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**Faculty of Letters, Languages, and Social Sciences**  
**Department of Letters and English Language**

**Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety in EFL Classrooms: The Case of  
Third year EFL students at the University of Belhadj Bouchaib Ain  
Temouchent**

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for a  
Master's Degree of Didactics and Applied Languages*

**Submitted by:**

Ms. BECHAGRA Nadjat  
Ms. BOUKAMBOUCHE Asmaa

**Supervised by:**

Dr. Benghalem Boualem

**Board of Examiners**

<b>President</b>	<b>Dr. Allal Rym</b>	<b>MCB</b>	<b>Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University</b>
<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Dr. Benghalem Boualem</b>	<b>MCA</b>	<b>Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University</b>
<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Mme.Bouzid Assia</b>	<b>MAA</b>	<b>Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University</b>

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I accordingly that this dissertation which I present for evaluation in an academic program leading to a Master's Degree in Didactics and Applied Languages, was completely finished by the researchers under the guidance and the assistance of the supervisor.it the result of the researchers' hard work and investigation, and it includes neither plagiarism nor materials previously published by another person except where due references are made.

Signed: BECHAGRA Nadjet

BOUKAMBOUCHE Asmaa

Date: 20/05/2023

## DEDICATIONS

*In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate  
I dedicate this work to my beloved parents who had dreamed about this day more than I did, you  
are the blessing of my life, may Allah grant you a long life.*

*Thank you for always supporting me and believing in me.  
Thank you for being always by my side in ups and downs.  
Thank you so much for your love, sacrifices, and encouragement.  
Thank you! Seems small for all what you have done for me*

*To my dear sister Karima and my brothers Karim, Abdelkader, and Redouane for their love,  
care, inspiration, and support.*

*To my closest friends, Hanane, Salima, and Asma for making the college years the best years I  
ever had.*

## DEDICATIONS

*I dedicate this work to my dear parents. No tribute keep showing on me. May God grant them  
good health and long life.*

*My soul sisters Sara, Aicha, and Meriem for their love and support. Without forgetting my  
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## ABSTRACT

Foreign language anxiety has become a common issue among learners in the process of foreign language learning, because of the impact it has. Several studies have been conducted on it. When it comes to speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms, the majority of EFL students struggle with it. The present study aims at investigating the existence of the phenomenon in an EFL classroom and the major effect of it on speaking skills.

In addition, it shed light on the main sources of speaking anxiety that learners face in classrooms as well as the main strategies that help anxious students overcome their struggle from both the teacher's and students' perspective. In order to achieve these objectives and answer the research questions, this study is based on a mixed-method research design manifested through a classroom observation, and an online questionnaire distributed to eighty (80) Third year EFL students at the Department of Letters and English Language at Belhadj Bouchaib University. The obtained results were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. The study's findings revealed that most students experienced anxiety attacks in classroom when performing in front of an audience, such as giving presentations. The data also revealed that speaking anxiety had a negative impact on the learning achievement of EFL students, particularly in oral performance. The questionnaire results also revealed that speaking anxiety can be reduced by employing a set of strategies and that the teacher's role in helping students to reduce anxiety is also effective. Finally, according to the findings of the study, we made suggestions and recommendations for EFL teachers and students on how to deal with speaking anxiety and improve their speaking abilities.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

**EFL:** English As a foreign Language

**FL:** Foreign Language

**FLA:** Foreign Language Anxiety

**LMD:** License, Master, Doctorate

**MMR:** Mixed Methods Research

**Qual:** Qualitative

**Quan:** Quantitative



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# **General Introduction**

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Acquiring another language requires four basic skills: Reading, writing, listening and the most important aspect of mastering a language is “speaking”. Most of EFL learners face speaking issues while acquiring a new language these issues are caused by a several kinds of factors, such as anxiety.

Anxiety is described as the symptomatic representation of an internal emotional struggle that happens when a person conceals (from conscious awareness) sensations, emotions, or instincts that are too scary or stressful to live with, making it a common problem in Learning foreign languages, speaking anxiety is the personal sensation of stress, fear, and worry related with an stimulation of the. Autonomic nervous system. Which prevents learners from successfully Learning an another tongue, Therefore it has an adverse effect on EFL learners performance competencies, However, it should be taken into account that acquiring an additional language is much more difficult than learning a first language for many reasons and aspects . In our study, we aim to figure some of speaking anxiety insights in order to help EFL learners improve their oral performance as well as to provide strategies and solutions in order to reduce anxiety speaking. Taking into account the objectives of this investigation, the following research questions are raised:

- 1- How does anxiety affect EFL third year EFL students’ oral performance?
- 2- What are the main factors that provoke FL speaking anxiety for third-year EFL students?
- 3- What strategies are used by teachers and learners in order to lower EFL speaking anxiety?

Based on the main research questions, we hypothesize that when FL speaking anxiety is provoked by a set of factors, it might have an adverse effect on the students' oral performances. Therefore, to overcome FL speaking anxiety, anxious students need to employ a set of strategies.

Our study is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the literature review, which includes an overview of anxiety, its definitions, and types, as well as the concept of foreign language speaking anxiety and its features and effects on the speaking skill. Then we shed light on the importance of speaking as a skill. In addition to the main sources that provoke anxiety, we will conclude by mentioning the main strategies used by teachers and students to reduce speaking anxiety.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The second chapter is devoted to research methodology and data analysis. In this research, we will be administering a classroom observation and an online questionnaire for third-year EFL students at the University of Ain Temouchent. The questionnaire is conducted in order to investigate the impact of foreign language speaking anxiety on the students' oral performances and the main sources of anxiety from both the students' and teachers' perspectives.

The purpose of the third chapter was to supply a discussion and thorough evaluation of the data collected via the two data gathering instruments used in this study: an online questionnaire, and the classroom observation. The main objective of this chapter is to explore the effect Foreign Language Anxiety on the students' speaking skills in the EFL classrooms.

## **Chapter One:**

# **FL Anxiety situation in English language learning classrooms**

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## 1.1 Introduction

While learning another tongue such as English, FFL students emphasize developing the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). However, when it comes to speaking skills, the majority of EFL learners face a set of factors that prevent them from practicing their speaking abilities, such as anxiety. Through this chapter, we try to shed light on foreign language speaking anxiety and its features, and we present the value of communication abilities. Then we identify the major factors that arouse anxiety and the strategies used by both the teacher and the learners to reduce classroom-speaking anxiety.

## 1.2 English Language situation in Algeria

Nowadays, English is considered among the greatest needed languages in the world in all fields. However, it is known that Algeria is a diverse country with many languages spoken and a very complex linguistic background. Although French is the most frequently utilized foreign language in Algeria, the country has recently developed a curriculum in which learning English is mandatory in the national educational program, and it is taught in middle schools, secondary schools, and universities. It is considered the second foreign language after French. However, in Algeria, the number of English speaking people is limited because it is absent from the daily lives of most Algerians. English learners mostly use their English in classrooms. Then it seems that the only source of English is through books, assignments, and textbooks given by the teachers. Said Slimani said **“English in Algeria is not the students’ natural communicative environment. Besides, this foreign language is not akin to the students’ mother tongue; Arabic. Therefore, apart from the limited amount of English they hear, speak, read or write in the classroom, English is, to a certain extent, absent most of the time in their daily lives”**. (Said Slimani, 34).

## 1.3 The concept of anxiety

Anxiety is considered one of the greatest well-studied psychological phenomena since it was explored in the 1970s. Generally speaking, it is a fearful and anxious feeling and a common reaction that most people have when they are stressed.

