

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF –MOSTAGANEM–
FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



MASTER

"Language and Communication"

**Investigating Social and Psychological Factors in Influencing South African
Student's Interaction in the Classroom**

Case study: South African Students of the English Department at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis
Mostaganem University

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2019- 2020

Abstract

Many South African students register at Algerian universities but encountered serious difficulties in integrating into the culture of these institutions. This study identified and analysed factors contributing to the integration of South African students in the Algerian universities at which they are registered. The purpose of this study was to explore the psychological and social experiences of South African students in Algerian universities, and the impact of their academic and psychosocial experiences on their integration in Algeria and the institutions to which they joined. As for the adaptation strategies, they use it to facilitate their integration into this new environment. Secondary data analysis allowed exploring the experiences of South African students in Algeria. The data were gathered for a project on student mobility in Algeria using a mixed-method design. The hypothesis adopted in this study sets out that if EFL teachers take into consideration the South African psychological aspect and linguistic background while teaching oral expression, classroom interaction will be promoted. The research method adopted for this research work was purely descriptive. The required data were collected through questionnaires administered to all levels of South African students of English Department at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis Mostaganem University. The results revealed that South African students, in Algerian universities, faced many challenges when integrating into the new environment, including language barriers, unfamiliar teaching methods, discrimination and racism, and the lack of social contact with local students. However, the results also revealed that South African students appreciate the benefits obtained by studying at Algerian universities.

Keywords: South African students; psychological experience; social experience, classroom interaction.

Dedication

In the Name of ALLAH, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, All the Praise is due to ALLAH alone, the Sustainer of all the worlds.

I dedicate this modest work to my dearest and amazing parents, who led me to this life and who raised me to be the person I am today. You have been with me every step of the way, from good to bad. Thank you for all the unconditional love, guidance, and support that you have always given me, I love you!

I also dedicate my research work to my lovely sister Imane, my closest friends Ghaicha Hayet, Dahmane Bounoua Kawther, Guenaoui Nora. My friends with whom I shared the university life with its lights and shadows, and to all my dearest English teachers. Special gratitude is due to all those extraordinary people who have stood by me in every hard moment.

Acknowledgements

This work would never be accomplished without the strength and ability that Allah Almighty has given me, and if I thank him day and night, it would never be enough.

I would like to warmly thank my lovely and empathetic supervisor Dr Hanane SARNOU who has been serious-minded and a source of motivation.

I am also grateful to the members of the jury Mrs Mounira KHAROUBI and Mrs Leila BEKRI; who will examine my research work with extreme goodwill, which will ultimately help me improve my work.

My thanks and endless love go to my parents, who have always been a source of strength and motivation.

My unlimited gratitude goes to the professors of the English department at the University of Mostaganem.

Finally, my endless gratitude and thanks go to all my classmates for the great times that we spent together helping each other .

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General Introduction

The learning process is a complex situation that involves both learners and teachers in addition to the task and context. These elements dynamically interact with each other. Foreign language teaching and learning purely comprises a kind of interaction, which requires active participation from both parts: the teacher and the student. Hence, classroom interaction is a vital pedagogical strategy which plays a crucial role in the learning process. If learners lack self-confidence in the classroom, they will likely feel embarrassed to use the language and evade risk-taking situations or sharing a conversation in the foreign language.

In other terms, the mastery of the linguistic features of the language, that is vocabulary, grammar, phonetics and semantics, is insufficient to create right and familiar articulations in the target dialect. Nevertheless, there are other elements, basically affective, which assume a conspicuous part either in creating or repressing the learner's interaction execution. In this context, the researchers emphasized on the concept of classroom interaction in EFL classes because it fosters the exchange of knowledge, creates a kind of sense of belonging among the students and promotes language use and development. Thus, the main interest of this study is to prove and investigate the hypothesis that emphasizes the idea that South African learners do not interact in class because they face obstacles psychological and social. These are the ones related to inhibition due to shame, anxiety and fear. And to what extent can the social and psychological aspects of the student influence the South African student's interaction in the classroom.

Some South African students demonstrate poor oral performance and even a noticeable reluctance to interact in class. Interaction in the classroom is essential for the development of the spoken language; the fact that has led many researchers and academics as well as

some linguists to stress its importance in improving the oral skills of South African students. They believe that interaction in the classroom is crucial and constitutes a primary model for developing foreign language learning skills. The lack of student interaction ultimately leads to poor speech production, and it also leads to several speech difficulties such as inhibition, lack of words, nothing to say, etc.

Besides, foreign language teachers have been advised to use a variety of teaching techniques as a pedagogical gadget that may help their students to interact more in the classroom. Different kinds of activities and tasks can raise the student's frequency of interaction. Most South African students face problems and difficulties when they interact in the classroom because of the lack of vocabulary, anxiety, inhibition, or being fearful of making mistakes which reduce participation and interaction. The teacher's encouragement and support for learners to interact in the learning environment, could be the first lead to promote student's classroom interaction. Classroom interaction then, is considered as a central tool in the learning process which contributes to the development of South African student's oral proficiency and language use.

Therefore, the problem that the current research is dealing with is investigating the social and psychological difficulties affecting South African student's classroom interaction. The precise research question to be asked is: What are the social and psychological factors that South African students face when interacting in the classroom, and to what extent can they influence their Oral performance?

In the foreign language classroom, language is the medium of the interaction between teachers and students. Acquiring that language is, therefore; the ultimate instructional goal of foreign language learning. To achieve this goal and reach more effective teaching and

learning situations, teachers should know how to deal with the differences in social and psychological trends. This study aims at investigating to what extent social and psychological factors hinder all South African students at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis Mostaganem University from classroom interaction. It aims as well in helping teachers to identify the most successful interactive activities that promote classroom interaction.

Consequently, in this study, it was hypothesized that if EFL teachers take into consideration South African's psychological trends and the lack of language skills during oral communication, classroom interaction will be encouraged.

Our research depends mainly on the method of quantitative data collection (questionnaire) as the appropriate method or means to analyze the information collected in the course of this research. The student questionnaire consists of ten (10) questions: closed-ended questions, where students are expected to choose "yes" or "no" answers with the rationale for their choice, and multiple-choice questions, where students are asked to select the appropriate answer among several choices and open-ended questions that require students to justify their answers.

Our research work is divided into three parts: The first chapter is devoted to the interaction in the category of English as a foreign language, its definition, importance, types and difficulties of separation from English as a foreign language, while the second chapter includes the information about the methods the researchers followed to put the research question in its proper perspective, as it attempts to provide information on the data collection tools used in the implementation of this study, and the third chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the student's questionnaire.

Chapter One : EFL Classroom Interaction and Students' Difficulties

1. Introduction

A language is a tool for communication. We communicate with others to express our thoughts and get to know the ideas of others. It occurs when two or more people communicate, interact verbally or nonverbally. Speaking is at the heart of learning foreign languages.

One of the foremost responsibilities of any EFL teacher is to enable students to communicate effectively and develop their ability to use the target language for communicative purposes in the classroom. It should be rewarding for students since they are facing difficulties to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas. This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section explores the EFL classroom interaction, its definition, types, and importance. The second section discusses the difficulties of EFL classroom interaction and possible barriers to the students' academic and social integration, which includes linguistic obstacles the students face, such as lack of lexical items and language interference. Besides, it discusses psychological problems such as shyness, inhibition, anxiety, and lack of self-confidence.

