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**Investigating The Affective Causes of
Poor Oral Performance
The Case of Third Year Students of English at Batna University**

**A dissertation in-part fulfillment for the “Magister Degree”
in Language and Communicative Competence.**

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2008

Dedication

To my parents, my siblings and my friends.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to:

My supervisor, **Dr. Ghouar**, and **Pr. Nedjai** for their support, assistance and guidance, and my teachers, my colleagues, my students, and my family for their help and contribution.

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Abstract

Foreign language learners are generally facing difficulties to use the foreign language to express their thoughts effectively. They avoid talking because they fear to make mistakes or cannot find the appropriate words and expressions.

The present dissertation is an endeavour to identify some affective causes behind these difficulties faced by Third Year students of English at Batna University. Students with less difficulties in speaking were eliminated. However, from our test those reluctant to speak were maintained. To collect the needed information, two questionnaires were designed for both students and their teachers of oral expression.

The results obtained showed that anxiety and lack of motivation affected students' oral production. The analysis of these factors led to suggest that what we believe is likely to reduce inhibition among learners.

Glossary

Self-esteem: Self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds towards himself. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to other verbal reports and other overt expressive behaviour. Self-esteem correlates positively with performance on oral production measure. Hence, learners with high self-esteem hesitated less, corrected themselves more, and did not need prompting.

Shyness: Shyness is defined as having difficulties in creating a good relationship with the people one meets. Some people do not know how to start a conversation or ask for a raise speak up in class.

Self-confidence: The essence of self-confidence is having faith in one's own abilities. It is the feeling of knowing that things will go well. Being able to trust that, whatever happens, one will be able to deal with it.

Proficiency at the Target Language : It is the ability to understand, to speak, to read and to write English. It is also defined as accuracy in

pronunciation, knowledge of foreign customs, knowledge of linguistics and of the essence of language acquisition.

Performance: it is the act of performing, of doing something successfully and using knowledge as distinguished from merely possessing it.

Apathy: It is the lack of emotion, motivation, or enthusiasm. Apathy is a psychological term for a state of indifference where an individual is irresponsible or indifferent to aspects of emotional, social, or physical life.

INTRODUCTION

The learning process is a complex situation that involves both learners and teachers in addition to the task and context. These elements interact with each other in a dynamic way (M. Williams and R. L. Burden, 1997). In their quest to make a sense of their worlds and their learning situations, learners bring certain personal attributes to the learning situation. Besides to the motivation they possess, they come with particular feelings and views of themselves in the world as learners.

If learners lack self-confidence and feel anxious in the classroom, they will likely feel embarrassed to use the language and will avoid risk-taking situations or sharing a conversation in the second language. In other terms, the mastery of the linguistic aspects of the language, that is vocabulary, grammar, phonetics and semantics, is not enough to produce correct and fluent utterances in the target language. Nevertheless, there should be other factors, mainly affective, which play a prominent role either in developing or inhibiting the learners' oral performance or even in second language achievement. Ur wrote in this respect (1996):

"Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism"

or loosing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts."

(p. 121)

This shows clearly that learning situation always contains obstacles that diminish the learner's capacities.

I- Statement of the Problem

Actually, third year students of English at Batna University show a poor oral performance and even a clear reluctance to speak in English. Most of them avoid to share any discussion during the oral expression session. There are some students who even refuse to answer the teacher's questions. We believe that these students do lack correct information about the discussed topics about the necessary vocabulary to produce accurate utterances. This has been clearly highlighted by previous investigations conducted by Magister candidates and teachers.

The main objective of this study is to identify some of the affective factors that inhibit the students to enhance their oral performance.

II- Hypothesis

Poor fluency among students stems from psychological inhibitions which are investigated as affective factors.

In foreign language classrooms, the language is the medium of the interaction between teachers and learners. Acquiring that language is, therefore, the ultimate instructional goal of second language learning. To achieve this goal and reach more effective teaching and learning situations, teachers should know how to deal not only with the differences of linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their learners, but also with their psychological trends. In this respect, teachers will be able to monitor the patterns of classroom communication and create a conducive environment to develop learners' language capacities and enhance their oral fluency.

The overall objective of this study is value on the importance of understanding the main affective factors that hinder third year students' oral performance, and the necessity to point out the teachers' involvement to develop and impair learners' oral fluency.

The choice of the research method should be determined by the nature of the problem, the purpose of the study and the researcher's objectives.

Educational issues directly involve individuals learning situations change constantly. The descriptive method is appropriate to capture research problems in education. However, it is worthwhile pointing out the main limitations of this method. It is difficult to establish a proof of causation. The size of the population under study does not always allow

generalisation. The sample must be both large and representative of the population to validate the results.

The population, subjected to the present study, is composed of 201 third year students of English at Batna University. This population was intentionally chosen because:

- After three of oral expression courses, students are supposed to speak a fluent English.
- At this level, we can easily detect students who really have difficulties to express themselves orally.

We administered a selection test to identify students with oral difficulties.

This test consists of simple and clear questions about students' opinions of their studies.

Results permitted us to eliminate forty-eight (48) students who presented no problem to speak in English. They showed no hesitation to answer questions or share discussions in the classroom. The one hundred and fifty-four (154) students who did not answer all the questions constitute our sample.

We administered a questionnaire to both students and teachers of oral expression. The aim is to collect data about feelings, attitudes, experiences and standpoints of both students and teachers.

The questionnaire administered to the Students contains fifteen (15) items and aims to investigate their attitudes towards speaking.

As far as validity and reliability are concerned, the questionnaire was first piloted on fifteen (15) students. Their comments helped to rewrite a more accessible questions.

The teachers' questionnaire contains ten (10) questions about their opinions about the following raised issue: "How did they perceive the students' reluctance to speak in English and what did they suggest to overcome their students' difficulties in speaking?"

To obtain more information, we used an interview as a second data collection tool. The interview is similar to the questionnaire except in the manner in which it is conducted. It added more opportunities to clarify questions, and permitted to evaluate the honesty of replies.

CHAPTER I

An Overview of Learning Theories

Introduction

The variety of definitions and theories revealed the complexity of learning as a natural process which, thanks to interventions, implies change in the individual.

Language learning has often been described as one of the most impressive mental operations of the human mind in view of the complexity of grammatical structures, the size of the mental lexicon, and multiple functionality language learners are confronted with. Consequently, a lot of controversy has arisen as to how a language can best be learned (Finegan, E. 1999). In this chapter, we will present an overview of the main learning theories and their implications.

I.1- Behaviourism

Behaviourism is a theory that only focuses on objectively observable behaviours and discounts mental activities. Behaviourists define learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behaviour (Kleinmann 1977; Skinner 1968 in Brown 2000).

Behaviourists argue that the inner experiences which were the focus of psychology could not be properly studied as they were not observable. Instead, they turned to laboratory experimentation. The result was the generation of the Stimulus-Response model. Here, the environment provides stimuli to which individuals develop responses. Three key assumptions underpin this view:

- Observable behaviour is the focus of study. Learning is manifested by a change in behaviour.
- The behaviour is shaped by the environment. The individual learner does not determine what s/he learns but this is determined by the elements in the environment.
- The principles of contiguity (how close in time two events must be for a bond to be formed) and reinforcement (any means of increasing the likelihood that an event will be repeated are central to explaining the learning process (Merriam and Caffarella 1991).

Edward Thorndike (in Brown, 1994) built upon these foundations and developed Stimulus-Response theory of learning. He noted that responses or behaviours were strengthened or weakened by the consequences of behaviour. This notion was refined by Skinner (in Brown, 2000) to be better known as Operant- Conditioning that is reinforcing what you want people to do again, and ignoring or punishing what you want them to stop doing.

Skinner (in Brown, 2000) developed the idea that we behave the way we do because this kind of behaviour has had certain consequences in the past. He denied that the mind plays any part in determining behaviour. Rather, people's experience of reinforcement determines their behaviour. We tend to avoid what is painful and to welcome what is pleasant. This is why we can speak of negative reinforcement (punishment) and positive reinforcement (reward).

I.1.1 -The main presuppositions of behaviourism

1. Behaviourism is naturalistic. Everything can be explained in terms of natural laws, and the material world is the ultimate reality. Man has no soul and no mind, but only a brain that responds to external stimuli.
2. Behaviourism considers man as no more than a machine that responds to conditioning. Behaviourists believe that thoughts, feelings, and mental

processes do not determine what we do. We are biological unconscious machines responsive to the only stimulus.

3. Consistently, behaviourism teaches that individuals are not responsible for their actions. If they are mere machines, without minds or souls, reacting to stimuli and operating on their environment to attain certain ends, then anything they do is inevitable.

4. Behaviourism is manipulative. It seeks not only to understand human behaviour, but to predict and control it. Skinner (in Brown, 2000) used his theory to develop the idea of shaping. By controlling rewards and punishments, you can shape the behaviour of another person.

According to James Hartley (1998) four key principles come to the fore in learning:

- 1- Activity is important: Learning is better when the learner is active rather than passive.
- 2- Repetition, generalization and discrimination are important notions. Frequent practice and practice in varied contexts is necessary for learning to take place. Skills are not acquired without frequent practice.
- 3- Reinforcement is the cardinal motivator: Positive reinforcers like rewards and successes are preferable to negative events like punishments and failures.

4- Learning is helped when objectives are clear: Those who look to behaviourism in teaching will generally frame their activities by behavioural objectives e.g. "By the end of this session participants will be able to ...". The concern is with competencies and product approaches to curriculum.

I.1.2 - Language Learning from a Behaviourist View

In learning, language is seen as a behaviour to be taught. Sequential steps act as stimulus to which learners respond either by repetition or substitution followed by the teacher's reinforcement.

M. Williams and R.L. Burden (1997) pointed out that:

"Learning a language is seen as acquiring a set of appropriate mechanical habits, and errors are frowned upon as reinforcing 'bad habits'."

(p. 12)

The language habits are acquired through pattern drills, memorisation and repetition of structural patterns. The learners are required to simply repeat the presented structures without understanding the meaning of words. Behaviourism denies the importance of the cognitive processes in learning to concentrate only on what is observable.

Learners use a wide repertoire of mental strategies to deal with the operating system in the language they are learning. This led language researchers to turn to the field of cognitive psychology for further exploration of learning.

Criticisms of behaviourism include:

- 1- Behaviourism does not account for all kinds of learning for it disregards the activities of the mind.
- 2- Behaviourism does not explain some aspects of learning without reinforcement such as recognition of new language patterns by young children.

