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**An Exploration of Teacher-Student Relationship: The Case of First Year  
EFL University Classroom**

*Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial  
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in  
Language Studies*

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# Dedication

**I am especially grateful to my parents for their supports and encouragement during the investigation of this work, and to my sister without forgetting my brothers.**

**My grand tribute goes to my friends for their motivation and moral help**

**A final dedication goes to my classmates.**

*Hadj abdel kader Fatima Zahra*

# **Dedication**

## **My Mother**

**A strong and gentle soul who was always there for me, taught me to have faith in Allah, work hard and that so much could be done with little.**

## **My Father**

**For earning an honest living for us, and for his support.**

**To my beloved brothers and to my precious one.**

*Hocini Nesrine*

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## **Abstract**

Teacher-student relationship has a significant impact on students' learning and academic achievement. Yet it is still not recognized that this impact is present at any level, mainly in higher education; thinking that it is not so imperative when teaching adults. The present research was triggered by this idea, and thus an exploration of teacher-student relationship existing in first year EFL Licence classrooms in Tlemcen University was undertaken. The purpose of the work was not only to examine the existing situation but also to find out the consequences of teacher-student relationship on students' learning. Hence, to achieve this end, an exploratory case study was conducted at the level of first year EFL Licence classrooms in Tlemcen University. The data collection relied on: students' questionnaire addressed to 30 informants randomly selected from the population of first year EFL Licence students, and a classroom observation of both students and teachers. The data gathered were analyzed quantitatively but mainly qualitatively through content analysis. The analysis and interpretation of the data collected revealed the existence of a negative teacher-student relationship in first year EFL Licence classrooms in Tlemcen University. Furthermore results showed that positive teacher-student relationships are more conducive to learning and academic achievement. The outcomes of this work put into question teachers' awareness of the importance of teacher-student relationship, and their competence in initiating and developing a healthy relationship. It also suggests the development of this skill in teacher education.

# Table of Contents

Dedication.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
<b>General Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>

## CHAPTER ONE

### Review of literature and Situation Analysis

1.1 Introduction.....	5
1.2 The importance of Teacher Student Relationship.....	5
1.3 Factors Affecting Teacher Student Relationship.....	7
1.3.1 Teacher Effectiveness.....	7
1.3.2 Teacher Sensitivity.....	8
1.3.3 Teacher Feedback.....	9
1.3.4 Student Motivation.....	11
1.3.6 Student Engagement.....	13
1.4 Student Perceptions about Good Teachers.....	14

1.5 The Effect of Teacher Behavior on Students' Academic Achievement.....	16
1.5.1 Establishing an Emotional Link.....	16
1.5.2 Cultivating a Sense of Belonging.....	17
1.6 Student's Attitudes towards Teacher's Behavior.....	18
1.7 Situation Analysis.....	20
1.8 Conclusion.....	21

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Suggestions**

2.1 Introduction.....	23
2.2 Research Methodology.....	23
2.2.1 Research Design.....	23
2.2.2 Sampling.....	25
2.2.3 Data-Collection Instrument.....	26
2.2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire.....	26
2.2.3.2 Classroom Observation.....	27
2.3 Data Analysis.....	28
2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire Results.....	28
2.3.2 Classroom Observation Results.....	36
2.3.2.1 Teacher Behavior.....	36
2.3.2.2 Student Behavior.....	38
2.4 Discussion of the Main Results.....	40
2.5 Suggestions and Recommendations.....	42

2.5.1 Building Teacher-student Interaction.....	42
2.5.2 Mutual Respect between Teachers and Students.....	43
2.5.3 Expectations and Attitudes.....	44
2.5.4 The Use of Positive Reinforcement.....	45
2.5.5 Teaching with Enjoyment and Enthusiasm.....	45
2.5.6 Incorporate Humor into Lessons.....	46
2.6 Conclusion.....	47
<b>General Conclusion.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>65</b>



## **List of Tables**

Table 2.1: Angry Teachers Addressing Students Loudly.....	34
Table 2.2: Consequences of Teachers' Praise and Encouragement.....	35
Table 2.3: Teacher Behavior.....	37
Table 2.4: Student Behavior.....	39

## **List of Figures**

Figure 2.1: Students' Fear as a Result of Teacher's Reactions.....	30
Figure 2.2: Teachers' Behaviors outside the Classroom.....	31
Figure 2.3: Teacher's Profile.....	34

# General Introduction

*General Introduction*

Any interaction occurring between human beings implies the existence of a relationship. This relationship is defined and mould according to many variables above all: age, gender, the context in which the relationship takes place, the nature of interaction and communication, the duration spent with the other part and so forth. Accordingly teacher-student relationship is also characterized by a set of variable. The focus of this study will be on the effect of teacher-student relationship on students' learning, believing that the nature of the relationship teachers cultivate with their students is crucial for students' learning and academic achievement. The main purpose of the work is to explore what kind of teacher-student relationship exists in the first year EFL Licence classroom at Tlemcen University. As most teachers are not aware of the importance this relationship has on students' learning and academic achievement. Little attention is given to building a solid and healthy teacher-student relationship due to unawareness of its impact on students' motivation and excitement vis-à-vis a learning situation. In fact teachers are unconscious of their ability to either boost or paralyze students' ambition to learn. Teachers must understand how they might encourage or dispirit the students.

This research is conducted in order to develop a better understanding of the issue. The significance of the study lays in the fact that it examines a real-life situation providing a base-ground of information that can be used in future research investigating the same subject matter; it also raises awareness among teachers and educators of the importance of teacher-student relationship and its impact on learning. The present research study looks into teacher-student relationship focusing on students' perceptions, opinions and preferences of what makes this relationship "positive" and thus favorable for learning. As mentioned above the work first concern is to diagnose what kind of teacher-student relationship exists in first year EFL classrooms at the level of Tlemcen University. This study also focuses on the impact of teacher-student relationship on students' learning. It is not meant to provide any conclusive evidence but rather explore a situation.

For this reason the researchers attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What kind of teacher-student relationship exists in the first year EFL classroom in Tlemcen University?
2. What is the impact of teacher-student relationship on students' learning?

The above mentioned questions led to the formulation of these hypotheses:

1. There is a negative teacher-student relationship existing at the level of first year EFL classrooms in Tlemcen University; characterized by teacher dominance, lack of closeness, lack of communication and frustration on both sides.
2. Positive teacher-student relationship is more conducive to learning and academic achievement.

To attain the objectives set at the beginning of the work, the researchers start an exploratory case study research at the level of Tlemcen University, English Department dealing with first year EFL students. The case study aims at gathering quantitative and qualitative data using two different research instruments: classroom observation of both teachers and students and students' questionnaire. The results will be analyzed quantitatively and using qualitative content analysis. Conducting this research paper led to the following organization of the work. A first chapter reserved to the literature relating to the topic including the importance of teacher-student relationship; the chapter then goes through some of the most significant factors interfering in teacher-student relationship, in addition to students' expectations of an effective teacher, and then the positive teacher behavior having a noticeable impact on students' learning. Finally the chapter indicates the impact of teacher-student relationship on students' learning. The second chapter is a description of the methodology used in this work including the research design and instruments used for data collection. Afterwards data analysis and discussion of the findings is preceded as well before providing some suggestions to improve teacher-student relationship.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Review of literature and situation Analysis**

1.1 Introduction

1.2 The Importance of Teacher Student Relationship

1.3 Factors Affecting Teacher Student Relationship

1.3.1 Teacher Effectiveness

1.3.2 Teacher Sensitivity

1.3.3 Teacher Feedback

1.3.4 Student Motivation

1.3.6 Student Engagement

1.4 Student Perceptions about Good Teachers

1.5 The Effect of Teacher Behavior on Students' Academic Achievement

1.5.1 Establishing an Emotional Link

1.5.2 Cultivating a Sense of Belonging

1.6 Student Attitudes towards Teacher's Behavior

1.7 Situation Analysis

1.8 Conclusion

# CHAPTER ONE

## Literature review and Situation Analysis

### 1.1 Introduction

Teacher-Student Relationship is the most vigorous component in the learning environment. There is a great agreement of literature that gives significant proof that, strong relationships between teachers and students are fundamental element to a better academic development of all students in schools (Birch and Ladd, 1998; Hamre and Pianta, 2001; Pianta, 1999)

This chapter transact with the review of literature related to the present work. This study aimed to explore the Teacher-Student Relationship by selecting different points that affect the students' learning outcomes at the level of first year EFL classrooms in University of Tlemcen.

### 1.2 The Importance of Teacher Student Relationship

Research has found that there is a link between student-teacher relationship and student learning outcomes, as it represents an integral section of classroom organization and learning environment cultivating a genuine and trustworthy teacher-student relationship is vital to students' leaning(Raider-Roth,2005).Muller (2001) found that "teachers' attitudes and actions are key in students' academic progress", in fact these behaviors from teachers' part are the ones who set the type of teacher-student relationship to take place. For this reason the teacher is the responsible for creating a healthy teacher-student relationship. Cazden (2001) states that "What counts are relationships between the teacher and each student, as an individual, both in whole class lessons and in individual seat work assignments.Now each student becomes a significant part of the official learning environment" (p. 131). Once again this comes to confirm the importance of having an ideal environment which most depends on creating a solid and positive relationship with each student as an individual. Many students equate being able to

learn in classroom to effective communication of the instructor. That is, the appropriate use of the instructional language by the teacher. Being able to communicate with his/her teacher really matters to students, was it in or outside the classroom. A good communication increases the degree of the psychological closeness between the teacher and the student, to achieve this collaboration between students and teachers is needed in this regard Downey reported that “students need teachers to build strong interpersonal relationships with them, focusing on strengths of the students while maintaining high and realistic expectations for success” (p. 57) When teachers have less close relationships with misbehaving students, one outcome may be poorer academic achievement (McInerney and McInerney, 2010). At this level comes the teacher role of creating a link with his students and using his communication skills to understand the disruptive behavior and trying to find solutions far away from any aggressive reaction that will do nothing but irritating even more the student behavior.

