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*Exploring EFL Teachers' Strategies for Overcoming  
Language Learners' Anxiety and Shyness: the case study  
of first year learners at the five brothers Hamidet*

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

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## **Statement of Originality**

We , Fenni imane safa and Kandouci Sara , hereby declare that our master thesis entitled : *Exploring EFL Teachers' Strategies for Overcoming Language Learners' Anxiety and Shyness: the case study of first year learners at the five brothers Hamideté*” is intirely our own work and that we have written it 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 We also confirm that the present work contains no plagiarism and that any information taken from published or unpublished has been acknowledged.

## *Dedication*

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*All praise is for ALLAH the Almighty Who has given me guidance, strength, and patience to Complete my studies along with this work and to whom I'm grateful for the infinite blessings.*

*To my beloved mother, Thank you for believing in me and offering me unconditional love and support. I hope I can always make you proud*

*A special thanks for my Teacher Mrs. Belaid Bekhta*

*To everyone who supported me*

*SaFaâ*

---

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my parents, who taught me that women are not meant to sit still and look pretty- they are meant to lead empires if they want to. Especially my mama, thank you for being there for me whenever I needed you and whenever I needed help. Your only wish is to see me successful, and I want to make you proud of me. Hence, I am going to be just as you are wishing me to be, because when you are feeling good then so am I.

I would like to thank me, SARAH, thank you for being stronger every time you are hurt and never gave up.

My brothers, Kadiro my superhero who loves me silently and annoys me knowingly, and never lets anyone annoy me but him. I love you brother and I hope we will never be apart from each other because you are my second father in my eyes even though you are only 6 years older than me. Mohamed my genius brother whom I'm so proud to have him, thank you for being there for us in every trouble we make. My beautiful sister Asmaa, who is my best friend and my human diary.

My auntie Nora, or my secrets' box, who is always there by my side, loves me like a mother and keeps secrets like a sister. Someone who fully understands me like a soul mate, but she is my soul sister.

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates foreign language anxiety and shyness in students and its impact on their learning. It aims to identify the causes of these issues and how they affect students' participation in classroom activities and language acquisition. Additionally, it offers practical strategies for teachers to help students overcome anxiety and shyness in the EFL classroom. Data was collected through questionnaires from first-year secondary school students and interviews with their teachers at the Five Brothers Hamidet' secondary school in Mecheria, Naama. Findings reveal that many learners experience anxiety due to factors such as fear of evaluation and lack of motivation, negatively affecting their performance. The study suggests various strategies for teachers to support students in reducing anxiety and shyness, emphasizing the importance of addressing these issues for a more positive language learning experience.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

**EFL:** English as a foreign language.

**LA:** Language anxiety.

**L1:**First language

**L2:** Second language.

**N:**Number

## **General introduction**

Embarking the journey of learning a new language opens doors to new cultures and personal growth. However, it is not always easy. Sometimes, in English classes for people who speak another language (EFL classes), students feel anxious or shy. This can make it hard for them to participate and learn effectively.

This study aims to explore and address the issue of heightened anxiety and shyness among first-year EFL learners. These emotions serve as significant barriers that hinder effective language learning, affecting students' ability to acquire English, develop fluency, and participate actively in classroom activities.

Anxiety and shyness are common issues in language learning environments, especially in EFL classrooms where students are mastering a new language. Understanding the causes of these emotions and finding effective strategies to manage them is crucial for improving educational outcomes. This study focuses on first-year learners and the techniques used by their teachers to create a supportive learning environment.

In light of these objectives, the study endeavors to address the following research questions:

- 1- What are the underlying causes of anxiety and shyness in the EFL classroom?
- 2- To what extent does language anxiety impacts students' learning process?
- 3- What strategies can adaptable teachers employ to assist students in overcoming anxiety and shyness in the classroom?

Based on the problem of the study and the research questions, the following hypotheses have been put forward:

- Heightened levels of anxiety and shyness in the EFL classroom stem for factors such as fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety.

- Increased language anxiety has adverse effects on various aspects of the learning process, including language acquisition, fluency development, and participation in classroom activities.
- Implementing learner-centered teaching strategies, such as fostering a supportive classroom environment, facilitating collaborative learning opportunities, and providing personalized feedback, can effectively alleviate anxiety and shyness among EFL students.

The research methodology involves a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from questionnaires distributed to First-year students with qualitative data from interviews conducted with English language teachers. Through this comprehensive approach, the study aims to provide valuable insights into effective strategies for managing anxiety and shyness among first-year EFL learners, ultimately, contributing to a more positive and effective language learning experience. To achieve the previous objective, this dissertation comprises two primary chapters. The first chapter will encompass a comprehensive review of pertinent literature defining the key concepts related to anxiety and shyness and the main strategies to overcome these psychological barriers while the second chapter will focus on the methodology employed in this research, detailing its implementation, findings, and concluding remarks based on the research outcomes. Furthermore, it will propose potential avenues for future research.

## **Chapter one:**

## **Literature review**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Many recent studies have focused on the problem of learning English as a foreign language as quick as could be expected and in an excellent way; i.e., that the student will be ready to communicate in English as a native. While numerous studies have delved into various methodologies and approaches towards achieving this proficiency, limited consideration has been paid to the basic job of teachers in addressing the psychological barriers such as anxiety and shyness that hinder students' language acquisition journey.

Anxiety is a psychological and physiological state portrayed by feelings of apprehension, worry or fear. It frequently manifests as heightened arousal, restlessness, and cognitive distress. It can go from gentle anxiety to serious trouble, impacting individuals' ability to function in different parts of life. While shyness is a personality trait or temperament associated with feelings of social discomfort or apprehension, particularly in unfamiliar or social situations. Shy individuals may exhibit a reluctance to engage in social interactions, often due to self consciousness or fear of judgment. There are different levels of shyness, and some people may naturally be reserved, excessive shyness can cause problems in social situations and daily life.

Shyness has been widely researched and discussed in the literature (e.g., Buss, 1980; Cheek & Buss, 1981; Crozier, 1979; Jones and Russell, 1982; Leary and Schlenker, 1981; Pilkonis, 1977; Zimbardo, 1977). Stage fright and communication anxiety are two other forms of social anxiety that are frequently linked to shyness. It is possible that most of us share a common experience when it comes to feeling shy. Nevertheless, there can be differences in the occurrence and intensity of shyness. Extremely shy people may miss out opportunities to connect with like-minded people and build close relationships with peers or people of the opposite sex (Caspi, Elder; Bem, 1988), as well as opportunities to be heard by their teachers in the classroom (Friedma., 1980). Shyness usually shows up in early childhood as being wary of new people and situations (Rubin et al., 2009). Shy

children are hypothesized to possess a relatively low threshold for physiological buzz, as evidence by a constellation of physiological characteristics (e.g., faster heart rate, higher cortisol) that distinguish them from their more sociable counterparts (Miskovic, Schmidt, 2012). Among older children, shyness can also include self consciousness and embarrassment when they are perceived of being evaluated by others (Gazelle, 2010). From a motivational perspective, shy children are thought to experience an inner-conflict between a desire to interact with others (i.e., social approach motivation) and the hesitation to do so because wariness and socio-evaluative concerns (i.e., social avoidance motivation) (Eggum-wilkens et al., 2015).

