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Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

**Investigating the Environmental Factors behind EFL Learners'
Low Academic Performance at University of Ghardaia
First year Master EFL students as a case study**

*Dissertation submitted to University of Ghardaia for obtaining the Master's degree
in Didactics*

Submitted by:

Kenniche Sabrine
Raad Bouchra

Supervisor:

Dr. khaled SADAoui

Board of examiners :

Chairperson: Dr. Siham SARTORIO

University of Ghardaia

Supervisor: Dr. Khaled SADAoui

University of Ghardaia

Examiner: Dr. Zohra GHANI

University of Ghardaia

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Dedication 1

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

This dissertation is dedicated to my father and mother, who have been with me since the first moments of my life. You were my greatest supporters in all the paths I took, shielding me from all the difficulties that tried to exhaust and stop me. This great achievement is due to your grace, after God Almighty. Without you, I would not have reached where I am today.

To my loving family, whose support and encouragement have been the cornerstone of my academic achievements.

To my dear grandmother, may Allah have mercy on her soul, who supported me and was eager to witness this event.

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Lastly, I dedicate this work to all those whose names may not be mentioned but whose influence has left an indelible mark on my academic and personal development.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Bouchra

Dedication 2

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

*"Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge,
by degrees."*

To the secret of my success and the light of my path,

To my mother and father, who never stopped believing in me,

My dear parents, who gave me the gift of dreams and the ability to achieve them,

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Abstract

This study investigates the environmental factors contributing to low academic achievement among English as a foreign language (EFL) learners at the university of Ghardaia. The data was collected using questionnaire and interviews from a sample of 32 master one's students , which aligns with the mixed-method approach. The questionnaire was administered to the entire initial sample of 32 master's students within the department of English language. It aimed to capture quantitative data on a range of environmental factors such as classroom conditions, technology infrastructure, teaching methods, and language barriers. In addition to the questionnaire, a subset of seven students was selected for in-depth interviews. These interviews provided an opportunity to know more about students' experiences and perceptions, offering qualitative data that complemented the quantitative findings from the questionnaire. Through these interviews, a richer understanding of the environmental challenges faced by EFL learners emerged, which served in enhancing the credibility and validity of the study's findings. through, the findings exhibited some significant concerns regarding classroom size, technology, teaching methods, and language barriers. Participants also offered recommendations for interventions, including improving resource access, include language immersion programs, and updating the teaching and technological materials. Even though the study provides credible and reliable results concerning the challenges faced by EFL learners and which result in their low academic achievement, further research is essential to explore the specific reasons and specific contributing factors.

Keywords: Environmental aspects, academic achievement, inadequate academic achievement, learning background, EFL students.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

1. Background

The learning environment is defined by a set of different combined factors, which might be physical, social, organizational, technological, or cultural dimensions. Physically, the design and layout of classrooms, coupled with considerations such as lighting and noise levels, form the backdrop against which students engage with academic content. Socially, the quality of relationships between teachers and students, as well as the dynamics of peer interactions, contribute significantly to the whole classroom atmosphere. The organizational environment, including class size, school culture, and access to support services, plays a major role in shaping the educational experience. The integration of technology further adds a layer to the learning environment, influencing how students interact with information and engage in the learning process. Moreover, cultural and socioeconomic factors introduce complexities related to cultural sensitivity, diversity, and the socioeconomic conditions that may impact students' access to resources. For all those reasons above breaking down the interplay of these environmental factors is essential for deciphering their collective impact on students' academic performance, and more importantly it is important in mitigating the impact of the specific environmental behind low performance.

2. Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate how various environmental factors contribute to low academic performance among students at the university of Ghardaia. Given the various challenges in the contemporary educational settings, this research will focus on all the aspects of learning, be it the physical, social, organizational, technological, and cultural dimensions of the learning environment. So the study aims to identify how they collectively

impact students' academic outcomes and which ones specifically result in low academic performance., in order to be able to overcome those negative influences imposed by the learning environment in the future.

3. Statement of the Problem

In the educational environment of the university of Ghardaia, students confronts numerous challenges that adversely affect their academic performance. These challenges can include increased academic pressures, evolving technological demands, and the need for personalized learning approaches. In response to these different environmental challenges, our research aims to identify and further explore the environmental factors that negatively impact students' academic performance, contributing to low academic outcomes within the university setting.

4. Motivations

The primary motivation for this study stems from the notable gap in existing research regarding the specific environmental factors behind low academic performance, particularly within the context of the university of Ghardaia. While numerous studies have broadly addressed environmental factors in education and their general impact on students, few have discussed how these factors uniquely may result in low academic outcomes. So despite the wealth of literature on general environmental influences, the lack of focused research on their direct impact on low academic performance leaves a critical void. It is within this gap that our study aims to contribute, through an exploration of the physical, social, organizational, technological, and cultural dimensions that shape the learning environment and their direct correlation to academic success or failure.

On a personal level, this research is driven by a profound commitment to educational improvement and student success. Indeed, this study is not merely an academic exercise but a

passionate pursuit to identify barriers that hinder student achievement and to propose practical solutions that can enhance the educational experience for all students at the university of Ghardaia.

5. Research Questions

The following questions guide our study to find out the environmental determinants of low academic performance of EFL learners in the university of Ghardaia:

- 1) What specific environmental factors contribute to the low performance of EFL learners in the University of Ghardaia?
- 2) How do the environmental challenges present within the university setting influence the academic performance of EFL learners?
- 3) What possible changes can be conducted to improve environmental factors in favor of enhancing the academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia?

6. Research Hypotheses

In light of these questions, the following hypotheses are presented to examine the influence of environmental factors on the low academic performance of EFL learners in the university of Ghardaia :

- 1) Specific environmental factors such as : classroom conditions, teaching methods, and institutional support .may contribute to the low academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia.
- 2) Environmental challenges within the university setting, such as insufficient learning materials, and language and cultural barriers, contribute significantly to the low academic performance of EFL learners.

3) Conducting changes such as improving language resources, enhancing teacher training programs, and fostering a supportive learning environment could potentially enhance environmental factors and consequently improve the academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is structured into two main parts: theoretical and practical. It starts first with a general introduction that sets the ground for the entire upcoming chapters and serves as an entry point to our study. It elucidates the key points about our current study including: the research context, problem statement, statement of the purpose, motivation, research inquiries, hypotheses, and the overall structure of the study.

Then we have the theoretical part which includes mainly one chapter, titled "Environmental Factors Impacting Students' Academic Performance," which provides an introduction besides detailing the various environmental factors that influence the academic performance of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This chapter is a literature review, therefore we made sure to include a discussion of educational theories, and an analysis of classroom conditions, institutional support, and socio-cultural influences. It ends by discussing the relationship between the variables of our study which are the environmental factors and the low academic performance.

Chapter two marks a transition to the practical part of the study, it outlines the research methodology, including the selection of data collection tools, procedures, population and sample. The practical part starts with an introduction outlining the objectives and methodology for investigating these environmental factors. It describes the research design, data collection methods, and analysis procedures, including details about the sample population and the research tools used. Data collection procedures and their associated

challenges are also discussed. This is followed by the analysis and interpretation of data from questionnaires and interviews, culminating in a discussion of the results.

The dissertation concludes with a general conclusion that summarizes the research findings, discusses their implications for improving EFL learners' academic performance, and offers recommendations for future research and practice.

6. Definition of Key Terms

6.1. Environmental Factors:

These are external elements that can influence living organisms, including humans. In the context of humans, environmental factors can include physical surroundings, such as climate and geography, as well as social and cultural aspects like family, socioeconomic status, and community influences.

6.2. Learning Environment:

The physical, social, and psychological context in which learning occurs. It includes the physical space (like classrooms or online platforms), the interactions among learners and teachers, and the cultural and emotional atmosphere that affects learning (DymentJ , 2005).

6.3. Learning Setting:

Similar to the learning environment, this term refers to the specific conditions or circumstances where learning takes place. It could include formal settings like schools and universities, informal settings like workplaces or community centers, or virtual settings like online courses (AL Hussaini & Hussain, 2023).

6.4. Academic Performance:

This refers to how well a student meets the standards or expectations set by educational institutions in various academic areas, such as grades, test scores, class participation, and completion of assignments or projects (Kumar, Agarwal, & Agarwal, 2021).

6.5. Low Academic Performance:

This indicates a level of academic achievement that falls below the expected or desired standard. It can result from various factors, including inadequate understanding of the material, lack of motivation, learning disabilities, environmental challenges, or ineffective teaching methods (Michael & Wumi, 2016).