Moreover research showed that “academic achievement and student behavior are influenced by the quality of the teacher and student relationship” (Jones, 1995). The more the teacher connects and interacts with his /her students, the more likely he will be able to help students learn at a high level and accomplish quickly, hence research comes to show once again that learning is enhanced when teacher-student relationship is strong. Even though teacher-student relationship is a-two parts collaboration still it is up to teachers to initiate the creation of this relationship otherwise students will be confused or simply act in ways that are not necessarily rights or suitable for a learning situation, they may choose to be attentive, careless, disruptive etc. Some may try to have this positive relationship with a teacher some others may not depending on each individual’s personality and psychological nature for this particular reason it is teachers that should take the first step towards a good teacher-student relation taking in consideration the need of all students of having a close bond with their tutor enabling them to better learn and guaranty a healthy learning environment.

Indeed teachers are responsible in making students engaging in learning, share the ability for the learning interactions that exist between them (Hare, 2005). The



relationship is more significant than the interaction between the two distinct individuals. Leitão & Waugh (2007) summarize Teacher-student Relationship: Positive teacher-student relationships are characterized by mutual acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation. Teacher-student relationships greatly influence a student's ability to adjust to school, to do well at school, and to relate to peers.

As a matter of fact positive Teacher Student Relationship can be initiated by teachers having specific characteristics as explained below.

### **1.3 Factors Affecting Teacher Student Relationship**

Teachers are required to set a positive teacher-student relationship in order to achieve a suitable learning environment and ensure high motivation and engagement needed for students to be successful in both academic and real life. Thus to reach this end a set of teacher's characteristics and behaviors should exist appropriately along with students' behaviors that come as a reaction.

#### **1.3.1 Teacher Effectiveness**

Teacher effectiveness focuses on the complexities that the students face while learning and helps them improve their learning outcomes. The term "teacher effectiveness" is broadly used to identify attributes of what constitutes a good teacher (Marzano, et al., 2001). Teaching effectiveness is not simple because student achievement is influenced by many features excepting the teacher's control; e.g., student's aptitude, motivational level and previous experience. However, student learning is the definitive condition of teaching effectiveness. Teacher effectiveness help teachers knowing their students' learning styles and needs in addition to their personalities, likes, dislikes, and personal situations that might influence performance in school (Stronge, 2002). It is also defined by those teachers who accomplish the objectives they set for themselves or have set for them by others. Teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills used appropriately help to achieve the students' educational goals. Various presumptions are implied in this definition of Teacher Effectiveness. The major presumption is that to achieve

teacher effectiveness teachers need to be aware of achieving educational goals. These goals lead the teachers to build relationships which guide their behaviors and interactions in the classroom. Educational effectiveness count on teacher effectiveness, In order to improve the quality of education that students receive, then, the teacher have to take into account what is happening in the classroom.

Words such as ideal, analytical, dutiful, competent, expert, reflective, satisfying, diversity-responsible, and respectful have been used to represent good teachers (Cruickshank and Haefele, 2001). The teachers need to be aware of any learning difficulties the student is having such as, problem, fear, or confusion. Once the teacher becomes aware, s/he will have more forbearance, thus, the student would feel safe and less confused. According to Jones (1987), “If the students like you, they will go along with almost anything” (p. 191). Effective teachers create and develop positive relationships with their students in order to achieve a positive learning environment. Stronge and Hindman (2006) add that effective teachers cultivate a positive classroom environment for their students by working with students to guarantee that routines, procedures, and expectations are clear. Marzano (2003) warns that ineffective teachers might actually block the learning of their students. Therefore, a sensitive teacher is also considered as an effective teacher.

### **1.3.2 Teacher Sensitivity**

The psychological behavior of the teacher in the classroom is considered as the most important aspect that affect the relationship between teachers and students, and it is perhaps the essential foundation for the learning process. Students behave differently. Thus sensitive teachers are aware of students’ emotional abilities and needs. Without a doubt students would view the teacher as a source of support. Sensitive teachers respond to their students and address their questions, interests and needs in an effective way. Teaching sensitively includes an awareness of individual students’ academic and social emotional needs which allows teachers to expect students’ difficulties and supply proper and efficient learning chances and fields of support for all students in the classroom. With a sensitive teacher, students comprehend and consider their teachers as exporter of support, instruction, and

reassurance. Teaching sensitively aids students feel relaxed by involving their thoughts, taking risks, and challenging themselves educationally and informally. It also allows students to work at ease on their own and in groups because they know they can be close to the teacher and s/he will be helpful. It is to be understood that teaching encompasses a compound system of inter-personal relationships. It is up to the teacher to realize how the students feel, what they prefer.etc. He must realize as well what their concerns, anxieties and activities are. He must understand that each word he uses and each of the action he shows in the classroom have an effect on his students' psyche.

A teacher should understand that each behavior produced by him/her cannot be acceptable by the students, the behavior should be reasonable. The activities of a teacher can be quite inappropriate to the students thus; he needs to be very careful and sensitive about his/her oral and non-oral behaviors. Being a good teacher is being sensitive to one's own weaknesses and to others' as well. A teacher, who is unable to be compassionate, relaxed and socially aware, he cannot be an effective teacher. Thus, for a teacher to be able to supply the goods in an effective way, sensitivity training is very important. Moral sensitivity in learning includes awareness of moral problems in the learning setting and competences to reflect on them with understanding and role-taking abilities.

### **1.3.3 Teacher Feedback**

Feedback is a paramount part of the learning process. Teacher Feedback plays an essential role in the classroom environment and it is tied to support the learning opportunities. Effective teachers are able to provide useful feedback relating to students' reactions, which is considered as the most effective strategy in order to exploit students' investigations. Feedback is a fundamental component of language learning and teaching that affects students' achievement. Emberger (2002) defines feedback as information that learners obtain from their teacher about their performance which help them correct their actions and guide them to reaching their goals. Feedback helps both the teachers and their students meet the goals and instructional means in learning and teaching. In language learning and teaching

variable types of feedback can be provided to students. As in, other disciplines, feedback that motivates students' language learning should be taken into consideration. Besides, feedback for motivation and language improvement are crucial for language instructors. Feedback can be defined from various viewpoints. Based on Hattie and Timperley's (2007) work, feedback can be defined as "information provided by an agent with respect to one's performance or understanding" (p. 81). Feedback affects the learners' motivation in many various ways; it is an essential theory in learning and is related to motivation.

Feedback is theorized as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) concerning the features of one's performance or understanding. Feedback aimed to move students from task to processing and then from processing to regulation. For Stronge (2002), feedback is one of the most powerful adjustment procedures for achieving learning outcomes. Brookhart (2008) explains that effective feedback is a "double barreled approach" (p. 2) as it reports both motivational and cognitive aspects. The cognitive advantage is what students need to know about the level of their learning and what to do to make their learning effective. Kluger and Denisi (1996) found out that student performance develops with feedback; ineffective feedback can lead to failure, Hattie and Timperley (2007) suggest four levels of student feedback: (a) task performance feedback such as if work is correct and how to get more information; (b) task processing feedback such as strategies the student used or could use; (c) self-regulation feedback such as information about student self-confidence or self-evaluation; and (d) personal feedback such as value statements about the student being "smart" or a "hard worker." As well as Lee (2006) suggests that there are three principles the learner must know for feedback to be effective: (a) the learning objectives and success criteria for the task; (b) the extent to which the learners have achieved the learning objectives/success criteria; and (c) how to move closer to achieving the learning objectives or how to close the gap between what they have done and what they could do. (p. 57). Positive feedback make students more engaged in learning accomplishments and provide positive interactions between teachers and students, than negative feedback (Newman and Schwager, 1993).

In the past, teachers believed that students were motivated by the fear of failure; study now found that using fear of failure only supports poor self-concept (Danielson, 2002). Feedback that is corrective in nature must provide students with an explanation of whether their activities are correct or not (Marzano et al., 2001). When corrective feedback is completed appropriately, it will always be helpful. Butler (1988) claims that evaluating or judging student work as a part of the feedback procedure can dispirit the learner from using such feedback as a motivating aspect or from adding other feedback to improve future learning. It is a necessary concept in learning and is closely related to motivation.

### **1.3.4 Student Motivation**

Student motivation has to do with students' desire to participate in the learning process. Glasser (1993) states that most of the students start learning in an enthusiastic way but after a few years this excitement would disappear. Students react positively and are motivated by teachers who like and respect them. Lin Tuan (2003) defines motivation as the term used to describe the instruments that motivate and direct behavior. However, there have been different studies on educational motivation, it is not yet clear how learning behaviors do become activated and directed. Accordingly, students who are motivated to learn will naturally appreciate improved academic success (Marzano, 2003; Shalaway, 1989). Learning is an energetic procedure in which students must be engaged as genuine members (Danielson, 2002). Stronge and Danielson (2002) assert that teachers, by making both classroom and students engaged in stimulating educational chances and experiencing success, the learning would be increased and the misbehavior would vanish.

Berelson and Steiner (1964) states that motivation refers to these terms “wishes,” “desires,” “needs,” and “drives.” According to Weiner (1990), Motivation has been an ancient but significant field in educational psychology. Motivation studies have removed its concern from behaviorism to learners' self and cognition Motivation is interrelated to an individual's central strength to achieve a learning task.

Student motivation is considered also as a critical component that is essential for quality education. The technique or procedure of teaching must be creative, encouraging, interesting, useful, and offer instruments that can be practical to the student's real life. The environment of learning needs to be available, safe, positive, adapted as much as possible. That is, students should perfectly have many bases of motivation in their learning experience in each class (Palmer, 2007; Debnath, 2005; D'Souza and Maheshwari, 2010). Student motivation has to do with students' aspiration to participate in the learning process. Yet, it also concerns the goals or aims that motivate their involvement or non-involvement in academic activities. In fact, motivation is one of the main issues in learning; it is often incompetently addressed in typical foundational (educational psychology) courses. Motivation has been termed as the intensity of behavior, the direction of behavior, and the duration of behavior.