## **1.2 Anxiety and shyness Definitions**

Anxiety is a common occurrence experienced within life. It plays a crucial role in human existence because all of us are victims of anxiety from different aspects. Students experience varying degrees of anxiety while they are studying. When anxiety is facilitative, it is considered as a normal phenomenon, but if it is disruptive, it becomes severe. Therefore, this is an abnormal behavior which is identified as a psychological issue. Anxiety is a nervous system-related subjective sensation of apprehension, nervousness, and worry (Spielberger, 1983). Although Scovel (1978) presented some arguments that it might need to be born in mind, the majority of students in an EFL classroom are aware of what language anxiety is and have already experienced strange emotions such as anxiousness.

Furthermore, shyness is defined as “a tendency to avoid social interactions and to fail participating appropriately in social situations” (p.596) by Pilkonis (1977). Zimbardo defined shyness 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). “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” is how Henderson (1992) defined chronic shyness. According to Cheek and Melchior, the term that is

most commonly used in everyday language to describe feelings of inhibition and anxiety in social situations is shyness.” Experience with it is remarkably common (Cheek, J.M. & Melchior, and LA, 1990)

### **1.3 Causes of anxiety and shyness in EFL classrooms**

It has been demonstrated that LA is not only pervasive among L2 learners, but also negatively impacts on their learning experiences (Daubney, Dewaela, & Gkonou, 2017). Under such circumstances, realizing the causes of language anxiety and shyness is undoubtedly the key to coping with it. According to Horwitz (2017), the most fundamental source of LA is a learner’s difficulty expressing themselves authentically in a non-native language, which can severely challenge their L1 identity or self concepts. Regarding LA and the L2 self, research has established that anxious learners are inclined to have low self confidence, self efficacy, and self esteem (Gkonou, 2012; Sampasivam & clement,2014). LA has also been discovered in those with perfectionism (Dewaele, 2017) and low tolerance of ambiguity (Dewaele & Ip, 2013).

Regarding interpersonal interactions, Yan and Horwitz (2008) discovered that comparison and competitiveness directly contributes to the development of L2 anxiety. Moreover, because L2 learners may find it difficult to express themselves in the language, their recognition of their competence as communicators in L1 may be so difficult that it comes across as a danger to them in the language classroom (Dörnyei, 2007).They are concerned about the occurrence of unpleasant situations, for example, exposing their disadvantages at making fools of themselves. Consequently, associated with certain learning experiences, this worry can evolve into anxiety about using the language in context.

Apart from the above, there are five more (thematic) causes of LA listed by Young (1991), based on her review of existing literature. They are L2 learner beliefs, L2 instructor beliefs, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing. In concise terms, these actually illustrate the anxiety the anxiety emanating from inconsistencies between the learner’s and the teacher’s expectations and thoughts of language learning and teaching. Furthermore, the

latter's harsh teaching method or style like correcting every error made can be problematic. Based on Horwitz's (2017) argument, it was argued that the personal and interpersonal factors may be more common and influential than the others. However, each of these issues highlights how crucial it is for teachers to comprehend the unique learning styles of their pupils.

On top of that, how many times have you or others told students to “don't be shy!” because shy persons do not feel in control of their feelings, it is simpler for teachers to say this than for students to actually do it. Zimbardo (1977) compares a highly shy person to having two mentalities in one head: that of the guard and his prisoner. Some students in the classroom are aware of the solution and want to impress their teacher, but they are unable to speak out because of something that keeps their hands down. Inner guard self commands prevent them from acting, such as “you'll look ridiculous, people will laugh at you; this is not the place to do that... Only if you are seen and not heard you will be safe.” And the prisoner within meekly obeys, choosing not to risk the dangerous freedom or unplanned life. (Pages 2-3). What seems to happen – for most starting early in childhood – is that the approval that one desires from parents at first, then teachers, and eventually peers, is given sparingly, if at all, and is contingent on behaving in a specified manner. As a result people hesitate to take action for fear of receiving negative feedback from those who matter to them. According to Zimbardo (1977) children are led to believe that their value and the love that they seek from adults are dependent on how well they perform. They have to prove their worth in a society that takes modest success for granted, bestows rewards sparingly, and magnifies shame on failures. Children raised in cultures that encourage shyness are frequently not given the opportunity to freely play with their peers or engage with adults, nor are they encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings in an open manner. (Pages 220-221). Zimbardo (1981) asserts that low-self worth, labeling, and shame work together to cause shyness, both explicitly and ultimately. In the classroom, Stevick talks about what he terms the *Evaluational paradigm*:

In every culture we are aware of, the majority of conventional classroom activities follow the Evaluational paradigm is made up of variants on a single formula. Using this formula, the teacher can say to the class: “now try to do this so I can tell you how well you did”, in a threatening or reassuring manner. Errors are called out – hard or softly, right away or after a little delay—and the way in which students respond to the assignment is assessed. Usually, the student leaves with impression that both of his work and himself have been assessed, either favorably or unfavorably. Even though we are providing the student with a “world of meaningful action”, our evaluation undermines his priority in it. If our assessment is unfavorable, we also question his suitability in that world. Page 23.

#### **1.4 The effects of language anxiety in students’ performance**

When anxiety gets in the way, students will be unable to communicate in class, put off completing their assignments, and move forward. Learners who exhibit “high apprehension” have the lowest self-esteem and perform poorly in their language classes. According to McCroskey et al (1977). Even highly anxious students may avoid circumstances where communications is necessary and ultimately face not receiving the benefits associated with social interaction. Anxiety is thought to be a highly detrimental element in language learning, especially in speaking classrooms, according to Xiuquin (2006).

Students who experience speaking anxiety will find it more difficult to pick up the target language. Xiuquin (2006) states that students who experience anxiety will find it more difficult to concentrate and process information in the classroom. Therefore, when the time of performing comes, the students will be affected by their inputs. Tobias (as cited in MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) presented a model that clarifies the effect of anxiety on learning (i.e. Tobias model) draws the differences among the learning stages, input, processing, learning, and output as to elaborate on some of the effects of anxiety in each stage.

The items represented from the students’ recollections are relevant to the input stage. Therefore, at this stage, students’ anxiety is influencing how well they are able to take in, concentrate on, and encode the external stimuli. For instance, in

foreign language learning, anxiety may appear if the language is spoken very fast, and then the learners will ask for repetition of the same sentences mentioned by the teacher. The same problems may be found in other skills of language. Based on Krashen's point of view (1985), the affective filter hypothesis is incorporated which leads to the factors filtering the amount of inputs in learners' memory, i.e., there are four effective factors which may affect foreign language learning. In the long run, the learners with high affective filter will have a remarkable decrease in their intake, and students with low affective filter will allow more input into their language acquisition process (Due, 2009).

Another effect of speaking anxiety which affects the students' performance is the processing stage. According to Tadjouri (2017), this stage covers many cognitive operations including organizing, storing, and assimilating the materials. Similarly, the learners in a foreign language learning classroom manipulate the unseen and internal items which are derived from the first stage. Thus, latency is the primary sign of an activity at the second stage. Anxiety worsens the cognitive processing on the tasks that are harder, reckon on memory, and is poorly organized. These latter are time consuming, i.e., the time spent to get a message or acquire a new lexis will be the indicator of activity at this stage for foreign language learners.

