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**The Role of Teacher-Student Relationship
In Enhancing Learning:
Case of Second year English LMD Students at Naama
University Centre**

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Fulfilment for the Requirements of the Degree of Master in Language Studies

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Dedications

*I dedicate this humble work to all members of
my small and large family
And to all professors of English at the University
Centre of Naama*

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First and for most we should as we do acknowledge our work for the most merciful and helpful of all , our creature Allah for if without his help we would not be here. I am deeply indebted to all those who have offered us some beneficial remarks. In particular, gratitude is expressed to Dr.Nabila ElHadjSaid for her guidance, insight and patience. We must also record our debt to all the English language teachers.

Abstract

The objective of this current study is to investigate how a positive and supportive relationship between teachers and students in the classroom can develop the learning process. Positive bonds between teachers and students can help motivating students, engaging them in the learning process and improving their performance. This research relies on quantitative data as the primary data collection methods using questionnaires for both teachers and students and the classroom observation. The results show that teachers and students share a supportive and kind relationship between them and that interaction is essential to the teacher-student relationship. This positive bond motivates students to become more interested in learning. Students benefit and are motivated when their teachers create a safe and smooth environment. Also, the methods and strategies that teachers use, makes students feel engaged and stimulated to participate in the learning process. The students have in their mind that a positive relationship with their teachers positively impacts their interest and motivation.

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General Introduction

The English language is universal that people worldwide like to learn and speak correctly. Its globalization lies in its international use since it plays a crucial role in many fields such as science, technology, education, politics...

In university, researchers are seeking to enhance learners and improve their level in English as a foreign language through innovative and effective methods and strategies.

Relationships are regarded as the main way to achieve success. The ability of interacting effectively with others has a great impact on success or failure of individuals. To be effective, many professionals such as politicians, social workers and teachers call for social skills.

Teaching is considered a hard and challenging social activity in our society with the vital goal of training students to acquire knowledge, social values and skills in order to apply and integrate them in the community. It is generally approved that good teaching entails good communication between teacher and students and also among students, the best output in a classroom. Stems from effective co-operation between the teacher and the students. Consequently, teachers' roles can be essential in the language learning. Teachers need to be positive and supportive. A helpful teacher is one who creates capably a positive classroom and a smooth atmosphere which helps students to be motivated.

The aim of this research is to investigate how a positive relationship between teachers and students in classroom can improve the learning process.

The positive relationship with students give them chance to be more motivated and feel engaged in the process of learning. They will be active engaged learners instead of passive ones. Thus, two main questions will be raised as follows:

- **What role does the teacher-student relationship play in the learning process?**
- **How to develop a supportive and positive relationship in our EFL classrooms?**

To answer these questions, the following hypotheses are suggested:

1/ It is hypothesized that if teachers maintain a supportive relationship with students then they will help them increasing their motivation and feeling part of the learning process' students will be able to improve their performance in acquiring a second language.

2/ Creating a smooth atmosphere and showing care motivate and encourage students and help to establish positive relationships.

This work is divided into two chapters; the first chapter is the theoretical review. It contains definitions of some issues that are related to the subject of relationships in classroom, and their importance in the development of the learning skills. The second chapter is devoted to the practical part, from data collection and analysis to the results obtained.



Chapter one:
Theoretical Review

Chapter one: Theoretical Review

1.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the theoretical analysis of the nature of the teacher-student relationships; it further describes its importance in classroom communication, and its role in influencing the students' engagement in classroom.

1.2. The learning Environment and Teacher-Student Relationship

Positive bonds between teachers and students in classroom play a crucial role in enhancing students' interaction and performance and thus creating a smooth atmosphere.

1.2.1. Teacher - Student Relationship

Relationships are regarded as the main way to attain success. Interacting effectively with others is related to the success or failure of individuals. In this line of thought, Collins and Repinski quoted in Wubbles and Brok (1994: 20) state: "Relationships are typically defined as enduring connections between two individuals, uniquely characterized by degrees of continuity, shared history, and interdependent interactions across settings and activities". In fact, relationships can create positive as well as negative experiences. In this respect, researchers have insisted on the benefits of different relationship requirements such as emotional well-being, instrumental help ,and a sense of identity for developing positive outcomes.

Educational researchers are also stressing the quality of the student-teacher relationship as another important mediating factor for success. In fact, many studies and researches have examined this variable and demonstrated that the student-teacher relationship extensively influences either positively or negatively on academic and

social outcomes (Birch & Ladd, 1996; Buhs, Ladd, & Herald, 2006; Hamre, 2006; Hamre&Pianta, 2005; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999).