Theoretical Part

Chapter One:

Environmental Factors Impacting Students'

Academic Performance

1.1 Introduction:

The academic performance of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners is subject to the influence of diverse environmental factors. In this chapter, we aim to examine and discuss these factors, with an intention of elucidating their impact on student achievement. Through the lens of educational theories and empirical research, we explore the specific environmental challenges that impede the academic progress of EFL learners. By showcasing the interplay between classroom conditions, institutional support, and socio-cultural factors, we seek to discern the underlying mechanisms driving low academic performance among students.

1.2 Definition and conceptualization of environmental factors in academic performance

To commence, we have to establish a definition of “environment” first. Well, the environment encompasses all elements surrounding living organisms, comprising natural forces and other life forms that facilitate their development and growth. Within the scope of this research, environmental factors denote influences that impede students from achieving their academic potential within their educational settings. Fraser (1998) proposes a broader interpretation of the learning environment, suggesting it encompasses not only natural and living elements but also social, psychological, and pedagogical dimensions that shape learning experiences, influencing students' attitudes and achievements. Kuert and Venkatkrishnan (2016) suggest that self-reported questionnaires are the primary method for evaluating the psychosocial environment. Over the past decade, research has revealed that the learning

environment reflects the quality of teaching and learning within a specific psycho-social context, as highlighted by Dorman (2014).

With that being said, environmental factors in academic performance include various aspects of a student's surroundings, upbringing, and socio-cultural context. School environmental factors, for instance, are the internal surroundings of the school, including teaching materials, facilities, resources, information technology, teacher support, and school climate. A peaceful and friendly school setting enhances students' happiness, while noisy environments, such as those near airports or busy town centers, disrupt concentration and lower academic performance (Siringi, 2010). These factors significantly affect both the physical and psychological potentials of students (Ayça and Ali, 2017). For instance, physical environmental factors can either positively or negatively impact academic performance, depending on the locale and specific circumstances. In fact, inadequate physical facilities like poorly constructed classrooms and insufficient resources compromise both students' and teachers' well-being, potentially leading to negative academic trajectories (Siringi, 2010; Akdil Sönmez and Akpınar, 2017; Onukwo, 2004; Okello, Sichari, and Odera, 2017).

Furthermore, the use of educational technology positively correlates with academic performance, emphasizing the need for integrating technology into education (Bizimana, Orodho, 2014; Haruna et al., 2016). School climate, another critical factor, creates a conducive atmosphere for learning (Nsa et al., 2014). Positive school climates significantly impact students' achievement and safety perceptions, fostering better academic outcomes (Nsa et al., 2014).

To put it all together, the physical and psychological conditions of the learning environment significantly impact student concentration, behavior, and academic achievement. Therefore, the definition and conceptualization of environmental factors in academic

performance include a broad range of influences that surround students within their educational settings. These factors can significantly impact students' learning outcomes, cognitive development, and overall academic success.

1.3 Classification of Environmental Factors Impacting Students' Academic Performance

Scholars typically tend to categorize those factors into broader classifications. They can be broadly categorized into physical, social, cultural, and institutional dimensions. However, according to many scholars, it should be noted that there is a classification that is more specific and precise. It is as follow:

1.3.1 Physical Environment: According to DymenJ (2005), the physical surroundings where learning takes place play a major role in academic performance. Factors such as classroom design, lighting, temperature, noise levels, and air quality can either enhance or impede students' ability to concentrate, engage with material, and retain information.

1.3.2 Home Environment: Gilavand A, Espidkar F, Gilavand (2016) contend that The home environment encompasses familial, socio-economic, and cultural factors that influence students' academic performance. Variables such as parental involvement, socioeconomic status, family structure, access to educational resources (e.g., books, computers), and parental attitudes towards education profoundly impact students' motivation, self-esteem, and academic aspirations.

1.3.3 Peer Influence and Social Dynamics: Dan Daviesa, D, Jindal-Snapeb (2013) assert that peers significantly shape students' attitudes towards learning, study habits, and academic achievements. Positive peer relationships, collaboration, and social support

networks can foster a conducive learning environment, whereas negative peer pressure, bullying, and social conflicts may adversely affect students' academic performance and overall well-being.

1.3.4 School Climate and Culture: Blair, D (2009) explore the cultural factors, such as race and ethnicity, claiming that the overall atmosphere and ethos of a school, including its policies, leadership practices, disciplinary measures, and organizational culture, profoundly impact students' academic experiences and outcomes. A positive school climate characterized by supportive relationships, high expectations, clear communication, and inclusive practices can enhance students' sense of belonging, engagement, and academic achievement.

1.3.5 Community and Societal Influences: Dymont, J. E., & Bell, A. C.(2008) argue that broader societal and community factors, including access to extracurricular activities, community resources, neighborhood safety, and cultural norms regarding education, shape students' educational experiences and opportunities. Socioeconomic disparities, systemic inequalities, and community-level challenges can significantly impact students' access to quality education and academic outcomes.

1.3.6 Technological Environment: In today's digital age, technological factors such as access to computers, internet connectivity, digital learning resources, and educational technologies profoundly influence students' learning experiences and academic performance. The digital divide, disparities in access to technology, and digital literacy skills can exacerbate inequalities in educational outcomes (AL Hussaini & Hussain, 2023).

Ultimately, defining and understanding the different types of environmental factors in academic performance are regarded as an essential step for promoting student success.

Indeed, prioritizing the improvement of school environments, stakeholders and teachers can create conducive settings that support better learning outcomes and student well-being.

1.4 The Role of Environmental Factors in Shaping Student Academic Performance

Learning is an intricate process influenced by a myriad of environmental factors, as extensively discussed in research studies conducted by scholars such as Yesica Paola Villarreal Arroyo et al. (2023) and Kelvin Hilario (2018). These studies discussed the multifaceted relationship between environmental conditions and students' academic performance, shedding light on the dynamics that shape the learning experience.

Undoubtedly, environmental factors play a major role in shaping the learning experience and academic performance of students. Concentration, defined as exclusive attention to one object or activity, is a valuable cognitive tool that thrives in the right environment. The learning process, occurring both within formal education and throughout life, is influenced significantly by environmental conditions, particularly the settings where instruction takes place (Hilario ; 2018).

Behaviorism, a theory focusing on observable and measurable behaviors, underscores the importance of environmental conditions in shaping human behavior and learning outcomes. A disorganized classroom environment, according to Linsin (2011), can inadvertently promote poor behavior and mediocre work habits among students. A chaotic classroom may signal to students that disruptive behavior is acceptable, leading to a lack of concentration and disregard for personal habits and respect for others (Linsin ; 2011).

Behavior and classroom management emerge as critical variables affecting student learning. Effective classroom management enables teachers to establish and enforce rules,

thereby maintaining authority and creating an environment conducive to learning. Stewart (1997) emphasizes the central role of behavior management in stimulating learning, highlighting the importance of maintaining control to engage students effectively in the teaching and learning process (Stewart ;1997).

Further to this, research suggests that students thrive in positive and supportive learning environments. Dorman, Aldridge, and Fraser (2006) assert that students learn better when they perceive the learning environment as nurturing and encouraging. Therefore, the quality of the learning environment not only influences language acquisition but also shapes students' character development and overall engagement in the learning process(Dorman et al., 2006).

Indisputably, it goes without saying environmental factors significantly influence students' academic achievements beyond mere physical conditions. Positive school climates, hard work by teachers and students, discipline, and effective teaching are vital for good results in national examinations and academic success. The learning environment profoundly affects behavior patterns, attitudes, and commitments of learners, highlighting the importance of conducive settings (Arroyo et al. ,2023).

1.5 Environmental Influences on Academic Performance: Socio-Ecological Systems Theory Perspective

Socio-Ecological Systems Theory (SEST) offers a holistic framework for understanding the various environmental factors and their impact on academic performance. SEST posits that human behavior and well-being are shaped not only by individual characteristics but also by the broader socio-cultural and environmental contexts in which individuals are embedded.

Within the context of academic performance, SEST highlights the dynamic interactions between individuals and their surrounding environments at multiple levels, including the micro (individual), meso (community), and macro (society) levels. This theory underscores the importance of considering both the social and ecological dimensions of the educational environment to fully grasp its influence on student outcomes (Garay, Moros, Orate, Russel, & Sinugbuhan, 2021).

