

English Language Speaking Anxiety among
Second-year EFL Students
of Mostaganem University



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Summary:

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has been widely researched over the last few decades. However, most research on FLA has focused on young beginner learners; while, scant attention has been paid to adult and advanced-level learners. Thus, this study investigates foreign language classroom speaking anxiety (FLCSA) among second-year EFL students of Mostaganem University by identifying its sources and major symptoms as displayed by the participants in the EFL speaking classroom. To this end, this study adopts a mixed-method approach whereby the participants' FLCSA is investigated quantitatively and qualitatively through a students' background questionnaire, a Modified Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (MFLCAS) questionnaire (Horwitz et al.1986) and a classroom observation respectively. The results indicate the existence of FLCSA among the participants. Furthermore, the sources of their anxiety include communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. Finally, the study also presents numerous anxiety symptoms demonstrating the student participants' negative affect.

Keywords: Foreign language classroom speaking anxiety (FLCSA), anxiety symptoms, anxiety causes

1. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that the rapid expansion of the English language has increased the demand to acquire good communication skills in English. However, learners of English often reveal a feeling of distress,

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apprehension, or anxiety while learning to speak it. Over the last few decades, the question of anxiety within the language learning context has received much attention. Nonetheless, most of the research on language anxiety has focused on young beginner learners and neglected adult and advanced learners who are often considered free of language anxiety due to their high motivation and proficiency. Such an assumption culminated in a veritable lack of research in this area.

This study is carried out to explore the affective state of Algerian university students when learning speaking in the EFL classroom. This issue was drawn from the fact that many classroom teachers have confirmed the apprehension and discomfort experienced by their students who were attempting to acquire and use a foreign language. Such a feeling of fear or anxiety becomes particularly even worse as students are required to speak in the FL classroom. The aim is to examine whether second-year EFL students of Mostaganem University experience FLCSA. Anxiety sources as well as its symptoms are also demonstrated. Based on these objectives, this paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Do second-year EFL students at Mostaganem University experience foreign language classroom speaking anxiety (FLCSA)?
2. What are the sources of the students' FLCSA?
3. What are the symptoms of students' FLCSA?

To answer these questions, the following hypotheses are tested.

1. Second-year EFL students at Mostaganem university moderately experience FLCSA.
2. Lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence and poor pronunciation are the main sources of students' FLCSA.
3. Silence, blushing, forgetting words are indicators that reveal the students' speaking anxiety.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Defining Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA)

Various researchers have examined FLA and dealt with it from different angles. However, from a broader point of view, Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) refers to the feeling of uneasiness, worry, nervousness and apprehension experienced in learning or using a second/foreign language. In this regard, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) defined *it as* "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning." (p. 284). In the same way, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1991) conceptualized foreign language anxiety as a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p.31). It seems, based on the above definitions, that anxiety is an uncomfortable

emotional state in which one feels powerless, nervous, and experiences tension in preparation for a probable danger.

2.2 Types of Foreign Language Anxiety

Psychologists make a distinction between three types of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety, as MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) refer to, denotes a more permanent personality characteristic. That is an individual suffering from this type is more likely to be nervous or feel anxious regardless of the situation he/she is exposed to. It is provoked by the confrontation with the threat. Indeed, such anxiety is a part of a person's character and therefore is permanent and difficult, if not impossible to get rid of.

situation-specific anxiety, however, represents the apprehension experienced by EFL learners in a specific or well-defined situation or events, such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Nonetheless, individuals who suffer from situation-specific anxiety may consider certain events as anxiety-provoking solely when given factors are present. For example, a student may be anxiety-free when writing an essay in English. However, when asked to write a similar essay in French, a second language, the same student may experience higher levels of anxiety (Pappamihiel, 2002).

On the other hand, state anxiety is transient anxiety. It refers to the sense of uneasiness, apprehension or distress that a language learner may experience as a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus such as an important test. It is worthy to note that people with a high level of trait anxiety are usually likely to get an increase of state anxiety, which may have cognitive, behavioural, or physiological manifestations.

