



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
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Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English



***Exploring the Antecedents of Students' Boredom in EFL  
Classes: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives  
A Case Study of Third Year EFL Students at Chadli Bendjedid  
University -El Tarf-***

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**Submitted by:**

Miss. Ibtissem MEDELLEL

**Supervised by:**

Dr. Zouleykha BELABBES

**Board of Examiners**

<b>President:</b> Mrs. Naima LADACI	MAA	University of Chadli Bendjedid El-Tarf
<b>Supervisor:</b> Dr. Zouleykha BELABBES	MCB	University of Chadli Bendjedid El-Tarf
<b>Examiner:</b> Mr. Med Amine MEDJABRA	MAB	University of Chadli Bendjedid El-Tarf

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## Declaration

I hereby certify that this research paper, which I now submit for assessment of the program of study leading to the award of Master in *Didactique de l'Anglais* is entirely the result of my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the context of my work.

Students' name: Ibtissem Medellel

Signed: .....

Date: ..... / ..... / .....

Student number: .....

## **Dedication**

In the name of ALLAH, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

I would like to thank ALLAH for blessings given to me to complete this work

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My dear family, precisely to my father “Cherif”, the source of wisdom and the principal of my life for his continual guidance and advice.

My beloved mother “Fatma Razgallah” who upholds me in life through her blessing, prayers and instructions.

Ala, who was always near and ready for help. He was so supportive in this work.

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All my lovely nephews and nieces Ikram, Chaima, Manel, Mariem, Maria, Yahia, Yacine, Youcef, and the rest of my family.

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## **Abstract**

Boredom is one of the most frequently experienced negative emotions in academic settings. It occurs as a result of many factors and causes. The present study aims at exploring the antecedents behind English Foreign Language (EFL) students' boredom at Chadli Bendjedid University. Through this work, we hypothesize that, from the perspectives of both students and teachers, EFL students' boredom is due to the methods used by the teacher, lack of motivation and engagements, exhaustion, monotonous discussions, teacher-centeredness, or the teacher itself. To check what we hypothesized, the researcher relied on the descriptive method. Hence, two questionnaires were administered for gathering data; one for 40 third year EFL students who are enrolled in the academic year 2018/2019, and the second one was directed to EFL teachers at Chadli Bendjedid University. The results obtained from students' questionnaire showed that the main antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes are teaching approaches and techniques used, the poor explanation of the lecture, teacher's personality, class environment, timing, lack of opportunity to participate and interact, routine, and monotonous discussions. Additionally, teachers' questionnaire findings revealed that students get bored because of monotonous and repetitive methods, teacher-centeredness, lack of motivation, and tiredness. Based on these findings, some recommendations for both teachers and students were provided for the sake of decreasing the rate of boredom among students and improving their motivation and engagement in classes.

**Key words:** Emotions, Antecedents, Boredom, Perspectives, EFL classes.

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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**E.g :** For example

**SESRL:** Self-efficacy for self- regulated learning

**ICT:** Information and Communiation Technology

**Q:** Question

**%:** Percentage

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# **General Introduction**

## **Introduction**

During the process of learning, students may experience numerous academic emotions in the classroom such as hope, enjoyment, anxiety, boredom, fear ...etc. It can be positive emotions that enhance their learning or negative emotions which affect their achievements. One of these negative emotions is boredom which is the most commonly experience emotion among students. According to Larson and Richards (1991), students experienced boredom during 32 % of class time, Nett, Goetz, and Hall (2011) found that students experienced boredom during 58 % of instruction time; while, Pekrun et al. (2010) reported that 42 % of students get boredom in class (as cited in Daschmann, 2013). This prevalence of boredom is due to several antecedents which contribute to the rise of this emotion.

### **1. Statement of the Problem**

Academic boredom is one of the negative deactivating emotions that students experienced in academic contexts. It has long been a significant problem in education since it has negative consequences on students' academic performance. Thus, it is important to identify its antecedents and precursors.

### **2. Aims of the Study**

The aim of the present dissertation is to explore the antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes from the perspectives of students as well as teachers. It, hence, attempts to figure out what factors make them feel bored during classes.

### **3. Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What antecedents of boredom do EFL students report in classes at Chadli Bendjedid University?

2. What are EFL teachers' perspectives toward the antecedents of boredom in classrooms?

#### **4. Hypotheses**

In the light of the research questions listed above, the researcher formulated the following hypotheses:

1. Students' boredom is due to several antecedents such as methods used by teacher, monotonous discussion, lack of motivation and involvements, and classroom environment.
2. EFL teachers may acknowledge students' boredom to teacher-centeredness, theoretical courses, and exhaustion (time and fatigue).

#### **5. Research Design**

This study was conducted to obtain reliable data about the antecedents of EFL students' boredom from students and teachers' perspectives; hence, a descriptive method will be adopted. The researcher opted for using questionnaires addressed to third year EFL students at Chadli Bendjedid University in El Taref, and to EFL teachers in the same university. To analyze the data, the researcher used a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) to clarify the findings.

#### **6. Significance of the study**

This study can be of great significance to:

*Students:* This study provides overt perceptions about the antecedents of their boredom and most of them are expected to greatly benefit from the results of the study.

*Teachers:* Teachers of English may have a full knowledge about the antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes.

*Researchers:* This study may provide literature for further researchers who wish to carry studies on this subject matter, and its findings would complement other studies and provide appropriate data for further researches

## **7. Organization of the Dissertation**

The present research work is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the related literature of academic boredom, thus, it comprises of definition of boredom and its forms and subtypes. Further, it covers the antecedents of boredom, signs and consequences reported from similar studies. The second chapter is concerned with the practical part of the study; it describes the methodology used in this research and the analyses of the obtained results from the administered questionnaires. Moreover, it presents the discussion of the results and proposes some recommendations for teachers and students to overcome and prevent boredom in classes.

# **Chapter One**

## **Academic Boredom**

## **Introduction**

The present chapter covers the issue of boredom in academic settings. It begins with defining academic emotions and its relation to both language learning and teaching. Then, it sheds light on boredom, giving its definition, forms, subtypes, and explaining its elements. It also includes identifying the antecedents of academic boredom and discussing its signs.

### **1.1 Academic Emotions**

Emotion has been given diverse definitions by many researchers and all of them affirmed that it is a mental state that consists of feeling, behaviour, physiological change and cognitions that occur in specific context (Emotion, n.d.). Emotion is a feeling that includes behaviour, physiological, and cognitive reactions toward specific situation be it internal or external. (Sternberg, 1998). Narine (2000) added that emotion comprises three main types of reactions:

- 1- Physiological arousal.
- 2- Expressive behaviours.
- 3- Individual experience.

Academic emotions is a term used to refer to learners' experienced emotions in educational settings (learning situations, achievements and classroom activities), such as enjoyment of learning, hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness, or boredom (Pekrun, Goetz, Frenzel, Barchfeld, & Perry, 2011 ). Emotions can be pleasant or unpleasant, so they can also be activating or deactivating (Pekrun, 2006). Activating emotions are positive ones like hope, pride, and enjoyment. They influence students' achievement in a positive way since they stimulate and assist them in their learning. Whereas, deactivating emotions are negative ones such as boredom and anxiety which decrease students' stimulation to be engaged in classworks. (Pekrun et.al., 2011)

Pekrun (2014) grouped the academic emotions which are related to educational context into four groups:

- *Achievement emotions* are linked to achievement activities and their outcomes (success or failure). For example, enjoyment of learning is related to success, and anxiety is related to failure.
- *Epistemic emotions* such as surprise, curiosity, confusion, and frustration... are provoked by cognitive problems. They are especially important in learning with new, non-routine tasks.
- *Topic emotions* are related to the topics students are learning. That is, students' emotions will be influenced by the lesson content, for example feeling empathy with a character in a novel.
- *Social emotions* such as love, sympathy, compassion, admiration, contempt, envy, or anger are emotions that pertain to teachers and peers within the class.

### **1.1.1 Emotions and Language Learning**

Studies have shown that emotions have a significant effect on learning in general, and on foreign language learning in particular (Pishghadam, Zabetipour, & Aminzadeh, 2016). Dewaele (2015) considered emotions as the heart of the foreign language learning process, and he added that the learning would be boring without emotions. In the EFL classes which are emotional places, students may experience positive and negative emotions that influence their motivation, insistence, and engagement which in turn foster their achievements (Macklem, 2015). In this light, previous studies revealed that these two categories of emotions in EFL classes influence the English learning achievement (Pekrun, Goetz, & Perry, 2005; Ismail, 2015).

Pekrun (2006) asserted that academic emotions have a main role in engagement and learning. Positive emotions, hence, are the pleasant ones such as enjoyment, pride, and hope...etc, they foster positive appraisals for academic achievement. While negative emotions are unpleasant ones such as hopelessness, anxiety and boredom. Pekrun (2014) stated that both positive and negative emotions affect learning by influencing students' attention, motivation, use of learning strategies and self-regulation of learning:

✓ *Attention :*

Positive and negative emotions can distract students' attention away from learning. They can distract attention away from doing the tasks and from learning in general. For instance, pride of getting good mark or anxiety about failing in a task can reduce performance on all other kinds of tasks that need attention. Also boredom in classes can transform students' attention to daydream. However, task-related positive emotions focus attention on the learning task itself; for example, when students enjoyed learning their full attention would be on the task and thus there is involvement. (Pekrun, 2014)

✓ *Motivation :*

Lopez and Aguilar (2013) claimed that foreign language learners' motivation can be affected by the two: positive and negative emotions. Positive emotions such as enjoyment motivate students to learn by gathering positive memories and evaluate the activities and the adequacy to solve them in a positive way. Negative emotions such as anxiety, shame, and boredom can decrease motivation.

✓ *Learning strategies :*

Pekrun (2014) pointed out that activating positive emotions can boost students to use flexible, creative and deep learning strategies; for example, students can elaborate relevant information by connecting them to the previous ones or with others' subjects,

i.e., using metacognitive and cognitive strategies of learning. Nevertheless, negative emotions such as anxiety and boredom can indicate and simplify the use of rigid learning strategies.

✓ *Self-regulation of Learning :*

In this regard, Pekrun (2014) posited that self-regulation of learning such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning with cognitive flexibility can be promoted by positive emotions like enjoyment, hope, and pride that boost students' self regulation of learning. However, negative emotions decrease their ability to draw on flexibility and self-regulation.

