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**Exploring the Difficulties Reducing EFL Students' Interaction in Oral
Expression Classes**

Case Study: First Year LMD Students of English at University of Jijel

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Dedication

It is my genuine gratefulness and warmest regard that I dedicate this work to:

The most important people in my life, my parent; for their endless love, support, and encouragement;

My beloved and amazing sisters

And their husbands;

My beloved brother;

My little niece and nephews: Israa, Aya, Yazen, Aniss, Yaman, and the little baby Zakaria;

To my grandparents for their support;

My special uncles and all Denche family;

To my aunts ;

My friends: Manar, Hind, Charifa, Fatima, Khadidja, and Sabrina.

Haniya

Dedication

*In the name of ALLAH, most Gracious, most Merciful, all the praise is due to ALLAH alone,
the Sustainer of all the work*

*First and for most, the greatest thank is to Allah who gave me strength and patience to
complete this work*

*To my dearest and beloved parents who raised me and made me what I am today, thank you
for your support, love, patience, guidance and encouragement. Thank you for everything*

*To the memory of my brother "Fateh", you have never been forgotten and you never will. I
miss you so much*

*To my heroes, my sympathetic brothers "Fares" and "Mohamed". I can never imagine my
life without you.*

To my wonderful brothers' wives "Sabria" and "Sara". I love you

To my lovely husband "Messaoud". Thank you for your support

To my gorgeous nephew "Ayoub"

To my sweet nieces "Aya", "Ines", and "Yasmine"

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To my big family "Allouti", and my second family "Ghachi"

To my best friends: Meriem, Wissem and Hania

I dedicate this work

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Abstract

The present research aims at exploring the difficulties that first year English Foreign Language (EFL) learners at Jijel university face during the interaction in Oral Expression (OE) classes. The main problem of this work is that students are unable to have a good interaction in OE class due to some barriers that hinder them from producing the target language as it is expected. The dissertation in hand is based on the hypothesis that if first-year EFL students face difficulties in OE class, their interaction will be affected. The theoretical issue is divided into three sections which represent an overview of classroom interaction in EFL setting, the oral expression skills, and EFL learners' interaction difficulties. With regards to the practical part, it represents the fieldwork in which both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used; a questionnaire for students and a classroom observation. The description design was followed as a basis to analyse and describe the relationship between the independent variable which is the difficulties encountered by EFL learners in oral expression class, and their effect on students' interaction which represents the dependent variable. The obtained results from both the questionnaire for students and the classroom observation revealed that the different difficulties faced by EFL learners in OE class affect their level of interaction. Based on the findings, some teaching and learning techniques and strategies were set as pedagogical recommendations to help both the teachers in achieving the course objective and the students to get control of all those difficulties being encountered for the aim of improving their level of interaction.

Keywords: Difficulties, EFL Students, Oral Expression, Interaction

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

L1: First Language

OE: Oral Expression

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

List of Tables

Table 2.1. Choice of Studying English.....	38
Table 2.2. Students' Level in English.....	39
Table 2.3. The Most dominant Talks in the Classroom.....	40
Table 2.4. The Students' Interaction in Oral Expression Class.....	41
Table 2.5. Teacher's Encouragement in Oral Expression Class.....	42
Table 2.6. The Classmates' Interaction Frequency.....	43
Table 2.7. The Most Enjoyable Learning Techniques for Students.....	44
Table 2.8. Type of Students' Interaction.....	45
Table 2.9. The Teacher's Interaction Encouragement.....	46
Table 2.10. The Students views towards Interaction Effect on Oral Proficiency Level.....	47
Table 2.11. The Importance of Teacher's Talk in Classroom Interaction.....	48
Table 2.12. Students' Attitude Toward Oral Expression Course.....	48
Table 2.13. The Students' Participation Frequency in the Oral Expression Session.....	49
Table 2.14. The Students' Attitude towards Participation in the Oral Expression Course.....	50
Table 2.15. The Students' Participation Difficulties (1).....	51
Table 2.16. The Students' Participation Difficulties (2).....	52
Table 2.17. Students' English Use outside the Classroom.....	53
Table 2.18. The Use of Mother Tongue inside the Classroom.....	53
Table 2.19. Student's Speaking Abilities	54
Table 2.20. Regular Interaction effect on Reducing Mistakes.....	55

Table of Content

Dedication	i
Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
List of Abbreviations	v
List of Tables	vi
General Introduction	1
1. Background of the Study	1
2. Statement of the Problem	2
3. Research Hypothesis	2
4. Research Questions	3
5. Aims of the Study	3
6. Research Methods and Tools	4
6.1. Research Method	4
6.2. Research Instruments	4
6.3. Sample of the Research	4
7. Structure of the Dissertation	5
Chapter One: Literature Review	6
Introduction	6
Section One: Classroom Interaction in EFL Settings	7
Introduction	7
1.1. Definition of Classroom Interaction	7
1.2. Types of Classroom Interaction	8
1.2.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction	8
1.2.2. Learner-Learner interaction	9
1.3. The Role of the Teacher and the Learner in Classroom Interaction	9
1.3.1. The Role of the Teacher	9
1.3.2. The Role of the Learner	11
1.4. The Importance of Classroom Interaction	12
1.5. The Role of Teacher Talk in Classroom Interaction	13
Conclusion	14
Section Two: The Oral Expression Skill	15
Introduction	15
1.1. The Listening Skill	15

1.1.1. Definition of Listening.....	15
1.1.2. The Importance of Listening	16
1.2. The Speaking Skill	16
1.2.1. Definition of Speaking	16
1.2.2. The Importance of Speaking Skill	17
1.2.3. Features of Speaking Performance	18
1.2.4. Integration Between Listening and Speaking	21
Conclusion.....	22
Section Three: EFL Students' Interaction Difficulties	24
Introduction	24
1.1. Linguistic Barriers.....	24
1.1.1. Lack of Vocabulary	25
1.1.2. Pronunciation Mistakes	26
1.1.3. Grammar Mistakes.....	26
1.2. Psychological Barriers.....	27
1.2.1. Lack of Self-confidence	28
1.2.2. Lack of Motivation	28
1.2.3. Anxiety.....	29
1.2.5. Fear of Making Mistakes	30
1.2.5. Shyness and Hesitation	30
1.3. Interference of L1.....	31
1.4. Poor Listening Practice	32
Conclusion.....	32
Chapter Two: Field Work.....	35
Introduction	35
2.1. Data Collection Procedures	35
2.2. Population and Sampling.....	36
2.3. The Students Questionnaire	36
2.3.1. Description and Administration of Students Questionnaire.....	36
2.3.2. Analysis of the Students Questionnaire Results	38
2.2.3. Interpretation and Discussion of Students Questionnaire Results	55
2.4. Classroom Observation	56
2.4.1. Description of Classroom Observation	56
2.4.2. Analysis of the Classroom Observation Results	57
2.5. Discussion of the Results.....	61

Conclusion.....	62
General Conclusion	63
1. Putting it all Together.....	63
2. Pedagogical Recommendations	64
2.1. Co-operative Learning	64
2.2. Communication Games.....	65
2.3. Discussion Activity.....	65
2.4. Oral Presentations.....	66
2.5. Roleplays.....	66
3. Limitations of the Study	66
References.....	68
Appendices.....	75
Résumé	81
ملخص	82

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Research Questions
4. Research Hypothesis
5. Aims of the Study
6. Research Methods and Tools
7. Structure of the Dissertation

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

In actual fact, it is vital for English Foreign Language (EFL) learners to experience authentic communicative situations in which they can practice their language, develop their speaking skills, and reach a native-like fluency and accuracy. Yet one of the biggest challenges in EFL settings is the improvement of the learners' speaking skills, in which it requires a rewarding learning environment and a good interaction. In EFL classrooms, interaction has a crucial role in the process of teaching and learning. Many scholars support the research of classroom interaction, among of them Allwright (1984) who affirms that successful teaching is highly correlated in successful managements of interaction (as cited in Walsh, 2006). Ellis (1990) believes that interaction is at the core of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (as cited in Chioukh, 2011, p. 1).

Furthermore, both Ellis and Van Lier (1996) claim that language learning does not arise through interaction but in interaction (as cited in Walsh, 2006). Indeed, both types of interaction are needed in teaching Oral Expression (OE) classes; the teacher-learner interaction and the learner-learner interaction where students can have real communicative situations. OE classes then are set to improve and enhance the learners' interaction so that it creates opportunities for the classroom participants to develop their knowledge and improve their language skills by practising the language where negotiation of meaning and provision of feedback are needed. As far as speaking skill is concerned, most of EFL learners are interested in improving their speaking skills and reaching fluency. In the light of this, Nunan (1991) states that "to most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or a foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language" (p. 39).

One of the significant factors that make interaction problematic to EFL learners in OE class is the deferent difficulties that they face during their participation. These difficulties impede them from having an effective interaction either with their teacher or with their classmates. Hence, being in real communicative situations in which learners are required to interact and engage in deferent discussions, some of them find themselves unable to provide correct statements; thus, they fail to produce the language as it is expected. Few students can communicate and respond to their teacher. In contrast, most of the others tend to keep quiet and silent. In other words, they do not participate, do not share their ideas, do not engage and involve in the OE class, as well as they show hesitation and feel uncomfortable, which affect their oral communicative skills negatively.

2. Statement of the Problem

Learning a foreign language has one primary objective that is to be able to communicate flexibly using that language. Most of the Algerian EFL learners may believe that their English language knowledge is shown by the way they interact inside their classes, more specifically in OE class where students can have authentic interaction using their ability to speak English. Since EFL learners do not have enough opportunities to practise English outside their classes, OE class helps to breakdown the public speaking wall, and shows the importance of developing the speaking skill. Students that speak in front of others can develop great self-esteem due to the different skills they learn and practise; however, many students still struggle with some difficulties that limit their speaking skill and interaction. Therefore, this study tends to find out the deferent difficulties that reduce EFL learners' interaction in OE classes focusing on the linguistic and the psychological barriers.

3. Research Hypothesis

Oral expression classes provide a lot of opportunities for students to practise their language, build tremendous vocabulary background knowledge, and develop their skills. As

far as the use of language is concerned, learners strive for achieving fluency and accuracy in EFL settings. Reaching such ambition requires learners to interact, engage, and involve in the classroom.

It has been hypothesized that if first-year EFL students face difficulties in Oral Expression class, their interaction will be affected.

4. Research Questions

OE classes aim at mastering the language in all its aspects including fluency, appropriateness, and providing students with opportunities to express themselves as well as their thoughts and to interact with each other; however, during these processes, EFL learners may face some obstacles and problems.

This research tends to investigate the significant difficulties that can reduce the students' interaction in OE classes. Hence, it aims at answering the following questions:

1. What are the different difficulties that first-year English language students face during their interaction in OE class?
2. Do these difficulties affect the learners' level of interaction?

5. Aims of the Study

This current research points towards exploring the different difficulties that face first-year English language students' interaction in OE classes at the University of Jijel. That is to say, EFL learners encounter a variety of challenges that hinder them from having a good interaction in OE class. The focal target behind this study is to explore what types of difficulties students face during their interaction in OE class, and to figure out if these difficulties reduce the students' interaction or not. Furthermore, it aims at enhancing the learners' oral production and providing pedagogical recommendations for both teachers and learners.

6. Research Methods and Tools

6.1. Research Method

Polit et al. (2001, p. 223) state that "research methodology stands for the techniques used to arrange a study and to gather and analyse data all along the research process". In addition, Morgan and Smircich (1980) argue that the actual suitability of the research method, derives from the nature of the social phenomena to be explored. Since the topic in research is to explore the difficulties facing EFL students' interaction in OE classes and since the nature of data to be collected are the criteria to select the method to be adopted. Hence the descriptive design is the most appropriate method to be followed for the aim of conducting this study.