I.2 - Cognitivism

Cognitivists believe that behaviourists focused more on single events, stimuli and overt behaviour. They suggest that perceptions or images should be approached as a pattern or as a whole rather than as a sum of the component parts. They are concerned with cognition: the act or process of knowing. Good and Brophy (1990) explained cognitivism in the following words:

"Cognitive theorists recognize that much learning involves associations established through contiguity and

repetition. They also acknowledge the importance of reinforcement, although they stress its role in providing feedback about the correctness of responses over its role as a motivator. However, even while accepting such behaviouristic concepts, cognitive theorists view learning as involving the acquisition or reorganization of the cognitive structures through which humans process and store information."

(p.187)

Jerome Bruner (in Brown, 2000) explored how mental processes could be linked to teaching and James Hartley (1998) explained that learning is the result of inferences, expectations and making connections. Instead of acquiring habits, learners acquire plans and strategies. He identifies the following principles:

- Instruction should be well-organised because it is easier to learn and remember well-organised materials.
- Instruction should be clearly structured.
- The perpetual features of the task are important. Learners attend selectively to different aspects of the environment. Thus, the way a problem is displayed is important if learners are to understand it.

- Prior knowledge is important. Things must fit what is already known if it is to be learnt.
- Differences between individuals are important as they will affect learning. Differences in cognitive style or methods of approach influence learning.
- Cognitive feedback gives information to learners about their success or failure concerning the task at hand. Reinforcement can come through giving information to remain a knowledge of results rather than simply a reward.

I.2.1 - Language Learning from a Cognitivist View

Behaviourists consider learners as passive participants in the learning process, while cognitivists see them as active users of different mental strategies in language learning.

M. Williams and R.L. Burden (1997) highlighted this difference by stressing cognitive activities:

"They are required to use their minds to observe, think, categorise and hypothesise, and in this way to gradually work out how the language operate".

(p. 15)

according to Chomsky's (1986) theory of competence and performance, language cannot be a form of behaviour. It is rather an intricate rule-based system resulting from the child's innate ability to acquire language. Language is a matter of making sense of the data which the brain receives through the senses. It is more mental than physical. The individual's ability to respond to new situations is more likely to overdo stimulus-responses patterns.

I.3 - Constructivism

Constructivism was developed almost simultaneously with Cognitivism. Jonassen (1991) wrote:

"learners construct their own reality or at least interpret it based upon their perceptions of experiences, so an individual's knowledge is a function of one's prior experiences, mental structures, and beliefs that are used to interpret objects and events."

(p. 16)

Constructivist learning theory sought to improve on what behaviourist learning theory had already established by focussing on human motivation and ability to construct learning. Behaviourism is viewed as

centred and directed. Constructivists, however, saw that teaching values individual work more than group work. They believe that humans have the ability to construct knowledge in their own minds through a process of discovery and problem solving (Jonassen, 1991).

I.3.1 – Principles of Constructivism

Constructivists prone the following principles:

- 1- Learning is a search of meaning. Therefore, learning must start with the issues around which students are actively trying to construct meaning.
- 2- Meaning requires understanding wholes as well as parts. And parts must be understood in the context of wholes. Therefore, the learning process focuses on primary concepts, not isolated facts.
- 3- In teaching, we must understand the mental models that students use to perceive the world and the assumptions they make to support those models.
- 4- The purpose of learning is for an individual to construct her/his own meaning, not just memorize the right answers and regurgitate someone else's meaning. Education is inherently interdisciplinary and the only valuable way to measure learning is to make the

assessment part of the learning process ensuring it provides students with information on the quality of their learning.

I.3.2 - The Assumptions of Constructivism

1. Knowledge is constructed from experience.
2. Learning is a personal interpretation of the world.
3. Learning is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience.
4. Learning should be situated in realistic settings, and testing integrated with the task.

I.3.3 - Language Learning from a Constructivist View

The constructivist approach urges language learners to develop their understanding of the conventions of language use in real situations. This is why Williams and Burden (1997) consider that: “*learning is influenced by the situation in which it occurs*” (p. 19). In other words, language learning is a dynamic and interactive learning process where understanding of vocabulary and structures, and learning competence and awareness coexist.

Jean Piaget (in Brown, 2000), like other researchers, explored changes in internal cognitive structure. He identified four stages of mental growth: Sensori-motor, Pre-Operational, Concrete Operational and Formal

Operational. According to him, foreign language learners are not expected to reach the stage of abstract reasoning to deal with the rules of the foreign language. The main aspects of learning stem from Piaget's theory (1972) and can be considered as important for language learners.

First, language learners are involved in making their own sense of the language input surrounding them as well as of the tasks presented to them.

Second, Piaget's notions of assimilation and accommodation to learning a new language are clearly identified when, for instance, learners receive new language input. They should first change what they already know about the language and then fit the new information into their existing knowledge. These two activities are called accommodation and assimilation.

Hence, learners will be able to gradually develop their knowledge of how the system of the new language operates.

I.4 -Humanistic Orientations to Learning

The basic concern is for the human growth potential. Scientific reductionism was criticised for humans were treated as objects. Instead the affective and subjective world was to be reaffirmed. The humanistic

approach gives more credit to personal freedom, choice, motivation and feelings.

The best known example is Abraham Maslow's (in Tennant, 1997) hierarchy of motivation where physiological needs are at the lowest level and self actualization at the highest one. Tennant (1997) summarized Maslow's hierarchy of needs in the following points:

- **Level One:** Physiological needs such as hunger, thirst, sleep, relaxation, sex and bodily integrity.
- **Level Two:** Satisfy needs call for a predictable and orderly world, and safety and security.
- **Level Three:** Love and the need to belong.
- **Level Four:** Self-esteem like desire for strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery and competence.
- **Level Five:** Self-actualization as a full use and expression of talents, capacities and potentialities.

Maslow's (in Tennant, 1997) hierarchy of needs obeys a sequential evolution where each need(s) depend(s) on the previous one(s) and conditions the next one(s).

Learning can be seen as a form of self-actualization. It contributes to psychological health (Sahakian 1984 in Merriam and Caffarella 1991). The humanistic tendency provided some hope for educators. It valued more the

individual's capacity. A persuasive exploration of humanistic orientations to learning came from Carl Rogers (1983). He saw the following elements involved in significant or experiential learning:

- 1- Quality of personal involvement.
- 2- Sense of discovery, grasping and comprehending.
- 3- Difference in behaviour.
- 4- Self-evaluation.
- 5- Building meaning and making sense.

All these factors engage the individual as an actor using his intrinsic capacities to make sense of this surrounding world.

I.4.1 - Language Learning from a Humanist View

Language learning is interpersonal. Learners refer to the integrated or eclectic strategies. The interpersonal and student-centred approach is influenced by Rogers (1951, 1961) who maintains the importance of the learner's personality in the teaching-learning process. Learners' tendency to realise their potential and to function autonomously will flourish under condition of acceptance and warmth by others and by oneself. The best way to facilitate learning is to establish an interpersonal relationship with the learner who should be respected and appreciated as a human being. The

teacher should place himself among learners just to create a less formal leaning context. The teacher plays the role of a mere facilitator.

Language learning tasks may require behaviouristic, cognitive or interpersonal approaches. Consequently, teachers call for eclecticism and flexibility in language teaching methods.

Conclusion

Linguistic-oriented theories of language learning emphasize genetic mechanisms, called universal grammar, in explaining language learning. Behavioral theories argue that association, reinforcement, and imitation are the primary factors in language learning. Cognitive theories suggest that rule structures and meaning are the distinctive characteristic of language learning. Memory processes have been singled out as the basis for language comprehension. Theories of discourse present interaction with as a critical dimension in learning language.

CHAPTER II

The Speaking Skill

Introduction

The aim of teaching a foreign language is to enable learners to communicate in the target language. In traditional classes, learners communicate mostly with their teacher, and occasionally with their mates. In both situations, learners practise the target language in the classroom and only later, if circumstances permit, in real-life.

It is important to prepare learners for the unpredictability of real communication which is quite different from what can be found in beginners' books. Unfortunately, it is a hard task to make learners communicate with one another as they normally would do in a real situation. Creating situations, in which the use of a foreign language is justified, is one of the most intractable problems in foreign language teaching.

Mastering oral language skills may be very rewarding for students since a good command of oral communicative proficiency helps them to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas. Opportunities for speaking and listening require structure and planning when they are to support language development.

II.1- Oral communication

Oral communication is a two-way process involving speaker and listener, productive and receptive skills.

II.1.1- Listening comprehension

A significant proportion of class time is needed to develop the students' ability to speak. Understanding the target language is the main task. In addition, poor understanding often generates nervousness which, in turn, inhibits the ability to speak. In other terms, listening and speaking are of equal value.

II.1.2- Oral production

The main goal in teaching speaking is oral fluency or the ability to express oneself accurately and without hesitation. To attain this goal, students are required to use fixed elements of the language, mainly grammatical patterns and lexical items, to produce expressions of personal meaning (Lynch, 1996).

II.2- Definition of the Speaking Skill

Speaking is defined as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. It

is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving, but not completely unpredictable.

Its form and meaning depend on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment and speaking purposes. Meaning in the spoken language is conveyed in part through the supra-segmental phonemes including rhythm, stress, and intonation.

To speak English is clearly important for English learners. It is also significant in terms of ongoing language learning. Oral communication helps learners to experience modified interaction. Doughty and Pica (1986) mentioned that:

"Interaction is altered in some way (either linguistically or conversationally) to facilitate comprehension of the intended message".

(p.305)

Such modifications occur through repetition of the spoken message as well as through three types of conversational moves:

1. clarification requests.
2. confirmation checks.

3. comprehension checks.

These modifications are important in both research and theory. Modified interaction is claimed to make input comprehensible to learners and to lead ultimately to successful classroom foreign language learning.

Speaking requires for learners to know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary . speaking, indeed, has its own skills, structures and conventions that differ from the written language. A good speaker synthesises skills and knowledge to succeed in speech.

II.2.1-What a good speaker does

Speakers must be able to anticipate and produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They must also manage discreet elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, and redirecting. The learner must also choose the correct vocabulary to describe a situation, rephrase, or emphasize words to clarify the description if the interlocutor does not understand. Appropriate facial expressions are used to indicate satisfaction, dissatisfaction or other attitudes. Skills and knowledge that instruction might address include the following:

1. producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures and language intonations,

2. using grammar structures accurately,
3. assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives,
4. selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs,
5. applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension,
6. using gestures or body language, and
7. paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximise listener comprehension and involvement.

