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**The Impact of Avatar Usage on Stress Reduction in Teaching Oral
Communication: The Case of Kasdi Merbah University, Ouargla**

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Dedication

First, I thank Allah for granting me success throughout this journey.

To the steadfast support in my entire educational path, my beloved mother.

To my dear father, who never let me lack anything and was a solid support for me.

To my five princesses, my dear sisters, sources of my joy and my support.

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running out.

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growth throughout my university journey.

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Dedication

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Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of using AI-generated avatars in reducing stress and enhance performance in oral English communication classes. The study is conducted at the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla, Algeria. Primarily, the study aims to explore how avatars can serve as a motivational and anxiety-reducing tool for students facing psychological barriers such as low confidence and fear of making mistakes. The methodology involves a three-session experimental design where students interact with a customized avatar that narrates short stories and provides speaking tips. Data are collected through student performances , with the goal of evaluating the productivity of avatars in creating a supportive learning environment. Ultimately, the findings support the hypotheses, and show that students responded positively to AI avatars, experiencing less stress, increased confidence, and improvements in vocabulary, sentence construction, listening, and speaking skills.

Keywords: AI avatar, Oral English communication, Stress, Insecurity, Oral communication skills.

List of Abbreviations

AI: Artificial intelligence

ASD: Average syllable Duration

EFL: English as a Foreign language

ELLS: English language learners

ESL: English as a Second language

ELS: English language students

JFL: Japanese as a Foreign language

NNS: Non-native speaker

NS: Native speaker

TBLT: Task -Based language Teaching

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General Introduction

1. Background of the study

Artificial intelligence (AI) has brought about a significant changes across many fields in general, and in education in particular; therefore, it has become a crucial tool, to help teachers and students in their academic journey. Meanwhile, in language learning, AI has become a game changer, especially in improving teaching and learning the English language. The development of AI tools assists learners of English to enhance their speaking skills, since speaking is one of the fundamental skills necessary for language acquisition. (Schmidt &Strasser, 2022)

Speaking skill is defined as the ability to effectively produce and communicate coherent, contextually appropriate spoken language in real time interactions, demonstrating control over pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse to convey meaning and achieve communicative purposes. That is to say, mastering these skills enables learners to hold conversations smoothly and nationally, express ideas clearly and effectively, and develop fluency and confidence in communication.

Furthermore, speaking skills are all important in providing confidence to the speaker; if a student miss one of these components, it can hinder their speaking performance. This often serves as a motivator for speaking anxiety, which impacts their performance, reduces fluency, and impairs their ability to communicate effectively. (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

2. Aim of the study

This study aims to investigate the impact of reducing stress on teaching oral expression using Avatars. The study will be conducted in the University of Kasdi Merbah, Ouargla, Al-

geria. The study will reveal the interplay between stress and oral skills, and how overcoming stress will directly affect students' performance in oral communication classes.

Furthermore, the study will propose methods on how to relieve anxiety in oral communication classes, and how can these methods be effective in achieving promising results.

3. Significance of the study

This research holds its significance in how AI can be a promising tool to overcome stress and anxiety. It sheds lights on how avatars can assist students of English in teaching oral communication and to help them to overcome difficulties compounded by psychological barriers like low confidence, fear of mistakes, and anxiety.

4. Research Questions and Hypotheses:

❖ Research questions

The present study aims to answer the following question:

➤ Can the use of avatars help students of English to overcome stress in oral communication classes?

❖ Research Hypothesis

➤ The use of avatars in oral expression classes maybe challenging to deploy, but are useful to overcome stress.

5. Methodology

5.1. Tools of data collection

The sample of this study comprises thirty (30) students of English at the department of English language and literature at the University of Kasdi Merbah. They are Second-year bachelor degree, twenty-two(22) are females, and eight(08)are males.

5.2. Procedures of data analysis

The experiment starts on January 2026, an avatar is generated using 'Heygen' app. This avatar is customized with a male appearance . The avatar will narrate three short stories, of forty-five(45) seconds about short story narrating, how to pose while talking, and how to answer questions confidently in the interview.

The experiment will be held through three (03) sessions, and by the end of each session, students will be asked to perform, on stage, a quick summary of what the avatar has taught them on how to pose. It is worth mentioning that students will be given an encouraging atmosphere to participate and to delve deeper into the activity. This will create a harmonious class interaction between students and the avatar.

Results will be concluded through the interaction of students by the end of the experiment, whether they enjoyed the avatar as a means to be interacted with, and whether they felt motivated listening to it talking and giving them pieces of advice.

6. Limitation of the study

The duration of the experiment (3 months) might be short. Effective results might not be revealed clearly compared to when done in a long period of time (more than one year). This is related to academic issues, as the period of preparing a master dissertation in the University of Kasdi Merbah, should be roughly 6 months. Moreover, the sample size might also be a limitation, it would be much more effective if the experiment is performed to more than 100 students, divided into many classrooms or groups.

7. Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation will be divided into two chapters, a theoretical part and a practical part. The first chapter will introduce the main definitions about foundational concepts of technological pedagogy; English speaking skills, teaching oral communication skills, the influence of stress and emotions on learning, avatar in language teaching, and benefits of using avatars in language learning.

Regarding the second chapter, the analysis and discussion will cover experimental design, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of results related to the implementation of avatars in oral expression classes.

