewpoints, accepting criticism, and encouraging one another. Besides, the teacher-researcher heard on some occasions students say, "My idea is the best, we should keep it". These students viewed themselves as group leaders, and as such had to take all the decisions. In such situations, the teacher intervened in order to advise the students to listen to each other's ideas first then arrive at a consensus as a group.

A core challenge with cooperative learning was the use of the mother tongue. Whilst engaged in cooperative tasks, it was observed that the students scarcely attempted to use English to discuss their ideas. They communicated with their team members either in Kabyle or in Arabic. In order to encourage the students to interact in English, the teacher emphasized the importance of using the language to negotiate meaning and develop their communicative skills. The students tried to use English when the teacher was near their team but returned to Kabyle or Arabic as soon as she moved away. In the United Arab Emirates, Eisa (2007) examined the reasons why students use their first language during group work. The results of the questionnaire showed that:

> 45% of the students said that they use Arabic to clarify something for a friend or to ask for clarification, 25% of them said they use Arabic because it is easier than English while 30% said because it makes them understand. (Eisa, 2007, p. 137)

Crowded classrooms was another outstanding weakness of cooperative learning application. Algerian classrooms comprise a large number of students, which render cooperative learning integration problematic. The teacher-researcher had to pay attention to seven heterogeneous groups in each university. It was difficult to be attentive and meet the

needs of every student. Kefale (2015) claimed that, "For proper implementation of cooperative learning, the number of student in the class should be optimum" (p. 24).

Allowing students to work in cooperative groups results in noisy classrooms. Unlike the traditional teaching method where the instructor controls the noise level, cooperative learning classes have the potential to be busy and noisy owing to students' interactions and discussions. Maintaining classroom management was problematic at the beginning of the treatment. After the formation of the heterogeneous groups, the teacher decided to assign one student in each team the role of the quiet captain. This role consisted of reminding team members to keep their voices down during group discussions.

The classroom situation was another hurdle to cooperative learning implementation. To be more specific, oral sessions were scheduled either in listening or in computer laboratories. It was difficult to move the furniture in order to perform the group tasks since the tables and sometimes the chairs were fixed to the floor. In addition, the classroom situation made it difficult to move around and observe the groups actions. Due to the restricted number of classrooms allotted to the two departments, it was impossible to work in other rooms. In a similar vein, Kefale (2015) noticed that the classroom situation was unsuitable for an effective application of cooperative learning in the Vietnamese context. One of the interviewed teachers acknowledged, "In terms of materials chairs are not easily movable to perform group work in the classroom" (Kefale, 2015, p. 45).

Successful implementation of cooperative learning requires teacher's understanding of its nature and underlying features. The teacher-researcher did not receive any specific training regarding the integration of this instructional methodology into the classroom setting. This lack of experience made the application of cooperative learning challenging.

IV.3. Interview Findings

This last section of the analytical procedure provides a thorough analysis of the interview outcomes. The results are displayed according to the interview questions. Students' responses to each question were coded and grouped into key themes. Thematic coding of the interview data produced themes that shed light on students' perceptions of the subject of study. The participants' answers are displayed in tables in terms of frequencies.

IV.3.1. Students' Perspectives on Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

The first part of the interview investigated students' perspectives on foreign language classroom anxiety. Specifically, it looked into the most and least anxiety-inducing classroom practices, the probable causes of anxiety, and the factors that can reduce its debilitating effect.

Question 1. *In which classroom situation do you feel anxious or uncomfortable speaking English?*

Students' responses to the first interview question generated the following themes: (1) spontaneous speaking activities, (2) discussing unfamiliar topics, (3) individual oral presentations, (4) group presentations, and (5) none. The frequencies of the participants' responses in each research site are recapitulated in Table 28.

Table 28

Most Anxiety-inducing Speaking Situations

Theme	Frequency in Boumerdes University	Frequency in Tizi Ouzou University
Spontaneous speaking activities	2	3
Discussing unfamiliar topics	2	2
Individual oral presentations	1	2
Group presentations	1	0
None	1	0

The interview findings indicated that speaking spontaneously in front of classmates appeared to be the most anxiety-arousing practice inside the classroom. Indeed, five interview participants (two in Boumerdes University and three in Tizi Ouzou University) confessed being highly apprehensive during spontaneous speaking tasks. Foreign language learners are faced with the problem of anxiety when they are put on the spot to speak in front of the whole class as illustrated by the following declarations:

> **Participant 03:** I feel so nervous when the teacher asks a question and asks me to answer right away. I feel stressed when the teacher give us activities and ask us to perform immediately. In such cases, I get confused. That is I don't know what to say and how to do the activity.

> **Participant 08:** The classroom situation that makes me the most stressed is when the teacher asks me to speak directly. What I mean is that sometimes the teacher just asks us questions or do activities without giving us time to think about what to say and prepare myself.

The interview outcomes disclosed that four students (Two in each research site) out of fourteen felt apprehensive when discussing alien subjects in the classroom. Participant 02 confessed, "To be honest, I feel mostly anxious, less comfortable and highly nervous when discussing some kind of questions or specific subjects that are strange to me". Similarly, participant 13 stated that, "I feel anxious and uncomfortable in the oral class because each time we are obliged to create and give new ideas and discuss unexpected subjects". In the Australian context, Woodrow's (2006) interview with forty-seven students revealed that eight interviewees were anxious when talking about unfamiliar topics (p. 319).

Three interview participants (One in Boumerdes University and two in Tizi Ouzou University) acknowledged that their anxiety reached a crowning level during individual oral presentations in front of the class. These students were afraid to deliver a speech in front of an audience. This aspect of communication apprehension, known as stage fright or performance anxiety, arises when students are required to perform before the entire class. In one study, Zhiping and Paramasivam (2013) investigated the construct of anxiety in oral English

classrooms among Nigerian, Iranian and Algerian students in a Malaysian University. One of the concerns shared by Iranian and Algerian students was their fear of being in public. One of the Algerian students confessed, "When I present I am a shy guy I feel somehow afraid … it is because I'm afraid of facing the public" (Zhiping & Paramasivam, 2013, p. 5). Oral presentation projects are embedded in EFL classrooms due to their emphasis on communicative skills. Having good presentation skills is important for EFL students. Nevertheless, oral presentations are anxiety-making for many students as explained by participant 12,

> I feel stressed during individual oral presentations. When I face the students in front of me, I just feel I should make them understand the topic I'm presenting. I am afraid that my classmates won't understand what I am explaining especially when I am incapable of providing more information and examples.

While working in cooperative learning groups, team members may have difficulties to communicate, organize their ideas, and perform the different assignments. In this case, the use of social skills is of paramount importance since they help team members communicate effectively and resolve conflicts. Misunderstandings and miscommunication between group members and fear of failure may lead to anxiety and may hamper the group's performance. Participant 06 professed,

> I feel anxious during group presentations because it is hard to coordinate what we are saying. We agree on what to say and how to do the task but at the last minute, some of my group mates decide to change everything. Sometimes it is when we are performing that they change the scenario without even informing me. This makes me nervous because I fear to fail because I don't know how to perform my role then.

Participant 07 asserted that, "I always like to answer. I love to participate. This is my passion. That's why I'm here. So, I don't feel anxious or uncomfortable during classroom speaking situations". This student had low anxiety. He was not afraid to answer questions verbally, participate in classroom discourse, or deliver a speech in front of peers.

Question 2. What is the main cause of your anxiety during oral practice?

The second interview question intended to ascertain the potential sources of the participants' apprehension. The roots of anxiety as obtained from the interview data were

grouped into the following themes: (1) lack of preparation, (2) lack of topical knowledge, (3) lack of lexical knowledge, (4) fear of being the center of focus, (5) fear of mistakes and negative evaluation, (6) lack of group coordination, and (7) none. The frequencies of students' answers are presented in Table 29.

Table 29

Potential Causes of Anxiety

Theme	Frequency in Boumerdes University	Frequency in Tizi Ouzou University
Lack of preparation	2	3
Lack of topical knowledge	1	2
Lack of lexical knowledge	1	0
Fear of being the center of focus	1	1
Fear of mistakes and negative evaluation	0	1
Lack of group coordination	1	0
None	1	0

The most anxiety-driving factor among the interview participants was the lack of preparation. Spontaneous speaking activities that put students on the spot without allowing prior preparation may be overwhelming and may cause panic. The interview findings showed that five students (Two in Boumerdes University and three in Tizi Ouzou University) out of fourteen felt anxious when required to speak English without any preparation. The following statements exemplify the situation:

Participant 03: I don't like it when the teacher forces me to answer questions immediately. I feel very anxious when I had to answer right away because I don't have enough time to think about the answer. Being not prepared is not good because it is psychologically disturbing.

Participant 08: The reason of my stress is probably the lack of preparation. I feel anxious when I have to speak in English without even being prepared. If I don't think about the answer or prepare the topic well, I will just sit there not being able to say anything.

Another disturbing factor was the lack of information about a given subject. Students feel disarmed when they have no background knowledge about a particular topic. Anxiety arises when learners have to discuss a particular subject or give their opinion about a topic in which they have little knowledge. In the present study, three students (One in Boumerdes University and two in Tizi Ouzou University) out of fourteen avowed that the lack of topical knowledge was the main cause of their distress. Nguyen and Tran (2015) defined topical knowledge as "the speakers' knowledge of relevant topical information. The information that topical knowledge provides enables learners to use language with reference to the world in which they live" (p. 9). Poor topical knowledge heightens anxiety, reduces students' confidence in their ability to speak English, and hinders their performance. Students become vulnerable when they lack knowledge about a topic they are supposed to discuss as evidenced by the following assertion:

Participant 13: When we have to discuss certain topics, I feel very anxious. The simple reason is that sometimes the topic proposed by the teacher is so difficult and I do not have any ideas or information about it in order to participate.

Lack of lexical knowledge about the topic under discussion was another factor that paved the way to anxiety. Anxious students worry about their incapacity to find the appropriate words to express themselves. Students find it difficult to express their thoughts and take part in classroom discussions especially when they lack the appropriate vocabulary words on the subject, as participant 02 indicated:

I feel anxious when discussing some topics because personally I find it hard to find the right words to express my ideas, especially when the teacher and the other students are waiting for what I'm going to say. I sometimes feel that my vocabulary is not enough. What I mean is that sometimes we discuss topics and I don't know the vocabulary related to the topics. This makes me nervous.

Like Liu's (2007) students, the participants of this study recognized their fear of being the center of attention. Students get highly apprehensive when they are singled out to speak in front of their classmates. Performing in front of others can be a devastating experience for anxious

and shy students because they feel that the audience is scrutinizing every movement and every single word they utter. Audience attention may lead to anxiety and may hamper students' performance. Two students (One in each research site) were afraid to be on the spotlight, as demonstrated by this confession:

> **Participant 04:** When I am performing alone in front of my classmates, I don't feel comfortable enough to speak English well. When I'm in front of them standing, I have some problems with that. I feel stressed and scared when they are looking at me. I don't like to be the center of their attention.

Some students have idealistic beliefs and feel that their presentation has to be perfect from the beginning to the end. They worry about making mistakes and appearing foolish and incompetent in the eyes of the teacher and fellow students. The bottom line is that these students fear to leave an unfavorable impression on others. Subaşı's (2010) interview indicated that one of the causes of Turkish EFL students' anxiety during oral practice was fear of making mistakes and being negatively judged. One of the interviewees affirmed, "I always make pronunciation errors while speaking in the target language and observe a humiliating manner on my classmates' faces. This makes me angry" (Subaşı, 2010, p. 43). In the present study, participant 12 communicated her fear of mistakes and negative judgment in the following:

> I feel anxious performing individually because maybe I think that I will blow (sic) it and I will forget some ideas and all my classmates will laugh at me and say that I am not competent. I am afraid of making unacceptable mistakes. I am studying English, so I think it is forbidden to make small mistakes. Sometimes the teacher makes me anxious too. Some teachers make me uncomfortable and joke when I make mistakes.

Since the cooperative groups encompassed students with different ability levels, learning styles and personalities, it was difficult for the members to work together and prepare coherent performances. The lack of harmonization may be due to the lack of cooperative skills and poor group processing. The following admission clarifies how the absence of group coordination may lead to anxiety:

> **Participant 06:** While working with my mates, I am a little bit anxious and afraid that we mess up what we wanted to say and do. I mean that sometimes some members decide to change everything without consulting the rest of the group and ruin the whole work.

Participant 07 replied, "As I said, I don't feel anxious at all when I am speaking in the classroom. There is no reason to be anxious. I am here to learn. I'm not afraid of making mistakes because it's normal". This student experienced low anxiety, had confidence in his ability to speak English, and considered error making as part of the language learning process.

Question 3. *In which classroom situation do you feel less anxious speaking English?*

The third interview question aimed to determine the least anxiety-producing speaking situations in the classroom. The participants' responses were coded and grouped into the following themes: (1) being prepared in advance, (2) discussing familiar topics, (3) working in cooperative groups, (4) speaking in one's seat, (5) mutual participation, and (6) all situations. The frequencies of students' answers are displayed in Table 30.

Table 30

Least Anxiety-inducing Speaking Situations

Theme	Frequency in Boumerdes University	Frequency in Tizi Ouzou University
Being prepared in advance	2	3
Discussing familiar topics	2	2
Working in cooperative groups	1	1
Speaking in one's seat	0	1
Mutual participation	1	0
All situations	1	0

Preparation increases learners' self-confidence to speak English and decreases the levels of anxiety. Five students (Two in Boumerdes University and three in Tizi Ouzou University) highlighted the importance of preparedness in shrinking anxiety and boosting self-confidence. In a similar vein, learners in Liu's (2007) study admitted that they would be less stressful and more self-assured with good preparation (p. 129). Therefore, teachers should provide students

with time to organize their ideas before performing. The role of preparation in lowering anxiety and enhancing self-confidence arose in declarations such as:

Participant 03: I feel less anxious when I have well prepared the task and what I wanted to say. When I'm well prepared, I feel confident about my work and I feel at ease about answering the teacher's question and speaking in front of my classmates.

Participant 08: I feel less nervous to speak English when I am well prepared. That is to say, when the teacher gives us time to prepare the task or time to think about the way to formulate the answer to the question he asked, I feel more comfortable to respond and confident about my English.

The interview data uncovered that four students (Two in each research site) felt less anxiety when discussing familiar topics. Participant 02 recognized, "I feel more comfortable to participate when I have vocabulary and know the topic proposed by the teacher". Similarly, participant 13 stated, "I feel less anxious in speaking classrooms when the topic discussed is about a subject that I really master and like". Students are less anxious and more confident to participate in classroom discourse when they are knowledgeable about the subject they are supposed to confer. In addition, anxiety declines when students discuss topics that interest them. Thus, in order to involve students in classroom discussions, teachers ought to give them a chance to choose topics that inspire them.

Two students (One in each research site) out of fourteen felt less apprehensive when working in cooperative groups. Cooperative learning is characterized by mutual help and support. These features may provoke less apprehension as participant 12 explained, "When I am working with my group mates, I don't feel anxious or afraid to make mistakes because I know that there is someone to help me when I don't know what to say". In addition, cooperative learning allows group members to divide the load and share the communicative burden as specified by participant 04, "I feel less anxious when I am working with my group because everyone has to do and say something and not all the attention and pressure is on me".

Anxiety arises when students are singled out to speak in front of the class. During the interview, participant 10 professed, "I am more comfortable and less scared to speak when I

just stay in my place and talk without facing the audience". This student felt less self-conscious when she did not have to speak in front of the class. Similarly, more than sixty-eight percent of Young's (1990) students were more relaxed when they were not required to speak in front of their peers (p. 543).

Another anxiety-soothing speaking situation is mutual participation. Participant 06 explicated, "I feel less anxiety when all my classmates are participating. When everyone in the classroom is speaking, participating and contributing his ideas, I feel more comfortable, more confident, and less scared to speak". Likewise, more than sixty-five percent of Young's (1990) students felt less apprehensive when they were not the only persons answering a question (p. 543).

During the interview, participant 07 acknowledged, "I really feel comfortable in any kind of classroom activity. I speak English comfortably and with no anxiety. I have the habit of speaking in public because I am doing theatre. That's why I don't feel anxious". This student had low anxiety and felt relaxed when engaged in oral communicative activities.

Question 4. *What would you suggest to reduce anxiety during oral practice?*

The study findings demonstrated that the participants' levels of anxiety reduced after fifteen weeks of instruction. However, they still reported some apprehension. It is then imperative to create a safe environment where students will no longer feel shy or afraid to express themselves. Thus, the fourth interview question asked the students to suggest ways to reduce anxiety during oral practice.

When asked about the strategies that may help reduce anxiety, the interview participants mentioned several implications related to the classroom procedure, the teacher, students themselves, and classmates. Their recommendations were coded by theme and grouped as follow: (1) preparation and practice, (2) discuss familiar and interesting topics, (3) friendly, (4) smiley, (5) provide encouragement, (6) avoid harsh error correction, (7) help reduce anxiety,

(8) recognize irrational beliefs, and (9) avoid laughing at mistakes. The majority of the suggestions provided by the students were about the teacher. Indeed, among the nine proposed anxiety-alleviating techniques, five recommendations were about teacher's practice and characteristics. According to the interview participants, the instructor is the greatest influencing factor in helping them get rid of their apprehension during oral practice. Table 31 exhibits the frequencies of the participants' responses in each research site.

