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Needs and Issues in Fostering EFL Learners' Oral Performance

Case of 3rd Year EFL Learners at 11 December 1960
Secondary School in Tissemsilt

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in Didactics

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Dedication

Thanks to ALLAH Almighty for the guidance, strength and countless blessings.

We lovingly dedicate this piece of work to those who are very close to our hearts, our Beloved parents and families for their endless moral and emotional help. Your keen love and encouragement were of great support to accomplish this research.

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of learners' psychological and pedagogical needs and issues on their speaking proficiency, as well as to raise awareness of their importance as crucial affective factors in foreign language learning. This present research was conducted with a sample of 20 participants who are third year scientific stream students of 11 December secondary school in Tissemsilt city; two teachers of high school were interviewed who are both from the same city. The presented data were collected through the use of two research instruments: an online questionnaire for learners and a semi-structured interview with two high school teachers. The collected data were recovered and analyzed objectively so that to conclude proper assumptions. The ultimate findings approved the hypotheses suggested earlier to certain extent. It was revealed that indeed Many challenging obstacles were raised while attempting to communicate in English by the students inside and outside the academic atmosphere. This study affirmed that it is important when teaching a foreign language to give much importance to the affective domain of the learner as it is given to the cognitive domain. Also, the adequacy of the deficient pedagogical strategies of speaking brought by the Algerian textbook was tackled through the high school text book "New Prospects" as sample for the investigation. Several resolutions and recommendations were brought into surface by the interviewed teachers concerning their aspirations about more effective teaching techniques of speaking and communication.

Key words: Oral performance; speaking skill; EFL learners; psychological needs; pedagogical issues; self-esteem; textbook deficiencies.

Table of contents

Dedication	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of contents	iv
List of Graphs and figures	vij
List of tables	viii
General Introduction	1
<i>Chapter One</i> Key Concepts of Speaking	4
1.1 Introduction	5
1.2 The Speaking Skill	5
1.3 Definition of Speaking	6
1.3.1 Speaking as Motor Perceptive Skill	7
1.3.2 Speaking as Communicative Skill	7
1.4 The Importance of Speaking	8
1.5 Characteristics of Speaking	10
1.5.1 Fluency	10
1.5.2 Accuracy	11
1.6 Types of Speaking	11
1.6.1 Face-to-Face Speaking	11
1.6.2 Interactive Speaking	11
1.6.3 Real-Time Speaking	12
1.7 Teaching Speaking	12
1.7.1 The Pre-Teaching Activity	13
1.7.2 Pre-Communicative Stage (Context-Free)	13
1.7.3 Communicative Stage (Interactive)	13
1.8 Activate Exercises	14
1.8.1 Information –Gap Activity	14
1.8.2 Discussions	15
1.8.3 Telling Stories	16
1.8.4 Role Play	16
1.9 The Teacher’s Role During Speaking Tasks	17
1.10 Unpredictability	17

1.11 Conclusion	18
<i>Chapter Two</i> Speaking In EFL Learning	19
2.1 Introduction	20
2.2 The Affective Domain (The psychological needs)	20
2.2.1 Self-Esteem.....	21
2.2.2 Levels of Self-Esteem	22
2.2.3 Types of Self-Esteem	23
2.2.4 Self Esteem and Adolescence.....	25
2.2.5 Self Esteem and Gender.....	26
2.2.6 Fostering Learners’ Self-Esteem.....	26
2.3 Textbook Deficiencies	28
2.3.1 The Role of Textbooks in EFL Classes.....	29
2.3.2 The Sample “ <i>New Prospects</i> ”	30
2.3.2.1 The Prevalence of Grammar and Writing Over the Speaking Skills	30
2.3.2.2 The Lack of Auditory Materials.....	31
2.4 Teachers’ Obstacles and Needs.....	32
2.4.1 Teaching Speaking Obstacles.....	32
2.5 Conclusion:	34
<i>Chapter Three</i> Research Methodology and Data Analysis	35
3.1 Introduction.....	36
3.2 Research Method	36
3.3 Administration of the Study.....	36
3.4 Data Analysis.....	37
3.4.1 Part one: Questionnaires’ Analysis	37
3.4.2 Discussion of The Results	54
3.4.3 Part Two: Teachers’ Interviews Analysis.....	55
3.4.3.1: Design of The Interview	55
3.4.3.2: Discussion of The Results	57
3.5 Psychological Remedies	58
3.6 Pedagogical Aspirations	60
3.7 Conclusion	61
General Conclusion.....	62
Bibliography	64
List of References.....	65
Appendices.....	

List of Graphs and figures

Figure 2.1: Self-esteem as an Umbrella Term.....	22-
Graph 3.1: Learners' gender	39-
Graph 3.2: Learners' age	40-
Graph 3.3: Learners' attitude towards speaking English.....	41-
Graph 3.4: Learners' estimation about speaking in English.....	42-
Graph 3.5 : Learners' estimation towards their oral English level	44-
Graph 3.6: Learners' feelings towards speaking in English	45-
Graph 3.7: Reasons why learners feel pressured to speak in English	46-
Graph 3.8: Learners' thoughts on which important skill to develop	47-
Graph 3.9: Textbook role in teaching speaking.....	49-
Graph 3.10: Students' opinion about time allotted for oral expression	50-
Graph 3.11: The implementation of additional supportive techniques.....	51-
Graph 3.12 : Classroom activities efficiency	52-
Graph 3.13: Learning speaking obstacles	53-

List of tables

Table 3.1: Learners' gender	-39-
Table 3.2: Learners' attitude towards speaking English.....	-40-
Table 3.3: Learners' estimation about speaking in English.....	-41-
Table 3.4: Learners' estimation towards their oral English level	-43-
Table 3.5 : Learners' feelings towards speaking in English	-44-
Table 3.6: Reasons why learners feel pressured to speak in English	-45-
Table 3.7: Learners' thoughts on which important skill to develop	-47-
Table 3.8: Textbook role in teaching speaking	-49-
Table 3.9: Students' opinion about time allotted for oral expression	-50-
Table 3.10: The implementation of additional supportive techniques.....	-51-
Table 3.11 : Classroom activities efficiency	-52-
Table 3.12 : Learning speaking obstacles.....	-53-

General Introduction

The deficiency that has been overlooked by the current Algerian educational system in high school is the disregard for EFL learners as unique individuals with various latent needs and preferences. Thus, Algerian teachers of English find teaching speaking challenging especially that they are bound to an imposed syllabus which may not correspond with certain set up objectives. Therefore, learners at the end of the course fail at being qualified as competent speakers of English.

The aim of the current study lays in the fact that priority in foreign language learning operation seems to lean towards the mastery of the speaking skill. In fact, it is one indicator reflecting the competence of a foreign language learner since it gathers all the necessary linguistic knowledge despite of being a remarkable challenge. Hence, the ultimate purpose of this research is to investigate the reasons behind the modest quality of oral performance of EFL students in the Algerian schools. Additionally, this piece of work is an attempt to overcome the obstacles and the challenging issues that might be encountered throughout the speaking skill acquisition process.

As a response to solve the aforementioned issue, many effective and practical approaches have been brought into surface as probable remedies. This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the challenging obstacles preventing EFL students from acquiring pleasant oral performance?
2. What ameliorative strategies could be brought into surface in the hope to build reliable oral basis?

In order to answer the previous questions we tend to advance the following hypotheses:

1. Various pedagogical and psychological challenges consequently inhibit EFL learners' oral production.

2. The effectiveness of implementing curative resolutions regarding the speaking skill acquisition.

The methodology chosen to address the research questions of this study was fundamentally quantitative while discovering the learners' oral capacities and partly qualitative as it investigates the teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis the adequacy of the Algerian syllabus and course books in learners' performance.

In order to investigate the previous hypotheses, we counted on three major chapters. As far as literature review is concerned, chapter one and two form the theoretical background of the current study. Chapter one is concerned with the scholars' consideration regarding the worth and signification of the speaking skill followed by an analytic overview in the second chapter stressing on the major factors that improve/inhibit EFL learners from procuring good speaking capacities inside and outside the academic borders.

Practically, the third chapter outlines the methodological stand of the study by presenting the findings of the questionnaire and the interview. It provides a presentation of the full results in terms of tables and figures followed by necessary comments and interpretations. It is also reserved for further psychological remedies and various pedagogical suggestion that might rebuild the issues being tackled.

Chapter One

Literature review on the Speaking skill

1.1 Introduction

The globalization has generated several new prospects and phenomena into the world one of which is focusing on the implementation of teaching English as a foreign language for the sake of communication and speaking. The major challenge that teachers of a second or foreign language face is assisting pupils in liberating themselves from anything that causes them to become tongue-tied while attempting to speak their minds freely. As a result, it's critical for students to understand why they are expected to speak so frequently.

The mastery of the English language, particularly speaking skills, is a must-have skill that is applicable not only in the classroom but also in real-life situations. moreover, English has become a widely spoken language. It affects not just native speakers, but also other populations today, employed in a variety of fields such as science, education, psychology, and technology.

This chapter attempts to provide a general information background on the speaking skill as well as its worth and importance on the construct of a competent EFL speaker. Light will also be shed on teaching speaking process phases and activities along with the contribution of the teacher in the latter .

1.2 The Speaking Skill

The ultimate goal of any EFL learner is to perfect the English speaking skill. Nunan makes a compelling case. (1991: 39) “ *To most of people, mastering speaking is the single most important factor of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language*”. Speaking, on the other hand, provides a significant difficulty to most language learners, according to Scott Thornbury (2005), because it is a skill that requires continual improvement and practice. Brown (1994:270) in his turn classifies speaking as the most difficult skill for learners due to some features of oral speech such as word stress, the contracted forms of some spoken words like in the case of auxiliary verbs in English (to do / to be) in the examples:“I don’t like it “or” I’m right, aren’t I”, and the interactive nature of speech.

Despite the prevailing consensus on the daring process of growing speaking as a skill, engaging students in creative and pleasant speaking activities remains a matter of motivation and support on the side of the teacher.

From another angle, the ability of speaking in a foreign language requires multiple sources of knowledge, since it is considered as a social skill of talking besides its academic and educational worth, according to Luoma (2004:ix):

“The ability to speak in a foreign language is at the very heart of what it means to be able to use a foreign language. Our personality, our self-image, our Knowledge of the world and our ability to reason and express our thoughts are all reflected in our spoken performance in a foreign language”

(Luoma, 2004:ix)

In other words, speaking necessitates the ability to learn specific language features such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Speaking does, after all, have its own set of abilities, patterns, and traditions that are distinct from written language. A competent speaker brings together a variety of skills so that to formulate accurate match.

1.3 Definition of Speaking

One of the most crucial active skills in mastering a language is speaking. It's a combination of phonological sounds that creates a meaningful message. These phonological parts must be structured and cohesive in a systematic manner. As indicated: *“the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in speech”* (Oxford dictionary, 2012). In other words, it is a mode of communication and a means by which people transfer their language, their thoughts, and even their feelings to others. The language may be delivered verbally through the lips or nonverbally through gestures (body language).

Moreover, Martin Bygate (1987: 5-6) outlined two basic models to defining speaking: The first as a motor perceptive skill and the second as a communicative skill.

1.3.1 Speaking as Motor Perceptive Skill

This is considered to be a bottom-up approach. The focus in speaking, from the bottom up view, is on providing acoustic signals that elicit a variety of verbal reactions in the listener. The fundamentals are based on systematically combining sounds. As a result, teaching speaking should be set off with the simplest sound units (e.g. phonemes) and progressing to larger sound units (e.g. words and sentences) within speech is the best way to teach speaking. This type of definition is preferable for beginners since it proceeds from the easiest to the most difficult phases in the speaking teaching process.

However, it was discovered that this strategy neglects both the interactional and social abilities of speech. Furthermore, it downplays the importance of employing real-life communication in the classroom. For example, in high schools, students may be instructed to read a text out loud. This is indeed, speaking. Yet the purpose behind it is mainly mechanical, since arranged sounds are to be uttered correctly without any purpose of communication.