CHAPTER ONE : THEORETICAL PART

1. AI Avatars

The term "avatar" comes from Sanskrit, where it originally meant the descent of a divine entity into human form, according to the Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology (Onions, 1966). In the world of virtual spaces, Peterson (2005) offers this take: "Avatars are online representations of the self in a virtual world (Kim, 2000) and are designed to boost interaction in those digital environments" (p. 30). Avatars play a crucial role in AI-powered education, drawing upon diverse theories of human-computer interaction and second language acquisition.

Recent technological advancements have led to the development of increasingly anthropomorphic and lifelike AI avatars, facilitated by improvements in speech synthesis, speech-driven lip synchronization, and speech-to-facial animation. Interaction with virtual avatars has long been a common feature in gaming environments; however, this trend is now gaining prominence within educational settings (Fink et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024), where learners engage with virtual tutors or instructors. Furthermore, such interactions are expanding into clinical contexts, involving virtual therapists or trainers (Fink et al., 2024; Kestin et al., 2025; Lee & Lee, 2023; Rus-Calafell et al., 2025). Over time, the depiction of avatars has evolved from fictional characters and simple animated figures to highly realistic, human-like entities.

❖ **Definition of Stress:**

In the context of language learning, stress refers to the psychological and physiological response to the challenges and pressures of acquiring a new language, which can affect motivation, focus, and overall performance (Skehan, 1998).

1.1. Technological pedagogy (educational technology)

For many years, technology has been an integral component of education, and today, its application is virtually synonymous with the teaching and learning of ESL worldwide (Ahmadi, 2018). Among the benefits that technology offers are enhancing the teaching and learning process and overcoming geographical limitations.

Technological pedagogy refers to the integration and application of technological tools, resources, and systems to enhance teaching and learning processes. It involves designing, implementing, and evaluating educational experiences that leverage technology to improve engagement, understanding, and for students.

Technological pedagogy in language learning involves integrating digital tools and resources to enhance the acquisition of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It aims to make language learning more interactive, engaging, and accessible through technology (Chapelle, 2009). Educational technology is rooted in various educational theories and models, including:

Constructivism: is a learning theory that posits learners actively construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflection. It emphasizes the importance of prior knowledge, social interactions, and contextual learning in the educational process (Piaget, 1950; Vygotsky, 1978).

Behaviourism: is a learning theory that emphasizes observable behaviours and the environmental stimuli that elicit them. It posits that learning occurs through conditioning processes, with little consideration for internal mental states. Behaviourism dominated psychological and educational thought in the early to mid-20th century (Watson, 1913; Skinner, 1953)..

Cognitivism: A learning theory that focuses on the internal mental processes involved in learning, such as memory, thinking, problem-solving, and information processing. It emerged as a response to behaviourism, emphasizing the active role of learners in constructing understanding through mental operations (Miller & Gildea, 1985; Piaget, 1952).

Connectivism: a relatively recent learning theory that emphasizes the role of social networks, technology, and the interconnected nature of knowledge in the learning process. Proposed by George Siemens (2005), it suggests that learning occurs through the process of forming and navigating connections within a net-worked environment, making knowledge a distributed and dynamic entity.

1.1.1. Benefits of Educational technology

The use of educational technology has therefore become important for today's learners because it offers them an opportunity to learn at a much faster pace than they would if they were not using such tools and programs.

Accessibility: It helps students in faraway or poor areas access education.

Personalization: It allows lessons to be customized to fit each student's needs.

Engagement: Using videos, games, and interactive tools makes learning fun.

Efficiency: it makes teaching and managing school work easier and faster.

Lifelong learning: it supports people in learning new things at any age, even out-side traditional schools.

In summary, integrating technology into language education is essential because students today are eager to use digital tools. Technology makes learning more engaging,

personalized, and accessible. It benefits students in remote areas, allows for tailored lessons, and promotes active participation. Given that students prefer using technology, its use can enhance the effectiveness of language teaching and create more inclusive and modern learning environments. As George Couros stated, "Technology will not replace great teachers, but technology in the hands of great teachers can be transformative."

2. English speaking skills

Nowadays, the world has become a small, interconnected village, within which people communicate with each other in a common language. Communicative skills have foundational impact and one must master oral skills to get a better chance in securing good communication links. In that, speaking skill is the most important skill among the four key language skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Out of the four key skills in English as a Second Language (ESL), speaking is considered the most essential for acquiring a second language. However, ironically, it tends to be the least emphasized, as ESL instructors frequently rely on repetitive drills and memorization when teaching speaking skills (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014; Dewi et al., 2016; Rao, 2019).

Because of the high stakes involved in real-life communication, the most critical aspect of the speaking skill is fluency.

2.1. Fluency

Bernstein et al. (2010) define fluency primarily by the speed at which spoken language units, such as words, are produced, measured in terms of time (p. 1241). Hirotani et al. (2012) identified five key fluency metrics in their study of learners studying Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL). These metrics include the total number of syllables spoken, the

number of pauses, the speech rate (syllables spoken per second), the articulation rate (syllables per phonation time), and the Average Syllable Duration (ASD), which represents the speaking time allocated per syllable (Spring et al., 2019).

