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Investigating the Relationship between Socio-Cultural Factors and Student's

Reluctance to Speak during Oral Sessions

First Year EFL Students at University of Ghardaia as a Case Study

A Dissertation submitted to the Department in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a

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Didactics

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Dedication

To my beloved parents, the two shining stars in the sky of my life, who have illuminated my path with their warm and radiant light, I want to express my deepest gratitude.

I love you in every possible way, and I pray to **ALLAH** to bless you with happiness, health, and comfort throughout your lives.

Thank you for everything; I am forever grateful to you.

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With love and gratitude.

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Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "He who does not thank people, does not thank Allah".

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Abstract

This study seeks to investigate the relationship between the social and cultural factors and students' reluctance to speak, to find out whether these factors pose a threat or stimulate the process of developing students' speaking and participation skills during oral class sessions. It also seeks to provide a deeper and clearer understanding to the concept of social factors, which includes:society, family, peers, socioeconomic status, gender differences, in addition to cultural factors that include: religion and beliefs, values and customs and delve deep into the theoretical framework that encompasses these concepts. Mixed methods approach was used to collect the data required to investigate this study, including first an observation of EFL First Year students' participation and interaction during the sessions of Oral Comprehension and Expression at the Department of English at University of Ghardaia, an online interview conducted with four professors with previous and current experience in teaching the Oral module, and finally a questionnaire directed to a group of first-year EFL students to get their insights and viewpoints about the influence of socio-cultural factors on their reluctance to speak. With this, a deeper understanding of these factors and the extent of their influence on EFL students' speaking skill development will hopefully be achieved. The study seeks to conclude with a set of strategies, suggestions and recommendations as solutions to be conducted by educators for a future inclusive educational environment for EFL students.

Key words: Students' reluctance, socio-cultural factors, EFL students, speaking skill development.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: **E**nglish as a **F**oreign **L**anguage.

MKO: **M**ore **K**nowledgeable **O**ther.

OCE: **O**ral **C**omprehension and **E**xpression.

SES: **S**ocio-economic **S**tatus.

SL: **S**econd **L**anguage.

Socio-Cultural Factors: **S**ocial and **C**ultural **F**actors.

ZPD: **Z**one of **P**roximal **D**evelopment.

List of Tables

List of Figures

Table of Contents

General Introduction

Part One: The Theoretical Part

Chapter One: Speaking, Participation and Students' Reluctance

Chapter Two

Vygotsky's Theory, Socio-Cultural Factors, and their Relationship to Student's Reluctance to Speak

Part Two: The Practical Part

Chapter Three: Research Methodology, Findings and Discussion

Introduction

Conclusion

General Conclusion

Summary of the Major Findings

Limitations and Suggestions for further Research

Pedagogical Implications

References

Appendices

الملخص

Background of the Study

Numerous studies have established that speaking plays a vital role in the communication process across various domains, such as education, social interactions, and professional settings. Thus, people usually tend to speak in order to articulate thoughts, emotions, and requirements, as well as to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among them through the utilization of a comprehensive language system encompassing letters, words, and phrases, which enables them as speakers to effectively convey and elucidate specific meanings to the others as listeners (Rao, 2019).

In the educational setting, to speak means to participate. According to Chanda (2024), participation refers to the active engagement of individual citizens and/or civil society organizations in discussions, mutual learning, or collaborative research with political, administrative, and scientific actors. Hence, students' participation during a class session is an integral aspect of the learning process, by fostering interactions between teachers and students, encompassing dialogues, discussions, and exploration of questions and answers, as well as enhancing the overall educational experience.

However, many studies believed that there are some factors that affect the students' speaking process, as well as, their academic performance, interaction, and participation during the class, as they may sometimes be the main reason that the students based on to decide when to communicate or remain silent. Social and cultural factors are among those factors, represented by societal influences, family dynamics, educational experiences, gender differences, socioeconomic status as well as religious beliefs and cultural values. All can impact the individual's ability to communicate effectively (Palmes, 2023).

Among the previous studies that aimed to investigate this phenomenon were a study conducted by Amiri and Karfa (2022) that focused on exploring the impact of the learning environment on the academic achievement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. The researchers employed open-ended questionnaire and interviews with first-year students to examine the relationship between socio-cultural factors and environmental factors in influencing students' academic performance. The findings of the research showed that students' academic achievements were significantly positively/negatively linked with the environmental factors, namely societal, home/family and school/classroom variables. The findings also revealed that the more highly sophisticated the social environment is, the more likely it is to foster EFL students' academic achievements. In addition, the study discussed the similarity that exists between the students' cultures and the successful learning. The study also showed that the development of EFL proficiency is a product of contextual factors' influence. As a result, the study concluded with several implications to enhance students' academic performance as well as improving the learning environment atmosphere (Amiri & El-karfa, 2022).

Another study was conducted by Tofi, Simon Ternenge Cln, Mnla (2021) in which they focused on exploring the correlation between socio-cultural and economic factors on the academic performance of undergraduates in the Department of Library and Information Science at Benue State University, Makurdi. The researchers utilized a questionnaire as a data collection tool to investigate these factors. The research employed a sample size of 282 participants selected using proportionate stratified random sampling method from a population of 951 students. The findings of the study revealed several significant points. Firstly, the presence of night clubs and drinking bars near the university had a negative impact on the academic performance of the students. Additionally, excessive chatting on social media with friends was found to negatively affect the academic performance of most

2

students. Cultural factors, such as religious practices within students' families, cultural festivals, cultural dress codes, and the home environment, were found to correlate with the academic performance of undergraduates. Economic factors, including the economic status of students' families, increased prices of goods in the labor market, and the high cost of books and reading materials, also correlated with the academic performance of students in the Department of Library and Information Science. As a result, to this study many recommendations were made based on those findings (Tofi et al.,2021).

Moreover, in 2022 Zil Hasnain and Ayaz Muhammad Khan conducted a study in Punjab, Pakistan, focusing on the impact of social factors on students' achievement. The researchers aimed to analyze and explore how social factors influence both social satisfaction and academic achievement among students. To gather data, Hasnain and Muhammad Khan employed a questionnaire which was administered to a sample of 777 students from six different universities in Punjab. The study findings indicated that social support and gender discrimination significantly affected both the social satisfaction and academic achievement of students. Additionally, the researchers discovered that community factors had a minor, yet significant, impact on students' academic performance (Zil Hasnain et al., 2022).

This phenomenon was investigated in another thesis titled "Influence of Socio-cultural Factors on Students" Participation in Secondary School Education in Pokot Central district, Kenya" was conducted by Andiema (2021) to investigate the influence of socio-cultural factors on students' participation in secondary school education in Pokot Central District. The socio-cultural factors investigated include; circumcision practices, values inculcated during child rearing practices, social roles, early marriages and pregnancy. The study employed descriptive survey design. The target population was all the forty (40) head teachers, thirty-five (35) class teachers and one thousand six hundred (1600) students in Pokot Central District. The instruments used were mainly questionnaires and interview

guide. The study found out that socio-cultural factors such as circumcision practices and early marriages were the major cause of low participation of students in secondary education particularly the girls. In view of the findings, it was recommended that parents and communities should be sensitized on the need for their children to acquire education and particularly for girls. As well as reducing the early marriages and fighting the sexual harassment. the government, through the Teachers Service Commission, should employ more female teachers in the school to act as role models to the girls hence encouraging them to study, in addition to some suggestions related to the topic (Andiema, 2021).

Motivation

Mastering the skill of speaking is an essential component of the learning and personal development process which requires significant effort from students and also necessitates external support. To effectively acquire this skill, whether in an educational setting or in everyday life, students must first identify the factors that may impact the learning process such as the socio-cultural factors, which are crucial for achieving better and faster outcomes. Thus, students would be able to improve their ability of sharing their opinions freely, enhance self-confidence, communicate effectively, comprehend others clearly, activate critical thinking skills and solve problems.

Statement of the Problem

This research problem aims to understand and investigate the relationship between socio-cultural factors and students' process of speaking English as a Foreign Language (EFL) among first-year students to determine to which extent these factors impact students' performance during oral session.

Statement of the Purpose

This research aims to achieve several objectives and make contributions to the scientific literature in the following ways:

1. Gain a deeper understanding of socio-cultural factors from an educational perspective.

2. Shed light on how socio-cultural factors can impact EFL students' performance during oral sessions.

3. Investigate and explore the relationship between socio-cultural factors and the reluctance of EFL students to speak at University of Ghardaia.

Research Questions

In order to prove the validity of this hypothesis, the following questions are raised:

1. What are the socio-cultural factors that affect the learning process?

2. How can these factors contribute to EFL first year students' reluctance to develop their speaking skill during oral sessions?

The Framework

Vygotsky's Theory

The work of Vygotsky has become the foundation of many researchers. Vygotsky has focused on the role of the social environment and interaction with others in shaping the process of learning and individual growth. This theory indicated that learning is not only an individual process, but it is developed through social interactions and cooperation with others. According to Vygotsky, individuals learn by drawing on the experiences and knowledge they share with other individuals in their social environment. He stated that the role of others, whether peers or professors, is to provide support, guidance, and motivate

students to communicate.

Research Hypothesis

Based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the following hypothesis is raised:

➤ There is a relationship between the socio-cultural factors and students' reluctance to develop their speaking skill during oral sessions.

The Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation includes two parts. The first is theoretical and the second is practical. The theoretical part is divided into two chapters: the first includes the definition of speaking as a skill, its importance, characteristics, and challenges. As this part is also about reasons of speaking and speaking reluctance. The second chapter includes a definition of Vygotsky's theory, a definition of socio- culture factors, their types, their contribution to EFL learning process, their relationship with students' reluctance to speak, and finally strategies to remedy this reluctance. While the second part, the Practical part, includes the research design, approach, method, techniques and the sample that will be used to collect and analyze the data.

Research Design and Methodology

This research is based on various approaches, methods, and techniques in order to collect, analyze, and present the data:

Approach: Mixed methods.

Method: (Quantitative / Qualitative) to provide more comprehensive about the Socio-cultural factors and its relationship on student's reluctance to speak.

Techniques:

Questionnaire: addressed to first year EFL students at university of Ghardaïa, to get their point of view about to which extent do they think that the socio-cultural background influences their oral participation.

Online Interview: with Oral module's teachers to get their insights about the participation of the students during the session.

Observation: to describe students' interactions with each other and how do they response to teachers' questions during oral session.

Limitations of the Study

When conducting any study, there might be some limitations to take into consideration. The obstacles faced in this research were:

1. Students' absences.

2. Difficulty in scheduling on-site interviews with teachers due to their busy schedules.

3. Limited time for conducting more observation sessions in oral module.

Chapter One

Speaking, Participation and Students' Reluctance

Speaking is an essential means of communication that helps in exchanging ideas and knowledge between individuals. In the context of education, speaking is one of the essential elements of students' interaction with academic content and with each other. It plays an important role in enhancing students' participation and interaction in the classroom. Teaching the speaking skill is vital in the learning process, as it contributes to developing students' abilities to express themselves clearly and confidently, as it also helps in improving students' listening and critical thinking skills. However, based on Rao (2019) There are several reasons why students may avoid speaking in class, including shyness, socialization, and anxiety about criticism or retaliation from their classmates. In addition, they may have difficulty organizing their ideas and presenting them logically and clearly, which makes them feel nervous and pressured when speaking in front of others. Therefore, teachers should direct efforts towards encouraging students to speak and providing them with support and guidance to overcome these difficulties.

1.1 Definition of Speaking

Speaking is the spoken word through which the speaker expresses the ideas that are in his mind, and the feelings that are rising in his chest (Tram, 2024, p.40). In other words, speaking is the process of using the spoken word to communicate ideas, thoughts, and emotions. It involves the use of language and vocalization to convey meaning and express oneself to others. Through speaking, a speaker can share information, engage in conversation, persuade others, entertain, or simply convey their thoughts and feelings (Rao,2019).

"Speaking means the activity involves two or more people in whom the participants are both hearers and speakers having to react to whatever they hear and make their contribution a high speed, so each participant has intention or a set of intention that he wants." (Laksana,

2016, p 5).

1.1.1 Speaking as a Skill

Speaking as a skill refers to the ability to orally and effectively exchange ideas, information, thoughts and feelings between individuals. According to Abd EL Fattah Torky (2006), speaking is students' ability to express themselves orally, coherently, fluently and appropriately in a given meaningful context to serve both transactional and interactional purposed using correct pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and adopting the pragmatic and discourse rules of the spoken language (p.13). In other words, according to him, students are required to show mastery of the following sub competencies/ skills:

1.1.1.1 Linguistic Competence: To understand and use a language effectively through exposure to the language. That is, by listening, speaking, reading or writing and using intelligible pronunciation, following grammatical rules accurately, and using relevant and adequately appropriate range of vocabulary.

1.1.1.2 Discourse Competence: To effectively communicate and maintain a coherent conversation that extends beyond individual sentences, by using appropriate discourse markers and transitions and rhetorical devices to create logical connection between ideas.

1.1.1.3 Pragmatic Competence: To communicate effectively by using the language appropriately in social contexts, as it includes; the awareness to the cultural differences such as styles of communication, forbidden words, social and cultural norms to avoid such embracement, using politeness markers such as please, sorry, thank you, when its necessary within communication, in addition to following the cooperative principles of conversation such as being honest, relevant, informative and clear which help ensuring successful communication (Torky, 2006).

1.2 The Importance of the Speaking Skill

The speaking skill is one of the crucial ways to communicate and participate effectively with other people to convey ideas and feelings clearly. It is also considered one of the most important factors influencing academic performance. According to Nyagah (2023) English-speaking skill has many advantages on its speakers that may be listed as follow:

1.2.1 Enhanced Job Opportunities and Communication

English is the primary international language for business communication. Employers are more likely to hire individuals with strong English-speaking skills as they can effectively communicate with customers and colleagues and understand instructions given in a foreign language.