At the micro-level, SEST emphasizes the significance of individual characteristics and experiences in shaping academic performance. This includes factors such as students' socio-economic background, family dynamics, and personal attributes, all of which can interact with the broader environmental context to influence learning outcomes.

Moving to the meso-level, SEST recognizes the role of community and institutional factors in shaping academic environments. This include aspects such as school climate, peer relationships, teacher-student interactions, and access to resources within the educational institution. These factors contribute to the creation of a supportive or challenging learning environment that can impact student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement.

At the macro-level, SEST considers the broader socio-cultural and economic context in which schools operate. This includes societal norms and values, educational policies, funding structures, and socio-economic disparities that can influence educational opportunities and outcomes. For that reason, understanding these macro-level influences is essential for addressing systemic barriers to academic success and promoting educational equity (Garay, Moros, Orate, Russel, & Sinugbuhan, 2021).

Accordingly to the principles of Socio-Ecological Systems Theory, teachers, stakeholders, and researchers can understand better the complex web of environmental factors

that shape academic performance. So, this holistic perspective accentuates the importance of considering the interconnections between individuals, communities, institutions, and broader societal forces in creating supportive learning environments that foster student academic success (Garay, Moros, Orate, Russel, & Sinugbuhan, 2021).

1.6 Environmental Influences on Academic Performance: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory Perspective

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is another theory that provides a framework for understanding the diverse environmental factors that shape academic performance. Developed by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, this theory emphasizes the importance of considering the multiple layers of influence that surround individuals within their environments (Guy-Evans, 2024).

At the core of Bronfenbrenner's theory are the nested systems that interact to influence human development. These systems include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Each system represents a different level of environmental influence, ranging from immediate surroundings to broader societal contexts and historical influences (Guy-Evans, 2024).

The microsystem refers to the immediate environments where individuals interact daily, such as family, peers, and school. Within the microsystem, interpersonal relationships, family dynamics, and peer interactions play a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes, behaviors, and academic engagement. For example, supportive family environments and positive peer relationships can contribute to a nurturing atmosphere that fosters academic success (Guy-Evans, 2024).

The mesosystem represents the connections and interactions between different microsystems in a person's life. This includes the relationship between home and school environments, as well as interactions between teachers, parents, and peers. A strong mesosystem characterized by collaboration and communication between home and school can enhance academic support and reinforce positive learning experiences for students (Guy-Evans, 2024).

Moving beyond immediate relationships, the exosystem encompasses broader social structures and institutions that indirectly influence individuals' experiences. This includes factors such as community resources, social policies, and cultural norms that shape the opportunities and challenges students encounter in their educational journey. To exemplify, access to extracurricular activities, community support services, and socio-economic disparities within the larger community can impact students' academic performance (Guy-Evans, 2024).

The macrosystem represents the pervasive cultural, political, and economic context in which individuals live. This includes societal values, beliefs, and ideologies that shape educational practices, policies, and opportunities at a societal level. Cultural expectations, educational policies, and economic inequalities within the macrosystem can have profound effects on students' access to resources, educational experiences, and academic outcomes (Guy-Evans, 2024).

Last but not least, the chronosystem acknowledges the dynamic nature of environmental influences over time. This includes historical events, life transitions, and developmental milestones that shape individuals' experiences and opportunities across the lifespan. Changes in family structure, societal attitudes towards education, and technological

advancements represent examples of how environmental influences evolve over time and impact academic performance (Guy-Evans, 2024).

1.7 Environmental Influences on Academic Performance : Environmental Psychology Theories

Environmental psychology theories provide abundant evidence about the relationship between the physical and social environment and academic performance. These theories stress how environmental factors influence individuals' cognitive processes, behaviors, and well-being within educational settings (Diaz, 2022).

1. **Environmental Stress Theory:** Environmental stress theory posits that environmental factors, such as noise, crowding, and lack of privacy, can create stress and negatively impact individuals' cognitive functioning and academic performance. To illustrate, exposure to excessive noise levels in classrooms can impair concentration and hinder information processing, leading to reduced academic achievement (Environmental Stress Theory, n.d.).
2. **Person-Environment Fit Theory:** Person-environment fit theory emphasizes the match between individuals' characteristics and environmental demands. In the context of academic performance, this theory suggests that students' academic success is influenced by the compatibility between their learning styles, personalities, and the characteristics of the learning environment. To exemplify, students who thrive in collaborative learning environments may struggle in competitive or individualistic settings (Diaz, 2023).
3. **Environmental Competence Model:** The environmental competence model proposes that individuals develop adaptive strategies to cope with and control their environment. In the context of education, students' ability to effectively manage

environmental stressors, such as distractions or time constraints, can influence their academic performance. Developing environmental competence involves acquiring skills to create conducive learning environments and regulate one's behavior and emotions (Roczen et al., 2014).

4. **Place Attachment Theory:** Place attachment theory explores individuals' emotional bonds and connections to physical environments. In educational settings, students' attachment to their school environment can influence their sense of belonging, motivation, and academic engagement. Unquestionably, schools that foster positive social relationships, a sense of ownership, and opportunities for meaningful participation can enhance students' attachment and positively impact their academic performance (Diaz, 2022).
5. **Environmental Determinism:** Environmental determinism theory suggests that environmental factors exert a deterministic influence on human behavior and outcomes. In the context of academic performance, this theory highlights the role of environmental conditions, such as classroom layout, lighting, and temperature, in shaping students' attention, motivation, and learning outcomes. Therefore, it goes without saying that optimizing environmental conditions would create a supportive learning environment conducive to academic success (Jerden, 2023).

To recapitulate, environmental psychology theories are packed with empirical evidence, they are of a great help for teachers and stakeholders in their forays to design a positive conducive learning environments that promote students' cognitive, emotional, and social well-being, ultimately enhancing academic performance. To go into details, strategies may include reducing environmental stressors, promoting person-environment fit, fostering students' environmental competence, strengthening place attachment, and optimizing environmental conditions to support learning and achievement .

1.8 The Environmental Factors behind Low Academic Performance

What is meant by the environmental factors behind low academic performance is the various external conditions and influences within educational settings that contribute to suboptimal academic achievement. These factors include classroom conditions, institutional support, language and cultural barriers, as well as psychological factors affecting learning outcomes (AL Hussaini & Hussain, 2023).

1.8.1 Classroom Conditions and Teaching Methods

Classroom conditions and teaching methods refer to the physical environment and instructional approaches utilized within educational settings. This include the condition of the classroom itself, including factors such as overcrowding, facilities, environmental quality, and noise levels. Additionally, it includes the methods employed by teachers to deliver instruction, such as traditional lectures, interactive activities, hands-on learning experiences, and the integration of technology. So both of classroom conditions and teaching methods are essential for creating effective learning environments that promote student engagement, comprehension, and academic success (AL Hussaini & Hussain, 2023).

- **Classroom Conditions:** Overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities, and poor environmental quality can create barriers to effective learning. To give an example, students in crowded classrooms may struggle to concentrate, while poor ventilation can lead to discomfort and reduced cognitive function. Additionally, excessive noise levels can disrupt learning and communication (Dan Daviesa et al., 2013).
- **Teaching Methods:** Traditional teaching methods that rely heavily on lectures and rote memorization may not cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. In particular, students with different learning preferences, such as visual, auditory, or

kinesthetic learners, may struggle to engage with material presented in a one-size-fits-all approach (Dan Davies et al., 2013)..

1.8.2 Institutional Support and Resources:

Institutional support and resources refer to the assistance, provisions, and facilities provided by educational institutions to support the learning process and academic success of students. This support includes various aspects such as access to educational materials, textbooks, technology, adequate facilities, counseling services, teacher training, and other resources necessary for effective teaching and learning. Institutional support and resources play a crucial role in creating an environment conducive to learning and enabling students to achieve their educational goals (Gilavand et al., 2016).

- **Access to Resources:** Inadequate access to textbooks, technology, and educational materials can limit students' ability to fully engage with the curriculum and acquire essential knowledge and skills. Schools with limited resources may struggle to provide students with the tools they need to succeed academically (Lester & Maudsley, 2006).
- **Teacher Training and Support:** Teachers play a critical role in supporting student learning, but insufficient training and professional development opportunities may hinder their effectiveness. Particularly teachers who lack training in effective instructional strategies or classroom management techniques may struggle to meet the diverse needs of their students (Wankasi, et al., 2022).