1.3.2 Speaking as Communicative Skill

Bygate (1998:23) opts for defining speaking in terms of interactional abilities centered on communication as an alternative. A top down view of speaking. According to proponents of this viewpoint, it is a two-faceted procedure that necessitates the actual exchange of ideas, facts, or emotion. In this methodology, spoken words are the outputs of real-time collaboration between two or more speakers in a specific spatial setting. As a result, followers of this viewpoint believe that it is preferable to encourage learners to be a part of spoken discourse from the beginning; eventually, they will learn tiny parts rapidly.

According to Thornbury (2005:261): “*not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary seen as linguistic competence but also that they understand when, where, why and in what ways to produce language, sociolinguistic competence*”. That is to say, speaking is a real-life activity that is performed by the speaker to communicate their ideas with listeners. This activity, i.e. speaking, is characterized by being unplanned and their continuity is situation-dependent, thus speaking is not only bound to the content (What to say) and the way ones transmit it, but also is related to the context in which it takes place.

Though the two approaches above display different methods to teaching speaking, the suggested alternative definition, i.e. the top down approach, is more appropriate for teaching higher-level English learners because they are ready to interact and engage in conversations in order to practice their language. Furthermore, this strategy appears to be effective in achieving the major objectives. In this case, teaching speaking should be situational, meaning that a range of real-life contexts (such as airports, restaurants, and so on) and cultural events should be used to achieve those goals.

1.4 The Importance of Speaking

Language is a medium of communication; humans speak with one another most of the time through speech to meet certain daily needs. And speech is the first skill that humans learn and develop over time. Hence “*without speech language is reduced to a mere script*” Ishrat Qureishi,(2016:3-10). Learning to speak is a protracted process that does not have to be attributed solely to classroom learning. In Europe, for example, learners are introduced to new abilities and linguistic things through interactive virtual means and the use of ICTs to maximize learning and achieve various educational goals, even at home.

Learners who have mastered speaking in a foreign language can communicate feelings and thoughts, discuss topics, and demonstrate the various uses of language. Speaking is also the most important ability outside of the classroom. As a result, foreign

language speakers are more likely to get employment in a variety of organizations and businesses. This idea is supported by Baker and Westrup (2003:05) who asserted that students who speak English well have a better chance of getting a better education, acquiring a job, and getting promoted.

Despite the fact that the importance of speaking is undeniable, the Algerian educational curriculum does not devote ample space to teaching it. Thus, it is up to the instructor (the teacher) to push himself / herself to shift from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered approach and provide more opportunities for students to talk and communicate in the target language.

The fact that all skills go hand in hand and must be equally engaged in the process of teaching. However; oral communication is mostly needed indoors (school and class) And outdoors (real life) since it enables the learner to:

- ❖ Debate and exchange thoughts correctly.
- ❖ Build interpersonal relationships.
- ❖ Be more open to the extern circumstances.
- ❖ Have sound opinions in discussions.
- ❖ Increase engagement.
- ❖ Raise productivity.
- ❖ Gain a strong self-esteem.
- ❖ Be able to interact fluently and accurately.
- ❖ Inspire change
- ❖ Effect and debate decisions
- ❖ Be able to free the mind thoughts

1.5 Characteristics of Speaking

It is evident that high levels of fluency and accuracy are required for good speaking performance.

1.5.1 Fluency

Fluency is the most important aspect of speaking performance, and it is usually the primary goal of teachers when teaching speaking. Riddell (2001:118) defines the former as *“the ability to talk fairly freely, without too much stopping or hesitation ...it also requires that the listener understands what is being said, so there must be intelligibility and meaning”* . This indicates that speaking fluency necessitates maintaining a decent grasp of the English language. In terms of mutual understanding of the message being delivered, the speech should have a continuous flow. Hedge (1993: 275) defines fluency as the ability to create well-coordinated responses by connecting words and phrases, properly enunciating sounds, and using stress and intonation effectively.

It is commonly believed that speaking fluently equals speaking fast, a misconception condemned by Scott Thornburg (2005:06): *“ all speakers pause—they have to draw breath. And even proficient speakers need to stop from time to time to allow the formulation of an utterance to catch up with its conceptualization”*. He explains that speed is a crucial element but not solely or even the most important one since pausing is equally important.

Teachers must be aware of the new teaching function that has been assigned to them in order to generate in learners the need to talk and make them want to communicate in order to acquire fluency. Learners must be persuaded of the importance of relating to the material and communicating. They must believe that they are the foundation of the communicating process.

1.5.2 Accuracy

A contemporary trend among foreign language learners is to place a greater emphasis on fluency mastery above accuracy. As stated by Mazouzi (2013:09), The latter is characterized as a learner's ability to produce a message that is accurate enough for the listener to grasp in terms of syntax, vocabulary, and pronunciation.. Therefore, accuracy is a core component in speaking proficiency accomplishment. For example, to master accuracy in terms of vocabulary means to know how to properly relate the right wordings for the right context; a confusion that most learners suffer from. They assume that the same word has the same meaning despite of being put in completely different contexts.

In the end, both accuracy and fluency are important aspects of language speaking, and a balance between the two is essential for effective English acquisition. As a result, teachers should incorporate both types in their lesson plans and use them flexibly to meet the requirements of their students as well as their learning objectives.

1.6 Types of Speaking

Making varied speaking activities for students necessitates a thorough understanding of both the nature and styles of speaking. Variable speaking activities can help learners prepare to communicate successfully in a variety of circumstances.

1.6.1 Face-to-Face Speaking

According to Cornbleet & Carter (2001:16), face-to-face speaking takes part in most conversations which let speakers receive immediate feedback. Face-to-face communication necessitates the presence of both interlocutors. Body language and facial gestures can aid communication.

1.6.2 Interactive Speaking

In the opinion of Bygate (1998), Whether chatting one-on-one, on the phone, between two individuals, or in a group, discussions normally flow smoothly, with speakers taking turns without gaps or everyone talking over each other. People alternate listening

and speaking when speaking is very interactive. Furthermore, there is frequently an opportunity to request clarification, repetition, or a slower pace from the speaker.

1.6.3 Real-Time Speaking

Foster, Tonkyn, and Wigglesworth (2000:354-375) argue that in this form of speaking, responses are often spontaneous, requiring speakers to think and develop language on the fly. According to Miller (2001:25-29), this might lead to a variety of problems for the speaker, such as forgetting. As a reaction, speakers must repeat themselves. Nonetheless, speaking on the spot puts the speaker under pressure, but it also gives the speaker more freedom in terms of correcting mistakes.

Exposing students to such scenarios allows them to practice speaking in real time, which helps them avoid making mistakes and sound natural when speaking a foreign language.

1.7 Teaching Speaking

Speaking a foreign language is a difficult challenge not only for the learner, but also for the teacher, as “*one of the basic problems in foreign language teaching is to prepare learners to be able to use the language*” according to Bygate (1998:3). Simultaneously, speaking and teaching speaking are equally important. As a result, the following issue emerges: how to teach speaking?

Although there are different strategies and approaches to teach speaking, they serve the same purpose which is the learner being able to use the new linguistic elements acquired in the pre-speaking activities (knowledge) for communication.

Most speaking activities in EFL classes follow the same stages or steps, such as pre-teaching, during teaching, and after teaching, which are seen to be the points of intersection between knowledge and communication. Language knowledge; for Baker & Westrup (2003) is realized when it is applied in social settings.

1.7.1 The Pre-Teaching Activity

“To guarantee a better procedure and gain better results, instructors must plan for all speaking activities. Instructors should have done simple activities before so the students will be ready and expect the speaking activities topics which would help them interact effectively” (Stein 2008:6). Learners will be exposed to a variety of new linguistic features at this level, which will subsequently be created in the form of communication. As a result, learners must first acquire and comprehend the new language before being able to utilize it effectively. Consider the following scenario: Teachers could begin by introducing some regularly used sentences and language when teaching students how to order meals in a restaurant.

1.7.2 Pre-Communicative Stage (Context-Free)

Learning any new skill requires practice and speaking is no exception. Students can learn a great deal of vocabulary and expressions, but due to the absence of activating that knowledge through practice or drills it ends up being forgotten. At this point, it is necessary to have a model dialogue or drills where students are supposed to repeat the pre-learnt elements in the previous level (Pre-teaching activity). For instance, after learning the expressions and words required ordering food in the restaurant, students now can be given a dialogue where the waiter is talking to a customer. Students have to practice the dialogue and switch roles.

1.7.3 Communicative Stage (Interactive)

Unlike the previous level, where students were not entirely productive, this stage requires students to summon pre-communicative information and employ it in real-life dialogues. Students are given the freedom to express themselves and make judgments in this environment. For example, after learning and practicing the needed vocabulary and expressions in the first phase (Restaurant in this case).

1.8 Activate Exercises

The real purpose of teaching speaking is to make learners able to use the language. However, the main concern is how to set the stage for such a task. Therefore, the sort of speaking learners should be able to do is what Harmer (1997:87) suggests as “*Activate exercise*”. This means that learners are supposed to put whatever linguistic knowledge they have into practice through a speaking activity that needs to be accomplished with motivation. According to him such speaking activities are important for three main reasons.

The first is to allow students to practice their language in a real-life setting and to engage in authentic foreign language dialogue. The second reason is that they allow teachers and students to obtain feedback; for example, the instructor will be able to analyze the students and determine which language elements they need to improve. Likewise the learners will get to evaluate their speaking. The third reason is that the speaking activities are meant to get learners willing to speak; therefore they need to be fun and appealing with regard to their interests and levels. Furthermore, speaking activities have the potential to increase learners ‘self esteem.

There are numerous classroom speaking activities that are both motivating and appropriate for the student's level. Because they are the most popular, this study will concentrate on them:

1.8.1 Information –Gap Activity

This activity is named after the fact that various pieces of information are required to complete the entire picture, but only if the two speakers share those pieces of information. Describe and draw is a quite well –known information –gap activity that is deemed by many teachers as fun and amusing. In this activity, a learner and his /her partner will work together but doing different. This means that the students will be separated into pairs, with one learner in each pair holding an image that he or she will describe to his or her partner, who will draw it without looking at it. As a result, these pairs will have to ask

and answer questions to complete the task. The teacher, as supposed to, gives a clear explanation about the rules of the task, or he/she can present a little demonstration to the activity.

1.8.2 Discussions

Sometimes it happens that learners want to talk about a topic either suggested by the teacher or by the textbook that is found interesting. Such spontaneous moments to maximize speaking need to be ceased. Discussions, according to Harmer (1983:128), increase the “*fluent language use* “. There are times when discussions are planned but are not much of a success. Reasons for this could be because learners are not given time to collect their thoughts upon the subject addressed .Therefore, it is always vital to have pre-discussion rehearsal time. For example learners form “buzz groups “in which the topic is investigated and ideas are prompted. After this, learners should be ready for an entire class discussion.

One way is to divide the class into two groups, one is in favor of and the other is against. The pre-discussion stage allows them to prepare arguments .The teacher will only need to find a triggering topic to heat up the conversation.

There are some key tips for teachers planning to integrate discussions into their speaking session including having a lead in activity that could smoothly introduce the topic. It could be a picture or a text to read. The discussion should also contain a closure. Next, the topic chosen should be specific and not general. Moreover, teachers should not interrupt the flow of the discussion and leave their remarks till the end. When conducting a discussion, teachers can always assist their learners with role cards.

1.8.3 Telling Stories

The idea of telling stories is appealing to almost everyone because it is part of the human nature to tell stories .Therefore, learners should be able to do that in English too. Harmer (1983:129) suggests a way to do this activity based on the principle of information –gap activity where learners are given something to talk about. Again, it is a group work, and learners are given a sequence of pictures that recite a story and that differ from one group to another. Then they are hidden or taken away out of the learners ‘ sight .The following step requires forming new groups made out of those original groups whose job is to work together and to find out the missing story sequences . They will have to discuss to find the right order of the story. There could be various alternatives for this task. The simplest one to get learners share their own real life experiences with the entire class such as talking about an injury or embarrassing moments. This would allow students to unleash their creativity.