1.2.2. Positive Relationship

Positive teacher-student relationships are defined as relationships which are “mutually respectful and supportive.”(Pendergast& Bahr, 2006) or “Open communication, as well as emotional and academic support that exists between students and teachers” (Pianta,1999). Furthermore, these relationships have also been characterized by empathy, warmth, and genuineness as mentioned by (Motshinig-Pitrik,Cornelius-White, Hoey, & Cornelius-White 2004). Positive teacher-student bonds involve understanding, mutual acceptance, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation. They are a significant component in establishing a positive and smooth classroom climate.

1.2.3. Negative Relationships

Contrasting to the positive relation, the negative one may also occur in classroom as Harmer (2009:126) explains:

“most teachers in many different learning culture have moments when their students fail to cooperate in some way, thus disturbing the learning which should be taking place, sometimes getting significantly out of control. Such moments of disruption can be unsettling not just for teachers but also for students.”

Additionally, the teacher-student relationships maybe characterized by disordered and disorganized communication, this happens when students cannot realize their tasks and do not know the right way to do so and as a result there is no dependency on the teacher which leads to chaotic teaching. In this respect, Skinner (2014: 108) asserts that:

“If teachers are unavailable; students soon learn not to count on them. Cumulatively, chaotic experiences can make students feel they do not know how to succeed in school and are helpless and incompetent”.

It is worth mentioning that rejecting interaction or communication with students disturbs students and may feel that they are not valued or respected.

1.3. Communication in classroom

Effective teaching entails good communication between students and teachers and among students. Cooperation between the teacher and his student leads to efficiency and productivity in classroom. Thus, teachers play a vital role in the development of language learning.

The establishment of such social and psychological relationships with students produces positive bonds and creates self esteem and self confidence among students. As reported by Gibb, 1961; Hays 1970 , “classroom communication climate is dependent largely on whether students consider their instructors to communicate with them in either a supportive or a defensive manner” (cited in Myers et al., 2012 p. 389).

Moreover, Darling & Civikly 1987 have also agreed on this dependency claiming that “When instructors communicate with their students in a supportive manner, they establish a classroom climate in which communication is efficient and characterized by few distortions, effective listening behaviours, and clear message transmission” (cited in Myers at al., 2012 p. 389).

However, Rosenfeld 1983 said that “when instructors communicate with their students in a defensive manner, they establish a classroom climate in which students feel threatened and react by engaging in resistance, rebellion, and defiance” (cited in Myers et 14 al., 2012 p. 389). In fact, learning depends on how students feel in their class and whether they are engaged or not. The way of the teachers in managing the classroom is also important because it leads them to be an active part of the learning process by making the communication a helpful tool.

1.4. The effect of Teacher Relationship on Students’ Classroom Engagement

Students usually prefer caring teachers, who create a good classroom environment and who are more flexible.

According to Weber, Martin, & Cayanus, 2005 (Mazer, at al., 2013, p.255), when students feel comfortable in their classroom work, they show their interest in

demonstrating their competence and consider their participation as vital to the course or lesson, thus, they become more motivated to communicate.

As has been stated by (Mitchell, 1993; Tobias, 1994), “Students with high interest perceive a content area to be important, are active and involved in the subject, and feel knowledgeable in the subject matter”, this means that interested and engaged students learn better.

Furthermore, Krapp, Hidi, & Renninger, 1992 (mentioned in Joseph P. Mazer, 2013, p. 256) explain that *“Interest is often triggered in the moment by certain environmental factors (e.g., teacher behaviour) and can be characterized from the perspective of the cause (the conditions that induce interest) or from the standpoint of the person who is interested.”* Mazer (2012:99) clarifies that *“Students who experience heightened emotional interest are pulled toward a content area because they are energized, excited, and emotionally engaged by the material”*

It is important to be included in a secure environment where students can feel engaged and motivated to learn, and demonstrate their competence and share their experiences.

Moreover, the learning situation plays a considerable role in maintaining student attention and engagement. When students feel safety in the classroom, they are more engaged and motivated because they move towards learning with enthusiasm and strength. Students become active participants in their educational environment (Skinner & Green, 2008; Maulana, Opdenakker, Stroet, & Bosker, 2013). as a result, the first stage that teachers should adopt to help a student become more motivated and involved, and hence successful, is establishing and maintaining positive teacher-student relationships.

Additionally, students and teachers affect each other, the more the student notices that he is welcomed and desired in the classroom, the more he is interested and motivated.

1.5. Classroom Management

The skills and methods teachers employ to ensure the well organization and order of students is called classroom management. The use of classroom management strategies should be achieved in an effective way to facilitate learning and motivate students because disordered classes usually impede learning. Classroom management involves instructions like ensuring that students are listening and following.