1.1. Definition of Oral Interaction Competency

Oral interaction competency is defined as an interactive process of constructing meaning that includes producing, receiving and processing information. Spitzberg (1988) defined it as: "The ability to interact well with others" (p.68). He explains the term 'well' to mean accuracy, clarity, comprehensibility, coherence, expertise, effectiveness and appropriateness. The process is frequently spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving, but not entirely unpredictable. Its structure and meaning rely on the context in which it occurs, the

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participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment and communication purposes.

Interaction in English is important for English learners. It is also significant in terms of learning the language. Oral communication helps learners to experience modified interaction. Doughty and Pica (1986) mentioned that: "Interaction is altered in some way (either linguistically or conversationally) to facilitate comprehension of the intended message."(p.305) Speaking requires learners to know how to generate specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. A good speaker synthesizes skills and knowledge to succeed in speech. A person will acquire knowledge and skills through interaction with other members of the society, which assists him or her in gaining membership of a group or society (Weidman et al., 2001). Once a student has gained the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes appropriate to the host university society, he or she becomes an accepted member of that community. It allows integration with other students and academic staff (Weidman et, al, 2001).

1.2. Classroom Interaction Definition

Defining the concept of classroom interaction implies defining each term independently. The word classroom then is considered as the primary situation in which the educator and the students have the opportunity to use the target language. Ordinarily, language use in the classroom can be utilized as media to make a significant connection during the lesson. The ability to understand and be understood when communicating with professors and native speakers is crucial to academic success. Academic Interactions focuses on actual academic speaking events, particularly classroom interactions, and gives students practice improving the ways that they communicate in a college/university setting.

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Scholars and researchers endeavour to define the concept of classroom interaction. Robinson (1994), for instance, sees that Interaction refers "To reciprocal face-to-face action. It can be verbal, channelled through written or spoken words, or nonverbal, channelled through touch, proximity, eye-contact, facial expression, gesture, posture, appearance, environmental factors, etc." (p.7). Robinson therefore, in his definition, tries to clarify the nature of interaction by saying that it is a face-to-face activity which means it is a reciprocal process in which students face each other or their teacher.

According to Marshal (1998) in the online dictionary of sociology, classroom interaction is "The relationship between teacher and students in the classroom ". This kind of relationship is seen as reciprocal action as it was mentioned previously. Dictionary definition should come first.

1.3. EFL Classroom Interaction Teaching

The use of classroom interaction within EFL learners is, without doubt, one of the most common, highly complex activities necessary to be considered when teaching English as a foreign language especially because we "live at a time where the ability to speak English fluently has become a must "(Al-Sibai 2004). The focus on classroom interaction teaching is to improve the students' oral engagement. Therefore, language teaching activities should aim to develop individual language use.

Speaking is the most important skill among the four, because people who know a language are called speakers of that language. It indicates that the use of a language is more important than mere knowledge, because "you do not need to know much about the language if you cannot interact with it" (Scrivener 2005). Interaction in the classroom is a productive learning technique. Learners of English as a foreign language acquire language knowledge and skills

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through interaction in which teachers and students actively participate to create learning opportunities, which stimulates student interest and their potential to communicate with others.

1.4. The Importance of EFL Classroom Interaction

It is better to learn a foreign language not only through strict formal methods, but also through direct contact to develop productive discussions. A successful foreign language learning process largely depends on the concept of interaction in the classroom, where the teacher and students create an enjoyable, action-packed atmosphere followed by reactions.

This atmosphere leads to a mutual understanding as learners can shape themselves through their active participation in the classroom. Therefore, the classroom interaction of learners is the key to learning foreign languages. It allowed the students to improve their level of participation during the course session.

Furthermore, Yu writes in the Asian Journal of Social Sciences (2008, p. 28) that “interaction in a classroom in the target language can now be seen not only as language practice, nor simply as an opportunity of learning, but as a building block of the language development process itself. It reveals this interaction in the classroom; it plays a central role not only for students but also for teachers, which is generally recognized by everyone. It can improve the language development and communication skills of students. Exercise any language opportunity can be developed through a significant part of classroom interaction. Classroom interaction facilitates language learning, motivates students to participate in language learning activities and generates more language outputs.

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According to Brown (2001), In the era of communicative language teaching, interaction is, in fact, the heart of communication” (p.35). It reveals that classroom interaction can be the language pedagogical tool that best facilitates the language learning process due to its opportunities for creating chances for turn-takings. In EFL learning context, language learning is conducted and initiated by teachers in different ways such as teacher questioning, teacher instructions, or any other kind of activities that facilitate learner’s Oral performance in the classroom.

1.5. Types of Classroom Interaction

In foreign language classrooms, interaction assumes a crucial role in developing the students’ language use and it figures out what learning opportunities they may get. Classroom interaction then has two sorts: student-teacher/ student-student interaction.

1.5.1 Teacher-Student Interaction

The teacher-student interaction is one of the most powerful elements within the learning environment, and it is also an important factor which influences the student’s development, accomplishment, furthermore, performance. Teacher-student interaction forms the basis of the social context in which learning happens. This sort of classroom interaction occurs when the teacher asks questions to learners, and learners answer these questions and vice versa; or when the teacher partakes in learning activities.

In the traditional way of teaching, the teacher sits or only stands behind a desk and spends a lot of time lecturing and giving directions, while the role of the student is to sit down, listen and passively take notes. The teacher controls the topic of the class discussion and decides when to start and stop speaking in class. Sometimes students are required to participate only by answering questions. They have no opportunity to participate in the classroom

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independently. They always depend on the teacher's instructions without taking care of issues as Kundu (1993) states: "Most of the time we talk in class hardly ever giving our students a chance to talk, except when we occasionally ask them questions".

However, recent approaches of language teaching such as "The silent way or method" vigorously accentuates on decreasing the teacher's talking time for the sake of giving more chances for students to "Run the show" with their teacher. Students then will feel that they are engaged in the topic, and they will feel autonomous to impart the lesson with the teacher. Since teaching is always a shared-relationship job. It includes numerous support from learners as Brown (2001) recommends: "Teacher talk should not occupy the major proportion of a class hour; otherwise, you are probably not giving students enough opportunity to talk".(p.99)

Teacher-student interaction facilitates the teaching process. A way for a student to be successful in performance, a positive student-teacher interaction has been expressed to be an important element. Nugent (2009) states research results of previous scholars, which found that if educators take the first step of time to shape interactions, they maybe could encourage learners to acquire knowledge. The author also said that more studies propose that instructors need to hold strong confidence that building interactions have a crucial role in the development of motivation towards academic achievements.

1.5.2 Student-Student Interaction

Initially, student-student interaction occurs among learners within a classroom context. In this form of interaction, the teacher assumes the role of a monitor and learners are the main participants. Students interaction, therefore, occurs when learners impart information with their peers and receive input. In light of this view, studies on interaction showed that in student-student interactions receive comprehensible input, opportunities to negotiate for

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meaning and receive other's feedback, and opportunities to deliver output. Student-student interaction may be more important for educational accomplishment than a teacher-student one. Constructive student-student interaction impacts a student's educational desire and develops social competencies.