Tadjouri (2017) goes into more detail about the output stage, which is the third stage of speaking anxiety's effects. During this phase, it is likely that the learners will use the target language in conversation. This phase is something that relates to processed student performance. In other words, it is probably related to the aforesaid stages from the organization of the output the time spent on receiving the information. In this stage, the students can clearly show their abilities to use the foreign language. Clearly, the students' performance is measured and it reflects their learning as well. These three stages are much interdependent because at each stage something happened which is the result of the previous one. Tadjouri (2017) explained that a difficulty in performing at the output stage is probably the result of the surplus existed in the input or processing stage. This is the reason that a negative

correlation between foreign language production and language anxiety denotes problems at any of these three stages.

## **1.5 Strategies for overcoming anxiety and shyness in EFL classroom**

Moving toward to the intimate domain in the classroom, fostering an environment that supports it is likely one of the most effective things we can do to support our students. In calling for this approach, C. Williams states that “in an intimate situation, a person is released from cultural or institutional restraints and free to explore the use of the target language... Researchers think that the EFL teachers who strive for a more relaxed and intimate atmosphere in the classroom can anticipate better outcomes from their free conversation exercises. (p. 11)

### **1.5.1 Classroom atmosphere**

Sadeghi, mohammadi, and Sedaghatgoftar (2013) proposed a range of strategies for coping with this phenomenon which has many different aspects. One of the strategies to get over speaking anxiety is the kind and the friendly behavior of the teacher and his role in teaching classroom to create a friendly and great learning atmosphere where the learners make mistakes without getting afraid of being asked or evaluated. In a similar vein, Occhipinti (2009) stated that for improving the oral practice of learners, teachers may have to foster an in-class environment where the students can express themselves freely and understand their own positions. The learners must be supported by their teachers and both learners and teachers need to observe the mutual respects in their classrooms to have a friendly and acceptable learning process.

Moreover, Young (1999) reported that problems may occur when many language teachers realize and step forward for improving their learners' oral performance by practice because anxiety itself is caused by the oral performance of students throughout the activities which foster students' competence in the foreign language learning classrooms. Sadeghi, et al. make learners participate in the classrooms activities passionately. i.e., if the teacher is able to motivate the students in the right friendly nice way about how they are supposed to participate in the

classroom. This, undoubtedly, can give an inspiration to students as to reduce the level of their shyness while being in the language learning classrooms.

### **1.5.2 Mistakes and error correction**

A friendly learning environment is important for foreign language learners, but another tactic to help them overcome speaking anxiety is to score their performances without taking into account any small issues that may arise while they are speaking in class (Sadeghi, et al., 2013). Tebout, seng and Abdullah (2017) also asserted that the errors come from students are as a natural art of the learning process. The spot correction is truly harmful to students because it can stop the students' speaking flow and it would make students more anxious about language learning process. Similarly, Nerlicki (2011) stated that when students are stopped while they are doing an oral activity, it may discourage them and it may also cause that they feel more anxious to the language learning process.

Most of the teachers feel that it's an important part of their job to correct for students their mistakes, but it can actually inhibit students from freely expressing themselves. It is for this reason that teachers should:

- a- Wait until a certain level of trust has been established between themselves and the student.
- b- Wait until they feel the student can handle error correction.
- c- Take less obtrusive routes in their forms of correction.

### **1.5.3 Pair/group work activities**

According to Riasati (2011), applying pair/group work activities is a very good technique that could help students in a foreign language speaking classroom feel less anxious. The pair/group activities offer increased opportunities for students to participate and encourage them to speak more, express their preferences and dislikes as to get rid of language anxiety which is a big obstacle in language learning process. In connection with the matter, Lee (2002) pointed out that students who engage in a group work activity, they feel that they are not assessed because in the group work they think they are on communication. They do not think that they

are on accuracy and they will also be less concerned with the errors even if the errors are noted down by their teachers. Additionally, one benefit of using group work activities in foreign language classrooms is that students take an active part in carrying out the activity and have responsibilities for it. Overtime, students' levels of language anxiety will decrease in proportion to their level of group activity participation.

#### **1.5.4 Removing the teacher's mask**

It is among the most effective methods for assisting shy students in getting over their shyness and fear of speaking a foreign language. In what way? Some students will talk more openly with their peers than with their teacher, and if they do, it will feel awkward and uneasy because they are worried about the teacher's opinion of them. The inner voices will be saying things like, "what if I ask him a question and he laughs at me?", what happens if he finds out that I cannot speak English well enough to make coherent sentences and ignores me?. For this reason when interacting with students both inside and outside of the classroom, the teacher needs to be astute in how he treats them and take off his mask as much as possible. In order to foster a positive environment in the classroom, Stevick also suggests occasionally stepping away from the role of the teacher.

#### **1.5.5 Changing labels**

There is an essential distinction between those who think they are shy and those who do not, and that difference lies in the sources of their feelings. Individuals who identify themselves as shy will perceive it as originating from within, while those who do not consider themselves as shy will attribute the causes to the surroundings or circumstances outside of themselves.

Wayne dyer, in his book, *Your Erroneous Zones* (1976), calls it "The I'm circle":

1. I'm shy.
2. Look at that attractive group of people.
3. I think I'll approach them.
4. No! I can't.

5. Why not?

Because

6. I'm shy (p.100)

Since a good majority of students carry this label with them, teachers must help to get them to realize that everything changes and for them to affect positive change within themselves, they must be able to change what could be viewed as negative self-descriptors of themselves.

### **1.5.6 Creating intimacy between students**

A teacher must look for ways to create intimacy between the students. In order to achieve this, C.Williams recommends that teachers select “topics that will explore each student’s personal background such as childhood memories, vacations, dreams, etc.” (p.11). in addition, he recommends: partner switching, using pair work, ice-breaking exercises. By sharing intimate details with each other, students create an atmosphere of intimacy. Since students will usually sit next to someone with whom they are already familiar, some teachers like to have the students switch partners from the beginning of a class. Since rules of communication are subconsciously defined early in a relationship, the rule of using English is more likely to be enforced when interacting with new student. Another activity that can promote intimacy is the use of language learning journals, where students write down their genuine feelings about learning the foreign language after each class, and then share these entries with other classmates. In actuality, most students want to get better at English, but they frequently worry that they will not look smart in front of their peers. However, when they discover that their friends are in the same situation as them, and are hence in the same boat, then they are far more likely to use the target language. Using first names amongst students and between the student and the teacher is another method for fostering intimacy in the classroom.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this literature review has provided an overview of the multi-faceted forms that anxiety and shyness take when it comes to learning English. Getting to know why people become shy, one thing becomes clear; that factors such as fear of evaluation and previous negative experiences significantly cause stress to learners. Moreover, it hampers academic achievement by affecting areas such as competence in speech, including reduced language proficiency, inhibited communication, and limited participation; underscore the importance of addressing these emotional barriers in educational settings.

However, amidst these challenges, promising strategies have emerged from the literature, emphasizing the pivotal role of teachers in fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment. By implementing techniques such as fostering a positive classroom atmosphere, providing opportunities for meaningful interaction, and offering targeted support and encouragement, educators can effectively empower students to overcome anxiety and shyness. Additionally, incorporating mindfulness practices, promoting self-regulation skills, and utilizing technology-enhanced learning platforms have shown promise in enhancing students' confidence and reducing psychological barriers to language acquisition.