### **1.1.2 Emotions in Teaching**

In the EFL teaching process, the classroom is an emotional place where learners and teachers come together. Hargreaves (1998) states that "emotions are at the heart of teaching" (p. 835) and teaching is considered as an "emotional practice"; it is regarded as a highly emotional work which can be highly emotionally rewarding (Hargreaves, 1998), or full of stress, fear, and embarrassment (Bullough, 2009). During teaching, teachers may experience a set of pleasant and unpleasant emotions (Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Hosseini, & Frenzel, 2018). These emotions are "important for their achievement and conviction in the classroom, interaction with students, and students' achievement" (Toraby & Modaressi, 2018, p. 513).

Academically, teachers in classrooms can experience positive emotions such as enjoyment and pride, and negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, and boredom as well (Frenzel, 2014; Khajavy, et. al., 2018).

## **1. 2 Definition of Boredom**

Boredom which is an affective state has been defined in different ways by many researchers. Pekrun, Goetz, Daniels, Stupnisky, & Perry (2010) described boredom as an

“affective state composed of unpleasant feelings, lack of stimulation, and low physiological arousal” (p. 532). Nett, Goetz, and Daniels (2010) added that boredom is “an unpleasant, transient affective state that is characterized by a severe lack of interest as well as difficulty concentrating on the current activity.” (as cited in Fisher, 1993, p.396). That is, boredom is an emotional state in which an individual get bored as a result of being exposed to repetitive tasks or when there is nothing to do.

Other researchers forwarded that boredom arises from the lack of excitement and the sketchy stimulation from the atmosphere (Lipps, 1903; De Chenne 1988; as cited in Fahlman, 2008).

According to (Pekrun et al., 2010) boredom can be defined as an experienced emotion that is characterized by five main components:

- \* Cognitive component: time goes slowly
- \* Affective component: unpleasant feelings
- \* Motivational component: Motivation to change or to escape the situation or activity
- \* Physiological component: weakened arousal
- \* Expressive component: includes the facial, postural, and vocal expressions when getting bored.

Psychological researchers viewed that boredom can be defined as a *trait* or *state* emotion, i.e., “trait emotions are seen as habitual recurring emotions typically experienced by an individual whereas state emotions are viewed as emotions experienced at a specific point in time” (Goetz, Cronjaeger, Frenzel, Lüdtke, and Hall, 2010, p.45).

### 1.3 Trait versus State Boredom

Researchers have introduced the difference between trait boredom and state boredom.

*State boredom:* The word ‘state’ means “state of being or state of consciousness, a particular combination of perceptions, affect, cognitions, and attributions; besides, ‘state’ also implies a transitory experience, because an individual “may be in a state of boredom in one instant and not in the next instant” (Mikulas and Vodanovich, 1993, as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p.37). State boredom for Vogel-Walcutt, Fiorella, Carper, and Schatz (2012) is a negative psychological state as result of low arousal such as dissatisfaction, frustration, or disinterest. It changes over time, or over a school day. This neurological state occurs as reaction to inadequately stimulating environment. In this context, Vogel- Walcutt et al. (2012) identified the antecedents of state boredom; for example, when student perceives that a given task or piece of work has no meaning, inadequate resources for tasks, or when goals are not clear or focused. This feeling may also arise when the teaching approaches are not exciting or stimulating, and when teaching does not match students’ skill or ability levels.

*Trait boredom:* Boredom can be considered as a ‘trait’, which usually writers refer to it as ‘boredom proneness’ or ‘increased susceptibility to boredom’ (Macklem, 2015), when individuals experience more anger and aggression, along with difficulty controlling their anger (Dahlen, Martin, Ragan, & Kuhlman, 2004; Rupp, & Vodanovich, 1997). Many studies find out that trait boredom is result of an exposing to an environment with low stimulation since students seek for more novelty and excitement (Maklem, 2015).

In this respect, Fahlman (2008) distinguished four different dimensions on which we can categorize state and trait boredom and they are temporal dimension, locus of causation dimension, pathology dimension, and the dimension that involves the role of objects. In the first dimension, "state" implies short duration and "trait" implies long duration over time. The second dimension suggests that "state" is an experience that comes as a result to external

stimuli; however, "trait" is an experience that comes from internal factors. In the pathology dimension which is the third one, "state" indicates a "normal" experience while "trait" indicates "abnormal" experience. The fourth dimension showed that boredom can be considered as a 'mood' or as an 'emotion'.

#### **1.4 Boredom in Three Academic Situations**

Academic boredom can be experienced by students in three different contexts:

*In class*, it is also called class-related boredom. Mann and Robinson's (2009) and Larson and Richard's (1991) studies, students reported that they are most commonly get bored in classes. The second context is *While studying/learning*; this category is also called learning-related boredom in which students can feel bored during learning (Tze, Klassen, Daniels, Li, & Zhang, 2013 as cited in Tze, 2015, p.65). These two contexts in which boredom occurred could be a result of learning environments such as teacher-centered lecturing, and /or cognitive appraisals of situations such as not finding meaning in studying.

*Testing*: The third context in which students experience boredom, is during a test as mentioned in some studies (Goetz, Preckel, Pekrun, & Hall, 2007; Ahmed, van der Werf, Kuyper, and Minnaert, 2013)

#### **1.5 Antecedents of Academic Boredom**

The emotion of boredom is a common experienced emotion among students in classes and it aroused by different causes. In the literature, there are different theories and studies that explore the numerous antecedents of this emotion. Robinson (1975), in his theory about academic boredom, postulated that monotonously instructed classes (i.e., classes in which instruction methods are presented in repeated way) are identified to be the most common antecedents of students' boredom. Also, the uselessness subject domain can cause boredom.

Furthermore, Robinson added other external factors that can induce boredom such as teachers, peers, parents, school, home....etc. In addition, the characteristics of persons can evoke boredom such as the voice and way of talking.

Moreover, Hill and Perkins (1985) assumed in their theoretical framework of boredom that situational monotony is considered the main antecedent of boredom especially when it interpreted as repetitious. This is influenced by the situation (e.g., if the person has the possibility to escape the situation), the person (e.g., if the person has a general tendency to be bored or boredom proneness), and the task (e.g., if the task contains of several activities a person can choose from).

Guest, Williams, and Dewe (1978) and Fisher (1987) argued that the emotion of boredom occurs as a result of:

- Repetitive or monotonous task which provides insufficient arousal or stimulation;
- Constraint on behaviour: constraint affects feelings of boredom.
- Concentration on the passage of time and a feeling of time drag.
- Individual differences.
- Mismatch between the task content and the interests of the bored person.
- Chronic pathological state.

Additionally, in Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory, he described that students' emotions of boredom are induced from individual (subjective) and environmental antecedents. The subjective antecedents occur when students experience a lack of control, either high or below their abilities, over their learning, (Pekrun, Frenzel, Goetz, & Perry, 2007), and/or if they do not perceive value in their academic tasks (Pekrun, et. al., 2011). Students' control and value beliefs may be influenced by learning environment such as the structure and clarity of instruction, the lack of support for students' autonomy (Pekrun, 2006).

Daschmann, Goetz, and Stupnisky (2011) designed Precursors to Boredom Scales (PBS) to identify the numerous causes leading to boredom. They found eight empirically supported causes leading to boredom: being over challenged (over-challenge), being under challenged (under-challenge), being bored by an unchanging routine (monotony), not finding meaning in learning (lack of meaning), having better things to do than being in class (opportunity costs), disliking the teacher (teacher dislike), feeling uninvolved (lack of involvement), and being bored in general (general boredom tendency).

Recently, Daschmann (2013) in his study explored the antecedents of students' boredom from both the students and teacher perspectives. He found that teachers and students were in accordance for the antecedents of students' boredom since they mention four identical categories in common which are:

- Characteristics of instruction (e.g., too little diversified instructional strategies).
- Topics and content of the courses (e.g., “dry” topics).
- Student's personality (e.g., personal issues).
- Subject (e.g., uselessness of the subject, or not attractive to age-group).

Besides, some students provided other antecedents such as follow students (e.g., lethargic classmates), institutional causes (e.g., last period of the day), and teacher's personality e.g., “burnt out” teachers). Likewise, some teachers provided over challenging students (e.g., course material being too difficult), under challenging students (e.g., too little demands), lack of attention (e.g., students being distracted), and heterogeneity of the class as antecedents of boredom.

In conclusion, the mentioned theories provided several different antecedents that induced boredom.

## 1.6. Forms of Boredom

According to Heidegger (1995), the state of boredom can take three forms. The first form is when an individual get bored "by" something. For example, when waiting the arrival of a train in a "tasteless station of some lonely minor railway" (Heidegger, 1995, p. 93). Thus, the object that is the train is somehow causing the boredom. Here, the individual gets bored and feels uncomfortable and try to drag the time, for example by reading the train schedule, or walking up and down a nearby road. Individuals do this thing to pass time because they are not interested in the situation or context they are in.

Secondly, boredom can take the form of being bored "with" something. Heidegger offers the example of spending a pleasant evening with friends and everything is right. But at the end of the day when the person returned home, he discovered that he/she was bored during all this evening even though he/she did not feel bored at that time.

Thirdly, Heidegger (1995) refers to the third form as "profound boredom". This form can happen to us "out of the blue"(as cited in Kenny, 2009, p. 110). Here, the one can be bored when he/she attains a state of complete indifference. Heidegger sees this profound boredom as a 'positive refusal' of the possibilities of doing and acting, as a rejection of responsibility for one's own being as being bored "for one" (as cited in Belton & Priyadharshini, 2007, p.581)

The three forms of boredom proposed by Heidegger are progressively deep. Stafford and Gregory (2006) claim that "we actively struggle to drive time on in the first form of boredom, less effort is expended in the second form, and the third form exhibits no effort at all, as subjects succumb to the overpowering nature of profound boredom" (p.166, as cited in Kenny, 2009)

## 1.7 Subtypes of Boredom

Boredom is one of the most common experienced emotions in classes. Goetz et al. (2014) conducted a study with high school and university students in Germany where they figure out five subtypes of boredom.