6.2. Research Instruments

To achieve the previous objectives in this research, data were collected through the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods; a questionnaire for students and a classroom observation. The questionnaire was devoted to English language students to investigate their interaction in OE class and whether they face different difficulties during the interaction. In addition, the classroom observation was carried out during the second semester of the academic year 2019/2020 for the sake of identifying the major difficulties that face those learners within their interaction.

6.3. Sample of the Research

The population of this study is the first-year students of English language at Jijel University. From the whole population, which consists of three hundred and thirty-two (332) students, only twenty-five (25) students were selected randomly as a sample for conducting the classroom observation. Whereas, the questionnaire was devoted to all of the first-year students, but only fifty (50) students filled in the questionnaire.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

As far as the structure of the study is concerned, the present research is divided into two chapters. The first chapter represents the theoretical part, while the second one represents the practical part.

Chapter one is the literature review which is divided into three sections; namely classroom interaction in EFL settings, the oral expression skill, and EFL students' interaction difficulties. It provides related concepts and definitions.

Chapter two interprets the collected data from both the questionnaire and the classroom observations. In addition, it provides the needed analysis and results to either confirm or reject the already stated hypothesis. This chapter also states pedagogical recommendations for both teachers and learners that may help them improving interaction in the OE classes. The chapter ends with setting the limitations that have been encountered during the accomplishment of this research.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Introduction

Section One: Classroom Interaction in EFL Settings

Introduction

1.1. Definition of Classroom Interaction

1.2. Types of Classroom Interaction

1.2.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

1.2.2. Learner-Learner Interaction

1.3. The Role of the Teacher and the Learner

1.3.1. The Role of the Teacher

1.3.2. The Role of the Learner

1.4. The Importance of Classroom Interaction

1.5. The Role of Teacher Talk in Classroom Interaction

Conclusion

Chapter One: Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter, insights about one crucial aspect of language classes which is *classroom interaction* are to be provided. This chapter attempts to explore the difficulties that face EFL students when they interact at their OE classes. It is mainly entitled *literature review*, in which more details and definitions supported by relevant research about classroom interaction, the oral expression skill, and different interaction difficulties will be provided. The chapter is divided into three sections; the first section presents comprehensive information about classroom interaction in EFL settings, which includes the definition of classroom interaction and its types, the role of both the teacher and the learner in classroom interaction and its importance. It deals with the role of teacher talk in classroom interaction. The second section entitled *the oral expression skill* deals with the two essential skills, namely listening and speaking that help EFL learners to achieve their oral proficiency and to communicate using the target language accurately and fluently. It provides their definition, importance, and the main features of the speaking performance. Then, this section ends with a focus on the integration between listening and speaking skills. The third section explains the most difficulties that face EFL students within the classroom interaction, it covers both the linguistic and psychological barriers, together with the interference of L1 and poor listening practice.

Section One: Classroom Interaction in EFL Settings

Introduction

A classroom is an environment where both teachers and learners share different features. Some studies have shown that learning development is seen as an interactive process where learners exchange information, indicate their capacities, and prove themselves in the classroom with their teachers or classmates especially in OE classes where presentations, conversations, and discussions are more frequent and more used.

1.1. Definition of Classroom Interaction

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) involves essential elements such as classroom interaction, which plays a vital role in the process of learning. When interaction becomes part of the classroom dynamic, classrooms become active places (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Moreover, Bromley (2008) states that active interaction helps to create "a positive learning environment and establish a community for learners who support each other" (p. 111). Thus, both concepts (classroom and interaction) are interrelated in EFL settings.

The word interaction involves more than just putting a message together, and it is also responding to other people to facilitate communication among them (Hadfield, 2008; as cited in Belabed and Soltani 2018). Lyster (2007) agrees that interaction makes the learners able to test their communicative success through exchanging information with the teacher or among students themselves (as cited in Belabed and Soltani 2018). This means that interaction is a response to what others say, negotiate, make conversations, and exchange ideas and so on. Allwright et al. (1991, p. 202) argue that "interaction is something people can do together, i.e. collectively" (in Astuti, 2007, p. 30). Moreover, Nunan (1991) states that "learning to speak in a second or a foreign language will be facilitated when learners actively engaged with attempting to communicate" (p. 51). Wagner (1994) also defines interaction as the "reciprocal

events that require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when these objects and events naturally influence one another" (p. 8).

Besides, interaction is significant for both the teacher and the learners. It is such an important factor that produces comprehensible output for the learners, in which they can negotiate with both the teacher and each other, as well as practice their language in the classroom. Then, interaction in the classroom offers the students opportunities to get feedback from the teacher or from other students that leads to improve their language system (Hedge, 2000).

1.2.Types of Classroom Interaction

Studies have shown that there are two types of classroom interaction; teacher-learner interaction, and learner-learner interaction. These two types of classroom interaction have a vital role in the development of the learners' capacities in using the target language.

1.2.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

This type of interaction plays a major role in developing and achieving the students' performance in the oral expression classes. Coulthard (1977) mentions that this type has received a great deal of teachers in a wide range of discipline. Teachers do take part in such interaction, since it happens between a teacher and one learner or between a teacher and many other learners. According to Harmer (1998), the way that the teacher uses to interact with his students is considered as an important skill in the classroom where they share one language. The teacher negotiates the course content with his students, in which he focuses on the type of the input he provides his students with, to make them interact with him by asking questions, sharing ideas, or asking for clarifications.

Harmer (2009) states that teachers should focus on three things when they talk to their students. First, they should provide a comprehensible output that suits all the learner' level. Second, the teachers must select an appropriate speech; hence their speech is a resource for

learners. Finally, teachers also should identify how they talk, such as voice, tone, and intonation.

1.2.2. Learner-Learner interaction

Student-student interaction occurs among learners within the classroom context, where the teacher plays the role of a monitor, and learners are the central participant (Tuan & Nhu, 2010). It occurs either in pairs (peer interaction), or in groups (student-student interaction) while the learners can negotiate and share their ideas and thoughts. As Probst (2007) states "it is the students who should be doing most of the work" (p. 43). On the other hand, Routman (2005) contends that "students learn more when they are able to talk to one another and be actively involved" (p. 207). Besides, Naegle (2002) says that "talking students with their peers about the content of the course is a powerful way for them to reinforce what they have learned" (p. 128). In addition, Johnson (1995) claims that

Student-student interaction in foreign language classrooms can create opportunities for students to participate in less structured and more spontaneous language use, negotiate meaning, self-select when to participate, control the topic of discussion, and, most importantly, it draws on their own prior knowledge and interactional competencies to actively communicate with others (p. 189).

Therefore, OE teachers should encourage such types of interaction between learners, because it helps students developing their speaking skills, learn from each other, and it can create a friendship inside the classroom and develops learners' capacities in collaborative work.

1.3. The Role of the Teacher and the Learner in Classroom Interaction

1.3.1. The Role of the Teacher

The teacher plays a vital role during the classroom interaction, because he/she is the one who provides his/her students with the suitable comprehensible input to their levels. OE teachers have a crucial role in creating interest in topics, as well as motivating students to

interact and share their ideas, since students cannot start an interaction themselves unless the teacher does. Scrivener sees that teacher's most important job has to do with creating conditions in which learning can take place maximizing students' interaction in class.

Moreover, "teachers need to create a safe and nonthreatening learning community in which students feel comfortable participating and in which students develop confidence that they can learn and achieve high academic standards" (Li, 2006, p. 39). In the same vein, Hedge (2000) identifies the essential roles of teacher inside classes

As controller in eliciting nationality words; as assessor of accuracy as students try to pronounce the words; as a corrector of pronunciation; as an organizer in giving instructions of the pair work, initiating it, monitoring it, and organizing feedback; as promoter while students are working together and as resource if students need help with words and structures during the pair work (p. 26).

- Controller: Harmer (2001) asserts that the teacher is the responsible for the teaching and the learning process within a classroom interaction. Then, the teacher job here is to transmit knowledge from himself to his students.
- Assessor: the teacher should show his students that their accuracy is being developed; Harmer (2001) confirms that this is done through giving correction or by praising them. Also, he/she should provide a clear idea to his students about their level by stating their strengths and weaknesses.
- Corrector: the teacher should know when and where to correct students' production. He/she should correct pronunciation mistakes, grammar mistakes, and all other errors being committed by his students during the classroom interaction.
- Organizer: according to Harmer (2001), the teacher acts in a classroom where many things must be set up such as organizing pair\group work, giving learners instructions, and finally, stopping everything when the time is over.

- Prompter: when the teacher encourages his students to think creatively so that to be independent of the teacher.
- Resource: inside the classroom, the teacher should be a resource by answering students' questions.
- Observer: In-classroom interaction, the teacher should be an observer of his students while using the language. Harmer (2001) points out that the teacher here should attract the students' attention so that they can interact naturally and spontaneously.

1.3.2. The Role of the Learner

The learners play a central role in an interactive classroom, Freeman (2000) considers those learners as communicators since they possess an active and a negotiated strategy to learn and construct the knowledge of the foreign language. Besides, the learners should take responsibility for their learning by considering the foreign language system (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation). Using interaction, they improve the quality of ideas, advance, and understand how the language they are learning functions in different contexts.

Moreover, Britton (1970) speaks about five dispositions for learners to become active and autonomous learners and make achievements in their learning. In the classroom setting, firstly, the learners should ask questions and be curious to uncover the ambiguous knowledge of the language. In addition, the learners should initiate the interaction, make decisions and solve problems. They should also demonstrate preciseness in the construction of their knowledge and share their ideas and opinions confidently in the classroom. Furthermore, the learners should be creative in the learning process and use their knowledge and language in a variety of situations. Finally, Britton (1970) maintains that the learners must be reflective because when they reflect, they tend to experience what they have learned in different situations.

1.4. The Importance of Classroom Interaction

For a long time, many approaches to language teaching, such as audiolingual and communicative approach have proved the importance and the role of classroom interaction in enhancing and developing the learners' acquisition of language. Classroom interaction is a process that relies on both the teacher and the learners, or just learners according to the subject in study. It helps to create a more motivating, comfortable, and enjoyable atmosphere to ensure a better understanding. Allwright (1984) describes interaction as "inherent in the very notion of classroom pedagogy itself" (p. 158). Besides, classroom interaction keeps learners active and creates a sense of collaboration and reciprocal exchange of ideas and thoughts; as a result, it pushes students to talk more; thus, communicate and express their thoughts and needs effectively which is the main intended goal of the teacher as well as the major ambition of the OE class. Brown (2001) claims that "in the era of communicative language teaching, interaction is, in fact, the heart of communication, it is what communication is all about" (p. 35).

"I try to implement activation techniques that focus on the students in the classroom, on keeping them involved, on having them doing and producing rather than passively receiving information" (Rosenberg 2004, p. 29). On the other hand, classroom interaction has the aim of keeping learners acting to make them participate, discover, and practice the different language structures by relying on themselves and make them more productive for instance by engaging them in role plays activities, group work presentations, and peer work projects, since this type of activities make learners more close to each other, increase the potential speaking time and ensure less pressure and anxiety for participants since they feel somehow freer and not restricted by the lesson itself. Hedge (2000, p. 13) claims that "interaction pushes learners to produce more accurate and appropriate language which itself provides input for other

students". This is one reason why peer and group work have become common features of contemporary classrooms.

