People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctorate LMD

Branch of English
Option: Applied Linguistics

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A Psycholinguistic Investigation into the Major Factors Leading to EFL Students' Poor Oral Performance
The Case of Third Year Students of English Language at Biskra University

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Declaration

I, Abdelhak ZIDANE, hereby give an affidavit avowing that this thesis is a presentation of my original research work, and has not been submitted before to any other institution or university for a degree. I seriously declare that all the needed academic rules and ethical matters are, to the best of my knowledge, highly respected. Wherever contributions of other researchers were involved, every effort was made to indicate this clearly with due reference to the literature. This work was conducted and completed at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, Algeria.

Date: 23/02/2022

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Dedication

Wholeheartedly, this thesis is dedicated to:

My irreplaceably precious late mother, languages fail drastically to describe what you mean to me …

My beloved father for his permanent encouragement …

My dear brothers and sisters for their robust support …

My adorable nephews and nieces …

My valuable brothers and sisters in law …

My esteemed friends …

All my teachers …

Acknowledgements

Abstract

It has been noticed that most of third year students have some problems with their speaking skill. They, often, feel blocked after uttering the first few words; they make long pauses, repeat words, stammer, and hesitate, and this sometimes makes their language even hard to be understood. The present study is an attempt to firstly identify what causes their speaking difficulties, and secondly to examine them, relying on a psycholinguistic ground, and to give solutions to the said problem. The present study is an investigation into the major factors leading to 3rd year EFL students' poor oral performance. In terms of the methodology employed, three data collection methods, namely, a students' questionnaire, a teachers' interview, and a classroom observation, were conducted. The qualitative data we gathered permitted us to identify the reasons behind the 3rd year students' deficiencies in terms of their speech production. In addition, we interpreted and discussed the data depending on the psycholinguistic components we had highlighted in our theoretical background. The results revealed that students' long pauses, hesitations and stammering were due to many factors such as; students' low intrinsic motivation, their high levels of speaking anxiety, the mismatch between the speaking activities and the learning styles, their low self-confidence, the lack of speaking activities, and the lack of feedback from the part of many teachers of oral expression. We, finally, concluded that the teachers' role in an oral expression classroom was highly important, students were urged to be exposed to English as much as possible, and that both students and teachers must be aware of the psycholinguistic components that explain the speaking process.

Key words: Learning styles, Levelt's model, Oral expression, Psycholinguistics, Speech production,

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ALM: Audiolingual Method.

CLL: Communicative Language Learning.

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching.

DM: Direct Method.

GTM: Grammar-Translation Method.

L1: First language.

L2: Second language.

NA: Natural Approach.

NM: Natural Method.

SW: Silent Way.

TPR: Toral Physical Response.

UG: Universal Grammar.

List of Tables

List of Figures

Table of Contents

Chapter Two: The psycholinguistic Approach and The Speaking Skill

Chapter three: Psycholinguistics and Language Teaching Methods

Chapter Four: The Research Methodology

 Chapter Five: Field Work and Data Analyses

Chapter six General Conclusion, Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Appendices

الملخص

General Introduction

General Introduction

Instinctively, speaking was, and perhaps still is, the primary mission of all languages. It is the overt realisation of these latter. Speaking does not only allow for communication, but it also has the power to motivate or even influence people. From an educational point of view, the speaking skill is no less important than its naturally original role. It is one of the four skills of language whose learning is crucial to reach the linguistic level required in modern societies. Clearly, the classroom is one setting in which the basics of the speaking skill can be parameterised to help students be more aware of the true steps that need to be followed in order to achieve an academically acceptable degree.

As a further consideration, this research beholds that speaking is a cognitive process that is better seen from a psycholinguistic perspective. According to Dipper (1999), language output is about resolving conceptual information. If conceptual representations are brought up, it means that we are more into cognition, and to relate this latter with language entails that the field of psycholinguistics is evoked. This is the rationale behind this whole research. That is to say, the area of psycholinguistics is relied on to explain the phenomena of the speaking skill. It is a branch of knowledge that is precisely pertinent to decipher the facets of language production, i.e., speaking.

What magnetised us to dive into this research is the fact that psycholinguistics, as an area of study to be based on to solve educational problems, is somehow neglected in Algeria. However, if one reads about the field, he will find out that it includes a very heavy amount of knowledge which can be used to come up with a new way of approaching teaching English as a foreign language in the country. Particularly, the present research deals with one aspect of language that is speech production to which psycholinguistics pays special attention.

Regarding the high complexity of the speaking process, its investigation is rather very difficult. To produce language encompasses a set of different aspects which obliges its study to include many variables. Differently stated, to explore this blended nature of the speaking skill, we had to rely on many aspects of the psycholinguistic field such as language anxiety, linguistic intelligence, Levelt's (1989) model of speech production, students' learning styles, Swain's output theory, and some of its other components. Our study claims that the speaking skill demands a broader look in order to be able to shed light on all its various sides. Towards an objective conclusion to solve our research problem, we have given meticulous attention to some details that will be discovered later on.

1 Statement of the problem

It is rather contradictory to say that 3ʳᵈ year university students of English, who are about to get a Bachelor's degree, have issues of speaking English, but it is what it is. This research is the consequence of a personal observation about the speaking level of the students of English as a foreign language. To explain, the researcher has noticed that many of them encounter serious problems when they speak English. More exactly, most of them do not have that quality of spontaneity when speaking. Their fluency is highly questioned due to the unnecessary pauses, hesitations, and stammering which they make. Therefore, to delimit the problem tackled by our study explicitly, there is an undeniable poor oral performance among students of English that often provides a route to critical problems in communication. For that reason, this research is a psycholinguistic investigation into the major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance.

2 The research objectives

The initial objective of the present research is to diagnostically delineate the major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance at Biskra University. To rephrase it, the

first aim of the study at hand is to identify the reasons behind many students' failure to speak English conveniently. Regarding the nature of our research problem and questions, and the end we are seeking, the obstacles that they encounter while speaking English must be known so that they will be Psycholinguistically investigated, which is the second objective of the present research.

Once known, those factors will be explained and explored in connection to the psycholinguistic components that are mentioned in the theoretical background that is covered afterwards. As stated before, since speaking has a lot to do with psycholinguistics, the second objective has to be that the students' speaking problems must be discussed Psycholinguistically which is how our investigation occurs.

Importantly enough, the third objective of the present research is to test the hypotheses, give proper answers to the research questions, provide solutions to the research problem, and recommend insightful techniques for both teachers and students on how to avoid the speaking deficiencies that EFL students of Biskra University face. Withal, this research and study are intended to proceed as objectively as possible in order to reach appropriate conclusions meeting the requirements of an academically doctoral project.

3 The research Questions

This research addressed three major questions. We believed that answering the following questions would help us solve the problematic already stated. Therefore, the research sought to build a methodologically sound approach to give answers to the following research questions:

- From a psycholinguistic perspective, what are the reasons behind students' failure in speaking English while they are supposed to have learned enough grammatical rules and vocabulary items?

- What solutions does psycholinguistics suggest for teachers to overcome such obstacles?

- What could students, on their part, do to solve their problems of poor oral performance?

4 Aims of Research Questions

For the first research question, the aim is to determine the psycholinguistic aspects characterising the reasons behind students' failure in speaking English in order to show their effectiveness in overcoming such an important issue. To put it in a more subtle way, these psycholinguistic aspects are analysed systematically in the forthcoming data analysis as to show whether they may be of much use for the present study to solve the problem of the student's poor oral performance.

As far as the second research question is concerned, it is directed towards the teachers themselves. It is for the purpose of figuring out what the psycholinguistic field is able to provide teachers of English with as techniques and methods to teach the speaking skill in a way that ends up with better results of fluency. In addition, the objective here is to stress the idea that Psycholinguistics might be a adequate scientific basis on which this research problem can be based to be solved.

In relation to the matter sought by the third research question, the stress falls on the students. It, actually, implies that the problem might be in the learners themselves. That is, we have to ask ourselves whether the students are doing what they have to do in order to possess a proper speaking skill that meets the demands of a well-knowledgeable student of English. Indeed, this is about the possibility of looking at their strategies to develop their speech production, which in turn, gives us insights about their awareness of correct and useful strategies to learn speaking in the realm of psycholinguistics.

Noteworthily, the three research questions are related to one another to an extent that their answers are interdependent. Bearing in mind that what interrelates the three research

questions is the research problem posed at the beginning of the present research, one can notice that they look at it from different angles while their objective is solely one.

5 The research Hypotheses

A research hypothesis is known as an assumption about the nature or the causes of a phenomenon, and it is tested by research. To clarify, the researcher generally puts research questions, then he generates some hypotheses as their answers. Furthermore, a research hypothesis is a claim that needs to be confirmed or disconfirmed by the end of the research itself (Bentley, 2006). However, we attempted to construct logically sound hypotheses for our research questions which, to the best of our knowledge, are tightly linked to our research variables all determining its real quest. This thesis, hence, provides three major hypotheses in accordance with the research questions. Those are as follows.

As far as the first research question is concerned, we hypothesised that, from a psycholinguistic point of view, the major factors behind students' failure to speak English are of different types:

- The use of inappropriate teaching methods.
- The lack of proper components in the course which would encourage speaking.
- Teachers' level and experience.

Concerning the second research question, our hypothesis was that some teachers only rely on intuition and they were not used to dealing with the psycholinguistic aspects of language learning.

For the third research question, we hypothesised that students could be guided to discover their learning styles, i.e., to build their own learning strategies.

6 Significance of the study

Providing that to speak English properly is of paramount importance for the Bachelor's degree (la licence) students, since their diplomat has to reflect their level, our research benefits are many. First and foremost, it offers readily the relevant literature on the subject of speaking in relation to the field of psycholinguistics. Understanding the notions, terms, and concepts of our research topic is significant for all the stakeholders who are concerned with teaching, or learning speaking. To clarify, shedding light on individual differences, Levelt's (1989) model of speech production, and Swain's (1995) output hypothesis to explain the speaking deficiencies that the 3rd year students face when speaking English, as an idea, is worthy of attention.

Second of all, the findings and results of the present research will be important for both teachers and students of English as they will be able to readjust their techniques and methods of teaching oral expression for a better outcome. Our study looks at the speaking process from a different angle, and it has been able to come up with a new way of approaching students' hesitations, unnecessary pauses and stammering while speaking. In addition, the students' questionnaire, teachers' interview, and the classroom observation enabled the researchers to deliver useful ideas and insights for the reader.

Thirdly, the originality of our work draws the attention of other researchers as to conduct related studies. That is to say, it can be brought to the reader's mind to do research on the contributions of psycholinguistics to the reading skill, the role of this field in teaching listening, as well as the writing skill in connection to it. Even more, this study opens doors for more research on the speaking skill, since this latter has other aspects to be taken into consideration such as the sociolinguistic ones. Overall, the proportional novelty of our idea is significant in the sense that it can be the reason behind other works that can also be beneficial to the field of teaching English as a foreign language.

7 Scope of the study

The present research covers the speaking skill in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language. It focuses on the major factors behind the students' failure to speak the language properly. More precisely, this study explores students' hesitations, unnecessary pauses, and stammering when speaking English. It gives analyses and discussions to explain the said deficiencies from a psycholinguistic point of view. This thesis, therefore, deals with the students' speech production issues, and attempts to solve them. We studied a sample from 3rd year students of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, we interviewed a sample from the teachers of oral expression, and attended some classroom sessions at the same university. Geographically, Biskra is a province (Wilaya) in Algeria. It is bordered by three other Wilayas which are Batna, Oued Souf, and M'sila.

8 The Methodology Employed

Considering that the present study is an investigation of students' poor oral performance, concentrating on psycholinguistic aspects, we believe that an exploratory descriptive approach is relevant to conduct this study so that we can tackle the issue from different angles. The study used a students' questionnaire, a teachers' interview, and a classroom observation as data gathering tools. Correspondingly, we preferred to opt for a comparative study during our analysis of the gathered data. This method has to be of much help to understand the nature of the problem under study. Hence, during the analysis of first and second steps of the gathered data (the questionnaire, and the interview), we dealt with the attitudes, perceptions, and ideas of both teachers and students. Eventually, the last procedure, which is the classroom observation, is considered as an instrument through which pertinent qualitative data is collected from a closer look at many aspects inside the classroom.

In addition, the selected research methodology provides data collection methods that may make us capable of reaching beneficial ideas concerning the already mentioned aims. In the same context, these data collection methods will be structured to enable us to interpret the participants' (both students and teachers') backgrounds, perspectives, ideas, and reactions to the study undertaken. What we are trying to say is that this approach to this study appears to be suitable, given the high complexity of the phenomenon of speech production. Generally, it is said that employing more than one data collection method (Triangulation) leads to a better understanding of the matter under study.

Triangulation is to undertake more than one approach to investigate a research problem (Cohen, L. et al, 2005) in order to increase the trustworthiness of the results. Going further, within educational research, triangulation stands for the reliance on various perspectives to study a phenomenon based on several data sources, theories, or research methods in order to corroborate a thorough interpretation of the findings (Dörnyei, 2007).

9 Review of Selected Literature

For the purpose of putting our investigation within the flow of other related studies, this section attempts to review the previously conducted works linked to ours. Scrolling up and down through the university's websites looking for similar works, we noticed that there is an unlimited number of studies dealing with the matter of students' poor oral performance. Nevertheless, only the most adequate ones are introduced in this part of the research.

To begin with, Abdolnoor Khaleghi (2016), at Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch in Iran, carried out a research entitled Identification of Affective Factors Influencing Students' Low Participation in University EFL Oral Classes: An Iranian Case Study. The research aims at discovering the main affective factors influencing students' participation in oral classes. To do so, Abdolnoor opted for a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview as

tools to gather the data. His sample was taken from an undergraduate EFL classroom at the same University. The results exhibited that five major factors; lack of confidence, shyness, anxiety, fear of making mistakes and fear of being despised are the most predominant factors which prevented students from participating in oral EFL classes.

In 2016 too, a Palestinian study was conducted, at Al Quds Open University, in which Dr. Ahmed Maher Mahmoud Al Nakhalah investigated the speaking difficulties encountered by English language students. His research concerned itself with exploring the reasons behind such difficulties. To reach this aim, he used an interview, as a data gathering tool, in order to measure the speaking obstacles met by students. Furthermore, the population of the investigation was made up of English students at Al Quds Open University in the Branch of Gaza for the academic year 2014/2015. The study, at the end, revealed that the fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence are the main obstacles that prevent students from speaking fluently.

Another thesis that is worth mentioning is the one conducted by Ariyanti Muflihin in 2016 at Widya Gama Mahakam University in Indonesia. This particular study investigated psychological factors affecting EFL students' speaking performance. Relying on direct observations and interviews, Ariyanti studied the matter in order to know what psychological factors impact on the student's speech production. More precisely, as far as the population was concerned, the researcher takes advantage of observing and interviewing twenty-four students from the fourth semester of English Department at Widya Gama Mahakam University. The findings demonstrated that the students were more likely to feel anxious when speaking because they were afraid of making mistakes which was linked to their lack of self-esteem in using English, and their native language often interfered and caused their errors.

The closest study to ours is that one conducted by Dr. Meriem BOUHENIKA at University Mentouri Bros, in Algeria, in 2014. Her research investigated The Effects of

Personality Variables; Extroversion, Anxiety, and Risk Taking on the Learning of Spoken English at University. The objective of her study was to demonstrate the correlation between the stated personality types and the students' speaking proficiency. Her study encompassed a questionnaire, an intervention, and a classroom observation. Finally, the findings showed that the students who were extrovert, non-anxious, and risk takers had better oral performance when they used English. However, personality types are not the only factors that might lead to poor oral performance, so this study missed some other aspects of the speaking process in order to reach more thorough results.

By the same token, and in another part of the globe, the study conducted by Ahmed Adam Abdellah, in 2011, at the university of Khartoum (Sudan) in the Department of English Language, Faculty of Arts, should not be underestimated. Adam, in his thesis entitled; Sudanese EFL Learners' Oral Communication Problems, discussed the problems that Sudanese EFL learners encountered when they spoke English, and the causes of those problems. He utilized two instruments, an interview and classroom observation, on the 4th year students of English language, at Faculty of Arts in Khartoum and Juba Universities. The research findings indicated that the major issues that face Sudanese EFL students when speaking English were; difficulties in pronunciation, difficulties in communication, lack of fluency, lack of practice, shyness, shortage of native speakers, and the interference of the mother tongue.

Last but not least, in 2010, the Thailander Kamonpan Boonkit, at Silpakorn University carried out a research on enhancing the development of speaking skills for non-native speakers of English. This study focused on how to increase speaking competence and confidence for undergraduate students. Moreover, his sample was the English majors and minors in the curriculum of a Bachelor of Arts degree in the Faculty of Arts. Consequently, this study has revealed that confidence, creativity of topics, and speaking confidence were crucial to improve the oral performance.

To make a point, reconsidering the previously mentioned studies, and given the fact that only one of them has tackled the students' poor oral performance from a psycholinguistic point of view, and they have not covered the problem deeply in terms of the instruments used to collect data, our study will rely on psycholinguistics as the area of study, and will use a students' questionnaire, a teachers' interview, and a classroom observation as tools to gather data about the students. That is, the current investigation, will be more profound and thorough relying on psycholinguistic grounds. Hopefully, this investigation will give trustworthy insights and solutions to our research problem counting on an in-depth method of analysis.

10 Thesis structure

In addition to a **General Introduction**, this thesis includes six main chapters. **Chapter one,** which is entitled "Psycholinguistic Contributions to Language Learning and Teaching" encompasses definitions of Psycholinguistics, factors influencing language learning, and a psycholinguistic approach to the four skills as a way to highlight the role of this field in teaching English. **Chapter Two**, that is "The psycholinguistic Approach and the Speaking Skill", goes further to narrow down the research to our main concern, which is the speaking skill. As a way to define speaking, it contains all the ideas and concepts related to psycholinguistics and speech production, all including Levelt's (1989) model of speech production of both L1 and L2 production, and other related literature.

Chapter three on which we put the title of "Psycholinguistics and Language Teaching Methods" involves the psycholinguistic characterisation of some important language teaching methods, as well as comparing some of them to stress on the differences that reside in that area. Moreover, **Chapter four,** entitled "The Research Methodology", is interested in the methodology used in the present research, encompassing all the instrumentation and data analyses methods. furthermore, **Chapter five** which we entitled "Field Work and Data Analysis" covers the practical part of our study; it tackles the discussion of the findings reached

during the study. Finally, **Chapter six** that is entitled "General Conclusion, Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations" **includes** the pedagogical recommendations and implications of the study.

Chapter one: Psycholinguistic Contributions to Language Learning and Teaching.

Introduction

Generally, speaking a language has a mental aspect. For this particular reason, psycholinguistics is one area of study from which we could benefit vis-à-vis the quest of this study. That is to say, since this research is investigating speaking deficiencies, psycholinguistics is, for us, an appropriate scientific ground that can be relied on to do likewise. Still, this part of the research concerns itself with a broader image; it is about looking at the contributions of this field to learning and teaching English in general.

1 Defining Psycholinguistics

Straightforwardly, psycholinguistics refers to the study of the connection between language and mind (Maftoon and Shakouri, 2012). Differently stated, it is the systematic amalgam of psychology and linguistics. That is, this is the study of the psychological and neurological factors that make humans obtain, use, understand and produce language (Altman, 2001). Pursuing this further, in the realm of this area of study, three important processes are investigated, namely, language production, language comprehension, and language acquisition (Clark & Clark, 1977; Tanenhaus, 1989). Thus, one can fathom that amongst the questions to which psycholinguistics tries to give answers are: what processes are underwent by the brain to comprehend and produce language? What cognitive processes are involved in the common use of language? And how languages are acquired and learned?

Historically speaking, psycholinguistics has evolved and extended into various sub-disciplines as cited down by Chaer (2015):

1. Theoretical psycholinguistics. As its name suggests, it is concerned with theories of human mental processes in language, such as phonetics, syntax design, discourse, and intonation.

2. Developmental psycholinguistics. This has to do with language acquisition, both first and second language acquisition. It investigates phonological, semantic, and syntactic acquisition, processes.

3. Social psycholinguistics is linked to the social aspects of language, focusing on social identity.

4. Educational psycholinguistics considers general characteristics of formal education, dealing with the role of language in teaching reading, teaching proficiency, and improving language ability to express thoughts and feelings.

5. Neuro-psycholinguistics is interested in the link between language, language production, and the brain. Experts in the field of neurology have succeeded to examine the biological structure of the human brain and to analyse what occurs with the input language and the way language output is set up in the brain.

6. Experimental psycholinguistics has often conducted experiments in language production, language behaviour, and language outcome.

7. Applied psycholinguistics has concerned itself with applying the findings of the already stated six sub-disciplines of psycholinguistics in some areas of study including psychology, linguistics, language learning, neurology, psychiatry, communications, and literature.

As far as language teaching is concerned, developmental psycholinguistics and applied psycholinguistics have a significant role in forming efficient ways of teaching. Hence, psycholinguistics theory encompasses language development in relation to humans' physical and mental development. These theories are considered in designing language teaching programs and materials in order to improve second language learners' mastery of the English language.

2 Acquisition Vs. Learning

The two notions, acquisition and learning, are highly debatable. We believe that making a difference between them, in such a thesis, is crucial. For that, in this parcel, they are discussed in a way to provide ideas about what they truly stand for. Historically speaking, the first well-formed framework of the two concepts was put forward by Krashen (1985) in his input hypothesis.

According to him, there are two distinct processes of second language performance, namely, acquisition and learning. The former is the result of a subconscious process very comparable to the one a child goes through when developing his mother tongue. That is to say, it needs meaningful interactions in the foreign language, and naturally contextualised communications; in which the learners focus on the form of their utterances rather than on the communicative act. The latter, learning, is the outcome of formal instruction and it includes a conscious process that is based on transferring knowledge about the language. Thus, acquisition is more important; and beneficial, than learning for Krashen (1985).

In this respect, in a more recent research, Field (2004) claims that the term acquisition is used to refer to the way children acquire their native language (first language acquisition) and to the way learners learn a second or a foreign language (second language acquisition). In the literature, the use of the two terms is still problematic. Some experts use the term "language learning", others use the term 'language acquisition', and some other scholars use them interchangeably. Chaer (2015) explains that some writers employ the term 'language learning' because they see that second language can be mastered by learning the language intentionally and consciously. That is, it is different from first language that is acquired naturally without a formal setting. So, the term "language acquisition" is used since some believe that a second language is acquired either formally or informally.

In this thesis, however, we will share Field's (2004) opinion. Meaning, we will use the term 'acquisition' to refer to both acquisition and learning, and we will mention whether it is about first or second language to differentiate between the two processes, i.e., first language acquisition means 'acquisition', and second language acquisition stands for 'learning'. Honestly, we made this clarification just to avoid any sort of confusion or misconception, for the purpose of being clearer and more straightforward.

3 Factors Influencing Language Learning

The fact that some students learn a new language more quickly and easily than others is linked to certain pivotal factors affecting their success, or failure, that are largely beyond the control of the learner. According to Lightbown and Spada (2006, p. 58-74), some factors influencing second language acquisition are as follows.

3.1 Intelligence

Generally, intelligence is that problem-solving skill that human beings have. In other words, it is the mental ability which is associated with reasoning, perceiving, calculating, learning… etc. Nevertheless, it is not easy to give one single definition of intelligence because it has many other aspects. For Janik (2004), it "is a deceptively simple appearing idea that has proven especially difficult to define, test and measure" (p.129). Thus, including several notions and characteristics, intelligence is difficult to be defined. Many experts define and measure it in terms of linguistic and logico-mathematical abilities. To explain, an individual's ability to process language or his ability to solve logic problems are the ways in which intelligence is measured (Fernandez-Corugedo, 1999).

Intelligence has been set and categorised, in different types, by many psychologists. These types of intelligence are said to be what differentiates human beings, and people's special traits are measured based on them. Recently, educational psychologists have been working to

develop theories vis-a-vis the complexity of intelligence. Gardner (1983) suggested various forms of abilities that are related to intelligence. Namely, linguistic intelligence (that is concerned with reading, writing, listening and speaking), musical intelligence (which is interested in playing, composing, singing and differentiating musical notes), logical-mathematical intelligence (that covers solving puzzles, and calculating), spatial intelligence (this deals with the awareness of one's location and knowing one's orientation), bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence (it embodies using one's body to achieve skilled movements), interpersonal intelligence (it concerns itself with understanding others dealing with relations in society), intrapersonal intelligence (to comprehend oneself and to have insights into one's own thoughts, actions and emotions). Later on, in 1999, Gardner put forward another type, that is naturalistic intelligence which includes understanding and working efficaciously in the natural world.

In brief, as far as we are concerned with linguistic intelligence, it stands for the idea that learners who are characterised by high linguistic intelligence seem to think in words (Nolen, 2003), they can use language successfully both orally and in writing (Christison & Kennedy, 1999). In other words, learners who are gifted enough to be better language students are probably the ones whose linguistic intelligence is high-ranking. Therefore, learners possessing a high degree of responsiveness to sentence structures, meanings, illocutionary force, and linguistic sounds (Armstrong,1999) are considered as being linguistically intelligent.

In this context, linguistic intelligence is defined as responsiveness to spoken and written languages, the ability to use language to achieve certain goals, and the potential to learn new languages (Gardner, 1983). Simply stated, linguistic intelligence is the degree to which learners of L2 know how to deal with language. Thus, it is about that language competency including speaking, articulating, expressing, and communicating the speakers' thoughts and feelings to the interlocutors using one or more languages.

To this end, linguistic intelligence is one significant factor that can make a difference between L2 students. To be knowledgeable of such individual difference between students in a language classroom is crucial for teachers in order to improve their speaking skill.

3.2 Aptitude

It is said that some specific abilities in learners are thought to determine the success of their second language acquisition. Thus, there have been many studies under the title of language learning aptitude. Moreover, research has depicted aptitude with regard to the ability to learn the language easily and quickly.

Thence, it is hypothesised that a learner with high aptitude may have a tendency to learn with greater ease and speed. So, this part of the research is concerned with exploring the matter of aptitude in language learning as being one major factor influencing language learning.

During the last two decades, aptitude has witnessed an increased interest from the part of many researchers. It has been acknowledged as being one of the most significant factors affecting students 'success in L2 learning (Dörnyei 2005). As it is the case for many terms, to give aptitude a thorough definition is strenuous, however, the usual way to do so is to define it in accordance with tests employed to measure it (Ellis 1985). Apparently, the principal view says that it is not a concept of one single entity. Instead, it is about a set of competencies and abilities which boost language learning in learners. In the words of Carroll and Sapon, aptitude is a group of "basic abilities that are essential to facilitate foreign language learning" (cited in Dörnyei 2005, p 23). To make this clear, these aptitudinal abilities involve distinguishing sounds and relating them to written symbols and recognising grammatical regularities of a language (Ellis 1985).

Contemporary research suggests that aptitude and intelligence share many aspects. In the literature, one may find that aptitude is just a broad term for a combination of certain

cognitive skills and abilities, like working memory or phonological coding/ decoding, which surpass the skills and abilities usually evaluated to ascertain linguistic aptitude (Dörnyei, 2005). Still, what appears to be beyond dispute is that aptitude has to do with learners' competency and the rate at which they learn a second language. Commonly, best language learners possess a certain talent, or gift, for languages which allows them to learn languages more quickly and easily than others (Lightbown and Spada 2006).

3.3 Learning Styles

Every learner is so unique in his way of learning that it is very difficult to find two learners who learn in an identical manner. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that language learners have dissimilar educational and cultural backgrounds, unalike personalities, and contrastive learning experience, which result in different degrees of success in language learning. Unambiguously, these learners' differences that usually affect their success in learning the language are referred to as learning styles.

Learning style is a term that is derived from the field of general psychology. By definition, learning styles are "the characteristic ways in which individuals orientate to problem-solving" (Ellis, 2005, p.4). Also, Keefe (1979) proposes a more precise definition of learning style. For him, it is about cognitive, affective and physiological attitudes that are signs of the way learners discern, react and respond to the learning environment. By the same token, James and Gardner describe the learning style as "the complex manner in which, and conditions under which, learners most effectively perceive, process, store, and recall what they are attempting to learn" (1995, P. 20). To clarify, each learner has his technique of learning the language, his method, or rather his style. So, learning styles are depicted more with regard to learners' strategies to learn (Mortimore, 2003).

Hence, another factor influencing language learning is the learners' strategy to learn. It appears that the way they approach the second language is very important and can have a robust impact on the development of the L2 as well as its appropriate acquisition. Therefore, following are two significant types of learning styles.

3.3.1 Perceptual Learning Styles

Perceptual learning styles, also known as sensory learning styles, refer to the employment of the learner's sensory receptors in the process of learning the language, like the eyes and the ears. That is to say, learners use their sensory apparatus to process the stimuli from outside. Mainly, there are four learning styles that fall into this model; visual learners, auditory learner, tactile learners, and kinaesthetic learners.

The first learning style in this part of the present research is called visual learning. That is to say, visual learners tend to rely more on their eyes to learn the language. In other words, they learn more efficaciously when the teaching materials are put in a visual form (Fleming and Baume, 2006). Furthermore, this style of learning usually includes dependent learners who like to work in a collaborative learning atmosphere (Fleming and Baume, 2006). Therefore, visual learners can do better in a group learning environment. They, obviously, like to learn by seeing words, reading books, and looking at some teaching materials. For instance, they would rather learn languages by looking at written words than to only listen to the teacher explaining. This is why there are many students who would ask the teacher to write more than to explain in the classroom. Thus, these learners are more likely to prefer using data shows to present the lesson so that they can see words, and pictures or charts, which in turn help them in the process of language learning to a high extent.

In keeping with perceptual learning styles, auditory learning is another learning style. In this type, which is also called verbal learning, as the name suggests, learners prefer to learn

by listening. That is, they may enjoy to have speaking interactions so that they can listen. Students of this learning style may not like reading books. They would rather like to listen more than to see. In some literature, it is concluded that independent classroom activities are more suitable for auditory learners, since they prefer using learning materials presented in an audio and video form (Pamela, 2011). Moreover, Battalio (2009) suggests that learners in this learning style can generally be described as reflective learners. Thus, collaborative learning environments, mainly, do not make any benefits for this type of learners. Correspondingly, using group learning to share learning information in a collaborative learning environment is not encouraging (Battalio 2009).

The third learners' type tackled in this part of the research is known as tactile or also haptic. By way of explanation, in the realm of this learning style, learners like to learn through the sense of touch, for example, playing with vocabulary puzzles. As Reid (1987) mentions, tactile learning is to put "hands-on learning, e.g., building models" (p: 89). To put it another way, these learners like better to learn by feeling or touching something with their hands instead of hearing or seeing it. Even more, tactile learners show tendency to like participating in tasks which include touching, building, or drawing. Simply, they learn best by doing, and more particularly, by touching. Finally, this learning style makes learners learn through fine motor movements rather than whole body movement, which is the case for the coming learning style.

The last, but not the least, perceptual learning style, is the kinaesthetic one. This style of learning shares many characteristics with the previous one. That is to say, this style of learners are active learners and they like working in social interaction (Battalio, 2009). The difference is that kinaesthetic learners prefer to move their whole body rather than only touching by their hands. In other words, they prefer activities involving physical movements to learning environments to learn the language, such as some practice that includes games in which learners can move to learn. Meaning, they would rather feel unmotivated in case their teacher only

allows them to listen and watch in the classroom passively because they prefer a learning environment where they are provided with an opportunity to discuss and exchange information and interact with each and one another.

In summary, perceptual learning styles are what differentiate students at the level of their senses and the way they see the learning process and react to it. That is to say, visual, auditory, tactile, and kinaesthetic learners are what this model of learning styles includes. Each type of learners, as a result, has its own way of tackling the second language being learnt.

3.3.2 Cognitive Learning Styles

The way a learner learns and finds solutions is simply a cognitive style (Brown, 2007). Cognitive styles are viewed as the use of cognitive abilities that have developed in a person, and are "preferred or habitual patterns of mental functioning" (Oxford et al, 1992, p. 440). Moreover, cognitive styles are what influences the way an individual perceives his environment and recognises the surrounding world. That is, this serves as a ground for the way the person collects, puts in order, and processes information when learning the language.

As applied to an English language classroom, cognitive styles, for instance, indicate that the learner might not be able to deal with the information in a successful manner, if the lesson is presented in a way that does not match his cognitive style, and more importantly, this can "affect students' learning potential and their attitudes toward English and toward learning in general" (Oxford et al., 1992, p.439). Seemingly, a cognitive style is an individual's characteristic that is linked to his personality (Brown, 2000) and might also have a cultural aspect (Cook, 2001).

In the literature, there are many cognitive learning styles, namely, focusing vs. scanning; serialists vs. holists students; divergent vs. Convergent thinkers; and field dependent vs. field independent learners. Nevertheless, the most significant and relevant pair is field independence

and field dependence, which has been explored widely in accordance with L2 language learning.

Originally, field dependence and field independence cognitive learning styles were put forward by Witkin, H. A. (1967) to elucidate the differences between field dependent (global) and field independent (analytic) cognitive styles. This approach to cognitive styles determines how learners experience their surrounding world, whether it is in a global way or an analytical one. By way of explanation, learners who are field dependent usually have a general view of what they are dealing with, meaning, they fail to see the minor details. However, field independent learners are described as strong observers focusing on details, without paying attention to the background whereby those details arise. Moreover, this type of learners has short memory span, can be distracted easily, and prefer natural learning situations. Nevertheless, field dependent students are, by nature, more enthusiastic, examiners and self-supporting. Also, they can focus more, have longer memory spans, and prefer academic and competitive environments to learn (Blakely & Tomlin, 2008).

Simply stated, field-independent learners are learners who generally concentrate on the details of a foreign language and like to break it down into parts or pieces to make the learning process less complicated. Meaning, they might neglect the whole picture while concentrating on details. For instance, they would prefer to divide a reading passage or a sentence into parts trying to get the exact meaning. Notwithstanding, field-dependent learners are global learners naturally. They would like to deal with the whole learning material. Hence, they seem to be adequate at understanding the main points and the general meaning of a text.

Even more, while Johnson (2003) claimed that "the field independent subjects seemed to be better learners" (p.32), giving more importance to this type of cognitive learning style, Brown (2007) suggested that both styles are important regarding the fact that they deal with two different forms of language learning. Videlicet, field independence is linked to that type of

language learning which is inside a classroom where examining, considering details, learning drills are included; whereas field dependence is related to non-formal language learning and to mostly communicative situations of learning the language.

By the same token, Ellis (2005) referred to two hypotheses. The first one claims that "field-dependent learners do better in formal language learning, while field-independent learners do better in informal language learning" (p.63). In addition, his second hypothesis proposes that "field dependent learners will interact more and seek out more contact with other users of the L2" (p.63). In other words, he wanted to say that field-dependent learners appear to be more interactive than the field-independent ones, they seek to make more contact with their classmates and make new relationships. For him, it is just a matter of the way the two types make connections between the members of the learning environment. Still, the two previously stated hypotheses are very debatable. Even Ellis, himself, indicates that "the research into field dependence/field independence has shed little light on the relationship between cognitive style and L2 learning" (Ellis, 2001, p.66), which means that research on this matter has to be encouraged in order to confirm or disconfirm his hypotheses.

Cognitive learning styles, thus, distinguish students in terms of their cognition and the way they realise, and recognise the language in order to learn it in their own cognitive manner.

3.4 Personality

Generally speaking, personality can be depicted as a set of features that distinguish an individual. As it is the case for many concepts, it is hard to agree on one single definition of personality due to its complicated nature. More so, one cannot find in the literature strong evidence of a stable relationship between personality variables and success in second language learning. Yet, Krashen (1981) claimed that personality variables could have an impact on learners' attitude and motivation which in turn affects their language learning (Gardner 1985).

That is to say, personality might promote or prevent learners from gaining full mastery of the language in an indirect way. To go further, some researchers, (see Lindgren1976; Gardner 1985; Brown 1987; and Littlewood 1984), suggested a number of personality traits that may affect second language learning. Such traits, which are dealt with in the coming section, encompass anxiety, extroversion or introversion, self-esteem, and risk taking.

3.5 Anxiety

Being emotionally uncomfortable when learning English might lead to serious troubles. Students differ from one another at the level of their feelings and attitudes towards the surrounding environment of the classroom, and this can affect their learning either positively or negatively. Thus, language anxiety seems to be one crucial factor that differentiates between students, and it is up to the teacher to be able to adjust it in order to be beneficial for his classroom

By its own nature, anxiety is a state of nervousness, and unease. As far as a language classroom is concerned, in some learners there is a high anxiety level whereas in others there is a low one. To explain, high anxiety learners are more likely to be in a constant feeling of tension and stress. However, low anxiety ones are, generally, in a feeling of relief, relaxation, and they are in control of themselves and the situation they are in. Yet, for Lindgren (1976), a moderate level of anxiety is required for successful language learning. He referred to a study that was conducted in Australia which found that students with an average amount of anxiety performed notably better than the ones with high or low anxiety.

Pursuing this further, the learning situation may also create anxiety in learners which can support or prohibit learning from taking place. To illustrate, if the situation seems to be threatening for the learner when he is asked to do a task that is beyond his level, language learning will be prevented. Subsequently, situations like; correcting the learner overtly, making

him pronounce unfamiliar words in the presence of his classmates, failure to comprehend or to express himself can arouse anxiety to a high extent.

As we have seen, some parameters within the learners demand meticulous observations so as to make a language classroom a better place. Nothing is to be underestimated, and good teachers are those who know the way their relationship with their students must be.

3.6 Extroversion and Introversion

Other personality factors influencing language learning are known to be Extroversion and introversion. Erton (2010) defines an extrovert person as someone who tends to focus on the outer world. That is, extroverts are more likely to be interested in other people's reactions, praise, opinions and events. On the other hand, an introvert is an individual who is concerned more with his own thoughts and feelings than with what is happening in the outside world (Zhang, 2009). In other words, this latter obtains his sense of welfare from his inner resources. For Zafar (2011), everybody has a certain level of both forms of personality, but there is always dominance of one over the other. Simply, extroversion and introversion are two types of personality that define the way individuals react to the outside world.

Concerning language learning, Ellis (2008) explains the way these two forms of personality have an impact on it giving more advantage to extrovert learners to master the language. To put it in his words,

> "Extroversion is viewed as a factor having a positive effect on the development of L2 basic interpersonal skills, as extroverted learners are likely to interact more and more easily with other speakers of the second language. However, introspective learners may also experience an advantage: they may find it easier to study the L2 and thereby develop higher levels of cognitive academic language proficiency" (p. 541).

It is suggested by Eysenck (1991) that extrovert learners and introvert ones may reveal some dissimilarities at the level of accuracy and speed in L2 production. Moreover, he claimed that extroverts are to be less distracted and that is the reason why they are better equipped to perform under stress. In this respect, this type of learners appears to be better at learning languages by decreasing their amounts of anxiety. Furthermore, there are more arguments which also support this idea. Lightbown (2013) concluded that many teachers see that extrovert students are more successful in L2 learning than their introvert classmates, mostly with regard to being better in their communicative ability. Besides, Barron-Hauwaert's (2010) interview with learners' parents showed that they share the same opinion. They view that being an extrovert learner is preferable because it would provide their children with more opportunity to practice language.

Thus, English learners' reaction to their classmates and the teacher is an important point which reveals another way in which they differ. That is to say, extroversion and introversion are two aspects on which the teaching operation must rely in order for it to get improved.

3.7 Self Esteem

Evaluating one's self is another personality trait that is of much importance when it comes to looking at the individual differences amongst students of English. Therefore, we have devoted this section to deal with self-esteem as one factor worth tackling in an English teaching classroom.

This type of personality is called self-esteem. It is a personal discernment of self-worthiness, deduced from experience with oneself, others and the world. To Brown (1987), self-esteem can be defined as:(a) general i.e., ones' attitude towards himself, (b) particular i.e., oneself as a language learner, (c) task orientated i.e., oneself as a speaker of the language.

Brown (1987) states that self-esteem may be an important variable in L2 learning. It plays a significant role in the success of language learning. To put it differently, increased self-esteem leads to an effective language learning. Heyde, as stated in Brown (1987), found a positive interconnection between self-esteem and language learners' oral production. Expectedly, learners with increased self-esteem tend to have lower levels of anxiety when speaking the second language.

Hence, there is a tight relationship between self-esteem, language anxiety, and language learning. Teachers, subsequently, should consider such a variable in the student's personality in order to help him acquire the language appropriately.

3.8 Risk Taking

There is a close relationship between self-esteem and risk taking. Individuals that are unsure of themselves (the ones who have low self-esteem) are less likely to take risks to deal with the language when there is a risk to fail. To explain, Ely (1986) has proclaimed that risk taking in a language classroom is viewed as learners' likelihood to utilize the second language. It is argued, too, that risk taking manifests itself in situations whereby students encounter challenging activities in which the probability of washout is highly anticipated (Nunan, 1992).

That is, most of risk-taking learners are described as being impulsive, daring, and talkative; they are likely to hypothesise, imagine, and even fail. Hence, Hurd and Murphy (2005) stated that: "Taking risks in language learning means being prepared to have a go at saying or writing something even if you are not exactly sure how to do it, without worrying that you might get wrong" (p.56). From these points we can say that students who do not have an appropriate flow of their speech production might not be risk takers due to the previously mentioned factors.

Pursuing this further, several studies have been conducted as an attempt to figure out the link between risk taking and foreign language mastery. For example, Ely (1986) inquired the influence of language class discomfort, risk taking, and sociability on L2 learners to reveal the following results: language classroom discomfort decreases risk taking and sociability in learners, and risk-taking led to participation which in turn resulted in oral correctness. Therefore, risk taking is seen as a significant factor influencing second language competency. Finally, risk taking is one part of learners' personality which can be a crucial sign of their success because it can encourage learners to take part in activities, practice more, interact with classmates, and as a consequence, achieve second language proficiency (Brown, 1994).

Here, it must be concluded that learners of English have to be encouraged to take risk and speak the language without being afraid that they could make mistakes. Also, the teacher has to do his best to make the classroom a more comfortable place for his students in order to give them opportunities to increase their risk taking.

3.9 Motivation

In reading literature on motivation, one might find several definitions of it. Although all the definitions fall into the same meaning, this part of the research has to mention some of them. To start with, according to Crookes and Schmidt (1990), motivation is the learner's tendency with regard to the purpose of learning a second language. In this respect, Pardee (1990) suggests that a motive is what stimulates the learner to act in a particular manner or create a tendency for certain behaviours. Likewise, Gardner (1985) defines motivation as the amalgamation of attempt and desire to reach the objective of, and preferable attitudes towards, learning the language. By the same token, Oxford and Shearin (1994) claim that motivation is a wish to achieve an objective. Therefore, the literature differs in categorising and classifying the types of motivation.

3.9.1 Types of motivation

Brown (2000) and Gardner (1985) say that there are two forms of motivation, namely, integrative and instrumental. Furthermore, based on Gardner and Lambert (1972), integrative motivation is about language learning for personal and sociocultural purposes. Putting it clearly, this is the type of motivation where the learner learns a language to integrate well in the foreign language society. Furthermore, they went on specifying that the second form of motivation, namely instrumental motivation, comes from the desire to learn the language for functional aims. This type of motivation incorporates the realisation of the learners' goals of learning the language, such as passing an exam or getting a job.

In agreement with them, the Hungarian-born, British psycholinguist, Zoltán Dörnyei, in 1998, indicated that the concept of motivation includes both instrumental and integrative forms. Thus, he added that most cases in learning language embody an amalgamation of the previously mentioned types of motivation; however, the level of each is relative. This means that one cannot say whether the learner is of either type, because it is the mixture of both of them that makes motivation. It is claimed, in this context, that the importance of integrative and instrumental motivation resides in the sense that the environment of learning plays a crucial role, i.e., the context and the situation of learning are what makes either integrative or instrumental motivation.

Later on, Dörnyei (1998) gave definitions for two other forms of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. The former stands for the motivation that is controlled by inner stimulations in learning. At this level, learners participate in tasks for their own inner intentions, purposes, and aims, i.e., not for external stimulus, such as rewards. Notwithstanding, the other type of motivation, namely, the extrinsic one, originates in outer factors, for example, some learners learn due to certain external forces, and their objective is not to acquire knowledge itself but to get the external outcome (Edward & Ryan, 1985).

Furthermore, in language classrooms, it is commonly suggested that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are needed, they often cooperate and even switch into one another (ibid). In this respect, Brown (2000) explains the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. For him, extrinsic motivation might convert to integrative motivation when the learner is pushed to learn the L2 for integrative purposes. Also, extrinsic motivation could turn out to be instrumental motivation in case an outer stimulus attracts the L2 learner to get the language.