Table 31

The Participants' Suggested Ways to Reduce Anxiety

Theme	Frequency in Boumerdes University	Frequency in Tizi Ouzou University
Preparation and practice	1	1
Discuss familiar and interesting topics	1	1
Friendly	1	1
Smiley	1	1
Provide encouragement	1	1
Avoid harsh error correction	0	1
Help reduce anxiety	1	0
Recognize irrational beliefs	1	0
Avoid laughing at mistakes	0	1

Even though the participants were enrolled in their fourth semester at the university, they did not have many opportunities to practice their communication skills. This lack of practice is probably due to the restricted hours devoted to the oral class (one hour and a half per week), the crowded classrooms, and the limited exposure to the English language outside the classroom. Consequently, students worry about being called on to speak in front of their peers

especially when they have not prepared their spoken interventions beforehand. Preparation and practice may enhance learners' confidence to speak and may shrink anxiety. In the present study, the importance of practice and preparedness in lowering anxiety was expressed in the following assertions:

> **Participant 03:** One way to reduce anxiety is to do more oral activities to practice the speaking skill and have enough time to think about what to say. This way, learners will have the habit to speak and feel less worried to answer.

> **Participant 08:** I think it is by having more oral practice. Last year, we didn't have the opportunity to practice speaking like this year. So it will good to practice speaking more using interactive activities. In addition, giving time to students to think about the answer will help them feel confident and less stressed because for myself it disturbs me when the teacher asks me to answer a question immediately and tells me to hurry.

As mentioned previously, the participants felt apprehensive when they were required to discuss topics in which they have little or no knowledge. Lack of information about a particular subject may lead to anxiety and may prevent learners from actively participating in the discussion. During the interview, two participants (One in each research site) suggested that discussing familiar and interesting topics could help lessen the intensity of anxiety. The following confession illustrates the point:

> **Participant 13:** To reduce anxiety, I want the teacher to give us subjects that have many things to talk about, interesting topics and not boring ones. The teachers can give us the easiest subjects that all students can speak about without any problems.

Teacher-learner interaction plays a significant role in increasing or decreasing the levels of anxiety. In order to dwindle anxiety in the classroom, teachers ought to be friendly and familiar with students. Indeed, two interview participants (One in each research site) asserted that teachers who are friendly help shrink anxiety. Participant 14 submitted that, "Teachers should be friendly. Students need to feel closer to the teacher and this by being gentle during the lecture and by having conversations out of the class. This way, students will feel comfortable to participate in oral activities".

Using nonverbal signals such as smiling to praise students may help reduce tension and apprehension in the classroom. The rigid side of the teacher may provoke anxiety; therefore,

instructors should display a warm behavior and wear an encouraging smile. A smiling face indicates the teacher's attentiveness and encourages students to keep talking. In the present study, two participants (One in each research site) accentuated the role of the teacher's smile in reducing anxiety. For instance, participant 11 recommended:

> Just smile like you do. When I see you smile, I forget my anxiety. So, in order to reduce anxiety, the teacher should smile. When I see the teacher smile, I feel as if she is my friend and this encourage me to speak.

In order to build students' confidence and reduce their anxiety, teachers should provide encouragement and positive feedback. Having more encouragement and support from the teacher may help shy and hesitant students to take risks and participate in oral discourse. Participant 01 advised, "To reduce anxiety, the teacher can help his students by providing them with encouragement and motivate them to speak and do better. He should encourage them to speak and let me do mistakes". Teachers should motivate and encourage students to speak even with mistakes. In her interview with Young (1991b), Omaggio Hadley suggested that teachers should let students make mistakes and reward communicating messages even if they are grammatically incorrect (p. 19).

Teacher's harsh error correction may intensify students' fear of speaking. Participant 09 confession, "It bothers me when the teacher interrupts me each time I make a mistake. So, he should not correct my mistakes until I finished otherwise I will be disturbed and cannot continue" suggests that students' anxiety declines when the teacher does not overcorrect their mistakes. Similarly, Von Wörde's (2003) participants were upset and became unfocused when the teacher interrupted them to correct mistakes. Therefore, teachers should let students express themselves then provide corrective feedback rather than interrupt them to correct their mistakes during their spoken interventions.

Students value teachers who understand their feelings of distress and help them search for ways to cope with anxiety. Teachers should be able to detect anxious students in the classroom,

let them know that they understand their state of apprehension, and help them find solutions to get rid of their nervousness. Participant 05 suggestion illustrates this point, "In order to reduce anxiety, the teacher should understand what makes me anxious and give me some advice and techniques to help me to be less nervous".

Among the probable causes of anxiety, Young (1991a) identified learner beliefs about language learning. Anxiety arises when students have pre-conceived ideas about the language learning process. In order to cope with anxiety and succeed in learning the target language, it is important to confront students' irrational beliefs. Participant 04 said that, "the sole way to clear anxiety is by overcoming one's false beliefs. I mean some students believe that to study English is hard and that they are not capable to learn it well. This creates stress". In this case, the teacher plays a significant role in identifying perfectionist students and helping them build realistic expectations. Foss and Reitzel (1988) recommended teachers to discuss with students their language learning experiences and shed light on their false conceptions (p. 445).

One of the factors leading to the development of anxiety is fear of making mistakes and being laughed at. Fear of being criticized and humiliated before the entire class may lead to students' reluctance to participate in classroom discourse. Participant 12 confessed that she would feel less anxious and more willing to speak if her classmates avoided laughing at her mistakes.

> In order to reduce anxiety and speak in the class, my classmates should not laugh when I make mistakes. When I'm speaking, sometimes it bothers me when someone is laughing. If I am saying something that is funny, then it's okay. But if I talk and they laugh, it's bizarre. We are all learners and we all make mistakes.

IV.3.2. Results for the Sixth Research Question

The second part of the interview examined students' perceptions of cooperative group learning and provided answers to the sixth research question. Based on their experiences in cooperative learning groups, the interview participants were questioned about their perceptions

and attitudes toward cooperative learning, the advantages and disadvantages of working in cooperation, and their preferred way of learning.

Question 5. *How do you perceive cooperative learning?*

The fifth interview question intended to explore students' perceptions of cooperative learning and answer the sixth study question (What are students' perceptions of cooperative learning?). When asked to reflect on their participation in cooperative learning groups, nine students (Four in Boumerdes University and five in Tizi Ouzou University) out of fourteen found the experience positive and enjoyable. According to them, the classroom environment was supportive and interactive and the oral class became interesting. They had the opportunity to interact with their group members, share ideas, support one another, take part in classroom activities, and make new friends. The following confessions are indications of students' positive attitudes toward cooperative learning:

> **Participant 02:** It is the best learning experience ever. Last year, during the courses of speaking, the teacher used to select topics and ask us to discuss them. Most of the time, the topics were not interesting and only few students participated. But this year, the assignments were interesting and different each time and all the students had the opportunity to speak and interact with the members of the group. This was a good opportunity to know each other and learn from one another.

> **Participant 04:** I really liked working with my group members. I had lots of fun. I have always been working alone, individually. This year when I started working and participating with the other members of my group, I discovered the real meaning of teamwork. I mean when I work individually, I am afraid that I can't carry on. But when we are working in groups, we complete each other's ideas and help one another.

> **Participant 08:** Working in cooperative learning group was very interactive, helpful, and enjoyable. When I work with my group mates, we exchange ideas, encourage one another, and we all have the opportunity to say something. In addition, when we work in groups the teacher gives us time to prepare our presentations.

> **Participant 11:** Definitely, certainly a positive experience. I see it as a positive experience because this is a new learning experience and it was really helpful. As a team, we shared information with each other and there was an equivalent participation among us.

> **Participant 13:** I found working in cooperation very entertaining and enjoyable. The classroom context was relaxing and interactive. I had a lot of fun working with my group members whom I didn't know before. It was an opportunity by which I could make new friendships. As a group, we share our points of view and we help each other.

Five out of fourteen students (Three in Boumerdes University and two in Tizi Ouzou University) had mixed views vis-à-vis cooperative learning. According to these students, working in cooperative learning groups is a double-edged sword. In other words, they viewed cooperative learning as both a positive and a negative experience. The following assertions exemplify this point:

> **Participant 05:** I think that working in cooperative groups can be both positive and negative. I found it positive because I had the opportunity to learn from others and keep confidence in myself. But I also found it negative because some of the group members were lazy people who are relying on you more. They think that you will do everything best so they tell you to do it. They push you to do everything by your own.

> **Participant 06:** Working with my group members was good in the sense that we got to know each other more. In addition, the atmosphere in the classroom was lively and interactive. But at the same time, it was bad because of the conflicts. We had troubles agreeing on scenarios for the tasks and when we agree the rest of the group decide to bring modifications at the last minute. I think that effective cooperative group learning depends on the relationship between the members of the group.

> **Participant 09:** In my opinion, cooperative learning can be helpful and harmful. The positive side is that we had the chance to acquire new knowledge. Another positive point is that at first we didn't know each other, so it is a good way to know others because last year we were from different groups. Concerning the negative points, we didn't choose our group members. So, there are some troubles when working with others.

Question 6. *Do you think that working in cooperative learning groups was beneficial for you? Please explain.*

When asked whether working in cooperative learning groups was beneficial on a personal level, the interview participants conveyed a range of profits that were grouped into themes. According to their responses, cooperative learning (1) enhances self-confidence, (2) develops social skills, (3) promotes learning, (4) reduces anxiety, and (5) develops positive attitudes toward oral tasks. The students became stronger individuals thanks to the help, the support, and the encouragement of their team members. Table 32 reports the frequencies of the participants' answers.

Table 32

The Participants' Perceived Benefits of Cooperative Learning

Theme	Frequency in Boumerdes University	Frequency in Tizi Ouzou University
Enhancement of self-confidence	2	2
Development of social skills	2	1
Promotion of learning	1	2
Reduction of anxiety	1	1
Positive attitude toward oral tasks	1	1

The cooperative learning environment enhances students' confidence to participate. Four students (Two in each research site) admitted that when working in cooperative learning groups they felt more confident about their abilities to speak English and perform in front of their peers. Unlike individual learning, cooperative learning encourages quiet and shy students to speak and participate actively. This aspect of cooperative learning is known as face-to-face promotive interaction. The following declarations show how cooperative learning enhanced the participants' confidence:

Participant 04: Cooperative learning was beneficial for me in the sense that thanks to the teamwork, I was able to present works I wasn't probably capable to perform them alone. I mean that thanks to the support and the encouragement provided by my group mates, I felt more confident to speak and participate in oral activities.

Participant 11: It was really helpful. Last year, I wasn't that sure of myself speaking English. But this year, with the work and the projects we have accomplished with my group mates, it gives me more faith about my work and let me the time to be always sure about what I am going to say and feel better. I'm now interested in theatre.

Three students (Two in Boumerdes University and one in Tizi Ouzou University) out of fourteen confessed that cooperative learning helped them to be more attentive to others and respect their standpoints. Effective cooperation occurs when group members communicate and listen actively to one another. These social skills are vital during teamwork because they help

build group relationships and improve the quality of the group performance. The following assertions demonstrate the role played by cooperative learning in the development of social skills:

> **Participant 07:** Yeah, so much. It was beneficial because as an individual I like my ideas to be first. But when I started working with my group members and we shared ideas, I learned to listen more and respect other ways of thinking.

> **Participant 14:** It was beneficial for sure. For me, it was an opportunity by which I could make new friendships and develop my skills. This year when I started working with the others, listening to them, I learned how to respect the opinions of others. It teaches you how not to be selfish anymore.

Working in cooperative learning groups helped the students to gain more knowledge and develop their vocabulary. Three participants (One in Boumerdes University and two in Tizi Ouzou University) stated that cooperative learning was beneficial in the sense that it enhanced their learning. During cooperative efforts, group members exchange ideas and correct each other's mistakes. Peer feedback is crucial during cooperative learning in the sense that it helps students improve their performance and expand their knowledge. The following statements exemplify the situation:

> **Participant 01:** Working with my friends helped a lot. As a group, we exchange our ideas, and we had the opportunity to correct each other's mistakes and provide one another with feedback. This helped me to know new vocabulary and learn more things.

> **Participant 08:** Working with my group mates was really beneficial for me. I learned so many things. Sometimes, I have wrong information and the group members give me the right answer. I feel good when they correct me. I learn, learn, and learn.

Besides the enhancement of self-confidence, cooperation lessens anxiety. Two participants (One in each research site) recognized that they felt more comfortable and less apprehensive to speak when they performed with their group members. Cooperation creates a supportive and caring learning atmosphere; consequently, students' nervousness and trepidation may mitigate, as explained by participant 12:

> I am always afraid to speak alone in front of people. I try to speak maybe just some words not a lot. But when working and performing as a group, I feel more comfortable and less scared to make mistakes. I speak English in front of my classmates with less stress because I know that my group mates will help and support me.

Cooperative learning improved students' attitudes toward oral tasks. Two participants (One in each research site) actually reported enjoyment in participating in oral communicative assignments. Thanks to cooperative learning, these students developed positive attitudes toward speaking activities. Participant 02 acknowledged that:

> Working in cooperation with my group mates has changed things on me. Last year, most of the activities were only discussion of topics proposed by the teacher. We didn't have the opportunity to participate and interact with classmates. The oral class was boring and not interesting. But this year, each session we have a different activity to perform. The class was lively and interactive and the activities interesting. It made me love oral activities and appreciate them. My favorite activity was the TV show. It was the best.

Question 7. What kind of difficulties have you encountered while working with your group members?

The seventh interview question aimed to investigate the problems students encountered during cooperative learning. In light of the participants' answers, the following themes emerged: (1) domineering members, (2) difficulty to arrange meetings, (3) difficulty to reach an agreement, (4) difficulty to work with students of diverse personalities and learning styles, (5) absence of group members, and (6) none. The frequencies of the students' responses are shown in Table 33

Table 33

The Participants' Perceived Problems with Cooperative Learning

Theme	Frequency in Boumerdes University	Frequency in Tizi Ouzou University
Domineering members	2	2
Difficulty to arrange meetings	1	2
Difficulty to reach an agreement	1	1
Difficulty to work with students of diverse personalities and learning styles	1	1
Absence of group members	1	1
None	1	0

During cooperative work, students may not contribute equitably because some members may dominate the group with their suggestions. Domineering students impose their ideas, make decisions without consulting their group mates, and ignore the contributions of the rest of the group as participant 06 specified, "Some members want to take control. They propose their ideas and they want just to do what they want. They don't care about others' ideas. Each time, they reject my ideas and I'm obliged to do as they said". Similarly, participant 10 indicated, "Some members think that their idea is better and you should do what they want to do. So every time, I give up my rights and let others impose their ideas". Such a controlling attitude prevents the other members from sharing what they know and contributing to the success of the group. However, in some groups, the students consulted each other to solve the problem. Participant's 02 confession illustrates this point:

> At the beginning, there was a misunderstanding between the members of the Eagles. Everyone imposes his opinions and everyone was running for leadership. When the group The Eagles started, we didn't know each other. I just knew the names of the members. One member in particular never asked me to do something. She was preparing everything. She felt that all the responsibility was on her shoulder. She thought that she was the leader. But that was at the beginning. We had a meeting and we told her that no one is the leader, that we should share all the responsibility, that we should learn together, and we have to work as a team. From that day, we started to work as a real team. We had a couple of problems at the beginning, but we found a solution. In addition, we had great results, I think.

The second challenge faced by the participants was the difficulty to arrange meetings in order to prepare the assignments. Some of the activities required the cooperative groups to work outside the classroom. This was the case for the oral presentations during the eighth week, job interview during the twelfth week, advertising during the thirteenth week, and the television show during the fifteenth week. The students had to meet to prepare their spoken interventions. Three of the interview participants (One in Boumerdes University and two in Tizi Ouzou University) indicated that the difficulty to arrange meetings was a hurdle to effective cooperation. The issue was highlighted in the following assertions:

Participant 03: It was difficult to arrange meetings to prepare the work. We live in different campuses. That was a problem. The only time we could meet was when a teacher was absent or during our free time between lectures but we don't have many.

Participant 12: We faced some difficulties concerning the timetable in order to prepare presentations. We have lectures all the day and other home works. At the end of the day, some of us go home and others live in the campus. So we can't meet after class. That's what created problems.

When students interact, they disagree and argue. During group discussions, team members can have different ideas and opinions about a particular topic and strive to come to an agreement. Two students out of fourteen (One in each research site) confessed having difficulties to reach a consensus. For example, participant 01 declared,

At the beginning, it was hard to take collective decisions because everyone has different ideas and opinions. Each one says that his idea is the best one. So at the beginning, we had problems to agree. But later on, we decided to listen and discuss each idea then select the best idea or combine all the ideas.

Cooperative learning requires students to work in small heterogeneous groups. This implies that the groups are composed of students with different gender, personalities, learning styles, and ability levels. Working with shy, introvert, or low-achieving students can be challenging for extrovert and high achievers. Shy students may be reluctant to take part in classroom oral practice. Encouraging these students to participate is one of the key features of cooperative learning. This component, known as face-to-face promotive interaction, takes place when group members help and encourage one another to complete assignments and achieve learning goals. This mutual support among members motivates shy and low achievers to express themselves. In addition, high achievers may have difficulties to explain the material and encourage group members to learn. The following declarations exemplify the point.

Participant 04: In our team Masterpiece, we didn't choose the members. Everyone has its own and preferred way of learning. It was really difficult to make the coherence between us. I was very shy at the beginning and I could hardly speak in English. So, it was difficult for my group members who like to participate to convince me to perform. But with time and thanks to their encouragement, I managed to overcome my shyness and gain confidence.

Participant 14: At the beginning, it was hard to work with my group mates because each has his own level and ability and each one learn at its own speed. So, it was hard for me to

teach and explain things, help group mates complete the tasks, and encourage them to perform. In the past, I work alone or with friends with the same level. But this year, the teacher formed the groups. It was difficult to adjust to the situation.