2.2. Grammar

English grammar is the rules that govern word order to form grammatically correct sentences that are meaningful. They are tense usage, sentence structure, subject verb agreement. In addition to this, grammar in conversation is not an issue of learning rules but a matter of applying them naturally in actual conversations. It is the skill of conveying your thoughts clearly, something that everyone interested in speaking English fluently needs to learn (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999) .

Gan (2012) reports that some ESL learners believe that to maintain grammatical accuracy in speaking, they need to consciously think about the relevant grammar rules before speaking. When they do not have enough time to think, they often make mistakes based on their intuition or “feel” for correctness. This suggests that limited thinking time can impact learners’ grammar and accuracy. However, from a fluency perspective, speakers may still sound more fluent even if they make errors. Therefore, achieving an appropriate balance between grammatical accuracy and fluency is essential for effective speaking skills.

2.3. Pronunciation

Many previous studies have shown that ESL/EFL learners tend to prefer native speaker (NS) English teachers for pronunciation instruction (see Guerra, 2017; Lasa-gabaster & Sierra, 2005; Levis et al., 2017). However, they often favour non-native speaker (NNS) teachers for other aspects of language learning, such as grammar, strategy training, and overall teaching to meet students’ needs and foster commitment. Although Gan (2012) found

that some learners find it challenging to navigate pronunciation differences between British and American English, it is widely acknowledged that exposure to native speakers remains an effective way to enhance ESL learners' pronunciation skills.

2.4. Vocabulary

Gan (2012) stated that many ESL learners consider limited vocabulary to be a key factor affecting their speaking fluency. Unlike writing, speaking provides less time to think, which sometimes prevents learners from expressing themselves accurately and effectively. Vocabulary is one of the major concerns of foreign language learning, it verifies to play an important role in oral communication. It has gained the attention of a lot of researchers. Schmitt (2008) has explained that vocabulary learning is essential as it is a vital indication of language proficiency.

3. Teaching oral communication skills

Oral communication involves the verbal exchange of information and ideas between a sender and a receiver. As outlined in the Oracy Skills Framework (Mercer et al., 2017), the key aspects essential for effective spoken language use are categorized into four domains: physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social-emotional. Oral communication skills mean the ability to speak fluently, accurately, and appropriately in a given context, which is very important with respect to academic and professional success. In the process of learning an English language, speaking proficiency is paramount as one of the most essential constituents for holistic language development.

However, a good number of the English Language Learners (ELLs) fail to have and demonstrate strong oral communicative skills even after several years of language training

(Rich and Byram, 2001; Teng, 2020). In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the interest of using as part of the development of communicative English and skills.

3.1. The Significance of Developing Oral Communication Skills

Developing skilled spoken abilities is crucial for students' educational growth, career advancement, and cultural awareness (Byram, 1997; Littlewood, 2004). By mastering effective speech habits, people can express themselves confidently, engage meaningfully in conversations, and interact successfully across various social settings.

3.2. Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Oral Communication

To effectively improve oral communication skills, different teaching methods are suggested, especially task-based language teaching (TBLT) and group learning activities (Nunan, 2004; Ellis, 2003). These approaches give learners real chances to speak and work with others, which helps them become more fluent and confident.

Also, using technology such as language apps, online discussion tools, and virtual exchange pro-grams creates immersive learning environments that further support the development of speaking skills and understanding of different cultures (Godwin-Jones, 2018; Li & Cumming, 2018). In our study, we also aim to investigate the potential of AI-driven avatars as a strategic tool for teaching oral communication, offering innovative and interactive opportunities for learners to practice speaking.

4. Influence of Stress and emotions in the learning process

The influence of stress and emotions in the learning process is critical factor that profoundly affects student's ability to acquire and use knowledge effectively, especially in Language Learning Contexts such as oral expression. Stress, often manifested as anxiety or

fear, can create psychological barriers that hinder cognitive functioning, reduce concentration, and negatively impact memory retention.

In oral communication, learners frequently experience anxiety related to public speaking, fear of making mistakes, or a negative evaluation by peers and instructors. These emotional states increase learners' affective filters, a concept introduced by Krashen (1982), which blocks language input from being processed efficiently. Consequently, high stress levels can lead to poorer performance, decreased motivation and avoidance of speaking opportunities, all of which undermine learning outcomes.

Emotions, both positive and negative, play an integral role in shaping the learning environment and students' engagement. Positive emotions such as confidence, enjoyment, and a sense of achievement facilitate a more receptive mental state, promote risk taking in language use, and enhance long term retention of skills (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014).

Conversely, negative emotions like anxiety, frustration, and embarrassment can disrupt cognitive processes, leading to diminished participation and slowed progress. Research shows that managing these emotional factors is essential for optimizing learning experiences. For instance, employing supportive teaching methods and creating a psychologically safe classroom environment can reduce stress, thereby improving learner's oral expression and communicative competence (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1999) .

In the context of this dissertation, the use of systems on AI-driven pedagogical tools specifically targets the reduction of stress, fear and negative emotions associated with oral expression classes. By providing a virtual, less intimidating platform for practice, avatars can lower learners' anxiety, encourage active participation, and foster positive emotional experiences. This approach aligns with the increasing recognition of emotional and

psychological dimensions in language education, emphasizing that effective teaching must address both cognitive and affective needs to maximize learning success.

Therefore, understanding and addressing the influence of stress and emotions is fundamental to enhancing oral communication skills particularly within the innovative framework of avatar mediated learning at the University of Kasdi Merbah.