1.8.3 Language and Cultural Barriers:

Language and cultural barriers refers to obstacles and challenges that arise due to differences in language proficiency and cultural backgrounds among individuals within educational settings. These barriers can hinder effective communication, comprehension, and

participation in classroom activities. Addressing language and cultural barriers is a necessity for creating inclusive and supportive educational environments that cater to the diverse needs and backgrounds of all students (AL Hussaini & Hussain, 2023).

- **Language Barriers:** For students who are not proficient in the language of instruction, language barriers can pose significant challenges to academic success. Limited proficiency in the language of instruction can impede comprehension, communication, and participation in classroom activities (Blair, 2009).
- **Cultural Differences:** Cultural differences in educational norms, values, and expectations may create misunderstandings and barriers to learning. Students from culturally diverse backgrounds may struggle to navigate unfamiliar academic environments and may not feel fully understood or supported by teachers and peers (Blair, 2009).

1.8.4 Psychological Factors Affecting Learning Outcomes:

This refers to the various mental and emotional elements that can influence an individual's ability to acquire, retain, and apply knowledge effectively. These factors include a wide range of psychological aspects such as attitudes, emotions, motivation, self-esteem, anxiety, stress, and mental well-being, all of which can significantly impact an individual's learning process and academic performance (Sugii, 2022).

- **Mental Health and Well-being:** Psychological factors such as low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and stress can have a profound impact on students' ability to learn and perform academically. Students who experience mental health challenges may struggle to concentrate, retain information, and engage in classroom activities.

- **Negative Experiences:** Negative experiences such as bullying, harassment, discrimination, or trauma can significantly impact students' psychological well-being and academic performance. Students who feel unsafe or marginalized in their school environment may experience heightened levels of stress and anxiety, which can interfere with their ability to learn and thrive.

1.9 Conclusion

To put it all together, this chapter has provided a detailed description of the environmental factors affecting the academic performance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in general. Starting with a definition and conceptualization of those factors and their different categories, moving on to an exploration of the various educational theories and empirical research regarding the influence of the environmental factors on the academic performance. The discussion has revealed interplay between classroom conditions, institutional support, and socio-cultural factors, all of which contribute to the challenges faced by EFL learners in achieving academic success. By discussing this, we aimed to deepen our knowledge about the underlying mechanisms driving low academic performance among EFL students, the thing we discussed at the end of the chapter. Moving forward, it is imperative to consider these theories and perspectives in the development of our practical part in order to be able to come up with a reliable methodology to elaborate on the current discussions concerning the environmental factors contributing to the low academic performance of EFL learners.

Part Two:

Practical Part

Part Two: Practical Part

2.1 Introduction

Moving to the practical part of this study, aiming to investigate the environmental factors behind the low the academic performance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners at the university of Ghardaia. In this part, we try to mention everything related to the data collection procedures and tools starting with the methodology of research and the population sample, all while providing a description of the research tools alongside their limitations and how they were mitigated to ensure valid findings. Then we move to the data analysis and interpretation section where all the data provided by the questionnaire and the interview is analyzed and interpreted in order to facilitate the discussion of the results of this study and answering our research inquiries.

2.2. Research Methodology

The research followed a mixed-method approach to ensure a detailed analysis of the factors at play, ultimately validating the study's hypotheses through empirical evidence from both research tools. Indeed, the combined use of questionnaires and interviews provide more details and information on the environmental factors influencing EFL learners' academic performance at the University of Ghardaia. The quantitative data from the questionnaires offered broad trends and general perceptions in form of numerical data that will undertake a statistical analysis, while the qualitative data from the interviews provided detailed written descriptions and narratives from participants that helps understand their individual experiences and challenges.

2.3. Sample of the Study

The sample for this study comprises of master one students from the department of the English language in the university of Ghardaia . This specific population was chosen because they have extensive experience within the university, they are familiar with it since they have spent several years in its academic and social environments. They hold knowledge of the institution's dynamics which makes them well-suited to provide valuable information about the environmental factors that influence academic performance.

A total of 32 students participated in this study. These EFL students were selected to ensure a better representation of different perspectives on the environmental determinants affecting their academic performance. The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire, which all 32 students completed. This questionnaire was designed to capture quantitative data on various factors such as classroom conditions, teaching methods, availability of learning materials, and institutional support.

To supplement the quantitative data and gain a more in-depth understanding of the students' experiences and perceptions, a subset of seven students from the initial sample was selected for in-depth interviews. These interviews provided qualitative data , allowing for a richer, more details of the specific challenges and influences these students face in their academic environment.

2.4. Description of the Data Collection Tools

The study utilized two data collection tools: a questionnaire and an interview. These tools were designed to capture the views of the EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia regarding the environmental factors affecting their academic performance in a negative way.

2.4.1. Description of the Questionnaire:

The questionnaire aimed to gather students' perspectives on the various environmental factors contributing to low academic performance among EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia. The objective was to identify actionable measures for improvement by getting to know first the complexities of students' academic experiences. The questionnaire was divided into three main parts:

- **Demographic Information:**

This section collected basic information about the participants , including gender and age, to contextualize their responses.

- **Environmental Factors and Academic Performance:**

This section included statements and questions designed to measure the students' agreement with various environmental factors and their perceived impact on academic performance. The topics covered included the availability of English language resources, the accessibility of language learning facilities, opportunities for language immersion, and support from faculty and staff.

- ✓ Statements were rated on a Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to gauge the adequacy of resources, facilities, and support systems.

- ✓ Perceptions of environmental challenges, such as classroom size and technology infrastructure, were rated from "Very negatively" to "Very positively."

- ✓ Open-ended questions solicited suggestions for improvements and specific strategies the university administration could implement to better support EFL learners.

- **Potential Interventions:**

This last part focused on the importance of various interventions to improve environmental factors for EFL learners. Participants rated the importance of increasing access to resources, enhancing learning facilities, and implementing language immersion programs.

Additional open-ended questions invited further suggestions for effective interventions and any other relevant comments.

2.4.2 Description of the Interview

In addition to the questionnaire, a subset of seven students from the initial sample of 32 was selected for in-depth interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to gain more details regarding the students' experiences and perceptions, providing qualitative data to complement the quantitative findings from the questionnaire.

The interview questions were designed to explore:

- **Learning Experience:**

Students were asked to describe their overall learning experience at the university of Ghardaia.

- **Environmental Factors:**

Students were asked to identify specific environmental factors within the university that affect their academic performance in English and elaborated on the impact of these factors.

- **Challenges in EFL Learning:**

Students also discussed the particular challenges they face in learning English within the university environment.

- **Resource Availability:**

Students were asked to assess the availability and adequacy of resources like libraries and language labs for EFL learning.

- **Classroom Environment:**

Students were asked to provide feedback on whether the classroom environment supports their English language learning goals and suggested improvements.

- **Social Interactions:**

Students were encouraged to reflect on how interactions with peers and faculty members influence their English language learning experience.

- **Desired Changes:**

Students were given a chance to propose any specific changes or improvements to the university environment to better support EFL learners.

- **Administrative Support:**

Students were asked to suggest ways so the university administration could better address the needs of EFL learners.

2.5. Administration of the Data Collection Tools

The administration of both the questionnaire and the interview was conducted online, opting for digital platforms to ensure ease of access and wide reach among the target population of master one students in the English department at the university of Ghardaia. Also the online administration of both the questionnaire and the interviews ensured broad participation and facilitated the collection of data.

2.5.1. The Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire, designed to investigate the environmental factors behind learners' low performance, was administered using Google Forms. This platform was chosen for its clear and simple interface, ease of distribution, and ability to compile responses efficiently. The questionnaire link was shared through various channels to maximize participation:

- ✓ **Facebook Groups:** The link was posted in Facebook groups specifically created for the university of Ghardaia's English Department. Since these groups are active forums where students regularly engage, making them an effective medium for reaching a large number of potential participants quickly.

- ✓ **Classmates and Delegates:** The link was also disseminated through personal networks, including classmates and student delegate of master students. These individuals were encouraged to share the questionnaire with their peers, further extending the reach and ensuring a diverse representation of responses.

This protocol resulted in 32 students completing the questionnaire, providing a broad data set for analyzing the environmental factors affecting EFL learners' academic performance.

2.5.2. The Administration of the Interview

The interviews were also conducted online to accommodate the participants' schedules and ensure convenience. For this purpose, Google Forms was used to facilitate the initial recruitment and scheduling process. A subset of seven students from the original questionnaire respondents were invited to answer these in-depth interviews. These students were asked to provide more detailed qualitative data of the issues identified in the questionnaire that needed further clarification and description.