Brophy (1988) suggests the motivation to learn as “a student tendency to find academic activities meaningful and worthwhile and to try to derive the intended academic benefits from them” (p. 205-206). Motivating students involves making students interested in and excited about learning and aware of the importance of learning itself (Stronge, 2002). Motivation in a way or another helps creating a positive relationship between teacher and student because whenever the student is motivated s/he is more engaged in learning, so that the teacher would try to help student participate in the learning process. As was stated previously, students who are more socially related have been found to be more educationally motivated and engaged (Connell and Wellborn, 1991; Eccles, et al., 1998). Stronge (2002) also asserts that, “Teachers can effectively motivate most students by encouraging them to be responsible for their own learning, maintaining an organized classroom environment, setting high standards, assigning appropriate challenges, and providing reinforcement and encouragement during tasks” (p. 18). Teachers' attempt to motivate students will create a positive feeling among students and thus improve teacher-student relationship.

### **1.3.5 Student Engagement**

Student engagement has been defined as participation in academically effective practices. Student's engagement is clearly achieved by many factors that the teacher handles in order to make the students more involved and investigate positive results. Appleton, et al., (2008) claims that, the concept of student engagement appears to address teachers who report that many students seem to be disinterested and uninvolved. The theory on engagement is important to encourage school success and the basic social skills required in the world of work (Appleton, et al, 2008; Finn, 1989).) Pianta (1999) asserts that teachers who care about their students and share them personal emotions and information make the students more engaged and achieve higher academic investigation. Stronge (2002) contends that the time students expend engaged in the instruction subscribes prominently to classroom success. According to Graden, et al. (1982), researchers found a strong relationship between the time students are vigorously engaged in learning and their achievement. Student engagement has been briefly defined across research literature while Fredricks et al. (2004) suggest a model which encompasses the three factors of behavior, emotion, and cognition. They have been defined as follows:

- Behavioral engagement: is signified in student's oral and non-oral activities.
- Emotional engagement: is related to students having a sense of belonging within school and connected to their peers and teachers.
- Cognitive engagement: can be defined as students having a personal responsibility towards their learning.

Each of the factors has an impact on the understanding of student engagement. Some studies suggest that a student's perception of his relationship with his teacher indirectly influences academic outcomes. For example, students who reported positive relations with their teachers were probably to be more engaged academically (Lynch and Cicchetti, 1992).

As stated by Skinner, et al., (1990), student's engagement holds students': "initiation of action, effort, and persistence on schoolwork, as well as ambient emotional states during learning activities" (p. 24) Studies investigating the role of teachers in students' academic achievement was derived mainly from the self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 2002), which stresses the need for relatedness as one of the fundamental psychological necessities. According to this theory, teachers' involvement is central for the satisfying the need for relatedness. This refers to the quality of interpersonal relations with students and is established through teachers having time for students, expressing positive feelings towards them, being flexible to their needs, etc. Teacher's involvement looks as the strongest predictor of students' academic motivation, among all of the other apparently important dimensions of teachers' behavior.

Maehr and Midgley (1992) identified some strategies for improving student engagement and motivation: (a) emphasize goal setting and self-regulation; (b) offer choices in instructional settings; (c) reward students for attaining "personal-best" goals; (d) foster teamwork through group-learning and problem solving experiences; (e) replace social comparisons of achievement with self-assessment and evaluation techniques; (f) teach time-management skills; and (g) offer self-paced instruction when possible. Garcia-Reid, et al., (2005) suggests that creating a culture of accomplishment in their classroom, ameliorating interactive and relevant lessons and actions, and being encouraging and supportive to students are all techniques in which teachers can boost student engagement in the classroom. Student disengagement is often a result of lacking a positive relationship.

#### **1.4 Students' Perceptions of Good Teachers**

Students tend to coin their own idea about how a good teacher should behave, Shaeffer, et al. (2003) surveyed students and found out that relational qualities like being understanding, personable, respectful, happy and caring were four of the top eight qualities identified. Interpersonal behaviors which indicate the identified relational qualities include the following : initiating conversations with students, praising students, admitting mistakes, interacting with students before and after



class, not talking down to students, and not losing one's temper (Buskist, 2002; Buskist, et al., 2002). Vulcano (2007) conducted a survey to explore student perceptions of teacher effectiveness, results reveal that twenty-four categories of teacher behavior mirrored Buskist, et al., (2002) findings. Teacher's behaviors identified comprise being approachable, enthusiastic about teaching, and twenty-four (24) fair; having a sense of humor, strong communication skills, and a flexible, open minded approach; and encouraging and caring for students (Vulcano, 2007).

Lowman's interpersonal rapport construct (1984, 1996) and Bain's (2004a, 2004b) "master facilitators" highlighted the importance of interpersonal skills in students' perceptions of effective teaching and how a good teacher behaves derived from the qualitative explorations findings, they encourage interaction between student and instructor by being warm and open, predictable, and student-centered. Students need a balanced degree of social and academic interactions with their teachers if expected to be successful. Lowman (1984, 1996) and Bain's (2004a, 2004b) findings stresses on the fact that a social life in academic setting is crucial for students. Students' experiences with their professors in reality differ from their preferences and perceptions regarding the idea they have about how a good teacher should behave, concerning course design, policies, and classroom behaviors (Epting, et al., 2004). This fact may create a sort of confusion in the students minds as they have to face another reality different to what they were expecting leading to some negative feelings and attitudes from the students part as reactions of the unexpected behaviors of a teacher, students will be uninvolved, showing no interest not attentive and other, such feelings and attitudes have a negative drawbacks on students', learning and academic outcomes.

Verily there is a difference between what makes a good teacher from students perspective and from the educators perspective however this is not the aim of the present study, it is rather to emphasize the importance of students view about what kind of teacher-student relationship help them better learn since they are the first and most affected by this relationship, and that teacher behaviors mark them not just as student but as human beings.

## **1.5 The Effect of Teacher behavior on Students' Academic Achievement**

It takes intentional and persistent effort from the teacher's part to build an optimal teaching/learning situation that is most favorable for students' learning, for this reason it is necessary to promote specific teaching behaviors the present study put emphasis on the two below stated ones.

### **1.5.1 Establishing an emotional link**

Students' view that teachers who show caring are effective teachers. Caring relationships boost students' motivation and help them better learn. In this respect Labaree (2000) speaking about teachers claimed that: "they also need to establish an emotional link to motivate the student to participate actively in the learning process" (p.229). According to Irme (1982), "Caring means that the other person matters, that the other person makes a difference not only to the person directly affected, but also to others who care" (p. 14).Caring as an important construct of other relationships types (e.g., friendship) is also crucial in teacher-student relationship. Research reveals that most of students who are committed to learning and remain involved during lectures were actually influenced by caring teachers who are ready to set an interpersonal relationship with their students (Garza,et al., 2010). Noddings (2005) claimed that "caring teachers listen and respond differentially to their students" (p. 19). He believed that the act of caring was complete once students acknowledged teacher's caring behaviors. Once more, Garza (2009) claims that caring for students should be relative to each student's individual needs, in other words teachers should be sufficiently aware of their student's needs and personalities in order to adapt their behaviors according to each student requirements.

Furthermore McCroskey (1992) noted that students display higher motivation when their teachers show concern and caring about them. Students report positive behaviors by teachers as showing empathy, understanding and responsiveness. Thus research aiming at building a caring classroom community and creating strong and consistent teacher student interpersonal relationships was closely related and

relevant with student perceptions about what makes a « good teacher » establishing a separating line between functional and dysfunctional classroom (Garrett, et al., 2009; Osterman and Freese, 2000; Wentzel, 1997). In Schlosser study of successful middle school (1992) students stated the following behaviors as qualities of a “good teacher” namely: teachers who noticed if a student was in trouble; discussed topics of interest to students such as gangs, drug addiction, and also valued, teachers who told students that they could come back after class if they needed to talk more. Student added that such behaviors made them feel self-worth and important and they enjoyed learning.

### **1.5.2 Cultivating a Sense of Belonging**

The sense of belonging is without a doubt a vital human need, the state of mind we have when we feel that we belong is indeed not the same as when we feel rejected, excluded or as a stranger for that it is crucial for students to have this feeling in a learning environment if to expect an effective learning and a positive performance in an academic setting. In the same vein, Baumeister and Leary (1995) in their article about the importance of sense of belonging in wellbeing proposed the ‘belongingness hypotheses. They suggested that “human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships” (p. 497). They added that absence of sense of belonging may lead to some negative feelings such as social isolation, loneliness and alienation.

Furthermore, Baumeister and Leary (1995) argue that belongingness goes beyond the need for only having a social contact since it requires a positive and pleasant social contact within the desired relationships with people concerned with these relationships. In other words, the need of belongingness is achieved through an interpersonal bond characterized by “stability, affective concern, and continuation into the foreseeable future” (p. 500). This was applied in educational context by scholars namely Goodenow (1993), he described the sense of belonging as follows:

Students' sense of being accepted, valued, included, and encouraged by others (teacher and peers) in the academic classroom setting and of feeling oneself to be an important part of the life and activity of the class. More than simple perceived liking or warmth, it also involves support and respect for personal autonomy and for the student as an individual. (p. 25)

As a matter of fact, relevant research has always revealed that students who experience a sense of belonging within their educational environment are of a higher degree of motivation and engagement in their schools and classroom activities and are more dedicated to school and learning (Osterman, 2000). Additionally, existing research show that students who have a sense of belongingness within their educational context report a high level of enjoyment, interest, enthusiasm, happiness and are more confident in engaging their learning activities, while students who have no sense of belonging and feel isolated and lonely generally report more anxiety, boredom, frustration and even sadness during the academic ongoing, as a consequence, their academic performance is directly affected (Furrer and Skinner, 2003).