Another impediment faced by the participants was the absence of some group members. Lack of class attendance hinders the group performance and forces the other members to reconsider their roles, as reported by participant 09,

Sometimes, some members are absent. This way it is difficult to work. If we work in the class then it is okay. The problem is when we prepare the work before and the day of the presentation, one or two members are absent. It is hard to change the work at the last minute.

Participant 07 admitted, "We haven't really faced difficulties. It is just a matter of knowing how to work with others, and respecting and accepting each other's ideas". This confession supports the observation note that *The Strangers* displayed cooperative skills from the beginning of the treatment. The members worked together, encouraged each other, and used interpersonal and small group skills.

Question 8. How would you prefer to work in the future? Individually or in cooperative groups? Kindly justify your answer.

The last interview question intended to determine the way the participants prefer to work during their upcoming learning experiences. Surprisingly, nine students (Four in Boumerdes University and five in Tizi Ouzou University) out of fourteen confessed that they prefer to continue working in cooperative groups. Cooperative learning allowed the students to exchange information, provide feedback, learn from one another, and develop their social skills. In addition, as stated by the participants, cooperation increased their confidence and reduced their anxiety. All these positive outcomes motivated the students to continue working in cooperation. The following declarations illustrate the point:

Participant 02: In the future, I would prefer to work cooperatively. It is a very interesting way of learning. Working with others will help you learn more things, motivate you to participate, and at the same time you keep your confidence in yourself. I think that it is the best way to get new knowledge, correct and improve oneself.

Participant 07: Working with my mates was a rewarding experience because it allowed me to grow as an individual and encourage the others to participate. Thus, I hope that next year teacher of speaking and the teachers of other modules will allow us to work in cooperative groups, not regular group work where everyone thinks about himself and work alone not together.

Participant 12: I prefer to work in groups. It makes me more relaxed and allows me to face the audience with less stress and without caring about making mistakes or forgetting ideas because there is always one of my group members for reminding and helping me carry on my ideas.

Participant 13: I love when we work as a team. I love working in cooperation especially when we start to talk. When everybody is asking questions and we are answering, I feel that I'm in a show. So, teachers should allow us to work in cooperation more often.

Five students (Three in Boumerdes University and two in Tizi Ouzou University) expressed their desire to work individually. Individual learning allows students to be independent and confident about what they know. In addition, they can learn at their own pace and be responsible for their own learning. Participant 06 stated that, "I prefer to work individually where each one can express his own ideas and take his responsibility for his work and each one gets a mark that he deserves whatever it is". Participant 09 professed, "Individually. I think that individual work is much important. In this case, you can show more capacities, more skills, and give yourself much more time and space to introduce yourself as a good English speaker".

<div align="center">

Conclusion

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The present chapter reported the results reached after the analysis of the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire, the outcomes obtained from the observation phase, and the findings got from the semi-structured interviews with fourteen students. The following part of the thesis discusses the study conclusions, provides answers to each research question, and correlates the findings with past research. This final section also presents some pedagogical implications.

Part Three:

Discussion and Implications

Chapter Five: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

Anxiety is one of the most prevalent psychological variables that inhibit the foreign language learning process. The literature on anxiety and foreign language learning contends that speaking in the target language is the most anxiety-provoking event inside the classroom (for example, Horwitz et al., 1986). Anxiety prevents learners from acquiring the speaking skill and developing their language proficiency. Thus, it is of paramount importance to search for classroom strategies that can promote students' participation, enhance their confidence and motivation, and reduce their apprehension about speaking.

In the last few decades, cooperative learning has attracted much attention from research teams and educationists. As mentioned previously, several publications have appeared documenting its numerous profits. Cooperative learning activities provide students with a relaxing classroom environment, encourage participation, allow group members to share ideas and prepare their spoken interventions, and obviate them from the discomfort and humiliation of performing alone in front of an audience. All these characteristics of cooperative learning may help lessen anxiety. Therefore, it was of the teacher-researcher's interest to investigate the effect of cooperative learning on foreign language speaking anxiety. To this end, a quasi-experimental study with two treatment classes and two control groups was carried out at the departments of English in Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou Universities. In order to measure the degree of anxiety, a modified version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) questionnaire was used as a pre-test and a post-test. After answering the pre-questionnaire, the experimental classes were instructed with the cooperative learning approach whereas the control groups were taught through the routine method of instruction. After fifteen weeks, both experimental and control groups answered the post-questionnaire. In addition, classroom observation and reflective teaching journals were used to record the way students interacted in cooperative learning groups

and shed light on the potential problems that obstructed the implementation of cooperative learning. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen students from the experimental groups to ascertain their perceptions of cooperative learning. The present chapter discusses the findings related to each research question and correlates them with the results found in the literature.

V.1. Discussion of Pre-questionnaire Findings

In order to answer the first research question (To what extent do second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou experience anxiety in oral classes?), the pre-questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The percentages for each item were calculated to determine the extent of the participants' agreement or disagreement. In addition, the means and standard deviations were computed in order to assess the degree of anxiety in oral classes. The results were presented in tabular and graphical forms.

The pre-questionnaire data were based on one hundred students' responses. The findings showed that students in both universities displayed different anxiety levels. To be more precise, based on their scores on the pre-questionnaire, the students were categorized into three anxiety groups: low anxiety, moderate anxiety, and high anxiety. Nonetheless, the majority of the study participants reported a midlevel of anxiety. This was probably because they were second-year students and had already taken two semesters of speaking classes during their first year at the university. In foreign language classrooms, moderate anxiety can be paradoxically debilitating or helpful. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), students with moderate anxiety may adopt avoidance behaviors such as procrastination, unwillingness to participate in classroom discourse, or hiding in the back rows in an attempt to avoid being called on by the teacher (p. 131). Yet, the benefits of medium anxiety should not be neglected. According to Chastain (1975), some anxiety can be an impetus for better performance (as cited in Scovel, 1978, p. 132).

One interesting finding is that among the FLCAS dimensions, communication apprehension ranked first followed by fear of negative evaluation. Oral classroom anxiety was relatively low. The pre-questionnaire outcomes showed that the main cause of communication apprehension among the study participants was the lack of class preparation. The participants in both research sites expressed their concern about speaking English without prior preparation. Students tend to freeze up when they are unexpectedly asked to speak or answer questions immediately. Spontaneous speaking activities that put students on the spot amplify anxiety and reduce self-confidence. Students' apprehension may be attributed to their lack of fluency in English. Since the study participants were second-year students, they may not be fluent enough to speak English spontaneously. They needed time to look for suitable lexis and organize their thoughts. In the Chinese context, Liu's (2007) subjects accredited the reason of their apprehension in the oral class to the lack of preparation and claimed that they would be less stressful and more confident to speak English if the teacher allowed time for preparation (p. 129). Liu's students highlighted the important role of adequate preparation in reducing the level of anxiety. Therefore, instructors should realize that asking students to speak in front of the class without allowing prior preparation could be a traumatic experience, and that providing ample time to prepare the speaking task could be an effective way to diminish fear of speaking. The second main factor leading to communication apprehension was students' unfamiliarity with the topics discussed in the classroom. Similarly, 37.5% of Liu's (2007) students endorsed the item "I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me in English" (p. 127). Students experience anxiety during classroom discussions when they are not familiar with the topic proposed by the teacher. They become vulnerable when they lack knowledge or have no opinion about a topic they are supposed to discuss or answer questions about. Subsequently, they lose confidence in their ability to speak English, avoid any involvement, and choose to keep quiet during classroom discussions. Fear of unfamiliar topics limits

students' chances of participation in the classroom, hinders their oral performance, and precludes them from becoming proficient in English. Thus, familiarizing students with the vocabulary associated with the topic the class is discussing could help them cope with their anxiety and encourage participation. Another source that aroused the feeling of anxiety was immature English vocabulary. Foreign language students choose to keep quiet and passive during classroom discourse because they have a limited vocabulary. Students find it difficult to express their ideas when they possess restricted vocabulary knowledge. It is apparent from the pre-questionnaire findings that many students were overwhelmed and scared to speak in the classroom because they did not have sufficient words to express themselves in English. In her study on anxiety among Chinese EFL students, Liu (2007) found that lack of vocabulary plays a significant role in aggravating students' anxiety in oral classes. Limited vocabulary knowledge may be pertained to students' lack of reading. Lack of vocabulary can lead to anxiety, frustration, and limited participation in the classroom. According to Idri (2014), "When learners cannot find the needed and appropriate vocabulary, they hesitate to answer, withdraw from communication in order to avoid any kind of negative evaluation" (p. 405). The feeling of anxiety can magnify when students are asked to speak spontaneously or give immediate responses. In addition, students' shy nature was a contributing factor to anxiety in the oral class. Shy students perceive speaking as a frightening practice and worry about negative evaluation. Consequently, they become reluctant to speak, evade participation in classroom communicative activities, feel embarrassed about volunteering answers or asking questions, and avoid eye contact and any kind of interaction with the teacher and classmates. The pre-intervention findings also revealed that the study participants had low confidence in their abilities to speak English, tended to underestimate themselves, and lacked confidence during oral presentations. Students who lack self-confidence feel inferior, barely believe in their capacities to speak English and face the teacher and peers, and worry about the perception of others. According to

Melouah (2013), "Learners exhibiting lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem have a tendency to rank their speaking abilities lower than that of their peers" (p. 72). Low self-confidence in one's own linguistic capacities heightens the affective filter and exacerbates the feelings of apprehension and insecurity in the classroom. Therefore, in order to reduce anxiety and encourage participation in the classroom, teachers should help their students build self-confidence. In terms of receiver anxiety, the participants avowed their difficulties to understand the teacher's meaning. These students had wrong beliefs that in order to grasp the meaning of the message conveyed by the teacher they must understand every word he/she uttered. Students with input anxiety have high affective filters that prevent them from obtaining comprehensible input. Miscomprehension of the language input may be caused by the teacher's speaking speed (Liu, 2007), bad diction, or the teacher's quiet voice (Stephenson Wilson, 2006). The feeling of anxiety is commonly linked with disagreeable sensations. Indeed, the outcomes divulged that fear of speaking is accompanied by physical reactions such as accelerated heartbeat and trembling. Ansari (2015) declared that, "When we are anxious, we feel nervous, worried, and fearful. We struggle, tremble, perspire, and our hearts beat quickly" (p. 39).

As far as features of fear of negative evaluation are concerned, fear of making mistakes provoked anxiety among the participants. Students' apprehension about committing mistakes precludes them from sharing their ideas and taking part in communicative activities (Chanprasert & Wichadee, 2015, p. 132). Nevertheless, the study participants were not fearful that the teacher would correct every single error they produced. According to Liu (2007), "These students seemed to expect that their mistakes would be pointed out and corrected by their teacher" (p. 126). Since the participants were second-year students, they probably knew that mistakes are part of the language learning process and universal in all learners. Considering their educational level, the participants' fear of mistakes was possibly due to their concern of producing silly errors and appearing incompetent. Students who are concerned about making

mistakes are preoccupied about the impression they leave on others, fear to sound silly, and worry that mistakes would destroy their image as competent students. The pre-questionnaire findings also indicated that the study participants seemed to have a negative self-perception of their ability to speak English. The students who endorsed statement 15 had a low self-perceived speaking ability level. They had the impression that their classmates spoke English better than they did. They compared themselves to their peers and assumed that they were not good at speaking English. Consequently, they evaded participation in speaking activities fearing negative judgment. In the Turkish context, Subaşı (2010) found that self-perceived ability compared with classmates was a major source of EFL students' anxiety during oral practice. It has to be noted that students' fear of negative evaluation by peers was not that significant as they did not fear their mockery nor their criticism. The study participants were not fearful to be criticized and ridiculed by their classmates. They were not scared that their peers would evaluate them negatively and make fun of their performance. Even though these students experienced anxiety and had little confidence in their abilities to speak English, they did not seem to fear the negative judgment of their fellow students. This was possibly due to the fact that all the participants were second-year students with an almost equal amount of lexical knowledge and knew that they were still learners desiring to succeed and accomplish their learning goals.

Oral classroom anxiety was lower than communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. The study findings suggested that the participants had favorable attitudes toward oral classes. Indeed, the students were willing to attend and take extra sessions and had no intention to skip the oral English classroom. The results also showed that the students felt self-assured and relaxed when they were on their way to the oral class. This means that the participants experienced no anxiety before attending their speaking class. However, the pre-questionnaire outcomes indicated that when attending the oral class, the participants felt so

nervous when the teacher asked them to give answers to questions that they forgot things they knew. Output anxiety impacts memory processes and prevents students from remembering and retrieving vocabulary items. Anxiety at the output stage impairs cognitive function, interferes with the retrieval of previously learned materials, and hampers students' ability to speak in English. It has to be mentioned that the oral class did not generate greater anxiety than the remaining courses. This could entail that having listening or reading comprehension lectures would be more anxiety-producing than taking a speaking class. This could also indicate that the students experienced the same amount of anxiety when attending all their courses. The study findings further support Horwitz et al.'s (1986) claim that foreign language anxiety is a distinct syndrome that encompasses learners' perceptions, beliefs, and feelings specific to the language learning environment rather than just being a mere conglomeration of these anxiety dimensions.

In sum, the pre-questionnaire outcomes revealed that the majority of the study participants had moderate anxiety. This confirms the first research hypothesis that "Second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou would experience anxiety during classroom oral practice". The use of inferential statistics showed that the difference between the anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups was statistically insignificant. To be more specific, independent samples t-test bared no statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention scores of the experimental class and control group in each research site. In addition, one-way ANOVA produced an insignificant statistical difference between the anxiety scores of the students who were enrolled at the University of Boumerdes and those registered at the University of Tizi Ouzou. To say it differently, the students in both universities reported the same amount of anxiety prior to the beginning of the intervention study. The findings reinforce Maatar's (2011) conclusions that second-year students of English enrolled at the University of Skikda experienced medium anxiety.

V.2. Discussion of the Post-questionnaire Findings

After fifteen weeks of using cooperative learning and traditional instruction, the post-questionnaire was applied in each of the study groups. The hundred participants completed the questionnaire in the classroom. Having collected the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire data, the SPSS program was used to analyze the findings. The mean scores in the post-questionnaire were computed and compared with those obtained in the pre-questionnaire. The findings indicated that the post-intervention scores were lower than those obtained before the treatment. This suggests a reduction in the participants' levels of anxiety. Indeed, the statistical analysis of the pre-questionnaire showed that the majority of the participants had a midlevel of foreign language anxiety. After the treatment, however, the participants' levels of anxiety fluctuated between low and medium except for Tizi Ouzou control class where the majority of the participants reported only moderate anxiety.

In order to answer the second study question and determine whether the participants' levels of anxiety reduced significantly after their exposure to the cooperative learning approach and to the traditional lecture method, paired t-test was utilized to compare between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups. The outcomes unveiled a significant difference between the groups' responses on the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire. In other words, the t-test outcomes disclosed a statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention anxiety scores of the experimental and control groups. This statistical difference indicates that the levels of anxiety in each of the study groups reduced significantly after fifteen weeks of instruction. Indeed, the results showed a significant reduction in the participants' levels of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and overall anxiety. The study findings indicated that the students who were exposed to the cooperative learning approach and those who were

instructed through the traditional lecture method reported a significant decrease in their levels of anxiety.

The post-questionnaire outcomes demonstrated that the study participants had built up a certain degree of self-confidence when using English in the classroom. They became quite sure of themselves when speaking English in the oral class, felt confident during classroom oral practice, and were relaxed and self-assured when giving oral presentations in front of the class. The students became more confident, felt comfortable during classroom discourse, believed in their linguistic capacities, and were not worried to stand in front of the class and perform. Students with high self-confidence tend to feel assured about their capabilities to speak English in the classroom and experience less anxiety and insecurity during speaking activities. Confident students are also more inclined to feel less shy and intimidated to speak English in front of the teacher and peers. This was the case for many students who acknowledged being less shy to speak English in the oral class. Confident and low communicatively apprehensive students are more likely to feel less shy to communicate their thoughts to the class and interact with the teacher and peers. In addition, the participants in both research sites reported fewer linguistic concerns. To be more specific, many students were not panicky to speak due to their limited vocabulary. These students became less afraid to talk and share their insights with the class maybe because they acquired new vocabulary terms. During the intervention, the students performed different oral tasks and were exposed to a wide range of vocabulary items. This might have helped them to develop their vocabulary repertoire and overcome their language deficiency. Furthermore, the majority of the students were not nervous and confused when speaking English in the oral class. These students experienced less anxiety and uncertainty when it came to speaking English in the classroom. These research findings could entail that as the students became accustomed to English, the teacher, and fellow students, they experienced less communication apprehension, felt more confident to participate in classroom speaking

activities, trusted their abilities to succeed, became less timid to speak and face the class, and encountered fewer linguistic obstacles.

The study findings showed that the participants experienced lower anxiety levels compared to the beginning of treatment and gained self-confidence. Even though the post-intervention scores of communication apprehension were lower than those got before the treatment, the percentages of students' agreement with items 6, 10, and 23 were still substantial. More than forty-five percent of the participants indicated that they immediately start to panic when the teacher asks them to speak English without allowing time for preparation. In a similar vein, forty-nine percent of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) students supported the statement "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class" (p. 129). Likewise, more than half of Aida's (1994) respondents concurred with the statement "I get nervous when the Japanese teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance" (p. 160). In the Algerian context, Khaloufi Sellam (2016) found that 68.74% of her students started to panic when they had to speak without preparation in the oral English class (p. 132), and 62.49% got nervous when facing questions they did not prepare in advance (p. 135). It can be assumed that being unprepared to speak is a major source of anxiety in the classroom. In order to encourage participation and decrease anxiety, students need time to think about what to say. Khaloufi Sellam (2016) highlighted the importance of providing learners with opportunities for "pre-planning, during planning and post-planning the oral topic" (p. 135). The post-questionnaire data also revealed that more than forty percent of the students got upset when they did not understand what the teacher was correcting. Anxious students feel frustrated when they are unable to grasp the teacher's feedback. Incomprehensible input can lead to anxiety and irritation in the classroom. Consistent with Khaloufi Sellam (2016), the manner students are corrected and rewarded plays a significant role in increasing or decreasing the level of anxiety in the classroom (p. 97). Another factor leading to anxiety was students' unfamiliarity with the topics

discussed in the classroom. Students become apprehensive and unwilling to participate in class when they are not familiar with the topics proposed by the teacher. Therefore, familiarity with the subject under discussion could be an influential factor in reducing anxiety in the oral class. Students would feel more relaxed and less apprehensive to take part in classroom discussions when they have information about the topic. Thus, in order to encourage oral production and reduce students' anxiety about unfamiliar topics, teachers of speaking should select flexible topics related to students' proficiency level and interest.