1.8.4 Role Play

This activity entails learners to perform a real life context to realize specific learning objectives. For example, the teacher may request them to simulate a job interview, or an interview with a famous person, or play a detective and a suspect, etc .In this case, learners are provided with instructions about the characters they are playing and the topic as well. On such occasions learners are usually given role-cards that explain each participant’s role, and what is supposed to be achieved. For a start, learners in groups, discuss among themselves their given parts, and the sort of questions to ask from their characters ‘perspectives. Then they are ready to perform. It is important that the teacher clearly explains the task and keeps monitoring the class. Any observed weaknesses are preferably to be saved till the end of the activity.

1.9 The Teacher's Role During Speaking Tasks

The teacher, during a speaking activity, can play three significant roles as stated by Harmer (1983:123). First, a participant but within a limited frame .Second the teacher is a prompter in the sense that he or she intervenes whenever something happens that could hinder the speaking task such as a learner forgets what to say .And third, the teacher is a feedback provider who always makes sure to react and offer constructive comments on the content and the language

1.10 Unpredictability

Since students are not efficient speakers, they are more likely to stutter and get anxious. As a result their speaking will be subject to hiatus (An interruption, break, gap or pause in speaking). Furthermore, students are more likely to get involved in awkward situations where they do not understand or do not know what to reply because they cannot predict what the interlocutor is going to say. It is necessary to teach them some strategic expressions and techniques that native speakers use frequently. For example, there are some words that can fill the pauses in speaking such as: “Erm”, “Hum”, etc. Students also should be able to use the expressions: “Can you speak more slowly, please!”“Sorry!” Instead of staring awkwardly.

1.11 Conclusion

As far as teaching is concerned, the teacher's role is to help the learner select and transmit information through performing orally (speaking) and gradually raising a conversation. Thus, communicative and functional components of language are crucial in foreign language and language training in general. It would be more beneficial to concentrate solely on conversational abilities the majority of time so that to satisfy the current needs of this digital age. Furthermore, speaking is motivated by a desire to attain a certain goal, such as expressing thoughts, expressing a wish, agreeing or disagreeing, solving difficulties, or maintaining and creating relationships and friendships. A matter of fact, the speakers themselves, their knowledge and experiences, the physical surroundings, and the goals of speech are all examples of sound communicative skills.

Chapter two

Speaking In EFL Learning

2.1 Introduction

Despite the inevitable criticism of existing methods, approaches, or resources, speaking is now often regarded as the most significant skill to develop. It has been considered as the key objective of language training.

This chapter aims at investigating the challenging issues and aspects that face EFL learners throughout their speaking course. To achieve that aim, we divided it into three main sections; the first section examines one powerful variable possessing the lion's share in the impediment of students' oral production is self-esteem and the psychological background of the learner. The second section is devoted to explore the textbook used by the Algerian EFL students as one of the hardships that reduce productivity as far as the speaking skill is concerned (the Algerian textbook "New Prospects" is taken as a sample for the evaluation) . The concluding section covers the major issues dealing with teaching and learning such a vital skill as speaking regarding the teachers methods inside the classroom.

2.2 The Affective Domain (The Psychological Needs)

Learning a foreign language is not purely cognitive; rather it coincides with the affective side. One reason behind the negligence of the affective domain in the EFL pedagogy can be due to the ignorance about this notion and its importance in the field as it is only recently that research has been intended upon the subject by educational psychologists. The affective domain can be defined as the emotional side of a person as opposed to the cognitive one. It includes feeling, sentiments and attitudes about oneself and the other as a result of contact (Brown 2007:140).

The affective domain is regarded as an umbrella term that carries different variables such as lack of self-confidence, motivation, anxiety, shyness, inhibition and so on. Additionally, self-esteem is undeniably the corner stone of the psychological

background of the learners, the latter may cause an enormous challenge when diagnosed improperly.

2.2.1 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is regarded as a key variable in educational psychology and it has been the main focus of many psychologists, sociologists and linguists including James (1890) and Coopersmith (1959). Branden (1992:18) defines self-esteem as “*the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and of being worthy of happiness*”. It is one of the most accepted and adequate definitions. From this stand, it could be asserted that self-esteem is about the human intrinsic belief in being important, worthy and valuable as a human being and trusting oneself as being capable of coping with life inevitable circumstances and failure.

In their attempt to define self-esteem, Sedikides and Gress (2003:18) believe that the concept is the general assumption one has for himself which can be either positive or negative and it is pertinent to the feelings of self-respect and self-confidence. To further understand the construct of self-esteem, light would be shed on some notions such as self-concept, self-image, and ideal-self. To begin with, self-concept as defined by Dennis Lawrence (2006:17) is the awareness of one’s identity, it is the overall view that any person makes about himself/herself, and this incorporates appearance, abilities, mentalities, and convictions. Lawrence argues that self-concept is the umbrella term that is subsumed beneath the self and it has three aspects.”Self-image” ; what the person is, “ideal self”; what the person would like to be ,and “self-esteem” ; what the person feels about the discrepancy between what he/she is and what he /she would like to be.

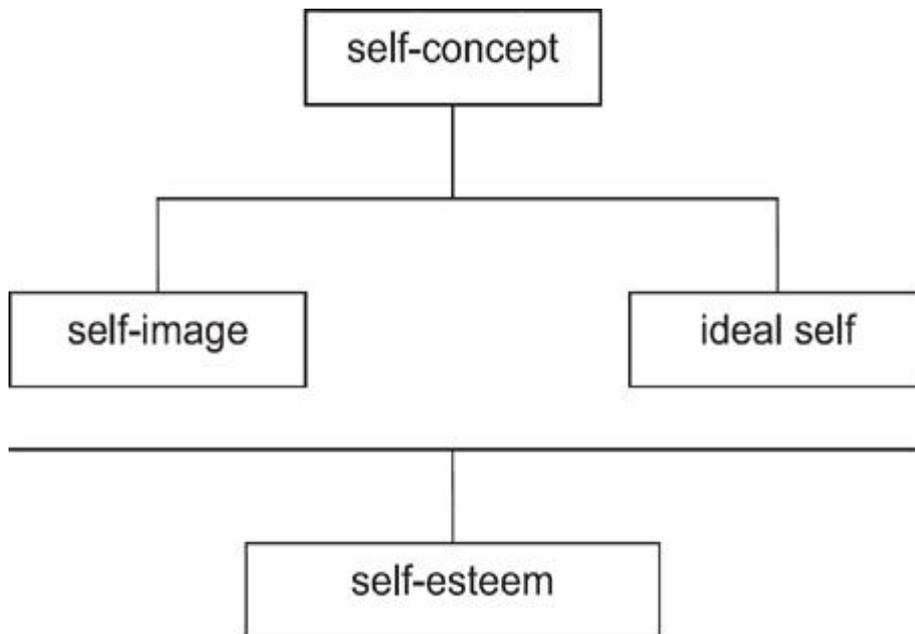


Figure 2.1: Self-esteem as an Umbrella Term (from Lawrence, D. (2006)

Enchasing self-esteem in the classroom)

It is noteworthy to mention that the discrepancy between the perceived self “self-concept” and “ideal self” give some indications of levels of self-esteem. If a person’s view of himself or herself is close to how he\she would like to be, then she can be said to have healthy self-esteem.

2.2.2 Levels of Self-Esteem

Rubio (2007:5) states that self-esteem varies depending on “*personal circumstances*” .In this respect, Brown (2007:153) offers a very commonly used model in the educational sphere that organizes self-esteem into three different levels reflecting those circumstances ,its multidimensionality and its relevance to Second Language Acquisition i.e. a subconscious learning of a language .

The first level is global self-esteem, and it is defined as a relatively fixed feature in adulthood which does not change. It is a dominant negative or positive assessment one develops of him/her own worth over time and across a varied set of situations.

The second level is situational self-esteem, also known as the specific self-esteem, which denotes one's "self-appraisal in specific life domains" such as a professional career, education and social life or in special skills and talents such as sports and arts. It can include personal characteristics like bravery, intelligence, honesty, and so on.. Task self-esteem is the third level and it is defined as "self-evaluations" peculiar to one angle within those specific situations or "subject matter area (pitching in baseball, the multiplication table, a particular aspect of language acquisition, etc...)"

Generally speaking, situational self-esteem could be connected to learning while task self-esteem to one's own judgment of his/her performance in the second language in one specific sub branch of the learning process .For example: speaking, writing or a classroom activity (ibid).

2.2.3 Types of Self-Esteem

According to Nathaniel Branden (1992:13), the extent of self-esteem is one influencing factor on how well or bad one can be in his or her personal, social, and professional life. Therefore, foreign language learning is not an exception .A general consensus over the types of self-esteem recognizes two.

- **High (Healthy) Self-Esteem**

Healthy or high self-esteem induces positive energy towards learning. Nathaniel Branden (1994:05) relates high self-esteem with (*rationality, realism, intuitiveness, creativity, independence flexibility, ability to manage, willingness to admit mistakes, benevolence, and cooperativeness*). In his study about The Correlation between Students' Self-Esteem and their Speaking Competencies, Wenni Wulandari Gustaman (2015:124), made some observations about students possessing healthy self-esteem. According to him, students with healthy self esteem acknowledge equity with others, and

feel at ease when making mistakes in speaking as one inevitable part of the learning process.

Furthermore, they naturally communicate their emotions; and showing gratitude is one illustration. On a social scale, they maintain healthy connections because they think positively about whoever they meet for the first time. They are also open to newness in any part of their lives. Moreover, they are more likely to adapt to unpleasant and unpredictable events free of any concerns because of their ability to contain inconvenient emotional states such as stress or anxiety. One significant feature is that healthy self-esteem students do not get intimidated in group talks and they welcome negative feedback. In fact, they show great aptness to speak and enjoy the experience without too much reflections on being mocked at for making mistakes or receiving criticism.

- Low Self-Esteem

Low levels of self-esteem can deeply hold learners from taking the best out of a learning experience. According to Branden (1994: 06) low self-esteem is related to “irrationality, blindness to reality, rigidity, fear of the new and unfamiliar, inappropriate conformity or inappropriate rebelliousness, over compliant or over controlling behavior and fear of hostility towards others”. The worst case scenario is the fear of failure as put by (ibid: 06): “the lower our self-esteem is, the less we aspire and the less we are likely to achieve”.

In a similar vein within the same study, Gustaman (2015) sheds light on some features of students possessing low self-esteem. According to him such students find it quite intimidating to speak to others, share their opinions or socially interact, let alone speaking in a foreign language. They constantly fear to be in awkward moments such as to be laughed at. Additionally, they do not dare to innovate or take any risks. Also, they get easily triggered or overwhelmed by rejection or negative feedback and react

aggressively towards them. These learners feel useless and have no faith in their abilities consequently they avoid leading roles or to willingly participate in social activities.

2.2.4 Self Esteem and Adolescence

According to Agnieszka Habrat (2018:28), there seems to be some conflicting views over whether or not the extent of self-esteem changes during the shift from childhood to adolescence .Those claiming the decrease of the construct refer back to factors that might include: body growth (puberty), exposure to a new social and educational context, and personal judgment. Deborah Plummer (2004:16) explains that this period is featured with self-doubts and uncertainty but it is also the period of the “real” self-rediscovery.

During this phase, family members are kept distant; however, peers opinions are significantly valued by the young adolescent. This latter, though is eager for independence; he or she is still in need for parental care and companionship. Middle school teenagers for instance, find themselves struggling to fit in new, daring circumstances such as starting new friendships, or adapting to unfamiliar school subjects. They are also more inclined to start an identity and identify themselves among their peers. As in the case of secondary school teenagers, their self-esteem is more likely to decline as a result to the pressure of preparing themselves to the final exams in case they were in their final year.

Furthermore, this category of students are expected to make up their minds about whether they would prefer to continue their higher education or pursue a different path , and about the areas of specialties that could pave the way for their future careers. Therefore, they are more likely to experience psychological instability. Another fact about secondary school students is that they are exposed to social classification and judgments by their peers that can be reasons for the decline of self-esteem.