### **1.6 Students' Attitudes towards Teachers' Behavior**

According to Derk (1974), it is shared knowledge that a good teacher can change a student's life. Teacher-student relationships are essential for the achievement of both teachers and students. As part of classroom management, such relationships are the most significant factor in determining a teacher's work as successful. Ellis (1994) claims that learner's attitudes have been acknowledged as one set of variables of major importance. The attitudes are shaped by the social aspects mentioned, which, in turn, effect learner outcome. Students are in a position to make more exact verdicts about teacher performance more than the ones outside who visits the classroom once or twice a year (Savage & McCord, 1986; Shepherd, 1989). Le Roux (1994) defines attitude to be a positive or negative emotional relationship with or tendency towards an object, establishment or person. Chambers and Pettman (1986) have shown that both feelings and information are important features in the realization of attitudes, and that these are critical elements of

understanding. Attitudes are closely related to views. Lord (1997) made a distinction as he claimed “however is that a person can state his opinion in word but may not be able to express his attitude by his action” (p. 222).

Teachers make a difference. Certain teachers educate much more student learning than others, and their success is attached to convenient differences in teaching behavior (Good, et al., 1975; and Rakow, et al., 1978). A survey conducted by Gözütok (1993) showed that 30% of the teachers are working to confirm discipline in the class by presenting the behaviors that could be considered as negative behaviors (hair pulling, slapping, insulting, threading by class mark, taking student to the principal or throwing chalk). Research has also revealed that male teacher’s pretend more negative behaviors than female teachers. If the teacher seems as a person that is interested in students personally, student becomes more engaged and motivated toward learning (Phelan, et al., 1992). Teacher expectations can affect a student’s attitudes and actions and lead to success or failure (Tomlinson and Eidson, 2003; Shalaway, 1989). It is important for students to realize whether the Teacher-Student Relationship is healthy or not. A conducted research showed that the learning objective of students was negatively affected by teachers who did neither care about their students nor their studies (Phelan et al., 1992). Brophy and Good (1970) assert that many teachers treat students differently through perceptions and expectations. Students catch hold of these perceptions and this can affect student self-image, motivation toward learning, behavior, and relationships with the teachers and other students and adults. Also according to Açıkgöz (2003), teachers have to tackle functions such as being a role-model and making guidance to student in addition to his main function of “learning facilitation”.

In order to explore the existing of Teacher-student Relationship and to find out about its impact on students’ academic achievement, the researchers choose first year EFL University students along with their COE teachers as a sample population in the University of Abou Bekr Belkaid Tlemcen.

## 1.7 Situation Analysis

This work was undertaken in the University of Abou Bakr Belkaid-Tlemcen, in the Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages, the Department of English. English is one of the most important departments in the Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages. Since 1989 till 2017, the Faculty knew different organization charts. Recently, the Foreign Languages Department has been restructured and the English Section has become an independent department including Translation. With 63 fulltime teachers and 1232 students (graduation) the English Department offers a variety of modules basically related to two specialties: Literature and Civilization in addition to Language Studies divided in different modules.

English section offers to EFL students a number of courses on the English language studies pointing at supporting and improving English language to the new baccalaureate holders. The teachers of secondary school are different from the teachers of University. The teachers of secondary school do not depend on their students, the attempt to bring them the information they need, explain in details and try to facilitate the lessons as much as possible. They teach three to four times per week for one hour. In fact, the movement of students from secondary school to University is a total change. Because of that, the researchers use first year University students to make the results related to the research questions more reliable. The three academic years in the licence degree are devoted to essence subject namely: Grammar, Phonetic (Phonology), Comprehension and Written Expression, Comprehension and Oral Expression, Linguistics, Literature and Civilization. The researchers investigate the work at the level of first year LMD students; aged between 19 and 22 years. The sample population consists of 7 COE teachers' and 7 groups composed of a number of students which varied from 26 to 28 individual in each group but only 30 students were asked to answer the questionnaire of the study. All students are native speakers of a dialectal form of Arabic and have learnt both French as their first foreign language for ten years and English for seven years. This case study tends to explore the Teacher-student

Relationship existing at the level of first year and find out its impact on students' learning outcomes.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

A Teacher-student Relationship is extremely important in which one should look at developing and creating a positive learning area. Many researches in the literature about the interest of positive and supportive teacher-student relationships. Therefore, these researches investigate teachers' understanding of their influence on Students' learning and behavior through their relationships. This chapter comes up with an overview of the importance of Teacher-Student Relationship. It exhibits different factors that impact the Teaching learning process. Thus, it becomes necessary to detect devices that are useful to make the teaching learning more effective.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Suggestions**

#### 2.1 Introduction

#### 2.2 Research Methodology

##### 2.2.1 Research Design

##### 2.2.2 Sampling

##### 2.2.3 Data-Collection Instrument

###### 2.2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire

###### 2.2.3.2 Classroom Observation

#### 2.3 Data Analysis

##### 2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire Results

##### 2.3.2 Classroom Observation Results

###### 2.3.2.1 Teacher Behavior

###### 2.3.2.2 Student Behavior

#### 2.4 Discussion of the Main Results

#### 2.5 Suggestions and Recommendations

##### 2.5.1 Building Teacher-student Interaction

##### 2.5.2 Mutual Respect between Teachers and Students

##### 2.5.3 Expectations and Attitudes

##### 2.5.4 The Use of Positive Reinforcement

##### 2.5.5 Teaching with Enjoyment and Enthusiasm

##### 2.5.6 Incorporate Humor into Lessons

#### 2.7. Conclusion



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Suggestions**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Research Methodology process encompasses a set of activities to be accomplished in a coordinated range of timing to conduct the research. This study commences principally to search and determine the Teacher-student Relationship existing in first year EFL University classroom. This chapter focuses on the research methodology of the study, and explains how the data are collected. It includes the research design, sample population, data-collection instrument, data analysis and the findings. In addition to that, the dissertation would be concluded by a set of solutions provided by the researchers in order to achieve positive results about the concerning topic. Hence, in the final of this part, the researchers select different suggestions pointed out from the results obtaining in the research work.

#### **2.2 Research Methodology**

This section discusses the plan put by the researchers to fulfill the overall aims of this work, it describes all the steps gone through along the whole research including: the research design, sampling, data-collection instruments and data analysis. The researchers aim to provide sufficient information that would be later on discussed and interpreted.

##### **2.2.1 Research Design**

The Research methodology represents all the proceeding policy of research, its steps and blueprints is used in data collection and later on in data analysis during the research investigation (Polit and Hungler (1997, p. 491). Accordingly Parahoo (1997, p. 142) defines research design as “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed”. Likewise Polit et al (2001, p. 167) give a definition to research design as follows: “the researcher’s overall for

answering the research question or testing the research hypothesis”. In other words by thoroughly planning the research design the researcher can make the right decisions and undertake appropriate procedures to achieve initial purposes of research and avoid errors.

Thinking and deciding about the methodology to be used help the researchers to direct their work and set the plan to be followed. Similarly, the present research design was intended to attain the answers needed in this work and it helps the researcher obtain the required information concerning the present situation. In this research, a case study was chosen as it is suitable to have a deep understanding of the situation in question and most of all as it fits perfectly with the exploratory approach of this work. Yin (1984) defines the case study research method as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (p. 23). Under the generalized category of case study there exist several types each of which may be selected depending on the researcher’s aims and objectives related to the conducted research.

GAO (1990) gives an accurate classification, distinguishing between six types of case studies:

- \* Illustrative—this case study is descriptive in character and intended to add realism and in-depth examples to other information about a program or policy;
- \* Exploratory—this is also a descriptive case study but is aimed at generating hypotheses for later investigation rather than for illustrating;
- \* Critical instance—this examines a single instance of unique interest or serves as a critical test of an assertion about a program, problem, or strategy;
- \* Program implementation—this case study investigates operations, often at several sites, and often normatively;

\* Program effects—this application uses the case study to examine causality and usually involves multi-site, multi-method assessments; and

\*cumulative—this brings together findings from many case studies to answer an evaluation question, whether descriptive, normative, or cause-and-effect.

This work is an exploration of teacher-student relationship in first year EFL classrooms at the level of Abou Baker Belkaid University of Tlemcen. The aim was to explore a real-life situation regarding what kind of teacher-student relationship exists but also the effect of this relationship on students' learning for this reason an exploratory case study was the most appropriate to be used.

### **2.2.2 Sampling**

A sample is “a smaller (but hopefully representative) collection of units from a population used to determine truths about that population” (Field, 2005). The study is concerned with the information gathered from the respondents in order to obtain the data needed. To pick out a sample, it should be taken into consideration that the sample represents appropriately the whole population. Sampling is considered as a process of selecting a number of individuals that is of interest to the researcher for a research study in order to gather data and attain results that can be generalized. The study used probability sampling. A random technique of choosing a sample took place as no precise aspects were necessarily taken into account to decide about the sample choice. The aim was to ensure a high probability of achieving a representative sample.

The target population in this investigation was first year EFL Tlemcen University students. The sample was selected according to the number of teachers and not the number of groups since ten groups exist, but only seven teachers. So the researchers decided to include seven teachers and their seven groups in which the number of students varied from twenty six to twenty eight individuals representing the study population which was observed during the research and from which thirty students were selected to answer a questionnaire.

### **2.2.3 Data-Collection Instruments**

The choice of instruments to be used depends on the nature of the topic in question as well as the researcher's objectives. Hungler (1999) defines data as "information obtained during the course of an investigation or study". In fact data-collection instrument is a systematic research that allows the researcher to collect the information needed in the study. It includes a set of different methods such as questionnaires, tests, structured interviews...etc. In this research study, the researcher used two methods that are of interest to the subject matter which are: students' questionnaire and classroom observation; which comprised students of first year EFL University setting. As it is mentioned before, the purpose of this study is to explore teacher-student relationship and to describe the factors affecting this relationship.

#### **2.2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is a research instrument which consists of different questions for the purpose of gathering information. Polit and Hungler (1997) define a questionnaire as "a method of gathering information from respondents about attitudes, knowledge, beliefs and feelings" (p. 466). The questions must be clear and acceptable so that the respondent could be able to read and respond to them easily without any difficulties. The questionnaire is useful for extracting students' attitudes and opinions about their classroom environment because students' points of view are essential for the purpose of determining their teachers' behaviors in the classroom and how they impact their learning achievements.