Moving forward, it is essential for educators and policymakers to prioritize the integration of such strategies into language learning curricula and teacher training programs. By recognizing then responding to the students' emotional requirements, educational institutions can create an atmosphere which supports acquisition of language yet at the same time ensures fairness in accessing language teaching opportunities for each student.. Ultimately, we can strive towards creating inclusive educational spaces where every learner can master the English language by working together and dedicating ourselves to the welfare of learners.

# **CHAPTER**

# **TWO**



**DATA COLLECTION  
AND ANALYSIS**

## **Chapter two: Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Interpretation**

### **2.1. Introduction**

### **2.2. Research Design and Sample**

### **2.3. Data Collection**

#### **2.3.1. Students' Questionnaire**

#### **2.3.2. Teachers' Interview**

### **2.4. Data Analysis**

#### **2.4.1. The Analysis of Students' Questionnaire**

#### **2.4.2. The Analysis of Teachers' Interview**

### **2.5. Data Interpretation and Discussion**

### **2.6 Suggestions and Recommendations**

### **2.7. Research Limitations**

### **2.8. Conclusion**

## **2.1 Introduction**

The second part of this research is field work. The aim was therefore to study the strategies used by teachers and first-year secondary students of The Five Brothers Hamidet secondary school at Mechria so to reduce speaking anxiety and shyness .A questionnaires are administered to english first-year secondary students, as well as an interview for two (02)first-year secondary teachers of english language. The main objective of using the student questionnaire and teacher interview is to obtain the opinions of teachers and students on how to reduce speaking anxiety and shyness in EFL and to answer our research questions.

## **2.2. Research Design and Sample Population**

In line with the research methodology of employing a mixed-methods approach, this study will conduct a descriptive interpretive case study focusing on first-year EFL students and teachers at Five Brothers Hamidat Secondary School in Mechria. This approach aims to gather comprehensive and varied perspectives on the subject. To achieve this, both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected from various sources. A questionnaire will be utilized to gather statistical data from students, while interviews will be conducted to delve into the viewpoints of English language teachers. The results obtained from these data collection methods will undergo thorough analysis and interpretation to provide robust evidence and effectively address the research questions. Through this comprehensive approach, the study endeavors to offer valuable insights into effective strategies for managing anxiety and shyness among first-year EFL learners, ultimately contributing to a more positive and effective language learning experience.

From a population out of total of two classroom of the first year EFL students ,thirty(30) individuals were chosen at random to represent the study sample.

## **2.3. Data Collection**

In this research two instruments are used to investigate; a questionnaire and interview. This two tools are described in the following part.

### **2.3.1 The questionnaire**

Since the main objective of this study is to investigate the strategies used to reduce anxiety and shyness in speaking, the researchers found it relevant to choose a questionnaire to collect data due to its advantages.

### **2.3.2 The Interview**

In this study structured interview was used. The purpose of choosing the interview as a second research tool is to explore teachers' views on speaking anxiety and shyness and how to reduce them. In addition, interviews allow us to better understand this phenomenon; they are therefore also suitable for exploring sensitive topics.

## **2.4 Data Analysis**

This particular section of the methodology chapter deals with analysing data gathered from EFL learners and EFL teachers. It is worth mentioning that data obtained from interviews and questionnaire will be qualitatively and quantitatively

### **2.4.1 The Analysis of students questionnaire**

The questionnaire is administered to (30) first year students of THE FIVE BROTHERS HAMIDET secondary school in Mecheria. This questionnaire contains(11) questions and it is made up of three sections.

#### **Section one: Personal information**

The first section of this questionnaire it includes (02) simple questions.

## **Section two: Speaking anxiety and shyness**

The second section it includes (03) questions.

## **Section three : strategies to reduce anxiety and shyness**

This section contains (06) questions.

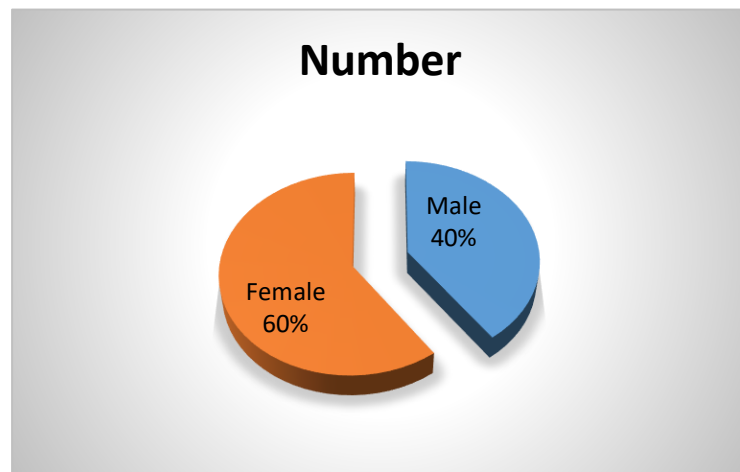
### **1.2 The analysis result of the questionnaires intended for students**

#### **Section one :Personal Information**

##### **Statement 01 :Gender**

Gender	Male	Female
Number	12	18
Percentage	40%	60%

**Table 2.1 : Students Gender**



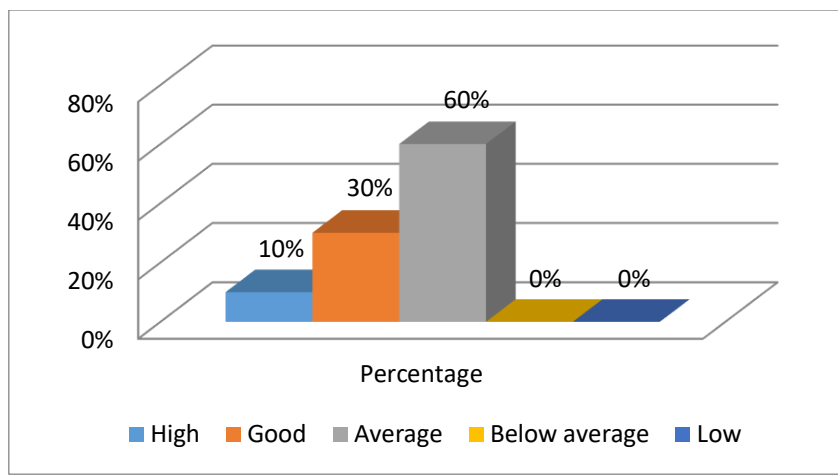
**Figure 2.1: Students Gender**

The figure2.1 shows that out of 30 participants, 60% (n=18) are female and 40% (n=12) are only male.