For the other type, intrinsic motivation, it can be converted to integrative one, also, when the learner needs to integrate with the L2 culture; intrinsic motivation, too, can transform to be instrumental when the L2 learner desires to reach particular aims using the second language. That is to say, learners with the same integrative motivation can show dissimilarities of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Subsequently, one can conclude that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are relevant to integrative and instrumental motivations in accordance with language learning (Brown, 2000).

In reality, to motivate students of English to be dynamic in the classroom and participate is very crucial. To do so, the teacher needs to have such knowledge about motivation and its types so that he could accommodate, and vary, the lessons and the atmospheres in accordance with the learners' motivation types.

3.10 Age

It is claimed that some adult learners who begin to learn a foreign language would probably fail to reach a native-like language proficiency, but young children who are exposed to second language at an early age are more likely to achieve native-likeness (cf. Lenneberg 1967). Based on this, young learners tend to have a more efficacious way to acquire a new language (Singleton and Ryan, 2004). That is, age looks like a crucial factor influencing

language learning, and it is widely accepted that children, most of the time, have greater amount of probability to acquire second languages expeditiously, effectively, and skilfully, whereas adults have less capacities to learn it due to the age factor.

3.10.1 Critical Period Hypothesis

Many researchers (Lenneberg, 1967; Scovel, 1988; Lamendella, 1977; Ellis, 1986) have investigated this phenomenon of age in relation to learning a second language. It is suggested that there exists a critical period for second language learners. This shows that young learners have a greater ability than adults do in this matter. The term critical period was firstly coined by Penfield and Roberts (1959), and it stands for the phenomenon of the reduced competence of learning languages over the increasing age.

Ellis, in this context, noticed that there is a certain period of time in which language acquisition occurs normally and effectively, however, after a particular age, the brain is no more capable of processing language thoroughly (1986). Accordingly, in the words of Scovel (1988), the critical period is defined as "the notion that language is best learned during the early years of childhood, and that after about the first dozen years of life, everyone faces certain constraints in the ability to pick up a new language." (p.2).

Moreover, the linguist and neurologist Eric Lenneberg, in 1967, used the term "lateralization" (p. 176) to explain that puberty is a period of time whereby locating language-processing ability in the human's left hemisphere is related to the biological development of the brain. Meaning, children's brains are characterised by more flexibility than those of adults when it comes to learning languages. This notion of lateralization was also tackled by Stephen Krashen (1973) who suggested that lateralization in the human's brain is completed by the age of five. Nevertheless, Lamendella (1977), concerning Krashen's (1973) claim, commented that that period suggested was exaggerated. Instead, he proposed the term "sensitive period" (p.

175) which meant that the probability of learning a language after the age of five is, more or less, higher.

3.10.2 Reactions to the Critical Period Hypothesis

Morford and Mayberry (2000) state that "individuals exposed to language at earlier ages consistently outperform individuals exposed to language at later ages for first and second languages of both signed and spoken languages" (p. 111). This hypothesis advocates the idea that young learners are more likely to perform better in language learning.

On the contrary, another assumption claimed that old learners can do better in language learning. This is about the idea that adult language learners can succeed better and perform more efficiently than young language learners. That is, several studies have been conducted to uphold this view. For instance, Ekstrand (1976) exhibited that L2 learning capacity 'improves with age' (p. 130). Simply, he claimed that the older the learners are, the better they can deal with the language given the fact that they have an idea about, at least, the way one language is constructed, which is their mother tongue.

Thus, one can say that adults are more experienced with language and this in turn makes them able to outperform young learners in terms of speed and efficiency of language learning. To support the idea of the speed rate of language learning in old learners, Harley's research favours the faster acquisition rate in later starters (1986). Based on these previously stated hypotheses, it is concluded that older learners can be more effective language learners.

Another view from Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978) supporting the idea that most children are substantially better language learners, but they are not always quicker than adults. In other words, adults seem to improve faster than in the case of young learners, whereas these latter exceed adults in ultimate attainment (Dulay & Burt, 1982). This view, to explain, endorses the idea that young learners are better learners, but "in the long run" (ibid, p. 94-95).

Again, age appears to be a significant factor in which language learners differ, and knowing how to deal with such situations by the teacher is significant too, because he plays an important role in guiding his students to learn the language. Thus, some researches claim that young learners are better, others argue that old learners are more experienced, and some other neutral opinions state that both can do well but the young ones can reach native-like proficiency while the old learners cannot.

4 The Psycholinguistic Approach

The psycholinguistic approach to language learning views it as a cognitive process whereby knowledge is built so as the learner is exposed to comprehensible input, provided with the opportunity to negotiate the input, and receive feedback. At most, psycholinguistic approaches to language learning broadly agree on the idea that a learner must be exposed to comprehensible input of the target language (Carlos, 2008).

Krashen (1985) 's input hypothesis is considered as one of the most exceedingly studied theories of input. Moreover, this hypothesis says clearly that a learner learns a language only when he is exposed to comprehensible input. Thus, for Krashen (1985), to enhance the opportunities for input comprehension, it has to be just one step above the learner's present level of linguistic competence.

Pursuing this further, Long's (1997) interaction hypothesis emphasises the point that in addition to the input the learner is exposed to, the adjustment of that input through interaction is what shapes the basis for language improvement. For him, input comprehensibility is boosted when the student interacts and employs various forms of interactional parameters, i.e., comprehension checking, confirmation checking, and clarification requests, to overcome communication failures (1997). Subsequently, Long's (1997) hypothesis attracted the interest of the so-called interactionists who were more likely to change their research plans to analyse

the way speakers adjust, modify, and change their speech and interaction method to let their interlocutors participate, comprehend, and boost the conversational continuity.

To get back to the point, the psycholinguistic approach to language learning guarantees the understanding of the reasons behind the success of every child to learn his native language by the age of five, and the way children achieve a proficiency level of using their mother tongue although they are not taught the language in a formal way. Hence, it upholds the idea that language acquisition is inherently preprogramed. In the realm of this approach, to learn a language demands perception skills and cognition abilities, and other processes which are linked to language learning and psycholinguistics.

So, the psycholinguistic approach concentrates on what learners know when they speak the language and the way they learn that knowledge and how this latter is utilised. Moreover, Matlin (1994) says that the principal approach of psycholinguistics theory is to explore the way people learn a language biologically and what variability of rules allows them to understand and produce the language.

4.1 The Psycholinguistic Approach and the Four Skills

Psycholinguistics has been trying to explain the mental activities that happen in the course of language production and comprehension in the human brain. Simply put, language production involves speaking and writing, while language comprehension embodies listening and reading. These four processes are known as the four skills of language. Thus, following is a brief description of the contributions of the field of psycholinguistics to language learning and teaching with special emphasis, of course, on its contributions to understand and teach the speaking skill, which is the main concern of the present study.

4.1.1 The Psycholinguistic Approach and the Listening Skill

Listening is no less important than the other skills of language. While learning a second/foreign language, listening plays a very important role. From a cognitive perspective, this skill is highly complex due to the difficulty of its investigation. This part of the research, therefore, pays special attention to the cognitive processes involved in listening.

4.1.1.1 A psycholinguistic framework of listening

In 1995, Anderson, J.R put forward a cognitive framework of language comprehension. For him, language comprehension occurs in three phases. This three-phase model suggests that comprehension incorporates perception, parsing and utilisation. As far as the listening skill is concerned, perception stands for encoding the acoustic message. It includes detecting phonemes from the ongoing speech (Anderson, 1995). In the course of this phase, meticulous attention is paid to the input and the sounds are kept in the echoic memory (the memory which is responsible for sounds) to be analysed in the coming steps. In other words, this phase is about a process whereby the listener contrasts the speech sounds he is listening to with semantic units in his lexicon.

After the perceptual processing comes the parsing phase. Here, words or phrases are converted to mental representations of their meanings (Anderson, 1995). By definition, the second phase, parsing, is "the process by which words in the message are transformed into a mental representation of the combined meaning of the words" (Anderson, 1980, p. 402). Simply put, parsing means analysing a linguistic unit (a word, a phrase, or a sentence) into its parts and describing their syntactic roles. In addition, the size of the linguistic unit processed depends on the linguistic knowledge and general knowledge the listener possesses.

Furthermore, "the third stage is the utilization stage, in which comprehenders actually use the mental representation of the sentence's meaning" (ibid, 1980, p. 402). During the

utilisation phase, the listener is more likely to derive various types of inferences, using the mental representation, to fulfil the interpretation and make it more personally meaningful. Pursuing this further, the utilization process incorporates relating mental representations of the heard meaning to existing knowledge. Differently stated, the long-term memory includes existing knowledge as propositions or schemata, and connecting the new input meaning to that existing knowledge occurs when knowledge in the long-term memory is activated so that it is connected with the new meanings in short-term memory, and thus, understanding happens.

Noteworthily, the three phases; perception, parsing, and utilization are closely interrelated and can occur simultaneously during listening comprehension. For Coakley and Wolvin (1996), when a listener matches previous knowledge of the topic, linguistic knowledge and cognitive processes to the listening activity and the aural text, listening comprehension takes place.

4.1.2 The Psycholinguistic Approach and the Reading Skill

In the words of Davies (1995), "A reading model is theory of what is going on in the reader's eyes and mind during reading and comprehending (or miscomprehending) a text" (p.59), there is a claim that reading has to be dealt with from a psycholinguistic perspective since it is a pure cognitive process. Furthermore, the reading behaviour is usually explained by the models of the reading process. Thence, the present research focuses on exploring two main models of reading, namely, top-down and bottom-up processes. A top-down model, that concentrates on the significance of background knowledge, establishes overall comprehension of the text being read, Nevertheless, a bottom-up model, which is concerned with linguistic clues, constructs literal understanding of a text (Carrell, 1988; Swaffar, 1991).

4.1.2.1 Top-down reading processes

Kenneth S. Goodman (1967) depicts reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, and he focuses on the idea that readers make predictions from their knowledge to understand what they read. Thus, for him, reading is a psycholinguistic process in the first place, and it is all about predictions.

The top-down approach stands for the idea that comprehension begins from the top, which is the reader, to the down, that is the text. It states that readers make sense of the text based on their experience and background, and interpret it based on their prior knowledge about language. For Goodman (1967), this top-down model pays particular attention to what readers bring to the process of reading. Thus, the reader observes the text and compares it with his world knowledge, in order to make sense of what is written. Straightforwardly, the point of interest here is on the reader as he interacts with the text and not the other way around.

Addedly, and as far as the classroom is concerned, the top-down approach induces students to concentrate more on understanding the fundamental ideas of a passage instead of dealing with the meaning of each word individually. In this respect, students are more likely to comprehend the meaning of a text as a whole even if they do not understand each word. Therefore, this model motivates students to rely on their knowledge and employ context clues to understand new vocabulary. In his own words, Brown (2007) describes top-down processing as "conceptually driven processing in which we draw on our own intelligence and experience to understand a text" (p. 358).

To conclude, the top-down model of reading is not recommended to be used at elementary levels of language teaching because, as Carrell and Coady argue, "knowledge of a minimum of 5000 words is essential to make top-down processing possible" (Swaffar, 1991, p.44).

4.1.2.2 Bottom-up reading processes

In the realm of this model, the reader tends to get the meaning from a text in a step-by-step process, that is, starting from letters to sounds to words then to meaning. To put it differently, this means that the reader, before grasping the meaning, deciphers separate linguistic units, phonemes, graphemes, and words. Alderson (2000) suggests that "Bottom-up approaches are serial models, where the reader begins with the printed word, recognizes graphic stimuli, decodes them to sound, recognizes words and decodes meanings" (p.16). By way of explanation, here, the reader concentrates on words and phrases in isolation, then understanding is reached by relating these detailed elements to reconstruct a whole.

Pursuing this further, as claimed by Gough (1972), the reading system, in relation to the bottom-up process, goes in the following order. Firstly, the graphemic information gets in the visual system and is converted from a letter character to a sound, i.e., from a graphemic representation to a phonemic one. Secondly, that phonemic representation is transformed into a word. The meaning units, or rather words, then are conveyed to the third operation where meaning is understood. Putting it differently, Brown (2007) asserts that readers in bottom-up processing have first to recognise linguistic clues like "letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, or discourse markers" (p. 358). Then they make use of their mental data-processing device to put these signals in order so that meaning is achieved.

As a conclusion, bottom-up models are not helpful at the advanced levels because at this level students are able to decode graphical input automatically. However, teaching reading at the intermediate level is more complex because both models are to be applied.

4.1.3 The Psycholinguistic Approach and the Writing Skill

Writing is a highly required skill. It is one of the four skills that has to be mastered due to its significance in language acquisition/learning. Thus, knowing about the processes involved

in it is crucial for both teachers and students. Therefore, this part of the research devotes itself to explore one of the most influential cognitive models of writing that explains how it occurs, i.e., Flower and Hayes' (1980) model.

4.1.3.1 Flower and Hayes' model of writing

Flower and Hayes' (1980) model of writing is constructed relying on a thinking-aloud protocol as a data gathering tool. These were the protocols of writing of both novice and experienced writers. The aim of their study was to look at the differences between their writings in order to come up with a model that embodies all the appropriate processes that make an experienced writer. Hence, their model of the writing process distinguishes between three different cognitive processes of writing. Namely, planning, translating and reviewing.

4.1.3.1.a Planning

This cognitive process in writing concerns itself with generating a content. In other words, it is at this level that goals are put forward, and ideas are produced and organised into a coherent structure. For Flower and Hayes (1981), the planning process is divided into three sub-processes; generating ideas, organising them, and goal setting. To explain, the first sub-process is when the writer retrieves pertinent information from his long-term memory. Simply, this refers to coming up with ideas appropriate to the subject desired to be written about.

After generating ideas, they have to be organised, and this is the organising sub-process. Here, this operation entails selecting the content retrieved during the generating process and arranging it into writing. Differently stated, this consists of structuring information in a cohesive and coherent manner. Whilst organizing, writers structure their thoughts (Ibid). That is, to organise ideas according to flower and Hayes (1981) simply means to arrange them logically in one's head.

The next sub-process of planning in the realm of Flower and Hayes model of writing is known as goal setting. In this part of the planning process, and with respect to meeting the specific goal of the piece of writing, certain thoughts from the generating sub-process are utilised to evaluate the goal of the text. According to Flower and Hayes (1981), goal-setting is what distinguishes good and poor writers. These latter are more likely to write without thinking of goals.

4.1.3.1.b Translating

For the Hayes and Flower writing model, the second part of the writing process is the act of composing known as translating. Particularly, it is when the writer actually puts his "planning process" into visibly structured language. To explain, translating is an activity whereby writers convert their ideas into sentences and paragraphs (Flower & Hayes 1981). Moreover, this is about putting ideas into language to construct cohesive and coherent texts. Conforming to Hayes and Flower model (1980), one can see it clearly when writers shift from planning to translating. To put it in their words, Hayes and Flower (1983) explained it as follows.

Writers have some more or less developed representation encoded in one form. The act of translating this encoded representation to another form (i.e., written English) can add enormous new constraints and often force the writer to develop, clarify, and often revise that meaning. For that reason, translating often sends writers back to planning. Often these processes alternate with each other from one minute to the next. (p. 209).

In other words, the translating process happens when writers' thoughts and ideas are converted into text. It takes the conceptual image for the planned content and produces text expressing it. That is to say, translating is getting material from long-term memory, in

agreement with the writer's plans and goals, and formulating sentences with it. More precisely, this is "the process of putting ideas into visible language" (Flower and Hayes, 1981, p. 373).

4.1.3.1.c Reviewing

After composing what is thought of, it has to be revised and evaluated, and this process is called "Reviewing" in Hayes and Flower's (1980) model of writing. By definition, it is the act of evaluating both what has been planned and what has been written. Reading and editing are strategies used in reviewing. In this process, writers examine the content with the aim of correcting anything that would prevent the text from meeting the objectives. This encompasses correcting grammatical errors and modifying the contents of writing.

Noteworthily, this process includes two sub-processes, namely, "evaluating and revising" (Flower and Hayes 1981, p. 374). Hayes and Flower (1981) suggest that when the evaluation is not satisfying, reviewing usually calls for revision.

4.1.3.1.d Monitoring

All the writing process is said to be controlled by a monitor. Flower and Hayes (1981) claim that monitoring comprises metacognitive processes that connect and regulate planning, translating, and reviewing. In accordance with this model, "The monitor functions as a writing strategist which determines when the writer moves from one process to the next" (flower and Hayes 1981, p.374).

Again, all the previously mentioned processes of writing are directed by the monitor, and it can call for any process or sub-process when needed. For example, when rereading what is composed for the sake of revision, the planning process can be brought up at any time in case the writer finds some cues for retrieving pertinent information from the long-term memory.

Thence, the field of psycholinguistics has a lot to provide to language teaching and learning. For this reason, the knowledge it contains is of much significance to solve many classroom issues. The skills; reading, listening, and writing, certainly, have a psycholinguistic aspect that explains their mental processes and the ways in which they operate. We strongly believe that good teachers are the ones who master the psycholinguistic knowledge enough to make their classrooms a better place.

As far as the speaking skill is concerned, as being the heart of the present research, we have devoted a whole chapter to it. So, in **Chapter Two** we try to explore the speaking skill in relation to the field of psycholinguistics all along with the most significant language teaching methods.

5 A psycholinguistic Error Analysis Approach
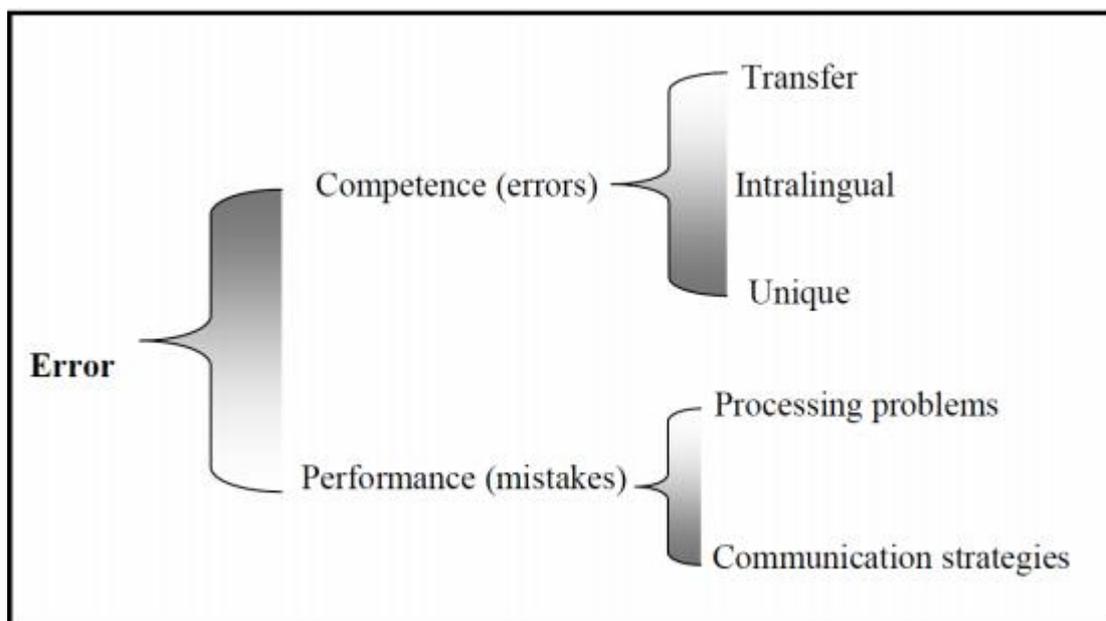
Figure 01: Psycholinguistic Sources of Errors (Ellis, 1994, p 58).

One of the sources of L2 learners' errors is a psycholinguistic one. As attested by Ellis (1994), L2 learners' errors are categorised as performance and competence errors. The first category, competence errors, are the result of unintendedly incorrect application of the

second/foreign language rules. These latter reside in the learner's linguistic knowledge (or system), due to several factors that will be dealt with shortly after. However, the second category, performance errors, are the usual mistakes committed often in language use. Even native speakers make such mistakes due to slips of the tongue, and many other factors. In the main, L2 learners' errors could be accredited to different psycholinguistic factors which influence, to a high extent, the second language acquisition. Among these we have the mother tongue interference. Precisely, these are termed interlingual and intralingual interference. Numerous researchers (Abi Samra, 2003; Brown, 2000; Richards, 1974; James, 1996;) see them as the two main factors influencing the second language acquisition in a negative way.

Errors, which we believe to be a very significant sign of second language development, whether interlingual or intralingual, have to be well treated by teachers regarding their importance in determining the extent to which the language is learned appropriately. For that, this part of the research is interested in exploring each type individually in order to explain the two factors in a more subtle way.

5.1 Interlingual Errors

Interlingual errors are that type of errors which are due to the influence of the native language. Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977) define them as errors which are attributed to the impact of "learner's MT [mother tongue] on production of the TL [target language] in presumably those areas where languages clearly differ" (p. 443). Thus, those errors are caused by language transfer; it includes two types, i.e., positive and negative transfer (ZIDANE, A., & MEHIRI, R., 2020). That is to say, interlingual errors are caused by the negative transfer of some linguistic structures from the mother tongue (Al-khresheh, 2010). To put it differently, the negative transfer is a process whereby a linguistic rule or structure of the native language is used, wrongly, in the second/foreign language.

Several researches have upheld that interlingual interference is a psycholinguistic matter that might be understood as a cognitive process and a learner's speech production can manifest a huge part of, if existed. As stated by Ellis (1994), language transfer is considered as "a very complex notion which is best understood in terms of cognitive rather than behaviourist models of learning" (p. 62). In the same context, Lim (2010) suggests that "interference has long been regarded as one of the major factors causing difficulties in the acquisition of a second language, yet what actually constitutes interference remains a subject of great interest" (p. 24). Giving much importance to language transfer to deal with learner's error, Lim (2010) stresses on negative interference given the fact that it prevents second language acquisition from happening.

For this reason, interlingual errors are seen as a very reliable source to investigate its impact on leaners' second language development. In the literature, we could come across an unlimited number of conducted studies devoted to second/foreign language learners' errors as being caused by their L1 (Lim, 2003; Noor, 1996; Mahmoud, 2005; Al-khresheh, 2010, 2011; Kharma and Hajjaj, 1989; Richards, 1974; Nemser, 1974; Newmeyer, 1996). This only shows the significant role that the mother tongue has in the process of second language acquisition. It has to be mentioned here that language transfer is a process that has to happen at a certain point of time during L2 acquisition. According to Newmeyer (1996), applying the mother tongue rules and structures during L2 acquisition is inevitable. Nevertheless, their use can be positive as it can be negative. For Al-Nofaie (2010), second/foreign language learners clearly employ their native language as a way to learn their second/foreign language.

For Zobl (1980), as cited in Al-Khresheh, M., 2016, interlingual errors are characterised by:

"1. Interference produces errors that are not like developmental.

2. Learners depend on L1 as a crutch at low level of L2 proficiency.

3. Learners use L1 to hypothesise about L2.

4. Learners are unable to separate L1 from L2.

5. Learners' errors are due to L1 habits.

6. Learners employ an interlingual generalisation." (p. 54).

Perhaps, the main reason behind mother tongue interference is the literal translation learners attempt to do in order to produce the second/foreign language. Thinking about the language rather than thinking with the language is probably what causes language transfer. For that, Dulay et al. (1982) state that "L2 errors are often the result of learners relying on carrying out word for-word translations of native language surface structures" (p.163). Even though the native language linguistic rules and structures interference in the target language negatively leads to committing errors, error analysis does not see this fact as "the persistence of old habits, but rather as signs that the learner is internalising and investigating the system of the new language" (Erdogan, 2005, p. 265). That is, teachers must not worry about their learners' errors as much as they have to worry about the way they should be knowledgeable enough to treat them in a sound and appropriate manner.

5.2 Intralingual Errors

Seemingly, there exist certain errors that are not due to language transfer. The category of errors in which this part of the research is interested has nothing to do with the L1. These are called intralingual errors.

As their name suggests, this type of errors rise from within the second language itself (AlTamimi, 2006; Jiang, 2009). Furthermore, intralingual errors may be caused by incomplete learning of the second/foreign language. In the words of Lim, (2010), intralingual errors belong to that kind of errors that "reflect the learner's competence at a particular stage, and they are evidence of some general characteristics of first language acquisition. They have been found to

be non-interlingual in nature as they are not directly caused by the differences between their first language and second language" p. 24). Hence, the intralingual error is an error that occurs because of a specific misutilization of a specific rule or structure of the target language. Under this type of errors, the target language is emphasised for it is seen as an error cause as mentioned before.

For Zobl and Liceras (1994), as cited in Al-Khresheh, M. (2016), intralingual errors are different from interlanguage ones in the following features.

"1. Errors are similar to those made by native speakers.

2. Learners create similar rules to those of native speakers.

3. Errors reflect learners' competence at a certain developmental stage.

4. Learners try to construct hypothesis about the L2.

5. Errors originate from L2.

6. Errors reflect general characteristics of acquiring language rules.

7. Learners use the strategies of simplification, generalisation and reduction of grammatical redundancy." (p. 55).

In keeping with intralingual errors, as being one of the two major sources of errors, it is significant, at this level, to explore their main characteristics. The following characteristics can be divided into four categories, namely, overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, and incomplete application of rules and hypothesis of false concepts, as will be demonstrated hereafter.

5.2.1 Overgeneralisation

To apply one rule for every linguistic structure thinking that it is appropriate everywhere is seen as one of the major causes of interlingual errors. In a more subtle way, overgeneralisation is about applying a specific rule to many situations when there are other rules that must be applied. In the words of Jacobvits, as cited in Richards (1974), this is "the use of previously available strategies in a new situation" (p. 174). By the same token, this type of interlingual errors is believed to "arise when the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language" (Ellis, 1994, p. 59).

Second language learners employ overgeneralization as a technique to make their language learning process easier. Noticeably, overgeneralisation does not happen only in the L2 but also in the L1 (O'grady, 2005). Even young English native speakers add the "ed" to irregular verbs in the past, for instance, to facilitate their learning process. For Littlewood (2002), this intralingual error is considered to be an essential strategy employed by second language learners. As put differently by Al-khresheh (2013), when the learner wrongly broadens the frame of the rule to a situation where it cannot be applied, this is called overgeneralization.

In accordance with Richards (1974), there are two major factors leading to overgeneralisation errors. The first one is when the learner makes "one deviant structure in place of two regular structures. For example: 'He can sings'. This sentence should be: 'He can sing'. There is an over form of a structure verb sing becomes sings" (p. 175). The second one, in addition, is the effect of the second language learners' way to diminish the difficulty of language learning.

5.2.2 Ignorance of Rule Restrictions

The second reason behind intralingual errors in this part of the research is named ignorance of rule restrictions. This latter, thus, is tightly related to overgeneralisation. Richards

(1974) claims that ignorance of rule restrictions is when the learner is unable to recognise the limits of the use of a particular linguistic rule, which results in applying rules to situations where they are not applicable. To illustrate, learning the sentence structure 'he ate an apple yesterday', the student might employ this in a new situation incorrectly such as 'he has eaten an apple yesterday'. Hence, when the learner is ignorant of the several situations in which the rule can be applied and where it cannot, he probably commits this category of errors.

5.2.3 Incomplete Application of Rules

Incomplete application of rules is considered as one of the significant reasons behind intralingual errors. At this level, the second language learner can utter structures in which the error reflects the extent to which the learning of the structural and grammatical rules needed to produce appropriate language has occurred. To illustrate, in the utterance 'he eating the apple', the main verb in the present continuous requires the verb 'to be'. Hence, this sort of errors is said to be due to insufficient language learning processes.

Richards (1974) argues that second/foreign language students are more likely to apply certain linguistic rules and carry on building incorrect structures as to make the learning easier. As a relevant illustration, L2 students could form questions like 'when you will eat the apple?' rather than 'when will you eat the apple?'. For him, several second/foreign language students find it very difficult to formulate questions, which forces them to go for some techniques and strategies in order to overcome such an issue. However, most of the time the process turns into committing errors.

5.2.4 False Concepts Hypothesised

The last intralingual error that this parcel of the research explores is the one which is caused by the learners 'failure to understand certain linguistic items, this is usually referred to as false concepts hypothesised. In the opinion of Al-Tamimi (2006), this category of

intralingual errors is, from time to time, due to "poor gradation of teaching items" (p. 44). To explain, the learners, often, build their own hypotheses about certain linguistic rules (Zidane and Mehiri, 2020). To illustrate, by dint of students employing the forms 'was or did' wrongly believing that these forms mark the past tenses, they end up producing utterances like 'yesterday it was occurred' or 'I was watched the movie'.

According to Lim (1998), errors caused by false concepts hypothesised are accredited to "classroom presentation, especially when excessive attention is paid to points of differences at the expense of realistic English" (p. 9). In other words, this type of errors might be the result of inappropriate ways of teaching which can, in turn, lead to faulty understanding on the part of the learners.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter we have seen the psycholinguistic traits in accordance with its varied aspects and parts linking all this with language teaching and learning. Psycholinguistics studies language in relation to its processed operations in the mind, and its robust historical background, as we have explained, proves its tight relationship with teaching. Furthermore, it is highly noticeable that the factors influencing language learning have a strong connection to psychology and language/linguistics which are the underpinnings of the field of psycholinguistics.

We have seen, also, the psycholinguistic approach along with its contribution to listening, reading and writing. For speaking, we have devoted the whole next chapter to deal with the psycholinguistic aspects of the speaking skill. Thus, cognitive abilities and language, both studied can be of much help to deal with the four skills of language. Bottom up and top-down processes of reading, Flower and Hayes model of writing, and a psycholinguistic

framework for listening were also significant parts of this chapter in order to build a broader idea of what psycholinguistics is able to offer to the field of teaching and learning.

Last but not least, error analysis was explored from a psycholinguistic perspective. The role of interlingual and intralingual errors to understand learners' deviant utterances was emphasised. That is to say, language transfer was analysed in order to make the phenomenon of error committing clearer for it contributes directly to the problematic this research is trying to solve.

Chapter Two: The psycholinguistic Approach and The Speaking Skill.

Introduction

Psycholinguistic research contributes to the field of teaching speaking as a skill to a high extent. Moreover, this field of study has explored different problems of speaking, such as speaking deficiencies; stammering, disarticulation and even voice disorders. Using this psycholinguistic knowledge, teachers can manage to apply the suitable methods and techniques to teach speaking. Below is an exploration of speech production as a psycholinguistic process. Notably, this skill, as expected and noted before, is going to be focused on.

2 Psycholinguistics and speech production

For the purpose of explaining the way L2 production operates, it is recommended, in this part of the research, to deal with L1 production in the first place so that this part of the research gives a thorough idea of the matter. Moreover, Levelt's (1989) psycholinguistic model of L1 production is relied on as the chief reference to this research. Thus, the aspects distinguishing L2 from L1 production will be identified, putting special emphasis on L2 speech production as a way of answering the posed research questions.

2.1 An introduction to Levelt's model of speech production

Attention to speech production has been the reason behind establishing several psycholinguistic models, during the last 30 years, which have attempted to consider the way language is processed in the brain. Admitting that nearly all models come to an agreement on the idea that there are distinguished processing levels in charge of generating, formulating, and articulating messages, they are dissimilar, in a considerable way, on how they describe the aspects of each process, and the interrelations that reside in those processes.

Levelt's (1989, 1993; Levelt et al. 1999) model of L1 production is used, in this research, to help explain L2 learners' speech production. As a further consideration, there are three reasons behind opting for Levelt's model in this study: in the first place, it has been one

of the most commonly recognized and significant models in L2 production research, and accordingly, applying it to this study allows initiating comparisons to results in other studies. To illustrate, certain studies which have employed Levelt's model in an L2 environment are Poulisse and Bongaerts' (1994) theory of L2 lexical access; De Bot's (1992) and Poulisse's (1997) description of bilinguals' language production; De Bot et al's (1997) investigation of second language vocabulary acquisition; Izumi's (2003) endeavour to give a psycholinguistic justification for the Output Hypothesis, and Yuan and Ellis's (2003) use of the model to explore the influence of pre-task and on-line planning time on learners' production.

Secondarily, we reckon that Levelt's speech production model, that is formed out of a durable psycholinguistic research and solid empirical findings, is pertinent to this study due to the fact that it explains other significant processes that are the heart of language processing such as attention and memory (see section **2.5** in this chapter for more details). Furthermore, Levelt's model relies on research results which have been mostly the findings of studying speech errors. These latter, in reality, can be a crucial factor to solve this research problematic due to its influence of the flow of speech.

Hence, Levelt's speech production model is going to be based on all the way through this part of the present research, and in the analysis of the findings as well. Hence, through reading the related literature, one can figure out that the said model is worthy of attention, especially in relation to the study at hand. Thence, following is an exploration of such a speech production model.

2.2 Levelt's model of L1 production

On the next page, a schematic diagram of the various processing stages concerned with the spoken language use as proposed by Levelt (1989, 1993) is depicted. To explain, the speech production framework developed by Levelt (1989, 1993) is made of some independent

components that are accountable for several characteristics of speech production. In other words, the conceptualizer, a component which deals with generating messages; the formulator, which is responsible for providing grammatical and phonological form to messages and supplying the lexicon which is defined as "the repository of knowledge about words in one's own language" (Levelt's, 1993, p. 4) ; the articulator, that is interested in the motor execution of the message; an audition or acoustic-phonetic processor, which converts the acoustic signs into phonetic representations; and lastly the speech comprehension system, which allows analysing or processing of both self-produced and the interlocutors' messages.
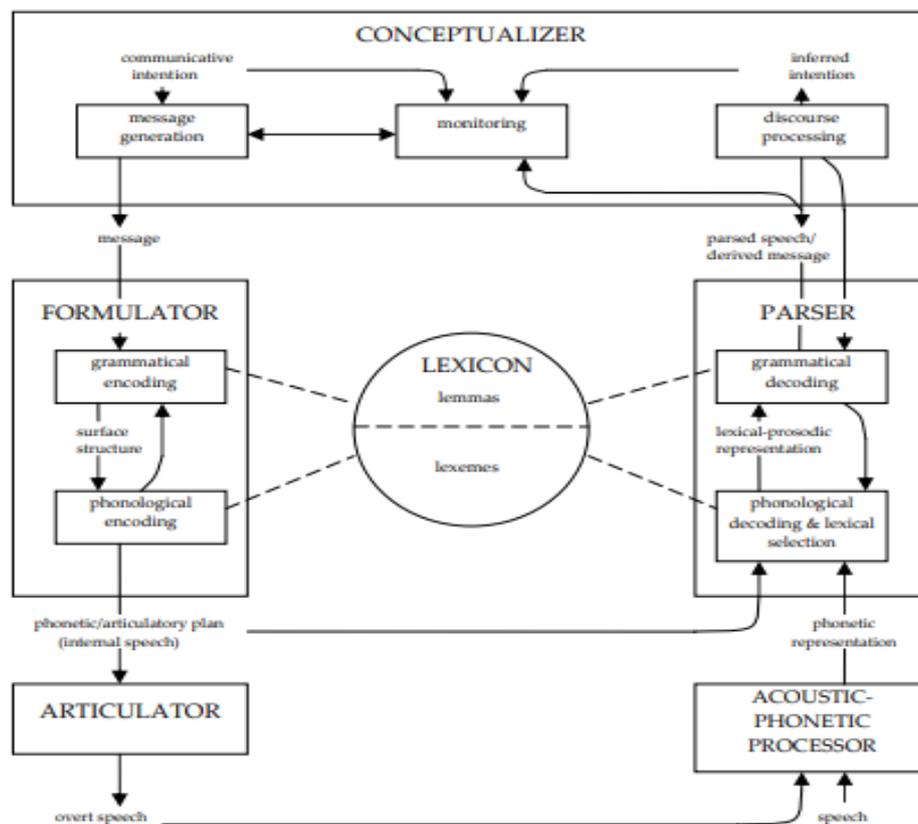
Figure 02: Levelt's (1993, p. 2) model of language production.

2.2.1 Message conceptualization

From where does the speaking process start? It is never an easy question to answer regarding the issue of its great complexity. In the very beginning of this process, conforming to

Levelt's model of speech production, the speaker is more likely to develop thoughts of what he intends to say. Subconsciously, he considers what has been said, the situation, and the knowledge he possesses in order to visualize mentally the word, or sentence, that is going to be uttered, and this is called the conceptualisation stage.

Simply speaking, conceptualisation is deciding about what to say. In a more psycholinguistic terminology, conceptualization is "willingness to execute a speech plan" (Levelt 1989, p. 59). In other words, it is a process whereby messages are generated, and conceptual representations are to be orally expressed. In this stage, the speaker retrieves all accessible data form a mental pattern of the intended message from the long-term declarative memory. That is, the declarative memory is where knowledge on what to say (message planning), what has previously been said (linguistic context), and the particular situation, place and time in which the communicative exchange takes place is stored to be retrieved (Marini, 2001). Moreover, such a system adjusts the amount of information that the speaker intends to communicate and its relevance with respect to what has previously been said (Grice, 1975).

In addition, according to Levelt, there exist two stages in message planning, namely, macroplanning and microplanning. The former encompasses the retrieving of information to set the sub-objectives that the general communicative goal intends to reach. That is to say, it concerns itself with producing speech act intentions, such as narrating a story or expressing a viewpoint. To put it in Levelt's (1993) words, "The speaker's planning of a speech act, his selection of information to be expressed, and his linearization of that information are called macroplanning" (p. 3).

However, microplanning is a stage where information is divided into smaller conceptual segments which are put into the accurate propositional form and informational perspective. *Exempli gratia*, a small story can be told in many different ways, that is, one might say 'the

child ate the apple' or 'the apple was eaten by the child'. Subsequently, macro and microplanning are what Levelt (1989, 1993) calls the preverbal plan, which is a systematic conceptual setup that is not yet linguistic and which shapes the particular input that the next processing stage, the formulator, will operate.

In short, for Levelt, the first step to speech is to gather the thoughts of what is going to be said in relation to what has been said, the context, and the knowledge one has. That is, this first stage concerns itself with "conceptualising" the intended message.

2.2.2 Message formulation

After collecting all the needed thoughts and concepts for the message to be conveyed, the so-called formulation stage intervenes. This is about the starting point of the actual realisation of constructing the utterance at the level of its words, sounds, and grammar. In other words, this stage is responsible for creating the linguistic form required to express the desired message.

Formulation covers grammatical, lexical, and phonological encoding of the message (Kormos, 2009). To put it differently, this process deals with the message to be delivered, and for that, it accesses proper words (i.e., nouns, verbs, adjectives ... etc) for the lexical concepts, and it constructs a meaningful syntactic and morpho-phonological structure (Wheeldon, 2013). Formulation stage is mainly divided into a word selection stage and a sound processing stage (Garrett, 1975). Here, the speaker is more likely to select a word from his vocabulary relying on its correspondence to semantic and pragmatic specifications. The relevant word representation is often called a lemma (Kempen & Huijbers, 1983), and it marks the presence of a word in a speaker's vocabulary that is capable of expressing particular semantic and pragmatic content within a particular syntactic context. The sound processing stage, on the other hand, encompasses building the phonological form of a selected word by retrieving its

individual sounds and organizing them into stressed and unstressed syllables (phonological encoding) and then specifying the motor programs to realize those syllables (phonetic encoding) (Levelt, 1989).

Amongst several suggestions of the way lexical access occurs (Dell 1986; Rumelhart et al., 1986; MacKay, 1987; Anderson, 1983), Levelt (1989) introduces Dell's (1986) spreading activation theory as being the most favourable one to deal with how lexical access happens at a real speech production time. Shortly, this demonstrates that a number of lemmas in the mental lexicon is activated by concepts, or thoughts, of the preverbal plan. Then, those lemmas that cause the biggest amount of activation, due to the fact that their semantic descriptions correspond to the concepts in the preverbal plan are the ones that will be chosen.

Keeping with the previous example, if a speaker, for instance, intends to produce the sentence 'the child ate the apple', among 30,000 words an average speaker has in his mental lexicon, the three items 'child', 'ate', and 'apple' will get highest activations since they best meet the pre-verbal plan specifications. Nevertheless, some other items might get activated along with 'child' because they share, more or less, similar conceptual characteristics, but it is the noun 'child' that receives the highest amount of activation.

To summarise, the formulation stage is interested in shaping the real message to be spelled out. It embodies two processes, namely, word selection and sound selection. The former deals with the lexical representation of the already conceptualised idea, and the latter reflects its phonological form.

2.2.3 Message articulation

Here comes the operation of putting into words what has already been conceptualised and formulated. In this part of this research, we are dealing with the execution of the articulatory

operation by the lungs, larynx, tongue, lips, jaw and other parts of the vocal apparatus resulting in speech. Simply, this is the phonological expression of words and sentences.

Once thoughts have been organized into a linguistic plan, speech muscles system has to get ready to execute the required movements and produce the desired sounds. This process in speech production, thence, is about the execution of motor programs to pronounce the sounds of a word. Fluent articulation of speech requires the coordinated use of a large number of muscles. These muscles are distributed over two systems: the respiratory and the laryngeal system. The former regulates the flow of air from the lungs to the vocal tract. The latter consists of the vocal cords or vocal folds. This system is responsible for the distinction between voiced and unvoiced sounds, e.g. [b] vs [p] (Ladefoged, 1976).

To conclude, the thoughts that were conceptualised, and the structures that were formulated in the two previous stages of speech production must now be articulated in this stage.

2.2.4 Self-monitoring

The speaker does not produce the language haphazardly. Even subconsciously, he keeps regulating, correcting, editing, and rectifying what is going to be said, and what has been said. According to Levelt (1989), self-monitoring is where speaking takes place, and it is where the intended sentence is finally uttered, but if something went wrongly, the speaker acts like a monitor to regulate his speech.

"Interlocutors not only produce speech and listen to one another when conversing, they also seem to keep one ear open on what they themselves are saying, and if they catch something amiss, they are quick to amend the goof and then continue to convers" (Scovel, 1998 p 46). Once in a while, we spontaneously interrupt our speech and correct ourselves, these corrections, generally, are called self-repairs. For Scovel (1998), the production process shows that speakers

are permanently self-editing. Speech production is not a one-way transmission of messages; it is a self-regulating process to guarantee that each previous stage of output was proper. Moreover, this indicates that speakers are naturally sensitive to what stage of the production process went wrong. Interestingly enough, the idea that speakers can monitor and rapidly correct any mistakes in their linguistic output confirms Chomsky's argument that there is a difference between performance and competence. The former concerns itself with the words we say, the overt manifestation of our ability in a language; the latter, however, represents our tacit, intuitive, knowledge about the language or languages we master. At this final level of production, competence monitors performance to ensure that our production is accurate (Ibid, p 47).

Ultimately, self-monitoring is not considered as an independent stage by its own through the process of speech production, instead, Levelt (1993) has claimed that it is present through the whole process. Hence, self-monitoring is for the purpose of guaranteeing a sound flow of utterances. It is there where to do what must be done to produce correct language at all levels.

2.3 Analysing Levelt's model

Before going further to use this model to explain L2 production, it has to be stated here that it raises a number of assumptions apropos the peculiarities of its components. Thus, this part is concerned with commenting on, and analysing, Levelt's stages of speech production.

First and foremost, according to Levelt (1989), the stages of his model are autonomous processes which do not require sharing information with other stages in order to do their jobs, even though each stage needs input from the previous stage. To explain, at the level of the formulation stage, for example, the concepts set by the conceptualisation stage (the pre-verbal plan) are needed, but their processing is entirely independent of any other stages, such as the articulation one. Even more, there is no involvement of the other stages in the sense that the

way one stage functions is not influenced by the output of other stages. That is to say, every stage includes its own executive information, and the feedback that could be gained is that which is given by internal speech to the conceptualisation stage, through self-monitoring. From this, it can be understood that the processing, in the realm of this model, goes in a linear way, i.e., from the conceptualizer to the formulator, but not all the way around, and there is no interference between stages.

These propositions of Levelt's (1989) modular design have been criticised by Vigliocco and Hartsuiker (2002), including other authors in the literature. They have refused his idea that only very little required information goes through the different stages. Also, they have disagreed on the point that there is a one-way flow of information without feedback from one level to another. Notwithstanding, they see that greater input might be needed in the sense that, for instance, speaking of lemma retrieving and phrasal forming (the formulation stage), this latter can take place before the former, and it is not merely for the lemma that will be chosen, but also for rival lemmas that have higher activations. Concerning the flow of information, sub-lexical segments, by way of illustration, could notify lexical segments, so to speak, that the amount of activation of the lexical target is increased, its preference from among choices is guaranteed, and errors are bypassed. To put it differently, Vigliocco and Hartsuiker (2002) claim that feedback amidst stages influences, in a direct way, the effectiveness and accuracy of language production.