- ✓ **Recruitment:** Invitations for the interview were sent via email and through personal messages on social media platforms.
- ✓ **Interview Process:** Each interview followed a structured format with predefined questions, but also allowed flexibility for participants to elaborate on their experiences and views.

2.6. Limitations of the Study

While the study provides important data regarding the environmental factors affecting EFL learners' academic performance at the university of Ghardaia, several limitations should be acknowledged:

- **Online Data Collection:**

The administration of both the questionnaire and the interviews was conducted online using Google Forms. This approach, while convenient and efficient, might have excluded students with limited internet access or those less comfortable with digital platforms, potentially biasing the sample towards more technologically proficient individuals. To minimize this issue, the study's links were shared through multiple channels, including Facebook groups and direct communication with classmates and student delegates, ensuring broader reach and participation, so it is safe to say that efforts were made to encourage participation and assist those facing technical difficulties.

• **Written Interviews:**

The interviews were not conducted face-to-face but rather through written responses. This format can limit the depth of the responses and may not capture the full range of participants' emotions and their experiences. Non-verbal cues and the opportunity for immediate follow-up questions were absent, which could have enriched the data. To mitigate this, the interview questions were designed to be open-ended, allowing participants to provide detailed and thoughtful responses. Follow-up questions were also included to encourage students to share more.

• **Self-Reported Data:**

Both the questionnaire and the interviews relied on self-reported data from the students. This method can introduce bias, as participants might provide socially desirable answers or may not accurately recall their experiences and perceptions. To address this limitation, the questionnaire and interview were carefully designed to include both closed and open-ended questions, ensuring a balance between structured responses and opportunities for participants to express their genuine thoughts and experiences. Besides anonymity and confidentiality to encourage honesty in responses.

2.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis section examine and interpreter the data collected through the questionnaire and interviews. This analysis aims to uncover the responses regarding the environmental factors that result in the low academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia. The collected data, both quantitative and qualitative, provide the direct views of the students' experiences, perceptions, and challenges within the university environment.

2.7.1 Data Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire responses offer quantitative data that highlight trends and patterns in students' perceptions of environmental factors, such as the availability of resources, classroom conditions, and institutional support. Most of these responses are analyzed using statistical methods to identify significant factors contributing to low academic performance among EFL learners while the actual data is represented in tables in forms of percentages and numerical data to make it easier to read.

- **Part 1: Demographic Information**

- ✓ **Gender Distribution:**

Gender	Number of Participants	Percentage
Male	14	43.8%
Female	18	56.3%

Table 01: Gender Distribution of the Participants

The gender distribution among participants shows a slight majority of females, comprising 56.3% of the sample, while males make up 43.8%. This gender distribution suggests a relatively balanced representation of both genders within the study.

✓ **Age Distribution:**

Mean Age: 22.5 years

Age Range: 20-25 years

The mean age of participants is 22.5 years, indicating that the majority of participants fall within the early twenties. (The mean age is the average age of the participants in the study. It is calculated by summing the ages of all participants and dividing by the total number of participants).

The majority of participants are aged 22 and 23, representing 28.1% and 31.3% of the sample, respectively. The least common age is 26, with only one participant (3.1%).

The mean age of participants is approximately 22.5 years, indicating that most students are in their early 20s.

This age distribution suggests a relatively young cohort, which is typical for university-level EFL learners.

• **Part 2: Environmental Factors and Academic Performance**

✓ **Question 1: Please indicate your agreement with the following statements regarding environmental factors influencing the academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia:**

a. Statement 1: Availability of English Language Resources

The following table presents the participants' responses regarding the availability of English language resources and its support for their learning needs:

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Strongly Agree	22	68.8%
Agree	8	25.0%
Neutral	2	6.3%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

Table 02: The Availability of English Language Resources

The majority of participants (68.8%) strongly agree that the availability of English language resources adequately supports their learning needs.

A smaller percentage (25.0%) agree with this statement, while a negligible percentage (6.3%) remain neutral.

None of the participants disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, indicating a high level of agreement regarding the availability of resources.

b. Statement 2: Accessibility of Language Learning Facilities

The next table showcases the participants' responses regarding the sufficiency of opportunities for English language immersion in enhancing language acquisition:

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Strongly Agree	20	20 62.5%
Agree	10	10 31.3%
Neutral	2	2 6.3%

Disagree	0	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0%

Table 03: Accessibility to Language Learning Facilities

From the previous table we can say that the majority of participants (62.5%) strongly agree that the accessibility of language learning facilities facilitates effective practice of English skills.

A significant proportion (31.3%) agree with this statement, while a small percentage (6.3%) remain neutral.

Similar to the previous statement, none of the participants disagree or strongly disagree, indicating a consensus regarding the accessibility of facilities.

c. Statement 3: Opportunities for English Language Immersion

The upcoming table exhibits the data obtained from the answers regarding the agreement with to this statements about the sufficiency of opportunities for English language immersion in enhancing language acquisition:

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Strongly Agree	15	15 46.9%
Agree	12	12 37.5%
Neutral	3	3 9.4%
Disagree	2	2 6.3%
Strongly Disagree	0	0 0%

Table 04: Opportunities for English Language Immersion

From the table above, nearly half of the participants (46.9%) strongly agree that opportunities for English language immersion are sufficient to enhance language acquisition.

A significant proportion (37.5%) agree with this statement, while a smaller percentage (9.4%) remain neutral.

A few participants (6.3%) disagree with the statement, suggesting that some perceive a lack of sufficient language immersion opportunities.

d. Statement 4: Support from Faculty and Staff

This table presents the participants' responses regarding the impact of faculty and staff support on their academic performance in English courses:

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Strongly Agree	18	18 56.3%
Agree	10	10 31.3%
Neutral	3	3 9.4%
Disagree	1	1 3.1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0 0%

Table 05: Support from Faculty and Staff

The data in the table show that the majority of participants (56.3%) strongly agree that support from faculty and staff positively impacts their academic performance in English courses.

A significant proportion (31.3%) agree with this statement, while a smaller percentage (9.4%) remain neutral.

Only one participant (3.1%) disagrees with the statement, indicating overall satisfaction with the support provided by faculty and staff.

✓ **Question 02: How do you perceive the following environmental challenges within the university setting influencing your academic performance as an EFL learner?**

a. Statement 1: Classroom Size and Composition

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Very Negatively	6	18.8%
Negatively	14	43.8%
Neutral	7	21.9%
Positively	5	15.6%
Very Positively	0	0%

Table 06: Classroom Size and Composition

From the data presented in the table a significant number of participants (43.8%) feel that classroom size and composition negatively affect their academic performance.

Some participants (18.8%) perceive these factors very negatively.

A smaller proportion (21.9%) remain neutral, while a few participants (15.6%) view these factors positively.

No participants view classroom size and composition very positively, indicating overall dissatisfaction in this area.

b. Statement 2: Availability and Adequacy of Technology Infrastructure

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Very Negatively	3	9.4%
Negatively	8	25%
Neutral	9	28.1%
Positively	10	31.3%
Very Positively	2	6.3%

Table 07: Availability and Adequacy of Technology Infrastructure

The table above exhibits the following data:

The largest group of participants (31.3%) feel that the availability and adequacy of technology infrastructure positively influence their academic performance.

Some participants (28.1%) remain neutral on this issue.

A combined 34.4% of participants feel that technology infrastructure affects their performance negatively or very negatively, highlighting a need for improvements.

A small percentage (6.3%) view the technology infrastructure very positively.

c. Statement 3: Supportive Learning Environment

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Very Negatively	2	6.3%
Negatively	5	15.6%
Neutral	9	28.1%

Positively	12	37.5%
Very Positively	14	12.5%

Table 08: Supportive Learning Environment

From the table it is shown that the majority of participants (37.5%) view the supportive learning environment positively.

A smaller but significant portion (28.1%) remains neutral.

A combined 21.9% of participants perceive the supportive learning environment negatively or very negatively, suggesting that some students feel underserved.

A noteworthy 12.5% view the environment very positively, indicating that improvements in this area could significantly benefit students.

✓ **Question 3: What changes or improvements do you believe could enhance the environmental factors to support the academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Gardaia?**

A majority of participants (17students) believe that increasing access to English language resources is important which suggests a significant need for more textbooks, reference materials, and other learning aids. While almost half of the participants (15) students suggest that better language labs and multimedia resources would enhance their learning experience, indicating a desire for more advanced and accessible facilities.