Moreover, classroom interaction is among the processes that facilitate the teachers' job since it is by which they implement different subjects, knowledge, and language structures through student-student interaction or even student-teacher interaction, this multiple the chance of understanding the input; thus, producing a clear output. Levine (1989) states that "interaction is an extremely complex and difficult process, but it is also the part of teaching that many teachers say they enjoy and value the most" (p. 73).

1.5. The Role of Teacher Talk in Classroom Interaction

The teacher talk has a significant influence and impact on the learner participation and interaction since this later react according to the input given by the teacher who strives to provide a good atmosphere and conditions in his/her class for a better learning.

The teacher talk gained value because the teacher is the monitor of the whole class who, on the one hand, control and ensure the order in class; on the other hand, he gives assignments and tasks to be fulfilled.

Teacher talk is not always centred on giving directions, but also teachers have the responsibility to provide learners emotional support to motivate and push them to work harder by praising and encouraging them; teachers do that by showing their appreciation using some motivating words and expressions, and this also will reinforce the teacher-learner relationship. Moreover, this talk can be divided into different categories among them giving information using any method the teacher finds suitable and makes learners interact with him/her regarding the learner perspectives. It can also take a form of questions for students to offer them a space to discuss with each other or even with the teacher himself; moreover, the teacher can use the learners' ideas to clarify the meanings and motivate them to take a part of the discussion.

The teacher talk is vital since the teacher is the one who creates and first open discussions which lead to good interaction, thus the aim and the purpose of oral expression classes. Wang and Castro (2010) claim that "interactive input is more important than non-interactive input" (p. 173).

Conclusion

Classroom interaction is a very effective procedure for it serves in enhancing and promoting the learning quality since it made learners no longer isolated, but more interactive, collaborative, and active within the surrounding environment; thus, it joins all classroom participants working all together to achieve the aim of a better understanding.

Section Two: The Oral Expression Skill

Introduction

1.1.The Listening Skill

1.3.2. Definition of Listening

1.3.3. The Importance of Listening

1.2.The Speaking Skill

1.2.1. Definition of Speaking

1.2.2. The Importance of Speaking

1.2.3. Features of Speaking Performance

1.2.3.1. Fluency

1.2.3.2. Accuracy

1.2.3.2.1. Grammar

1.2.3.2.2. Vocabulary

1.2.3.2.3. Pronunciation

1.3.Integration between Listening and Speaking

Conclusion

Section Two: The Oral Expression Skill

Introduction

Teaching OE in EFL higher education settings is considered as an effective way to improve the learners' communication in various situations. It helps in developing the learners' oral skill through enabling them to use the language accurately and appropriately. Thus, the oral skill is based on the integration between two primary skills: one is receptive (listening) while the other one is productive (speaking). Both are regarded as essential pillars of language communication, and they are widely used in real-life settings.

1.1.The Listening Skill

1.1.1. Definition of Listening

According to Nunan (1991), the term listening is used in language teaching to refer to a complex process that allows us to understand the spoken language. It is among the most important communication skills since it is considered as the key for receiving messages. Listening is both a psychological and an interactive process which requires an active and effective involvement as well as a considerable concentration from the student in a trial to understand the conveyed message. The listening process requires not just hearing sounds; but also requires attending to the sounds of the language and trying to infer the message. Rost (1994) argues that the listener must know how to criticize what the illocutionary force of an utterance is, and know how a sequence of sounds should be conveyed in a particular situation. Underwood (1989) describes the listening skill as "the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear" (p. 1). Although the listening skill requires active and vital mental abilities, it has been often considered as a passive skill where the learners just pick up or receive the information.

All in all, listening plays a crucial role in OE classes for it enables the students to produce the language fluently and to communicate with others in different situations. Therefore,

students are involved in different listening situations to make them being able to understand facts, analyse things from their perspective, as well as to interpret the meaning of messages.

1.1.2. The Importance of Listening

Listening was considered among the most important language skills for second language learners, due to its huge effect on developing the other skills. Listening provides a significant and enriching knowledge that is very helpful for the mastery of language, and the speaking skill development. Moreover, listening plays a vital role in OE interaction, (as cited in Sen, 2013, p. 5) because:

- It helps in building rapport with teachers, classmates, and people with whom to interact using English.
- It helps in comprehension and understanding assignments; thus, answering questions.
- Listening involves reduced forms of language that sometimes cannot all be covered in class lessons such as "I wanna play".
- Listening encompasses a variety of ways of information delivery that is, in some cases, difficult for teachers to transmit using the other skills like subjects that are related to phonetics.
- Listening to various varieties of language permits second language learners to enrich their background about that language.

1.2. The Speaking Skill

1.2.1. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted (Thornbury, 2005). It is considered as one of the most language skills that should be mastered in learning any language. Brown (2004) defines speaking as "a productive skill can be directly and empirically observed, those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and the

effectiveness of a test-taker's skill, which is necessary, compromises the reliability and the validity of an oral production test" (p. 140). Hedge (2000) claims that "speaking is as a skill which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed" (p. 261).

Furthermore, Chaney and Burk (1998) define speaking as "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal, non-verbal and symbols into a variety of contexts" (p. 13).

Being able to speak the target language gives opportunities to use that language to attain certain objectives and specific goals, i.e. for purpose (English for general purposes or English for specific purposes), to address and fulfil a ones' needs. Thus, learners give it more importance and tend to develop their fluency and way of speaking. Bygate (1987) states that

Speaking is the vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and of business. It is also the medium through which much language is learnt, and which for many is particularly conducive for learning. Perhaps, then, the teaching of speaking merits more thought (p. 1).

Yet, approximately, most English language learners' essential goal behind learning English as a foreign language is to speak it correctly with less or no mistakes and errors.

1.2.2. The Importance of Speaking Skill

In the field of foreign language learning, there is a lot of importance attributed to the speaking skill and students' development of their communicative capacities. Indeed, it is indispensable for students to acquire the communication skills of the language to get success in their receptive fields. As Ur (2012) declares "of all the four skills, [listening, speaking, reading and writing], speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing" (p. 120). Hence, speaking skill is a crucial aspect of developing the students'

language proficiency, and "many if not most foreign language learners are interested in learning to speak" (Ur, 1984, p. 120). In addition, Richards and Bohlke (2011) claim that

In sum, the development of good speaking skills is no longer a bonus for language learners, but an essential aspect of their language-proficiency development because it has a direct impact on the personal and professional success of many of them (p. 21).

This, therefore, indicates that using a language is more important than just knowing about it, as Scrivener (2005) explains "there is no point that knowing a lot about language if you can't use it" (p. 146).

1.2.3. Features of Speaking Performance

In OE classes, the speaking skill is regarded as the parameter by which EFL learners can be judged about their oral language. Thus, a lot of attention has been paid to design activities which focus more on tasks that are balanced between the need to achieve both fluency and accuracy. These criteria are the main features which characterize the speaking skill, and they are also based upon in the assessment of the oral skills.

1.2.3.1. Fluency

Achieving oral fluency is one of the major concerns that EFL learners wish to accomplish in their speaking performance. Hughes (2002) defines fluency as the ability to express oneself in an intelligible, reasonable and accurate way without too much hesitation; otherwise, the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest. To achieve fluency, the teachers should train their learners to use the target language freely and to produce sentences with ease. Hedge (2000) states that

The term fluency relates to the production, and it is normally reserved for speech. It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate showiness, or undue hesitation (p. 54).

In other words, fluency refers to the ability to respond coherently through linking the words and phrases effectively, pronounce the sounds clearly, and use stress and intonation correctly. Hughes (2002) also supports that fluency and coherence refer to the ability to speak in an average level of continuity, rate and effort in addition to link the ideas together in a coherent way. Hence, speech rate and speech continuity are the key indicators of coherence.

Many of second or foreign language learners believe that a fluent speaker is the one who can speak fast and rapidly without pauses. However, Thornbury (2005) does not consider the speed of speech as the only factor nor the most important. He argues that speed is an important factor in fluency and pausing too, because speakers need to take breath. Native speakers also need to pause from time to time to let the interlocutors catch what they said. However, a frequent pausing is an indication that the speaker has problems of speaking. In such cases, Thornbury (2005) suggests what is called production strategies, i.e. the ability to fill the pauses. The most common pause fillers are "uh" and "um", vagueness expressions such as "short of" and "I mean". Another device for filling the pauses is the repetition of one word when there is a pause (as cited in Kouicem, 2010, p. 32).

1.2.3.2. Accuracy

Generally, the main concern of EFL learners in studying a foreign language is being able to speak that language fluently without paying much attention to accuracy. EFL learners need to pay attention to the correctness and completeness of language form to achieve oral proficiency. According to Skehan (1996, p. 23), accuracy refers to "how well the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language" (as cited in Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 139). In addition, Harmer (2001) points out that accuracy requires using grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation correctly, which are the major characteristics that help teachers to assess the students' proficiency.

1.2.3.2.1. Grammar

Students have to be aware of the appropriate words, tenses, and grammatical structures to be used while speaking. They should also pay attention to the different uses of grammatical structures and to the other changes that may occur. The learners' awareness about these grammatical elements help them to avoid making mistakes. Thornbury (2005) lists the following features of spoken grammar:

- Clause is the basic unit of construction.
- Clauses are usually added (co-ordinate).
- Head+ body+ tail construction.
- Direct speech favoured.
- A lot of ellipsis.
- Many tags question.
- Performance effects (hesitation, repetitions, false starts, incompleteness, syntactic blends).

1.2.3.2.2. Vocabulary

In terms of vocabulary, accuracy means the appropriate selection of words and phrases when speaking with respect to the speaking context and situation. However, most students find difficulties to express their ideas because of the lack of vocabulary. As a result, they tend to repeat words when they speak to others and sometimes, they repeat the whole utterances.

Ibsen (1910) claims that a good speaker is the one who has a wide range of vocabulary knowledge. He, further, claims that being a good speaker means constantly growing your vocabulary. The more interesting words you know, the stronger your speaking skills. According to Harmer (2001), the knowledge of the word classes also allows speakers to perform well-formed utterances.

1.2.3.2.3. Pronunciation

English language has been considered by either native speakers or non-native ones as a difficult language because of its pronunciation. Therefore, learners who want to improve their English oral proficiency should be aware of the different sounds as well as their features and articulation. Moreover, they have to take into consideration the word's stress, i.e., when to use raising intonation and when to use the falling one. All these aspects help learners to know how to speak English effectively to achieve the goal of better understanding of spoken English. Redmond and Vrchota (2007) state that

It is imperative that you use the correct word in the correct instance and with the correct pronunciation. Pronunciation means to say words in ways that are generally accepted or understood (p. 104).

If the speaker fails to achieve correct pronunciation, she/he will not be understood, and therefore accuracy is not achieved.

1.2.4. Integration Between Listening and Speaking

Speaking and listening are the two primary complementary skills that shape the OE skill. Many researchers opted to investigate and search the kind of the relationship that joins these two skills. For instance, Richards and Renandya (2002, p. 201) say that "most language learners study English for the aim of developing the oral proficiency"; therefore, the great focus is on mastering English conversation. Hence, most language teachers give more importance to active listening through which learners acquire the different aspects of the language like vocabulary, syntax as well as better pronunciation and better speaking.

Moreover, Osada (2004) affirms that "speaking does not of itself constitute communication unless what is being said is understood by another person" (p. 55). In other words, the two skills are interrelated and none of them could occur in isolation of the other.

Furthermore, Redmond and Vrchota (2007) claim that "speakers are at the mercy of listeners" (p. 120). Yet, the more students listen to the target language, the better their speaking skill will be enhanced, since there should be an input to be delivered and an output to be produced.