In a second place, the various levels can deal with their particular kinds of information concurrently or parallelly. In other words, usual language productions demand several levels to be operating simultaneously in order for speech to proceed at an adequate rate. Processing, in this model, functions both in series and in parallel. Thence, models of spreading activation are helpful to explain what occurs during production, as long as they support parallel processing that is compulsory to deal with real time speech production.

Thirdly, and to put that idea of parallelism in a clearer way, I have to mention, in accordance with Levelt's (1993) assumptions, that the process of language production is gradual, or rather, progressive. When one stage finishes processing its particular input and moves it forward to the following stage, for example from conceptualisation to formulation, it, the conceptualiser, can begin processing another input while its output is being processed in the formulator. As an illustration, in the utterance 'the child ate the apple', after the preverbal plan for 'child' has been completed and begins to be processed by the formulator, the conceptualizer can start operating, at the same time, 'ate' instead of holding on until the outcome of the formulation of 'child' is reached. This is why Levelt (1993) asserts that "though all components work in parallel, they work on different bits and pieces" (p. 12) of the input.

Fourthly, some items of the process operate in a self-activating way. To explain more, the conceptualizer demands some sort of executive functioning, in other words, attention and memory for message generation and self-monitoring need to be used consciously. In the words of Levelt (1989), "Human controlled processing tends to be serial in nature, and is therefore slow." (p. 21), by describing the process of conceptualisation as slow, Levelt (1989) is not criticising it, but in a way, he is saying that it is complicated to a high extent. To clarify this more, with respect to his model, conceptualisation needs a couple of points, like to build an inner image of the message (take for example, a representation which is caused by external factors such as requesting something), opting for the information to be conveyed, split it into smaller segments, and putting them in a linear order (Guhe, 2003). Contrarily, grammatical and phonological encoding, during the formulation stage, are claimed to be automatic, meaning that they do not need attention because they are to be familiar, and habituated. According to Poulisse (1997), "the grammatical and phonological encoding of a message, including lexical articulation, are usually automatic. With some exceptions, for example, in the case of very infrequent words, these processes are executed without conscious awareness and do not share

their processing resources with other processes." (p. 204). Hence, it must be stated that parallelism, progressiveness, and automaticity of the speech production process boost the continuous speed flow of language in real time.

Finally, the notions of the relation that resides in between stages, the parallel processing, and automaticity were discussed here as an attempt to avoid any kind of inconsistencies or misconceptions that could rise when reading this part of the research. Notwithstanding, Levelt's (1989) model of speech production, we reckon, is a thorough explanation of the process which is why, again, it was chosen to be the basic reference to our study.

2.4 Levelt's model and L2 production

It is said that most characteristics of L2 production are able to be explained through models of L1 production. Still, there is certain peculiarity of L2 speech which demands some special dealings and a different type of clarification. Pursuing this further, Poulisse (1997) claims that there are three central dissimilarities between the two kinds of production which are related to (1) the volume of the mental lexicon and its items specification, the extent to which automaticity operates, and the interference of L1 in L2 production.

First of all, in foreign language speakers, L2 knowledge is not fully learnt as it is the case for L1 knowledge. Moreover, L2 speakers may encounter obstacles to communicate a concept since, for instance, they are not able to get the accurate word to express it. Some lexical elements in the mental lexicon are not perfectly set to match their syntactic, semantic, morphological and phonological information, which, most of the time, results in committing errors. Addedly, the links between various lexical components might not be wholly defined yet. Several compensatory techniques (Poulisse, 1990) or problem-solving tasks (Dörnyei & Kormos, 1998) are usually done in case an L2 speaker faces problems regaining a lexical item.

Also, L2 grammar comprehension may not be fully developed, which can cause L2 speakers to utter ungrammatical structures or to avert some L2 grammatical ones.

By the same token, some parts of processing in the L2 production framework are deficient in terms of automaticity. As we have seen in the case of native language production, the formulation stage is known to occur automatically. However, it seems that it is not the case for l2 speech because lexical retrieval and encoding might demand serial processing, i.e., processing one item at a time, for L2 speakers instead of simultaneous and parallel processing in L2 production. Poulisse (1997) states that this fundamentally occurs at the morphophonological and articulatory stages. Generally speaking, L2 speakers, especially beginners, are more likely to be doubtful and uncertain of what they communicate, the rate of their speech seems to be slower, and the degree of automaticity may differ based on their competency. It is noted, too, by Poulisse (1997) that making slips of the tongue in L1 speakers is doubled in the case of L2 ones and it is due to the previously mentioned causes.

Another aspect that differentiates between L1 and L2 productions is the interference of the mother tongue. That is to say, L2 production holds some sort of L1 influence in one way or another. Thus, L1 interference during L2 production may be due to either intentional code-switching (Appel & Muysken, 1987; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Grosjean, 1982; Poulisse, 1990) or unintentional one (Sharwood-Smith & Kellerman, 1986; Poulisse & Bongaerts, 1994). For the former, it might happen due to various reasons such as a missing lexical item; the fact that there is more accessibility to L1 vocabulary; the desire to highlight one's identity; the wish to describe a specific addressee, or to communicate an emotion (Poulisse & Bongaerts, 1994). However, unintentional code switching is usually known as language transfer or cross-linguistic interference (Sharwood-Smith & Kellerman, 1986; Faerch & Kasper, 1986). Therefore, L2 proficiency level can influence both intentional and unintentional switches. Beginner learners tend to voluntarily have recourse to L1 vocabulary when speaking L2.

These clarifications had to be made in order for us to be able to go further in this background of the study. Such L2 characteristics must be mentioned for explanatory purposes. That is, this section is specifically about applying Levelt's (1989) model of speech production on that of L2 and the following is a deeper explanation of each stage of this model in relation to L2 speech.

2.4.1 Conceptualization in L2 production

L2 learners seem to go through, more or less, the same path of native speakers' speech production. At the level of conceptualisation, many studies have been conducted to see whether the process is identical in L1 and L2. Thus, in this part, a comprehensive explanation of the matter is set.

Some researchers, like Kroll (1993), went for the idea that conceptual representations are more likely to be the same in both L1 and L2. However, lexical representations do not seem to be likewise. Furthermore, while certain suggestions (Lipski, 1978; McNamara & Kushnir; Albert and Obler, 1978, 1971; see Kroll, 1993, for a critical evaluation), have claimed that there are particular sections in the lexicon each of which is responsible for one language, it is argued that there is a single mental lexicon in which L1 and L2 lexical items exist side-by-side (Poulisse and Bongaerts, 1994). For the ones who have upheld the idea of a single mental lexicon, code-switching can be a phenomenon that explains their view. To illustrate, this phenomenon of code-switching is due to the launch of two preverbal plans by L2 speakers, one for each language, and this has been asserted by De Bot (1992). Thus, the existence of, and accessibility to, two conceptual plans explain why code-switching, whether it is about an intentional or an unintentional one, occurs in L2 speech.

In addition, the conceptualisation stage is responsible for producing the preverbal plan that links both the conceptual information and the language to be opted for (Poulisse and

Bongaerts, 1994). That is to say, concepts are usually produced then attached to the language to be used. After that, both the conceptual information and the selected language trigger the lemmas, that include the suitable meaning, to be activated (Poulisse, 1997), and then passed to the next level which is the formulator. That is, aside from language selection in the preverbal plan, the conceptualiser operates the same as for L1 production.

By way of explaining, if we take the already used example in L1 production, "the child ate an apple", one can say now that its preverbal plan would proceed the same whether the speaker is going to speak L1 or L2. In the case of L2, the concepts that he would like to communicate will indicate which lemmas and forms will be chosen in the L2.

2.4.2 Formulation in L2 production

Thus, starting from the different concepts in the preverbal plan that include the specifications when learners speak the L2, the formulation stage intervenes. To be clear, according to Poulisse & Bongaerts (1994), the processes of spreading activation function is the same as it has been explained in the L1 production. Keeping with the same example, whenever an L2 speaker wants to say 'child', different vocabulary elements, that have related meaning, will be activated, including the L1 lemmas.

To clarify, lexical elements of both L1 and L2 are connected to mutual conceptual nodes, this is why the selection of vocabulary activates lemmas in the two languages, which in turn enhances the chances of code-switching to happen. In the case of beginner speakers, it is not usual for them that L1 lemmas get less activations than those of the L2, so, even when they want to use the L2, they encounter such issue (i.e., they end up using L1 instead of L2). Thence, Poulisse & Bongaerts (1994) state that this explains why L1 lemmas, mostly function words, generally receive more activations in the L1 than in the L2.

Again, as maintained by Poulisse and Bongaerts (1994), each language, be it L1 or L2, has its own morphological encoding. Meaning, the morphemes which constitute an utterance that has been planned in the L2 will come from that morphological encoding of the L2. Besides, according to their view, there exist only one general store of phonemes (sounds) which is relied on throughout phonological encoding. Subsequently, errors at the level of speech sounds are due to the deficiency of the store or because its items are not properly defined.

The formulation stage of L2 speakers, finally, is seen as a process of lemma retrieving, the same as it is the case for L1 formulation, once more. However, it is at the level of these mentioned tiny details that the two processes differ. As we are going to see in the analysis of the findings, the problems of lexical access and formulation will be of crucial significance for the interpretation.

2.4.3 Articulation in L2 production

The output of the grammatical, morphological, and phonological encoding that was produced in the formulation stage is now received by the articulation stage. With regard to Levelt's (1989) accounts, this information is transferred to the articulator in the form of components of phonological words and phrases. Every one of these components encompasses the motor instructions necessary for the articulator to be able to interpret the mental representation of the morphemes into actual sounds. After being retrieved from the formulator, the articulator deciphers then executes the motor commands that are based on to regulate the flow of articulation. This appears to be one of the highly complex processes in which human beings take part, since "it involves the coordinated use of approximately 100 muscles [spread across the respiratory system and the laryngeal and super laryngeal systems], such that speech sounds are produced at a rate of about 15 per second" (Levelt, 1993, p. 413). So, compared to the other speech production stages, the complexity of this one demands the highest levels of

proficiency. That is to say, in usual native speech, this process of articulation is very automatized and free from executive processes.

Under these circumstances, it would be expected that to have an aboriginal pronunciation is the hardest aspect of SLA (Matter, 2006). Moreover, Matter (2006) claims that as the process of speech production goes on, i.e., from conceptualisation to articulation, more automation is needed, that, for him, is why there are foreign language speakers who might display some mastery of morphosyntactic processing like a native speaker, but never appear to be able to get rid of their accent. De Bot (1992), pursuing this further, has used this evidence to propose that there is one single articulator for both native and foreign languages. This argument, addedly, too, assumes that the mother tongue interreference is unavoidable, and that L 2 speech performance is extremely hard to be modified.

Hence, the stage of articulation explains many differences between L1 and L2. It is claimed, therefore, that articulation in the L2 is highly special because native-like pronunciation is rarely reached. So, the two processes seem to be dissimilar.

2.4.4 Self-monitoring in L2 production

It has been explained shortly before that, during the process of language production, there is a monitor that is responsible for checking the correctness of what is being said, a procedure that demands conscious attention. Briefly, here we are concerned with highlighting the self-monitoring process during L2 production.

Obviously, while speaking, learners face obstacles at the level of their message processing a lot more frequently with using the L2 than with speaking their native language. This part of the research is concerned with the obstacles that L2 speakers encounter and the way they attempt to find a solution to overcome such obstacles applying a problem-solving mechanism. Many researchers, like Dörnyei and Kormos (1998), Poulisse (1993), Kormos

(1999), and Dörnyei and Scott (1997), have dug deeper in this matter and have provided explanations of the type of problems L2 speakers face while speaking and the solutions they opt for to resolve them.

Shedding light on Dörnyei and Kormos' (1998) work, this section will proceed. Their studies rely on Levelt's (1989) model to examine and categorise the forms of communicative obstacles that L2 speakers confront. Plus, their researches draw on pertinent literature, like Bialystok, 1990; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Tarone, 1977; Paribakht, 1986; Poulisse, 1993; Willems, 1987, to put forward a structure of a problem-solving strategy for each type of obstacles faced.

2.4.4.1. Resource deficit problem-solving mechanisms

As it is claimed by Dörnyei and Kormos (1998), learners are more likely to have troubles in retrieving lexical components from their deficit L2 mental lexicon, and also, they might be unable to proceed in a grammatically and phonologically correct encoding of their messages since the items in the mental lexicon are not adequately defined. In such a case, the speaker has three essential options, he either: quits his macro-plan; modifies it by reducing it; or substitutes it with another message.

Poulisse (1993) uses the term compensatory strategies instead of problem-solving mechanisms. He claims that L2 speakers depend on three types of compensatory strategies. Foremost, a substitution technique that changes or omits one lemma in the preverbal message, and subsequently a back-up lemma takes the place. Code-switching is seen as a type of substitution. This is to employ L1 vocabulary when speaking L2 for the purpose of giving an approximate meaning, i.e., using similar meaning like 'clock' instead of 'watch', or a hyponym such as 'animal' rather than 'giraffe', employing a general-purpose word like 'thing' or 'stuff', or just cancelling the message.

In the second place, the conceptual information of the lemma can be modified by the speaker and substituted by L1 or L2 grammatical and phonological encoding processes, that generally results in making errors, a technique that Dörnyei and Kormos (1998) labelled as a substitution plus strategy. To illustrate, foreignization, which is "using L1 or L3 word by adjusting it to L2 phonology (i.e., with a L2 pronunciation)" (Dörnyei and Kormos, 1998, p.360), word coinage, and literal translation are forms of it.

In the third place, a reconceptualization of the preverbal message might happen. In accordance with Dörnyei and Kormos' (1998) study, it is divided into two types, namely, macro-reconceptualization and micro-reconceptualization. The former, on the one hand, stands for the process whereby a series of chunks which belong to the global plan are discarded and another plan is produced. This mechanism is referred to, by Dörnyei and Kormos (1998), as restructuring. The latter, on the other hand, is about a revision of one single chunk of the message by means of either a circumlocution, which is "exemplifying, illustrating, or describing the properties of the target object or action" (Dörnyei and Kormos, 1998, p,360), or a semantic word coinage, that is "creating a non-existing L2 word by compounding words" (ibid).

Concerning grammatical problem-solving mechanisms, when having troubles having to do with a grammatical rule, L2 speakers may go for modifying some features of the lemma by virtue of transfer or overgeneralisation. Another alternative mechanism is called, according to Dörnyei and Kormos (1998), grammatical reduction. This is defined as "Using simplified grammar in the belief that the interlocutor will be able to reconstruct the grammatical meaning from the context" (ibid, p, 361).

Apropos phonological and articulatory problem-solving mechanisms, Dörnyei and Kormos (1998) suggest that there are three mechanisms that L2 speakers experience when encountering such issues. The first one is termed phonological retrieval. It means learners of a second language utter a set of incomplete or incorrect language structures until arriving at the

proper form. They call this "tip-of-the tongue phenomenon". The use of similar sounding words is the second problem-solving mechanism in the realm of phonological and articulatory difficulties. When the speaker is uncertain of some forms, he usually catches up using a lexical item that approximately sounds like the planned item. This is, in Dörnyei and Kormos' (1998) terms, known as phonological and articulatory substitution. Last but not least, mumbling, under the phonological and articulatory reduction mechanism is the final problem-solving mechanism that Dörnyei and Kormos (1998) suggest. This is defined as "Swallowing or muttering inaudibly a word (or part of a word) whose correct form the speaker is uncertain about." (p. 362).

To sum up, one can say that resource-deficit issues are due to incomplete knowledge of the target language. When faced with such obstacles, L2 speakers most of the time go through a number of strategies such as substitutions and code-switching.

2.4.4.2 Time-pressure problem-solving mechanisms

Dörnyei and Kormos (1998) assume that since L2 production, compared to L1 production, is automatic to a lesser degree due to the idea that during some stages of speech production the encoding processes can only function serially, and this is the reason behind slow production. They also quoted De Bot (1992) arguing that, due to the previously mentioned causes, lemmas retrieval can take "more time than the production system will allow" (p. 14).

When producing speech, learners know that lengthy pauses are undesirable. Therefore, as an attempt to satisfy themselves overcoming conversational issues, and to make their speech acceptable at the level of rate and speed, they might use some techniques. The first one is about the dismissal or the reduction of the message which is time consuming. Addedly, they might employ the resource-deficit strategies that were tackled earlier. L2 speakers use different strategies, or what Dörnyei and Kormos (1998) call *stalling mechanisms* for the purpose of getting extra time and allocating more attention to the process. For them, these can be

nonlexicalized pauses including umming and erring (this is about nonlexicalized filled pauses like "er, uh, mhm"), unfilled pauses (to keep silent while talking), drawling (lengthen a sound of word), or lexicalized pauses (these are fillers like "*well; you know; actually; okay").*

In the same context, *repetitions* are another type of stalling mechanisms. This is divided into two forms, i.e., self-repetition and others-repetition. The former, always in accordance with Dörnyei and Kormos (1998), is defined as reiterating a word or a phrase directly after being uttered. This is, needless to say, a strategy by L2 speakers to have an opportunity to gain time to think of what to say next. The latter, notwithstanding, occurs when the speaker repeats what was said by the interlocutor.

To this end, it appears that the speaking process includes more than what is expected. Even time-gaining is a strategy used by L2 speakers. Message reduction, nonlexicalized pauses, unfilled pauses, drawling and repetitions are the techniques that they use.

2.4.4.3 Deficient own output problem-solving mechanisms

Kormos (1999) has put forward a detailed classification of problem-solving mechanisms linked to some deficiencies in the speakers' own production; this is generally known as "self-repair" (Robinson, p., 2013, p. 575). In her study, she has applied psycholinguistic theories of speech production processes on L2 research findings with respect to the development of consciousness, automaticity, and theories of awareness, and noticing during speech production.

By studying Levelt's perceptual loop theory, (which, according to Levelt (1983), suggests that speech is monitored by the comprehension system, which reveals errors by comparing the comprehension of formulated utterances to originally intended utterances), Kormos (1999) suggests that it could be adopted to describe, or define, monitoring in the second language (Robinson, p. 2013). However, it is argued that there are two L2 situations that are

not explained by the perceptual loop theory. That is to say, some L2 learners, despite of having a satisfactory amount of L2 knowledge, they are still not able to spot a lot of errors in L2 speech. Moreover, some specific forms of errors are undiscovered. To explain, the dissimilarity between L1 and L2 monitoring resides in the fact that it demands attentional control (Kormos, 1999). In Kormos' (1999) opinion, the point is that L2 attentional capacity is limited, which in turn means that the amount of attention relied on to indemnify for the non-automatic processes in the L2, such as grammatical and phonological encodings, restricts the monitoring that should happen.

Simply, it is assumed by these ideas that, when speaking L2, due to the use of many attentional resources to encode its messages both grammatically and phonologically, the number of resources that are exploited for self-monitoring is reduced. We shall devote a section where to dig deeper in the matter of attention in speech production hereafter.

2.5 Attention and memory in speech production

In the literature, one can find in-depth studies that have discussed the different notions of attention and memory on the subject of second language acquisition (Schmidt, 2001; Robinson, 1995a; Robinson, 2003b; Ellis, 2001). Yet, this part of the research is interested in the aspects of attention and memory that are linked to L2 production that is the major concern of this study.

As might be expected, language processing encompasses learning, comprehension and production. Nonetheless, the explanation of attention and memory processes will be intentionally directed to production in this parcel of the study. Still, comprehension will be referred to, occasionally, due to the fact that it is an essential part of production as it has been demonstrated in Levelt's (1989) model.

2.5.1 Attention

Attention is a process that is linked to short-term memory, and this latter is, in turn, the activated part of long-term memory. Psycholinguistics, strikingly, takes from the theories of cognitive psychology. This last-mentioned field defines attention as the process which controls the successive flow of information from short-term memory to long-term memory (Broadbent, 1958). However, some opponent perspectives (such as Shiffrin and Shneider (1977), and Anderson's (1983)) believe that attention happens all through the entire processing system, and not throughout one single executive control. As a more general definition of attention, and on which this study relies, it is a "necessary and sufficient condition of long-term storage" (Schmidt, 2001, p. 16). Schmidt (2001) means that L2 learners' attention needs to be raised when speaking the language.

2.5.1.1 Role of attention in the various stages of speech production

As a reaction to Krashen (1981)'s allegation that subconscious processes are enough to ensure effective L2 acquisition, Schmidt (1990) put forward the significance of the conscious process of learning. According to him, learners must be attentive and focused when learning the language, and their focal attention results in the intake of new linguistic items in long-term memory for future use (Schmidt, 1995). Ergo, this section deals with attention in relation to speech production

On that account, this is about the allocation of attentional resources according to levelt's (1989, 1999) speech production model. It is claimed by many researchers (like van Hest, 1996; O'Connor, 1988 and Bange & Kern, 1996; Schmidt 2001) that attention is highly needed, at different levels, for the appropriate operating of the entire speech production process, and it is responsible for L2 development (Verhoeven, 1989; Kormos, 2000a, 2000b). Moreover, de Bot (1992) suggests that the first stage of speech production, i.e., conceptualization, is the most

consuming one of attentional resources because it requires attention during the whole process, and this is for both L1 and L2 speakers, and for all proficiency levels. Even so, the formulator stage consumes them to a lesser degree since the processes, at this level, start to be automatized. The articulatory stage, for de Bot (1992), requires even less attention, for it is believed to be more automatized.

A more recent study conducted by Garrod and Pickering (2007), concluded that the first stages of speech production, i.e., conceptualisation and formulation, demand more attention than the last stages, i.e., word-form encoding and articulation. In the literature, this opinion is upheld by results from another study done by Ferreira and Pashler (2002). In the practical part of their research, they prepared a task for the participants in which these latter were asked to designate pictures while, at the same time, doing another tone discrimination task. This kind of a dual-task procedure is a broadly employed method to test whether or not two tasks can influence each other in relation to some resources (e.g., Pashler, 1994; Szameitat, Schubert, Müller, & Von Cramon, 2002; Welford, 1952), and in this case, this is about attentional resources. Thence, Garrod and Pickering (2007) prove that attention is an interesting factor to tackle when dealing with speech production.

As a summary, attention in both language learning and speech production is considered to be an important aspect which can improve the process to a high extent. As a result, L2 learners must raise consciousness during their speech especially at the early stages of production.

2.5.2 Memory

This parcel of the research concentrates on memory and its relation to speech production. In the first place, we are going to discuss some features of memory along with its design. In one way or another, attention has to be integrated in such a discussion due to the tight

relationship which is between attention and memory. In the second place, the link between memory and learning is going to be highlighted. Finally, a distinction between memory macro-processes and memory micro-processes shall be made.

2.5.2.1 The memory designs

Each memory part serves for a particular function. These parts include; perceptual or sensory memory, short-term, or working memory, and long-term, episodic, or semantic memory. In this study, nevertheless, the role of short-term memory is of special importance. This latter is the process whereby the links between input, whether it is already known or not, and the knowledge saved in the long-term memory are made. According to Cowan (1993), short term memory, or what is known as the working memory, is described as the: "interface between everything we know and everything we perceive or do" (p. 166). That is to say, we are going to see the interrelation between memory and speech production in an L2 classroom.

Some researches on memory have viewed it as a linear operation (see Berry and Broadbent, 1984; Baddeley, 1986). Still, Cowan (1993) has defined short-term memory as a continuously activated area of long-term memory. In the same context, Robinson (1995b) has put forward a framework that differentiates between short-term memory and working memory. For him, working memory is an area that belongs to short-term memory, which also gets focal attention. In other words, what Robinson (1995b) has tried to say is that when the speaker detects input, it may go through two dissimilar directions. The first direction might be the one that lacks awareness. Thus, using peripheral attention and not focal attention, meaning, information may temporarily enter the working memory and automatically operates the already learnt information in the long-term memory. The second one, though, is through entering working memory and receiving focal attention, while the information is noticed and rehearsed (with awareness). Seemingly, these two directions are the representation of what is known, at the present time, as implicit and explicit learning.

To explain, according to several scholars (Cowan, 1993; Robinson, 1995b; Baddeley, 1986), language processing begins just after input is identified and automatically processed by the perceptual part of the working memory. Thereafter, it reaches short-term memory, in which an automatic process of recognition runs various categories that are related to the input received. That is to say, certain mechanisms are undertaken, when receiving new input, to compare and contrast it with the already kept information in the long-term memory. As far as L2 production is concerned, learners receiving new input go through some encoding processes that have access to interlanguage representations. Notwithstanding, this process of acquisition is different from learning (see learning VS acquisition in section in **Chapter one**), since, for learning to take place, that is, for new input to be deciphered in the long-term memory, the new input must not match the already stored knowledge. Which means that, as it has been explained shortly before, the input has to go through focal attention (not just automatic recognition), entering working memory, then it has to go either through a process of awareness, or a one of unawareness (explicit or implicit learning).

To this end, the importance of memory can never be neglected; it processes the input, for the speaker to be able to generate the output. Seemingly, memory is a key aspect of either explicit or implicit learning.

2.5.2.2 Memory impacts on learning

As we have seen so far, memory is a crucial factor of learning. For it to be a thorough exploration for the matter, we have devoted this section to look at how memory influences learning. For this, both teachers and learners have to be knowledgeable of these processes in order to improve the learning environment.

Conforming to Doughty's (2001) ideas, there exist two types of memory processes, namely, microprocesses and macroprocesses. As for the former, it is divided into two forms

that can influence learning, these are: selective attention and cognitive comparison. Selective attention, according to O'Malley et al. (1985), means that the learner decides to improve his insufficient learning by attending to particular features of language to overcome the difficulties of learning the language. In this respect, Schmidt (2001) proposes that for learning to take place, learners must know what is missing for them to speak the language so that they can search for that knowledge in the input afterward. To put it in Doughty's (2001) own words, "For it to be cognitively possible for learners to notice gaps, they must have sufficient and coordinated working and long-term memory resources to enable the cognitive comparison" (p. 225).

For clarity's sake, this signifies that L2 learners need to have sufficient sources from where they can compare and contrast their own language, or their unsuccessful trials to construct them due to incomplete knowledge, to the language of their more qualified interlocutors. Strictly speaking, L2 learners observe what their language lacks, at that point, they find out the solution in their interlocutors' utterances, and, subsequently, they make a cognitive comparison that reconstructs their interlanguage. Doughty (2001) carries on stating that "making connections between the known and the unknown eventually leads to knowledge restructuring" (p. 227). Hence, the way memory is designed says that selective attention and cognitive comparison occur within the function of the working memory with the learners' awareness, and they have been known as two processes that account for learning.

Concerning the macro-processes of memory, Doughty (2001) depicts them as automatic and even out of a learner's reach. Pursuing this further, she distinguishes four macro-processes, i.e., internalization, mapping, analysis, and restructuring. Be forewarned, though, that these provided processes are not directly pertinent to the intended objectives of the study at hand, but they have to be mentioned due to their role in understanding the architecture of memory.

Regarding the first constituent, internalization, two main concepts, in relation to it, exist in the literature, viz 'comprehensible input' and 'intake'. On the subject of the first concept, in

his input hypothesis, Krashen (1982, 1985) has argued that the development of L2 learners' interlanguage is the result of receiving comprehensible input that carries linguistic structures which are one step beyond their present level of competency. For him, exposing learners to comprehensible input of the target language is one crucial factor for acquisition to take place. Regarding the second concept, intake, it has been the concern of many researchers (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Corder, 1967; VanPatten, 1993, 2002). Gass and Selinker (1994) have described it as the operation of absorbing linguistic items, where new input is compared to already stored knowledge, and the processing operates in reaction to already internalized grammar rules. In this respect, Van Patten (2002) has depicted it as "the linguistic data actually processed from the input and held in working memory for further processing" (p. 757).

Mapping, in the second place, has its roots in studies of first language acquisition, and its theory has been used to explain second language acquisition. For L1, it is proposed that what leads to language acquisition is the linking of basic cognitive concepts to certain phonological forms that children derive from the received input. Concerning L2, Doughty (2001) claims that "what ensures the mapping of forms to meaning and grammatical functions is the support of the physical context" (p. 218). In a way that supports the contextualisation of learning, simply, mapping is a process whereby students relate linguistic concepts to the real world.

Furthermore, the third constituent of macro-processes of memory is analysis. It has been defined as an input-free component. Meaning, analysis does not occur when the immediate input is being received. Rather, it is

> "The process by which linguistic and conceptual representations become more explicit, more structured, and more accessible to inspection. Analysis proceeds on implicit unstructured representations and converts them into an increasingly explicit form…it is the means by which cognitive processes are responsible for altering

mental concepts of grammar in the absence of any ongoing input or correction"
(Bialystok 1994, p. 561).

Thus, analysis and mapping are viewed as consecutive processes, i.e., after mapping, comes analysis.

Last but not least, restructuring is the change of some particular aspects of interlanguage to be more correct. That is to say, learners restructure the linguistic knowledge in a manner that makes information transfer effective with the input. However, restructuring is not done by all students in the appropriate way. DeKeyser (2001) has spoken of the idea that restructuring strategies can be improved with extensive practice from the students' part. DeKeyser (2001) has argued that the inner linguistic knowledge can be the knowledge of performance, and, in turn, this helps automatization of the rule to happen.

Finally, memory has to be taken into consideration when dealing with learning a foreign language due to its significance in operating the speech production process. Therefore, microprocesses and macroprocesses types of memory are pivotal components when it comes to learning the L2.

2.6 Speech production and interlanguage development

This section is about to delve into the subject of the possible relationship between speech production and interlanguage development. Logically, speech production accuracy develops in accordance with the improvement of interlanguage, which means that we must put special emphasis on interlanguage so that a fluent speaking skill can be reached.

2.6.1 The importance of output

During the recent decades, Swain's (1985, 1993, 1995, 1998) studies have attracted the attention of researchers to deal with output as a probable factor of L2 progress. Pursuing this

further, Swain's work on speech production was a reaction against other frameworks of second language learning which argued that only maximal exposure to input was enough for language learning to take place. For example, Krashen (1985, 1989) had claimed that output is just an indication of language acquisition progress, and that the output does not influence second language acquisition. In accordance with Swain's (1998) studies on learners from the Canadian immersion programs centre, where ample and diverse input is delivered to students, it is demonstrated that although they had shown successful development at the level of comprehension and communication, they are more likely to commit grammatical errors. The point is that exposing learners to the input is crucial for language learning. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to reach an approximate native-like level in the target language.

Swain (1998) continues to say that learners can finish their training with deficient linguistic knowledge, such as grammar inaccuracy, because in that type of educational trainings, learners are not encouraged to be more correct, and teachers speak more in the classroom. Like that, Swain (1985) approached the notion of comprehensible output. The idea behind is that when interacting, L2 speakers encounter communicative obstacles, so they must be motivated to make their language use more accurate, clearer, and more coherent. Therefore, Swain's (1993, 1995) output hypothesis, as an attempt to shed light on the importance of output in second language acquisition, suggests a number of functions that might result in interlanguage development, which in turn leads to an appropriate second language learning.

2.6.2 Output Hypothesis

For Swain (1995), speech production, or say output, has a role in improving L2 learners' accurate fluency. Its first function is called hypothesis-testing. When L2 learners speak, either individually, i.e., in any form of one-sided communications, like class presentations, in which direct feedback is not accessible, or interacting with interlocutors, i.e., when feedback may occur, they tend to test their already formed hypotheses, about the language, against the

receptive knowledge. To explain, de Bot (1996) states that the nature of L2 speech is characterised by the fact that its speakers return to their receptive knowledge, "which is assumed to be more stable and reliable than productive knowledge" (p. 551), and this may produce a finer and more correct performance.

In other words, when conversing, L2 speakers check whether they are being understood and whether the representation of their interlanguage, which is their output, is linguistically acceptable. If it is not the case, when they receive feedback, learners begin a negotiation of meaning, and, this way, their production is boosted to produce more accurate and precise language. Swain's (1995) point is that the input that students receive might or might not be good for language development. However, their output permits them to keep an eye on their own learning process which makes their speech production better.

The second function of output that Swain (1995) proposes is that one called the metalinguistic function. As its name suggests, metalinguistic function of output is when a process of 'thinking about the language', if it might be said, happens. For Swain (1995), the point is that when learners speak the L2, they can "control and internalize linguistic knowledge" (p. 126). That is, in a real communicative language use, to think of the linguistic rules and structures helps learners generate an exquisitely reprocessed output, and this in turn contributes to a positive language learning. Swain (1998) believes that motivating L2 learners to develop their meta talk when encountering a communicative problem has to assist them to be aware of both the language learning and the speech production processes.

The last function of output that Swain (1995) has put forward is named the noticing function of output. In an indirect way, this function is linked to language input. For her, Swain (1995) argues that L2 learners can observe, or say 'notice', what misses in the speech they desire to deliver compared to what they are able to, actually, produce. Thus, boosting the noticing strategy in learners makes them realise their lacking knowledge of the L2.

Furthermore, this process of gaps recognition might be either an inner process, i.e., it is the learner himself that notices them, or an outer one, i.e., pointed out by an interlocutor. This function, in keeping with Swain (1995), is said to be significant at the level of two points. That is to say, in the case when L2 input is not instantly present, the learner can launch a number of thinking processes whereby he considers his linguistic knowledge in order to strengthen it or reproduce a new one. However, if L2 input is instantly available, he focuses more on that input so that he can overcome his communicative obstacles to fill in what misses in his knowledge of the language.

Ultimately, Swain's (1995) output hypothesis can be seen as an important aspect of the present study regarding the rich background that it contains concerning communicative obstacles that learners face when speaking English. Once more, the aspects of this hypothesis are going to be, exclusively, based on during the analysis and the interpretation of the findings.

2.7 A Psycholinguistic Approach to Assess the Speaking Skill

In the 1970s, the field of psycholinguistics started to contribute to assess the oral proficiency as the earlier methods of its evaluation and assessment were insufficient. For Read (1981), as cited in Salah, D. (2005), according to the psycholinguistic approach, "language came to be seen as a well-defined taxonomic structure and more of a dynamic, creative, functional system (cited in Salah, D. (2005). It was recognized that natural language contains a considerable amount of redundancy, so that it is difficult to show that any single linguistic unit is indispensable communication…" (p. 77). To explain, this quote means that, from a psycholinguistic perspective, learners' spoken language is to be assessed as a whole, since it is not easy to assess each aspect individually. For example, it would be invalid to test the learners' grammatical adequacy in speaking because a spontaneous way of speaking is seen as "more of a dynamic, creative, functional system" (ibid). Thus, in order not to ignore those dynamic, creative and functional aspects of speaking, it has to be measured as a whole unit.

Scrutinizing the literature concerning the domain of language assessment one can figure out that psycholinguistic components, like automaticity, have been paid little attention (Van Moere, A, 2012). That is to say, there is a huge database research concerning automaticity (Gass, 1989; Gass & Shacter, 1989; Koda, 1989; 1996; McDonald, 1987) due to its crucial importance in speaking; however, it is not included within the constructs of the oral proficiency tests. Besides, fluency is seen as one noticeable manifestation of automaticity (Van Moere, A. 2012). The research problem of the present thesis concerns itself with students' poor oral performance. A problematic whose solution might include a big part of fluency issues. This leads us to the idea that automaticity has to be taken into account when it comes to testing the speaking skill.

By this token, automaticity is about the learners' processing ability of the linguistic baggage they have learned. If that processing ability is strong enough to operate in real life situations, it makes the students able to speak fluently. The question is how automaticity is assessed. Van Moere (2012) proposes a method that relies on timed stimulus-response tasks. In these tasks the student is supposed to respond in an instant dialogue with a certain conversational pace. Two types of timed stimulus and response activities are amongst several other ones (Van Moere, 2012), these are sentence repeat and sentence build tasks, which we will explore in this research since they are more related to oral production.

The first exercise which is sentence repeat task is also called elicited imitation (Van Moere, 2012). By definition, elicited imitation is an assessment approach in which students are asked to listen to a sequence of stimulus sentences, phrases, words (vocabulary items) and then repeat them immediately (Underhill, 1987). More, in this task, the provided vocabulary items are not linked to one another at the level of meaning; nevertheless, the teacher can arrange them to make increasing levels of "complexity, length, or speed of delivery" (Van Moere, 2012, p.

7). Once the task is finished, the test results are revealed depending on the degree to which the student makes mistakes and miss words.

The second task is called the sentence build task. It shares many common aspects with the previous task. Nonetheless, in this one, the teacher uses a sentence which has been split up into three parts that are supposed to be introduced randomly (Van Moere, 2012), and the student is supposed to rearrange it in order to make a meaningful sentence. To illustrate, if the learner hears "to be eaten/too salty/the food was" he has to reply "the food was too salty to be eaten". Moreover, each part of the sentence must be uttered with the "same neutral intonation" (Van Moere, 2012, p. 7) in order not to provide the learners with any cue of the way the sentence is correctly arranged. This way he is obliged to rely on his own way of recognizing and understanding syntax to build the sentence.

Levinson (1983) and Brown, Yule (1983), as cited in Van Moere (2012), argue that most speakers often use their speaking partner's vocabulary items and grammatical structures. This makes the two previously mentioned tasks valid for testing the learner's automaticity. In addition, Tannen (1989), as quoted by Van Moere (2012), shows the significant role of repetition in our daily speech to signal our interest in what is being said; "Repeating the words, phrases, or sentences of other speakers (a) accomplishes a conversation, (b) shows one's response to another, (c) shows acceptance of other's utterances, their participation, and them, and (d) gives evidence of one's own participation" (p. 8). In other words, when the listener repeats the speaker's words, this gives him some sort of approval which in turn makes the communication easier.

Psycholinguistically speaking, to adopt our speaker's words has an implication (Bygate, 2001). In other words, in conversations, listeners, in order to save time and make the speaking process easier, they ought to employ their interlocutors' words so that they gain time during the formulation stage and concentrate more on the conceptualisation stage to reply (ibid). In the

same context, For Swain (1985), listeners in one-sided communications they deal with meaning more, nevertheless, in a conversation, where they are supposed to participate, they also consider vocabulary because they might employ it when they take the floor (ibid).

This explanation was given in order to show the importance of the timed stimulus-response tasks in testing the learners' automaticity as a factor in assessing their speaking skill. Repeating the interlocutor's vocabulary items is a process that exists in our daily life which means that we use it to make our processing ability more effective.

Even though sentence repeat task is rarely used in speech proficiency tests, it shows reliable measures of the processing ability and vocabulary items remembering ability (verbal working memory), which means that is not just about mimicking and imitation. In accordance with Ota (2009), "repetition of a sentence as a unit is a cognitive task involving semantic, grammatical, and syntactic processing, and not a simple rote memorization task" (P.141). Addedly, learners' sentence repetition outcomes reveal more "positive correlation with their total IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores than with each sub score for listening, reading, writing, and speaking" (Midori, S., 2014, p. 41). Sentence repetition, hence, shows proficiency in the speaking process as a whole and not in terms of each language component. It is important to mention at this level that although this kind of tests demands listening and speaking skills, it boosts the learner to use English instead of questioning his knowledge about it, and measures his verbal working memory. Eventually, this is about a test of comprehensive oral skills and not only listening or speaking (Buck, 2001).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have seen psycholinguistic features in relation to language learning in general shedding light on the speaking skill in specific. Thus, we have tried to explain concepts and notions linked to the particular objective of this study which is figuring

out why students of English, despite having much knowledge of this language, still have many deficiencies when they speak English.

To sum up, we have started with Levelt's model as a tool to explore the oral production. Before dealing with its application on L2 production, we have decided to start with L1 production so that the matter will be clearer. Moreover, we have highlighted important points in the self-monitoring process of L2, such as resource deficit problem-solving mechanism, as being significant aspects in speech production which must be explored to understand the process better. Also, attention and memory, and their role in maintaining smooth operating of Levelt's four stages of speech production have been covered. Finally, A psycholinguistic approach to assess the speaking skill has been explained. This latter has shown the field of psycholinguistics has contributed to measure speech production using its two testing types, namely, sentence repetition and sentence build tasks

We can conclude now that the speaking process is purely psycholinguistic, which means that it is going to be tackled in better conditions under the realm of Levelt's model of speech production as an attempt to achieve the purpose of the present study. The next chapter, therefore, will be exclusively devoted to the psycholinguistic speaking skill in accordance with the significant teaching methods throughout history.

Chapter three: Psycholinguistics and Language Teaching Methods

Introduction

The language teaching approach incorporates both the theory of the nature of language and that of language learning. One can say that language teaching methods are the realisation of the language teaching approaches in the classroom. Therefore, any teaching method can be appropriately applied if its basic theories are plainly understood. To put it simply, the classroom is a place where human language knowledge and human language learning meet. Hence, the essential theories in dealing with language teaching methods are generally split up into two major theories which are the theory of language (embodying all the characteristics and nature of language) and the theory of language learning (focussing on the way the knowledge of the language theories can be applied to learn and teach the language). This part of the research, hence, sheds light on the relationship between the field of psycholinguistics and some important language teaching methods.

3 Language Teaching Methods and Psycholinguistics Approach

As far as language teaching is concerned, there are three primary theoretical considerations for language teaching methods: structural theory, functional theory, and interactional theory. The first theory, structural theory, defines language as a system of grammatical units, i.e., words, phrases, clauses, sentences… etc. Secondly, the functional theory, as the name suggests, sees language as a communication tool, that is to say, language is used to deliver information, to express emotions, to persuade, and so on. In the third place, the interactional theory focuses on the idea that language is used as a means to achieve interindividual relationships and attain social interactions. Thus, each of the three views has its own contributions to the development of the methods of teaching in one way or another.

This chapter, as might be expected, gives particular consideration to the speaking skill as it is the major interest of this thesis. Thus, in each language teaching method, after dealing

with its general framework, we devote a discussion to the place of speaking in it in order to, hopefully, identify the appropriate method to teach the speaking skill by the end of the chapter.

Again, the field of Psycholinguistics is for the purpose of dealing with matters like: the cognitive processes involved in language learning, and the conditions under which a language classroom is able to achieve a higher quality of language learning activities. For this simple reason, psycholinguistic findings have been employed broadly as a basic theory in improving language teaching methods.

3.1 The Psycholinguistic Characterisation of the Language Teaching Methods

First and foremost, let us consider the contribution of the field of psycholinguistics to language teaching methods. Any theory of language, when defining its principles for the nature of language, has a psycholinguistic part in its notions, and the same for the theory of language teaching. Hence, this field has a lot to do with languages and the way they are taught, this is why this whole research is based on the psycholinguistic findings to deal with its problematic.

In their book, entitled *Psycholinguistics: Language Mind and World*, Danny D. Steinberg et al (2001) have explored the substantial aspects of language teaching methods from a psycholinguistic perspective. We consider their description as being comprehensive and of paramount interest that it would be very beneficial to this part of the research if discussed critically. For that, our review shall proceed relying heavily on this reference.

According to Steinberg et al (2001), "language teaching methods may be conveniently characterized according to five principal dimensions:

1. Language Focus: Speech Communication vs, Literacy

2. Meaning Learning: Direct Experience vs. Translation

3. Grammar Learning: Induction vs. Explication

4. Psychological Orientation: Mentalist vs, Behaviourist

91

5. Linguistic Orientation: Mentalist vs. Structuralist" (p. 190).

Steinberg et al (2001) believe that these dimensions are not considered when teaching the mother tongue. Meaning, these dimensions should be based on only when teaching English as a foreign language. Following is a critical analysis of each dimension. Based on our way of evaluation, a description of each dimension is going to be presented, and after that, a discussion will take place.

3.1.1 Language Focus

As far as the first dimension is concerned, Steinberg et al (2001) assert that teaching methods, in terms of their focus, are generally split up into two types. The first type is for the methods that focus on communication to teach the target language. The second type, needless to say, is concerned with methods that concentrate on teaching the language based on reading and writing. More precisely, and to give an example of the available teaching method, which will be dealt with later on, the focus of the grammar-translation method is on reading, writing, and translation, but, nearly all the other methods stress communication in teaching the target language.

The grammar-translation method is employed in foreign language classrooms in order to help students be able to read the literary works of the target language. Mainly, the pros of this method consider reading and writing as basic steps that lead the learners to communicate in the language being taught (Steinberg et all, 2001). Yet, focusing only on reading and writing if the goal is gaining communicative skills leads to the lack of practicing speaking which in turn leads them to be incapable of communicating in real life situations.

Language focus in the classroom is an important aspect to understand when dealing with the special traits of the language teaching methods. Mostly, the judgement of a teacher to select what to focus on when teaching (whether communication or literacy) depends heavily on some

other factors such as individual differences (see **chapter one**). For example, the difference in learners' personalities is one key. A teacher can never force a shy student to act in a communicative way amongst his classmates because it has to be very difficult for him. Likewise, an extrovert learner will not feel at ease if a teacher uses the grammar-translation method with him since he is sociable enough to share his opinions and communicate with his classmates.

