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***Exploring The Influence of Self-confidence On
Students Speaking Skills
The Case of First Year EFL Students***

***Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English as a Partial Fulfilment
for the Degree of Master in Linguistics***

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Statement of Originality

We, ***LERGUET Hafsa*** and ***GUILANE Meghnia*** , hereby declare that my master thesis entitled “Exploring The Influence of Self-confidence On Students Speaking Skills” is entirely our own work and have written it in our own words, it contains no material that has been submitted previously , for the award of any other academic degree or diploma except where otherwise indicated . We also confirm that the present work contains no plagiarism and that any information taken from published or unpublished sources has been acknowledged.

Dedication

My beautiful people, my loved ones, those who stand by my side all my life I want to express deep gratefulness through this dedication to all of you

*My father **Mohamed** who was the reason why I am still here, my mother **Malika** who gave all her time for our success*

*My siblings **Zakaria, Amina, Safaa** and the whole family especially my cousin **Kalthoum**.*

*My mom of my studies, my dreams and my first support the first one who gave me hope of life and love of English language Mrs **Kadour Fatima Zahra** all my success is because of you and for you my love.*

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Last but not least I want to thank me, for believing in me, for doing all this hard work, for never giving up.

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Dedication:

*I dedicate my work to the most precious people to my heart
and my source of inspiration, my mother "**Fatima**" and my father "**Dahman**" who raised me
in endless love, May Allah bless them*

To my brothers and lovely cousins who provided me with support and encouragement.

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Abstract

In the educational setting, self-confidence and speaking skills represent an interconnected relationship in which they continually reinforce each other. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the role of student's self-confidence and its influence in enhancing his/her speaking skills at SALHI Ahmed University Center. The study has adopted a mixed-methods approach using triangulation, a questionnaire was administered for a sample of 47 participants among the first year EFL students, and an interview was addressed to oral expression teachers in addition to a classroom observation to collect comprehensive data. Thus, the data collected were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to uncover deeper insights into students' perceptions of self-confidence. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between excellent speaking performers and high level of self-confidence. Students with higher self-confidence reported greater motivation to speak and participate, better study habits, and more effective coping strategies for academic challenges in comparison to students with a low degree of self-confidence

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

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GENERAL
INTRODUCTION

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Language is an important aspect of the learning process because it helps students form social interactions. Therefore, practicing the four abilities of reading, listening, writing, and speaking is essential to learning a language. It takes highly specific skills to become competent in speaking. Teachers want learners to use language correctly, but sometimes psychological factors that operate as barriers to communication cause students to feel more nervous and afraid when speaking with their teachers or even with other students. One of the things that make speaking challenging or difficult to achieve is a lack of confidence.

In addition, a lot of EFL students have trouble communicating during class and are constantly nervous and hesitant to interact with their teacher or even other students. Any EFL student, but especially those who identify as introverted, are constantly afraid to perform confidently in front of their instructors and other students. The stress that most students experience before giving a speech or presentation is illogical. Self-confidence, on the one hand, encourages students to value and be proud of their own abilities. However, those who lack confidence will not be able to stand up face the challenge of speaking in front of the class.

Speaking is regarded as the most challenging skill since it presents difficulties in the classroom. The majority of EFL students seek to improve their speaking abilities, but they face various language obstacles that limit their ability to communicate. These issues may result from individual differences among learners, including shyness, hesitancy, nervousness, or fear of making mistakes, or they could come from language issues, like a lack of vocabulary. These speech problems could be caused by a lack of confidence that prevents them from succeeding.

The purpose of this study is to determine the amount of self-confidence that first-year students have in their ability to use the language effectively at SALHI Ahmed University Centre.

Another major goal of the study is to find out how self-confidence affects students' speaking skills; this work aims to investigate this main research question:

- ***To what extent does self-confidence have an influence on the fluency and accuracy of students' spoken English?***

The following sub-questions are derived from the main research question:

- *How can self-confidence influence students speaking skills in oral expression sessions?*
- *To what extent oral expression teachers and first-year students are aware of the importance of self-confidence in speaking skill development?*

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- *How can the teacher help the students overcome their speaking difficulties?*

The following hypotheses are made based on the earlier questions:

- *Students with higher self-confidence will demonstrate stronger speaking skills compared to students with lower self-confidence and lack of motivation.*
- *The more awareness among oral expression instructors and first-year English students regarding the significance of self-confidence, the higher will be the desire to foster it for improved performance.*
- *Teacher can help their student overcome their speaking difficulties by providing them with activities such as role-playing or playing games in pairs or groups to help them boost their confidence.*

The dissertation is divided into two chapters: the theoretical part, which discusses speaking skills and the role of teachers in enhancing student participation, It also explores the role of both teachers and students in promoting self-confidence and the practical part, which analyzes student questionnaires, classroom observations, and teacher interviews. The study concludes with a general conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

Literature review

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1. The introduction

Being able to speak a language is often considered equivalent to mastering it, as speaking is the most fundamental instrument of how people interact, speaking to peers, or strangers in their native tongue or in a common language that both speakers can comprehend is the aim of many language learners, but speaking a foreign language is challenging, since speaking competency takes a long time to achieve.

When learning a new language learners may face some psychological barriers that will affect their progress since learners experience discomfort when performing. This chapter aims to provide a theoretical background about speaking skills and self-confidence in two sections, the first one tackles the definition of speaking skills and its characteristics than the importance of speaking moving to the speaking difficulties in foreign language learning, and the second section handles the definition of self-confidence and its importance also how to build and develop student's self-confidence, ending up with the role of teachers in enhancing learner's speaking skills .

1.1. The definition of speaking

When we describe someone as being able to speak a language, we typically mean that they can form coherent sentences in that language. According to Brown (2004: 140) *“Speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed, those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and effectiveness of the test takers' listening skills, which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral production test”*

Thornbury (2004: 1) highlights that *“speaking is so much part of daily life that we take it for granted”*. Chaney (1998:13) describes speaking as *“the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts”*. Speaking is one of the four language skills and the most difficult one among them. It is a form of communication used by people to exchange information, ideas, and emotions hence most of us speak more often than we write in our daily lives.

1.2. The Importance of Speaking Skill

English is the common language used to communicate with individuals who are in other states, countries, regions, and continents of the world with different backgrounds because it is widely spoken and considered to be a global tongue. Luoma (2004:01) argues that *“speaking*

in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop”.

The fundamental skill to master a foreign or second language is speaking. It is considered to be the most essential among the four language skills As Ur (1991) states **“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”** the main goal of learning a foreign language is to be able to engage and communicate effectively both within and outside of the classroom since we speak more than we write.

The current world requires learners to have communication skills. Additionally, communication is of greater significance for employability than technology, since oral communication skills are so important, learning how to speak well has become more vital to help students succeed in their academic endeavors and their careers once they graduate. Being able to communicate effectively and confidently is essential for obtaining greater job possibilities additionally, in job interviews, candidates’ abilities are evaluated based on how well they perform, and the speaking skills are the key to success in various domains of life.

1.3. The characteristics of speaking

Students tend to become highly fluent and accurate English speakers. Employers also demand that their staff members speak English well, as proficiency in the language is necessary for both success and progress in a variety of job domains in the modern world.

1.3.1. Fluency

Fluency is the degree to which speakers may communicate through a language with confidence and speed, showing little hesitation or awkward breaks. It is essential to provide students with chances to improve their speaking elements (Nunan). Page 55

Jones (2007, p.18) states that:” ***Fluency doesn’t mean speaking fast without hesitating. It’s being able to express yourself despite the gaps in your knowledge, despite the mistakes you’re making, despite not knowing all the vocabulary you might need. It means hesitating in such a way that others keep listening and wait for you to continue, rather than finishing your sentences for you***”, which means that being fluent is the ability to speak and convey your thoughts and feelings regardless of your lack of comprehensive vocabulary and error

making. He added that Speaking fluently means speaking properly and carefully rather than quickly and randomly. Increased vocabulary, confidence, and a lack of fear of looking dumb are all necessary for fluency.