5. Avatars in language teaching

The use of avatars in language education has progressed from basic profile pictures to advanced, AI-driven digital personas that revolutionize student interaction with a new language. By offering a "safe" and approachable face for communication, avatars help bridge the gap between traditional textbook exercises and real world fluency, fostering more engaging and confident language practice. AI-based avatars can serve three primary educational roles: learning, assisting, and mentoring (Wollny et al., 2021). The role of learning involves facilitating skill acquisition and assessing competencies. Assisting pertains to supporting or simplifying tasks to enhance the learner's experience. Mentoring focuses on nurturing students' individual growth and development.

5.1 Benefits of Using Avatars in Language Learning

A. Reduced Anxiety and Fear of Making Mistakes

One of the most significant advantages of using avatars in language education is their ability to create a safe, non judgmental environment where learners can practice speaking without fear of embarrassment. Unlike human interlocutors, avatars do not judge or criticize, allowing students to experiment with new vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structures

freely. This comfort encourages more spontaneous and frequent practice, which is essential for language acquisition. As a result, learners build confidence gradually, transforming their approach from tentative to confident speakers, ultimately accelerating their journey toward fluency. We have observed in our study that students interacting with AI avatars tend to forget about anxiety and fear (Nunnari et al., 2025).

B. Increased Engagement and Motivation

Using avatars in language learning makes the process more interactive and fun, capturing learners' attention and keeping them motivated. Avatars can simulate real life conversations and scenarios, allowing students to practice in a dynamic and engaging environment. This immersive experience sparks curiosity and enthusiasm, encouraging learners to participate more actively. As a result, students are more likely to persist through challenges, enjoy the learning journey, and achieve better language proficiency (Wang & Wu, 2020).

C. Increased Consistency and Flexibility

Using avatars in language learning makes it easier for learners to practice anytime and anywhere. This flexibility allows students to fit language practice into their daily routines, such as in the morning, during breaks, or at night. Avatars also provide a consistent learning experience, so learners can repeat lessons, get the same feedback, and see their progress over time. This helps learners improve their skills steadily and stay motivated, without being limited by time or location (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008).

In conclusion, the integration of avatars into language teaching offers numerous benefits that enhance the overall learning experience. They help reduce learners' anxiety by providing a safe and non judgmental environment for practice, which encourages more

frequent and confident speaking. Additionally, avatars increase student engagement and motivation by making learning more interactive and enjoyable through realistic scenarios.

Furthermore, avatars offer greater flexibility and consistency, allowing learners to practice at their convenience and track their progress over time. As Wollny et al. (2021) state, “AI-driven avatars serve as versatile tools that support various educational roles, from learning and assistance to mentoring, thereby transforming language education into a more accessible and engaging process.” Overall, avatars are valuable tools that support more effective, engaging, and accessible language education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated that the integration of AI and personalized educational methods plays a crucial role in transforming language learning experiences, particularly in reducing stress and enhancing speaking skills. AI-powered avatars create safe, engaging, and flexible environments that help learners overcome anxiety, build confidence, and improve their oral communication. By leveraging advanced technology and innovative approaches, educators can design inclusive and motivating language learning spaces tailored to individual needs.

Literature Review

Introduction

The integration of AI avatars in teaching English within university settings presents promising opportunities to enhance student engagement and reduce stress. Traditional teaching methods, while effective for many, often fall short in addressing the diverse emotional and psychological needs of learners, especially in high-pressure environments. With the advent of AI-driven technologies, innovative approaches have emerged that offer personalized, adaptive learning experiences tailored to individual student needs. This section examines existing research on AI avatars in language education, focusing on their potential to create more inclusive and less stressful learning environments. It also aims to identify gaps in current studies, highlighting areas where further investigation can optimize the use of AI avatars to support student well-being and academic success.

Moussalli and Cardoso (2020) examine how smart speakers like Amazon Echo can supplement traditional L2 classrooms by providing additional opportunities for input and output practice. Their previous research indicated that Echo facilitates stress-free language exposure and speaking practice, though initial challenges arose for beginner learners with accented speech, affecting intelligibility. However, their recent study demonstrates that Echo effectively recognizes and processes non-native accented speech across different proficiency levels, with learners reporting successful interactions. The findings suggest that voice-controlled AI like Echo can serve as a valuable tool for enhancing autonomous language practice, complementing classroom instruction and addressing input/output limitations.

Hirata (2023) investigates the effectiveness of avatar-assisted virtual classrooms in reducing anxiety among Japanese university students during spoken English presentations. Using a self-reported survey, the study compares students' responses across three learning environments: traditional in-person classes, Zoom-based online classes, and avatar-based virtual classrooms via Gather. The results indicate that avatar-assisted environments significantly alleviate speaking anxiety and boost students' confidence, outperforming Zoom-based sessions. These findings suggest that avatar technology can foster a more inclusive and less intimidating language learning environment.

Fink and Ertl (2024) explore how AI-based avatars are transforming education by offering innovative teaching and learning experiences. They discuss the potential benefits of these avatars, including personalized, contextualized instruction and increased engagement. However, the authors also highlight significant challenges, such as the risk of misinformation and data privacy concerns. Their analysis underscores the importance of addressing these issues to harness the full potential of AI-driven educational avatars effectively.