2.2.5 Self Esteem and Gender

According to Habrat (2018) there has been some insightful interest induced by the effect of gender on self-beliefs, therefore it is not surprising to find a host of multiple contrasting views over this matter. One theory that Habrat (2018: p30) referred to is that female self-esteem is lower than that of males, a difference that manifests itself clearly in adolescence. Such phenomenon could be better explained by the multidimensional nature of self-esteem. Since males and females do not perceive things similarly, their self-esteem is dependent on what the two genders believe it is important in their lives. For example, teenage boys are more interested in sports; therefore, their self-esteem depends on how well they perform in such activities while teenage females give more attention on manners, and patterns of behavior. Thus, their self-esteem relies on how well they have been socially active with others.

2.2.6 Fostering Learners' Self-Esteem

Teachers often get caught up in a lesson planning and the details of what they have to do the next day, and they forget that true teaching is about the learner as an individual. The student should feel safe, cared for, loved, confident about himself /herself and have a healthy self-esteem. Lawrence (2006) argued that teaching is more effective when the teacher combines an approach which balances between the learner's cognitive abilities and their affective state. And also as Harmer (1983:75) stated: "as moral guides, as therapists as well as being teachers of language", teachers can play the biggest role in enhancing and maintaining positive self-esteem in their learners and in order to do that they should act.

There are at heart many strategies and techniques that teachers can use in order to nurture their pupils' self-esteem and restore their belief in themselves and change their negative thinking patterns: Praise is ranked as the number one factor contributing to the

installment of self-esteem. The frequent positive feedback that learners receive, such as comments indicating thoughtful appreciation for a certain classroom tasks, is very meaningful to them. However, teachers should be aware of not to randomly praise their learners otherwise they can be at the risk of developing phony self-image (Lawrence 1988:30).

Constructive criticism is another way that could elevate learners' self-esteem. Yet, teachers need to be careful when giving criticism because low self-esteemed learners tend to be sensitive towards it and they are unable to handle it even if it is meant to help them. Therefore, in the opinion of Harmer (1983: 30), teachers should keep criticism for a minimum use and be careful not do anything that could damage their learners' self-worth .

Another way to reinforce learners' self-esteem is that teachers need to respect the idea of individuality and to stop considering them as one homogeneity group .In this case learners will feel safe because they are fairly and equally treated. Students with low self-esteem are afraid of making mistakes, and this fear can affect their learning and damage their self-confidence. Therefore, teachers should try to minimize this fear and convince them that making mistakes is one way to improve.

In addition, teachers should consider making mistakes in front of their learners to make them realize that even teachers can slip up. It is highly recommended for teachers to set realistic goals and expectations that correspond with every learner's unique needs.

It could be concluded that education means more than just teaching academic skills, it is rather helping students to believe in their hidden credentials and skills and making them build a positive self image and a healthy self-esteem as armor against the challenges of the world.

2.3 Textbook Deficiencies

Mastering a language is mostly defined by the speaking abilities and skills acquired in order to be able to communicate and establish relations with other native or non-native speakers. Yet Algerian teachers of English may find it hard to teach speaking skills since they are restricted to a specific syllabus which may not meet the learner's needs and preferences.

Leonarda Myslihaka (2016:01) states: "*in learning a foreign language, communication definitely plays a crucial role*". Learning to communicate effectively and being able to speak and understand other people is the ultimate aim of any language learning process. Therefore education is the most affordable path through which speaking skill can be gained.

The textbook is undeniably a valuable material in the educational process of teaching and learning foreign languages since it is a manual document designed according to the demands of the educational institutions; presents basic explanations of a subject matter defined by the curricula; adjusts the teacher delivering method and enchases the capacity of better understanding the aims and objectives of the syllabus for both sides at once. Yet the textbooks provided by the Algerian educational system are quite debatable both at the level of content and the aims carried throughout the curricula, more precisely one may find it challenging to teach and learn speaking and communication skills through them. The fact that teachers both veteran and novice and learners depend on texts and tasks represented by the textbook does explain to what extent it is important to constantly update and check the textbook.

The following section is shedding the lights on the deficiencies of the third year textbook all streams "NEW PROSPECTS" as a sample of the study. In order to be more authentic. We intended to depict some the common issues in most Algerian course books

from the sample textbook so that to represent the major challenges encountered by EFL learners.

Textbooks should expose learners to communication and speaking materials that are authentically derived from daily life in the target community. Yet the texts and lessons presented should introduce them to the different English communities and the types of communication that are appropriate for each.

Textbook designers should consider the recent methods in teaching languages that has proven to optimize learners' outcome concerning communication and speaking. Algerian learners became more interested in English and felt the need to master the language. However, teachers can notify learners' resentment to deductive instructions when it comes to grammar. Designers tend to introduce the grammar in context project yet the authenticity of the utterances presented is questionable since learners found themselves unable to produce the same patterns when they face a real talk.

2.3.1 The Role of Textbooks in EFL Classes

Learning a new language is usually overwhelming. Textbooks are an elementary tool in teaching languages because they provide a gradual transition from the simplest units to the complicated ones. According to Jack Richards: *“despite the impact of new technologies, textbooks will doubtless continue to play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful resource for both teachers and learners”* ⁽¹⁾. It is meant to contain the adequate information about the target community reinforce the basic four skills and frame to an authentic representation of the language.

(1) Professorjackrichards.com

Cunningsworth (1995:117) proclaims: Moreover textbooks mainly function as providers of lessons. They gradually embody the aims and objectives carried throughout the syllabus thus helping novice teachers in facilitating the teaching process. Textbooks should emphasize the core role of language that is communication. :

Textbooks in Algeria are designed by the ministry of education. Teachers are authorized to make modifications within texts and activities to suit learners' needs and their learning styles. However, those modifications must conform to the units introduced by the formal course book. Thus educators are not allowed to teach according to their own philosophies when facing a genuine classroom and find themselves restricted to the philosophies of the designers who present the project according to an ideal sample of students.

2.3.2 The Sample “*New Prospects*”

New Prospects was introduced by the Ministry of Education in 2007 as a restoration of the old version (2001). It is composed of 270 pages describing the level, designers, the content of the syllabus and the goals and the aims to achieve. Pages from 08 to 13 include divided summaries of the 6 units in terms of grammar, vocabulary, sound system, skills and strategies.

2.3.2.1 The prevalence of Grammar and Writing Over the Speaking Skills

As the ministry of education planned for the project of New Prospects it emphasizes the linguistic aspect of the language throughout the course book. As the designers mentioned “*the fact that baccalaureate is exclusively of the written mode*” (2007:06) in describing the four features of the syllable that have been given careful consideration in designing the textbook. Thus New Prospects is exclusively dedicated to reinforce the learner's linguistic competence.

The final year of high school is supposed to prepare learners for either higher education or the working field. Higher education in Algeria has recently become more related in English and applying for jobs required the ability of communicating in English. Moreover learners themselves are more interested in speaking the language than distracting themselves with the restrictive instructions that substantially demotivate them along the course. When exploring New Prospects one can notice the implementation of writing and the emphasis of accuracy even in speaking activities students are required to write down their potential answer, dialogue, and interviews.

The prevalence of activities dedicated to grammar and writing over speaking, vocabulary, and pronunciation is showcased in the following table:

unit	grammar	vocabulary	pronunciation	speaking	writing
1	9	4	4	7	7
2	8	2	2	6	7
3	10	4	3	7	6
4	9	2	2	6	6
5	6	3	3	6	6
6	8	4	2	6	8

2.3.2.2 The Lack of Auditory Materials

The activities pertaining to the sequence of “ LET’S HEAR IT”. The section devoted to the development of students’ speaking skills are annexed with texts and dialogues related to the units at the end of the textbook. During lectures of listening and speaking, students are not allowed to check them. The teacher read them out loud and instructs the learners to infer answers to the tasks based on what they have heard. These activities are supposed to

enhance learner's speaking and listening skills and help them communicate decently as they understand the message, recognize words and answer questions.

The sequence of "pronunciation and spelling" is devoted to phonology. It presents transcribed words. The teacher explains to the students the rules of final /d/, final /s/, and silent letter etc. Eventually both lectures should end with students writing their answers. The lectures presented under the two sequences are entirely based on the teacher's accent and pronunciation, which could not be always fluent or accurate. Thus learners who are academically ranked intermediate or post-intermediate could be exposed to inaccurate pronunciation or random accents.

One can notice that textbooks in Algeria are exclusively written and presented without auditory supplies, instead designers hold the teacher responsible for learners ability to articulate accurately or to adopt dialogues from the internet that teach authentic English language from real life talk.

2.4 Teachers' Obstacles and Needs

Teachers in EFL classes are mainly regarded as mentors whose mission is to replicate the target community through their behavior language and attitude. They are required to frame to a sphere in which mistakes are embraced and regarded as an elementary step in learning thus learners would be encouraged to interact in English despite the lack of vocabulary and grammar mistakes. Moreover teachers have to refer to their learners' styles and needs in presenting tasks and activities that motivate them to express themselves.

2.4.1 Teaching Speaking Obstacles

Speaking is considered to be a set of skills that need to be developed which makes it complex to teach and to learn. The following are some difficulties that a teacher may encounter when teaching speaking:

- **Time:**

Teachers are supposed to cover a series of different linguistic elements such as: grammar, vocabulary, writing, etc. This makes it difficult to dedicate some time to speaking.

- **Exposure**

As students will not have enough time to practice English in EFL classrooms, they are more likely to be less exposed to English speaking.

- **Psychological Aspects**

The less students are exposed to communication activities in English, the more anxious and nervous they get when trying to speak. As a result, speaking English will be considered a nightmare for EFL learners especially that they know they are going to make mistakes.

- **The Mother Tongue**

Teachers of EFL have to be exposed to the learners' native language sounds and structures since students will be count on their mother tongue to produce the target language. Consequently, Learners are more likely to make structural and phonological mistakes.

- **Topics and Motivation**

The nature of the topics can have an impact on the motivation of the learners to speak. Some topics may not be of interest to the learner. Textbooks, therefore, have to be updated according to each generation's orientation.

2.5 Conclusion:

Based on the previously discussed key elements in this chapter, one may conclude that indeed there are clear cut ties between some of the psychological and pedagogical issues and speaking as a major productive skill. Points of emphasis are centered upon the teacher's responsibility to make use of convenient strategies that could foster learners' oral performance while simultaneously maintain progress in their psychological and pedagogical needs through effective monitoring and guidance.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology and Data Analysis

3.1 Introduction

The second chapter of this dissertation is devoted to practice so that to form a real and practical basis for the hypotheses.

The chapter is sectioned into two main parts: the questionnaire and the interviews. Both research tools investigate the issues and the challenging obstacles within EFL learners while attempting to speak their minds in/outside the classroom in correct coherent English. The questionnaire is intended for pupils to inquire their ability to communicate in English and to which extent this could be caused by several circumstances. However, the interview is devoted to teachers to investigate their considerations regarding these issues and how much they could serve or damage the teaching of communication and speaking. Yet their answers are held more precise providing their experience. In this chapter we intended also to reinforce the previously mentioned hypotheses with presenting teachers and learners' recommendations concerning their aspirations about teaching speaking and to provide learners with the adequate amount of knowledge and background Information to reformulate their thoughts into an accurate speech. It is also reserved to the further suggestions given by teachers and learners being incorporated in this work.

3.2 Research Method

This research is exclusively based on descriptive data rather than an experimental method to match the nature of the topic tackled.

3.3 Administration of The Study

Due to the nature of the current dissertation, which is descriptive. The reliance of questionnaires seems to be most appropriate for gathering accurate data on the targeted sample. The questionnaires were merely distributed on secondary school third year pupils. The wholesome of the pupils being questioned is 20 students from 11 December secondary school in Tissemsilt. The questions presented are simple and require minimum thinking so

that it would be easy for the students to fill in the closest answer to reality. The role of the questionnaire is to draw appropriate conclusions regarding the pupils' oral skills.

Teachers participated into this dissertation via a semi-structured interview which incorporated pre-determined questions related to the topic being tackled; the aim of the interview is to measure the oral performance of their students.

The government adopted several preventive measures to protect citizens from the wide spread of the Corona Virus (Covid-19). Such procedures precluded meeting with the teachers and pupils to set for interviews and distribute the formulas of the questionnaire. Therefore interviews and questionnaires were both set online (Google forms; Facebook, Instagram)

3.4 Data Analysis

The results of the questionnaires and the interviews obtained were extremely important to draw conclusions and validate the previous hypotheses.