- *Indifferent boredom:* This type of boredom supposed to include students who appear relaxed, cheerful fatigue, calm, and withdrawal from the external world. It can be a pleasant feeling.
- *Calibrating boredom:* In the second boredom type, students find their thoughts wander, not knowing what to do, are unsure, general openness, enthused to change the current situation. It is somewhat unpleasant. This type occurs when students receive repetitive works, and they are not sure of what to do to decrease this boredom.
- *Searching boredom:* Students experiencing this third type of boredom are restless and actively search for exit of the boredom. They need activity; that is why, they begin to think about more interesting activities, hobbies, leisure, interests, work, and school. This type of boredom is unpleasant.
- *Reactant boredom:* Students in reactant boredom state are strongly motivated to flee the boring situation and avoid those responsible of inducing this feeling such as the setting, the teacher, the subject, or the materials. They are also restless, angry or aggressive, and are very uncomfortable. This fourth boredom type is unpleasant and aversive.
- *Apathetic boredom:* In this last type, students had a lack of positive and negative emotions. They are dissatisfied and helpless. This boredom type appears to be unpleasant and associated with very low arousal levels.

## **1.8. Key Elements of Boredom**

Fahlman (2008) in his study described the elements of boredom based on a review of theoretical contributions, eight qualitative studies on boredom and large qualitative study that he conducted with Eastwood and William (2004). He showed that there are six elements of boredom:

### **1.8.1 Activity and Arousal**

*Activity:* Researchers pointed out the need for activity; for instance, Lipps (1903) in his definition of boredom indicated “a need for intense mental activity and lack of incitement to it, or inability to be incited” (as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p.17). Moreover, other researchers described the lack of interest with the current activity or with the environment (Fisher 1993; Sundberg et al. 1991, as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p17).

*Arousal:* Authors used the terms ‘arousal’ or ‘stimulation’ in their definitions of boredom meaning something else from activity as “a sense of inadequate stimulation from the environment” (De Chenne, 1981, p.73, as cited in Fahlman, 2008). Likewise, O’Hanlon defined boredom as “prolonged exposure to monotonous stimulation” (p. 54, as cited in Fahlman, 2008). For them, boredom is a result of ‘inadequate’ or ‘monotonous’ stimulation. For Mikulas and Vodanovich (1993), boredom is “a state of relatively low arousal” (as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p.18). So, low arousal is a component of boredom.

### **1.8.2 Dissatisfaction and Difficulty**

*Dissatisfaction:* Boredom is considered as a negative experience, unpleasant feeling, and dissatisfying. It has been defined as ‘negative reaction’ (De Chenne, 1981), ‘unpleasant’ (Fisher, 1993), ‘aversive’ (Perkins & Hill, 1985), ‘unpleasurable’ (Fenichel, 1953), and

dissatisfying (Bernstein, 1975; Greenson, 1953; Mikulas & Vodanovich 1993; Todman, 2003). Thus, dissatisfaction is another element in experiencing boredom.

*Difficulty:* In addition to activity, arousal, and dissatisfaction, boredom is an experience that is difficult to endure. Some researchers viewed that boredom is unpleasant and painful. For example, Wangh (1975) stated that “the feeling of boredom is unpleasant-usually only mildly so, but it may become painful” (p.538). Moreover, Sundberg, Latkin, Farmer, and Saoud (1991) added that boredom can be extended “from mild to severe unpleasantness” (p.210).

### **1.8.3 Inattention**

The difficulty of paying attention when getting bored has been the focus of many researchers. In this context, Hartocollis (1972) and Bernstein (1975) viewed that the difficulty of paying attention with the surrounding activities is a main component of boredom (as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p.24). When attending a boring activity, it is difficult for individuals to control their attention.

### **1.8.4 Time Perception**

Time perception is when an individual perceives time is passing or moving too slowly when experiencing boredom. In fact the German word *Langeweile* meaning boredom, translated into ‘long while’ or ‘long time’. Wangh (1975) described this feature as “the unpleasant feeling of concern with the passage of time in boredom” (as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p.26). When an individual is experiencing boredom, time seems to have no end, there is no difference between past, present, and future, simply it is an endless present (Wangh, 1975, as cited in Fahlman, 2008, p.27).

### **1.8.5 Emotional Components of Boredom**

The state of boredom involves many emotional components such as anger, anxiety, sadness, dysphoria, and emptiness. This outlined components are not all experienced by an individual at the same time, it might be at least some of them or one that is always present (Fahlman, 2008).

### **1.8.6 Impaired Validity**

This last component is considered as a motivational element. That is, motivation is impaired, how? An individual fluctuate between low energy and raised energy since individuals may have high energy or motivation or low energy when they are experiencing boredom (Fahlman, 2008)

## **1.9 Signs of Boredom**

When students get bored in class, they show some negative behaviours which are considered as signs of boredom. According to Davies and Fortney (2012), as cited in López, 2016, p.17) “boredom is a feeling resulting from a surplus of mental resources (Mentons) given a relatively unchallenging task environment. The unused mental resources will result in boredom and the possibility of the arousal of signs of boredom in class”. Hence, there are four common signs of boredom which are as follows:

### **1.9.1 Yawning**

Pursuant to definition, yawning implies “opening the mouth wide and closing the eyelids while inhaling deeply and then exhaling more briefly. A yawn typically lasts 5-10 seconds and is usually accompanied by retroflexion of the head and sometimes by elevation of the arms” (Teive, Munhoz, Camargo & Walusinki, 2018, p.473). Generally, people often

yawn after waking up or before falling asleep. In class, they can yawn when seeing someone yawn, drowsiness, fatigue, or when feeling bored; so, it is considered as a sign of students' boredom. Provine (2012) conducted a study in which he filmed secretly two groups of people. The first group was watching television test-card and the second groups were watching music videos. The results of the study show that people watching music video were enjoying and those who watching TV test-card were yawning 70%. Hence, he argued that people yawn when they are bored. Whereas, Chong (2014) stated that no person knows the reason of yawning or its process.

### **1.9.2 Talking**

Talking between students is a common issue for teacher. It is seeing as a distraction to students while learning since it affects the talker's attention or his classmates. Talking is considered as a sign of boredom between students and it can take many forms: the blurting, the whispering, and the chatterbox. (<https://classroomcaboodle.com/teacher-resource/talking-in-class-solution/>)

### **1.9.3 Sleeping in class**

Students rarely sleep in class, they might "take a little nap" when they feel fatigue, or because of sickness, or working late. Yet, students may fall asleep when they get boredom in class; they simply lean on the table and sleep since he/she is no more enthusiastic to do a task or take part in the class in a vital way (López , 2016).

### **1.9.4 Using cell phones in class**

In those days, the use of cell phones especially the smart ones among students became widespread. The use of cell phones during class can be considered as a sign of boredom. Students when get bored, simply they hold their phones to play games, use social network, or

using other applications. By using their phones during class, students lose the attention to the lesson and influence other students and the classroom as a whole (López, 2016).

## **1.9 Boredom and Learning**

It has been proved through statistical researches that emotions have a profound effect on learning and achievement in academic contexts (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007, as cited in Ahmed, 2010), where learning and emotion are seen as interdependent. More specifically, boredom is a deactivating negative emotion that is considered as a motivational barrier and obstructs the academic learning process. In this context, Pekrun (2014) stated that "... boredom during lessons can lead students to withdraw attention, avoid effort, procrastinate in doing assignments, fail exams, and drop out of school"(p.15). Similarly, Sharan and Tan (2018) claim that "boredom is destructive of learning" (p.3); when students get bored, they cannot attain their cognitive and metacognitive potentials (Daschmann, 2013).

## **1.10 Consequences of Boredom**

Given that boredom is a negative and deactivating emotion, it is negatively related with students' educational development. For Kouker (1959), boredom affects negatively the students' behaviours; for instance, when students feel bored in school, they more often come late and do that on purpose which has a great effect on their learning (as cited in Tze, 2015, p.21).

Moreover, there are negative relationships between academic boredom and multiple learning factors, such as self-efficacy for self-regulated learning (SESRL), effort, and course grade (Daniels et al., 2008; Pekrun et al., 2011; Tze, Daniels, Klassen, & Li, 2013; as cited in Tze, 2015, p.21).

The control-value theoretical framework conducted by Pekrun (2006) indicated that boredom has an effect on:

- Cognitive resources : Boredom experienced during an achievement task withdraws the attention from the activity and reduce the cognitive resources available for this activity
- Motivation: Boredom reduces the motivation especially when boredom is caused by an activity. Here, motivation is induced to prevent this activity. Besides, it reduces the effort invested in the activity.
- Strategies and self-regulation: Boredom reduces the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies; it reduces the use of flexible strategies, such as elaboration of learning material , and more rigid strategies, such as rehearsal of material.
- Performance: Boredom has a negative effect on performance on both simple and more complex tasks (as cited in Pekrun et al., 2010, p.535).

## **Conclusion**

Over this chapter, the researcher attempted to give the basic information about academic boredom based on different researchers' and psychologists' frameworks. Hence, this chapter dealt with academic emotions in language learning and teaching, definition of boredom, forms of boredom, its antecedents, and consequences. The next chapter will be devoted to research design, data analysis and recommendations.

**Chapter Two**  
**Data Analysis**  
**and**  
**Recommendations**

## **Introduction**

This chapter is designed to investigate and interpret students' and teachers' perspectives towards the antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes. The researcher will identify the design of this study, population and sampling, description of the questionnaires, and data analysis. Besides, it deals with the discussion of the obtained results and provides some recommendations for both teachers and students to evade boredom during class sessions.

### **2.1 Research Design**

The current study aims at exploring the antecedents that lead students to get bored in EFL classes from both students' and teachers' perspectives. In doing so, the researcher adopted the descriptive method which allows the researcher to provide an accurate description of events and explore the phenomena. According to Monsen and Horn (2008), "descriptive research is an effective way to obtain information used in devising hypothesis and proposing association" (p.5, as cited in Amarouche, Melouah, & Rahem, 2016).

### **2.2 Sample Population**

This study is concerned with two types of population: students and teachers. The first population of the present study is third year LMD students of English at Chadli Bendjedid University in El Tarf. Their overall number for the academic year 2018/2019 is 105 students. The sample consists of 40 students, aged between 19 to 23 years old, and composed of 34 females and 06 males. The researcher administered 60 questionnaires to the whole sample population, but only 40 participants responded. The selection of this sample was based on the presumption that students have already studied at least two years at university, thus, in this level they surely have experienced boredom. They have an opinion on boredom and they would be aware of its antecedents.