Teachers may use many techniques to manage classroom in order to improve learning and students performance. They should have positive facial expressions and respectful statements. Moreover, providing the classroom with stimulating learning materials that help practising activities also support learning.

1.6. Establishing Positive Teacher-Student Relationships In Classrooms

Building supportive and positive bonds between teachers and students make learners feel relaxed and motivated and thus being engaged in their classroom.

1.6.1. Students' Misbehaviour Management

The most suitable way that to avoid the misbehaviour of students is the successful classroom management, this can be done through creating a positive atmosphere that can control and organize students, and enhance their motivation and classroom engagement. It is necessary to adopt strategies that support good behaviour and develop the students' self esteem and sense of responsibility. The teacher is responsible for the way he treats his student for instance even the way chosen to punish students should be appropriate in order to avoid any disorders.

1.6.2. Producing A Positive Psychology In The Classroom

As a matter of fact, the teacher's behaviour and method usually shape the students' behaviour and his classroom engagement. The interaction between teachers

and students should be structured and any misbehaviour should be avoided. Murray & Pianta (2009: 108) consider that:

“Such structures can also promote positive relationships within classrooms. A well-managed classroom environment provides students with a consistent, safe setting where expectations for appropriate behaviors are clearly stated and consistently reinforced”.

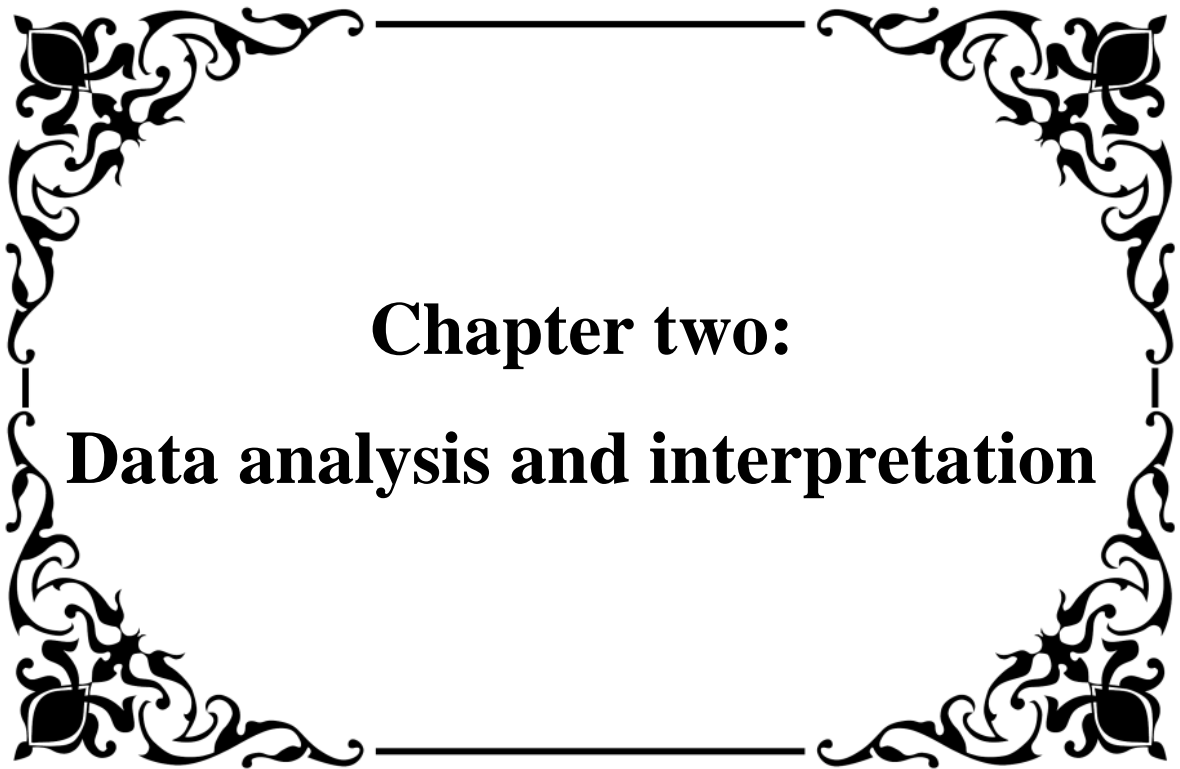
In order to manage the classroom appropriately, there are several techniques and strategies to employ. The teacher should make the student feel safe and relaxed when expressing himself and exchanging knowledge. Making mistakes should be considered as opportunities to learn more rather than a source of failure. A teacher can make learning stimulating through collaborating with his students to work hard and realize goals.