II.2.2-What students need to do

Many students clearly feel that a speaking-based classroom does not prepare them for the real world. Thus, they need the following:

1. Practice at using first language (mother tongue) strategies, which they do not automatically transfer.

2. An awareness of formal and informal language and practice at choosing appropriate language for different situations.
3. The awareness that informal spoken language is less complex than written language.
4. Exposure to a variety of spoken text types.
5. The ability to cope with different listening situations. Many listening exercises involve students as passive hearers, even though most communication is face-to face.
6. To be efficient at both message oriented or transactional language and interactive language to maintain social relationships
7. To be taught patterns of real interaction.
8. To have intelligible pronunciation and be able to cope with streams of speech.
9. Development of speaking fluency.

In this respect, Douglas Barnes (1976) explained that second language learners possess knowledge about both their native language and second language. This knowledge is acquired within the linguistic, social, and cultural contexts of their real-life experiences and thus , represents an important aspect through which students use language to interact with the world around them.

II.3 - Fluency in Speaking

Fluency is considered as the extent to which a speaker interacts with others with normal speed, apparent confidence, and freedom from excessive pauses or vocabulary searches. Hammerly (1991) notes that laypersons use fluency to mean: speaking rapidly and well.

Fluency in speaking is the aim of many language learners. A fluent speaker can participate in extended conversations, understand the language when spoken normally on TV, radio, film, etc., figure out meaning of words within context, use and understand complicated grammatical structures with little or no difficulty.

Signs of fluency include a reasonably fast speed of speaking and only a small number of pauses and “ums” and “ers”. These signs indicate that the speaker does not have to spend a lot of time searching for the language items needed to express the message. In other terms, a fluent speaker may have some gaps in vocabulary, but is capable of figuring out these terms in context. Likewise s/he can reword sentences in order to describe an object, explain an idea, or get a point across, even if s/he does not know the actual terms.

To develop fluency, we must generate a need to speak, to make learners want to speak. The learners themselves must be convinced of the need to relate to the subject and communicate it. They need to feel that they are

speaking not simply because the teacher expects them to, but because there is some strong reason to do so, for example, to get or provide information that is required for a purpose.

II.4– Error Correction

Some learners may experience difficulty in pronouncing certain sounds and groups of sounds in another language. Giving too much attention to the correction of pronunciation in the early stages of language learning can make learners worried and reluctant to speak because of fear of making errors. The study of errors and their causes is called error analysis.

The following are some errors causes and suggestions for the teachers about the way they should behave towards them:

1- The learner makes an error because s/he has not had sufficient chance to observe the correct form or to develop sufficient knowledge of the language system.

* The teacher should not correct the learner but should give more models and opportunities to observe.

2- The learner makes an error because s/he has not observed the form correctly.

* The teacher should give an implicit correction by showing the learner the difference between the correct form and the learner's error.

3 -The learner makes an error because of nervousness.

* In that case, the teacher should not correct. S/he should use less threatening activities.

4- The learner makes an error because the activity is difficult, that is, there are many things the learner has to think about during the activity.

This is sometimes called cognitive overload.

* The teacher should not correct, but should make the activity easier or give several chances to repeat the activity.

5- The learner makes an error because the activity is confusing. Use of tongue twisters, for instance, for pronunciation can be confusing.

* The teacher should not correct but only improve the activity.

6- The learner makes an error because s/he is using patterns from the first language instead of the patterns from the second language.

* The teacher should give some corrections. If there has been plenty of opportunities to develop knowledge of the second language, then should be spent on correction to help the learner break out of making errors that are unlikely to change. Errors which are resistant to change are called fossilised errors and imaginative correction is often needed to break the fossilisation.

7 -The learner makes an error because s/he has been copying incorrect models.

* The teacher should correct the learner and provide better models.

This range of causes shows that the teacher should not rush into error correction, but should consider whether the error is worth the interruption and, if it is, the teacher should consider possible causes and then think of appropriate ways of dealing with the error.

Conclusion

Speaking is a key to communication. By considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report, teachers can help learners improve their speaking and oral competence. In speaking classes there must be some attention to certain aspects like pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and the appropriate use of the spoken language.

Learners should be encouraged to produce meaningful spoken messages with a real communicative goal. They should be given the opportunity to gain truly fluent use of what is already known.

To speak, learners need to feel that they will be heard and that what they are saying is worth hearing. They need to feel comfortable to express themselves in the classroom. However, the need and the will to speak may be influenced by psychological factors that inhibit students' performance. Possessing the oral competence does not mean to be a fluent speaker.

CHAPTER III

The Affective Factors in Second Language Learning

Introduction

In order to carry on their language learning, learners need to be motivated. In order to succeed, they need an atmosphere in which anxiety levels are low. Issues of motivation and language anxiety are the key of this Chapter.

Affective factors can certainly play a large role in influencing the ongoing language learning experience of language learner. In a study conducted by Paula Kristmanson in 1993, learners pointed out that emotions, like stress, feelings of failure and shyness, influenced their learning.

Factors such as the mood of the classroom, support of classmates, and the teacher's behaviour were often mentioned by students as having an effect on their motivation. A relaxed atmosphere, where students can take risks and make errors without fear of embarrassment or negative repercussions, seems to be important to many learners. On the negative side, students can feel frustration and failure when they do not grasp the presented subject.

In addition, some learners feel anxious when they are pitted against fellow learners. Schrum and Glisan (1994) noted that:

"Competition in language learning may result in feelings of anxiety, inadequacy, hostility, fear of failure, guilt and too strong a desire for approval."

(p. 389)

They go on to say that cooperative strategies are much conducive to building self-esteem and increasing motivation.

III.1 –Motivation in Second Language Learning

Many students equate the ability to speak with the knowledge of the language. They may get de-motivated and lose interest in learning if they do not learn how to speak or lack opportunities to speak the target language. In this chapter, we shed light on the effect of motivation on second-language learners' performance.

III.1.1- Definition of Motivation

Although the word motivation sounds simple and easy, it is in fact very difficult to define. Theorists did not reach a consensus.

It is defined as the impetus to create and sustain intentions and goal-seeking acts (Ames and Ames, 1989). It is important because it determines the extent of the learner's active involvement and attitude toward learning.

In his "Understanding Second Language Motivation: On with the Challenge!" Dornyei (1994) stated that motivation plays a major role in second language learning. Motivation consists of different components, which include the student's desire to learn the second language, the personal effort the student uses for learning the second language, and her/his attitudes towards learning the second language.

Positive motivation is presented as the desire to learn. Effort exerted and good attitude lead to more successful and faster language learning.

Wen (1997) suggested that students will, more actively, exert effort in language learning if they believe that their effort affects the process and outcomes of language learning.

In their research on Students' of English motivation in Mexico, Norbert Francis and Phyllis Ryan (1998) found that cross-cultural factors affect the learners' motivation and raise their affective filter to make them self-conscious about using English.

Social devaluation of one's primary language and primary culture, indeed, fosters motivational factors transforming the target language and aspects of the dominant culture into highly prized objectives, often with the implicit goal of total assimilation.

Exaggerated attention to surface forms and structures in production, often associated with feelings of shame, inadequate mastery, and lack of language learning aptitude, results in a number of negative consequences (Francis and Ryan, 1998). The students' aim for complete mastery of surface forms results in very long periods of silence and reluctance to take risks. They become unwilling to create original phrases with the language. However, focus on such skills is not conducive to language learning.

III.1.2 - Motivational Theories and Models

Oxford and Shearin (1994) analysed a total of twelve motivational theories or models, including those from socio-psychology, cognitive development, and socio-cultural psychology. They identified six factors that impact motivation in language learning:

1. Attitudes towards the target language and the learning community.
2. Beliefs about self, self-efficacy, expectancies, and anxiety.
3. Goals.
4. Environment support.
5. Personal attitudes like aptitude, age, sex, and previous language learning experience.

Before examining the effect of motivation on second language learning, it is first important to realize that it influences a learner's success. In his socio-educational model, Gardner (1985) attempts to inter-relate four features of second language learning: social and cultural milieu, individual learner differences, the setting or context in which learning takes place, and linguistic outcomes.

The second phase of this model presents the four individual differences which are believed to be the most influential in second language learning. These include language aptitude, intelligence, motivation, and situational anxiety (Giles and Coupland 1991). The next stage, however, refers to the setting or context in which learning takes place. Hence, in a formal setting

intelligence and aptitude play a dominant role in learning and exerting a weaker influence in an informal setting. Anxiety and motivation are thought to equally influence settings.

The final phase of the model identifies linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience. According to actual language knowledge and language skills, linguistic outcomes include test indices like course grades or general proficiency tests. Non-linguistic outcomes, however, reflect an individual's attitudes toward cultural values and beliefs, usually vis-à-vis the target language community.

According to Ellis (1997), individuals will attain a higher degree of second language proficiency and more desirable attitudes if they are motivated to integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience.

Gardner's model (1985) perceived motivation as composed of three elements: effort, desire and affect. Effort is related to time spent studying the language and the drive of the learner. Desire refers to how much the learner wants to become proficient in the language. Affect illustrates the learner's emotional reactions with regard to language study.

In terms of oral production, the learner needs to possess the appropriate language aptitude which, when developed in a healthy environment, will raise the learner's desire to speak and to be fluent.

III.1.2.1 - The Expectancy-Value Model of Motivational Achievement

Research in motivation has focused on either the valuing of doing an activity, whether for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons (Lepper 1983; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and /or on expecting to succeed in the activity (Weiner 1986; Schunk 1983, 1988).

In his attribution theory, Weiner (1986) proposed that the extent of future expectancy to succeed depends on what individuals attribute their past successes or failures to: whether a stable factor such as ability, or less stable factors like effort, luck, and task difficulty.

Students who attribute good grades to ability are more likely to expect to do well on next tests than if they had attributed the grades to tests being easy or to being lucky. However, attributing failure to inability will have a more negative effect on next tests than attributing it to an unstable factor such as luck of study.

Expectancy of success in Weiner's attribution theory (1986) is similar to Bandura's (1991) concept of self-efficacy, the self judgement of one's ability to perform a specific act. According to Bandura (1991), the greater one's self-efficacy to do a task, the greater will be the motivation to do it. In other words, people are motivated to do what they think is possible for them to do.

Eccles (1983) proposed that expectancy for success in achievement task and the subjective values for succeeding in the task are the best predictors of subsequently choosing the task, making effort in the task, and succeeding at it. To define expectancy, she distinguished between interpretations of past events, self-competency beliefs, and expectancies for future success. The general self-competency beliefs in the domain, in which we succeed in doing a task, are what we think we can or cannot do. Those beliefs influence expectancies for future success at the task, what we are likely to think we later can or cannot do (Wigfield, 1994).

Eccles and Wigfield (1992) found that feelings of competency in a domain, expectancies for success in that domain, and subsequent performance perceptions formed one factor, showing that the distinction between ability beliefs and expectancy for success had no empirical importance.

