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Physical symptoms and feelings when speaking in public: pre-service EFL teachers

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DEDICATION

*This study is dedicated to my family who is always supporting me.
Especially, to my mother and my brother, to my friends who are always
there for me, and all the LEI students who are always trying to improve.*

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I would like to thank to my thesis director Sandra who was really helpful.

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research would not be possible.*

Thank you for your kindness and your time.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study aims to identify what are the main difficulties that prevent ELT students from expressing themselves clearly at the moment of an English public speaking presentation. Therefore, it was conducted through a qualitative approach by using a survey as the instrument to collect data. This data collection would help to answer the following research questions:

What are participants' feelings in every stage of an English public speaking presentation (pre, during, after) and how do they evolve?

What are the most common physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation?

According to the participants, what are the main difficulties that ELT students have at the moment of performing an English public speaking presentation?

The results show that negative feelings and some physical symptoms are a critical factor that has a direct impact on the performance of the participants at the moment of English public speaking presentation. Therefore, this thesis will share the identified participants' feelings before, during, and after their English public speaking presentation performance. In fact, during the development of this study, it was realized how these feelings evolve through these three stages. Finally, there will be identified, the most common physical symptoms that students suffered when presenting as well.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

There have been many studies based on how to improve foreign language skills such as listening, reading and writing. However, this research looks specifically to focus on the speaking skill. Particularly, this study aims to identify the reasons for some students to feel uncertain at the time of speaking in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in public.

According to Šolcová (2011), speaking is a process which requires interaction between two individuals who alternate roles as speakers and listeners which principal goal is to communicate a message in a clear way. Usually, speaking is a goal that is not being accomplished by the students easily. Particularly, in this study, the participants learned EFL through a bilingual environment and they are supposed to become in English Language Teachers (ELT). They are higher education students from the Language Faculty of BUAP who are currently taking classes in the bachelor of English Language Teaching (ELT). As previously stated, they have faced problems when speaking EFL in public and this research aims to explore them.

1.1 Rational for the Topic Selection

English language learning process has four main skills to take into account to develop, these four skills are listening, reading, writing and speaking, and this last one is the most difficult skill to develop. According to Al Hosni (2014) the comprehension process is different from the production process which can affect an interaction since many times we can infer the meaning but we cannot avoid the process of using a linguistic system. For instance,

researchers such as Jeong-Ryeol Kim (2009) suggest that implementing new ways of language acquisition help learners to develop the four main skills like he did by creating a supporting dictionary based on school textbooks which was piloted and proved. It demonstrated that students enlarged their vocabulary thanks to the dictionary, which led the students to have more fluency while speaking.

In-class presentations are a very common task in schools and universities all over the world, though many students claim that causes long-term stress and harm (The Atlantic, 2018). On the other hand, school teachers say that in-class presentations help students to develop their confidence such as Prada (2015) stated in his research. Particularly, he mentioned that there exists a dialectic relationship between students' self-confidence and their oral production in class, showing that improving one of these aspects will affect the other one. Although this kind of presentation is very stressful especially for those students who have anxiety issues. This is supported by a reporter named Whiteside (2019) who showed a compilation of several tweets from students all over the world claiming to stop in-class presentations since it can cause mental distress. Therefore, most people do not feel comfortable speaking in front of a large group of people even when they converse easily in everyday situations, that is why people are always trying to avoid these kinds of situations unless it is inevitable (like in-class presentations). This kind of stressful situation can cause fear, anxiety and excessive sweating (Raja, 2017).

Public speaking anxiety can be different in each person, since every human being thinks and behaves in a different way. Gershman (2019) states that the fear of speaking in public is in our DNA, given that we percept the looking audience as a threat, in response our body reacts with panic attacks, shortness of breath, redness of face and shaking. However as

it was mentioned before every human being is different and its body can react with different symptoms. Consequently, the researcher of this study have noticed that there exists a necessity to study and identify the problems that speaking in public can cause to students who aim to become in English Language Teachers.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The results of this study will be useful in the following aspects. First of all, the outcomes of this study will help the institution to realize the large number of students from ELT bachelor who have issues at the moment of speaking EFL in public and the importance of implementing strategies to confront this situation. According to Padmadewi (2016), his research has established that examination, individual presentations, spontaneous activities and limited availability of time cause anxiety which is a really common problem between students.

Second, this research investigation will assist the teachers from the Language Faculty to understand the main causes of students' speaking issues and develop effective methods to reinforce students' confidence at the moment of speaking in public. Also this research will be useful for the teachers, hence they can identify students with public speaking problems and implement different strategies in individual presentations in order to avoid that the student feels insecure and nervous while they are presenting in class.

Third, this study will help the students who have public speaking problems to reinforce their confidence, fluency and having a clear tone of voice while speaking in public. The results of the research conducted by Ferreira Marinho, et al. (2017) showed that one important factor that makes the students feel insecure while they speak is that they have a

self-perception of their voice as high-pitched or too soft. This can result in them being ashamed of speaking in public in view of their classmates and can make fun of them. Therefore, this research will also help the students to be more empathetic with their classmates while they are speaking in class.

1.3 Context of the Research

This study aims to investigate the main reason why ELT students have issues at the moment of speaking English in public. The study is developed in the Language Faculty of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP). This is a higher education institution and it is located in Puebla, Mexico. BUAP is one of the most prestigious universities in Mexico, it was founded in 1587 (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, n.d.). BUAP has 24 faculties located in different zones of the state of Puebla, each faculty has different learning programs and bachelor degrees. Also all faculties are divided into 4 different areas. The language faculty in which this research is developed is located in the social science and humanities area (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, n.d.).

The Language Faculty has two bachelor degrees, the bachelor in French Language Teaching (FLT) and the bachelor in English Language Teaching (ELT). Their main objective is the integral formation of new professionals who can impart various languages but principally the already mentioned (Facultad de Lenguas, n.d.).

Many students from the English teaching bachelor face problems at the moment of speaking English in public, a curious event if we take into account that the students are preparing themselves to be English teachers and this implies that they should be comfortable

speaking in front of a large group of people. The discomfort of speaking English in public has led some students to quit the university.

1.4 Aims

This research aims to identify what are the main difficulties that prevent ELT students from expressing themselves clearly in EFL at the moment of an English public speaking presentation. At the same time another research aim is to know what are the feelings of the students before, during and after an English public speaking presentation and realize how they change in every stage. Finally, another aim is to identify what are the most common physical symptoms the students may suffer during a presentation.

1.5 Objectives

In order to accomplish this research aim, a survey was designed by taking in consideration the information that was required to reach the goals of the study. Once the survey was finished, it was applied through an online platform, thus participants from target language IV and V could answer it. After the survey was answered by the participants, the information collected was segmented, analyzed and organized using visual aids to facilitate its comprehension to the readers.

1.6 Research Questions

What are participants' feelings in every stage of an English public Speaking presentation (pre, during, post) and how do they evolve?

What are the most common physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation?

According to the participants, what are the main difficulties that ELT students have at the moment of performing an English public speaking presentation?

1.7 Conclusion

Summarizing the previous information, students from the ELT bachelor are struggling with speaking EFL in public that is why this research attends to identify the main reasons why these students are not able to freely speak while they are in public. As it was stated previously, speaking in public is a really common issue between students from all over the world and identifying what causes this issue could help ELT students to overcome this situation. This research will be useful for future researchers and students who attend to find a solution to public speaking problems. The following chapter of this thesis will state the theoretical framework of this research by summarizing and describing experts' statements and other researchers' findings in this particular field.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This section will inquire in depth about the speaking skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and why it is important in the modern world by exploring previous researchers from different authors. In order to do so, first, this chapter will present literature that defines English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and how it is different from English as a Second Language (ESL). Second, speaking skill will be defined and its sub-skills along with the importance of speaking a language. And third, it is described the physical and mental symptoms that people can face at the moment of speaking EFL in public since this is this study's main concern.

2.1 English as a Foreign Language

During the colonial times, the British Empire which covered 25% of the earth's surface demanded people in those countries to speak in English instead of their native Language. That is how English language spread and it is currently one of the most spoken languages. (British Study Centres, n.d). Nowadays learning English is a basic requirement for most public and private educational institutions. English is the language most widely used all over the world although most people do not need to use it in their daily lives that is why the hundreds of thousands of learners around the world have a personal motivation to learn English. (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, Pincas, 2003).

The term English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to the people who are non-native English speakers but have domain over the language or are learning the language in a

country where English is not the dominant language. This term emerged after World War II (Nordquist, 2019). Additionally, it is important to mention the difference between EFL and English as a Second Language (ESL) since they are concepts that people can think mean the same but there are some differences between one and other. ESL refers to people who speak English in a country where English is widely spoken (English Study Breaks, n.d). Therefore, this researcher can ensure that EFL and ESL differ in how English language is learned for the reason that EFL is learned in a non-English speaking context which can difficult the process of learning, contrary to ESL which is acquired by the speakers by being in an English language context.

Regarding learning EFL importance, as it was stated before, English is widely used all over the world, that is the reason why knowing English can provide you with many benefits. Besides, it helps you to grow both personally and professionally. The British Study Centres (n.d.) website enlist 10 reasons why learning EFL is important:

- 1 .English is a global language
- 2 .Studying English can help you to get a job.
3. Learning English can help you meet new people.
4. Many scientific papers are written in English.
5. English is the language of the media industry.
6. English is the language of the internet.
7. Traveling is a lot easier with a good knowledge of English.
8. English is one of the most important languages for business.

9. With English you can study all over the world.

10. English gives you access to multiple cultures. (para 6)

The first point of the previous list suggested by The British Study Centres (n.d.) claims that English is a language spoken worldwide. Around the world there are approximately 1.5 billion English speakers, that means around 20% of the world population speaks English, however most of these people are non-native English speakers. (Lyons, 2017). In fact, as it is mentioned in the second point, there are some authors which believe that learning EFL would help professionals to obtain a well-paid job (The British Study Centres, n.d.; Pandey, Pandey 2014) since in the professional world communication skills are essential for business.