The second sample population of this study composed of 14 EFL teachers from the department of English at the same university. They are nine females and five males. The average years of their teaching EFL ranges from 1 to 33 years. The researcher chose all the teachers because all of them are supposed to know about students' boredom and its signs and antecedents.

### **2.3 Data Gathering Tools**

In conducting this study, the researcher depends on the questionnaire as a tool for collecting data. It was designed for both third year EFL students and EFL teachers in English department at El Tarf University. The researcher adopted the use of questionnaire since it helps to collect reliable data about the topic; it is practical, easy to design and to analyse. In this sense, Richard (2005) stated that,

Questionnaires are one of the most common instruments used. They are relatively easy to prepare, they can be used with large numbers of subjects and they obtain information that is relatively easy to tabulate and analyze. They can also be used to illicit information about many different kinds of issues, such as language use, communication difficulties, preferred learning styles, preferred classroom activities and attitudes and beliefs. (p.60)

### **2.4 Description of the Students' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire of this study includes 15 questions which are ordered logically (see appendix A). The questions are mixed between multiple choices questions where respondents are asked to pick their own answers and justify their selection, and closed questions in which students are required to choose 'yes' or 'no' answers with a justification. Also, there exist open ended questions.

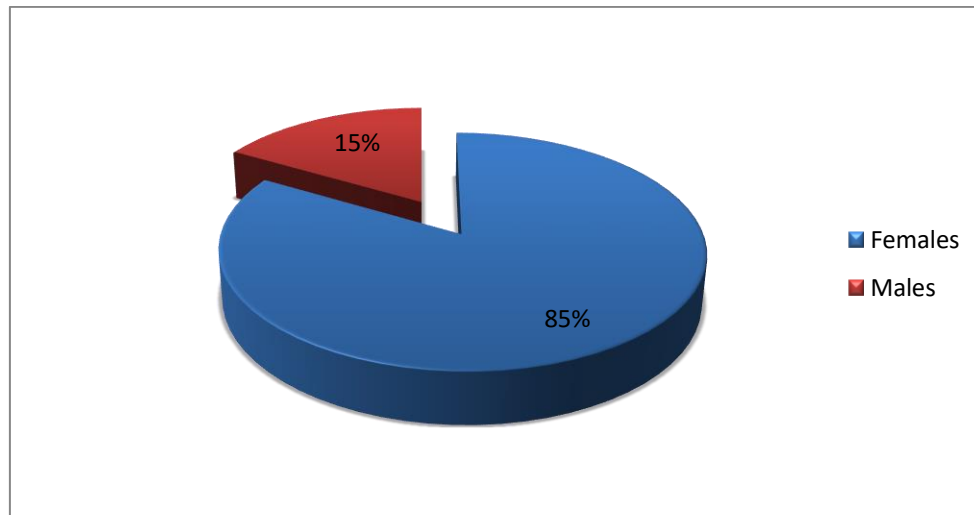
The questionnaire is made up of two sections which are as follows:

- **Section One:** this part is allocated to get personal information about the chosen sample of students. They are required to specify their gender (Q1), age (Q2), and their choice of studying English (Q3).
- **Section Two:** this part includes 11 questions that aim at exploring the students' perspectives toward the antecedents of boredom in EFL classes. At the beginning, they were asked to specify their most common emotion felt during class sessions (Q4). In (Q5) and (Q6), students were required to give the frequency of their feeling bored during class and in which part of day with a justification of each question. Besides, in (Q7) students were asked if they find all the modules interesting or not. In the next question (Q8), they were provided with a list of modules in which they were required to choose the module during which they get bored and of course with a justification. Then, in (Q9) they are asked to describe the reasons that make them feel bored. In (Q10), students were asked to tick the frequent given antecedents of getting bored. Then, they were asked whether they think that their teacher notice their boredom or not, and what he/she did (Q11). For the twelfth question, they were asked to choose the action they did when they get bored in class. Question 13 was set to obtain solutions that students used to prevent boredom in classroom. Next, in the (Q14), students were required to supply an answer whether they tried to tell their teacher when they feel bored or not with a justification. Finally, the last question (Q15) was set to ask students providing some recommendations for teachers to help them avoid boredom.

## 2.5 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

### 2.5.1 Section One: Background Information

#### Question 01: Gender



**Figure 1: Students' Gender**

The figure above shows the gender of the participants from the department of English at Chadli Bendjedid University. It shows that the majority of the participants are females constituting the total of 85%. Therefore, males constitute a small minority which represent 15% of the whole sample.

#### Question 02: Age

According to the answers obtained from the participants, their ages varies between 19 to 23 years.

#### Question 03: Studying English was the choice of:

Yourself  Parents  Others  Specify: .....

**Table 1**

*Motives to Choose Studying English*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Yourself</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	39	1	0	40
<b>percentage</b>	97.5%	02.5%	00%	100%

The majority of respondents (97.5%) said that studying English is their own choice. However, only one respondent declared that it is the choice of his/her parents. While no respondents add other sources of their choice in studying English.

**2.5.2 Section Two: Exploring the Antecedents of Boredom**

**Question 04:** What is the most common emotion that you are experiencing inside the classroom?

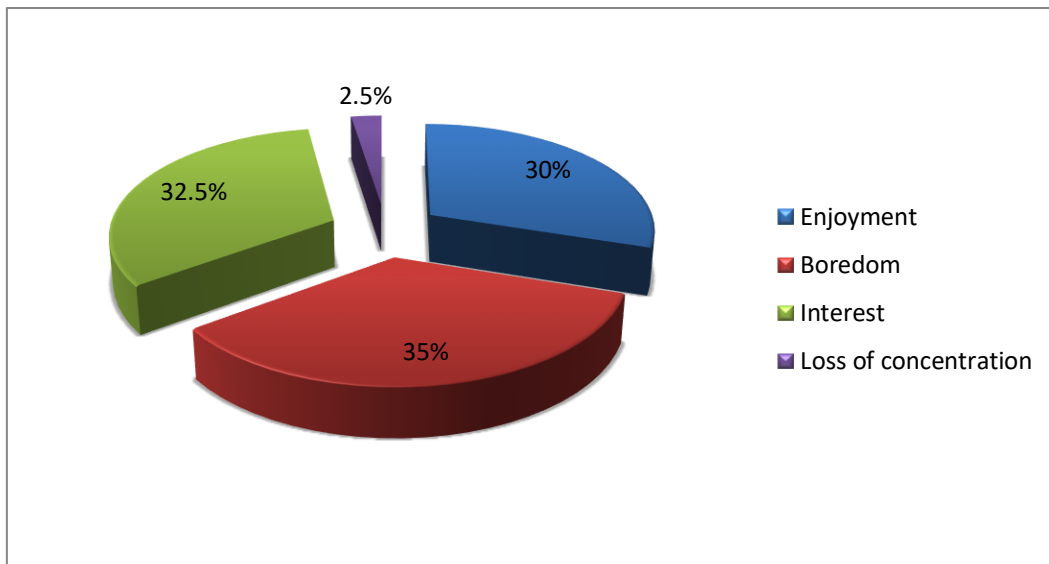
- Enjoyment
- Boredom
- Interest
- Loss of concentration

Please justify .....

**Table 2**

*The Most Common Experienced Emotion in Class*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>Boredom</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Loss of Concentration</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	12	14	13	1	40
<b>Percentage</b>	30%	35%	32.5%	2.5%	100%



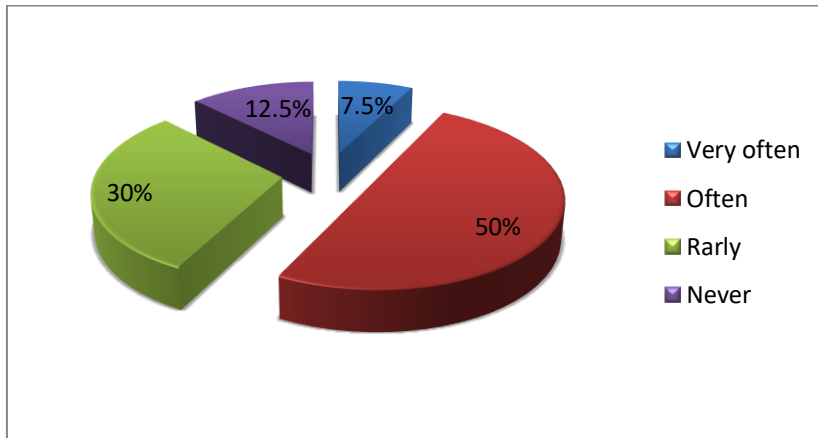
**Figure 2: The Most Common Experienced Emotion in Class**

The results reveal that (35%) of the participants (14 out of 40) feel bored inside the classroom because of many factors such as the teachers' personality or their accent, the way the teacher presents the lesson, or even the content of the lesson, the module itself since some students prefer to focus on modules which are useful in everyday life rather than theoretical ones, and the atmosphere of the classroom. While 13 out of 40 of students (32.5%) said that they feel interested when they learn something new and know new information, and when they take modules that are concerned with the language. Other students (12 out of 40) experience enjoyment during class since they like the English language and, hence, they enjoy it and enjoy learning new thing about it. Also, they said that they enjoy when they feel involved in the lesson and they can participate and discuss, or they simply enjoy studying. The rest of the participants which is only one respondent (2.5%) posited that he/she lose his/her concentration after few minutes from the beginning of the session.

**Question 05:** Given your answer to the previous question, how often do you get bored?

- Very Often
- Often

- Rarely
- Never



**Figure 3: Frequency of Getting Bored**

It is clear from the figure above that (50%) of participants often feel bored. Other respondents (30%) stated that they rarely feel bored, while (12.5%) of them said that they never get bored in class. While only (7.5%) of the participants declared that they very often get bored.

**Question 06: When do you feel bored?**

- At the beginning of the session       At the end of the session
- During the whole session       In the morning
- In the afternoon

- Please justify.....