What we are trying to say is that teachers, most of the time, are limited in their decisions of what method to choose or even what technique to rely on when teaching the target language. Regarding the idea that one method is never able to satisfy all the members of the classroom, including the teacher. Speaking of which, even teachers' individual differences are sometimes a burden. Introvert teachers are, in most instances, incapable of teaching in a communicative atmosphere because they are too timid to deal with a communicative lesson. In this case, a grammar-translation method is a must.

If we trace back the historical development of language teaching methods, we would fathom that there are two methods from which many other methods took advantage (Celce-Murcia, 2001), those are the grammar-translation method and the communicative language teaching. Two methods that can be compared in order to give more insights about the language focus that Danny D. Steinberg et al (2001) have explored in this part.

On the one hand, and as mentioned shortly before, the grammar-translation method (GTM) is used to get students to read the foreign language literature. To put it differently, the major goal of learning a language, in the realm of this method, is to be able to understand and discuss the literary works of the target language. On the other hand, communicative language teaching (CLT) concentrates on the communicative competence as the central aim of the language teaching process (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011). That is to say, by applying the GTM the teacher is more likely to make the students analyse the language rather than speak

it. However, employing the CLT, he is able to get the students speak the language rather than analyse it (or describe it).

Truth is, an important aspect that Steinberg et al (2001) missed is that language focus depends massively on the learners' needs as well as the purposes of the whole educational system of the country. In other words, teachers are not always free to select what to focus on in their teachings (an idea which will be explored by the end of this chapter). Thus, what the educational system imposes on teachers to do is inevitable, limiting their creativity. When the whole curriculum is designed to promote reading and writing, the teacher is obliged to apply the grammar-translation method and vice versa.

3.1.2 Meaning Learning

Coming to the second dimension, which is about meaning learning and teaching, one can delve more in the matter of the language teaching methods. For Steinberg et al, there are two ways to teach the meaning of the words of the foreign language. Translation is one of them. As in the grammar-translation method, the items of the language being taught are translated into the learners' native language (2001). To illustrate, Arabic speaking students learning English would be told that "car" stands for "سيارة", and "what is your name?" means "ما اسمك؟". In other words, Arabic, here, is used to explain the target language which is English. Thus, this is the way translation is used to explain the meaning of the target language, but is it the best way to learn meaning?

The second way to teach meaning, which answers the question posed, is dealt with in this paragraph. This is about teaching through experience. What Steinberg et al (2001) mean by the word experience is that to deliver an idea of a vocabulary item, the teacher might expose his learners to "actual objects, events, or situations in which the target language is used" (Steinberg et al, 2001 p. 191). To cite an instance, keeping with the same example already

mentioned, the teacher can demonstrate a picture of a car to his learners and simply say "car", or, play for them a video of two persons meeting and one of them asks the other "What is your name?". This is, indeed, the idea of contextualising the lesson in order to make the learners witness, or say experience, the language in real life situations so that they can learn meaning without the intervention of the mother tongue.

Moreover, many language teaching methods, like the direct method and CLT, argue in favour of the second way of teaching meaning, which is experience. To put it differently, they reject the use of the learners' native language in order to explain meaning. Rather, they try to contextualise the lesson in order to help students understand words meanings. It was concluded by many researches (Krashen, 1985; Long, 1983; Ellis 2002b) that communicative lessons are more advantageous than the classical way of teaching meaning. Interaction in the classroom is the key here. Learners are more likely to converse with one another and with their teacher who plays the role of a guide to help them acquire vocabulary items.

Nevertheless, prohibiting the use of the mother tongue in foreign language classrooms might sometimes, and under certain circumstances, hinder meaning learning. To explain, if the educational institution in which the teaching takes place lacks some teaching materials, like pictures, videos, data-shows, computers …etc, the contextualisation of the lesson can be very difficult for the teacher which can result in confusion at the level of the learners' meaning understanding. Another issue to be pointed out, too numerous language classrooms also make it hard for the teacher to explain the meaning of some vocabulary items using only the target language, especially if it is about abstract words. Hence, learning meaning by experience as claimed can sometimes be very difficult, or even impossible.

Here comes the usefulness of the grammar-translation method, or at least some of its techniques, to translate words meaning. Some students have a real difficulty to induce the meaning of a word from its context due to certain interlingual meaning resemblance. To clarify

this idea, when French learners hear the word "actually", they most of the time understand it as the French adverb "actuellement", which is not the correct meaning that they should get. Also, words like "attend/attendre, blessed/blessé, Envie/Envy … etc., are all very confusing words for French learners of English. In the field of contrastive linguistics, these are called "false cognates" which are words among languages which seem to mean the same but they, actually, do not. Thus, in some situations the teacher has to use translation to make things clearer for his students, otherwise he risks to deliver false meanings to them.

Thence, we strongly reckon that language is meaning. What would be left of a language if it loses its words meaning? For this simple reason, it has to be taken seriously. Teachers have to pay meticulous attention while teaching it. If the learners internalize false meanings of words, their whole understanding of the language is at risk which influences their way of communicating the language. Teachers have to make sure that their students understand the meaning appropriately.

3.1.3 Grammar Learning

Teaching grammar is a highly valued point to be considered in a language classroom. However, researcher and specialists have opposite viewpoints vis-à-vis the way the operation should be done. According to Steinberg et al (2001), there exist two ways of how grammar has to be dealt with. The first one is called Explication. It stands for explaining the grammatical rules of the target language using the learners' mother tongue. To give an example, in a classroom of Arabic learners studying English, the teacher is supposed to explain, using Arabic, that the English sentence ordering structure has a subject-verb-object sequence.

The second way of learning grammar resides in the idea that the grammatical structures of the target language are supposed to be learnt by induction. This happens by deducing the grammatical rule or structure from the context. Thus, the learners experience a situation which

includes a dialogue or a text for instance, and they are asked to derive the grammatical structure intended to be taught. Importantly, this occurs using the target language only (Steinberg et al, 2001).

Again, the use of the mother tongue is controversial. Furthermore, to learn any language, grammar is crucial. For that, teaching it has to be dealt with carefully. If a grammatical rule is understood wrongly, the learners may risk to acquire incorrect structures of the target language. Induction and explication can be both used in order to have a thorough grammatical lesson. For instance, beginner learners of English might be helped with their native language in order to absorb the lesson well. However, more advanced classes can be taught grammar through induction, using the target language only.

3.1.4 Psychological Orientation

The fourth dimension of a language teaching method that Steinberg et al (2001) have explored concerns the idea of the philosophy behind the principles of the method. This latter has certain psychological assumptions that, if understood well, can determine the teacher's choice of a method, and even his attitude.

Based on his presumptions, which are in turn formed from the idea that human beings are influenced thoroughly by their external environment, a behaviourist teacher would rely on positive reinforcements when his learners do well. The same concept applies to punishments if they do not do well so that they would not repeat the mistake. A behaviourist is more likely to drill his students to learn the present simple for example. For him, habit formation has a significant role to learn a foreign language. Hence, drill activities, repetitive practices, verbal reinforcement, and establishing rules are the behaviourist teacher preferred techniques in his language classroom.

The audiolingual method, that we are going to discuss shortly after, is the realisation of the behaviourism theory. For Fauziati (2016), Behaviourism in a language classroom is applied based on the following principles: the central focus is on the learner, the considered behaviour is a verbal one (since we are dealing with language), the stimulus is the lesson, the response is the students' feedback to the stimulus, and the reinforcement is the teacher's approbation.

The other orientation, according to Steinberg et al (2001), is known as Mentalism, a language theory that was put forward by Noam Chomsky in the 1950's. A mentalist teacher would give space to his learners to act in a freer way. For him, the learner acquires the language thanks to an innate capacity. A mentalist teacher is more likely to believe that "the greater the exposure to the language, the more effectively the learner can formulate and revise his hypotheses about the structure of the language" (B. Salim, 2001, p. 39). Hence, the language classroom has to include any sort of meaningful and natural examples, or samples, of the second language being taught (Ibid).

What Steinberg et al (2001) are trying to explain is that the teacher's psychological orientation is of high importance when it comes to language teaching. That is to say, it has an influence on how the teacher's method is built.

To look at this matter from a different angle, the teacher has to build his lesson in accordance with his learner's needs. He does not have to choose between a behaviourist and a mentalist theory. Rather, a combination of both might do well in delivering his ideas. Simply, according to us, a language classroom is a hybrid environment in which many personalities, mentalities, feelings, and ways of learning meet. For that, an amalgamation of all what is needed is helpful, and if the construction of a lesson requires that, it would be better not to stick to only one orientation.

3.1.5 Linguistic Orientation

This orientation, as mentioned in Steinberg et al (2001), is straightforwardly put to deal with the teacher's definition of the nature of language. This is about the way he regards the notion of the sentence and how it is structured. Needless to say, structuralism holds the basics of Behaviourism. Hence, for a structuralist like Bloomfield, the syntactic analysis of a sentence as 'Jack runs' is said to be an arrangement of word classes (Noun (Jack) + Verb (runs) or an order of phrases (Noun Phrase (Jack) + Verb Phrase (runs). However, Chomsky's (1957, 1965) famous examples, as a reaction to structuralism in the 1950s and 1960s, 'John is easy to please' and 'John is eager to please', can never be dissected with that modest syntactic surface structure providing the fact that both sentences are similar in this respect, that is to say, Noun + Verb + Adjective + Preposition + Verb.

So, a mentalist teacher would teach the two sentences by analysing the semantic relationships that uphold them. To explain, he could explain that the sentence 'John is easy to please', 'John' is the object of 'easy to please' (people please him), but in the other one 'John is eager to please', 'John' is the subject of ' eager to please' (He pleases other people). Inside the language classroom, thus, the teacher has dissimilar notions to offer to his learners considering this matter.

The point is, considering the linguistic orientation of a teacher, the kernel of sentences will be seen in quite different ways. In other words, this orientation undoubtedly influences the ways sentences are to be taught to the learners, which in turn affects the teaching method itself.

If we regard this last orientation, that Steinberg et al (2001) acknowledge, as inherently related to the linguistic features that the teacher relies on when realising his lessons, we should also consider that if the teacher's linguistic orientation is not beneficial sufficiently in terms of the learners' linguistic outcome, it would not be easy for him to opt for the other linguistic

orientation since this has to do with his principles and way of conceiving things in life as a whole.

3.2 Classical Language Teaching Methods

After understanding the basic foundations of the teaching methods termed as the five dimensions, we will start dealing with the most influential foreign language teaching methods. These are the very first language teaching methods that were employed as an attempt to teach foreign and second languages. In this part of the research then, Grammar-Translation, Natural, Direct and audiolingual methods will be dealt with in a thorough analysis of each one so that a complete image of the language teaching methods will be clear.

3.2.1 The Grammar-Translation Method

According to Steinberg et al (2001), this method fundamentally includes two general constituents, as the name suggests, the use of the mother tongue to explain the grammatical rules of the target language, and the employment of translation to teach vocabulary items. For them, this use of translation in teaching is the oldest of all known language teaching techniques. It is even traced back in ancient Greece and Rome.

The GTM's later form used in language classrooms was refined in order to teach numerous classes unlike it was the case for its original purpose. For Steinberg et al (2001), the GT method in its modern version is considered as an endeavour to come out with a language teaching method designed especially for mass education. During the Middle Ages, say Steinberg et al (2001), learning a foreign language was limited to individuals. The idea was that the adult learner started the process of learning, by himself for some intellectual reasons, relying only on studying the grammar and then applying it to reading using a dictionary. With the spread of formal schools, that type of language learning had to be adjusted to suit the new requirements of a mass education language classroom. Eventually, Grammar and translation

were kept in the modernised form of the GT method since teachers, back then, had gone through the same training depending on these techniques.

The typical structure of the GT method encompasses a piece of writing, in the foreign language to be read, a number of words with their translations, all along with the teacher's explanation, employing the learners' mother tongue, paying attention on important grammatical constituents in the text which are related to the lesson. In the realm of this method, at the end of the lesson, the teacher provides some exercises for practice. Those exercises fluctuate between translation and asking questions about grammar. Most of the time, in the GT method, the translation part is generally carried out from the target language to the native language, and rarely the other way around. As far as the teacher's role is concerned, during the lesson, most of the time, it is devoted to explaining the grammatical details, and some other time asking his students about a specific translation, and/or asking them read a certain passage aloud and then explain it.

Perhaps the reason why many educational institutions used to apply the GT method (and still do it) even if it denies dealing with the speaking skill, is that it has some advantages which promote it to be very practical in certain situations. As an illustration, the GT method is very effective for Non-native teachers who have an average level of fluency in the target language, or incomplete knowledge about it. Furthermore, self-education is an important aspect in life, for that, the GT method is very suitable for students who want to learn a foreign language by themselves. Relying on books, their grammar, and their translations makes it obvious that they are undergoing the GTM techniques. For Steinberg et al (2001), the most important advantage of the GT method is its "adaptability to changing linguistic and psychological theories" (p.195). In other words, the grammar translation method can be adapted to any of the language theories. Whether the teacher's linguistic and psychological orientations are behaviourist or mentalist, the method can still be applied conveniently. "Whether a grammatical point is to be explained

101

according to Chomsky's or Bloomfield's theory of grammar is of no concern to the method" (ibid).

Now, if one is to evaluate the GT method, one would probably look at its drawbacks too. However, we can never deny that it can be successful in teaching a very big part of the language since many students, when it was the only method applied, managed to get advanced levels in second languages. Hence, the major deficiencies linked to this method are as follows. In the GT method, communication is ignored. The method focuses mainly on reading which explains why many learners fail to communicate in a real-life situation even after a long period of learning. Another serious disadvantage of the language teaching method is that it fails, completely, to be used in a classroom of young children. Providing the fact that they are not able to read or deal with grammar, the GT method is not appropriate for them.

A key idea which might be of high concern to our research problem is that in the grammar translation method there is a lucid absence of speaking practices. It devotes very little consideration to pronunciation. We can say that this method is not interested in the communicative aspects of the language. Despite the fact that the GTM is of paramount help to the development of teaching/learning languages, we are afraid that it would not be the appropriate language teaching method on which we can rely to solve the problem posed at the very beginning of this research as far as teaching speaking is concerned.

3.2.2 The Natural Method

Questioning is fundamental in the development of any field. Thus, the grammar translation method was questioned and criticised, as we have seen, in order to come up with another language teaching method which tries to fill in its gaps. So, the natural method (NM) was put forward as a response to it. As cited in Steinberg et al (2001), the idea of the natural method was inspired from the works of Comenius (1568) and Rousseau (1780). The Age of

Enlightenment brought up new insights concerning the natural aspects of humans and their languages that gave rise to new ways of dealing with a language classroom.

The idea of the natural method is simple. It says that we have to follow the same steps a child goes through in acquiring his mother tongue. According to Steinberg et al (2001), these steps, respectively, are speech comprehension, speech production, and after that, reading and writing. Importantly, Grammar was taught indirectly, it is in this period of time that context started to be taken into consideration. Meaning, this method stresses on the idea that grammar should not be taught explicitly, i.e., exposing the language to the learners by creating contextualised situations which allow them to learn grammar and vocabulary of the second language.

For the sake of explanation, under the umbrella of the natural method, the teacher is not supposed to prepare the situation or lesson materials. Instead, he has to boost his learners' spontaneous reactions by starting spontaneous conversations. Lessons were taught only with the target language, using the body language to explain. Imitating the manner in which parents would talk to their children, the teacher uses language that is suitable to the learners' level of understanding. A point that is necessary to our research has to be pointed out the speaking skill was the pivotal idea in the natural method. That is to say, the learners were encouraged to participate in contextualised activities, which makes this method suitable for communicative purposes.

The strongest aspect of the natural method was that teaching the language naturally led to a very good outcome of the learners in both receptive and productive skills. Nevertheless, this method, clearly, could not escape criticism. The first issue that we can think of is that the natural method demands teachers of very high levels. A teacher who is able to create such an environment in which the learners experience the target language in an interesting situation to participate in has to be one of the best teachers in terms of language and linguistic knowledge,

and this is a requirement that is not easily reached. Another weak point which makes the NM deficient in some situations is when dealing with large-size classes. Generally, to apply a communication-based method like the natural method in a large size language classroom is very difficult, or say impossible. This can make a real problem for underdeveloped countries that are not able to allocate language classes including less than 20 learners.

In this method, the teacher is supposed to encourage his learners to do activities such as problem-solving tasks, and games. To explain, the aim of the problem-solving activities is that learners are stimulated to figure out a correct answer or solution to a certain problem. Games, on the other hand, are seen as entertainment activities, and they can be used as means to develop language competency.

It is obvious, at this level, that the importance of communication has started to be taken into account. Learners are motivated to interact in the classroom; they are not limited in terms of creativity. This means that the speaking skill can be improved with this method. Nevertheless, regarding the drawbacks of the NM mentioned above, it still lacks several points in order to be said to be the suitable language teaching method for the speaking skill.

3.2.3 The Direct Method

The early Twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new language teaching method, which was based on the Natural Method idea, called the direct method. As might be expected, this latter focuses on the communicative skills, learning the language through context, and teaching grammar indirectly.

With the natural method techniques, the proponents of the DM, such as Harold Palmer (1922), saw that by relying on scientific knowledge driven from the fields of linguistics and psychology, teachers can make of their language classrooms a better place. In other words, they believed that using the spontaneous lessons of the natural method with some scientific

modifications can get a better outcome. Thus, not to get confused, a comparison between the DM and the NM is delivered below.

Both the direct method and the natural method have a mentalistic orientation regarding that both of them see students like active thinking members of the language classroom that can be part of the language learning process. Besides, the two methods rely on an inductive way of teaching grammar. Still, in the direct method language materials are systematically prepared, something which is absent in the natural method. Those language materials should be based on the order of language complexity. The present simple, as an example, has to be dealt with before the present perfect. The main purpose of this is to make the learning process easier for the student.

As far as the procedures inside the classroom are concerned, the direct method is known for its interest in the students' communicative competence. Hence, the DM includes many activities and exercises that boost the learners' oral performance. Also, we can notice the influence of the natural method on the direct method concerning the language acquisition order that this latter focuses on. According to Steinberg et al (2001), the DM devotes many efforts to speech understanding in the first place, then speech production, and after that reading and then writing.

Although this method relies most of the time on the natural acquisition of language in its way of teaching, it, from time to time, allows a verbal translations and grammatical clarifications of certain difficult items to confirm the learners' understanding.

Communicative competence is boosted, which in turn stimulates the learners to speak. This might be of much help to produce sound oral capacities in learners. Contextualised conversations are crucial to help the learners be spontaneous in their speaking. In the classroom,

they have to be free and not constrained by a language teaching method that prevents them from conversing freely in order to improve their speech production and reach native-like levels.

3.2.4 The Audiolingual Method

With the arrival of the Audiolingual method (ALM) in the 1950s, the direct method started to vanish as being less effective though it worked for a long period of time. The Audiolingual method was upheld by proponents like Fries (1945, 1949) and Lado (1957). So, this part of the research concerns itself with the audiolingual method as one of the fundamental language teaching methods in history.

The impact of the American linguistics and psychology on the creation and fast emergence of the Audiolingual method was so clear (Steinberg et al 2001). To explain, American Structural linguists' (such as Edward Sapir, and Leonard Bloomfield) language studies and the American Behaviourists' (like B. F. Skinner) helped the ALM to strive to a high extent. The theory was created during a period of time when there was a huge amount of linguistic and psychological knowledge which took the ALM to another level.

In fact, the audiolingual method claimed that language in the first place is but a structure of sounds used as a means of communication within a society, which makes writing its additional derivative system (Carroll, 1963). So, we can understand that the major goal of the ALM is the communicative competence of learners. While basing on the oral performance, the ALM uses dialogues to create habit formation. That is to say, the learners are supposed to reach communicative competence when they create new habits in the second language and throw away the old negative habits if there were any (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

As being based on the theory of Behaviourism, it would be obvious that the ALM defines language as a type of human behaviour that can be learned depending on creating correct speech habits (Thornbury 2000). As claims Dendrinos (1992), the pivotal purpose of the

audiolingual method is to encourage students to get new habits of the target language. Richards and Rodgers (2001) have the same idea concerning habit formation. They believe that language learning is essentially an operation of automatic habit formation in which appropriate habits are created by providing students with a sound language instead of by letting them make mistakes. For this particular reason, language drills that students are asked to repeat are most of the time employed to form positive habits. Simply, this is the principle which claims that the extent to which the idea is repeated determines the habit formation in learners which in turn defines the degree of learning the target language.

Moreover, for Brooks (1964), this method is characterised by many features that were taken from the direct method, i.e., prepared situations, the use of materials that follow the same natural order of language acquisition, the use of language drills and dialogue memorization. However, the ALM did not opt for using natural situations and spontaneous speech unlike the direct method.

The audiolingual method had a very prestigious place in teaching languages. Teachers used it and looked for its new updates in order to improve their ways of teaching. In accordance with Steinberg et al (2001), during the 1950s Fries and Lado used to teach at the university of Michigan at Arm Arbor which was the ALM heart.

Once more, without denying that research during that period of time did its best to come up with a teaching method that is, relatively, better than the previous ones, the ALM was still lacking the capability to reach the goals it promised. It, moreover, did not succeed to result in that learners' level where they can communicate fluently using the target language in real life situations. Notwithstanding, it was exactly at this time that the famous Chomskyan revolution, which was able to question, misbelieve, and then challenge, all the prior teaching methods including the audiolingual method, started to appear.

Even though the audiolingual method main interest was in communicative competence, their learners did not achieve high levels of speaking. Perhaps this is due to the way it used to drill them. They were asked to imitate and repeat what the teacher was saying, so they were not free enough to speak spontaneously. This might not be beneficial for them to react spontaneously in real life situations.

3.3 Noam Chomsky's Insights

Thinking outside the box made Noam Chomsky's ideas so persuasive in the field of teaching languages. His criticism of structuralism and behaviourism in the 1950s and 1960s were scientifically and logically justified so that he could take the two theories down succeeding to motivate researchers after him to dig deeper and make his ideas valid even for second and foreign language teaching.

To make Noam Chomsky's theory clear, a brief historical overview has to be given in this part of the research. There is a debate that is about whether linguistic capacities are inborn or acquired. There are the nativists who see that children are born with some prior linguistic knowledge, but we have the empiricists who believe that children acquire language from the outside world (with experience). Furthermore, from 1940s up to the 1950s, behaviourism was the ruling theory of language learning. B. F. Skinner's theory stands for the idea that without a stimulus there would be no response implying that a child has to be stimulated with the language in order to learn it. Nonetheless, Chomsky's mentalist theory supports its counter evidence with the argument that many children are noticed to produce structures of their mother tongue that they have never heard before (Carroll, 2005). That was the starting point of Chomsky's theory. To introduce his idea, he came up with what he called the language acquisition device. After that, he put forward the Universal Grammar theory in order to explain and emphasize his new insights.

Chomsky (1965) claims that universal grammar (UG) is a mental capacity to learn languages that human beings are innately equipped with. According to Cook (1994), UG theory attempts to interpret the nature of language, its learning, and its use. Basically, it characterizes what processes children go through when acquiring their first language (Skehan, 1998).

It has to be mentioned here that Chomsky's UG theory was put forward based on studies only on the first language acquisition. His works were later on applied to second language acquisition. Importantly, the influence of Chomsky's theory was, and still is, very deep. When one sees the extent to which second-language researchers relied on Noam Chomsky's fundamental notions in linguistics, one will, recognise the great impact that the field of teaching witnessed back then, and now. In agreement with Steinberg et al (2001), in the present time, there is a very limited number of theorists and teachers who do not take the Mentalistic idea into account to deal with second language problems. As a matter of fact, Chomsky's ideas caused the downfall of the Audiolingual method and the creation of many other teaching methods whose principal concepts rest on the Mentalistic approach.

3.4 Underachieving Language Teaching Methods

When the Audiolingual Method was proved to be ineffective, the 1960s experienced the emersion of several language teaching methods. Despite that, very few of them could survive, and a smaller number of them continued to be used. Steinberg et all (2001) mention four of the teaching methods that could not survive, i.e., the cognitive code, the community language learning, the silent way, and suggestopedia. So, in this part of the research we attempt to deal with the teaching methods that were not able to succeed and have broad usage, and also, disappeared quickly.

Importantly, despite that these language teaching methods did not have the opportunity to prevail and emerge in the educational context at that time, no researcher can deny their

significance in understanding the process of teaching and learning as well as the study of the nature of language. Of course, they brought new ideas, new insights, and new techniques in the field of teaching foreign languages. We can even detect some of their techniques in the coming, and more refined teaching methods. Thus, even though they vanished in a short period of time, they participated in the improvement of teaching English as a foreign language.

3.4.1 Cognitive Code

In the 1960s, the Cognitive Code method was the first reaction against the audiolingual method adopting Chomsky's mentalistic theory to the teaching of a second language. Regarding all the changes that happened during that period of time, concerning second language teaching, a new language teaching method was required. That is why researchers, theorists, and linguists had to come up with a language teaching approach that was supposed to meet the needs back then.

Proponents of this tendency who are associated with this orientation, e.g., Chastain (1971), and Donaldson (1971), join the mentalists in their beliefs, support generative grammar concerning their linguistics, and employ eclecticism in their methodology (Steinberg et all, 2001). In the cognitive code method, grammar used to be taught both inductively and deductively. As far as the four skills are concerned, teachers adopting this method did not focus on a typical order to teach them. Rather, they used to blend all of them by uttering the sentence and writing it on the board to ask students to read it. This way they managed to teach the four skills at once. Seemingly, that approach to language teaching was not adequate enough to reach advanced levels of the target language.

That is, since the cognitive-code method of the 1970s was based on Chomsky's universal grammar theory, it could be very clear that it stood for the idea that learning a language necessitates active mental processes, and that it was not just a mere operation of habit

formation (the basic idea of the audiolingual method that was dominant before). Hence, it was an attempt that invoked lots of questioning and criticism making it insufficient in terms of the learner's outcomes it had promised to achieve.

3.4.2 Community Language Learning

Community Language Learning (CLL), known also as counselling learning, was advocated by Charles A. Curran in the 1960s. Charles A. Curran is best known as being the creator of community language learning, he was a counsellor-therapist who viewed second-language learning as a counselling session (Curran, 1972, 1976).

Furthermore, playing the role of a counsellor, the teacher deals with the learners as clients. For that, the learners are supposed to converse freely with one another while the counsellor, or the teacher, is there just to guide and lead that conversation. Thus, the learners have circular seating arrangements and interact with one another using only the target language, the teacher might use translation to help them say what they intend to say while standing behind the learner who is speaking (Richards & Rodgers, 2002). Here is what happens often, the student says what he would like to say using his mother tongue and the teacher translates that to the target language. After that, the learner repeats the translation to his classmates who are supposed to reply, and in case they do not know how to say that using the language being taught, the operation is to be redone.

If we compare Curran's authentic CLL method of language teaching with its varieties that were used later on we can glimpse some differences. According to La Forge, certain versions of the CLL are different from the original one to a high extent (1983). To explain, sometimes teachers record the sentences stated by the learners in order to transcribe them, to discuss them, and finally memorize them. Afterwards, time is given to the learners to ask

questions about the grammatical items, and structures of the language, and the role of the teacher is to give comprehensive clarifications (Stevick, 1980).

It is noticeable then that communicative language learning has some basic principles of the grammar translation method. Although those later versions kept the group interaction aspect in order to make the method special and different from the grammar translation method, perhaps that was the reason behind its collapse.

As a matter of fact, to come across some language teaching methods which are influenced by the previous ones is expected. It is obvious that we may find some features of the earlier methods in the later ones for we believe that the language teaching methods, historically speaking, were chained with one another. Each one completes the other. Every language teaching method came to rectify/improve the previous one, even though they seemed to deny each other by criticism, all of their knowledge is what takes language to the next level.

3.4.3 The Silent Way

Another language teaching method which did not have the possibility to survive is the silent way (SW). It was created by Caleb Gattegno (1972, 1976). The idea is simple, the silent way, as its name suggests, is characterised by the teacher's silence in the classroom, i.e., the silent way of teaching the language. From the part of the learners, they have to be encouraged to use their own abilities to understand, and learn the language by themselves. In Gattegno's opinion, the two processes, first and second language acquisition, are quite dissimilar due to the fact that learners of a foreign language have previous knowledge about a first language. Also, they have adult cognitive abilities that can allow them to deal with the target language differently. For that simple reason, teaching a foreign language has to "replace a natural approach by one that is very artificial and, for some purposes, strictly controlled" (Gattegno, 1972, p. 12).

The silent way sees language learning as an operation of discovery and creativity, so students are asked to guess the rules and language structures that are included in the teaching material that is introduced to them. However, this is very hard for the learners since the teacher remains silent which means that they lack input to be analysed and acquired. This, obviously, made it very weak in terms of its general concept of the nature of language, and teaching/learning it.

The SW method somehow inverts the natural order of language acquisition focusing first on speech production before speech comprehension which is not the case in other communication-based language teaching methods. The teacher remains as silent as possible while motivating his students to talk as much as possible. Thus, this has to be strenuous and stressful for the learners because they do not possess enough knowledge to interact in the target language, especially during the initial levels of learning. That is to say, under the SW method, the teacher does not show the learners correct pronunciation since he keeps silent, but rather, he presents some charts and points to the letters and waits for the correct pronunciation from within the learners and makes that as a model pronunciation.

The classroom in the realm of the silent way includes physical objects, like the coloured rods that are used to clarify the meaning of vocabulary items and grammar. In its best time, although the acceptance of some teachers to use the silent way, many students were not very enthusiastic vis-a-vis the way they were asked to find out grammatical rules by themselves. Paradoxically, this language teaching method fosters cooperation amongst the learners instead of competition (Richards & Rodgers, 1986); competition is, most of the time, the usual norm between learners.

3.4 Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia was established by a Bulgarian educator in the 1970s whose name is Georgi Lozanov. As considered to be the strangest of all language teaching methods, it uses music as a means of relaxation in order to boost students' memorization of linguistic structures and grammatical rules. In other words, since Lozanov (1978) claims that the only issue in a language classroom is memorization, he stresses on the idea of relaxation in order to help his learners memorise the target language. For that to happen, according to him, music is a very crucial aspect to relax in order to improve memorisation in learners, which in turn improves the learning process.

Moreover, the main concept of this method is that it creates a certain attitude of consciousness in learners that leads them to language learning. This is described, by Lozanov (1978) as 'hypermnesia', which means super memory, and it is reached following some mind relaxation techniques that are for the purpose of raising the learners' self-confidence which in turn make the process of language learning easier. More exactly, to reach mind relaxation, classical music has to be played at a precise tempo (the tempo, in the field of music is the speed of the musical rhythm). Thence, Relaxation aims at encouraging students to achieve the required mental readiness.

Basically, suggestopedia claims that the learners have to be equipped with comfortable armchairs and delightfully furnished rooms. The teacher's role in the classroom to build learners confidence is crucial (they are supposed to get self-confidence from their teacher's behaviour). Thus, he is more likely to propose (or say 'suggest', as in the name of the method) some situations to his learners to help them be very confident in the classroom by influencing them. Strikingly, Lozanov (1978) asserts that, in the method of suggestopedia, learners are able to learn 1800 words, speak a grammatically sound language, and read any piece of writing only within 24 days.

Didactically speaking, language teachers applying suggestopedia in their classrooms usually rely on dialogues which include vocabulary items and linguistic structures that the learners are to understand and memorise. Hence, the teaching materials are first written and then spoken. Besides, the written form of the lesson is translated to the mother tongue (grammar-translation method techniques are most of the time present). What characterises this teaching method is how the teaching materials are presented in accordance with the students' behaviours and attitudes. For Steinberg et al (2001), the teacher is supposed to read a dialogue loudly, three times, in a particular manner while the learners are relaxing on their armchairs, all this happens with the music played on.

Conforming to Bancroft (1972), that unique way of the teachers' reading is crucial. It involves clear control of intonation sounds using printed words to illustrate. Nevertheless, the exact manner of reading was not pointed out, it lacks precision. In other words, the proponents of suggestopedia did not clarify how sounds, intonations and timing must be used in a specific way (Stevick, 1976).

It is true that to employ suggestopedia in a language classroom might lead to great outcome of learning; yet, it is very difficult to be applied at the same time. As all the teaching methods, suggestopedia did never escape criticism. Firstly, we can notice that this method includes many aspects of the grammar-translation method as we have already pointed out. Steinberg et al (2001) depict it as being the grammar-translation method with music. That is, one can say that the only thing left from that method for the present time is that some teachers play slow music before they start their lesson in order to gain the learners' attention.

3.5 Surviving Language Teaching Methods

The methods we are about to investigate are the most influential ones from which the field of teaching/learning has benefited to a very high degree. Although many of them received

harsh criticism, they were used for long periods of time, and whose experiences were advantageous to create new methods of teaching with more potential to achieve better results. These are; total physical response, communicative language teaching, and natural approach.

3.5.1 Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) is more like a natural speech-based method. To explain, it is interested in language comprehension before language production. In the classroom, the teacher is not allowed to use the mother tongue. Physical objects and contextualized situations are relied on to make the learners induce meaning. The teacher intends to motivate and help his learners infer the grammatical rules, and then, obviously, speak the target language once they are ready.

This method was developed by James Asher in the 1970s. He believes that it is characterized by the principle that the students learn the language through physical actions following the teacher's commands using the second language (Asher, 1977). Its idea is that the TPR method depends on the coordination of speech and physical movement to teach the language. Seemingly, the teacher explains the lesson giving physical commands to students using the language being taught, and then the learners participate with body movement, also. In other words, Asher (1976) claims that memory is reinforced by motor activity which in turn leads students to remember and install language structures, vocabulary items, and grammatical rules easily. An important detail has to be mentioned here which is that the TPR took many insights from the direct method. However, James Asher focused more on physical movements and makes them the heart of the language teaching method.

At the very beginning of a total physical response classroom dealing with novice learners of English, as stated by Steinberg et al (2001), physical commands include "Stand up, sit down, Open the door, walk to the table, point to the table, point to the door, where is the

table? Where is the book? etc." (p. 207). Then, the lessons get complicated more and more when the initial lessons are well understood, i.e., the degree to which the commands are complex depends on the level of learners. The point is, even at initial stages of the learning, the learners are presented with contextualized sentences because meaning is derived from the situation. Teachers are more likely to show the meaning of the vocabulary items by pointing to their concrete representations while performing the commands for the students to respond to them. Proponents of this method argue that using the TPR will gain learners the capacity to learn 25 new lexical items within one hour, in addition to several language structures (Steinberg et al, 2001).

It is claimed that the total physical response method is similar to the direct method in terms of strengths and weaknesses. To achieve that classroom environment where students learn communicatively through contextualised lessons, teachers with high levels in terms of fluency, creativity, and language mastery are highly required (Steinberg et al, 2001), a matter that could be a real issue especially for underdeveloped countries. Furthermore, the total physical response, on the word of Scott and Ytreberg (1990), is said to suit only children's way of language learning. For them, children often understand what they are told by focusing on body language, that is, physical movements are of much importance for them to learn.

To put it differently, adult learners do not concentrate on actions since they are grown up enough to deal more with the content of the communication. Another issue with the TPR which is pointed out by Steinberg et al (2001), is that outside the classroom, learners who are used to the physical movements of the TPR cannot learn by themselves providing the fact that they always wait for an input which is mixed with body movements. Adults, most of the time, do not feel at ease walking on every side of the classroom and performing things, this can create an affective filter prohibiting language learning from happening.

According to the literature reviewed (Asher, 2007; Peck, 2001; Curtain and Dahlberg, 2010; Steinberg et al, 2001), the limitations of the total physical response are many. However, we stick to the most important ones. Although it seems to be entertaining and uncomplicated for young children, it is not considered as a very creative language teaching method for the reason that learners do not have the opportunity to express themselves in a creative manner. In this context, despite the possibility that the TPR is a great method to teach vocabulary items where the classroom size does not really make a problem, it is deficient given the fact that not every aspect of the language can be taught with physical movements, like abstract words, which makes it incapable of standing alone, i.e., it has to be incorporated with other language teaching methods.

3.5.2 Communicative Language Teaching

In the history of language teaching, researchers, theorists, linguists, and specialists have tried to design and develop each new method in order to meet the desired levels of learning a second language. However, they all failed drastically. One can say, though, that the most successful and influential teaching method was the communicative language teaching method as it had, and still has, an impact on every syllabus designed to teach a language. For that, this part of the research concentrates on it, giving it much more space providing that it deserves meticulous analysis and comments.

Truth is, many linguists have figured out, recently, that there is an absence of compatibility between language research and its practices inside the classroom. The fact that many language teaching methods failed to meet the achievements they promised means that there is a gap between theory and its practice. We believe that communicative language teaching, though its limitations are many, has succeeded to fill in that gap to a high extent. The deep influence that it had, and still has, on language teaching in general proves this to be right.

From the 1970s up to the present time, the available literature on this matter reveals that the learners must be exposed to meaningful and communicative activities involving grammatical structures so that they can end up at advanced levels of language mastery (Hatch 1978; Spada 1987). Since the emergence of communicative language teaching, as a reaction against the failure of the previously used language teaching methods, the focus on communicativeness as the major aim to learn a target language, and prioritizing meaning and context have been the dominant factors that most syllabus designers take into account.

Nevertheless, some researchers claim that the CLT has few similarities with some previous methods such as the audiolingual method (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Aski, 2003). In fact, this is more likely to happen providing that the CLT came after several teaching methods whose knowledge and experiences have to be considered to come up with a more effective method.

Research in the field has shifted its concern towards the literature on the CLT to assert that it does not belong to any theory of language given the fact that it relies on principles form here and there. Differently stated, in its intrinsic principles, the CLT has the aspects of both, mentalism and behaviorism. Speaking of which, the communicative language teaching approach principles include: (1) "The communication principle: Activities that involve real communication promote learning", (2) "The task principle: Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning", (3) "The meaningfulness principle: Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p 86).

By definition, communicative language teaching is "based on the premise that successful language learning involves not only a knowledge of the structures and forms of the language, but also the functions and purposes that a language serves in different communicative settings" (Lightbown and Spada,1999 p. 172). In other words, the CLT concentrates more on

context rather than form. It teaches the language, not about the language, a very important point which many of the previous teaching methods missed.

By the same token, for Savignon (2002), the four components of communicative competence presented by Canale and Swain (1980), that are, grammatical, discourse, sociocultural and strategic competence, are achieved by practicing a great variety of communicative contextualized situations. Simply, an approach to language teaching which considers communicativeness and creativity as being very important factors to learn the language appropriately is needed (Omaggio, 2001).

Until now, we have seen that the CLT appeared to react against focusing on the formal parts of the target language which was widespread amongst the majority of the preceding language teaching methods. Hence, teachers employing communicative language teaching stress on meaning before structure and form; communicative competence before grammatical competence. That is, contextualization is important, while making errors is seen as part of the learning operation, and not to be hampered at any cost.

Speaking of which, there has been always a debate on whether to stress on an approach teaching the language with an explicit analysis (one that relies on form), or an approach emphasizing on implicit instruction claiming that the second language can be taught only by exposing learners to it (one that relies on meaning). Researchers, that is to say, never agreed on this particular point. Each side has its arguments.

As we have seen, it may be noticeable that the former teaching methods, starting from the GTM up to the ALM, were, as a matter of principle, mainly formed on explicit language analysis syllabi. Those earlier methods viewed language as the main object of study where linguistic items were taught in an explicit way and each item or structure was taught in isolation

(Long & Robinson, 1998). In other words, they used to focus on form ignoring the intrinsic and crucial importance of meaning in context.

During the last half-century, an excessive number of researches (Krashen, 1985; Long, 1983; Ellis 2002b) reveals that this way of teaching was proved to be drastically inefficient to reach the desired aims. As a result, for the purpose of remedying the nonsuccess of a focus on form, a novel approach had to be put forward. For that reason, there was a shift toward a focus on a meaning approach which basically argues that adults can learn a new language approximately the same way young children acquire their mother tongue (Schwartz 1993; Zobl 1995). Even more, this point of view categorically denies certain teaching aspects of the earlier methods like teaching grammar explicitly, correcting errors, and that intensive repetition of the structures of the foreign language as a means of learning, i.e., pattern drills (see Krashen and Terrell's (1983) Natural Approach that will be discussed later on). They claim, thus, that what the learners need is just a maximal exposure to a meaningfully structured language to achieve better levels of learning.

Nevertheless, and as no method or idea is perfect, sooner enough, Harley and Swain (1984) and Swain (1985), in their studies on French immersion programs, concluded that maximal exposure to communicatively meaningful language was, again, insufficient to ensure high degrees of communicative competence. In other words, they observed that speakers who had been exposed to the language for years could reach very acceptable levels of proficiency but their performance could not even be close to native-like levels, particularly in terms of their grammatical competence. That is, giving the importance only to the message (meaning) and completely ignoring the form could lead to inadequate language competence (Nassaji ,1999). By the same token, some research demonstrates that students who go through formal instructions appear to learn the language in a faster and more grammatically sound rate than

the ones who rely only on environmental learning (Ellis 1994). A result that made the focus only on meaning approach a bit in trouble.

It has to be mentioned here that just few years before, some studies talked about the usefulness of including contextually communicative practices to those grammar-based teaching methods (Savignon 1972). Moreover, these studies revealed that the learners who were supported with communicative activities outdid the ones who did not, at the level of grammatical competence (Montgomery & Eisenstein 1985). At some time later, research took a further step to propose an amalgamation of both, focus on form and focus on meaning. Actually, this is what Long (1991) termed as 'focus on form'. That is to say, he proposed the idea which said that teaching a foreign language should combine form and meaning (Lightbown & Spada 1990; Doughty, 1991; Lightbown 1991; White 1991; White, Spada, Lightbown & Ranta 1991; Doughty & Williams 1998; Harley 1998).

To explain, this approach argues that the aim of the focus on form is to guide students to care about forms of the language in the contextualized input they receive within a lesson which focuses on meaning. What they were trying to say is that within our general aim which should be a focus on meaning, a focus on form has to be included. This is how they claim that advanced degrees of learning the target language will be achieved. A combination between form and meaning has to be made, hence.

Therefore, most advocates of the CLT method encourage the classroom practices which include attention to form to sustain meaningful communications (Nassaji 1999; Lee & VanPatten 2003). This idea, seemingly, was adopted by many researchers in the field. Take for example Savignon (2002) when he says that "while involvement in communicative events is seen as central to language development, this involvement necessarily requires attention to form" (p. 7). Eventually, the predominant majority syllabus designers, from that time on, who

follow the communicative language teaching approach are more likely to involve a balance between form-focused and meaning-focused practices in their syllabi.

Another point that has to be discussed when dealing with the CLT is input. The crucial significance of input has been the concern of many linguists and researchers (Harley and Swain,1984; Swain, 1985; Krashen 1985; Gass 1997; VanPatten 1996, 2000, 2003). Gass (1997) defines input as "… the single most important concept of second language acquisition" (p. 1). In other words, the concept of input is given much importance since it is considered as the key to second language teaching. Similarly, VanPatten (2003) confirms that "the discovery of the role of input completely altered the way in which scholars conceptualized how languages are learned" (p. 25). Hence, the crucial role of the input that learners receive is very decisive to the extent to which languages are taught. As a matter of fact, communicative language teaching basic principle is that it deals with input in a different way than the earlier language teaching methods. For that, this part of the research is devoted to discuss the features of input.

We can describe appropriate input as the language that is understandable and from which the learner can (1) get a meaningful message, and (2) learn the language and develop his linguistic knowledge based on it. That is to say, exposing the learners to contextually meaningful input has a great impact on their learning of all the linguistic aspects (morphosyntax, vocabulary, and even the sociolinguistic norms of a language community).

Notwithstanding, the findings outlined by Harley and Swain (1984) and Swain (1985), as we have already mentioned, reveal that only exposing learners to input is not sufficient to guarantee language learning. As maintained by Nassaji and Fotos (2004) it is "necessary for learners to notice target forms in the input; otherwise, they process input for meaning only and do not attend to specific forms, and consequently fail to process and acquire them" (p. 128) (see also VanPatten, 1996). To put it another way, input does not have to be presented solely without paying attention to the formal aspects of the language, otherwise the learners would

still make grammatical mistakes, and this is the idea of the amalgamation between meaning and form that we have tackled shortly before.

There is no convention amongst researchers concerning the features of the perfect input to be presented to learners. However, we think that appropriate input, or say beneficial input, is that which is "comprehensible and can be turned into intake" (Krashen, 1983, p. 138-139). Speaking of which, the intake is defined as the linguistic features which are fully learned by the students (Krashen, 1983). To conclude, the students have to be exposed to a multiplicity of contextually comprehensible input, and at the same time, provided with sufficient opportunities to analyse and learn both its form and meaning.