## 1.4 Categories of anxiety

### 1.4.1 Trait anxiety

Pappamihel (2002) describes dispositional anxiety as **“the tendency of a person to be nervous or feel anxious irrespective of the situation he/she is exposed to”** Based on this definition Individuals



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who are trait anxious are more prone to experiencing elevated levels of panic, concern, and anxiety and all negative emotions. In several situations and on a regular basis. That is to say, in such a situation most people do not experience similar emotions, trait-anxious people frequently experience and exhibit state anxiety. Trait anxious people are more prone to feel worried and uncomfortable in less dangerous and hard situations (Spielberger, 2005). This kind of anxiety is linked to a person's personality; however, it is hard to overcome it and it has a negative influence on the process of language learning.

### 1.4.2 State anxiety

State anxiety is defined by MacIntyre (1999) as "**the moment-to-moment experience of anxiety**" (cited in Zsuzsa Toth, 2010, p. 6). That is to say, it is a temporary feeling of worry and nervousness that takes place as a consequence of a particular threat or situation. Based on that, when individuals experience a bad feeling or stressful situation, their anxiety arises but for a short amount of time. Such as when a student experiences apprehension while taking an important exam. This kind of anxiety is considered an obstacle for individuals, especially learners because it affects their learning skills.

### 1.4.3 Situation-specific anxiety

Situation specific anxiety is described as " the likelihood to feel nervous in a specific situation, such as throughout examinations (labeled as 'test anxiety'), while tackling mathematical problems (designated as 'math anxiety'), or especially when talking a different language (marked as 'language anxiety')" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994, p.2). (As cited in Djebari 2013, p.55). In other words, a disturbing feeling arises when an individual experiences stress or nervousness at a specific time and place. It is similar to trait anxiety, but it occurs in a specific situation. However, this kind of anxiety can affect a person in a specific circumstance and cause anxiety, whereas another one could not affect him at all. Nevertheless, it is sure that all three types of anxiety, trait, state, or specific-situation, have an adverse outcome on the students' learning process.

## 1.5 What is FL anxiety?

Anxiety when it comes to foreign languages is a common phenomenon among students that has been discussed psychologically over years. However, "Language stress can be characterized as a nervousness and unfavorable feelings caused by acquiring or employing an additional tongue" McIntyre (1999:27). That is to say, it is a state where foreign language learners behave anxiously and nervously in classrooms when they are under stress while acquiring a new language.

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### **1.6 Categories of foreign language anxiety (skill-related)**

Researchers have been interested in FL anxiety and how it affects students' learning for decades. However, they have introduced four types of FL anxiety that are related to specific language learning skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

#### **1.6.1 FL Reading anxiety**

According to Cheng et al. (1999), research shows that second tongue reading apprehension exists. It is an anxiety that students feel while reading a passage in a foreign language. However, this anxiety the result of a fear of failing or a lack of self-confidence. Which affects the scholastic achievement of a student. However, according to Chen (2007), it has a strong connection with the learner's oral performance.

#### **1.6.2 FL Writing anxiety**

Foreign Language Writing Anxiety (FLWA) is defined as ‘‘an overall evasion of composing and circumstances noticed by people to require a certain level of words, which includes the possibility of assessing that writing’’ (Hassan, 2001: 4). In other words, it is a negative attitude by students toward their writing or the situation in which it necessitates evaluating their writing skills. Students who have high levels of FL writing anxiety normally write short passages and have difficulty comprehending the contents and concentrating. (Horwitz et al.1986).

#### **1.6.3 FL listening anxiety**

Listening is generally regarded as a difficult skill in foreign language learning and might cause anxiety in the student and affect his language learning performance. According to Young (1992), listening comprehension is highly challenging, especially when the learner cannot understand the text, and that affects both the learners' performance and listening ability. However, Foreign Language Listening Anxiety (FLLA), also known as listening comprehension anxiety is a type of anxiety experienced by students in a language learning situation that requires listening skills and that can cause uneasiness, frustration, and self-doubt, apprehension, and tension. (Lili, 2015).

#### **1.6.4 FL Speaking anxiety**

The ultimate aim of foreign language learners is to speak and communicate in the second tongue fluently. Speaking is the procedure of creating and communicating purpose in a range of settings through the use of nonverbal and verbal signs. (Chaney 1998) It means that speaking is the greatest used skill in our daily life interactions. Especially in classrooms, it is considered a fundamental skill among all four-language skills in the field of learning foreign languages.

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Most students put a major focus on enhancing their speaking abilities to communicate with other people and express feelings and thoughts in the target language.

Many students suffer from anxiety and nervousness reactions toward performing orally and when they are asked by teachers to speak the second language in classrooms. Indeed, Young (1991) described it as "**distortion of sounds, inability to produce 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).

### 1.7 The Value of Speaking as a skill in the EFL Classroom

Humans communicate their feelings, ideas, and thoughts to one another through speech. And for this reason, communication proficiencies perform a significant role. Several researchers have highlighted the value of speaking in recent studies, especially in the field of learning and teaching foreign languages. Speaking is, by far, the highest essential proficiency amidst the other skills: reading, writing and listening.

Speaking skills are a major concern among FL learners. Students work to improve their ability to speak because the proficiency of this skill judges the level of the speaker. Students who are competent at talking the second tongue are most likely to be active and dynamic when practicing and exchanging both inside and outside the classroom.

Students who master the skill of speaking provide them with several advantages. Proficiency in speaking increases a speaker's confidence. An effective and confident speaker can deliver a presentation easily, as well as, attract and maintain the awareness of the audience until the end of his presentation. It also encourages students to participate in debates, discussions, and speech competitions in classrooms. As well to getting better job opportunities when applying for a job, the candidate's performance or speaking skill is measured during job interviews. However, it is not only limited to professional life but also used in daily life situations, such as enjoying the moments of life in which they communicate and express their ideas, exchange information, and share emotions. "**In the present modern world, everything is linked with speaking skills. One who has good talent in speaking can conquer the whole world**" (Raw 2019 p.10).

The importance of speaking was completely neglected by the majority of EFL/ESL teachers. So far, it became significant after realizing the value of spoken conversation in developing the level of competency of learners while acquiring a foreign/second language.

### 1.8 The sources of FL speaking anxiety in classrooms

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Since foreign language speaking anxiety has been a concern to researchers because of its negative effects on students' learning process, various studies have been performed to look into the roots of the speaking anxiety that students face in classrooms. The section that follows provides different factors that provoke speaking nervousness in an unfamiliar tongue classroom.

### 1.8.1 Self-perception or Self-esteem

The level of self-esteem and self-perception is determined by how each student evaluates and judges himself and the thoughts that he receives from within or from others. Therefore, it means that the students who get anxious are the ones with low self-esteem due to their negative thoughts about their learning abilities. However, they compare their capacities with other students and underestimate themselves and they overthink their classmate's criticism about their limited proficiency in vocabulary, structure, and speaking skills. (I.W. Antoro, 2015, p. 4.) In contrast, students with high self-esteem are most likely to be active in classrooms.

(Antoro, 2015) confirms that the phobia of performing faults and failure is also a reason that makes self-perception a factor of speaking anxiety. The majority of students feel that making mistakes is embarrassing and humiliating. Therefore, it is not surprising that they prefer to remain silent in classrooms rather than make mistakes since they have lost confidence in themselves.