1.3.2. Accuracy

Accuracy is defined as the ability to produce error-free speech (Housen & Kuiken, 2009), While Jones defines accuracy as *“Accuracy means not making too many mistakes. We certainly want our students to become more fluent, but we also want them to become more accurate. An overconfident, inaccurate speaker can be an irritating companion, though preferable to a silent one!”*

When providing accuracy guidance, it's necessary to address spelling, vocabulary, and grammar mistakes. You may do this by either stopping the speaker when they make a mistake or by pointing out the mistakes and offering corrections once the speaker concludes. (Nunan)

1.3.3. Vocabulary

Lexical competence has become widely known among vocabulary experts to be the foundation of communicative competence, or the capacity to speak effectively, building up your vocabulary is essential whether studying a language as a second, or foreign language. (Celce-Murica, M)

According to (harmer) a significant aspect of the teacher's technique while teaching vocabulary is to find various ways to interpret meaning; for students to understand how words are used, they must see them in context. Therefore, it may be perfect to introduce new words to learners by having them read aloud or listen to audio files so they may see or hear the words in use. One of the main goals of reading texts aloud in class is to expose learners to new vocabulary. Additionally, to understand word usage anytime they read or listen, by that the learner will enhance the ability to select words correctly.

1.4. The role of the teacher

Teaching is The process of assisting someone in learning anything by giving them direction, information, and comprehension based on the teacher's skills and knowledge, the goal of teaching speaking nowadays is to improve students' ability to communicate in English and express themselves correctly leading and addressing class activities to develop, enhance,

and broaden students' speaking proficiency is an important aspect of teaching languages. (Chand 2021).

The way a teacher teaches in the classroom directly affects the learning of the students as a result the teacher has a vital role in improving students' speaking skills, the best learning environment should be created by teachers to reflect the needs of the learners. To get the students to actively participate in classrooms, teachers need to switch their old approaches with the newest and creative ones which attract their full attention. It's also critical that teachers adopt a learner-centered approach to teaching, moving away from a teacher-centered one, to give students as many opportunities as possible to engage in teaching and learning activities.

The teachers should use a variety of strategies to help their students improve their speaking abilities since some of them face shyness and a strong fear of making mistakes, to encourage students to communicate in English classes, teachers can now incorporate some entertaining activities into the curriculum, such as language games. In general, the majority of students enjoy playing games in class, to increase students' participation and help them become better speakers, teachers ought to incorporate these kinds of activities into their normal classes.

1.5. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning

Learners while developing their speaking abilities, face a variety of challenges among these challenges are the psychological factors that are an obstacle in the speaking process such as feelings of confidence, fear, lack of motivation, the feel of discomfort, insecurity therefore it is necessary to pay attention to the following psychological factors.

1.5.1. Self-esteem

According to the Oxford Dictionary, "*Self-esteem is a feeling of being happy with your own character and abilities*". Self-esteem ranks as one of the characteristics of a person that becomes a key component when practicing to speak in public. Students may either succeed or fail in developing strong English-speaking abilities as a result of it. Students who lack confidence or have low self-esteem are less likely to believe in their abilities, which makes them afraid to take chances when it comes to their academic progress, they feel nervous shy, doubtful, and unable to communicate in social situations, which makes engaging with others challenging.

1.5.2. The lack of motivation

The primary factor in determining a person's speaking skills is motivation a highly motivated student will participate in speaking and has the ability to talk effectively which stems from their desire to share their thoughts thus the absence of motivation on the part of teachers and colleagues give rise to the speaking problems because they believe that teachers are the source of encouragement and inspiration in the classroom. Learning is deeply related to the notion of motivation which is an essential component of the teaching-learning process without motivation.

1.5.3. Inhibition

When speaking a foreign language in the classroom, students tend to feel limited because they are afraid of making mistakes or similarly receiving negative feedback even in cases where students are not prevented their lack of motivation prevents them from saying anything

1.5.4. The use of mother tongue

Ur 1991 mentioned that to prevent misunderstandings and the fear of receiving negative feedback from their peers, learners feel comfortable and secure speaking in their mother tongue during class. As a result, they favor speaking in their home tongue in the classroom, which makes learning English more difficult.

2.1. Definitions of self-confidence

Confidence is defined as having faith or trust in something; beyond this, it is also a belief in one's own capacity to accomplish and realize particular objectives. It's important for students who have a high level of self-confidence to persevere until they achieve their objectives because they have faith in their abilities; Murray (2006) argued that, "***Confidence is defined in my dictionary as 'firm trust' . If you are confident about something, you don't worry about its outcome; you just take it for granted that it will go well***" (p.53). Accordingly, having confidence in oneself refers to having faith that an objective will be achieved.

Brown (2007:155) states that "***no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-confidence***" This emphasizes how important confidence is as an essential aspect that supports the effective achievement of emotional and cognitive tasks and the belief in one's 'own capabilities to successfully perform an activity.

2.2. The importance of self-confidence

Self-confidence is a very essential factor that EFL students should possess, It is essential for effective communication , Successful students often have the quality of high self-confidence As Cole et al. (2007) argued “*confidence was as important as competence in speaking and listening*” (p.20). Also, Dr. Abdallah and Dr. Ahmed (2015) pointed out that based on the previous studies which conducted concerning the impact of self-confidence on EFL learning showed that there is an important relationship between self-confidence and success in EFL learning, especially success in oral communication and academic performance (p.1095).

Furthermore Self-confidence is considered as main part and the secret of successful life. Dornyei (2001) asserted, “*You can employ your most creative motivational ideas, but if students have basic doubts about themselves, they will be unable to ‘bloom’ as learners*” (p.87). So, teachers should focus more on developing students’ self-confidence because it is very important.

2.3. The interference between self-confidence and some concepts

Self confidence enables students to develop stronger personalities, which in fact encourages more engagement in the educational process. Students' achievement is positively impacted by self-confidence, which also increases their motivation in the classroom and develops their sense of autonomy

2.3.1 The concept of motivation

Motivation is an essential element of effective learning, which suggests that motivated learners perform better than unmotivated ones. As Dornyei (2001) argued that “*motivation is one of the key issues in language learning*” (p.1). Harmer (2001) define that “*motivation is some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something*” (p.51). In general, motivation is tendency behaviour and reinforcements that allow people to do their jobs perfectly. When students build up their self-confidence, they will be more motivated during the course because they will engage in the task without fear. Indeed, motivation is helpful for teachers too in order to completely eliminate stress and boredom in the classroom.

2.3.1.1 Types of Motivation

There are two types of motivation:

- A. Intrinsic motivation:** comes from within ourselves and from the individuals and their enjoyment in learning without any intervention from the environment. It's the drive to do something for the inherent satisfaction it brings Oelmüller (2006: 5) suggested that: *“Intrinsic motivation can be described as an appeal for the sake of the subject or topic itself”*. The intrinsic motivation is considered as the powerful form of motivation. As Goldsmith (2010) claimed that *“the most powerful form of motivation is the type that comes from within us”* (p.149)
- B. Extrinsic motivation** comes from outside of us. It is the external factors that motivate individuals to take actions and to fulfil their goals and objectives such as, the need to pass an exam, the hope of financial reward, or the possibility of future travel, (Harmer, 2001, p.51). Richards and Schmidt (2010) claimed that *“.... Extrinsic motivation, driven by external factors such as parental pressure, societal expectations, academic requirements, or other sources of rewards and punishments”* (p.378). Extrinsically motivated behaviours would not occur spontaneously and they would have to be done by a request or by promised consequence (Kernis, 1995).