1.2.2 Increased Confidence

Those with strong English-speaking skills often exhibit higher levels of confidence when speaking in front of groups or interacting with people from different cultures. This can create a positive impression on employers and increase job prospects.

1.2.3 Expanded Social Networking

Many social networking platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, predominantly use English. Having strong English-speaking skills allow individuals to make more connections and build personal and professional networks more quickly.

1.2.4 Cultural Understanding

English is spoken in numerous countries worldwide, and studying its nuances can provide individuals with a better understanding of different cultures. This facilitates doing business with people from diverse backgrounds and enables greater appreciation of their perspectives.

1.2.5 Increased Mobility

Proficient English-speaking skills make it easier for individuals to find work opportunities abroad. This opens up a range of possibilities for international careers and

personal growth.

1.3 Characteristics of Speaking Skill

According to Harroug (2020), speaking is a challenging skill to master, and learners of a foreign language aspire to achieve fluency and accuracy in their spoken communication. Proficiency in speaking skills is typically characterized by several key features, including proficient use of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Thus, he argued that these elements collectively contribute to effective and successful spoken performance in a language as follows:

1.3.1 Fluency

The primary objective of teaching speaking is to develop oral fluency, which is the main characteristic of a speaker's performance. Fluency is the ability to express oneself clearly, coherently, and accurately without excessive hesitation, as it ensures that communication remains effective and engaging. To achieve fluency, teachers should encourage learners to use language freely to express their ideas, rather than imitating a specific model. It is worth noting that fluency does not solely depend on speaking at a fast pace. Native speakers also pause at times to allow their interlocutors to comprehend their message. However, excessive pausing indicates speaking difficulties. In such cases, learners can employ "tricks" or production strategies to fill pauses, such as using pause fillers like "uh" and "um," vague expressions like "sort of" and "I mean," or repeating a word during a pause (Harroug,2020).

1.3.2 Accuracy

While fluency is important, accuracy should not be overlooked. Many language learners prioritize fluency and neglect the importance of accuracy. However, as Harroug (2020) stated without accurate language production, speakers may not be understood, and their listeners may lose interest.

1.3.3 Grammar

Grammatical accuracy pertains to learners' ability to use a range of grammatical structures appropriately. It involves constructing utterances of varying lengths and complexity, as well as, using subordinating clauses effectively. important to note that the grammar of spoken language differs from that of written language (Harroug, 2020).

1.3.4 Vocabulary

Based on point of view of Harroug (2020) Vocabulary selection is crucial for effective speaking. Students often struggle to express their intended meaning due to a lack of appropriate vocabulary. They may also misuse words, such as synonyms that have different contextual meanings. Therefore, students need to develop the ability to use words and expressions accurately.

1.3.5 Pronunciation

English pronunciation is often seen as challenging by both native and non-native speakers. To improve speaking skills in English, learners should practice overall pronunciation. They should be familiar with different sounds, their articulation points in the mouth, word stress patterns, and intonation patterns. Developing awareness of these aspects helps learners speak English effectively and enhances their comprehension of spoken English (Harroug,2020).

1.4 Challenges of Speaking Skill

According to Belhabib (2014), EFL learners often encounter some difficulties while dealing with such a difficult skill. Even those who have a clear idea about the language system face the same problems. Additionally, there are four main problems in getting students speak in Foreign language in the classroom (Bieńkowska et al.,2019).

1.4.1 Inhibition

Risadi et al., (2020) "The first problem that the students often encounter is inhibition"

(p.52) When students want to participate in the classroom, many of them experience inhibition that is caused by many issues as shyness and fear of making mistakes (Bouhasoun,2019).

1.4.2 Nothing to Say

When students are obliged to share their thoughts and talk about a given topic, most of them prefer to keep silent while others might say, "I have no idea" or "No comment". These expressions are due to the lack of motivation in expressing themselves on the chosen topic. The teacher may ask his students to talk about an uncongenial topic or about an unknown subject, thus, they have nothing to say whether in the native language or foreign one (Bouhassoun,2019).

1.4.3 Low or Uneven Participation

According to Bouhassoun (2019) Low participation is about the amount of each student's time of talking. However, some students tend to be dominant and take the place of others who prefer to keep silent or they are uncertain whether what they will say is correct or not and the situation will get worse. Therefore, a minority of talkative participants dominates classroom discussion and contributions are not evenly distributed. This may be due to the mixed-ability groups.

1.4.4 Mother-Tongue Use

"In cases where the majority, if not all the students, share the same mother tongue, they prefer to use it outside and even inside the classroom rather than the target language since they feel more at ease." (Boughazzoula, 2021, P29).

1.5 Speaking as a Reason to Participate

In educational context, students participate in the classroom during the session in many forms, such as participating by speaking and interacting with the others verbally and orally, while some students use the listening skill as a kind of non-verbal participation. Among the

most area of participation is the involvement in different activities such as discussions, group exercises, creative activities, problem solving, and presentations which promote and enhance the communication and the interaction between students during the session. Thus, students share and exchange their different points of view, express their feelings or experiences through discussion on a variety of particular topics to enhance their speaking, listening and social interaction skills, in addition to, the expanding of knowledge cooperative learning and critical thinking (Trila & Anwar, 2023, p. 331).

1.6 Students' Reluctance to Speak

There are various reasons why students may be reluctant or hesitant to speak and participate within the classroom. According to Siti Hafsah (2017), reluctance refers to the state or feeling of students being unwilling to speak. It is due to psychological factors, individual circumstances within the classroom, and a general lack of motivation or inactivity on the part of the student. Hamouda (2013) stated that most of the students that are unwilling to speak and interact with the others in oral English language classroom is due to the lack of confidence, fear of losing face, lack of practice and low English proficiency, shyness and anxiety and cultural beliefs.

Naili and Nessah (2020) argued that Some students may experience feelings of shyness and anxiety while participating in class, which can hinder the development of their skills in speaking and interacting with others. These negative feelings may lead to a lack of self-confidence and make them reluctant to speak up or contribute their ideas to discussions. This hesitation can limit their opportunities to improve their speaking skills, increasing their feelings of shyness and doubt about their ability to communicate effectively. In addition, the fear of negative evaluation by colleagues or teachers may lead to a decline in their self-confidence, as they feel worried about making mistakes or being laughed at by others.

On the other hand, some students may be exposed to social pressures from society,

parents, or school, as they feel the need to fulfill others' expectations of them and meet their standards. This may increase pressure on them and affect their academic performance and their ability to interact effectively with the learning environment. According to Sangma et al. (2018), "Students experienced academic stress arising from both their own expectations to excel as well as expectations arising from their parents and teachers." (p.8).

1.7 Reasons of Speaking Reluctance

According to Mugaddam (2024) students' hesitation to speak is due to many factors which are socio-cultural factors, cultural factors, and psychological factors. Each of these factors has direct and indirect effects on students' performance in general as following:

1.7.1 Socio-Cultural Factors

1.7.1.1 Family Engagement: The absence of family involvement in their children's education, the absence of parents or family support, motivation, encouragement to their children to develop their language and address their hesitation to speak is one of the factors. An unsupported environment for English exposure. Less discussions and conversations in English and the lack of communication in English as a Second language can be another factor for students' reluctance to speak.

1.7.1.2 Cultural Factors: The sense of not belonging to the existing class culture may increase students' difficulties to interact with other students from different cultural backgrounds. Disrespect to other students' different beliefs and values can also be one of the reasons that lead students to become unwilling to speak during session.

1.7.2 Psychological Factors

1.7.2.1 Feeling Anxious and Afraid: Fear of failure, fear of making mistakes, fear of others' reaction and fear of embarrassment are all factors that cause reluctance to students to interact.

1.7.2.2 Feeling Shy: This may be articulated in many shapes such as fear of judgment, lack of confidence, social anxiety, cultural difference and so on.

1.7.3 Linguistics Factors

1.7.3.1 Dominant Local Languages Use: When students are not proficient in the language used in the classroom, it causes them reluctance to speak.

1.7.3.2 Inappropriate Pronunciation: This includes many examples such as students struggling with the pronunciation of the dominant language due to lack of language exposure, absence of corrective feedbacks from teachers, peers or others, fear of being misunderstood by the teacher or classmates and so on.

1.7.3.3 Poor Grammatical Knowledge: Such as how or when to use the right tenses or how to conjugate the verbs to form an appropriate sentence, can significantly impact their learning process and cause them hesitation to speak in the classroom.

1.7.3.4 Lack of Vocabulary Mastery: This is manifested in situations that involve less practice of the target language, difficulty in recalling and retrieving vocabulary quickly during speaking and so on.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the focus was on defining speaking in general and as a skill, highlighting its importance, characteristics and challenges, in addition to Speaking as a reason to participate, Students' reluctance to speak and reasons of reluctance.

<center>**Chapter Two**</center>

<center>**Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory, Socio-cultural Relationship to Student's**</center>

<center>**Reluctance to speak**</center>

Introduction

Social and cultural factors play an important role in determining the level and the ability of students to develop their speaking and participation skills in the field of education. These factors include a variety of elements such as family, peers, economic factors, beliefs, values and customs, which in turn affect students' behavior, way of thinking, and personal development, in addition to their academic achievement. The impact of these factors may be positive, such as motivating students to achieve their goals. As it may also have a negative impact, leading to educational challenges and difficulties. For example, some students may be exposed to ridicule by their colleagues as a result of their mistakes. This makes them withdraw from participating again and interacting with others.

Morin (2012) stated that Vygotsky's theory suggests that humans learn through social and cultural interactions with others. The more positive the environment's interactive standards are, the greater the individual's ability to be productive, and the more negative the standards are, the lower the individual's ability to produce and sustain.

Thus, this chapter includes the Definition, Historical background and Principles of Vygotsky's theory. In addition to the definition of Socio-cultural Factors within EFL learning context, Types of Socio-cultural Factors. And The impact of Socio-cultural Factors on student academic performance. Also, the relationship between Socio-cultural Factors and students' speaking Reluctance. Strategies to remedy Students' Reluctance to speak.

2.1 Definition of Vygotsky's Theory

Based on the definition provided by Mcleod (2022), Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasized the crucial role that social interaction plays in an individual's psychological

development. According to this theory, learning in humans is largely a social process, where cognitive functions are formed and developed based on interactions between the individual.

This Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory focuses on how mentors, and peers influence individual learning. Mentors provide the guidance and support necessary for the individual to develop his skills and gain knowledge. In addition, the theory focuses on how cultural beliefs and attitudes are reflected in the education process. Social interactions and cultural events contribute to the formation and development of an individual's values and beliefs as it promotes a deep understanding of how society and culture influence learning experiences and individual development, and highlights the critical role of social interaction in this process (Mcleod, 2022).

2.2 Historical Background of Vygotsky's Theory

The theory originated in the work of the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who considered that parents, caregivers, peers, and culture in general are involved in the development of advanced functioning. According to Vygotsky, the basis of learning is interaction with others. When this happens, information is integrated at the individual level (Cherry, 2022).

Vygotsky emphasized that children are born with basic biological limitations in their brains. However, each culture provides "tools for intellectual adaptation." These tools allow children to use their abilities in a way that is adapted to their culture. For example, one culture may focus on memory strategies such as note-taking. Another culture may use tools such as mnemonics and memorization (techniques that use repetition). These subtle differences affect how children learn and provide them with the "tools" appropriate to their culture (Mcleod,2022).

Vygotsky, who was born in 1896. He was a contemporary of other major thinkers such as Freud, Skinner and Piaget but his theories initially received little recognition because he

died early at the age of 37 and his works were suppressed in Stalinist Russia. (Cherry, 2022).

2.3 Principles of Vygotsky's Theory

Every theory has characteristics and foundations that it depends on to be accepted and understood. These characteristics and fundamentals include the scientific evidence that supports the theory, the internal consistency of the theory, and its ability to explain various phenomena comprehensively and logically. As every theory must also be subject to examination, testing, and field experiments. According to an article written by Rajeev Ranjan (2017), the principles of Vygotsky's theory are:

2.3.1 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Ranjan (2017) stated that the ZPD refers to the gap between a learner's actual developmental level and their potential development with the assistance of a more knowledgeable other (MKO). Vygotsky argued that learning is most effective when it occurs within this zone. It is in this zone that learners can engage in tasks that they cannot perform independently but can accomplish with guidance or scaffolding from a teacher, peer, or more skilled individual.

2.3.2 Scaffolding

Scaffolding refers to the support provided by a more knowledgeable individual to assist learners in their ZPD. The scaffolding process involves adjusting the level of support according to the learner's needs, gradually withdrawing support as the learner becomes more capable. This process helps learners internalize new knowledge and skills (Ranjan,2017).

2.3.3 Social Interaction

Vygotsky believed that social interaction plays a vital role in learning and cognitive development. He emphasized the importance of collaborative learning and the exchange of ideas among peers and between learners and more knowledgeable individuals. Through social interaction, learners acquire new knowledge, cultural tools, and problem-solving

strategies from their social environment.

2.3.4 Cultural Tools

Vygotsky emphasized the influence of cultural tools, such as language, signs, symbols, and artifacts in shaping cognitive processes and learning. These cultural tools are passed down from one generation to another and mediate the learner's interaction with the world. Language, in particular, plays a crucial role as a tool for thought and communication (Ranjan,2017).

2.3.5 Private Speech

Vygotsky observed that young children often engage in private speech, talking to themselves while solving problems or engaged in activities. He argued that private speech serves an important function in cognitive development, as it allows children to regulate their thinking and behavior. Over time, private speech becomes internalized as inner speech, which is a silently articulated thought (Ranjan,2017).

2.3.6 Play and Learning

Vygotsky highlighted the significance of play in a child's development. He believed that play provides a zone of proximal development in which children can engage in activities beyond their current developmental level. Through play, children can experiment, imagine, and practice new skills in a less structured and more enjoyable environment (Ranjan,2017).