Both Abdallah and Dr. Ahmed (2015) confirmed in their previous studies that there exists a relationship between self-confidence and success in EFL learning, especially in oral communication and academic performance. Adalikwu (2012) defined confidence as "**the belief that a person has in their potential to accomplish at a task, based on whether or not they have been able to perform that task in the past**" (pp. 5-6). Therefore, A confident student is the one that believes in himself and his learning capacities whether they are excellent or not. That is why students who experience a lack of confidence are those who underrated their skills; as a result, they are likely to have a nervous breakdown toward oral performance. Concerning this topic, As WL Arifin explained, "**A teacher may be experienced to find his/her student less willingness and isolates among their friends. This symptom generally influenced by the lack of confidence in the individual of the students. Students who are low in confidence also have low self-efficacy that is being influenced by the feeling that they are 'stupid', 'worthless', not as 'bright' as others, they do not know that everyone else is not probably better than they are**". (p.33.2017)

Based on the above explanation, students who have low self-confidence are influenced by their inner thoughts that they are not as skilled and competent as other class participants. Eventually, they

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avoid speaking in front of others in classrooms, or they get an anxiety reaction if they are in this kind of situation. On the other hand, confident students are able to overcome overthinking and anxiety while also presenting their ideas and thoughts in a comfortable and effective way.

### 1.8.2 Presentation in the Classroom

Presentation, in general, refers to presenting an idea, concept, or information in a formal, structured way in front of a group of people. It is an important part of the teaching and learning foreign language process because it requires speaking skills. However, many students find it difficult to perform facing an audience, particularly in classrooms. According to Antoro (2015), presentation in classrooms is considered a factor of FL speaking anxiety.

Presentation is a source of anxiety due to several reasons listed by many researchers. However, according to Antoro (2015), learners are passive when it comes to presentations in classrooms because they are anxious that they will become the center of attention and they are also afraid of the questions asked by other learners and lecturers. Therefore, they avoid public speaking in classrooms because believe that they will appear unintelligent or foolish and get exposed in the presence of their classmates and teachers if they make any mistakes. Ur (2000) also stated that students often experience discouragement when they try to speak in a second tongue because they are worried that they will be mocked and the teacher may form a negative attitude toward them. Aftat (2008) who mentioned that this worry is connected to criticism and embarrassment supports this.

According to C. Tian's (2019) research, he indicated that the factor of "time for preparation" of the presentation is the cause of the anxiety in classroom presentations. He stated that students get high-level anxiety reactions when they are not well prepared for the presentation. Because they feel anxious about whether or not they have prepared adequately. They got extremely nervous because they knew they would tremble, especially when they realized that they would be the next to present. He also viewed the "number of presentations" as a cause of classrooms presentation anxiety: students' level of anxiety increases when they are required to do a presentation multiple time. (p.136. 2019).

### 1.8.3 Fear of Making Mistakes

Cognitive aspects hold a huge impact on discouraging students from speaking in the classroom atmosphere. Such as the phobia of committing faults. Several studies have highlighted the purpose of the apprehension of making errors in raising students' anxiety levels. According to Young (1990) studies, one of the causes of students' remaining silent during speaking activities is their worry about making mistakes in the language classrooms. (Horwitz et al., 1986). Young (1990) also confirmed that when he

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surveyed students and declared that if they were not so worried about saying the wrong thing, they would be more willing to participate in classrooms. Gürbüz and Gürbük (2014) conducted research in which they hypothesized that, along with several other factors, making mistakes and negative evaluation are the major causes of EFL speaking anxiety.

For several reasons, the phobia of committing faults has become a common issue among students. In Wahyudi et al.'s (2015) research, students remain silent and quit in classrooms because they get anxious when other students correct their mistakes while speaking. Jones (2004:31) as cited in Wahyudi et al.'s (2015) states **“Classroom is always a problem... you find many people watching you and try to correct you, laugh at you, you will be blamed for any mistakes, and you have to be correct because it is a class.”** Lack of vocabulary was also recognized as a source of anxiety in a study conducted by Tanveer (2007), who conducted an interview research to explore the possible origins of linguistic apprehension when speaking in classroom atmospheres. He agrees, stating that the student's difficulties in acquiring linguistic forms are likely to provoke speaking anxiety. Because their difficulties are reflected in their communicative competence. He also claims that when teachers react negatively to students' mistakes, their anxiety of committing faults increases. As a result, any attempt to speak in the classroom will be discouraged.

### 1.8.4 Social Environment

The community atmosphere is the place and community in which students live and learn. It is known that it has a major influence on the students' learning processes. Several studies have pointed out that sociocultural factors, including social environment, can contribute to students' speaking anxiety. Because the larger number of the learners live in an environment that does not support and encourage students to frequently speak the target language, they only use their mother tongue language on a daily basis, and classrooms are the only places where they can speak the target language. According to Wahyudi et al. (2015), the social environment has an impact on the learners' level of anxiety when speaking. Because when students are not familiar with using the acquired language (English) in their daily life interactions, they are apt to experience an anxiety reaction in classrooms.

Al Nakhalah (2016) also said students prefer to speak in their primary language because they believe that the target language is only used for communicatively nonessential domains like drills or dialogue practice, whereas the mother tongue should be used for discussing essential topics. Therefore, learners in such environments only interact with the target language through in-class small talk. The

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classroom is the only source of language input and practice. As a result, the lack of opportunities to speak English outside classrooms contributes to increasing the students' speaking anxiety in classrooms.

Mulyani (2018) also conducted research in which a participant pointed out that low use of English in their home environment is an obstacle to the development of their communicative skills. When students are not exposed to the target language, it decreases their language proficiency, in which they will be limited in using vocabulary, grammatical rules, and pronunciation, which lowers their conversation aptitude and provokes their speaking anxiety.

### 1.8.5 Gender

Several studies have shown concern about the possible gender outcomes on anxiety and the relationship between the two terms. According to Wahyudi et al. (2015), gender is a source of speaking anxiety in the classroom. He stated that students get anxious when they are talking faces the opposite sex. In previous research, Mohammadi, (2013) investigated the gender-related impact on second language anxiety among the Iranians who experimented in matched-gender and mixed-gender classrooms. The result was that mixed-gender classrooms are considered anxietyprovoking because of the presence of the opposite gender.

However, it remains the most controversial. Some researchers hypothesize that there may be a possible difference between males and females in the level of anxiety. Female students showed high levels of anxiety than male students in academic settings. (El-Khafai 2005)

Neuman (2007). Also claimed that women's levels of anxiety are higher than men's while investigating gender differences about anxiety.

In other studies, conducted research about the possible causes of speaking anxiety among second-language gendered business education students. They asked a research question: if gender differences influence the level of anxiety of students in UNISEL, the results established that girls are more anxious compared to male students when they are asked to speak the target language (English) in class. Because female students are concerned about their self-esteem and are afraid of others judging them.

Cultural background also plays a role in the factor of gender. In terms of cultural background about gender, some cultures do not value a woman's voice, and some students from such cultures may feel uncomfortable speaking in public. Especially when she has been told that her opinion is worthless, as a result, which contributes to their speaking anxiety. Toth (2011) cited by Gaibani, A. & Elmenfi, F. (2014).

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### 1.8.6 Cultural Difference

Several social identities (e.g., gender, age, race, ethnicity, and class) with various backgrounds can be found in some classes among the students. Their speech, behaviors, and thinking differ from each other. However, in these situations, different features, such as accents and dialects, occur with these cultural variations and communities, which can lead to misunderstandings of what is meant, said, and done due to the different ways they utilize language. As a result, it provokes speaking anxiety in some students.

Some students get apprehensive when they talk to students who have different cultural backgrounds because they overthink that maybe they will say something inappropriate in their culture since they are not used to the target language. Yildiz (2021) also adds that each student represents their own culture, which may be new to other students in the classroom, in this kind of situation; students get apprehensive about not understanding gestures and cultural jokes. This unfamiliarity with the culture provokes speaking anxiety in EFL students.