3.4.1 Part one: Questionnaires' Analysis

. The participants involved in this study are 20 pupils of third year level scientific stream classes combined (exact sciences and technical math) studying at 11 December secondary school in Tissemsilt. Their ages are between 17 and 18 years old and they have been exposed to English as a second foreign language since the first year in middle school until these current years of their secondary educations following competency based approach.

The initial plan was to conduct the research with 30 pupils from one scientific stream classroom; however, within these exceptional circumstances, the researchers had to continue the research with what was available.

This is an online questionnaire made on Google Forms and consists of fifteen items of various types distributed in three sections. Six of these are closed ended questions, six are

multiple-choice questions (MCQ), while only three are open-ended questions that require brief statements; one in which learners tell about their age and the other two in which they justify their choices or provide arguments freely. The sections are organized as the following:

Section One: Learner's Profile (Q1-Q2), there are two items: the first is a closed-ended question that about the learner' sex (male or female) and the second question requires the learners' age. The purpose behind these items is to make clear that the presented data is a sample of adolescents who belong to these categories of age and gender, do not necessarily reflect the upcoming generations.

Section Two: Learner's Attitudes towards the Speaking Skill (Q1-Q8), these items target whether or not learners are interested in English as a foreign language, whether it is difficult or easy to speak in English with providing reasons, their beliefs about their oral English level, whether they feel pressured to speak in English or not with giving reasons, and finally their thoughts about which language skill is most important to develop with providing reasons for their selected choices.

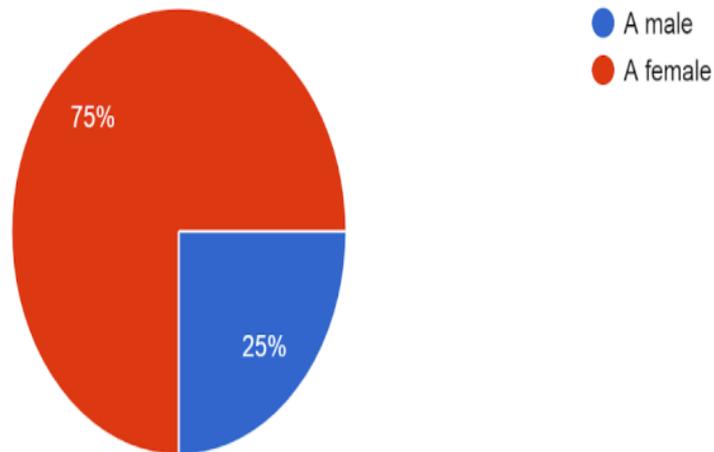
Section Three: Speaking Skill issues and difficulties (Q1-Q5), these are designed to check the obstacles that face learners while trying to speak and interact in English about, their feelings about being involved in classroom speaking activities and their aspirations towards better speaking acquisition.

Google Forms gives the advantage of automatically calculating and analyzing the data obtained from the online questionnaire and representing them on graphics as one way to save time and energy for the researchers. Thus, the researchers only copied and pasted the presented data and the already suggested charts on a document created on Google Docs first and then copied and pasted on Microsoft Word and they are presented as it follows:

Item One: Are you?

Options	Participants	Percentage
A male	05	25 %
A female	15	75 %
Total	20	100 %

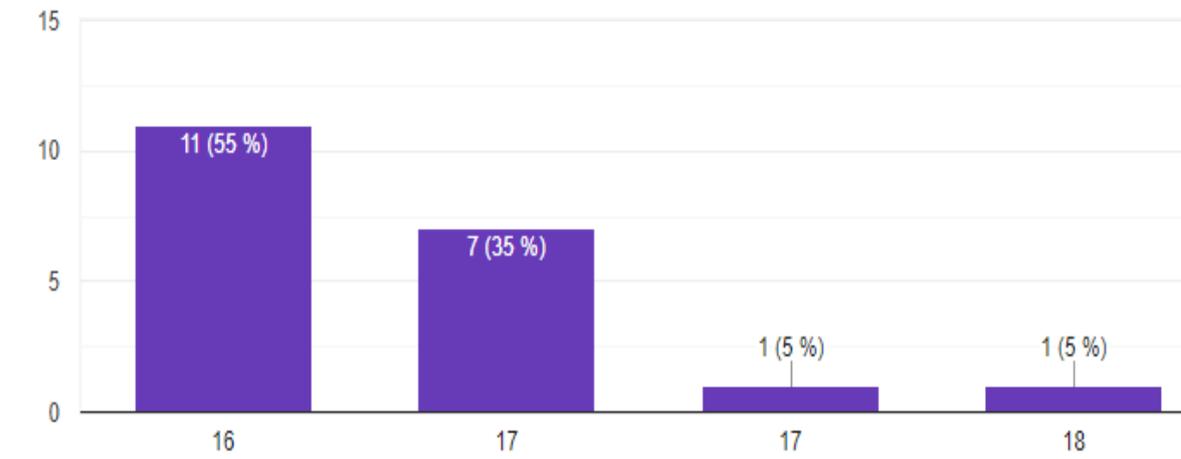
Table 3.1: learners ‘Gender



Graph 3.1: learners ‘Gender

The pupils were first asked about their gender. Results show that (75%) are 15 females participants while (25%) are 05 male participants. This indicates that the data obtained out of this questionnaire reflect a sample representing a population that contains more female participants than male participants. The following pie chart represents the gender data of the sample in question.

Item Two: Age



Graph 3.2: learners 'Age

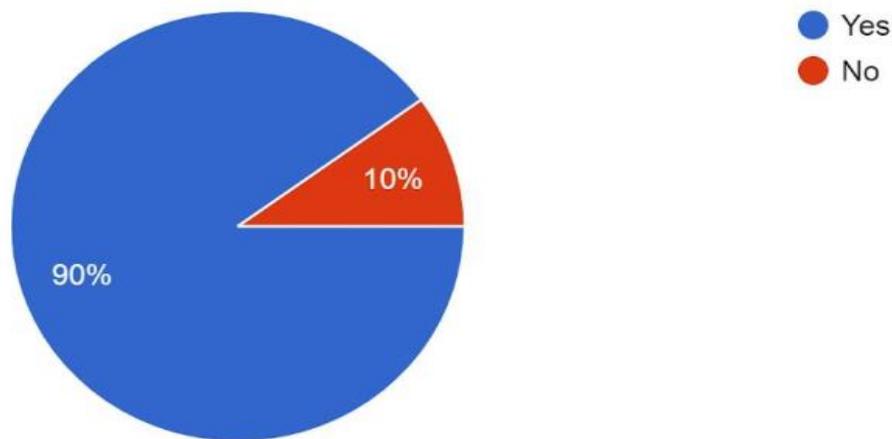
The second item quests for learners' age. The indicated results which are demonstrated on the following bar chart represents learners' ages rating from 16 years old to 18 years old . It shows that (55%) are the 11 participants who are 16 years of age. The following(35%) and (5%) represents the 08 participants aged 17 years old and the (5%) represents the only participant aged 18 years old . One can notice that the majority of participants are those adolescents aged between 16 and 17 years old. This means that these research finding will be reflecting a population of adolescents whose majority are teenagers aged between 17 and 18 years old.

{ Section 2 }

Item Three: Do you like speaking in English?

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	18	90 %
No	02	10 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.2: Learners' Attitudes Towards Speaking in English



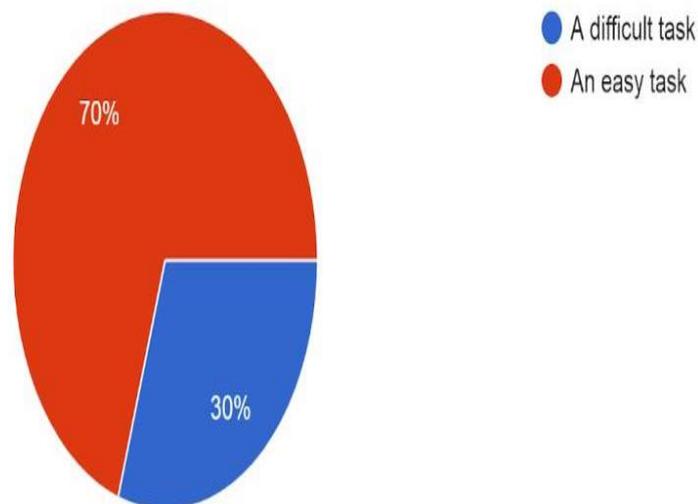
Graph 3.3: Learners' Attitudes Towards Speaking in English

The results obtained showed that (90%) of the participants enjoy speaking in English while (10%) of them do not. This means that a great number of adolescents have positive attitudes towards speaking in English.

Item Four: Do you think that speaking in English is a difficult task or an easy task?

Options	Participants	Percentage
A difficult task	06	30 %
An easy task	14	70 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.3: Learners' Estimation About Speaking in English



Graph 3.4: Learners' Estimation Towards Speaking in English

The results indicate that (70%) find speaking in English an easy task while (30%) find it a difficult task as demonstrated on the following pie chart. However, this would also reveal that those who like speaking in English do not necessarily find it an easy task.

Item Five: Why

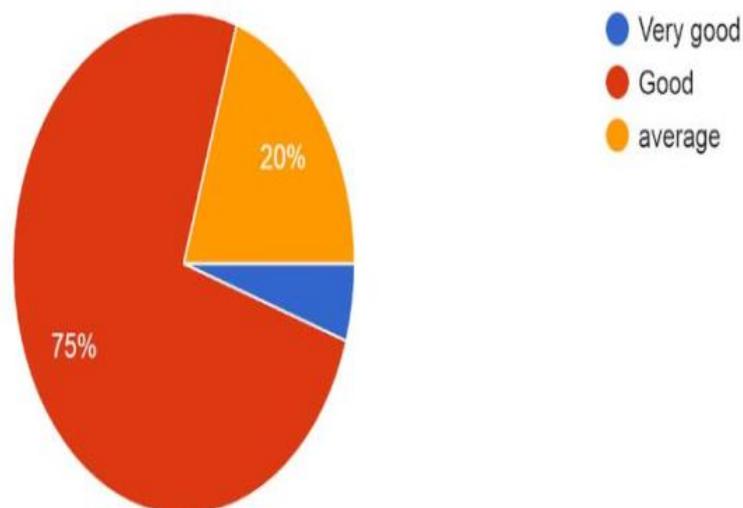
Learners were asked to justify their responses on why they find it difficult or easy to speak in English through an open-ended question. Those who find it easy to speak in English gave some interesting reasons. The most common argument is that English is quite easy when compared to other languages such as French. They pointed at how simple and clear English grammar is especially when making coherent sentences, and how practical and simple it is to communicate in English. Another reason that others expressed is that they simply have fun learning English and it is their most favorite language to communicate with.

Others claimed that because it is an international language and frequently spoken and therefore easily accessible. On the other hand, others reported that their frequent exposure to English on the social media is one helping factor that they find speaking in English easy. For those who find speaking in English difficult admitted that they lack the sufficient linguistic background that enables them to speak the language. Others noted to the fact that they lack the sufficient vocabulary and that they do not make efforts to learn English. Others said they simply favor speaking in French instead. Some simply refrained from giving any arguments.

Item Six: How do you consider your oral English level?

Options	Participants	Percentage
Very good	01	05 %
Good	15	75 %
Average	04	20 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.4: Learners' Estimation Towards their Oral English Level



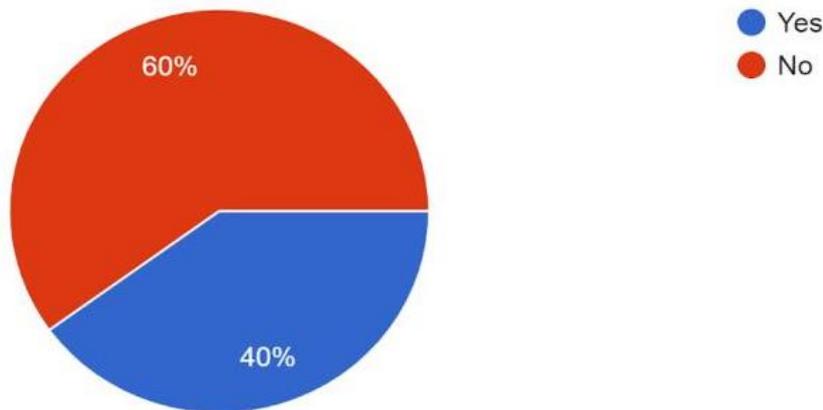
Graph 3.5: Learners' Estimation Towards their Oral English Level

Learners are asked to state their opinions as far as their oral competencies in English are concerned. It has been recorded that (75%) of the participants think of their oral abilities as good which explains why the majority of them find it an easy task. The (20%) of them think that they have average level which in turn can be due to the fact they find it a difficult task because of the mentioned reasons in the previous open-ended question, while the remaining (05%) represents the one female participant who thinks that her level in English is very good.