1.6.3. Improving Working Relationships

Teachers may apply some techniques, and strategies that improve working relationships in classroom; like promoting connection and communication with students, encouraging cooperative learning and establishing a classroom structure. Moreover, teachers require to demonstrate enthusiasm and passion in teaching, and should believe in students and their abilities and thus , enable them to increase their sense of responsibility in classroom.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter was the theoretical part of the study; it aimed to illustrate information about the relation between the teacher and the student and its significance in promoting a positive psychology in classroom. The next chapter will try to portray the target situation, sample population, and the research tools.



Chapter two:
Data analysis and interpretation

Chapter two: Data analysis and interpretation

2.1. Introduction

As it was presented in the first chapter, some related issues have been conceptualized and defined; the second chapter is devoted to the analysis of the questionnaires which have been delivered at Naama university centre to both teachers and students. The questionnaires used provide rich information about the relationship between students and teachers and its effect on learning.

2.2. Sample Population

The participants in this study are second year LMD students and EFL teachers of Naama University Centre Salhi Ahmed which is a new university center in Algeria. The department of English section is selected to gather comprehensive information about the teacher-student relationship.

2.3. Research Instruments

The research tools are used to facilitate the collection of information and obtaining results. In this study, two research tools are mainly employed to gather the required result to be analyzed.

- **Classroom Observation**
- **The Questionnaire**

2.3.1. Questionnaires

They are regarded as the most important tool in research as Robinson (1991:21) states: "*it can be sent fairly easily to a large number of people*". Thus, large amount of

information can be gathered over a short period of time. Two questionnaire were structured using simple English and given to teachers and students.

2.3.1.1. Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire involves two rubrics, the first one describes the students' profile, and the second one consists of six questions. The questionnaire is structured as follows:

Questions	Description
Rubric 1	-Q1 : It is about the students' age. -Q2 : It is about the number of years studying English.
Rubric 2	-Q1 : this question is about the estimation of the teacher-student relationships in classroom. -Q2 : identifying the importance of the positive relationships in enhancing the students' learning. -Q3 : describes the importance of the emotional attachment in increasing the students' learning outcomes. -Q4 :it is concerned with the influence of the cooperative teachers on the learning outcomes. -Q5: this question is an open-ended question, demonstrating if the supportive teachers' relationship boosts the students' motivation and engagement.

Table 2.1. Students' Questionnaire Objectives

2.3.2.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

As regards teachers' questionnaire, it also consists of two rubrics, the first one focuses on the teachers' profile, and the second one contains questions, it is formulated as follows:

Questions	Description
Rubric 1	<p>-Q1 :It is about the teacher’s domain</p> <p>-Q2 : concerning the teacher’s degree</p> <p>-Q3 : showing the teacher’s experience in teaching English Language</p>
Rubric 2	<p>-Q1 : investigating the way to avoid a negative relationship and construct a positive one in classroom.</p> <p>-Q2 : aims to demonstrate the strategies to improve relationships with difficult students.</p> <p>-Q3 : describes the way to promote a positive psychology in classroom.</p> <p>-Q4 : it concerns the influence of teachers’ relationship on students’ classroom engagement.</p> <p>-Q5 : concerning the importance of the classroom attachment in improving the learning outcomes and motivation.</p> <p>-Q6 : this question investigates the way to cultivate a positive teacher-student bond in EFL classrooms.</p>

Table 2.2.Teachers’ Questionnaire Objectives

2.3.2. Classroom Observation

The classroom observation is considered as one of the effective research tools, it helps the researcher to observe and examine the concrete situation. In this study, classroom observation aims to focus on the nature of the teacher-student relationships and the main strategies and techniques used by the teachers to create a safe environment to increase the students’ motivation and their learning outcomes. This classroom observation focuses on the teacher-student interaction.

2.4. Data Analysis

This section will examine the data collected from students' and teachers' questionnaires, in addition to the classroom observation. Data will be analyzed quantitatively through the students' questionnaire that reveals the number of students who have good and bad relationships with their teachers, and quantitatively through the teachers' questionnaire and the classroom observation that seek to explain the ways to establish and cultivate positive relationships between teachers and students in classroom.

2.4.1. Students' Questionnaire Analysis

Students' questionnaire analyzed quantitatively, these results were attained:

Question1: What is your evaluation on the relationship between you and your teacher?