### 1.8.7 Formal Classroom Environment

The learning atmosphere is mostly designed in a formal, well-organized environment. However, some students feel apprehensive in this kind of environment, and they are most likely to get an anxiety reaction.

This environment encompasses a range of activities that are vital in the learning process. Such as in the foreign language anxiety-learning environment, where students are encouraged to do activities that require them to interact with each other to practice the target language such as presentations. Some students feel comfortable engaging in those activities and practices as part of their language learning process, but others avoid them due to the stressful environment of oral performance and the fact that they are expected to present individually and spontaneously in a short amount of time. (Padmadewi 1998).

During those activities, the teacher is the one that listens and evaluates, so when students feel they are in an environment where they will be evaluated by the teacher, their anxiety level rises. Especially, when they are apprehensive of committing faults and being evaluated harshly by the teacher in front of the entire classroom. Wahyudi et al (2015) said that **“learners will feel highly anxious to speak the foreign language /L2 when they are in an evaluative situation or when monitored by the teacher and friends.”** (p.5)

This identifies that student regard in class activities as stressful apprehensive and anxiety-provoking due to the formal classroom environment.



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### 1.9 The effects of FL Anxiety on Learning Foreign Language

Several studies on FLA anxiety in relation to language learning have been conducted, and its effects on the level of the learners' language academic achievement. It is known that FLA anxiety has a direct impact, mostly negative. According to MacIntyre, (1998). The effects of anxiety on second and foreign language learning and performance are classified into at least five different dimensions.

Students are uncomfortable when they are in social interactions as communicating with others, especially when the speaker is expected to speak in the target language.

Cognitively, Anxiety might make it difficult for information to enter the cognitive system. Moreover, if it does, it may have an impact on learning efficiency, performance, and fluency while speaking or writing the target language. (Tobias1999).

Anxiety arousal might affect the quality of communication output because students experience "freezing-up" periods that include emotions such as fear, tenseness, and fright. When they are in this type of situation, they have difficulty concentrating. That hinders information retrieval.

Finally, personally, According to MacIntyre, the personal result of anxiety is that some students consider learning a language a "traumatic experience" (1999, p. 39). This type of negative experience can seriously damage a learner's self-esteem and confidence.

### 1.10 Strategies to reduce FLS anxiety in FL classrooms

It is vital to master speaking abilities with the objective of being fluent in a foreign language. It is a rule that all FL students are aware of. However, the majority of FL students encounter anxiety while speaking a foreign language in classrooms. It is a problem that prevents students from gaining better results in their speaking skills. According to Foss and Reitzel (1988), if FL learners could acknowledge their fear of learning a foreign language, they would be able to reduce anxiety-provoking situations and deal with them appropriately. Therefore, there are some strategies developed in order to help FL learners overcome their anxiety. These procedures are arranged into two parts, strategies done by teachers and strategies done by students themselves.

#### 1.10.1 Strategies used by the teachers

There is no doubt that the teacher's role in helping the student overcome the FLSA in class is crucial. Teachers' concern is always seeing their students have the best results in the classroom. Some numerous tips and strategies can be used by the teacher to deal with such situations and overcome this anxiety.

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Teachers must create a positive atmosphere in second language classrooms. It is a strategy that has a good impact on the students' level of anxiety. Han, T. et al. (2016) stated that: "... **teachers were helpful in terms of making them feel comfortable in the classrooms by approaching them like friends with a respectful and positive attitude.**" The responsibility of the teacher is to create an environment that motivates and encourages the learner to perform and communicate. A less stressful environment in classrooms makes the students relaxed and comfortable while performing in classes, which reduces anxiety.

Since students are well known for making vocabulary and grammar errors, as well as pronunciation and fluency errors, especially during oral presentations in classes. Teachers must remind anxious students that making mistakes is acceptable and that is a natural part of the language-learning process (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002).

As well as the teacher must be tolerant and calm when correcting the learner's mistakes. Because most students feel uneasy when the teacher or their classmates in sight of the whole class correct their mistakes, especially in a harsh way. By doing that, the teacher prevents a situation where students feel judged or negatively evaluated. Gregersen (2003) discusses the value of error tolerance and how it might help students in dealing with anxiety. Indeed, this helps them overcome their fear of speaking as well as encourages them to use the target language in a comfortable manner. In addition, teachers' ways of correcting mistakes help them develop their language speaking proficiency and competency.

In addition to that, several studies claim that a teacher who has proper use of entertainment in EFL classrooms can offer many benefits to students. Especially the ones who suffer from speaking anxiety. The majority of students value and enjoy a positive and humorous atmosphere because it makes learning enjoyable. According to Martin (2007), humor creates an enjoyable classroom climate that encourages students to think and learn.

When teachers exhibit a good sense of humor, for example, by sharing jokes and hilarious stories or memories, it creates an informal learning environment that helps develop a positive relationship between students and teachers (Hashem, 1994). Furthermore, it provides many other advantages in the context of foreign language teaching. It makes students concentrate more and remember information effectively, According to Berk (2002), humor helps students engage in the classroom. Simultaneously, it gives them a sense of safety, allowing them to know that it is acceptable to take risks in the classroom without experiencing any bad feelings or anxiety while performing orally using the target language.

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When teachers express nonverbal compliments, such as smiling and mentioning students by their personal names, they create a friendly and encouraging environment in the classroom where students become less anxious and participate and interact with confidence and comfort.

Cooperative learning is also an effective strategy used by teachers in order to lower anxiety. Singh, Y. P., and Agrawal, A. (2011) define the concept as "**the learning process in which individuals learn in a small group with the help of each other.**" (p. 1). Over the years, several researchers have emphasized the value of group work in classrooms and the fact that it has beneficial results for students with speaking anxiety, especially among EFL students. Dornyei (2001) confirmed that cooperative environments benefit the learning process by encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence. Furthermore, inspires students to interact in class, enhances critical thinking and decision-making abilities, as well as encourages students to be active in classrooms and improves speaking fluency. Therefore, it has become a favorite classroom strategy among many educators, who see it as a solution to the majority of educational challenges.

However, it became evident during the language teaching classroom activities that teachers encouraged students to participate in cooperative group learning. Because it allows students to rely on one another, it creates an atmosphere in which they support and encourage one another to participate in class without apprehension. Group work creates a non-threatening environment in the classroom, allowing apprehensive students to participate in speaking performances and activities while also reducing anxiety and increasing interaction and communication.

Ansari (2015) conducted research to provide EFL teachers with effective strategies to lower foreign language speaking anxiety. His study disclosed that the greater number of learners interviewed preferred to work in pairs and on group tasks during speaking activities. Because when educators confer learners to learn in pairs or groups to do activities and assignments, it creates an intimate speaking environment in which students feel comfortable and calm, which motivates them to participate. Group learning activities also create a sense of security because when students recognize that they are in small groups where everyone is feeling the same way, their anxiety of appearing foolish around other students fades (Doyon 2000, p. 19, cited in Sato, K. 2003).

Ultimately, the teacher have to bear in mind the importance of acknowledging the existence of language anxiety as a value step in helping students to overcome their speaking anxiety. Teachers should identify the reasons behind students' hesitation to participate in classroom discussions; then they will notice that the bulk of quiet students in their classrooms are struggling with anxiety. According to

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Hashemi, M. (2011), "**Language teachers should acknowledge the existence of the feeling of anxiety and stress among the language learners and should apply quick and effective strategies to help them cope with those destructive feelings.**" (p. 644). Detecting students' behavior and attitudes toward oral presentations and classroom interaction helps the teacher to help apprehensive students cope with their anxiety. In addition to that, Teachers also, ought to explain to their students that anxiety is a common natural problem that could happen to any EFL learner. (Alrabai's. 2014 p. 95), because once students recognize the existence of their anxiety, they may seek solutions to reduce it.