Item Seven: Do you feel pressured to speak in English?

Options	Participants	Percentage
Yes	08	40 %
No	12	60 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.5: Learners' Feelings Towards Speaking in English



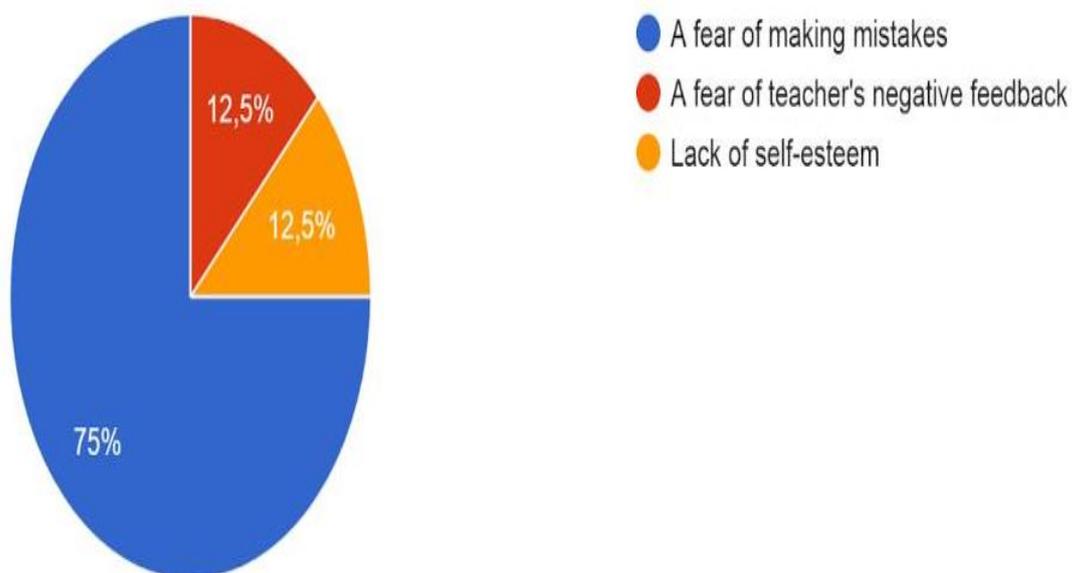
Graph 3.6: Learners' Feelings Towards Speaking in English

Learners are asked whether or not they feel any pressure when speaking in English. The (60%) of the participants confirmed that they do not while the (40%) admitted that they do feel pressured to speak in English. Reasons behind learners feeling the pressure to speak in English are clearly described in the next item.

Item Eight: If yes, is it because?

Options	Participants	Percentage
A fear of making mistakes	06	75 %
A fear of teachers' negative feedback	01	12.5 %
Lack of self-esteem	01	12.5 %
Total	08	100 %

Table 3.6: Reasons Why Learners Feel Pressured to Speak in English



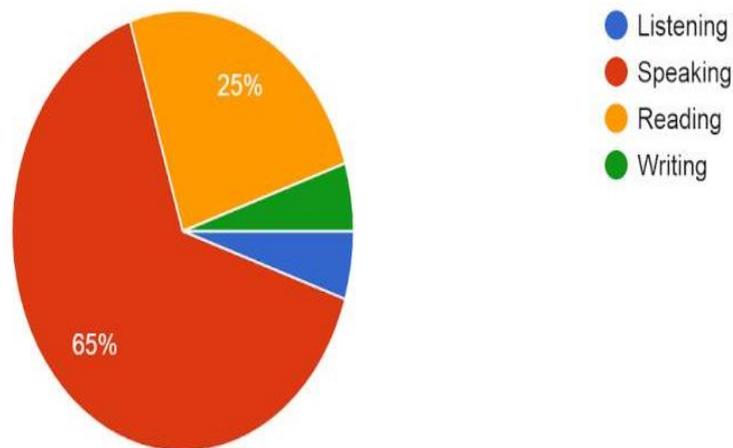
Graph 3.7: Reasons why learners Feel Pressured to Speak in English

In this question, there are 08 learners who declared that they feel pressured to speak in English and they were supposed to choose one reason out of the three stated possibilities. The (75%) represents the 06 participants who declared that they feel so because of the fear of making mistakes, while (12.5%) represents the one male participant who declared that the reason goes to the fear of their teacher's negative feedback. As for the other (12.5%), it represents the one male who admitted that it was due to the lack of self-esteem. It should be noted that making mistakes is one indicator to low self-esteem, therefore this majority though not admitting fully that they suffer the lack of self-esteem, they admitted to possess the indicator that proves that they do.

Item Nine: Which of these four skills do you think it is important to develop?

Options	Participants	Percentage
Listening	01	05 %
Speaking	13	65 %
Reading	05	25 %
Writing	01	05 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.7: Learners' Thoughts on Which Important Language Skill to Develop



Graph 3.8: Learners' Thoughts on which Important Language Skill to Develop

This question aims to investigate learners' thoughts on what skill it is important to develop in a language. The (05%) represents one of the participants who thinks that listening is the most important skill, followed by the vast majority (65%) who believes that speaking is the most important skill. Next, the (25%) represents the one participant who

believes that reading is the most important skill to develop and the remaining (05%) represents the only participant who thinks that writing is the most important skill all illustrated by the following pie chart.

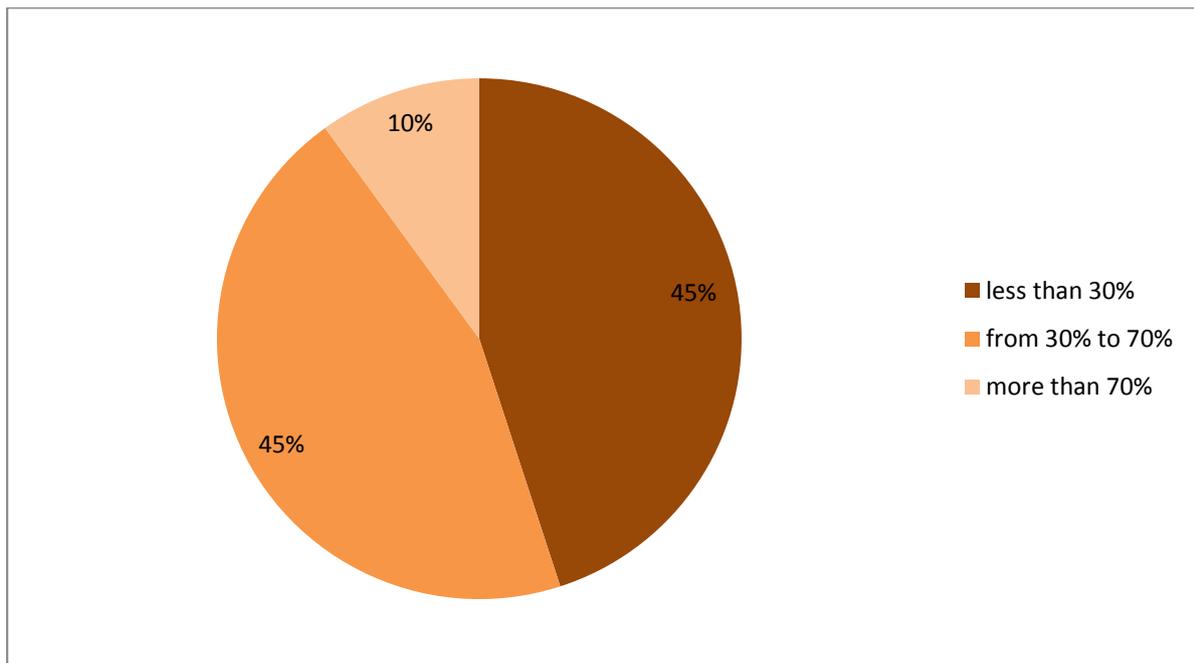
Item Ten: Please say why?

Learners were requested to freely justify their options through this open-ended question. The majority who opted for speaking as the most important skill to develop argued that thanks to this skill they can learn from their mistakes and correct them. On the other hand, others claimed that speaking has the priority because English is an international spoken language which requires one to learn how to speak in it. Other arguments include the need to speak in order to develop pronunciation and learn English accents and that developing speaking skills enables one to communicate with others. The four participants, who opted for reading as the most important skill to develop, argued that through this skill they learn how words are spelled, to get educated and learn about the world. One argument included that reading is simply the best way to learn. As for the one female participant who went with writing as the most important skill had no comment on the matter while the one male participant who favored listening to the rest of the skills stated that it is simply his opinion.

Item Eleven: To what extent your textbook facilitated the task of the teacher in the speaking class?

Options	Participants	Percentage
Less than 30%	09	45 %
From 30% to 70%	09	45 %
More than 70%	02	10 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.8: Textbook’s Role in Teaching Speaking



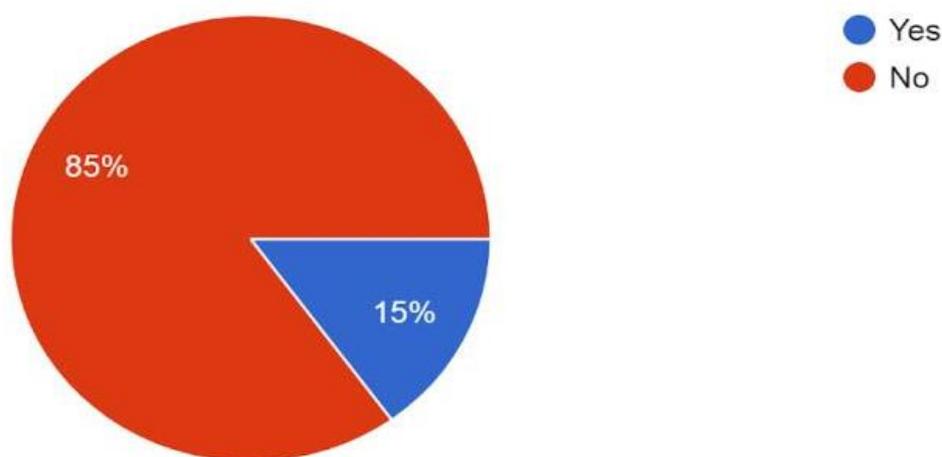
Graph 3.9: Textbook’s Role in Teaching Speaking

To be more specific and strait, by asking this question we tend to discover the help that the textbook offers to the learners in order to interact properly in English either inside the classroom. There are (45%) of them who claim that it is not that much helping (less than 30%) while another (45%) claim that it often interesting (from 30% to 70%) . As for the (10%), they declared that they find the textbook an essential tool of facilitating teaching (more than 70%).

Item Twelve: Do you think that the time allotted for oral expression is sufficient?