2.3. Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety

Experts in second/foreign language education suggest that there are special features that provoke anxiety in ESL/EFL learners who in other learning situations might not experience it. Horwitz et al, 1986; Pappamihiel, 2002 contend that in a foreign language learning context, learners may experience anxiety which can be attributed to problems related to communication apprehension (e.g., difficulty in understanding the teacher's instruction), negative evaluation (e.g., fear of correction and fear of making mistakes) and a general feeling of anxiety (e.g., fear of failing the class).

To embark with, communication apprehension (CA) refers to the fear and anxiety that an individual experiences when communicating with people. Difficulty in speaking in public, listening or learning a spoken utterance are all demonstrations of communication apprehension. In the second/foreign language learning context, learners' personality traits such as shyness, quietness, and reticence are said to frequently trigger CA.

Next, test anxiety (TA), as explained by Horwitz et al., (1986) “refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure” (p. 127). Test anxiety is the tendency to become alarmed about the consequences of inadequate performance on a test or other evaluation, irrespective of whether the worries are realistic or not. Students with test anxiety often experience cognitive interference and go through a difficult time focusing on the task at hand (Rebecca Oxford, 1999, p.63).

Finally, fear of negative evaluation (FNE) is an extension of the second component (test anxiety) of second/foreign language anxiety because it is not confined to test-taking situations; rather it may occur in any social, evaluative situation, such as taking an interview for a job or speaking in second/foreign language class (Horwitz et al., 1986). It is also broader in the sense that it appertains not only to the teacher’s evaluation of the students but to the perceived reaction of other students as well (Shamas, 2006, p.10).

2.4. Symptoms of Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is manifested through distinctive symptoms. These involve nervous laughter, avoiding eye contact, joking, short responses, avoiding classroom activities, coming to class unprepared, cutting class, and crouching in the last row. (Baily in Young, 1991, p.430). As more studies have been carried out on FLA, more researchers have concluded that foreign language anxiety (FLA) often interacts with many other variables during the complex process of foreign language learning. These mainly include age, gender, self-confidence, risk-taking and competitiveness.

3. METHOD

3.1 Participants

This study was conducted in the Department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem during the academic year 2018-2019. Within this context, 50 second-year EFL students took part in the study. They were 19 (38%) males and 31 (62%) females, their ages ranging between twenty and twenty-one years. Taught by the researcher herself, these student participants had one hour and a half a week of Oral Expression class, all along their academic year. The major aim of the tutorial consists of practising and enhancing the EFL students’ speaking skills. The researcher has chosen second-year students purposefully to conduct her study. In other terms, students at such a level are supposed to have an intermediate level and to be more acquainted with the nature of the Oral Expression module than their first-year counterparts.

3.2. Instruments

To collect data, a mixed-method approach was employed. This includes a students’ background questionnaire, and a modified version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (MFLCAS), (Horwitz et al, 1986), in addition to classroom observation. The students’ background questionnaire consists of seven questions. They are all related to the participants’ experience with FLCSA and the

potential causes attributed to it. The MFLCAS questionnaire (Horwitz et al, 1986), which is a modified version of the FLCAS (Horwitz et al, 1986), consists of 22 statements. It aims to measure the participants' level of speaking anxiety and to pinpoint its main causes. Finally, the classroom observation was conducted on the same participants to cross-validate the data obtained by both questionnaires.

3.3. Findings

3.3.1. The Students' Background Questionnaire

1. Do you feel anxious /stressed when speaking in your oral class is needed?

Table1. Students' Responses on whether or not They Experience FLCA in the O.E. Class

| Yes | No |
|-----|-----|
| 35 | 15 |
| 70% | 30% |

This question aimed to investigate whether the student-respondents experience FLCA when they are required to speak in the Oral Expression (O.E.) class. As table 1 indicates, the majority of the students confirmed that they experience FLCA when they are needed to speak in the O.E. classroom. In parallel, only 30% of them denied that they feel anxious when speaking.