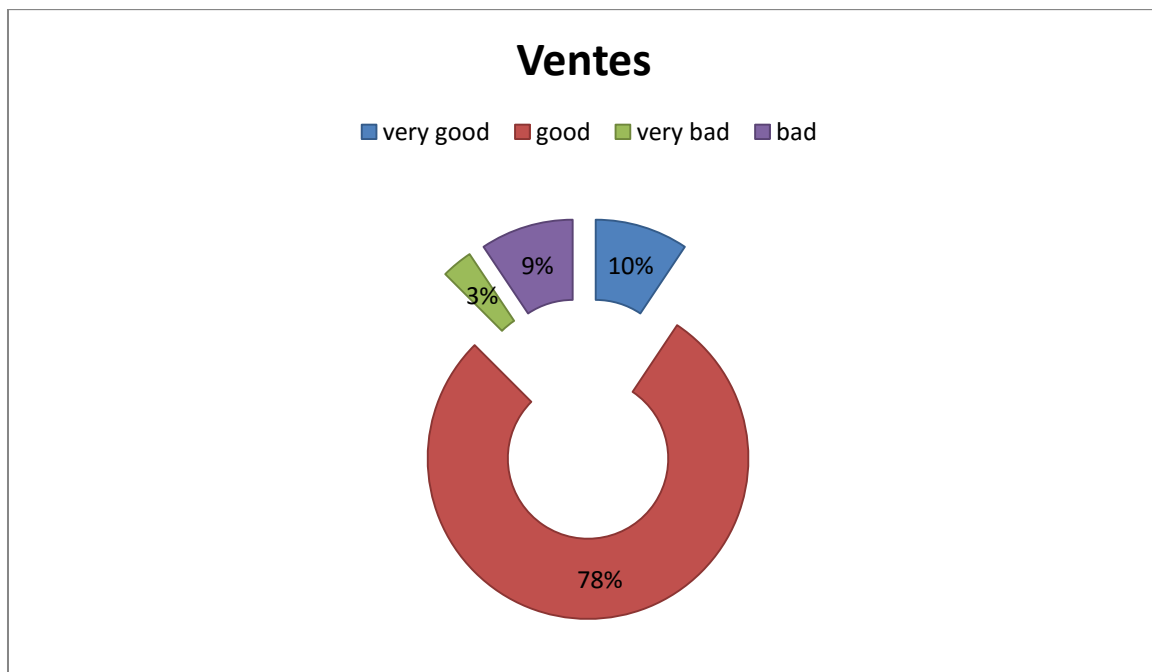
- **10%** of the students have a very good relationship with their teachers.

-**78%** have a good relationship.

-**9%** of the students have a bad relationship.

- **3%** very bad relationship with their teachers.

This is well explained in the following pie-chart :



Pie-Chart 2.2. Teacher-Student Relationship.

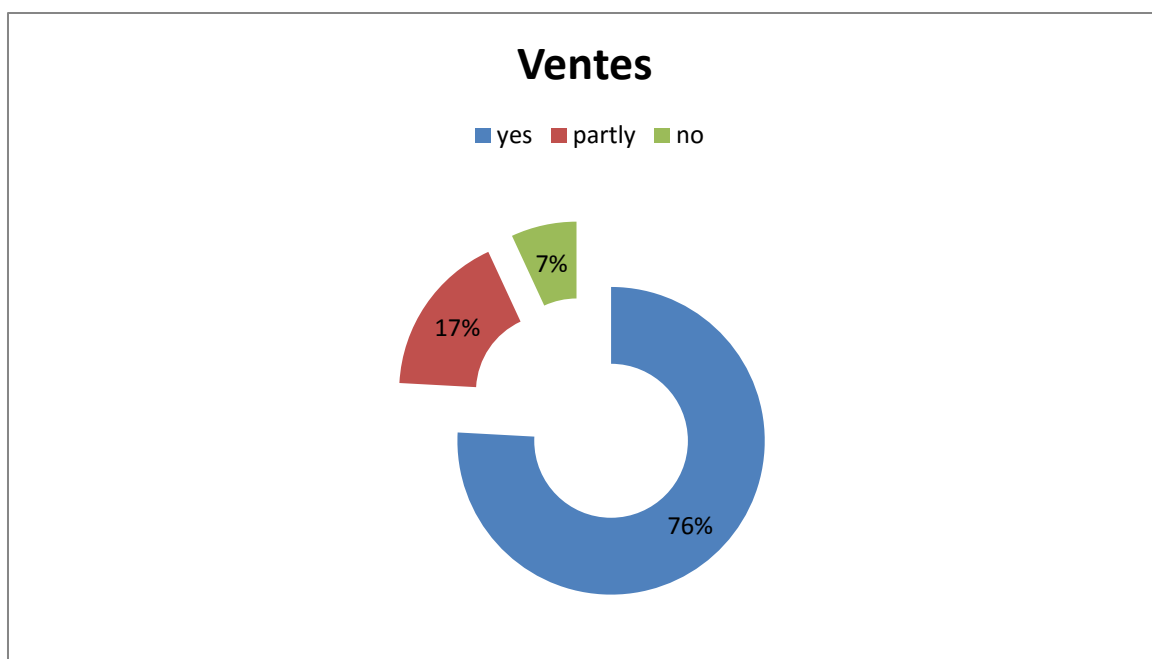
Question2 : Does a positive teacher-student relationship improve your learning?