Johnson (1995) in " Understanding communication in second language classrooms has pointed out that: " Student-student interaction in foreign language classrooms can create opportunities for students to participate in less structured and more spontaneous language use, negotiate meaning, self- select when to participate, control the topic of discussion, and, most importantly, it draws on their own prior knowledge and interactional competencies to actively communicate with others".(p.189). Moreover, student-student interaction provides a more meaningful social environment for promoting language use than traditional teacher-directed instruction, and it can increase student's opportunities to use language effectively.

1.6. EFL Classroom Interaction Difficulties

Interaction in the classroom is always the most difficult task to involve the majority of learners at EFL classes. According to Rababa'h (2005), many factors cause difficulties during the interaction. Some of these factors are related to the students themselves, but others are due to the teaching strategies and the learning environment. For example, many learners do not have the vocabulary necessary to make their senses understandable and therefore cannot maintain interaction, for fear of mistakes and criticism, or simply out of shyness. These difficulties that South African often face the following challenges. Here are some specific obstacles that South African Students face when interaction in the classroom:

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1.6.1. Linguistic Obstacles

Loama (2004:01) states: "Speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop ". It has been noticed that linguistic knowledge plays a crucial role while interacting. Students may find obstacles within their speaking if any feature of language is lacking or not performed well. These problems are due to lack of vocabulary, mispronunciation, and some syntactic weaknesses.

1.6.1.1 Lack of Appropriate Lexical Items

Knowing the vocabulary is the prior requirement that students must have as to the language they want to speak. However, this is the most considerate area of difficulty. Learners of English as a Foreign Language, who lack vocabulary knowledge and have a limited repertoire, cannot generate, receive and communicate with the target language. Students feel uncomfortable when they intend to express their thoughts clearly.

Learning any foreign language requires incredible information about its vocabulary. In EFL classes students frequently find some problems when they attempt to express themselves because they struggle to find the necessary vocabulary item. It reflects their limited vocabulary repertoire. Hence, this lacking vocabulary influences the rate of their participation in oral activities and makes them unable to interact.

1.6.1.2 Mispronunciation

Besides the learners' problems in vocabulary, there is a noticeable problem which is a mispronunciation of words, which leads to problems in reception or comprehension of an utterance meaning.

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Students may fail to produce an effective oral communication because of their pronunciation mistakes. Rather than conveying certain meanings, they convey others, so they do not feel at ease when speaking in front of their peers. And; consequently, reduce their oral interaction.

Pronunciation is the most significant skill in foreign language learning since it enables EFL learners to be more competent in communication. Furthermore, the level of pronunciation proficiency represents the main criteria that EFL students can be judged on and evaluated.

1.6.1.3 Syntactic Weaknesses

The syntax is an important element of a language. It is defined as the way a language manipulates and combines words to form longer units of meaning. Students must care about any sound they produce while speaking the target language. They find it difficult to combine words effectively. For example, the abuse of tense when a student says "I'm exhausting" instead of saying "I'm exhausted", this is a serious problem, as such grammatical errors can change the full meaning of the sentence. Thus, it is difficult for students to speak the target language, and this creates very embarrassing situations. As a result, they keep their ideas to themselves. Also, EFL learners often prefer to remain silent rather than produce non-grammatical structures because they fear embarrassment in front of their teachers and classmates.

1.6.1.4 Language Interference

It has been widely noticed that EFL South African learners often use the mother tongue inside and outside classrooms because they are less exposed to the target language. Students tend to borrow words from their native language when they fail in expressing their thoughts in

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foreign language due to the lack of vocabulary. Therefore, the use of mother tongue lessens the students' speaking capacity and leads to the breakdown of interaction in the classroom. Besides, they will find it difficult to use the target language accurately if they keep on borrowing words from their native language.

1.6.2 Psychological Obstacles

Interaction in the classroom remains the most difficult task for learners of English as a foreign language in South Africa as many psychological factors influence their oral communication. In her study regarding psychological factors that hinder students from speaking in English class, Juhana (2012), states that "the study revealed that psychological factors such as fear of making mistake, shyness, anxiety, lack of confidence and lack of motivation hinder students from speaking in English class" (p.100).

1.6.2.1 Lack of Self-Confidence

Lack of self-confidence has a significant impact on almost everything students intend to do: on the way they engage in activities, dealing with challenges, and interacting. For EFL South African learners, it is important to communicate with the target language. Thus a certain amount of self-confidence is required. Furthermore, lack of self- confidence enables student's needs to be understood; it pushes for the repression of negative feelings that can lead to a decrease in students' interaction.

Besides, Al-Hebaishi (2012) states that "Self-confidence is a personal factor that plays a supportive role in the achievement of foreign language learning. Some studies claim that no language learning activities will be carried out successfully without it" (P.60). In their attempts to find out if any relationship exists between L2 learners' anxiety, self-confidence

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and Oral performance among the Korean college students, Park and Lee (2004) found that "The higher confident they were, the higher oral performance they showed" (p.197).

Self-confidence is an essential quality that international students can possess. When students believe in their abilities, they facilitate their learning and engage in the task without any interference that may hinder their interaction. Students will positively behave because they feel confident in their abilities. However, students who suffer from a lack of self-confidence hurt their presentation in the foreign language.

1.6.2.2 Shyness

Shyness is the act of feeling uncomfortable in social situations. New and unfamiliar situations can bring out students' shy feelings. The classroom is an area of much stress for shy students. EFL South African students do not interact because they are not sure of how to act, what will happen and how others will react. They may encounter some obstacles in oral expression in official exams; they are lost and worry about how to stand in front of their classmates.

Overcrowded classes are one of the main reasons for shyness; they feel uncomfortable about interaction in a classroom which contains a large number of students. Cooper (2009) argued that "Shyness is a choice; it is much closer to fear than anything else" (p.09). Thus, shy students may lose a lot of successful opportunities; they will participate less and feel anxious when they do.

1.6.2.3 Inhibition

In the field of education, pressure may create inhibition and anxiety among EFL South African students. The feeling of linguistic inferiority, shyness, and fear of making mistakes prevent South African students from taking part in the discussion or participation.

1.6.2.4 Nothing to Say

The common expressions that EFL South African learners use when they have to get involved in a particular subject area "I have nothing to say" or "no idea" or "no comment" or silence. These expressions are generated when the students do not wish to express themselves or discuss the chosen subject.

Besides, the weak practice of the target language can contribute significantly to this problem. Backer and Westrup (2003) argue that many students have difficulty responding when teachers ask them to say anything in the target language. Learners may have only a few ideas to discuss; They may not know how to use the vocabulary or may not be sure of grammatical accuracy. Also, the students were unable to facilitate discussion of topics that did not increase their motivation.

1.6.2.5 Anxiety

Anxiety refers to the psychological tension that the learner goes through in performing a learning task. In a foreign language interaction, fear of negative evaluation derives from both teachers and students' peers. EFL South African learners assume that they are not capable of

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achieving the appropriate social impression, that's why they are extremely worried about others' evaluation when they tend to interact.

If anxiety impairs cognitive function, anxious students may learn less and also may not be able to demonstrate what they have learned. Therefore, they may experience even more failure. According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), learning a foreign language can cause low self-esteem because students have to interact in an unfamiliar way which is quite different from the way they usually use.