### 1.10.2 Strategies used by the students

Students' recognition of their problem is the first step to helping themselves overcome their anxiety problem. Students must understand that anxiety has an adverse consequence on their speaking performance and that it could affect their learning process. Students should be aware of any feelings that may prohibit or influence their performance.

The second one is preparation. Preparation is an essential technique. That is why students must practice and prepare before any presentation or any oral performance by presenting in front of their classmates or in front of their teachers, so that they will know what to say and what to do. It will eventually help them cope with their anxiety. According to Liu's (2007) research, their nervousness in the oral class was due to a lack of preparation, and he emphasized the importance of proper preparation in reducing anxiety. That is, if students had enough time to prepare, they would be less anxious and more comfortable speaking English. It is an effective technique that may help them develop their self-esteem in speaking, which can lower the level of anxiety.

Self-talk is known as the inner voice that can be either negative or positive. Positive self-talk is also viewed as an effective technique for students to decrease their speaking anxiety. According to Young (1991), anxious students use positive talk such as "**I can handle this.**" **Just relax... Take a deep slow breath and I will start as I rehearsed it "as a strategy to help themselves cope with their anxiety."** (Cited by Zed, B.C. Kassad, H. 2017. P. 24). Students should be aware that all students are capable of making mistakes, and they should encourage themselves to keep speaking regardless of what happens, and they should convince themselves that everything will be fine. In this way, they can resist their negative thoughts with positive thinking.

Positive reasoning is a cognitive behavior that could have a beneficial effect on reducing anxiety. Anxious students to eliminate their anxiety problem can use an effective strategy. According to Basset (1989), "**To begin to replace negative, depressive thoughts with compassionate, respectful,**

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**comforting thoughts"** (p.3-1), that is to say, learners must forget about their negative thoughts and replace them with positive thinking, such as imagining doing a successful performance and getting good reactions from other students and the teacher. This kind of thinking develops self-encouragement and builds confidence and motivation.

Last strategy is relaxation techniques. It can also be beneficial. The aim of this strategy is to manage symptoms such as stress, fear, and worry caused by speaking anxiety in the classroom during or before any oral performance. According to Bryan (2001), anxious students can use a variety of relaxation techniques during a study. To feel more at ease, they can perform breathing exercises and relax their muscles. Furthermore, anxious students can use expressions like: "**I am calm, I am good and relaxed, I can finish my work easily, I can present it effectively, and so on.**" (Barkat, C. Z., and H. Kassid. 2017. P. 25) to put themselves at ease when they forget words or make errors. Moreover, some nervous students tend to speak quickly. To express their thoughts, these students must repeatedly remind themselves to speak more slowly and breathe more deeply in order to control their anxious or frightened feelings and eventually reduce their anxiety. These kinds of strategies are effective because the more students are relaxed, the less anxious they are.

### 1.11 Conclusion

To conclude, in this chapter we provided the information needed about the background of foreign language speaking anxiety and its features. We provided definitions of FL anxiety in general and FL speaking anxiety in particular. We also emphasized the impact caused by FL speaking anxiety on the EFL students' oral performance and the most common sources of speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms, as well as we highlighted the value of speaking skills for FL learners. Finally, we have presented some strategies and techniques to minimize FL anxiety.

## **Chapter Two:**

# **Research Methodology and Data Collection**

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter lays the groundwork for the research by outlining the methodology, research design, and data collection procedures used in the study. It details the various steps taken to investigate the impact of foreign language speaking anxiety in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms for third-year students at Belhadj Bouchaib University, Ain Temouchent. The chapter begins by thoroughly discussing the research design and methodology, including the rationale for the chosen approach. Next, the context of the investigation and the sample are described, providing background information on the setting and participants. The chapter then outlines the different data collection instruments and procedures used during the data collection phase, including surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Each method is explained in detail, with attention paid to the strengths and limitations of each. Finally, the chapter emphasizes the data analysis methods used to analyze the various types of data collected. It provides a clear explanation and interpretation of the validity and reliability of the data, highlighting steps taken to ensure the accuracy and robustness of the findings. Overall, this chapter establishes a strong foundation for the study, setting the stage for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of the results.

### 2.2 Research Design

The research design involves making decisions regarding what, where, when, and how data will be collected, quantified, and evaluated. Several factors influence research design decisions, including the nature of the research problem, research purposes and objectives, type of data required, population being studied, data collection techniques, and data analysis methods (Creswell, 2020).

This study employs a mixed-methods research (MMR) model to examine the impact of foreign language speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms for third-year English foreign language (EFL) students. Mixed methods research design involves collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single research study (Dornyei, 2007; Creswell, 2020). The advantages of mixed methods research include combining the strengths of quantitative and qualitative data to overcome the limitations of each method, providing a clearer picture of the phenomenon under investigation, enhancing the validity and reliability of research outcomes through convergence of research results, confirming and/or clarifying quantitative findings through qualitative data, obtaining the most information by exploring various viewpoints and features of the study subject, and improving comprehension of the research subject and phenomenon under investigation. The researchers choose to employ both quantitative and qualitative

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data gathering approaches to cross-check and validate study findings in order to fulfill the research objectives and answer the research questions. On the one hand, the qualitative technique and qualitative data collection tools allow the researchers to investigate various elements of the research subject. It improves understanding of the research problem.

### 2.3 The Target Population

The sample for this study consisted of third-year students from the English department at the University of Ain Temouchent Belhadj Bouchaib. Participants were selected based on their previous experience with anxiety in oral exams and their completion of the English module for three years, enabling them to provide in-depth insights into this issue.

### 2.4 Research Tools

Collecting information is a crucial aspect of any research project. In scientific studies, it involves acquiring and quantifying information on a phenomenon or specific variable(s). The data collection process involves using one or more instruments such as questionnaires, observations, and interviews. The scope of the research problem and objectives influence the choice of data collection instrument(s). For this research project, two data collection instruments were selected by the researchers: an online questionnaire and classroom observation, to gather the necessary information required for the study.

#### 2.4.1 Online Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a frequently used data collection instrument in Applied Linguistics, particularly in quantitative and statistical research, and are considered a quantitative data collection approach. According to Abawi (2013), a questionnaire is "a data collection instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents." A structured web-based questionnaire was chosen as the initial data collection instrument in this study because it is straightforward to use and cost-effective. Compared to an unstructured questionnaire with open-ended questions, it facilitates the collection of quantitative data in a shorter amount of time.

The questionnaire used in this study consists of 11 questions of various types, including multiple-choice, open-ended, and closed-ended questions. The first section aims to gather information on the participants' opinions and attitudes towards oral classes and in-class oral activities, as well as their level of English-speaking proficiency. The second section focuses on speaking anxiety in the foreign language



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classroom, exploring the students' speaking difficulties, previous experiences with anxiety, and the impact of anxiety on their learning, as well as the importance of speaking as a skill. The objective of these questions is to determine if students perceive speaking as a stressful skill. The final questions aim to identify the factors that contribute to anxiety and the strategies that can assist EFL learners in reducing their anxiety.