To achieve the present research objectives, a questionnaire was designed for students for first-year EFL students at the University of Abou bakr Belkaid Tlemcen. The questionnaire was distributed to thirty 30 students studying in ten 10 different groups. It comprised of a combination of fifteen 15 questions arranged under two 2 rubrics which go hand in hand with the research questions and hypotheses of this study. The first rubric which includes eight 8 questions organized in a manner that the students would not feel bored while responding the question in

addition to the intended information that the researchers want to collect to accomplish their work. The second rubric, comprising of seven 7 questions, was devoted to collect data concerning the students believes about the impact of Teacher-Student Relationship in the first year EFL university classrooms.

### **2.2.3.2 Classroom Observation**

The other tool used in the present work is classroom observation. It is defined by Marshall and Rossman (1989) as “the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study”. Observation, as a process of gathering research information, comprises the attitudes and the behaviors observed by the researcher and the data collected are consistently to be recorded or written as results to the work. Observations are structured by the research questions. Indeed, the observer places himself in the real position and observes cautiously the participants without contacting them. Observation becomes a scientific instrument and method that helps the researcher collect the research data. Observation processes are beneficial to researchers in an assortment way. It help the researchers realize the non-oral idiom of emotions, specify how the interactors communicate, and understand how they participate and share ideas with each other Schmuck, (1997) and Dewalt (2002) believe that “the goal for design of research using participants observation as a method is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate as possible given the limitation of the method” (p.92). They propose that participant’s observation considered as a useful method that elevate the power of the research study and it helps the researcher improve his/her comprehension about the real situation.

A classroom observation was crucial to investigate the subject of the work, i.e., teacher-student relationship. An insight into what goes on between the teacher and student in the classroom situation was accomplished by attending seven sessions with seven different first year EFL groups along with seven teachers each time. Both teachers and students were observed during each session by using an observation grid. It should be noticed that teachers were not aware that they had

been observed neither students. The aim was to ensure having real information inflecting what really happens in the classroom between teachers and students.

The module dealt with during the seven sessions was COE (Comprehension and Oral Expression) as it is the module when the most interaction occurs between teachers and students; as a result, many behaviors were expressed from both parts. The observers divided the seven sessions and tried to get familiar with the students during the sessions for the duration of one hour and a half. It has been noticed that in each time most of the seven groups were present (students provided information about the whole number of groups).

## **2.3 Data analysis**

After collecting the information, this later has to be considered and analyzed for the purpose of evolving the research outline. This is essential for a scientific study and for assuring that the researcher possesses the data needed in order to make an anticipate comparison and analysis of data obtained.

### **2.3.1 Students' Questionnaire Results**

This questionnaire was directed to first year EFL students of Tlemcen University. The questionnaire was given out at the end of each of the seven sessions observed and participants were selected randomly (Appendix A. page 63). The data gathered from the questionnaire were then, handled and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively as follows.

#### **Rubric one: Students Perceptions about their Relationship with their Teachers.**

This rubric aimed at collecting students' views concerning their relationship with teachers through teachers' behaviors.

Question one: teachers caring about students' academic and social well-being.

The first question directed to first year EFL students is meant to examine to which extent students think their teacher care about their wellbeing both socially and academically. 67% of the responses are positive whereas the 33% remaining students express a negative response and strongly believe that their teachers do not show any interest about their academic and social wellbeing.

Question two: Students views about having a positive or negative relationship with their teacher.

The purpose of this question was to explore if the kind of teacher-student relationship existing in first year EFL students was seen as positive or negative. 37% students provided a negative answer; they claimed that their relationship with teachers was not positive and that they were not satisfied. 63% of students being questioned supplied positive answers and considered their relationship with teachers as positive.

Question three: students' ability to ask their teachers for assistance without fear of rejection or embarrassment.

It is important in a learning environment for students to feel free and encouraged while addressing their questions to teachers, for this reason such a question was directed to students. 67% students answered that they were able to ask questions during lectures without rejection. While the 33% remaining students expressed negative answers, their questions were rejected and teachers tended to embarrass them in front of their classmates. Such behavior provoked negative feelings namely fear and hesitation on students part.

Question four: Students' fear as a result of teacher's reactions.

Responses to this question revealed to what extent some teachers' reactions produced fear among students as represented by the following figure.

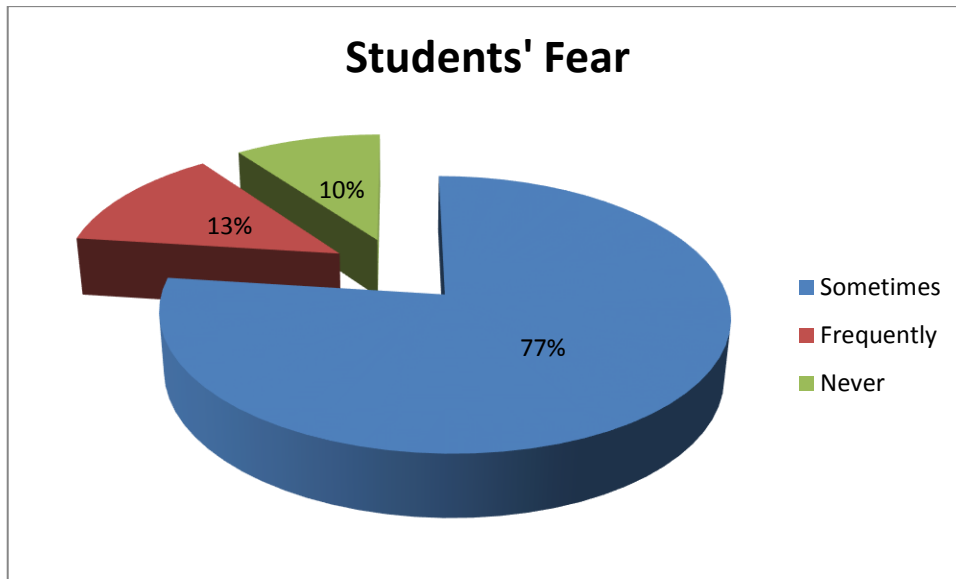


Figure (2.1): Students' Fear as a Result of Teacher's Reactions

Results indicated that the majority of students feel afraid because of teachers' harsh reactions sometimes. Behaviors such as shouting and repressing students marked a feeling of fear among students leading to frustration and distraction, students then will be uninvolved during the lecture and will hesitate to participate or ask questions.

Question five: Students excitement to attend a teacher's class.

50% of the students confirmed excitement about attending a teacher's class, and the 50% remaining did not. Half of the students questioned were not excited to attend their lectures; they felt bored and were obliged to assist (information provided by students during the piloting of the questionnaire).

Question six: teachers' behavior outside the classroom.

The figure below shows in percentage the frequent behaviors performed by teachers towards their students out of the classroom.



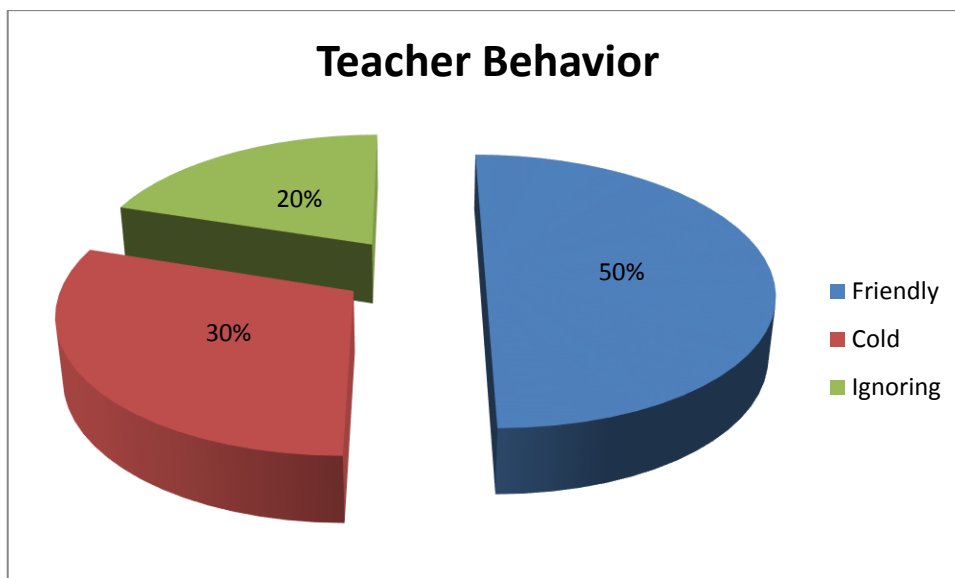


Figure (2.2): TeacherBehavior outside the Classroom

50% students to whom the question was addressed said that teachers were “friendly” during any contact outside the classroom; 30% of the students found their teachers “cold” when they talked to them outside the classroom in an academic setting; the 20% remaining students answered that their teachers were completely “ignoring” them in such a situation.

Question seven: Teacher closeness to students.

Students were asked to describe to what extent their teachers were close to them. The majority of the students representing 70% said that they felt “slightly close” to their teachers, when they were asked to give an explanation orally. They claimed that their teachers were friendly but always holding the role of an instructor without any attention to explore students’ psychology as an individual. 13% of the students stated that they were “close” to their teacher; feeling that the latter was interested in their social wellbeing. 17% of students felt “not close” to their teachers, reasons were that teachers were not friendly, cold and stick to instructions without interactions.

Question eight: Teacher respect of students.

This was a yes/no question, but students found difficulty answering it. According to students, it was hard to tell whether teachers were respectful towards

them or not, since the relationship they had with their teachers was not stable and depending on various situations and the teacher's behavior. Results revealed that 67% of the students thought that their teachers were respectful towards them whereas, 33% of the students did not.

### **Rubric two: Student's Beliefs about the Impact of Teacher-Student Relationship on their Learning.**

This rubric aimed at highlighting in which way teacher-student relationship affected students learning depending on students' points of view and perceptions.