2.4 Socio-Cultural Factors within EFL Learning Context

2.4.1 Social Factors

The term social factors have been defined by many scholars as an important term related to all systems of managing society's affairs. According to Al-Qahtani (2019), social factors refer to a set of circumstances and influences that surround an individual, shaping their upbringing, personality, development, and social interactions. These factors include family, educational environment, economic conditions, peer influences, and personal characteristics.

They play a significant role in shaping an individual's decisions and determining their future.

Moreover, social factors play a vital role in personality development. According to Rose Thompson (2006), children are influenced by diverse cultures, such as social class, race, religion, and region, as well as small groups such as family and friends. Social interactions play an important role in shaping personality and guiding an individual's behavior, especially within family, friends, and school. In addition, close relationships and the self-image that a child forms to the social world influence his personality development. In general, social factors provide a framework for individuals to learn the rules of society, develop communication skills, and form their personal identity.

Forsyth, et al. (2023) argued that social factors refer to the factors that contain all societal systems, whether political, economic, or natural, when relations of exchange and interaction arise between these systems through the members of society.

2.4.2 Cultural Factors

Several concepts were given to the term cultural factors. Kang et al., (2019) argued that culture is a "set of beliefs, moral values, traditions, language, and laws (or rules of behavior) held in common by a nation, a community, or other defined group of people." (P.17) Beliefs, Thus, These elements can be influenced by historical, social, geographical, religious, political, economic and other cultural factors. For example, the religious, philosophical and social values and beliefs of each society determine what is right and wrong and what is good and bad within that society.

In addition to traditions, customs and behaviors that play an important role in enhancing social cohesion and enhancing collective identity. By following traditions and customs, community members feel a sense of belonging, interconnectedness and harmony with each other. These traditions and customs transmit history and cultural heritage across generations in order to transfer values, beliefs, knowledge and culture to society. This is done through

language, as it plays an important role in communicating and expressing ideas, feelings, experiences, cultural heritage, and building understanding and cooperation among members of society (Oluwatobi,2024).

Diverse socio-cultural factors characterize different communities, geographical areas, and population groups. What is considered normal in one society may be deemed immoral or unusual in another. For example, dressing in bikinis in the Western world is perfectly normal, but in Arab countries this is prohibited among women. In countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Iran, women are culturally required to cover their entire bodies with the Burqa. Selling bikinis in Middle-Eastern nations would not make much business sense (Forsyth et al., 2023).

Types of Socio-Cultural Factors

Sociocultural refers to the broad range of societal and cultural factors that influence humans' thoughts, emotions, actions, and overall health outcomes. These sociocultural determinants of health and illness encompass various aspects, including socioeconomic status (SES) factors such as income, education, and occupation, as well as cultural factors. The term encompasses multiple dimensions including family, peers, ethnicity, gender, language, beliefs, values, attitudes, and religion. These factors interact and shape individuals' experiences and interactions within their social and cultural contexts, influencing their health behaviors, access to healthcare also (Gonzalez & Weitzman, 2020).

In public life, social factors are all aspects of life that influence human behaviors, actions and decisions. In the context of education, it is everything that can affect the academic performance of students. The Following factors are among the most important types of social and cultural factors as suggested by Cox (2022).

2.5.1 Family

An extended family refers to a collective of individuals connected through marriage, blood ties, or adoption, and who engage in social interactions based on their designated roles within the family structure such as parents, children, and siblings.

2.5.2 Social Norms

Social norms are the commonly understood and often unspoken guidelines that determine acceptable and appropriate behavior within a specific group or community, thereby shaping human conduct.

2.5.3 Discrimination

The act of discrimination consists of discriminating against people according to their race, sex, national origin, age, or other factors.

2.5.4 Socioeconomic Class

A person's socioeconomic class refers to how wealth and income are combined with other factors, such as occupation or education, to determine their place in society.

2.5.5 Peers

A peer is someone who is the same age or who has the same social position or abilities as other members of a group (Press, 2024, p.1 in Cambridge Dictionary)

2.5.6 Language Abilities

A person's language abilities include the ability to communicate verbally and in writing. The four components of these abilities are reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

2.5.7 Religious Beliefs and Values

They refer to the belief systems that relate humanity to spirituality. They influence what they prioritize and what they should care about. Humans' values represent the characteristics they strive to embody in order to direct their behavior, shape their desired identity, and determine their interactions with others and themselves. They serve as a general guideline

for action.

2.6 The Relationship between Socio-Cultural Factors and Students' Reluctance to Speak

Adi Putra et al. (2023), stated that students may not participate or avoid interaction within the learning session for several reasons and factors including the socio-cultural factors that may be divided into different categories that differ from one person to another as well as from one society to another. Among those categories are the following:

2.6.1 Introversion and Shyness

Introverted individuals tend to have a preference for engaging in activities alone or in the company of a small, close-knit group of people. They value taking time for introspection before expressing their opinions or making decisions in social settings, as most of them may feel shy to engage in social situations, For example, a shy student may begin their day with the hope of avoiding interactions with others at school (Cuncic,2024).

2.6.2 Cultural Differences

Conversational norms can vary significantly due to cultural influences. In many cultures, interrupting, speaking over others, or contradicting them in public is viewed as disrespectful. Moreover, certain cultural practices may restrict or prohibit nonverbal gestures that are commonly used by individuals from Western cultures to actively participate in discussions. For instance, some individuals from specific cultural backgrounds may perceive the classroom as a space where the authority of the professor should be respected, leading them to refrain from questioning or challenging their professor's statements (Mugtaba,2023).

2.6.3 Previous Negative Experiences

A student's reluctance to participate in class discussions may stem from past instances of being embarrassed or shamed by faculty members or fellow students. Speaking up in front of a large group can be perceived as risky, and if someone has experienced humiliation after

contributing their thoughts in class, it can take a significant amount of time for them to regain the comfort and confidence to speak up again, both in class and in group settings because the fact that they may face again some negative social pressure from their peers (Ahmad, 2021).

2.6.4 Lack of Interest

If a student lacks interest in the subject matter, they are unlikely to actively engage in class discussions or show enthusiasm during group discussions. While faculty members may find the concepts being taught exciting, students may not yet possess enough knowledge or understanding of the material to experience the same level of intrigue (Zakrajesek, 2017).

2.6.5 Fear of Failure

Some individuals have a heightened fear of making mistakes in a public setting compared to others. There are students who, despite their uncertainties, are willing to express their thoughts by saying, "I'm not sure if this is what you mean, but..." in an attempt to validate their ideas. On the other hand, there are individuals who dwell on decisions and become hesitant to make statements in a public forum due to their fear of failure (Zoloth, 2023).

2.7 Strategies to Remedy Students' Reluctance to Speak

According to Rajeev Ranjan (2017), strategies refer to specific techniques, approaches, or methods provided by the teachers to be practiced by learners to enhance their language acquisition and proficiency. He means that speaking must be developed as a skill to reach effective communication, while the focus on grammar may come after that. Therefore, Vygotsky came up with a learning theory as a set of strategies that can be applied by the teacher to enhance students' communication skills:

2.7.1 Scaffolding

In a mathematics class, the teacher employs scaffolding techniques to motivate students in tackling a difficult problem. The teacher offers systematic guidance by breaking down the problem into manageable steps, posing questions, and providing hints to facilitate students' comprehension of the problem-solving process. As students become more self-assured and proficient, the teacher gradually diminishes the level of assistance, enabling them to independently solve similar problems (Ranjan, 2017).

2.7.2 Cultural Tools

In a social studies class, teachers can incorporate various cultural tools to enhance learning. For example, the teacher uses maps, artifacts, primary sources, and multimedia resources to help students understand historical events or different cultures. By engaging with these cultural tools, students develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter and how it relates to their own lives (Ranjan, 2017).

2.7.3 Collaborative Learning

During a science experiment, students can collaborate in small groups to make observations, predictions, and collectively analyze data. Through this collaborative learning approach, students can benefit from learning from one another, gaining diverse perspectives, and expanding their knowledge by building upon each other's ideas. (Ranjan, 2017)

2.7.4 Peer Tutoring

In a language arts class, older students may take on the role of peer tutors for younger students, offering assistance and encouragement in reading comprehension activities. The older students provide guidance by explaining concepts, posing thought-provoking questions, and engaging in discussions about texts. This collaborative learning approach benefits both the tutor and the tutee, as it fosters social interaction and effectively utilizes the zone of proximal development (Ranjan, 2017).

2.7.5 Dramatic Play

In a preschool classroom, the teacher may set up a pretend grocery store. The children take on different roles, such as cashiers, customers, and store managers. Through dramatic play, children engage in problem-solving, negotiation, and language development. They learn about social roles, develop their communication skills, and practice cooperation and sharing (Ranjan, 2017).

2.7.6 Reflective Dialogue

In a literature class, the teacher can engage students in reflective dialogue about a novel or a poem. Students are encouraged to share their interpretations, ask questions, and provide evidence to support their arguments. Through the dialogue, students develop higher-order thinking skills, enhance their communication abilities, and deepen their understanding of the text (Ranjan, 2017).

Conclusion

In this chapter, the focus was on giving a definition to Vygotsky's theory, knowing much more about the historical background of the theory, defining the socio-cultural factors to discover how they influence the students' academic performance in general and students' reluctance to speak particularly. Additionally, this chapter discussed the possible strategies that can reduce the phenomenon of students' reluctance to speak and improve their speaking skill.

<center>**Chapter Three**</center>

<center>**Research Methodology, Findings and Discussion**</center>

Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, the sample, data collection and the instruments employed in this study. It aims to explore the socio-cultural factors contributing to students' reluctance to speak during oral sessions by providing compelling arguments through the utilization of various analytical tools, including questionnaires, online interviews, and classroom observations.

3.1 Research Design

Jang (1980) stated that "the purpose of a research design is to provide a plan of study that permits accurate assessment of cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables." Therefore, a mixed-methods approach of both quantitative and qualitative is the appropriate method for this study. The quantitative approach consists of a questionnaire while the qualitative approach includes a semi-structured interview and classroom observation.

The quantitative research method deals with quantifying and analyzing variables to get results. According to Bhandari (2020), "Quantitative research is the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships, and generalize results to wider populations."

Qualitative method, by contrast, "is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions. It generates non-numerical data" (Pathak et al., 2013). This method generates non-numerical data through various tools and techniques to gather in-depth and detailed information about the studied social and human phenomenon. Therefore, this study used an online interview and classroom observation to understand how can socio-cultural factors affect students speaking and cause them hesitation to speak during oral session.

<center>28</center>

3.2 The Sample

The sample consists of thirty (30) students, comprising fifteen (15) males and fifteen (15) females who were randomly selected from a population of 65 first year L.M.D students. Additionally, four (04) teachers at the Department of English, University of Ghardaia, were selected based on their experience and involvement in teaching the Oral module. Most of the students are native speakers of Arabic and they learn English as a Second language (SL). The sampling methodology was based on the rationale that first-year EFL students are encountering the Oral Comprehension and Expression (OCE) module for the first time in their academic journey. Consequently, their oral participation is expected to occur naturally as they engage with the module for the first time. The study aimed to investigate the socio-cultural factors that contribute to students' reluctance to speak during oral sessions, focusing specifically on the selected sample of first-year EFL students.

3.3 Research Variables

Independent variable	Dependent variable
Socio-cultural factors	**Speaking reluctance**

Table 01: Research Variables

3.4 Data Collection
3.4.1 The Questionnaire

A multiple choice and open-ended questions survey was administered to first-year EFL students at the Department of English, University of Ghardaia, during the academic year 2023/2024 to elicit their opinions about the possible reasons that may influence their unwillingness to participate during the oral sessions.

3.4.1.1 Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire to this study consists of questions to be answered through selecting the appropriate options. It is divided into three parts. The first part contains three questions about personal information while the second consists of nine questions, aiming to gain information related to students' perceptions on speaking and participation during oral sessions. The last part includes twelve questions about socio-cultural factors' relationship with students' reluctance to speak.

3.4.2 Online Interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted with four teachers referred to as (A), (B), (C) and (D) respectively. These teachers had previously taught OCE at the English Department, University of Ghardaïa. Drawing on their experiences, this interview sought to gain insights into EFL students' development and improvement in speaking skills. Furthermore, the interview aimed to identify the obstacles that students may encounter while participating in oral sessions from the teacher's perspective.

3.4.2.1 Description of the Online Interview

The interview was conducted online instead of a face-to-face one as it was supposed to be, due to the lack of time. It included twelve questions with yes/no options and open-ended questions provided to explore teachers' point of view about the relationship between the two variables.

3.4.3 Classroom Observation

On-site observation was carried out with three groups of first-year students at the Department of English. It focused on investigating the factors that promote students' interaction and factors that impede their willingness to speak and participate during oral session.

3.4.3.1 Description of the Observation

Three Observation checklists were prepared to be filled in with what is observed during the session. Each had thirty questions ranging from students' participation to factors affecting their willingness to speak, and from student- teacher interaction to teaching strategies. The aim of these observation sessions was to analyze students' engagement and performance during oral sessions, along with the instructional methods employed by the teacher and the classroom environment, to determine factors that either facilitate or hinder students' participation.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Observation

3.5.1.1 Students' Perspective

3.5.1.1.1 *Students Participation:* In order to assess the level of student participation and interaction during the oral session, it was observed that the first group demonstrated active engagement with both the teacher and their peers. They sought clarification, asked questions, and shared their opinions freely. In contrast, the majority of students in the second and third groups were more passive, primarily listening to the teacher and their prominent classmates. Some students in these groups only contributed to the discussion when specifically prompted by the teacher, unlike the spontaneous participation seen in the first group. Furthermore, in the first group, the attendees were predominantly female, while the second and third groups had a mixture of male and female students.