2. In which situation/ situations do you feel anxious to speak?

Table2. Students' Situations of Speaking Anxiety

| When you respond voluntarily | When called by the teacher to respond individually | When presenting in front of your class. | Oral tests | When you participate in formal discussions | When speaking in front of the other gender | Others |
|------------------------------|--|---|------------|--|--|--------|
| 11 | 28 | 22 | 20 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 22% | 56% | 44% | 40% | 6% | 12% | 10% |

The purpose behind this item is to ask students about the situation that evokes their anxiety in the O.E. classroom. As table 2 displays, 56% of the student respondents considered being called by the teacher to respond individually as the most anxiety-evoking situation. In parallel, 44% of them reported being anxious when presenting in front of the whole class. Similarly, 40% of the respondents confessed being anxious during oral tests. Besides, 22 % of the participants considered responding voluntarily as being anxiety-provoking. In parallel, 12% of the students confirmed being anxious in front of the other gender, 6% of them get stressed when participating during formal discussions, and the remaining 10% mentioned that their anxiety is evoked by other situations.

4. Why do you feel anxious?

Table3. Students Causes of Classroom Speaking Anxiety

| Lack of vocabulary | Poor pronunciation | Lack of self-confidence | Fear of making mistakes | Being unfamiliar with the topic |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8 | 15 | 9 | 22 | 21 |
| 16 | 30 | 18 | 44 | 42 |

This question was mainly asked to gather data about the reasons that stand behind the students' speaking anxiety. As displayed in table 3, 44% of the students attribute their anxiety to their fear of making mistakes, 42% of them associate it to their unfamiliarity with the topic, and 30% of them link anxiety to their poor pronunciation. In parallel, 18% of the respondents claimed that anxiety is caused by their lack of self-confidence, while 16% of them related anxiety to their lack of vocabulary.

4. Do you worry about making mistakes in front of your classmates?

Table4. Students' Responses on whether or not They Worry about Making Mistakes in front of Their Classmates

| Yes | No |
|-----|-----|
| 29 | 21 |
| 58% | 42% |

The aim behind this question is to investigate whether or not the students worry about making mistakes in front of their peers. As table 4 shows, the majority of the student-respondents stated that they worry about making mistakes in front of their peers. However, 42% of them denied worrying about making mistakes in front of their classmates.

5. Do you think that comparing yourself with other classmates makes you more anxious when speaking in the classroom?

Table5. Students Responses on Whether or not Comparing themselves with the other Classmate makes them more Anxious

| Yes | No |
|-----|-----|
| 35 | 15 |
| 70% | 30% |

This question intends to point out whether the students think that comparing themselves with other classmates render them anxious when speaking in the classroom. The findings obtained disclose that a large majority of the respondents (70%) think that comparing themselves with their peers

arouses their anxiety in the speaking classroom. However, only 30% denied being anxious in such a situation.

6. If you are suddenly called by the teacher, will you answer comfortably or anxiously?

6. Students Responses on Whether They Respond Comfortably or Anxiously When Called by the Teacher

| Comfortably | Anxiously |
|-------------|-----------|
| 19 | 31 |
| 38% | 62% |

This question aims to investigate whether the students answer comfortably or anxiously when suddenly called by the teacher. In fact, as Table 6 displays, 62% of the students confess that they respond anxiously to the sudden calls of the teacher; while, 38% stated that they answer comfortably in such a situation.

7. How would like your teacher to react to your speaking mistakes?

7. Students' Responses on their Reaction Toward the Teacher's Corrections of their Speaking Mistakes

| To correct mistakes directly | To correct indirectly | Not to correct |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 26 | 22 | 3 |
| 52% | 44% | 6% |

This question is meant to examine the way students like their teachers react to their speaking mistakes. As indicated in table 7, 52% of the students express their preference for direct correction; while 44% favour indirect correction and only 6% prefer not to be corrected at all.

3.3.2. The MFLCS Questionnaire (Horwitz et al.1986)

Table 8: Students' Responses on MFLCS Questionnaire (Horwitz et al.1986), Based on Percentage