Conclusion

In short, this section provided an overview of the oral expression skill. It focused on the two significant complementary skills, mainly listening and speaking that help EFL learners to achieve their oral proficiency and to communicate using the target language accurately and fluently. In addition, it explained the characteristics of the speaking performance, including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Finally, the section highlighted the emphasis on the integration between listening and speaking.

Section Three: EFL Students' Interaction Difficulties

Introduction

1.1. Linguistic Barriers

1.1.1. Lack of Vocabulary

1.1.2. Pronunciation Mistakes

1.1.3. Grammar Mistakes

1.2. Psychological Barriers

1.2.1. Lack of Self-confidence

1.2.2. Lack of Motivation

1.2.3. Anxiety

1.2.4. Fear of Making Mistakes

1.2.5. Shyness and Hesitation

1.3. Interference of L1

Poor Listening Practice

Conclusion

Section Three: EFL Students' Interaction Difficulties

Introduction

Students are required to communicate their ideas and thoughts into comprehensible speech accurately and fluently to achieve an effective interaction within an EFL context. However, becoming a fluent speaker together with attaining a native-like accent is still considered the most challenging skill for the majority of foreign language students because they will face all kinds of learning problems. Most EFL learners encounter various difficulties that hinder their interaction with each other and prevent them from performing a fluent speech in oral expression classes.

1.1. Linguistic Barriers

EFL students need to have an excellent linguistic knowledge. Concerning this, Thornbury (2005) argues that

Being skilful assumes having some kind of knowledge base ... Knowledge that is relevant to speaking can be categorized either as knowledge of feature of language (linguistic knowledge) or knowledge that is independent of language (extra-linguistic knowledge) (p. 11).

Thornbury (2005) emphasizes that linguistic knowledge plays an essential role in developing the speaking skill since it helps the students to produce their speech fluently and accurately in the first place. Further, it raises the students' awareness of the main language problems that may face within their speaking development, such as the lack of vocabulary, pronunciation mistakes, and grammar mistakes.

1.1.1. Lack of Vocabulary

Because vocabulary is a fundamental segment in any language, "recognizing, understanding, and using the vocabulary is an essential aspect in learning the English language" (Sedau, 2004, p. 6). Therefore, EFL learners are highly required to possess a sufficient number of lexis to achieve their oral fluency. Otherwise, they may fail to put the "receptive vocabulary knowledge into productive use" (Nation, 2001, p. 129). According to Lewis (1993), "lexis is the core or heart of language" (p. 89). In addition, learning foreign languages requires an excellent knowledge of its vocabulary "while without grammar very little can conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Wilkins, 1972, p. 97), as well as the selection of appropriate words and expressions so that to use them accurately when speaking. Thornbury (2005) states that "spoken language also has a relatively high proportion of words and expressions" (p. 22). Thus, the common phenomenon in OE sessions is that many students find themselves struggling either because of their limited lexis or their failure to use the words in the appropriate context. Meara (1980) claims that "students have mentioned that foreign language vocabulary acquisition is the main source of trouble learning the language" (p. 221). Indeed, "a large vocabulary is necessary to function in English" (Schmitt, 2008, p. 329). However; most of students have weak background vocabulary knowledge. Thus, they prefer to keep silent and avoid intervening in classroom interactions as well as they produce influent speech embedded with false starts, grammatical blends, unfinished sentences, and fillers (e.g., um, er, mm, eh). Other students find it difficult to learn new words and put them into practice. In a way or another, these vocabulary limitations affect, to some extent, the amount of interaction in speaking activities.

1.1.2. Pronunciation Mistakes

Pronunciation is one of the most challenging problems that English students face throughout their foreign language learning process. For non-native speakers, pronunciation is a significant part of English communication, because by using a good pronunciation, students will avoid misunderstanding while practising the language. According to Harmer (2001) "for all these people, being made aware of pronunciation issues will be immense benefit not only to their own pronunciation but also to their own understanding of spoken English" (p.183).

Therefore, EFL students have to practice their pronunciation and to be aware of the different rules of sounds as stress and intonation. Bada et al. (2011) assert the importance of pronunciation as follows; "in speaking, they compete with limited time to recall words, and also take care of their pronunciation...speaking is often dealt with at pronunciation level" (p. 122). In OE sessions, students are judged and evaluated on their pronunciation. Even when they speak with minor inaccuracies in grammar or vocabulary, students will interact when they master good pronunciation and intonation effectively (Burns & Claire, 2003). However, the lack of pronunciation may lead to a negative impression, impede the students from doing their speaking activities, and prevent them from taking part in the classroom interaction. Instead, students remain passive and silent to avoid pronunciation mistakes and being laughed at.

1.1.3. Grammar Mistakes

An adequate mastery of foreign language requires the knowledge of all its aspects starting from syntax, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar. Thus, grammar is among the first most important aspects to focus on because it informs learners how words are arranged to form sentences, different structures and makes them knowledgeable about the various ways of use of different tenses since a simple change can affect the whole meaning. Canal and Swain (1980) define grammatical competence "this type of competence will be understood to include

knowledge of lexical items, and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics and phonology" (p. 29). Based on an Albanian study in "Fan S. Noli" University in Korca (2013/2014) (as cited in Kacani, 2014, p. 323) which deals with the most common grammatical mistakes that Albanian students make during the learning process, it was found that the most common grammatical mistakes that learners commit are as follows:

- Verb agreement.
- Tense use.
- Question and negative forms.
- Verb patterns.
- Elliptic structures.
- Articles and prepositions.

All those mistakes and others appear due to different circumstances and the way learners transform, omit, and disordered language elements and translate from L1. Such mistakes represent an obstacle for students and make them less comfortable and more nervous while speaking. Therefore, they prefer not to participate and keep listening rather than speaking and being criticized since they feel they cannot manage a full conversation. Davies and Pearse (2000) state that "many people do not like speaking in front of large groups of people" (p. 82).

1.2. Psychological Barriers

In addition to the aforementioned linguistic difficulties, students may have other psychological problems that hinder them from interacting freely with their classmates in the OE class. Hence, EFL students may experience various psychological barriers, including the lack of self-confidence, the lack of motivation, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, shyness, and hesitation.

1.2.1. Lack of Self-confidence

Self-confidence is among the most important factors that have a significant impact on the student development and achievement in class. Adalikwu (2012) believes that "self-confidence can be summed up as the belief that a person has it in their ability to succeed at a task, based on whether or not they have been able to perform that task in the past" (pp. 5-6).

There is a significant relationship between self-confidence and effective learning. Generally, learners with high self-confidence are more successful than the others because "confidence is crucial to a happy and fulfilling life. It influences your success at work, your family life, relationships and leisure activities. It affects your performance in everything you do" (Preston, 2001, p. 7).

However, in OE classes, there are two types of students; students with high self-confidence and others that are not confident; thus, that is to say, they have a difficulty to speak, communicate, and hesitate to take a turn in a conversation. They also do not participate even if they have the correct answer and efficient abilities since they do not trust themselves and think that something wrong will happen if they talk.

Self-confidence and self-esteem are very important in successful education since they allow students to trust themselves, have faith, take pride in their personality and capacities, make them more motivated to enter challenges, and prove themselves. Therefore, they develop their social, speaking and communicative skills.

1.2.2. Lack of Motivation

Motivation is considered as an essential source for successful foreign language learning. It plays a crucial role in determining whether a learner embarks totally in an activity, how much energy he devotes for it, and how long he preserves. According to Gardner (1985), motivation is "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (p. 10). In other words; one

can understand that motivation can be as the goal-directed, and the learners' immediate goal is to learn the language. Dörnyei (2008) states that "without sufficient motivation; however, even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any real useful language" (p. 5). In OE classes, the lack of motivation is one of the main language difficulties that prevent learners from getting high scores or even make some improvement in their speaking performance. Zua (2008) describes motivation as an energy that pushes learners to get the best achievements; conversely, they will never be able to learn the target language when they lose their motivation. As a consequence, the students' reluctance to speak English will be increased, and their motivation to interact and engage in the speaking activities will be reduced on the other hand.

1.2.3. Anxiety

Anxiety is another important psychological barrier that frustrates the speaking ability of foreign language learners. Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the nervous system" (p. 15). It is strongly correlated with negative feelings as the lack of self-confidence and the fear of misunderstanding. Scovel (1978) also argues that "it is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension or worry" (p. 134). According to Brown (2000), there are mainly two types of anxiety; debilitating anxiety and facilitative anxiety, they also known as "harmful" and "helpful". While the former is related to negative feelings such as uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt and so on. Facilitative or helpful anxiety is concerned with negative feelings like motivation and confidence. EFL learners should avoid debilitating anxiety since it affects the learning process negatively and learn how to control the other type, which is facilitative anxiety, because it creates positive attitudes to students and leads them to achieve success and get a good grade. Horwitz and Young (1991) see that

anxiety affects the learners' performance and makes them appear less fluent than they are as they lose words or become tongue-tied.

1.2.5. Fear of Making Mistakes

Fear of making mistakes is a kind of fear of failure which has been defined as "persistent and irrational anxiety about failing to measure up to the standards and goals set up by oneself or others" (American Psychological Association, 2007, p. 369). It may result in anxiety over academic standing and loss of one's self-esteem.

The first objective of the teacher in oral expression classes is to promote oral communication in English language and practice its different structures to help students interact within a cooperative environment; however, in such classes, some students display a kind of fear to perform and take part of different conversations and tasks that are generally all about speaking.

Generally, in OE classes, students feel afraid of making mistakes and being judged according to their performance, perhaps because they experienced a past failure, think that their teacher or classmates will criticize them, or simply because they did not do sufficient preparation that allows them to participate and perform with more confidence; thus, in this case, they should blame themselves. Ur (2000) claims that "learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts" (p. 111). This fear and nervousness appear in different ways like shaking hands and quavering voice; thus, it negatively affects the way the speaker comes across the listeners and the quality of the work.

1.2.5. Shyness and Hesitation

Among the major and the most important issues that affect second language learners negatively are shyness and hesitation. Shyness has been defined as a "heightened state of

individuation characterized by excessive egocentric pre-occupation and over-concerned with social evaluation, with the consequence that shy person inhibits, withdraws, avoids and escapes" (Zimbardo, 1982, pp. 467-468). In addition, Henderson (1992, as cited in Hofmann & Dibartolo, 2010, p. 68) defines chronic shyness as "a fear of negative evaluation that was sufficient to inhibit participation in desired activities and that significantly interfered with the pursuit of personal or professional goals".

Shyness makes students hesitate to take a part of a conversation. Pilkonis (1977) states that "shyness is a tendency to avoid social interaction and to fail participating appropriately in social situations" (p. 596). This affective sensitive psychological factor represents a huge barrier for students who do not trust themselves and their capacities to speak and perform in front of others; thus, this makes them demotivated to speak especially when they are asked to answer questions, prepare presentations or give their opinion about something. Hence, students may hesitate, give the answer by splitting it into different parts and making a lot of pauses or simply they escape in different manners. Juhana (2012) refers to this psychological barrier as "an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English" (p. 101). This factor has also been described by Baldwin (2011) as one of the most widespread phobias that students encounter.

1.3. Interference of L1

The interference of the first language is considered as an obstacle that often hinders learners throughout the process of learning English as a foreign language. A rich bulk of researchers in the ESL/EFL learning context such as Tylor (1981) highlight the fact that the interference of the speakers' mother language remains the primary cause of students' failure in learning foreign languages. Since childhood, learners have been talking their mother tongue, which becomes their instrument of thought and deeply a part of their habits. The movement of their speech organs had been set to produce their native language; thus, it is

difficult to switch their speech organs to produce foreign sounds with both a different sound and a grammatical system. In this point, Baker and Westrup (2003) state that "barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language" (p. 12). Yet, in OE classes, students often tend to switch their speech into L1 when they are exposed to the target language because they feel more comfortable and unstressed, or simply because of their limited vocabulary and the lack of their linguistic knowledge. Therefore, the majority of students fail to talk and interact with others using the target language correctly since they keep on being influenced by the use of their mother tongue.