**Table 3**

*Periods of Students' Boredom*

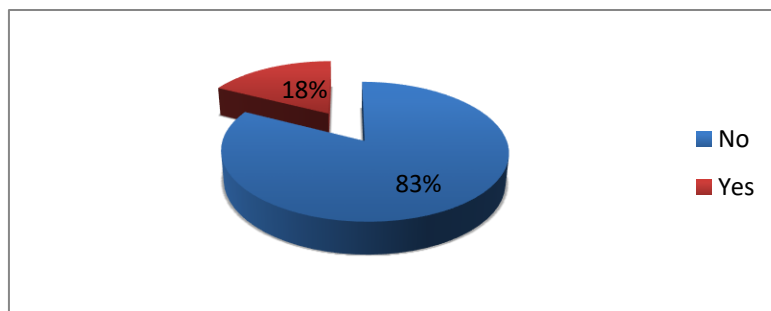
<b>Options</b>	<b>At the beginning of a session</b>	<b>At the end of the session</b>	<b>During all the session</b>	<b>In the morning</b>	<b>In the afternoon</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	5	17	6	3	24	55
<b>Percentage</b>	09%	31%	10.9%	05.5%	43.6%	100%

The third question was set in order to determine in which part of day students feel bored. The majority of the respondents (43.6%) stated that they feel bored in the afternoon because when they study all the day they feel tired and want to have a rest. Moreover, they lose their concentration especially during afternoon sessions which are heavy, longer and get slowly to end. Some respondents (31%) said that they get bored at the end of the session because of exhaustion, time passing slowly, the end of the session could not be appropriate for understanding. Few informants (10.9%) declared that they feel bored during all the session owing to some reasons such as the topics being covered which were not a source of interesting, loss of concentration, the teacher, the method used by the teacher, the module itself. Amazingly, (09%) of the respondents declared that they feel bored at the beginning of the session due to the way or method the teacher uses to present the lesson; while, only (05.5%) participants claimed that they get bored in the morning simply because they had a bad mood.

**Question 07:** Do you find all modules interesting? Justify?

Yes

No



**Figure 4: Students' Perspectives towards Interesting Modules**

The majority of the respondents (82%) stated that not all modules are interesting because they do not like theoretical modules instead they enjoy practical modules. They said that there are repetition of the same content, some modules are either so easy or so difficult, some topics tackled were not interesting, the teacher of the module; further, some participants claimed that some modules are not important and they do not need them in everyday life. However, only (18%) of the respondents admitted that all module are interesting since they are linked to English language, and, in a way or another, they boost their language abilities and skills. Indeed, those participants said that they like all what they get at classroom.

**Question 08:** According to you, in which module(s) do you get bored?

**Table 4**

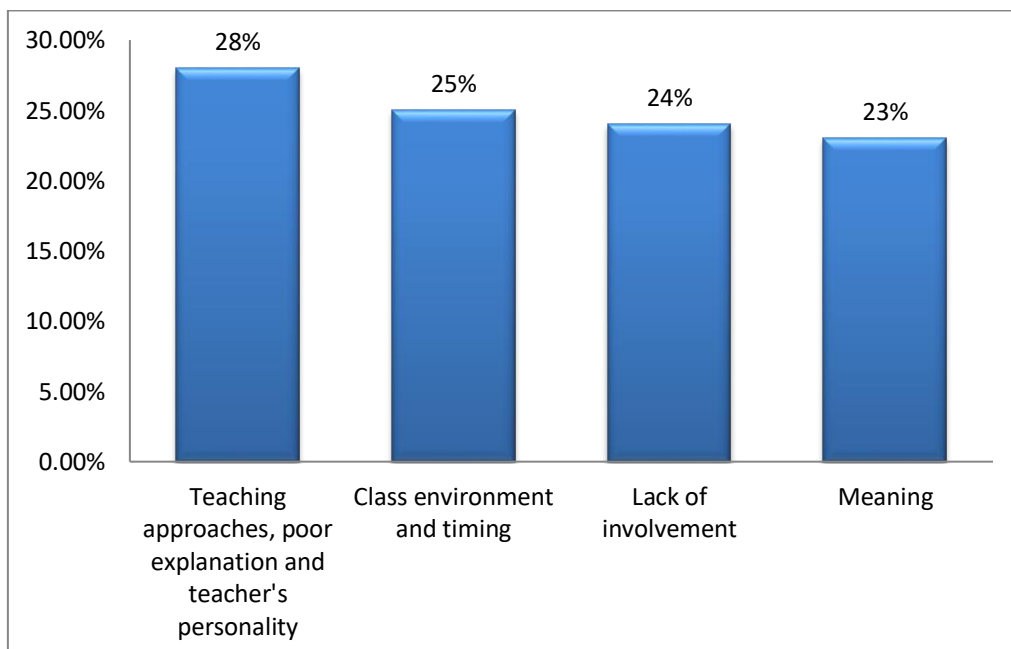
*Students' boredom Experienced during Different Modules*

Options	Number	Percentage
Written	08	11.9%
Oral	06	09%
History	10	14.9%
Research Methodology	09	13.4%
French	01	01.5%

<b>Linguistic</b>	14	20.9%
<b>Literature</b>	19	28.4%
<b>Total</b>	67	100%

The results mentioned above in the table show that (28.4%) of the participant said that they feel bored in the literature module, and (20.9%) of the respondents get bored in linguistic courses. Other participants (14.9%) get bored when they study history, while (13.4%) of the participants said that they feel bored when they study research methodology. Some respondents (11.9%) claimed that they feel bored in written module. Whereas (09%) of the respondents get bored in oral sessions. Only one participant (01.5%) get bored when he/she study French.

**Question 09:** Why were you bored in those modules? Please describe, as precisely as possible, the reasons that make you feel bored?

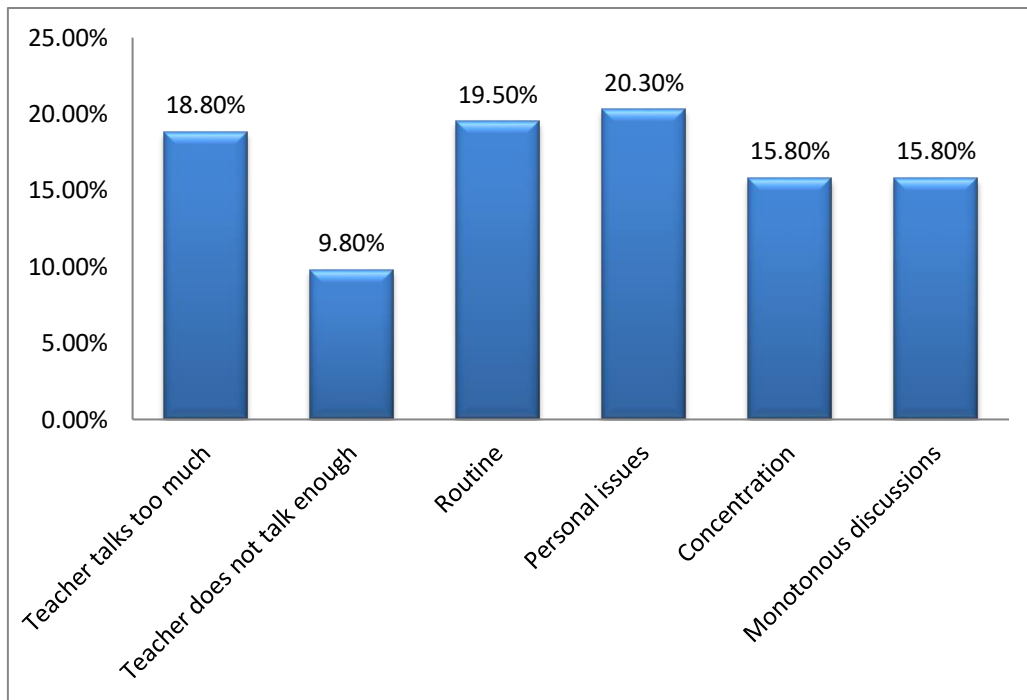


**Figure 5: Reasons of Students' boredom**

As it is clearly observed from the figure above, the majority of the participants (28%) reported that the teaching approaches and techniques used, the poor explanation of the lecture, and teacher's personality are the main causes of their boredom in classroom. Besides, almost (25%) of the participants stated that class environment (noise outside or inside the classroom, bad classroom conditions (enlightenment, hot, cold...etc), crowded classroom...) and timing (the time goes slowly during class, or no breaks between lectures and courses and setting for too long) is the cause of their boredom. Whereas, (24%) of the participants get bored when they have little opportunity to participate, share, and interact in classroom discussions; i.e., lack of involvement. Moreover, (23%) feel bored during class when they do not understand the objective or the idea of such activity or even the course; i.e., meaning.

**Question 10:** You get bored at classroom because:

- Teacher: He/she talk too much
- He/she does not talk enough
- Routine: the same thing is repeated
- Personal issues: having a personal problem, or being in a bad mood
- Lack of concentration, failure to focus, lack of attention
- Monotonous discussions



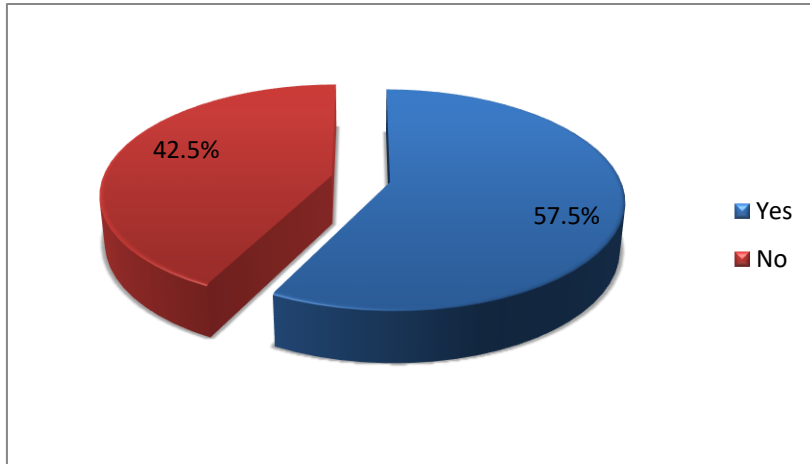
**Figure 6: Causes of Students' Boredom**

The responses of the participants showed that 20.3% of respondents get bored when they have personal issues such as having a problem or being in a bad mood; while, 19.5% of them get bored when the same thing is repeated. Some participants (18.8%) reported that they feel bored when their teachers talk too much. However, 15.8% of the participants feel bored when they lack concentration and attention, the same percentage (15.8%) got from other participants in which they said that because of monotonous discussions they get bored in classrooms. Whereas, only 9.8% of participants declared that their boredom is due to their teachers when they do not talk enough.