Concerning fear of negative evaluation, the study participants did fear the negative judgment of the teacher and fellow students. They were not embarrassed to volunteer answers in the oral class, were not afraid to be laughed at when speaking English, were not concerned that their flawed English pronunciation would cause jokes, and were not worried that their poor English proficiency would be a subject of criticism. The majority of the students were not concerned about others' evaluation and did not consider pronunciation and English proficiency as big problems in the oral English classroom. These students felt secure and confident and coped with their fear of others' laughter and derision. In addition, the post-questionnaire findings showed that the study participants were not frightened that the teacher of speaking would correct every single mistake they made. These students wanted the teacher to correct their language errors and viewed the teacher's feedback as a way to improve their English proficiency. Even though the students reported a reduction in their fear of making mistakes, the degree of their disagreement with item 2 was still substantial since 25.9% to 45.8% of the participants were still worried about error making. These students were dreadful at the thought that their classmates might notice their mistakes. Fear of making mistakes is related to the learners' concern to impress both the teacher and fellow students. Students who are concerned about making mistakes seek perfection, want to make a good impression, and fear to appear incompetent when committing minor mistakes. The post-questionnaire findings also indicated

that the students did not have sufficient self-confidence. To be more specific, many students believed that they had low ability levels compared to their peers. These students were still concerned about the fact that their classmates might speak English better than they did. Despite the fact that the students acquired self-confidence, there were still many students who compared themselves to their peers and got frustrated when they found that their classmates had better linguistic ability levels than theirs. It can then be deduced that anxiety arises when students have a low perception of themselves and feel inferior to other students.

As far as oral classroom anxiety is concerned, the t-test yielded a p-value greater than .05. This denotes a statistically insignificant difference between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores. More specifically, the students experienced the same amount of oral classroom anxiety at the beginning and the end of the treatment. The study participants had positive attitudes toward oral classes. Indeed, they were not bothered by the fact of taking more classes and had no intention to skip the oral class. In addition, they did not experience anxiety before attending the oral class. The results also showed that the oral class in comparison with other courses did not provoke more anxiety among the study participants. Some of these findings are not compatible with the results reached by Khaloufi Sellam at the University of Annaba. In her study, Khaloufi Sellam (2016) found that 53.12% of the students rejected the item "When I am on my way to oral English class I feel very sure and relaxed" (p. 135), whereas 54.68% concurred with the statement "I often feel like not willing to go to my oral English classes" (p. 136). Contrary to the study participants, Khaloufi Sellam's students experienced uncertainty and apprehension before coming to the oral class and were unwilling to attend their English speaking course.

In order to answer the third research question (Is there any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the students who work in cooperation and those who perform individually?), independent samples t-test was performed in order to assess the

significance of the difference between the post-intervention scores of the experimental class and control group in each research site. Statistically, no significant difference was found and equal variances were assumed. In other words, the analysis of the post-intervention scores indicated that the students in the cooperative learning-based groups felt the same amount of anxiety as their counterparts in the control groups. After the implementation of cooperative learning, anxiety levels in the experimental groups reduced significantly. However, this reduction was not statistically significant compared with the control groups' anxiety scores. The students who worked in cooperative learning groups did not report a significant reduction in the levels of anxiety compared with those students who performed individually. It appears that cooperative learning is not more effective in reducing anxiety in comparison with traditional instruction. Therefore, the hypothesis that "The implementation of cooperative learning would bring about a statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental and control groups" is disconfirmed. The study findings do not support previous conclusions (Khader, 2011; Ma, 2013) where the application of cooperative learning resulted in a significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental class and control group. The decrease of the anxiety levels in both experimental and control groups might have been influenced by other variables. It has to be noted that this was not the first time that the students participated in classroom speaking activities. At the time of the intervention, the study participants were enrolled in their third and fourth semesters at the university. Therefore, the study conclusions probably suggest that over time, the participants' experience with the English language increased and their speaking anxiety decreased. The findings of the present research may support MacIntyre and Gardner's (1991b) hypothesis that "as experience and proficiency increase, anxiety declines in a fairly consistent manner" (p. 111). In addition, the ANOVA test uncovered an insignificant difference between the anxiety scores of the study groups. This entails that second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of

Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou experienced the same degree of anxiety after the treatment. The results indicated that regional settings did not seem to impact the degree of anxiety students experience in the oral class.

V.3. Discussion of the Observation Findings

Classroom observation was first used to detect the participants' anxiety reactions. Both experimental and control groups were observed during fifteen weeks to uncover the existence of foreign language speaking anxiety and supplement the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire findings. The observation phase allowed the teacher-researcher to record the participants' anxiety symptoms during oral practice. The most perceptible anxiety reactions noted during the observation stage included shyness, avoidance of eye contact, unwillingness to participate, blushed cheeks, trembling hands, stuttering, and fidgeting. These signs indicate that the study participants suffered from foreign language speaking anxiety. These observations support the pre-questionnaire outcomes and confirm the first research hypothesis. Indeed, the pre-intervention findings indicated that the study participants suffered from anxiety and uncertainty, experienced some disagreeable anxiety reactions like trembling, felt shy to speak, and encountered linguistic obstacles.

The observed anxiety manifestations can be categorized into physiological reactions such as blushing; behavioral symptoms such as avoidance behavior, fidgeting, stuttering, and trembling; and emotional signs like shyness. Among the three categories, behavioral anxiety reactions were highly visible amid the participants. Some of the study notes support the observations reached by Sanaei (2016) who explored the anxiety reactions displayed by Iranian intermediate EFL learners during oral narratives. The researcher used direct observation as a means to capture students' instantaneous anxiety reactions. Sanaei (2016) detected physiological signs like blushing, perspiration, and palpitation; and behavioral manifestations such as stammering, fidgeting, trembling, procrastination, and avoidance behavior (p. 909).

Sanaei (2016) noticed that, "Behavioral reactions were the most obvious anxiety symptoms and reactions that occurred in the learners' narrative performance" (p. 909).

As the present study advanced, the participants became more comfortable as they showed more motivation and willingness to take part in classroom oral communicative activities. The students became more confident, felt less shy to speak and express their ideas before the rest of the class, experienced less apprehension and confusion, and faced fewer linguistic concerns. These observations are congruent with the post-questionnaire findings where the study groups reported a significant reduction in their levels of anxiety. Indeed, the study participants reported a significant reduction in their levels of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and overall anxiety.

Classroom observation was also used in order to answer the fourth study question (How do the students in the experimental groups cooperate with their group members?). During the first weeks of the treatment, the experimental groups were introduced to a variety of activities to familiarize them with cooperative learning and train them to adopt cooperative behavior. It was observed that the students were not accustomed to cooperative learning. At first, the participants were hostile toward the idea of working in cooperation and expressed their desire to go back to individual learning. In addition, some of the participants refused to work with their allotted group members and asked the teacher whether they could work with their friends. Even though the teacher-researcher gave clear instructions and explanations regarding cooperative learning and the purpose of using social communication skills, some students at the beginning of the intervention study were frustrated and displeased with the new classroom approach and showed disinterest in participating in cooperative activities. In a study about Saudi high school teachers' and students' perceptions regarding cooperative learning, Almulla (2017) reported the same problem. The author noted that "some students at the beginning still felt uncomfortable with the new approach and resisted engaging with it" (Almulla, 2017, p. 184). Students' antipathy

toward cooperative learning may be due to their unfamiliarity and lack of experience with this teaching-learning paradigm and to the competitive dimension of their previous learning experiences. In Algeria, students are praised for individual contributions. Thus, helping others learn in a competitive context is not an easy task. In order to involve the students in group tasks, the merits of working under the cooperative learning approach were emphasized and intergroup competition was incorporated. Students' resistance may also be due to their shy nature. Shy students tend to fear embarrassment and feel uncomfortable interacting and working with students with whom they are not familiar. Therefore, in order to help these students become active and confident contributors, the teacher-researcher engaged them in small-group activities and encouraged them to get rid of their shyness. This had proven to be effective since the students gradually changed their attitudes toward cooperative learning, showed more commitment and enjoyment, and displayed the five key factors of cooperative learning. Group members interacted with one another, exchanged ideas, listened to each other's suggestions, divided the load, encouraged participation, helped one another complete the tasks, and offered feedback. However, in some groups, it was observed that some of the members displayed uncooperative behavior. To be more specific, these students dominated the group performances, imposed their ideas, and did not value the contributions of their teammates. In order to solve the problem, the teacher intervened to model appropriate cooperative behavior. The results of the present study indicated that cooperation is a lengthy process. To work together, students need time to get to know each other, be comfortable with one another, and learn how to accept, work, and help group members learn. Therefore, teachers who wish to implement cooperative learning should be patient with their students, and give them time to know each other and get accustomed to the new classroom situation.

To answer the fifth research question (What are the problems that may obstruct the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes at the Universities of Boumerdes

and Tizi Ouzou?), the experimental classes were observed during fifteen weeks. Besides students' hostility, other obstacles hindered the implementation of cooperative learning. One of these impediments was the use of the mother tongue. During group discussions, it was observed that the students tended to use their first language more than the target language. They used English when the teacher was in the hearing range but reverted to Kabyle or Arabic when the instructor moved away. This lack of interaction in English during cooperative tasks can hamper the development of students' oral communicative skills. Students use their first language during group interactions because it is easier than communicating in English (Eisa, 2007; Taqi & Al-Nouh, 2014). Another reason for the use of the mother tongue might be students' insufficient vocabulary repertoire in English. Another obstacle to cooperative learning integration was the classroom size. The number of students in the experimental classes ranged between twenty-four and twenty-six students. The teacher-researcher divided each cooperative class into seven heterogeneous teams of three to four students. Therefore, it was difficult to monitor each group and control classroom management. Cooperative learning works best when the classroom size is small. Thus, educators and policymakers should apply classroom size reduction programs to allow successful application of cooperative learning. Another stumbling block to cooperative learning implementation was the management of the noise level. When students interact in cooperative learning groups, they generate considerable amounts of noise compared to traditional classes. It is important to take measures to lower down the noise since it disturbs not only the other groups but also the nearby classrooms. In order to reduce the noise level, the teacher-researcher decided to have a quiet captain or a noise monitor in each team. The function of the quiet captain is to encourage group members to use quiet voices during group discussions. Hwang and Ananthi (2017) advised teachers to "assign one student to be the quiet captain for the group and his/her role is to ensure that all the members speak in 6- inch or 15-cm voices so that they would not disturb other groups" (p. 108). It was difficult to implement cooperative

learning in fixed-seat classrooms. Speaking classes were scheduled in listening or in computer laboratories where the furniture was fixed to the floor. The classroom situation impeded group discussions and created difficulties for the teacher to move around the class to observe group interactions. For effective integration of cooperative learning into the classroom environment, it is important to have moveable furniture. This can facilitate group interactions and movement in the room. Successful application of cooperative learning necessitates teacher's experience. Despite extensive research and active planning, the teacher-researcher had never received any training regarding cooperative learning integration into the classroom. The lack of training made it difficult to use this instructional model and train the students to adopt cooperative behavior. Thereby, higher educational administrative departments should provide teachers with some training sessions and organize workshops in cooperative learning usage. Some of the study observations matched the results of previous research. In the Chinese context, Xuan (2015) used interviews in order to examine teachers' attitudes toward the use of cooperative learning in English classrooms at Wenzhou College. The outcomes exposed several pitfalls of cooperative learning. This included classroom size, lack of background knowledge and experience regarding cooperative learning application, classroom preparation and classroom management, standardized test, and lack of teaching materials. In another study, Kefale (2015) investigated the problems affecting cooperative learning implementation in an Ethiopian university. The observation and interview findings revealed that teachers face various obstacles when applying cooperative learning. This encompassed classroom size, classroom condition, lack of training, lack of administrative support, and lack of resources. The present research contributed to the literature by exposing the problems that impeded the integration of cooperative learning in two Algerian universities. Therefore, the hypothesis that "Some obstacles might hinder the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes" is confirmed.

V.4. Discussion of the Interview Findings

After fifteen weeks of instruction, fourteen students with different anxiety levels were interviewed. Each interview comprised eight open-ended questions. Thematic analysis was used to treat the recorded data. The interview allowed the teacher-researcher to get a deeper understanding of the anxiety phenomenon in oral classes. The interview questions covered the most anxiety-inducing classroom speaking situations, the potential causes of anxiety, the least anxiety-provoking speaking situations, and ways to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety.

When asked to determine the most anxiety-producing event inside the classroom, five out of fourteen students mentioned spontaneous speaking activities. Putting students on the spot by asking them to answer questions or speak in front of the class may be overwhelming and may cause anxiety and frustration. Indeed, the most anxiety-arousing factor cited by the students in both research sites was insufficient class preparation. Apart from the interview data, based on the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire findings, the study participants admitted that lack of preparation was a major contributor to anxiety in oral classes. The findings of the present research showed that the main source of anxiety among the participants was communication apprehension owing to ill-preparedness. According to Batiha, Noorizah, and Rosniah (2016), "Unpreparedness as a factor causing speaking anxiety can be explained by two reasons which are: limited language proficiency and inability to respond to spontaneous questions" (p. 72). It can be understood that students feel less apprehensive and more comfortable to take part in classroom discourse when they are given time to organize their thoughts and make proper language choices. In the present study, the interview participants emphasized the importance of preparation and practice in minimizing their feelings of anxiety. This finding is in line with the result by Liu (2007). Like the study participants, Liu's students appreciated the role of preparedness in lowering their anxiety. The assertions "I never want to speak English without preparation. But if I'm well prepared, I will not be nervous, and I can speak clearly" and "I am

often nervous if asked to speak English without preparation, and it is much better if I am prepared" (Liu, 2007, p. 129) illustrate the situation. Preparation and practice can boost students' self-confidence and reduce their communication apprehension. Therefore, EFL teachers should take into consideration the role of preparation during oral performance and provide students with more opportunities to practice speaking. Communication apprehension also occurs when students have to discuss topics that are ambiguous or unfamiliar to them. In fact, the second anxiety-provoking practice cited by the interview participants was conversing about new topic themes in the classroom. Four out of fourteen students acknowledged their fear of speaking about unknown subjects in English. This outcome is in accordance with the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire findings where the study participants recounted their fear of discussing things unfamiliar to them. When asked to specify the sources of their concern, the interviewees highlighted two factors. The first aspect was the lack of topical knowledge. MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noels (1998) believe that topical knowledge has an impact on students' speaking performance. The authors explained that having enough knowledge and being familiar with the topic under discussion boost students' linguistic confidence, while poor knowledge and unfamiliarity with the subject may impede students' confidence and their attempts to speak (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 554). The second reason was the lack of lexical knowledge on the topic. Students find it difficult to communicate their thoughts and ideas when they have inadequate or immature vocabulary repertoire on the subject. For example, students cannot talk about *globalization* when they lack specific vocabulary terms. Therefore, in order to participate in classroom discussions, students need to be equipped with the necessary subject words on the topic and develop strategies to enrich their vocabulary. The results of the present study also indicated that students become disinclined to speak when the topic under discussion is of no interest to them. The majority of Young's (1990) students indicated that they would be more willing to participate in class if the topics discussed were interesting (p. 544). Even though

students' apprehension reduced significantly in each of the study groups, there was still some anxiety in oral classes. The study participants acknowledged their fear of speaking English without prior preparation and their worry about discussing unfamiliar and uninteresting topics. It seems that topic preparation, familiarity with the topic content and vocabulary, and topic interest could help alleviate speaking anxiety. Another anxiety-inducing exercise mentioned by the interviewed students was individual oral presentations. Three out of fourteen students admitted that they feel highly apprehensive during individual presentations in front of the class. Students become anxious and self-conscious when asked to expose and risk reveal themselves in front of others. According to Daly (1991), "the fear of giving a speech in public exceeded even such phobias as fear of snakes, elevators, and heights" (as cited in Von Wörde, 2003, p. 5). Concerning the factors leading to the anxiety associated with individual oral presentations, the students mentioned fear of being the center of attention and fear of making mistakes and being negatively evaluated. Students who suffer from performance anxiety are afraid to be the focus of the class. The more students worry about the attention of the teacher and peers, the more apprehensive they get during their oral performances. Fear of mistakes and negative judgment was also a source of oral presentation anxiety. Worry over the possibility of making mistakes and performing inadequately in front of the teacher and classmates may have a debilitating impact on students' self-esteem, self-growth, and oral communication skills. The participants indicated that they would be more comfortable to face the class and less scared to make mistakes if they performed in cooperative learning groups. Thus, teachers should involve students in group presentations.