### **2.4.2 Classroom Observation**

Observation is a valuable qualitative data collection tool for scientific research that involves systematic examination and recording of people, events, behaviors, and practices to address research questions. For this study, the researchers conducted classroom observations of third-year oral English classes to investigate the impact of foreign language anxiety on students' speaking skills in EFL classrooms at Belhadj Bouchaib University. Classroom observation was chosen due to its numerous benefits for this research project. Firstly, it allowed the researchers to obtain direct, accurate, and authentic data from a natural setting. Secondly, predetermined aims and topics for observation minimized subjective bias. Finally, classroom observation was beneficial for enhancing the researcher's professional development in the field of study.

### **2.5 Data Collection Procedures**

The process of collecting data involves several steps and is a continuous cycle that starts with selecting the data collection instrument and ends with the actual collection of information. In this study, two data collection instruments were used: an online questionnaire and classroom observation. The researchers gathered both quantitative and qualitative data at different times to assess the impact of foreign language speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms at the Department of Letters and English Language at Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University

#### **2.5.1 Online Questionnaire Administration**

The online questionnaire administration used in this study followed a rigorous process, which included several stages such as examination, modification, test study, and substantive data collection. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms, with the supervisor added as a collaborator to ensure accuracy and suggest any necessary modifications. After the supervisor's revisions, a pilot study was

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conducted to ensure validity and clarity. Two students from the target population were selected to respond to the online questionnaire.

Ultimately, the questionnaire was distributed to the participants via email and Messenger. A total of eighty (80) out of one hundred (100) third-year EFL students responded to the questionnaire within twenty days.

### **2.5.2 Classroom Observation**

To gain a deeper understanding of the research problem, the researchers utilized classroom observation as an additional data collection method. After administering the online questionnaire, responses were automatically recorded for analysis. The researchers conducted the classroom observation by sitting in the last row of the classroom, taking notes on paper, and observing the students. During the post-observation debriefing, third-year EFL students were encouraged to share their difficulties and challenges in oral assessments. The observational data will be qualitatively analyzed.

### **2.6 Data Analysis**

The next step after data collection is data analysis, which involves organizing, evaluating, and interpreting data to address research questions and achieve research objectives. This process entails applying analytical and logical thinking to comprehend the gathered data. Two main data analysis approaches exist: quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis. This research project utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques to investigate foreign language anxiety in EFL classrooms. The results of the online questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively, while the data collected through classroom observation was analyzed qualitatively.

#### **2.6.1 Quantitative Analysis**

Quantitative analysis is a statistical and mathematical method of interpreting numerical data in order to gain a better understanding of a specific topic or phenomenon. The researchers utilized quantitative analysis to examine the results of the online questionnaire in this study. The online questionnaire responses were automatically collected and saved in a data file in Google Forms. The researchers aimed to compare the results of EFL students with high anxiety levels and those with low anxiety levels. The data file was downloaded in an Excel format, and the results were manually separated

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into groups of anxious and non-anxious students. The quantitative data and online questionnaire results were presented in tables.

### **2.6.2 Qualitative Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis involves understanding, interpreting, and clarifying the qualitative data collected on the research topic. Qualitative data can be gathered from various sources using different techniques such as observation. There is no single correct way of analyzing and presenting qualitative data, as the method depends on the research objectives and the purpose of collecting the data. In this study, qualitative analysis is used to define, evaluate, and comprehend the data gathered through classroom observation. The qualitative data from the classroom observation is recorded in the form of notes and sentences, and the results are reported as direct quotations in this study. Methodologists suggest that the analysis method should align with the research objectives and overall aim of the study (Patton, 2002; Gibbs, 2007; Cohen et al., 2018).

### **2.7 Conclusion**

To conclude this chapter illustrates the research design, sample population, instruments, and data collection procedures used in this case study. The techniques to evaluate the collected quantitative and qualitative data were provided. Additionally, this chapter highlights the methodology used to explore the effect of foreign language anxiety on the students speaking skills in the EFL classrooms. Now that the methodology of the study has been outlined in detail, it is time to move on to the next chapter, which presents the results and recommendations based on the findings from the data analysis.

**Chapter Three: Data Analysis,  
Suggestions and Recommendations**

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the method's analysis of the questionnaire and the classroom observation results. We believe it will contribute to our research. It was conducted at the Department of Letters and English Language at Belhadj Bouchaib University to investigate the impact of foreign language speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms for English foreign language (EFL) third year students. This chapter is devoted to present the participants and explaining the main instruments and tools used in the research; this chapter discusses the method's analysis of the questionnaire and classroom observation results. With the aim of answering the research questions and confirming and disconfirming the hypothesis.

### 3.2 Results of the Online Questionnaire

The questionnaire is used in order to collect an adequate information needed in the research study. This questionnaire consists of 11 questions of various types: Multiple choice questions, open-ended questions, and closed-ended questions. The online questionnaire of this study was shared via collective email to EFL third year students at Belhadj Bouchaib University Ain Temouchent.

#### 3.2.1 Analysis of the students' questionnaire

**Question 01:** How often do you attend your oral English class?

**Table 01:** Students attendance to the oral English class

Response	Number	Percentage
Never	0	0%
Sometimes	15	20%
Often	24	24%
Always	26	46%
Rarely	15	10%
Total	80	100%

The above question aims at identifying at students' attitudes toward attending oral classes. As shown 20 percent of students (15 participants) stated that they sometimes attend oral sessions, 24 percent of students (24 participants) stated that they often join oral sessions, 46 percent of students (26 participants) stated that they always participate oral sessions, while 10 percent (15 participants) declared that they rarely attend oral sessions. Moreover, 0% chose not to attend the oral sessions at all. This

percentage indicates that the majority of students have a positive attitude toward oral sessions and that they are motivated to learn and to attend, which may be seen in that the oral class is the only session that allows them to express themselves and exchange their ideas.

**Question 02:** How often do you participate in oral performance activities?

**Table 02:** Students participation in oral performance activities

Response	Number	Percentage
Never	06	6.7%
Rarely	17	22.3%
Sometimes	23	41.1%
often	18	13.3%
Always	16	16.6%
Total	80	100%

The above question aims to identify students' participation in oral performance activities. However, 6.7 percent of students (06 participants) stated that they do not participate at oral activities at all, 22.3 percent of students (17 participants) stated that they rarely participate, 41.1 percent of students (23 participants) stated that they occasionally participate, while 13.3 percent of students (18 participants) declared that they constantly participate. Moreover, 16.6 percent of students (16 participants) stated that stated that they always participate at oral activities. This result indicates that among the passive students, there are some who are active in the classroom. It is beneficial because it may create a positive environment that encourages passive students to speak and at least practice their speaking skills.

**Question 03:** Your English-speaking skill in oral session is

**Table 03:** The level of students in English-speaking skill during oral session

Response	Number	Percentage
Excellent	07	15.6%
Good	42	51%

Average	26	26.7%
Poor	5	6.7%
Total	80	100%

The question above identifies the student’s opinions about their proficiency in English-speaking skills during an oral session. According to the results shown in the table, 51 percent (42 participants) stated that their level of English is good, 26.7 percent (26 participants) stated that their level of English is average, 15.6 percent (07 participants) stated that their level of English is excellent, and only 6.7 percent stated (05 participants) that their level of English is poor. The results show that the majority of EFL students believe in their communication skills.