2.3.2 The Concept of Autonomy

Autonomy is the ability to act independently without being controlled by anyone else, In other words, autonomy is the student's power of controlling and regulating his/her learning. Holec (1981) describes autonomy as *“the ability to take charge of one's own learning”* (as cited in Palfreyman and Smith, 2003, p.1). Thornbury (2005) stated that *“autonomy is the capacity to self-regulate performance as a consequence of gaining control over skills that were formerly other-regulated”* (p.90). Autonomous students are able to make judgments about their goals in learning.

2.4 The characteristics of students with low and high self-confidence

According to Wright (2009, p. 24) in his book Building Self-Confidence with Encouraging Words, students who lack self-confidence often exhibit the following characteristics:

- a) Fear of change comes from their concern and stress of what might occur in the future or "what if." They tend to be reactive rather than proactive and have negative attitudes toward their talents.

- b) They have a negative outlook and frequently perceive things as partially empty; they hold others accountable for their misfortunes. They never attempted to be proactive or make an effort, and they consistently believed that horrible things would happen.

Wright (2009, p. 26) listed more characteristics of students who have high self-confidence in the same context:

- A. *They have great desires and are motivated*; to succeed and fulfil their objectives, they do not view life as simply living or surviving.
- B. *They have a goal-oriented mindset*; they make objectives for themselves and work to achieve them. Their main goal is to achieve the greatest outcome or status possible.
- C. *They are kind and loving*: students with high levels of self-confidence typically build healthy relationships with others rather than unhealthy ones because they have a positive inner confidence.
- D. *They are attractive and receptive to others*: Students who are secure in themselves have a lovely and attractive spirit. They express confidence in a way that draws positive attention and attracts people to them.

Indeed, successful learners are those who possess a high level of self-confidence in comparison to those who lack it. It is the duty of the educator to support students who lack confidence in themselves in overcoming issues so they can learn well and succeed. According to Juhana (2012) (quoted in Drs. Abdallah and Ahmed, 2015, p. 1095), there is a way to address the issue of low self-confidence, which has a negative influence on EFL instruction by stating that

The possible solution to overcome those psychological factors, most students believed that motivating them to be more confident to speak English is worth considering. This finding suggests that the teachers should be more aware of their students' hindrance to speak in English class.

2.5 Tips for building self-confidence in learners

Building self-confidence starts from the learners themselves, here are some tips suggested to help learners in enhancing Self-Confidence.

2.5.1 Use a study plan

Students can make studying easier and more confident by breaking down tasks into manageable portions with the use of a study plan, which clearly states their objectives

2.5.2 Look at what you have achieved

Making a list of your achievements, even if they don't include obtaining good grades, is a useful strategy for boosting self-confidence. Students who lack confidence or are unhappy can go back to the list and appreciate those items.

2.5.3 Avoid comparing yourself to other people

One of the biggest mistakes that all students make is comparing themselves to other people. When students start to judge themselves against individuals who achieved more. In this case, they will disregard their objectives and pay more attention to their flaws than their strengths, and advantages.

The development of the student's learning process is significantly influenced by the educators who can implement various strategies and activities that promote self-esteem such as:

2.5.4 Encouraging student participation:

A key component of effective teaching is fostering an environment that is inclusive and stimulating, which inspires students to participate and voice their opinions. Teachers may promote student participation in the classroom by keeping lines of communication open and using a variety of instructional strategies, like debates and group projects. Every child's learning is improved when they participate more in class. It fosters a deeper comprehension of the material and produces a lively and dynamic classroom environment.

2.5.5 Encourage students when they make mistakes

Errors are a natural part of learning, therefore it's important to encourage them when they occur. Talk about the lessons the kids can take away from what happened, rather than concentrating on their error. Encourage them to view their errors as opportunities for growth

rather than as failures. Describe the significance of commitment and having faith in the process.

Conclusion:

This chapter divided into two part the first part discusses the challenging speaking process in EFL classes, addressing obstacles and problems faced by learners, emphasizing the teacher's role in improving oral performance , while the second part dealt with definition of self-confidence with major titles associated with it, namely, its importance, the interference between self-confidence and some concepts such as motivation and autonomy, in addition to the characteristics of students with low and high self-confidence; at the end ways to build it on learners with the help of educators

CHAPTER TWO

Research Methodology and Data Analysis

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1. Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the theoretical side of this study, in this chapter, the researchers aim to advance the study to more practical and methodological sides, it is devoted to the explanation and analysis of data that was collected through three main instruments: students' questionnaire, teachers' interviews, and classroom observations.

The objective of this chapter is to present the current study's methodology and research method. It starts with a description of the study's participants before going on to explain the research design. Also, a description of the instruments and data collection methods used to either validate or invalidate the research's hypotheses suggested. In addition, a questionnaire is used to collect both quantitative and qualitative information from first-year EFL students. Qualitative data was gathered through classroom observation and interviews with EFL instructors at the Naama University Centre's Department of Foreign Languages, a detailed description of the procedures and methodologies for data analysis and interpretation will be provided.

2. Sample of population

The first-year EFL students at Ahmed SALHI University's centre in Naama were chosen as the study's participants. This sample was selected in order to examine the varying degrees of confidence that students demonstrate in oral sessions, as well as their initial experiences at the university. This study includes oral educators to better understand their function in light of their extensive experiences working with students at various levels and how they handle them. Their profiles are displayed as follow:

2.1. Students' Profile

The sample community for this study consisted of forty-seven (47) EFL students who participated; they were chosen at random in order to guarantee an appropriate representation of this study. They are organized as follows:

Level	Number	Gender		Age
		Male	Female	Between 17 and 38 years old
First year students	47	11	36	

Table 1: Students Sampling

2.2. Teacher's Profile

Three EFL teachers of oral expression were selected for this study, in order to effectively describe this study. It consists of 3 teachers, their experiences range from five (13) years to Twenty five (25) years, they are arranged as follows:

N° of teachers	Gender	Experience
01	Male	15 years
02	Female	25 years
03	Male	13years

Table 2: Teachers' Sampling

3. Research Approaches

For the purpose of collecting data about the study, the researcher relies on a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to better understand the range of both methods. It is suggested that readers delve deeper into the positivistic (quantitative) and naturalistic (qualitative) paradigms. Quantitative research involves collecting and analyzing numerical data, whereas qualitative research deals with narrative or experiential data. Research that combines quantitative and qualitative data into a single study is known as mixed-methods research. The "mixing" of qualitative and quantitative study components to produce a more thorough explanation of the research problem is a critical component of mixed-methods research.

The main benefit of mixed methods research is that it combines the generalizable, highly verifiable data from quantitative research (such as surveys) with the specialized, comprehensive findings from qualitative research

4. Research instruments

The selected tools to accomplish this research are: a questionnaire for students, in addition to classroom observation which was taken from the attendance of some oral expression sessions ending up with oral teachers interviews. The following section will deeply focus on describing the data gathered through these instruments

4.1. The student's questionnaire

Questionnaires are considered as the most fundamental tool that is used in any research work. This questionnaire is prepared for First year EFL students at Naama University Center in order to gather data about student's opinions and attitudes towards the importance of self-confidence on enhancing students' speaking skill.

4.1.1. Description of the questionnaire

Forty-seven (47) Students were requested to answer the questionnaire which is divided into two sections, the first one is concerned with students' background information and the second is about the influence of self-confidence in the speaking skill, composed of twelve (12) questions, three different sorts of questions were used to form it. In closed-ended questions responders are asked to choose "yes" or "no" as their response, while in open-ended questions responders are not constrained by predetermined answers and are free to respond in any way, in multiple-choice questions the respondents are required to choose one answer from the available options.

This questionnaire's prepared questions seek out responses from students concerning their experiences, concerns, and opinions about the topic under investigation.

4.1.2. Students questionnaire analysis

The first section is composed of three questions:

Question one: dealt with the age of students.