Besides highlighting the importance of having sufficient preparation and discussing familiar and interesting subjects, the interviewed students suggested other ways to reduce anxiety during oral practice. They mentioned some teacher's characteristics and behaviors. The findings revealed that building positive and friendly relationships with students and displaying

warm smiles are must-have features to reduce anxiety in the classroom. Students tend to feel more comfortable in the classroom when the teacher sets an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness. Teacher's sociability, such as establishing close interpersonal relations with students and smiling during the course, is an important prerequisite to reduce anxiety and encourage participation in the oral class. In addition, the role of the instructor in the classroom should be altered from the provider of knowledge and feedback to that of guide and encourager of participation. Instructors are expected to encourage shy and anxious students to speak and participate in classroom communicative activities, avoid interrupting them whenever they make a mistake, and adopt delicate error correction approaches. Even though the students were not afraid that the teacher would correct every mistake they made, they were irritated when the instructor interrupted the flow of speaking to correct their language errors. The students wanted the teacher to correct their mistakes but only after having finished their conversational exchanges. Furthermore, teachers who understand students' emotional states and who help them look for ways to reduce their apprehension about speaking were cited as being helpful in easing the feelings of anxiety. Therefore, teachers have to pay attention to students' affective side and help them cope with their disturbing feelings.

The interview also permitted the teacher-researcher to answer the sixth research question (What are students' perceptions of cooperative learning?) and test the validity of the fourth hypothesis. The findings indicated that the majority of the interview participants had positive attitudes toward cooperative learning and favored it over individual learning. Most of the students believed that cooperative learning is a good pedagogical practice and showed readiness and motivation to work in cooperation during their upcoming learning experiences. Nine out of fourteen students seemed to like cooperative learning, viewed it as a positive instructional experience, and agreed that the oral class became more interesting, interactive, relaxing, and enjoyable. The students had the opportunity to interact with their group members, share

insights, encourage participation, and promote each other's learning instead of being passive listeners. Even though the participants were reticent to work in cooperative learning groups in the beginning, they liked the experience in the end. Therefore, the hypothesis that "Students' perceptions of cooperative learning would be negative owing to their long experience with competitive and individualistic learning" is partially supported. The findings indicated that as the students became familiarized with cooperative learning, their attitudes toward this educational approach turned into positive. The findings are compatible with Xuan's (2015) results who examined students' attitudes toward cooperative learning in China. In order to collect data, an online questionnaire was administered to one hundred sixty-six students enrolled in Wenzhou College. The results revealed that 74.69% of the students liked cooperative learning, 78.90% expressed their desire to participate in group activities, and 78.31% wished that teachers would use cooperative learning activities more often (Xuan, 2015, pp. 53-54). The outcomes also corroborate the findings by Almulla (2017) who explored students' perceptions of cooperative learning in one state all-male high school in Saudi Arabia. The results showed that the majority of the students held positive perceptions of cooperative learning and preferred it to the traditional teaching method (Almulla, 2017, p. 180). Nonetheless, the results of the present research suggested that working in cooperation is not everyone's favorite way of learning since five out of fourteen students had mixed views regarding cooperative learning and wanted to go back to individual learning. Owing to the fear of failure and obtaining low grades, some students preferred to work alone rather than in cooperation. Since the Algerian educational context values individualistic learning and competition for grades, this might explain students preferring individual work. Similarly, some of Almulla's (2017) participants preferred individual learning instead of cooperative learning. One of the students declared, "Sometimes I prefer to be taught by using the lecture method and working individually because I can get high grades than when I have to help and explain things

to others" (Almulla, 2017, p. 155). Almulla (2017) asserted that, "Competitiveness and the desire to achieve higher grades than their peers seem to have an effect on students' preference in relation to teaching methods" (p. 155).

The interview findings demonstrated that most of the students developed positive attitudes toward cooperative learning and enjoyed working with their group members. When asked whether they had benefited from working in cooperative learning groups, all the participants responded positively. The students reported psychological, social, and academic benefits. One of the positive outcomes that resulted from learning under the cooperative approach was the enhancement of self-confidence. The students indicated that they felt more confident to perform in front of the class when working in cooperation because they could rely on their group members. Thanks to the help and encouragement of team members, shy and reticent students became more active and confident to participate in classroom activities and express themselves freely in English before the entire class. Another psychological profit of cooperative learning reported by the interview participants was the reduction of anxiety. In traditional classes, students are subjected to the focus of peers who inspect their performances and language choices. Any mistake or any wrong response becomes a subject of attention and criticism. Such classroom situations generate anxiety, discomfiture, and reticence. Unlike traditional classrooms, cooperative learning creates a friendly, pleasant, and safe environment where students exchange ideas, divide the workload, encourage participation, prepare the group product, and receive group members' feedback before performing in front of the whole class. Cooperative learning allows the dissemination of attention among group members and reduces the likelihood of making mistakes and being exposed to the criticism of the teacher and fellow classmates. The safety of small groups and the sense of community among members encourage anxious students to take risks in the classroom. In a study about the impact of cooperative learning on college students' learning anxiety, Ma (2013) asserted that, "The safety of small

groups not only encouraged students' participation, but also ultimately changed their psychology, since it saved students from being exposed to a large number of audience alone" (p. 705). Even though the research results showed that cooperative learning activities do not have a significant impact on the reduction of the anxiety levels when compared with the traditional teaching method, a positive connection was observed between the two variables. Indeed, certain students in the cooperative-based groups felt less anxiety when they performed with their group members. Apart from the interview findings, more than half of the students in the experimental classes supported the post-questionnaire item 26 and indicated that they felt more anxious when they worked individually than when they performed in groups. Cooperative learning also helped the students to acquire and develop social interaction skills. This aspect of cooperative learning, introduced by the Johnson brothers, is of paramount importance when students work in cooperation. Thanks to the teamwork, the students acquired interpersonal and cooperative skills. They became more attentive, tolerant, and accepting of others' viewpoints. In addition, working in a closer interaction resulted in the formation of friends. This was feasible since the teacher-researcher was responsible for group formation and did not allow the students to self-select the teams. When it comes to academic benefits, the students admitted that cooperative learning contributed to the promotion of their learning. When students cooperate, they exchange ideas, explain and teach what they know to their group members, and provide one another with feedback. This facet of cooperative learning, known as face-to-face promotive interaction, allowed the students to share information, learn from one another, enhance each other's understanding, correct each other's mistakes, activate their background knowledge, and learn new vocabulary terms. Another positive aspect of cooperative learning mentioned by the interviewed students was the enhancement of positive attitudes toward oral tasks. Compared with the teacher-fronted classes, cooperative learning provides students with abundant opportunities to communicate and interact with their peers. This interaction allowed them to

work and perform in a lively and enjoyable classroom environment, which in turn changed their perceptions of oral communicative activities. The findings of the present investigation corroborate the literature on the role played by cooperative learning in the promotion of students' personal, academic, and social growth. In line with Johnson et al. (2014), "cooperative learning creates positive interpersonal relationships characterized by personal and academic support and promotes greater psychological health and well-being (including self-esteem and social competencies). It also creates positive attitudes toward the university experience" (p. 114).

Nonetheless, working in cooperative learning groups is not an easy task. Like any other instructional method, cooperative learning has disadvantages. Besides the problems detected during the classroom observation phase, the interview findings exposed other issues related to cooperative learning application. Although most of the students held positive attitudes toward cooperative learning, they also mentioned some weaknesses and hitches. One of the problems of cooperative learning reported by the interview participants was domineering group members. Competitive and high-performing students tend to dominate the group conversations, discount and underestimate the opinions of low-status members, and take all the decisions without conferring with teammates. Such uncooperative behaviors disrupt the group functioning and progress, and preclude the other members from contributing their ideas and participating fully in group tasks. Students' confessions are congruent with the observation notes taken during the intervention study. Even though the teacher-researcher interfered in these groups in order to encourage the participation of quiet students and discourage controlling attitude, some members still dominated the floor of speaking and imposed their ideas to teammates who accepted them without dispute. Such bossy demeanor may be attributed to the competitive or to the perfectionist nature of some students, or to the lack of confidence in low-achieving students considering them passive and less competent. Another hurdle was the difficulty to coordinate

schedules and arrange group meetings. When the students were required to engage in cooperative work outside the classroom, they had difficulties to meet in order to prepare their spoken interventions. Students' busy timetables and their different places of residence made the arrangement of common meetings problematic. The participants confessed that they took advantage of their free periods and the absence of some teachers to work on their assignments. Conflicts are an inevitable part of cooperative group learning. Two interview participants recognized the difficulty to come to an agreement. When students work together, they disagree, have opposing opinions about a given subject, and struggle to take collective decisions. Conflicts can be destructive or constructive. Destructive conflicts hamper students' learning and group development, whereas constructive conflicts have the potential to increase team productivity and enhance the quality of cooperation. Cooperative learning is a peer-to-peer educational strategy where students with a range of ability levels, personality traits, and learning styles work together to reach a common goal. Not all students find it easy to take an active part within such heterogeneous teams. Shy students may have a hard time to cooperate because they fear embarrassment and negative judgment. High-performing students, on the other hand, may find it difficult to teach low-achieving group members. Encouraging shy students to perform and become active contributors in teamwork-based activities and helping low achievers to learn is one of the key components of cooperative learning. Since the participants were not familiar with cooperative learning, they first had difficulties to get accustomed to the classroom situation and help others learn. Lack of class attendance of some group members was also cited as a challenging aspect of cooperative learning. Absences hamper the progress of the group and oblige the other members to fill in for the absent teammate(s).

In sum, the results of the present study suggested that cooperative learning has strengths and weaknesses. Cooperative learning has proven to be a useful instructional approach. Most of the interviewed students showed positive attitudes in favor of cooperative learning, reported

enjoyment and benefits from working with teammates, and proposed that cooperative learning should continue to be implemented in the classroom. Nonetheless, the study findings indicated that there are some difficulties in the application of cooperative learning in Algeria. Despite the challenges, cooperative learning is in many ways a more effective instructional approach than competitive and individualistic efforts. Compared to the control classes, the students in the experimental groups showed more participation, interaction, engagement, and positive attitudes toward oral tasks. Therefore, EFL teachers should be encouraged to transform their traditional classes into cooperative ones.

Conclusion

This study aimed to delve into the effect of cooperative versus individual learning on foreign language classroom anxiety. The results demonstrated that both cooperative instruction and individual learning were equally effective in reducing language anxiety. Nonetheless, the participants still experienced some anxiety. Therefore, the succeeding chapter offers some implications to help lessen foreign language speaking anxiety.

The study findings suggested that there are other ways to teach oral expression than traditional instruction. Thanks to the implementation of cooperative learning, the students had a chance to socialize, which made the classroom very interactive. This interaction allowed the students to teach and learn from one another and develop their social skills. Despite the challenges and limitations of cooperative learning, teachers ought to incorporate this instructional approach into the classroom. Based on the teacher-researcher's experience with cooperative learning integration, the last chapter provides some useful guidelines for teachers who want to apply this pedagogical practice in their teaching.

<u>Chapter Six: Pedagogical Implications</u>

Introduction

Since anxiety plays a crucial role in the foreign language learning process, this chapter aims at providing both teachers and students with some recommendations to help reduce its debilitating effect. It enumerates several anxiety-reducing strategies reported in the existing literature and suggests other solutions based on the findings of the present research. Besides, the study findings indicated that cooperative learning has many advantages. However, the use of this pedagogical practice in Algeria is rather scarce and challenging. Based on the teacher-researcher's experience with cooperative learning implementation, this chapter offers guidelines for teachers who want to integrate this approach in their teaching.

VI.1. Suggested Ways to Reduce Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Oral production is anxiety-inducing for many students. Due to the pervasive influence of anxiety on the speaking skill, it is important to identify anxious students in the classroom and help them get rid of their apprehension. Searching for ways to assuage students' anxiety should be one of the priorities of language teachers. Besides the teacher's contribution in assisting learners in their journey to relieve anxiety, students themselves should contribute. Based on the conclusions of past research and the study interview findings, the following strategies aspire to help lessen anxiety during oral practice.

VI.1.1. Strategies for Teachers

The teacher plays an important role in decreasing the level of anxiety students experience in the classroom. Tanveer (2007) stressed the significance of teacher consideration of learners' anxiety in helping them attain the envisioned performance goals in the foreign language (p. iii). Thus, the following recommendations intend to help EFL teachers alleviate anxiety among their students.

- The first step in helping students to overcome their debilitating feelings is to acknowledge the existence of language anxiety. Teachers should understand that oral production is anxiety making for some students (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009, p. 43). To detect the presence of anxiety, teachers should observe the class and pay attention to students' learning styles and individual differences. By doing this, they will understand the reasons underlying students' reluctance to participate in classroom discourse. They will realize that the quiet students in their classrooms are not sluggish or unmotivated but experience speaking anxiety. They will also be able to identify students' jittery behaviors and take measures to help them get rid of their apprehensions. Aida's (1994) students appreciated teachers who were able to identify anxious learners and who looked for ways to help them cope with their nervousness (p. 164). Like Aida's findings, the study interview outcomes suggested that students like teachers who are conscious about the existence of anxiety, who understand their emotional state, and who assist them in counteracting their devastating feelings.

- Students need to know that they are not alone in their apprehensions. Hence, teachers should explain to their students that anxiety is a universal problem among foreign language learners (Alrabai, 2014, p. 95). One of Von Wörde's (2003) participants submitted that teachers should begin the first day of class by explaining to students that anxiety is a normal feeling and a common issue amid students (p. 7). For instance, teachers can share their experiences as anxious students. In addition, teachers should motivate students to discuss their worries and negatives emotions with one another (Liu, 2007, p. 133). Once students become aware of the existence of anxiety and understand that it is a common problem in language classrooms, they can search for strategies to lower it.

- Fruitful language learning takes place when students have low anxiety, high motivation, and high self-confidence. To lower students' affective filters, teachers should create a relaxing and non-threatening classroom environment where students can express themselves without

fear of mistakes and humiliation. This can be accomplished by creating a friendly learning environment. Indeed, Young (1990) recommended teachers to create a safe classroom atmosphere by being friendly, relaxed, and patient with students (p. 550). Likewise, most of Price's interview participants admitted that "they would feel more comfortable if the instructor were more like a friend helping them to learn and less like an authority figure making them to perform" (as cited in Young, 1991a, p. 432). In a similar vein, the participants of the present study indicated that friendly teachers and familiarity with the instructor are influencing factors in reducing speaking anxiety. In this sense, teachers should be friendly and assume the role of facilitators rather than authoritative figures in the classroom. Creating a friendly and informal learning context can reduce the distance between teachers and students and help learners cope with their disturbing feelings. Teachers can also create a harmonious classroom atmosphere by using nonverbal signals. Nonverbal praise like smiling can play a crucial role in alleviating speaking anxiety and encouraging students' participation. Indeed, the study interview findings implied that students become less anxious and more inclined to speak when the teacher praises them with a smile. Consistent with Yang (2017), "A smile gives positive feedback and impacts the affective domain by communicating pleasure, trust, friendliness, interest … Teacher's natural smile in the classroom can ease the students' pressure on learning English, and help students to create hopeful and optimistic mind" (p. 1335). Such a positive learning climate can also be created by integrating humor into the classroom. Introducing humor can enhance students' confidence and motivation to speak, and help them relax and acquire the target language. Laughter is indeed the best medicine. Akinkurolere (2013) stressed the importance of humor in creating a lively classroom atmosphere and lowering anxiety (p. 66). Likewise, Young's (1990) subjects felt less apprehensive when the teacher displayed a good sense of humor (p. 550). A humorous way of teaching can shorten the distance between teachers and students,

lighten the classroom mood, and engage students in speaking tasks. Thus, teachers should inject humor into the classroom. They can, for instance, tell jokes, share funny stories or memories with their students, or use wordplays.

- To reduce anxiety in the classroom, various researchers encourage teachers to build a sense of community among students. In a study about anxiety and speaking, many of Young's (1990) subjects asserted that they would feel less anxious to speak in front of their peers if they knew them better (p. 543). In another study, Von Wörde's (2003) students highlighted the importance of developing a feeling of community to lower anxiety. In order to create this classroom community, the participants counseled teachers to arrange the class in a circle, motivate them to meet and interact outside the classroom, and form study groups (Von Wörde, 2003, pp. 6-7). In order to help students know their classmates personally, teachers can also use icebreakers. The term "icebreaker" refers to a ship designed to break the ice in order to help other ships navigate in the frozen seas. This concept also refers to the idiomatic expression "break the ice", which denotes an attempt to make a social situation less awkward and more comfortable. Icebreakers intend to help people get to know each other in an easy-going way. Just like the ships that render navigation easy in the Arctic and Antarctic, icebreakers help learners feel relaxed while engaged in a conversation with the teacher and/or peers. Instructors can also permit students to work in pairs or small groups. In order to get students to know each other, teachers should allow them to work with different peers for different assignments.

- To help students to become confident speakers and overcome their fear of mistakes and unfavorable judgment, teachers should determine the timing and the method of error treatment. Students tend to feel apprehensive and disturbed when the teacher interrupts the flow of speaking to correct erroneous utterances. Therefore, in order to encourage participation and reduce anxiety in the classroom, teachers ought to delay error correction.

In other words, teachers should tolerate students' mistakes, let them complete the task, and then provide corrective feedback. Besides the timing, teachers should decide how to correct language errors. Instructors' constant error correction approach amplifies anxiety and restrains students' involvement. Thus, teachers should establish a friendly and supportive classroom environment where mistakes are not overcorrected (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009, p. 43). Other researchers (Idri, 2014; Von Wörde, 2003) proposed the use of gentle error correction methods and words of encouragement. In this case, teachers should avoid highlighting individual mistakes and giving negative remarks. In addition, in order to persuade those students who worry about language errors to take an active part in speaking activities, teachers should tell them not to worry about making mistakes, and let them know that error making is an unavoidable component of the foreign language learning process and that all learners make mistakes.