##### **Statement02:Students level in English.**

Answers	High	Good	Average	Below average	Low
Participants	03	09	18	0	0
Percentage	10%	30%	60%	0%	0%

**Table 2.2 : Level of students in English**



**Figure 2.2 : Students level in English**

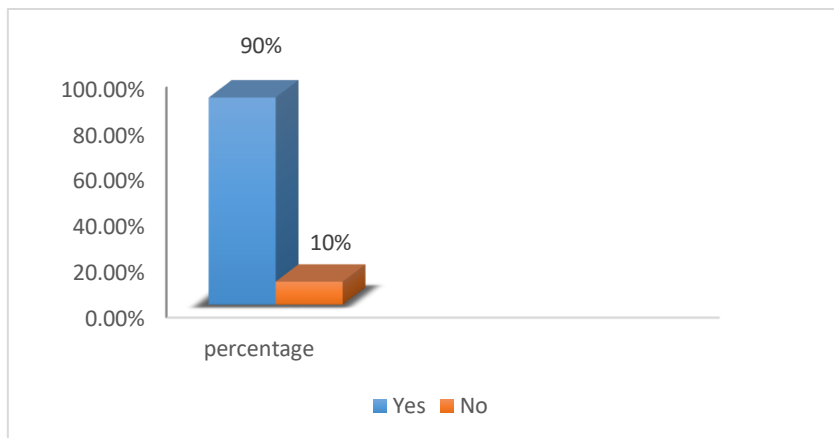
The numerical data above demonstrate that the heavy majority 60% (n=18) of the students believe that their level is average. 30% (n=09) think that their level is good. Only 10% (n=3) think that their level is high. This means that they have basic knowledge and signifies their interest and willingness to learn English.

## **Section two: Speaking anxiety and shyness**

**Statement 03 :** Do you feel anxious and shy when you speak in front of your teachers and classmates ?

Answers	yes	no
Participants	27	03
Percentage	90%	10%

**Table 2.3 : Students’ feeling about speaking in front of their teacher and classmates**



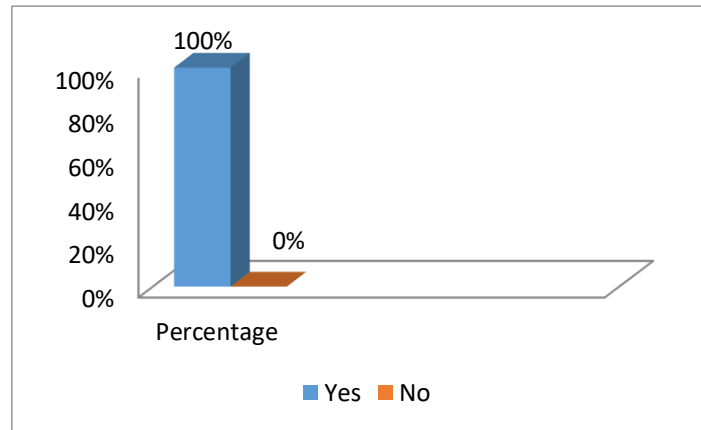
**Figure2.3 : Students’ feeling about speaking in front of their teacher and classmates.**

The results in the figure above indicate that 90%(n=27) of students feel anxious and shy when speaking in front of teachers and classmates, while 10%(n=3) of them do not fear or feel stressed from speaking in public. Which means that the majority of learners fear from talking in front of others may be because they lack of self-confidence or just afraid to fail when speaking.

**Statement04:** Do you feel afraid that other students will laugh at you when you speak the English language.?

Ansewrs	Yes	No
Participants	30	00
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 2.4 : Participants Perceptions when other students laugh at them while speaking English.**



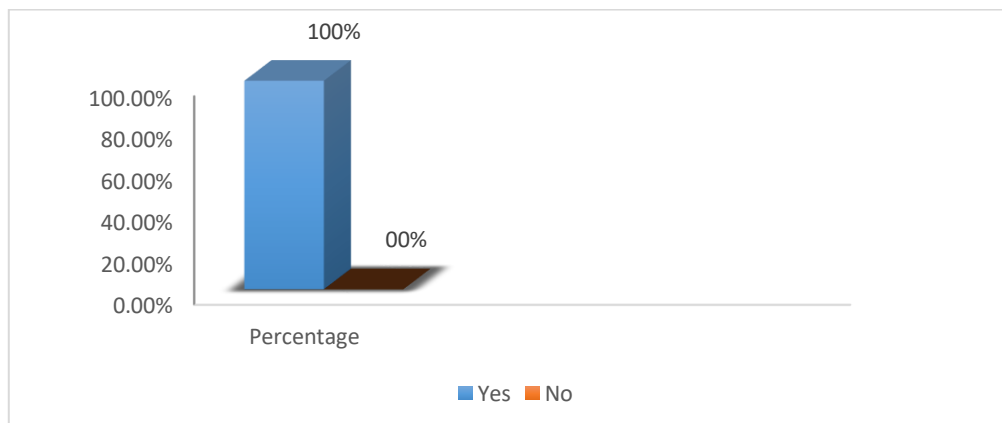
**Figure 2.4 :Participants Perceptions when other students laugh at them while speaking English.**

As mentioned in the figure (04), the highest percentage of learners 100%(n=30) afraid that other students will laugh at them when speaking may be because they didnt know making mistakes is a part of learning and they care about the others opinion. So; they remain silent.

**Statement 05:** Your heart beats very fast when you start speaking English ?

Answers	Yes	No
Participants	30	0
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 2.5 : Students“ Feelings during speaking English.**



**Figure 2.5 :Students“ Feelings during speaking English.**

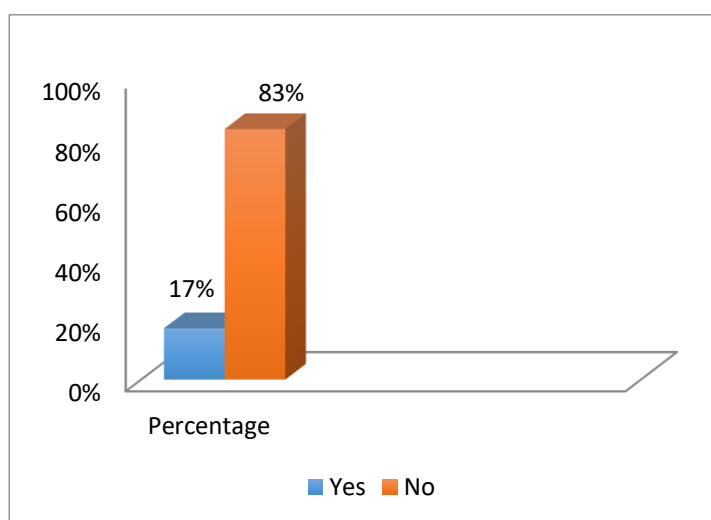
As mentioned in the figure(05), all the students 100%(n=30) agrees that their hearts beat very fast just they start speaking English, because it is foreign language and they fear of making mistakes.