Eccles (1983) distinguished personal valuing into attainment value (or importance), intrinsic value (or intrinsic interest), extrinsic utility value, and cost value. Battle (in Lukmani 1972) introduced the concept of attainment value of a task with the meaning of the importance of doing the task, its personal, familial, and social relevance to oneself. For instance, having a continuing desire for achievement is a personal importance. Besides, the intrinsic value of a task is the interest in doing that task and the

enjoyment of it that motivates and encourages one to do it. However, the extrinsic value (utility value) of a task is its perceived usefulness, even if it is not currently important. This is perhaps due to a foreseeable future gain.

Studies demonstrated later that these three values are independent. The cost value of the task has been stated as the effort spent in doing it which reduces the time available of other tasks and the negative costs of doing it like being anxious during performance or being afraid of failure.

Atkinson (1957) was the first to suggest the relationship between the ability to succeed in an activity and the choice to continue doing it. He proposed that having the ability to do the task, that is, expectancy for success, and the will to do the task due to a desire to succeed in it are the main requirements to achieve in a task. He also defined expectancy as anticipating success or failure on a task, and incentive value as finding it attractive to succeed in a task. So, the higher the expectancy to succeed was, the lower was the challenge and thus the incentive value in doing it. In this, expectancy was the primary variable and incentive value was the secondary one.

Weiner (1986) considered value of less significance and stated that the value of succeeding at something was a constant whether one had high or low expectancy. The expectancy to succeed at something they feel very confident about succeeding in because they will not find it interesting.

From one hand, people choose to do something because they are good at it and this gives it importance to them. Hence, the more they expect to succeed in a task, the more they value doing it.

From the other hand, and as already mentioned, expectancy-value models of motivational achievement include various ways of valuing and valuing a task is in itself motivating if one is challenged by it, has interest in it, is involved in it, or finds it useful.

Eccles (1983) and Wigfield (1994) have also reached another common relationship between expectancy and achievement. Weiner (1986) reported earlier that, irrespective of ability, the greater the expectancy to achieve, the greater the likelihood to achieve. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the more self-efficacy is felt with respect to an act, the more one desires to do it. The longer and harder one will work at it, the more one will succeed, to the extent that the perception of self-efficacy may have more influence on motivation than current ability.

As far as speaking is concerned, the more English language learners feel able to perform orally, the more they produce fluent English.

III.1.2.2- The Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Models

Generally individuals undertake activities for their sake rather than for external reasons. This distinction has come to be termed between

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, depending on whether the stimulus originated outside or inside the individual (Van Lier 1996; Deci and Ryan 1985).

The term “Flow” has been introduced by Csikszentmihalyi (Lukmani, 1972) to point out the act of wholeheartedly doing something, just for doing it. Flow, then, is an act of concentration in which time passes without any awareness of it. Flow takes all of one’s attention, leaving no room for the will to do anything else or for the negative thoughts that generally accompany boredom or apathy.

Other pre-requisites for flow are:

1. being in control of a task,
2. having clear goals,
3. and being challenged by it.

However, lack of sufficient skills over-challenges the learner and leads to anxiety. Having more skills than required causes boredom.

Doing things for a reward can take away one’s feeling of ownership of them. Learners are generally inhibited when watched over or when forced to rehearse, to receive deadlines, and to be threatened with grades, or to compete with others.

In other terms, if learners are interested in learning, in performing in it, or in enjoying doing it, they are subsequently self-determining and intrinsically motivated.

Van Lier (1996) considers that intrinsic motivational drives are based on some innate fundamental psychological needs. Three innate needs have been proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985, 1991): competence, relatedness, and autonomy. These are transformed by the individual into goals via social interaction and cultural patterns. However, Deci and Ryan (1985, 1991) consider intrinsic motivation as voluntary and spontaneous, independent of reinforcement, of biological drives, and of external reward.

Van Lier (1996) suggested two layers of intrinsic motivation:

1. A basic motivation consisting of intentionality, affect and effort,
- and, 2. a specifically human motivation, grafted onto this organismic one, consisting of consciousness and choice.

Extrinsic motivation is differentiated into four types dependent on the degree of self-determination that learners possess. These vary from external regulation that is extrinsic motivation for an activity over which one has no control, to integrated regulation or intrinsic motivation for a task that one wholeheartedly accepts.

Most motivational theories have focused on past and future sources of extrinsic motivation, ignoring the intrinsic motivation that emerges when language skills and challenges are balanced, and the learner experiences pleasure in the activity itself (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). In this respect, Van Lier (1996) presented the following table of motivational sources:

Figure 1. Sources of Motivation

(Van Lier 1996. [http:// journals.cambridge. org/action/displayAbstract](http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract))

Past	Present	Future
Drives, needs, learning or other responses programmed in the individual.	Enjoyment of performance in the present; intrinsic motivation, emergent motivation.	Goals in directing action; instrumental, integrative.

III.1.2.3 - Integrative motivation:

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) have identified motivation as the learner's orientation in learning a second language. Successful foreign language students value the language, its native speakers, its civilisation, and its culture at large. This is integrative motivation.

The concept “integrative” is important in artificial language setting. Benson (1991) suggests that bilingual equates with bicultural. Yet, this perspective remains hard realising in traditional “mono-cultural” societies.

III.1.2.4 - Instrumental motivation

Instrumental motivation is generally characterised by the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language (Hudson 2000).

With instrumental motivation the purpose of language acquisition is more utilitarian. It concerns activities like meeting the requirements for school or university graduation, applying for a job, requesting higher pay based on language ability, reading technical material, translation work or achieving higher social status.

Instrumental motivation is often a characteristic of second language learning, where little or no social integration of the learner into a community using the target language takes place. In some instances it is even desired.

III.1.2.5 - Integrative Versus Instrumental motivation

Integrative and instrumental motivations are essential elements of success. However, integrative motivation has been found to sustain long-

term success when learning a second language (Ellis 1997; Crookes and Schmidt 1991). In an early research conducted by Gardner and Lambert (1972), integrative motivation was viewed as more important in a formal learning environment than instrumental motivation. It is continually linked to successful second language learning. However, students select instrumental reasons more frequently than integrative reasons for the study of language.

Those who do support an integrative approach to language study are usually more motivated and more successful in language learning. One area where instrumental motivation can be successful is in the situation where the learner is provided with no opportunity to use the target language. Therefore, no chance to interact with members of the target group. Lukmani (1972) found that an instrumental orientation was more important than an integrative orientation in non-westernised female learners of English in Bombay.

The social situation helps to determine both what kind of orientation learners have and what kind of orientation is most important for language learning. It is not uncommon for second language learners to be successful with instrumental purposes considered as underlying reasons for study.

Brown (2000) suggests that both integrative and instrumental motivations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Learners rarely select

one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. He cites the example of international students residing in the United States, learning English for academic purposes while at the same time wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country.

Motivation is an important factor in second language achievement. It is then important to identify the combination of motivation that assists in the successful learning of a second language. At the same time, it is necessary to view motivation as one of a number of variables in an intricate model of interrelated individual and situational factors which are unique to each language learner.

The integrative orientation was originally favoured as more successful than the instrumental orientation. Meng-Ching Ho (in Wen 1997), scholar from the School of Education at University of Durham, UK, said that students who learn English with an instrumental motivation are clearly more successful in developing proficiency in this language than those who do not adopt this motivation.

Some applied linguists still assume that students with integrative orientations were more genuinely interested in the language. Integrative orientations receive a higher reputation for assisting students in successful language learning at the advanced level. However, both integrative and

instrumental orientations are worthy and should be developed. In this respect Wen (1997) wrote:

"later studies [after Gardner's original proposal of integrative and instrumental orientations] found that instrumental motivation was also an effective factor in second language learning and integrative motivation may not necessarily be superior to instrumental motivation."

(p. 30)

Students who are integratively motivated, however, are probably more successful at an advanced language level than those who are not. The cause is the psychological integration which sustains interest in learning the language longer. Recent linguists, such as Dornyei (1994), have refined the definition of integrative and instrumental orientations. In "Understanding second language motivation: on with the challenge!" Dornyei (1994) clarifies that integrative and instrumental are not antagonistic counterparts, but rather they are inherently interrelated. For instance, a student merges both orientations when s/he has the aim of speaking English in order to talk to the neighbours. Her/his goal is basically functional: maybe s/he would like to borrow something. But it also incorporates skills, such as getting to

know the neighbour's culture and its values for the future inclusion in that social group. As Ho (in Wen 1997) stated, there is no clear-cut dividing line between the integrative and instrumental orientations.

III.2 – Anxiety in Second Language Learning

Language anxiety and its effect on second language learning show a reciprocity between anxiety and proficiency. Even in optimum conditions, students can experience destructive forms of anxiety (Reid 1999).

However, this effect is seen to be complex and difficult to measure, though research proposes that language learning contexts are especially prone to anxiety arousal. Campbell and Ortiz (1991) estimated that debilitating language anxiety is likely experienced by up to half of all language learners. Horwitz (1986) found that language anxiety may cause students to postpone language study indefinitely or to change majors.

Aiming to understand the causes of anxiety and how it can be reduced, Scovel (1978) provides an early review of anxiety research supplemented by MacIntyre and Gardner's (1991) reviews. In his turn, Oxford (1999) has investigated whether language anxiety is a short-term or lasting trait; whether it is harmful or helpful, how it can be identified in the language classroom, and which factors correlate with language anxiety.

III.2.1- Definition of Anxiety

It is very important to consider the psychological aspects when studying anxiety, as it can be seen in the following:

1. Anxiety is defined as an emotional state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object.
2. Anxiety is a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.

Such psychological definitions most commonly refer to a state which facilitates as well as inhibiting cognitive actions such as learning.

III.2.2 - Foreign Language Anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1991) stated that foreign language anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension and nervousness associated with the situation of learning a foreign language. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991) also contended that probably no other field of study implicates self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does. Therefore, anxiety ranks high among factors influencing language learning, regardless of whether the setting is informal or formal.

Anxiety, then, stands out as one of the blocking factors for effective language learning. Its damaging effects have become a barrier for

successful performance in all of the four skills. It correlates negatively with second language course grades (Horwitz, 1986) and the ability to take in, process, and output second language information (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994). Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) explained language anxiety as:

"the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient."

(p. 26)

They also describe the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language context and performance.

According to Krashen (1982), anxiety contributes to an affective filter which prevents students from receiving input. This makes language learning fail to progress. He maintained that anxiety inhibits the learner's ability to process incoming language and short-circuits the process of learning. Moreover, it has been showed that speaking in the second language can be especially anxiety provoking (Horwitz et al. 1986; Koch and Terrell 1991; MacIntyre and Gardner 1994a). It has been found that among attitudes, measures of language anxiety showed the strongest correlations with several indexes in second language achievement.