In the literature about the CLT, the way of teaching grammar has a prestigious importance. Do we have to teach grammar in the communicative language teaching classroom? Since the 1980s following Krashen's (1981) differentiation between the two concepts acquisition and learning, several studies claim that the classical way in which grammar was taught was not useful to improve the learning of L2 (Ellis 2002a). Thus, it is argued that only teaching grammar explicitly leads to construct merely declarative knowledge about the target language that would probably not be reachable in unprepared oral performances. In other words, explicit grammar instruction does not make learners able to speak the language freely in real life situations. Nonetheless, some counter studies conducted later on have demonstrated that explicit teaching of grammar can be used to support the communicative lesson for explanatory purposes in order to make sure that the learners have understood the linguistic item which in turn can be of much help to improve their level (Long, 1983; Doughty 1991; Norris & Ortega 2000; Ellis 2002b).

Hence, clearly enough, the question has to be put differently, i.e., how should grammar be taught? A huge number of researchers deny the idea that the classical way of teaching grammar can be of any help to develop the students' communicativeness (Wong & VanPatten

2003). Even more, VanPatten (2002) went a step further to emphasize that "the types of presentations and grammar practices in the vast majority of contemporary language textbooks, especially foreign language textbooks, are untenable as far as causing acquisition or even promoting it" (p. 111). So, the traditional way of teaching grammar was rejected by many theorists for it was proved to be deficient.

Any textbook of teaching English as a foreign language includes sections for the grammatical rules to be taught, but its way of teaching is left for the teacher to decide whether it would be explicit or implicit. In early methods of teaching, grammar was taught in the form of drills. During the time of the audiolingual method, mechanical drills were seen very important. But, in the 1970s, contextualized meaningful practices began to be presented, while mechanical drills were yet very significant. With the arrival of the communicative language teaching, after that, it was understood that learners required more opportunities to communicate their own meaning freely. Furthermore, Lee and VanPatten (2003) put emphasis on the idea that grammar is the central aspect of the language giving it a paramount interest to learn the language, they claim that communication should help the learning of grammar and not vice versa. In their own words, "communication is at the service of grammar rather than the other way around" (76).

When we say that meaning is of greatest importance in the CLT while meticulous attention to form has to be paid in order to reach the best outcome of learning, we mean that the perfect teaching approach is that which stresses on meaningful communications while taking form into account. Thence, the communicative language teaching method denies at all cots the classical method of grammar instruction which includes mechanical drills that are out of context and do not pay attention to meaning.

3.5.3 The Natural Approach

The natural approach (NA), which should not be confused with the natural method already dealt with in this chapter, was coined by Terrell (1977, 1982) and Krashen (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). As we have seen that there was a revolutionary research in the early 1980s, those paradigms and insights of language teaching led to the establishment of interesting notions and approaches. Besides the fact that the natural approach has some correspondence and similarity with the natural method of the nineteenth century, as we are going to see shortly after, it has much resemblance with other natural language processing methods like the direct method and the total physical response. Although it does not seem to be a new method, maybe it is a try to put forward a comprehensive framework of the processes involved in second-language acquisition relying on up-to-date studies (Steinberg et all, 2001). Let's consider it as a refurbished version of them.

Like the natural method, direct method, and total physical response, the idea that comprehension precedes production is stressed in the Natural Approach. In the realm of the natural approach, it is emphasised that production is postponed up to the time that the student is said to be ready.

According to Steinberg et al (2001), grammar is rarely explained because it is believed to be learned by receiving contextually and comprehensibly appropriate input. The complexity of sentences to be taught is considered. In the natural approach, the structures are introduced starting from the easy ones moving to the difficult ones which is typically the case in the direct method and total physical response.

The natural approach is described as a language teaching method whose main purpose is to create fundamental communicative skills in learners both oral and written. The natural approach aims at, as it is claimed, making students able to speak and understand the language,

and read and write it. The Natural Approach, as it is the case for other speech-based methods, employs visual representations and concrete material in addition to meaningful dialogues and situations in the classroom for language input (Krashen, S. D., &Terrell, T. D., 1998).

Stephen Krashen's (1982) affective filter encompasses the language learning factors like motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety as we have seen in Chapter 01. It is said to have a great impact on the process of learning a language, those learning factors are taken into account in the Natural approach. The advantageous situation in which the affective filter is low allowing the learning to occur freely is encouraged. In the natural approach, the learners are permitted to converse without having to worry about committing mistakes in order to boost their communicative skills. Because, the other way around, i.e., if their mistakes are not dealt with appropriately, and corrected inadequately, the affective filter is said to have the opposite impact preventing any learning from taking place due to learners' anxiety and lack of motivation for instance.

3.6 Comparing Between Important Methods

To dig deeper into teaching methods as a way to gain other insights and ideas, a comparison between some of them should be done hereby. That is, if we look closely to the similarities and dissimilarities which reside amongst the dominant language teaching methods, we shall understand better how they are constructed and how they were refined in order to improve the teaching/learning operation. Steinberg et al (2001) have dealt with some sort of a comparison between several language teaching methods, an idea which might be of a paramount relevance to our research. Therefore, we shall go further, in this part of the research analysing what they did.

3.6.1 The Grammar-Translation Method Vs. the Audiolingual Method

Among all the language teaching methods, two methods are of special interest to the available literature. These are the grammar-translation method and the audiolingual method. As

a matter of fact, they are special due to their constitutional principles. That is to say, the former was put forward based on the traditional teaching approaches that were employed to teach Latin and Greek back in the time. The latter, however, emerged based on the behaviouristic thoughts which were prevalent during that specific time. Both had their prestige and fame to be used widely.

In the GTM, there is the major gaol which is to teach the learners to read and interpret the literary texts of the target language, and then to focus on writing with clear neglection of speaking and listening. Nonetheless, as far as the audiolingual method is concerned, it has somehow, two sorts of aims, short-term and long-term ones. The ALM Short-term goals are teaching oral comprehension, speech production with accurate pronunciation, and then reading and writing. For the long-term goals, the ALM strives to achieve native-like fluency and pronunciation. Meaning, it prioritizes the oral skills, before moderate attention is paid to the other skills as the learners' level improves.

Perhaps the aspect which is similar in both methods is teacher-centeredness. In the GTM, learners are passive receivers of the linguistic knowledge provided by their teacher. They are not motivated to be part of the process. Quite similarly, in the ALM, the students are supposed to imitate their teacher without any intention to freely communicate or change the content of teaching. Hence, in both cases, the teacher is the main axis, not the learners. He is the sage on the stage teaching his lessons and the learners are there only to listen.

Scherer and Wertheimer (1964), as cited in Steinberg et al (2001), concluded that the grammar translation method outdid in reading and writing, but concerning speaking and listening, the audiolingual method prevailed. Seemingly, each method showed better results in what it claims to focus on. In another study that was conducted by Smith (1970), in which he compared the GTM with AL, and the amalgamation of the two, it was arrived at the same

conclusions confirming that the skills in which the method is interested demonstrated better scores.

To conclude, the GTM and the ALM are different in their methodologies as well as their definitions of the learning process and the nature of language. Their applications in the classroom are dissimilar. The grammar-translation method was the first attempt to put teaching into a framework in which languages are taught in an educational setting. The audiolingual method came after it trying to make the process easier having better results. Despite the differences, they are both teacher-centred approaches whose classrooms are characterised by the active role of the teacher and the passive role of the learners.

3.6.2 The Total Physical Response Vs. the Audiolingual Method

If we take a look at the TPR and the ALM methods we notice that they are similar in many aspects. They are both teacher-centred. Like the ALM, the TPR considers the teacher as the guide that must be imitated by his learners. The slight difference concerning this point is that in the ALM, the learners are asked to imitate their teacher's pronunciation, but in the TPR method they are asked to imitate the body language their teacher performs. The other common aspect between them is that they both, in the first place, stress on listening and speaking, and then on writing and reading.

However, the first difference between them is that in the total physical response, as far as the speaking skill is concerned, the process of learning the oral part is much longer than in the audiolingual method. As we said before, it is until the learners are prepared to produce oral language that they are encouraged to speaking in the TPR. Nonetheless, the ALM obliges the learners to speak the language in each lesson they are taught.

Error treatment is another key difference here. On the one hand, teachers employing the audiolingual method pay meticulous attention to their learners' errors correcting each one

immediately, and trying to avoid errors as much as possible. On the other hand, it is not the case in the total physical response method where the teacher is more likely to tolerate making errors, and deal only with the major errors which he thinks they can prevent sound language learning.

Asher (Asher et al., 1974), made a comparison between the TPR and the ALM. The study was conducted during a short period of time, the students were novice learners. It was revealed by the end of the study that the TPR took advantage due to the fact that they were beginner learners, as it was already mentioned that this teaching method is best used with beginners (Steinberg et al, 2001).

That is, the analysis of both teaching methods demonstrates that they share many aspects as they differ in several points. The TPR method uses more body language in the classroom to make learners induce meaning; while, the ALM goes more for making students imitate and drill in order to train them to learn the language.

3.6.3 The Natural Approach Vs. the Grammar-Translation Method

When the natural approach was compared with the grammar-translation method by Hammond (1988), it was shown that the learners who were taught with the natural approach got inconsiderably better results than those taught with the grammar-translation method, i.e., there was just a slight difference in the scores to the favour of the NA.

Concerning grammar, the students' scores were equal in both cases. Surprisingly enough, direct grammar teaching, which is explicit (in the grammar translation method), and learning grammar through communication (in the natural approach) had the same results. It can be said here, that learners can learn grammar either inductively or through the classical way of teaching by explication. Nonetheless, concerning using grammar within a spontaneous conversation, the natural approach showed better results regarding the fact that teaching grammar implicitly, i.e., through contextualised communications makes the learner gain

communicative capacities that allow him to converse freely even in real life situations, which is not the case for the classical way of teaching (Steinberg et al 2001).

The only aspect that the two methods share is that they are both called teaching methods. Otherwise, they differ tremendously. The natural approach, principally, claims that language teaching has to follow the natural order of language acquisition. Besides, it focuses on contextualised communications, using the target language, as the major process from which languages can be learnt. Nevertheless, the grammar translation method teaches grammar explicitly, uses translation as the only means to convey meaning, and allows an excessive use of the mother tongue.

The two methods differ at the level of their main purpose of teaching. The grammar translation method claims that once the learner is able to read and understand the literary works of the target language, he has learnt the language. It focuses, so, on reading, more precisely, it gives much importance to vocabulary learning, and meaning acquisition. Notwithstanding, the natural approach aims at making learners able to speak the language, considering speaking as the main purpose of any language. This latter stresses on oral comprehension and production over written language. It gives more room to the students in order to communicate freely and creatively to build their own communicative abilities.

The focus of the GTM classroom is, also, quite different from that of the NA. In the realm of the GTM, the teacher is the main element, however, the NA sees the learner as the intrinsic substance of the classroom. Differently stated, the GTM follows a teacher-centred approach, whilst the NA is purely learner-centred. Thus, in the grammar translation method, the teacher is supposed to give his course with the learners being passive receivers of the lessons. On the other hand, the natural approach provides the learners with the opportunity to control the lesson, they ought to participate and interact with the teacher and with their classmates in order to create a communicative atmosphere.

Hence, we are comparing here one of the very early language teaching methods with one of the very late approaches to language teaching. The huge development that researchers could, and still can, achieve as far as the refurbishment of the way humans teach/learn a foreign language can be very clear. It started from a prescriptive approach that teaches about the language, to shift towards a descriptive one that teaches the language itself.

3.7 What Language Teaching Method to Select?

For Steinberg et al (2001), even though no method is perfect, it has many aspects from which students can actually learn something. That is to say, we can benefit from any language teaching method. For them there is always a succeeding part in any method. In other words, each method has certain linguistic knowledge to be provided to the learners. At the same time, we do not have one best single method amongst the existing ones on which we can rely solely to teach the language fully and thoroughly. We believe that good teachers are the ones who take the appropriate aspects from each method depending on the age, level, and needs of their learners. One way on which the selection of a method is based claims that considering the aims of the language learning is crucial.

That is, when the purpose is to reach appropriate levels of speaking and listening, communication-based methods would suit the situation. But, when the major aim is the skills of writing and reading, grammar-translation method should be the selected method. Even on a national scale, the governmental decisions have to take this into account when designing curriculums and syllabi of teaching foreign languages. Sometimes the purpose of a country is to foster reading and translation skills in order to deal with foreign matters. The grammar translation method is recommended in this case. Nonetheless, another country would prioritize communicative skills for specific governmental and political purposes; it would rather, then, employ a speech-based approach for better results (Steinberg et al, 2001).

An important point has to be mentioned here is that the economic and financial conditions of a country, for many times, is what determines the selection of the method. Speech-based language teaching methods require (1) teachers of high levels of fluency and creativity, and (2) classes including a small number of students. Those two factors lead to the idea that poor and underdeveloped countries do not have many options except for employing the grammar-translation method that can be of much help in the case of large classes and limited number of teachers.

Conclusion

To recapitulate, throughout this chapter we have explored the language teaching methods in relation to the field of psycholinguistics. Starting from the psycholinguistic characterisation of the language teaching method, going through the classical teaching methods and the methods that appeared then disappeared, to contemporary language teaching methods on which modern education is based. This chapter pays special attention to the speaking skill, obviously, since this whole research is concerned with it.

Reading the literature, we could realise the importance of questioning and criticism in developing a teaching method. Each language teaching method came as a reaction against the previous one as an attempt to achieve levels it could not achieve. Some of the teaching methods were better than the former ones, however, others were worse. As an example, the direct method was put forward as a reaction against the GTM and it showed better results. But even though the silent way was created years after, it experienced a drastic failure. Thus, the road towards the most refined language teaching method was, and still is, going through difficult obstacles.

To say it plainly, the most appropriate language teaching method relevant to our study is that one which stresses on (1) communication-based techniques, i.e., a teacher has to prepare contextualised situations where learners can interact and converse (dialogues, activities, events

... etc), (2) combination of meaning and form, i.e., communication is the key but it has to be guided with the lessons that deal with the structural parts of the language, and (3) teachers knowledge of the psycholinguistic approach that explores the characteristics of a teaching method, for this can help him be more knowledgeable of what method to choose and under what circumstances it should be employed.

Chapter Four: The Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with the fundamental steps followed to conduct the present study. It highlights the research design by explaining its method and tools. That is, this part of the study is interested in describing the methodological procedures undertaken in this research as well as elucidating the design and administration of the three research tools. Therefore, it introduces the data collection procedures of the questionnaire, the interview, the classroom observation, and the process of their analyses. In addition, it sheds light on the limitations of the study and the ethical considerations which have been highly considered by the researchers.

The roadmap of the methodology used to fulfil the major aim of the whole study is crucial to be put forward by any researcher. By definition, research methodology is seen as the means or methods by which something is done (Mouton, 1996). In the same context, Henning (2004) describes methodology as the logical set of methods that are closely based on each other, and that are to show how the research data and results, representing the research questions and problem, are provided.

Thus, the present research methodology marks the coherent processes undertaken in this study in order to investigate the major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance. Therefore, being as objective as we could, the research at hand looked up to reveal, discuss, and try to find solutions to the different obstacles that 3rd year students of English at Biskra university encountered when they spoke English.

4 The research design

For the purpose of gaining as much data as possible to boost the reliability of the present study, this research tried to deliver an understanding of the subject matter and all the possible concepts relating to it. For the very reason that the current thesis covered speech production in an EFL classroom, we reckoned that the appropriate research method to be adopted, is not only

descriptive, but also analytical. In a more methodological terminology, we will settle upon an approach that is composed of; a questionnaire for the 3rd year students of English at Biskra University, an interview with some teachers of oral expression of the same university, and a number of classroom observations in order to get closer to the operation of teaching the course.

To give a detailed account, it is of high importance for our investigation to discover the students' attitudes and perceptions about their teachers' ways of teaching, techniques, and content of the lesson because their speech production is one variable that our study is based on. To explain, it was the students' speaking obstacles that we were investigating, thus, we believed that a questionnaire is one data collecting tool by which we were able to get pertinent findings that could be useful to answer one research question, or more, in this study.

Besides, providing that teachers of oral expression are very convenient sources of information that can give useful ideas and viewpoints about their students' poor oral performance, we decided to construct a teachers' interview whereby we tried to come up with different opinions about the students' speaking problems. That is to say, by interviewing teachers, the researchers could explain, and understand better, the students' behaviours, reactions, and teachers' experiences with their students' hesitations, long pauses, and stammering.

Last but not least, this study went farther to look at the processes of teaching and learning speaking inside the classroom. Hence, we opted for a classroom observation as an attempt to get a more detailed examination of the way teachers are actually teaching oral expression at Mohamed Khider University in the Branch of English. Also, a meticulous observation of both the teachers' teaching, and the students' speaking processes inside the classroom could be beneficial to double-check the findings of the questionnaire and the interview.

4.1 Population and sampling

The nature of our research and methodology necessitated relying on a questionnaire, an interview, and a classroom observation. Thus, this part of the research explores the population and sample of each one of them, individually.

The questionnaire was conducted on the 3rd year students of English at Mohamed khider University of Biskra. The sample comprised three (03) groups of the total number of twelve (12) groups. In other words, the whole number of students of this population was 324 students, from which the three groups represented 51 students. Due to the many absentees that were during the pandemic period of time, each group did not exceed seventeen (17) students to which we distributed the questionnaire. This means that our sample corresponds to 15.74% of the whole population (this would be pointed out in the limitation of the study section).

Concerning the interview, the number of oral expression teachers during the academic year 2020/2021 in the Branch of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra was five (05) teachers. The researcher managed to conduct interviews with four (04) of them. That is, our sample represents 80% of the whole population of the teachers.

After that, the researcher attended seven (07) classroom observations with seven different groups, at the same university, with the same four teachers who were previously interviewed. More precisely, three (03) sessions were with one teacher, two (02) sessions were with another teacher, and the rest of the sessions were with other two different teachers. Noteworthily, the three groups of students who answered the questionnaire were among these seven groups.

4.2 Description of the research tools

In this part of the thesis, as the title suggests, the research instruments are depicted. Like it was aforementioned, for the purpose of answering the research questions, the present research

instruments encompass, a questionnaire, an interview, and a classroom observation. It is significant to describe them in order to provide a clearer idea about the content, structure, and aim of each tool.

4.2.1 The questionnaire description

The questionnaire was constituted of fifteen (15) questions that were divided into three main sections. The sections were put in a way that represents a smooth shift between its questions. Also, each section represented a part of the research problem.

The first section included five (05) questions. We asked the participants about their gender, the extent to which they liked attending oral expression sessions, the frequency of their speaking difficulties (hesitations, stammering, and long pauses), the degree to which they experienced speaking anxiety, and about what they liked the most; debates, teamwork, pair work, or role play. This section was entitled "The speaking difficulties" for it dealt mainly with the speaking deficiencies the students encounter when speaking English. Its purpose was to introduce the main topic of the research so that the respondents would have an idea about the problematic and the coming sections.

The second section, furthermore, was entitled "The students' attitudes". It covered four (04) questions, one was open-ended, and the other three were close ended; what techniques do your teachers usually use to teach speaking? Are you open to participate willingly in your speaking tasks? does your teacher motivate you to speak in the classroom? what are the difficulties that you have when speaking in EFL class? (Anxiety/Shyness/Fear of making mistakes). The four questions were directed towards the students' perceptions on the teaching procedures inside an oral expression classroom. The idea was that we needed to know their opinions in order to come up with deeper understanding about their speaking problems.

The final section was about "Students' efforts in speaking". It comprised six (06) questions. They were on the students' own endeavour to develop their speaking level. After asking them about the efforts they do at home to improve the oral proficiency, the participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed about the following expressions: I never feel confident when I speak in my oral English language tasks, I am not afraid of making mistakes when I speak English, I feel anxious when I am asked to speak without preparation in the classroom, During the tasks of oral expression, I feel so worried so that I forget words I know, It frightens me when my teacher corrects every mistake I make.

4.2.1.1 Piloting the questionnaire

In order to evaluate the feasibility of the questionnaire, we had to have an outside opinion; a step which was prior to the actual questionnaire study. Hence, we contacted four (04) teachers from different Algerian universities. Three (03) of them were from M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes and one from Mentouri Brothers University of Constantine. Pursuing this further, two teachers agreed on both the structure and the content of the questionnaire; while, the rest recommended some changes in terms of the structure so that it would be more suitable for the intrinsic purpose of the study. We took their pieces of advice into consideration and made the necessary changes.

4.2.1.2 Questionnaire administration

As to make sure that all the distributed questionnaires were given back to the researchers, the questionnaire was administered in the classroom. We gave the copies to the participants during some of their lectures, and asked them to fill them up and return them back in the coming session. Thus, they had enough time to answer it at home. We explained the purpose and topic of the research so that they would have an idea before answering the

questionnaire. Besides, we informed them that their identity would remain anonymous during the data collection, analysis, and discussion.

4.2.1.3 The analysis procedure

After gathering the data, the researchers organised the participants' answers, summarised the open-ended questions in terms of their themes to facilitate the operation, then made the mathematical calculations and the percentages. The findings, using Microsoft Excel, were put in tables, graphs, bar charts, and pie charts in order to make the discussion and explanation more understandable. Furthermore, each question was analysed individually, and the respondents' attitudes, opinions, perceptions and ideas were discussed, and commented on, in a way that suited the major aim of the present research.

4.2.2 The interview description

The interview comprised ten (10) questions. It was designed to know the teachers' viewpoints about their students' speaking problems, their techniques to deal with the latter, their attitudes towards the students' whole level of speaking, as well as their methods of teaching oral expression. The questions of the interview tried to cover all the aspects of our research problem. Besides, they were structured in a way that reflected the research questions and hypotheses. Thus, light was shed on the students' speaking deficiencies such as hesitation, stammering and unnecessary pauses.

The questions of the interview were of different types and aims simply because we wanted to raise as many inquiries and ideas about the topic as possible. To illustrate, the first question, "To what extent do your students have difficulties (like hesitations, long pauses and stammering) to speak English?", was straight to the point because the interview had to start highlighting our main quest. However, "Do you consider your students' learning styles while planning your speaking lessons? If yes, how do you do that?" was a direct question concerning

the learning styles. Our intention to put a variation of questions was to tackle our problematic from various angles in order to reach our desired objectives.

4.2.2.1 Piloting the interview

Before delving into interviewing teachers, and just after constructing the first draft of the interview, it was e-mailed to four (04) teachers from different Algerian universities to provide us with their view-points concerning the structure and the questions. The teachers were welcomingly enthusiastic to comment on the interview. Two teachers agreed on the content of the interview; while, the other two teachers had some remarks concerning the nature of the interview questions in relation to the research questions. Their feedback was taken into consideration, and the final version of the interview was elaborated.

4.2.2.2 The interview administration

The teachers were interviewed in the classrooms of the Branch of English (Ceil) at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. Each interview had to be administered in a quiet place because it was recorded in order to be easily transcribed and analysed later on. For the purpose of controlling the interview, each question had to be stated by the researcher, and once answered fully, he would move to the next one. In each interview, all the questions were answered by the teachers. The researcher made sure that the interviewee understood the question to achieve its intended aim, not to fall into any misconception. Thus, it was administered in appropriate circumstances.

4.2.2.3 The analysis procedure

We dealt with each question separately. Data were calculated using Microsoft Excel and put in tables, graphs, pie charts, and bar charts in order to be analysed. The teachers' answers were described, discussed, and commented on in a way that enabled an understanding of the students' speaking deficiencies. In order to answer the research questions, test the hypotheses,

and finally solve the research problem, the researcher emphasised on a detailed explanation from the part of the teachers in order to be able to attain a thorough analysis of the gathered data.

4.2.3 The classroom observation checklist description

The classroom observation checklist was designed to be used for our classroom observation. Besides information about the oral expression session like place, time and date, the checklist covered thirty (30) items that were to be ticked in by the researcher during the observation, as "not at all, to some extent, or to a high extent". Those items were classified into five parts, according to their themes.

The first part of the checklist was entitled "Teachers' role" where we shed light on the duties of the teachers. It included the aspect of how the teachers reacted inside the classroom, that is, the extent to which they used the warming-up, gave pre-speaking activities, stated the objectives of the lesson, used authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.), gave students enough time to speak English freely, provided appropriate feedback. We had to observe the teacher's way of dealing with his students, and content of the lesson.

"Students' role" was the title of the second part of the classroom observation checklist. It encompassed some aspects about the students' reactions to the teacher, the content of the oral expression session, and the atmosphere of the classroom. The items of this part were "Show interest to the topic and given material", "Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes", and "interact with the teacher and participate". Therefore, this part of the checklist included some of the students' responses to the classroom setting as a whole.

The third part was entitled "students' fluency" whereby the focus was on their flow of speech production. We observed their speaking issues in a closer way. That is, careful attention was paid to the extent to which they spoke without unnecessary pauses, stammering, word

repetition and/or hesitations; their language was clear, understood; they asked for clarification; they used proper intonation in different situations. As a matter of fact, this was an important part for our research from which useful explanations and clarification, concerning our research problem and questions, were obtained.

Fourthly, in this checklist we devoted a section to the teacher-student inter-activity. It was put out of a belief that the relationship between the teacher and his students is of paramount significance for the improvement of the speaking skill. This part included items like "Shy students are persuaded to participate", "The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom", "The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words", and "The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations".

Last but not least, the fifth section of the classroom observation checklist was reserved for the psycholinguistic considerations of our thesis. To explain, as it was highlighted before in the general introduction and throughout the whole thesis, the contributions of the field of psycholinguistics to the speaking skill are many. Hence, such items had to be implemented during our observation. Those items included "Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary", "The teacher decreases students' anxiety", "Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem solving mechanisms)", "Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output)", and "The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences".

4.2.3.1 The classroom observation administration

The observation, obviously, was conducted inside the classrooms of the Branch of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. The researcher succeeded to attend seven (07) oral expression sessions with different groups to gather the data we needed. The teachers

were informed before and they were given a consent letter to sign to show their agreement on the classroom observation. During each session, the researcher observed the processes of teaching speaking and he would tick in the box that, to the best of his knowledge, suited the item in the checklist. Also, the researcher took notes as the session went on.

4.2.3.2 The analysis procedure

The data gathered from each classroom observation, from both the checklist and the field notes, were analysed and discussed separately. They were described, analysed, and commented on after an in-depth scrutiny. The items of the classroom observation checklist were critically discussed in the sense that the extent to which they existed during the oral expression determines the positivity or the negativity of the teaching process. The scientific observation allowed for insightful ideas, and it was another step towards testing the hypotheses, answering the research questions, and solving the research problem.

4.2.3.3 Variables

Our research is interpretively qualitative by nature. In other words, qualitative research represents "subjective experience", as Siegle, D (2015) described it. According to this latter, qualitative studies are not for the purpose of expressing the quantifiable differences between their variables, nevertheless, they just express the difference itself. To explain, a qualitative study, in social sciences, concerns itself with collecting non-numerical data. It tries to interpret the gathered data in order to facilitate the understanding of social life by means of studying a selected sample. Noteworthily, qualitative variables, also known as categorical variables (Siegle, D, 2015), can be reflected by numbers or percentages, but it is only for the sake of identification and explanation (ibid). Simply, in qualitative research, variables are not quantitatively measured due to the fact that the investigation, as it is the case in our study, is contingent on interpreting, describing, discussing, and exploring subjective experience.

By categorical variables we mean variables that fall into categories. Concerning our thesis, the categorical variables that we have are the major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance. Hence, we have two categorical variables, i.e., "major factors" and "students' poor oral performance". The former falls into the category of "reasons", while the latter belongs to the category of "results". More precisely, we are investigating what leads to students' problems of speaking English as a foreign language. In addition, our investigation depends solely on the field of Psycholinguistics to interpret the collected data. This, therefore, justifies the word choice in the title of this research.

4.3 Limitations of the study

When this study was in its course of conduction, the circumstances that the whole world was living back then, made it rather more strenuous. More exactly, this study was conducted during the pandemic of covid-19 period. The second and third years of our PhD training were characterised by the lockdown of all the universities due to the quarantine strategy that the Algerian government had undertaken. For that, our research underwent a number of compelling limitations that must be pointed out in this part of the study for if we had bypassed them, our research could have taken a better path.

First of all, because of the preventive measures that were set, there were no means of transportation during the pandemic which made the researcher unable to move to university as he lived in a different province (wilaya). Also, the university campus, hotels and restaurants were all closed. As a result, it was not possible to organise meetings with the supervisor given the importance of the face-to-face tutoring to decide on some methodological matters concerning the whole research. Thus, we had to rely only on phone calls, SMS, and E-mails which were not enough at all.

At the beginning of the third year, universities were allowed to open their doors despite the fact that the pandemic was not over yet. So, the precautions were still compulsorily taken. Nevertheless, we decided to start conducting the practical part of our study. Our first step to diagnose the students' speaking issues was to conduct the questionnaire. Given the said circumstances, the planning of the different courses at university was totally different. They studied for fifteen (15) days, and rested for the next fifteen (15) days. This caused problems for the study itself. Above that, there was a very high number of absentees providing that the problem of transportation for students still existed, and perhaps many of them were still afraid of being infected with the covid-19. Normally, each group of the 3rd year students included an average of thirty (30) students, but when we were conducting the questionnaire, the classes did not exceed seventeen (17) students. This means that our sample got decreased due to the highly difficult conditions that were experienced, and we could not expand the number of groups due to the unreachability of their teachers.

Afterwards, the phase of the interview came. Even though this data collection tool was used in acceptable conditions, it had some problems at the level of organising the meetings with teachers. Not only they were very busy teaching all the time having schedules almost full, but we also had problems of finding an unoccupied and quiet room to conduct the interview. In addition, there were five (05) teachers of oral expression in the Branch of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, but we managed to have only four (04) interviews. We wanted to do it with the whole number of teachers, however, one of the teachers was absent all the time and we could not reach her.

The final stage of the study was that of the classroom observation. As stated before, we attended seven (07) oral expression sessions. The problem of the students' absence was persisting. The classes that we observed had even more absentees. It has to be mentioned,

though, that the classroom observation procedures were done in proper circumstances, the teachers were very helpful and welcoming.

This study witnessed an issue at the level of piloting the data collection methods. Due to the reasons that we have already mentioned, i.e., the pandemic and the lockdown of universities, we were unable to do a pilot study for the questionnaire with the students, and a pilot study for the interview with teachers. For that simple reason, we confined ourselves to only taking other teachers' pieces of advice and opinions concerning our data collection tools.

Our study could have included a treatment (a pre-test, an intervention, and a post-test), unfortunately, because of some administrative disorganisations and time constraints which were, again, due to the covid-19 pandemic, we could not get a number of groups of the 3rd year students to teach for a period of time. Our study would have obtained more pertinent data that could have been of much help to solve the research problem. A treatment could have played an important role in the results of this study.

4.4 Ethical considerations

Reading the literature on ethics in scientific research (Bickman& Rog, 2009; Norton, 2009; Cohen et al 2005; Blaxter et al 2006; Stark, L. & Hedgecoe, A., 2010; Perry, Jr. 2005), it has been understood that research is founded on a number of ethics to be considered as methodologically, academically, and educationally accepted. Namely, honesty, objectivity, carefulness, openness, transparency, confidentiality, and originality.

To explain, a researcher must work honestly. Data has to be sincerely reported, honesty ought to prevail over analysing the findings, and stating the methods and procedures of analysis. By the same token, data are not to be made up, faked, changed, misreported, or given a false account. Furthermore, bias is to be avoided at all costs. A study endeavours to ensure objectivity in the sense that data interpretation must be neutrally put. Truth is, in qualitative research, it is

difficult to evade subjectivity, but it has to be minimised. In a third place, inattentive errors and carelessness are not acceptable. The research and its study need to be meticulously done. Moreover, what we mean by openness is that while sharing data, discussions, and results, the researcher is required to be ready to receive criticism and new insights from the part of other researchers.

Fifthly, the study; including research methods, tools, and assumptions, has to be transparently revealed to allow a sound and a thorough evaluation of the research. In addition, participants' confidentiality is one important aspect of any research. Anonymity is considered as their right to protect the information they provide from being identified as theirs. Finally, plagiarism is fought by all the educational institutions. The research originality is highly compulsory. Therefore, any idea or information taken from other researchers' works needs to be accredited as theirs, mentioned in an in-text citation, and acknowledged in the references section.

As far as the present research is concerned, the researchers strived to make sure that all the previously stated criteria of research ethics were reached and established. That is to say, either when researching for the literature on our theoretical background, or while conducting the questionnaire, the interview, and classroom observation, we, to the best of our knowledge, made every effort to be subject to the ethical guidelines already mentioned.

The objective of scientific research is to get authentic studies in order to expand the value and amount of knowledge in a given field of study. Hence, the benefits of ethics in research are many. Avoiding duplication, i.e., doing the exact same research by two or more different researchers, is one of them. So, research ethics enhance the achievement of the aim of research. Simply, if the work is not original, it will end with a non-original aim as well. This is what scientific research totally prohibits. Establishing ethical norms in research, as a result, guarantees the soundness of the research and its authenticity.

Conclusion

During this chapter, the research methodology was explained. Its focus was on the research design of this study that encompassed describing the data gathering tools (the questionnaire, the interview, and the classroom observation). Population and sampling were elucidated and justified. After that, we underlined some important aspects about the variables of this study. Addedly, the limitations of the study were highlighted, then we ended this chapter with the ethical norms that were considered during this research.

Chapter Five: Field Work and Data Analysis

Introduction

In order to reach the research results, the data gathered have to be analysed. This chapter, therefore, is the concretisation of the study itself. During this part of the research, data analyses of the questionnaire, interview, and classroom observation are made, and their findings are interpreted, discussed, and commented on. As far the analysis is concerned, it is important to mention that the researcher opted for an exploratory descriptive approach to proceed it. Our investigation had required such an approach given the qualitative nature of the data we collected.

5.1 Questionnaire findings

Interpreting the data is a step of paramount significance in any research, "this is where the process is turned into a product" (Dörnyei, 2007, P. 257). Therefore, this part of the analysis is concerned with interpreting and discussing the data gathered through the questionnaire that was delivered to three groups of the third-year students of English at Mohamed Khider University.

The questionnaire's results are demonstrated through pie charts, bar charts, and tables so as to make them "visually accessible" (ibid), and then described and discussed. Importantly, the notion of representativeness is not sought since the present work is a case study. The sampling of this study is categorised as convenience sampling, which is defined as a sampling technique in which the participants are selected because they are easily available for the researchers (Taherdoost, H., 2016). To explain, methodologically speaking, convenience sampling belongs to non-probability sampling. This latter is regularly linked to case study research design. Accordingly, the reason behind opting for this sampling technique is that the three groups dealt with were taught by the supervisor, which makes them readily reached.

Hence, the discussion during this data analysis is rather descriptive. Given the nature of the thesis at hand (Case study), and the choice of the sampling technique (Convenience sampling), this partial of the analysis goes under descriptive statistics. This latter, simply, describes the data provided by the students, which is opposed to inferential statistics whereby the conclusions of the data analysis can be broadened to the population under study (Woodrow, L. 2014).

5.1.1 The characteristics of the questionnaire

This questionnaire was structured to obtain information from the students. Its major aim was to find out the main obstacles that prevent them from speaking English. To achieve this aim, it was divided into three sections. The first section was interested in the students' speaking difficulties, the technique that helps them improve their speaking fluency, as well as the extent to which they like attending oral expression sessions. The second section, however, was about their attitudes towards their oral expression teachers, the techniques they use to teach them, and the degree to which their teachers motivate them to speak. Finally, the last section was about the students' effort to develop their speaking skill. It also deals with their emotional status while doing oral expression tasks. Hence, the classification of the question types relied on in this questionnaire was as follows:

- **Personal information:** also known as demographic questions. These are used to ask about the participants' gender, age, religion, etc. By asking these questions, the researchers can be provided with important data concerning their participants' backgrounds, and thoughts. As far as this particular questionnaire is concerned, we have used one personal question which is about the participants' gender. We posed such a question in order for us to be aware of the respondents' way of answering the questions in relation to their gender which might be an important learning factor.

153

- **Close-ended:** Close ended questions stand for the type of questions in which participants are asked to select a response from a different set of predetermined responses, such as "yes or no" questions. Most of the questions in the questionnaire at hand are close-ended. Take for example; **does your teacher motivate you to speak in the classroom?** Yes or No. Although such a type of questions provides limited ideas from the students, it made it easy for them to respond, and helped the researchers gather and analyse the data straightforwardly as well.

- **List or Multiple choices**: This is one of the most used type of questions in questionnaires and surveys. Multiple choice questions are the ones that require the participants to select one or more item from a list. It is one of the types of close-ended questions. Concerning the questionnaire of this study, we asked the students many multiple-choice questions. To illustrate, **"Which technique helps you improve your oral performance the most?"** was a multiple-choice question, and the list from which they were asked to choose included "debate, teamwork, discussion in pairs, role play".

- **Open-ended:** There are some questions that cannot be answered only by a "yes or no" response, or with a pre-defined set of responses, this is why researchers ask open-ended questions in their questionnaires. This kind of questions is asked when the researcher wants the respondents to express themselves and elaborate their own ideas about the question posed with longer responses. In our questionnaire, we have put only one single open-ended question which is "**What techniques do your teachers usually use to teach speaking?**"

- **Likert scale:** This type of questions is known to be used to survey opinions and attitudes. In this type of questions, the participants are requested to rate a subject, or an idea, on a certain degree of agreement. That is, in order to interpret the extent to which the participants agree or disagree on a specific idea, researchers use the Likert scale. In

the present questionnaire we have used more than one of this type of questions. To give an example, the statement "**I feel anxious when I am asked to speak without preparation in the classroom"** (Strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) was one of the Likert scale questions that we posed.

5.1.2 Analysis and Discussion of the Questionnaire Data

Given that our sample is from the third-year students of the English Language Branch at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra in the academic year 2020/2021, we distributed fifty-one (51) questionnaires to them. All the questionnaires were handed back to the researchers, and all were considered to be ready to use for scientific purposes. Hence, the return rate, which is the number of the questionnaires handed out in relation to the number of returned questionnaires, is 100%.

Section one: The speaking difficulties

Item one:

What is your gender? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)
Male ☐
Female ☐
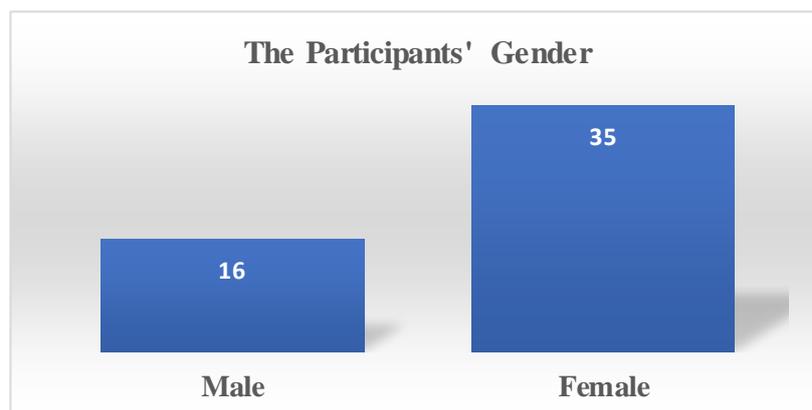
Figure 03: The participant's gender

In order to get certain personal knowledge about the respondents, such a question was posed. According to the answers, one can see that the majority of the participants are females.

35 out of 51 respondents are females (or 68,63 %) of the sample. However, there were 16 males (31,37%) among the respondents. Therefore, it is clear that females have more tendencies to study English based on their large number in the branch of English at Biskra University. Though it is obvious that female students outnumber the male ones, both of them take part evenly in the study.

Item two

To what extent do you like attending speaking sessions? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)
To a very high extent ☐
To a high extent ☐
To a low extent ☐
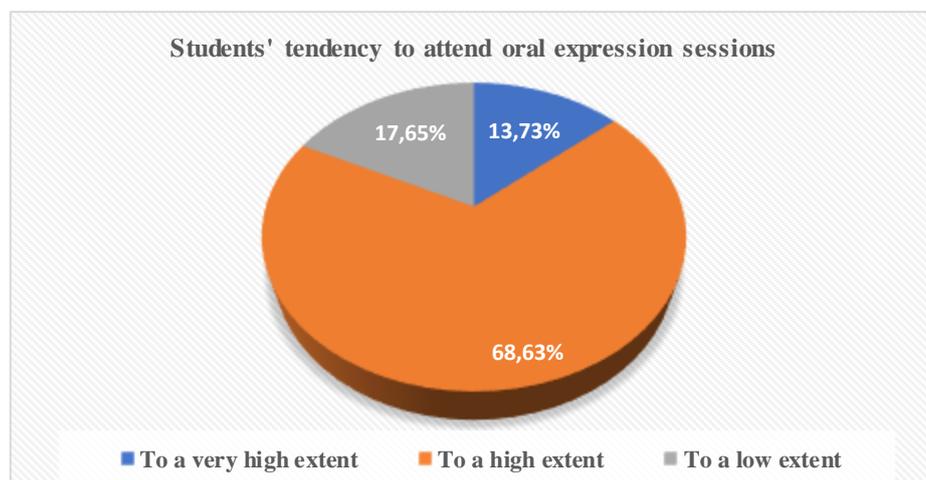
Figure 04: Students' tendency to attend oral expression sessions.

Answers to question two showed that 35 students selected "To a high extent", which corresponds to 68.63%. 9 students (17.65%), however, opted for "To a low extent. Optimistically enough, 07 of them (13.73%) like attending the oral expression sessions to a very high extent.

As to shed light on a more scientific basis to explain the students' answers, we focus on motivation as one factor influencing their attitudes. According to Crookes and Schmidt (1990), motivation is the students' tendency with regard to the purpose of learning a foreign language.

In the same context, Dörnyei (1998) states that it is divided into two types, i.e., intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former is what concerns us behind this particular question. Seemingly, the overwhelming majority of the respondents, 68.63% (the ones who selected "To a high extent" plus 13.63% the ones who selected "To a very high extent"), has high inner stimulation to attend the speaking class. They like to come to the class and participate willingly in the speaking tasks. Nevertheless, 09 participants (17,65% who opted for "To a low extent") have relatively little inner stimulation to be present in the oral expression lessons, which means that, even when they attend the class, they remain, presumably, passive and avoid participating.

Item three

How often do you experience difficulties (like hesitation, long pauses and stammering) when speaking English? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).

Very often ☐
Usually ☐
Never ☐
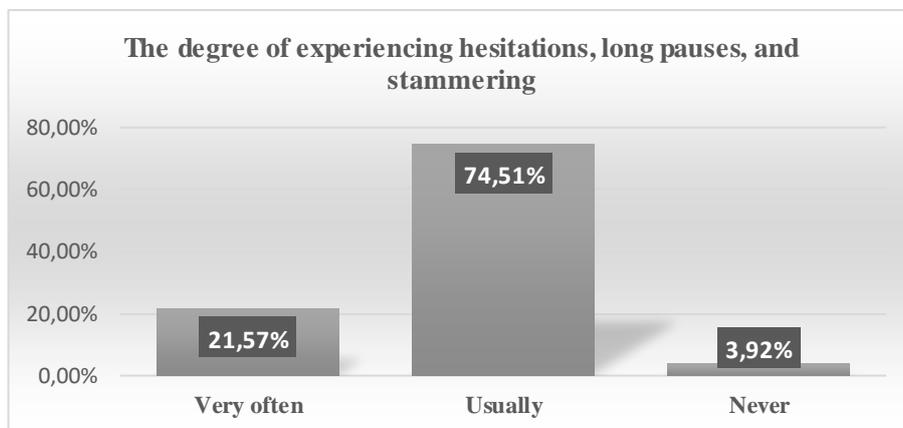
Figure 05: Students' difficulties when speaking English.

The bar chart above reveals that 74.51% of the students usually experience hesitations, long pauses, and stammering when they start speaking English, which corresponds to 38 students. Moreover, 21.57% (11 participants) of them have selected "Very often" as an answer to this question. Very few though, 3,92% (02 students) said that they never witnessed such impediments.

The psycholinguistic approach offers scientific explanations for such obstacles of speaking. To explain, personality can be one important factor that influences the students' reactions once they begin speaking English. For Krashen (1981), personality variables affect learners' behavior. That is to say, when speaking, the students are more likely to behave in accordance with their personality type. Furthermore, even during the sessions of oral expression, personality can either promote or prevent learners from gaining full mastery of the language. For example, self-esteem as a relevant personality trait that can be the reason behind student failure to speak English. For Brown (1987), there is an interconnection between self-esteem and students' oral production. For him, students with increased self-esteem are more likely to have lower levels of difficulties when speaking a foreign language. Apparently, our participants lack such personality feature providing that a large percentage of them experience such speech deficiencies.