The third point mentions that English is a good tool to meet new people and make friends. As Santhi (2015) mentions in his research, communication is necessary to create bonds with other people and as it was stated before, English is a worldwide Language. For that reason learning English allows people to communicate with a great part of the world.

The fourth point states that many scientific papers are written in English language; in fact, a researcher named Nishanthi (2018) claims that anywhere in the world it is possible to find books and newspapers written in English since it is the dominant language in international communication what take us to the next point, which mentions that English is the language of the media industry. It is an idea that The British Council (2013) supports since they reaffirm that while English was spreading it started to be the dominant language in printed materials, radios, television and cinema. English not only dominates the mass media, factually, most of the websites in the world are created and written in English. Even

websites in other languages offer the possibility to translate them to English (Nishanthi, 2018). This assertion is also mentioned in the sixth point.

Brown English Language School (n.d) website recommends learning English if you like to travel, since most likely it is possible to find someone who speaks English anywhere in the world. Statement number seven says that it is a lot easier to travel with a good proficiency of EFL. Kuiper (2007) narrates her story when teaching in a university in Malaysia claiming that English is the language of business as it is mentioned in point number eight. In quote number nine, there is mentioned the opportunities that EFL provides for studying; supporting, Nishanti (2018) claims that countries open their doors to qualified people who have knowledge over the English Language to increase their academic knowledge. Finally, the last point talks about how English gives access to multiple cultures, Omar (2015) states that learning a language is necessary to be immersed in a different culture; furthermore, this information is complemented with the previous points as it was shown that you can find information, books, webpages, newspapers, magazines and so on in English language. Nevertheless, the most important fact would be that it is possible to find people who speak English anywhere in the world and you are able to do so as well.

Regarding EFL learning within the context of this research, Mexico, it is important to mention that there exists around 10% of the population who can speak EFL. However, out of this 10%, only 4% are able to speak it fluently (How widely spoken, n.d). As it can be seen learning EFL is not being accomplished in Mexico even when English is a mandatory subject in public educational institutions. Mijangos-Guzzardo (in Tesol international association, n.d) narrates her experience teaching EFL in a private school in Mexico. She describes this experience as frustrating since the textbooks the school provided to the students were

outdated and there was no interest from the director of the school to improve the learning of EFL. Nowadays there exist the Programa Nacional de Inglés (PRONI) in Mexico, which main purpose is teaching EFL in public schools in order to improve the professional opportunities of students and give them access to more information (Gobierno de México, n.d). Nevertheless, Ramírez-Romero, Pamplón-Irigoyen, Cota-Grijalva (2012) through a set of interviews show in their research that most of the teachers, directors, parents and students do not have any knowledge about what consist of national and state English programs.

In conclusion, in this section of the literature review, it is perceived that English language is necessary to be in contact with the modern world besides it helps to grow professionally. Nevertheless, even when EFL has been taught in all private and public schools in Mexico, most of the students do not have any interest in learning a foreign language (Narváez-Sierra, n.d). Thus, definitely there is a gap to fill about EFL learning in Mexico. In order to learn EFL appropriately, 4 main skills are necessary to achieve an accurate communication, they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. EnglishClub (n.d) points out that, when people learn EFL the first skill they try to domain is listening followed by speaking, reading and the last one is writing. Particularly, this researcher considers that speaking is usually the last skill that a student learns. This is why this research is focused on the speaking skill. The following section of this literature review is presenting different experts' concepts and they will be explored.

2.2 Speaking skill

Speaking is a basic skill that human beings learn at an early age, thus, this skill is used in any situation throughout a lifetime (Qureshi, n.d). Through speaking, people express their opinions, ideas, feelings and so on but most importantly through speaking people create

bonds. Thanks to the speaking skill people can know each other, which the researcher of this project thinks is the basis of human civilization, after all, where would be the whole world if people could not be able to communicate with each other.

Speaking a language is not only a means of communication, it is also part of identity and culture. Sirbu (2015) states that language is a fundamental aspect that conveys traditions and values within a society. The need for communication triggers the development of a language, such a need is so essential that society over time has created a sign language for those who are not able to speak, which were actually the first means of communication along with painted symbols. Additionally, Rao (2019) believes that speaking is the most important skill above the other 3 language skills for the reason that having good communication skills are key to succeed in professional life and fulfill dreams and ambitions.

Since this research is focused on speaking it is necessary to define the concept of speaking, therefore it will be provided definitions from different experts. Torky (2006) defines speaking as the ability to express an idea using the correct linguistic competences and adopting the pragmatic rules of the spoken language. Supporting, speaking is an interactive process in which the participants receive and process information in order to produce and exchange information (Burns and Joyce, 1997, as cited in Torky, 2006). As it is shown, experts have similar definitions about the speaking skill as well as Wahyuni (2016) who defines speaking as the skill to produce meaning into words which would be understood by other people. Therefore, it can be concluded that speaking is the communication by two or more people which follows a structure in order to express feelings, emotions, ideas and opinions; mainly, speaking conveys a meaning by producing words. The following section of this literature review describes all sub-skills that belong to the speaking skill.

2.2.1 Speaking sub-skills

Once the definition of speaking is clear, it is necessary to know what are the speaking sub-skills and how are they defined. According to the English Binus University (n.d) there are four speaking sub-skills that are *fluency*, *vocabulary*, *grammar* and *pronunciation*.

Firstly, the British Council (n.d) defines *fluency* as speaking easily without hesitating and with a good rhythm, in addition Thomsom (2015) relates *fluency* with accent, intelligibility and comprehensibility. It can be concluded that *fluency* is the ability to speak in a clear way with no pauses and with a good level of comprehensibility. Secondly, *vocabulary* is defined by Lestari (2015) as a set of words the speaker uses in a specific language, furthermore Mofareh (2015) defines *vocabulary* as words to communicate and express ideas. In summary *vocabulary* is a set of words that the speaker uses in order to express meaning. *Grammar* can be defined in many ways as Wilcox (2004) shows in her research investigation although she concludes that grammar is a set of rules that allows the user to create meaningful words and sentences, additionally Richards (n.d) describes *grammar* as the structure it is used to create sentences and texts. In other words, *grammar* is the set of rules it is used to give structure and meaning to words. *Pronunciation* is the last speaking sub-skill which is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary (n.d) as the manner words are said, moreover “pronunciation is the production of a sound system which does not interfere with communication either from the speakers’ or the listeners’ point of view” (Paulston & Burder, 1976, as cited in Gilakjani, 2016). In conclusion *pronunciation* is the manner words are produced by sounds. This last sub-skill may be one of the main reasons why students from ELT are ashamed and have difficulties speaking in public.

2.3 Type of problems to face when speaking EFL

Speaking may become a difficult task when we have to be in front of a large group of people and even more when we have to speak in a foreign language, due to this the human body can face different mental and physical symptoms (Ryan, 2014). On the one hand, some physical symptoms that people can experience while speaking in public are *sweaty palms*, *faster heart beating*, *shaky legs* and *blush*. All of them will be described in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, according to SweatHelp.org (n.d) excessive hands sweating is a medical condition called palmar hyperhidrosis. *Sweaty palms* can negatively impact social life since it is a stressful condition which is embarrassing and can be a confidence wrecking problem. This symptom along with others can have negative effects at the moment of speaking EFL in public for the reason that was mentioned before, it can wreck your confidence when speaking. Secondly, Mayo Clinic (n.d) website explains that a *faster heart beating* can be normal under some situations. For instance it is normal that the heart beats faster during exercise or as a response to stress. In the case of speaking EFL in public the stress can be so hard that it is normal a *faster heart beating*, however as the *sweaty palms* symptom, this situation can impact negatively to the performance at the moment of speaking. Thirdly, according to Lamia (2014) *blushing* is an emotional response to certain situations such as feeling embarrassed, humiliated, discouraged or mortified. It occurs when feeling involved in a social transgression, however it can also happen in exciting situations such as being attracted to other people. *Blushing* can also reveal our feelings since it can be a sign of lack of confidence that is why people always try to hide their faces when they feel they blushed. Finally, *Leg shakes* is a sign of anxiety disorders and stress. When the human body feels anxious or stressed it prepares itself to fight the stress that means that the body is flooded

with extra energy which can cause leg shaking (Scott, 2019). This symptom along with all the previous ones may cause a bad impression to the public when speaking in front of a large group of people since they may be seen as lacking experience, preparation and knowledge.

On the other hand, the mind can also be affected by the *fear* of speaking in public or *nervousness* which is the most common symptom and can lead to other symptoms such as the mind starts getting blank or in other words, you *forget your speech*. Again, these symptoms will be described to clarify what this researcher refers about when stating them here in the literature review. Firstly, being good at speaking in public is critical to grow in professional life even though 25 percent of the people report having *fear of speaking in public*. Glossophobia is the medical term for the *fear of public speaking*, this fear comes from the speaker's feelings, thoughts and acts more than the quality of the speech since most of the time the speaker is more worried about their own anxiety than the quality of their performance (Tsaousides, 2017). Secondly, *Nervousness* is a response to stress when the human body perceives a threat. In order to combat the threat the body starts to boost adrenaline, in consequence the heart begins to beat faster and the blood pressure rises (Healthline, n.d). As it can be seen *nervousness* may be the main source of some of the previous physical symptoms that were described above when speaking EFL in public. Finally, *forgetting your speech* can cause a lot of troubles during a presentation since you start forgetting what you were supposed to say and it can lead to stutter (Ryan, 2014). Mainly, some experts agreed that forgetting a speech is caused by the excessive stress people can put in their mind by the fear of ruining their presentation at the moment of speaking in public (CNADC, n.d). If the speaker is not used to speaking in public or if he or she does not have any experience speaking in public, it is very common that the speaker freezes at the audience

and starts forgetting what they were supposed to say even if they have practiced several times before. Another valid reason is that most of the speakers memorize their presentations, which becomes the process of speaking into a conscious effort instead of being an automatic process, which can lead to stress and anxiety (Speaking Lifestyle, n.d).