1.4. Poor Listening Practice

Generally, the ability to have a good speaking performance is based on developing the listening skill. According to Wallace et al. (2004), "listening skills are essential for learning since they enable students to acquire insights and information, and to achieve success in communicating with others" (p. 13). In other words, the listening skill is essential for EFL students since it helps them to practice the language accurately and fluently and provides them with good communication skills. Thus, listening comprehension plays a crucial role in communication because it allows the learners to develop the "prosodic features" (intonation, stress, and rhythm) of English language which are very necessary for language production. As it is the learners' role to work hard on improving their listening skill, it is also the teacher's prominent role to provide his/her students with much listening practice activities where the two skills (speaking and listening) are effectively interrelated (Lynch, 2009).

Conclusion

In a nutshell, speaking proficiency has a great significance for EFL learners, yet it is the most difficult skill to be achieved. Therefore, mastering this skill requires involvement to overcome the different difficulties that hinder the interaction and participation. This section

explained the most difficulties that face EFL students within the classroom interaction including the linguistic barriers as the lack of vocabulary, pronunciation mistakes and grammar mistakes, as well as the psychological ones like lack of self-confidence, lack of motivation, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, shyness, hesitation, together with the interference of L1, and poor listening practice.

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

2.1. Data Collection Procedures

2.2. Population and Sampling

2.3. The Students Questionnaire

2.3.1. Description and Administration of the students Questionnaire

2.3.2. Interpretation and Discussion of the Students Questionnaire Results

2.4. Classroom Observation

2.4.1. Description of Classroom Observation

2.4.2. Analysis of the Classroom Observation Results

2.4.3. Interpretation and Discussion of the Classroom Observation Results

2.5. Discussion of the Results

Conclusion

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

This chapter aims at investigating the difficulties facing EFL students' interaction in oral expression classes, in what follows one can come up with what might confirm or reject the already stated hypothesis. Moreover, it aims at providing the readers with the main research instruments and procedures that have been used to collect data in this study. The present work intends to elicit the students' opinion about the interaction in OE classes, and the difficulties that may appear during this interaction. Their views and opinions are very crucial to test the stated hypothesis. Two different research tools were used in order to collect the necessary data, a questionnaire for students, and a classroom observation.

2.1. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is considered as an essential component for conducting research; it is generally regarded as a hard task. However; there are different tools to collect the data such as interviews, tests, experiments, observations, and questionnaires.

The present work was conducted with the use of both a questionnaire and a classroom observation, to collect data for the deep investigation in this research. Dornyei (2011) believes that the backbone of any research is the instruments that are used in gathering the data.

The questionnaire is a research instrument and an investigation tool; it consists of a series of questions in a written form, to gather information from respondents. Brown (2001) defines a questionnaire as "any written instruments that presents the respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (p. 6).

The questionnaire is devoted to first-year EFL students at the University of Jijel. For the aim of investigating students about the difficulties they may face during their interaction in the OE class.

A classroom observation is a formal observation of teaching while it is taking place in a classroom or other learning environment. It is carried out during weeks, for the aim of obtaining the needed evaluation. It was applied in this study to confirm the stated hypothesis with the students questionnaire, as well as for the aim of observing the students' behaviours, and the teachers' attitude inside OE classes.

2.2. Population and Sampling

Concerning the students questionnaire, only fifty (50) students participated from the total number of first-year English language students' population, which is around (332), at Jijel University. Whereas, a group consisted of twenty-five students (25) was the selected sample for conducting the classroom observation. The selection of this sample was based on the consideration that first-year students are exposed to use the language production in their OE classes to develop their English oral proficiency. Furthermore, to help them discover their weaknesses of the language use, and having a good interaction in the coming years.

2.3. The Students Questionnaire

2.3.1. Description and Administration of Students Questionnaire

This questionnaire consists of twenty (20) questions, classified in three sections. In which each section focuses on a specific aspect. There are different types of questions; closed-ended questions, where students answer by "yes" or "no", or by ticking one answer from a set of options, multiple-choice questions are presented as well, and open questions; that require students to give their own answers as well as to provide justifications whenever necessary.

Section One: Students' profile (Q1 - Q2)

Questions in section one aim at gathering personal information about the target sample. The section consists of two questions, where students are asked to give information about their choices to learn English, as well as to evaluate their level in English.

Section Two: Classroom Interaction (Q1 - Q9)

This section consists of nine (9) different questions; it aims at providing information about students' interaction in the OE class. Question (1) is about who does most of the talk in the classroom, (the teacher or the learner), where students are asked to justify their answers.

Question (2) is addressed to students about how they find interaction in OE class. Then, in question (3) they are asked if they are given the opportunity to interact with their teacher, and how often.

Later in question (4), they are investigated how often they interact with their classmates inside the classroom. And question (5) is about which of the interaction techniques they enjoy the most; in which they can tick more than one answer and add other techniques that are not mentioned in the choices.

In question (6), students are asked about the type of interaction they prefer the most; whether student-teacher interaction, or student-student interaction, as well as they are asked to give justifications to their answers. Question (7) is put to know if the teacher encourages students to interact in the classroom and whether, in question (8), classroom interaction improves their proficiency level.

Finally, the last question in this section is devoted to knowing the students' opinion towards the role of the teacher talk in the classroom interaction.

Section Three: EFL Students' Interaction difficulties in Oral Expression course (Q1-Q9)

The last section contains nine (9) questions that are devoted to investigate the students' interaction difficulties in the OE classes. Question (1) and (2) illustrate if students like the OE course and how often they participate during this course.

Questions (3-5) are designed to investigate the students' fear of participation; they are asked to tick more than one answer and to add any other answer that is not mentioned in the choices.

Later in question (6), students are asked if they practice English outside the classroom, and if they use their mother tongue inside the classroom in question (7). Then, questions (8-9) are designed to generate information about the students' speaking ability because of classroom interaction, and if the latter helps them reducing their speaking mistakes.

2.3.2. Analysis of the Students Questionnaire Results

Section One: Students' Profile

Q 01: Why did you choose to study English?

- a) Personal choice
- b) Academic orientation

Table 2.1.

Choice of Studying English

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	40	80%
b	4	8%
c	6	12%
Total	50	100%

The results above show that 80% of first-year English students chose to study English at the university; thus, it was their personal choice. On the other side, 12% of students were imposed to study English since it was an academic orientation because their general average did not fit their personal choice. The rest 8% declared that, for them, studying English is their parents' choice. These results show that the majority of the sample population was interested in learning English at the university; hence, they were motivated and intended to learn and master that language.

Q 02: How do you consider your level in English?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Average
- d) Poor

Table 2.2.

Students' Level in English

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	7	14%
b	34	68%
c	9	18%
d	0	0%
Total	50	100%

The data in the table demonstrates that almost the majority of the students (68%) considered their level in English as good, while 18% of them claimed that their English level was average. In addition, around 14% of students assumed that they were very good concerning the English language; thus, they have almost no problem, and they were satisfied with their level; whereas no one (0%) chose option four "poor".

Section two: Classroom Interaction**Q 01: Who does most of the talk in the Classroom?**

- a) The teacher
- b) The students

Table 2.3.*The Most dominant in the Classroom*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	41	82%
b	9	18%
Total	50	100%

The findings revealed that 41 students who represent 82% of the selected sample assumed that the teacher is the one who does the most of the talk in the classroom. On the other hand, nine students, around 18% of the whole sample responded that students make the most of the talk during the presentation of the lesson.

Justifications:

Students who claimed that the teacher is the one who does most of the talk in the classroom justified their responses arguing that the teacher is the conductor of the session; he/she is requested to make more efforts in the classroom to make the learners understand the subject in the study. The teacher is considered as the students' guide who introduces new topics, explains small details, and corrects students' mistakes. Some others claimed that the teacher talks more and he/she is the most dominant in the classroom, due to the students' limited knowledge of the language (vocabulary, grammar, and language structures). The fact that makes them hesitate, feel shy and less confident; thus, they are afraid of making mistakes since they are still not having the needed capacity to talk. In general, they supported the idea that the classroom is teacher-oriented.

However, there have been some students who said the opposite; students do talk more than the teacher, their responses were based on the idea that the main aim of the oral expression course is to bring students to talk, participate and interact with each other. Hence, it is the session where they are given more opportunities to express and present their ideas, open discussions, and talk freely.

Q 02: How do you find interaction in oral expression class?

- a) Very easy
- b) Easy
- c) Difficult
- d) Very difficult

Table 2.4.

The Students' Interaction in Oral Expression Class

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	12	24%
b	29	58%
c	9	18%
d	0	0%
Total	50	100%

The question aims to assess the students' interaction capability. Looking at the results above in the table, the significant percentage (58%) was given for the second option, where 29 students responded with "Easy" followed by the first option "Very Easy" with the percentage of 24% of students who answered that they find interaction in oral expression very easy. The rest of respondents that constitute (18%) of the sample declared that they find it difficult to interact in such classes. However, no one selected option four "Very Difficult".

Q 03: How often does the teacher allow you to interact (give and take) with him?

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

Table 2.5.*Teacher's Encouragement in Oral Expression Class*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	24	48%
b	11	22%
c	12	24%
d	3	6%
e	0	0%
Total	50	100%

The objective behind this question is to know how frequently students practice the speaking skill and interact with their teacher. The results mentioned above reveals that 24 students, around 48% answered with "Always", while 12 of them that represent 24% chose option three, i.e., they responded with "Sometimes". Furthermore, 11 students, around 22% of the whole sample selected "Often", whereas the three last respondents that constitute a percentage of 6% ticked the option "Rarely", but no one chose "never".

Q 04: How often do you interact with your classmates in the classroom?

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Never

Table 2.6.*The Classmates' Interaction Frequency*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	7	14%
b	21	42%
c	17	34%
d	5	10%
e	0	0%
Total	50	100%

The question aims to know the student-student interaction frequency. According to the obtained results, 42% of students, around 21 learners responded with "Often"; whereas, 34% which stands for 17 learners answered with "Sometimes". 14% illustrating seven students responded with "Always" and finally the last five respondents representing 10% of the sample population responded with "Rarely" which indicates that they have some problems that prevent them from interacting more frequently and easily. There has been no response with "Never".