| Statements | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| 1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class. | 50% | 22% | 28% |
| 2. I don't worry about making mistakes in English class. | 32% | 18% | 50% |
| 3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class. | 64% | 8% | 28% |
| 4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English. | 54% | 20% | 26% |
| 5. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am. | 52% | 20% | 28% |
| 6. I am usually at ease during tests in my English language class. | 36% | 26% | 38% |
| 7. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class. | 56% | 20% | 24% |
| 8. I worry about the consequences of failing my English class. | 62% | 22% | 16% |
| 9. In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. | 68% | 8% | 24% |
| 10. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class. | 34% | 22% | 44% |
| 11. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it. | 42% | 22% | 36% |
| 12. I often feel like not going to my English class. | 44% | 16% | 40% |
| 13. I feel confident when I speak in a foreign language class. | 52% | 26% | 22% |
| 14. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make. | 36% | 20% | 44% |
| 15. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class. | 62% | 20% | 18% |
| 16. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do. | 50% | 20% | 30% |
| 17. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes. | 22% | 18% | 60% |
| 18. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class. | 42% | 24% | 34% |
| 19. When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed. | 54% | 30% | 16% |
| 20. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says. | 58% | 18% | 24% |
| 21. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English. | 26% | 14% | 60% |
| 22. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions that I haven't prepared in advance. | 50% | 24% | 26% |

As table 8, demonstrates, a large number of participants reported that they experience speaking anxiety in the English classroom. Indeed, half of them (50%) agreed on the statement *'I never feel quite sure of myself when I may in my English class'* (item1). Similarly, more than half of the participants agreed that they get nervous and confused when communicating in the English classroom.

Fear of negative evaluation may render students less enthusiastic to speak in the FL classroom. The majority of the participants confessed that they worry about making mistakes in the English classroom. This is well illustrated when 50% of the participants disagreed on the statement *"I don't worry about making mistakes in the English classroom"* (item2) and agreed on the statement *"I get nervous when the teacher asks questions which I have not prepared in advance"* (item22). Significantly, however, a considerable number of participants (44%) disagreed on the statement *"I'm afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make"* (item 14). This reflects, in fact, the students' awareness of the significance of error correction; though they may differ in the manner they prefer to be corrected.

Furthermore, testing the students' speaking skills in a foreign language may evoke their anxiety. Actually, by looking at table 8, it is clear that a great number of participants confirmed that they experience test anxiety in the English language. This is well demonstrated when 62% of the participants agreed on the statement *"I worry about the consequences of failing my English class"* (item8). Moreover, table 8 shows also how most of the participants agreed on feeling nervous and frustrated during tests regardless of whether or not they prepared for them (item 3,6,9,11,12,15,17).

It is worth highlighting that the other items listed in the MFLCAS questionnaire (Horwitz, et al 1986) were related to general class anxiety, preparation and learners' competitive attitudes. Most of the participants agreed that they feel tense and uneasy when they speak without preparation (item7). What is more, almost half of the participants asserted that they get annoyed when they find out that their peers speak better than they do (item5,16). Notwithstanding, 26% of the participants provided neutral answers on whether or not they feel confident when speaking, and at ease during tests (item13,6).

In short, the participants' responses to the MFLCAS (Horwitz, et al 1986) questionnaire revealed that anxiety influences the learners' eagerness to participate in the classroom speaking activities. The responses showed also that fear of negative evaluation, apprehension towards tests and the need to be prepared all the time when attending the speaking class are the major concerns that affect the students' capability to communicate in the English classroom.

3.3.3. The Students' Classroom Observation

To cross-validate the data obtained using the students' questionnaires, a classroom observation was conducted by the researcher during the first semester of the academic year (2018-2019). This qualitative data collection tool attempted to determine students' behaviours indicative of FLCSA during the Oral Expression session. In doing so, the researcher relied on a classroom observation checklist.

Actually, the teacher/ researcher noticed two categories of students. The first category, which constituted the minority of the class, maintained good eye-contact with the teacher/ researcher. They revealed a willingness to volunteer answers and remarkable comfort and easiness while responding to the questions. When they started speaking, they did not look down at a paper. They also displayed a relaxed posture. This finding is congruent with Greegerson's (2007) study which confirmed that non-anxious learners lean somewhat forward and maintain a relaxed and open body position. In addition, these participants used a strong loud voice and smiled and laughed naturally whenever necessary. These were rated as non-anxious participants. The second category, however, which represented the majority of the class, resorted to silence. Despite the teacher's/researcher's efforts to prompt them, they remained hesitant throughout. This has already been approved by Horwitz et al. (1986) who argued that anxious students lack the desire to take part in in-class activities or volunteer answers.