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion as it was shown through this chapter, EFL is a key that opens a lot of opportunities in personal life and the professional world since English is a worldwide language (British Study Centres, n.d; Broughton et al., 2003). Although English is the most spoken language in the world, countries like Mexico still have problems of English as a Foreign Language education; it is an issue that surely can be improved and needs more attention from part of the educational authorities. These educational problems may lead to public speaking problems for the reason that educational institutions in Mexico do not teach young students how to behave in front of an audience and this situation may trigger the previous physical and emotional symptoms that were mentioned before (Ryan, 2014; Mayo Clinic, n.d.; Lamia, 2014; Scott, 2019; Tsaousides, 2017; CNADC, n.d; Healthline, n.d; Speaking Lifestyle, n.d.). In the following chapter, there will be presented the approach and methodology used for this research as well as the research instrument.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to describe the methodological design and procedures used in this study. Furthermore, it contains the explanation of the overall design as the description of the study itself in a specific context by taking into account the participants and procedures. Additionally it describes the instrument used in this research and how it was designed and applied in order to collect the information desired.

3.1 Methodology

In order to reach the goals of this dissertation, a qualitative approach was applied owing to the fact that there was gathered quantitative data, and it was considered to have a complete interpretation of this study's results. In order to scope what a qualitative approach research is, it is important to discuss both approaches: qualitative and quantitative. This is only to clarify what experts say about these two kinds of research and then compare those definitions to have a better understanding of the research methodology used in this study.

Quantitative research focuses on quantifying the data collected, its main concern is to determine *how much* or *how many* terms. In other words, quantitative research's main purpose is to measure something or find out the variables in a social context (Rahman, 2017). Other researchers have similar definitions about quantitative research as Apuke (2017) who defines quantitative research as a method to quantify variables for an specific purpose, this method uses statistical techniques in order to gather data and interpret it. It can be concluded that the main difference between quantitative and qualitative is how these two kinds of research

interpret the results. On the one hand qualitative research concerns about lived experiences, behaviours, emotions and feelings and once the data is collected the results are written in a detailed analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Miles and Gilbert, 2005). On the other hand, quantitative research concerns more about statistics and it is supported with visual aids which quantify the data collected (Rahman, 2017; Apuke , 2017).

Now that quantitative research has been defined, it is important to know how it contrasts to qualitative research which is the one used in this study. According to Miles and Gilbert (2005), qualitative research looks to describe a certain inquiry and then create a detailed report of the situation observed during the process, this kind of approach usually uses open-ended questions. Other experts such as Bogdan and Biklen (1998) defined qualitative research by stating 5 variables, it has: *Naturalistic, descriptive data, concern with process, inductive and meaning*. *Naturalistic* refers to the place and the context where the research is being applied, since the data collected will be more reliable in the setting in which it occurs. *Descriptive data* is the written result of the observation, in other words, it is the data collected in the form of words or pictures. *Concerning the process* means the responsibility and dedication that the researcher puts on the study more than the outcomes. *Inductive* is the process of data analysis which comes from general to specific since qualitative researchers tend to analyze the data from experimentation and observation. Finally *meaning* refers to the perspective of the participants, most qualitative researchers look to capture how people interpret and give meaning to the researched topic (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998).

Particularly, in this study the research questions guide us to collect the main reasons why students from ELT bachelor have problems at the moment of speaking EFL in public

which is qualitative data. At the same time, this study collected a sample of *Target Language IV and V classes* in the whole language faculty. Therefore, this study works through a qualitative approach which is the one that best fits its necessities. In other words, this study implies adopting a research strategy that uses qualitative data analysis to answer its research questions (Brannen, 2005).

Besides describing the type of approach that this study is having, there is also the methodology that it aims to follow to develop this research, it is *Descriptive Methodology*. Descriptive Research can use elements of qualitative and quantitative research. It focuses on answer “what is” on a research investigation, as well as it can tabulate numerical information with visual aids such as graphics and charts; these last are in order to handle the data for a better comprehension of the reader. As its name says it describes the gathered data, for that reason observations and surveys are the most common tools applied to collect information in this kind of research (The handbook of research for educational communications and technology, 2001). Descriptive methodology aims to identify characteristics, frequencies, trends and categories by observing and measuring. Supporting, McCombes (2019) adds that in this kind of methodology, the researcher does not intervene or manipulate any element, the researcher just limits observation in order to understand why, how and when something happens. Therefore, this study concludingly uses a descriptive methodology since it accomplishes all requirements pointed out in this section of the research methodology chapter.

3.2 Context of the Study

This research study was applied in the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) which is a higher education institution. The origins of BUAP date back to 1578 when a

religious group decided to establish in the city of Puebla and found the Seminario de la Compañía de Jesús de San Jerónimo, 9 years later it was turn into a college, since then, the college had several changes until it became the university that is nowadays (BUAP, n.d). Currently, the educational offer of BUAP counts with middle education schools, higher education faculties and postgraduates. The higher education offer is divided into 4 different areas that have a total of 24 faculties. The 4 educational areas are the economic-administrative area, engineering and exact sciences area, natural and health sciences area and the social sciences and humanities area. The 24 faculties are located through the different educational areas and all over the state of Puebla (BUAP, n.d) and one of them is the Languages Faculty.

The Languages faculty, which is located in the city of Puebla, is located within the social sciences and humanities area. This faculty currently has two bachelor degrees. The English Language Teaching degree and the French Language Teaching degree along with other educational programs such as cursos de extensión universitaria and the center of foreign languages CELE. Moreover, BUAP language faculty also counts with ‘The house of English’, ‘La maison de la langue française’ and ‘Das haus der Deustchen sprache’, each one of these offer different courses from intermediate to advance in their respective languages (facultad de lenguas, n.d).

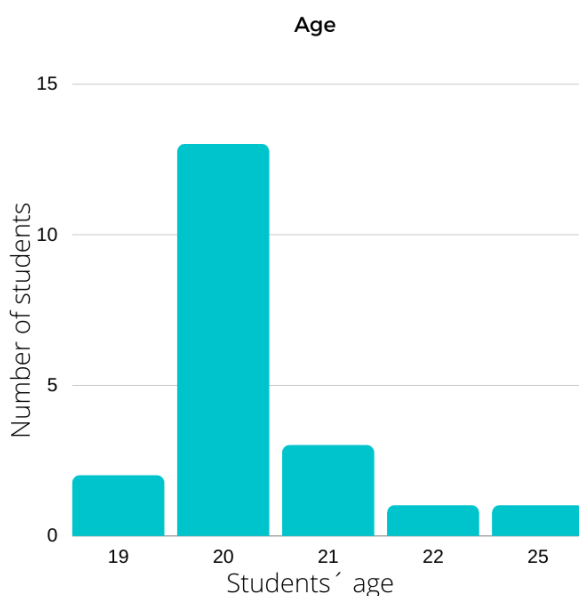
Regarding the English Language Teaching bachelor degree (LEI), its graduate students are supposed to be highly competent teachers with a high knowledge about anglophone culture with at least a B2 proficiency of English language according to the common european framework of reference for languages (facultad de lenguas, n.d). As stated by Cambrige, an individual with a B2 qualification should not only be able to communicate

effectively expressing opinions and arguments in the desired language, but also be able to write clearly and detailed, explaining advantages and disadvantages of different points of view as well as writing letters, reports and other types of text (Cambridge English Assessment, n.d). As it can be seen, speaking is a crucial skill that students from ELT bachelor should master completely since being a teacher demands having excellent speaking control, not only to transmit knowledge in the best possible way, but also for good communication between students and teacher which will help the teacher to understand their students educational needs in order to improve the learning process.

In order to provide LEI students with enough tools to become in English Language Teachers, BUAP language faculty counts with a large variety of equipment and facilities that are really useful to practice and improve the learning of a language. To start, there are 4 multitask classrooms which are designed to help students to improve their skills in different languages, all of these rooms are equipped with computers with internet access, audiobooks, audiovisual material, books and magazines; all this classrooms belong to the self-access center (CAA). There is also a computer room where students can access in their free time in order to do their homeworks or do some research, this room is also used to apply tests and exams. Language faculty also counts with an extense library in which it can be found a large amount of material in several languages. Students from the language faculty are free to enter and study in the library, they can take the books out of the library with a permission. Finally each classroom is equipped with a computer, a screen, an interactive board and a projector, most classrooms have capacity for 20 to 30 people.

3.3 Participants of the Study

The participants of this study are students from LEI bachelor from the language faculty at BUAP. In total, there are 20 participants in this study. Out of the 20 participants, 13 of them are from target language V class, and the other 7 are from target language class IV. As it is shown in Graph 1, the age of the participants is from 19 to 25 years old with an average age of 20 years old.

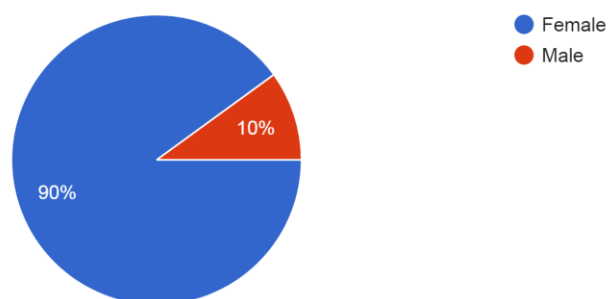


Graph 1 Participants' age

As the reader can see in Graph 1, there are 20 participants where one of them who is a female is twenty-five years old and is from target language V class, she represents 5% of the total participants. There is also another female student (5%) who is twenty-two years old from target language V class. Additionally there are three students (15%) who are twenty-one years old, all of them are females. From these three participants, two of them are from target language V class and the other participant is from target language IV class. As it was mentioned previously most of the participants are twenty years old, they represent 65% of

the total. Nine of these students are females from target language V class, three are females from target language IV class and the last participant is a male from target language IV. Finally, the last 2 participants are students from target language IV, they are nine-teen years old and one of them is female and the other one male.