Lin and Yu (2025) investigated how the perceived embodiment of AI-generated characters such as teachers, peers, and advisors in educational videos influences students' acceptance and adoption of technology. Their study, involving 1,042 higher education students, found that four sub-dimensions of embodiment human likeness, credibility, learning facilitation, and engagement significantly predicted students' perceived ease of use and usefulness of virtual teachers. Interestingly, human likeness did not significantly influence perceived ease of use in their context. The study also highlighted that perceived systemic interactivity and the impact on learning processes served as key mediators. Qualitative analysis revealed student concerns regarding classroom management, technical issues, interpersonal interaction, and

developmental support, emphasizing the importance of embodiment and interactivity in virtual teacher design within language learning environments.

Conclusion

The reviewed studies underscored the potential of AI avatars to transform language learning environments by reducing student stress and increasing engagement. However, several important gaps remain, particularly in understanding how AI avatars can be effectively integrated into diverse educational contexts and tailored to individual learner needs. Future research should explore the development of more sophisticated, personalized AI avatar systems that adapt to students' emotional and cognitive states. Additionally, combining AI avatars with other emerging technologies, such as virtual reality and gamified learning, could further enhance the inclusivity and effectiveness of language education. Addressing these gaps will be essential in optimizing AI avatar applications to create supportive, engaging, and stress-reducing learning experiences for students in the English language classroom.

CHAPTER TWO: PRACTICAL PART

1. Case study: AI-Based Language Learning to Alleviate Stress and Enhance Speaking Skills among ELS.

1.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the practical component of the study, which aims to enhance English speaking skills by reducing stress to learners through the use of AI avatars an innovative technological tool designed to facilitate language acquisition. The selected activities for this research focus on assessing students' speaking abilities while simultaneously examining the impact of stress on their performance.

Additionally, the study seeks to evaluate the extent to which AI avatars can influence and improve these skills. The experiment was conducted over several weeks to monitor changes in students' stress levels and to observe any corresponding improvements in their speaking proficiency. The overarching goal is to overcome psychological barriers such as anxiety and to foster greater confidence in speaking, thereby contributing to more effective language learning outcomes.

1.2. Participant Profile

The case study consisted of thirty (30) second-year bachelor's degree students specializing in English at the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Kasdi Merbah. Among them, twenty-two (22) were females and eight (8) were males. All participants were enrolled in the same academic level, and their participation was voluntary. The students had varying levels of familiarity with technological tools, which influenced the implementation of AI-based instructional activities. The study aimed to observe how these students engaged with the activities, and necessary adjustments were made based on their responsiveness, interest, and comfort to ensure effective learning and meaningful interaction with the instructional content.

1.3. Methodology

1.3.1. Tool Used

"HeyGen" is a platform that specializes in creating AI-generated videos and virtual avatars. It allows users to produce videos with realistic AI avatars for various purposes such as education and communication. In fact, we incorporated it into the development of several instructional activities. For our study, we utilized "HeyGen" to animate and enhance our activities.

1.3.2. Learning Activities

The study focused exclusively on developing speaking skills, specifically targeting fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The activities were designed to enhance these aspects through interactive and communicative tasks.

1.3.3. Duration

The experiment was held in a duration of four weeks, with 45-minutes for each session.

1.3.4. Assessment Criteria

The students' interactions and responses to the avatar, as well as their active participation in the exercises, were systematically observed and analyzed to assess engagement levels and the effectiveness of the instructional activities. This evaluation provided insights into their communicative behaviours and facilitated the measurement of progress in their speaking skills within the experimental framework.

1.4. Observations and Findings

1.4.1. Engagement

The students' reactions and active involvement in the activities exemplified a significant level of engagement, especially among those who initially experienced shyness and nervousness. Their progressive participation reflected increased confidence and

motivation, highlighting the effectiveness of the instructional approach in fostering a supportive learning environment and promoting meaningful skill development.

1.4.2. Language Progress

The participants in this scientific experiment showed notable improvements, providing valuable insights for our research. Their interactions indicated that the avatar was an effective tool in enhancing their language performance. Additionally, it was observed that some participants possessed strong abilities; however, stress acted as a barrier preventing them from fully demonstrating their potential. This highlights the importance of addressing emotional factors alongside technical tools to optimize language development.

1.5. Analysis of the activities

Activity One: Narrating a short story

Duration: 45 minutes

Overview

In this activity, we introduced a short story told by one of the avatars that we created using Hey Gen. We named it 'Jake'. This is to observe how students would react to an AI presence during the session. When we entered the classroom and announced the video, the students became curious and calm, immediately adjusting their posture to pay attention.

We have divided the video into three (03) phases. After each phase, we stop the video and we interact with students for more clarifications, open conversation about what did they understand, and open discussions related to oral communication classes.

It is essential to note that the short story was about a rock climber, we did not give him a name, because we wanted to make this part of the conversation and interaction

with students.

Phase 01: Exposition

As we started the video, every student focused their attention on the screen. They listened carefully to the narration while watching the accompanying images. A few students reacted actively by taking quick notes on new vocabulary, while others remained focused on the visuals to grasp the context.

Phase 2: Plot

During this segment, several students showed excitement as they recognized familiar concepts. Others began to engage more deeply as the plot progressed. We occasionally paused the video to check understanding with questions such as: "What did you understand about this part?" or "Could anyone explain this concept further?" The students eagerly raised their hands to share their ideas.