It was noted that the girls in the first group felt more at ease and confident, speaking up and interacting with others compared to their counterparts in the other groups. Across all groups, there was a noticeable difference in students' behavior based on their level of interest in the subject being discussed. Students, who were engaged and interested, actively participated

and interacted while those who found the topic challenging or uninteresting tended to withdraw and avoid engaging in it.

Additionally, it was observed that some students in all groups displayed behaviors such as interrupting others while speaking, showing signs of anxiety, trembling, and lacked confidence when speaking in front of their peers. Furthermore, there were instances of students mocking or laughing at the responses of their classmates, showing a lack of respect for both their peers and the teacher.

3.5.1.1.2 Students' hesitation to speak and Socio-cultural Factors: In all groups, the boys were initially reluctant to speak up because of their small numbers. However, when the teacher divided them into separate groups for males and females, the boys had greater opportunities to participate and engage in the session. Interestingly, it was observed that when discussion topics shifted towards social and cultural issues, student participation increased. The students of the first group were asked to perform a role that the students felt interested in. The students were then divided into four groups (two groups of females, two groups of males). The first group of females decided to take a look at how parents treat their children differently and respect the smartest one of them more than the others. The role of the second group was about how teachers punish students when they do not do their homework. While the male group discussed football issues and their favorite team, while the second group discussed their future goals after graduation. It was observed that everyone inside the classroom was enjoying their time and feeling more interested and involved.

3.5.1.2 Classroom Management

3.5.1.2.1 Student-Teacher Interaction During the Session: It was noticed that some students tended to interrupt both their peers and the teacher to express their opinions, while others chose to actively listen to what was being said by the teacher and their classmates. Additionally, a few participants avoided making eye contact while speaking, which could suggest a lack of confidence.

3.5.1.2.2 Teaching Strategies: In the first group, the teacher effectively communicated with students using gestures and body movements, while also encouraging and motivating them to participate by awarding extra points to the most active participants. The teacher provided clear explanations and examples to help students understand the subject matter and showed respect to all students by giving everyone a chance to participate without judgment or interruptions. Whereas in the second group, the teacher corrected students' mistakes immediately and focused on specific students for participation. This blocked the others and made them more convenient to speak. In the third group, discussions were facilitated through questions from the teacher and answers from the students, which increased their engagement and interest and encouraged all the students to participate and share their opinions.

3.6 Results and Discussion

The Importance of Freedom for Active Participation It was noted that students who participated actively in the first group felt free to share their opinions, ask questions, and get clarifications. This enhanced the interaction and exchange of ideas and helped students better understand the subject. It also indicated the importance of feeling free and relaxed to interact during the session. The Influence of Gender in Participation and The Importance of Creating a Comfortable Environment for Effective Participation of both Genders. When students were divided into two separate groups of males and females, males had more opportunities to participate in the session, indicating the influence of mixed-gender classroom on the student's

willingness to participate, this drives attention to the importance of providing an appropriate learning environment That encourages all students to participate regardless of their gender.

3.6.1 The Importance of Choosing Interesting Subjects

It was noted that students' participation increased when social and cultural subjects were discussed. means that the more attractive, interesting and involving the subject is to students' lives and backgrounds, the more interested students are about participating and sharing their opinions in a better way Better. By contrast, the more students are not familiar to the subjects discussed, the more reluctant they are.

3.6.2 The Importance of Class Management

It has been noted that some students were reluctant to participate because of others' mockery and laugh on them. This means that the more bullying there is in the class, the less participation takes place. In this case, teachers may structure the interaction between students and encourage mutual respect among them by promoting self-confidence, positive participation and appreciation of others' opinion, giving equal opportunities to all to participate and express their views.

3.6.3 Enhancing Self-Confidence

Some students avoid eye contact between each other and even with the teacher while speaking which indicates poor self-confidence. Helping such students build their self-confidence can be achieved by providing a supportive environment and by encouraging them to participate and express their willingness spontaneously and confidently.

3.6.4 Using Effective Teaching Strategies

It has been concluded that the more teacher uses techniques such as movements and clear examples to help students better understand the subject, the more students can absorb the lesson. Students were more motivated to participate through additional points offered by the teacher to those who interact more.

3.5.2 Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Personal Information

Q1. Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	15	50%
Females	15	50%

Table 02: Students' Gender

Out of the 30 respondents shown in table (1), 15 students represented a percentage of 50% as males while 15 other students, also representing a percentage of 50%, were females, which indicates a balanced number of males and females.

Q2. Age

Ages	Number	Percentage (%)
18-20	24	80%
21-23	4	13%
24-27	1	3%
More than 27 years old	1	3%

Table 03: Students' Ages

According to the responses of the participants, **80%** of students are between 18 and 20 years old. **13%** students stated that they are between 21 and 23 and Three **3%** of the students represented the age between 24 and 27. The last **3%** percentage indicates the age of only one student which is more than 27 years old.

Q3. What motivated you to choose English?

When students were asked what made them motivated to learn English, most of their answers revolved around their love of the English language. Some others stated that they would like to

learn it for personal purposes such as travel, study, and work. Some students even mentioned that they admire the English culture, and this motivated them to learn the language to communicate and exchange cultural aspects with native English speakers.

Section Two: Learners' Perceptions on Speaking and Participation during Oral Sessions:

Q1. Most of the students participate during oral sessions.
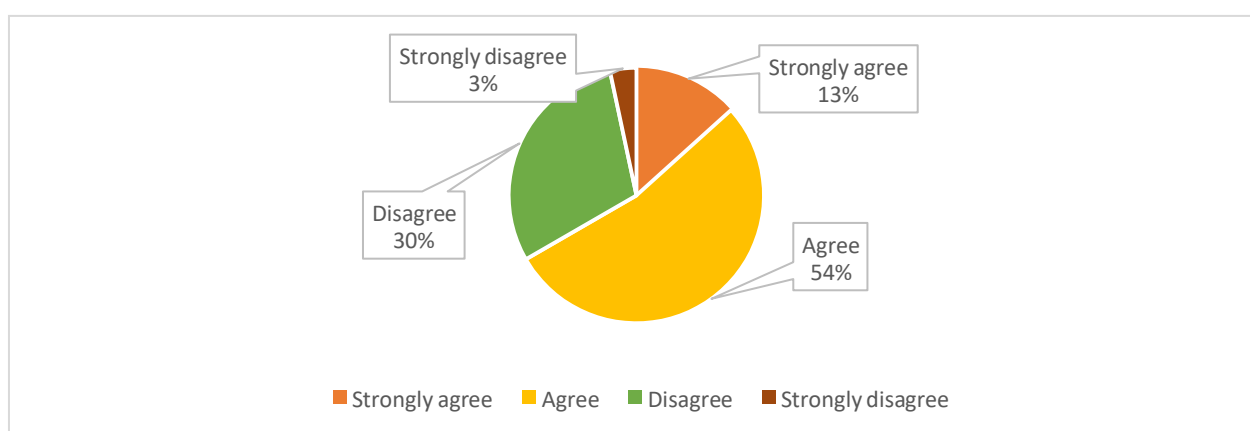
Figure 01: Students' Participation

According to the results shown above, **54%** of the students think that most of the students participate during oral session, while **13%** confirmed that strongly. However, **30%** have disagreed, followed by **3%** who strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q2. In oral sessions, students prefer to listen rather than to speak
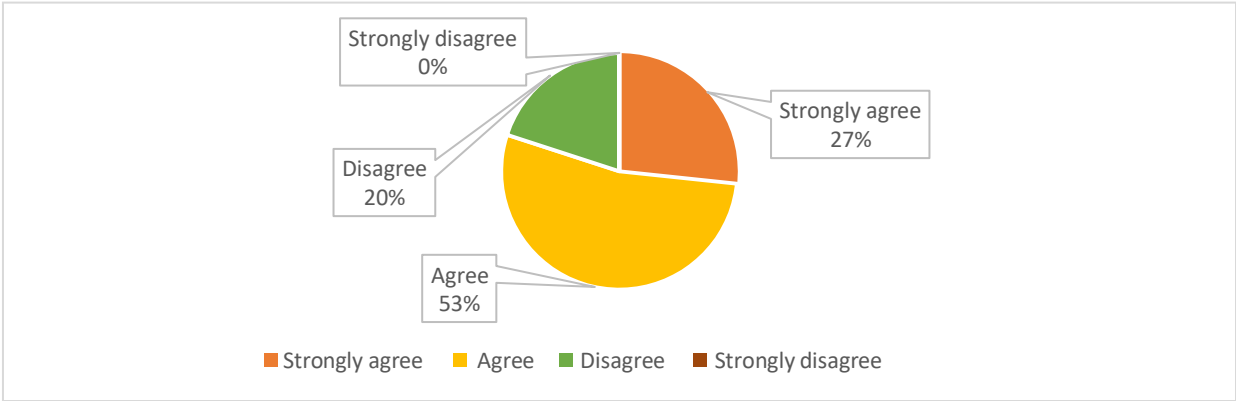
Figure 02: Student's Perception on Speaking

The information presented in the pie chart indicates that **53%** of students agree that listening is preferable to speaking in oral sessions, while **27%** out of the total population strongly confirmed this preference. On the other hand, **20%** of students disagreed with the statement, indicating a preference for expressing themselves orally. **None** of the participants strongly opposed this statement.

Q3. Most of the students prefer to speak in small numbers of classmates
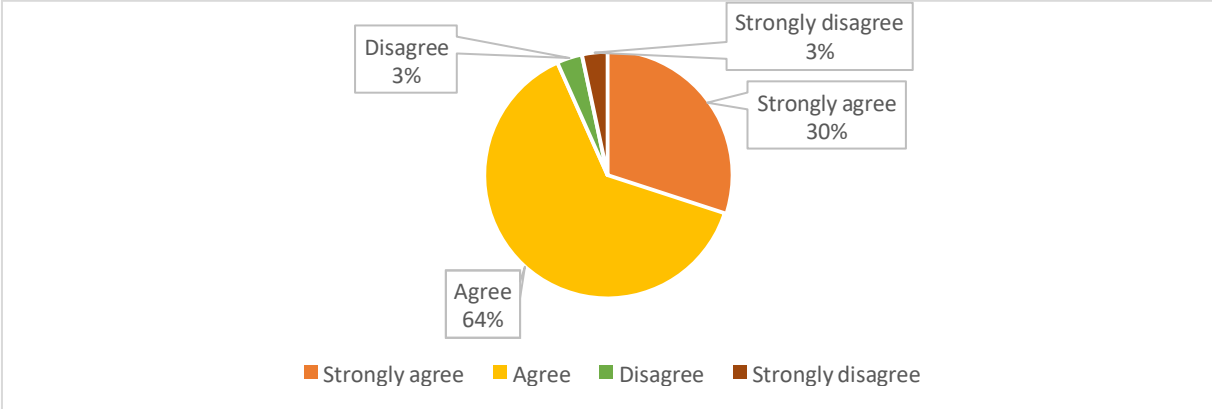
Figure 03: Speaking in Small Numbers

Based on the data provided, **64%** of respondents agree that students feel more comfortable and freer to speak and express their opinions when there are less students, as **30%** of respondents had also confirmed on the same thing. Conversely, **3%** of respondents do not believe that the number of students in the classroom has an impact on students' ability to speak

so they disagreed on, lastly, **3%** strongly disagree.

Q4. Girls tend to be more hesitant to speak than boys, in oral sessions.
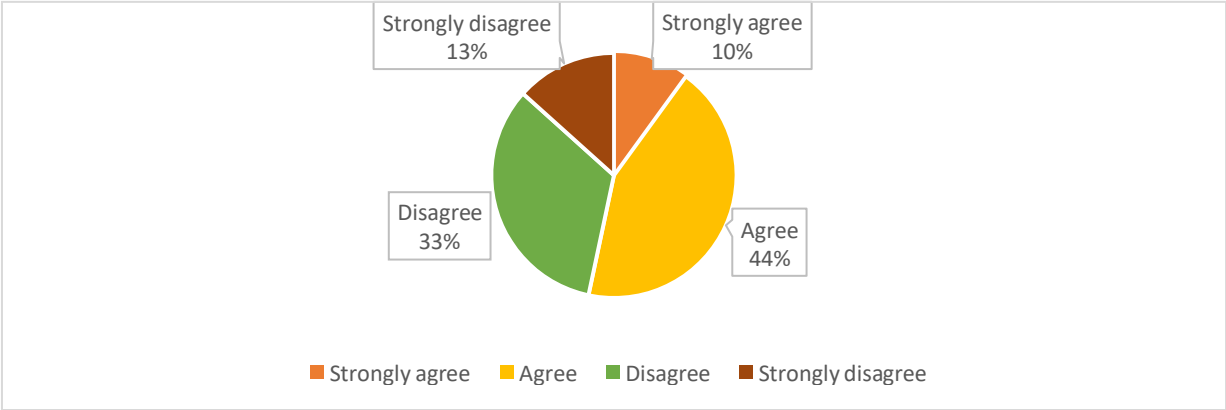
Figure 04: The Most Hesitant Gender

In order to understand which gender is most hesitant to speak during oral session, these answerswere collected. **44%** of the students agreed that females are the most hesitant to speak in the oral session, **10%** confirmed that. **33%** were against indicating that males are most hesitant and **13%** strongly disagree with the statement.