Option	Number of Participants	Percentage
Yes	03	15 %
No	17	85 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.9: Students' Opinions About the Time Allotted for Oral Expression



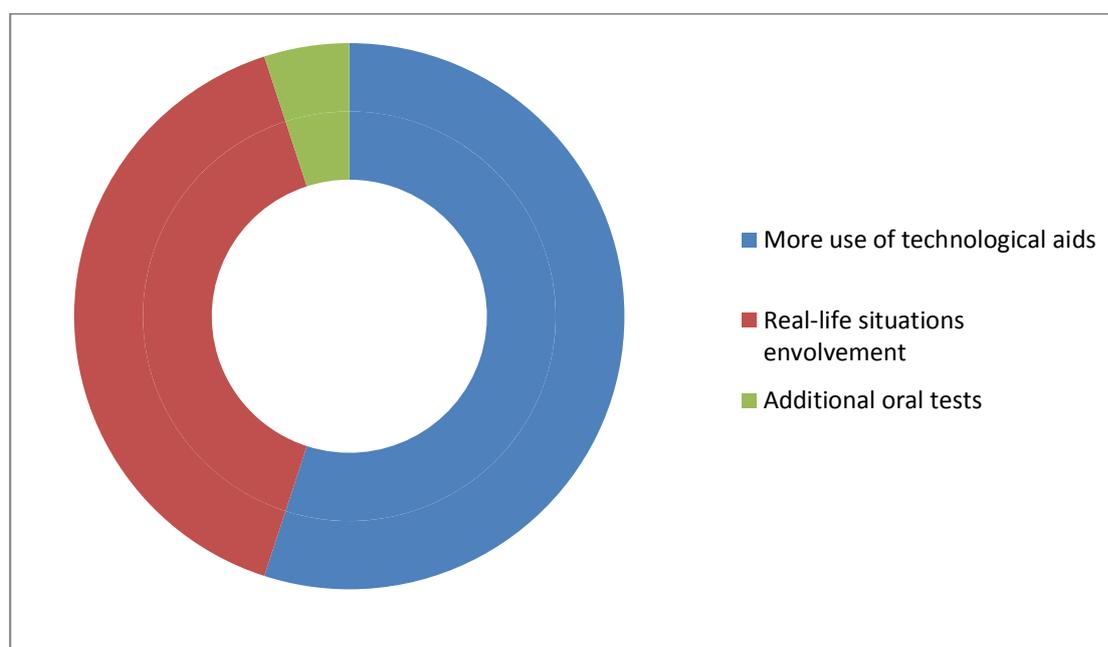
Graph 3.10: Students' Opinions About the Time Allotted for Oral Expression

Out of 20 participants; 85% claimed that the time allotted for oral expression is insufficient and they need extra time to practice the target language. On the other hand, 15% were totally satisfied with the time put for practicing English orally till the present time.

Item Thirteen: what do you suggest as additional techniques to support your oral performance outcomes?

Option	Number of Participants	Percentage
More use of technological aids	11	55 %
Real-life situations envolement	08	40 %
Additional oral tests	01	05 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.10: the Implementation of Additional Supportive Techniques



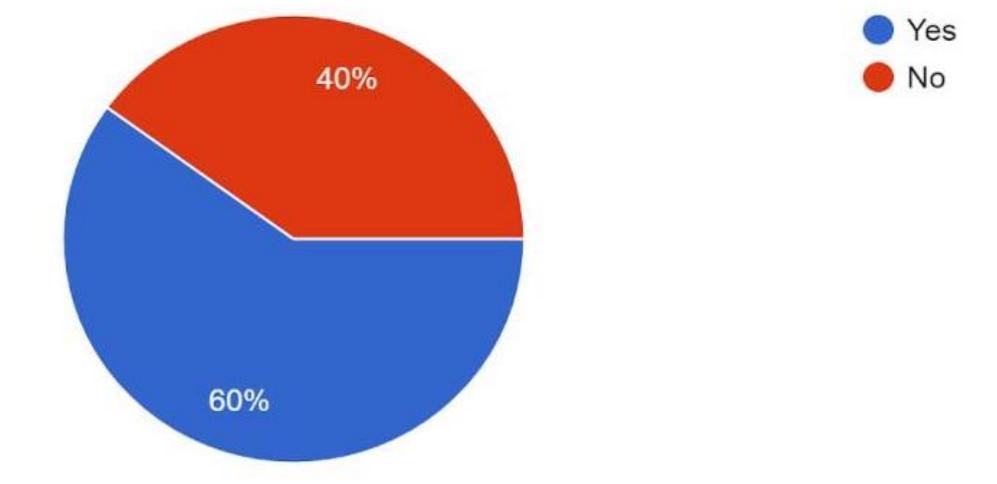
Graph 3.11: the Implementation of Additional Supportive Techniques

As far as oral performance is concerned, we attempted to ask the pupils about the possibility of including oral supportive techniques to enhance their understanding of oral skills as a concept. The results reflect that the vast majority of learners (55%) feel the need to practice English through ICTs so that to improve their abilities in speaking. The following (40%) represents those who desire to participate during the speaking tasks using real-life situation and actual context and then (05%) that represents the one participant that preferred adding an oral test in addition to the written one.

Item Fourteen: Do classroom activities motivate you to speak?

Options	Number of Participants	Percentage
Yes	12	60 %
No	08	40 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.11: Classroom Activities Efficiency



Graph 3.12: Classroom Activities Efficiency

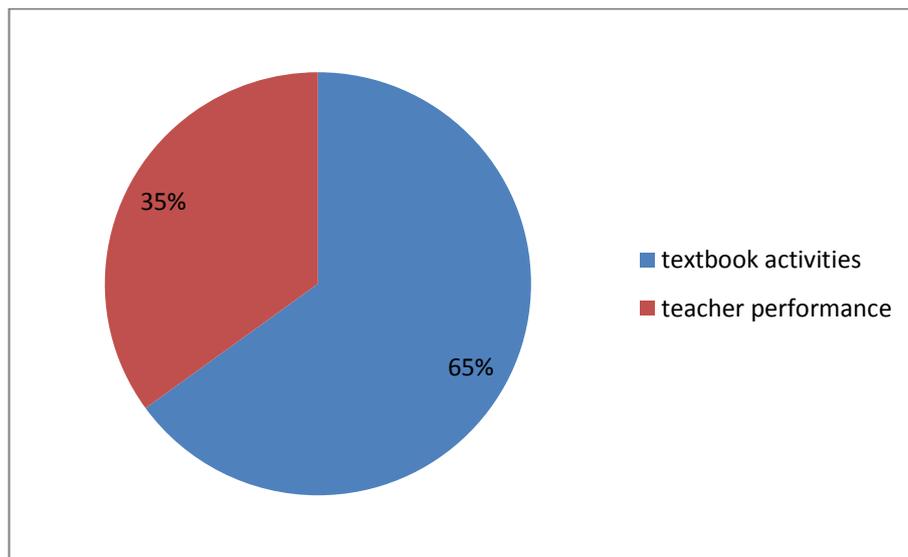
This question precisely aims at discovering whether the pupils are been motivated by the activities being tackled in the classroom or not. As shown in the pie chart below, (60%)

of the participants confirmed that most of the tasks either brought by the teacher or adopted from the textbook motivate them to speak while (40%) of the participants do not feel the same.

Item Fifteen: Are the preventive issues that you face while attempting to speak majorly related to?

Options	Participants	Percentage
Textbook activities	12	65 %
Teacher performance	07	35 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3.12: learning Speaking Obstacles



Graph 3.13: Learning Speaking Obstacles

The question strives to reveal whether the challenges that face EFL learners when they attempt to speak are majorly due to the activities imposed by the textbook or by the

teacher' s performance using these activities or other adopted ones. As shown by the pie chart above, 35% of the participants believe it is related to the teacher' s way of delivering while 65% claim that those issues raise due to the textbook content.

3.4.2 Discussion of The Results

Based on the results in hand, the researchers conclude the following: The sample of 20 pupils ranging from 16 to 18 years old of age, belonging to two different classes and not taught by the same teacher of English has a majority of 90% of learners who have positive attitudes towards speaking in English. Moreover, most of this majority shares the opinion of how vital and necessary it is to speak in English being an international language, and how important it is to practice the act of speaking to master the language and avoid making mistakes which explains the fact they do not feel pressured but rather confident to participate during the classroom activities and which proves that there is a positive correlation between learners' speaking and their self-esteem.

The learners who were found to feel pressured and reluctant to speak in the classroom as a result to their fear of making mistakes explains the reason they find speaking a difficult task which expounds why they have developed negative attitudes towards speaking. The fear of making mistakes is one indicator of low self-esteem; these learners are intimidated to speak because they assume that when they make mistakes they would be laughed at or be embarrassed; consequently they refrain from speaking.

The role of the teacher and the classroom activities are other factors that have been proved, according to these results, to be of crucial importance for improving learners' speaking performance and their feelings towards themselves. The results indicate that the majority who were found to like speaking and feel no pressure to speak was due to their teachers' motivation and encouragement for them to speak. Thus, the teacher creating an emotionally safe and comfortable environment for the learners has proved a crucial factor

that guarantees not only the learners' emotional stability but also a successful academic performance.

3.4.3 Part Two: Teachers' Interviews Analysis

The interview is the second data instrument used in this research. The researchers opted for a semi-structured interview to carry on with this study. Semi-structured interviews give participants more room to answer in terms of what is important to them. This research instrument attempted to display the teachers' view concerning the existence of abstract affective barrier that can either hinder or contribute into the acquisition of the target language. It should be noted that the interview consists of nine prepared questions and it was conducted via voice recording.

The interviews were conducted with two high school teachers of English (a male and a Female), our informants hold the degree of magister and they teach the three levels.

3.4.3.1: Design of The Interview

- **Question 01:** How long have you been teaching English?
- The respondents' experience of teaching English ranges from 8 to 16 years.
- **Question 02:** Do you think that the psychology of the learner is important in learning a foreign language?
- To answer this question, the respondents opted for "yes". For the male teacher success nowadays depends less on methods, materials, techniques and strategies and more on what happens inside the classroom. For the female teacher, she said that knowing the psychology of the learners enables her to adopt some behaviors according to each category and helps her to identify her learners' mixed abilities in learning English as well as to find out ways for motivation.

- **Question 03:** Do you think that the oral speaking skill is given much importance in teaching a foreign language?
- To answer this question the respondents opted for “no”, and for them this concept is not widespread because the learning process is still mainly related to the cognitive domain.
- **Question 04:** There are many factors that hold back students from speaking; can you illustrate some of them?
- The respondents agreed that there are plentiful problems that may interfere in the learning process and they affirmed that self-esteem can be one of them as far as speaking is concerned, they believe that the more students trust their own abilities and capacities the more they would be confident and motivated to improve their oral skill . Also, they proclaimed that insufficient vocabulary and scanty background knowledge is a knotty task to overcome. Moreover, most pupils suffer from the lack of motivation concerning the imposed units of the textbook they have to deal with according to the female teacher.
- **Question 05:** Do your learners lack the proficiency of speaking and interacting? And how do you know that?
- The respondents said that not all their pupils are not able to speak and interact in English and they can notice that when some of their learners refuse to take part in the speaking class even when the questions are easy as they claim or when they hesitate or stutter in interacting and answering questions despite the fact that they are totally able to structure comprehensible answers as they do in the exam paper .The male teacher also added that some of his students with favor sometimes to drop out of the class in order to avoid taking risks in the classroom.
- **Question 06:** In your opinion, what could be the reasons behind the emaciated oral performance within learners?
- The respondents believe that unpleasant speaking skill acquisition could be related to some psychological aspects, outdated content of the syllabus with insufficient practice of speaking in comparison to other skills, lack of preparation and poor vocabulary. The male

teacher stressed on the importance of adopting and adapting in order to spur the pupil out the ordinary atmosphere and academic obligations, as he mentioned, will contribute positively to the learners' scholar achievement and their personal development.

➤ **Question 07:** Do you think that the teacher can lift up his students' ability to speak accurately and fluently and self-esteem? How?

➤ The respondents assured that the teacher can help learners to raise their oral performance and overcome their fear of speaking in English. The female teacher, for instance, claims that she always tries to show her learners the significance of self-esteem and believing in themselves and in their abilities, she also added that she opted sometimes for verbal praise such as "good", "nice work" these tender words as she claimed. On the other hand, the male teacher confirmed that ceasing every opportunity to speak English inside and outside the academic borders increase the possibility of gaining pleasant oral speaking skills effortlessly.

➤ **Question 08:** How do you motivate your students to speak in the classroom?

➤ To motivate learners to speak, the respondents use different strategies such as group work, the use of ICTs in addition to tolerating mistakes and hesitations while interacting with peers, the female teacher also added that involving learners in the selection of activities can stimulate their motivation to speak and participate as they make them feel that they are important figures not just passive elements applying what is imposed on them. Then, she concluded that learners are more comfortable to speak and participate when they are put in a friendly and motivating atmosphere.