Gender
20 respuestas



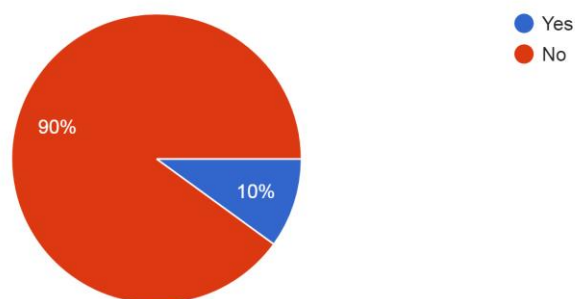
Graph 2. Participants' gender

As it can be seen in Graph 2, most of the participants are females, they represent 90% of the total. In other terms, 18 of the students who participated in this study were females and only 2 of them were males. Males represent 10% of the total of participants.

Within the survey, there are two questions that were based on participants' experience with their target language: English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

1. Have you ever travel abroad?

20 respuestas

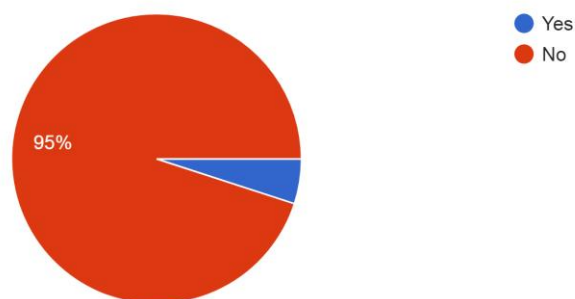


Graph 3. Participants who have travel abroad

The first question is about the experience of traveling. Graph 3 demonstrates that the majority of the participants have never traveled abroad. This means that 90% of them, eighteen participants out of twenty, have never traveled to other countries. This was important to know because traveling helps the individual to be immersed in the language all the time, this leads to an improvement of all language skills by daily interactions (Victoria, 2020).

2. Currently, do you have a job?

20 respuestas



Graph 4. Participants who have a job

The second question is based on working experience. As it is seen in Graph 4, currently only one of the participants has a job. It represents 5% of the participants' population. This participant mentions that she works as a photographer. However this question aimed to explore if any of the participants was currently working to see if their job, as EFL teachers, could have helped them to improve their EFL speaking performance. Nevertheless, as a photographer, she will not be able to improve the EFL language. This is because this kind of job does not require much interaction with people or any kind of activity that involves language production.

3.4 Research Instrument

Research instruments are tools through which the researcher collects information for his research work. Research instruments help to measure variables in a subject of interest from a research, these tools are designed to gather data from a specific population in order to know in depth a specific concern (Des moines University Library, 2020). There exist multiple research instruments that can be applied depending on the data the researcher wants to obtain, since not all research instruments help for the same purpose. These research instruments include: questionnaire, observation, interviews, tests, surveys, checklist and many more. Particularly, this study used a survey to collect the required qualitative data.

Since the research instrument used for this research was a survey it is necessary to know what a survey is, as well as its features and how it works. According to Columbia University (n.d) survey is an instrument that collects data from a predefined group through questions. There are two types of questions that can be applied in a survey, the first type are open-ended questions or free-answer questions, in this type of questions the respondent is free to write an answer in order to fulfill the question's requirements. The second type are

multiple choice questions which are divided into four subtypes. Also, they are dichotomous questions, semantic differential scale questions, rank order questions and rating scales. In multiple choice questions the respondent must choose one answer from a predefined list of answers (QuestionPro, 2020).

As previously stated, the instrument used to collect information in this research was an online survey. This survey is divided into four stages, the first one is about general questions from participants' background. The second one is the 'pre-presentation' stage, in this section there are questions whose main purpose is to identify how students from LEI prepare themselves for a public speaking presentation and how they feel about it. The third stage is the 'while presenting performance' stage which was designed to know the feelings of the students during a public speaking presentation and how they behave, as well as the physical and emotional symptoms they may suffer during a presentation. Finally the fourth stage is the 'post-presentation performance' stage, this stage helps to report how students feel once they release the pressure of presenting in a foreign language. This survey's stages are having three types of items. It contains general questions in order to know a little bit about the respondent context such as gender and age. There are sixteen questions in the survey where seven out of these sixteen questions are 'yes or no' items; that means that they are dichotomous questions. Six questions are *open-ended*, and the last three items are *multiple choice*.

3.5 Overall Research Design

This research design description considers two main branches, the instrument research design and its application. The instrument for this dissertation was designed thinking about reaching the purpose of this research, for that reason the questions were created in a way that it would

help to collect the data desired to complete the research goal. First it was discussed what would be the best instrument for this study. Once a deep look into the different research instruments was done, it was decided that a survey was the best instrument to collect the data desired for the reasons that were stated previously. All this process of the instrument research design took around two weeks, since there were several corrections to do in order to arrive at the wanted result.

Regarding the application of this instrument, originally it was thought to collect information from all target language classes within the English Language Teaching bachelor's degree. Unfortunately not all the professors in charge of their classes were willing to participate and help the researcher to collect his data. The thesis director of this research helped to contact the teachers from the target language classes; however, it was impossible to count on the teachers. In the end, it was decided to use only the data collected from target language class IV and V whose professors in charge were the only ones willing to help this study. All this process of data collection and the application of the instrument lasted around 3 weeks, the director of this research contacted the teachers in charge of the class groups, the first week none of the groups answered the survey, for that reason the thesis director sent a reminder to the professors. The second week only the target language V class answered the survey, so it was decided to wait another week before proceeding. The third week the target language IV class answered the survey as well as one student from target language I and one from target language II. Due to the lack of information collected from these last two groups, at the end it was decided to omit their answers and continue only with the data collected from target language IV and V. It is important to mention that the survey was applied on an online platform.

3.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is necessary to know what the main purpose of a research is, since if a researcher has not a clear goal it would be impossible to continue with the process. Through the investigation process, in this chapter, the researcher realized what research method best suited his purpose. Additionally, the research instrument was a critical item presented considering that it was the key to collect and analyze the data required for this study. Other elements to take into consideration are the participants of the study and the context of the study, these elements are crucial at the moment of designing the research instrument and were stated in this chapter as well. In the next chapter the results of the surveys will be interpreted and analyzed. All research outcomes will be written in a detailed report in order to know what the main factors that affect LEI students' performance are at the moment of an English public speaking presentation.

Chapter IV

Results

4.0 Introduction

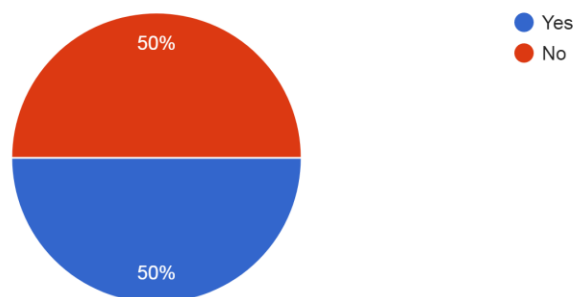
This chapter's main concern is segmenting and analyzing every piece of data collected through the research instrument. For this purpose, the information will be represented with visual aids in order to handle the information in the best possible way, also for better reader's understanding. After, research questions that were posed in chapter I will be answered. Finally, in order to close this chapter the findings will be explained as well.

4.1 Obtained results

Through the application of the research instrument a lot of important information was collected. This information will be broken down and analyzed later on in this section of the thesis. To start the data collection analysis, Graph 5 shows the percentage of students who believe that they can express their ideas clearly in EFL. As it can be observed, half of the participants think they can accomplish this goal of speaking clearly in EFL (See Graph 5).

4. Are you able to express your ideas clearly in the English Language?

20 responses



Graph 5. Students who can express their ideas clearly in EFL

Regarding the fact of believing or not that they speak clearly, most of the participants stated EFL vocabulary as their main reason. In fact, seven of the participants wrote similar answers. Two of these seven respondents stated that they have a good level of vocabulary and the other five claimed that they lack vocabulary. Another mentioned reason was related to feelings. Six of the participants manifested their discomfort at the moment of speaking EFL; meanwhile, three of them said that they get nervous when they have to speak in the English language. Two of them mentioned that they are afraid of failing and committing mistakes and the last one claimed that she does not feel comfortable when people look at her (See Chart 1).