Q 05: Which of the following techniques do you enjoy the most? (You can tick more than one answer)

- a) Pair and group work
- b) Communication games
- c) Discussion activities
- d) Oral presentations
- e) Roleplays

Table 2.7.*The Most Enjoyable Learning Techniques for Students*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	2	4%
b	2	4%
c	4	8%
d	-	-
e	-	-
b. + c.	4	8%
a. + c. + d.	2	4%
b. + d. + e.	4	8%
b. + c. + e.	2	4%
b. + e.	1	2%
b. + c. + d.	1	2%
c. + e.	1	2%
a. + b. + c. +d.	2	4%
a. + b. + c. +e.	1	2%
c. + d. + e.	1	2%
c. + d.	3	6%
a. + b. +c.	3	6%
a. +b. +e.	3	6%
a. + b. + c. + d. + e.	3	6%
b. + c. + d. + e.	1	2%
a. + c.	5	10%
a. + b.	1	2%
a. + d.	2	4%
a. + e.	1	2%
d. + e.	1	2%
Total	50	100%

The results in the table above indicates that more than a half of the students sample prefer discussion activities more [$c = 33$ ($\underline{c} : 4$) + ($b + \underline{c} : 4$) + ($a + \underline{c} + d : 2$) + ($b + \underline{c} + e : 2$) + ($b + \underline{c} + d : 1$) + ($\underline{c} + e : 1$) + ($a + b + \underline{c} + d : 2$) + ($a + b + \underline{c} + e : 1$) + ($\underline{c} + d + e : 1$) + ($\underline{c} + d : 3$) + ($a + b + \underline{c} : 3$) + ($a + b + \underline{c} + d + e : 3$) + ($b + \underline{c} + d + e : 1$) ($a + \underline{c} : 5$) ; 66%], in which they express their ideas with no restrictions. Followed by 58% who enjoy communication games [$b = 28$ ($\underline{b} : 2$) + ($\underline{b} + c : 4$) + ($\underline{b} + d + e : 4$) + ($\underline{b} + c + e : 2$) + ($\underline{b} + e : 1$) + ($\underline{b} + c + d : 1$) + ($a + \underline{b} + c + d : 2$) + ($a + \underline{b} + c + e : 1$) + ($a + \underline{b} + c : 3$) + ($a + \underline{b} + e : 3$) + ($a + \underline{b} + c + d + e : 3$) + ($\underline{b} + c + d + e : 1$) + ($a + \underline{b} : 1$) ; 56%], then half of the respondents (52%) opted for pair and group work [$a = 25$ ($\underline{a} : 2$) + ($\underline{a} + c + d : 2$) + ($\underline{a} + b + c + d : 2$) + ($\underline{a} + b + c + e : 1$

) + (a + b + c: 3) + (a + b + e: 3) + (a + b + c + d + e: 3) + (a + c: 5) + (a + b: 1) + (a + d: 2) + (a + e: 1); 50%]. Unlike 34% of students who liked oral presentations [d= 20 (d: 0) + (a + c + d: 2) + (b + d + e: 4) + (b + c + d: 1) + (a + b + c + d: 2) + (c + d + e: 1) + (c + d: 3) + (a + b + c + d + e = 3) + (b + c + d + e: 1) + (a + d: 2) + (d + e: 1); 40%], other students (48%) preferred role plays[e = 19 (e: 0) + (b + d + e: 4) + (b + c + e: 2) + (b + e: 1) + (c + e: 1) + (a + b + c + e: 1) + (c + d + e: 1) + (a + b + e: 3) + (a + b + c + d + e: 3) + (b + c + d + e: 1) + (a + e: 1) + (d + e: 1); 38%]. The majority have selected more than one option which means they do prefer a variety of techniques to not get bored and to meet the needed objectives since each technique has its special goal.

Others? Please specify

A small number of students have mentioned that in contrary to the majority who enjoy such collaborative techniques, they do prefer more individual work since they feel more concentrated, free, and organized.

Q 06: What type of interaction do you prefer most?

- a) Student-Teacher
- b) Student-Student

Table 2.8.

Type of Students' Interaction

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	43	86%
b	7	14%
Total	50	100%

The table above diagnoses that the larger part of the population sample (86%) preferred student-teacher interaction, i.e. discussing and opening conversations with the teacher. The rest 14% of students opted for student-student interaction.

Justifications

The majority of respondents (86%) who like student-teacher interaction justified their answers arguing that the teacher's level is higher than that of the learner since he/she has a large knowledge that can help his/her students to develop their abilities and master that language; thus, for them, student-teacher interaction is more efficient. Whereas, the other 14% of respondents who opted for student-student interaction claimed that interaction in group work with classmates has much and more important than with the teacher since students could understand each other using more simple vocabulary and less complex language structures.

Q 07: Does your teacher encourage you to interact in the classroom?

a) Yes

b) No

Table 2.9.

The Teacher's Interaction Encouragement

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	48	96%
b	2	4%
Total	50	100%

The noticeable conclusion that can be drawn is that the majority of respondents (98%) responded with "Yes". This shows that their teacher motivates them to talk and take part of different conversations and discussions. Just (2%) did not agree; they selected the second option i.e. "No".

Justifications

Almost all students (96%) defended their responses saying that their teachers try to get them to speak and practise the speaking skill always, which is the main purpose behind the

OE course especially shy students and those who are afraid of making mistakes. Those persons need more guidance and efforts to get rid of all these problems, to participate, and present freely, which is, as mentioned before, the aim of OE class.

Q 08: Do you think that classroom interaction improves your oral proficiency level?

a) Yes

b) No

Table 2.10.

The Students views towards Interaction Effect on Oral Proficiency Level

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	47	94%
b	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Since classroom interaction is among the main goals of oral expression class, due to its massive importance in enhancing the learner's oral proficiency, 94% of students selected option a "Yes", while only 6% answered with "No".

Justifications

The proponents of the idea that classroom interaction plays an essential role in developing the student's oral proficiency level argued that practice the language inside the classroom helps the learners in developing their speaking skills and rises their oral proficiency level. Yet, sometimes some subjects could be very limited to the extent that they cannot cover all the language aspects, the needed and intended outcomes. Thus, classroom interaction is crucial to develop oral proficiency. All in all, for them, the more students practice and interact with both the teacher and classmates, the better and faster they perform and acquire the target language.

Q 09: Teacher talk has an essential role in classroom interaction.

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly disagree


Table 2.11.*The Importance of Teacher's Talk in Classroom Interaction*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	29	58%
2	7	14%
3	7	14%
4	4	8%
5	3	6%
Total	50	100%

This question aims to know to which extent do students agree or disagree with the idea of the teacher's essential role concerning classroom interaction. Obviously, more than a half (58%) of the respondents strongly agreed with this point, they ticked 1. Almost around 36% were in between; 14% of the students selected 2, also the other 14% of students selected 3, and the rest 8% of respondents selected 4. The last 6% representing three students strongly disagreed selecting the number 5.

Section Three: EFL Students' Interaction Difficulties in Oral Course**Q 01: Do you like oral expression course?**a) Yes b) No **Table 2.12.***Students' Attitude Toward Oral Expression Course*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	48	96%
b	2	4%
Total	50	100%

A quick glance to the table will show that almost all students (96%) like oral expression course except 4% that represent only 2 students of the whole sample who responded with "No".

Justifications

Participants who answered with "Yes" claimed that oral expression course is the suitable atmosphere for students to express their thoughts, opinions, and different points of view freely, increasing their vocabulary knowledge and correct their mistakes on the spot. Moreover, it is not restricted and not boring like the other courses since it deals with a variety of new and free topics the fact that makes it more enjoyable, motivating, and more exciting. They said it is simply a way of entertainment in term of learning. Whereas, the rest 4% that answered with "No" argued that they feel anxious and less confident in such courses.

Q 02: How often do you participate on the oral expression session?

- a) Sometimes
- b) Always
- c) Rarely

Table 2.13.

The Students' Participation Frequency in the Oral Expression Session

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	21	41%
b	26	53%
c	3	6%
Total	50	100%

The table (13) above presents the students' participation frequency in oral expression course. Around 53% of students responded with "Always", while (41%) of the sample declared that they participate in oral courses sometimes; however, the other 6% of

respondents ticked the last option "Rarely" which indicates that they have some problems and obstacles that do not permit them to participate.

Q 03: Are you afraid about participation in oral expression course?

a) Yes

b) No

Table 2.14.

The Students' Attitude towards Participation in the Oral Expression Course

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	18	36%
b	32	64%
Total	50	100%

Based on the data presented above, the general conclusion that can be taken is that more than a half of the whole number of students (64%) answered with "No" which means that they do not feel afraid, but rather more comfortable. On the other hand, 36% of respondents selected "Yes"; hence, there is something that prevents them from trusting themselves and feel less confident in such courses.

Justifications

Unlike the 64% of students who ticked "No" and justified their answers saying that participation is their right, and it does not matter if they make mistakes and do not feel a shame of that since they are still learning. Thus, the big mistake that students commit is fear of making mistakes, the rest 36% of students who replied by "Yes" declared that it is because they feel shy, less confident, and afraid of not giving the right answer.

Q 04: If yes? Is it because (you can tick more than one answer)

a) Lack of vocabulary

- b) Fear of making grammatical mistakes
- c) Fear of making pronunciation mistakes

Table 2.15.*The Students' Participation Difficulties (1)*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a.	4	8%
b.	2	4%
c.	3	6%
a. + b.	3	6%
a. + c.	2	4%
a. + b. + c.	3	6%
No answer	33	66%
Total	50	100%

First English students encounter different difficulties while interacting in oral expression class, some face one problem and others more than one. 24% of students responded that lack of vocabulary is the main and the major obstacle they face [$a = 12: (a: 4) + (a + b: 3) + (a + c: 2) + (a + b + c: 3); 24%$], on the other side, other respondents declared that they fear of making grammatical mistakes [$b = 8: (b: 2) + (a + b: 3) + (a + b + c: 3); 16%$], and some selected fear of making pronunciation mistakes [$c = 8: (c: 3) + (a + c: 2) + (a + b + c: 3); 16%$]. This explains that vocabulary is the most important factor that influences the students' participation and interaction. However, there were 66% of the students who did not answer this question.

Q 05: Or you do not participate because of?

- a) Lack of self-confidence
- b) Lack of motivation
- c) Anxiety
- d) Shyness and hesitation

Table 2.16.*The Students' Participation Difficulties (2)*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a.	2	4%
b.	3	6%
c.	1	2%
d.	9	18%
a. + b.	1	2%
a. + c. + d.	2	4%
b. + d.	1	2%
c. + d.	3	6%
No answer	28	56%
Total	50	100%

Only 22 students answered this question. Another important factor that do not allow learners to participate is shyness and hesitation. As it is shown in the table, it is the major obstacle that prevent learners from participation [$d = 15: (d: 9) + (a + c + d: 2) + (b + d: 1) + (c + d: 3); 30\%$]. Hence, students do not have enough courage to talk and present in front of their teacher and classmates. 10% ticked "lack of self-confidence" which is crucial in learning in general and in oral expression in particular [$a = 5: (a: 2) + (a + b: 1) + (a + c + d: 2); 10\%$]; those students do not trust their capacities and abilities the fact that makes them not as much as confident as to participate and perform effectively. Some others selected "anxiety" [$c = 6: (c: 1) + (a + c + d: 2) + (c + d: 3); 12\%$] and others ticked option two "lack of motivation" [$b = 5: (b: 3) + (a + b: 1) + (b + d: 1); 10\%$]. This shows that some students find this session somehow boring and less motivating; therefore, they feel stressed and less active to inter discussions and interact with the others. But there were 28 students who did not answer this question.

Others, please specify

Some students mentioned that the fact of being afraid of performing in oral expression course depends on other different aspects and factors like the teacher's character; whether

he/she is polite. Some of them claimed that the age difference is very crucial which means old students may fear of making mistakes, the fact that makes younger ones laugh at them which makes the others anxious and angry; yet, they prefer to avoid all these by keeping silent.

Q 06: Do you speak English outside the classroom with your classmate?

a) Yes

b) No

Table 2.17.

Students' English Use outside the Classroom

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	38	76%
b	12	24%
Total	50	100%

According to the results, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the respondents (76%) responded saying that they practice English outside the classroom with their classmates answering with "Yes"; on the other hand, around 24% answered with "No" which means they rely only on what is done in the classroom.

Q 07: Do you use your mother tongue inside the classroom?

a) Yes

b) No

Table 2.18.

The Use of Mother Tongue inside the Classroom

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	41	82%
b	9	18%
Total	50	100%

Since the mother language is the first language that anyone acquires unconsciously, it can appear and interfere in different contexts when learning another language. 82% of students that represent the majority of the sample responded with "Yes" while the remaining 18% answered with "No" which means that they focus on the target language without referring to the mother language.