Phase 3: Conclusion

In the final seconds, the video summarized the story's meaning and moral. Having fully grasped the narrative, the students listened intently. Once the video finished, they broke into applause, showing their appreciation for the technology. We concluded with reflective questions such as: "Did you enjoy the video?" and "What did you learn from the story?" The students responded enthusiastically, sharing insightful thoughts and feelings about the experience.

To end this with, we asked them to think for a name for the rock climber, Arabic names that reflect courage, temerity, and endurance. We divide them into five (05) groups, each group should also provide us with English signification of the chosen

name.

The table below shows the suggested names students gave to the rock climber in the short story:

Groups	Suggested Arabic name	English Signification
Group 01	Ra'ad	It signifies thunder, students believe this name is strongly associated with climbing mountains, and its holder should be brave.
Group 02	Sakhr	This name signifies a rock, it reflects how bold and fearless the hero is.
Group 03	Leith	It signifies lion, and it is a common name that reflects bravery in Arabic culture.
Group 04	Miqdam	It means the one who steps forwards and has no fear inside his heart
Group 05	Basila	A female name that signifies a fearless and a brave woman.

Table 01. Suggested names for the short story protagonist in activity one

Discussion of the table

As one can see, most of students have participated to provide us with names they liked for the protagonist of the short story. They all had their reasons behind such naming. Some of them recalled names from Arabic folklores, some just picked a name based on its literal meaning as with group 04. As for group 05, most of them were female, they have chosen the name 'Basila' to show that not only men could be Rock Mountains, but also women.

Activity two: Copy body movements.

Duration: 45 minutes

Objective:

Teach students how to recognize, practice and use body movements to improve physical awareness.

Teach students how to be confident when they speaking in their classroom or in public speaking.

Materials Needed:

- Ai avatar video.
- Note books and pens for notes.
- Body movements (hands, arms, feet...)

Introduction: 10 minutes

1. warm- up:

- Start with a friendly greeting.

- Then, a simple warm up movements to prepare the body (arm swing, shoulder roller).

Explain:

Body language and movements play an important role in showing how we feel and what we think when we speaking. Learning and using our body language help us be confident. We can better express ourselves and also understand how others are feeling.

Overview

In this activity, students engaged with an AI avatar designed to teach the physical mechanics of confident communication. The goal was to move beyond theoretical understanding into physical mastery. By using a digital mentor, the students felt a sense of "safe practice," allowing them to focus on their body language without the immediate pressure of a human audience.

Phase-by-Phase Interaction Analysis

The session was structured to transition students from observers to active practitioners and, finally, to peer-coaches.

Phase 01: Observation & Internalization

Students watched the avatar's instructions on commanding a room. They focused on specific cues: uncrossing arms, showing palms, and maintaining a solid stance.

Students internalized the "mental template" of what a confident speaker looks like, preparing them for the physical rehearsal.

Phase 02: Behavioural Modeling.

We repeated the video and requested that students copy the movements in real-time.

This phase turned passive listening into active muscle memory. Students practiced planting their feet shoulder-width apart and using hand gestures to emphasize points.

Phase 03: Peer-to-Peer Accountability & Correction

As the activity progressed, a significant shift occurred. Students began to observe one another's performance while following the video.

They became aware of each other's faults. Instead of ignoring mistakes, they actively warned and corrected one another if a peer swayed or crossed their arms. This showed they had fully grasped the "correct" criteria for the activity.

- **Technical & Behavioural Synthesis**

The table below breaks down the specific techniques students were practicing and correcting in each other based on the avatar's instructions:

Movement Technique	Puopose explained by avatar	Student observation& correction
Open posture	Signals approachability and honesty.	Students checked if peers had their arms and uncrossed.
Hand Gestures	Builds trust by showing palms.	Students corrected "closed" hands or lack

		of emphasis.
Eye Contact	Makes the audience feel involved.	Students prompted each other to look around the room.
Solid Stance	Stops swaying and shows stability.	Students "warned" those who were swaying or off-balance.

Table 02. Analysis of Student Mastery and Peer-Correction of Non-Verbal Communication Cues.

Discussion of the table

The most significant outcome of this experiment was a notable shift in authority within the classroom. The fact that students were able to identify "mistakes" in their peers demonstrated that they had not only watched the video but also mastered the criteria being assessed. Additionally, the act of students warning each other reflected a high level of comfort and collaboration, transforming the classroom dynamic from a collection of individual learners into a supportive coaching circle. The use of the avatar served as a "standardized model," enabling the teacher to facilitate social interaction and peer correction, rather than acting as the sole source of critique.

Activity Three (03): Interview

Duration: 45 minutes

Overview

In the concluding activity, the same avatar was maintained throughout the experiment to facilitate familiarity and ease interaction for the students, thereby enhancing their engagement in the activity. The primary focus of this activity was to develop students' confidence in responding to interview questions.

The session was structured into three distinct phases, each lasting 15 minutes, totalling a duration of 45 minutes.

The first phase: Observation and Guided Practice

It involved a combination of video observation and guided practice. Students watched an instructional video featuring the avatar, followed by the presentation of sample responses to various interview questions. This phase aimed to familiarize students with effective response strategies and set a foundation for active participation.