### Section three : strategies to reduce anxiety and shyness

**Statement06:**When you are well prepared do you feel anxious and shy ?

Answers	Yes	No
Participants	05	25
Pourcentage	17%	83%

**Table 2.6 : Students" Perceptions when they are well prepared**



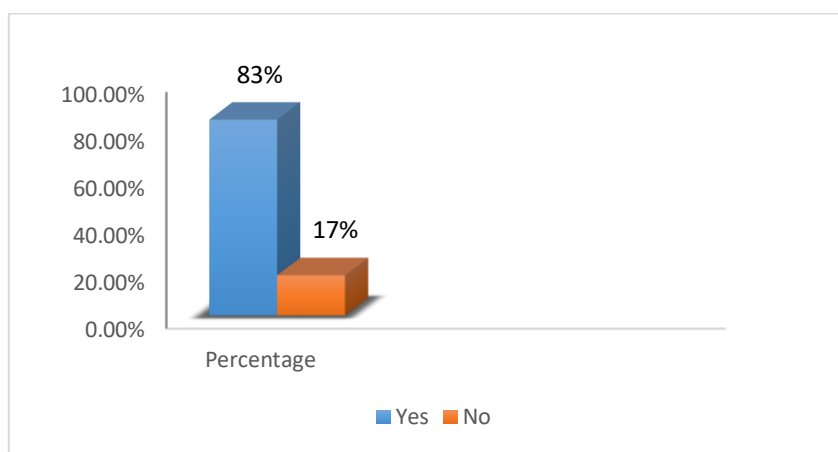
**Figure 2.6 :Students" Perceptions when they are well prepared.**

In this item,,most students 83%(n=25) agree on that preparation is a key of feeling less anxious. While 17% (n=05) disagree on that, Form this we retain that preparation is a key to overcome any psychological factor which may inhibit the learning process.

**Statement 07 :** Do you think having group work in class helps reduce your anxiety and shyness when speaking ?

Answers	Yes	No
Participants	25	05
Percentage	83%	17%

**Table 2.7 : Students’ Perceptions about group work strategy to reduce anxiety.**



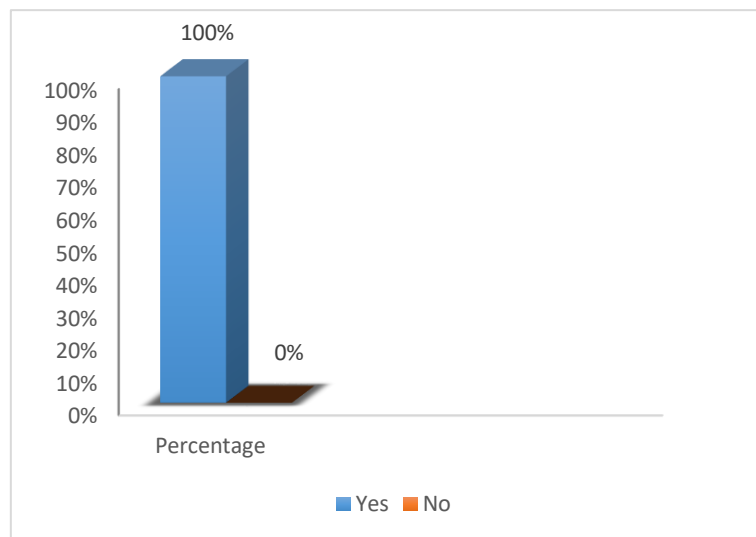
**Figure 2.7 :Students’ Perceptions about group work strategy to reduce anxiety and shyness**

In this item, 83%(n=25) of students said that the idea of having a group work in class helps reduce their anxiety and shyness in speaking. However 17% (n=05)of them reported that group work is not suitable option to reduce anxiety and shyness. From the obtained results it is noticeable that the majority of learners enjoys group work and considers it as helpful strategy to overcome their anxiety and shyness.

**Statement 08 :** Teacher’ encouragement makes you feel less anxious and more relaxed when speaking ?

Answers	Yes	No
participants	30	00
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 2.8 : Students’ Views about Teachers’ Encouragement during Speaking English.**



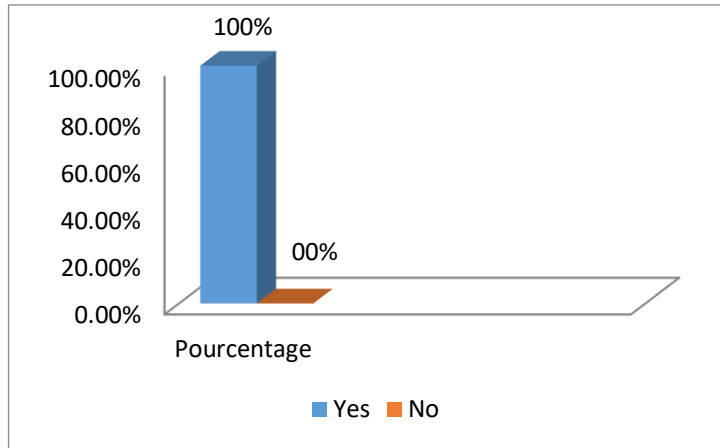
**Figure 2.8 :Students' Views about Teachers' Encouragement during Speaking English.**

This figure indicates that 100% (n=30) of students view teacher's encouragement as an effective instrument to overcome speaking anxiety. From the obtained results it is noticeable that all the students need teacher's encouragement because they become more relaxed when teachers use positive evaluation and motivate them.

**Statement 09 :** Do you think staying positive helps reduce your anxiety and shyness ?

Answers	Yes	No
participants	30	00
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 2.9 : Students' Perceptions about Staying Positive to reduce their anxiety and shyness.**



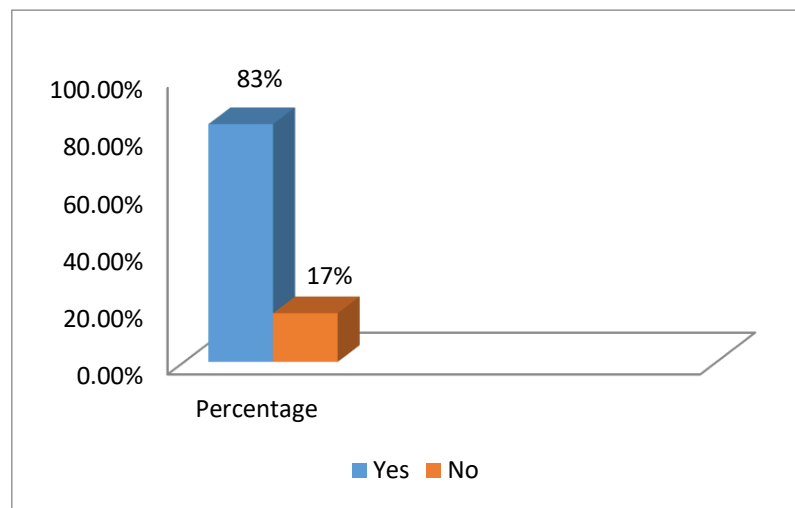
**Figure 2.9 :Students“ Perceptions about Staying Positive to reduce their anxiety and shyness**

This figure shows that all the students 100% (n=30) believe that staying positive is one of the best strategies to reduce anxiety and shyness. So from the results we can say that positive thinking can change the shape of ones brain and help to stop anxious thoughts.