1.6.2.6 Fear

Fear remains a barrier for many EFL South African students. Even if they have memorized a few thousand English words and dozens of grammar rules, they may not be able to interact effectively. Some students mistakenly assume that they must make a correct speech in which the teacher understands every single word they generate. In other words, they are just afraid of being misunderstood.

Another illusion that EFL South African learners tend to have is that fluent speakers do not make mistakes. The truth is that we all make mistakes, even native speakers. The act of making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. If students allow themselves to commit mistakes, they will develop their speaking performance effectively.

Most EFL students do not interact and remain silent because they fear appearing awkward, foolish or incompetent in front of their peers; those factors can inhibit classroom interaction.

1.6.2.7 Low Self-Esteem

Being confident when engaged in Oral performance in front of an audience or being able to cope with tasks successfully of a learner could not do it if he/ she has no self-esteem. This

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psychological factor that influences learners especially foreign language learners; self-esteem is the belief in your abilities that you are capable of doing things successfully; in other words, when a learner performs activities with confidence and without fear of failure.

The relationship between self-esteem and Oral performance attract much attention because of the role of self-esteem in enhancing EFL South African learners' interaction. "No successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem" (Brown, 2000, p.145).

1.6.3 Organizational Obstacles

Most EFL South African learners are proficient in grammar but often find it difficult to interact with the target language. The researchers point out some of the regulatory barriers that could constitute an obstacle to classroom interaction for students at EFL classes. One of the four main barriers is the low asymmetric participation.

1.6.3.1 Low Uneven Participation

Foreign language lessons are bounded by many factors, one of them being the talking time given to each student. However, some students may seem to dominate the class, and they spend much time interacting without giving their classmates the floor to do so. Rivers (1968, p.98) claims that some personality factors can influence participation in a foreign language class, and teachers should be able to point them out. Other students may prefer not to interact due to their doubts of being incorrect, and some others keep silent, show no interest or participation all along the course.

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Harmer (2001, p.120) suggests that streaming weak participants in groups and letting them work together. In such cases, they will not hide behind the active participants, and the teacher can achieve a high level of participation.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented some of the psychological and language barriers of South African students in Algerian universities; to better understand some of the experiences of the students. The previous studies indicate that South African encounter numerous challenges in the form of lack of words, stress, shyness as well as other identified stressors that South African face in a new country. These learners, in particular, also encounter challenges at school which may influence their learning performance. These challenges involve the issue of language competence. These challenges have repercussions for the learners' identity formation, development and psychosocial welfare. Consequently, teachers should be conscious of these problems and eventually try to solve them to promote classroom interaction.

2. Introduction

This research is about the investigation of the social and psychological factors in influencing South African Student's interaction in the classroom. In this chapter, we will present the research methodology and procedure used to answer the research question about the social and psychological impact of South African student's performance in the classroom.

2.1. Method

Research methods in the field of education, and more specifically at the university level, fall into various categorizations and appear in many numbers. One of these categorizations is the detailed eightfold grouping presented in Tight. The list below was taken and used as it is in the source though the author confesses and avows that it might be questioned or altered. The term method can be understood to relate principally to the tools of data collection: techniques such as online questionnaires and interviews. An online questionnaire allows the collection of data through an electronic set of questions that are posted on the web. Participants are invited to submit their answers usually in simple checkboxes or drop-down menus. However, text boxes can also be used to provide more detailed responses. The advantages of the online questionnaire are:

- The elimination of postage, paper and data entry costs.
- Data is available almost immediately and can easily be imported into the data analysis software.
- Skip patterns and question logic can be easily programmed into the questionnaire.
- It is simple to send reminders and follow-ups to participants. It is convenient for respondents who can complete the questionnaire at their leisure.

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The questionnaire as a data collection tool was considered as an integral method in our research as it was an optimal method that has provided us with different kinds of interpretations. Questionnaire as a shared research strategy has helped us evaluate the effectiveness of our topic by asking questions and collecting as many answers as possible. Moreover, this method of conducting research was of paramount importance in our study since it could either approve or disapprove facts and results that had been initially drawn in our hypotheses. This study has utilized more open-ended questions and the main reason for this choice was to gather as much information as possible regarding the sample population to draw conclusions and validate our expectations regarding the investigation of social and psychological factors that are affecting South African student's interaction outside and inside the classroom.

2.2. Participants

We have selected eight females and twelve males from English Department Abdelhamid Ibn Badis Mostaganem University to have different opinions from the two genders. They are South African students from different levels.

2.3. Context

The reason we selected all levels of South African students as participants in this survey is that they had 16 years of schooling or even older for some, which means that they have made many journeys from school. They have a lot of experiences with various good societies. Their branch includes lots of discussion, debate and conversation sessions, which means there is a lot of verbal interactions with teachers or their classmates. Finally, it made the distribution easier because they are my classmates and my friends at the same time.

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2.4. Data collection instruments

To collect data for this research study, we designed a questionnaire, that contains ten questions, was conducted to elicit differing opinions from South African students on social and psychological barriers and how they influenced them in the classroom.

2.4.1. Questionnaire

Designing the questionnaire was a complex process for us as we had to make sure that the questions asked would lead us to a particular state of knowledge.

The main advantages of questionnaires can be summarized as follows:

The questions are very convenient and effective compared to other research tools because they save a lot of time and effort. A large group of respondents can be addressed in such a short period.

- Questionnaires are easy to manage, codify and analyze.
- The questions are standardized, which guarantees objectivity.

Despite their advantages, questionnaires have certain disadvantages such as:

- Respondents refused and were not motivated to answer the questionnaire.

This questionnaire is composed of 10 questions, which contains closed questions that need yes or no and open questions, which need to justify or explain your choice.

2.4.2. The description of the questionnaire

The purpose of using a questionnaire in this study was to reveal whether a social and psychological factor influenced the interaction of South African students in the classroom. The questionnaire is divided into two main parts. The first section sought to study the experiences of social integration of South African students in Algerian universities and was classified while

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analyzing the data into specific themes as follows: Socialization with other students; Participation in social activities; Language is an obstacle to socialization; discrimination; and cultural experiences. The second section aims to reveal the academic experience of South African students which is largely shaped by their experience in the new learning environment.

2.4.3. The Questions design

The questionnaire is divided into two sections, the first section is about the social experience, and the other one is about the academic experience.

2.4.3.1 Social experience

Question n° 1

Question one is considered important in researching since they have allowed us to gain detailed descriptions and insights into the circumstances of the respondent. First of all, it is beneficial to start the questionnaire with questions that are easy to answer for the respondents, secondly, we need to know some different challenges and how they deal with them in the host country (Algeria).

Question n° 2

We have asked our participants questions to find out if they struggle in going along with the Algerian students or not.

Question n° 3

This question was designed to allow the respondent to state freely the difficulties in getting in touch with Algerian students in the campus.

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Question n° 4

In this question, participants were asked to choose about their relationships with other students and if they find it exciting or boring to interact with the Algerian Students.

Question n° 5

The question was designed to allow the respondent to choose whether making friends in the host country (Algeria) is easy for them or not. In these questions, the research has given the space for the respondents to justify the choice they have made. By asking them to explain, it was clear for us whether or not the question we have designed was lucid.