Also, some students (5 students) see the value in more language immersion programs, such as speaking clubs and language exchange opportunities, to enhance their practical language skills.

✓ **Question 4: How do you think the university administration can better address the needs of EFL learners like yourself?**

Nearly half of the participants (43.8%, 14 students) suggest that the university administration should provide more language resources and support, which indicates a strong desire for additional materials and assistance to aid in language learning.

While a third of the participants (34.4%, 11 students) believe that improving technology infrastructure, such as access to computers and internet connectivity, would better support language learning efforts.

Approximately a fifth of the students (21.9%, 7 students) suggest increasing interaction opportunities with native speakers, which suggests a recognition of the importance of practical language practice and exposure to authentic language use.

- **Part 3: Potential Interventions**

✓ **Question 01: Please rate the importance of the following potential interventions in improving the environmental factors for EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia:**

a. Intervention 1: Increasing Access to English Language Resources and Materials

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Not Important	0	0%
Somewhat Important	2	6.3%
Important	7	21.9%
Very Important	10	31.3%
Extremely Important	13	40.6%

Table 09: Increasing Access to English Language Resources and Materials

From the table above it is clear that the majority of participants (40.6%) consider increasing access to English language resources and materials extremely important.

A significant proportion (31.3%) view this intervention as very important.

Only a small percentage (6.3%) rate it as somewhat important, indicating a strong consensus on the need for more resources.

b. Intervention 2: Enhancing Language Learning Facilities and Technology Infrastructure

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Not Important	1	3.1%
Somewhat Important	3	9.4%
Important	8	25%
Very Important	11	34.4%
Extremely Important	9	28.1%

Table 10: Enhancing Language Learning Facilities and Technology Infrastructure

From the previous table it is evident that most participants (34.4%) rate enhancing language learning facilities and technology infrastructure as very important.

A substantial number (28.1%) view it as extremely important.

Only a few participants (3.1%) consider it not important, reflecting a strong need for better facilities and infrastructure.

c. Intervention 3: Implementing Language Immersion Programs and Extracurricular Activities

Response	Number of Participants	Percentage
Not Important	0	0%
Somewhat Important	4	12.5%
Important	7	21.9%
Very Important	12	37.5%
Extremely Important	9	28.1%

Table 11: Implementing Language Immersion Programs and Extracurricular Activities

The data in the table exhibit that the majority of participants (37.5%) believe that implementing language immersion programs and extracurricular activities is very important.

A significant portion (28.1%) view this intervention as extremely important.

Only a small number (12.5%) rate it as somewhat important, emphasizing the value of practical language use and engagement outside the classroom.

✓ **Question 02: 2. Are there any other interventions or strategies you believe would be effective in improving the environmental factors for EFL learners? Please elaborate :**

The participants provided various responses highlighting different interventions and strategies that they believe could effectively improve the environmental factors for EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia. These suggestions cover a range of areas including classroom environment, extracurricular activities, resource access, faculty development, and community support. They are as follow :

"We need smaller classes so teachers can give us more individual attention."

"Using different teaching methods would help cater to all our learning styles."

"It would be great to have more language clubs and conversation groups."

"Going on language immersion trips would really help us improve our skills."

"We need better access to online resources and digital libraries."

"Having more up-to-date textbooks and learning materials would be really helpful."

"Hiring more experienced and qualified language instructors would make a big difference."

"Creating mentorship programs where senior students help juniors would be beneficial."

"Encouraging more opportunities for peer-to-peer learning would support us a lot."

So the responses highlighted several common themes that can be summarized as follow :

Resource Improvement: Many participants called for more and updated English language resources, including textbooks and multimedia materials.

Technology Enhancements: There was a strong demand for better technology infrastructure, such as improved internet access and more language labs.

Support and Interaction: Students emphasized the need for more supportive interactions with faculty and opportunities for peer collaboration.

Environment and Class Size: Suggestions included reducing class sizes and creating a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment.

✓ **Question 3: Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the environmental factors resulting in low academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia?**

Few students answered this question and provided the following additions :

"The university library lacks a sufficient number of English books and journals."

"The campus environment is often noisy, which makes it hard to concentrate."

"There aren't enough English-speaking events or activities to practice outside of class."

"The internet connection on campus is unreliable, hindering access to online resources."

"There is a lack of psychological support for students dealing with academic stress."

2.7.2 Interpretation of the Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire results reflect the perceptions of EFL learners regarding various environmental factors affecting their academic performance mainly the ones resulting in low academic performance. The responses indicate a strong consensus that the availability of English language resources and the accessibility of language learning facilities are adequate and beneficial for students' learning needs. There is also a general satisfaction with the opportunities and the support from faculty and staff, though some students feel there is room for improvement in immersion opportunities.

However, feedback reveals that classroom size and composition are seen as significant challenges, negatively impacting students' academic performance. While the opinions on the availability and adequacy of technology infrastructure are mixed, with a substantial number of students feeling that improvements are needed. Besides the supportive

learning environment which is generally viewed positively, but there are indications that some students feel underserved.

On another note, participants suggest several key improvements to enhance the environmental factors affecting their academic performance. These include increasing access to English language resources, enhancing language labs and multimedia resources, and implementing more language immersion programs. Additionally, there is a call for better support and mentorship from faculty, improved technology infrastructure. While the additional comments highlight the need for a better library, a quieter campus environment, more English-speaking events, reliable internet, and psychological support for students dealing with academic stress.

2.7.3 Analysis of the Interview Results

✓ Question 1: How would you describe your learning experience at the University of Ghardaia?

From the interview it was clear that at the university of Ghardia , students have diverse experiences that shape their academic journey: Student 1 paints a positive picture, accentuating the supportive faculty members. However, Student 2 faces challenges in the form of inadequate and outdated classroom resources although they appreciate the assistance provided by professors. Student 3 enjoys the diversity in learning but struggles with resource accessibility, while Student 4 finds the linguistic exchange and communication with teachers and students rewarding yet feels overwhelmed by workload and a lack of study spaces. Student 5 expresses frustration with outdated teaching methods but values peer interactions, while Student 6 appreciates collaborative projects despite language barriers. Lastly, Student 7 finds the experience enriching but desires more extracurricular language activities.

- ✓ **Question 02: Can you identify any environmental factors within the university setting that affect your academic performance in English? How do these factors impact your performance?**

Regarding environmental factors affecting academic performance, students share their observations: Student 1 identifies noise pollution as a major distraction, whereas Student 2 highlights the struggle with unreliable internet access. Student 3 points out the impact of inadequate lighting on concentration, and Student 4 discusses overcrowded libraries affecting access to materials. Student 5 mentions the absence of language immersion programs, and Student 6 talks about limited language tutor availability. Student 7 raises concerns about the condition of language labs and resources.

- ✓ **Question 03: What specific environmental factors do you believe contribute to the low performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia?**

When asked about specific factors contributing to low performance, each student offers different answer: Student 1 believes the unavailability of handouts and textbooks hinder engagement and retention of the lessons and lectures, while student 2 discusses the lack of practical application opportunities. Student 3 talks about equipment and the absence of authentic materials, and Student 4 mentions the absence of native speaker interactions. Student 5 highlights the scarcity of supplementary learning materials, and Student 6 advocates for more interactive classroom activities. Finally, Student 7 raises concerns about the limited availability of academic advisors for guidance.

- ✓ **Question 04: What specific challenges do you face in learning English within the university environment?**

Student 1: "One of the biggest challenges I face is the lack of English-speaking opportunities outside of class, it's hard to practice speaking and listening skills in real-life situations."

Student 2: "For me, the main challenge is understanding the complex academic vocabulary used in lectures and readings, I need a dictionary just to understand the material."

Student 3: "I struggle with finding time to practice English outside of class, it's hard to dedicate enough time to language study."

Student 4: "As a non-native speaker, I sometimes feel intimidated speaking up in class I worry about making mistakes and being judged by my peers."

Student 5: "I find it challenging to keep up with the fast pace of English-speaking discussions in class I can't express myself quickly enough."

Student 6: "One of my main challenges is finding relevant and up-to-date resources for my English studies. The library doesn't always have the materials I need, and online resources can be limited."

Student 7: "I struggle with grammar and sentence structure, especially when writing essays or reports. It's hard to know if I'm using English correctly, and I often second-guess myself."