Q5. In oral sessions, most students feel:
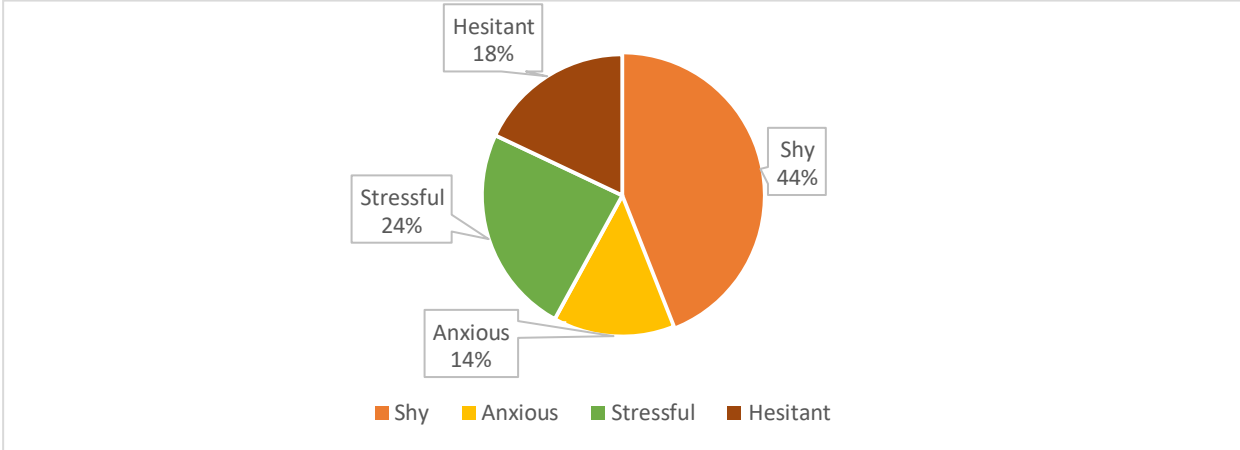
Figure 05: Students' Feelings during Oral Sessions

To identify the emotions that have the greatest impact on the communication process in theoral class, the following data were collected where **44%** of the total population reported feeling shy and an additional **24%** feeling stressful. Furthermore, **18%** expressed feeling hesitant to speak and **14%** experiencing anxiety.

Q6. Most students avoid speaking in oral sessions because of:

Figure 06: Student's Reasons of Hesitation

To determine the factors that hinder students from speaking during the oral session, the data collected reveals the following insights: **22%** of the students believed that a lack of vocabulary is a significant hindrance to speaking during the session. Pronunciation problems were considered a hindrance by **14%** of the respondents. Also, lack of confidence was identified as a barrier by **15%** of participants, leading to hesitation in speaking. Shyness and nature of the topics discussed were each chosen by **13%** of respondents as factors that hinder speaking. Grammatical mistakes were seen as a cause of unwillingness to speak also by **9%** of participants. Additionally, fear of criticism was selected by **7%** of respondents. Gender differences were considered a factor by **6%** of students while **5%** answered with different social and cultural background.

Q7. The classroom environment can affect student's participation to speak

Disagree 7%

Strongly disagree 0%

Strongly agree 46%

Agree 47%

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree
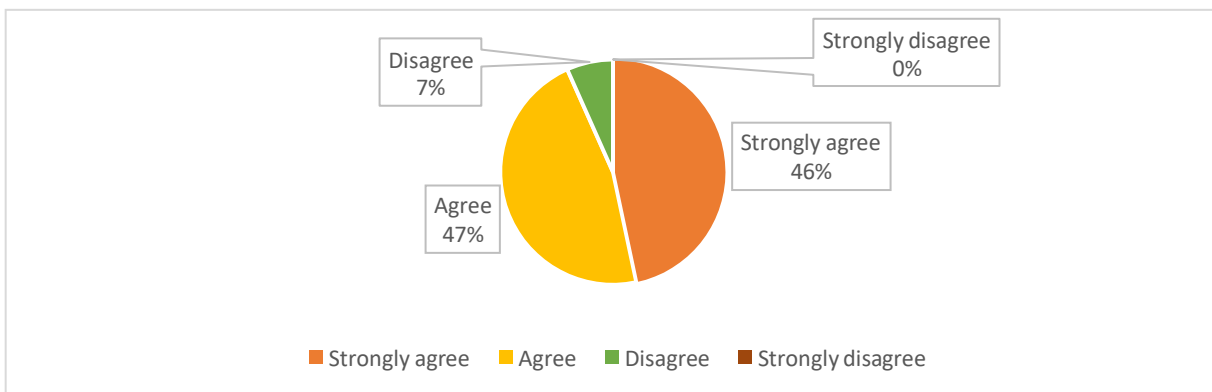
Figure 07: Classroom Environment and Participation

The pie chart data reveal that **47%** of students agree with the statement, while **46%** strongly agree. On the other hand, **7%** of students disagree and **none** of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Q8. The classroom environment can cause students to become hesitant to speak through:

Teacher's strategy of teaching 14%

Students different cultural background 12%

Student's interruption to each other 10%

Teacher's immediate feedback 10%

The nature of the topics discussed in the session 20%

The absence of respect in the classroom 11%

Teacher's focus on certain student's participation 23%

■ Students different cultural background
■ Teacher's immediate feedback
■ Teacher's focus on certain student's participation
■ The absence of respect in the classroom
■ The nature of the topics discussed in the sessionStudent's interruption to each other
■ Teacher's strategy of teaching

Figure 08: The Impact of Different Factors within the Classroom

This pie chart indicates the following percentages and reasons for students' reluctance to speak in the classroom: **23%** agreed that the teacher's focus on certain students' participation can cause reluctance among other students to speak, while **20%** selected the nature of the topicsdiscussed in the session as one of the reasons, **14%** agreed that the teacher's strategies

40

contributeto students' reluctance to speak. Yet, **12%** believed that students' different cultural backgroundsinfluence their willingness to speak. **11%** mentioned the absence of respect in the classroomas a factor, **10%** identified student interruptions to each other as a reason for reluctance. Another**10%** believed that it is due to the teacher's immediate feedback.

Q9. If there are any specific experiences or situations that have made you hesitant tospeak during oral sessions and which are not mentioned above, please describe thembelow:

The responses to this question were somehow limited, but three students stated that they hadbeen subjected to ridicule by their classmates and teachers once when they participated, whichhas subsequently diminished their desire to participate. Additionally, another student mentionedthat he suffers a lot with vocabulary and grammar, causing him to hesitate when speaking up. The third student said that feeling shy and nervous make him avoid participation.

Section Three: Socio-Cultural Factor's Relationship with Students' Reluctance to Speak

Q1. Social norms and cultural factors may influence student's unwillingness to speak during oral sessions.

Strongly disagree 3%

Disagree 13%

Strongly agree 7%

Agree 77%

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree
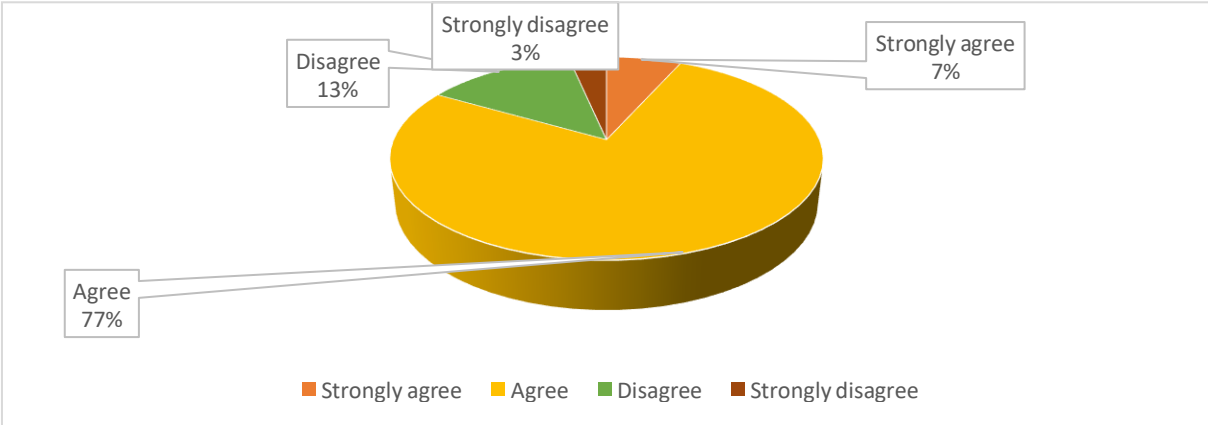
Figure 09: Socio-Cultural Factors and Student's Reluctance to Speak

Data was collected to explore the relationship between socio-cultural factors and students' reluctance to speak. The results indicate that **77%** of participants agreed with the statement, with an additional **7%** strongly agreeing. On the other hand, **13%** of the respondents

41

disagreed, and **3%** strongly disagreed with the statement, denying a potential link between socio-cultural factors and students' hesitation to speak.

Q2. The style of speaking and communication within the family members can affect the student's speaking in the classroom
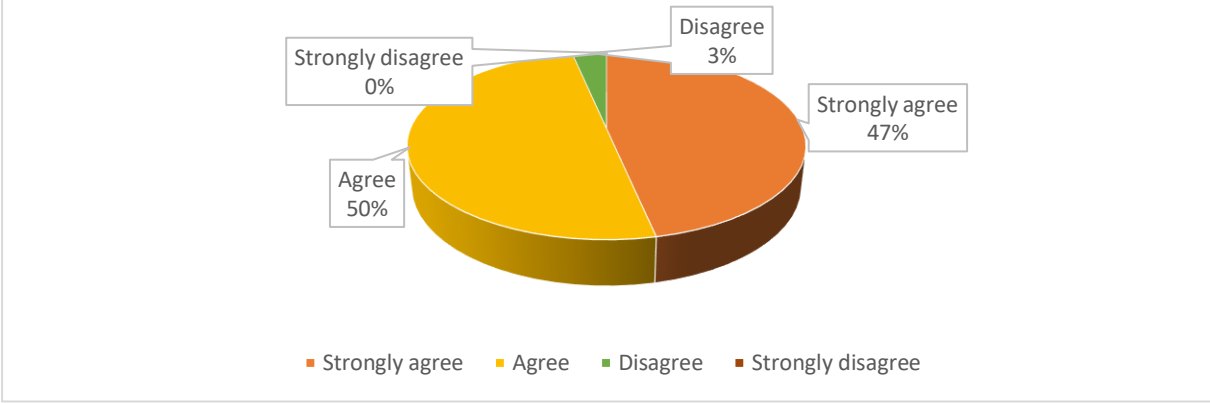
Figure 10: Family role in developing Speaking Skills

According to the pie chart, **50%** of respondents agree that the ways family members communicate with each other impact the style of communication in the classroom. Additionally, **47%** strongly agree with this statement. By contrast, **3%** of participants disagreed and **0%** strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q3. Family pressures may distract students' attention and hinder their communication process.
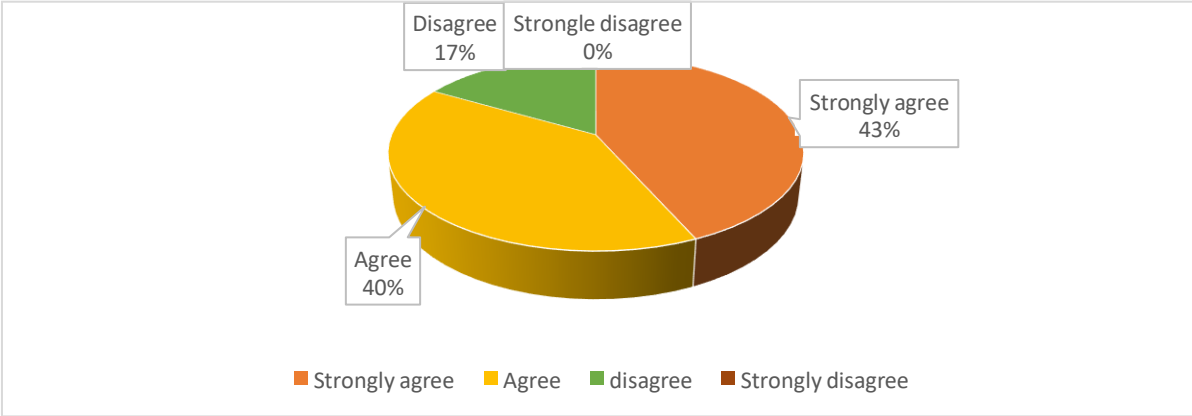
Figure 11: Family Pressures and Students' Communication Process

As shown above, **40%** of students believe that family pressures are a significant obstacle to their willingness to speak, with an additional **43%** confirming this belief strongly.

Conversely,**17%** of respondents disagreed with this statement while **0%** strongly disagree.

Q4. How do you perceive the role of family expectations in shaping your comfort levelwhen speaking in English?

Some students responded that their families' encouragement to learn English motivates them todevelop their speaking skills. For their part, others stated that learning English is not that important to their families, which is considered as a kind of demotivation to master the language.

Q5. Negative classmate's relationship can affect their participation during the oral sessions
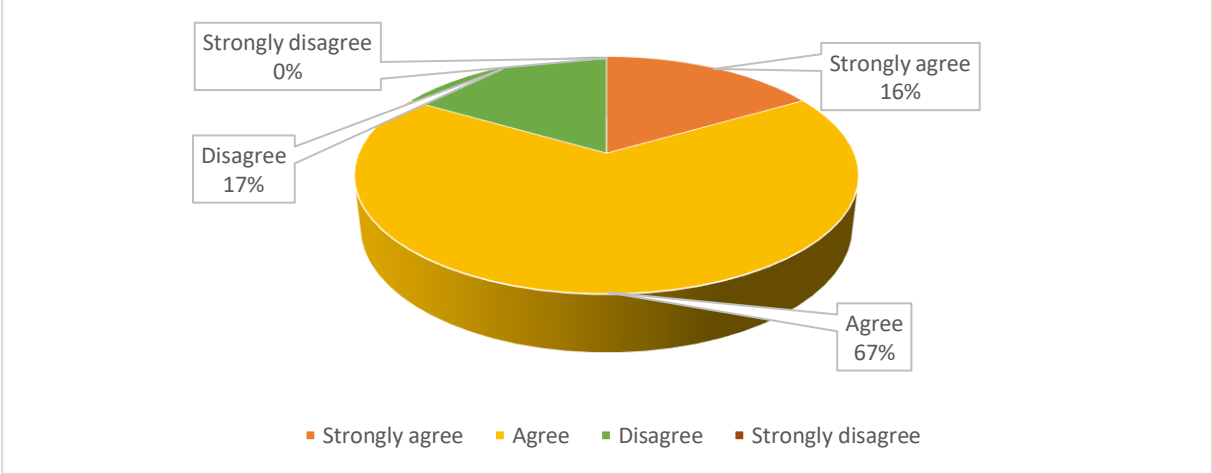
Figure 12: The affects of Classmates Relationship

The results show that the majority of the students **67%** agree with the statement.