Item four:

To what extent do you experience speaking anxiety when you speak English? (Put the description that best suits your answer between brackets)
To a high extent/ to a moderate extent/ to a low extent.
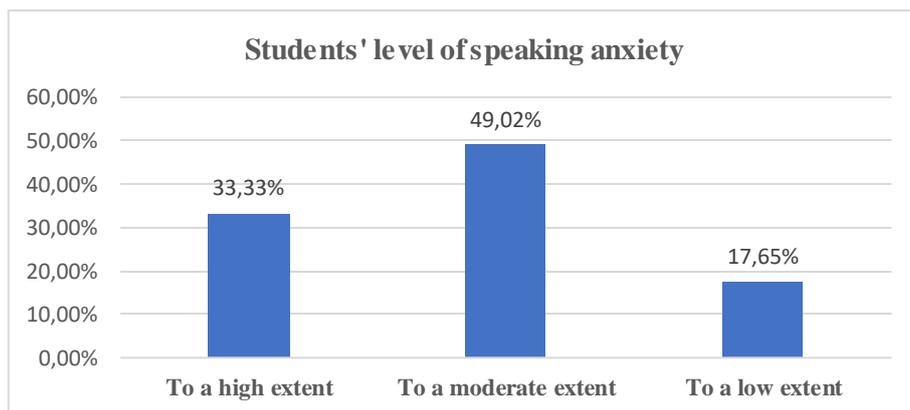
Figure 06: Students' level of speaking anxiety.

The above bar chart demonstrates that 17 students (33.33%) underwent a certain level of anxiety when they speak English. Moreover, 25 students, that is 49.02% of the sample,

selected "To a moderate extent", while the rest (17.65%) witnessed speaking anxiety "To a low extent".

When students have a sensation of unease when speaking English, they can have severe problems at the level of their speech production. Furthermore, individual differences amongst students are important factors; they differ from one another in terms of their feelings and attitudes towards the classroom environment which can affect their way of speaking either positively or negatively. However, Lindgren (1976), suggests that a moderate level of anxiety is demanded for successful language learning. To put it differently, an average amount of anxiety helps to reach a better performance (see **Chapter one**, **3.5 Anxiety** for more).

Item five

Which classroom activity helps you improve your oral performance the most? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Debate

teamwork

Discussions in pairs

Role play

The technique that helps students improve the oral performance

19,61%   23,53%

31,37%   25,49%

▪ **Debate**   ▪ **Teamwork**   ▪ **Discussions in pairs**   ▪ **Role play**
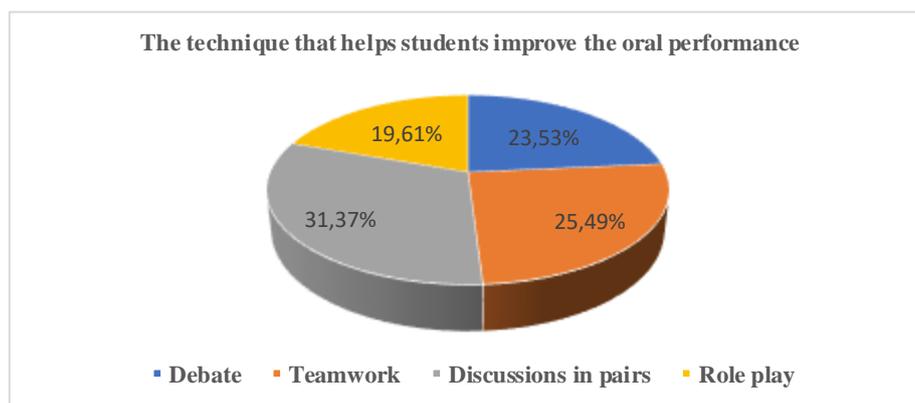
Figure 07: The student's choice of the classroom activity that suits him the most.

The answers of this question disclose that 19.61% (10) of the respondents prefer role plays as a way through which they learn to speak English. Still, 12 (23.53%) among them favor in-class debates to base their learning speaking on. Moreover, 25.49% of the participants would

rather do teamwork tasks to practice speaking. Finally, 16 (31.37%) of the students like more discussions in pairs as a method to be used for them to train themselves to speak the English language.

We strongly reckon that the students' learning strategies have a lot to do with their choices in this question. Oxford, (1990a) argues that co-operating with peers is one language learning strategy that many students use. This explains why most students selected Teamwork and Discussion in pairs. The idea is that, as classmates, when they interact with one another, most students tend to be more relaxed and at ease than when they interchange topics with the teacher, or when they face the classroom presenting a topic.

Section two: Students' attitudes

Item six

What class activities do your teachers usually use to teach you speaking? (You can answer this in note form)**.**

Class activities	Frequency
Presentations, topic discussion	14
Teamwork, debate	1
Presentations, Role play, Pair work	7
Presentations	12
Songs, videos, and movies	3
Topic discussion	7
No answer	7
Total	51

Table 01: Classroom activities used by the participants' teachers.

The table above is a demonstration of the classroom activities used by the teachers in the branch of English at Biskra university during the oral expression sessions. As it is, the

activities differ from presentations, topic discussion, teamwork, debate, role play, pair work, to songs, videos, and movies. Importantly, it is obvious, from this table that the most frequent oral expression activities are; presentations and topic discussion.

In a more detailed account, 14 students said that they are usually asked to prepare presentations, and also, their teachers raise some topics in the classroom to be discussed. One single student stated that teachers used teamwork and debates in the classroom as a method to encourage students to speak the language. 07 respondents, in the same context, answered that presentations, role play, and pair work are the classroom activities that they usually do in the oral expression sessions. Moreover, 12 among the participants mentioned only presentations as tasks of speaking. However, 03 respondents referred to listening to songs, and watching videos and movies in the classroom as a technique to learn speaking. In addition, 07 participants wrote that topic discussions are their teachers main speaking activities, i.e., they brought for them topics to the classroom to be discussed. Nevertheless, there have been 7 students who left the question without an answer for unknown reasons.

Item seven

Are you open to participate willingly in your speaking tasks? Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).
Yes ☐
No ☐
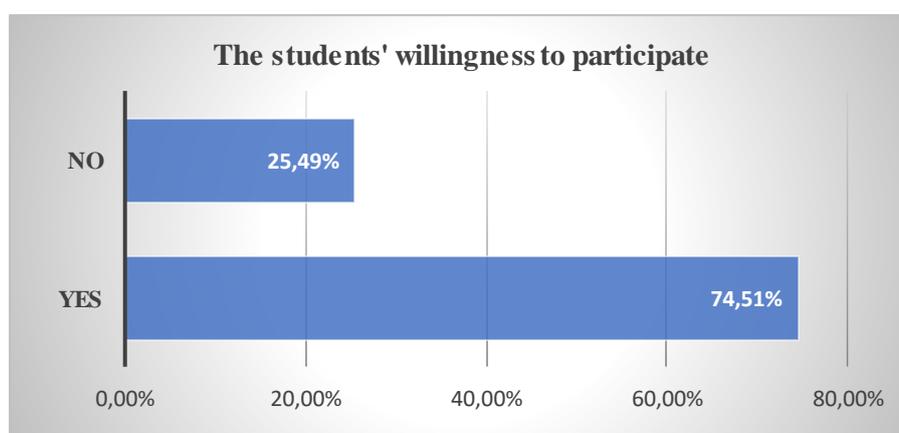
Figure 08: The students' willingness to participate in the oral expression tasks

This bar chart shows the prevalence of students (74.51%) who were open to freely be part of the speaking activities. However, 2.,49% have ticked in the "No" box to answer the question. Positively enough, the majority of the respondents like to participate in the activities, which means that they are willing to take the risk even if the task is challenging.

Amongst the individual differences, the students' risk-taking aspect can be of much help to understand the participants' choices. Even if there is a possibility to fail or, make a mistake in front of his classmates, a risk-taking student participates anyway. Regarding Hurd and Murphy's (2005) opinion, "Taking risks in language learning means being prepared to have a go at saying or writing something even if you are not exactly sure how to do it, without worrying that you might get wrong" (p. 56). Another psycholinguistic element that explains the respondents' answers is their personality type. Namely, extroversion and introversion. For Ellis (2008), extroverted students tend to interact more, while introverted ones are more concerned with their inner cognitive abilities.

Item eight

Does your teacher motivate you to speak in the classroom? Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).
Yes
No
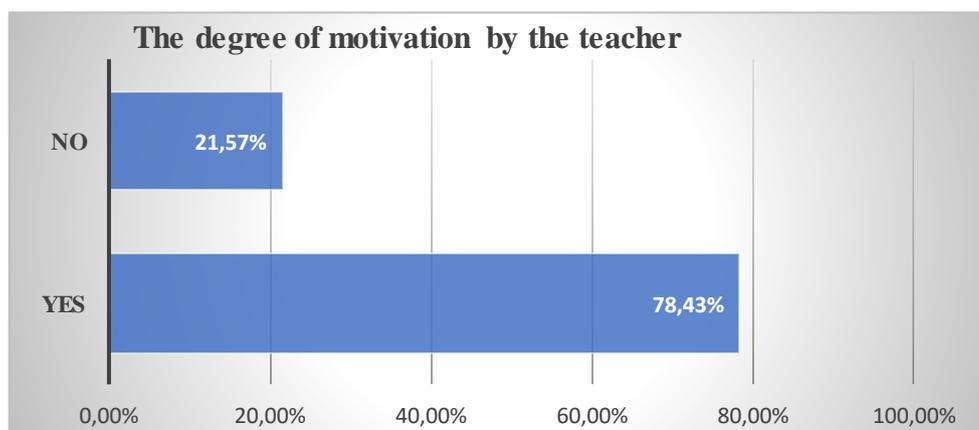
Figure 09: The degree to which students were motivated by their teacher.

The previous graph shows the students' attitudes towards the degree to which their teachers motivate them to be active during the oral expression tasks. It says that 11 participants (21.57%), claim that their teachers do not seem to be their source of motivation. Nonetheless, the majority of the students, i.e., 40 respondents (78.43%) said that their teachers motivate them to participate in the classroom.

Psycholinguistically speaking, the teacher can be a source of extrinsic motivation, which is the opposite of the intrinsic motivation dealt with in **Item two**. To elucidate, this type of motivation is generally caused by outer factors (Edward & Ryan, 1985). The aim behind this question was to look at the students' attitudes and feelings towards the way their teachers lead them to speak inside the classroom. It seems that a large number of the respondents find their teachers supportive to make their level of extrinsic motivation high enough to interact during the activities. This, in fact, is very important in an oral expression session. Besides, it is not easy for teachers to make all their students interact throughout the given activity.

Item nine

What are the difficulties that you have when speaking in EFL class? Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).
Anxiety
Shyness
Fear of making mistakes

Option	**Frequency**
Fear of making mistakes, shyness	6
Fear of making mistakes	17
Anxiety	14
Shyness	9
Anxiety, Fear of making mistakes	2
Anxiety, shyness, Fear of making mistakes	1
Anxiety, Shyness	2
Total	51

Table 02: The students' difficulties when practicing English in the classroom.

This table exhibits the students' selections amongst three options "Anxiety", "Shyness", and "Fear of making mistakes". Some of them opted for more than one option as it is shown in this table. To be more precise, 06 amongst the participants' difficulties are fear of making mistakes and shyness. 17 of them selected only "Fear of making mistakes". Addedly, 14 students went for anxiety. Then, 09 among them ticked in the box of "Shyness". For 02 students, anxiety and fear of making mistakes are their two most difficulties. 01 student selected all the three options, and the last 02 respondents opted for "Anxiety" and "Shyness".

Apparently, the highest frequency goes for "Fear of making mistakes". As expected, most students do not engage in conversations in English due to the fact that they are afraid of their interlocutors' reactions, and the present members, if they make mistakes. Self-esteem, extroversion and introversion, risk-taking, and motivation are cognitive aspects that the field of psycholinguistics offers to explain such phenomenon that some students experience. If a student has a lack of confidence and his level of motivation is low, fear of making mistakes becomes a serious obstacle for him. Equally important, this might lead to other issues. When the student who is afraid of making mistakes is obliged to speak inside the classroom, he is more likely to experience hesitations, long pauses and stammering (which is the heart of the research problem we are trying to solve). In this particular context, the teacher's role is of paramount importance. His feedback, and the way he corrects his students' mistakes have to be in line with his students' personalities and mentalities.

Section three: students' efforts in speaking

Item ten

What efforts do you make at home to improve your speaking skill? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)
Watching videos and listening to songs of native speakers ☐
Speaking with native speakers via social media ☐
Practicing English with your family members and/or friends ☐
None of the above ☐
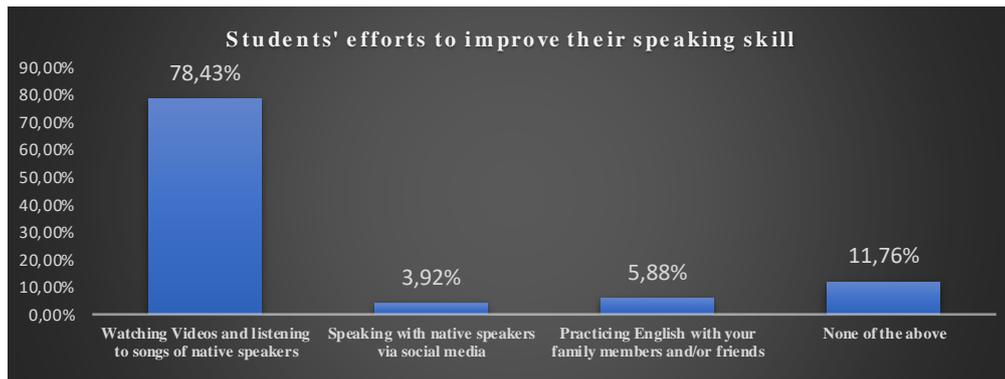
Figure 10: The students' efforts to improve their speaking skill.

This bar chart demonstrates what students do at home as activities and processes in order to develop their oral performance. A large number of participants (40 students) selected "Watching videos and listening to songs of native speakers", which represents 78.43% of the sample. Moreover, 03 of the students (05.88%) practice English with their family members/or with their friends. Addedly, 02 respondents (03.92%) speak English with native speakers via social media. Nevertheless, 06 students (11.76%) selected "None of the above" meaning that they do not do any of the three offered options.

Question eleven

I never feel confident when I speak in my oral English language tasks (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)
-Strongly agree ☐ -Agree☐ -Neutral ☐ -Disagree ☐ -Strongly disagree☐
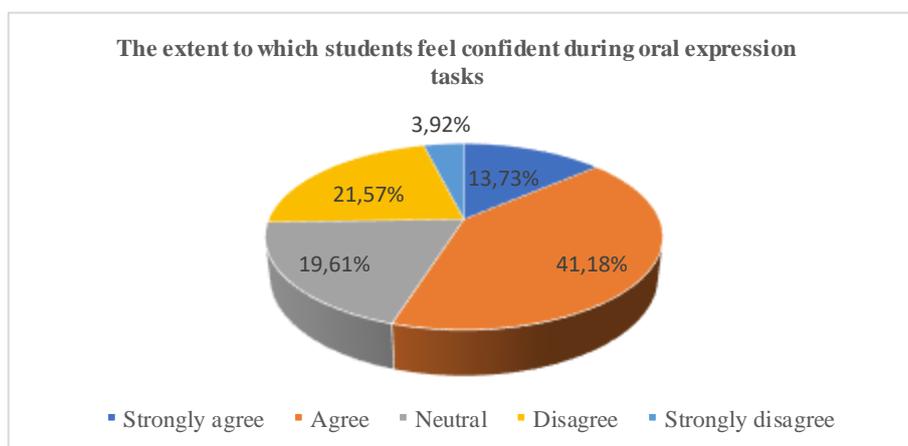
Figure 11: The extent to which the respondents feel confident during the speaking activities

This pie chart exhibits the degree to which the respondents feel confident while speaking English. Among them, there are 21 students who selected "agree" to the statement, this is 41.18%. However, 11 students (21.57%) of the sample chose "disagree" about the expression. 19.61%, moreover, were "Neutral", these are 10 participants. In the same context, 07 students (13.73%) selected "strongly agree", whereas 02 students (3.92%) opted for "strongly disagree" implying that they feel quite confident when they speak English during the oral expression activities.

Self-confidence, when it comes to speaking, has a crucial role. "It provides impetus to speakers to communicate his or her ideas effectively" (Kakepoto, 2012. p.71). Having said that, self-confidence during the speaking process has to do with many psycholinguistic factors. Therefore, we can explain these results, as far as this particular question is concerned, as follows. In the First place, a higher level of self-confidence is among the factors that leads to the successful use of the student's cognitive abilities, which in turn makes him achieve proper speech production during the speaking tasks. That is, students with high levels of self-confidence trust their cognitive abilities and this makes them willing to confirm to themselves that they can master the English language. However, the negative evaluation of one's self tend to get him very low levels of self-confidence and this is seen as a severe issue because it leads to obstacles when speaking. To put it simply, lack of self-confidence in foreign language oral expression classes leads to difficulties in developing the students' speaking ability making them, again, avoiding to participate and be active in the speaking sessions.

Item twelve

I am not afraid of making mistakes when I speak English (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)
Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐
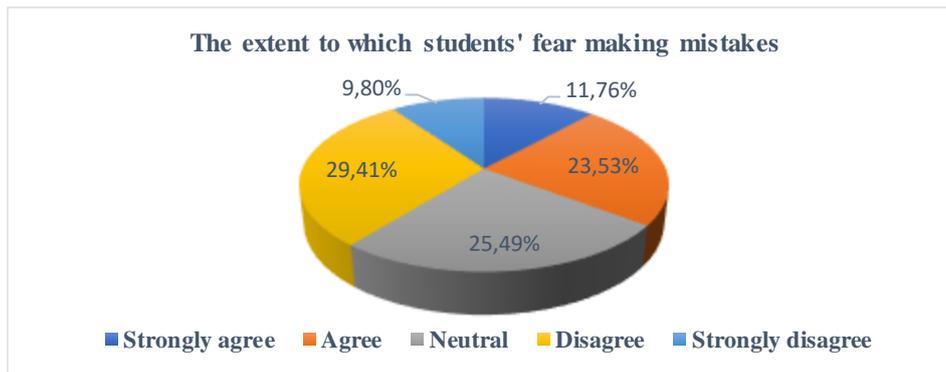
Figure 12: The extent to which students fear making mistakes while speaking English.

The data collected by this question revealed that 06 students (11.76%) strongly agreed on the given statement, 12 students (23.53%) agreed on it, and 13 students (25.49%) were neutral. Nevertheless, (15 students) (29.41%) disagreed, and the rest 05 students (09.80%) strongly disagreed.

Fear of making mistakes, as it seems to be, is an important factor which is the reason behind students' speaking deficiencies. To clarify, it may demoralize them to be part of the classroom activities. Therefore, getting rid of this fear can reduce the level of speaking stress in students while speaking. Hence, they have to be reassured that this phenomenon of making mistakes is very natural during the language learning process. To guarantee this, students' perception on mistakes has to be changed. Thus, when students are aware that making mistakes is not failure, but rather a sign of learning, they will speak in a more comfortable way inside the classroom.

Item thirteen

I feel anxious when I am asked to speak without preparation in the classroom. (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐
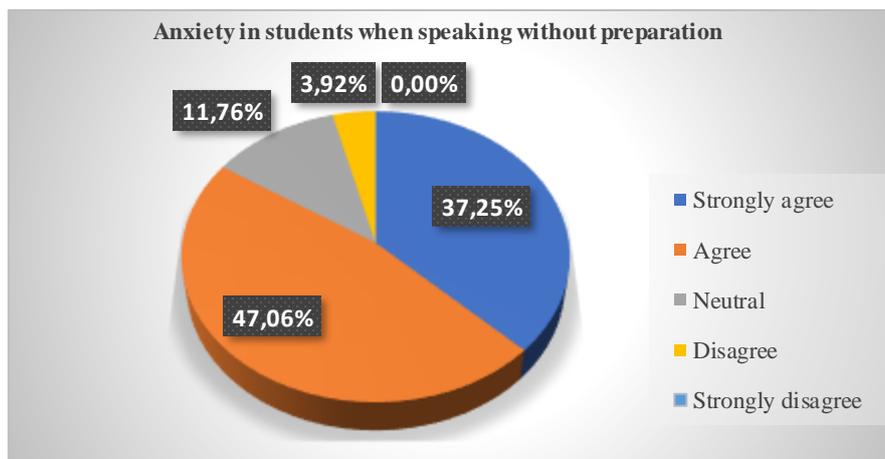
Figure 13: The degree to which students feel anxious when asked to talk without preparation.

This question asks the students about whether they feel anxious when they speak without preparation. The data demonstrated that 24 students (47.06%) agreed on the statement, i.e., they usually feel anxious when they perform English in the classroom without preparation. A little bit lesser, 19 students (37.25%) of them strongly agreed. 06 students (11.76%) were not sure of their answer, so they remained neutral. However, 03.92% (only two students), disagreed on the expression, which means that they can speak English without preparation. Besides, none of the respondents has chosen "strongly disagree" as an answer.

Speaking without preparation is a real burden for students of English as a foreign language. Conceivably, a large number of students undergo such a problem. Cognitively, low levels of motivation, self-esteem, and personality type, as far as the students learning styles might all affect the students' willingness to speak extemporaneously in the classroom. When teacher talking-time is reduced, the students find themselves somehow obliged to speak, and in case the topic is raised instantaneously, they might struggle to speak. Therefore, the teacher's role is to maintain his students' self-esteem and motivation to participate as high as possible, and again, the variety of the classroom activities has to match their personality types and learning styles.

Item fourteen

During the tasks of oral expression, I feel so worried so that I forget words I know (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐
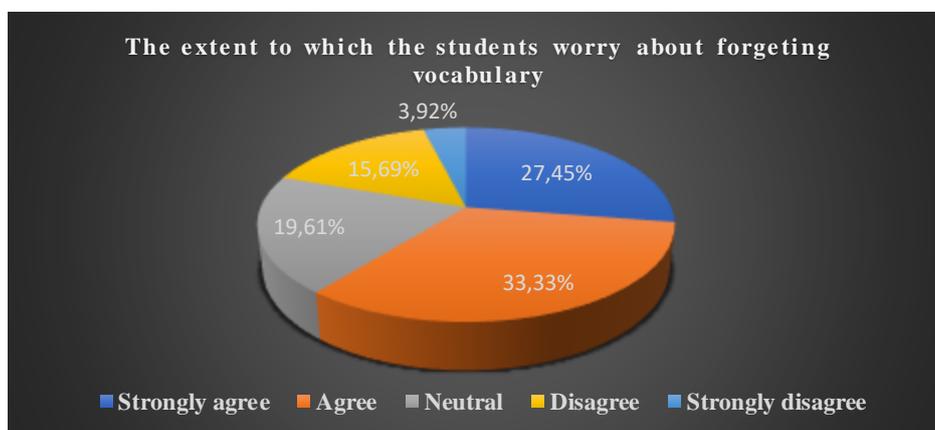
Figure 14: The extent to which the students worry about forgetting vocabulary.

The pie chart above shows the degree to which the participants agree/disagree about the statement (During the tasks of oral expression, I feel so worried so that I forget words I know). The results exhibited that 17 students (33.33% of the sample) agreed, while 08 (15.96%) disagreed. Moreover, 14 students (27.45%) strongly agreed, whereas, 02 students (03.92%) strongly disagreed. Once more, 10 students (19.61%), were uncertain of their real attitudes, and they selected "Neutral".

Memory impacts on learning has a very huge scientific ground which can be of much help in this part of the study (see **Chapter two: 2.5.2.2 Memory impacts on learning** for more details). Schmidt (2001) proposes that for learning to take place, learners must know what is missing for them to speak the language so that they can search for that knowledge in the input afterward. To explain, as Doughty (2001) stated, "making connections between the known and the unknown eventually leads to knowledge restructuring" (p. 227). Thus, for students to strengthen their memory, from a psycholinguistic perspective, they ought to receive enough comprehensible input from which they can compare and contrast their previous linguistic

knowledge and edit, or fix problems if there are any. This is how they can make sure that their short-term memory, and long-term memory are working appropriately. This might lead to overcoming the issue raised by this specific question.

Item fifteen

It frightens me when my speaking teacher corrects every mistake I make (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)
Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐
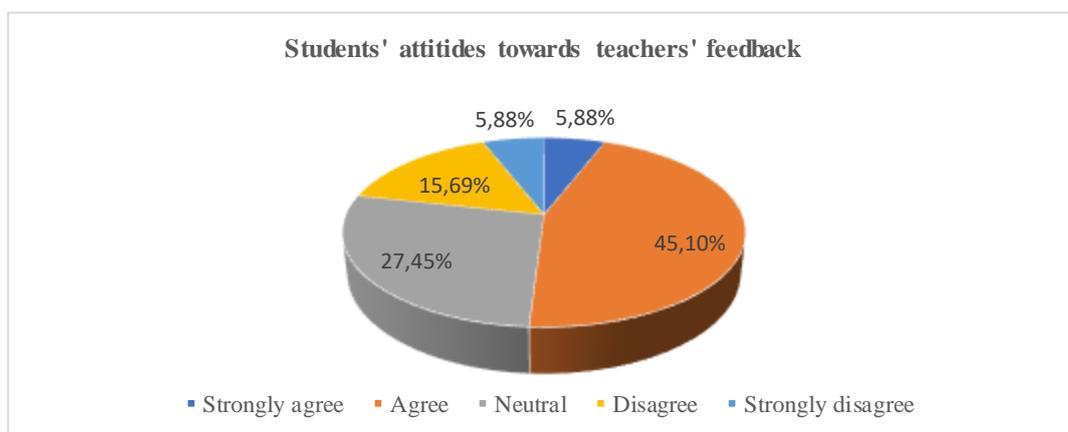
Figure 15: Students' attitudes towards their teachers' immediate feedback.

Data from this question disclosed that 23 students (45.10%) of the sample agreed on the given statement, while 14 students (27.45%) remained neutral being unsure of the expression. 08 students corresponding to 15.69%, disagreed. In addition, 03 students (05.88%) strongly agreed, whereas, the rest (another 03 students, 05.88%), strongly disagreed.

Clearly, making mistakes is inescapable in the process of language learning. Students have to be encouraged to take risks and fail since it is a sign of their linguistic development. One thing that threatens students' contribution to oral classroom activities, as we have seen, is their fear of making mistakes. Thus, the way their teachers deal with that is very significant. Therefore, the teachers' role to make students relaxed and comfortable in the classroom is a key step to be taken. The teacher ought to show an optimistically positive attitude towards his

students' trials to speak. Doing this, he is enhancing their self-confidence; speech fluency and making them get rid of that habit of reluctance to practice English.

5.1.3 Summary of the Questionnaire Data Analysis

When the students were asked whether they liked attending oral expression classes in **item two**, their answers disclosed problems at the level of their intrinsic motivation. If we take a meticulous look at the reasons behind low inner stimulation, it could be said that intrinsic motivation is reduced if there was an outer reward just for finishing a particular task (Levy, A. et al, 2016). In other words, when teachers keep praising on their students excessively just because they finished their tasks, they will have less intrinsic motivation to do the task from that time forth, which in turn leads the students to having no desire to even attend the class. Notwithstanding, psychological researches conclude that positive feedback for the learners who perform better than their classmates is more likely to increase their intrinsic motivation. Thence, the teacher's role to maintain a high level of intrinsic motivation is crucial.

Item three revealed that students experience hesitations, long pauses, and stammering on a usual basis. Perhaps we agree with Birdsong & Molis' (2001) claim that disproves foreign language students' nativelike achievement, but what we are seeking in our students is just an acceptable level of fluency that meets the requirements of the bachelor's degree they are about to get. Thus, what we are trying to say is that those hesitations, long pauses, and stammering that the students are experiencing hamper their speech flaw which means that their oral performance is substandard. An issue that has to be solved.

Therefore, to explain the data gathered from **item four** which was about their speaking anxiety level, the percentage of students who selected "To a high extent" means that they might have serious problems of nervousness, and discomfort while expressing themselves orally. This is considered as a predictor of negative language learning since it leads to speaking difficulties

prohibiting students from performing a fluent speech production. This can be one reason behind their long pauses, stammering, and hesitations while speaking. Nonetheless, a moderate level of anxiety is not seen as an issue, because it may be a positive stimulus for those students. In a more subtle way, an average amount of anxiety is believed to support students to develop different adapting strategies, and this, in turn, leads to an augmentation of self-confidence (Hayasaki, A., 2018). Even more, managing the rate of both enjoyment and anxiety might enhance the students' performance (ibid). Eventually, students who selected "To a low extent" are thought to be comfortable, at ease, and confident while speaking English, which might be due to the fact that they have rich vocabulary, acceptable English proficiency, and high self-confidence. That is, their personality and level help them reduce their language anxiety levels.

Concerning **item five**, students who have the highest levels of motivation and self-esteem are more likely to prefer role playing, for it helps enthuse themselves. Also, they might be gifted with a talent of acting so that they feel comfortable to do it in the classroom and it encourages them to learn to have better performance of speaking. The other group of students who opted for "debate" might have that personality type that likes to discuss and argue about some ideas. It can be very beneficial to improve their speaking level, by learning, from one another, new vocabulary and new expressions. Thus, students' choice of the preferred activities depends on their own way of learning.

As **item six** exhibited, the psycholinguistic approach firmly claims that the speaking classroom activities have to mirror the students' learning styles. Therefore, a variety of tasks is the key. Teachers are supposed to vary the type of activities as an attempt to converge with their students' best ways of learning as well as their personalities. As an illustration, in this context, visual learners are more likely to prefer to be the audience of a presentation, or to watch videos and movies to learn. Auditory learners would probably like to listen to audio files and songs and then practice speaking. Tactile learners, who like to learn through their sense of touch,

would rather like games and playing with vocabulary puzzles as an oral expression activity. Finally, kinaesthetic learners like working on social interaction, so activities like debates, teamwork or pair work would suit them to learn speaking comfortably.

Item seven was about the students' openness to participate willingly in the classroom oral tasks. It could be concluded that their risk-taking aspect is what explained their choices. From that, we believe that students who challenge themselves and are active in the classroom have this quality of risk-taking. Truth is, this is a positive feature amongst students, for speaking the language requires, to some extent, an impulsive and daring student. In addition, the students' personality type was seen as another key. More precisely, extroversion and introversion. It was inferred that the students who like to participate can be seen more like extrovert students who can, and want to, learn through interacting with their classmates and teachers.

Teachers are considered as very significant factors in defining the quality of learning as far as **item eight** is concerned. For many researchers, the way teachers motivate their students has an important effect on these latter and their achievement (Atkinson, 2000). To clarify, as far as the speaking skill is concerned, the teacher is more likely to have an impact, either positive or negative, on his students' degree of participation, which in turn, can be seen as one reliable predictor of learning to speak English. Based on the data gathered from this particular question, we can say that most students of our sample are extrinsically motivated by their teachers to engage in the speaking activities and tasks which can contribute positively to improve the outcomes of their oral performance.

In **item nine** though, anxiety and shyness come as subordinates in the students' selections between the options available for this question. Anxiety, on the one hand, can be linked to some sort of a threat to the students' capacity and level in the foreign language (English). To put it differently, language anxiety raises in situations of fear during which students are asked to perform in the target language (Pappamihiel, 2002). Thus, students who

considered anxiety to be their critical difficulty when speaking English tend to have low self-esteem which makes it hard for them to do the oral activities. On the other hand, shyness, which is defined as "a tendency to avoid social interactions and to fail participating appropriately in social situations" (Pilkonis,1977, p.596), is believed to be an affective factor which can cause severe problems when it comes to speaking English since shy students often avoid participating and being active during oral expression tasks. Therefore, shy students might have an appropriate level of knowledge about the target language. However, they over-monitor what they are saying which automatically leads to hesitating, taking pauses and stopping to think about what to say. Special care has to be paid to shy students, hence, for it is a significant affective factor that can be a useful predictor of the learning outcome.

Item ten that showed that the majority of our participants watch movies and listen to songs of native speakers as a strategy to make their oral performance better implies that since this is the easiest and the most available way, they opt for it. Practicing English with family or with friends seems to be not at the students' reach because it is rare that one of their families or friends speaks English which explains why few students do it. Eventually, speaking with native speakers via social media appears to be the least preferred option for students, maybe because the reliable platforms, in which native speakers are ready to speak for this purpose, are payable. Nonetheless, the choice of the participants who ticked in "None of the above" box remains inexplicable.

In **item eleven**, for the students who selected "strongly agree", they mean that they feel very uncomfortable when they are speaking the language. These might have the lowest levels of self-confidence. Presumably, they have serious difficulties when it comes to speech production. Furthermore, those who opted for "Agree" are more likely to experience low levels of self-confidence frequently, but in a lesser amount comparing them to the previous ones. It seems that those who chose "Neutral" were uncertain of their level of self-confidence, or

perhaps, they partially agree and partially disagree on the proposed statement. However, by selecting disagree, the students are claiming that their self-confidence is acceptably high to an amount where they feel positively sure of themselves, and this makes them speak English freely. In addition, those who strongly disagreed with the expression means that they are very self-assured and reliant having enough amount of confidence that allows them to speak in a very relaxed way.

Moreover, **in item twelve**, "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" were the two less selected options. The former means that students do not fear making mistakes at all, while the latter implies that students are, to a high extent, afraid of making mistakes. Nonetheless, "agree" and "disagree" are the two most selected options. The former infers that the students do not usually witness the phenomenon of fear of making mistakes, whereas, the latter shows that making mistakes is not one of their worries when speaking. Proportionally speaking, a considerable number of respondents opted for "Neutral" (which are 13). We can deduce from their choice that they, probably, do not pay attention to whether they are afraid of making mistakes or not. If we consider both the ones who selected "disagree" and those who opted for "strongly disagree" as students who experience fear of making mistakes, we would have 39,22%, which is a considerable percentage meaning that it is this factor which hinders the speaking process among students.

Hence, the answers of **item thirteen** revealed that a great number of students feel anxious when asked to speak without preparation, which leads them to be even reluctant to take part in the tasks behaving more unwillingly to speaking English. This issue seems to be universal. "This has been a great challenge for EFL teachers for years … teachers complain about their students' silence during oral communication courses" said Savaşçi, M. (2014, p. 2683). Thus, it is extremely important to look at the students' obstacles in order to solve this issue. In this particular context, insufficient information about the topic being discussed is one

of the reasons behind students' unwillingness to participate (Littlewood, W. 2004), which may get us back to this students' problem of being anxious when asked to speak without preparation, i.e., perhaps the lack of knowledge about the subject is one of the causes also.

A vast number of students, as the data in **item fourteen** demonstrated, worried about forgetting words when it came to speaking English. Superficially, students who are not familiar with, or do not practice enough, the speaking skill, tend to have this kind of apprehension. That is, one can notice that sort of spontaneity in those students who practice speaking. Thoughtfully, however, the problem may be just an illusion due to some deficiencies at the level of the students' self-confidence, and self-esteem. As an explanation, it could be that students just feel afraid of forgetting certain words when speaking because they are less self-confident, but if they are actually faced with a 'fait accompli' they may perform appropriately. Still, in accordance with Psycholinguistics, for students to solve this problem, they must get exposed to the English language as much as possible, and have enough practicing about what they have listened to. This can help them make their memory, and vocabulary retrieval, more accurate.

As it was revealed by **item fifteen**, a considerable group of students have great fear when their teachers correct every mistake they make (if we count the ones who agreed plus those who strongly agreed, it equals 50.98%). Thus, teachers who give improper feedback have to reconsider their method because it could hinder the students' participation, and how would students practice English in the classroom without participating? For instance, if an introvert student's answer is given immediate improper feedback, he would probably avoid participating next time. We deem that good teachers are those who know when and how to correct their students' mistakes.

Finally, this part and partial of the study was devoted to dealing with the data gathered by the questionnaire. As a matter of fact, this first phase of our experimentation, the questionnaire, was for the purpose of exploring the students' perceptions, attitudes and

suggestions in relation to the overall research problem. As for this, their answers were insightful enough for us to come up with conclusions that would help answer the posed research questions. The questionnaire included 15 questions which were directed to decrypt the students' major reasons behind poor oral performance. These latter were found to be; low intrinsic motivation, high frequency of hesitation, long pauses and stammering, high level of speaking anxiety, the monotony of the speaking activities (the classroom oral activities are not varied enough to suit the learners' learning styles), low levels of risk taking in the students, low degrees of self-esteem, high degrees of fear of making mistakes, some students' individual efforts were not enough, low levels of self-confidence, issues with vocabulary retrieval, and fear of teachers' immediate feedback.

5.2 Interview findings

The major concern of this part and partial of the study is to analyse and discuss the data gathered through the teachers' interviews. The main objective of the interview was to investigate the teachers' attitudes towards their students' speaking deficiencies, and how they could be overcome. It aimed at exploring the aspects of the students' hesitations, long pauses and stammering while speaking. Furthermore, the interview is intended to check the results of the questionnaire that was previously administered to the third-year students of English at Biskra University. For a detailed account, the interview included ten questions that were thought to succeed in getting helpful insights from the teachers about the said matter.

The central interests of the questions fluctuated between the extent to which students have issues of speaking, the reasons of those difficulties, the situations that make the students comfortable to speak, Levelt's model stages that were hard for students to process, the learning styles in relation to lesson planning, the suggested techniques to remedy this situation, and the testing of the students' speaking proficiency. After they filled in and signed on consent forms in which we ensured that their answers will be kept anonymous, and used only for academic

purposes, they were given enough time to provide us with answers, comments, and suggestions for the questions posed. Eventually, the interviews were of much help for us to identify the real sources of difficulty along with their possible solutions.

5.2.1 Interview description

In accordance with the research questions generated at the beginning of the research, and in relation to the problematic dealt with, the questions of this interview were put. For Patton (1987), the first steps of making the blueprint list of the interview questions are called the interview guide approach. Therefore, considering the nature of our research and its methodology, each question was made purposefully in order to reach a thorough discussion with the participants in an attempt to come up with a deep understanding of the speech production flow of their students.

The interview data were collected between January, 30th and February, 02nd, 2021. The interviews were held with four (04) teachers of oral expression of the branch of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. The language used during the interviews was English, and the durations of the interviews were between nine (09) and twenty-three (23) minutes, all depending on the interviewees' way of answering the questions. On the whole, and given the complexity of our study, all the interview questions were open-ended. The idea was that we decided to give the interviewees much room to give their comments freely. In other words, this type of unstructured interviews permits the interviewee to give in-depth and broad discussions about the questions (Dörnyei, 2007). The teachers' answers on some questions such as question three (03) and four (04) were based on the extent to which they evaluated their students' perceptions and attitudes towards the main topic of the question, i.e., their comments were based on their students' reactions in the classroom.

Thus, the qualitative data gathered from these interviews were of paramount significance to the researchers as they helped them generate more ideas and insights about the topic of this thesis. They allowed them to construct deep awareness of the students' speech production obstacles and the way their teachers perceive them. Actually, each of the face-to-face interviews was held in a calm classroom. The operation was digitally recorded by the interviewer as he took notes while the interviewee was answering the questions. The answers, were afterwards, transcribed and written on word files.

5.2.2 The interview data analyses and discussions

This part of the study is concerned with the concretization of the interview data analysis. Thus, after transcribing the interview records, data were calculated using Microsoft excel and then demonstrated in tables, pie charts and bar charts. As part of the analysis, we went for a descriptive-interpretive approach to deal with the qualitative data collected through these interviews. The data analysis, hence, will be, of course, related to the main purpose of the present study, and will be interpreted from a psycholinguistic perspective.

Item 01

1 - To what extent do your students have difficulties (like hesitations, long pauses and stammering) to speak English?

Answers	Percentage	frequency
To a large extent	75%	3
To a low extent	25%	1
Sum	100%	4

Table 03: The extent to which students experience hesitations, long pauses, and stammering.

The above table shows that three teachers (representing 75%) claimed that their students have real difficulties in speaking English. However, one of them argued that the majority of his students have a very acceptable level of the speaking skill. During the first interview, the

interviewee said that for the majority of the students this is noticed to be a real obstacle, as most of them make many stops when speaking. The second teacher, moreover, thought that the lack of practice is what makes students fear that they are in cases where they are put to perform, which in turn might make them hesitate. In the third interview, the teacher confirmed that many of his students demonstrated such type of issues. Nevertheless, the last interviewee stated that he was really astonished by the good speaking level of his students, claiming that the majority are excellent.

As it seems, these speech impediments are a real burden which is noticeable in the students' speaking process according to the majority of oral expression teachers at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. To explain, making unnecessary stops when speaking English, means that the student has serious issues at the level of his fluid, or say, flowing way of articulating his utterances. It might be noticed that he repeats a word, or a part of it, for many times, or he just pauses unsuitably between the parts of the sentence. Also, students sometimes speak at a very fast pace and mix two words or more producing unclear language. They sometimes overuse "emm" or "uh" as speech fillers when they are needless.

To be fair, these types of disfluencies are experienced by many people, even by native speakers. However, if they are excessively witnessed, i.e., above the normal standard, they are considered as sever issues of speaking leading to serious problems at the level of communicating in English. Once the speed, rhythm, and flow of words are influenced by such stammering, hesitations, and long pauses, it means that the student undergoes some sort of discomfort at the level of his speech production.

Item 02

2 - Why do you think that many students of English struggle with the speaking skill?
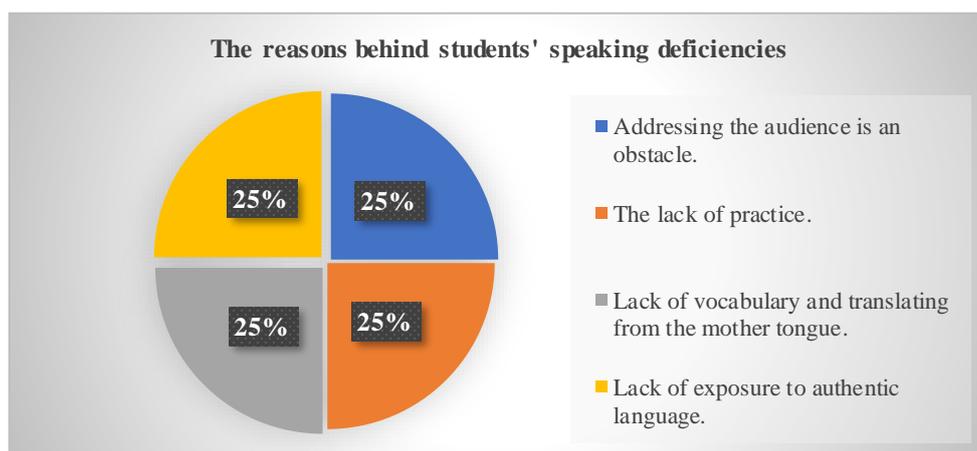
Figure 16: The reasons behind the students' speaking deficiencies.

This pie chart exhibits the nature of what causes students' problems at the level of speaking, from the perspective of their teachers. Each teacher had his own way of analysing his students' oral proficiency. According to the first interviewee, the aspects of the students' hesitations, long pauses, and stammering appear more when they face an audience and present something. The second participant claimed that such speech production impediments are due to the lack of practicing speaking. For him, the less they practice English, the more they are likely to experience those problems when speaking. The third one said that students do unnecessary stops because of two reasons, namely, the lack of vocabulary and the fact that they translate from the mother tongue into English which takes much time making them stammer and hesitate. The last one, moreover, argued that the speaking level has a lot to do with exposing the learners to a natively authentic English. This, to him, is the reason why they struggle to speak the foreign language.

Some of the interviewees went into other details talking about the students' different forms of psychological backgrounds which were the reason behind their personal inhibitions to speak English. That is, they feared when they were put to speak. They thought if they spoke English and failed to do that in terms of grammar or vocabulary, they were going to be left out, that is why they blocked, they stammered, mumbled, and they hesitated. Others claimed that

even the interaction, inside the oral expression sessions, is very limited. There are no means to vary between the activities and boost the leaners' communicativeness. Hence, the nature of the speaking tasks is highly influenced by the capacities of the university itself, if it cannot provide the teachers with appropriate items to meet the requirements of a communicative oral expression session there will be many obstacles for teachers to do their job properly.