2.4.3.2 Academic experience

Questions n° 3 and n° 4

In questions 3 and 4, we have asked our participants questions to find out how attached our respondents were with their Algerian friends and how often they interact with them.

Question n° 5

In this question, we asked participants about the barriers or difficulties they face when interacting with other people inside or outside the classroom.

2.5 Conclusion

To conclude, we used one tool to obtain some data and information and extract a large number of different responses and opinions from all levels of South African students of English department at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem. The questionnaire includes ten questions that were closed and open in order. The questionnaire includes ten closed and open questions to allow them to answer freely and to get an idea of what they think about Algerian society and the factors that help to strengthen the relationship and the expectations of the students from their teachers as well.

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As for the discussion of the results chapter, it will be on how to improve the student-teacher relationship to enhance and reinforce the relationship, and the level of both teaching and learning to achieve a better social connection for the upcoming generations.

3. Introduction

The main objective of our research is to inspect the social and the psychological and their impact on shaping the learner's interaction in the academic setting. All through we attempt to use mixed-method research to uncover the results of the investigation; hence, this section of the research gateway aims to report the finding extracted from the data collection tool. First, we start by presenting the results obtained from the learner's questionnaire and finally we conclude our chapter section by discussing.

3.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into two main parts. In the first section, we have devoted our time to explore the experiences of social integration of South African students in Algerian universities and was classified while analyzing the data into specific themes as follows: Socialization with other students; Participation in social activities; Language is an obstacle to socialization; discrimination. In the second section, we wanted to reveal the academic experience of South African students which is largely shaped by their experience in the new learning environment.

3.1.1 Section one: Social experience

Question one: What are the challenges in dealing with interpersonal relationships, and how do you cope with it?

One participant recalled how he struggled to understand the different accents in the Algerian university:

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« The big problem for me has to do with language and it's quite difficult to cope with this one because the language we learnt, french is not even being used by the Algerian people most often. »

However, another participant has noticed the mindset's differences between his society and the Algerian one :

« Coming from an open-minded society to a rigid society, it is hard to cope up at the beginning, so much discrimination from the natives. My biggest achievements have been making friends with different foreign nationalities, and it has been an interesting journey. »

« The purpose is to find a common communicative circle proper to each other for good interaction. For that, it is important to be aware of the difference between current and habits but also different perceptions of the living life proper to everyone. »

« Challenge is staying yourself, try not to show part of your personality and hide another one. Stay true with ourselves. To cope with that situation, we Just relativise, focus on the idea that this is not eternal; everything moves on one day. »

Question two: Do you have any difficulties getting along with Algerian students?

YES	NO
16 (80%)	4 (20%)

Table 1. Difficulties in getting along with Algerian Students

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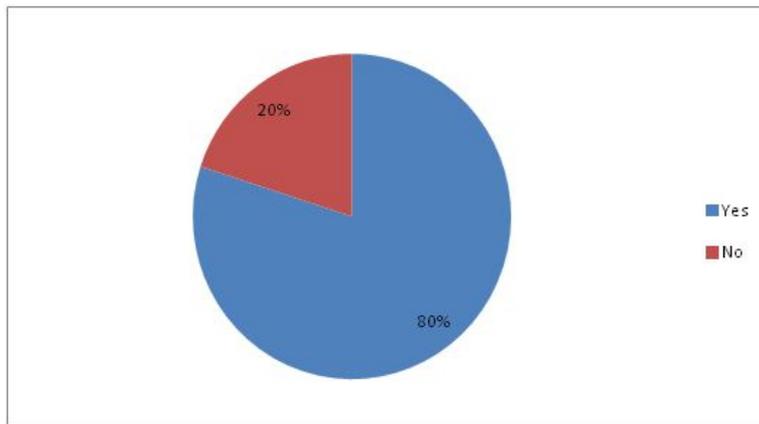


Figure1. Difficulties in getting along with Algerian Students.

Participants were asked about their relationships with other students. 80% of the participants find it hard to go along with Algerian students; however, the other 20% consider it easy.

Question three: Tick some of the current social difficulties that you encounter in the campus?

- Discrimination
- Fear from the other
- Racism
- Harassment
- Language Barriers

Discrimination	Fear from the other	Racism	Harassment	Language Barriers
3,6 (18%)	3,6 (18%)	3,6 (18%)	2,8(14%)	6,4 (32%)

Table 2. South African students' difficulties that they encounter in th campus.

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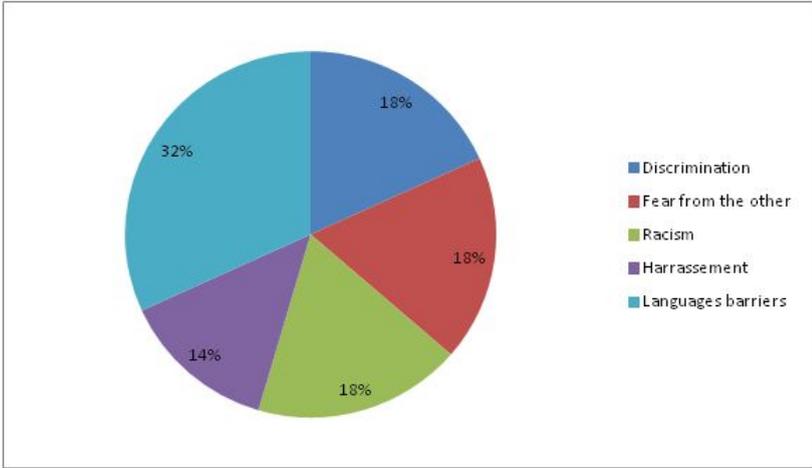


Figure 2. South African students’ difficulties they encounter in the campus.

South African students found that language was again the main barrier to interaction with Algerian students. 32% Participants recounted frustrating experiences which were the result of this language barrier. 14% of participants mentioned that they were harassed by Algerians in the campus, and 18% of them face racism; however, 18% of participants fear from the other and discrimination. Some of them provided us with the difficulties they encounter in the campus such as ignorance and injustice.

Question four: - How do you find interacting with Algerian students?

- Boring
- Exciting

Boring	Exciting
17 (72,7%)	3 (27,3%)

Table 3. South African student’s feelings about interacting with Algerian Students.

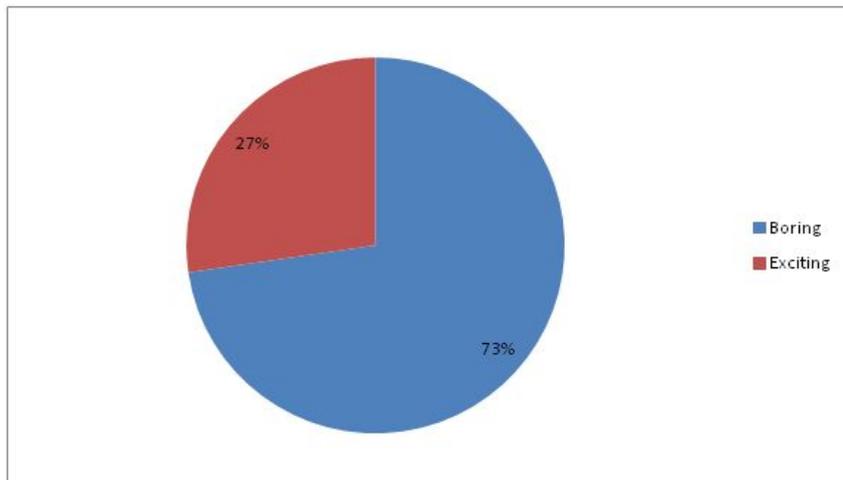


Figure 3. South African student's feelings about interacting with Algerian Students.