**Question 11:** Do you think that your teacher notices your boredom?

Yes

No

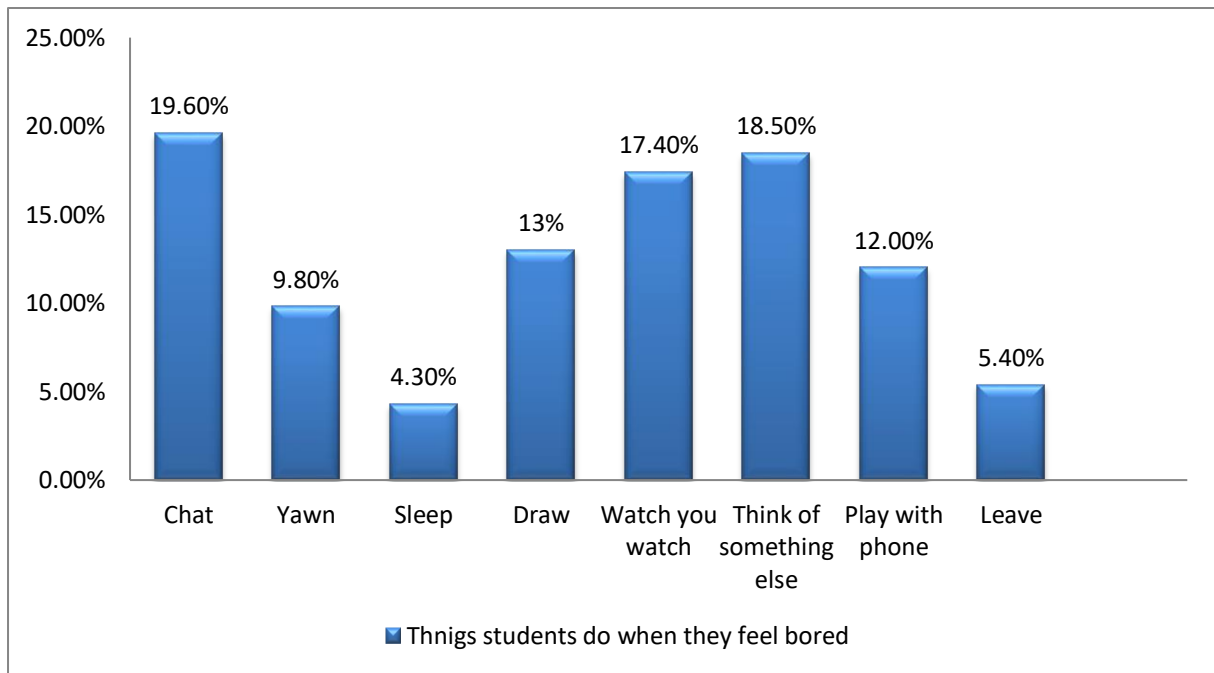


**Figure 7: Teacher's Notification of Students' Boredom**

According to the answers, almost more than the half of the participants (57.5%) replied that their teacher notice their boredom. They said that their teachers tried to make the course suitable, give them breaks, change the method, give them remarks, or did nothing. However, 42.5% of the informants declared that their teachers did not notice their boredom.

**Question 12:** When do you get bored, you:

- |                               |                          |                                       |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Chat with your classmates   | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Yawn                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Lean on the table and sleep | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Draw                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Watch your watch            | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Think of something else             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Play games in your phone    | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Leave the class at the break period | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**Figure 8: Things Students Do When They Get Bored**

Results obtained from the question (7) indicated that most of respondents (19.6%) chat with their classmates when they feel bored in classrooms, and (18.5%) of respondents think of something else or dream, and (17.4%) of them watch their watches. Moreover, (13%) of respondents reported that they avoid boredom by drawing on their block notes. Whereas, (12%) of participants prefer to play games on their phones. Furthermore, yawning is another sign of boredom that some respondents (09.8%) reported in their answers. Other few respondents (05.4%) leave the class at the break period when they feel bored during class., and the rest of the participants (04.3%) said that when they get bored they simply lean asleep.

**Question 13:** What solutions do you use to avoid getting bored in classroom? Does this help you to overcome boredom?

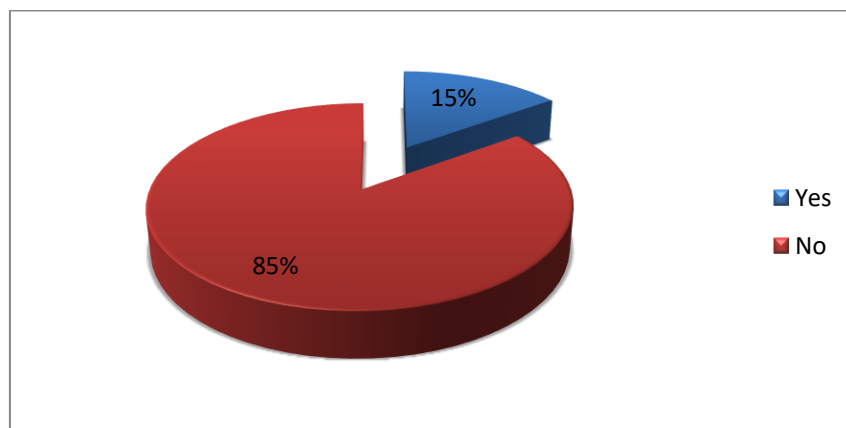
Different responses were collected from this question in which the majority of respondents said that they try to concentrate with their teachers, pay attention, listen carefully, focus with the explanation, participate, share ideas, take notes, and prepare their lessons before coming to

class. Other respondents said that they use the courses as an opportunity to learn new vocabulary and enhance their English accent and write new words which they do not know. In this respect, all respondents found that those solutions helped them avoiding getting bored in classrooms.

**Question 14:** Do you try to tell your teacher that you feel bored during class?

Yes

No



**Figure 9: Do Students Tell Their Teachers About Their Boredom**

The majority of respondents (85%) claimed that they do not try to tell their teacher that they feel bored because they found this impolite, disrespectful, and shame. Also, they are afraid of their teacher's reaction, they do not have the ability to tell teachers, or they do not want to make their teacher feel embarrassed. Whereas, (15%) of participants said that they tried to tell their teachers that they feel bored, and their teachers' tried to change the method of teaching, and asked students to concentrate.

**Question 15:** What do you require from your teachers to avoid boredom in classroom?

Participants provided the following suggestions:

- Change the method of teaching when it does not work and try to vary them from time to time.
- Use authentic materials and technologies such as data show when necessary.
- Give students a break of 5 min to get rest.
- Choose appropriate and interesting topics and let students choose the topic from time to time.
- Be skilful, active, and creative; create new ways of presenting the lesson, give tasks and activities as games.
- Involve the students enough in the learning process.
- Create a friendly atmosphere, tell jokes, and do some games.
- Make practical courses more than theoretical ones.
- Be dynamic and competent with a sense of humour.

## 2.6. Description of Teachers Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was handed to 14 teachers of English in the department of English at the University of Chadli Bendjedid. This questionnaire is required to fulfil the sought objectives of this research. It is divided into two sections and comprises of eight questions (see appendix A). The types of questions are closed ended and open ended questions. The two sections are as follows:

- **Section One:** this section seeks information about the teachers' gender (Q1) and their teaching English experience in terms of teaching years (Q2).
- **Section Two:** this section aims at exploring the antecedents of students' boredom from the teachers' perspectives. In this section teachers were asked to give the frequency of their students' boredom in classes (Q3). In (Q4), teachers were asked to state how they know that their students' feel bored. Then, (Q5) is devoted to mention the causes of students' boredom. Teachers were also asked whether they allow their

students to choose the activities or not (Q6). Question seven (7) aims at inspecting teachers' actions when their students get bored, and whether it is useful or not. In the last questions (Q8), teachers were asked about the more bored gender.

## 2.7 Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

### 2.7.1 Section One: Background information

#### Question 01: Gender

The participated teachers who answered the questionnaire are 09 females and 05 males.

#### Question 02: Years of teaching experience

**Table 5**

#### *Teachers' Teaching Experience*

Options	Number	Percentage
1-10	10	71.4%
11-20	03	21.4%
21-30	00	00%
31-40	01	07.2%
<b>Total</b>	14	100%

From the obtained data, the teaching experience of the participants ranges from 1 to 33 years in which (10 out of 14) of the participants' teaching experience is between 1 year to 10 years. While 21.4% of the participants have a teaching experience between 11 to 20 years. As for the rest, the remaining participants (1 out of 14) have spent a teaching experience that ranged between 31 to 40 years.

### 2.7.2 Section Two: Teachers' perspectives of students' boredom

#### Question 03: How often do your students get bored in classes?

Very often

Often

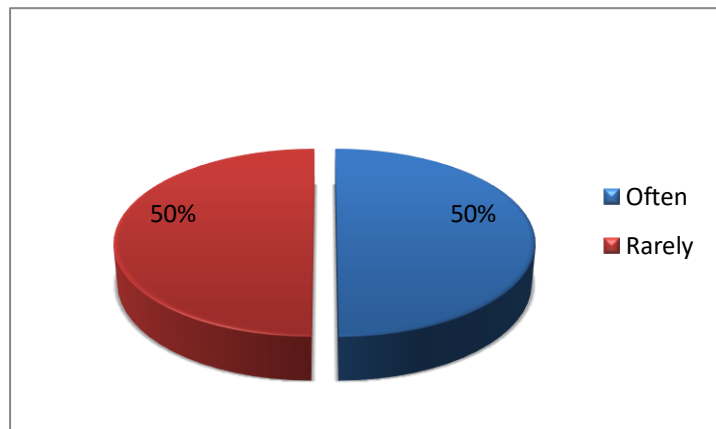
Rarely

Never

**Table 6**

*Frequency of Students' Boredom*

Options	Very often	Often	Rarely	Never	Total
Number	00	07	07	00	14
Percentage	00%	50%	50%	00%	100%



**Figure 10: Frequency of Students' Boredom**

The figure above showed that (50%) of the participants stated that their students often feel bored; whereas,(50%) of the participants declared that their students rarely feel bored during class.