Question nine: The effects of Teacher-Student Relationship on learning.

In such a study it is very important to know about student's view and perceptions concerning the impact of teacher-student relationship on their learning. Results revealed that the great majority of students representing 80% believed that the relationship they share with teachers had an impact on their learning. Reasons were the following:

- Having a positive relationship with my teacher will make me feel self-worthy and thus, more confident.
- I feel more close to kind teachers and I enjoy their lectures
- Having a close relationship with my teacher makes me more attentive, participate in class and respect the teacher.
- Having a negative relationship with a teacher highly affects my motivation to learn and often choose not to attend his/her lecture.
- Disliking my teacher makes me hating the module.
- I cannot concentrate if my teacher is not friendly, angry and not smiling.
- My relationship with my teacher is the key point of whether I'm motivated to learn or not and if I will attend his/her lectures or not.
- I consider the aggressive behavior of teacher as a lack of respect towards me.
- Having a positive and a close relationship with my teacher enable me to easily grasp his/her lectures; it helps me to learn better.

- If I like my teacher I like his module and enjoy lectures as a result I learn better.
- Being friendly and kind, a teacher pushes me to work hard during his lectures.

Only 20% of students thought that there was no impact on their learning due to their relationship with teachers.

Question ten: Dropping out university due to teacher's negative behaviors.

The purpose of this question was to point out one of the serious consequences of teacher's negative behavior, which is the decision of dropping out university.

Results were the following, 80% of students said that they would not drop out university because of teachers' negative behavior, whereas 20% of the students claimed that they seriously thought of abandoning university due to the negative behavior of teachers.

Question eleven: Angry teachers addressing students loudly.

This question intended to uncover what kind of feelings and reactions among students is promoted when the teacher is angry and addressed students loudly. 60% of students admitted their mistake and were attentive after the teacher's remark, 23% of students said that they felt diminished and demotivated after such a behavior reasons provided were that the way the teacher made his remark was inappropriate and disrespectful and that the same remark could be done properly. 17% remaining students claimed that such behavior harm their feelings but they pretend to be careless. However students commented that they disliked such a behavior and they found it offensive.

Answers	AF	RF
<b>a. I admit my mistake and try to be attentive.</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>b. I feel diminished and demotivated.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>c. It hurts me, but I show that I'm careless</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17%</b>

**AF:** Absolute Frequency

**RF:** relative Frequency

Table (2.1) Angry Teachers Addressing Students Loudly

Question twelve: teacher profile.

The purpose of this question was to explore what kind of teacher profiles existed among oral production teachers of first year EFL students of Tlemcen University.

Results revealed that the most recurrent profiles were “friendly and understanding”, “dominant and authoritative”, “strict and aggressive”, “tolerant” and “indifferent”. It was to be mentioned that students were allowed to select more than one answer. Some students claimed that their teachers did not have a specific profile the whole time and that it depends on their humor.

Answers were detailed in the following figure:

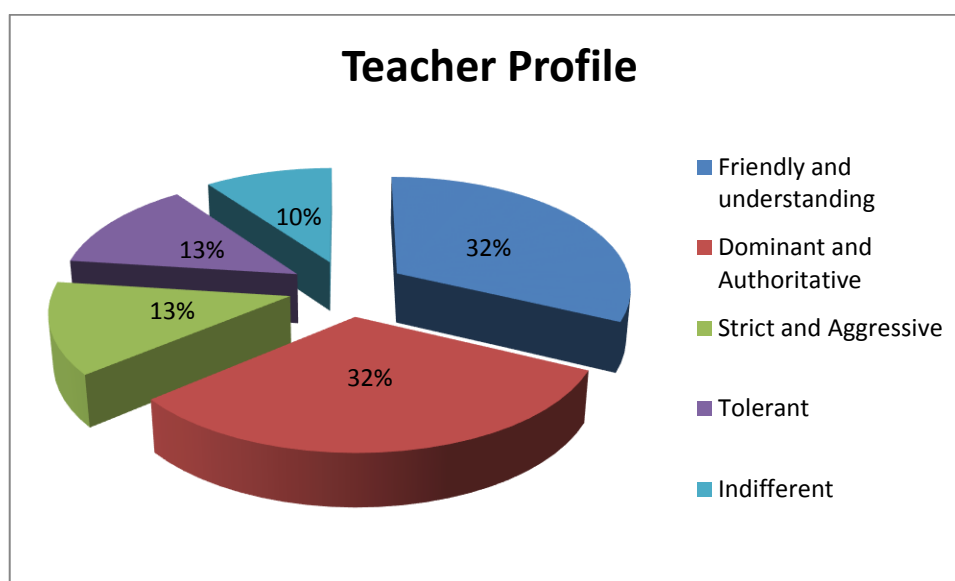


Figure (2.3): *Teacher Profile.*

Question thirteen: Teacher encouragement.

This was a two parts question, in the first part students were asked if their teachers tended to praise on students good work, efforts or behaviors, and encouraged them. 60% of the students gave a positive answer whereas remaining 40% of students gave negative answers. In the second part of the question students were asked to justify their positive answers by telling what kind of feeling they had after teachers' praise and encouragement.

Results are shown in the table below:

<b>The consequence</b>	<b>AF</b>	<b>RF</b>
➤ <b>It motivates me to work hard</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>93%</b>
➤ <b>It frustrates me</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
➤ <b>It does not affect me</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7%</b>

Table (2.2): Consequences of Teachers' Praise and Encouragement.

Question fourteen: Student most enjoying class.

This question was formulated to learn about when and what mostly pushed students to enjoy the class. As expected, results showed that students do enjoy a class when both having an "interesting content" and a "friendly teacher", since the majority of students representing 60% answers "both", whereas 27% of students questioned claimed that they enjoyed class when having "an interesting content" and the 13% remaining stated that it was crucial for them having "friendly teacher" in order to most enjoy class.

Question fifteen: Students' perceptions about having a close relationship with teachers.

As being the first part affected by the consequences of teacher-student relationship, students were prior to be asked about these consequences.

For this reason such a question was worked out, unsurprisingly the great majority of students representing 67% said that having a close relationship with teachers “helps a great deal motivating students to learn”. Whereas 33% of the students claimed that a close relationship with teachers “does not affect students learning”.

### **2.3.2 Classroom Observation Results**

Next to student’s questionnaire, the study used classroom observation which lasted for fifteen (15) days (seven (7) sessions in all). An observation grid was designed for this sake consisting of two main rubrics; the first one was dedicated to “teacher behavior” and the second to “student behavior” (reactions), with **yes/no** columns and another one specific to the researcher’s comments and note taking.(Observation grid:Appendix B page 69)

Observation has gone through seven (7) different groups with seven (7) different teachers. Each session lasted for one hour and a half, the module dealt with in each session was Comprehension and Oral Expression (COE). The researchers introduced themselves as “student working on dissertation” without precising that they were observing neither student nor teacher behaviors to ensure reliable data and especially to avoid any kind of pressure on both teachers and students.

The researchers decided to select COE as the subject matter for the only reason that it encompassed high interaction between teacher and student. Indeed; the subject itself or the content was not the focus points of the study, but instead the communication and the interplay which laid under the various behaviors and reactions from both teachers and students partsestablishing the base-ground of teacher-student relationship.

#### **2.3.2.1 Teacher behavior**

Classroom Observation allowed the collection of the following data. The two rubrics are handled apart:

The first rubric was devoted to “teacher behavior” in the classroom presented in the table (2.3). The descriptive statistics were simply represented with the number of a behavior occurrence during the seven (7) sessions of COE:

<b>Teacher behavior</b>	<b>Number of sessions when it happened</b>	<b>Number of sessions when it did not happen</b>
<b>1. Friendly and understanding</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Shows respect to students</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Hesitating</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Tolerates disorder</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>5. Well-structured lessons</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>6. Holds student’s attention</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7. Supports freedom and responsibility</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>8. Allows questions</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>9. Encourages students to react and speak</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>10. Takes personal interest in students</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>11. Gets angry against small mistakes</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>12. Repress students</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>13. Smiling</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>14. Familiar with students’ names</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

Table (2.3) : Teacher Behavior

It must be noticed that teachers were not aware that they were observed to ensure authentic and accurate data which reflects real situations. From the first sight the researcher noticed that the first thing teachers did once in the classroom was heading to the desk, sometimes without even greeting the students already present, (3) out of (4) teachers were not smiling most of the time once in the classroom and they was always writing something while waiting for the rest of students to come and for the teachers who were late did not apologize for keeping students waiting and immediately started the lecture. Through observation the majority of teachers

were “understanding and friendly” in all what concerns the topic discussion. Lessons were generally well-structured and questions were mostly allowed provided that it relates to the content, only (2) teachers out of (7) did take personal interest in students, and ask questions about their social life. Accordingly few teachers supported freedom and responsibility. In (5) sessions observed, teachers encouraged students’ reactions and interactions provided that it was relating to the content. Additionally teachers who tended to hesitate sometimes face to students questions and tolerates disorder did not hold student’s attention eventually. The observer examination showed that three (3) out of seven (7) teachers were likely to repress students by some means during the ongoing of teaching learning situation without paying intention or in purpose. From the behavior eleven in table (2.3) one can conclude that some teacher’s behaviors were motivated by some external aspects not relating to students or the content discussed. Classroom observation showed that almost half of the teachers observed (3 out of 7 teachers) were not familiar with their students’ names even at the middle of the year.