3.4.3.2: Discussion of The Results

In the beginning of this research, it was suggested as a first hypothesis that EFL learners encounter many challenging issues throughout the course of learning the skill of speaking and interacting. The results that we have obtained were in fact in the direction of our research hypothesis and they revealed that learners who are conscious about their weaknesses and the obstacles they face frequently are more enthusiastic and motivated to

improve their oral achievement. Also the teachers ensured the idea that ameliorative strategies concerning the teacher, pupil and textbook triangle are actually most affective grounds that must not be ignored for its considerable significance in the learning teaching process. Teachers are in fact conscious of the pivotal role of affective variable in instilling learners' speaking production; accordingly; they argued that they stress more on the emotional side of the learners while teaching.

Our research findings also shed light on some reasons that create weak oral performance among EFL learners such as low self-esteem, insufficient time allotted to practice speaking skills, outdated content of the textbook and the prevalence of other skills over speaking.

To conclude, both teachers and learners are required to make more efforts to stimulate the outcomes and contributing positively in the amelioration of their speaking results.

3.5 Psychological Remedies

Healthy psychological atmosphere is not an inborn feature but rather a work in progress that starts with childhood providing that there is parental warmth; therefore we recommend that parents should be always alert of this fact and help their children maintain a positive self-regard so they would grow up strong in the face of the inevitable future challenges.

It is high time schools and parents likewise worked together to invest more efforts on preparing self-esteem enhancement programs because the cost of having low self-esteem generations is unaffordable.

We recommend that learners' learning difficulties should be detected and assessed on both linguistic and psychological levels and then treatment is intended to what accords with learners' needs and expectations.

We recommend that teachers offer students interaction and communication opportunities with classmates, and feedback on their performance should be necessarily provided for clarification.

We recommend that teachers do not interrupt learners during the elaboration of interaction and communication activities as a result of error or mistakes, instead these latter should be welcomed as this will reduce learners' inhibition by the idea of speaking in the class.

We advise teachers and peers likewise, during the treatment, to offer relatively increased encouragement and support for learners as this will motivate them to speak confidently.

The treatment can be a short or a long process that might take weeks or months depending on the significance of the damage learners might be going through with regard to their self-esteem, therefore teachers should constantly monitor their learners' performance and see whether they are making a progress or not and work on what needs to be fixed based on observation.

The activities and the topics should be selected accordingly with the learners' preferences and interests because they are more inclined to communicate about things they like and enjoy doing.

Teachers' self-esteem is equally important as learners' self-esteem for teachers themselves cannot help their learners if they do not feel worthy and pleased about themselves. Thus we urge teachers to consider this point and educate themselves upon this matter so they can help their pupils.

3.6 Pedagogical Aspirations

Both of the questionnaire and the interview included a request for future recommendations from the teachers and the pupils that they see as a better way of teaching speaking skills, their several new suggestions were paraphrased and mentioned below:

- Providing high schools with national exams laboratories in which speaking and listening skills would be taught, given that listening to native speakers is the main key towards better communication
- Extending written materials into several textbooks with different philosophies so as to free teachers from the constraints generated from unique textbooks displayed for a decade.
- Integration of oral tests within national exams and ordinary test so that all skills would be evaluated and given the equal importance.
- Reducing learners' population in the classroom so that teachers would be able to manage the class and to assess every pupil's performance.
- Reducing work hours for teachers so that they would be motivated and teaching would be more exhaustion-free.
- Updating textbooks every three years since working with the same textbook including the same units and activities for a decade certainly reduces creativity.
- Providing high school with the adequate technologies to facilitate teaching process.

3.7 Conclusion

In short, the interview and the questionnaire were both implemented in this study to conclude validated results. The questionnaire was reserved for learners because it appeals to their abilities in understanding and answering simple and short questions. On the other hand, teachers contributed to those papers throughout the interview giving their large repertoire of vocabulary, ideas, and experience. After analyzing the results recovered both research tools attested the main hypothesis objectively.

General conclusion

This work was mainly dedicated to evaluate the oral speaking skills and performance through investigating the encountered hardships within EFL learners at secondary school, the finale stage where pupils would have the ability to learn speaking before either entering university or engaging in the work field.

Even though teaching speaking is a prolonged process that is to be established for form the beginning yet the final stage is equally important since it would display an eminent level of lessons to finalize the course. This research papers involved both teachers and students to incorporate their opinions in building an inclusive study. The answers of both parties cleared the role played by the psychological and pedagogical needs and sought for better resolution that may revive teaching English in Algeria.

The investigations show that teachers are aware of the dynamic of teaching a foreign language and their significant role they play within this process, which will require them to spend more time and efforts to work on improving this psychological construct as much as they do as far as lesson planning is concerned.

In conclusion, the psychological side of the students necessitates be diagnosed and taken under consideration when speaking is taught. Also, immediate resolutions are of much importance to heal some of the pedagogical issues such as those encountered in textbooks. Such resolutions should be inspired from a real experience rather than theoretical approaches in order to elevate the Algerian educational system.

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Appendices

Questionnaire of Learners

Dear participants,

We are English students from the department of English, and we are conducting this questionnaire as an endeavor to gather data about the influence of extra –psychological and pedagogical factors on students' speaking proficiency. We would be glad if you could answer these questions to help us in our research. Please, read these statements attentively and simply answer them by ticking the appropriate choice and answer with full statements whenever it is necessary. Be sure that your answers will be kept confidential.

I. Section One:

1- Are you?

A-male

B- female

2- Age:

I. Section two: Learner's Attitude towards Speaking

1 - Do you like speaking in English?

A- Yes

B-No

2- Do you think that speaking in English is?

difficult task

an easy task?

Explain

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

3- How do you rate your oral English level?

a- very good

b- good

c-average

4- Do you feel pressured to speak in the classroom?

a- Yes

- No

5 - If your answer is " yes", is it because:

a- Fear of making mistakes

b -Fear of teacher's negative feedback

c- Lack of self-esteem

6 - Which of the four skills in English do you think is the most important to develop?

a- reading b- writing c-speaking d-listening

Why?

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

II. Section three: Speaking Skill issues and difficulties

1- to what extent your textbook facilitated the task of the teacher in the speaking class?

a- less than 30% b- from 30% to 70% c- more than 70%

2- do you think that the time allotted for oral expression is sufficient?

a- Yes b- No

3 – what do you suggest as additional techniques to support your oral performance outcomes ?

a-more use of technological aids

b-real-life situation involvement

c- additional oral tests

4-do classroom activities motivate you to speak ?

a- Yes b- No

5- Are the preventive issues that you face while attempting to speak majorly related to?

a- textbook activities b- teacher performance

Thank you

Interview of Teachers

Dear teachers,

Thank you so much for your agreeing to speak with us. We really appreciate your willingness to participate in this project .As stated before, we are English students and we are conducting a study on the influence of some psychological and pedagogical obstacles on learners speaking production.

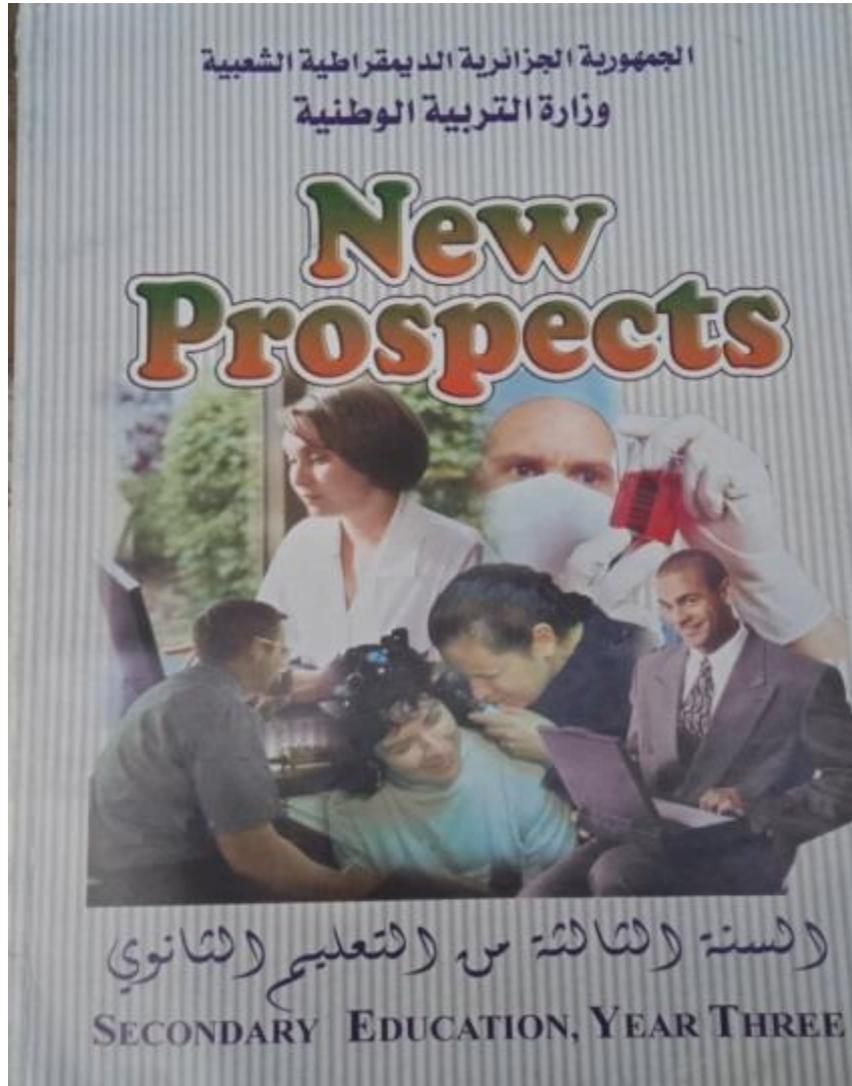
Today, we want to know your perception concerning this issue as well as your perception concerning the role of the teacher in boosting his students' self-worth.

In order to get your input I am going to record our conversation.

The interview Questions:

- 1- How long have you been teaching English?
- 2- Do you think that the psychology of the learner is important in learning a foreign language?
- 3- Do you think that the oral speaking skill is given much importance in teaching a foreign language?
- 4 - There are many factors that hold back students from speaking; can you illustrate some of them?
- 5- Do your learners lack the proficiency of speaking and interacting? And how do you know that?
- 6- In your opinion, what could be the reasons behind the emaciated oral performance within learners?
- 7- Do you think that the teacher can lift up his students' ability to speak accurately and fluently and self-esteem? How?
- 8 - How do you motivate your students to speak in the classroom?

- The secondary school textbook New prospects (the sample of the study)



Summary

The present study introduces some of the main psychological and pedagogical challenges encountered by the Algerian secondary school EFL learners while attempting to perform orally: the deficiency of some pedagogical strategies brought by the Algerian textbooks has been as well investigated to ensure authenticity. Valuable resolutions were spotted concerning the aspirations about more effective remedies of the aforementioned issues and obstacles.

ملخص

تطرح هاته الدراسة بعضا من العراقيل النفسية والبيداغوجية التي تعيق الطلاب المتخصصين بدراسة اللغات عموما واللغة الإنجليزية على وجه الخصوص بالثانوية الجزائرية عند محاولتهم تقديم عروض شفوية متنوعة. كما غطى هذا البحث بعضا من النقائص في الأساليب والاستراتيجيات البيداغوجية التي تتخلل بعض الكتب المدرسية الجزائرية من أجل ضمان مصداقية الدراسة. وختاما فقد طرحت بعض الحلول والاقتراحات فيما يخص محاولة معالجة بعض من الرضوض والتشنجات التي تمس كل ما قد ذكر مسبقا.

Résumé

L'étude actuelle présente quelques-uns des principaux défis psychologiques et pédagogiques rencontrés par les élèves de l'école algérienne (EFL) tout en essayant de se produire oralement. La carence de certaine stratégies pédagogiques apportées par les manuels algériens a également été étudiée pour en assurer l'authenticité. Des résolutions précieuses ont été repérées concernant les aspirations à des remèdes plus efficaces des obstacles susmentionnés.