Notwithstanding, silence was not the only symptom of anxiety that the researcher detected. When pointing at them to speak, the researcher could identify various reactions and anxiety-related behaviours from the anxious student participants. To begin with, one of the anxious participants made several pauses while speaking. He tried hard to recall his forgotten words. In addition, he wrinkled his nose and smiled a lot. Similar findings were already highlighted by Greegerson (2005) whose participants' signs of anxiety "consisted primarily of nose wrinkling when searching for words. Otherwise, tense facial muscles precluded any other type of facial expression, including smiling" (p. 391).

Furthermore, a second participant refused altogether to speak when called by the teacher/researcher. However, when the latter insisted on her, she replied by simply "*I do not know*". Notably, however, when the speaking session was over, this student participant explained to the teacher/researcher the reasons for her avoidance behaviour. She said, "*I like English. I have good ideas about the topic too. Yet, I cannot speak English in front of my classmates because they may laugh at me*". Essentially, this student's negative affective state highlights her care about social image and her concern with her peers' attitudes towards her speaking performance. Another source of her grievance and fear of negative evaluation lies in her belief that she should produce error-free utterances. This finding seems consistent with Greegerson's (2002) proposal that anxious learners tend to focus

on form rather than on content. This is why the majority of them prefer to remain silent than to produce an erroneous utterance.

Importantly, as a way to escape the speaking assignment, another anxious participant hid behind her classmate. Yet when the teacher/researcher pointed at her to speak, she started stuttering and repeating her words. She used very limited eye contact with the teacher and her voice was distorted as well. Indeed, this student suffers from high-level anxiety that affected negatively her speaking performance. Such anxiety stems from two factors that can be classified as linguistic and non-linguistic. Under the linguistic factor, this participant was anxious about making mistakes and worried about the negative feedback that her teacher would make on her grammatically flawed utterances. On the other hand, the non-linguistic factors constitute her failure to speak English in public, that is in front of the teacher and the peers. This finding is in agreement with Amiri and Putsch (2018) who carried out English speaking anxiety research on a group of international students enrolled in several Malaysian universities. They found out that students' anxiety was due to insufficient linguistic competency, inadequate knowledge of the speaking topic, in addition to other factors such as the participants' low self-confidence.

It should be noted that some anxious participants resorted to procrastination on speaking assignments. For instance, one of the students replied by "ask me later please", when the teacher pointed at her to speak. By such behaviour, this student wanted to be given extra time to think more about the topic and organize her ideas before she spells them out. Interestingly, some of the anxious participants blushed when it was their turn to speak. These were the shy participants who suffered also from communication apprehension especially in front of the teacher and the peers. Another sign of anxiety that the researcher could signal among the anxious participants was nervous laughter. Indeed, one of the male participants used to laugh nervously whenever it was his turn to speak. The teacher/researcher could notice that his laugh was not natural, but an artificial one. It served to hide his negative affect in front of the class.

4. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to provide an answer to the previously cited research questions. In other words, it aims to investigate whether FLCSA exists among second-year EFL students in Mostaganem University and to identify its main sources and manifestations. Therefore, this part is devoted to the discussion of the main findings obtained using the student background questionnaire, the MFLCAS questionnaire (Horwitz et al. 1986) and the classroom observation respectively.

The students' questionnaire findings showed that second-year EFL students in Mostaganem University experience FLCSA during their Oral Expression class (item8). Regarding the items they endorse as sources of their anxiety, they resemble the three variables identified by Horwitz et al. (1986), namely,

communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. Essentially, this experienced speaking anxiety derives from two factors that can be classified as linguistic and non-linguistic (item10). Under the linguistic factors, the participants reported as well that their apprehension was due to their unfamiliarity with the speaking topic and their apprehension and lack of sufficient vocabulary. These findings are consistent with that of Liu (2007) whose participants affirmed that lack of vocabulary was a major cause for their anxiety in English conversation classes. A feasible explanation for this is that students cannot understand others or convey their ideas without sufficient lexical repertoire. This is true for Wilkins (1972) who argued that "... while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp.111-112). Indeed, individuals can imagine themselves experiencing various languages; even without grammar, with a few useful words and expressions, they can manage to communicate. In the same line of thought, Schmitt (2010) also contended that "learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books" (p.4). Therefore, vocabulary plays a key role to enable students to use English and communicate with others.