**Question 04:** Do you find any difficulties while speaking English in classrooms?

**Table 04:** if student find difficulties while speaking English in classrooms

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	23	28%
No	20	22%
Sometimes	37	50%
Total	80	100%

The question above was asked in order to determine if students find any difficulties while speaking English in classrooms. According to the results shown in the table, 28 percent (23 participants) stated that they find difficulties while speaking English in the classroom, 22 percent (20 participants) stated that they don’t find any difficulties while speaking English in the classroom, and 50 percent (37 participants) stated that they occasionally find difficulties while speaking English in the classroom. These results indicate that third year EFL students have the motivation to speak English, but they face obstacles in the classroom that make them feel uncomfortable during the oral exam, which making it difficult for them to practice their communication skills.

**Question 05:** Do you consider anxiety as a cause of these difficulties?

**Table 05:** if students consider anxiety as a cause of speaking difficulties

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	12	15.5%
Neutral	10	11.2%
Agree	43	53.3%
Strongly agree	15	20%
Total	80	100%

The question above is an open-ended question intended to investigate students' opinions on whether they consider anxiety is a cause of their speaking difficulties in class. According to the results, the greatest number of students find difficulties in speaking English while the other students do not find any difficulties in speaking English. This finding confirms that the majority of third year EFL students who have difficulties with speaking English in class are the ones who are anxious during the session and oral activities. In contrast to the remaining students, their difficulties may be due to a lack of speaking proficiency or motivation.

**Question 06:** Have you ever experienced stress and anxiety while performing an oral performance?

**Table 06:** if students experienced stress and anxiety while performing an oral activity

Response	Number	Percentage
Always	30	42.2%
Sometimes	45	51.1%
Never	5	6.7%
Total	80	100%

The data gathered was about whether they felt stressed or anxious while performing an oral activity. According to the above-mentioned results, it was a close result between students who answered "always" (42.2 percent) (30 participants) and students who answered "sometimes" (51.1 percent) (45 participants). Only 6.7 percent (5 participants) said "never." This result indicates that the vast majority



of EFL students experience anxiety when performing orally in class, which causes them to remain passive. While those who answered "no" are more likely to be dealing with something other than anxiety, or they are motivated and confident enough to speak for a short time without any problem.

**Question 07:** Do you think anxiety effects learners' foreign language learning?

**Table 07:** Anxiety effect on learners' foreign language learning

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
disagree	5	9%
Neutral	10	15%
Agree	45	51%
Strongly agree	20	25%
Total	80	100%

The data gathered was about whether they agree that anxiety affects the learners' foreign language learning achievement. The majority of students argued that anxiety effects learners' foreign language learning. While the minority of students disagreed that anxiety has an effect on learners as it is shown in the table above. This result is confirming the fact that anxiety prevent students from achieving a good level in their learning process.

**Question 08:** If so, how?

**Table 08:** The effect of anxiety on learners' foreign language learning

Response	Number	Percentage
Anxiety impacts the learning efficiency, performance, and fluency while speaking the target language (English)	21	26%
Anxiety damages a learner's self-esteem and confidence	26	33%
	11	12%

Anxiety reduces the level of academic achievement in language learning		
Anxiety affects the quality of communication output	22	29%
Total	80	100%

We suggested four statements in the table above that are known as the effects of anxiety on learners' foreign language learning, and we asked the student to choose the most relevant to them. The result revealed that 11 students out of 80 chose that anxiety reduces academic achievement in language learning, while 21 students out of 80 chose that anxiety influences learning efficiency, performance, and fluency while speaking the target language (English). Furthermore, 22 students out of 80 believe that anxiety affects the quality of their communication output and 26 out of 80 believe that anxiety harms a learner's self-esteem and confidence. The result confirms the fact that anxiety has a direct impact, mostly negative, on the student's learning achievement and that it is an obstacle that makes their learning challenging.

**Question 09:** EFL students get anxious while speaking English in classrooms because:

**Table 09:** The factor that cause EFL students' anxiety while speaking English in classrooms

Response	Number	Percentage
I don't like the teachers way of correcting my mistakes	09	10 %
I am uncomfortable in speaking in front of audience	16	13%
I am not familiar with using the target language (English)	14	9%
I get panic when I don't get enough time to prepare before the presentation	17	25%
I think making mistakes while speaking is embarrassing	24	43%

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Total	80	100%
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In the table above, we suggested five statements that are recognized as factors that cause EFL students' anxiety when speaking English in class, and we asked the students to select the most relevant to them. The results revealed that 24 of 80 students chose that student experience anxiety when they believe that making mistakes while speaking is embarrassing. 16 students out of 80 chose that student get anxiety when they are uncomfortable speaking in front of an audience. 17 students out of 80 chose that student experience anxiety when they do not have enough time to prepare for the presentation. Only nine (09) students out of 80 chose that student who got anxiety because of the teacher's way of correcting mistakes. Fourteen students out of 80 chose that student gets anxious because they are not familiar with using the target language (English). This result confirmed that third year EFL students become anxious due to a variety of factors that cause them anxiety while speaking in class, which they must avoid in order to reduce their anxiety.

**Question 10:** What do anxious students expect the teacher to do to help them cope with their anxiety?

**Table 10:** Teacher's strategies that could reduce students' anxiety

Response	Number	Percentage
When a teacher tolerates making mistakes	22	27%
When teachers express nonverbal compliments, such as smiling	30	43%
When the teacher encourages having a group work in class	28	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results obtained from the question above indicate that the teacher's strategies could help students reduce anxiety. Thirty of 80 students agreed that teachers expressing nonverbal compliments, such as smiling, is beneficial, and 22 of 80 students agreed that the teacher's tolerance with their students when they make mistakes is a beneficial strategy. While 28 out of 80 students thought that the teacher's

encouragement of group work in class was a good strategy. Based on these findings, it is clear that teachers play an important role in reducing student anxiety in the classroom.

**Question 11:** What can students do to minimize their anxiety?

**Table 11:** Students strategies that could minimize their anxiety

Response	Number	Percentage
When I speak positively to myself and encourage myself	25	30%
When I avoid any negative thinking, and do relaxation exercises	28	37%
When I practice and prepare before any presentation or any oral performance	27	33%
Total	80	100%

The results obtained from the question above indicate strategies used by students that could minimize their anxiety. shows that in order to reduce anxiety, 27 out of 80 students claimed that practicing and preparing before any presentation or any oral performance is a helpful strategy, and 25 out of 80 students claimed that using positive self-talk and encouragement. Twenty-eight out of 80 students avoid any negative talk, and use relaxation techniques. Consequently, it has been observed that the majority of third year EFL students experience anxiety and stress while speaking, and their concern is to reduce anxiety by employing various strategies that may help them feel more comfortable during an oral activity.

### 3.3 Classroom Observation Results

For this study, the researchers conducted classroom observations of third-year oral English classes to investigate the impact of foreign language anxiety on students' speaking skills in EFL classrooms at Belhadj Bouchaib University. To gain a deeper understanding of the research problem, the researchers utilized classroom observation as an additional data method. The reserchers decided to

conduct a classroom observation to observe EFL students' practices and behaviors. The results of the classroom observation will be presented in the coming paragraphs.

During the oral class session, several noteworthy observations were made regarding the students' participation, anxiety levels, teacher's approach, and overall classroom atmosphere. The following key points were noted:

**Low attendance:** The fact that half of the students in the section did not attend raises concerns about engagement and motivation levels among the students. This could indicate a lack of interest in the subject matter or dissatisfaction with the learning environment.

**Limited student interaction:** Only five students were actively participating and interacting with the teacher during the oral class. This suggests a lack of engagement from the majority of the students, which could be attributed to their shyness, anxiety, or fear of making mistakes.

**Excellent performance of a few students:** The five students who participated consistently demonstrated an excellent level of proficiency in the language. Their confidence and lack of anxiety while speaking indicate that they may have a stronger foundation in the subject or more experience in oral communication.