- In order to reduce anxiety and boost self-confidence and motivation, teachers should encourage students to participate in speaking activities and take risks in the classroom. They should encourage quiet students to be actively involved in speaking classes, provide positive feedback, and reward communicative messages. Since error making is a natural phenomenon in the foreign language learning process, teachers ought to encourage oral production by allowing students to express themselves freely and make mistakes. Teachers should display friendly, supportive and cooperative behaviors, and stimulate encouragement and positive reinforcement.

- In an interview with Young (1991b), Omaggio Hadley suggested that not putting students on the spot would help them feel less apprehensive (p. 17). Indeed, the study findings indicated that not being prepared to speak was a major contributor to anxiety in oral classes and that having sufficient time to organize ideas and prepare for the speaking activity could help reduce anxiety. In addition, having more oral practice could be an effective strategy to

diminish speaking anxiety. Therefore, in order to lower anxiety and improve oral performance, teachers should avoid involving students in spontaneous speaking activities and pressuring them to give immediate responses. Instead, they should allow more opportunities to practice speaking and provide students with ample time to get well-prepared to speak.

- Students become self-conscious and less inclined to take part in classroom discourse when they are asked to discuss unfamiliar and uninteresting topics. Thus, to reduce anxiety and encourage active participation, teachers should select topics relevant to students' interest and proficiency level, and familiarize them with the subject content and vocabulary. Discussing familiar subjects is more likely to encourage students to speak without being afraid to make mistakes. In addition, allowing students to select topics that interest them and that suit their proficiency level can motivate them to participate in classroom discussions. The more students are interested in a topic, the more eager they are to communicate it to peers.

- Individual oral presentations in front of the class have the potential to induce communication apprehension and fear of unfavorable judgment. Students who suffer from performance anxiety fear to be the center of attention and worry about the impression of the teacher and peers. Therefore, in order to help students to feel comfortable, teachers should engage them in pair or group presentations. By doing so, students' stage fright, their fear of making mistakes, and their worry over negative judgment may lessen. Teachers are also advised to involve students in more classroom oral presentations and to train them during the early stages of the language learning process on how to make presentations before the entire class.

All in all, in order to eliminate anxiety in the classroom, teachers should be aware of the existence of this psychological construct, determine its causes; and avoid classroom practices that cause trepidation for students. Besides teachers' assistance, students themselves should acknowledge the existence of speaking anxiety and search for ways to reduce its intensity. Once

both teachers and students become conscious about the existence and the causes of anxiety, they can work hand-in-hand in order to take measures to minimize its damaging effects. Hence, the following recommendations are expected to help students overcome their disturbing feelings.

VI.1.2. Strategies for Students

Hauck and Hurd (2005) offered a list of eleven anxiety-alleviating techniques. To cope with anxiety, the authors recommended students to use the following strategies.

1. *Use positive self-talk (For example, I can do it; it doesn't matter if I make mistakes; others make mistakes).* In order to overcome anxiety, students should combat negative thoughts with positive thinking and understand that all foreign language students make mistakes. For example, students can use positive self-talk before presentation performance to reassure themselves that everything will be fine. This strategy can be particularly helpful to reduce state anxiety.

2. *Actively encourage myself to take risks in language learning, such as guessing meanings or trying to speak, even though I might make some mistakes.* Students should encourage themselves to speak and keep talking even if they make mistakes. They should encourage themselves to take part in classroom discourse and risk reveal themselves in front of the class. Self-encouragement can boost students' confidence and motivation to speak and shrink their anxiety.

3. *Imagine that when I am speaking in front of others, it is just a friendly informal chat.* Many students experience anxiety when they are required to speak or give a presentation before the entire class. Stage fright is accompanied by anxiety reactions such as accelerated heartbeat, shortness of breath, sweating, and shaking. Therefore, in order to manage their anxiety, students should visualize themselves speaking to a group of friends rather than in front of peers who judge their performance.

4. *Tell myself when I speak that it won't take long*. Shy and introvert students have difficulties to express themselves in the classroom. In order to overcome their reticence to speak, they should picture themselves giving a brief speech.

5. *Give myself a reward or treat when I do well*. Students should recompense themselves when they accomplish their learning goals. To reinforce their success, they can treat themselves with a book, a meal, new clothes, or anything they want. They can also take a break, catch up with friends on Facebook or other social media outlets, and share their accomplishments.

6. *Be aware of physical signs of stress that might affect my language learning*. If students can acknowledge their fears and unrealistic beliefs, they will be able to identify anxiety-inducing situations in a more rational way and attempt to face rather than evade these anxiety-producing events (Foss & Reitzel, 1988, p. 445). In order to help students identify their worries during communicative situations, Foss and Reitzel (1988) proposed the use of an anxiety graph. This chart helps students realize that not all learning situations produce the same amount of anxiety. On the word of Foss and Reitzel (1988), "The anxiety graph is designed to help students to gain an accurate understanding of the nature of their anxiety, to pinpoint when anxiety is highest in a given interaction, and to approach the situation more realistically" (p. 447).

7. *Write down my feelings in a day or notebook*. Students should be encouraged to keep a diary where they can record their worries and language learning experiences. Foss and Reitzel (1988) explained that journal writing "can help students track their feelings of apprehension in the second language situation. In addition to talking/thinking through anxieties, students also can write through their feelings of inadequacy to arrive at a more realistic, positive sense of their progress" (p. 450). Journal writing can help students detect inadequate feelings and build realistic expectations.

8. *Share my worries with other students*. Sharing one's fears may help students moderate anxiety. Students should share their apprehensions not only with peers but also with the teacher, friends, and family members. They can also share their apprehensions and negative emotions with their Facebook friends. This can help them receive genuine emotional support and advice on how to cope with anxiety.

9. *Let my tutor know that I am anxious*. Students should inform the teacher about their fears and apprehensions. By doing so, the instructor will understand the reasons for their passive behavior in the classroom, show sympathy and support, and help them search for effective ways to assuage their nervousness.

10. *Use relaxation techniques e.g. deep breathing, consciously speaking more slowly, etc*. The more relaxed, the less students are anxious. Tseng (2012) stated that relaxation turns "nervous energy into positive energy" (p. 84). Thereby, students need to use relaxation techniques like deep breathing. Deep breathing can help students control their anxiety and relax their muscles. Tseng (2012) advised students to sit comfortably, take long slow breaths, hold it for four or five seconds, and release it slowly (p. 84). In addition, students who suffer from performance anxiety tend to speak very quickly. In order to articulate their thoughts and reach the audience, they should slow down and avoid rushing their speech or presentation. Another relaxation technique that students can use before any stressful situation is music. Listening to soothing music can help students calm down their nerves and put themselves in a positive mood for learning.

11. *Other*. For example, reviewing previously learned materials to check progress, and revision and rehearsal to boost self-confidence.

- Besides the aforementioned anxiety-alleviating strategies, students should recognize their irrational beliefs about language learning and build realistic expectations. Some students have faulty beliefs about the difficulty and the nature of language learning and negative

perceptions about their ability to learn the target language. Unrealistic ideas about language learning may lead to anxiety and frustration, dissatisfaction with one's own performance, reticence to speak, and lack of confidence and motivation to learn the target language. Hence, students need to acknowledge those unfavorable beliefs that negatively influence their language learning. They should, for instance, keep in mind that making mistakes is not a matter of life and death but a natural part of the foreign language learning process, and understand that an ideal performance is just a myth. In order to reduce speaking anxiety, students should "realize that perfection is an impossible goal and that is not a requisite for success" (Tseng, 2012, p. 84).

- Classmates also play a crucial role in language learning. The negative behavior of some students toward their peers can provoke anxiety. Many students give too much importance to their self-image and the attitude of their fellow students and tend to get apprehensive when they laugh at their mistakes and flawed pronunciation. Consequently, they keep quiet during classroom communicative activities by fear of making mistakes and being exposed to the negative judgment of class fellows. In order to reduce anxiety in the classroom and encourage participation, students should understand that speaking in the classroom is an anxiety-producing event for other students. They should display a positive attitude and avoid laughing at their classmates' errors and making fun of their answers.

VI.2. Proposed Guidelines to Implement Cooperative Learning

The findings of the present research showed that unlike traditional instruction, cooperative learning increased students' participation and interaction, developed their social skills, and enhanced self-confidence and positive attitudes toward oral tasks. Teachers are, thus, encouraged to integrate cooperative learning into their teaching. The study conclusions, however, revealed that the application of this pedagogical practice in Algerian EFL classrooms is a challenging task. Therefore, based on the teacher-researcher's experience with cooperative

learning implementation, the following recommendations intend to help teachers who wish to infuse this teaching model into their classrooms, maximize the amount of interaction, and enhance students' gains.

- To apply cooperative learning successfully in the classroom, teachers need to understand its basic principles and build experience and positive attitudes. To achieve this, they need to participate in cooperative learning training workshops to gain knowledge and experience about cooperative learning implementation and raise their awareness about the immense potential of this instructional approach for teachers and students alike.

- One important issue that teachers need to consider when applying cooperative learning is group formation "who will work with whom". Group composition can be a complicated process. When integrating cooperative learning into the classroom, teachers can be confronted by the dilemma of whether using students-selected groups, random grouping, or instructor-generated teams. When students are allowed to select the teams, they tend to form friendship groups and fail to involve low-status and minority students in the classroom. According to Johnson et al. (1991), "Having students select their own groups is often not very successful, because such groups often are homogeneous; for example, high achieving students work with other high-achieving students…" (p. 61). This uniformity can impact group cohesiveness and progress. Therefore, teachers are advised to establish group membership. They can use random appointment such as the count-off method (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 61), which involves assigning numbers (e.g. 1-4) or letters (e.g. A-D) to students then grouping them according to their numbers or letters. For example, all the 1's or all the A's will be in one group. This is an effective grouping system because it is easy to administer and prevents the formation of friendship groups. However, this grouping technique does not always ensure a good combination of students (Clark & Baker, 2015, p. 23). In order to have a good mix of students in each team, teachers should form heterogeneous groups based on

gender, ability level, and learning styles. Before forming the groups, instructors need first to learn about students and their abilities. One common method requires the use of a questionnaire to solicit information "about preferred working style, language ability, skills, study habits, times that they are available for meetings" (Clark & Baker, 2015, p. 23).

- In order to promote cooperation, ensure the participation of all group members, and prevent the occurrence of dominant personalities, teachers should build individual accountability. The first step consists in the formation of small heterogeneous groups. As Johnson et al. (1991) explained, "The smaller the group, the greater individual accountability could be" (p. 20). The ideal group size according to most cooperative learning practitioners is four members. This size provides sufficient diversity of opinions, and opportunities to contribute ideas and form pairs within groups. The next step is the assignment of roles to group members like reader, recorder, checker of understanding, encourager of participation, and elaborator of knowledge (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 3). For instance, the role of the encourager is to encourage teammates to participate and share ideas (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 27). In order to build the accountability of each student, Kagan (1989) also suggested distinctive roles such as leader, recorder, reporter, timer, checker, and quiet captain (as cited in Liang, 2002, p. 65). For example, the role of the quiet captain is to monitor the noise level during group discussions. According to Árnadóttir (2014), individual accountability can be structured by assigning different roles to group members, "that is, one student could be responsible for spelling while another is responsible for grammar" (p. 16). Finally, individual contributions should be assessed. One way to do this is by randomly calling on students and questioning them about the material they have discussed in groups (Johnson et al., 1991, p. 20).

- Not all students are born with the capacity to work in cooperation (Johnson et al., 1991). Therefore, before implementing cooperative learning, teachers should teach the required

interpersonal and small group skills. The teaching of social skills is of significant importance as they help reduce needless conflicts and increase the chances of meaningful interaction and productive cooperation among group members. For cooperation to succeed, teachers should explain to their students how to communicate successfully with teammates, take turns and share ideas, listen attentively to others, ask for clarifications, respect each other's viewpoints, and handle disagreements effectively. Johnson and Johnson (1996) presented five steps to teach cooperative skills. Before engaging students in cooperative group learning, teachers should first discuss the need for the social skill. One effective way to explain the importance of a cooperative skill is to ask students to role-play a situation where the skill is lacking in a group. Second, teachers should select a social skill and explain how and when to use it. They can use a T-Chart graphic organizer to model the skill until students understand what the targeted skill looks like (Things to do) and sounds like (Things to say). They should choose one social skill and ask students to brainstorm what the skill looks like (nonverbal behavior) and sounds like (verbal behavior). Third, teachers should provide students with opportunities to practice the social skill. This can be accomplished by incorporating cooperative learning structures. Think-Pair-Share, for instance, can be used to practice active listening and turn-taking. Teachers can also observe each group, record how often and how effectively students use the skill, and intervene in order to help them improve their use of the skill. Fourth, teachers should give students corrective feedback on their use of the required skill. They can ask group members to process on how well they think their team used the skill and reflect on ways to improve their use of the skill. After small-group processing, teachers can integrate whole-class processing to provide feedback. Fifth, instructors should ensure that students persevere in practicing the skill until it becomes automatic. Students need to practice the skill many times so they can incorporate it into their

daily exchanges with group mates (Johnson & Johnson, 1996, pp. 2-3). Figure 22 is an example of a T-chart that teachers can use to teach students social skills.

Encouraging participation

Looks like	*Sounds like*
Smiles	What is your idea?
Eye Contact	Awesome!
Thumbs Up	Good idea!
Pat On Back	That's interesting.

Figure 22. T-Chart: Encouraging participation (Johnson & Johnson, 1996, p. 2).

- A core challenge teachers face when applying cooperative learning in the classroom is the assessment of individual efforts. During cooperative work, participation can vary from one group member to another. Thus, awarding the same mark to each group member may lead to the perception of unfair assessment and encourage free loafing. To achieve individual fair assessment and recognize individual contributions, teachers can observe the groups at work and record individual level of participation, or incorporate self-assessment and peer-assessment. Instructors can encourage students to evaluate their performance and contributions to the group work, determine their strengths and weaknesses, and assess the efforts and behaviors of their fellow group members.

- One problem encountered during the integration of cooperative learning was students' hostility. In order to avoid students' antipathy, teachers should communicate the purpose and benefits of learning in cooperation. Students need to understand the values of working in cooperative learning groups. On the first day of class, teachers should highlight not only academic success but also social and psychological benefits. Before any cooperative learning lesson, teachers should also explain the purpose of using cooperative learning rather than traditional instruction. This can help students understand why they are doing things

differently and what they will gain from the process. Consistent with to Byrd (2009), "When students are aware of the purpose and benefit of functioning in groups, they will be more willing to adapt their behaviors for successful completion of the activities" (p. 20).

- The study findings showed that cooperation is a lengthy process. Working in cooperative groups can be a new learning experience for students. Owing to the competitive and individualistic instructional environment, many Algerian students have no experience with cooperative learning. In order to operate in teams, they need training and time to familiarize themselves with cooperative group learning. Accordingly, teachers should devote ample time to train students to adopt cooperative behavior and help them get accustomed to cooperative learning and fellow classmates. Teachers should first incorporate teambuilding activities such as Three-Step Interview, assign students into short-term groups, involve them in informal cooperative learning structures like Think-Pair-Share and Numbered Heads Together, and allow them to work with different students for different tasks. Once students become familiar with cooperative learning and gain social skills, teachers can allot them to long-term groups to work on a broader project.

- In order to function as a team, students need to build a group identity and create a spirit of togetherness. Team identity building starts when each cooperative group is asked to brainstorm on team names. Teachers should ask group members to consult and select a name for their respective teams. Having team names can help students realize that they belong to one group and that in order to attain success they have to work together and support one another. Another way to form a group bond is to allow group members to work together for at least a few weeks. This allows students to know their teammates and develop their social skills.

- Intergroup competition can increase group interaction, productivity, coordination, and cohesion. The present study showed that this blended competitive-cooperative learning

approach motivated group members to work together and enhanced the quality of cooperation and performance. Since Algerian students learn in a competitive context, teachers should harness this competitive spirit to encourage group members to cooperate by establishing competition between groups.

- When integrating cooperative learning into the classroom, teachers should alter their role from being the main source of knowledge to that of facilitators of students' learning and monitors of group performance and progress. They should move around the class, observe the group actions, and record individual participation. They should also offer help when needed, encourage shy and reticent students to take part in group discussions and contribute their ideas, teach social skills, intervene when disagreements occur in a group, and provide feedback.

Conclusion

The present research attempted to measure the levels of anxiety students experience in the oral class. The outcomes indicated that there is some anxiety in the oral class. Accordingly, this chapter provided some pedagogical implications to help teachers and students to reduce speaking anxiety. The study also endeavored to test the effect of cooperative learning on classroom anxiety. The results revealed that compared with the traditional instructional method, cooperative learning did not have a significant effect on students' levels of anxiety. Despite some limitations and challenges of implementation, the results suggested that cooperative learning created an interactive learning climate, enhanced self-confidence and positive attitudes toward speaking tasks, and developed social skills. Therefore, instructors are invited to use cooperative learning to break the monotony of teaching. The suggestions presented in this chapter intend to guide teachers who want to integrate cooperative learning into their teaching.