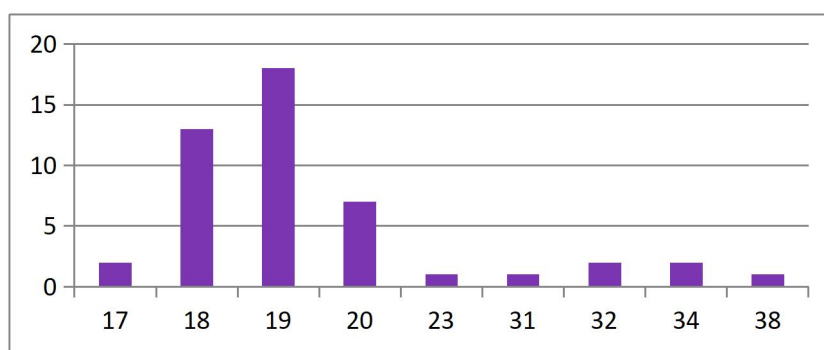


Figure 1: Students' age.

As is shown from the graph students are between 17 and 38 years old, most of them are 19 years old.

Question two: is concerned with the participants' gender.

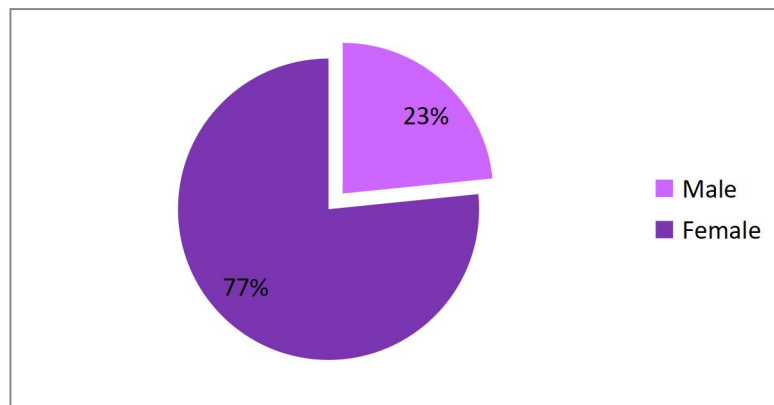


Figure 2: Students' gender.

From the responses shown above it can be seen that the majority of participants are female (77%) while a small number of participants (23%) are male students this demonstrates that most of the learners of English in the research sample are female.

Question three: was studying English at the university by choice or imposed?

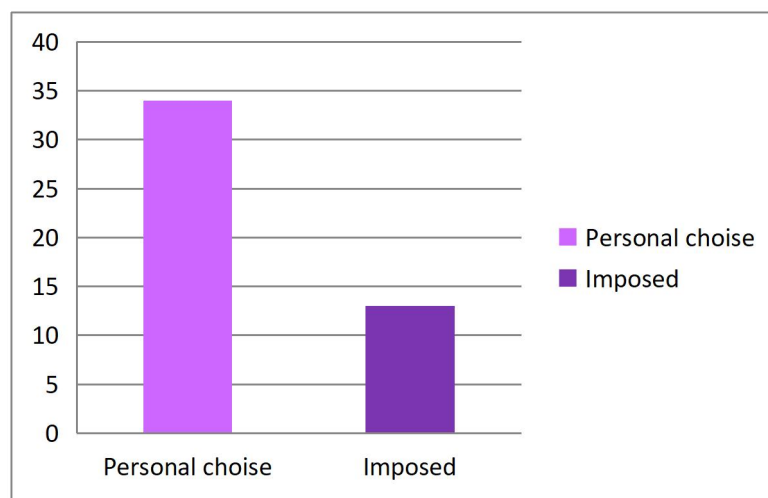


Figure 3: Students' choice of English.

It is clear from the results that the majority of students (77,3%) want to major in English and (22,7 %) of them were imposed in their choice to study English.

The second section contains 12 questions

The first question attempts to know the level of students in English.

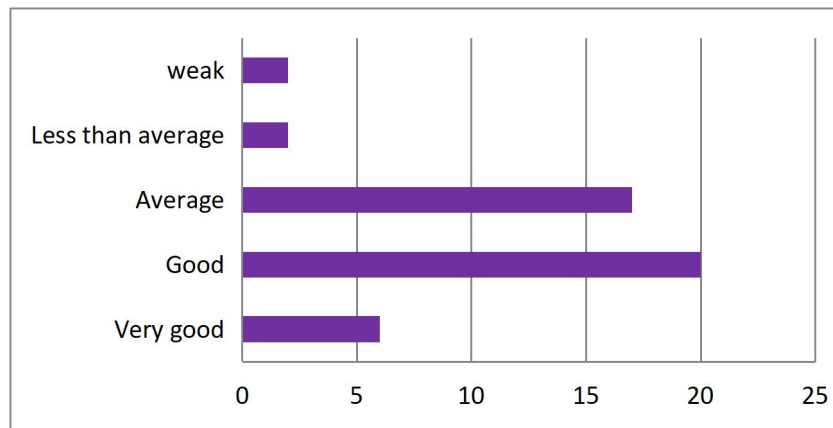


Figure 4: Students' level in English.

The result showed that 20 students had a good level, 17 had an average level, 6 students had a very good level, 1 student had less than average, and only one student represented the weak level.

The second question was if the students tried to speak in the classroom.

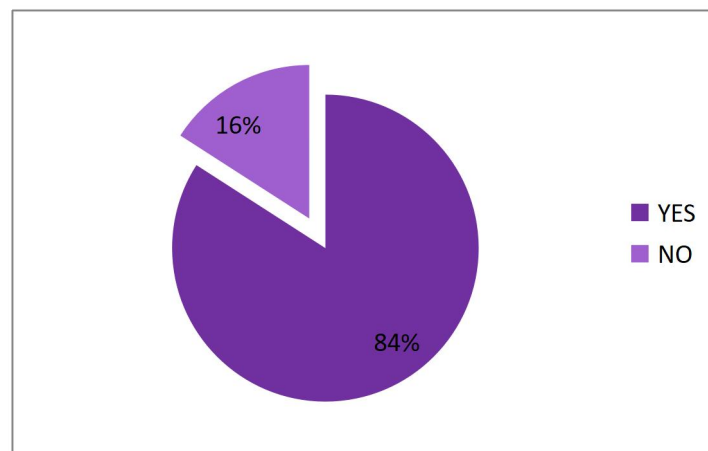


Figure 5: Students' attempt to speak English in the class.

The graph above shows that most of the participants (84%) try to speak, they replied with "yes" and the rest (16 %) replied "no", they were asked to justify why "no" and the common answer was they felt shy and nervous.

The third question was if they keep silent even if they can speak English.

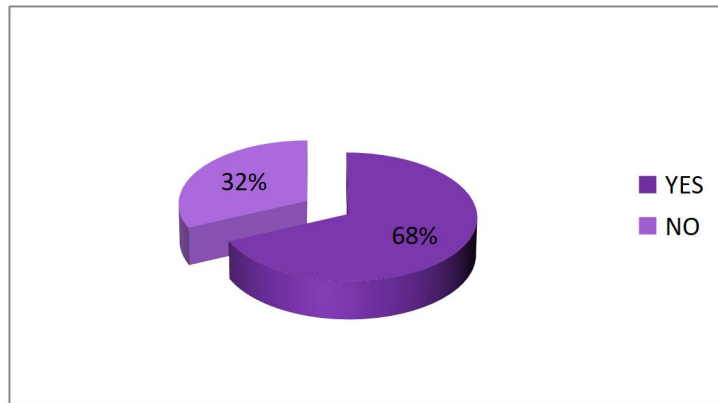


Figure 6: Remaining silent while having the ability to speak in English.