**Question 04:** How do you know that your students are feeling bored?

Different answers were received from the respondents in which they reported that they know that their students were getting bored from their interaction; when they do not participate and interact with both teacher and their classmates; and when they show their unwillingness to be motivated and interested in sharing ideas, and getting involved in the

process of learning in general. Moreover, other respondents declared that from students' facial expressions they can detect their boredom; for instance, when they feel sleepy, daze, or start sighing. Additionally, students get bored when they start checking time, playing with their phones, or asking for permission to go out for a while. Other participants added that they notice that their students were getting bored when they start to talk with each other especially if it comes from the brilliant students.

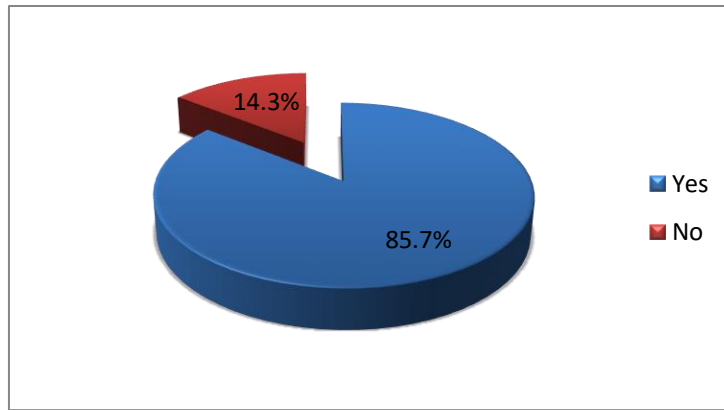
**Question 05:** According to you, why do students feel bored during class?

In this question participants provided different answers, most of them (43%) stated that students feel bored when the lesson is theoretical since most students tend to like practical courses or using ICT supports. Additionally, other respondents (21.4%) added that students feel bored during class when the teacher's methods grow monotonous, or when repeating the same teaching methods and procedures. However, some respondents (14.3%) view that students have no role in selecting tasks, and teacher dominates the talk and does not give them the opportunity to participate or express themselves freely as other causes of boredom. Other respondents (14.3%) provided other causes as lack of motivation from both sides teachers and students, lack of motivating activities, and lack of revision or reading. Few informants (07%) stated that students get bored in class when they are tired after a long day studying, or after having bad night sleeping, or simply they are careless.

**Question 06:** Do you allow your students to choose the activities from time to time?

Yes

No



**Figure 11: Do Teachers Allow Their Students to Choose the Activities**

The results obtained from the data showed that most respondents (85.7%) said that they allow their students to choose the activities being conducted in the class from time to time. They allow them to choose:

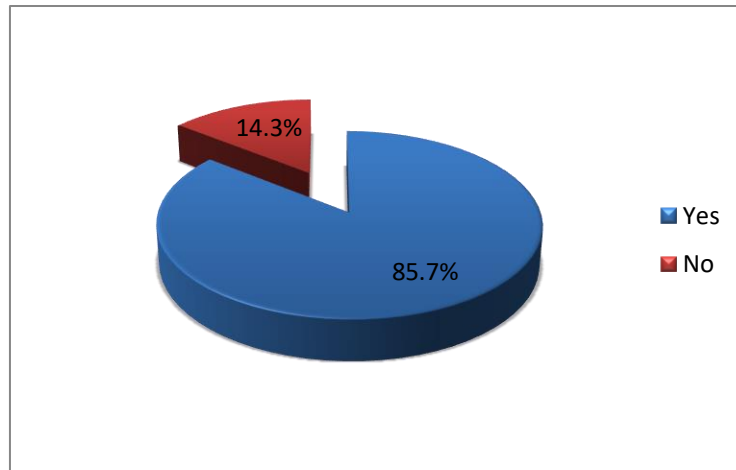
- The topic to be discussed or to be presented orally (oral presentation).
- Written activities.
- Pause activities related to the course.
- Group work.
- Pair work.
- Yes/no questions.
- Role play activities.

While only few respondents (14.3%) declared that they do not allow their students to choose the activities.

○ Does this affect your students' motivation?

Yes

No



**Figure 12: Does This Affect Students' Motivation**

We observe from the figure above that 85.7% of respondents believe that allowing their students to select activities to be performed in class affect their motivation since they feel free when giving the opportunity to choose some activities, change the routine of presenting such activities, they will be more motivated since they can work with something they like and enjoy, they will participate in the lesson, and they feel more involved in the process of learning and teaching. However, few respondents (14.3%) answered that this does not affect the students' motivation because of the nature of the modules that are totally based on the teacher's information and tasks, and also students can be motivated even if they did not choose the activities.

- If no (not allow students to choose activities), when you notice that your students are not interested in these activities do you change them or continue?

In this part of the above mentioned question, respondents who said that they do not allow their students to choose the activities, claimed that when they notice their students are not interested in the task they change the activities being performed according to their interest in order to motivate them and to attain effective teaching and learning.

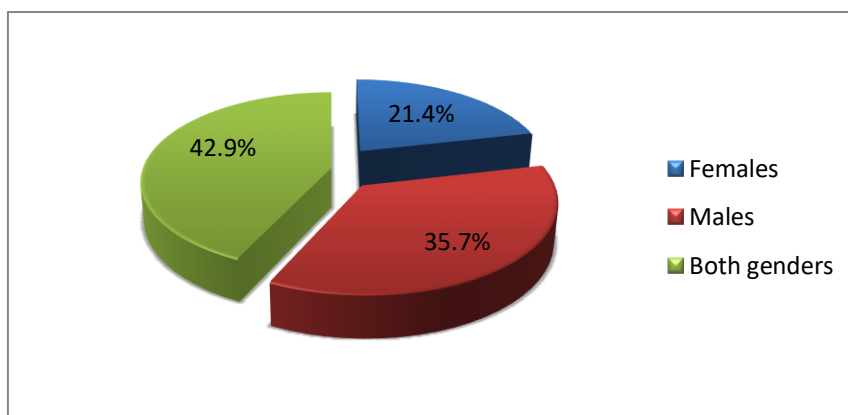
**Question 07:** If your students get bored, what do you do?

The respondents provided different answers for this open question. Most of them (64.3%) declared that when their students get bored, they change the topic or the way of teaching the course, and give new methods or strategies. Other participants (21.4%) stated that they create a friendly and comfortable atmosphere for students by telling jokes related to the topic if possible, tricky activities, and games to let them forget their bored mode. Whereas, (14.3%) of respondents claimed that they give their students time to relax and have rest and try to promote interaction and motivate their students.

- Do you find this useful? Please, explain

All participants (100%) consider their proposed solutions useful since humour in class will change the mode of students, students will feel motivated through varying different activities and new lesson plans, and it helps to feel involved in the course; thus, they will learn effectively. Equally important, promoting interaction and making students feel free in expressing their opinions would create a pleasant learning atmosphere. Also, giving them breaks will refresh their minds.

**Question 08:** Which gender is most likely to get bored?



**Figure 13: The Most Bored Gender**

Concerning this question, most of the respondents (42.9%) stated that both genders seem to get bored because boredom has nothing to do with gender, it is a psychological state. Also, due to the number of females in one class which is always more than males, it is inappropriate to endorse the most gender that is likely to get bored in classes. However, 35.7% of the respondents declared that males is the most likely gender to get bored and show their boredom and cannot hide it because they are usually less motivated to learn than females, (or because of their bad habit of smoking cigarettes). The rest of the respondents (21.4%) said that females get bored more than males since they are outnumbering males, quickly and easily get their attention lost.

## **2.8 Discussion of the Findings**

The main objective of this study is to explore the antecedents of students boredom in EFL classes and to sketch both students' and teachers' perspectives of boredom in classrooms. The following discusses the obtained results.

The analysis of students' questionnaire shows that boredom is a common emotion among EFL students who often experience it during different classroom sessions. It is, therefore, necessary to identify the reasons of this emotion. The majority of students who participated ascribe their boredom to teaching approaches, poor explanation of the lecture, teacher's personality, class environment, timing, and no breaks between sessions. Participants also mention that they feel bored when they lack the opportunity to participate, interact and share their thought and ideas, as well as the fact that students do not feel involved enough in the lesson. The results also showed that repetitive tasks or monotonous discussions make them bored. Besides, participants mentioned other precursors such as loss of concentration, personal issues, or teacher talks too much. Thus, we can say that the first formulated hypothesis is confirmed.

Students' responses also revealed the signs of which students get bored during class; instances of that are chatting with their classmates, thinking of something else, watching their watches, drawing, playing with their phones, yawning, or sleep, ...etc. Some participants reported that they strive to use some solutions to avoid getting bored such as trying to concentrate, focusing on teacher's explanation, participating, taking notes...etc.

The data gathered from teachers' questionnaire indicated that most teachers are aware of their students' boredom. Their perspectives on the antecedents of boredom are somehow resembling to students' ones; they argued that students feel bored because of the teaching method, repetition, lack of opportunity to participate and share ideas, theoretical modules, tiredness. However, teachers did not mention themselves as causes of boredom. Nevertheless, the teachers reported that they allow their students' to take part in the lesson and vary activities and tasks to avoid boredom. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is to some extent valid.

In a nutshell, the students who participated in this study identified the most antecedents of their boredom that they encounter in classrooms and the teachers seemed to know most of the antecedents of their students' boredom in the class but how they can help students avoid getting bored in every session is truly a big role for any teacher and this does not mean that students are deprived of sharing this role as well.

## **2.9 Recommendations**

Boredom is a common experienced phenomenon in EFL classes. Based on the main results of the present study, some recommendations will be provided for the sake of helping students' side-stepping boredom in classrooms:

### 2.9.1 Recommendations for Teachers

- Teachers need to be aware of the causes of the occurrence of their students' boredom before going about reducing it.
- Teachers have to build a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere; build a friendly sense in the classroom.
- Using higher quality of teaching methods and approaches to prevent boredom, employing instructional aids during the teaching process, and engaging fun and enjoyment during the implementation of the instructional events to increase students' enjoyment of learning.
- Teachers should vary tasks and activities up to the students' need.
- It is appropriate if EFL teachers use different technologies in the instruction process that raise students' motivation and interaction.
- Teachers should give their students a break when they sit for a long time. This helps students to refocus their attention.
- Giving students the opportunity to choose what to learn or how to learn it will motivate them and make them interested in what they are learning.
- Teachers have to use positive reinforcement to promote positive behaviour and create positive learning atmosphere.
- Using humour is an effective way to help students feel comfortable in the classroom; thus, teachers can incorporate it in their lessons plans and use them every day.
- Teachers should plan activities in which students use variety of skills since each student is interested in particular skill. This will help the whole class to be engaged in these activities and relate positively to the material.