The second phase: Collaborative Role-Playing Exercise

Students were provided with sample interview questions and instructed to collaborate with their peers. This collaborative exercise lasted for 10 minutes, during which students engaged in role-playing and peer-to-peer practice to reinforce their understanding and application of appropriate interview.

The third phase: Independent Response and Practical Application

It encouraged active participation through volunteer selection. Five (05) students, who expressed interest during the initial session, were invited to the teacher's desk. During this segment, they were presented with a new video featuring the same avatar, now posed with interview questions without sample responses.

The students were given the task to answer these questions based on the skills and knowledge acquired in the preceding phases. This structured approach aimed to build confidence and provide practical experience in interview response techniques within a supportive environment.

The following table represents the answers of the five students. Each number in the table corresponds to the response given by a specific student. By analyzing these answers, we can compare how each student approached the questions and identify any common trends or differences. This information helps us understand the overall performance of the class and can guide us in providing targeted support where needed.

Interview Question	Student's answers
1 - Can you tell me about yourself?	1."I have a background in marketing and enjoy applying my skills to help achieve team objectives". 2."I consider myself a reliable and hard-working individual who takes pride in de-

	<p>livering quality results".</p> <p>3."I am passionate about my work and always strive to improve and learn new things".</p> <p>4."I have developed excellent time management skills, which I am eager to bring to your organization to ensure efficient and effective work".</p> <p>5. "My strong command of the English language has equipped me with effective communication skills that will help me succeed in this role".</p>
<p>2. Why do you want to work here?</p>	<p>1. "I want to be part of a company that values innovation and creativity".</p> <p>2. "I believe this company offers the opportunities and environment I need to develop my skills".</p> <p>3."I am looking for a role where I can grow professionally and contribute meaningfully".</p> <p>4. "Your organization's mission aligns with</p>

	<p>my personal values and career goals".</p> <p>5. "I am impressed by your company's achievements and want to be part of your future success".</p>
<p>3. What are your strengths?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I have excellent communication skills, which help me work well with others". 2. "I am a quick learner and adapt easily to new environments". 3."I am a problem-solver who remains calm under pressure". 4. "I am dedicated and committed to achieving high standards in my work". 5. "I am highly organized and able to manage multiple tasks effectively".
<p>4. How do you handle stressful situations?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I prioritize my tasks and stay focused on solutions rather than problems". 2. "I remain calm and assess the situation carefully before taking action". 3. "I find that open communication helps me manage stress effectively".

	<p>4."I break down complex issues into manageable steps to resolve them efficiently".</p> <p>5."I use stress as motivation to stay productive and meet deadlines".</p>
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Table 03. Student Responses to Interview Questions in Activity Three

Discussion of the table

Overall, the activity's structure aligns with best practices in experiential learning, combining observation, collaboration, and active participation. Maintaining the same avatar throughout the activity provided consistency, making students more comfortable and engaged. Additionally, analyzing five student's responses, as shown the table, offers valuable insights into their strengths and areas of improvement, enabling targeted support.

The initial question, "Can you tell me about yourself?" elicited diverse responses from the students, predominantly focusing on their backgrounds and skills. In contrast, the responses to the second question revealed varied motivations among the students, highlighting individual differences in their reasons and aspirations.

The third question received particularly impressive answers, with all students responding in an ambitious manner that reflected their aspirations and future goals. Lastly, the responses to the fourth question demonstrated that students possess the ability to manage stress effectively in different situations, showcasing their resilience and adaptability.

This approach fosters a positive learning environment where students can develop essential interview skills, feel supported, and gradually become more confident in their abilities.

1.6. Description and Objectives of Classroom Activities

In activity one, short story, the goal was to assess students' comprehension and interaction skills within the classroom, as well as their acceptance of avatars as an effective teaching tool. In activity two, Copy body movements, it designed to enhance both physical and social confidence skills. Recognizing and practicing body movements can increase physical awareness, making individuals more mindful of gestures, posture, and overall presence. This can improve non-verbal communication and lead to more engaging interactions. Additionally, building confidence in speaking whether in the classroom or during public presentations helps in expressing ideas more clearly and assertively.

In activity Three, interview, it was primarily aimed at building students' response confidence. It focused on practical skill development by encouraging students to articulate their thoughts clearly and assertively in a simulated interview. Overall, the approach strategically combined familiarity through maintaining the same avatar with targeted skill-building. This combination was designed to enhance student engagement and boost their confidence in oral communication skills.

1.7. Challenges

One of the challenges encountered during the study was limited time availability and lack of adequate halls.

1.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated that the integration of AI and personalized educational methods plays a crucial role in transforming language learning experiences, particularly in reducing stress and enhancing speaking skills. AI-powered avatars create safe,

engaging, and flexible environments that help learners overcome anxiety, build confidence, and improve their oral communication skills.

General Conclusion

This study explored the effectiveness of AI avatars in oral communication classes to help reduce students' stress and improve their speaking confidence. Research on VR for language learning emphasizes how avatars influence learners' anxiety, confidence, motivation, and engagement. It has been primarily found that avatars assist language learners by lowering their affective filters and reducing anxiety, as they provide a sense of safety by allowing learners to avoid being physically seen by others. Additionally, the research highlights the benefits of using AI avatars in language teaching for authentic learning experiences .