Q 08: How do you evaluate your speaking abilities as a result of classroom interaction?

- a) Well
- b) Very well
- c) Not so well
- d) Bad

Table 2.19.

Student's Speaking Abilities

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	27	54%
b	11	22%
c	12	24%
d	00	0%
Total	50	100%

As it is shown in the table above, more than a half of the respondents (54%) evaluated their speaking abilities as good selecting the first option "well". 24% of students responded with "not so well" which means they consider their speaking ability not so good as it should be. The rest 22% selected "very well"; hence, they feel more comfortable with their level and speaking skill.

Q 09: Regular interaction in the classroom helps you reduce your speaking mistakes

Strongly agree



strongly disagree

Table 2.20.*Regular Interaction effect on Reducing Mistakes*

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	23	46%
b	9	18%
c	7	14%
d	6	12%
e	5	10%
Total	50	100%

The results above illustrate that 46% of the respondents declared that they strongly agreed with the idea that regular interaction in the classroom helps to reduce speaking mistakes since it permits to practice and correct students' mistakes. On the other side, 10% strongly disagree with this idea. The rest 44% of participants were in between.

2.2.3. Interpretation and Discussion of Students Questionnaire Results

The results obtained from the analysis of the questionnaire for students show that almost all the students enjoy the OE session since they feel freer and less restricted; however, their answers prove that they encounter various obstacles that impede them from participating and interacting in such class. The collected data expose that both linguistic barriers like grammatical and pronunciation mistakes, and psychological barriers such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence and motivation, play an important role in creating interaction' hindrances for learners. Whereas, the most remarkable difficulties shown in the tables 15 and 16 are lack of vocabulary, shyness and hesitation. This indicates that there are more serious problems than others; considering vocabulary the main element of any statement (see table 15) as mentioned in the literature review, Wilkins (1972) who believes that "without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p. 97). In addition, shyness and hesitation can hide a lot of capacities and abilities of the learners, as Juhana (2012) refers to this psychological barrier as "an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English" (p. 101). Moreover, the obtained results also

prove that the teachers' encouragement has an essential impact on the students' level of interaction (see table 5 and 9), since he/she offers them different opportunities, motivates shy students and creates the suitable atmosphere for a better learning. This ensures a good interaction which is the main aim of the OE course.

2.4. Classroom Observation

2.4.1. Description of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a tool that offers the chance to gather data from naturally occurring situations. Hence, it is used in this current study as a convenient tool to attain the research aims, which are the attempt to probe into the different problems that prevent EFL students from interaction in oral expression classes as well as the attempt to observe the real behaviour of those students to relate the finding data within our research.

In this study, classroom observation took place during the beginning of the second semester in the class of OE as well as online on Google Meet application with first-year English language students at Jijel University. A class consisted of twenty-five (25) students, being physically present in two oral sessions for one week; from the 19th to the 20th of February. In addition, attending four online sessions in Google meet for three weeks; starting from the 17th of May to the 11th of June during the academic year 2019-2020. The observation was presented in the form of a checklist which contains three sections, under each section, there is a set of items. The first section is devoted to observing the learners' interaction and participation, i.e., whether they are active or passive.

Moreover, this section is concerned with the difficulties that prevent EFL students from interacting in OE sessions which are: lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, and pronunciation and grammatical mistakes. The second one is designed for observing the teacher's attitude in the classroom. The last section is designed to know the different teaching techniques used by the teacher to present the lesson.

Section One: General observation about the learners' participation and interaction in the classroom

This section involves (4) items which are concerned with the difficulties of learners' participation and interaction such as lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, pronunciation and grammatical mistakes.

Section two: Teachers' attitude in the classroom

This section illustrates the attitude of oral expression teachers. It consists of (4) items that describe the role of the teacher inside the classroom; whether the teacher helps his students to overcome their interaction difficulties or not.

Section three: Presentation of the lesson

Section three is designed to know the different teaching techniques used by the teacher to present the lesson.

2.4.2. Analysis of the Classroom Observation Results**Section One: Learners' Participation and Interaction****Item One: Active and Passive Learners**

During the observation, two types of students were discovered "active and passive learners". Active students were highly motivated; they participated and interacted with the teacher through asking/answering questions, giving opinions, and providing suggestions. Those students were willing to develop their speaking skills and communicative abilities. In fact, they tended to participate even they encountered some pronunciation and grammatical mistakes. Whereas passive students were rarely participating, they tended to keep silent, and did not engage with their teacher and classmates; simply they did not involve in the classroom.

Item Two: Lack of Vocabulary

Lack of vocabulary was the major factor among students' linguistic barriers. Some students have a limited vocabulary knowledge, in which they were not able to produce full sentences with enough vocabulary. Sometimes they asked their teacher to provide them with appropriate words; other times, they failed to express their ideas and thoughts which led them to remain passive.

Item Three: Lack of Self-Confidence

Lack of self-confidence was one of the significant psychological factors that were noticed during the observation. Some students were not confident; they hesitated, felt anxious, and got nervous when they tried to participate. In some cases, they avoided having eye contact with their teacher when he asked questions, because they were afraid of giving wrong answers and being laughed by their classmates.

Item Four: Pronunciation and Grammatical Mistakes

During the observation, it was noticed that most of the students were unable to provide grammatically correct sentences. They committed mistakes related to tenses and sentence structure, which negatively affected their accuracy and language production. On the other side, few of them were making pronunciation mistakes. Those students were making mistakes related to rules of sounds and stress; they tended to pronounce words in a wrong way which sometimes led them to misunderstand each other.

Section Two: Teachers' Attitude in the Classroom**Item One: Teachers' encouragement**

The teacher had a crucial role in the classroom interaction. He created a comfortable and inspiring atmosphere to his students. The teacher motivated them to involve with the interaction by asking them to give opinions or to ask/answer questions. Moreover, he encouraged them to get rid of their shyness and anxiety in order to develop their fluency and communicative abilities.

Item Two: Interesting Topics

During all the observed sessions, it was observed that the teacher was presenting new interesting topics. He raised the students' creativity by introducing topics of their interest, as well as he succeeded to create a rewarding learning environment to enhance them to involve in the class.

Item Three: Teacher's interruption of students' answers

The teacher never interrupted his students during the interaction when they encounter mistakes. Rather, he listened carefully, and by the end of the session, he gave feedbacks about the committed mistakes.

Section Three: Presentation of the Lesson

Item One: Lesson Plan

The teacher was following a lesson plan during the presentation of the lesson. Planning helps the teacher to organize and systematize the learning process, as well as it determines the teacher's goals and provides a definite objective for each session.

Item Two: Techniques Used by the Teacher

As far as teachers' role is concerned, the OE teacher of the observed class used limited teaching techniques since the sessions were carried out online. Most of sessions were done

through the use of feature film clips and discussion activities. It was impossible to apply any other teaching technique such as role-plays, oral presentations, and communicative games since the sessions were carried out online.

Item Three: Peer/Group Work

In the first week of the observation when we were physically present, the teacher was setting his students to work in peers as well as in small groups; he asked them to prepare conversations than to play the role orally. Peer/group work is very important in OE class; it allows learners to exchange ideas, correct each other's mistakes, and delegate roles and responsibilities.

2.4.3. Interpretation and Discussion of the Classroom Observation Results

The obtained results from the analysis of the classroom observation provide many aspects that have a role in the students' interaction, starting from the students' interaction difficulties which are the main concern of this piece of research, moving to the teacher's encouragement and finally the lesson plan. The findings show that the students intention of participation serves in developing their speaking abilities since it is noticed that there are passive and active learners; however, many of them face a set of problems like grammar and pronunciation mistakes, and more particularly, lack of vocabulary and self-confidence which are both an essential factor that affect students' interaction negatively; therefore, this fact gives more strength to the idea mentioned in the literature review, mainly the difficulties faced by EFL learners hinder their interaction in OE class. Additionally, teachers' encouragement and choice of interesting topics also attract learners and motivate them to speak and perform effectively following a specific lesson plan and using some suitable techniques according to the subject in the study.

2.5. Discussion of the Results

The results from both the questionnaire and the classroom observation, in relation to the literature review, clearly answer the previous asked questions (Q1; What are the different difficulties facing EFL learners' interaction in OE class? And Q2; Do these difficulties affect the learners' level of interaction?). The results show the problems that prevent first year EFL learners from interacting in OE class. The results reveal the different difficulties that hinder learners' interaction, and they clearly show that there are two types of problems that vary from linguistic to psychological.

The obtained data collected from both the questionnaire for students and the classroom observation strengthen the already stated hypothesis that investigates, if first-year EFL students face difficulties in Oral Expression class, their interaction will be affected. Hence, this research goes in line with the previous researches mentioned in the literature review (Thornbury, 2005; Lewis, 1993; Wilkins, 1972; Burns & Claire, 2003; Adalikwu, 2012).

The results confirm that the difficulties faced by EFL learners in OE class do affect their level of interaction to an extent. From the students' answers, and from what had been observed in the classroom; we may state that the previously mentioned difficulties do affect the learners' interaction in two different ways. Some learners tend to remain passive during the interaction when they face both linguistic and psychological barriers such as lack of vocabulary and lack of self-confidence, they tend to keep silent during the whole session, or they are less interacted when making a lot of errors such as grammar mistakes, mispronouncing words, providing wrong words, or by merely showing hesitation and lack of self-confidence. Whereas some other students tend to keep interacting and practising the target language even, they face both linguistic and psychological barriers. Those students are willing to improve their speaking capacities and develop their oral communicative skills to reach a native-like fluency, even they know that they encounter various pronunciation and

grammar mistakes. Even sometimes, they do not find the appropriate expressions to express their ideas; they keep interacting with each other and with the teacher for the aim of improving their English communicative skills and rich fluency and accuracy.

Conclusion

The main concern of this chapter was to test the already stated hypothesis and arrive at the intended answers. In other words; to explore the difficulties facing EFL students' interaction in oral expression classes. As a result, chapter two presented a brief investigation of the study and its findings; those gained from both the analysis of the questionnaire and the classroom observation.

The results yielded from the both tools of investigation show that most of the first year students face both linguistic and psychological barriers during their interaction (including lack of vocabulary, pronunciation mistakes, grammatical mistakes, lack of self-confidence, shyness, and hesitation). These problems prevent them from having a good interaction in the OE module. Thus, they get de-motivated and remain passive. The analysis also highlighted the role of the teacher inside the classroom and during the interaction.

General Conclusion

1. Putting it all together

2. Pedagogical Recommendations

3. Limitations of the Study

References

Appendices

Résumé

ملخص

General Conclusion

1. Putting it all Together

Classroom interaction is a very effective procedure for it serves in enhancing and promoting the learning quality since it made learners no longer isolated; but more interactive, collaborative, and active within the surrounding environment; thus, it joins all classroom participants (members) working all together to achieve the aim of a better understanding.

In short, this section provided an overview of the oral expression skill. It focused on the two major complementary skills, mainly listening and speaking that help EFL learners to achieve their oral proficiency and to communicate using the target language accurately and fluently. In addition, it explained the characteristics of the speaking performance, including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Finally, the section highlighted the emphasis on the integration between listening and speaking.

In a nutshell, speaking proficiency has a great significance for EFL learners, yet it is the most difficult skill to be achieved. Therefore, mastering this skill requires both the teacher' and learners' involvement to overcome the different difficulties that hinder the students' interaction and participation. Furthermore, this section explained the most difficulties that face EFL students within the classroom interaction including the linguistic barriers as the lack of vocabulary, pronunciation mistakes and grammar mistakes, as well as the psychological ones like lack of self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation, the L1 interference, and poor listening practice.