Anxiety is experienced by learners of foreign and second language. It poses potential problems because it interferes with the acquisition, retention and production of language (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994b).

Crookall and Oxford (1991) reported that serious language anxiety causes other related problems with self-esteem, self-confidence, and risk-taking ability. It ultimately hampers proficiency in second language.

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) defined language anxiety as:

"... a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours [...] arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process."

(p. 125)

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991) confirmed that anxiety typically centres on listening and speaking. Speaking in the classroom is frequently difficult for anxious students, even though they are pretty good at responding to a drill or giving prepared speeches. Gardner, Tremblay and Masgoret (1997) found that language anxiety is negatively related to achievement in second language. It is associated with problems in listening comprehension, vocabulary learning, low grades in language courses or a combination of these factors. Moreover, the effects of anxiety can influence both communication process and language learning.

Price (1991) investigated the causes of foreign language anxiety. He found that learners feel more anxious whenever they have to speak a foreign language in front of other peers. Besides, he shed light on the teacher's role to reduce the learners' anxiety, especially when criticising their pronunciation.

III.2.3 - History of Research on Anxiety and Language Learning

Early empirical researches on trait anxiety and state anxiety showed mixed and confusing results. They were unable to establish a clear picture of how anxiety affects language learning and performance (Horwitz and Young, 1991).

Liebert and Morris (1967) identified the cognitive and affective components of anxiety as worry and emotionality. Sarason (1986) defined worry as distressing preoccupations and concerns about impending events often taking the form of distraction, worry over failure, and concern over others' opinions. Such outcomes often impair tasks performance. Thus, anxiety causes cognitive interference in performing specific tasks. This draws attention to three related performance anxiety:

1. Communication apprehension.
2. Test anxiety.

3. Fear of negative evaluation.

Eysenck (1979) suggests a re-conceptualisation of anxiety in terms of this interference. The anxious person has her/his attention divided between task-related cognition and self-related cognition. In other words, worry and other task-irrelevant cognitive activities associated with anxiety always impair the performance quality. Eysenck (1979) also proposes that anxious students are aware of this interference and attempt to compensate by increased effort. However, extra study by anxious students does not reflect the effort (Price 1991).

Recent reports propose that anxiety matters to students of all abilities, especially when there is a heavy ego-involvement as in oral examination. Horwitz (1986) indicates that high language anxiety is related to students' negative concepts of themselves like language learners and negative expectations for language learning.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a) state that anxiety plays a little part in the learner's first experience with foreign languages. Language aptitude and motivation are the dominant factors in learning. However, language anxiety develops if subsequent experiences are not positive.

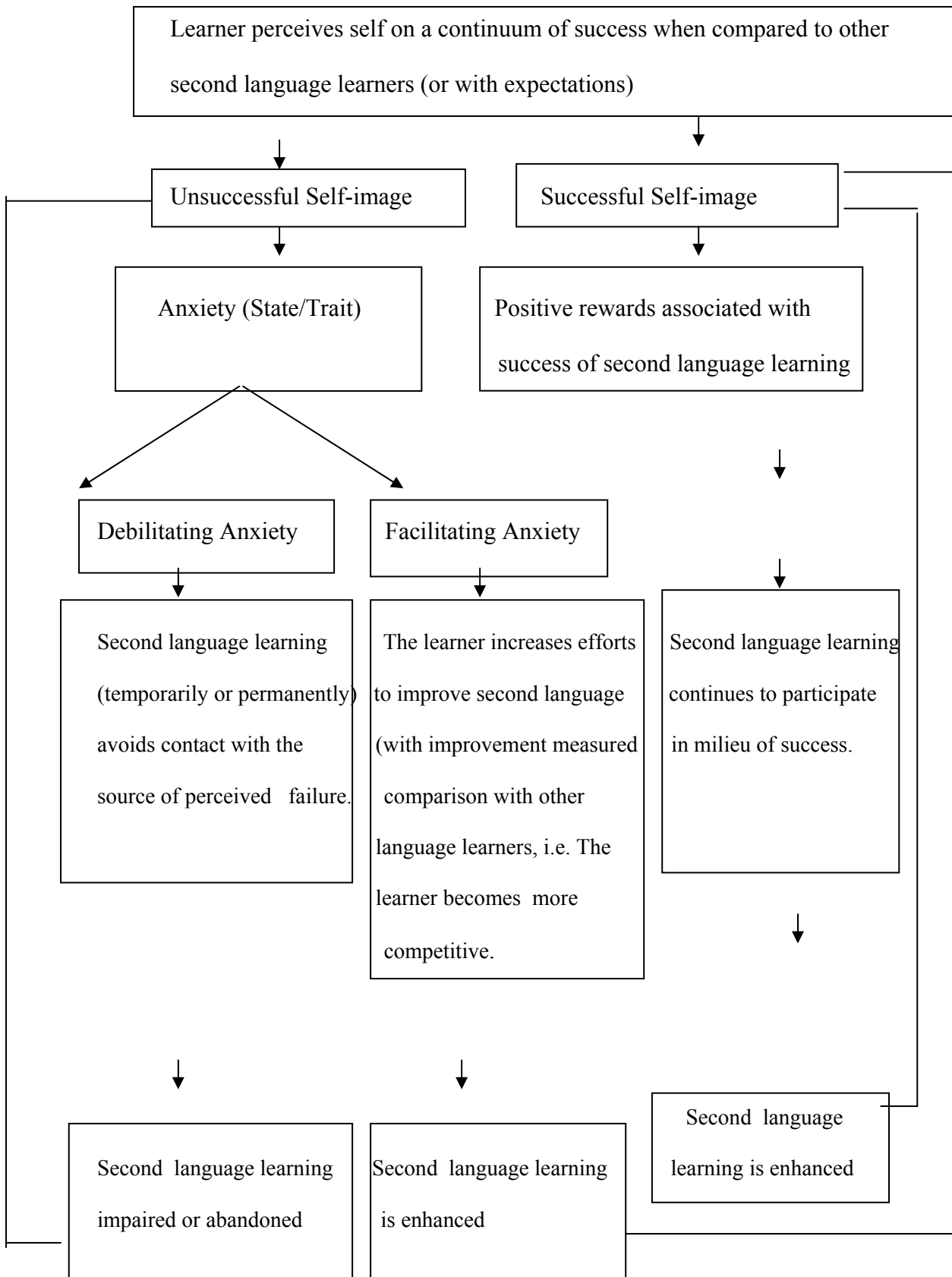
Therefore, a low-stress language learning climate is a priority for the teacher. It is important to help students to manage anxiety, to improve their performance, and to reassure them that they are not alone in their affective

reactions and that these feelings are normal. Phillips (1992) also states that evaluations involving partners and small-group work, interviews, and role-plays are usually preferred and enjoyed by students for they can reduce anxiety-raising competitiveness and apprehension. According to Bailey (1983), familiar tasks also create less anxiety and test-tasks encourage confidence.

In the investigation of the correlation between language test-scores and anxiety, the obtained results reveal that mild anxiety could be beneficial. This issue of facilitating versus debilitating anxiety may be important to research on anxiety in second language learning. Besides, the relationship between competitiveness and anxiety results in either a successful or unsuccessful self-image.

The following model (p.57) shows that when learners are subjected to facilitating anxiety, the successful self-image and the unsuccessful self-image enter a cycle of enhanced learning and positive rewards. However, when learners are subjected to debilitating anxiety, the unsuccessful self-image enter a different cycle of perceived failure. But , if the learner continues in the language course, this cycle can be broken by future facilitating anxiety.

Figure 2. Competitive Second Language Learner (BAILEY 1983. p 97)



III.2.4 - Types of Anxiety

Anxiety and its effects on foreign language learning have been studied since the 1970's. Despite the remarkable progress in the teaching methods and techniques, language learners continue to face the problem of apprehension.

As early as 1973, H. D. Brown predicted that the construct of anxiety was intricately intertwined with self-esteem, inhibition, and risk-taking. It has a major affective role in second language learning. Researchers provided confusing results about the relationship between anxiety and foreign language learning. This confusion is due to the similarity of anxiety to fear and the different variables affecting learning. Two of these variables are:

1. **Trait anxiety:** it is a relatively permanent personality feature, that is to be anxious in any situation.
2. **State anxiety:** it is evoked by a particular set of temporary circumstances. It is the apprehension felt in a particular situation, for instance, having to speak a foreign language in front of classmates (Spielberger, 1972).

In a second language classroom, students are struggling to master the target language and to perform in it. This has a tremendous effect on their self-perception and self-confidence. It also causes state anxiety specific to

the foreign language classroom. Students' perceptions of their own communicative competence, in both native and second language, is another variable that may affect language learning. These students are likely to underestimate this competence relative to less anxious students (MacIntyre, Noels and Clement, 1997), and become themselves anxious about their performance. Besides, students' apathy and disinterest may also cause anxiety in foreign language classes.

Horwitz (1986) found that when required to speak in the classroom, students with low English proficiency feel that their self-esteem is undermined. So, anxious students keep silent to avoid humiliation and criticisms, and to preserve self-esteem.

Gardner et al. (1994) showed that the more anxious learners are, the less likely they perform in speaking. But, it is not possible to say whether it is the anxiety that causes the poor oral fluency or whether the poor speech skills that create the anxiety.

A distinction is made between facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety (Kleinmann 1977; Scovel 1978). Indeed, one type of anxiety can be helpful. **Facilitating anxiety**, for instance, encourages learners to learn and to participate as they progress in using the language.

Debilitating anxiety, however, creates self-doubt and excessive fear. It reduces the learners' participation and language use. Performance

anxiety, then, is one common result of debilitating anxiety. It is common to introvert students participating in oral reports, role-plays, and other types of interactive activities. Learners may have frustrating experiences in the form of skills. This frustration creates a debilitating anxiety if the learning experiences are usually un-comprehensible. In traditional, teacher-centred classrooms, learners' performance is always criticised and learning activities are generally irrelevant or annoying. Thus, these environments cause a debilitating anxiety.

Conclusion

Oxford and Shearin (1994) consider motivation as crucial for second language learning. Dornyei (1990), Van Lier (1996) and Crookes and Schmidt (1991) warn that it is a multifaceted factor and that no theory has yet given a total representation of motivation. In this respect, researchers should know that the aspect of motivation they are focusing on is likely to represent only a part of a more intricate psychological construct.

In education, motivation to learn and learning effectiveness can be increased in learners who take responsibility for their own learning and who understand and accept that their learning success is a result of effort. Learners can be highly motivated if they are interested in the learning tasks and the learning outcomes for their own sake, and if they focus on learning outcomes rather than performance.

Horwitz (1986) acknowledged that a negative correlation exists between anxiety and performance. He proposed that researchers should focus on the subtle effects of language anxiety on specific processes involved in language learning and communication.