Additionally, **16%** strongly agree, yet, **17%** disagree and **0%** strongly disagree.

Q6. Students may avoid communications or participation due to the nature of the topics being discussed in the session
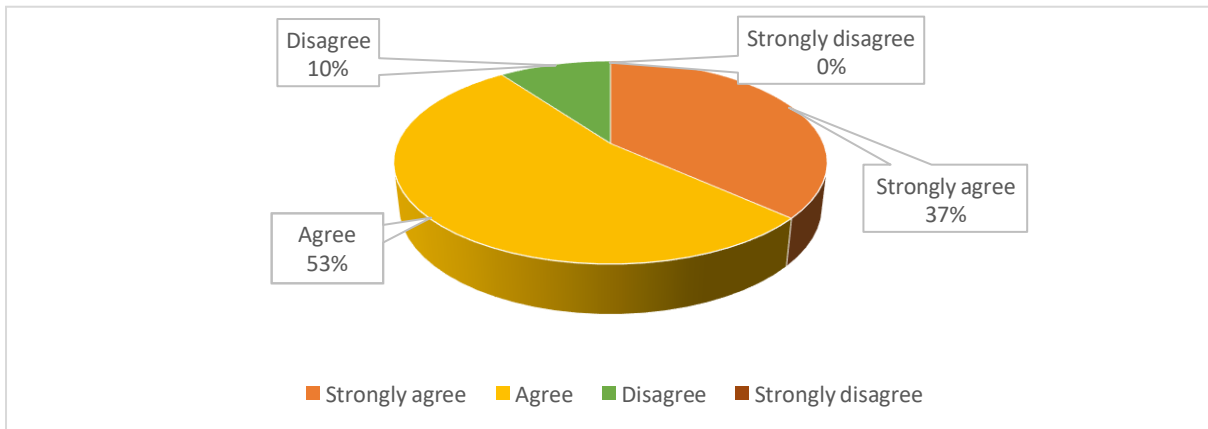
Figure 13: The nature of the Topic

Based on the visual data, it can be observed that **53%** of respondents find that the nature of the topic has a significant impact on students' participation during the oral session. Furthermore,**37%** strongly confirmed this belief. On the other hand, **10%** believed that the nature of the topicdoes not matter and has no relationship to participation. Notably, **none** of the respondents strongly disagree with thestatement.

Q7. Teachers may use some specific strategies and techniques to encourage students' engagement during the session
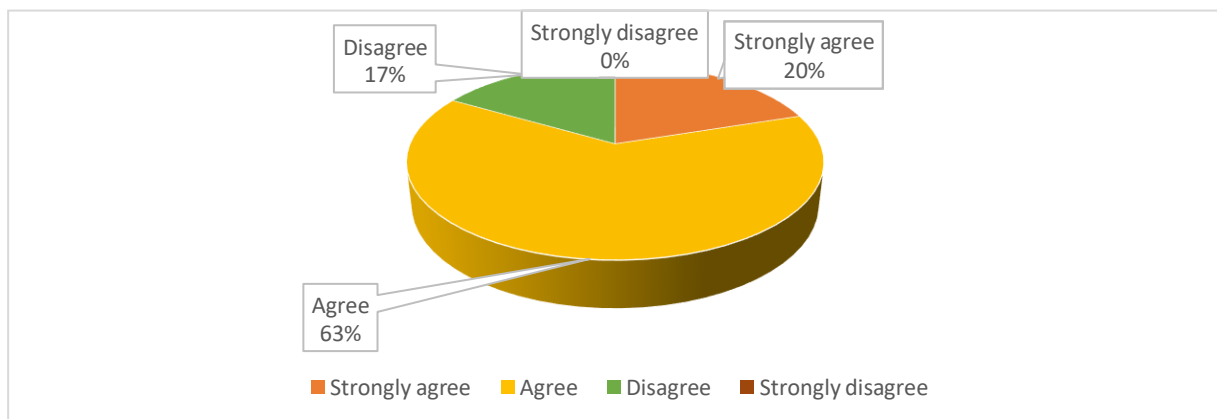
Figure 14: Teaching Strategies

The results illustrate that **63%** of students agree that teaching strategies play an important role in increasing students' engagement, with an additional of **20%** of them strongly

agreeing. On the other hand, the rest of the students disagreed.

Q8. Students may hesitate to speak due to their physical appearance which reflect theirfinancial conditions or traditions
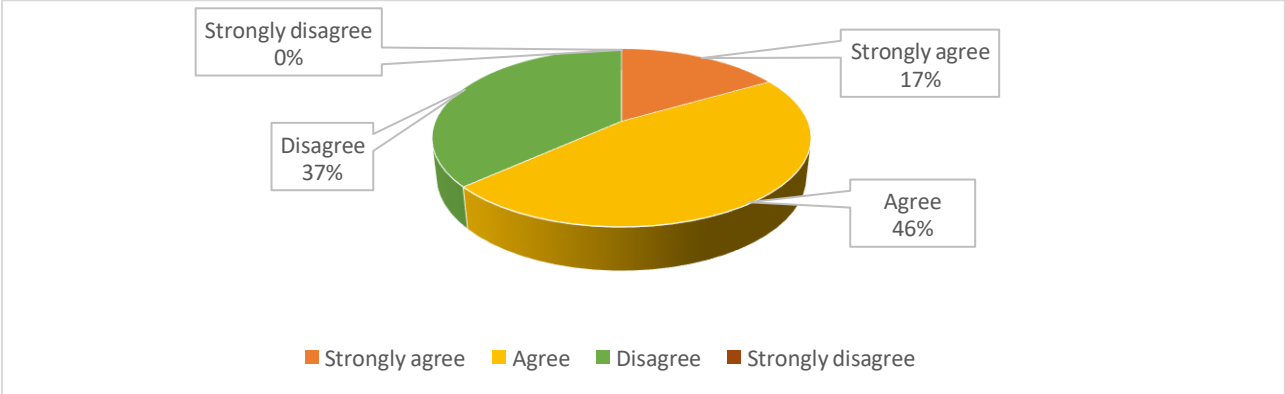
Figure 15: Socioeconomic Status

Based on the results shown, **46%** of respondents agree that students may hesitate to speak in order to avoid drawing attention to their appearance, which reflects their financial condition. Additionally, **17%** strongly agreed with this statement. However, **37%** of participants do not believe that appearance or physical condition has an impact on participation. It is worth noting that disagreeing strongly as an option was selected by none.

Q9. Mixed-gender classroom may lead to students' hesitation to speak
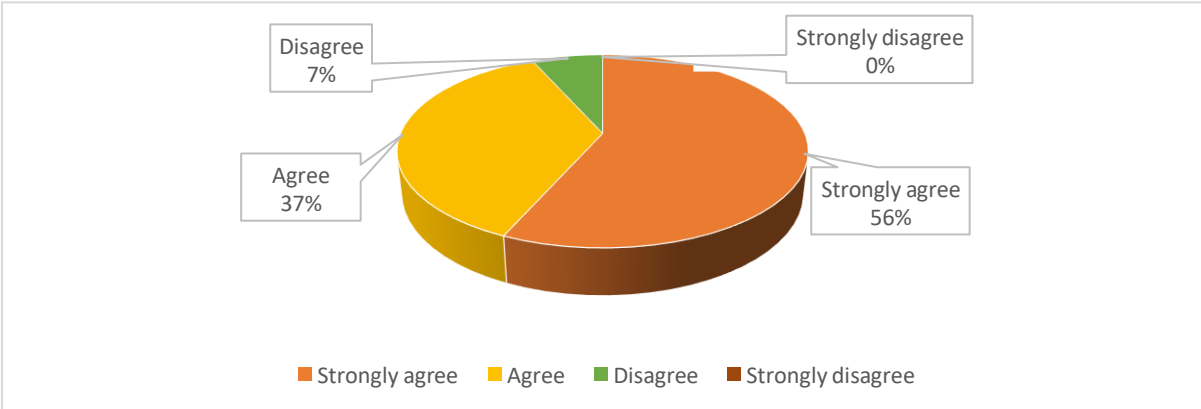
Figure 16: Mixed-Gender Classroom

The data indicates that **56%** of students strongly agree that mixed gender classroom (having both male and female students together) can cause students to hesitate to speak. Additionally, **37%** of students agree with this. On the other hand, **7%** of students disagree withthis viewpoint, and there is no strong opposition to it.

Q10. Girls may feel reserved and speak in low voice in front of boys.
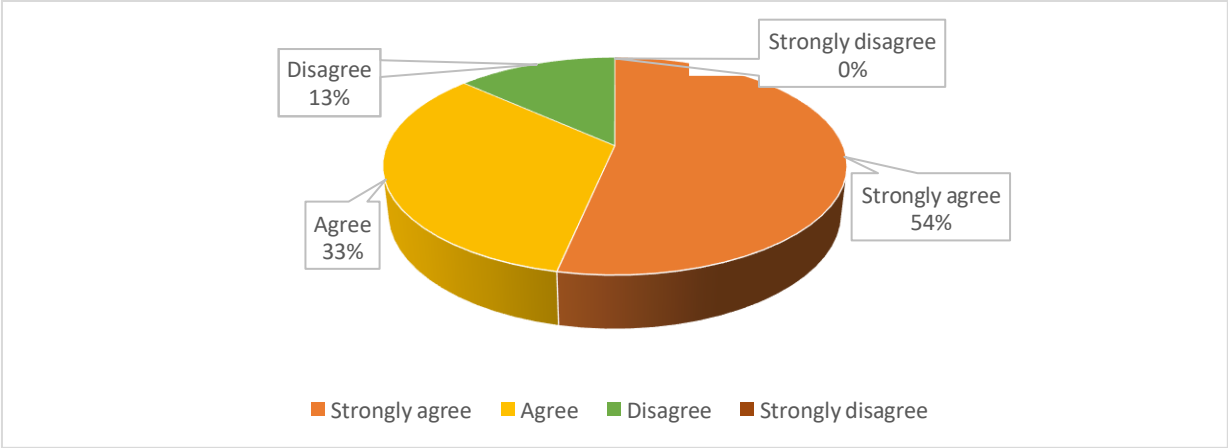
Figure 17: Low Voice Speaking

According to the pie chart, **54%** of respondents strongly agree that females may hesitate and speak in a low voice due to feeling shy in front of their male counterparts. Additionally, **33%** of respondents agreed with this statement. By side **13%** of participants disagreed with this notion while no one chose the strongly disagree option.

Q11. In oral sessions. Students may avoid engaging in discussion on cultural topics because of the fear of their own personality to be changed or deviating from the originalculture.
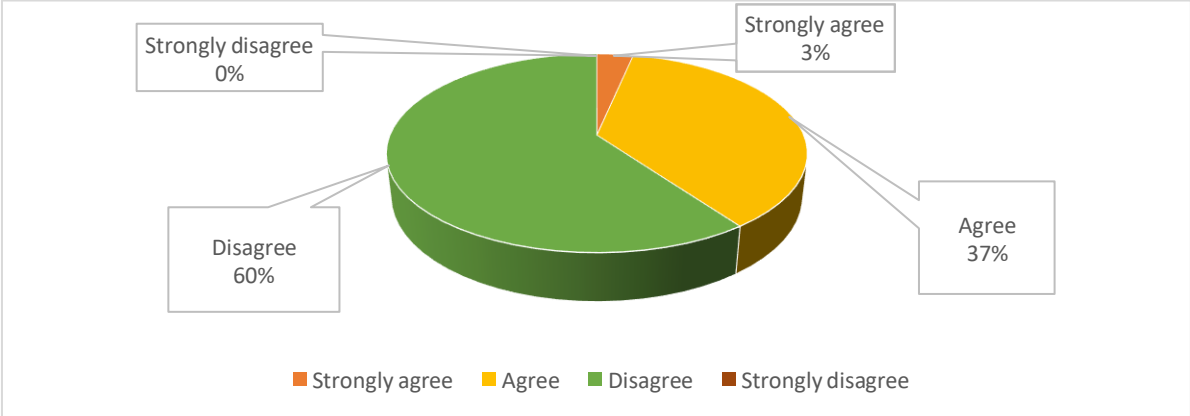
Figure 18: The Impact of Cultural Topics

According to the data shown, **60%** of respondents disagree with this statement, indicating that they do not think that students may avoid speaking because of cultural topics. However, **37%** of participants agree with this notion, suggesting that they do experience concerns aboutpotential changes to their personality or cultural alignment. Additionally, **3%** of respondents strongly agree with this perspective and notably, none of the respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement.

Q12. Kindly, add any additional comments, provide your feedback or point out any remarks that might not have been addressed in the questionnaire.

During data collection, no feedback or comments were given by the students regarding thecontent of the questionnaire, except some students who indicated that the questionnaire was long and contained too many questions.

3.7 Results and Discussion

The majority of the students stated that they are between 18-20. In the next question about what motivates them the most to learn English, most of the students answered by saying they like the language and they want to learn it for future plannings.

Most of the answers agreed that most of the students participate during oral session. The majority of the students agreed that in oral sessions, they prefer to speak rather than to listen. Moreover, most of the answers indicated that most of the students prefer to speak in small numbers of classmates where there are few members. However, based on the student's answers, it has been found that girls tend to be more hesitant to speak than boys in oral session.