- At the beginning of the session, the teacher should precise the objective of the lesson and then, he/she can ask one main question about the lesson that students will answer on it at the end of the lesson.
- Teachers could use as possible as they can the appropriate vocabularies for students to help them using them effectively in appropriate contexts.
- Teachers could help their students understanding, imagining, and categorizing what they learn by using mind mapping.
- Teachers could create a real-world connection to what their students are learning. This will give them a better understanding of why they need to learn what their teachers are teaching them.
- It is an effective way if teachers think outside the box and plan a lesson that is completely out of the ordinary, for example, inviting a guest speaker, go on a field trip, or take learning outdoors...etc. When teachers try something new and different students will not get bored (Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/ways-to-keep-your-class-interesting-4061719>).

The following recommendations are suggested for students to help them overcoming boredom:

### **2.9.2 Recommendations for Students**

- Students have to put their phones away or turn them completely off for the duration of class because they will be less likely to pay attention to studying.
- Students have to stay focused with their teacher and take notes to keep themselves knowledgeable and engaged.

- Students should prepare their lessons before coming to class. This will make them motivated because they know what they are going to learn, and also students can bring up questions that they have about the lesson.
- Students should avoid checking time to not feel that time goes slowly.
- Students have to challenge themselves to join in class discussions.
- Students can make studying easy for themselves; they can take notes, keep them in order, and write them in their own words. This will make their notes more memorable and more interesting. Moreover, they will be engaged and far from reaching boredom.
- Students can plan their end goals and what they need to accomplish to combat boredom.
- Students should avoid getting bored by rewarding themselves; they can tell themselves that they can only get the reward if they truly focus while studying. Thus, they will be more likely to focus on the task and not get bored since they have a fun event or tasty treat waiting for them when they finish their graduation.
- Students should be active and optimistic because as long as a person is optimistic, his/her mind performs well too.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted the practical part of this research, in which the researcher analysed the obtained data from the questionnaires administered to both EFL students and EFL teachers. The researcher obtained a clear view about the antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes. Then, we discussed the obtained results and offered some recommendations to prevent the occurrence of boredom during class.

# **General Conclusion**

The present study is conducted to explore the antecedents of boredom among third year EFL students at El Tarf University. Its purpose is to find out the causes that lead third year LMD students at Chadli Bendjedid University feel bored while learning.

To test our hypothesis, the researcher followed descriptive method; we have administrated two questionnaires for both third year EFL students and EFL teachers at El Tarf University during the academic year 2018/2019.

The results obtained from the analysed data gave a clear view about the antecedents of students' boredom. It revealed that third year English students at El Tarf University feel bored while learning because of several reasons such as teaching methods, teacher's personality, lack of involvement, bad classroom environment, routine, monotonous discussion...etc. Add to this, the finding showed that teachers are aware of the antecedents of their students' boredom. They reported that their students get bored because of having theoretical courses, teacher's method, lack of motivation, and fatigue. Therefore, the results of the questionnaires went hand in hand with our hypotheses. Thus, students have to challenge themselves and to focus with their teachers in order to achieve their goals. Furthermore, teachers need to change the method of teaching from time to time according to their students' need and to make more enjoyable atmosphere in classrooms.

Obviously, boredom will continue to exist in EFL classes so that the present study needs to be conducted in other settings to get more generalized findings.

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# **Appendices**

**Appendix A : Students' Questionnaire**

**Appendix B : Teachers' Questionnaire**

## Appendix A

### Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire attempts to collect information about the antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes. We would be very grateful if you could answer the questions as truthfully as possible.

Please put a tick (✓) in the appropriate choices:

#### Section One : Background information

Q1 - Gender: Male

Female

Q2 - Age:

Q3 - Studying English was the choice of: Yourself

Parents

Others  Specify: .....

.....

#### Section Two : Exploring the Antecedents of Boredom

Q4 - What is the most common emotion that you are experiencing inside the classroom ?

• Enjoyment

• Boredom

- Interest
- Loss of concentration

- Please justify .....

.....

**Q5** - Given your answer to the previous question, how often you get bored :

- Very often
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

**Q6** - When do you feel bored? (*You can choose more than one answer*)

- At the begining of a session
- At the end of the session
- During the whole session
- In the morning
- In the afternoon

- Please justify.....

.....

**Q7** - Do you find all modules interesting?

- Yes                       Not all of them

- Please justify .....

.....



Yes

No

- If yes, what he/she did ?.....

**Q12** – When you get bored, you:

- Chat with your classmate
- Yawn
- Lean on the table and you sleep
- Draw
- Watch your watch
- Think of something else, you dream
- Play games in your phone
- Leave the class at the break period

**Q13** - What solutions did you use to avoid getting bored in classroom?

.....  
.....

- Did this help you to overcome boredom?.....

**Q14** – Did you try to tell your teacher that you feel bored during class?

Yes

No

- If yes, what was his/her response?.....

- If no, why?.....

**Q15**- What do you require from your teachers to avoid boredom in classroom?

.....

.....

.....

.....

*Thank you so much* 😊

## Appendix B

### Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

We are presently conducting our master dissertation on the antecedents of students' boredom in EFL classes. You are kindly requested to fill in the questionnaire.

Please tick (✓) in the appropriate box:

#### Section One : Background information

Q1 - You are:      Male     

Female     

Q2 - Years of teaching experience:

#### Section Two : Teachers' perspectives

Q3 - How often do your students get bored in classes?

- Very often
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

Q4 - How do you know that your students are feeling bored?

.....

.....

.....  
.....

**Q5** - According to you, why do students feel bored during class? (*Please, comment on factor(s) as precisely as possible*)

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

**Q6** – Do you allow your students to choose the activities from time to time?

Yes

No

○ If yes, what are these activities?.....  
.....

- Does this affect your students motivation ?

Yes

No

-How ?.....  
.....

○ If no, when you notice that your students are not interested in these activities do you change them or continue?

.....  
.....

**Q7-** If your students get bored, what do you do?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- Do you find this useful? Please, explain

.....

.....

.....

**Q8 -** Which gender is more likely to get bored? .....

- Please, justify.....

.....

*Thank you for your collaboration*

## المخلص

الملل هو أحد العواطف السلبية الأكثر تجريباً في الأوساط الأكاديمية. يحدث نتيجة للعديد من العوامل والأسباب. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف السوابق التي وراء ملل طلاب اللغة الأجنبية الانجليزية. من خلال هذا العمل، نفترض أن الملل، من خلال وجهات نظر كل من الطلاب و المعلمين، أن ملل طلاب اللغة الانجليزية راجع إلى المنهجيات المستخدمة، نقص التحفيز و الارتباط، التعب، المناقشات الرتيبة، تركيز المعلم، أو المعلم في حد ذاته. للتحقق من هذه الفرضيات، اعتمد الباحث على المنهجية الوصفية. بالتالي، تم إدارة استبيانين لجمع البيانات، احدهما موجه إلى 40 طالب سنة ثالثة أنجليزية المسجلين بالموسم الجامعي 2019/2018 و الثاني موجه إلى معلمي اللغة الأنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة الشاذلي بن جديد. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من استبيان الطلاب أن السوابق الرئيسية لملل الطلاب في فصول اللغة الأنجليزية هي مناهيج التدريس و التقنيات المستخدمة، سوء شرح الدرس، شخصية المعلم، بيئة القسم، التوقيت، قلة فرص المشاركة و التفاعل، الروتين، و رتابة المناقشة. من ناحية أخرى ، كشفت نتائج استبيان المعلمين أن الطلاب يشعرون بالملل بسبب رتابة و تكرار المنهجية ، تركيز المعلم ، نقص الحافز ، والإرهاق والتعب. بناءً على هذه النتائج ، يُنصح المعلمون بأخذ سوابق الملل لدى الطلاب بعين الاعتبار، وتوفير أنشطة واستراتيجيات متنوعة لتحسين حافزو المشاركة لدى الطلاب.

**الكلمات المفتاحية :** العواطف، أسلاف، ملل، وجهات نظر، أقسام اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

## Résumé

L'ennui est l'émotion la plus fréquente d'expérience dans les milieux académiques. Il se produit en raison de nombreux facteurs et causes. La présente étude a pour objectif d'explorer les antécédents de l'ennui des étudiants d'anglais de langue étrangère (EFL). Par ce travail, nous supposons, des perspectives des étudiants et des enseignants, que l'ennui des étudiants EFL est en raison de méthodes utilisées, manque de motivation et d'engagement, l'épuisement, discussions monotones, centrage de l'enseignant, ou l'enseignant lui-même. Pour vérifier cette hypothèse, on a appuyé sur la méthode descriptive. Par conséquent, deux questionnaires ont été administrés pour la collecte de données, l'un pour 40 étudiants d'anglais de troisième année inscrits pour l'année universitaire 2018/2019, et le second, destiné aux enseignants d'anglais de l'Université Chadli Bendjedid. Les résultats obtenus à partir du questionnaire des étudiants ont montré que les principaux antécédents d'ennui des étudiants dans les classes d'anglais étaient les approches et techniques d'enseignement utilisées, la médiocre explication de la conférence, la personnalité de l'enseignant, l'environnement de la classe, le manque de possibilité de participer et d'interagir, la routine et discussion monotone. D'autre part, les résultats du questionnaire destiné aux enseignants ont révélé que les étudiants s'ennuyaient en raison de méthodes monotones et répétitives, centrage de l'enseignant, manque de motivation, fatigue. Sur la base de ces résultats, les enseignants ont conseillé de prendre en compte les antécédents de l'ennui des étudiants et d'offrir diverses activités et stratégies pour améliorer leurs motivations et l'engagement.

**Mot Clés :** Émotions, Antécédents, Ennui, Perspectives, ELE classes.