Levels of foreign language anxiety can be the result of the development of oral skills, although students show an interest in developing their oral communication in the target language. This performance anxiety can be intensified by communicative oral testing because evaluative

situations increase anxiety. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994b) claim that : "***a clear relationship exists between foreign language anxiety and foreign language proficiency***" (p. 283). They propose that the repeated negative experiences with the second language are the cause of the language anxiety development.

Studies of learners' negative correlations between anxiety and output quality indicate that anxious students have more difficulties in expressing themselves, and that they tend to underestimate their level of ability compared with more relaxed students.

It is, therefore, important for teachers to identify anxious students and any elements producing this reaction in the classroom. They have to create a healthier environment where students can feel more motivated and less anxious in order to develop their oral performance.

CHAPTER IV

IV.1- The Students' Questionnaire

We administered a questionnaire to third year students of English at Batna University to highlight what causes their poor oral performance.

The main concern of this chapter is to describe and to interpret the questionnaire's results.

IV.1.1- Participants and Procedures

To carry out this study, we estimated that the questionnaire should be administered to a quite representative sample (154). As already mentioned, we used a selection test to all third year students of English to form our sample (154).

This test contains simple and direct questions about some basic knowledge and about their opinions regarding their studies. We avoided difficult questions to give all students the same chance to answer and to speak without being inhibited because of the lack of knowledge.

Forty eight (48) Students had no difficulty to speak and were eliminated. Students who were reluctant to answer the questions formed our sample with a total of 154.

The questionnaire was first piloted on fifteen (15) students to avoid mistakes and leading questions. We finally, administered a questionnaire that contains fifteen (15) close and open questions.

IV.1.2- Results Analysis:

Item 1: *What do you learn English for?*

Students were asked this question to know their aim behind learning English and, as stated below, they were given four choices to answer.

Figure 3: Students' motives to learn English

To get a degree	To get a job	Appreciation	Other	Total
59	33	53	9	154
38,31%	21,43%	34,42%	5,84%	100%

The majority of students' responses (38,31%) revealed that they were learning English to get a degree. Some of them added that what was important in a society like ours was certainly studying at the university and getting a degree.

Thirty-three students (21,43%) said that they had chosen to learn English to get a job. They stated that it was relatively easier to get a job as a teacher of English. Fifty-three students (34,42%) ticked the third choice:

Appreciation. Most of them stated that they liked foreign languages, particularly, English which had gained a major importance in our country over the last years.

A minority of students (5,84%) stated that they were learning English for other reasons. Some expressed the intention to emigrate and the will to know about a new culture. Others stated that this branch had been imposed on them and it was not their choice to study English.

From these answers, we could understand that most students were urged to learn English. They were ready to adapt themselves to the English learning situation whatever the difficulties they might face. Here, we can say that most students were extrinsically motivated to develop their English and oral performance.

Item 2: *Before studying at the university, did you think that learning English would be: Easy – Difficult – In between.*

The aim of this question was to know how students' opinions about learning English at the university.

Figure 4: Students' prior opinions about learning English

Easy	Difficult	In between	Total
51	21	82	154
33,12%	13,64%	53,24%	100

An important percentage of students (33,12%) thought that learning English would be easy at the university. However, they stated that they were unable to improve their language skills and especially the speaking skill. Only twenty-one students (13,64%) thought that it would be difficult to learn English at the university because they did not have a good training at the secondary level of their education.

More than half of the students (53,24%), however, stated that they always thought that learning English, like any other foreign language, would be neither easy nor difficult. They thought that it requires serious work and efforts.

These results show that most students were surprised to fail in developing their language learning especially as far as oral production is concerned. It was more acceptable for them to face difficulties in scientific studies such as mathematics and physics. They never thought that studying English might be difficult. They believed that previous training in both

French and English would make things easier and accessible at the university.

Item 3: Do you like Oral Expression session? Why?

This question aimed to know the students' attitudes towards the only session that gave them more opportunity to talk and express themselves orally.

Figure 5: Students' attitudes towards Oral Expression Sessions

Yes	No	Total
138	16	154
89.61	10,39%	100

The results showed that the great majority of students (89,91%) liked oral expression sessions. This reflected their willing to learn and practise the language. However, only sixteen students (10,39%) answered negatively. Visibly, students were keen to learn English and willing to improve their speaking skill. They knew that knowing a language meant being able to speak it fluently.

Students who like the oral expression stated that it was the session that allowed them to freely express their thoughts and ideas in English. It

also permitted them to learn new vocabulary and correct their pronunciation mistakes. Some said that they liked the teacher's way of teaching, as s/he knew how to create a more comfortable atmosphere that made students feel comfortable when speaking in the classroom.

However, students who answered negatively explained that they were given no opportunity to speak and practise in the classroom. Others said that they felt so shy that they could not even answer the teacher's questions. Few students thought that the lack of means (laboratories, attractive means ...) prevented them from appreciating the session. They thought that speaking any foreign language requires listening to native speakers first, and then trying to imitate them once language is understood.

According to students' comments, we could deduce that they were conscious of the importance of the oral expression session. They believed that it was vital for them to have enough time to practise oral English. They asserted that they had no opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas overtly in the other sessions. They carried on explaining that in the other sessions, the teacher was always dominating the lecture by explaining or dictating the course, leaving no room for students to speak.

Item 4: *Do you have enough opportunities to speak English in the classroom? Why?*

This question aimed to know whether students had enough opportunities to speak English in the classroom.

Figure 6 : Opportunity to speak English in the classroom

Yes	No	Total
96	58	154
62,34%	37,66%	100

Ninety-six students (62,34%) answered positively while fifty-eight students (37,66%) answered negatively.

Through this question we could identify the reasons why students had or had not enough opportunities to practise English in the classroom.

Students who answered positively to this question explained that the teacher gave them enough time to talk in the classroom and used various techniques to incite them to express themselves freely. They added that the teacher never criticised them when making mistakes. S/he rather corrected their errors indirectly and implicitly.

The students who answered negatively stated that the teacher was always the one who dominated the discussion giving no opportunity to students to express their ideas. The teacher always interrupted any student

trying to participate whether to correct mistakes or to impose a different point of view.

It is clear from the students' answers that our classrooms are still teacher-centred. The teacher is still dominating the course and students are passive listeners. Although we are dealing with the oral expression session, teachers still neglect the students' role in the classroom interaction. They forget that it is the only session where students are supposed to practise the target language orally, and the teachers' role is bounded solely to guidance.

Item 5: How do you evaluate your oral English? Very Good –Good-Average -Poor.

Figure 7 : Students' self evaluation

Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Total
4	31	67	52	154
2.60%	20.13%	43,51%	33,76%	100%

Only four students (2,60%) considered their oral English to be very good. Thirty-one students (20,13%) thought that their oral English was quite good. However, sixty-seven students (43,51%) assumed that their oral

English was average while fifty-two students (33,76%) revealed that they had a poor oral English.

From these answers, we deduced that third year students were facing a serious problem. Although objectivity was far from being expected from students' responses, most of them assumed that their oral English was far from being good. They expressed a deep disappointment particularly because they still have problems at the end of their studies.

They wondered how they will teach in the future with such a poor oral performance. Some students confirmed that they were unable to participate effectively in the classroom. They were still using the same simple vocabulary they acquired in the secondary school, aloud with the same grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

Item 6: Do you feel satisfied with the way (s) you are / were taught oral expression? Yes – No

This question aimed to know whether students appreciated or not the way (s) they were taught oral expression.

Figure 8: Students' attitudes towards the teaching methods

Yes	No	No answer	Total
50	101	3	154
32,47%	65,58%	1,95%	100%

While only fifty students (32,47%) showed their satisfaction with the ways they had been taught oral expression, the majority (65,58%) answered negatively. Only three students (1,95%) did not answer for unknown reasons.

Students commented that their disregard towards the way(s) they were taught was due to both the boring subjects imposed and the teacher's dominance in the classroom. They added that the teacher's way of presenting the subjects did not attract them or encourage them to participate. In this case, we can say that the teachers' challenge is to work hard at making the course enjoyable and satisfying. They should select activities related to the learners' interests, needs and aspirations. They need to use authentic materials and techniques to attract students and urge them to develop their oral English.

Item 7: Do you find difficulties in speaking English? Yes – No

Figure 9: Students' difficulties in speaking English

Yes	No	No answer	Total
97	53	4	154
62,99%	34,41%	2,60%	100%

A great number of students (62,99%) did not deny that had difficulties in speaking. Fifty-three (34,41%) answered negatively while four students (2,60%) did not answer.

If yes, do you think it is due to: Poor vocabulary -Shyness - Lack of interest

This question helped us to understand the reasons behind the difficulties faced by students in speaking English.

Figure 10: The causes behind the students' difficulties in speaking

Poor vocabulary	Shyness	Lack of interest	No answer	Total
41	98	8	7	154
26,62%	63,63%	5,20%	4,55%	100%

Ninety-eight students (63,63%) estimated that shyness was the main cause that hindered them to speak in the classroom. They stated that they had always felt shy to speak in front of other people knowing that everybody was looking at them and listening to what they say. However, forty-one students (26,62%) stated that they faced serious difficulties in speaking in the classroom because of their poor vocabulary. Only eight students (5,20%) showed their disinterest in speaking English and did no effort to overcome these difficulties. In addition to the four students who did not answer the previous question, three others did not explain what caused their difficulties in speaking.

Again, students revealed to be hampered whenever they were asked to communicate orally. Their answers pointed out the major role the affective factors played in hindering the students to develop their oral performance. We deduced that a poor linguistic knowledge was not a real obstacle for students since they could overcome it by reading. Yet, when the barrier is linked to psychological factors, then the problem becomes more delicate for it takes time to build up confidence and depends on the teacher support.

Item 8: *In the classroom, do you like learning: Individually - In pairs - In groups.*

Figure 11: The way students like learning

Individually	In pairs	In groups	Total
28	53	73	154
18,18%	34,42%	47,40%	100%

The majority of students (47,40%) showed their preference to the group work. In the same context, fifty-three students (34,42%) preferred to learn in pairs, while twenty-eight students (18,18%) chose to learn individually.

Why?

Students who favoured learning in pairs or in groups explained that this way permitted them to exchange ideas, learn from each other and even overcome shyness. They could encourage each other to speak and sometimes help each other in specific situations. When a member of the group could not answer a question or explain some points one of her/his mates intervened. However, students who liked learning individually

focused on the point that this may help them concentrate more and attract the teacher's attention.

These results also confirmed that students were mainly inhibited to speak English because of psychological factors. Those who did not prefer working individually, lack self-confidence to talk in front of both the teacher and their mates. They rather preferred to be backed up by their peers.