General Conclusion

Past research on the relationship between foreign language anxiety and cooperative learning produced controverting outcomes. Some of these studies suggested that integrating cooperative learning into the classroom environment could lower foreign language anxiety while other research found no significant correlation between the two variables. Besides, although a good deal of research studies have attempted to explore the impact of cooperative learning on foreign language anxiety in several countries, few if no investigation has been undertaken in Algeria. Therefore, the main objective of the present research was to contribute to this body of literature by uncovering how the implementation of cooperative learning as an instructional technique could influence the degree of anxiety students experience in oral English classes. In other words, the study aimed to explore the impact of cooperative learning on foreign language speaking anxiety in the Algerian context. In addition, the study endeavored to pinpoint the obstacles hampering the application of cooperative learning in oral classes, observe students' behaviors while working in cooperative learning groups, and ascertain their attitudes toward cooperative learning. To this end, four classes of second-year students preparing a License degree in English at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou participated in the study. The research design was quasi-experimental and involved two classes in each university: one as the experimental class and the other as the control class. Cooperative learning was applied in the experimental groups and the traditional instructional approach was used in the control groups. Six study questions and four research hypotheses guided this investigation. A modified version of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS, classroom observation and reflective teaching journals, and semi-structured interviews were used to gather the relevant data.

A pre-questionnaire and a post-questionnaire were used to measure the degree of anxiety before and after the intervention study. At the beginning of the academic year 2015-2016, the pre-questionnaire was administered to the sampled subjects. After the completion of the anxiety

scale, the students in the experimental classes worked in cooperative learning groups whereas the students in the control classes performed the tasks individually. Since cooperation was a novel learning experience for the students, the teacher-researcher first familiarized them with the theory and the different cooperative learning structures. During the first six weeks of the treatment, the students in the experimental groups had the opportunity to know their classmates by working in informal cooperative learning groups. Starting from the seventh week, the students were assigned to heterogeneous groups of three to four members to perform different assignments. The students in the comparison groups, on the other hand, performed the same tasks alone. After fifteen weeks of instruction, the post-questionnaire was applied in both groups and the findings were analyzed and compared with those obtained in the pre-questionnaire using the SPSS program.

The analysis of the pre-questionnaire showed that the majority of the participants had moderate anxiety. Independent samples t-test was used to measure the difference between the anxiety scores of the experimental class and control group in each research site. The t-test outcome disclosed a statistically insignificant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the two groups. This entailed that the students in both classes began the study with the same amount of anxiety. One-way ANOVA was then applied to compare the anxiety scores of the study groups. The test produced an insignificant difference leading to the assumption that the students who were enrolled at the University of Boumerdes and those who were registered at the University of Tizi Ouzou were homogeneous in terms of the anxiety they experienced before the treatment.

The analysis of the post-questionnaire revealed that the participants' level of anxiety diminished after their exposure to the cooperative learning approach and the traditional lecture method. In order to find out whether anxiety reduced significantly in each group, paired t-test was used to compare between the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores. The findings

showed the presence of differences with statistical significance between the anxiety scores on the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire. To say it differently, the experimental groups taught through cooperative learning and the control classes instructed with the traditional method reported a significant reduction in the degree of anxiety. In order to determine whether the difference between the anxiety scores of the experimental class and control group in each university was statistically significant, independent samples t-test was performed. The outcomes exposed an insignificant statistical difference. To be more specific, the implementation of cooperative learning did not bring any significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental and control groups. The use of the ANOVA test demonstrated that the difference between the anxiety scores of the study groups was statistically insignificant. This implied that the participants in both research sites ended the intervention with the same degree of anxiety. The findings obtained in the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire could be summarized in the following points:

- The majority of the study participants reported a midlevel of anxiety.

- There was an insignificant difference between the anxiety levels of the experimental and control groups before the treatment.

- There was an insignificant difference between the anxiety levels of the study groups before the treatment.

- There was a significant difference between the anxiety levels of the experimental groups before and after the treatment.

- There was a significant difference between the anxiety levels of the control groups before and after the treatment.

- There was an insignificant difference between the anxiety levels of the experimental and control groups after the treatment.

- There was an insignificant difference between the anxiety levels of the study groups after the treatment.

The results of the present research do not support the conclusions of previous studies where the application of cooperative learning brought a significant reduction in the degree of anxiety compared with traditional instruction. The study findings showed that both cooperative learning and traditional learning had a significant impact on the participants' level of anxiety. This could entail that the degree of anxiety was not influenced by the instructional method used. Other factors could have affected the degree of anxiety students experienced in the classroom like the year of study and the experience with the English language. Since the participants were second-year students and had already taken two semesters of oral classes, this could explain this significant reduction in the level of anxiety in both treatment and control groups. It could be assumed that as students pass from one academic year to another and become familiar with English, their anxiety attenuates. Therefore, a longitudinal study should carried out to explore and clarify the correlation between foreign language speaking anxiety, language learning experience, and year of study.

All along the intervention, the study groups were observed to discover whether the students suffered from anxiety during oral practice and complement the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire findings. During the first weeks of the treatment, the students exhibited some anxiety symptoms such as avoidance of eye contact, unwillingness to participate, trembling hands, and fidgeting. The observed signs could imply that the study participants suffered from foreign language speaking anxiety. However, as the study progressed, the participants were relaxed and showed confidence when facing their classmates. Such behavior could entail that the participants became less apprehensive. The observed anxiety manifestations supplemented the pre-questionnaire findings where the majority of the participants reported moderate anxiety. The results were also in line with the post-questionnaire outcomes in which the study

participants reported a significant decrease in the degree of anxiety. The observation phase also allowed the teacher-researcher to examine the way students interacted and cooperated with their group members. At the beginning of the treatment, the students in the experimental classes contested the idea of working in cooperation. This might be due to students' long experience with competitive and individualistic learning and to their lack of knowledge of how to work with others. Despite their opposition, the students progressively showed more engagement as they started to accept their group members, became comfortable with one another, encouraged participation, and provided feedback. After becoming acquainted with cooperative learning and being aware of its principles and benefits, the students began to show enjoyment in participating in cooperative activities and commitment toward their group members. Therefore, teachers who wish to implement cooperative learning in their teaching should prepare their students for cooperative tasks and give them time to get familiar with the new approach. Besides students' antipathy, other obstacles hindered the implementation of cooperative learning. The observation phase highlighted some factors that impeded the application of cooperative learning such as the use of the mother tongue, crowded classrooms, noise level, and classroom situation. It was also difficult for the teacher-researcher to integrate cooperative learning and to train the students to work in cooperation. Despite extensive reading and preparation, lack of training and experience made the application of cooperative learning challenging. All these factors contributed to the creation of an unfavorable environment for the application of cooperative learning. Therefore, some measures need to be taken in order to allow successful integration of cooperative learning into the classroom environment. To enhance the practices of cooperative learning, it is important to provide both teachers and students with some training sessions and workshops in cooperative learning usage, offer small class size, and create a suitable classroom situation to allow movement during cooperative activities.

The interview data were collected from the students in the experimental classes for more information. Fourteen students with different anxiety levels were invited to share their experiences and perceptions of cooperative learning. Each interview comprised eight open-ended questions. The interviews were recorded, listened to several times, transcribed, and then analyzed thematically. The interview participants indicated that not being prepared for speaking and discussing alien subjects are the most anxiety-inducing practices in the classroom. It appeared that having time to prepare for the speaking tasks and discussing familiar and interesting subjects are determining factors in lowering students' apprehension during oral practice. Hence, teachers should consider students' psychological needs and evade oral practices that may cause anxiety. When asked to reflect on their experiences while working in cooperative learning groups, the students mentioned certain issues such as the dominance of some team members and difficulties to arrange meetings and reach a consensus. Despite these problems, the interviewed students reported many advantages and positive outcomes like the enhancement of self-confidence and the development of social skills. The interview findings also demonstrated that most of the students had positive attitudes and good perceptions of cooperative group learning. The majority of the interview participants liked working with their group members because they had the chance to interact with one another, share insights, and learn to respect each other's viewpoints. Even though the students were at first unreceptive about the idea of working in cooperation and in spite of the problems they faced while working with their group members, their attitudes toward cooperative learning turned out to be positive. The participants enjoyed working with their group members and suggested that cooperative learning should continue to be used in the classroom. This finding could entail that students' experience of using cooperative learning for fifteen weeks appeared to have had a positive effect on their perceptions. Although no evidence was found that the use of the cooperative learning approach brought a significant reduction in the level of anxiety compared with the traditional

teaching method, there was some evidence that cooperative learning generated other benefits. Cooperation provided opportunities for communication and interaction, developed social and personal skills, and created a stimulating and lively classroom environment. The atmosphere in the experimental classes seemed to be more cooperative and the students appeared to be more eager to take part and perform the oral activities. Therefore, to avoid the monotony of teaching and enhance the quality of teaching and learning, instructors should use new and innovative teaching methods in language classrooms like cooperative learning.

As far as the first hypothesis is concerned, the findings proved the existence of anxiety and confirmed that second-year students of English enrolled at the Universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou experienced anxiety during classroom oral practice. Unlike what the researcher expected, the implementation of cooperative learning did not bring any statistically significant difference between the anxiety mean scores of the experimental and control groups. Thus, the second study hypothesis was rejected. Concerning the third research hypothesis, the observation and interview outcomes indicated that there are some challenges and difficulties regarding the incorporation of cooperative learning. Therefore, the hypothesis that "Some obstacles might hinder the implementation of cooperative learning in oral English classes" was validated. For the fourth hypothesis, the researcher assumed that since Algerian students generally work competitively and individually, their attitudes toward cooperative learning would be negative. The first phase of the observation proved the validity of the hypothesis. Nonetheless, the second phase of the observation and the interview findings indicated that the majority of the participants developed positive attitudes toward cooperative learning. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially satisfactory.

The main strength of the present thesis is that a study of this kind that examined the correlation between foreign language anxiety and cooperative learning among two experimental groups and two control classes enrolled in oral English classes at the Universities

of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou has not yet been investigated to the researcher's knowledge. Therefore, the present study is original in terms of the methodology used and its research context. Another positive point is that the pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire were administered and answered by the same students. This contributed to the validity and reliability of the findings.

However, this study has many limitations. First, even if this research was conducted in two research sites, the findings cannot be generalized to all universities in Algeria. Second, the study was restricted to the measurement of the anxiety levels of second-year students of English. Thus, it is difficult to generalize the results to all EFL university students in Algeria. The study would have generated more generalizable outcomes if it had involved students in different study years and other universities throughout the country. Third, the study examined the effect of cooperative learning on foreign language anxiety in oral classes. Therefore, the conclusions cannot be generalized on the remaining courses. Fourth, the validity and reliability of the findings depended on the trustworthiness of the students when answering the questionnaire and responding to the interview questions. Even though the students were informed about the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses and were told that the results would not affect their grades, their answers may not reflect their psychological status and their real opinions and may have been influenced by what they thought the teacher wanted them to say. Indeed, the students may have selected their answers to satisfy the teacher-researcher's expectations.

In light of the study findings and conclusions, some suggestions for further research are presented. First, the study outcomes are proper to second-year students of English enrolled at the universities of Boumerdes and Tizi Ouzou during the academic year 2015-2016. A more comprehensive study involving students in different years of study and from other Algerian universities will shed more light on the relationship between cooperative learning and foreign language anxiety. To develop a more adequate explanation and generate more evidence on the

impact of cooperative learning on foreign language speaking anxiety, future research ought to replicate the study and include more classes of EFL students in different study levels, over an extended period of time, and with teachers who have more experience with cooperative learning implementation. Second, further research is needed to clarify the link between foreign language anxiety and the level of study. Upcoming studies should measure and compare the levels of anxiety experienced by first-year, second-year, and third-year students. Another suggestion for research is to examine the effect of cooperative learning on writing, reading, and listening anxieties. Furthermore, since the present study comprised few male students, the researcher did not take into consideration the gender variable. Therefore, it will be helpful to compare the levels of anxiety experienced by male and female students and test the effect of cooperative learning on students of the opposite gender. Undertaking such actions would probably produce generalizable conclusions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

A Modified Version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Dear students,

This questionnaire is designed for academic research. Your contributions are important for the completion of the work. Your answers will be anonymous and confidential, so please answer as honestly as you can.

1. Gender

    Male ☐   Female ☐

2. Age…………………………

3. The statements below reflect feelings you may or may not have when attending oral English classes. Read each statement carefully, then write **SA**, **A**, **N**, **D**, or **SD** next to each statement.

Note: SA=strongly agree; A=agree; N=neither agree nor disagree; D=disagree; SD=strongly disagree.

Please do not leave any statement unanswered.

---

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in the oral class.

2. I do not worry about making mistakes in the oral class.

3. I tremble when I know that I am going to be asked to speak in the oral class.

4. It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in English.

5. It would not bother me at all to take more oral classes.

6. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the oral class.

7. I don't understand why some students get so anxious in oral classes.

8. In the oral class, I can get so nervous when the teacher asks me to answer a question that I forget things I know.

9. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in the oral class.

10. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

11. I often feel like not going to the oral class.

12. I feel confident during classroom oral practice.

13. I am afraid that my teacher of speaking is ready to correct every mistake I make.

14. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be asked to speak in the oral class.

15. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.

16. I feel shy about speaking English in the oral class.

17. I feel more tense and nervous in the oral class than in other classes.

18. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in the oral class.

19. When I'm on my way to the oral class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

20. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.

21. I get panicky to speak English due to my limited vocabulary.

22. I worry that my broken English pronunciation would cause jokes when I want to bring up a question.

23. I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me.

24. I feel confident and relaxed when giving oral presentations in front of the class.

25. I am afraid to be criticized by both teacher and peers during classroom discussions because of my poor English proficiency.

26. I feel more anxious about speaking English individually than in groups.

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 2

Interview Questions

Q1. In which classroom situation do you feel anxious or uncomfortable speaking English?

Q2. What is the main cause of your anxiety during oral practice?

Q3. In which classroom situation do you feel less anxious speaking English?

Q4. What would you suggest to reduce anxiety during oral practice?

Q5. How do you perceive cooperative learning?

Q6. Do you think that working in cooperative learning groups was beneficial for you? Please explain.

Q7. What kind of difficulties have you encountered while working with your group members?

Q8. How would you prefer to work in the future? Individually or in cooperative groups? Kindly justify your answer.

Appendix 3

♫ *Song Worksheet* ♫

She _____out to the man on the _____

sir can you _____ me?

It's _____ and I've _____ to sleep

is there _____ you can tell me?

He _____ on, doesn't _____ back

he _____ he can't _____ her

starts to _____ as he _____the street

seems _____ to be there

Oh think twice, 'cos it's _____day for

you and me in _____

Oh think twice, 'cos it's _____ day for

you, you and me in _____

Think about it

She _____ out to the man on the _____

he can see she's been _____

she's got _____ on the_____ of her feet

she can't _____, but she's _____

Oh think twice, 'cos it's _____ day for

you and me in_____

Oh think twice, it's just _____ day for

you, you and me in _____

Just think about it

Oh Lord, is there _____more _____ can do

Oh Lord, there must _____ you can say

You can tell from the _____on her _____

You can see that she's been there

_____ been moved on from _____ _____

'cos she didn't _____in there

Oh think twice, 'cos it's _____ day for

you and me in _____

Oh think twice, it's just _____ day for

you, you and me in _____

Just think about it

Think about it

It's just _____ day for you and me in

_____

It's just _____ day for you and me in

_____

Comprehension Questions

1. Listen to the song then insert the missing words.

2. Who is the singer?

3. What do you think the song is called?

4. Who is the woman in the song?

5. What does she want?

6. Do you think that the man made a good action?

7. Explain the following words from the context of the song

   - Pretends………………………………………………………………………………….

   - Embarrassed…………………………………………………………………………..

8. Explain the meaning of the song with your own words.

   …………………………………………………………………………………………...…

   …………………………………………………………………………………………...…

   …………………………………………………………………………………………......

9. Match the phrasal verbs from the song with the meaning.

1. call out	**a.** turn your head around in order to see something
2. look back	**b.** to leave somewhere for another place
3. walk on	**c.** say something in a loud voice
4. move on	**d.** to continue walking

Appendix 4

Pair Discussion

I. Say whether the following statements are "true" or "false". Justify your answers.

1. All people who are homeless live on the street.

2. People who are homeless are lazy and don't want to get a job.

3. People who are homeless sometimes have pets for companionship.

4. All people who are homeless are addicted to drugs or alcohol.

5. There are no homeless children.

6. Homeless people are in all communities not just big cities.

Source: *Homelessness: A teacher's guide* (2010) by Ethos Strategy Group (p. 11). Retrieved from http://stophomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/teachers-guidelr_10.pdf

II. Give two causes of homelessness.

III. Suggest two solutions to this plight.

Appendix 5

Proverbs Task Cards

Task card 1. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. All that glitters is not gold.
2. Deux avis valent mieux qu'un.

Task card 2. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. Actions speak louder than words.
2. C'est en forgeant qu'on devient forgeron.

Task card 3. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. Birds of a feather flock together.
2. Il faut réfléchir avant d'agir.

Task card 4. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. Don't cry over spilt milk.
2. Quand on veut, on peut.

Task card 5. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. Strike while the iron is hot.
2. Mieux vaut prévenir que guérir.

Task card 6. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. The early bird catches the worm.
2. La curiosité est un vilain défaut.

Task card 7. Explain the moral of the English proverb and find the equivalent of the French proverb in English.

1. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.
2. Dans l'adversité, on connaît ses amis.

Appendix 6

Idioms

Mark had been feeling under the weather for weeks. One day he came into work looking like death warmed up and so we told him to go away for a few days to recharge his batteries. After one day beside the sea, he no longer felt off-colour and by the second day he knew he was on the road to recovery. He sent us a postcard and we were all glad to learn that he was on the mend. By the end of the week, he returned to work as fit as a fiddle. And he's been as right as rain ever since.

Source: McCarthy, M., & O'Dell, F. (2002). *English idioms in use*. Cambridge University Press.

1. According to you, what is the difference between proverbs and idioms?
2. Locate the idioms in the text and determine the meaning.
3. Group the idioms that have the same meaning together.
4. Give the meaning of the following expressions then put them in the group of idioms that share the same meaning as the idioms in the text: *back on one's feet*, *in bad shape*, *full of beans*, *sick as a dog*, *in the pink of health*.