Participants were asked about their interaction with Algerian and whether it was boring or exciting. 3 (27,3%) of participants found it exciting to interact with different people, as it allowed them to broaden their knowledge about different experiences. However, 17 (72.7%) of the participants found interacting with Algerian students boring. In this regard, participants mentioned the following:

"Wow, I don't know, I think it's a fact that you learn from a lot of different people, and I think I want to learn from the experiences of different people, and it's exciting to meet someone completely different. of you ..."

In contrast, some participants put poor socialisation with Algerian students down to the racial grouping that was prevalent at Algerian universities and in Algerian society as a whole, one of them mentioned that:

« Because they are racists, blacks are mostly with blacks, white people with white people. »

And some of them have a communicative problem:

« Most of the students don't interact with you for genuine reasons they want to know if you can speak their language if your Muslim or not. And if you're not most of them won't even be

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interested in interacting so much with you. Due to language barriers communicating with them is not easy at all, sometimes, you have to repeat what you are saying several times before so they can understand you, which is very tiring. »

Question five: Do you find it easy to make friends in the host country (Algeria)?

YES	NO
18 (90%)	2 (10%)

Table 4. South African student's attitude towards making friends in Algeria

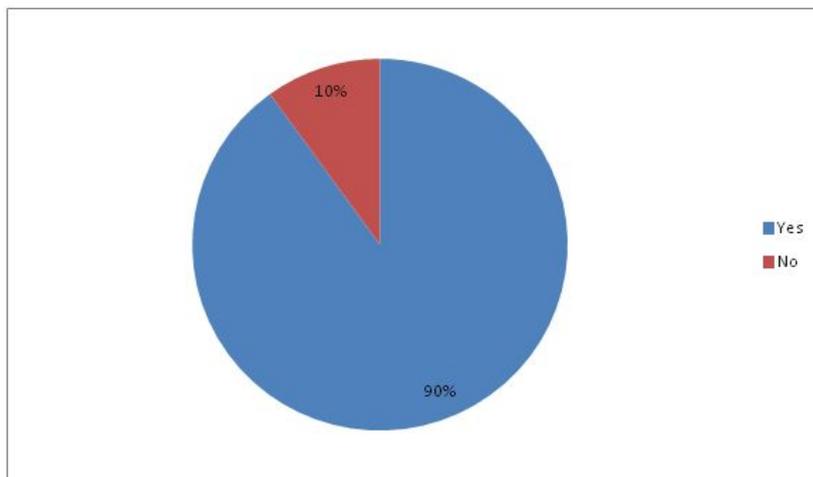


Figure 4. South African student's attitude toward making friends in Algeria.

18 (90%) of participants consider it easy to make relationships with Algerians, while 2 (10%) seems difficult to them.

Mention why?

« Of course it was not an easy matter of fact I do not have many friends, but just classmates and maybe four friends. A large percentage of them are racists so they won't be interested and some people want to do it out of pity because no one is talking with you. They do it, so you stop feeling like an outcast; generally, making friends with Algerians is not easy, most of them are hypocrites and racist. »

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« Difficult in the term of cultural differences and barriers present in each culture »

However, the rest mentioned that:

«I think they are nice, you can see, if you approach them they talk, but there’s nothing wrong is just that they are not confident with strangers, there is that, I don’t know, it’s protection, they don’t talk too much but they are fine. »

3.1.2. Section two: Academic experience

Question one: Are there any differences related to teaching styles in your home and the host one?

YES	NO
5 (25%)	15 (75%)

Table 5. Different teaching styles between South African’s country and Algeria .

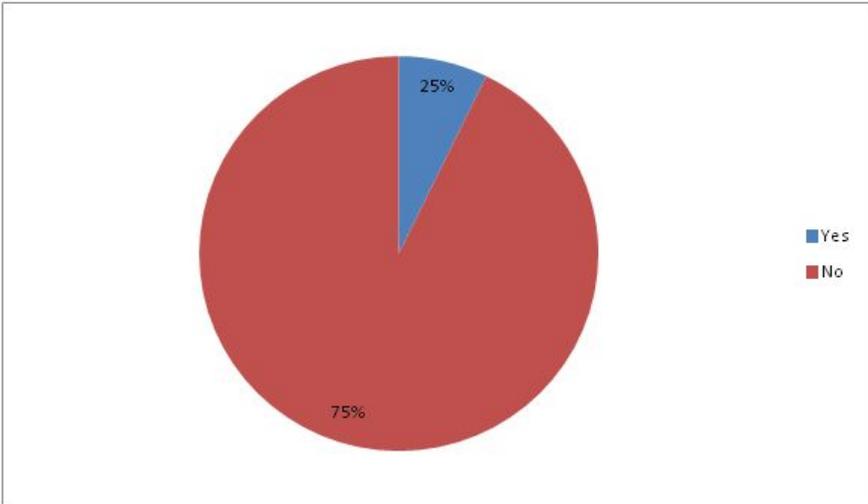


Figure 5. Teaching styles differences between the South African’s country and Algeria
5 (25%) of participants had noticed that there are differences to teaching styles in their home and the host one (Algeria); otherwise, 15 (75%) of participants saw that there are no differences.

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If yes, why?

« I'm a language student, so we are always a few, which is good for student-teacher interaction, unlike in my country where students are so many in one class. Though the system seems outdated, most of the things we study are somehow not applicable in the working place.
»

Question two: Do you find that an independent style of learning maximizes class interaction with your classmates?

YES	NO
7 (90%)	13 (10%)

Table 6. Classroom interaction and learning styles.

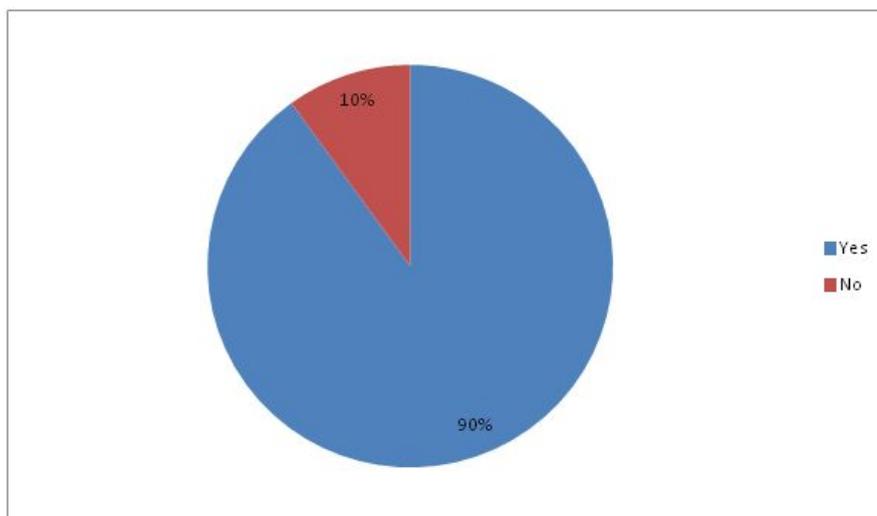


Figure 6. classroom interaction and learning styles.