So generally students highlighted challenges such as lack of English-speaking opportunities, difficulty understanding academic vocabulary, finding time to practice English, feeling intimidated speaking up in class, struggling with the fast pace of discussions, and difficulty finding relevant resources which showcases the complexities of learning English in a university setting.

- ✓ **Question 05:** How do you perceive the availability of resources (such as libraries, language labs, etc.) for EFL learning at the university?

Student 1: "I think the library has a decent selection of English books and materials, but sometimes it's hard to find what I need".

Student 2: "I've never really used the language lab, so I can't speak to its availability."

Student 3: "I wish there were more resources available online for English learners. It would be helpful to have access to digital textbooks and interactive exercises."

Student 4: "The library is usually crowded, especially during exam season. It can be difficult to find a quiet space to study, and sometimes there's a shortage of textbooks."

Student 5: "I think the language lab is a great resource, it would be nice to have one for students who need extra practice."

Student 6: "I've never had any issues with resource availability. "

Student 7: "I've had mixed experiences with the library. Sometimes they have the materials I need, but other times they're outdated or unavailable. It's hit or miss."

So accordingly students had mixed perceptions of resource availability. While some found the library's English materials sufficient but poor, others struggled with crowded spaces and outdated materials. Similarly, opinions varied regarding the availability and usefulness of language labs and online resources, reflecting diverse experiences among students.

✓ **Question 06: Do you feel that the classroom environment supports your English language learning goals? If not, what improvements would you suggest?**

Student 1: "Overall, I think the classroom environment is supportive. But I think there could be more opportunities for group discussions and interactive activities to practice speaking."

Student 2: "I don't always feel comfortable speaking up in class, especially when the topics are complex. It would be helpful if the professor encouraged more participation from everyone."

Student 3: "I feel like the classroom environment is fine for learning English, but sometimes the lectures can be overwhelming. It would be nice to have more breaks or opportunities for questions."

Student 4: "I think the classroom environment is okay, but I wish there were more visual aids or multimedia presentations to help illustrate the material. Sometimes it's hard to understand complex concepts just from listening."

Student 5: "I enjoy the classroom environment, but I think there could be more variety in teaching methods. Not everyone learns the same way, so it would be beneficial to incorporate different approaches."

Student 6: "I feel supported in the classroom, but I think there could be more focus on real-life language skills like conversation and pronunciation. Sometimes the lessons feel too focused on theoretical things."

Student 7: "I think the classroom environment is good overall, but I wish there were more opportunities for peer feedback and collaboration. Sometimes it feels like we're just learning in isolation."

So from the answers above it is clear that students generally feel supported in the classroom but suggested improvements such as more interactive activities, encouragement for participation, breaks, visual aids, multimedia presentations, variety in teaching methods, and a focus on practical language skills.

✓ **Question 07: How do social interactions with peers and faculty members influence your English language learning experience?**

Student 1: "I think social interactions are essential for language learning. Practicing English with my classmates outside of class has helped me improve my speaking and listening skills."

Student 2: "I don't have many opportunities for social interactions with my peers, but I think it would be helpful for practicing speaking and building confidence."

Student 3: "I enjoy socializing with my classmates, but sometimes I feel self-conscious about my English skills. I worry that I'll make mistakes and embarrass myself."

Student 4: "I think social interactions are important for language learning, but I struggle to connect with my classmates because of language barriers. I often feel left out of conversations."

Student 5: "I love interacting with my classmates and practicing English together. It's fun to learn from each other and share our experiences."

Student 6: "Social interactions with my peers have been invaluable for improving my English. I've made friends from different backgrounds who help me learn new words and phrases."

Student 7: "I haven't had many social interactions with my classmates or professors outside of class. I think it would be beneficial for practicing English, but I'm not sure how to initiate conversations."

So from the information provided above it is evident that social interactions were deemed important for language learning by some students, who emphasized the importance of practicing with peers. Others expressed a desire for more opportunities for social interactions,

highlighting its potential benefits for language acquisition. However, language barriers and self-consciousness were noted as challenges in social interactions for learning.

✓ **Question 08: Are there any specific changes or improvements you would like to see in the university environment to better support EFL learners?**

Student 1: "I would like to see more English-speaking events and activities to encourage language practice outside of class."

Student 2: "I think the university could provide more resources for English learners, like conversation groups and clubs."

Student 3: "I would like to see more interactive and engaging English courses that focus on real-life practical language skills."

Student 4: "I think the university could offer more support for students struggling with English, like workshops or extra sessions."

Student 5: "I would like to see more opportunities for language immersion, like study abroad programs or language exchange partnerships."

Student 6: "I think the university could provide more access to technology and online resources for English learners."

Student 7: "I would like to see more cultural events and activities that promote language learning and intercultural exchange."

2.8. Discussion of the Findings

The findings from both the questionnaire and the interview shed light on various environmental factors that potentially result in low academic performance of EFL learners at

the university of Ghardaia. So it is important to examine the findings in relation to the hypotheses presented:

The questionnaire results revealed that a significant number of participants expressed concerns about classroom size and composition, availability and adequacy of technology infrastructure, and supportive learning environment. Additionally, data from the interview highlighted issues such as noise pollution, inadequate lighting, and overcrowded libraries affecting students' academic performance. Therefore, there is evidence to support the first hypothesis previously suggested, which anticipated that specific environmental factors indeed play a role in influencing the academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia.

Moreover, both the questionnaire and interview responses corroborated the presence of environmental challenges affecting EFL learners. Indeed, issues such as limited access to English language resources, outdated teaching methods, and language barriers were highlighted by participants. Hence, these challenges contribute to the overall difficulties faced by EFL learners in achieving academic success. Thus, there is support for the second hypothesis suggesting that environmental challenges indeed have a significant impact on the low academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia.

Furthermore, the suggestions provided by participants in both the questionnaire and interview point towards potential interventions that could address the identified environmental challenges. Besides the recommendations such as increasing access to resources, implementing language immersion programs, and improving technology infrastructure were proposed. Additionally, enhancing teacher training programs and fostering a supportive community were deemed essential by participants. Therefore, there is support for the third hypothesis, suggesting that implementing changes to enhance environmental factors could

lead to improvements in the academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia.

In a nutshell, the findings from both the questionnaire and the interview identify and clarify the environmental factors behind the low academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia. The evidence supports the hypotheses presented previously, indicating the importance of addressing specific environmental challenges mentioned by the learners themselves to enhance the learning experience and outcomes of those EFL learners.

2.9. Conclusion

In conclusion, this practical part aimed to answer our research inquiries and provide answers regarding the specific environmental factors behind low academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia. Following a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of questionnaire data and qualitative examination of interview responses, we gained answers entailing the challenges faced by EFL learners in their academic journey and that can be considered as environmental factors behind the low academic performance. Also, through descriptive statistics and thematic analysis, we identified key factors related to classroom conditions, resource availability, teaching methodologies, and institutional support.

The findings from both the questionnaire and the interview revealed the environmental factors contributing to the low academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia. The concerns include classroom size and composition, technology infrastructure, and a supportive learning environment, as well as noise pollution, inadequate lighting, and overcrowded libraries. Additionally, limited access to English language resources, outdated teaching methods, and language barriers corroborate the second hypothesis that environmental challenges impact EFL learners' academic success. The discussion explored these findings, highlighting the significance of environmental challenges

such as insufficient learning materials, language barriers, and inadequate support systems. Now after identifying these factors, we can pave the way for potential improvements, including enhancing language resources, improving teacher training programs, and fostering a supportive learning environment.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

It goes without saying that the academic performance is influenced by various factors, many of which extend beyond the individual capabilities and efforts of students. At the university of Ghardaia, the academic performance of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners is notably impacted by a range of environmental factors. These factors can be categorized into physical, social, organizational, technological, and cultural dimensions, each playing a significant role in shaping the educational experience and outcomes of students. To exemplify, factors such as classroom size, layout, lighting, and noise levels create the backdrop against which students engage with academic content. To precise more, overcrowded classrooms can hinder individual attention from teachers, making it difficult for EFL learners to keep up with lessons. Inadequate lighting and high noise levels further detract from students' ability to concentrate and absorb information. Also, the social aspect within the classroom and the broader university setting significantly affect academic performance. The quality of teacher-student relationships is particularly important for EFL learners, who may require additional support and encouragement. Positive interactions with teachers can enhance students' motivation and confidence, while negative interactions can lead to disengagement and anxiety.