The result showed that 68% of the students selected the answer "no", and the rest 32% selected "yes". The second part of the question presents the explanations provided by the students who kept silent during classroom such as:

- I feel shy.
- Fear of making errors.
- A little shyness, social phobia, non-concentration, lack of self confidence and words.
- I'm not sure about my English.
- Even if my answer is correct I don't trust it.

The fourth question is related to student's participation in the oral expression class.

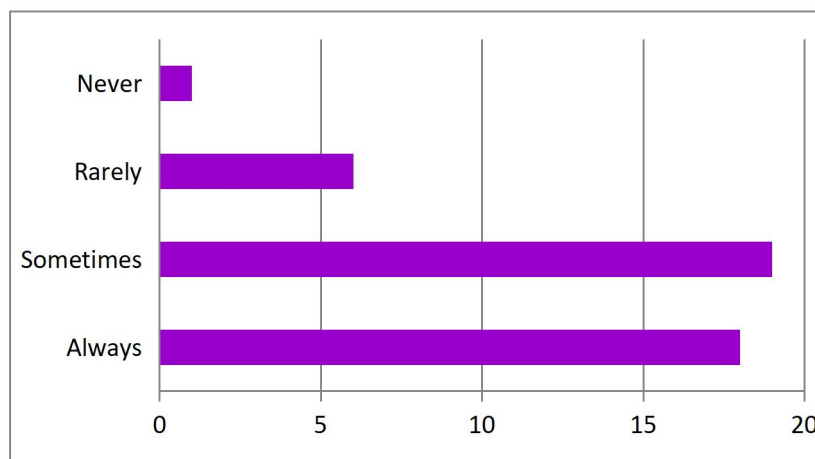


Figure 7: Students' participation in the oral expression class.

The graph above shows that 19 students confirmed that they sometimes participated in oral sessions, whereas 18 said they always participated in class, 6 students said they participated rarely and only 1 student never participated.

The fifth question is an open-ended question concerned with how the teacher reacts to student's mistakes.

The result showed that most of the answers stated that teachers positively react to errors and try to correct them in a nonjudgmental way, students can feel free to make errors in a helpful classroom setting without worrying about being laughed at or judged. Some teachers take it in funny way to normalize errors and ease nervousness, teacher might use humor. Also, the teacher offers words of support, telling the student that errors are an essential part of learning and opportunities for improvement. The minority stated that the teacher was sometimes nervous or uninterested and sometimes didn't react at all.

The sixth question was if the reaction of the teacher affected student's confidence in speaking English

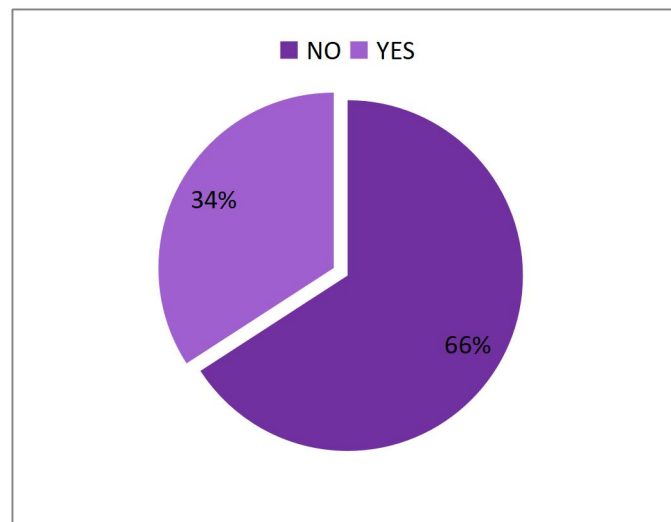


Figure 8: The effect of teacher's reaction on students' confidence in speaking English.

The graph shows 34% of students confirmed that the teacher's reaction has an impact on student's speaking skills, whereas 66% of students disagree. The participants who answered with "yes" were asked to justify and the majority stated that the teacher's reaction is very important, the positive encouragement and motivation increase the student's confidence.

The seventh question was if the teacher made an effort to raise student's self-confidence.

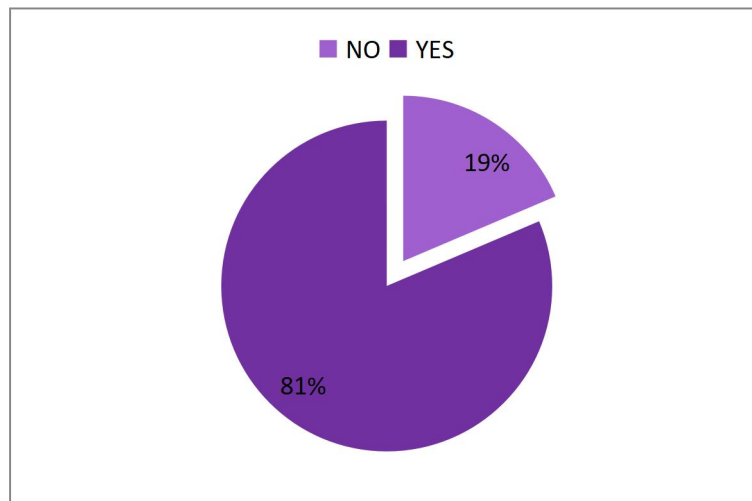


Figure 9: Students' opinions about the role of teachers in raising their self-confidence.

The graph shows that "yes" is the most frequently selected response among the responses, with 81% of students and 19% choosing no. The second part of this question is concerned with the justification concerning the efforts made by the teachers to boost their students' confidence; the participants shared the following perspectives:

- The teacher tries to encourage students to participate even if they make mistakes
- Giving the students complete freedom to speak and express themselves.
- Calling them to stand up with him as if they were the teachers, this increases their confidence and takes away their fear and shyness.
- By listening carefully, and giving the students an opportunity to talk, to break shyness, and raise self-confidence.

The eighth question: The following pie graph shows whether students feel comfortable speaking in front of the pupils and teacher.

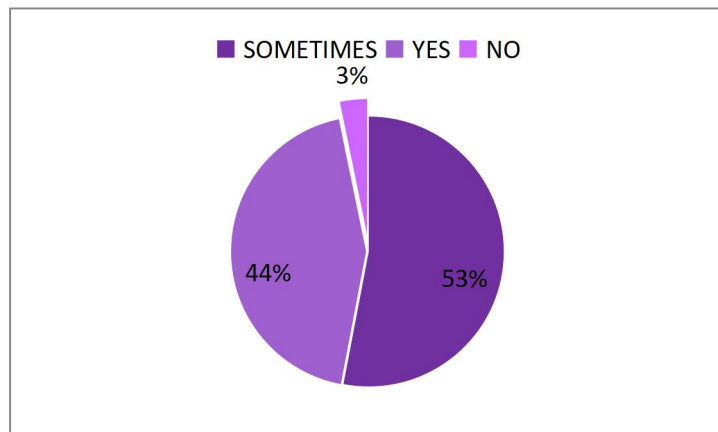


Figure 10: Students' comfort speaking in front of classmates and teacher.

As a result, 44% of students feel comfortable talking in front of the teacher and their friends, 53% of them select sometimes the rest 3% feel uncomfortable.

The ninth question is about how the students feel when they are asked to speak in class.

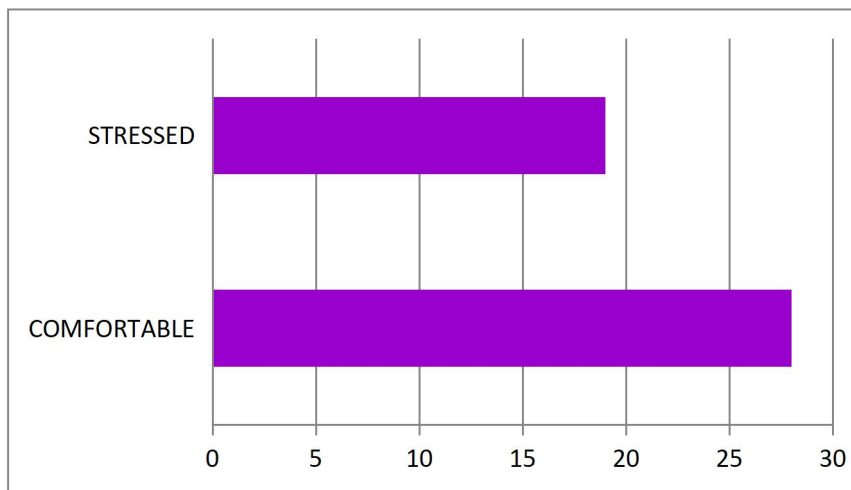


Figure 11: Students' feeling in speaking class.