<i>Justification of students who answered YES in question No. 4</i>	<i>Justification of students who answered NO in question No. 4</i>
<i>I was thinking in this answer because I'm able to express my ideas but sometimes when I am talking with a native speaker I freeze up, I feel all my English knowledge disappear, so, the ideas are not always 100% clear.</i>	<i>Because I feel that I make mistakes when someone else is looking at me.</i>
<i>Most of the time I try to say just what I need, but sometimes my ideas don't connect with each other while speaking.</i>	<i>I think it's due to my lack of vocabulary.</i>
<i>because I think that I have the vocabulary to express but the problem sometimes is I get nervous</i>	<i>I feel uncomfortable talking English because of my my lack of vocabulary</i>
<i>Because I think I have the vocabulary to do so</i>	<i>I am afraid to say something wrong</i>
<i>I have been studying English for several years, so I think I am already able to express myself well in this language</i>	<i>I need practice</i>
<i>I think I have the necessary level to do it.</i>	<i>I think I don't have enough vocabulary to express myself.</i>
<i>Because I've been trying to practice my oral production quite hard since Target Language 3, that was my first target language class.</i>	<i>Because I get nervous and I tend to forget vocabulary</i>
<i>I can explain by myself easily</i>	<i>Sometimes I get nervous</i>

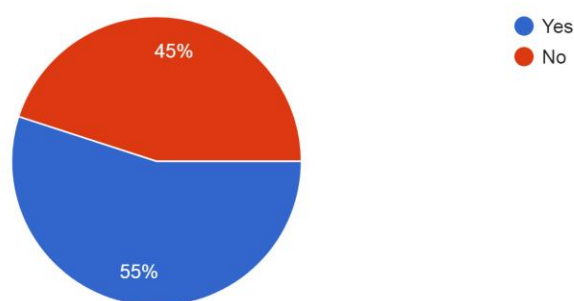
<i>Because I try to practise it whenever I have the chance or I even talk to myself in English.</i>	<i>I don't know some vocabulary</i>
<i>I can explain by myself easily</i>	<i>Because I'm a bit shy and I start sweating</i>

Chart 1. Students' opinion about expressing themselves clearly.

In the following Graph 6, it is shown the personal perception of the students regarding their level of English. Eleven of the respondents, who represent 55% of the total, said that they have a good level of English while the other part of the participants said otherwise. Participants who claimed that they do not have a good proficiency in EFL represented the 45% of the participants.

5. Do you consider yourself having a good level of English?

20 respuestas



Graph 6. Students' personal perception of their level of English

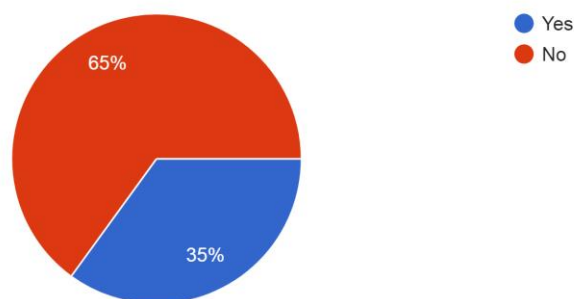
As it was done in the previous question, it was asked the participants to justify their answers. In this case eight of the students claimed that they have the necessary skills to understand the English language. Although, five out of the twenty participants expressed that they struggle the most with the speaking skill. Even three out of the eight participants who claimed having the necessary skills to understand English said that they do not have a good speaking level.

<i>Justification of students who answered YES in question No. 5</i>	<i>Justification of students who answered NO in question No. 5</i>
<i>Because I've been learning English since I have memory</i>	<i>To be honest I'm not good at listening and it's quite hard for me to understand.</i>
<i>I can understand enough to keep a conversation</i>	<i>Because I have problems with my speaking skill, and I feel it is so important. Also, I need to acquire more vocabulary, phrasal verbs and idioms.</i>
<i>I think I'm not perfect but I try my best at it</i>	<i>I think I need more practicing</i>
<i>I have been studying English for several years and I practice a lot to get it</i>	<i>I have the feeling that I need to learn a lot of things, and my English level is just acceptable but isn't at the level I'd like</i>
<i>Although I am not good at speaking, in the other skills I have a good level</i>	<i>I think I need to work on some areas, to improve my level</i>
<i>I'm able to communicate with others in English.</i>	<i>not really, I think that I have some weaknesses as an example, my writing and my speech</i>
<i>Because I've been practicing grammar and vocabulary</i>	<i>When I entered the university, I was regular and my first target language class was very good and I made a lot of progress, but when I went to the second semester, my teacher always spoke to us in Spanish, I really didn't learn any new vocabulary. So, I think that affected me.</i>
<i>Taking into account my current target language class, I consider that I have the ideal knowledge because I haven't had many problems understanding the content.</i>	<i>Sometimes Is difficult</i>
<i>I have enough vocabulary and I really like write in English but my speaking is not good enough, I'm working on that</i>	<i>I used to, but not no more because I feel that I have a B1 and I need to have a B2. It's just that I don't have a good amount of advanced vocabulary and I don't use complex grammatical structures.</i>
<i>I have a good level for almost all the skills but speaking.</i>	
<i>I have enough vocabulary and I really like write in English but my speaking is not good enough, I'm working on that</i>	

Chart 2 Students' opinion about their EFL proficiency.

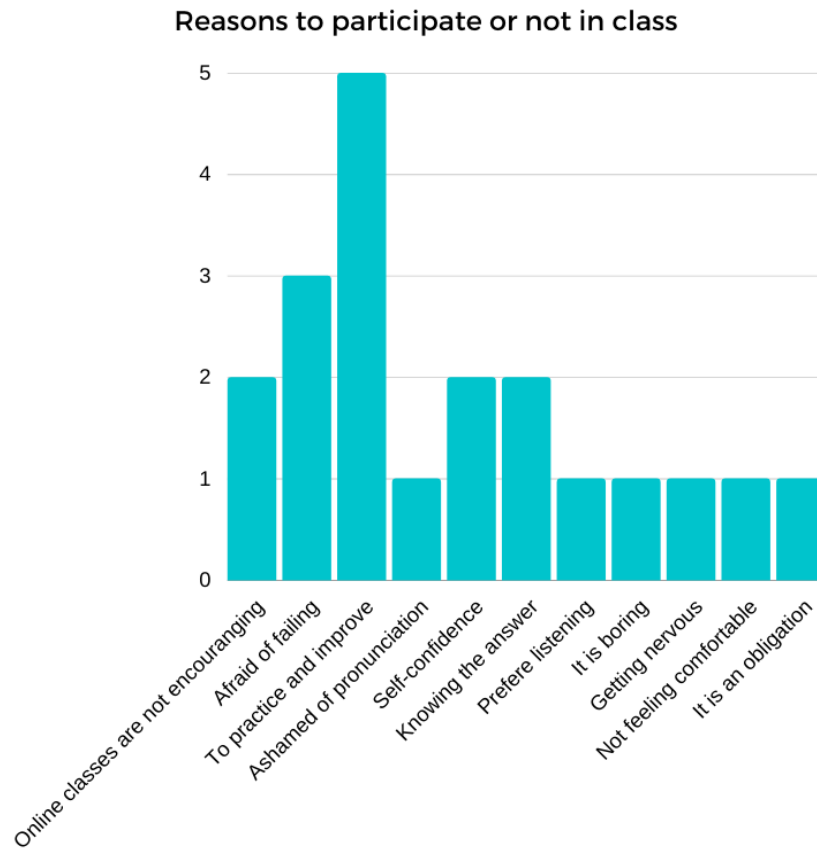
6. Do you participate regularly in your target language class?

20 respuestas



Graph 7. Students' participation in class.

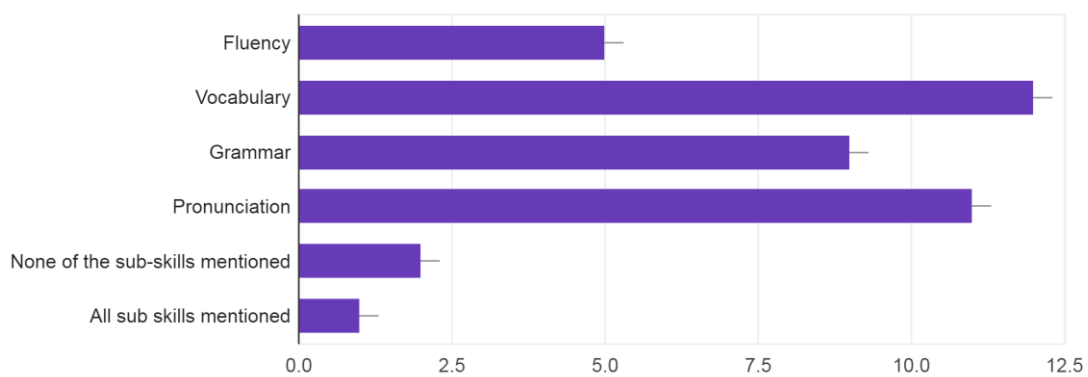
Graph 7 represents the number of students who participate regularly in class, the most, in this case, the popular justification was related to self-confidence and being afraid of failing in front of others. Six of the participants wrote similar answers: from those six participants two of them said that they do not have enough self-confidence. One of them claimed that she is ashamed of her pronunciation, and the other three participants stated that they are afraid of failing. In second place, other five of the students said that classes are the best place to practice and improve their English level. The third answer with more frequency was about the current sanitary situation that is taking place in the world, since two of the students claimed that they do not feel comfortable with online classes, for that reason they are not encouraged to participate (see Graph 8).



Graph. 8 Students' reasons to participate or not in class.

7. In which of the following speaking sub-skill do you consider having a good level of domain?
(Mark as many as applicable)

20 respuestas



Graph 9. Speaking sub-skills level of domain.

Regarding question 7, the respondents were asked to mark the speaking sub-skills that they consider having a good level of domain (See Graph 9). It can be seen that the speaking sub-skill with less mastery level is the fluency. Only five students marked this sub-skill. In second place, grammar is identified as one of the lowest mastered sub-skills with nine marks. In third place is pronunciation with eleven marks. Finally, twelve students marked vocabulary as a sub-skill domain. It is important to mention that two participants said that they have no mastery in any of the sub-skills mentioned and only one said that she has mastery in all sub-skills. This is to say that in total thirteen participants agreed on the fact that vocabulary is the sub-skill that they domain the most when speaking in EFL.

The following sections of this survey considers the three stages of performing the speaking skill: *pre-speaking*, *while-speaking* and *post-speaking*. Within the ‘pre-presentation performance’ stage, it was asked to the participants to answer how they prepare themselves for an in-class presentation. This question got many mixed answers. Although there were some words that were written, in most of the answers, these words were: *studying*, *research*, *practice*, *repeat*, *organize* and *memorizing*. Chart 1 indicates the various feelings that students can have before an English Public Speaking presentation. It is notorious that the most common feeling is nervousness, thirteen out of twenty participants said that they feel nervous before presenting.