Looking at the results above, a noticeable increase for the second option (90%) dominates the percentage, and this explains that a huge number of South African students find that an independent style of learning maximizes class interaction with your classmates.

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Question three: How do you find interacting in the academic setting (classroom)?

Easy	Hard	Very Hard
10 (50%)	10 (50%)	0 (0%)

Table 7. Student's attitude towards English classroom interaction

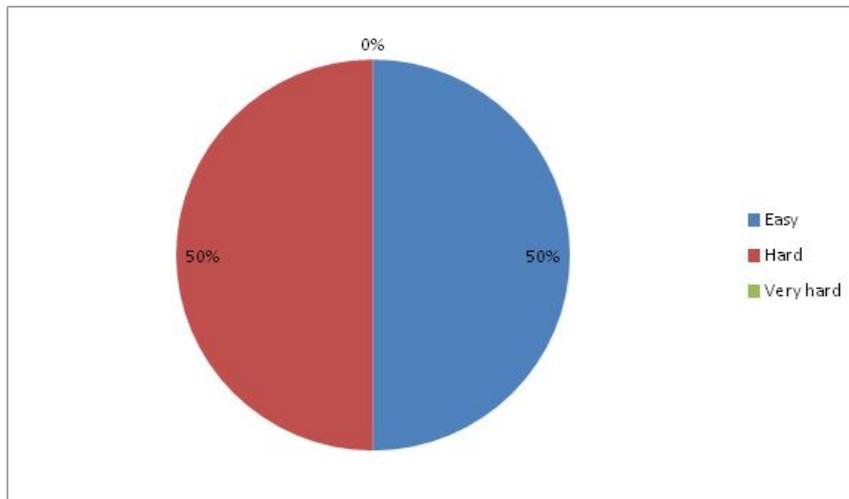


Figure 7 Student's attitude towards English classroom interaction

The two first choices were equal, 10 (50%) of the South African students claim that it is easy for them to interact in the academic setting (classroom), While 10 (50%) of them find it hard.

Mentions why?

« All people do not have the same preferences interaction; for some people, it is almost natural and easy to interact with classmates while it is difficult for others, this is due to their differences of personalities, and also it is difficult for a host from a different country to deal with people who are not from the same origin as him/her. »

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Question four: How often do you interact with your Algerian classmates?

Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
4 (20%)	14 (70%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)

Table 8. Frequency of student's interaction in the classroom

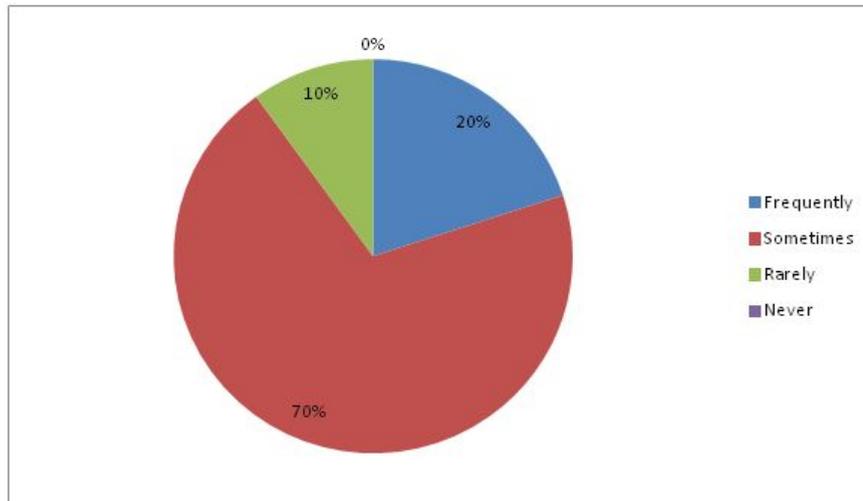


Figure 8. Frequency of student's interaction in the classroom

A noticeable number of participants indicated that their frequency of interaction was 'sometimes' the result shows that most of the students (70%) responded with 'sometimes'. And (20%) responded with 'frequently'. Whereas, two students (10%) responded with 'rarely'.

Question five: What are the difficulties that you face while interacting?

Inhibition because of shyness and anxiety	Fear of other judgement	Lack of background about the chosen topic
14 (70%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)

Table 9. Interaction difficulties

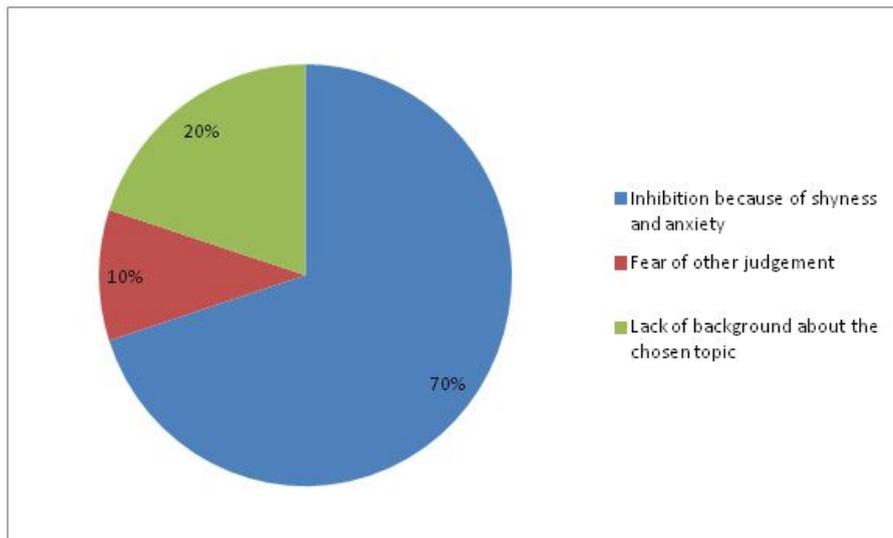


Figure 9. Interaction difficulties

20% of the South African students do not dare interact because they lack background about the chosen topic. 14(70%) asserted that they are shy and anxious, and the rest of the sample is 10%, it has indicated that they fear other judgement.

3.2 Discussion

The results revealed that South African students had mixed academic experiences in Algerian universities, both positive and negative. Most of the students said they experienced the classroom atmosphere in Algeria, which was different from their experiences at home. They enjoyed their studies and felt much happier. The struggle to adapt to the Algerian learning culture may have affected the cultures of South African students. This study also found that most students felt that the Algerian university's classroom environment was conducive to learning due to the freedom given to students in the classroom. This freedom creates a comfortable classroom atmosphere that is enhanced by positive student-teacher relationships. These good student-teacher relationships facilitated positive learning experiences among South African students as they found the teachers accessible and supportive.

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This study confirmed that most South African students in the sample were non-native English speakers. They had difficulty understanding the terminology of their speciality as well as the content of the subject. Additionally, poor English proficiency interferes with students' writing skills and classroom presentations and also affects their class participation and discussions with their classmates. As a result, students with poor English language skills lacked confidence and were reluctant to participate in the class; It affected their self-esteem. This result is consistent with those of Schweisfurth and Gu (2009) and Maringe and Jenkins (2014), who showed that poor language proficiency in the main language of instruction limited students' academic performance.