The academic performance of EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia is deeply influenced by the environmental factors. In fact, students at the university of Ghardaia face numerous challenges that adversely affect their academic performance. This research aims to identify and analyze the environmental factors that negatively impact academic performance, contributing to low outcomes within the university setting. Hence, addressing the physical, social, organizational, technological, and cultural dimensions of the learning environment is essential for improving the academic outcomes. So our general aim is to explore how

different environmental factors contribute to low academic performance among students at the university of Ghardaia.

For this purpose, the dissertation is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical. It begins with a general introduction that sets the stage for the subsequent chapters, outlining the research context, problem statement, purpose, motivation, research questions, hypotheses, and the overall structure of the study. The theoretical part contains a single chapter titled "Environmental Factors Impacting Students' Academic Performance." This chapter introduces the topic and provides a detailed literature review, discussing educational theories, classroom conditions, institutional support, and socio-cultural influences that affect the academic performance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. It concludes by examining the relationship between environmental factors and low academic performance.

Subsequently, chapter two transitions to the practical part of the study, starting with an introduction that outlines the objectives and methodology for investigating these environmental factors. It describes the research design, data collection methods, analysis procedures, sample population, and research tools used. The study was conducted at the university of Ghardaia using a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative data from questionnaire and qualitative information from interviews, to examine environmental factors affecting EFL learners' academic performance. Thirty-two master's students from the department of English language participated, the questionnaires captured data on classroom conditions, teaching methods, learning materials, and institutional support, while interviews offered detailed personal experiences. This chapter also addresses the challenges associated with data collection. Following this, the analysis and interpretation of data from questionnaires and interviews are presented, culminating in a discussion of the results.

The findings from both the questionnaire and interviews showed various environmental factors contributing to low academic performance among EFL learners at the university of Ghardaia, aligning with the study's hypotheses. The questionnaire revealed concerns about classroom size, technology and materials, and the learning environment. Interviews identified additional issues such as noise pollution, inadequate lighting, and overcrowded libraries. These factors support the hypothesis that specific environmental conditions influence academic performance.

Both data sources confirmed environmental challenges like limited access to English resources, outdated teaching methods, and language barriers, supporting the second hypothesis that these challenges significantly impact academic success. Moreover, participants suggested interventions such as increasing resource access, implementing language immersion programs, and enhancing technology materials. These recommendations support the third hypothesis that improving environmental factors can enhance academic performance. Thus, the aforementioned hypotheses have been substantiated.

Ultimately, the purpose of this study was to address a limited set of inquiries. It is important to engage in continuous research to assess the impact of environmental factors on academic performance over time and across different contexts. The findings of this study have showed predominantly the significant influence of environmental conditions on EFL learners' academic outcomes at the university of Ghardaia. However, further research is warranted to know about the reasons behind specific environmental challenges and their differential impacts on students. Future studies should focus on exploring the specific factors that contribute to the low academic performance of EFL learners, such as socioeconomic background, individual learning differences, and institutional policies. It is also advisable to consider the previously mentioned limitations and the recommendations to ensure more fruitful outcomes. With a hope that our efforts will increase awareness and prompt more

strategies to address these issues. It is our aspiration that this research will play a role in furthering the advancement of effective educational practices.

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Appendices

Appendix 01: Questionnaire: (Investigating the Environmental Factors behind Learners Low Performance)

In order to understand the complexities of students' academic experiences within the esteemed confines of the University of Ghardaia, our inquiry pivots around exploring the environmental factors behind the low academic performance of EFL learners. This questionnaire aims to gather students' perspectives regarding the various environmental factors that may contribute to the low performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia. Your participation would be of a great help to gain information about the environmental factors and the challenges faced by EFL learners within the university setting and in identifying potential strategies for enhancing their academic success. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences.

Part 1: Demographic Information

1. Gender:

- Male

- Female

2. Age: _____

3. Year of Study:

- First year

- Second year

- Third year

- Fourth year or above

4. Major/Area of Study: _____

Part 2: Environmental Factors and Academic Performance

1. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements regarding environmental factors influencing the academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia:

a. The availability of English language resources (e.g., textbooks, reference materials) adequately supports my learning needs.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

b. The accessibility of language learning facilities (e.g., language labs, multimedia resources) facilitates effective practice of English skills.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

c. Opportunities for English language immersion (e.g., speaking clubs, language exchange programs) are sufficient to enhance language acquisition.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

d. Support from faculty and staff in addressing language-related difficulties positively impacts my academic performance in English courses.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2. How do you perceive the following environmental challenges within the university setting influencing your academic performance as an EFL learner?

a. Classroom size and composition (e.g., large class sizes, diverse language backgrounds of classmates)

- Very negatively
- Negatively

- Neutral
- Positively
- Very positively

b. Availability and adequacy of technology infrastructure (e.g., access to computers, internet connectivity) for language learning purposes

- Very negatively
- Negatively
- Neutral
- Positively
- Very positively

c. Supportive learning environment (e.g., encouragement from professors, collaborative learning opportunities)

- Very negatively
- Negatively
- Neutral
- Positively
- Very positively

3. What changes or improvements do you believe could enhance the environmental factors to support the academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia?

-

4. How do you think the university administration can better address the needs of EFL learners like yourself?

-

Part 3: Potential Interventions

1. Please rate the importance of the following potential interventions in improving the environmental factors for EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia:

a. Increasing access to English language resources and materials

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important
- Extremely important

b. Enhancing language learning facilities and technology infrastructure

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important
- Extremely important

c. Implementing language immersion programs and extracurricular activities

- Not important

- Somewhat important

- Important

- Very important

- Extremely important

2. Are there any other interventions or strategies you believe would be effective in improving the environmental factors for EFL learners? Please elaborate :

.....

3. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the environmental factors resulting in low academic performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix 02: The Interview

1. How would you describe your learning experience at the University of Ghardaia?
2. Can you identify any environmental factors within the university setting that affect your academic performance in English? How do these factors impact your performance?
3. What specific environmental factors do you believe contribute to the low performance of EFL learners at the University of Ghardaia?
4. . What specific challenges do you face in learning English within the university environment?
5. How do you perceive the availability of resources (such as libraries, language labs, etc.) for EFL learning at the university?
6. Do you feel that the classroom environment supports your English language learning goals? If not, what improvements would you suggest?
7. How do social interactions with peers and faculty members influence your English language learning experience?
8. Are there any specific changes or improvements you would like to see in the university environment to better support EFL learners?
9. How do you think the university administration could better address the needs of EFL learners like yourself?

ملخص

تتحرى هذه الدراسة العوامل البيئية التي تساهم في الأداء الأكاديمي المتدني بين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في جامعة غرداية. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام استبيان ومقابلات من عينة مكونة من 32 طالب ماستر، مما يتماشى مع نهج البحث المختلط. تم توزيع الاستبيان على العينة الأولية بالكامل المكونة من 32 طالب ماجستير من تخصصات مختلفة ضمن قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. وهدف الاستبيان إلى جمع بيانات كمية حول مجموعة من العوامل البيئية مثل ظروف الفصول الدراسية، البنية التحتية للتكنولوجيا، أساليب التدريس، وحواجز اللغة. بالإضافة إلى الاستبيان، تم اختيار مجموعة فرعية من سبعة طلاب لإجراء مقابلات معمقة. أتاحت هذه المقابلات فرصة لمعرفة المزيد عن تجارب الطلاب وتصوّراتهم، مما وفر بيانات نوعية تكمل النتائج الكمية من الاستبيان. من خلال هذه المقابلات، ظهرت فهم أعمق للتحديات البيئية التي يواجهها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مما ساهم في تعزيز مصداقية وصحة نتائج الدراسة. ونتيجة لذلك، أظهرت النتائج بعض القضايا الهامة فيما يتعلق بحجم الفصول الدراسية، التكنولوجيا، أساليب التدريس، وحواجز اللغة. كما قدم المشاركون توصيات للتدخلات، بما في ذلك تحسين الوصول إلى الموارد، وتنفيذ برامج انغماس لغوي، وتحديث المواد التعليمية والتكنولوجية. على الرغم من أن الدراسة توفر نتائج موثوقة وذات مصداقية تتعلق بالتحديات التي يواجهها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية والتي تؤدي إلى أدائهم الأكاديمي المتدني، فإن هناك حاجة لمزيد من البحث لاستكشاف الأسباب المحددة والعوامل المساهمة بشكل أكبر .

الكلمات المفتاحية: العوامل البيئية، الأداء الأكاديمي، الأداء الأكاديمي المتدني، بيئة التعلم، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.