2. Pedagogical Recommendations

The main goal of this research is to explore the different difficulties that first year EFL learners face during their interaction in oral expression module.

In the light of what has been presented in chapter one and chapter two, the following recommendations are suggested:

. OE module is fundamental to build the students' communicative competence, develop their four skills, and improve their English level in general. EFL learners have two oral sessions per week, which is not enough for them to develop their skills. Hence, it is proposed to raise the number of oral sessions according to the students' needs.

. Teachers sometimes tend to create boring topics at the aim of opening discussion, but unfortunately, students do not engage and involve with them. In the light of this, it is highly recommended to create new interesting topics of the students' field of interest to motivate, inspire, and raise the students' creativity.

. Speaking a foreign language requires following a set of oral communication strategies during OE courses where both the teacher and the learners collaborate with each other to create a dynamic interactive learning atmosphere. Therefore, EFL learners are exposed to many classroom strategies that enhance their L2 learning and promote their language performance and interaction. The following strategies are suggested:

2.1. Co-operative Learning

To provide a comfortable learning environment, most oral expression teachers tend to rely on the use of co-operative learning as a pedagogical activity which implies that learners can learn better from each other through pair and group works. Richards and Rodgers (2014) describe cooperative language learning as "an approach designed to foster cooperation rather than competition, to develop critical thinking skills, and to develop communicative

competence through socially structured interaction activities” (p.195). In this instructional activity, the teacher may design various communicative activities where students can exchange their ideas and promote their speaking abilities. Such activities may include story-building, problem-solving activity, roll the ball, information-gap activities, doing interviews and so on.

2.2. Communication Games

Communication games are one of the best strategies that EFL teachers may implement to encourage students to interact in a genuine communication. According to Bygate (1987, as cited in Kouicem, 2010), this activity can be presented in three forms. The first one is called describe and draw in which one student describes the provided picture and the other student must draw it. The second is to describe and arrange the place where a student describes a picture, then reconstruct it orally without seeing the original one. The third one is where two students are given two similar pictures with slight differences, and they are asked to find those differences through each oral description without seeing each other pictures.

2.3. Discussion Activity

The discussion activity is one of the most common activities used in oral expression courses to develop the students' communicative abilities. In fact, discussion activities provide EFL learners with the opportunity to express themselves freely and practice the language speaking skill at the same time. In this sense, Little Wood and William (1981) state that “It (discussion) provides learners with opportunities to express their personality and experience through the foreign language” (p. 47). Hence, it is regarded as a real language activity that fosters interaction within the language classroom.

2.4. Oral Presentations

According to Baker, "oral presentation is like a formal conversation, speaking to a group as a natural activity" (2000, p. 115). This activity is considered as a part of spoken language that EFL learners practice during their oral expression courses. Oral presentations can also be supported by visual aids like pictures, projector, and videos, which enable the students to be creative in presenting their work. In addition, using this strategy in teaching the target language is the best way that helps students to fight their fear of stage, public speech, lack of confidence and their anxiety as well. Moreover, King (2002, p. 401) see that making an oral presentation in front of the class is one of the activities that learners have to do to improve their language proficiency level since it is included in the language curriculum. Besides, it promotes the self-confidence and reduces interaction difficulties.

2.5. Roleplays

Role-play is one of the best common strategies used in oral expression classes to enhance interaction with each other. It is an effective way which provides EFL learners with the opportunity to practice a real-life spoken language in the classroom. Such pleasant activity is required since it trains the learners how to use the language in social situations and develops their communicative competence.

3. Limitations of the Study

The limitations that faced us while conducting this research are illustrated in the following four points.

- Lack of available resources concerning our topic was the major problem that faced us while doing this research.
- Another limitation was the lack of previous researches on the topic under study.
- Covid-19 was the most serious problem in the period of conducting this research, the lockdown caused a lot of limitations, among them the closed universities and libraries

which hindered us from meeting with each other, meeting with our supervisor, as well as hindered us from providing further resources concerning the topic.

- The fourth problem was the sample representativeness issue. Because of the lockdown, we were obliged to work with a very limited number of representatives to collect data through the questionnaire, and we were obliged to observe only one group since it was the only first-year group that had an online OE class.

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

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DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire for Students

Dear student,

This questionnaire is an investigation tool for gathering data required for the fulfillment of a master dissertation. It aims at investigating the difficulties that EFL students face when interacting in oral expression classes. We would be grateful if you answer these questions to help us accomplish this research.

Please, use a tick (✓) to indicate your chosen option, and justify your answer wherever it is needed.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Section One: Student's Profile

1. Why did you choose to study English?

Personal choice

Parents' choice

Administrative orientation

2. How do you consider your level in English?

Very good

Good

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

Average

Poor

Section Two: Classroom Interaction

1. Who does most of the talk in the classroom?

Teacher

Students

Please, justify your answer.

.....
.....

2. How do you find interaction in oral expression class?

Very easy

Easy

Difficult

Very difficult

3. How often does the teacher allow you to interact (give and take) with him?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

4. How often do you interact with your classmates inside the classroom?

Always

Often

Sometimes

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

Rarely

Never

5. Which of the following interaction techniques do you enjoy the most? (you can tick more than one answer)

Pair and group work

Communication games

Discussion activity

Oral presentations

Role-plays

Others, please specify.....

6. What type of interaction do you prefer most?

Student-teacher interaction

Student-student interaction

Please, justify your choice.

.....
.....

7. Does your teacher encourage you to interact in the classroom?

Yes

No

Please, justify your answer.

.....
.....

8. Do you think that classroom interaction improves your oral proficiency level?

Yes

No

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

Please, justify your answer.

.....
.....

9. Teacher talk has an essential role in classroom interaction.

Strongly agree Strongly disagree

Section Three: EFL Students' Interaction Difficulties in Oral Course

1. Do you like oral expression course?

Yes

No

Please, justify your answer.

.....
.....

2. How often do you participate in the oral expression lessons?

Always

Sometimes

Rarely

3. Are you afraid about participation in oral expression course?

Yes

No

4. If 'yes', is it because:

Lack of vocabulary

Fear of making grammatical mistakes

Fear of making pronunciation mistakes

Others, please specify.....

5. Or, you do not participate because of:

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

Lack of self-confidence

Lack of motivation

Anxiety

Shyness and hesitation

Others, please specify.....

6. Do you speak English outside the classroom with your classmates?

Yes

No

Please, justify your answer.

.....
.....

7. Do you use your mother tongue inside classroom with your classmates?

Yes

No

8. How do you evaluate your speaking ability as a result of classroom interaction?

Well

Very well

Not so well

Bad

9. Regular interaction in the classroom helps you to reduce your speaking mistakes.

Strongly agree Strongly disagree

10. Please, add any comment (s) or suggestion (s) you see relevant to the topic.

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

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

Thank you very much for your cooperation

APPENDIX II

Observation Schedule

Title of the research: *Exploring the Difficulties Facing EFL Students' Interaction in Oral Expression Classes. The Case of First Year LMD Students of English at University of Jijel.*

Name of the researchers: Gherbi Haniya and Allouti Sabrina

Name of the University: Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel

Name of the teacher: Abdeldjalil Bouzenoun

Date of the session observed: _____

Details of the session observed: _____

Name of observer: _____

Objectives of the session: _____

A- Learners' Participation and Interaction

1	Do students actively interact in the classroom?
2	Are the learners able to produce full sentences with correct vocabulary?
3	Do learners have enough confidence to participate?
4	Do they make pronunciation and grammatical mistakes?

B- Teachers' Attitude in the Classroom

1	Does the teacher encourage learners to interact and participate?
2	Does the teacher create interesting topics?
3	Does the teacher interrupt students' answers and correct them?

C- Presentation of the Lesson

DIFFICULTIES FACING EFL STUDENTS' INTERACTION

1	Does the teacher have a lesson plan?
2	Does the teacher use a variety of techniques?
3	Does the teacher set his students to work in peers/groups?

Résumé

L'objectif principal de cette étude est la découverte des difficultés que rencontrent les étudiants de la langue anglaise comme langue étrangère dans le module de l'expression orale, et à tel point que ces dernières influent sur l'interaction des étudiants de l'université de Jijel. D'après cette étude, on a fait une supposition afin de déterminer est-ce que ces obstacles que rencontrent les étudiants de première année Anglais dans le module d'expression orale influent sur leur interaction. Le cadre théorique de cette étude se compose d'un seul chapitre, réparti en trois phases dont l'analyse a été faite sur :

- L'interaction
- La maîtrise d'expression
- Les difficultés que rencontrent les étudiants durant leur interaction en langue anglaise

En ce qui concerne le deuxième chapitre, il était pratique où les résultats ont été cumulés à partir de l'exécution des moyens de recherche nécessaires; lesquels se composent d'un questionnaire destiné à 50 étudiants parmi 332 de la première année Anglais, plus le suivi des séances d'études d'expression orale. Après l'analyse des résultats de cette étude, il a été confirmé que les étudiants de la première année Anglais rencontrent plusieurs difficultés notamment ; les obstacles linguistiques et psychologiques ayant des impacts sur l'interaction des étudiants dans le module d'expression orale, ainsi que le facteur de la langue maternelle et le manque d'application de la maîtrise linguistique et l'expression orale, ce qui nuit au niveau de l'interaction des étudiants. Sur la base de cette étude, des propositions et des conseils ont été avancés afin qu'elles soient suivies par les professeurs dans le but d'élever le niveau d'interaction des étudiants dans ce module d'expression orale.

Mots Clés :

Difficultés Interaction, La maitrise de l'expression orale, Les obstacles linguistiques et psychologiques.

ملخص

ان الهدف الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة هو استكشاف الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في فصل التعبير الشفهي والى أي مدى تلك الصعوبات قد تؤثر على تفاعل الطلاب بجامعة جيجل. وفقا لذلك تستند الدراسة الى فرضية مفادها ما اذا كانت الصعوبات التي يواجهها طلاب السنة أولى لغة انجليزية في فصل التعبير الشفهي تؤثر على تفاعلهم في هذا الفصل. تألف الاطار النظري لهذه الدراسة من فصل واحد تم تقسيمه الي ثلاث أجزاء تم فيهم تناول تفاعل الفصل، مهارة التعبير الشفهي، و الصعوبات التي تواجه تفاعل طلاب اللغة الانجليزية. أما الفصل الثاني فكان عمليا تطبيقيا حيث تم جمع النتائج من خلال تطبيق وسائل البحث اللازمة و التي تتكون من استبيان موجه عشوائيا لخمسين (50) طالبا من أصل ثلاثمئة و اثنان و ثلاثون (332) للسنة الأولى انجليزي، بالاضافة الي مراقبة الفصول الدراسية الخاصة بالتعبير الشفهي. و بعد تحليل نتائج هذه الدراسة تم التأكد أن طلاب السنة الأولى انجليزي يواجهون عدة صعوبات نذكر منها الحواجز اللغوية والنفسية التي تعكس تأثيرا على تفاعل الطلاب في فصل التعبير الشفهي، اضافة الى عامل اللغة الأم و نقص ممارسة مهارة الكلام و التعبير الشفهي في هذا الفصل مما يؤثر على مستوى تفاعل الطلاب. و على أسس هذه الدراسة تم تقديم اقتراحات و نصائح يمكن اتباعها من طرف الأساتذة لرفع مستوى تفاعل الطلاب في فصل التعبير الشفهي.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الصعوبات، تفاعل الفصل، مهارة التعبير الشفهي، الحواجز اللغوية و النفسية.