The majority of the students feel shy during the oral sessions. Some students also expressed feeling stressed and hesitant, while others reported feeling anxious. Furthermore, a great focus has been given to investigate the reasons for students hesitation. Most students selected the lack of vocabulary as their first reason. Some attributed their hesitation to lack of confidence, which leads eventually to a fear of criticism. Others mentioned difficulties with pronunciation as a barrier to speaking up. Furthermore, the majority of students agreed that the classroom environment does have an impact on their participation in oral sessions, while others perspective was the opposite.

Additionally, outdated teaching strategies (as one of the reasons) that may for example fail to make the topics enjoyable can further contribute to students' reluctance to speak up. Also, the absence of respect within the classroom has been identified as a contributing factor. Yet, immediate judgments from the teacher or frequent interruptions among students can also create an environment that discourages active participation. Moreover, students' diverse social and cultural backgrounds can influence their willingness to speak, for example, the instances of racism or differentiation between students based on their cultural backgrounds can lead to a sense of exclusion or marginalization, further inhibiting students'

willingness to participate. Furthermore, when students were asked about specific experiences or situations that made them hesitant to speak during oral sessions, their responses shed further light on the issue. One of the students said *"I decided to participate for the first time during oral sessions,however, I ended up giving a wrong answer, then the teacher and other students started laughing at me, and the teacher even advised against raising my hand without being sure of the answer."* Based on this experience, this action had a lasting impact on the student, makingthem hesitant to participate in future sessions as it shows the negative impact of teacher judgments and the lack of respect from peers that acts as a barrier to students' participation.

The majority of students agreed that social norms and cultural factors can influence students' reluctance to speak during oral sessions. This consensus confirms that social norms, including family dynamics, peer relationships, and the teacher-student relationship, as well asdifferent cultural backgrounds, can impact students' willingness to participate, whether positively or negatively.

Students were specifically asked whether the communication style among family members affects their oral participation. The majority of students agreed, highlighting the significant role of the family in developing students' communication skills. Having a positive and an open communication environment within the family will make students more confident and motivated tocommunicate and engage in the classroom. Besides, and based on most students' answers, family pressures may affect students' willingness to participate.

Furthermore, the majority of students agreed that negative relationships among students can have a detrimental effect on their participation during oral sessions. In other words, when there are issues such as peer conflicts, ridicule, or bullying, it hinders students from actively participating in the session.

Additionally, according to most responses, students might refrain from participating

during the session due to the nature of the topic being discussed. They may feel uncomfortable or uninterested in certain subjects, particularly if the topics are sensitive or if the level of the discussion is challenging for them.

Besides, most students agreed with the idea that teachers could use specific strategies to encourage and motivate participation during oral sessions. For example, some teachers might offer extra points to those who participate the most.

Also, most students believed that mixed-gender classroom may lead to students' hesitation to speak. Some students might be concerned about how their opinions or ideas will be perceived by the opposite gender. They may fear being, ridiculed, misunderstood or dismissed based on their gender as well.

Particularly, based on most students' answers, some girls may feel shy or uncomfortable speaking in front of the opposite gender, leading them to speak in low voice and prefer expressing themselves in a single-gender setting where they may feel more at ease.

By side, the majority of students believe that they may refrain from participating in oral discussions on cultural topics due to the fear of their own personality being altered or strayingfrom their original culture. Although it's important to discuss certain cultural issues, however, some students recognize that such conversations can imply a threat to their personal identity or cultural roots and beliefs.

Last, the students did not provide any further feedback or comments, except for mentioningthat the questionnaire was somewhat lengthy.

3.5.3 Teacher's Interview

How long have you been teaching at university?

Teacher (A) has been teaching at the university for 2 years, **Teacher (B)** has been teaching for four years, **Teacher (C)** has been teaching for 17 years, and **Teacher (D)** has a two-year period of teachingexperience.

How long have you taught the module of Oral Comprehension and Expression for 1st Year students?

Teacher (A) has taught the module of OCE to 1st Year students for 2 years while Teacher (B) has taught the module for just one semester. Teacher (C) has the longest period of teaching the OCE module that stretched 10 years while Teacher (D) has taught oral module for one year.

Taking the nature of the module into consideration, is there a relationship between speaking and participation? How?

All the Teachers agreed that there is a relationship between speaking and participation. Teacher (A) stated that the more the students participate, the more they are encouraged to speak despite the mistakes they might make. Teacher (B), on the other hand, said that the oral expression module is designed to specifically enhance students' speaking skills. It requires students to actively participate in communication situations such as discussions and conversations where they are encouraged to express their opinions and ideas through speaking. Additionally, Teacher (C) said that those who do have difficulties to communicate in their mother language be able to participate and communicate in other foreign languages. Teacher (D) believed that if a student consistently chooses not to participate that means he has a lack of proficiency in speaking skills.

On a scale of 0 to 100%, how do you evaluate your students' participation during the session?
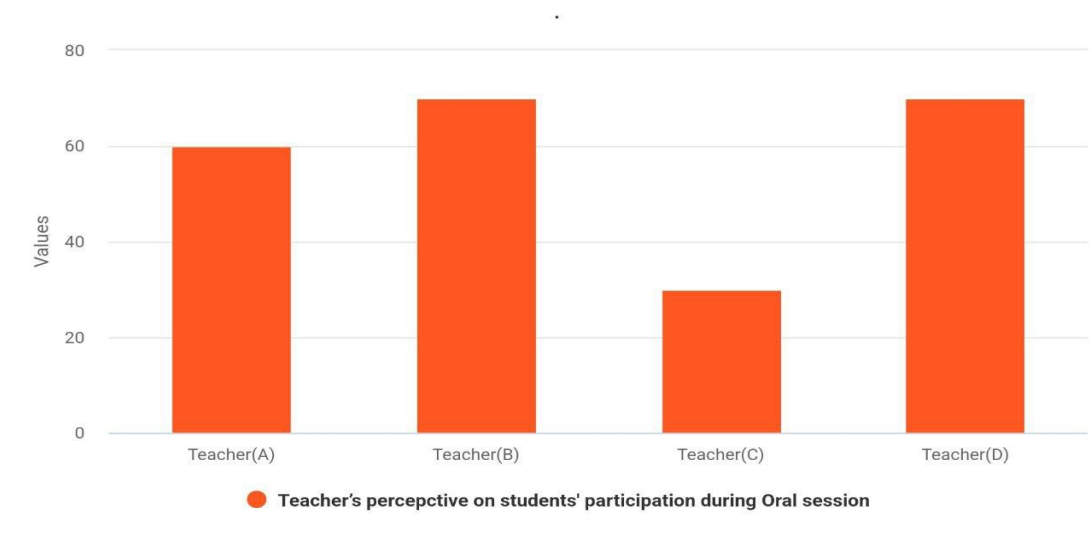
Figure 19: Teacher's Perspective on Students' Participation during Oral Session

Teacher (A) reported a 60% percentage out of the total number of their students, **Teacher (B)** declared 70%, while **Teacher (C)** said 30%, **Teacher (D)** has evaluated it by 70%.

Do you think that EFL 1st Year students are reluctant (unwilling/lazy) to speak during the session?

Three Teachers answered with **Yes** making up a **75%** percentage while just one teacher answered with **No** making up a percentage of **25%**

Which of the factors mentioned below may hinder students' willingness to speak in general?
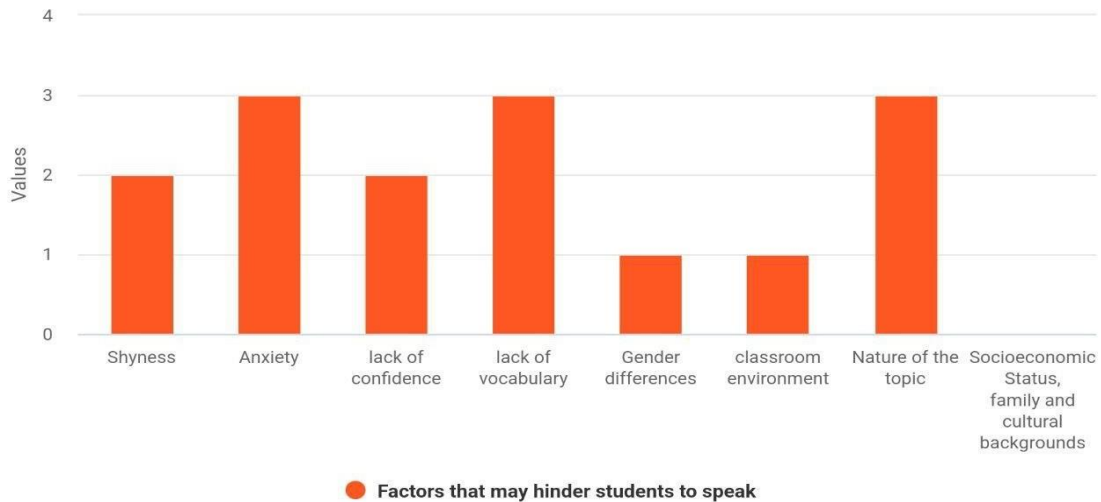
Figure20: Factors that may hinder students to speak

Note: Only three teachers out of four have answered this question.

Two teachers answered with (Shyness) while three answered with (Anxiety), and two teacherswith (lack of confidence). Three teachers answered with (lack of vocabulary), beside one teacher that said it is due to (Gender differences) and one teacher stated that it is because of (classroom environment) while three teachers believed that it is due to the (nature of the topic).While no one thinks that it could be due to socioeconomic status or family and cultural background.

If there are other socio-cultural factors that are not mentioned (and that you have noticed before), can you list them?

All the Teachers stated that there are no other factors which are not mentioned, whichmeans that they noticed anything else except the ones mentioned before.

Have you noticed any differences in your students' willingness to participate during the oral session based on these/some of these socio-cultural factors

Teacher (A) claimed that no differences were noticed on students' participation during

oralsession. While **each of Teacher (B) and (C)** replied with "**Yes,** they have". Lastly, **Teacher (D)** argued that gender differences may not be the reason for students' unwillingness to participate as it could be the opposite because students like to participate more when there are a mixed-gender classroom which may lead to different perspectives.

Do you think it is the role of the teacher to address and understand these factors that influence students' willingness to speak during the oral session?

All Teachers answered with **Yes**.

In your opinion, how can the teacher's understanding of these factors help in eliminating students' reluctance to speak during the oral session?

Teacher (A) said that the more teachers know about their students, the more they will be able to reduce their speaking difficulties. **Teacher (B)** stated that the awareness of how to manage the oral session in a successful and fruitful way is very important and that teachers should create suitable and real-life situations that push and encourage the students to speak regardless of their levels. **Teacher (C)** believed that it is preferable to ask each student to present a topic and choose the most hesitant student to start discussing the topic. Lastly, **Teacher (D)** believed that teachers should just let the stage free for the students to speak unless he/she notices any obstacles then it is important to interfere and guide the conversation again.

Based on your experience, what strategies and teaching practices have you used to eliminate the influence of these factors and to effectively promote students' participation during the session?

Teacher **(A)** stated that no specific strategy is followed, however, it depends on the situation, while **Teacher (B)** claimed that he/she obliged the students to participate and evoke real-life topics. **Teacher (C)** found that the form of siting such as in U helps students reduce

shyness and facilitates their engagement and participation more. **Teacher (D)** argued that studentsare free enough to suggest the strategy they want to be based on during oral session.

Finally, what recommendations and pieces of advice would you give to other teachers of this module trying to understand the influence of the socio-cultural factorson students' reluctance to speak during oral session.

    Teacher (A) expressed that being kind and friendly to students is important to make them feel more relaxedand comfortable to participate and share whatever they want to say. **Teacher (B)** gave no specific recommendations. **Teacher (C)** argued that it is the responsibility of the Department to guide the teachers and choose theadequate teachers for the module. Finally, **Teacher (D)** believed that it is better to make the session enjoyable, and to avoid using hard rules aboutparticipation, as teachers should better discuss the topics that the students feel interested with.

Results and Discussion

    This interview was conducted online with a group of experienced teachers who have taughtthe oral class for first-year EFL students at university in order to gain insights and explore their perspectives and experiences regarding the relationship between the two variables. As being declared, the longest periodof teaching experience was for 17 years to the shortest period of just one semester. This indicatesthat the teachers possess a wealth of knowledge and have observed students' behavior over a significant period of time. This enables them to identify the factors influencing student participationduring oral session.

    All the teachers noticed that there was a close relationship between speaking and participating and stressed the importance of speaking skills in oral classes. Additionally, they pointed out that students have to participate actively and speak up even if they make mistakes, as errors are an essential part of the learning and speaking skills development

process.

When Teachers were asked why students are reluctant to speak, the answers indicated a variety of factors. Most notably, there was a lack of vocabulary where students had difficulty remembering appropriate words to be used in the right context, leading them to avoid speaking even if they had answers. Some teachers believed that it may be because of psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety which may cause them to loose confidence. Also, some teachers suggested that the classroom environment could play a significant role in promoting or reducing participation as well. When the climate is positive and supportive, participation levels rise, while the negative climate leads to reduced interaction. Another teacher explained that a good seating and class organization could enhance communication between students and encouraging them to participate more.

With regard to the mixed-classroom environment, one of the teachers stressed that it did not hinder student participation but could enhance interaction and increase diversity of views as a result of different social and cultural backgrounds between the sexes.

As in the questions about teacher's role and the recommendations that can be given to other teachers to manage the oral session and encourage students to speak, the majority of them emphasized the teacher's crucial role in supporting students suffering from hesitation and silence during oral classes. Also, promoting participation by building positive relationships with students and understanding their personal and social conditions were some of the solutions suggested by the teachers. Some teachers noted the importance of strategies that could help increase participation such as the creation of an encouraging classroom environment in which students would feel comfortable and confident in expressing their views as educational subjects can also be linked to reality and practical applications to motivate students to participate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this section has examined the data and findings gathered through the instruments utilized in this study, including classroom observations, questionnaires, and online interviews. The analysis revealed that students encounter various challenges that impede their participation and speaking during oral sessions.