Appendix 7

Slang Cards

Instruction: Try to guess the meaning of the slang words written in bold.

Can I **crash** here tonight?	We plan to **hit the road** about dawn.	I will be there **in no time.**
Go ahead. Give it another **shot**.	We spent the whole day **hanging out** in the mall.	I **screwed up** my entrance exam.
Don't be a **chicken.** Stand up to him.	Lucy spent the night **cramming** for the test.	Hi, Jamie! **What's up**?
I know **Zilch** about computers.	What an **awesome** sunset.	I am **all ears**.
Henry is a **junkie**.	Dina is a **psycho.** She should be in a hospital.	I need some **dough** to buy groceries.
She is **broke** and homeless.	It takes **guts** to do something like that.	Do you have a **buck** I can borrow?
This restaurant is open **24/7**.	I am **beat**. Good night.	Susan has a big **crush** on Simon.
He called the **cops** to report a carjacking.	I don't like Peter. He seems like a **creep**.	Sandra is such a **big mouth**.
He got drunk last night and **puked** in the car.	Who is the **dude** with Ashley?	She is so **hot.**

Appendix 8

Everyday English Role-play Cards

Role Card 1: **At the restaurant**	*Student A* and *Student B*: You are celebrating your first anniversary as a married couple in one of the most prestigious restaurants. The evening is going well until the wife found a hair in her plate. Call the waiter to complain then ask for the manager.
	Student C: Greet and escort customers to their table, present the menu, take their order, and deliver food and drinks. Apologize for the food and try to resolve the conflict without involving the manager.
	Student D: You are a restaurant manager. Two customers are complaining about the quality of food and threatening to destroy the reputation of the restaurant. Try to find a solution.
Role Card 2: **At the hotel**	*Student A* and *Student B*: you are new weds on honeymoon. You are guests at The Royal Hotel. Your room has not been cleaned yet. In addition, you specifically requested an ocean view, but your room has a view on the pool. Complain to the reception then to the hotel manager.
	Student C: you are a receptionist at The Royal Hotel. Welcome the guests as they arrive, check their reservation, allot them a room, and give them the key. Try to respond to the customers' complaints.
	Student D: you are the manager of The Royal Hotel, a modern holiday resort surrounded by lots of sights and sandy beaches. Everything seems perfect, but you have to deal with problems.
Role Card 3: **Arguments between neighbors**	*Student A*: You are a musician. In a few days, you are going to perform at a music festival. You rehearse day and night. Two of your neighbors complain about the noise.
	Student B: You are a student. You are preparing for your final exams. You cannot concentrate because your next-door neighbor is playing music. Explain your situation and ask him/her nicely to make less noise.
	Student C: You are a mother. Your three-month baby cannot sleep because your neighbor is playing music day and night. Go to him and complain about the noise.

Role Card 4: **May I go to a party?**	*Student A*: you are planning a party at your house. Call your best friend to invite him/her and discuss the party.
	Student B: You are a teenager. Your best friend is having a massive party at his/her house this weekend because his/her parents are away. The boy/girl of your dreams is also going to be there. You do not want to miss the party. Ask your parents for permission.
	Student C and *Student D*: You are strict parents. Your son/daughter comes to you with a request about the weekend.
Role Card 5: **Visiting the doctor**	*Student A*: You have had a cold for two weeks and it is not getting better. Phone a doctor's office to make an appointment to see the doctor and help the receptionist fill out the Patient Information Form. Tell the doctor about your health problems.
	Student B: you are a medical receptionist. Make an appointment for the patient. Fill out the Patient Information Form. Welcome the patient and ask him/her for the Medicare card.
	Student C: you are a doctor. Give the patient some advice about his/her illness.
Role Card 6: **Shopping for groceries**	*Student A* and *Student B*: you are mother and daughter. You want to prepare a birthday cake. You are in a supermarket shopping for the ingredients. Ask the shop assistant for help.
	Student C: You are a shop assistant working in a big supermarket. Help the customers during their shopping.
	Student D: You are a cashier. You great the customers, calculate the price of the products, tell the customers the total amount of their shopping, ask them about the method of payment, and inform them that their credit card has been rejected. Mother and daughter do not carry any cash. Find a solution.
Role Card 7: **At a wedding**	You are friends. You haven't seen each other since secondary school. You are at the wedding of a common friend. Try to catch up, share secrets, and do some gossiping.

Appendix 9

Group Processing Form

Reflect on the way your team cooperated today.	*True*	*False*
We took turns and shared information.		
We listened carefully and valued all the ideas.		
We involved everyone and divided the task equitably.		
We encouraged and helped one another complete the task.		
Every team member did his/her share of the work.		
We used quiet voices while working on the task.		
We completed the task on time.		
Our group did a good job today.		
We all attended group meetings.		
We did best at..………………………………………………………….............. …………………………………………………………………………………….. ……………………………………………………………………………………		
Next time, we could improve at…………………………………………….... ………………………………………………………………………..……… ……..…………………………………………………………………………………		

Appendix 10

Jungle Survivors

Back from the dead!

Three years ago a small passenger plane crashed in the middle of the Borneo jungle with twenty-seven people on board. Rescue teams arrived at the scene of the crash three days later. They searched the area, but found no survivors.

Two days ago, however, two people walked into a remote tribal village on the edge of the jungle and said that they were survivors of the plane crash. They told the astonished tribespeople that they had been living in the jungle by themselves since the day of the crash. We have sent two of our reporters to Borneo to interview these amazing people. Look out for an exclusive interview in next week's *Daily Planet*!

Reporter's role card

You are going to interview the survivors of the plane crash. With your partner(s), write down some of the questions you are going to ask. Try to write at least **twelve** questions.

Make sure you include questions to find out the following information:

- personal details
- how they know the other survivor(s)
- the crash and how they survived
- life in the jungle (food, shelter, etc.)
- the dangers they faced
- their health (now and in the past)
- the tribal village and its people
- plans for the future
- how they feel about flying
- how they are getting home

Survivor's role card

You are going to be interviewed by a journalist about what happened to you. With your partner, decide what your story is. Make brief notes to help you in your interview. Use your imagination!

Here are some things you might be asked about:

- personal details (be imaginative!)
- how you know the other survivor
- why the plane crashed
- how you survived the crash
- life in the jungle (food, shelter, etc.)
- the dangers you faced
- your health (now and over the last three years)
- the tribal village and its people
- plans for the future
- how you feel about flying
- how you are getting home

Source: http://www.pearsonlongman.com/adult/pdf/jungle_survivors.pdf

Appendix 11

Criminal Investigation Vocabulary

> "You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney during interrogation; if you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed to you."

Word/Expression	Meaning
accomplice (n)	someone who helps someone else to commit a crime
acquitted (adj)	declared innocent in a court of a law
admit (v)	to confess to having committed a crime
arrest (v)	to take someone into custody
back-up (n)	Support
bail (n)	sum of money to get someone temporarily released from custody
ballistics (n)	the scientific study of the movement of objects that are projected through the air, especially of bullets fired from a gun
bruise (n)	a mark on the body where the skin is discoloured as the result of a fall or a blow (US = contusion)
capital punishment (n)	death penalty
community service (n)	unpaid work by a convicted offender that is beneficial to the community done as an alternative imprisonment
convict (v)	to declare someone guilty of a crime
court (n)	a place where legal judgments are made
custody (n)	when you are detained in a cell by police, they hold you in custody
defendant (n)	a person who has been accused of a crime
evidence (n)	something that proves that a crime happened or a person is guilty
fingerprint (n)	the pattern of curved lines on the skin of a fingertip
guilty (adj)	found responsible for a crime
gun (n)	a weapon that fires bullets
handcuffs (n)	a pair of metal rings locked around someone's wrists to restrain them
homicide (n)	Murder
hostage (n)	someone who is held as a prisoner by a person or group until they receive money or meet specific demands
injury (n)	physical damage to the body
jury (n)	group of people who give a verdict on a legal case presented before them in a law court
plead (v)	to answer 'guilty' or 'not guilty' in a court of law
records (n)	database of past crimes or criminal convictions
residue (n)	something that has been left behind, e.g. *gunshot residue on someone's hand which shows they have fired a weapon*
robbery (n)	taking something illegally by force or violence that belongs to someone else
sample (n)	a specimen or example of human blood, saliva, etc for scientific or medical examination or analysis

sentence (n)	a court judgement
suspect (n)	person who might be guilty of an offence
toxicology (n)	scientific study of poisons
verdict (n)	the finding or decision of a jury in a trial
victim (n)	someone who is hurt or killed by someone or something especially in a crime or accident
witness (v)	to see a crime or an accident when it happens

Source: English for Law Enforcement Glossary. MACMILLAN. Retrieved from http://www.campaignmilitaryenglish.com/EFLE_Resources/EFLE.Glossary.pdf

Appendix 12

Extracts from the Teaching Journal

<u>*Extract 1: Tizi Ouzou University*</u>

Week One: Three-Step Interview

November 18th, 2015

8:00-9:30

The purpose of this first session was to familiarize the students with cooperative learning.

At the beginning of the session, I have first introduced myself to the class then explained the new classroom procedure and practice. I have provided the students with enough information about cooperative learning.

In order to familiarize the students with cooperative learning, I have decided to introduce Kagan's cooperative approach *Three-Step Interview*. After explaining the activity, I have assigned the students into groups of four members. Since I was not acquainted with any student, I have used random grouping to form the teams. The students were asked to interview each other in pairs and share their findings with their group mates then with the rest of the class.

<u>Observation one</u>: the students seemed shy and rarely interacted with one another. They gave the impression that they were unfamiliar with their fellow classmates. The reason could be that the students were from different study groups during their first year at the university. Therefore, Three-Step Interview was perfect to break the ice and help the students to get to know each other.

<u>Observation two</u>: I detected a sense of opposition from the students. This was evident from their reactions. Some students voiced their antipathy in statements like "Please Madame, I want to change the group and work with my friends" and "I think it is preferable that each student introduces himself". Such reactions are indications of students' unfamiliarity with cooperative group work. It is evident that the students tended to work either individually or in traditional learning groups.

<u>Week One Summary</u>

- The students have no experience with cooperative learning. This was not a surprise considering the competitive nature of the Algerian educational context.
- I think that training the students to adopt cooperative behaviors will not be easy and will take time.
- I need to find a way to engage the students in cooperative group work.

Extract 2: Boumerdes University

Week four: Proverbs

February 9th, 2016

9:40-11:10

The purpose of this session was to structure positive interdependence and individual accountability.

At the beginning of the session, some English proverbs were introduced and explained.

In order to structure positive interdependence and individual accountability, I have decided to incorporate the cooperative structure *Numbered Heads Together*. After explaining the activity and highlighting the importance of the participation of each team member to the group success, I have formed the teams using random grouping.

The students were asked to discuss some English and French proverbs with their group members. The students had to combine their efforts and make sure that all their teammates knew the answers (positive interdependence). Instead of conferring with their group members, the students started to complain and acknowledged their desire to work individually on the task. I have faced the same problem in Tizi Ouzou University. In order to solve the problem, I have decided to add the element of intergroup competition. Competitiveness seemed to alter the classroom atmosphere and engaged the reluctant students in the activity. Therefore, I have decided to do the same in Boumerdes University. The incorporation of intergroup competition motivated the students to work with their group mates. It was observed that the students exchanged ideas and combined their efforts to complete the task.

Week Four Summary

Intergroup competition motivated the most reluctant students to work with their teammates. Since Algerian students learn in a competitive context, it is important to take advantage of this competitive spirit to encourage the students to work in cooperation with their group members by creating competition among groups. Establishing intergroup competition seemed to be an effective way to engage the students in cooperative learning.

Résumé

L'anxiété est considérée comme un facteur négatif qui empêche les étudiants de communiquer leurs idées et de développer leurs compétences linguistiques. Réduire l'appréhension en classe des étudiants peut améliorer leur expérience d'apprentissage des langues et leurs compétences en communication. Au cours des dernières décennies, l'apprentissage coopératif a attiré l'attention des chercheurs et des éducateurs en raison de ses retombées positives sur les performances des étudiants. Ainsi, cette thèse vise à mesurer le niveau d'anxiété ressentie dans les cours de production orale et à comparer les effets de l'apprentissage coopératif avec la méthode pédagogique traditionnelle sur l'anxiété. En outre, l'étude tente de déterminer les facteurs susceptibles d'entraver la mise en œuvre de l'apprentissage coopératif et d'examiner les comportements coopératifs des étudiants et leurs attitudes à l'égard du travail coopératif. À cette fin, quatre classes d'étudiants inscrits en deuxième année anglais aux universités de Boumerdès et de Tizi Ouzou au cours de l'année universitaire 2015-2016 ont participé à l'étude. Cette recherche quasi expérimentale de quinze semaines a inclus deux classes expérimentales initiées à l'apprentissage coopératif et deux groupes contrôles enseignés avec la méthode pédagogique traditionnelle. Trois instruments ont été utilisés pour collecter les données : une version modifiée de l'échelle/questionnaire de l'anxiété langagière élaborée par Horwitz, Horwitz et Cope (1986), l'observation en classe et des entretiens semi-dirigés. Un mélange de méthodes quantitative et qualitative a été utilisé pour analyser les résultats. Le questionnaire a été utilisé en tant que pré-test et post-test pour déterminer le niveau d'anxiété des participants. Les résultats pré-intervention ont indiqué que les participants présentaient un niveau d'anxiété moyen. Aucune différence statistiquement significative n'a été trouvée entre les scores d'anxiété des groupes d'étude. Les données post-intervention ont montré une diminution significative du niveau d'anxiété chez les participants. Cependant, aucune différence statistiquement significative n'est apparue entre les scores d'anxiété des étudiants ayant étudié en coopération et ceux ayant travaillé individuellement. L'observation en classe et les entretiens avec quatorze étudiants ont mis en évidence les problèmes qui entravent l'intégration de l'apprentissage coopératif dans les cours d'expression orale tels que l'opposition des étudiants, la situation en classe et des membres de groupe dominateurs. Malgré leur réaction hostile, les participants ont progressivement manifesté un comportement coopératif. La plupart des étudiants à l'entrevue avaient une perception favorable de l'apprentissage coopératif et ont exprimé le souhait de travailler plus souvent en coopération. Par conséquent, les enseignants devraient être encouragés à utiliser l'apprentissage coopératif dans le cadre de leur enseignement.

Mots-clés : anxiété langagière, apprentissage coopératif, méthode pédagogique traditionnelle, étude comparative, conception quasi expérimentale.

ملخص

يعتبر القلق عاملاً سلبياً يمنع الطلاب من إيصال أفكارهم وتطوير مهاراتهم اللغوية. يمكن أن يؤدي خفض تخوف الطلاب في إلى تعزيز تجربة تعلم اللغة لديهم وتحسين كفاءتهم في التواصل. في العقود الأخيرة، اجتذب التعلم التعاوني انتباه الباحثين والمعلمين بسبب نتائجه الإيجابية على أداء الطلاب. وبالتالي، تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى قياس درجة القلق في دورات التعبير الشفوي ومقارنة تأثيرات التعلم التعاوني مع الطريقة التدريس الاعتيادية على القلق. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تحاول الدراسة تحديد العوامل التي قد تعرقل تنفيذ التعلم التعاوني، وتفحص السلوكيات التعاونية للطلاب ومواقفهم تجاه العمل الجماعي التعاوني. ولهذه الغاية، شاركت في الدراسة أربع فئات من طلاب السنة الثانية في اللغة الإنجليزية المسجلين في جامعتي بومرداس وتيزي وزو خلال السنة الجامعية 2015–2016. اشتمل هذا المنهج شبه التجريبي الذي استغرق خمسة عشر أسبوعًا مجموعتين تجريبيتين تم تدريسهما وفق أسس التعلم التعاوني ومجموعتين ضابطتين تم تعليمهما بالطريقة الاعتيادية. تم استخدام ثلاثة أدوات لجمع البيانات: نسخة معدلة من استبيان هورويتز، هورويتز وكاوب (1986) لقياس القلق اللغوي، والملاحظة الصفية، والمقابلات شبه المنظمة. تم استعمال مزيج من المنهجية الكمية والنوعية لتحليل النتائج. تم استخدام الاستبيان كاختبار قبلي وبعدي لتحديد مستوى القلق لدى المشاركين. أظهرت نتائج تحليل الاختبار القبلي أن المشاركين يعانون من مستوى متوسط من القلق. لم يتم العثور على فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية بين درجات القلق لدى مجموعات الدراسة. أظهرت نتائج التطبيق البعدي انخفاضًا ملحوظًا في مستوى القلق. ومع ذلك، لم يتم العثور على فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية بين درجات القلق لدى الطلاب الذين درسوا بشكل تعاوني وأولئك الذين عملوا بشكل فردي. كشفت الملاحظة الصفية ونتائج المقابلات التي أجريت مع أربعة عشر طالباً عن المشاكل التي تعيق دمج التعلم التعاوني في دورات التعبير الشفهي مثل معارضة الطلاب، ووضع الفصل الدراسي، وأعضاء الفريق المسيطرة. على الرغم من رد فعلهم العدائي، أظهر المشاركون بشكل تدريجي سلوكًا تعاونيًا. كان لدى معظم الطلاب الذين تمت مقابلتهم نظرة إيجابية عن التعلم التعاوني وأعربوا عن رغبتهم في العمل أكثر بشكل تعاونني. لذلك، ينبغي تشجيع المعلمين على استخدام التعلم التعاوني كجزءٍ من تعليمهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القلق اللغوي، التعلم التعاوني، طريقة التدريس الاعتيادية، دراسة مقارنة، منهج شبه تجريبي.