<i>Feelings</i>	<i>Number of students who have this feelings</i>
<i>Nervousness</i>	13
<i>Confident</i>	2
<i>Relax</i>	2
<i>Insecure</i>	2

<i>Anxious</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Stressed</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Good</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Afraid</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Proud</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Dumb</i>	<i>1</i>

Chart 3. Participants' feelings before an English public speaking presentation

Additionally, the participants indicated that the cause of those feelings usually come from the lack of confidence and the fear of failing (See Figure 1).

What do you think is the cause of those feelings?

20 respuestas

Participant 1	For lack of confidence
Participant 2	I don't like to feel that way but I think it's normal when I'm in front of a lot of people.
Participant 3	I'm not introvert at all and I'm afraid of commit a mistake.
Participant 4	I manage to do it as good as possible
Participant 5	Fearing the audience
Participant 6	Because I'm not good at english
Participant 7	Principally, the feeling that I am wrong, or I am going to fail in everything. Also, I feel that I can get stuck and that blocks my mind.
Participant 8	because I'm afraid that say something wrong and people laugh at me
Participant 9	The fear to fail, not pronounce something right or forget the something.
Participant 10	I don't have a good self-confidence in myself and I get nervous
Participant 11	I am afraid to make mistakes in front of the group
Participant 12	I am not comfortable with my English
Participant 13	Because most of the time I'm not sure about my answer
Participant 14	I'm not in a direct contact every day with the language. My entire family with whom I live speaks Spanish.
Participant 15	As I said before, I'm not self-confident.
Participant 16	I think it's because I'm don't have enough confidence in myself.
Participant 17	Maybe because of bad experiences with presentations
Participant 18	Well, I do prepare myself and I practise my presentation one day before.
Participant 19	The idea that I can mess up the presentation because I might say something wrong, also the idea that people's attention is focussed on me
Participant 20	For lack of confidence

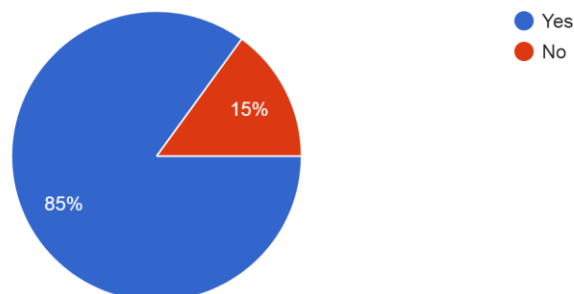
Figure 1. Students answers about how they feel before presenting

Basically, as it is shown in Figure I, the most popular answer is nervousness. Participant number 1 indicated that she feels nervous before a presentation due to lack of confidence.

Participant 2 stated that she feels nervous for being in front of a group of people. Participant 6 said that she is not good at English. Participant 8 mentioned that she is afraid of saying something wrong and people laugh at her. Participant 9 indicated that she is afraid of failing as well as participant 11 who wrote that she is afraid to make mistakes in front of others. Participant 12 said that she is not comfortable with her English level. Participant 13 said that the reason for her nervousness is not being sure about what she is talking about. Participant 14 claimed that the fact of not being in contact with EFL every day is the reason for her nervousness at the moment of presenting, in other words lack of practice. Participant 16 as well as participant 1 said that their nervousness is caused by lack of confidence. Participant 17 said that she feels nervous due to bad previous experiences. Participant 19 wrote a similar answer to participant 9 and 11 since she also said that she is afraid of failing, additionally she mentioned that another reason is that people focus their attention on her. Finally, participant 20 mentioned that she feels nervous because of her lack of confidence.

As it can be observed all of the thirteenth participants who claimed feeling nervous at the moment of an English public speaking presentation had similar answers. It can be concluded that those participants agreed that the main reasons for feeling nervous *before presenting* are being *afraid of failing*, *lack of confidence* and *being in front of a group of people*. The next stage of the survey was the while-presenting performance. In this section, firstly, it was asked to indicate if the number of the audience influenced their performance. As it can be observed in Graph 10, 85% of the participants indicate that in fact the number of the audience is an important factor that may affect their performance during a presentation.

10. The number of the audience during an English public speaking presentation influences your performance?
20 respuestas



Graph 10. Students whose performance is influenced by the number of the audience

For the next question, it was asked to the students to report how they feel during an English public speaking presentation. Chart 4 indicates the answers the respondents gave. The most important finding in this section is that the feeling of nervousness persists, in fact, the number of participants who feel nervous remains the same. Nevertheless, there appear some positive feelings in this stage of a presentation but not many students feel this way.

<i>Feelings during a presentation</i>	<i>Number of students who have those feelings</i>
<i>Nervous</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Relax</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Embarrassed</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Good</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Anxious</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Afraid</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>In shock</i>	<i>1</i>

Chart 4. Students' feelings during an English public speaking presentation

After this question it was required to point out the causes of those feelings. Most of the participants claimed that these feelings were related to self-confidence and the fear of failing. Nevertheless, eight out of twenty participants claimed that the audience represents a factor that causes those feelings (See Figure 2).

What do you think is the cause of those feelings?

20 respuestas

Because I'm not confidence at all

I think it's because talking in front of a lot of people is a little uncomfortable for me, I'm a little shy.

Again, I'm afraid of commit a mistake.

Maybe the fear to fail

My performance

My level of english

The feeling that my speaking performance is correct. Also, when the audience faces are not like "I don't have an idea what he is talking about". I fee that I am doing good.

the situation, there many eyes looking me

I guess is something in my mind, my perception of things is the cause of those feelings

I think is the reaction of the public or the teacher

I get stressed

The presentation is going well

I can't control myself and I speak quick

Because during my presentation all the people will be looking at me

I'm not in contact always with the language.

I'm not good at speaking, I'm so shy and I don't like crowded places nor talking to strangers.

Self- distrust.

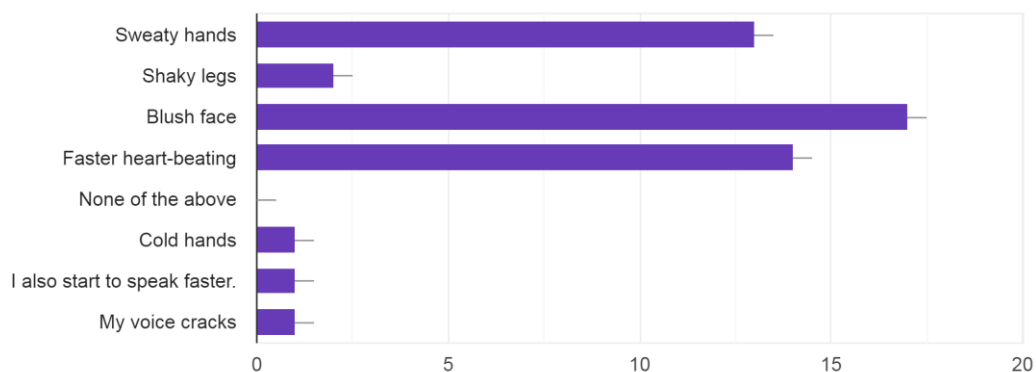
Maybe because of bad experiences and sometimes because people laugh if you get wrong

Maybe my personal insecurities.

Figure 2. Students answers about how they feel while presenting

12. Do you have any of these physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation?
(mark as many as applicable)

20 respuestas

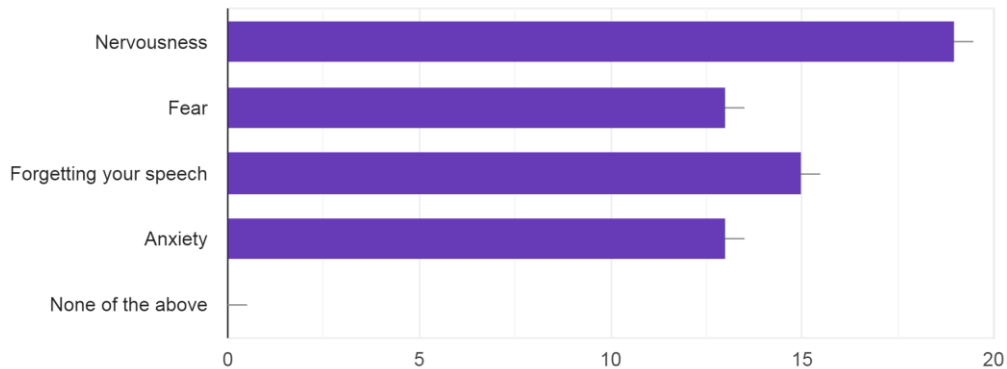


Graph 11. Students' physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation

Regarding question number twelve, it was asked to mark all applicable physical symptoms the students marked that students have when presenting. The symptom with more marks was *Blush face* seventeen (85%) out of twenty participants indicated they suffer this symptom. In second place, fourteen (70%) students marked that they suffer *faster heart-bating*. In third place, it was *Sweaty hands* where thirteen (65%) of the respondents marked this symptom. In fourth place, it is the symptom of *Shaky legs* and it was chosen by two participants only. Additionally, two symptoms were mentioned by participants as symptoms: *Faster speaking* and *Cracked voice* (See Graph 11).