General Conclusion

Summary of Major Findings

    In conclusion, according to Vygotsky learning is a social and cultural process that occurs through interaction with others and the surrounding environment. Thus, based on the results of this study, it can be said that there is a close relationship between socio-cultural factors and students' reluctance to speak in oral session. Socio-cultural factors play an important role in shaping students' self-confidence and their ability to communicate confidently and effectively. Social factors, such as family treatment, school environment, and peer relationships can influence the development of students' communication skills and self-confidence. Arguably, the more positive the social support and encouragement from family, friends, and society, the more it enhances self-confidence and reduces hesitation in speaking.

Whereas if the support is negative, it easily leads to students' reluctance to speak, Additionally, cultural factors which include the values and beliefs of society can also influence students' directions regarding communication and speaking; such as the students who come from cultures that encourage reticence and not expressing or conveying ideas out loud may feel more hesitant when undertaking oral tasks.

Thus, the findings confirmed the hypothesis of this study, which states that there is a relationship between socio-cultural factors and students' reluctance to speak during oral sessions. Student's reluctance to speak can be influenced by a combination of social and cultural factors as well as by individual factors. By understanding and addressing these factors, both parents and educators can create a positive environment that help students in improving their speaking skills as it promotes active participation which may motivate them to express themselves confidently.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This study has been conducted under difficult procedures, some of which were out of controlat that time such as the frequent absences of students especially male's category which has hindered conducting a proper observation to know the extent of their participation and interaction during oral session, some students' unwillingness to answer the questionnaire due to being it long as they argued and finally teachers' busyness which prevented on site-conducted interviews.

Thus, to avoid the obstacles that this study went through, it is important for future researchersto follow these guidelines:

1 Conduct the study on a large and diverse sample of students with both the two genders to obtain their perspectives on what can influence their willingness to speak during oral sessions.

2 Conduct interviews with multiple teachers to provide valuable insights into their different teaching strategies and approaches and their effect in managing the classroom as well as the session.

3 Conduct observation sessions with several groups which will help to collect sufficient information about what affects students' interaction and what encourages them to participate. Conduct a brief interview and short questionnaire so that everyone can answer quickly and easily.

4 Initiate the research and data collection process as soon as possible to avoid any unforeseen circumstances that may affect the availability or participation of students.

At the end, researchers can gather comprehensive and reliable data regarding the relationship between socio-cultural factors and student reluctance to speak, taking into account the views ofa large and diverse sample of students, interviewing multiple teachers,

and obtaining accurate information through classroom observations. Although, it may take some times to overcome these challenges, with cooperation and flexibility, positive improvements can eventually beachieved.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the research results, the following suggestions have to be taken into consideration:

1. Encourage students to share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas without fear of judgment.

2. Create a safe space where they feel comfortable expressing themselves openly.

3. Listen actively to the students when they speak, showing genuine interest in what they have tosay.

4. Validate their emotions and opinions, even if you may not agree with them.

5. Involve students in family discussions and decision-making processes to encourage them tovoice their opinions.

6. Involve students in programmes, training courses or group activities to improve and develop their communication skills and enhance their self-confidence.

7. Educate students about the importance of choosing a good, positive, motivating friends.

8. Encourage students to respect the views of others and their social or cultural differences.

9. The teacher must encourage and support students to participate in the classroom and show interest and respect for their opinions and ideas (positive remarks).

10. The teacher should give everyone the opportunity to participate and offer prizes to those who participate more effectively as a catalyst such as additional points and symbolic gifts.

11. The Teacher must use a variety of educational methods and strategies to meet the

different needs of students such as Toys, acting shows, Groups activities.

12. Use a variety of educational methods such as images, videos, illustrations to draw students'attention and encourage them to participate and discuss more.

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Appendix 1

Observation Checklist

Observation Checklist

Level: Session Topic:

Module: Date &Time:

Teacher's Name: Room:

Session Number: Students' Number:
Group: Classroom Conditions:

Observation Objective:

....

....

Questions	Yes	No	Comments
1. Do all students participate during oral session?			
2. Do all students frequently participate during the session by asking questions or seeking clarification?			
3. Do girls participate more than boys?			
4. Do the participant students speak fluently?			
5. Do students stutter, tremble, sweat or feel anxious and tense while speaking?			
6. Do students prefer to participate spontaneously than being selected?			
7. Do students show interest in the subject matter?			
8. Do students spontaneously interrupt each other or the teacher while speaking?			
9. Do students actively listen to their teacher and peers while discussing?			
10. Do students show signs of hesitation or reticence when they participate?			
11. Do students laugh or mock their peers when they talk?			
12. Do students make eye contact with the teacher and their colleagues when they speak?			

13. Do girls tend to be more hesitant or reluctant to speak than boys?			
14. Do students tend to hesitate to engage and participate if they are divided into mixed groups of boys and girls?			
15. Does the students' physical appearance reflect their financial condition or traditions?			
16. Do students use gestures and speak out loud while participating?			
17. Do students prefer to collaboratively work with their peers?			
18. Are the topics discussed in the session relevant to the socio-cultural norms?			
19. Do the topics discussed encourage students' interaction and communication during the session?			
20. Does the teacher use gestures and body movements to effectively communicate with the students?			
21. Does the teacher judge or laugh at students' answers while speaking?			
22. Does the teacher provide examples and clear explanation to help students grasp the lesson?			
23. Does the teacher use some specific strategies and techniques to encourage students' engagement?			
24. Does the teacher respect the students and give them the opportunity to ask questions or share their opinions?			
25. Does the teacher handle the students' interruptions effectively for a smooth session			
26. Does the teacher focus and rely on the participation of some certain students or he/she makes sure that all students participate, regardless of their gender, age, or level?			
27. Does the teacher use praises and compliments to encourage students' participation?			
28. Does the teacher motivate the students to interact and participate?			
29. Does the teacher judge and correct students' mistake immediately while speaking?			
30. Does the teacher provide additional guidance based on the student's individual needs?			

Appendix 2

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This survey is being conducted to collect data for a Master's dissertation. It aims to explore your point of view about the relationship between the socio-cultural factors and students 'reluctance to speak during oral sessions. You are kindly requested to take a few minutes of your time to answer the following questions by checking (✓) the appropriate boxes or providing comments if necessary. Please, be assured that your responses will remain confidential and will solely be used for research purposes. Thank you for your cooperation.

Section One: Personal Information

1-Gender

• Male ☐

• Female ☐

2-Age

•18-20 ☐

•21-23 ☐

•24-27 ☐

• More than 27 years. ☐

3-What motivated you to choose English?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section Two: Learners' Perceptions on Speaking and Participation during Oral Sessions:

1- Most of the students participate during oral sessions.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

2-In oral sessions, students prefer to listen rather than to speak.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

3- Most of the students prefer to speak in small numbers of classmates.

•Strongly agree ☐

 •Agree ☐

 •Disagree ☐

 •Strongly disagree ☐

4-Girls tend to be more hesitant to speak than boys, in oral session.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

5- In oral sessions, most students feel:

 (Selecting more than one answer is possible)

•Shy ☐

•Anxious ☐

•Stressful ☐

•Hesitant ☐

6- Most students avoid speaking in oral session because of:

(Selecting more than one answer is possible)

• Lack of vocabulary ☐

• Grammar mistakes ☐

• Lack of confidence ☐

• Pronunciation problems ☐

• Different Social and cultural background ☐

• Gender differences ☐

• Shyness ☐

• Fear of criticism ☐

• Nature of the topics discussed ☐

7-The classroom environment can affect student's participation to speak

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

8-The classroom environment can cause students to become hesitant to speak through:

(Selecting more than one answer is possible)

Students different cultural background. ☐

Teacher's immediate feedback ☐

Teacher's focus on certain student's participation ☐

The absence of respect in the classroom ☐

The nature of the topics discussed in the session ☐

Student's interruptions to each other ☐

Teacher's strategy of teaching ☐

9- If there are any specific experiences or situations that have made you hesitant to speak during oral sessions and which are not mentioned above, please describe them below:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Section Three: Socio-Cultural Factors' Relationship with Students' Reluctance to Speak

1-Social norms and cultural factors may influence students' unwillingness to speak during oral sessions

•Strongly agree ☐

☐

•Agree

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

2- The style of speaking and communication within the family members can affect the student's speaking in the classroom

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

3-Family pressures may distract students' attention and hinder their communication process.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

4- How do you perceive the role of family expectations in shaping your comfort level when speaking in English?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

5- The negative classmates' relationship can affect their participation during the Oral session

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

6-The students may avoid communication or participation due to the nature of the topics being discussed in the session.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

7- Teachers may use some specific strategies and techniques to encourage students' engagement during the session.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

8- Students may hesitate to speak due to their physical appearance which reflect their financial conditions or traditions

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

9-Mixed-gender classroom may lead to students' hesitation to speak

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

10-Girls may feel reserved and speak in low voice in front of boys.

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

11-In oral sessions, students may avoid engaging in discussion on cultural topics because of the fear of their own personality to be changed or deviating from the original culture

•Strongly agree ☐

•Agree ☐

•Disagree ☐

•Strongly disagree ☐

12- Kindly, add any additional comments, provide your feedback or point out any remarks that might not have been addressed in the questionnaire.

……

……

Appendix 3

Online Interview

Dear Teachers,

This survey is being conducted to collect data for a master's dissertation. as it aims to explore your point of view about the relationship between socio-cultural factors on Students Reluctance to speak. kindly request a few minutes of your time to answer the following questions by checking the appropriate boxes or providing comments if necessary. Please be assured that your responses will remain confidential and will solely be used for research purposes. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. How long have you been teaching at university?

....

2.How long have you taught the module of Oral Comprehension and Expression for 1st Year students?

....

3.Taking the nature of the module into consideration, is there a relationship between speaking and participation? How?

                    Yes   No

....

....

4.On a scale of 0 to 100%, how do you evaluate your students' participation during the session?

....

5.Do you think that EFL 1st Year students are reluctant (unwilling/lazy) to speak during the session?

                    Yes   No

6.Which of the factors mentioned below may hinder students' willingness to speak in general?

a. Shyness

b. Anxiety

c. Lack of confidence and self-esteem

d. Lack of vocabulary and language proficiency

e. Gender differences

f. Classroom environment (teacher's interaction, peer evaluation/mocking, fear of making mistakes, participation norms □ waiting for the teacher to nominate, waiting for peers' attention.)

g. Nature of topics tackled during the session

h. Socioeconomic, family and cultural backgrounds

7. Have you noticed any differences in your students' willingness to participate during the oral session based on these/some of these socio-cultural factors?

             Yes   No

....

....

8. If there are other socio-cultural factors that are not mentioned (and that you have noticed before), can you list them?

....

....

9. Do you think it is the role of the teacher to address and understand these factors that influence students' willingness to speak during the oral session?

             Yes   No

....

....

10. In your opinion, how can the teacher's understanding of these factors help in eliminating students' reluctance to speak during the oral session?

....
....

11. Based on your experience, what strategies and teaching practices have you used to eliminate the influence of these factors and to effectively promote students' participation during the session?

....
....

12. Finally, what recommendations and pieces of advice would you give to other teachers of this module trying to understand the influence of the socio-cultural factors on students' reluctance to speak during the oral session?

الملخص

تشهد المدارس والجامعات ظاهرة منتشرة بين الطلاب والتي تتمثل في عزوفهم عن التحدث وتجنبهم للمشاركة في المناقشات الصفية، إذ أشارت الدراسات السابقة بأن هنالك عدّة عوامل تؤثر على مشاركة الطلاب وتسبب لهم ترددا عن التحدث، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة طبيعة العلاقة بين العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية وتردد الطالب عن التحدث، ومدى تأثيرها على عملية تطوير مهارة التحدث لديهم. تم اختيار فئة من طلاب السنة الأولى تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة غرداية كعينة للدراسة، إذ اعتمدت هذه الدراسة في جمع البيانات على الاستبيان (موجه للطلبة)، بالإضافة الى حضور حصص المادة الشفوية لتسجيل الملاحظات حول أداء الطلاب اثناء مشاركتهم وذلك مع مختلف أفواج السنة الأولى، كما تم أيضا اجراء مقابلة عن بعد مع أساتذة ذوي خبرة سابقة في تدريس المادة الشفوية، وذلك لمعرفة آرائهم حول أهم العوامل المؤثرة على رغبة الطلاب في المشاركة.

وبعد الدراسة تم التوصل إلى مجموعة من النتائج والمتمثلة في:

- العوامل الاجتماعية، مثل معاملة العائلة، البيئة المدرسية، والعلاقات بين الاصدقاء، تؤثر في تطوير مهارات التواصل والثقة بالنفس لدى الطلاب، فكلما كان الدعم الاجتماعي والتشجيع من قبل الأسرة والأصدقاء والمجتمع إيجابي كلما كان سببا في تعزيز الثقة بالنفس لديهم والتقليل من الخجل، القلق، والتردد في التحدث، والعكس صحيح.

- العوامل الثقافية، المتمثلة في القيم والمعتقدات الخاصة بالمجتمع والتي بإمكانها التأثير في توجيهات الطلاب بشأن التواصل والتحدث، فقد يشعر الطلاب الذين يأتون من بيئة محافظة تشجع على كتم الأفكار وعدم البوح بها أو نقلها بصوت مرتفع بتردد أكبر عند التحدث والمشاركة، خشية ألا يتم احترامهم. وهكذا فإن هذه النتائج تؤكد النظرية التي تم اعتمادها في هذه الدراسة والتي تقول بأنه " توجد علاقة بين العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية وبين تردد الطلاب عن التحدث ".

استنادا إلى تلك النتائج، اقترحت هذه الدراسة مجموعة من الحلول والإرشادات التي يمكن للآباء والمعلمين اتباعها لمساعدة الطلاب في التغلب على التحديات التي قد تواجههم أثناء المشاركة وتطوير مهارتهم في التحدث والتواصل بفعالية.