As a result, 28 students feel comfortable when they are asked to speak and 19 students feel stressed.

The tenth question is related to which session the students prefer and feel confident during it.

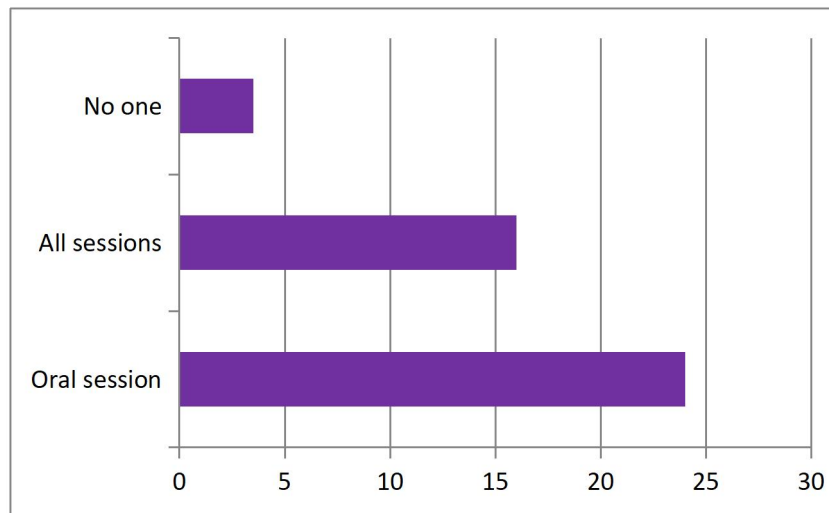


Figure 12: Students' Preferred session.

From the graph, we can notice that most of the students 54% feel confident and more confident during the oral expression sessions, 36% feel confident during all sessions, whereas 11%of students do not feel comfortable in any of the classes.

The eleventh question: the pie chart represents Students' perspectives on the importance of having a high feeling of self-confidence to improve their speaking abilities.

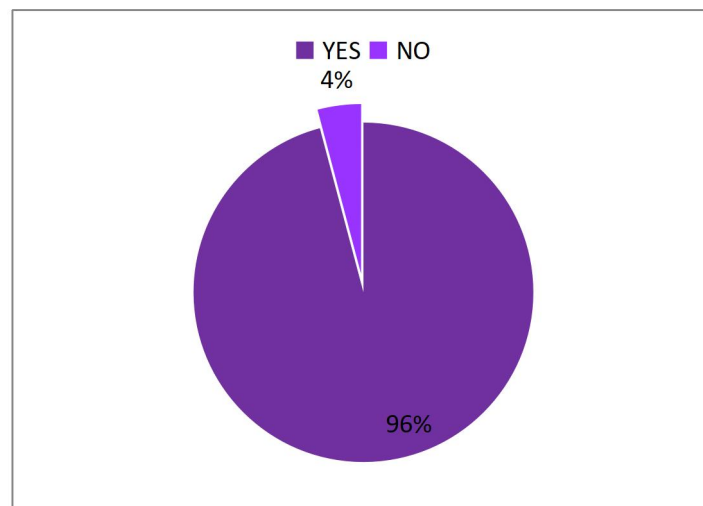


Figure 13: Students' perspectives on the importance of having a high feeling of self-confidence in improving their speaking abilities.

The majority of the participants 96% agree that having a high feeling of self-confidence is essential for developing speaking skills, when you are confident, you'll be more motivated to

practice your speaking abilities, which will eventually lead to ongoing improvement. However, 4% of students disagree and think that it has no importance.

The twelfth question is concerned with Students' belief that they will be proficient English speakers in the future.

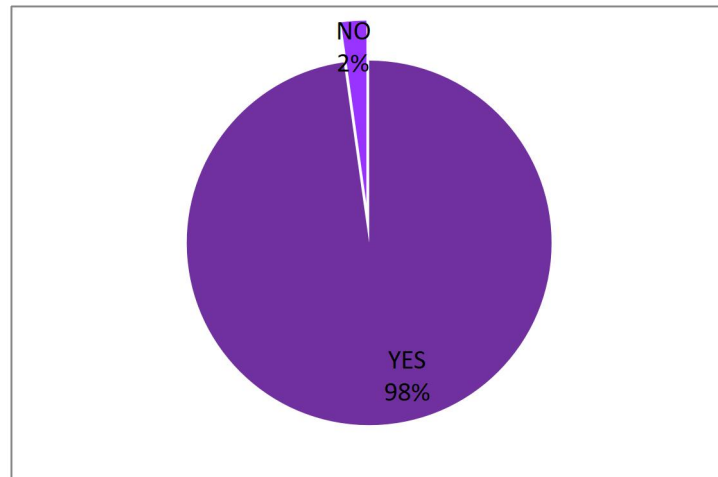


Figure 14: Students' expectation that they will speak fluently in English in the future.

From the graph above we notice that most students 98% think positively of themselves and their abilities and that they will be good speakers however the rest 2% answered with "no", they had no confidence they needed help from the part of the teacher to overcome their challenges.

4.2 Classroom observation

A classroom observation is a simple process where an observer spends time in a classroom collecting data and generating feedback about the teaching and learning, it is a qualitative way of recording and observing teachers' and students' behaviour about certain phenomena.

4.2.1 Classroom observation analysis

On Feb20th,2024, the researchers started attending oral expression sessions with the 3rd group of first-year students also applied in another on Apr23rd,2024, it was done in an overt manner which means that the observers were participating in the session; the observation was unstructured, in order to make it flexible in collecting a variety of behaviors.

The observers arrived at the same time as the teacher and students. They noticed that the teacher gave the learners a particular subject to discuss, and time to reflect then asked them to stand up in front of their colleagues to share their experiences with that topic. Some students did not take the opportunity to reflect; instead, they volunteered to speak, regardless of

whether they were afraid or awkward. On the contrary, some students were not willing to participate, even though they had enough to say, but they waited for the teacher to call their names. Finally, some of the students did not engage at all, despite the teacher's encouragement, but they felt stressed and shy or they made an effort to speak quietly without coming up in front of their classmates.

The educator was a good listener, dealt well with students' errors, and supported them as it should to make them feel more comfortable.

4.3 Teachers' Interview

Three (03) EFL teachers of oral expression at SALHI Ahmed University Centre were interviewed in the structured interview, which was conducted face-to-face on April 23rd, 2024. The purpose of the interview was to discover more about the role teachers play in enhancing students' self-confidence. The questions gathered during the interview will be analyzed and presented below.

4.3.1 Teachers' Interview analysis

✓ **Item one:** How many years have you been in service?

The answers to this question showed that the teachers in this study who were interviewed had more than ten years of expertise in instructing oral expression, the first teacher had about 25 years, the second teacher had 15 years, and the last one 13 years.

✓ **Item two:** In your experience, how common is it for students to struggle with speaking skills in your classroom?

According to the teachers, students frequently struggle with speaking; at least half of them find it difficult to communicate effectively and successfully. However, the degree of difficulty varies across students; some can manage it well, while others find it hard. The fear that many individuals have when speaking in front of others in a classroom is a common issue.