**Statement 10 :** Do you feel more relaxed when the teacher tolerates your mistakes?

Answers	Yes	No
participants	25	05
Percentage	83%	17%

**Table 2.10 : Students“ Perceptions about tolerant teacher..**



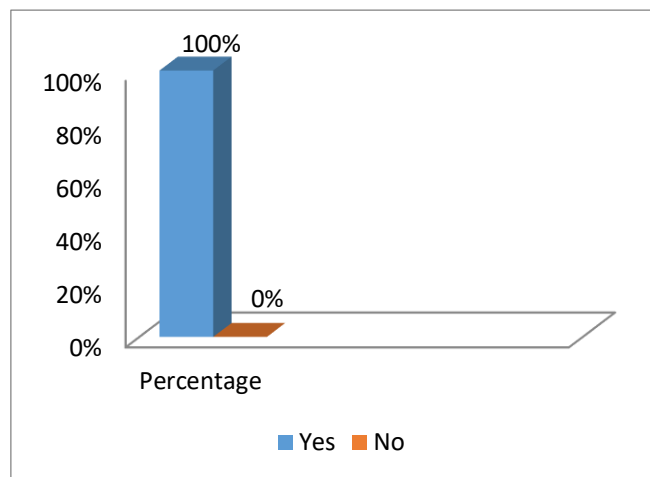
**Figure 2.10 :Students’ Perceptions about tolerant teacher.**

In the figure above, participants were asked if they feel more relaxed when the teacher tolerates their mistakes. Almost all of them 83% (n=25) said yes that they feel less anxious when allow making mistakes without punishment. Whereas 17%(n=05)of them said no .The results show that tolerance is a part of teaching and teacher needs to recognize that he needs to play a father role in treating his students..

**Statement 11 :** Do you think practicing helps reduce your anxiety and shyness?

Answers	Yes	No
Participants	30	00
Percentage	100%	00%

**Table 2.11 : Students’ Views about practicing as strategy to reduce their speaking anxiety and shyness.**



**Figure 2.11 : Attitude Students’ Views about practicing as strategy to reduce their speaking anxiety and shyness.**

As mentioned in the figure, all the students 100(n=30) answers “yes”. So according to the answers of our population practicing is the key to overcome stress and feel more comfortable, in addition practicing in classroom can improve students’ performance and establish directions for continued learning and growth..

#### **2.4.1.1 Discussion of students questionnaire results**

Students are asked to give some techniques to reduce anxiety and shyness, so their answers are as follows:

- Preparation is a successful strategy to overcome anxiety.
- Practice makes perfect.
- Self-confident helps to overcome anxiety and shyness
- Practice relaxation strategies such as a deep breath and positive imagination.
- Tolerant teacher helps to reduce the student’s anxiety and shyness
- Teacher’s encouragement is a helpful technique.
- Positive teacher-student relation.
- Provide a calm atmosphere.

#### **2.4.2 The Analysis of Teachers’ Interview**

This study was to investigate teacher and learner used strategies to reduce anxiety factor in EFL classroom and also how teachers can deal with speaking

anxious students. So; we found it relevant to speak with teachers about this phenomenon. The following interview was made up from five (05) questions with two teachers of English at Five brothers hamidet secondary school in mecheria; teachers were interviewed at different times and in different locations. The questions were directed obtain relevant information regarding language anxiety and strategies used to reduce student anxiety and shyness.

The questions are like the following:

**1. How do anxious students feel when they use English in speaking?**

The teachers give us three answers :

1. Anxious students are usually hesitant to speak, they are afraid of making mistakes.
2. Students with anxiety feel frustrated, they stammer, they lose words and sometimes they feel blocked.
3. Students with anxiety feel upset, embarrassed and they are always panicked when they speaking English.

**2. Do your students feel anxious when they are in front of their teacher?  
Can you set some physical and emotional reactions?**

The teachers give us three answers:

1. This statement depends on the students themselves, they are sometimes afraid of the teacher because they do not know his previous experience, they have been blamed, inhibited and they can generalize, all teachers would be the same and they would be sanctioned. So they feel anxious about the situation itself and the topic they are going to present.
2. Students feel anxious when talking in front of the teacher, so he tried to tell them keeps on, do not stop, keep cool and told them that learning comes through making mistakes.
3. Students hesitate, cannot express ideas clearly, try to tear up, rush to finish, snap their fingers, shake, breathe hard, make mistakes, repeat ideas, and forget ideas.

### **3. How does anxiety affect language learning in general and oral performance in specific?**

We get three answers from the teachers:

1. an effect of anxiety would appear in the performance of the students, slips of the tongue with errors, because they were consciously chased by a certain pressure which did not let them express themselves at ease or present their work at ease, the second thing sometimes, if this anxiety intensified, it led to catastrophic results, they go backwards little by little, they lose everything.
2. anxiety is something neglected and serious, it seriously affects the learning process and makes students perform poorly.
3. claimed that anxiety is a terrible psychological obstacle, it hinders the flow of ideas, makes the speaker confused, cannot let him think and immediately affects the way he learns, he feels bored,

#### **4. Do you consider any helpful strategies?**

- 1) preparation is a helpful strategy for anxious learners to overcome anxiety and shyness.
- 2) Teacher should create an atmosphere of discussion as if the change in class management is a circle.

#### **5. Can you provide us with your own used strategies**

All teachers have been answered in the same way since they almost have the same

- 1) Teachers should not interrupt their students while they are speaking and ask them to feel free, if there are comments they leave them until the end of the session presentation.
- 2) Teachers do not comment on students mistakes or pronunciation. If a student interrupts their classmate when they are speaking, they simply stop them and ask the speaker to finish.
- 3) Teachers help students by standing next to them if they are in front of their classmates.

- 4) Teachers try to tell jokes and talk friendly in a way that encourages students and helps them relax.
- 5) The teacher must be a facilitator in a professional manner, not only to help students learn, but also to overcome all the psychological fears they bring into the classroom.

## **2.5 Data Interpretation and Discussion**

With the analysis of the interview and the questionnaire at hand, this section delves into the interpretation of data and the discussion of the main findings to provide a detailed overview of What factors contribute to anxiety and shyness in the EFL classroom and how does language anxiety affect students learning and what strategies can adaptable teachers use to help students overcome the challenges ?

After analysing the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview, we find the following results:

Students are often anxious about being judged by their peers and teachers when they make mistakes while speaking English. This fear can stem from past experiences ,lack of confidence ,and the high stakes they associate with learning performance. Students feel they lack the necessary skills to communicate effectively in English this is often to insufficient practice.

Language anxiety significantly impacts students learning processes and outcomes .Anxious students are less likely to participate in classroom activities ,which limits their practice opportunities and hinders language acquisition.

Teachers should foster a positive and encouraging classroom atmosphere where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities rather than failures .This include providing constructive feedback and praising efforts .

The analysing of the data confirms the research hypotheses to a large extent.The main findings from both the teachers interviews and students questionnaires align with the hypotheses that anxiety is indeed factor effecting EFL learners. Fear of negative evaluation and lack of confidence are primary contributors to this

anxiety. Teachers are aware of these issues and actively employ strategies issues and actively employ strategies to mitigate anxiety and shyness; although there is always room for more tailored approaches based on individual student needs.

## **2.6 suggestions and recommendations**

Here are alternative recommendations based on the presented findings and conclusions

- Students ought to recognize the significance of speaking in acquiring a foreign language.
- Emphasis should be placed on honing speaking abilities through regular practice through preparation and engaging in speaking activities .
- Acknowledge that feeling anxious and shy while speaking in front of others is normal and part of the learning process.
- Encourage students to embrace mistakes as learning opportunities and foster an environment where students support each others learning without ridicule.
- Teachers should actively promote students participation in speaking activities within the classroom.
- Foster collaborative learning by encouraging students to work in pairs or groups to exchange ideas and perspectives.

## **2.7 Research limitation**

During this research, there was one obstacle that hindered the completion of the study the insufficient time provided for gathering information from students as well as the refusal of the concerned teachers to provide audio recording and instead opting to give direct answers which compelled us to write them down immediately.