In the case of group work, the teacher does not evaluate each student alone but the group as a whole. So, individual errors are less significant and students do not feel personally singled and directed. They feel less anxious vis-à-vis their teacher.

Item 9: *How much do you worry about making mistakes when you are asked to speak in the classroom? Very much-Little-Not at all.*

This question aimed to know how much students worried about oral mistakes.

Figure 12: The student's worry about oral mistakes

Very much	Little	Not at all	Total
107	32	15	154
69,48%	20,78%	9,74%	100%

The majority of students (69,48%) revealed to worry very much about making errors when speaking in the classroom. Thirty-two students (20,78%) stated that they worried just a little, while only fifteen students (9,74%) did not worry at all.

We assume that it is quite obvious that a learner refrains from speaking and participating in the classroom because s/he worries about making mistakes. The learner believes that s/he will disappoint the teacher and will urge her/him to react in an unpleasant way. This may frustrate the learner and inhibit her/him to speak, even if s/he possesses appropriate linguistic and cultural knowledge.

Item 10: *In the classroom, do you want your teacher to correct you immediately in front of your classmates? Yes - No*

Figure 13: The students' feeling towards the teacher's correction in the classroom

Yes	No	Total
48	106	154
31,17%	68.83%	100%

Answers to this question presented a clear refusal of 106 students (68,83%) to be corrected immediately by the teacher and in front of their classmates. This reflects the students' confusion when interrupted by the teacher to correct their mistakes. Students felt hindered to carry on their speech. The remaining forty-eight students (31,17%) had no objection to be corrected in front of their classmates, as this may help them to avoid future errors and may help to enhance their oral English.

Item 11: *Do you mind if other students sometimes correct your mistakes?*

Why?

Figure 14: The students' feeling towards their mates' correction in the classroom

Yes	No	Total
88	66	154
57,14%%	42,86%	100%

Students seemed more comfortable when corrected by their classmates. While eighty-eight students (57,14%) still refused to be corrected even by their classmates, sixty-six students (42,86%) had no objection.

Actually, making oral mistakes and being corrected at each time in front of the others may be one of the major sources of students' inhibitions. It makes the student feel less self-confident and unable to progress.

Students who did not mind being corrected by their classmates stated that they never feel embarrassed since they were all learning and had the same level. They might hence make the same errors. They would prefer that their classmates whispered them the right word or the correct pronunciation rather than being corrected by the teacher. Those who did not like their classmates to correct their errors in the classroom thought that since they all had the same level, their classmates were not in a position to correct the others mistakes.

While making mistakes did not pose a serious problem to students, correcting them was their main obstacle. Most students were not against being corrected by their teacher and their mates. They, however, felt more anxious towards the way they were corrected: harshly, ridiculously or sharply. They welcomed any kind of correction as far as it did not embarrass or offend them. Here comes the teacher's role to help learners overcome any difficulty that hampers them to foster their oral performance. In other words, if teachers correct mistakes and further embarrass shy students, it may isolate students even more. Instead, repeating back the corrected statement allows feedback without damaging the student's ego. If

a student shuts down after an outright correction, then opportunity for more practice will diminish.

Item 12: *Do you think that the atmosphere in the Oral Expression class is: Relaxing – Tiring – Motivating - Boring*

Figure 15 : The classroom atmosphere

Relaxing	Tiring	Motivating	Boring	Total
37	35	28	54	154
24,03%	22,73%	18,18%	35,06%	100%

Fifty-four students (35,06%) said that they felt bored in class. This may be due to the lack of motivation. Thirty-seven students (24,03%) found the atmosphere in oral expression. The teacher, hence, was almost the only one who spoke during the course. S/He never obliged them to talk and dealt only with those who showed an interest to the topic.

While thirty-five students (22,73%) considered the atmosphere in the oral expression session tiring, only twenty-eight students (18,18%) felt motivated as the teacher used interactive means in teaching oral expression. To understand more the students' impressions towards the oral expression session, we asked the following question.

Item 13: *How do you feel regarding your teacher of Oral Expression?*

Afraid – Confident – Careless

Figure 16: Students' feeling regarding their teacher of Oral Expression

Afraid	Confident	Careless	Total
103	15	36	154
66,88%	9,74%	23,38%	100%

As shown in Figure 19 (p.81) , 103 students (66,88%) felt afraid of their teacher of oral expression. This fear may be caused by the teacher's reactions towards students' mistakes. The teacher may not tolerate some errors and may tend to ridicule the student in front her/his classmates. While fifteen students (9,74%) felt confident towards their oral expression teacher, thirty-six students (23,38%) did not care about her/him.

It is very important to understand that the teaching/learning situation involves both the teacher and the learner who should co-operate in order to achieve their objectives. From the one hand, the teacher should create a relaxing and motivating atmosphere for learners and urge them to improve their oral proficiency. From the other hand, learners should be active and creative. This positive interaction leads to a healthy environment.

The students we worked with showed no interest in the subjects discussed in the classroom. They disliked the teacher's approach and her/his reactions towards them.

Moreover, the relationship between teachers and students was too limited. Teachers had no interest to establish a friendly relationship with students and preferred to be strict rather than open to their students. Consequently, students become afraid of their teachers and avoid direct contact with them.

Item 14: *How much do you feel motivated to speak in English? Very much - little - Not at all.*

- Justify your answer.

This question aimed to know to what extent students were encouraged to speak in English.

Figure 17: Students' motivation to speak in English

Very much	Little	Not at all	Total
14	49	91	154
9,09%	31,82%	59,09%	100%

While 59,09% of students seemed to be totally de-motivated to speak in English, 31,82% showed to be little motivated to express themselves orally in the classroom. This may be due to the teacher's behaviour, the subject, the lack of interactive means...etc. Only fourteen students (9,09%) revealed to be very much motivated, and this means they were intrinsically motivated.

Students were asked to justify their answers to the previous question. As assumed above, motivated students stated that they felt motivated from within because they liked the language and wanted to improve their oral English. They seemed to value neither the atmosphere provided in the classroom nor the teacher's comportment. They knew the importance of the opportunity they could get from the oral expression session and were determined to take advantage of it regardless their teacher and mates' reactions.

Students who were less motivated argued that this was due to the lack of opportunities to speak in the classroom and to the teacher's reactions. Many students revealed that they had experienced embarrassing situations where the teacher blamed them about mistakes. They were also laughed at when other classmates corrected their errors.

The two last answers revealed a prominent lack of motivation. Neither the classroom atmosphere nor the teacher's attitude did attract and encourage students to participate and to promote their oral performance.

If the teacher were too strict and dominant, leaving no room for the students' creativeness, it would be obvious to come up with de-motivated learners. In other terms, the tangible conditions like enough space, uncrowded class alone cannot motivate students and ensure their success.

Item 15: *How do you prefer to be taught Oral Expression?*

Thanks to this question, students could suggest the way in which they would have preferred to be taught oral expression. The quasi-totality of students' suggestions was about creating an appropriate environment. They would have preferred to learn in classes with a limited number of students in order to have more opportunities to speak. Students also suggested the use of interactive means such as tapes, videos and internet.

The teaching / learning process does not only involve the learner and the teacher. It does implicate different materials as well. It is not enough to have a teacher to carry out an oral expression session. It is, yet, indispensable to use other interactive means. This would certainly make learners feel they are in a native setting and increase their motivation .

IV.2.- The Students' interview:

To obtain more information about students' attitudes and perceptions about oral performance, we conducted an unstructured interview of three open-ended questions. It was conducted on fifteen students (10% of the sample) who were randomly chosen. All the interviews were held in the university yard with a duration of thirty (30) minutes.

IV.2.1- Analysis of the interview results:

Five students among the selected interviewees were eliminated because of their contradictory responses. They showed a clear disinterest to discuss this issue. The following analysis is based only on ten interviewees' responses.

IV.2. 1.1- Interview questions:

1-What are the difficulties you face when speaking in the classroom?

All interviewees gave similar responses which were all around feelings of shyness, fear, and apprehension vis-à-vis both mates and teachers.

It is clear that all what had been mentioned by students is related to language anxiety. None of them had referred to another point.

2- How do you describe the oral expression session?

Six students reported that they felt bored in the oral expression session. Nothing did attract them or made them enjoy the session. They said that they

were disinterested to take part in what they qualified as old fashioned discussed topics like music, sport, and movies .

Two students asserted that they felt disinterested and had no desire to attend but they did it just by fear to be excluded from the oral expression courses.

The last two interviewees were totally disappointed with the materials and methods used. They went further explaining that the overcrowded classes did not give them the opportunity to participate in the classroom or attract the teacher's attention. There is, in fact, nothing in the classroom that motivates students to develop their oral performance.

3- What do you expect from the oral expression session?

Responses were unanimous about the need to a creative environment to help them overcome their anxiety and enhance their oral abilities. Students also suggested the use of up-to-date interactive means such as tapes, videos and internet. Students numbers do not offer any possibility for generalised language practice.

Like in the questionnaire, students emphasised the need for better learning conditions.

Conclusion

The questionnaire and the interview permitted us to find out that the affective factors play a prominent role in the development of learners' oral performance. Whenever we tried to understand students' reluctance to speak in the classroom, we found ourselves confronted with a psychological factor that prevented them from using their oral English.

Students' responses were basically related to anxiety and lack of motivation. They are less encouraged to develop their oral English; their teachers did not motivate them enough; and learning conditions did not foster their interest. They even stated that they had rarely or never been praised: this is a major inhibitor. These factors made students less self-confident and less comfortable in the classroom.

The reaction of both the teacher and classmates represented a major inhibitor for students. They feared to be intimidated and ridiculed in front of everyone. That is why they preferred to refrain from participating in the classroom. Data collected from the questionnaire and the interview confirm our hypothesis. To support our assumptions, we administered another questionnaire to the teachers of oral expression.

CHAPTER V

The Teachers' Questionnaire

V.1 - Participants

This questionnaire was administered to the four third year teachers of oral expression. These teachers are not specialised in teaching oral expression. They taught other topics to other levels. They, however, possess a significant experience in teaching oral expression.

V.2 - Design of the questionnaire

This questionnaire contains ten (10) close and open questions. We tried to know how teachers evaluated their students' oral performance to identify the difficulties they face in speaking.

V.3 - Results Analysis

Item 1: Is the *atmosphere of the Oral Expression session: Relaxing - Motivating – Strained.*

This question aimed to know how the atmosphere of the oral expression session is.

Figure 18: The classroom atmosphere

Relaxing	Motivating	Strained	Total
2	2	0	4
50%	50%	0%	100%

Two teachers stated that they had always tried to create a relaxing atmosphere for their students, and two others confirmed that their classrooms were always motivating. All of them stated that they had always used different techniques in teaching oral expression. They added they had always aimed to create real-life learning situations to motivate students.