The field of psycholinguistics explains the causes of speaking difficulties. Attention and memory influences on L2 production are relevant to this specific matter. As it has been highlighted in **Chapter two**, many studies were conducted on the significant role of attention during the four stages of speech production. They claimed that learners must be attentive and focused when learning the language, and their focal attention results in the intake of new linguistic items in long-term memory for future use. That is, attention is highly needed, at different levels, for the appropriate operating of the entire speech production process, and if the students are not attentive enough when speaking English, they will have problems in terms of their fluency. Concerning memory, short and long-term memory are responsible for vocabulary retrieval from the students' lexicon. Memory is responsible for treating the linguistic input, for the speaker to be able to generate his linguistic output. Thus, if the students' memory processes do not run effectively, they would encounter several issues when producing the language.

Item 03

3 - Does the students' personality type has an impact on their openness to communicate? If yes, how?
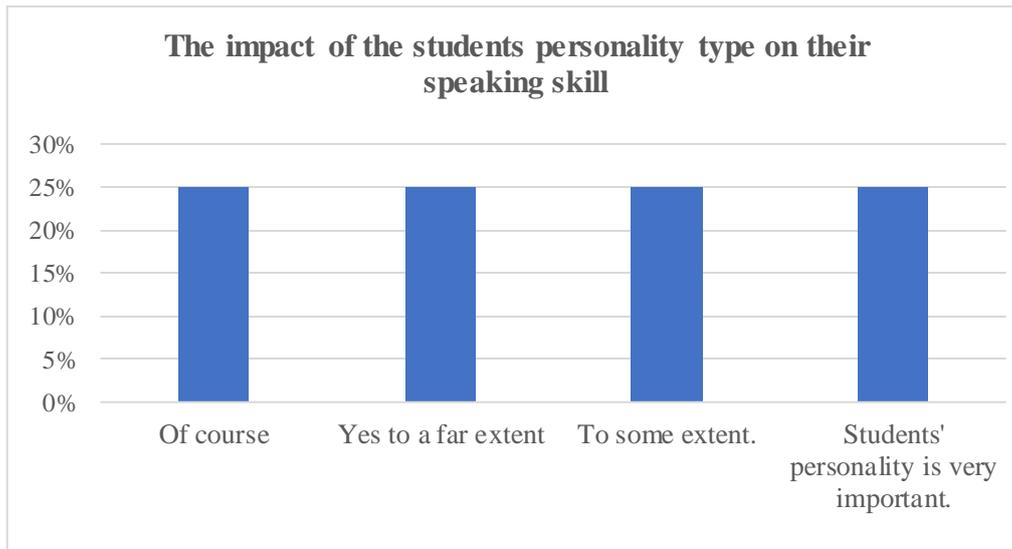
Figure 17: The teachers' attitudes about the influence of the students' personality on their speaking.

As it is shown in this bar chart, all the interviewees agreed that personality is a highly considered factor when it comes to the speaking problems. One teacher said that it is noticeable in his oral expression sessions that "easy-going students", as he described them, seemed to have a suitable flow of language production. To another teacher, furthermore, if students lacked confidence to show their mastery of the language, they would not make it through the speaking tasks and activities. However, even though he started his answer by saying "Well of course", one teacher claimed that personality would not have a huge impact on the students' speaking skill. The last interviewee, finally, talked about self-reliance as a way to depict the idea of personality as being an influencer of the student's oral performance. For him, when the student was well prepared for the class, he would come with the quality of depending on himself which makes him active during the activities, and this in turn helped him get rid of the speaking deficiencies we are investigating.

Apparently, students who have immoderate communication skills are more likely to have an imposing personality. That is, those with efficient communicative abilities can put themselves to interact with the surrounding people, be it their classmates or their teacher.

Hence, the students' oral fluency correlates with their personality. The latter's influence on the former is either positive or negative. According to Krashen (1981), as mentioned in Gardner (1985), personality variables could have an impact on the learners' attitude and motivation which in turn affects their oral fluency. Thus, students' personality is an important predictor of the students' success in the speaking skill, and has to be taken into account, on a serious basis.

Psycholinguistics, in this realm, offers scientific knowledge that can help us during this discussion. Both the cognitive and behavioral aspects of the students when they speak English explain that their personality can determine the extent to which their spoken English does not witness unnecessary stops, hesitations, and stammering. If we speak of personality as their way of reacting to the different obstacles at the level of speech production, we ought to refer to their problem-solving mechanism. When their strategy to overcome such constraints is dependent on their personality type, they are probably going to make pauses, and use needless speech fillers, i.e., they will have the speaking difficulties that this study is scrutinizing.

Item 04

4 - "Extroversion and Introversion are important factors that influence learning speaking". What can you say about that?

Interviewees	Answers' summaries
Teacher 01	It is true, 100% true. Introverts, they always have problems.
Teacher 02	Yes, some societal inhibitions have to be diminished in the classroom.
Teacher03	Different activities should be assigned to different types of students to reach introvert students.
Teacher04	Students must be familiar with the language.

Table 04: Teachers' comments about extroversion and introversion in relation to speaking.

In order to get an in-depth understanding of the teachers' perceptions on personality types regarding the students' speaking proficiency, we have posed such a question that is linked to the previous one. The above table manifests that, for the first interviewee, introvert learners most of the time encounter problems of speaking. Moreover, the second one has gone through a deeper analysis claiming that personality types are caused by some social practices. To explain, he has stated that the students' societal life is reflected into their classes in the sense that if they have any family problems, for instance, that has led them to be introvert, this will be shown in their way of speaking English inside the classroom. Touching the solutions of this specific issue, the third one talked about the oral expression itself. For this latter, the teacher must do dissimilar speaking tasks as an attempt to reach all the available types of students, including the introvert ones. The fourth interviewee, eventually, claimed that the extent to which students are connected to the target language can be a remedy of their personality trait that prevents them from speaking fluently.

As a matter of fact, extrovert students are known to be overtly expressive which means that, exclusively for the speaking skill, this can be of great help for them to improve their accurate and fluent communicativeness. Nevertheless, introverted ones are, generally, shyly discreet students. A fact that makes them relatively far away from possessing a fluid speech production. Pursuing this further, extravert students tend to risk making errors when conversing at the expense of maintaining their fluency, as opposed to introvert students who are most of the time independent and reserved so that they would not be put to perform or speak in English. Unfortunately, and as it is argued by Cain (2012), despite the fact that the current classrooms seek to give opportunities for both personality traits to improve, the majority of their structures are highly biased towards extroverts. For example, if we notice the idea of grading students based on their participation in the classroom, the introverted students are more likely to be

wronged. Therefore, teachers have to take into consideration their students' personality types when it comes to the speaking skill.

Psycholinguistically speaking, extroverted students tend to engender some stances for themselves to be part in a conversation. This creation of appropriate opportunities, that is to say, to speak English, will have positive influence on the improvement of their level in speaking. This is why it was concluded by many psycholinguistic researches, such as Rossier's (1976) and Genesee's (1976), that extroversion could be considered as an important factor in the development of students' language proficiency. Speech production is a tremendously complex process that is influenced by many psychological aspects. In all cases, when students of English begin speaking, their speech production level is revealed based on their performance. The properly accepted performance is when they succeed to deliver speech with correct pronunciation and intonation, while their ideas and thoughts are appropriately delivered and clearly understood by their interlocutors. However, their poor oral performance is observed when they relatively fail to convey their message, with incorrect tone and pronunciation, and the audience misapprehend it. Therefore, the relationship between the students' speech production and their personality types, i.e., extroversion or introversion, can be established to infer that the students' oral performance, be it good or poor, demonstrate their level in the spoken language.

Item 05

4- - In your opinion, what are the situations in which the students feel comfortable to communicate? Teamwork, in pairs, or when the teacher is involved?

The situations in which the students feel comfortable

- When the teacher is involved. — 25%
- All the three. — 50%
- Teamwork. — 25%
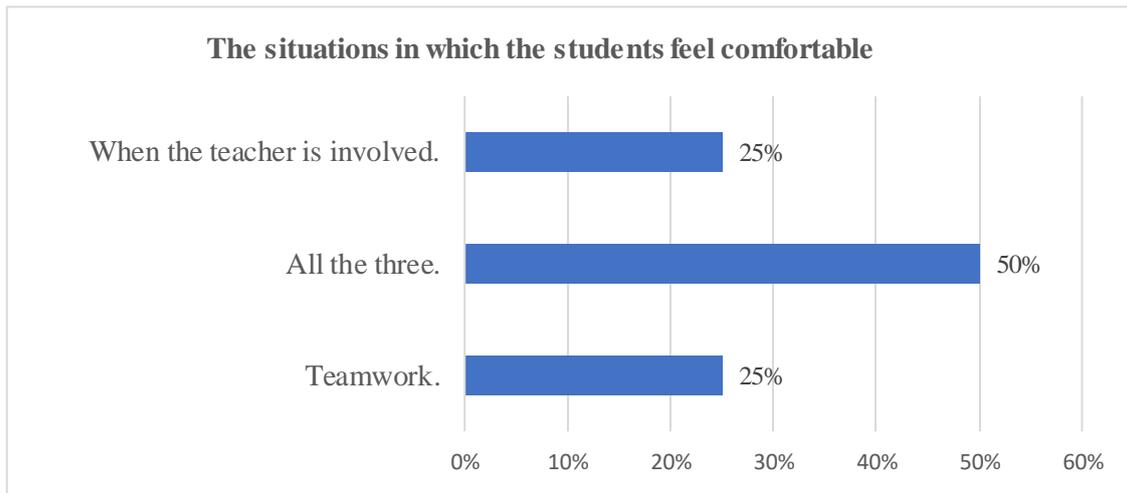
Figure 18: Teachers' opinions on when their students feel comfortable to speak.

As an attempt to understand more the teachers' perceptions about their students inside the classroom, we wanted to know what they think about the kind of different speaking activities assigned in different ways in relation to their students' level of their comfortability to communicate. The above bar chart shows that one interviewee said that his students felt freer to speak when the teacher was involved. Two of them, however, claimed that in all the three propositions, they can be comfortable, but it just depends on their teacher. In addition, the last teacher favored teamwork as a way to boost his learners' communication aspects.

To dig deeper into the teachers' viewpoints, one of them said "teamwork is really helpful" and continued "I allow them to choose their group members". For him, they must have some room to select what team they will be in. This is how he managed to make them at ease during the speaking tasks. Another one mentioned that since the teacher is the central focus of the students, his intervention has to be within their interest. Moreover, concerning the third interviewee, he straightforwardly put emphasis on the teachers' role during the speaking tasks. He stated that "the teacher should take part in all the activities, and should create some supportive learning environment in the classroom so that the students participate and communicate". The last teacher, lastly, believed that all of the three options must be offered.

"We should gather all the ways", he said. Meaning, during his speaking activities, teamwork, pair work, as well as the teachers' intervention have to be all relied on.

If we explore the teachers' opinions from a psycholinguistic perspective, we should probably refer to the students' needs and their preferred ways of processing the language, i.e., their cognitive styles. This individual difference presenting the students' natural method of discerning, recalling, ordering, processing, and internalizing the input they receive is very crucial when it comes to the way their speaking sessions are structured. Each student has his own cognitive style. Generally, cognitive styles go hand in hand with the learning styles, but the two notions are not the same in the field of psycholinguistics. Hence, team work is for students who like to interact in a group. Activities in pairs are assigned to students who would rather prefer to converse with one classmate, and activities which involve the teacher are for introvert students who are most of the time passive, this could give the teacher an opportunity to stimulus them to interact. All in all, in order to cover all the possible existing cognitive styles in an oral expression session, a variation of the tasks and activities is recommended.

Item 06

6 - Levelt's model (1993) of speaking suggests that the speaking process goes under four main stages which are; conceptualization (subconsciously developing thoughts about the topic), Formulation (creating the linguistic form required to express the desired message), Articulation (putting into words what has already been conceptualised and formulated), and self-monitoring (regulating, correcting, editing, and rectifying what is being said).

what stage do you think that your students have more difficulties to process?
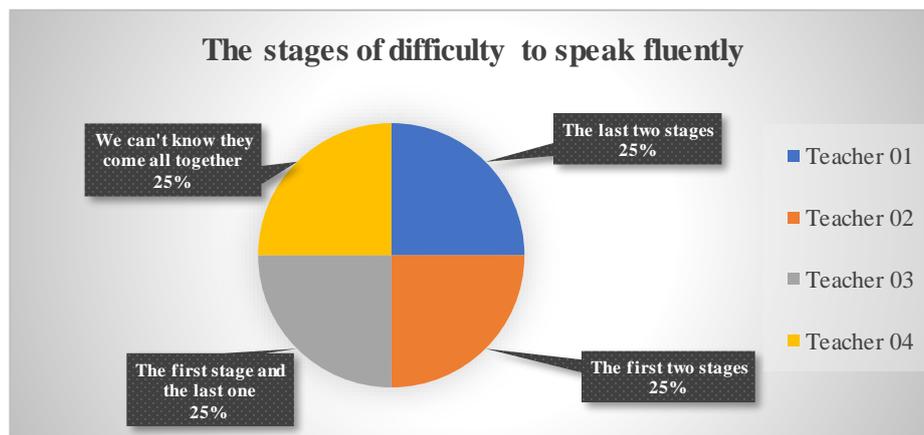
Figure 19: The teachers' opinions on their students' stages of difficulty when they speak English.

This question was generated for the purpose of gathering data concerning the students' speech production stages that are difficult to process. According to the first teacher, the last two stages, i.e., articulation and self-monitoring, are what makes speaking fluently for students so difficult. The second one, nevertheless, went for the two first stages as the most two hard ones to deal with. These are conceptualization and formulation. The third interviewee said that conceptualization and self-monitoring are what causes the students hesitations, long pauses, and stammering. The fourth teacher, finally, argued that it was not possible to distinguish between the students' speech production stages.

Truth is, Levelt's (1989) model of speech production was put forward after a scientific experimentation on people speaking. Our question, in this respect, was to get the teachers' opinions on the matter, they were their mere perceptions and viewpoints that, hopefully, can lead us to come up with a better understanding of the third-year students' most frequently faced problems of speaking. Therefore, as being teachers of oral expression, they spent time with their students while having conversations, and interacting using the English language, so they are supposed to have at least some sort of observation during the class. This is why we posed this question; we sought for more knowledge concerning our problematic.

189

One of the teachers mentioned that when his students began to articulate what they had conceptualized, and he stopped them or asked them a question, it would be difficult for them to reorganize their ideas again so they were unable to monitor their speech. Another one gave a more detailed account. He claimed that the first two stages were "the essence of the whole operation". Nonetheless, when the conceptualized information did not match the students' linguistic competence, its formulation could have many problems, which continues to the coming stages. The issues of the last stage, which is self-monitoring, according to the third interviewee, were revealed when he asked them to elaborate what they had just said. It was at that time that they failed to readjust their speech if they had made mistakes. The last teacher asserted that for the sake of research and investigation it was possible to dissociate the speaking process, but, naturally, in classrooms or in real life situations it is different and difficult to know the speech production stages.

The psycholinguistic speech production framework put forward by Levelt (1989) can be relied on to deal with students' speaking deficiencies. Applying its basic framework to observe the third-year students' speech production process is of much help to have explanations of their unwanted speaking problems. Each of the interviewed teachers' answers were based on his own experience with them. Actually, an appropriate beginning of the speech production leads to an appropriate realization of the speech itself. In other words, if the conceptualization stage is well structured, the articulation stage, all along with self-monitoring, is going to end up well. Perhaps, the teacher ought to prepare his students to speak. Their brainstorming is important to help them conceptualize the content they want to deliver. Giving them enough vocabulary on the topic will support their formulation stage to create the required linguistic items. Teaching them pronunciation, intonation, and tone would assist their articulation of the already conceptualized and formulized message. Providing them with proper feedback in relation to their grammatical mistakes, in a proper manner and timing, will aid them to get used

190

to boost their self-monitoring stage. Seemingly, the teachers' role can never be neglected in an oral expression classroom.

Item 07

7 - Do you consider your students' learning styles while planning your speaking lessons? If yes, how do you do that?

The consideration of the students' learning styles.

- Teacher 01 I would say, not consciously, I do it like throughout the class, I just try to adapt to what is found in the classroom
- Teacher 02 Not necessarily, through experience, we deduce their learning styles.
- Teacher 03 Of course, yea, It's a very important point.
- Teacher 04 No. There is no preparation. I give them the will to prepare themselves.
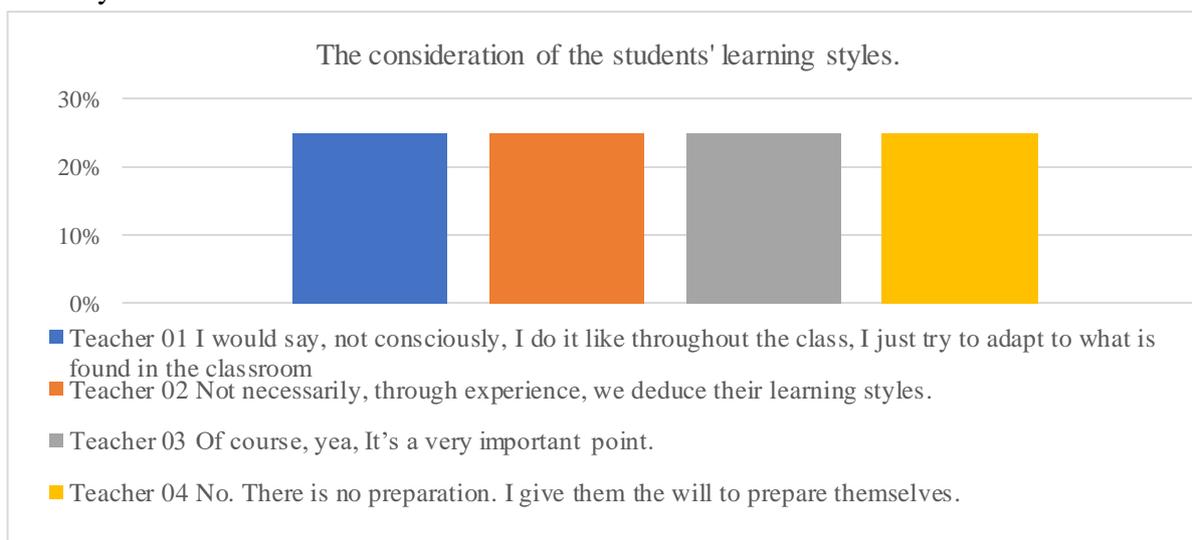
Figure 20: The extent to which teachers consider their students learning styles while planning the lessons.

Lesson planning has to include a variety of speaking tasks and activities to cover the available students' learning styles. This question was put to see whether teachers of the English branch at Biskra university are interested in this particular point. As the bar chart reveals, two teachers (corresponding to 50% of the sample) did not consider their students learning styles when they prepare their oral expression lessons. The other two teachers (50%) did it regarding its importance.

The first interviewee said that he did not intend to do it when preparing the lesson. Rather, he did it throughout the session. He meant that he adapted to "what is found in the classroom". That is to say, the focus of the learning styles occurred during the oral expression sessions. Another one claimed that since he used to do a needs analysis study in the two first sessions, then based on that he designs his course. The third teacher puts emphasis on the

significance of knowing the learning styles and building the lessons on that basis to assure the students learning. In the final interview, the teacher stated that he did not prepare his oral expression sessions for third year students. He argued that they did not require any preparation, he just asked them to prepare topics themselves, and present them to the class.

The idea is as simple as follows. The psycholinguistic field of study holds that every student has a prevailing learning style that permits him to absorb the input he receives with ease. Regarding that the teacher must be the observer of his own students, he is supposed to know their learning styles so that he can vary between the kind of speaking tasks and activities as a strive to make the learners interested enough to interact and participate so that they can improve their fluency. We reckon that it is a highly valued step that teachers of speaking must spend some time trying to do it. According to many studies, learning styles and the speaking skill correlate with, and influence, one another (Oxford, 2003). Thus, this learning factor should not be neglected. It can either hinder or boost the students' oral performance. Both teachers' and students ought to be aware of its crucial significance as far as speaking is concerned.

Item 08

8 - Are there any techniques that you can suggest to remedy the students' hesitations, long pauses, and stammering while speaking English?

Teacher 01	I ask them to do works that they feel at ease with.
Teacher 02	I give room to the learner, this kind of easiness to make this kind of production, they are going to overcome all these issues.
Teacher 03	I make the students feel comfortable, they shouldn't fear mistakes.
Teacher 04	I involve, I encourage students, to work in groups where I mix good students with bad ones.

Table 04: The teachers' techniques to remedy the students' hesitations, long pauses, and stammering.

Language classrooms are heterogeneous, they are not homogeneous. There must be, concerning oral performance, bad, average, good, and even excellent students. The way that teachers deal with the former, i.e., students with insufficient efforts, is important to be known in our study.

Therefore, the answers to this specific question demonstrated that the interviewees did different techniques to remedy the students' hesitations, long pauses, and stammering. The first one, as an attempt to make them feel comfortable during the oral activities, assigned to them tasks in which they felt at ease. He gave them the opportunity to choose the type of oral tasks they wanted to be part in. The second one, alternatively, tried to get rid of those issues by giving more room to his students to interact. He intended to create that sort of smooth rapport with them. The third teacher made his students at ease by attempting to enhance their courage not to fear mistakes when communicating in English. The last interviewee saw the problem from another perspective. He argued that those speech impediments can be overcome by getting the students to work in groups. Not only that, but also by mixing low performing students with high performing ones. This way the students could learn from their classmates and from their teacher at once.

It is when students rush to finish an idea that they experience speaking problems. That is to say, speeding up the speech leads to raise the students' speaking anxiety which, from a psycholinguistic point of view, results in facing problems at all the speaking stages. To explain, many studies, such as Clarl, H.H., and Clark, E. (1977), have found that anxiety is more likely to augment the frequency of unnecessary stops within utterances. In anxiety-provoking situations, or when it is about topics that provoke anxiety, it is difficult for students to access their lexicon to choose the most appropriate words to express what and how they feel, or what they intend to say, which might take more time than usual. Notably, all the teachers' answers turn around the idea of making students comfortable which is, as a matter of fact, a very

appropriate way of lowering their level of anxiety to make them participate during the oral expression tasks.

item 09

9 - How do you motivate your students to be active during the speaking tasks?

The way interviewees motivated their students to participate.

TEACHER 04: I INVOLVE THEM, I WITHDRAW MYSELF AND INVOLVE THEM WITHIN THE GROUP. IT'S ONLY THE GROUP WORK THAT BRINGS A REMEDIAL ACTION. — 25%

TEACHER 03: I FACILITATE THE TASK FOR THEM, I URGE THEM TO SAY ONE WORD, THEN ONE SENTENCE, THEN TO SPEAK FOR A LONGER TIME. — 25%

TEACHER 02: THE TYPE OF EXERCISE IS IMPORTANT, AND THE USE OF SOME ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THEIR PARTICIPATION. — 25%

TEACHER 01: I CHOOSE INTERESTING TOPICS RELATED TO THEIR LIFE, SO THEY FEEL INTERESTED, AND WANT TO CONTRIBUTE. — 25%

0%   10%   20%   30%

Figure 21: The teachers' strategies to motivate their students to be active during the speaking tasks.

Most of the time we notice that many students do not want to take part in the discussions during the oral expression activities. If they do not interact using English, at least inside the classroom, they are probably not going to have the required level of speaking it. This is why the teachers' role to change that habit is of paramount importance.

The above bar chart shows the teachers' answers concerning this aspect. The first one claimed that choosing interesting topics related to their life might make them want to participate. For the second one, the type of the assigned exercise was important, he said that there were some speaking tasks that could stimulus them to contribute to discussions. According to the third one, facilitating the task and urging them to say one word, then one sentence, then to speak for a longer time was his technique. The last teacher stressed the idea that he had to

withdraw himself while getting them in groups to help the passive students interact. He said that only the group work that brought a remedial action for that.

If the topic of the oral expression session is interesting enough to make some of the passive students participate, all the attempts of speaking must be highly encouraged by the teacher. Reluctant students must be the ones facing more issues at the level of their speech production due to the lack of practice. The aim of this question was to extrapolate the way teachers deal with such kind of students because their job is not a mere teaching but it is also to motivate the reluctant students to practice English. Presumably, raising students' self-confidence, relating the lessons to the students' real life, encouraging them not to fear making mistakes, raising their attention to what is happening in the class, and choosing a variety of tasks to cover their learning styles, as the interviewees mentioned, might be positive strategies to boost the students' motivation to speak in class.

Item 10

10 - How do you usually test your students' speaking proficiency?

Teacher 01	I rely on a rubric that tests, their body language, their eye contact, their knowledge about the topic, their organisation of ideas, their enthusiasm about the topic.
Teacher 02	I test intonation, grammar, vocabulary, the choice of the topic, and the tone.
Teacher 03	I create a rubric, during the first semester I focus on what to say, during the second one I focus on how to say it.
Teacher 04	what I take into consideration in testing my students, are grammatical mistakes. Grammatical mistakes are avoided at all costs, Language is grammar.

Table 05: The participants' way of testing the students' speaking level.

The last question of our interview aimed at knowing how the interviewees assessed their students' speaking proficiency. As it is shown in the table above, testing speaking differs from one teacher to another. Given the high complexity of the speaking process, it is very hard to test its level. Even from the point of view of the available literature there is no one single way of testing speaking that is agreed on by all teachers of oral expression.

The first teacher said that he relied on a rubric that tested the students' body language, their eye contact, their knowledge about the topic, their organisation of ideas and their enthusiasm about the topic. This teacher asserted that he always gave them time before the test to prepare for the topic they were about to discuss or the presentation they would present. The second teacher focused on intonation, grammar, vocabulary, the choice of the topic, and tone. He started his answer by saying that to measure the speaking level was extremely difficult because many factors had to be taken into account. He also put emphasis on the idea of telling his students what they were going to be tested about. That is, he said "I tell my students which are the rubrics, okey? I don't hide them, I say for example, you've got two points for the body language, you've got this for the voice…". To the third teacher, the process is a bit dissimilar. He said that during the first semester, he tested his students on what to say. Meaning, he concentrated on the content not on the form. However, during the second semester he stressed on how to say it giving more importance to the form itself. In the last interview, the teacher argued that grammar is all what his testing is about. He said that since language is grammar, grammatical mistakes are not tolerated at this level.

As opposed to the testing methods of the interviewed teachers, the psycholinguistic approach provides an alternative way. In this context, students' spoken language should be assessed as a whole entity, and not seen as different parts. Speaking is a smoothly spontaneous process that comes out as a united combination to express a certain idea. For that, the psycholinguistic approach suggests that it should be tested as a whole (Read, 1981). To explain,

it is hard to assess each part of the spoken language individually. For instance, it would be inadequate to test the students' grammatical adequacy in speaking because a spontaneous way of speaking is seen as "more of a dynamic, creative, functional system" (ibid). Thus, in order not to neglect those aspects of speaking, it must be measured as a whole unit. (See **chapter two** for more details).

5.2.3 Summary of the interview data analysis and discussion

In the first question of the interview, the majority of the teachers said that their students experience the said speaking problems frequently. If the speaking pace and the continuity of words are impacted by stammering, hesitations, and long pauses, it means that there is a deficiency at the level of the students' speech production. As it was confirmed by all the teachers of speaking, a high number of students are more likely to make many stops when expressing themselves in English.

The answers to the second question revealed that the reasons behind those speaking issues are the lack of practice, the lack of vocabulary, translating from the mother tongue, the lack of exposure to native English, and facing the audience. Attention and memory impacts on L2 production are the two psycholinguistic components that can explain this phenomenon. In brief, students have to be sufficiently attentive and concentrated when learning speaking. As a result, that focal attention tends to lead to the intake of new linguistic items in long-term memory for future use.

As far as the third question is concerned, all the interviewees agreed on the fact that personality correlated with the speaking skill. They said that the students' personality type has an influence on their speaking flow either positively or negatively. That is to say, those students who possess appropriate communication skills seem to have an imposing personality. Finally, personality factors can influence students' attitudes and motivation which in turn impacts their speaking skill.

Concerning the fourth question, which was related to the previous one, the teachers consented to the given expression which says that extroversion and introversion influence learning speaking. For them, extrovert students have more opportunities to outrun the introvert ones in the speaking skill. Students who are extrovert often challenge themselves to practice speaking even in situations where they are not sure of their linguistic competence which is a psycholinguistic variable that differentiates between poor and above-average students in terms of oral performance.

The fifth question was about the situations in which students feel comfortable i.e., team work, in pairs, or when the teacher is involved. Two teachers said that all the three options have to be relied on, while one of the interviewees said that team work must be highlighted, and the last one emphasized the teacher's intervention. This has to do with the students' cognitive style which makes them fit in certain speaking activities and unfit in others. Concisely, for the teacher to encompass all the available cognitive styles in an oral expression session, he should variate the speaking activities.

Question number six asked the teachers about the speaking stage that students have the most difficulties to process. Teacher 01 went for the last two stages, teacher 02 selected the first two stages, teacher 03 opted for the first stage and the last one, teacher 04, however, denied the fact that those stages can be noticed in the classroom. If one reads about Levelt's (1989) model of speech production, he is supposed to fathom that a proper start of the speech production results in proper achievement of the spoken language itself. To put it differently, in case when the conceptualization stage is well prepared, the articulation in addition to self-monitoring stage will be completed accurately.

The seventh question was put to see whether the teachers considered their students learning styles while planning their speaking lessons. Three of them stated that they do not really do it. Only one of them did it. Truth is, teachers have to discover their students' learning

styles. Time must be spent to know them in order to be able to shape the oral expression lessons based on that. Neglecting this step shall result in situations where the students are bored, passive, and not learning to speak English.

The next question was about the techniques that the interviewees used to overcome the said speaking problems. Their focus was on making their students sufficiently comfortable in order to remedy their hesitations, long pauses, and stammering while speaking English. Psycholinguistics explains that if students' anxiety is increased, their risk of encountering such problems increases as well. Having difficulties to reach their lexicon to retrieve words, students take time expressing themselves. Thus, making students comfortable is the key that most teachers claim to rely on as a technique to remedy students' speaking difficulties.

The topic of the question number nine was on the way the interviewees motivated their students to be active inside the classroom. Their answers fluctuated between choosing interesting topics, assigning the type of activities that suited the learners, encouraging the students to speak in a gradual process, from one word to one sentence and involving the students with insufficient efforts in groups with the high performing ones. Furthermore, being the ones who are supposed to experience such speaking issues, reluctant students are considered to be a challenge for teachers of oral expression.

The last question in the interview targeted speaking assessment. Most of the teachers of oral expression of third-year at Mohamed khider university rely on certain rubrics that they created. Each testing method is different from one teacher to another. 03 teachers (corresponding to 75% of the sample) assessed their students' speaking level based on their body language, eye contact, knowledge about the topic, organisation of ideas, enthusiasm about the topic, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, choice of the topic, and their tone. However, one of them based his speaking tests only on grammar. He believes that grammatical mistakes must be avoided at all costs since it is the heart of any language.

Throughout this section of the practical part, we have discussed and analysed the data gathered by the conducted interviews with the teachers of oral expression of the English branch at Mohamed khider University of Biskra. It has been an investigation into the interviewees' perceptions, attitudes, opinions, and ideas about the different aspects of their students' major problems as far as the speaking skills are concerned. Their contributions to the study have enlightened it with a tremendous amount of data that will be of great assistance to our quest towards answering our research questions.

5.3 Classroom observation findings

In this section, data gathered through the classroom observation tool are analysed and discussed. We would like to emphasize that this data collection instrument is an extension of the present research tools. Following the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview, the classroom observation is implemented as a method through which we attempt to observe the oral expression sessions, in the English Branch at Mohamed khider University of Biskra, seeking answers to our problematic. Actually, the triangulation aspect of data collection and discussion supports the data findings' cross-checking and their confirmation or disconfirmation all over the three phases of this practical part.

The researcher dealt with this operation relying on a checklist and field notes techniques. That is, he prepared a classroom observation checklist. Oral expression sessions were attended to be observed while he took field notes of what was happening inside the classroom. The checklist was divided into five parts; i.e., Teachers' role, Students' role, Students' fluency, Teacher-student inter-activity, and the psycholinguistic considerations, all encompassing a number of necessary items of the research purpose to be evaluated as ''not at all'', "to some extent", or "to a high extent".

5.3.1 Classroom observation data analyses and discussions

The researcher attended seven (07) classroom observation sessions, and the present analysis and discussion will proceed to deal with each session individually. Each one was characterised by its own lesson plan, techniques of teaching speaking, oral tasks and activities. Therefore, we decided to deal with them session by session and try to objectively reach appropriate results.

The research sample included group 01, group 02, group 03, group 08, group 09, group 10, and group 11 of the third-year students of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. As it might be noticed, the three groups of students that had answered the questionnaire are covered, all along with four other groups. This convenience sampling technique, which belongs to the non-probability sampling method, was opted for since the sample encompassed teachers who were easy to reach for the researchers. Due to the exceptional circumstances that the world witnessed during the study (the covid-19 pandemic), there were many absentees in all the oral expression classes. Still, we will provide the rate of students' participation in all the sessions. As far as the teachers and the students' confidentiality is concerned, our data analysis did not include any names so that their identities remained anonymous as it was promised in the consent letter they had signed.

5.3.1.1 Classroom observation session 01

In this class, the teacher welcomed his students and started speaking about how to present a topic (see **appendix C4**). He skipped the warming up and did not recapitulate the previous lesson. After that, he briefly stated the objectives of the lesson, and began giving tips and ideas about the way topics had to be presented in the classroom. Furthermore, he did not use any kind of authentic material, which resulted in the fact that very few students showed interest in the topic being introduced. The teacher spoke more than his students and they were

not given enough time to express themselves. He did not seem to provide them with any sort of feedback neither. The participation rate was very low since it was more like a lecture and not an interactively communicative session. A couple of students intervened and asked questions. There was no sign of interaction neither between the students nor with the teacher.

As far as the very small number of students who spoke English was concerned, their speech production had several issues. Firstly, it was filled with long stops, stammering, and hesitations. They could not deliver their ideas in an averagely fluent way which made their language somehow unclear. Although their pronunciation was correct to some extent, their speech was characterised by word repetition and literal translations from the mother tongue. Moreover, the teacher-student inter-activity, needless to say, was not established because, as it was mentioned before, the teacher did not succeed to construct that favourable atmosphere for the students to speak freely. These latter were not encouraged to use English, and they were not helped by their teacher when they forgot words and had speech pauses.

Truth is, there were no speaking tasks and activities. In such a classroom environment, there was no opportunity for the students to improve their speaking skill. What are the oral expression sessions for if they do not boost students to practice English as a way to get familiar with speaking which increases the spontaneity of their oral performance?

The last section of the checklist includes the psycholinguistic considerations of our study. For the very few students who participated, the researcher could come up with the following. Their risk-taking aspect was moderate, because even though they did not have the linguistic competence required, they participated. Their speaking anxiety was not high because the teacher listened to them without any harsh comments. However, they were not motivated to take part in the classroom. This, in turn, made their self-esteem and confidence low enough to result in their passivity. Their problem-solving mechanisms at the level of their self-monitoring stage showed weaknesses when it came to the reactions to the linguistic obstacles they faced

while speaking. Their vocabulary retrieval was too slow so that they experienced many pauses and stops. Hence, this made them unable to overcome their communicative holdbacks resulting in a somewhat incomprehensible output. Apparently, the students' learning styles were not taken into consideration for there was no variation between the activities and the speaking tasks.

5.3.1.2 Classroom observation session 02

We planned another classroom observation with the same teacher, but with a different group of students, in order to double check with his method of teaching speaking (see **appendix C5**). Again, he started by greeting his students and mentioned very briefly what they had done in the previous session. Without giving any sort of pre-speaking activities, he began explaining how topics should be presented in the classroom. The objectives of the session were not stated as he kept going on in highlighting the problems that students face when doing presentations. His way of giving a lecture in an oral expression classroom seemed to be persisting. No authentic material was brought into the classroom, and students were not encouraged to speak, nor were they given feedback when few of them interacted.

The students' interest in the topic was moderate, they were not really attracted to participate and give opinions. Seemingly, when the teacher's role was decreased, the students' tended to reduce also. Little interaction among the students and with the teacher was observed. Furthermore, the number of the students who tried to participate was not sufficient. Even though there were many absentees in the class, the attempts to take part in the discussion did not exceed five (05) students. Concerning these latter, their spoken language demonstrated some deficiencies at the level of its fluency. Their speech production did not appear to be spontaneous. They made many stops, they repeated words, and half words, they hesitated, and they stammered.

As far as the teacher-student inter-activity is concerned, during this oral expression session, the students were not stimulated to practice English. Introvert ones were not taken into consideration. They were not asked to take part in the classroom. The teacher focused on the students' voice and tone when they were supposed to present, and not specifically while speaking English inside the classroom. To some extent, the teacher-students relationship was not that strong but a somewhat smooth atmosphere inside the classroom was observed. However, when the speaking students forgot words, made long pauses, or stammering, the teacher did not provide help, neither directly nor indirectly.

Reaching the psycholinguistic considerations for this classroom observation, the researcher made some notes. Despite the teaching method that did not suit both the students and the course itself, some of them, though a very small number, took risk to interact even when they were not sure of their linguistic competence. Since the teacher was an easy-going one, the students speaking anxiety was more likely to be low, to some degree. The students' motivation was noticed to be low as the overwhelming majority of the students were passive. Therefore, their self-esteem was at a minimum level. For the ones who spoke English, their problem-solving mechanisms demonstrated weak reactions since most of them did not succeed to overcome the encountered speech production issues. Concerning their output, their language could be understood, but not to the required level. Finally, the students learning styles were not taken into account because there was no variation of the topics and methods of teaching.

It has to be stated in this context that the teacher's role was of paramount significance. He influenced his students; his negative energy was transmitted to them. Due to the fact that he spoke more than them, and to his lecturing method, they were not boosted to interact, which led them to be passive, and just receivers of information, something that an oral expression session has to avoid at all costs. In order for the students to possess that quality of communicativeness in a fluent way they must be encouraged to speak, at least inside the classroom. Addedly, they

should be notified with all their weaknesses in terms of speech production so that they can develop their speaking skill.

5.3.1.3 Classroom observation session 03

Another classroom observation was held with another teacher (see **appendix C6**). This teacher started the lesson with warming-up about that day's topic which was memorization. As a pre-speaking activity he asked a question about the man who invented the vaccination. Students interacted with the question and gave answers, some were wrong, and others were right.

Afterwards, the speaking task was about giving them a picture to look at for a moment. After taking back the picture, the teacher asked them some questions about it to see whether they remembered some of its details. The discussion started, students interacted with the teacher and between themselves in an appropriate atmosphere. The teacher provided them with new vocabulary and new ideas. The students were triggered to participate. They were lured with awards (plus 05 marks for the correct answer). The teacher varied the techniques to motivate his students to participate. Therefore, they were given enough time to speak freely. Still, no authentic material was brought into the classroom.

High interest in the lesson was shown by the students. Some of them corrected each other's mistakes. As far as their fluency is concerned, they had unnecessary pauses, and stammering in their speech production. However, the language was clear and understood. The hesitation and word repetition were in a low rate comparing to the previous classroom observations. Furthermore, they asked for clarification and spoke with the teacher, but their intonation and pronunciation were not used properly in different situations.

In this oral expression session, the teacher-student inter-activity was characterized by; (1) students were boosted to practice English, (2) the teacher succeeded to create a

communicative mood with his students so they interacted, participated, and exchanged ideas. The number of students participating was rising gradually. Nevertheless, introvert and shy students were not focused on, i.e., they were not given special care. In addition, students were not propelled to pay attention to their tone and pronunciation. When some students started speaking, they forgot some words in English, but the teacher did not help them remember them in an indirect way, but they were corrected overtly and immediately, and help was given for those who experienced stammering, hesitations and long pauses.

The psycholinguistic considerations that were taken during the observation were as follows. The students took risk and reacted to the discussion even when they were not sure of the answer. The teacher and his students had a friendly rapport which resulted in decreasing students' language anxiety. In this respect, their self-confidence and self-esteem were high enough to communicate comfortably. In general, their self-monitoring stage showed positive problem-solving mechanisms. To explain, although they faced the said speech production issues, they managed to control them in several occasions. Moreover, the noticing function of their output was clear. They, for many times, observed what they missed in the speech they wanted to convey in relation to their linguistic competence. The researcher believed that this teacher took his learners learning styles into account when planning his lesson since the techniques of teaching were diverse in order to reach all the types of learners in the classroom.

5.3.1.4 Classroom observation session 04

In this oral expression class, another speaking session, with another teacher, was attended (see **appendix C7**). He welcomed the students, and started speaking about the course that will be taught during the second semester because it was their first class in that semester. However, his instructions took more than half of the session's time. After that, the teacher brought up a topic, that is cultural differences, and the discussion started, after raising some questions. He did a warm up about the different cultures in Algeria, and the way

misunderstandings can occur from one region to another about some Algerian meanings. He did not use any authentic material. To some extent, students were given enough time to speak freely. Nevertheless, the teacher did not intend to give any sort of feedback for his students.

The students had shown interest in the topic, and they interacted with the teacher and participated. Nonetheless, they did not exchange ideas with one another, and they were not encouraged to do so by the teacher. As far as their fluency is concerned, their speech production was full of long pauses and stammering which caused the fact that their language was unclear and hard to be understood. Although they did ask for clarification using correct intonation and pronunciation to a certain degree, they hesitated and repeated words. The teacher's role is not to be underestimated in such classes for it is one reason behind student's motivation to interact without fear.

The teacher-student inter-activity in this classroom was marked by many features. First of all, it was observed that there were some attempts by the teacher to boost his students to practice English. Nonetheless, introvert students were not given particular attention. The ones who did not interact, they were left out. For the students who spoke English, they were not adverted to regulate their tone and their voice while speaking. Still, the teacher managed to make of the classroom an appropriate place to practice English. When students forgot vocabulary items, the teacher did not help them in an indirect way. Rather, he gave explicitly immediate feedback. Importantly, concerning students who encountered the problem of hesitation, and, unnecessary pauses, and stammering, they were not provided with suitable aid by the teacher. He let them speak without interrupting them. Perhaps, this was his way of making them feel comfortable.

During this classroom observation, we took down some psycholinguistic considerations. The majority of students were not risk takers. To explain, in situations when answers to questions were uncertain for them, or in cases where they lacked the required linguistic level,

207

they did not participate in the discussion. Their avoidance strategy was highly noticed. Even so, the students' speaking anxiety was decreased, and their motivation was raised, all by the teacher. Their self-monitoring stage demonstrated negative responses. Most of the time, they did not succeed to overcome speech production problems. That is, their problem-solving mechanisms were not effective enough to make them get rid of hesitation, stammering and speech stops which led them to produce incomprehensible output. Finally, activities and speaking tasks were not varied as a way to cover the available learning styles.

5.3.1.5 Classroom observation session 05

'The importance of listening' was the topic of that oral expression session (see **appendix C8**). After receiving his students, the teacher mentioned directly that day's subject matter. This was the same teacher with whom the researcher attended the first two classroom observations. The class started without warm ups, pre speaking activities, or stating the objectives of the lesson. Addedly, there was no use of authentic material. Few students interacted with the teacher, and talked about the significance of listening to develop the speaking skill. The teacher, from time to time, corrected some of the interveners' grammatical mistakes.

The students' role in this classroom was not sufficient. Showing little interest to discuss the topic, they did not interact with one another, and the majority did not answer the raised questions. Communication in this oral expression session was one-sided, i.e., the teacher spoke more than his students. Despite the fact that only few students spoke, the observation of their fluency resulted in the following. Unnecessary pauses as speech fillers were frequently relied on. They stammered and hesitated, especially when they were asked for more explanations. However, their intonation in different situations was correct to some extent.

Teacher-student inter-activity in this oral expression classroom was observed. Although the students were encouraged to practice English, shy students were not focused on. Moreover,

for the ones who interacted, they were not asked to pay attention to the tone of their voice. On a small scale, the teacher created an atmosphere for communication in the classroom. The relationship between the teacher and the students did not seem to be a strong one. They did not have that attitude to communicate with him comfortably. Furthermore, when some students had speaking obstacles, the teacher did not help them to overcome them.

Some psycholinguistic considerations were noted during that speaking session. Since the students who interacted asked to participate more than once, we considered that their risk-taking aspects demonstrated a moderate tendency to make them communicate even when the situation was challenging. The problem was that although the teacher did not cease to try to decrease their anxiety, raise their motivation, and enhance their self-confidence and esteem, the majority of the students remained passive. For the few ones who spoke English, their problem-solving mechanisms of their speech production did not show effectiveness to solve the issues of involuntary stops, stammering, and hesitating while speaking the language. Observing their output, the researcher concluded that their message was delivered and understood, but not well-structured to meet the required level. At the end, it was noted that the teacher did not vary the speaking tasks and the teaching techniques as a way to reach the students' different learning styles.