-76% of the students agree that a positive relationship in classroom improve their learning.

-17% said that it has not a big impact on their learning.

-7% showed a disagreement that learning can be improved by this relationship.

This is well explained in the following pie-chart :

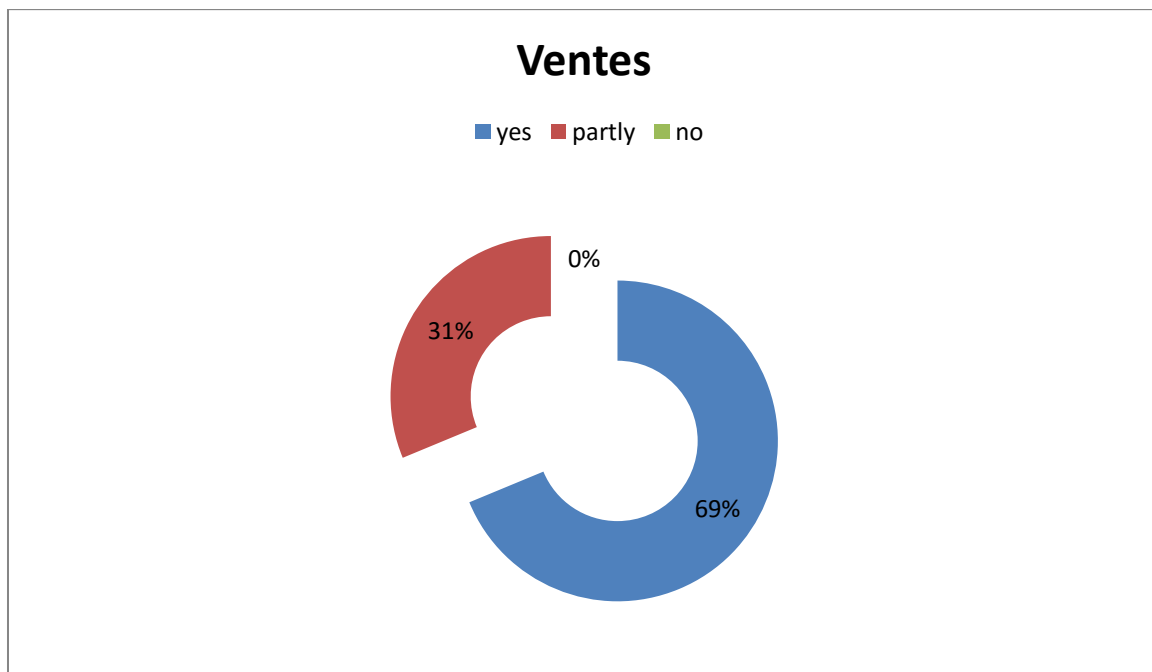


Pie-Chart 2.2 The influence of positive relationship on learning

Question3 : Does an emotional attachment between the teacher and the student increase students' learning outcomes?

- 69% of the students believe that an emotional attachment increases the learning outcomes.

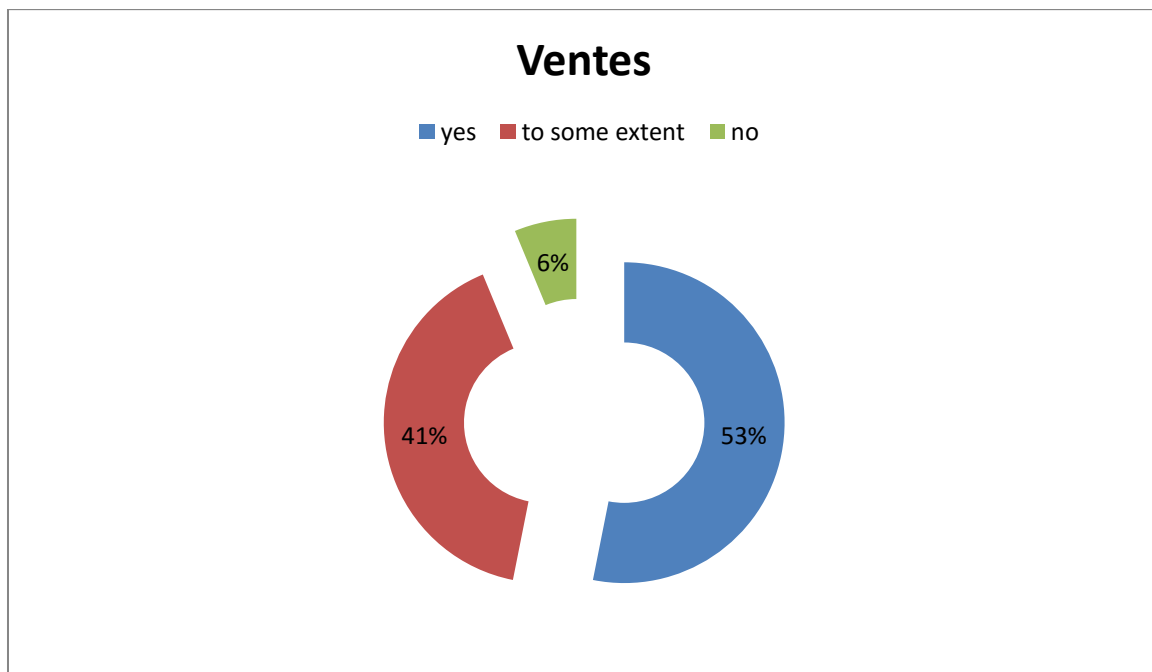
-31% agree that it has a small effect on learning outcomes.