**High levels of anxiety and shyness:** The majority of the students appeared to be shy and anxious, leading to stuttering and difficulty in expressing themselves. This suggests that the classroom environment may not be conducive to promoting a safe and supportive space for learning and practicing oral skills.

**Negative impact on student confidence:** Some students experienced humiliation when answering questions and making mistakes, leading to frustration and unwillingness to participate further. This highlights the importance of fostering a positive learning environment that encourages risk-taking, learning from mistakes, and constructive feedback.

**Strict teacher approach:** The teacher's strictness and lack of tolerance toward students with lower language abilities may contribute to the high levels of anxiety in the classroom. By only providing opportunities to students with excellent language skills, the teacher may inadvertently be discouraging those with average or weak levels from participating and improving.

**Overall tension and anxiety:** The cumulative effect of these factors results in a classroom atmosphere characterized by high levels of tension and anxiety. This can hinder the learning process and impede students' progress in developing their oral communication skills.

### 3.4 Discussion of the Main Findings

In this study, the researchers used two research instruments: an online questionnaire, and the classroom observation. They were conducted in order to investigate the impact of foreign language anxiety on students' speaking skills in EFL classrooms also to identify the major factors that contribute to this anxiety, along with providing the strategies required to reduce it. This section discusses the major findings obtained from the various research tools used in this study.

The findings confirmed the existence of a negative impact of anxiety on the EFL student's oral performance. According to the results from both the students' online questionnaire and the classroom observation, the majority of third year EFL students suffer from anxiety to a certain level while speaking the target language in the classroom. It is a psychological problem that hinders them from practicing their oral skills and achieving a better result.

The findings also confirmed that anxiety is caused due to a variety of factors in classrooms, and that both teachers and students are aware of its bad influence. This kind of factor causes difficulties that make EFL students struggle with their learning. Anxiety is caused by a lack of self-perception or self-esteem, a fear of being the center of attention, a fear of making mistakes, a lack of use of the target language (English) in daily life interactions, cultural differences, and a formal classroom environment. The result confirmed that these factors hinder students from practicing their speaking skills and that they increase stress and anxiety.

Furthermore, the result showed that the majority of teachers are aware of the common difficulties that students face during oral sessions and presentations and the importance of their role in helping those students to minimize their anxiety by employing a set of strategies used by them that encourage their students to overcome their anxiety, such as creating a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere by exhibiting a good sense of humor, expressing nonverbal compliments, such as smiling, tolerating making mistakes reduces anxiety, and encouraging having group work in class.

Moreover, the findings revealed that students need to overcome speaking anxiety by helping themselves by employing a set of strategies. According to that, anxiety is reduced if a student practices and prepares before any presentation or any oral performance, speaks positively and encourages himself, also avoids any negative thinking and does relaxation exercises.

### 3.5 Suggestions and Recommendations

Since the study was about the impact of language anxiety on EFL students' speaking skills, there are some recommendations and suggestions that EFL teachers and students can use to reduce students' anxiety during oral performance.

#### 3.5.1 Recommendations for third year English Foreign Language Students

Anxiety is considered to be among the main factors that prevent students from practicing their speaking skill and achieving better result in their learning process, they must do their possible to prevent its damages. Therefore, it is necessary to suggest some strategies for helping students to cope with their anxiety and develop their speaking skills.

- Students should avoid thinking negatively and avoid comparing their capacities with other students. They should never underestimate their speaking capacities, and they should develop their proficiency in vocabulary, structure, and speaking skills.
- The student should resist their negative thoughts with positive thinking and should have high self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Students should recognize their problem and be aware of the difficulties that are caused by anxiety, and they should think about solutions.
- Students should understand that making mistakes is a common and natural thing, and they should be aware that everyone makes mistakes, and they should encourage themselves to continue speaking regardless of what happens.
- Students should be open-minded and accept the teacher's evaluation.
- Students should understand that making mistakes is a common natural thing and it is a part of the learning process.

#### 3.5.2 Recommendations for English Foreign Language teachers

When speaking about the anxiety in the foreign language learning and teaching process, it is important to mention that teachers have a significant role in helping their students to decrease their anxiety by employing a set of effective strategies.

- Teachers should create a positive, relaxed environment that motivates and encourages the learner to perform and communicate effectively.
- Teachers should help anxious students to understand that making mistakes is acceptable and that it is a natural part of the language-learning process.

- Teachers should create an informal learning environment by sharing jokes and hilarious stories or memories that help develop a positive relationship between students and teachers.
- Teachers should encourage students to participate in cooperative group learning, because it creates an atmosphere in which they support and encourage one another to participate in class without apprehension.
- Teachers should not hesitate when it comes to anxiety; they should be aware of the existence of the negative impact of language speaking anxiety on learners and the causes that contribute to it.
- Teachers should explain to their students that anxiety is a common natural problem that could happen to any EFL learner.

### **3.6 Limitations**

Our study was conducted in the English department of Ain Temouchent Belhadj Bouchaib University for third year EFL students. The most important limitation lies in the fact that there was some difficulty while collecting questionnaires from the students; some students did not respond to our questionnaire, and some left out some questions. Time was also almost insufficient for the researchers to analyze and interpret all the collected data in a short period.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter was to supply a discussion and thorough evaluation of the data collected via the two data gathering instruments used in this study: an online questionnaire, and the classroom observation. The main objective of this chapter is to explore the effect Foreign Language Anxiety on the students' speaking skills in the EFL classrooms and our hypotheses were confirmed. The analysis of the students' questionnaire agreed on the existence of the negative of anxiety on the oral performance of the student. However, it can be reduced by both students and teachers. The results obtained from the classroom observation revealed that the teachers are aware of the existence of anxiety and its negative effect on the learner's learning achievement and the importance of their role in helping those students to minimize their anxiety. Finally, the researchers supplied some suggestions and recommendations that would elevate EFL students' and teachers' for helping them to decrease anxiety.



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### **Summary**

This dissertation is designed to study the existence of foreign language speaking anxiety among third-year EFL students at Belhadj Bouchaib University and how this psychological problem is affecting their oral performance as well as to clarify the main factors that provoke FL speaking anxiety. It also seeks to provide effective strategies and techniques to reduce anxiety for EFL students. Two questionnaires were used in this research, administered to both third-year EFL students and EFL teachers to investigate their attitudes and perceptions toward FL speaking anxiety. The result of this confirmed the hypothesis of the research, which is the existence of anxiety among EFL students and that it is provoked due to several factors students encounter in classrooms during oral sessions and presentations. However, it can be reduced by employing a set of strategies and techniques.

### **Résumé**

Cette thèse est conçue pour étudier l'existence d'anxiété de langue étrangère chez les étudiants EFL de troisième année à l'Université d'Ain Temouchent Belhadj Bouchaib. Et comment ce problème psychologique affecte leur performance orale, ainsi que pour préciser les principaux facteurs qui provoquent l'anxiété de la FL. Il cherche également à fournir des stratégies et des techniques efficaces pour réduire l'anxiété pour les étudiants EFL. Deux questionnaires ont été utilisés dans cette recherche, administrés aux étudiants EFL de troisième année et aux enseignants EFL, pour étudier leurs attitudes et leurs perceptions envers l'anxiété de parler FL. Le résultat de cela a confirmé l'hypothèse de la recherche, qui est l'existence de l'anxiété chez les étudiants EFL et qu'elle est provoquée en raison de plusieurs facteurs que les élèves rencontrent dans les salles de classe pendant les séances orales et les présentations.