13. Do you have any of these mental symptoms during an English public speaking presentation?
(mark as many as applicable)

20 respuestas



Graph 12. Students' mental symptoms during an English public speaking presentation

On the other hand, question thirteen asked respondents to mark as many mental symptoms they suffer when speaking. As shown in Graph 10, it is notorious that nineteen participants (95%) marked that they feel nervous when they are presenting. This information is contradictory with the previous information since only thirteen participants said that they feel nervous while they are presenting. Maybe, they did not realize they felt this way until they saw the written word. Later, the symptom with more marks is *forgetting your speech* fifteen (75%). According to information mentioned by Speaking Lifestyle (n.d), memorizing can lead to forgetting your speech for the reason that it turns the process of speaking into conscious effort instead of being an automatic process. Thus, this can be due to the fact that some of them said that they memorize their presentation. Subsequently the next two mental symptoms have the same number of marks, thirteen (65%) of the respondents reported that they suffer *fear* and *anxiety* during an English public speaking presentation (See Graph 10).

Finally, the last stage of the survey was about the post presentation performance. The main purpose of this stage was to realize how students' feelings change once they present.

The first question of this section was how they feel after an English public speaking presentation. As it is shown in Chart 5, the positive feelings increased considerably. At this point, most of the students feel, in their own words, *good* and *relaxed*. An important outcome to mention is that out of thirteen students who felt nervous when they were presenting, only 3 of them remained with this feeling once they finished their presentations.

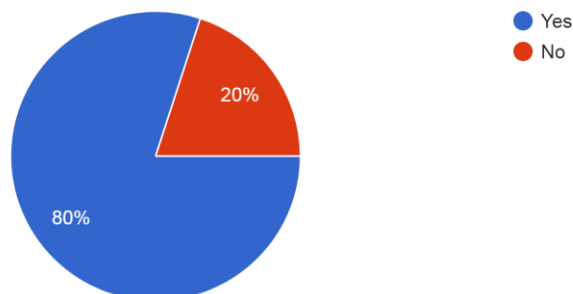
<i>Feelings after a presentation</i>	<i>Number of students who have those feelings</i>
<i>Relax</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Good (better)</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Calm</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Alleviate</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Relief</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Tired</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Nervous</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Disappointed</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Wasted</i>	<i>1</i>

Chart 5. Students' feelings after an English public speaking presentation.

When participants reported their reasons for those feelings, it was shown that eighteen participants reported a sensation of relief once they finished their presentation.

16. Do you think you would have a better performance if you were presenting in your mother tongue?

20 respuestas



Graph 13. Students who think they would have a better performance in their mother tongue

The last question of the survey asked participants to mention presenting in their native language would help them to have a better performance. In this case, sixteen respondents marked *Yes* as an answer while the other four said *No*. Most of the answers were justified by stating the domain of the language and they are more fluent in their mother tongue so they can express their ideas easier than in an EFL presentation.

4.2 Research Questions' answers

Previously, all the data collection was analyzed in the previous question. In this section, the results will be interpreted in order to answer the research questions that were stated in Chapter I. The first research questions is:

What are participants' feelings in every stage of an English public speaking presentation (pre, during, after) and how do they evolve? In order to answer this question the data collected is on the following Chart 6 in order to visualize the evolution of participants' feelings the best way possible.

	<i>Feelings before a presentation</i>	<i>Feelings during a presentation</i>	<i>Feelings after a presentation</i>
<i>Participant 1 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous and stressed</i>	<i>Relaxed than before</i>	<i>Better and relaxed</i>
<i>Participant 2 feelings</i>	<i>Anxious</i>	<i>Anxious</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>
<i>Participant 3 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous and afraid</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Free and nervous</i>
<i>Participant 4 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Calm</i>
<i>Participant 5 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous and anxious</i>	<i>Nervous, anxious and afraid</i>	<i>Tired, nervous but better</i>
<i>Participant 6 feelings</i>	<i>Stressed, nervous, insecure and with anxiety</i>	<i>Nervous and with anxiety</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>
<i>Participant 7 feelings</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>
<i>Participant 8 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous and anxious</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Better</i>
<i>Participant 9 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous and dumb</i>	<i>In shock</i>	<i>Better</i>
<i>Participant 10 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Disappointed</i>
<i>Participant 11 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Participant 12 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Relieved</i>
<i>Participant 13 feelings</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Calm</i>
<i>Participant 14 feelings</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Insecure</i>	<i>Relieved</i>
<i>Participant 15 feelings</i>	<i>Confident and proud</i>	<i>Good and comfortable</i>	<i>Relieved and relaxed</i>
<i>Participant 16 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>
<i>Participant 17 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>
<i>Participants 18 feelings</i>	<i>Insecure</i>	<i>Embarrassed</i>	<i>Alleviate</i>
<i>Participants 19 feelings</i>	<i>Good and confident</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Wasted</i>
<i>Participants 20 feelings</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Nervous</i>	<i>Relaxed</i>

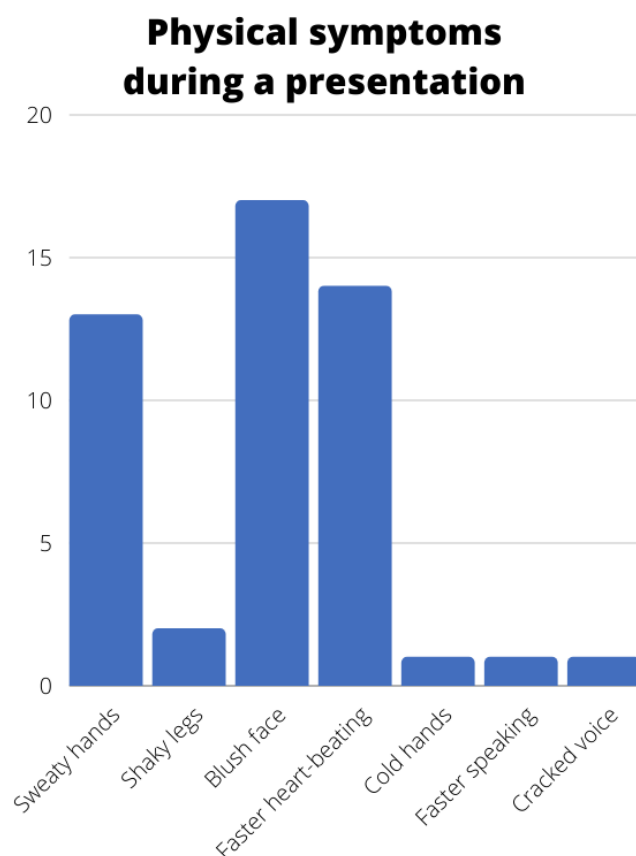
Chart 6. Evolution of participants' feelings through every stage of a presentation..

The chart above indicates the feelings of each one of the participants in every stage of an English public speaking presentation. Red color represents strong negative feelings, orange color still indicates negative feelings but with a mix of positive feelings, yellow color represents positive feelings. In the first stage there are 15 participants that reported having

negative feelings, it is important to mention that the most common feeling in this stage is *nervousness*. During the second stage the number of students with negative feelings raised from 15 to 18. Finally, in the third stage those negative feelings decreased considerably from 18 to 5.

As it can be observed, in percentages, there is a tendency on the evolution of the participants' feelings. 50% of the participants reported feeling bad before a presentation. The negative feelings persisted, however, once the presentation is over they start feeling good and better than in the other two stages. On the other hand, 15% of the participants feel bad before and during a presentation and have mixed feelings after presenting. 15% of the participants feel good before presenting, during the presentation they have negative feelings and once they finish their presentation they have positive feelings again. 5% of the participants feel bad in the first stage, then in the second stage they have mixed feelings and have positive feelings after presenting. 5% have negative feelings in the three stages while the other 5% have positive feelings in all three stages. Finally the last 5% starts with positive feelings then negative feelings and finish with mixed feelings.

The second research question is: *What are the most common physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation?*



Graph 14. Physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation.

According to the responses of the participants, the most common physical symptom that they may suffer during a presentation is *blush face*, 85% of the participants indicated that they suffer this symptom in their presentations. Alongside other physical symptoms the participants may have is *faster heart-beating*, 70% mark this symptom as applicable. Additionally, 65% of the participants reported having *sweaty hands* during a presentation, those three physical symptoms are the most common, since more than 50% of the students indicated suffer from those while they are presenting in EFL. In less frequency, only 10% of the participants marked *shaky legs* as an applicable symptom, while the other three symptoms left which are: *cold hands*, *cracked voice* and *faster speaking* are applicable to only 5% of the participants.

The third research question is: *According to the participants, what are the main difficulties that ELT students have at the moment of performing an English public speaking presentation?* According to the participants' answers, the stage where they suffer the most when presenting is the while-presenting stage. Supporting this idea, the University of Pittsburgh (n.d) states that negative feelings such as nervousness and anxiety are worse before presenting and at the beginning of the presentation, those feelings decrease as the presentation progresses and the confidence of the speaker starts to increase. The previous statement is also confirmed with the results of this study since Chart 6 shows that assertion.