✓ **Item three:** Can you describe some of the behaviours you observe in students who struggle?

Students struggling with speaking often display discomfort behaviours like avoiding eye contact, speaking quietly, and using fillers. These behaviours are the results of shyness, nervousness, and irritation.

- ✓ **Item four:** Do you believe self-confidence plays a role in students' speaking skills? Why or why not?

In this question teachers gave importance to Self-confidence for effective communication, because students who are confident in themselves are often more able to take risk; chances, speak up, and express themselves clearly. On the other hand, students who lack confidence in themselves may be hesitant to participate or may be afraid of making mistakes, which can limit their ability to speak. As a result, building students' self-confidence is essential for helping them become more successful speakers since it motivates them to participate actively and helps them get over their fear of making mistakes.

- ✓ **Item five:** Can you describe some ways in which students with high self-confidence typically approach speaking activities compared to students with low confidence?

This question points to a strong relationship between students' engagement in speaking activities and their level of confidence, according to teachers students who show confidence are outgoing speakers who hold eye contact, speak slowly, and express themselves clearly also get comfortable with classmates and teachers, they participate actively even in difficult or unprepared circumstances, they can do challenging tasks without help. Unlike less confident students, who might show anxiety through rapid speaking or repetition, lack of expression and shyness, they cannot even make eye contact with instructors or colleagues.

- ✓ **Item six:** Have you observed any specific factors that contribute to students' lack of confidence in speaking? For example, fear of mistakes or language anxiety?

The question presented suggests a diverse combination of factors influencing students' self-assurance during speaking tasks. A common problem is fear of being criticized, which can be caused by bullying, shyness, or pressure from classmates. Also, a limited vocabulary for difficult subjects and the inability to participate can all be signs of this fear. Additionally, students might underestimate their skills and worry about making mistakes or being picked out. These issues emphasize the importance of encouraging learning settings that deal with these underlying anxieties and provide students with the confidence to engage.

- ✓ **Item seven:** In your classroom, what strategies or techniques do you use to help students build their confidence in speaking?

Concerning the strategies and the techniques for building students' confidence teachers suggested fostering a safe, encouraging atmosphere where learners feel relaxed taking chances. Use a variety of methods, such as small-group discussions before whole-class presentations, to develop speaking abilities. They use entertaining activities, positive critiques, and procedures to help decrease the nervousness associated with speaking practice. In addition, they utilize simple vocabulary to provide comfort and relaxation, actively listen to students' concerns, motivate participation through one-on-one conversations. Furthermore, they create excitement and a sense of safety that allows them to speak freely by giving important expressions, breaking the ice at the beginning of sessions, and having trust in your students' talents.

- ✓ ***Item eight:*** Have you observed any specific benefits for students who develop greater self-confidence in speaking? For example, participation, fluency, or engagement?

Teachers in this question highlight the beneficial relationship between student participation and self-confidence. Confident students tend to be more involved, offering to help with projects and volunteering for presentations, this positive engagement can result a more favourable educational environment and higher levels of achievement, can also lead to broader enjoyment of classes and improved fluency.

- ✓ ***Item nine:*** In your opinion, what could be done at the school level or within the curriculum to further support students in developing their speaking skills and confidence?

This question aimed to provide Ideas for enhancing speaking opportunities such as working with clubs to give enjoyable and exciting events, podcasts covering topics of interest, and current audio or video materials can all help educators greatly improve their students' speaking abilities, another way is introducing public speaking and presentations into many fields of study, so students can acquire the skills they need to succeed, also by participating in workshops on self-confidence. Furthermore, fostering an environment that values effort and progress over perfection and marks encourages students to take risks. Teachers could additionally promote more powerful speaking by allowing students to speak during each lesson, and introducing open-ended questions to give them space to express themselves freely.

5. The data interpretation

The data obtained through triangulation from the research tools , namely students' questionnaire , classroom observation and teachers' interview in order to have qualitative and quantitative data , were analysed in the previous section, this one deals with the interpretation and discussion of the main findings that were gathered in order to test the hypothesis highlighted by the researchers in the first chapter.

First, the information collected from the students' questionnaire gives us optimistic answers, which supports our hypotheses. According to the results most of the students have a good level of English and attempt to speak in the classroom, while others never participate because of different psychological reasons such as stress and low level of self-confidence, that proves the first hypothesis which states that students with higher self-confidence will demonstrate stronger speaking skills compared to students with lower self-confidence, based on students' answers educators always try to encourage students to talk in class through using various speaking exercises. They also seek to foster a welcoming and comfortable learning environment in the classroom because they see students' self-confidence as an essential aspect of their personalities.

Furthermore, most oral expression instructors frequently remind students of the significance of having self-confidence to improve their speaking abilities; this validates the second hypothesis related to the awareness among oral expression instructors and first-year English students regarding the significance of self-confidence, in improving a better speaking performance.

The results of the classroom observation have demonstrated that teachers play a significant role in enhancing students speaking skills and overcoming their fear ,stress and low motivation by different positive reactions such as , giving them the chance to speak even with making mistake in an entertaining atmosphere , where they feel more involved and excited which result favourable feedback , this gives the third hypothesis validation which suggested the importance of teacher help for students to overcome their speaking difficulties by providing them with activities .

Regarding the results of teacher's interview, all of the mentioned hypothesis are confirmed according to the first one teachers stated that the degree of difficulty varies across students (check Q2 item). In the other hand teachers gave importance to self-confidence for effective communication in the answer of the fourth item (see Q4); this one conforms the second hypothesis, according to their role to help students build self confidence teachers suggested

different strategies which are listed in the seventh item, the last result is related to the third hypothesis.

To sum up , the discussion of the final results gathered from the three mentioned tools through triangulation method, show that good speakers are the most confident students in comparison to less confident ones, teachers in the other hand try several methods and strategies to raise their students' confidence and make the classroom a comfortable place for them to participate and feel at ease , in addition most of oral expression teachers inform them about the importance of self confidence in order to be a good speakers , and talk in front of audiences.

6. Recommendations and Suggestions

Regarding the significance of self-confidence on students speaking performance, the following recommendations are suggested:

- ✓ Students should practice speaking skills on a daily basis to raise their achievement level.
- ✓ Educators need to foster positive atmosphere in the classroom to inspire learners and enhance their self-confidence.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of the instructor to treat all students equally, fairly, and with care.
- ✓ The oral expression module provides students with valuable opportunities to practice speaking. It is preferable if there is a daily session, not once a week.
- ✓ Developing students' autonomy in learning has a significant impact on their self-confidence.
- ✓ Instructors need to focus more on psychological aspects of teaching because they have affect students learning process.

Conclusion

The gathered data is fully described and analyzed in this chapter. The findings from the teacher's interview, the students' questionnaire, and the classroom observation enhance our research by providing a strong proof of the influence of students' self-confidence on improving their speaking abilities. Thus, we can now state that First-year English language learners will successfully improve their speaking skills if they demonstrate a high level of self-confidence, with the help of their educators also, if they teach them the impact of self confidence and be both aware of its importance , it will make it easy for them to master it as a skill , and make them the best speakers .

***GENERAL
CONCLUSION***

GENERAL CONCLUSION

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Speaking English or any other language fluently in formal and daily situations is the main goal of foreign language learners since the speaking skill is considered the most important one among all skills, in addressing the challenges of learning foreign language skills, it was noticed that students' self-confidence is the biggest issue they face when it comes to speaking skills which lead to weak or ineffective outcome and linguistic competency, Students who lack confidence or have low self-esteem are less likely to believe in their own abilities, which makes them afraid to take chances when it comes to their academic progress for this reason, this research aims to find out the influence of self-confidence on improving students' speaking skills and to figure out the degree of confidence first-year students have in their ability to speak the language.