Item 2: *In the classroom, students who participate are:*

Numerous - Few.

Figure 19: The students' participation in the classroom

Numerous	Few	Total
1	3	4
25%	75%	100%

Three teachers confirmed a low participation among their students. Only one teacher stated many students participated during the oral expression session.

This may be due to the different ways teachers used in the classroom. Some might give more opportunities to students to participate. Others might praise them as a way of encouragement, while others might inhibit them by their reactions towards the students' performance. It may also be due to the lack of the background knowledge and information, the lack of interest, or the lack of opinions about topics discussed in the classroom.

Item 3: *Are they the same ones who always participate?*

Figure 20: Identification of the students who always participate in the classroom

Yes	No	Total
3	1	4
75%	25%	100%

Three teachers confirmed that participation is always conducted by the same students. We understand that students who always participated in

the classroom did not fear to take risks in the classroom. In other words, those students might be more extrovert and more integratively motivated.

The teacher who said that numerous students participated in his classroom, revealed that they were not the same all the time. Some students might be interested in some topics while others might find them boring to be refrained from participating.

Item 4: *How do you evaluate your students' oral English?*

Teachers were asked this question in order to know their opinions about the level of their students' oral English.

Table 21: The teachers' evaluation of their students' oral English.

Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Total
0	0	2	2	4
0%	0%	50%	50%	100%

Two teachers thought that their students' oral performance in English was average. The two others said it was poor. Teachers expressed a deep disappointment towards their students' oral performance. They seemed too anxious about their students' performance later when teachers. Two

teachers stated that most students had a poor written production as well. This was noticed clearly in their paper exams in different modules. They went further explaining that students gave more importance to right information and answers rather than taking care of producing correct English.

Actually, the main test for real success in learning and teaching should be learners' ability to communicate in English. Their ability to understand, to answer and to talk in different situations. Success is not just the ability to repeat memorised sentences or complete grammar exercises. It is, however, the ability to use English effectively in real communication situations.

Item 5: Do you notice that your students face difficulties in speaking English?

The aim of this question was to know whether teachers noticed that their students were facing difficulties in speaking English.

Figure 22: The teachers' remarks about their students' difficulties in speaking

Yes	No	Total
4	0	4
100%	0%	100%

The answer was unanimous. All teachers confirmed the fact that their students had a real problem in speaking. They stated that the majority of students refrained from speaking in the classroom even when they were asked individually. They usually hesitated when expressing themselves orally even if they knew the answer.

Although all teachers were aware of the difficulties faced by their students in speaking, they seemed unable to overcome those problems.

Item 6: *If yes, do you think it is due to: Poor Vocabulary – Shyness - Lack of Interest.*

This question helped us to know the causes of difficulties faced by students when speaking in English.

Figure 23: The causes behind the students' difficulties in speaking

Poor Vocabulary	Shyness	Lack of Interest	Total
1	2	1	4
25%	50%	25%	100%

Two teachers emphasised shyness in the classroom. One teacher thought that it might be due to poor vocabulary while the other teacher

pointed out that most students lacked interest in learning English. This teacher added that most students study for requirements.

It is disappointing that third year students' inhibition to speak is due to poor vocabulary. Reading might help a lot.

Item 7: Do you think that your students like learning: Individually – In pairs – In groups. Why (in your opinion)?

This question aimed to know whether teachers thought that students liked to learn individually, in pairs or in groups.

Figure 24: The way students like learning

Individually	In pairs	In groups	Total
1	1	2	4
25%	25%	50%	100%

While one teacher thought that students liked learning individually, the others thought the opposite. The teacher who thought that students liked learning individually asserted it was due to poor communication. The three others said that most students preferred to learn in pairs or in groups for they felt more motivated and less stressed. They noticed that students felt

more comfortable in group works. Whenever one of them could not express an idea, another one took up to cover her/his mate's weakness. It is clear that our students are still dependent on each other and lack self-confidence.

Item 8: In the classroom, do you find that the students are: Bored – Anxious – Motivated – Indifferent.

- *Why?*

Figure 25: The students' state in the classroom

Bored	Anxious	Motivated	Indifferent	Total
1	2	0	1	4
25%	50%	0%	25%	100%

Two teachers stated that the majority of their students felt anxious. One teacher said that they were more bored while the other reported that they were rather indifferent.

Teachers attributed students' anxiety to both the boring classroom atmosphere and the lack of interaction.

Furthermore, we believe that both class size and the shortage of time are the major causes that create inhibition. We believe it is impossible to give every learner enough time to speak and correct her/his mistakes.

Item 9: *Do you correct your students' mistakes: Implicitly - Explicitly?*

Figure 26: The teachers' correction of their students' mistakes

Explicitly	Implicitly	Total
2	2	4
50%	50%	100%

Responses to this question revealed the use of ways to correct students' mistakes. Two of them said that they were always direct and overt whenever a student made a mistake. They believe it is the best way to point out students' mistakes, and so, made students more aware about the need to correct. The two others, however, preferred implicit needed correction.

Item 10: *Are you satisfied with the means available to teach oral expression?*

The aim of this question was to know how teachers thought about the available materials used in teaching oral expression, whether they were sufficient and efficient or they needed to be developed and varied.

Figure 27: The teachers attitudes toward the means available to teach Oral Expression

Yes	No	Total
0	4	4
0%	100%	100%

Teachers reported that despite the availability of the language laboratories, they were not satisfied with the materials used in teaching oral expression. Nevertheless, they were keen to develop the existing materials and suggested the use of computers, CD's and internet.

Conclusion

The results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire revealed that the main factors affecting the students' oral performance were more psychological than linguistic. All teachers asserted that poor vocabulary prevented oral expression. Students' reactions expressed either anxiety or disinterest. Moreover, teachers stressed their dissatisfaction as to teaching materials to attract and motivated learners.

Main Conclusion

Attitudes play a significant role in language learning. Krashen (1985) proposed that attitudes act as barriers or bridges to foreign language learning. They are the essential environment ingredient for language learning (Tse 1997). Intimidation and feelings of inadequacy inhibit foreign language students' oral performance. This inhibition is experienced by third year students of English at Batna university. This study confirmed that both low motivation and high anxiety are the main causes behind students' inhibition.

Error correction is another relevant point related to creating a positive affective environment in the classroom. Similarly to the findings of Terrell (1985) and Schrum and Glisan (1994), the present study pointed out that correcting errors directly leads to frustration. The teacher's overt error correction is ineffective. It undermines students' confidence and impedes their progress.

This research confirms our hypothesis about the main psychological causes behind the students' poor oral performance. Therefore, our students need a healthy environment that motivates them and helps them to overcome any psychological hurdle that hampers their oral performance.

Recommendations

Teachers should use encouraging words to motivate students to overcome their anxiety. They should also point out some apparent mistakes in their students' speaking but without interrupting them.

It is very important that teachers adopt as many ways as possible to encourage their students to practise English in the classroom. They should choose topics relating to learners' interest and experience. They must let students have complete freedom to choose their favourite topics like movie stars, songs, music, magazines, sports and travel.

Teachers must play an important role in making the class lively and active. Students' initiatives should be encouraged and respected, but it does not mean that there is no guidance or assessment by teachers. If teachers try to encourage them to speak by using as many ways as possible and by creating a good language speaking environment, students will speak actively, willingly and naturally. Speaking is mastered only through practice.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

The Selection Test

- 1- Who is reigning England?
- 2- Who discovered the USA?
- 3- Give a short definition of the Sentence?
- 4- What is language?
- 5- Who wrote Hamlet?
- 6- How many women did Henry VIII marry?
- 7- Who are the native inhabitants of the USA?
- 8- What is syllable?
- 9- What is the difference between Synchronic Linguistics and Diachronic Linguistics?
- 10-Why some consonants are called Nasals?
- 11-What are the main dynasties that reigned England?
- 12-Why do we stress words in speaking?
- 13-How do you feel towards the subjects you have dealt with so far?
- 14-Do you think that by the end of your curriculum, you will be able to speak in English about everyday topics?
- 15-If you had the choice, what would you have studied other than English?
- 16-Why?

Appendix 2

**UNIVERSITY OF BATNA
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMAN SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

You are kindly invited to fill in this questionnaire. Your answers will remain confidential and will serve the only purpose of my research. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

1/ What do you learn English for?

To get a degree To get a decent job
Appreciation Other (specify)

2/ Before studying at the university, did you think that learning English would be:

Easy Difficult In between

3/ Do you like oral expression session?

Yes No

Why?

.....
.....
4/ Do you have enough opportunity to speak English in the classroom?

Yes No

5/ How do you evaluate your oral English?

Very good Good

Average Poor

6/ Do you feel satisfied with the way(s) you are/were taught oral expressions?

Yes No

7/ Do you find difficulties in speaking in English?

Yes No

If yes, do you think it is due to:

Poor vocabulary Shyness

Lack of interest Other

8/ In the classroom, do you like learning:

Individually In pairs In groups

Why?

.....
.....

9/ How much do you worry about making mistakes when you are asked to speak in the classroom?

Very much Little Not at all

10/ In the classroom, do you want your teacher to correct you immediately, in front of everyone?

Yes No

11/ Do you mind if other students sometimes correct your mistakes?

Yes No

Why?

.....
.....

12/ Do you think that the atmosphere in the classroom is :

Relaxed Motivating Boring

13/ How do you feel regarding your teacher of oral expression?

Afraid Confident Indifferent

14/ How much do you feel motivated to speak in English?

Very much Little Not at all

Justify your answer.

.....
.....

15/ How would you prefer to be taught oral expression?

.....
.....

Thanks for your cooperation.

Appendix 3

**UNIVERSITY OF BATNA
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMAN SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

You are kindly invited to fill in this questionnaire. Your answers will remain confidential and will serve the only purpose of my research. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

**1/ Is the atmosphere of the Oral Expression session: Relaxing -
Motivating – Strained.**

Relaxing Motivating Strained

2/ In the classroom, the students who participate are:

Numerous Few

3/ Are they the same ones who always participate?

Yes No

4/How do you evaluate your students' oral English?

Very good Good

Average Poor

5/ Do you notice that your students face difficulties in speaking in English?

Yes No

6/ If yes, do you think it is due to:

Poor vocabulary Shyness Lack of interest

7/ Do you think that your students like learning:

Individually In pairs In groups

Why (in your opinion)?

.....

8/ In the classroom, do you find that the students are:

Bored Anxious Motivated Indifferent

Why?

.....

9/ Do you correct your students' mistakes immediately?

Yes No

10/ Are you satisfied with the means available to teach oral expression?

Yes No

Thanks for your co-operation.