### **2.3.2.2 Student behavior**

The second rubric of classroom observation was dedicated to “Student behavior” which was associated to teacher behavior since it came as a reaction most of the time. The structured observation using an “observation grid” came along with the researcher’s remarks and comments for each behavior observed. Results were summarized in the table (2.4) as follows:



<b>Student behavior</b>	<b>Number of sessions when it happened</b>	<b>Number of sessions when it did not happen</b>
<b>1. Feel afraid and apprehensive from teacher</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Provoke the teacher</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Seem confused</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Attentive</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Enjoy the lesson</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. participate</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7. Follow teacher instructions</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>8. Autonomous</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>9. Extremely docile</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>10. Distracted</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>11. Disruptive</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>12. Uninvolved</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

Table (2.4) : Student Behavior

The observers noticed that most of students seemed confused at the very beginning of the session this was due to the inappropriate introduction and initiation of the session. Students sounded afraid when their teacher did not use greeting at the beginning of the session and was shouting, repressive and even aggressive against small mistakes. “Distracted behavior” occurred in half of sessions observed, almost in the same rate with “disruptive” which scored four (4) out of seven (7) repetitions during the observation period. Hence, students exhibited differing levels of engagement which ranged on a continuum from uninvolved scoring three (3) out of seven (7) occurrences to distracted behavior then attentive, and finally participatory with a lower scoring.

The researchers observed that a great majority of students during the seven (7) sessions were following teachers’ instructions. From this, one can conclude that the teacher was the main authority in these classrooms. Additionally “provocative behavior” of students rarely occurred during the classroom observation.

During the sessions observed, the observers noticed that almost half of students observed were autonomous, in what came to tasks given by teachers, or even topics discussed. They tended to form their own understanding of the matter discussed. Whereas, a minority of students over dependent on the teacher for learning.

## **2.4 Discussion of the Main results**

Positive Teacher-Student Relationship is held to be crucial for effective teaching and learning to take place. Essential aspects of this relationship are what happen between teachers and students i.e. behaviors of both sides occurring during an exchange. The nature of teacher-student relationship and its impact on students' learning and academic outcomes was investigated in the first year EFL Licence classroom of Tlemcen University. Indeed, most of research done on Teacher-Student Relationship mainly focused on learning and instructional aspects of the relationship and neglected both the aspects of guiding student's behavior and the social and emotional aspects of Teacher-Student Relationship (Al-Nahari, 2004; Leitao, 2007). As mentioned earlier the present study aimed to investigate Teacher-Student Relationship from the emotional and social aspects with regard to student's perceptions about the relationship.

It is clear that the instructor's teaching skills matters along with the mastery of the content taught. However, in order to achieve an effective teaching learning operation, the teacher's cooperation to create a healthy teacher-student relationship is crucial. On one hand, results of the questionnaire addressed to thirty first year EFL students in University of Abou bekr Belkaid Tlemcen, showed that these students were unsatisfied of their relationship with teachers. Findings of the first rubric of students' questionnaire revealed that a significant number of teachers did not care about the social and academic well-being of students; the majority of students questioned claimed that they did not have a good relationship with their teachers. Many students hesitated to ask for assistance in fear of rejection and embarrassment. Results revealed that most students felt slightly close or not at all close to their teachers this was due to some teacher's negative behaviors namely:

the teachers being cold or completely ignorant outside the classroom, did not take any personal interest in students or being repressive, offensive and sometimes even disrespectful towards students for small mistakes. All this led to dispiriting students' motivation and ambition to learn and attending lectures. The researchers' observation gave the same results including: teachers' dominance, teachers not being familiar with nearly all students' names, the absence of teachers' greeting of students and inappropriate initiation of the lecture, showing no support for students' freedom and responsibility, nearly no interactions outside the content and lack of smiling during the session. As a reaction students' behavior reflected no excitement for attending lectures, a lack of motivation, a disruptive behavior, students' distraction or being provocative. These findings showed teachers' neglect for the social and emotional aspects of teacher-student relationship, and thus it confirmed the first hypothesis stating that there is a negative teacher-student relationship at the level of first year EFL Licence classrooms characterized by teacher dominance, lack of closeness, lack of communication and frustration from both sides.

On the other hand, data collected from the instruments used in this exploratory study, showed that teacher-student relationship has an impact on students' learning. Results of the second rubric of students' questionnaire uncovered the major effect of this relationship on students' learning, results revealed that some of the teacher's negative behaviors highly affect the student's psychology as a significant number of them already thought about dropping out university due to these negative behaviors. Students' motivation and determination to learn increased or decreased according to the type of this relationship. Students who had a positive relationship with teachers were excited to attend lectures and enjoyed learning. Teachers' praise and encouragement of students resulted in higher motivation and a boost to work hard. Students who were repressed by their teachers felt diminished and demotivated to learn and participate. To sum up results indicate that students who have a positive relationship with their teachers are more motivated and ready to learn. Classroom observation showed that the times when a teacher was angry or repressive, students' reactions varied between being provocative and disruptive or being afraid and uninvolved and thus having no attempt to learn. Whereas positive teacher behavior

such as “praise, encouragement, taking personal interest in student and being familiar with students names” had a positive role in enhancing students’ self-esteem and promoting classroom participation. It increased students’ motivation and ambition to learn and they most enjoyed the lectures. The above mentioned results seem to confirm the second hypothesis which assumes that positive teacher-student relationships are more conducive to learning and academic achievement. When it came to the effects of teacher-student relationship on learning, results revealed that the quality of interactions and social connectedness with teachers had a great impact on students’ academic and social well-being.

## **2.5 Suggestions and Recommendations**

Teachers are permanently attempting to ameliorate their relationships with their students. It is intractable to build a comfortable learning environment, but creating a positive relationship between teachers and students helps to develop the teaching and learning processes. The researchers provide some solutions and suggestions that help both teachers and students realize the importance of their relationship and to work towards this end in order to produce a favorable atmosphere for better learning.

### **2.5.1 Building Teacher-Student Interaction**

It is necessary to give importance to this step in order to make the Teacher-Student Relationship successful. The results of this study indicate that the interaction between teachers and their students has an impact on improving relationships and achieving successful learning. According to Whitaker (2004) the major flexible person in the classroom is not the student, but the teacher. Teachers are aware of the necessity of connecting with their students. Without a doubt, if they are able to connect with them sentimentally, they can easily affect their minds. It is up to the teacher to induce interaction in the classroom and to encourage their students for the purpose of creating a relaxed setting. In fact, any behavior produced by the teacher can affect the student’s learning, and thus, the interaction plays an important role in the teaching learning procedure because it makes the teacher

responsible in managing students' problems. Sometimes students want to share their thoughts with their teachers and their classmates, but they would be afraid that their teachers would not allow them to participate. Many students fear that by expressing their personal views, the teacher will not only refuse their opinions, but embarrass them in front of their classmates for not agreeing with the teachers' views. So, the researchers suggest that building and improving interactions helps both teachers and students to act positively in the classroom, and indeed this affects the students' learning achievement.

### **2.5.2 Mutual respect between teachers and students**

Mutual respect in the classroom encompasses more than the interaction between students and the teacher. The findings of this study suggest that teachers need to respect their students in the classroom and outside the classroom, and vice versa. Students should listen to their teachers and attempt to do their best in the classroom. Teachers would as well do their best to provide their students with a quality education and respect them as individuals. For instance, showing respect to students may be by addressing them by name in uneventful voice. Hence, teachers may speak to their students in the same way they expect to be spoken to by them. Respect is a crucial component of successful classrooms. Daniel Richardson (2006) supports active learning as a worthy process in the classroom that leads him to mutually respect his students without losing his power as a teacher. He notes:

I have found that active learning is not a particular method, but rather a shared attitude between students and teachers that allows them to perform as a team, a team in which teachers orchestrate the processes and procedures for learning to occur and students become engaged in these processes in ways that learning will occur.(p. 244)

Richardson (2006) states that common behavior of active learning provides an "atmosphere of mutual respect" (p. 244), in which the teacher and the student react as equivalents in the learning process. The students and the teacher can respect one

another within the classroom. Thus, the researchers suggests that, equipped with an understanding of the mutual respect promote both the teacher and the students improve and ameliorate the teaching learning procedure. A respectful class encompasses students not only friendly and forgiving but also makes them involved in learning.

### **2.5.3 Expectations and Attitudes**

The importance of teacher expectations has an impact on facilitating student learning, i.e., Teachers' expectations relate to student outcomes. Green (2010) states that "Low teacher expectations and a lack of positive student-teacher relationships within the classroom setting perpetuates the self-fulfilling prophecy and low student achievement." (p. 34). According to Boyton and Boyton (2005) teachers must possess and communicate both academic and behavioral high expectations for students which help them feel a sense of belonging in the classroom. In fact, teachers who make effort to involve all their students, they will achieve positive results in the classroom. Teachers' performance in the classroom would be unsuccessful if the teachers think that they execute positively with their students. In fact, their behaviors and interactions with their students in the classroom or during teaching should be more dynamic than what they teach. It is obvious that teacher's way of thinking and attitude affects his/her behavior inside and outside the classroom. In addition, teachers need to profit on the effect that their attitudes represent, Miller and Rose (1975) stated that "the genuine enthusiasm displayed by the instructor is always a major factor in motivation because it is contagious, it engenders a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom and contributes a high motivation" (p. 36). If a teacher improves a positive attitude towards his/her profession, this would make him/her work hard for the students' success. Accordingly, Palardy and Rumberger (2008) stated that teachers' attitudes, performance, and beliefs have a substantial effect on students' achievement. Indeed, the teacher is the students' key to success. They play an important role in transmitting and equipping their students with the knowledge needed.

#### **2.5.4 The Use of Positive Reinforcement**

The use of positive behavior supports and encourages the students' learning. It plays an important role in education and it is used to provide effective teaching methods in order to monitor problematic behaviors. In their study Conroy, et al., (2009) found that teachers can ameliorate their classroom environment and elevate positive interaction with their students by using effectively positive reinforcement including praise. Positive reinforcement is an efficient technique to recognize and teach appropriate behaviors to students, using encouragement and rewards process (Sigler and Aamidor, 2005). Maag (2001) suggests also that positive reinforcement strategy can be stratified for students for any age, gender or inability and for any problem behavior. The results of this study indicate that using positive reinforcement would achieve positive results and improve the relationships between teachers and students. Therefore, the teacher can simply reward students by saying positive expressions in each time the student complete the required activity, for example: by saying "good job", "very good", "excellent" etc.