The present study is divided into two chapters; the first one provides a theoretical background that covers essential concepts regarding speaking skills and self-confidence including the definitions, characteristics, importance, and the role of the teacher. The second chapter is the practical part an explanation of the whole method was given, followed by a presentation of the data gathered using the research instruments that were employed, then moved on to analysis, discussion, and conclusion-making,

A mixed-method approach was used in the study to gather data and determine the importance of self-confidence and its effect on students' speaking skills. A well-constructed questionnaire was used in this study and given to the first year EFL students at the University Center SALHI Ahmed and an interview was addressed to oral teachers in addition to a classroom observation to support the hypotheses of the research.

The results revealed that most of the students and teachers agreed that speaking skills can be greatly enhanced by having a high level of self-confidence, the outcomes show that according to the majority of students in this study, the teacher's contribution to their speaking fluency development was determined to be an essential part, teachers should adopt a variety of techniques, such as small-group discussions, debates, one-on-one conversations , to help students improve their speaking abilities, consequently the obtained results confirmed the three hypotheses.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The second chapter ends with suggestions and recommendations, teachers should help learners become more confident and improve their oral communication skills. Students also must be accountable for their own educational achievements.

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights and offers responses to certain questions related to self-confidence and speaking skills in addition it is important to note that the current study's findings may be seen as the start of a new research investigation, this could offer the chance to conduct additional research on topics like learner accuracy and fluency, speaking skill performance, and self-confidence, and speaking ability, future teachers and learners should have an awareness about the importance of self-confidence , and try to improve it as a skill , by following certain strategies or the government should add a specific lessons in the curriculum that support this topic, the world is getting developed by many technologies and artificial intelligence that are possible to be used in order to make the whole learning process easier and enhancing self-confidence levels .

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APPENDICES

Appendices

People's Democratic and Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Ahmed Salhi University Centre of Naama
Department of Foreign Languages
Section: English

Dear student,

We are preparing a research on the influence of *self-confidence* on enhancing Students *speaking skill*. The case of first year students of English as a foreign language. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us in our research.

Please answer by putting a tick (✓), and specify your answer when needed. May I thank you in advance for your collaboration

Section ONE: student's background information

- AGE
- GENDER : Male Female
- Studying English at the university was :
 - a. Personal choice
 - b. Imposed

Section Two: The influence of Self-confidence in the Speaking Skill

1/Do you consider your level in English:

- a. very good.
- b. good
- c. average
- d. less than average.
- e. Weak

2/Do you try to speak in the classroom?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If no, explain why?

.....
.....

3/Do you keep silent even if you can speak English?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Appendices

If yes, explain why?

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

4/ How often do you participate in the oral expression class?

- a. Always b. Sometimes c. Rarely d. Never

5/ How your teacher react to your mistakes?

.....

6/ do you think his/her reaction affects your confidence in speaking English?

- a. Yes b. No

- If yes how?

.....

7/ Does your teacher try to raise your self-confidence to speak English in the classroom?

- a. Yes b. No

If yes, how?

.....
.....

8/ Do you feel comfortable when you speak in front of your teacher and classmates?

- a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes

9/ How do you feel when you are asked to speak in the class ?

- a. comfortable b. Stressed

10/ You feel more confident during:

- a. Oral expression sessions b. All sessions c. No one

11/ Do you think that a high feeling of self-confidence will enhance your speaking skill in English?

- a. Yes b. No

12/ Do you think that in the future you will be good speaker of English?

- a. Yes b. No

Appendices

Interview with Teachers:

Exploring the influence of Self-Confidence on students Speaking Skills

Introduction:

- Thank the teacher for their time and participation.
- Briefly explain the purpose of the interview: *to explore teachers' experiences with how self-confidence affects students' speaking skills.*

Questions:

01/How many years have you been in service?

02/In your experience, how common is it for students to struggle with speaking skills in your classroom?

03/Can you describe some of the behaviours you observe in students who struggle?

04/ Do you believe self-confidence plays a role in students' speaking skills?

Why or/why not?

05/ Can you describe some ways in which students with high self-confidence typically approach speaking activities compared to students with low self-confidence?

06/Have you observed any specific factors that contribute to students' lack of confidence in speaking? (e.g., fear of mistakes, language anxiety)

07/In your classroom, what strategies or techniques do you use to help students build their confidence in speaking?

08/Have you observed any specific benefits for students who develop greater self-confidence in speaking?

(e.g., participation, fluency, engagement)

SUMMARY

09In your opinion, what could be done at the school level or within the curriculum to further support students in developing their speaking skills and confidence?.

Closing:

Thank the teacher again for their time and insights. Briefly explain the next steps in your research

يعد تعلم اللغة أمرًا بالغ الأهمية للتواصل الاجتماعي، كما أن ممارسة التحدث والقراءة والاستماع والكتابة أمر ضروري، خاصة التحدث لأنه يعتبر المهارة الأكثر تحديًا في الفصل الدراسي. ومع ذلك، فإن الحواجز النفسية يمكن أن تجعل التحدث صعبًا، خاصة بالنسبة لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الانطوائيين. غالبًا ما يواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية عقبات لغوية، مثل الخجل أو التردد أو القلق أو الخوف من الأخطاء، والتي يمكن أن تعيق قدرتهم على التواصل بشكل فعال. يهدف هذا البحث إلى فهم أثر الثقة بالنفس في تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى الطلاب وثقة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في السنة الأولى بقدراتهم. تم استخدام منهج متعدد الأساليب، حيث تم تقديم استبيان لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في السنة الأولى في المركز الجامعي الصالحي أحمد وإجراء مقابلات مع معلمي التعبير الشفهي. وأظهرت النتائج أن الثقة العالية بالنفس يمكن أن تعزز مهارات التحدث بشكل كبير، وكانت مساهمة المعلمين في تطوير طلاقة التحدث ضرورية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعبير الشفهي، الثقة بالنفس، متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية، مهارات التحدث.

Résumé

L'apprentissage des langues est crucial pour la communication sociale, la pratique d'expression orale, de l'écoute et de l'écriture orales est essentielle, en particulier l'expression orale, car elle est considérée comme la compétence la plus difficile en classe. Cependant, les barrières psychologiques peuvent rendre difficile l'expression orale, en particulier pour les étudiants introvertis en EFL. Les étudiants EFL sont souvent confrontés à des obstacles linguistiques, tels que la timidité, l'hésitation, la nervosité ou la peur des erreurs, qui peuvent entraver leur capacité à communiquer efficacement. Cette recherche vise à comprendre l'impact de la confiance en soi sur l'amélioration des compétences orales des étudiants et sur la confiance en leurs capacités des apprenants d'anglais de première année. Une approche à méthodes mixtes a été utilisée, avec un questionnaire remis aux étudiants d'anglais de première année au Centre Universitaire SALHI Ahmed et des entretiens avec des professeurs d'expression orale. Les résultats ont montré qu'une grande confiance en soi peut grandement améliorer les compétences orales et que la contribution des enseignants au développement de la maîtrise de l'expression orale est essentielle.

Les mots clés : La confiance en soi, les apprenants de l'anglais, les compétences orales, l'expression orale.

SUMMARY

Summary:

Language learning is crucial for social communication, practicing speaking reading, listening, and writing, is essential, especially speaking since is considered the most challenging skill in the classroom. However, psychological barriers can make speaking difficult, especially for introverted EFL students. EFL students often face language obstacles, such as shyness, hesitancy, nervousness, or fear of mistakes, which can hinder their ability to communicate effectively. This research aims to understand the impact of self-confidence on improving students' speaking skills and first-year English language learners' confidence in their abilities. A mixed-method approach was used, with a questionnaire given to students of English in the first year at the University Center SALHI Ahmed and interviews with oral expression teachers. The results showed that high self-confidence can greatly enhance speaking skills, and teachers' contribution to speaking fluency development was essential.

Key words EFL students, oral expression, self-confidence, the speaking skills.