Under the nonlinguistic factors, however, the participants stated that their anxiety was caused by their fear of speaking in public, i.e., in front of the teacher who may embarrass them by his/her negative comments and the peers who may mock at their spoken errors. Their apprehension was also due to their lack of self-confidence. Though this constituted a minor source according to the participants' reported findings (18%), the lack of self-confidence or self-perception still constitutes a major barrier that prevents the students from overcoming their speaking anxiety and enhancing their speaking skills. This was confirmed by Piechursha-Kuciel (2015) who argued that students who estimate their language capabilities at high levels tend to engage in communicative activities confidently and successfully. Yet, students who are dominated by perfectionist tendencies and negative self-thoughts tend to remain hesitant in their speaking classroom. This was affirmed by most participants (70%) of this study who stated that they feel more anxious when comparing themselves with the other classmates (item12).

Moreover, a considerable number of participants (44%) in this study reported that their anxiety was caused by their fear of making mistakes. Such a fear derives basically from their sensitivity to their instructors' corrective feedback. This finding is congruent with Ohta (2005) who confirmed that fear of negative evaluation was a source of language anxiety of Japanese ESL college learners. Likewise, Mak's study (2011) indicated that fear of negative evaluation caused speaking anxiety among Chinese ESL university students. Zhiping and Paramasivam's study (2013) also revealed that fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension contributed to classroom speaking anxiety of EFL international postgraduate students of a Malaysian University.

Furthermore, the data collected from the MFLCAS questionnaire (Horwitz et al.1986), which was addressed to the same participants who completed the student background questionnaire, displayed that a great number of students experienced FLCAS. This figures prominently when 50% of the MFLCAS questionnaire respondents reported that they felt anxious when required to speak in class. The students confirmed as well that their anxiety was evoked in situations such as being called by the teacher to respond individually, in formal discussions and oral tests. What is more, many reasons led students to experience speaking anxiety in the aforementioned situations. In other words, the large majority were anxious due to the direct questions asked by the teacher requiring them to respond individually, their lack of linguistic competence, in addition to the teacher's direct corrections of their errors. Comparing oneself with the other mates was also another significant reason that evoked the students' speaking anxiety and drove them into paralysis in their speaking performance. All these findings are complemented and seem to be congruent with the ones obtained using the students' questionnaire.

Concerning the classroom observation conducted in this study, its findings revealed that the second-year EFL students of Mostaganem University experienced FLCAS. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the participants manifested several physical and behavioural symptoms that indicated their struggle with anxiety in their English-speaking classroom. In this respect, Horwitz et al. (1986) confirmed that *"subjective feelings psycho-physiological symptoms and behavioural responses of the anxious foreign language learner is essentially the same as for much specific anxiety"* (p.126). The signs were noticed in situations that were specific to foreign language learning such as speaking with the instructor in front of the peers, while having formal discussions, etc. Besides, speaking anxiety was due to a set of factors: some of *them* "are associated with the learner, some with the teacher, and some with the instructional practice" (Young, 1991, p.427). In other words, the instructors tend to urge their students to speak by asking them direct questions, without even granting them to think and prepare. Then, the severe way of correcting students either embarrassed them so that they stopped speaking, or escaped from the speaking situation completely "a harsh manner of correcting student errors is often cited as provoking anxiety" (Young, 1991. p. 428-429). Students lacked sufficient linguistic competence with the English language, they lacked preparation and practice, teased each other and competed with each other. All these causes were associated with the students' participants and were reported through the findings of the three previously mentioned research tools.

5.CONCLUSION

The study was devoted to the analysis of the quantitative and the qualitative data obtained using three distinct research instruments. As a matter of

fact, the analysis of the students' questionnaire, the MFLCAS questionnaire (Horwitz et al, 1986) and the classroom observation (data triangulation) displayed that second-year EFL students of Mostaganem University experienced FLCSA when speaking in the Oral Expression class. Concerning the sources of their speaking anxiety, the findings revealed that the participants' anxiety was due to communication apprehension (CA), fear of negative evaluation (FNE) and test anxiety (TA). Regarding the symptoms of anxiety, the participants revealed many behaviours indicative of speaking anxiety which is related to the literature. Finally, the findings confirm the hypotheses suggested by the researcher previously.

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