## **2.8 conclusion**

In conclusion, while The theoretical chapter explored the definitions, forms, sources, and impacts of anxiety and shyness, as well as the correlation within EFL classrooms , the strategies used by educators and learners to combat speaking

anxiety and shyness. the methodology chapter detailed our structured approach, including the use of questionnaires for students and interviews for teachers. The subsequent data analysis section analysed insights from both parties regarding the effectiveness of techniques to mitigate students' apprehension in speaking English. Consequently, our study proposes practical strategies to address students' speaking anxiety, informed by both educators' and learners' perspectives. The findings underscored the significance of peer support, open communication, and positive reinforcement in alleviating anxiety, as well as the pivotal role of teachers in creating a conducive learning environment for linguistic growth and confidence-building .

# **General conclusion**

## **General conclusion:**

This study delved into the common issue of heightened anxiety and shyness among EFL learners, especially first-year students, and examined the strategies that both teachers and students use to manage these emotions. The main questions we sought to answer were: What causes these feelings? How do they affect learning? And what teaching methods can help reduce them? We hypothesized that anxiety and shyness are fueled by fears of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety. We also believed that these emotions hinder language acquisition, fluency, and classroom participation, but that learner-centered teaching methods could help.

Our research was organized into two main chapters. The first chapter provided a theoretical background, defining anxiety and shyness, exploring their causes and effects on language learning, and discussing strategies to overcome these challenges in the EFL classroom. The second chapter focused on the practical aspect, detailing our research methodology and analyzing the data we collected from questionnaires given to first-year students and interviews with English language teachers at Five Brothers Hamidat Secondary School in Mechria.

Our findings supported our initial hypotheses. We found that fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety significantly contribute to heightened anxiety and shyness among EFL learners. These emotions negatively impact language acquisition, fluency development, and participation in classroom activities. However, we also found that learner-centered teaching strategies—like creating a supportive classroom environment, encouraging collaborative learning, and providing personalized feedback—are effective in reducing these feelings.

Based on our findings, we recommend the following for future research:

**Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct long-term studies to see the sustained impact of learner-centered strategies on reducing anxiety and shyness over several academic years.

**Diverse Populations:** Explore the effectiveness of these strategies across different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to ensure their applicability in various EFL contexts.

**Teacher Training Programs:** Investigate how teacher training programs can equip educators with the skills and knowledge to manage student anxiety and shyness effectively.

**Technological Interventions:** Examine the potential of technological tools and online platforms to provide additional support to anxious and shy EFL learners.

Finally, an open question for future investigation could be: How do individual differences, such as personality traits and previous learning experiences, influence the effectiveness of strategies to reduce anxiety and shyness in the EFL classroom? This aspect has not been thoroughly explored in our study and could offer deeper insights into tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of diverse learners.

In conclusion, our study highlights the significant role that tailored teaching strategies play in alleviating anxiety and shyness among first-year EFL learners, ultimately contributing to a more positive and effective language learning experience.

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# Appendices

## Appendices

### Appendix 01 : Learners' Questionnaire

Dear students

You are kindly requested to answer the following Questions. Please, tick (✓) the choice that corresponds to your answer. Thank you very much in advance.

#### Section one : Personal Information

**Statement 01 :** Gender

Male  Female

**Statement 02:** What is your level in english ?

Hight  Good  Average   
Below Avrege  Low

#### Section two: Speaking anxiety and shyness

**Statement 03:** Do you feel anxious and shy when you speak in front of your teachers and classmates ?

Yes  No

**Statement 04:** Do you feel afraid that other students will laugh at you when you speak the English language ?

Yes  No

**Statement 05:** Your heart beats very fast when you start speaking English ?

Yes  No

**Statement 06 :** When you are well prepared do you feel anxious and shy ?

Yes  No

**Statement 07 :** Do you think having group work in class helps reduce your anxiety and shyness when speaking.?

Yes

No

**Statement 08 :** Teacher' encouragement makes you feel less anxious and more relaxed when speaking

Yes

No

**Statement 09 :** Do you think staying positive helps reduce your anxiety and shyness ?

Yes

No

**Statement 10 :** Do you feel more relaxed when the teacher tolerates your mistakes.?

Yes

No

**Statement 11 :** Do you think practicing helps reduce your anxiety and shyness ?

Yes

No

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**Thank You.**

## **Appendix 02 :Teachers Interview**

**Question 01:** How do anxious students feel when they use English in speaking?

**Question 02:** .Do students feel anxious when they are in front of their teacher?  
Can you set some physical and emotional reactions?

**Question 03. :** How does anxiety affect language learning in general and oral performance in specific?

**Question 04:** .Do you consider any helpful strategies?

**Question 05. :** Can you provide us with your own used strategies?

## Summary of the dissertation:

يستكشف هذا البحث قلق وخجل طلاب السنة الأولى في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ثانوية الإخوة الخمسة حميدات في مشرية، النعامة. يهدف البحث إلى تحديد أسباب القلق والخجل، وتقديم استراتيجيات للتخفيف منهما. من خلال استعراض للأدبيات ودراسة تجريبية، توصل البحث إلى أن القلق والخجل يؤثران سلباً على عملية تعلم اللغة ومشاركة الطلاب في الفصل. استراتيجيات مقترحة تشمل خلق جو فصل ودي، تجاهل أخطاء الطلاب، وتشجيع العمل الجماعي. يسلط الضوء على دور المعلمين في تقديم الدعم للطلاب للتغلب على القلق والخجل.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** استراتيجيات المعلمين للتغلب على القلق والخجل واللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، ثانوية الإخوة الخمسة حميدات في مشرية، طلاب السنة الأولى

Cette étude examine comment les enseignants d'anglais langue étrangère abordent l'anxiété et la timidité des élèves, en se concentrant sur les élèves de première année de la Lycée des Cinq Frères Hamidata Mecheria, Naama. À travers une étude empirique, elle identifie les facteurs causant l'anxiété et la timidité, tels que la comparaison et la compétitivité. Les outils de recherche comprennent des enquêtes et des observations. Les résultats suggèrent que ces facteurs entravent l'acquisition et le développement linguistiques ainsi que la participation en classe. Les stratégies proposées incluent la création d'un environnement de classe accueillant et la promotion d'activités collaboratives. L'étude souligne le rôle crucial des enseignants dans l'atténuation de l'anxiété et de la timidité des élèves.

**Mots-clés :** l'anxiété et la timidité ,stratégies des enseignants, anglais langue étrangère, lycée des cinq frères Hamidet à Mecheria, élèves de première année secondaire .

This study investigates how EFL teachers address students' anxiety and shyness, focusing on first-year students at Five Brothers Hamidat High School in Mecheria, Naama. Through literature review and empirical study, it identifies factors causing anxiety and shyness, such as comparison and competitiveness. Research tools include surveys and observations. Findings suggest these factors hinder language acquisition, development, and class participation. Strategies proposed include fostering a welcoming class environment and promoting collaborative activities. The study underscores the pivotal role of teachers in mitigating student anxiety and shyness.

**Keywords:** Anxiety and shyness,EFL teachers' strategies, , Five Brothers Hamidat High School in Mecheria, first-year secondary school students.