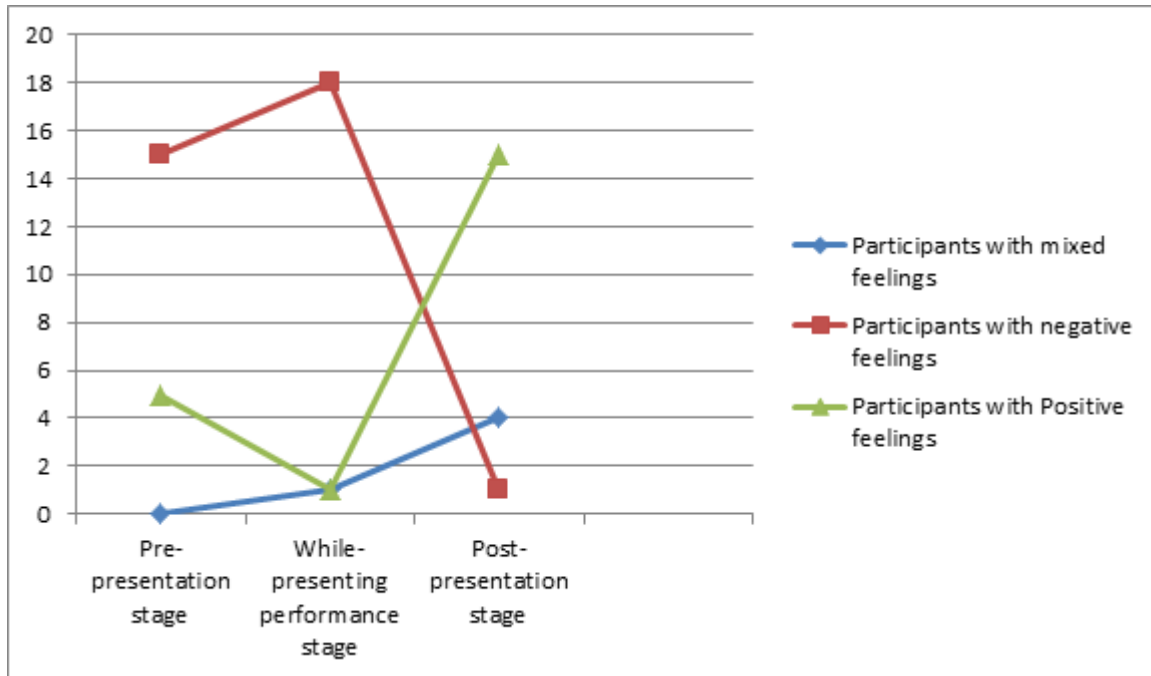
The most important factor mentioned by them as a difficulty when performing are their negative feelings. It can be assumed that those feelings are related to their English language proficiency since 50% of them claimed that they cannot express their ideas clearly in the English language. 10% of them said that it was due to their lack of vocabulary. Besides, 80% of the participants indicated that they could have a better performance if they were presenting in their mother tongue. To sum up, it is concluded that the main difficulties for LEI students to talk in front of people are the different negative feelings that they may have during a presentation. Feeling nervousness and anxiety were the ones with more mentions. According to the responses of the participants the source of those feelings is the lack of self-confidence and the discomfort of being in public.

4.3 Findings and discussion of data

In this section there are discussed two important findings that were discovered during the analysis of this study's data collection. There exists a strong controversy pointed out here: first, 50% of participants indicated that they are able to express their ideas clearly in EFL (see Graph 5) while 55% of them consider having a good level of English language

proficiency (see Graph 6). Moreover, they stated that when speaking, they considered that the speaking sub-skill with more mastery from them was vocabulary (see Graph 9) thus they did not have a problem when expressing their ideas. Controversially, most of the participants reported having negative feelings before and during an English public speaking presentation, no matter if they indicated previously being able to express their ideas in EFL accurately and having a good level of English language proficiency. The University of Pittsburgh (n,d) reinforces this finding, they mention that getting nervous while giving a speech or a presentation is really normal; even experienced speakers can feel this way. Usually, speakers who look calm and relaxed have learned to control their feelings.

Secondly, it was discovered a tendency in the evolution of the feelings during the three stages of a presentation. According to the information previously shown in the *Research Questions' Answers* section, 75% of the participants reported having negative feelings before a presentation, those feelings increased in the second stage, at this point 90% of the participants have negative feelings. In the third stage, it can be observed how most of the students start feeling better. The tendency here would be from feeling bad to worst and finally feeling better, since 50% of the students showed the same evolution on their feelings.



Graph 15. Evolution of participants' feelings in every stage of a presentation

4.4 Conclusion

During this chapter it was analyzed every piece of data collected during the study, thanks to this analysis, research questions were answered satisfactory. All data were organized and supported with visual aids such as graphics, charts and figures; this was done with the purpose of handling the information in the best possible way and facilitating the reader all the findings that were discovered throughout the dissertation. Additionally, it was discussed some findings that were contradicting the answers that participants gave. In the following chapter, it will be discussed the contributions that this study did for this research community.

Chapter V

Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to point out how this research study is helpful for the community. Besides, it will explain the limitations that occurred during the developments of the study. Furthermore, there will be some suggestions for researchers who are interested in this specific topic to find out more information and possible future contributions. To conclude this dissertation there is a final reflection and a conclusion section in this chapter.

5.1 Research Contributions

The outcomes of this research assist teachers and students to understand the main causes of students' speaking issues. By realizing the results of this study, it is easier to develop effective methods to reinforce students' confidence at the moment of speaking in public. Also this research will be useful for the teachers, hence they can identify students with public speaking problems and implement different strategies in individual presentations in order to avoid that the student feels insecure and nervous while they are presenting in class. This study helped to realize that having problems at the moment of speaking in public is really normal. Readers who can relate to this situation should not feel bad about it, actually it should be a factor to reinforce confidence and empathize with other speakers who are in the same situation.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

During the development of this study, there were some complications. Thus, the researcher had to modify some aspects of it. Firstly, at the beginning it was thought to use a mixed method, unfortunately due to the lack of commitment of some professors to participate in this

dissertation, it was not possible to gather the data required to use the mixed method. As a consequence it was necessary to modify the research questions and focus the aim on other aspects of the study. Secondly, the biggest complication was due to the Covid-19 sanitary emergency, originally it was planned to observe the participants while they were presenting in target language class. The purpose of this was to analyze how they behave while they are presenting in front of their classmates. This was not possible since all subjects were moved to online mode classes. Regardless of all the complications that may have occurred, it was possible to keep going with this study and focus on other aspects of the same that are as important to analyze as the ones that were originally planned. Finally, due to the small sample of participants in this study, generalizations cannot be made.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

For further researchers who are interested in this specific topic and want to inquire more about it, it is recommended to use other methods to collect information in a more reliable way. Methods such as observations and interviews can help to analyze each participant individually and obtain specific information from each one of them. A good way to continue with this study is to examine how students overcome negative feelings at the moment of a public speaking presentation. Also, knowing how some students have successful presentations despite their negative feelings may help the students' community to improve their oral skills and become better English teachers. Finally, variations of context would provide different results as well.

5.4 Reflection

Throughout the development of this dissertation, it was realized how someone can feel when he or she has to present a specific topic in front of an audience. It can be said that it is really common to feel nervous before, and even more, when presenting in front of others that people do not know. Additionally, the researcher of this study noticed that he felt identified with some of the answers that the participants proportionate. He knows how it feels to be presenting in front of a public and the mental distress that those feelings can generate. This study helped the researcher to know where those feelings can come from, consequently knowing the source of any feeling can help to control that feeling and avoid it. With this study future readers can find some help to improve in their presentations and oral skills in order to become better English teachers.

Regarding doing research, this study's author finds this experience as challenging and rewarding. Although doing a thesis is not an easy task. Nevertheless, at the end, the results are very comforting and make you realize that all the time you spent doing your research was worthy.

5.5 Conclusion

Through this chapter it was shown how this study contributes to the community. Furthermore, there was explained the limitations that were presented during the development of this study and how it was necessary to modify some aspects of it in order to accomplish the research goals. After, some suggestions for further researchers were mentioned. Those suggestions mentioned some changes and improvements that will help to improve the topic of this study.

Finally, there is a final reflection about the development of this research that hopefully will motivate the readers to improve their public speaking presentations.

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Appendix A

Research Instrument

English Public Speaking Survey

The purpose of this study is to identify the main physical and emotional symptoms that participants have before, during and after an English Public Speaking (EPS) presentation as well as the main causes of English Public Speaking Anxiety (ESPA).

Instructions

Please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

Age *

Texto de respuesta breve

Gender *

☐ Female

☐ Male

Target Language class *

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

1. Have you ever travel abroad? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Currently, do you have a job? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

If so, what is it?

Texto de respuesta breve

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4. Are you able to express your ideas clearly in the English Language? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why? *

Texto de respuesta largo

5. Do you consider yourself having a good level of English? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why? *

Texto de respuesta largo

6. Do you participate regularly in your target language class? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why? *

Texto de respuesta largo

7. In which of the following speaking sub-skill do you consider having a good level of domain? *
(Mark as many as applicable)

- ☐ Fluency
- ☐ Vocabulary
- ☐ Grammar
- ☐ Pronunciation
- ☐ None of the sub-skills mentioned
- ☐ All sub skills mentioned

Pre-presentation performance

Descripción (opcional)

8. How do you prepare yourself for an in-class presentation? *

Texto de respuesta largo

9. How do you feel physically and emotionally before an English public speaking presentation? *

Texto de respuesta largo

What do you think is the cause of those feelings? *

Texto de respuesta largo

10. The number of the audience during an English public speaking presentation influences your performance? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

While-presenting performance

Descripción (opcional)

11. How do you feel physically and emotionally during an English public speaking presentation? *

Texto de respuesta largo

What do you think is the cause of those feelings? *

Texto de respuesta largo

12. Do you have any of these physical symptoms during an English public speaking presentation? *
(mark as many as applicable)

☐ Sweaty hands

☐ Shaky legs

☐ Blush face

☐ Faster heart-beating

☐ None of the above

☐ Otra...

Why do you think this occurs? *

Texto de respuesta largo

13. Do you have any of these mental symptoms during an English public speaking presentation? *
(mark as many as applicable)

- ☐ Nervousness
- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Forgetting your speech
- ☐ Anxiety
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Otra...

Why do you think this occurs? *

Texto de respuesta largo

14. What do you do when you make a grammatical mistake or mispronounce a word during a presentation? *

Texto de respuesta largo

Post-presentation performance

Descripción (opcional)

15. How do you feel physically and emotionally after an English public speaking presentation? *

Texto de respuesta largo

What do you think is the cause of these feelings? *

Texto de respuesta largo

16. Do you think you would have a better performance if you were presenting in your mother tongue? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why? *

Texto de respuesta largo

Thank you for answering

All data gathered in this survey will be confidential and used only for the study purposes.