Pie-Chart2.3. The emotional attachment

Question4 : Do cooperative teachers have an influence on their students learning outcomes?

- 53% of the students agree that cooperative teachers influence the students learning outcomes,
- 41% believe that they do not have a big influence.
- 06% of them disagree and neglect the influence of cooperative teachers on their learning outcomes.



Pie-Chart2.4.The cooperative teachers

Question5: Does a supportive teacher-student relationship increase the students motivation and the classroom engagement?

Relating to this question, students agree and believe that such relationships are very important, it may shape and improve their learning outcomes. A positive and supportive teacher-student relationship within the classroom built the students' self confidence which may increase their motivation, and attract them to be engaged in the classroom.

2.4.2. Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis

Concerning the findings of teachers' questionnaires, the following results were reached :

Question1: From your experience, how to avoid a negative teacher-student relationship, and build a positive one within the classroom?

In the first question, generally all teachers have the same opinions and stages to build a supportive positive relationship in classroom; some teachers stress the need to make students feel that they are valued and that everyone has a role in classroom, and be aware of their rights and obligations, others insist on keeping respect between students themselves and their teachers

Almost all teachers focus on the role of motivating their students and showing interest to them in addition to the need to be fair with them. They also call for avoiding bad treatment and hurting students by excluding bad words.

Question2 : How may teachers improve relationships with difficult students ?

Regarding the second question, teachers answered that as teachers, they should welcome their students and listen to them to get closer to them, some teachers focus on the need to make students engaged in the lectures and giving them the opportunity to participate. All teachers use security and guidance in their classes to improve their relationships with their students.

Question3 : How to promote a positive psychology in classroom ?

In the third question, teachers mentioned that creating a smooth atmosphere in classroom helps to promote a positive psychology. They suggested to create a friendly and lovely environment, a more relaxed class and encouraging students to collaborate and work in groups. They also mention the necessity to help students to get rid of shyness and fear by giving them the chance to express themselves.

Question4 : In your opinion, how may teacher's relationship influence the student's classroom engagement ?

In this question, teachers agree that they should inspire their students in order to be engaged, teachers said that respecting students and listening to them help their engagement, they also mention that they should show enthusiasm for teaching, and should select appropriate strategies in lectures.

Question5 : Does the classroom attachment increase the students learning outcomes ?

As regards this question, all teachers said they agree that classroom attachment has an important effect in rising the students learning outcomes, because, the more we see students motivated to attend classes the more creative they become which lead to positive results and good performance.

Question6 : How to develop a positive teacher-student relationship in our EFL classrooms ?

Relating to the way of cultivating a positive teacher-student relationship in our EFL classrooms, teachers propose that teaching should be inspired, full of showing enthusiasm, love and interest towards the learners.

2.4.3. Classroom Observation Analysis

The classroom observation took place with the second year LMD students during the session of oral expression. This classroom observation focused on the teacher-student talk and interaction, the student-student talk to know the nature of the peer relationships in classroom, and the classroom management and engagement.

From the observations, the researcher noticed that the environment of learning was full of respect and full with the sense of humor to refresh the students. The teacher tries to avoid their anxiety and stress, then starting storming their brains to get all of them engaged in the lecture using cooperation that helps students to be motivated enough to share their ideas, express themselves and exchange knowledge.

The teachers adopted a good method to manage classroom prohibiting students to go beyond the limits and stop their misbehaviour. Moreover, teachers succeeded in supporting a positive psychology in classroom, which is revealed through a total listening and full attention, that made the students' engagement easier for teachers.