5.3.1.6 Classroom observation session 06

In this oral expression class, the students were supposed to do presentations about their future aspirations (see **appendix C9**). The teacher started by stating the benefits of doing presentations in the classroom. The first presentation started. After finishing the presentation, the teacher asked the whole class whether they had comments or questions, as a way to stimulate them to speak. The students interacted and discussed their classmate's future plans. Moreover, the teacher had some comments; he gave her feedback about different aspects of the student's presentation.

The second presentation started by explaining the meaning of aspiration. The student kept presenting her work while the teacher was taking notes. Once she finished, her classmates began exchanging ideas on what she presented. Importantly enough, this one used a data show, and her classmates' interest in the presentation increased comparing it to the previous one. In the third presentation the student talked about her dreams and what she wanted to become in the future. When she finished, the teacher started discussing her ideas with her classmates. They were interested in the topic.

The session went in a very good mood for a communicative oral expression classroom. When the presentation was over, the teacher gave overall remarks about all the presentations. He stressed on his students' pronunciation, grammatical mistakes, word choice and intonation. He mentioned some other problems such as their voice during the presentation, and their "presence" when presenting. Finally, he encouraged them to use the data show.

Students' fluency in this oral expression session demonstrated that the students' speech was filled by hesitations, stammering, and long stops within their utterances. In addition, their intonation was not appropriate. As the teacher-student inter-activity was observed, the teacher succeeded to push the students to practice English. However, shy students were not dealt with properly, i.e., they were not provided with enough help to interact agreeably, and they were not aided to remember words when they forgot them or when they stammered and hesitated.

The psycholinguistic considerations noted during this session encompassed; the students risk taking was increased, the teacher's role to decrease their speaking anxiety was observed, their motivation, self-confidence and self-esteem were boosted by the teacher, and many students' problem-solving mechanisms were efficient enough to overcome the speech deficiencies making their output comprehensible. Perhaps, teaching speaking requires a strong relationship between the teacher and his students for it was observed in all the groups where it

was likewise that the students exhibited a high desire to interact communicatively which must be the goal of any oral expression session.

5.3.1.7 Classroom observation session 07

This oral expression session was made up of presentations (see **appendix C10**). The first presentation was a quiz called "would you rather?". The student in charge distributed sheets of paper in which it was written A on one side and B on the other side. She demonstrated a picture on the data show with two choices, and their classmates, including her teacher, would select only one option. Importantly, the students showed a lot of interest in the game. They were given all the necessary time to interact, and participate freely. The student who was presenting was very comfortable. Noticeably, the teacher was close to the students which made these latter exchange ideas with one another and with the teacher to a very high extent.

It has to be mentioned that the use of data shows increased students' participation rate to a very high extent (which in turn increased their practice of using English, meaning that their speech production was more likely to be improved). In this specific classroom, the "would you rather" game was very effective to raise students' attention so that the discussion sometimes had to go uncontrolled and the teacher did not intervene. What was special in this session is that the teacher, from time to time, asked the passive and silent students about their viewpoints on the subject matter. Subsequently, the students' reactions to the activity were positive all the time.

As a matter of fact, the student who was presenting was very smart to fetch such a speaking activity to the classroom. The oral expression session was very successful in terms of the students' participation and interaction. Furthermore, the teacher's interventions were not for the purpose of correcting or giving feedback. Rather, he was more like their classmate participating in the speaking activity. Maybe this what made them very comfortable. He

managed to create a very agreeable mood for discussions and debates which raised the students' interest tremendously.

As far as the students' fluency is concerned, it was noticed in the majority of the students who participated that they spoke confidently without speech production deficiencies. To some extent, they spoke without unnecessary pauses, their language was clear and understood, they spoke without hesitation, and they used proper intonation in different situations. To a high extent, they spoke without stammering, and without repeating words. Once again, the teacher's role is of paramount significance to make the classroom a better place for practicing English.

The last part of the classroom observation checklist explores some psycholinguistic considerations as it is the case for the previous ones. To start with, the students' risk-taking aspects were far up. They did not care about the correctness of their answers; they just rushed to be part of the discussion. The teacher succeeded to decrease their speaking anxiety and to raise their self-confidence. They spoke confidently and comfortably. These details were the stimulus of their efficacious self-monitoring stage to function appropriately and make them overcome the communicative obstacles they faced. Their comprehensible output including their hypothesis-testing made their oral performance finer. Their attempts to check whether they were being understood were clear to the researcher. These latter, according to the Swain's output hypothesis, were how they tested their prior linguistic knowledge, and when the teacher's intervention was there, their production was boosted to produce more accurate and precise language.

5.3.2 Summary of the classroom observation findings

The major aim of the classroom observation was to watch some oral expression sessions in the English Branch at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. As mentioned before, the classroom observation of this study rested onto a checklist that included the prerequisite aspects

of the research aim. Therefore, in this part of the research, the findings are summarised to give a brief idea for the reader.

The first classroom observation was characterized by the following. There was a lack of the speaking activities, students were not given opportunities to practice English, and the teacher's lecturing method affected the students in a negative way. Concerning the very small number of students who participated, various problems were observed in their speech production. The rate of experiencing long stops, stammering, and hesitations was high. Their risk-taking was moderate. The teacher did not motivate them to interact. Moreover, their self-esteem and confidence were not at an appropriate level. In addition, their problem-solving mechanisms in terms of their self-monitoring stage demonstrated ineffectiveness once encountering linguistic and communicative obstacles. The students' vocabulary retrieval was observed to be tardy causing them to witness many pauses and stops. As a result, their output was somewhat incomprehensible.

The second classroom observation was with the same teacher but a different group. His method was the same. The students' speaking process was not spontaneous. Many stops, repeated words, hesitations, and stammering were observed. Furthermore, they were not appropriately encouraged to speak the language. Besides, shy students were not given special attention. A very small number of the students took risk to participate even when they were not sure of their answers. Their inner motivation was low. The students' problem-solving mechanisms exhibited low responses regarding that many of them failed to prevail over the speech production deficiencies they faced. As far as their output is concerned, their language was comprehensible, but not to the sought level. Eventually, their learning styles did not appear to be taken into consideration before since no variation of the topics and methods of teaching was observed.

Higher levels of interest in the lesson were seen during the third classroom observation. Students corrected one another. Although they had unnecessary pauses, and stammering, their language was clear and understood. Comparing to the other classroom observations, hesitation and word repetition were decreased. By this token, the students were encouraged to speak. The teacher managed to make them interact, participate, and exchange ideas. In addition, he gave help for those who witnessed stammering, hesitations and long pauses. Language anxiety was at a low rate. Therefore, the students' self-confidence and self-esteem were increased to allow them to communicate freely. In the same context, their self-monitoring stage demonstrated appropriate aspects of problem-solving mechanisms. That is to say, the noticing function of their output was there. Frequently, they noticed what was missing in their speech in order to correct it.

During the fourth oral expression class, "cultural differences" was the topic to discuss. Only some of the students appreciated it. Furthermore, their long stops and stammering were observed to a high extent. This was the reason behind their unclear language. There was no interaction between the students themselves. Addedly, introvert students were not dealt with properly. Pursuing this further, most students did not take risk. However, the teacher, for many times, tried to decrease the students' language anxiety, and raise their motivation. Psycholinguistically speaking, the students' self-monitoring stage exhibited unfavorable responses concerning the speech deficiencies they faced. This resulted in producing incomprehensible output. Subsequently, the variation of the speaking tasks in order to reach the different learning styles was not observed.

As far as the fifth classroom observation is concerned, it was about the importance of listening to improve speaking. When the discussion started, only few students exchanged ideas with the teacher. Occasionally, the teacher corrected some of the students' grammatical mistakes. It was observed that the students' role was inadequate and did not meet the required

level. The dominant number of the group did not reply to the given questions by the teacher. Their fluency was characterized by unnecessary pauses stammering and hesitation, especially when they were asked to explain more. Moreover, the students' risk-taking rate was moderate and it made them interact when the situation was challenging. According to the reactions of their problem-solving mechanisms, it did not show effectiveness to solve the speaking problems. As far as their output was concerned, the researcher observed that their message was clearly conveyed. Nevertheless, it was not appropriate enough to meet the needed standard.

Noticeably, the use of a data show during the sixth classroom observation made a huge difference at all levels. The oral expression session was made of presentations. Despite that the teacher managed to make the students practice English, and created a suitable environment for a communicative classroom, they experienced hesitations, stammering, and long stops when they spoke. Furthermore, the students took risk, and the teacher's attempts to decrease their language anxiety were clear. He also enhanced their motivation, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Their self-monitor functioned to overcome the speaking obstacles for many times. Finally, the researcher concluded that teaching speaking needed a keen relation between the teacher and his students because it was perceived that similar classroom demonstrated students' willingness to participate.

The seventh classroom observation revealed that the oral expression session was advantageous at the level of the students' interaction and use of English. The teacher succeeded to make a convenient atmosphere for communication, and this raised the students' interest to a high extent. Pursuing this further, most of the students practiced English confidently, and the rate of the speech production issues was low. The students took risk to participate, their language anxiety was observed, their self-confidence and esteem were increased. The students self-monitoring stage was appropriate since they overcame their speaking constraints. Moreover, their hypothesis-testing of the output made their speaking better. To explain, their

215

trials to verify the clarity of their language were obvious. For the techniques and ways of teaching the teacher was using, it was clear that his students learning styles were considered.

The idea behind using a classroom observation as a data gathering tool was to determine both the teaching methods used in the English Branch at Mohamed Khider university, and the students' reactions and attitudes towards them. Also, it was for the purpose of checking with the questionnaire and the interview findings previously collected. We took a closer look at the oral expression classrooms in which we could come up with a deeper analysis and discussion about the main quest of our research as well as our research problem, and questions. Thus, the classroom observation findings revealed that all the five parts of our checklist, i.e., the teacher's role, the students' role, the students' fluency, the teacher-student inter-activity, and the psycholinguistic considerations could decipher what an oral expression classroom is made up of. Once again, the speaking skill is bound by various psycholinguistic aspects that must explain the failure, or the success, of the objectives of a speaking course.

Conclusion

This chapter has followed the steps of the research methodology extrapolated in **Chapter four**. That is to say, it dealt with data analyses and discussions of the data gathered by the three instruments (the questionnaire, the interview, and the classroom observation). It strived to objectively proceed the analysis. The findings of this part of the study will be interpreted in the next chapter in the sense that we will demonstrate how they are meaningful and relevant to the aim of our aim.

Chapter six: General Conclusion, Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Introduction

this section sums up the results in a way to check the findings of our three data collection methods. As a matter of fact, this is the quintessence of the whole research in which we straightforwardly provide teachers, students, and researchers with a ready overview of the conclusions of this research. Also, some implications and recommendations for pedagogical purposes are highlighted. This part of the research attempts to offer the field of education insightful ideas about a more refined way of teaching oral expression at university because the intrinsic core of the idea that pushed us to conduct this research was to give solutions for 3rd year EFL students' speaking problems at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

6 The Major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance

For the purpose of diagnosing the reasons behind EFL student's failure to speak English fluently, the study began with a questionnaire. For the data gathered, what led to students' poor oral performance is as follows:

- Some students had issues in terms of their intrinsic motivation to attend oral expression sessions which lessens the teachers' feedback for them.

- There are high levels of speaking anxiety amongst students preventing them from speaking fluently.

- According to the students' answers, their learning styles are not considered during the lesson.

- The overwhelming majority of the students do not make enough efforts outside the classroom to practice English.

- Some students' self-confidence is low when it comes to speaking English, which hampers the flow of their speech production.

- Most of the students were afraid of making mistakes while speaking. It made them keep checking what they are saying, which in turn caused long pauses, stammering, and hesitations.

The second step in our diagnosis of the students' obstacles to speak English was to conduct an interview with their teachers of oral expression. According to our analysis of the teachers' answers, the major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance are:

- There is consensus in the teachers' answers that their students experienced hesitation, stammering, and long pauses which means that there is a real deficiency in their speech production process.

- The lack of practice, the lack of vocabulary, translating from the mother tongue, the lack of exposure to native speakers are what caused student's long stops and hesitations.

- Personality factors were another key that led to students' poor oral performance. Introversion is a negative personality type when it comes to speaking English.

- For some teachers, failure in the conceptualisation stage might be one important factor leading to the students' obstacles in proceeding in the other stages of speech production.

- Most teachers confessed that they did not consider their students' learning styles while planning the lessons of oral expression.

The diagnosis process was finalised by a classroom observation data gathering tool. We observed some oral expression sessions in order to be close to the process of teaching oral expression. We considered the following factors as being the causes of the students' speaking deficiencies:

- During many oral expression sessions, there was a lack of speaking activities permitting the students to speak English.

- In many classes, students were not given opportunities to practice English inside the classroom, and if they did not do speak it elsewhere, they were more likely to have severe problems when it comes to communicating.

- Some of the teachers with whom we attended the oral expression sessions brought topics to the classroom which were out of the students' interests, and therefore, the majority of the students did not participate. This means that the students' needs and learning styles were not taken into account.

- Some teachers' lecturing methods were far from being recommended in an oral expression classroom.

- During many of the classroom observations we done, there was an obvious lack of feedback from the part of the teachers.

- As far as the students are concerned, their role inside the classroom, for many times, was inadequate to allow them to practice speaking appropriately.

- Long pauses, stammering, and hesitations were observed to a high extent.

6.1 Research questions and hypotheses

After diagnosing and identifying the major factors leading to 3rd year students' poor oral performance, it is high time we tried to answer the research questions posed, and checked the correctness of our hypotheses in the realm of this whole research. In a form of making the link between the three data collection methods' findings, this part of the research, therefore, attempts to answer the research questions and check the hypotheses.

6.1.1 The research questions

Question one

"From a psycholinguistic perspective, what are the reasons behind students' failure in speaking English while they are supposed to have learned enough grammatical rules and vocabulary items?" was the first research question we posed, which aimed at defining the psycholinguistic facets of the reasons behind students' poor oral performance. After the findings of three data collection methods were discussed and analysed, the researchers reached the conclusion that student's failure to speak English is caused by many factors. For the questionnaire findings, low intrinsic motivation and the way teachers deal with it (as feedback) is a highly important reason. In addition, the ignorance of the students' learning styles; either while planning the lesson or during the oral expression session itself, is one reason that the three data collection methods demonstrated. It was seen as the factor leading to many students' passivity, because they do not find themselves at ease with unmatched learning styles, inside the classroom, limiting their opportunities of practicing English.

The students' low risk-taking rate inside the classroom reflected their attitudes outside the classroom which means that even in real life situations they were not risk takers to speak English and this probably led to problems at the level of speaking. This reason was identified by both the questionnaire and the classroom observation. Furthermore, introversion is another factor. For the questionnaire, the interview, and the classroom observation findings, most introvert students have higher levels of hesitations, stammering, and long pauses. Addedly, high levels of anxiety and shyness in students led to many difficulties in terms of the flow of their speech production. This was determined by the questionnaire data analysis. In the same context,

the interview findings showed that personality type correlated with the students' oral performance. That is, extrovert students are more likely to surpass the introvert ones in the speaking skill.

The questionnaire and the interview data revealed that students' effort to be exposed to native speakers are not enough. Very few students sought to be in touch with native speakers. For the three data gathering tools, many students have low self-confidence. This latter hampered the improvement of the speaking skill since they, most of the time, escape practicing English. Concerning the questionnaire findings, fear of making mistakes, being afraid when asked to speak without preparation, worrying about forgetting words, fear of the teachers' correction, are other reasons behind students' failure to speak English. According to many teachers of the interview, the lack of practice, the lack of vocabulary, translating from the mother tongue, and facing the audience are the reasons behind the students' poor oral performance. Subsequently, the interview findings concluded that if the conceptualisation stage is not well undertaken by the 3rd year students, the following stages are more likely to be extremely difficult to process.

The classroom observation findings stressed that the lack of the speaking activities caused the absence of the students' participation. This was due to some teachers' lecturing methods. The ineffective self-monitoring stage was considered as a reason behind the students' deficiency in terms of the flow of speech production. Seemingly, some students' problem-solving mechanisms showed low responses failing to overcome the speech production issues they encountered.

Finally, this was a compare-and-contrast approach to double-check the results of the three data gathering instruments as a way to answer the first research question of the thesis at hand. As to make our allegations objective, we focused on the triangulation method of analysing the data gathered, and we had to take advantage of this in order to answer the research questions.

Question two

The second question, that is "What solutions does psycholinguistics suggest for teachers to overcome such obstacles?", aimed at finding out what the psycholinguistics field can offer as techniques and methods for teachers of English in order to improve the way oral expression is taught. Our study findings demonstrated that this field includes an enormous data base covering what teachers need to get better ways of teaching the oral expression course for the purpose of developing the students' speaking skill. This part of the study, thus, makes use of

the relationship between the results of the three data collection tools of this study in order to answer the second research question.

Psycholinguistics stresses on the idea that positive feedback is crucial to increase the students' intrinsic motivation. They have to be provided with the appropriate feedback in order to boost their intrinsic motivation. For example, immediate correction of an introvert student's mistakes may cause severe problems. He is more likely to adopt an avoidance strategy not to participate next time. Furthermore, from a psycholinguistic view, the oral expression tasks ought to go hand in hand with the students' learning styles. As an attempt to cover these latter, the teacher has to diversify the speaking activities and the techniques of teaching.

Another point, special care must be given to anxious and shy students. Psycholinguistically speaking, those students over-monitor their speech production, and this might lead to their hesitation, stammering and long pauses. In the same context, there are many psycholinguistic factors linked to self-confidence when it comes to speaking. Increased levels of it lead to proper uses of the student's cognitive abilities. However, its lower levels are the reason behind the communicative obstacles they encounter. Hence, the teachers' role must be directed towards enhancing the students' self-confidence.

In accordance with the psycholinguistic subject matter, exposing students to authentic English and pushing them to practice it, makes their memory retrieval more appropriate. They have to be familiar with the language. This can solve the issue of forgetting words when speaking which causes hesitations and stammering for students. In this respect, attention and memory affect speech production. These two psycholinguistic components can be used to understand the students' speaking deficiencies. The teacher should make sure that his students are not absent-minded, they must be attentive. That focal attention is important to reach the intake of vocabulary items in the long-term memory.

Moreover, teachers have to take into account their students' personality types. Anxious and shy students' affective filter is very sensitive and can rise due to any sort of embarrassment preventing them from being active and participating. That is to say, they have to pay attention to their students' cognitive styles in relation to the speaking activities they bring into the classroom. The former needs to match the latter. For the teacher to cover all the existing cognitive styles, again, he should make use of different speaking activities and teaching methods. Importantly enough, the teacher's job is to make his students comfortable in order to decrease their language anxiety. If they are not at ease, this will be negative for their speech

production causing them a lot of speaking problems such as hesitation, stammering, and unnecessary pauses.

Hence, discussing interesting topics, assigning activities that match the students' learning and cognitive styles, making them comfortable, encouraging them to speak in a gradual form, giving them enough time to speak, and providing them with positive feedback are techniques to motivate the students to be active during an oral expression session, which is the path towards a beneficial practice of the English language, and this in turn makes them succeed in getting rid of all of their speaking deficiencies.

Question three

"What could students, on their part, do to solve their problems of poor oral performance?" was the third research question in this thesis. Its objective was to focus on the efforts of the students themselves to improve their speaking skill. Therefore, this part of the research is devoted to answering the third research question through linking between the three data collection methods' findings.

To start with, the students have to surround themselves by the target language, which is English in our case, they have to receive authentic input. Trying to find native speakers to communicate with is highly recommended. Being familiar with English develops their spontaneity in speaking making their speech production fluent. Practice makes perfect, the speaking skill can never be improved if the student does not spend more time on actually speaking English. Thus, using English with classmates at university, speaking English with family members if possible, and finding a native speaker to speak to, through social media for instance, all can help overcome the speaking problems.

Most of 3rd year students of English at Biskra university have to work on their inner motivation. It is what keeps that strong desire in them to attend and be active during the oral expression classes. Also, they must strive to have a good rapport with their teachers of oral expression. This is how they can make themselves comfortable. This, in turn, facilitates their participation. That is, the teacher-student relationship has a significant role in such classes where there must be a communicative environment.

The relationship between the classmates themselves must be strong as well. Most of the speaking tasks and activities include either the classmates, the teacher and/or both. In cases

where the relationship between the classmates is not positive enough, there must be some problems at the level of the activity itself, as it was noted in many classroom observations.

6.1.2 The research hypotheses

In relation to the first research question, we hypothesised that from a psycholinguistics perspective there would be several types of the factors leading to EFL student's poor oral performance, which were put as follows:

- The use of inappropriate teaching methods.
- The lack of proper components in the course which would encourage speaking.
- Teachers' level and experience.

Although this research question was seen from a general point of view, it has included the three general points of the answer that was reached after conducting the study. First and foremost, a teaching speaking method that does not consider the students' inner motivation, learning tyles, personality types and self-confidence, as well as proper feedback is described as inappropriate because it misses the intrinsic aim of an oral expression session. Second of all, the lack of proper components in the course which would encourage speaking implies that an oral expression course needs to cover many speaking activities and tasks allowing students to practice English. Thirdly, the one-sided communications delivered by the teacher, as it was observed in many classrooms, is far from being his real role. He ought to be aware that an oral expression class must encourage the students to speak as much as possible, thus, the teacher's level and experience are of high value.

According to the second hypothesis, some teachers only rely on intuition and they were not used to dealing with the psycholinguistic aspects of language learning. It is tightly linked to the first hypothesis. Apparently, this puts emphasis on the teacher's role in an oral expression classroom. Our study revealed that if the teacher is not knowledgeable enough about the field of psycholinguistics, since it is an area of study that covers a huge amount of data concerning the speaking processes, his method is probably going to be based on the traditions of teaching and his intuition which may be a wrong method of teaching speaking.

That is to say, the field of psycholinguistics, as it was highlighted in the theoretical background of this study, provides explanations and delineates the way teachers should react to the different aspects of the teaching process including all the individual differences inside the classroom. Hence, it seems that the extent to which the psycholinguistic underpinnings of

speaking are known by the teachers of oral expression can be considered as an important predictor of the teaching/learning success.

The third hypothesis of this research, as a predicted answer to the third research question, was "students could be guided to discover their learning styles, i.e., to build their own learning strategies.". Although the students' role in an oral expression classroom is emphasised, the teacher remains their guide towards a successful realisation of the objectives of the course. To explain, this latter can always be of much help to direct his students towards a better outcome. If a teacher manages to lead his students to discover their learning styles, their speaking skills are to be improved. Nevertheless, this hypothesis focused only on the classroom while the students can do more efforts outside of it. The answer of the third research question that was put earlier concentrated on both, inside and outside of the classroom. We stress the idea that learning speaking requires practicing it all the possible time, not only inside the classroom. For that, this hypothesis missed an aspect that might be advantageous to solve the research problem.

5.4.3 Recommendations

As we finally reached the part where the research problem is solved, this thesis suggests the following recommendations. After starting with a theoretical background in which we defined and described the needed concepts and theories related to our research, and undertaking the study that included three data collection methods in order to solve our research problem, we recommend the following:

- Our study confirmed that the teachers' role in an oral expression classroom is of paramount significance. He is responsible for leading his classroom towards either success or failure of practicing English. He influences his students to a high extent. Therefore, it is highly recommended that he has to be, firstly, knowledgeable about the field of Psycholinguistics, and secondly, to be able to apply that knowledge inside the classroom.

- The teachers' lecturing method in an oral expression session must be avoided at all costs. The students ought to speak far more than the teacher. He should succeed, using the already mentioned pedagogical implications of our study, in creating that atmosphere where the students are highly motivated and ready to be part of in the activity willingly.

- The use of data shows in an oral expression classroom makes a huge difference as it was witnessed during the classroom observations. Topics that are presented well

enhance the students desire to participate. It is, therefore, recommended to rely on the available technological tools to teach the speaking skill.

- We strongly believe that raising the students' interest in the topic being discussed, or the assigned activity, means that they are more likely to be active, and this is what an oral expression classroom is all about.

- Both students and teachers must be aware of the psycholinguistic components that explain the speaking process. It is a field of study that can provide them with solutions to their speaking issues.

- Concerning outside the classroom, students are urged to be exposed to English as much as possible. Also, in order to be familiar with the language and reach high levels of automaticity, they are advised to spend more time on practicing English for speaking is a skill that needs to be practiced in order to be mastered well.

Conclusion

Throughout this part of the thesis, we attempted to come up with the bottom line of the whole research. That is, it encompassed the intrinsic results of the study as well as their place in the classroom precisely, and in the educational system generally speaking. The major factors leading to EFL students' poor oral performance were clearly identified, summarised, and organised. This process was done through checking the findings of the three data collection methods of this study. Afterwards, the research questions were answered and the hypotheses were discussed in terms of their aims and usefulness in relation to the research questions. Our recommendations were put forward in a form of solutions to the research problem.

As a final word, the speaking skill is very complex, understanding it is difficult, and teaching it is even harder. The simple reason why we are claiming this is that it cannot be investigated through only one of its aspects. Thus, we reckoned that the field of psycholinguistics is tremendously pertinent to do likewise. Since speaking is considered as a cognitive process, again, we opted for psycholinguistics to further our investigation. To explain, the nature of our research problem required following the steps that have been followed through this thesis. A broader picture has to be sought in order to examine the speaking skill from different angles as an attempt not to miss any valuable data that can be of use to understand, and try to solve, the speaking problems of the 3rd year students of English at Biskra university.

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Appendices

Appendices A: The teachers' interview

Appendix A1: Teachers' Consent Letter for Interview

Dear teacher,

My name is Zidane Abdelhak, a PhD student majoring in Applied linguistics at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

I am conducting a research on the students' poor oral performance as part of a Doctorate project. To explain, my study is about investigating the speaking skill from a psycholinguistic perspective. Therefore, given the nature of my research, and the chosen methodology, data need to be gathered from both teachers and students. Thus, I seek to discuss and share insights about this topic with the teachers of oral expression at the at the branch of English at Mohamed khider university of Biskra. My thesis is entitled "A Psycholinguistic Investigation into the Major Factors Leading to EFL Students' Poor Oral Performance: The Case of Third Year Students of English Language at Biskra University".

You are, hence, politely invited to contribute to this study by answering and commenting on the questions of the interview. More exactly, the interview was designed to investigate the teachers' attitudes and opinions on the reasons behind the third-year students' poor oral performance. This document will be put as an appendix in the thesis. Furthermore, your name will be mentioned on the acknowledgement page as recognition of your kind collaboration. In case you have any questions or other comments relating to this PhD project, feel free to contact me through the following contact details:

Abdelhak ZIDANE
English Language Branch,
Department of Letters and Foreign Languages,
Biskra University, Algeria.
Phone number: (+213) 676 192 611 / (+213) 773 384 599
E-mail: Abdelhak.zidane@univ-biskra.dz

N.B: If you consent to answer the interview questions, please fill in the following consent form
and return it back to the researcher as soon as possible.

Best regards.

Appendix A2: Teacher's Consent Form

I consent to answer the interview questions of the PhD research being conducted by Abdelhak ZIDANE

Name of college/institution: …………………………………….……..………………

Teacher's name: …………….……………………………………………………. …..

Phone number: …………………………………………………………………….…...

Email: …………………………………………………………….……………………

Signature: ……………………………

Date: ………………………………

Researcher's contacts details:
Abdelhak ZIDANE
English Language Branch,
Department of Foreign Languages,
Biskra University, Algeria.
Phone number: (+213) 676 192 611 / (+213) 773 384 599
E-mail: Abdelhak.zidane@univ-biskra.dz

Appendix A3: The interview
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The interview
</div>

Dear teacher,
We are conducting a study on the students' poor performance in the speaking skill. Our PhD research is entitled "A Psycholinguistic Investigation into the Major Factors Leading to EFL Students' Poor Oral Performance: The Case of Third Year Students of English Language at Biskra University". Thus, we are investigating the 3rd year students' oral proficiency. For that, your participation is of paramount help to fulfil our study.
N.B. Your answers will be kept anonymous, confidential and they will be used only for academic purposes.

1 - To what extent do your students have difficulties (like hesitations, long pauses and stammering) to speak English?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……
2 - Why do you think that many students of English struggle with the speaking skill?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……
3 - Does the students' personality type has an impact on their openness to communicate? If yes, how?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……

4 - In your opinion, what are the situations in which the students feel comfortable to communicate? Teamwork, in pairs, or when the teacher is involved?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

5 - "Extroversion and Introversion are important factors that influence learning speaking". What can you say about that?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

6 - Levelt's model (1993) of speaking suggests that the speaking process goes under four main stages which are; conceptualization (subconsciously developing thoughts about the topic), Formulation (creating the linguistic form required to express the desired message), Articulation (putting into words what has already been conceptualised and formulated), and self-monitoring (regulating, correcting, editing, and rectifying what is being said).

what stage do you think that your students have more difficulties to process?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

7 - Do you consider your students' learning styles while planning your speaking lessons? If yes, how do you do that?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

8 - Are there any techniques that you can suggest to remedy the students' hesitations, long pauses, and stammering while speaking English?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

9 - How do you motivate your students to be active during the speaking tasks?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

10 - How do you usually test your students' speaking proficiency?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……

Thank you for your help

Appendix B: The students' questionnaire

The questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly asked to fill in this questionnaire. It is used in a study that is about the students' poor oral performance. Its major aim is to investigate the deficiencies that the third-year students experience when speaking English. Our PhD thesis is entitled "A Psycholinguistic Investigation into the Major Factors Leading to EFL Students' Poor Oral Performance: The Case of Third Year Students of English Language at Biskra University". Hence, we would be very grateful if you could answer the following questions because your participation is of paramount importance.

N.B. Your answers will be kept anonymous, non-public and they will be used only for academic purposes.

Section one: The speaking difficulties

What is your gender? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Male ☐

Female ☐

To what extent do you like attending speaking sessions? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

To a very high extent ☐

To a high extent ☐

To a low extent ☐

How often do you experience difficulties (like hesitation, long pauses and stammering) when speaking English? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).

Very often ☐

Usually ☐

Never ☐

To what extent do you experience speaking anxiety when you speak English? (Put the description that best suits your answer between brackets)

To a high extent/ to a moderate extent/ to a low extent

Which technique helps you to improve your oral performance the most? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Debate ☐

teamwork ☐

Discussions in pairs ☐

Role play ☐

Section two: Students' attitudes

What techniques do your teachers usually use to teach speaking? (you can answer this in note form)

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Are you open to participate willingly in your speaking tasks? Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).

Yes ☐

No ☐

Does your teacher motivate you to speak in the classroom? Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).

Yes ☐

No ☐

What are the difficulties that you have when speaking in EFL class? Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer).

Anxiety ☐

Shyness ☐

Fear of making mistakes ☐

Section three: Students' efforts in speaking

What efforts do you make at home to improve your speaking skill? (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Watching videos and listening to songs of native speakers ☐

Speaking with native speakers via social media ☐

Practicing English with your family members and/or friends ☐

None of the above ☐

Indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements:

I never feel confident when I speak in my oral English language tasks (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

I am not afraid of making mistakes when I speak English (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

I feel anxious when I am asked to speak without preparation in the classroom. (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

During the tasks of oral expression, I feel so worried so that I forget words I know (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

It frightens when my speaking teacher corrects every mistake I make (Tick in (✓) the box that best describes your answer)

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendices C: The classroom observation

Appendix C1: Teachers' Consent Letter for Classroom observation

Dear teacher,

My name is Zidane Abdelhak, a PhD student majoring in Applied linguistics at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

I am conducting research on the students' oral performance as part of a Doctorate project. To explain, my study is about investigating the speaking skill from a psycholinguistic perspective. Therefore, given the nature of my research, and the chosen methodology, data need to be gathered through classroom observation. Thus, I seek to observe a few oral expression sessions of yours.

You are, hence, politely asked to contribute to this study by accepting our request to attend some of your classes and observe the students' actions and yours. More exactly, the classroom observation checklist was designed to investigate the teachers and the students' roles, and their inter-activity as well as to consider some psycholinguistic processes during the oral expression sessions. This document will be put as an appendix in the thesis. Furthermore, your name will be mentioned on the acknowledgement page as recognition of your kind collaboration. In case you have any questions or other comments relating to this PhD project, feel free to contact me through the following contact details:

Abdelhak ZIDANE
English Language Branch,
Department of Letters and Foreign Languages,
Biskra University, Algeria.
Phone number: (+213) 676 192 611 / (+213) 773 384 599
E-mail: Abdelhak.zidane@univ-biskra.dz

N.B: If you consent to our request, please fill in the following consent form and return it back to the researcher as soon as possible.

Best regards.

Appendix C2: Teacher's Consent Form of the classroom observation

I consent to the classroom observation of the PhD research being conducted by Abdelhak ZIDANE

Name of college/institution: …………………………………….…….……………

Teacher's name: …………….……………………………………………………. …..

Phone number: …………………………………………………………………..…..

Email: …………………………………………………………….………………

Signature: ……………………………

Date: ………………………………

Researcher's contact details:
Abdelhak ZIDANE
English Language Branch,
Department of Foreign Languages,
Biskra University, Algeria.
Phone number: (+213) 676 192 611 / (+213) 773 384 599
E-mail: Abdelhak.zidane@univ-biskra.dz

Appendix C3: The classroom observation Checklist

<u>**Classroom Observation Checklist**</u>

University/Institution: ....

The teacher's full name: ………............................……….

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: ………………

Place: ....

Time: ……………………   **Date:** ……………………

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To a high extent
Warming up / Recalling the previous lesson.			
Gives pre-speaking activities.			
States the objectives of the present lesson.			
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).			
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.			
Gives appropriate feedback.			
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To a high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.			
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.			
Interact with the teacher and participate.			
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To a high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses			
Speak without stammering			
Their language is clear and understood			
Speak without hesitation			
Speak without word repetition			
Ask for clarification			

Use proper intonation in different situations			
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To a high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.			
Shy students are persuaded to participate.			
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.			
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.			
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.			
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.			
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.			
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To a high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.			
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.			
The teacher raises students' motivation.			
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.			
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).			
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).			
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.			

Appendix C4: The first classroom observation session

Classroom Observation Checklist

University/Institution: ...Med Kheider University of Biskra...

The teacher's full name: ....

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: ...How to present a topic.

Place: ...col 03......

Time: ...12:00 – 13:00   Group 03   Date: 28/03/2021

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.	✓		
Gives pre-speaking activities.	✓		
States the objectives of the present lesson.		✓	
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).	✓		
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.	✓		
Gives appropriate feedback.	✓		
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.		✓	
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.	✓		
Interact with the teacher and participate.		✓	
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses	✓		
Speak without stammering		✓	
Their language is clear and understood		✓	
Speak without hesitation	✓		
Speak without word repetition		✓	
Ask for clarification	✓		
Use proper intonation in different situations		✓	
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.	✓		
Shy students are persuaded to participate.	✓		
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.		✓	
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.	✓		
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.	✓		
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.	✓		
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.	✓		
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.		✓	
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.		✓	
The teacher raises students' motivation.		✓	
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.	✓		
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).		✓	
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).		✓	
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.	✓		

Appendix C5: The second classroom observation session

Classroom Observation Checklist

University/Institution: Med Khider University of Biskra.

The teacher's full name: _____

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: Memorisation

Place: lab 03   Group : 08

Time: 10.00 - 11.00   Date: 29/03/2021

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.			✓
Gives pre-speaking activities.			✓
States the objectives of the present lesson.			✓
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).	✓		
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.			✓
Gives appropriate feedback.			✓
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.			✓
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.		✓	
Interact with the teacher and participate.		✓	
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses	✓		
Speak without stammering	✓		
Their language is clear and understood		✓	
Speak without hesitation		✓	
Speak without word repetition		✓	
Ask for clarification		✓	
Use proper intonation in different situations	✓		
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.		✓	
Shy students are persuaded to participate.	✓		
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.	✓		
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.			✓
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.	✓		
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.		✓	
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.			✓
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.		✓	
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.			✓
The teacher raises students' motivation.			✓
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.		✓	
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).	✓		
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).	✓		
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.			✓

Appendix C6: The third classroom observation session

Classroom Observation Checklist

University/Institution: *Med Khider University of Biskra-*

The teacher's full name: ....

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: *How to present a topic -*

Place: *Cril 06* *Group 102*

Time: *13:00 - 14:00*   Date: *28/03/2021*

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.		✓	
Gives pre-speaking activities.	✓		
States the objectives of the present lesson.	✓		
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).	✓		
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.	✓		
Gives appropriate feedback.	✓		
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.		✓	
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.		✓	
Interact with the teacher and participate.			
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses		✓	
Speak without stammering		✓	
Their language is clear and understood		✓	
Speak without hesitation	✓		
Speak without word repetition	✓		
Ask for clarification	✓		
Use proper intonation in different situations		✓	
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.	✓		
Shy students are persuaded to participate.	✓		
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.		✓	
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.		✓	
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.	✓		
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.	✓		
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.	✓		
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.		✓	
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.		✓	
The teacher raises students' motivation.	✓		
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.	✓		
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).		✓	
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).		✓	
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.	✓		

Appendix C7: the fourth classroom observation session

Classroom Observation Checklist

University/Institution: *Med Khider University of Biskra.*

The teacher's full name: ....

Course: Oral expression

Lecture: *Cultural differences.*

Place: *Sal 12* Group: 10

Time: *12:00 - 13:00*　　　Date: *20/03/2021.*

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.			✓
Gives pre-speaking activities.		✓	
States the objectives of the present lesson.	✓		
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).	✓		
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.		✓	
Gives appropriate feedback.	✓		
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.		✓	
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.	✓		
Interact with the teacher and participate.		✓	
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses	✓		
Speak without stammering	✓		
Their language is clear and understood	✓		
Speak without hesitation		✓	
Speak without word repetition		✓	
Ask for clarification		✓	
Use proper intonation in different situations		✓	
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.		✓	
Shy students are persuaded to participate.	✓		
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.	✓		
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.		✓	
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.	✓		
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.	✓		
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.	✓		
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.	✓		
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.		✓	
The teacher raises students' motivation.		✓	
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.	✓		
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).	✓		
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).		✓	
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.	✓		

Appendix C8: The fifth classroom observation session

Classroom Observation Checklist

University/Institution: Med Khider University of Baskra.

The teacher's full name: ....

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: the importance of listening.

Place: Geita   Group 101

Time: 13:00 - 14:00   Date: 29./03./2021.

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.	✓		
Gives pre-speaking activities.	✓		
States the objectives of the present lesson.	✓		
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).	✓		
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.		✓	
Gives appropriate feedback.		✓	
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.	✓		
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.	✓		
Interact with the teacher and participate.	✓		
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses	✓		
Speak without stammering		✓	
Their language is clear and understood		✓	
Speak without hesitation	✓		
Speak without word repetition		✓	
Ask for clarification		✓	
Use proper intonation in different situations		✓	
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.		✓	
Shy students are persuaded to participate.	✓		
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.	✓		
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.		✓	
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.	✓		
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.	✓		
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.	✓		
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.		✓	
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.			✓
The teacher raises students' motivation.			✓
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.			✓
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).		✓	
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).	✓		
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.	✓		

Appendix C9: The sixth classroom observation session

<u>**Classroom Observation Checklist**</u>

University/Institution: *Med Khider University of Biskra.*

The teacher's full name: [redacted]

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: *Future aspirations.*

Place: *Cell 13*   Group: *11*

Time: *09:00 – 10:00*   Date: *30./03./2021.*

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.	✓		
Gives pre-speaking activities.	✓		
States the objectives of the present lesson.		✓	
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).		✓	
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.			✓
Gives appropriate feedback.			✓
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.		✓	
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.		✓	
Interact with the teacher and participate.			✓
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses	✓		
Speak without stammering		✓	
Their language is clear and understood	✓		
Speak without hesitation	✓		
Speak without word repetition		✓	
Ask for clarification	✓		
Use proper intonation in different situations	✓		
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.		✓	
Shy students are persuaded to participate.	✓		
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.	✓		
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.		✓	
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.	✓		
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.	✓		
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.	✓		
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.			✓
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.		✓	
The teacher raises students' motivation.		✓	
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.		✓	
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).		✓	
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).			✓
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.	✓		

Because the session was about students' presentations.

Appendix C10: The seventh classroom observation session

Classroom Observation Checklist

University/Institution: Met Khider University of Biskra.

The teacher's full name: ...

Course: Oral expression.

Lecture: Presentations

Place: Ecil 13   Group: 09

Time: 11:00 – 12:00   Date: 31/03/2021

The researcher's full name: ZIDANE Abdelhak.

Teacher's role	Not at all	To some extent	To high extent
Warms up / Recalling the previous lesson.	✓		
Gives pre-speaking activities.	✓		
States the objectives of the present lesson.			
Uses authentic material (audio files, videos, movies, songs ... etc.).			✓
Gives students enough time to speak English freely.			✓
Gives appropriate feedback.	✓		
Students' role	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Show interest to the topic and given materials.			✓
Interact with (each) and one another (e.g.: correcting each other's mistakes.			✓
Interact with the teacher and participate.			✓
Students' fluency	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Speak without unnecessary pauses		✓	
Speak without stammering			✓
Their language is clear and understood		✓	
Speak without hesitation		✓	
Speak without word repetition			✓
Ask for clarification	✓		
Use proper intonation in different situations		✓	
Teacher-student inter-activity	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students are boosted to practice English.			✓
Shy students are persuaded to participate.		✓	
Students are propelled to pay attention to the tone of their voice while speaking.	✓		
The teacher creates an effectively positive mood in the classroom.			✓
The teacher helps the students indirectly when they forget words.		✓	
The teacher provides help for students who experience stammering, long pauses, and hesitations.	✓		
The teacher brainstorms the students before starting the speaking task.	✓		
The psycholinguistic considerations	**Not at all**	**To some extent**	**To high extent**
Students take risk and participate when they are not sure of the answer, or/and when they lack vocabulary.			✓
The teacher decreases students' anxiety.			✓
The teacher raises students' motivation.			✓
The teacher boosts the students' self-confidence and self-esteem.			✓
Levelt's self-monitoring stage is demonstrated in the students' speech production (Problem-solving mechanisms).		✓	
Students overcome communicative obstacles (Students' comprehensible output).		✓	
The teacher varies the activities and tasks to consider the learning styles and individual differences.	✓		

الملخص

لقد لاحظنا أن معظم طلبة السنة الثالثة يعانون من مشاكل كثيرة فيما يخص مهارة التحدث. غالبًا ما يشعرون بالعجز عن الاستمرار في الكلام بعد نطق الكلمات القليلة الأولى؛ يقومون بالتوقف لفترات طويلة اثناء الكلام ويكررون الكلمات ويتلعثمون ويترددون وهذا يجعل لغتهم في بعض الأحيان صعبة الفهم. الدراسة الحالية تحاول تحديد سبب مشاكل التحدث لديهم وفحصها، بالاعتماد على مجال علم النفس اللغوي، لإيجاد حلول للمشكلة المذكورة. الدراسة الحالية عبارة عن تحقيق في العوامل الرئيسية التي تؤدي إلى ضعف الأداء الشفهي لطلاب السنة الثالثة ـ لغة الإنجليزية. فيما يتعلق بالمنهجية المستخدمة، تم إجراء ثلاث طرق لجمع البيانات، وهي استبيان الطلبة ومقابلة مع الاساتذة وملاحظة الأقسام. سمحت لنا البيانات النوعية التي جمعناها بتحديد الأسباب الكامنة وراء مشاكل طلبة السنة الثالثة اثناء عملية نطق الكلام. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فسرنا البيانات وناقشناها وعلقنا عليها اعتمادًا على المكونات النفسية اللغوية التي أبرزناها في الخلفية النظرية لهذا البحث. أظهرت النتائج أن توقف الطلاب اثناء الكلام والتردد والتلعثم كان نتيجة عوامل عديدة مثل؛ انخفاض الدافع الذاتي للطلبة ومستويات عالية من القلق اثناء الكلام وعدم التوافق بين الأنشطة الكلامية وأنماط التعلم وانخفاض الثقة بالنفس لديهم ونقص الانشطة الكلامية وندرة التقييم من طرف العديد من اساتذة التعبير الشفهي. توصلنا، أخيرًا، إلى أن دور الاستاذ في قسم التعبير الشفهي كان مهمًا للغاية. تم حث الطلاب على ان يحيطوا أنفسهم باللغة الإنجليزية قدر الإمكان، كما يجب عليهم، وعلى الاساتذة ايضا، ان يكونوا على دراية بالمكونات اللغوية النفسية التي تشرح عملية الكلام.

الكلمات المفتاحية: علم اللغة النفسي، عملية نطق الكلام، أساليب التعلم، نموذج ليفيلت، التعبير الشفهي.