This study found that even students who were native English speakers had some difficulty understanding Algerian accents. These accents hurt the academic performance of some South African students because it took them a while to understand their lecturers. At the same time, students felt excluded by teachers who used local languages in class without translating their words into English to accommodate them. Despite several challenges facing South African students in Algeria, this study found that many of them gained great academic benefit from studying at Algerian university. These benefits encouraged them to overcome any challenges.

As for the social experience of South African students, the findings revealed that South African students, who participated actively in classroom activities, found it easier to make friends with classmates, as such participation made them more popular with other students. Most of the South African students were willing to socialise with local students but found it difficult to establish a sustainable relationship with them. They attributed this to the following factors: firstly, local students in most instances grouped themselves along racial or ethnic lines; secondly, most local students only befriended South African students if there was a

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prospect of benefiting either academically or materially from these students. For these reasons, South African students resorted to socialising among themselves.

Discrimination in Algeria permeates both on campus when South African students interact with members of the community. Some students said that on-campus they felt discriminated against by faculty and their peers. This result confirms the argument advanced by Tinto (1975) in his model that the experiences of students in higher education institutions are influenced by the previous educational experience of each student.

In this study, most South African students found that they initially struggled with the new teaching methods encountered in Algerian universities, but once they adapted to these methods, they had struggled to cope with the new teaching methods that Algerian universities were facing. I love to learn new ways. The teaching programs and this positive academic experience facilitated the relationships they established with faculty members, especially supervisors and teachers. This interaction between pupils and teachers is at the heart of the academic integration of pupils (Galiini, 2014). From these results, it appears that the support that South African students receive from teachers facilitates a positive academic integration in Algerian universities. Besides, the interaction between South African students and their fellow students is enhanced through interactive learning that encourages the sharing of ideas with classmates through group discussions and participation. This interactive learning approach develops the intellectual development of students, which is at the heart of academic integration. However, independent learning approaches can limit student integration because they interact less with teachers and other students.

The findings of this study revealed that language facilitated both the academic and the social integration of South African students in the host country and institution. Language further

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determined peer group association in the sense that most students found it difficult to associate with local students in Algeria because they spoke local indigenous languages in which South African students did not understand. Also, the study revealed that when these students socialised among themselves, language also influenced with whom they spent most of their time. The language was thus a barrier to social interaction between South African and local students. At the same time, ethnicity and racial grouping also had an impact on student-student interaction. Negative social experiences, such as poor social interaction between South African students and local students resulted in feelings of loneliness and isolation (Song, 2013; Mudhovozi, 2011). These feelings were an indication of poor social integration.

The findings of this study indicated that social interaction, in this case, was limited between local and South African students as a result of issues such as discrimination, racism and boredom. Even though South African students put more effort into improving their English in Algeria, challenges arose from the use of Algerian indigenous languages outside the classroom. Many South African students have failed to build lasting relationships with local students; as a result, they resorted to socializing among themselves. It was a coping mechanism because they supported each other on their journey towards integration. This study also reported that South African students used avoidance strategies to deal with issues of discrimination and crime. However, these strategies limited their interaction with Algerians.

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3.3 Conclusion

The research study explores the impact of academic and social experiences of South African students on their integration into the Algerian institution they attend. The strategies used by international students to face the challenges of Algeria were also examined. The results revealed that the challenges faced by South African students in Algerian universities had a somewhat negative impact on their integration into the new environment. However, the outcomes also indicated a positive interaction between students and teachers. Participation in social activities improved their school and social integration. Faced with the challenges, South African students have developed the strategies that have helped them integrate into host institutions.

General Conclusion

The currently conducted research shed light on the social and psychological factors that are affecting South African students' classroom interaction and has proved its impact in the process of foreign language teaching and learning. Consequently, in this study, it was hypothesized that if EFL teachers take into consideration the South African students' psychological trends and the linguistic background while teaching oral expression, classroom interaction will be promoted.

Classroom interaction is highly recommended in EFL classes to create opportunities for learners to practice and use their language. Moreover, its implementation creates situations that allow students to improve their oral communication, as learners work collaboratively in pairs or groups to promote knowledge exchange, interaction and sharing of ideas, which are theirs. The visit contributes significantly to the improvement and enhancement of language learning and language development in addition to the use of languages.

The present work consists of three chapters. The first is devoted to the theoretical part, which is purely descriptive, to reviewing related literature, the second was about the research methodology. As for the third chapter, it was concerned with the practical part through the administration of questionnaires to students of all levels of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis Mostaganem University. The first chapter then presented issues about EFL classroom interaction, its definition, types and importance. Then, it discussed some social and psychological difficulties that South African students face while interacting in the classroom. The second chapter discussed the tool that was selected to collect data. However, the third chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from students.

The results obtained confirmed and asserted the hypothesis that if EFL teachers pay attention to the South African students' psychological state and linguistic background while teaching oral expression, classroom interaction will be promoted. The findings presented in this research prove that social and psychological factors affect to some extent South African students' classroom interaction.

In light of these findings, the core of this entire work can be illustrated in the following two points: (1). Classroom interaction is an essential aspect in the language learning process, and it may be rewarding for South African learners since they face some psychological and social obstacles that are those related with inhibition because of shyness, anxiety, fear and language interference. (2). EFL teachers need to be motivators as well as a participant to encourage them to interact. They need to introduce the cooperative learning technique where learners interact in pairs or groups, which reinforces their sense of belonging and discussion to acquire new vocabulary while interacting.

On the whole, this research study carried out on South African students is not only used to help them identify their oral communication (speaking) difficulties. It also enables teachers to understand the psychological tendencies of South African students and the influence of their language training on the classroom interaction to foster interaction in their EFL classes.

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Appendices

Dear participant,

This research questionnaire aims to investigate the role of social and psychological factors in influencing South African student's interaction in the classroom, and your contribution helps us validate or/ not validate our hypotheses regarding the given research topic. Your responses will be taken into account and confidentially.

Section One: Social experience

Q1: What are the challenges in dealing with interpersonal relationships, and how do you cope with these challenges?

Q2: Do you have any difficulties to get along with Algerian students?

a. Yes,

b. No

Q3: Tick some of the current social difficulties that you encounter on the campus?

a. Discrimination

b. Fear from the other

c. Racism

d. Harassment

e. Language barriers

If others, please provide us with some examples

Q4: How do you find interacting with Algerian students?

a. Boring

b. Exciting

Why...?

Q5: Do you find it easy to make friends in the host country (Algeria)?

a. Yes,

b. No

Why...?

Section Two: Academic Experience

Q1: Are there any differences related to teaching styles in your home and the host one?

a. Yes,

b. No

If yes, explain why...?

Q2: Do you find that an independent style of learning maximizes class interaction with your classmates?

a. Yes,

b. No

Q3: How do you find interacting in the academic setting (classroom)?

a. Easy

b. Hard

c. Very Hard

Why...?

Q4: How often do you interact with your Algerian classmates?

a. Frequently

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

d. Never

Q5: What are the difficulties that you face while interacting?

a. Inhibition because of shyness and anxiety

b. Fear of other judgement

c. Lack of background about the chosen topic