2.4.4. Data Interpretation

This research work seeks to stress the nature of the teacher-student relationship in classroom, in addition to the employment of the main strategies and techniques in classroom engagement.

Concerning questionnaires 'analysis, both those of student and teachers and classroom observation analysis, the following results are found:

Teachers and students have the same opinion that supportive and encouraging relationships offer a safe and secure atmosphere that helps to promote a positive psychology which increases the students' sense of belonging and be motivated and engaged in classroom.

Through the questionnaires and classroom observation, it is found that most of the teachers and students are aware of the significance of a good relationship in classroom and its importance on the development of the academic engagement and achievement.

It is also worth mentioning that both teachers and students tend to build and cultivate supportive relationships in classroom by providing safe and secure environment.

2.4.5. Conclusion

This chapter was concerned with data collection and analysis, it provides a brief analysis and interpretations of the collected data from questionnaires with a clear analysis of the results obtained.

General Conclusion

This study seeks to find out about the relationships between teachers and students in classroom, the ways to avoid negative relationships and construct positive and supportive ones as well, in addition to the methods and techniques adopted to cultivate supportive relationships and positive bonds in our EFL classrooms. This was achieved through a case study using questionnaires and classroom observation.

This research contains two chapters; the first one was about the importance of the teacher-student relationships in establishing a positive environment, which enable students to increase their sense of environment belonging, enthusiasm, to learn successfully, and increase their classroom engagement. The second chapter was about the case study; collecting data through questionnaires and classroom observation, then analysing the findings, in addition to reveal and interpret the main results.

Ultimately, one can say that there is no definite conclusions though research and theories, a lot is needed to be done in the field of optimizing learning through the teacher-student relationships. Results showed that both teachers and students hope to find a way to provide a positive environment for a peaceful and effective learning, which support and encourage creativity and inspiration in classroom that lead students to reach their academic achievement.

Nevertheless, it is commonly accepted that both teachers and students seek to find away to avoid negative relationships and build positive ones, that may boost the students' motivation, and classroom engagement, which may positively influences their learning process to be successful. As promoting and building a positive teacher-student relationship in classroom is vital to improve students' learning, it paves the way to other researchers to conduct further studies in the field.

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Appendices

Student's Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims at exploring the nature of the teacher-student relationships, and its importance within the classroom, in addition to its influence on the classroom engagement.

Rubric 1 :Students' profile

Numbers of years studying English :.....

Rubric 2 :

1/ What is your evaluation on the relationship between you and your teacher?

- Very good - Good- Verd-Bad

2/ Does a positive teacher-student relationship improve your learning?

-Yes-ParNo

3/ Does an emotional attachment between the teacher and the student increase students' learning outcomes?

-Yes-parNo

4/ Do cooperative teachers have an influence on their students learning outcomes?

-Yes-Tone extent-No

5/ Does a supportive teacher-student relationship increase the students motivation and the classroom engagement ?

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Thankyouverymuch

Teacher's Questionnaire

I am a master 2 English student at Naama centre university, and I am working on the teacher-student relationships, your help in completing this questionnaire is highly appreciated , and I commit that all your personal information will be kept confidential. Your opinion will be used for the purpose of this research only.

Rubric 1 :Experience

1/ Your domain:

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2/ your degree :

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3/your experience in teaching English Language :

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Rubric 2 :

1/ From your experience, how to avoid a negative teacher-student relationship, and build a positive one within the classroom ?

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2/ How may teachers improve relationships with difficult students ?

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3/How to promote a positive psychology in classroom ?

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4/ In your opinion, how may teacher's relationship influence the student's classroom engagement ?

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5/ Does the classroom attachment increase the students learning outcomes ?

-Yes -No -Why ?

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6/ How to develop a positive teacher-student relationship in our EFL classrooms ?

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Thankyou for your help

الملخص:

يهدف هذا العمل المتواضع إلى معرفة دور العلاقات بين الأستاذ والطالب في التعليم، وأهميته في تطوير المهارات، وكيف أنه يزيد من تحفيز الطلاب، و كذا تعزيز انتمائهم إلى الجامعة؛ وهل هذا الأمر يسمح لهم بالتعلم على نحو فعال.

Résumé :

Ce travail modeste vise à identifier le rôle des relations enseignant-étudiant dans l'éducation, son importance dans le développement des compétences, la manière dont il accroît la motivation des étudiants et la promotion de leur affiliation à l'université, et s'il leur permet d'apprendre efficacement.

Mots Clé : Relations, Etudiant, Enseignant, Environnement.

Abstract:

This modest work aims to identify the role of teacher-student relationships in education, its importance in developing skills, how it increases student motivation and the promotion of their affiliation to the university; and whether this allows them to learn effectively.

Key Words : Relationships, Student, Teacher, Environment