#### **2.5.5 Teaching with Enjoyment and Enthusiasm**

The feelings and sentiments of teachers are counted pertinent not only for their own well-being but playing an important role in the classrooms. The teacher need to enjoy being in company of their students. Experimental researches assert that enjoyable emotions are positively related with learning motivation, self-regulatory efforts, stimulation of cognitive resources, and executions (Ashby, et al., 1999; Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun, et al., 2002a). These emotional attitudes comprise gestures, different intonations, recurrent eye contact, various sentimental facial expressions, vitality while lecturing, and use of humor and real examples (Collins, 1978; Gage & Berliner, 1998; Murray, 1983; Rosenshine, 1970). Motivating students is one of the main challenges teachers confront in their daily experiences. Teachers play a vital role in their students' engagement and motivation (Hill & Rowe, 1996). Specifically, Martin (2006) found that a teacher's enjoyment and confidence in teaching, educational effectiveness, and emotional guidance in the classroom have a positive influence on student engagement and motivation. Hence,

the researcher suggests that a pleasant atmosphere helps students for better learning and also develop the Teacher-Student Relationship. It is reasonable that teachers' experience of enjoyment converts into enthusiasm during teaching. Students will react positively when a teacher is enthusiastic and emotional about what s/he teaches. Brophy and Good (1986) identified teacher enthusiasm as one of the essence teacher characters positively influencing motivational outcomes. Excitement is very important in the teaching procedure. So, the students will be excited as their teachers would be. Therefore, enthusiasm helps the teacher get the attention of his/her students.

### **2.5.6 Incorporate Humor into Lessons**

Humor in an effective classroom enhances students' attention and involvement. Humor in educational environment accomplishes different positive purposes by merely making students laugh from time to time during the session. Students would react in a positive way between each other when humor is existent. Teaching and learning should not be tedious. Most students prefer being in a funny classroom, they will enjoy attending class because they like to laugh and learn, so that; teachers should incorporate humor into their daily lessons. This may be involving a suitable joke related to the content or they may be laughing at their teachers when they make mistake; it is up to the teacher to provide humor even when making mistakes because this makes students feel comfortable. Wagner and Urios-Aparisi (2011) noted that the teacher's use of humor is related to the problems of teaching effectiveness, student's achievement, classroom environment, student motivation, the judgment of students about their teachers. Therefore, using humor in the classroom creates a positive and relaxed atmosphere, which in turn helps decrease student's anxiety, and establishes and maintains relationships between teachers and students. And, indeed, it overcomes difficulties and problems existing in the classroom.



## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter portrayed the research methodology and the solutions provided by the researcher. The purpose of the research design in this study was to maximize adequate and appropriate results related to the answers of the research questions. Therefore, the main data collection instruments that the researcher used to collect the information needed was gathered by both classroom observation and students' questionnaire. The researcher's aim was to use the valid methods in order to analyze and ensure that the data was reliable. Therefore, the results obtained from these analyses provide the researcher to select some suggestions that help both teachers and students accomplish positive relationships in an educational setting.

# General Conclusion



Many studies have gone through teacher-student relationship. The majority of these studies were done by educators somehow reflecting the instructors' views and ideas about how teacher-student relationship should be and neglecting students' points of view. Furthermore these studies generally focused on the educational aspects of the relationship rather than the emotional and social aspects, thinking that it is more beneficial for students to keep teacher-student relationship content-centered away from any interpersonal exchange, teachers feel the obligation to teach the maximum content to ensure better performing scores from students' part leaving no chance for building relationships. The present research aimed at considering teacher-student relationship from students' points of view regarding how they expect it to be and how it actually exists.

To investigate teacher-student relationship in the Algerian University, an exploratory case study was conducted at the level of first year EFL classrooms in Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen, attempting to answer the following questions:

1. What kind of teacher-student relationship exists at the level of first year EFL classrooms in Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen?
2. What is the impact of teacher-student relationship on students' learning?

Consequently the relating hypotheses were formulated as follows:

1. There is a negative teacher-student relationship at the level of first year EFL classrooms characterized by teacher dominance, lack of closeness, lack of communication and frustration from both sides.
2. Positive teacher-student relationships are more conducive to learning and academic achievement.

The work contains two main chapters within each the researchers tried to clarify the problem and bring a better understanding of the subject matter. The first chapter was devoted to the review of literature connecting to the topic and selected by the researcher according to its connection with the two research questions mentioned

above, i.e. the importance of teacher-student relationship and its effects on students' learning as well as highlighting some of the chief-affecting factors influencing teacher-student relationship. The second chapter was kept to discussing the whole operation of data collection and analysis that provided the answer research questions the chapter then presents some suggestions proposed by the researcher.

The exploratory case study was undertaken using classroom observation and a students' questionnaire. The results reported that students were unsatisfied with their relationship with teachers, and they blamed them for that. The relationship was characterized by being entirely content-centered, lacking closeness, distant and setting barriers between teacher-student, based on teachers' dominancy and neglecting the students' consideration as an individual before being a knowledge-seeker. Indeed teachers showed a disregard, some of them an insensitivity for the social and emotional aspects of the relationship, evidence were found in a set of negative behaviors from the teachers' part observed by the researcher or claimed by the students. In fact teacher-student relationship in first year EFL classrooms was set by the teachers alone with no reflection or consideration for students' position about the situation in addition to a complete neglect for the social and emotional aspects and no attempt of building an interpersonal teacher-student exchange. All these results seem to confirm the first hypothesis stating that, there is a negative teacher-student relationship at the level of first year EFL classrooms characterized by teacher dominance, lack of closeness, lack of communication and frustration from both sides.

This research has opened up opportunities to dive in teacher-student relationship, and shed lights on the consequences it has on students' academic practice and outcomes. Indeed teacher-student relationship can be detrimental to students' learning if a negative one, just as it can be productive and conducive to their learning if a positive one. This conclusion confirmed the second hypothesis of the work holding that positive teacher-student relationships are more conducive to learning and academic achievement. The findings of this dissertation are hoped to raise awareness among educators as well as educational policy-makers about the importance of teacher-student relationship and its impact on students' learning. In fact the set of

skills enabling teachers to build a positive and effective teacher-student relationship, with regard to students' perceptions and points of view about it, should become a part of the curriculum in teacher training and intervention programs as a way to improve the teaching-learning environment, enhance teacher proficiency and achieve a better academic performance from students' part. Teacher-student relationship is broad topic and there are many sides of it to be focused on. Moreover the findings of this case study cannot be claimed to be generalized especially with such a small sample. This work serves as a base ground of data for future research undertaking the same topic. It provides an examination of a real-life situation which might be needed for more detailed investigations on the same topic such as how positive teacher-student relationship encourages higher achievement or developing positive teacher-student relationship.

To conclude this study adds to the understanding of teacher-student relationship, and highlights the importance of positive teacher-student relationship to reach a healthy learning environment and a better academic achievement. The work has revealed the key issues, behaviors and variables interfering in building such a relation, this would help educators next to policy-makers making the right choice about what kind of teacher-student relationship is more favorable for students' academic and social well-being.

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# Appendices

*Appendices*

## Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

### Questionnaire

Dear students,

We kindly ask you to take a few minutes to fill in this questionnaire. The information you provide us with is essential in helping us with our study we would be very grateful if you could help.

**Rubric 1:** Students perceptions about their relationship with teachers.

1- Do you think that your teacher care about your academic and social well-being?

Yes

No

2- Do you have a good relationship with your teacher?

Yes

No

3- Are you able to ask for assistance without fear of rejection or embarrassment?

Yes

No

4- How often do you feel afraid because of teachers' reactions?

Frequently

sometimes happens

never happens

5- Does your teacher make you feel excited to attend his/her lecture?

Yes

No

6- How does your teacher behave with you outside the classroom?

Friendly

Cold

Ignoring

7- How close do you feel to your teacher?

Close

Slightly close

not close

8- Is your teacher respectful towards you?

Yes

No

**Rubric 2:** Students' believes about the impact of teacher-student relationship on their learning.

1- Do you think that your relationship with your teacher affects your learning?

Yes

No

➤ If "yes", how?

.....  
.....  
.....

2- Do you sometimes think of dropping-out university because of teachers' negative behaviors?

Yes

No

3- How do you feel after a teacher addresses you loudly for disturbing class?

a) I admit my mistake and try to be attentive.

b) I feel diminished and demotivated.

c) It hurts me, but I show that I'm careless.

4- Is your teacher :

▪ Friendly and understanding.

▪ Dominant and authoritative.

▪ Strict and aggressive.

▪ Tolerant.

▪ Indifferent.

**N.B: You may select more than one answer.**

5- Does your teacher praise and encourage you?

Yes

No

➤ If "yes", how does this make you feel?

a) It motivates me to work hard.

b) It frustrates me.

c) It does not affect me.

6- When do you most enjoy the class?

a) Interesting content.

b) Friendly teacher.

c) Both.

7- What do you think about teachers who have a close relationship with their students?

a) It does not affect students learning.

b) It helps a great deal motivating students to learn.

## Appendix B: Observation Grid

	Date	Time	Place	
	Subject		Topic	
	Class		Student n°	
	Behaviour	YES	NO	Comments
Teacher	1-Friendly and understanding			
	2-Shows respect to students			
	3-Hesitating			
	4-Tolerates disorder			
	5-Well-structured lessons			
	6-Holds student's attention			
	7-Supports freedom and responsibility			
	8-Allows questions			
	9-Encourages students to react and speak			
	10-Takes personal interest in students			
	11-Gets angry against small mistakes			
	12-Press students			
	13-Smiling			
	14-Familiar with students' names			

Behaviour	YES	NO	Comments	
<b>Student</b>	1-Feel afraid and apprehensive from teacher			
	2-Provoke the teacher			
	3-Seem confused			
	4-Attentive			
	5-Enjoy the lesson			
	6-Participate			
	7-Follow teacher instructions			
	8-Autonomous			
	9-Extremely docile			
	10-Distracted			
	11-Disruptive			
	12-Uninvolved			