Previous studies suggest that avatars enhance engagement and presence while alleviating negative emotions such as stress, low confidence, and anxiety that hinder language development. The practical part of this study aimed to evaluate the impact of AI avatars in oral communication classes through planned exercises. The results showed that students responded positively to AI avatars, experiencing less stress, increased confidence, and improvements in vocabulary, sentence construction, listening, and speaking skills .

Overall , the use of avatars proves beneficial during speaking activities because it boosts learners' confidence and encourages them to take risks in the language without fear of losing face. Moreover, successful interactions with avatars help students build self-confidence and a sense of achievement, which fosters more autonomous learning.

This study has shown that the integration of AI avatars in oral communication classes, changed the traditional didactic teaching methods, because it plunges the

learners into real-life situations where they are expected to participate, think and then react, enhancing the acquisition of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It aims to make language learning more interactive, reducing stress emotions and boosting confidence among learners, by allowing individuals to create their virtual representations.

All in all, the reviewed studies underscore the significant potential of AI avatars in reducing stress and anxiety among students in language education. They suggest that avatars can foster a more inclusive and a less intimidating learning environment, thereby encouraging autonomous language practice. In a similar vein, the study proves fruitful in providing new insights into how the strategic use of avatars can effectively alleviate anxiety and enhance speaking skills in language learning.

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Appendix 01



Figure 01 : Avatars image in videos

Avatar's name : Mr.Jake

Generated by : "Hey Gen "

Appendix 02

Oral communication activities

Activity One: *Narrating a short story*

Duration: 45 minutes

Phase 01: Exposition (15 minutes)

Phase 02: Plot (15 minutes)

Phase 03: Conclusion (15minutes)

Questions:

- Did you enjoy the video?
- what did you learn from the story?

Appendix 03

Activity_Two: *Copy body movements*

Duration:45 minutes

Obejectives:

-Teach students how to recognize, practice and use body movements to improve physical awareness.

-Teach students how to be confident when they speaking in their classroom or in public speaking.

Materials Needed

- Ai avatar video.

- Note books and pens for notes.

- Body movements (hands, arms, feet...)

Introduction (15minutes)

Greeting and warm-up (5 minutes)

- Start with a friendly greeting.

- Then, a simple warm up movements to prepare the body (arm swing, shoulder roller).

Explain (10minutes)

Phase 01: Observation and Internalization (15 minutes)

Phase 02:BehaviouralModelling(15minutes)

Phase 03: Peer-to-Peer Accountability and Correction (15minutes)

Appendix 04

Activity Three: *Interview*

Duration:45 minutes

The first phase: Observation and Guided Practice (15minutes)

The second phase: Collaborative Role-Playing Exercise (15 minutes)

The third phase: Independent Response and Practical Application (15 minutes)

Interview Questions:

- Can you tell me about yourself ?
- Why do you want to work here ?
- What are your strengths ?
- How do you handle stressful situations ?

Résumé de l'étude

Ce mémoire s'est intéressé à l'étude de l'importance et de l'efficacité de l'utilisation de vidéos basées sur l'intelligence artificielle via l'avatar éducatif pour réduire la peur et le stress chez les étudiants lors des cours d'expression orale, ainsi que pour renforcer leur confiance en eux. Étant donné que la majorité des étudiants souffrent de ce problème, l'étude a mis en évidence l'importance de la technologie éducative et sa contribution au développement de l'apprentissage, ainsi que l'importance de la compétence orale pour assurer une communication efficace en anglais. Elle a également souligné le rôle de l'avatar comme assistant dans l'enseignement de la langue. La partie pratique de la recherche a porté sur une expérience utilisant des vidéos d'intelligence artificielle via l'avatar, visant à développer la compétence orale et à renforcer la confiance en soi des étudiants. Les résultats finaux ont montré que l'avatar est un outil précieux qui soutient un enseignement plus efficace, plus attrayant et offrant de meilleures possibilités d'accès à la langue.

Mots-clés : Avatar - Intelligence artificielle - Peur et stress - Technologie éducative.

مستخلص الدراسة

تطرقت هذه الرسالة إلى دراسة مدى أهمية وفعالية استخدام فيديوهات الذكاء الاصطناعي عبر الافتار التعليمي لتقليل الخوف والتوتر لدى الطلاب في حصص التعبير الشفوي، وتعزيز ثقتهم بأنفسهم. ونظرًا لأن معظم الطلاب يعانون من هذه المشكلة، استعرضت الدراسة أهمية التكنولوجيا التعليمية ومدى مساهمتها في تطوير عملية التعلم، بالإضافة إلى أهمية مهارة التحدث في تحقيق التواصل الفعال في اللغة الإنجليزية، ودور الافتار كمساعد في تدريس اللغة. ركز الجانب التطبيقي من البحث على تجربة استخدام فيديوهات الذكاء الاصطناعي عبر الافتار بهدف تنمية مهارة التحدث وتعزيز الثقة بالنفس لدى الطلاب. وأسفرت النتائج النهائية عن أن الافتار أداة قيمة تدعم تعليمًا أكثر فعالية وجاذبية، وتوفر إمكانيات أكبر للوصول إلى اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرمز التمثيلي "الافتار" - الذكاء الاصطناعي - الخوف والتوتر - التكنولوجيا التعليمية.