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Investigating the Role of Helpful Anxiety in Promoting Learning Outcomes in an EFL Context

A Case of 2nd Year EFL Students at Mila University

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Dedications



I, Miss Amal DJOGHLAL, dedicate this humble work to all my beloved family and friends

To my cherished parents: Abd Elmadjid and Saliha who have always encouraged me and have been my strength and support.



To my precious and kindest sisters: Amira, Amina, Ikram; Nour Elhouda



To my only dearly loved brother Abd Elmoumin



To M. Khalid who has backed me up all the way



To my partner Halima, the person with whom I have accomplished this work



To my precious and unique friends who are a portion of me: Ines MERIOUCHE, Halima DJEBLI and Zina BOUFELGHOUR



To all My dear cousins, especially my precious one, Hadjer DJOGHLAL



To my dear grandmother Fatima who has been praying for my success ever since I learned my first letters



I, Miss Halima DJEBLI, dedicate this work to the dearest people to my heart

To the sun that lightens my life, my sweetheart, my dear mother Nora

To my kind father Foudil may ALLAH bless him



To all my brothers: Farid, Moussa, Aissa, Haroun, especially my lovely brother Mouhamed

Thank you for your precious and priceless support



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and my precious friend Ines MERIOUCHE

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To everyone who helped me one day

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Abstract

The role of affect in general and anxiety in specific has been stressed for long in the field of second/foreign language learning. This study is a response to a call for clarity about the facilitating role of anxiety whose salience had not been established previously. The present dissertation attempts to delve into the role of positive anxiety in enhancing EFL learners' outcomes at the University of Mila. Initially, the scene is set for a reconsideration of preliminary background which paves the way for a clear conceptualization of the phenomenon of anxiety, specifying its nature, theories, types, symptoms, and sources. Additionally, it is shown how foreign language anxiety manifests in students' performance and the relative role of a moderate anxiety level and its potential benefits in improving students' achievements. Because it has been widely accepted that purported language anxiety is in fact inevitable, this research is devoted also to mitigate it through a wide array of coping strategies, either on the part of the teacher, or on the part of the learner. To verify the hypothesis and to give consistency to the present study, a questionnaire and The Facilitative Anxiety Scale have been submitted to a sample composed of 70 second year students, plus another questionnaire for 18 teachers from the Department of English at Mila University. The findings indicate that facilitative anxiety exists in foreign language classrooms and it can serve as an alert or a motivator for their learning. Besides, the results of the analysis confirm and recommend that teachers' role is important in alleviating students' anxiety to a proper amount that may push them to perform better.

Key words: Anxiety, Facilitative Anxiety, Learning Outcomes, Foreign Language Anxiety, Motivator, Alleviating.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

AAS: Achievement Anxiety Scale

BAS: Behavioral Activation System

BIS: Behavioral Inhibition System

CF: Constructive Feedback

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: Euphoric Language Tension

FFS: Fight-Flight System

FL: Foreign Language

FLA: Foreign Language Anxiety

FLCAS: The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

FLSA: Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

LA: Language Anxiety

LAD: Language Acquisition Device

L2: Second language

Q: Question

RST: Reinforcement Sensitivity Theory

%: Percentage

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General Introduction

1. Background of The Study

In the area of foreign language investigation, great interest has been devoted to investigate the cognitive aspects of foreign language learners. However, recently, given the increasing significance of the learners' affective state, researchers oriented their attention to psychological aspects of the learners as well.

Psychology is a huge umbrella term, underlying the psychological factors which are those affective factors like feelings and emotions that are present in the accomplishment of any task, such as the task of language learning. Affect, may be labeled as feelings, is one of the affective factors and is one constituent of the numerous aspects that shape the complex chemistry of the individual's make up (personality) which is the key individual difference (Scovel, 1976).

From the educational perspective and in the case of foreign language learning, affect is the emotions and feelings that learners experience during the process of language learning. Anxiety is considered as one of the most important affective variables that influence foreign language learning. Gass and Slinker confirm: "Anxiety seems to represent a trait that falls within the broader scheme of factors affecting learning" (1994, p.400). Since Spielberger (1983) defines it as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system, anxiety is a task that is believed to generate stress and fear for learners. In the field of foreign language research, the phenomenon of anxiety and its inevitable effects have been subject to extensive investigation. For that, studying its role in FL learning has been a long-term research interest. Researchers and educators conducted a good deal of studies to show the correlation between anxiety and learners' performance. Studies carried to show the negative correlation of those two variables

had the lion's share of focus and interest, whereas the positive correlation between anxiety and learners' achievement has not received much attention. In those few investigations of the facilitative features of anxiety, researchers try to touch upon the significance of the teacher's management for classroom anxiety in order to enhance learner's outcomes because successful language learning and teaching can only be achieved if teachers exerted efforts towards a better understanding of the affect of his/her learner

2. Statement of the Problem

Some foreign language learners appraise anxiety as a threat; while others consider it a motivator. Actually, the difference lies in the way students interpret their own anxiety. Despite the fact that anxiety is commonly believed to be a negative factor in learning, we attempt to show that it has facilitative features that boost learning. That is to say, anxiety, like any other factor, is characterized by a curvilinear impact on learners' academic outcomes: low levels help, whereas high levels hurt. On that account, the problem in this research is that students lack knowledge about how to control their feelings and how to positively orient their anxiety keeping in mind that too much worry about failure can get in the way of their success. Moreover, this study equally highlights the teacher's role in managing his/her classroom anxiety and the strategies followed to reduce it.

3. Aim of the Study

The current paper aims at shedding light on the significance and the role of helpful anxiety in EFL classroom. Throughout this research we seek to conceptualize anxiety and clarify various issues regarding its nature, taking into account its facilitating influence on EFL learners which provides a reasonable justification for their achievement.

4. Research Questions and Hypotheses

From what has been discussed, the following questions can be raised:

1. Does anxiety have an influence on learners' performance?
2. What are the major sources of EFL learners' anxiety?
3. To which extent may anxiety determine learning outcomes?
4. How does anxiety positively influence performance?
5. What is the appropriate amount of anxiety that makes it helpful for EFL learners?
6. What is the role of the teacher in managing classroom anxiety?

In the light of the above research questions, we hypothesize that:

1. Experiencing a moderate level of anxiety would affect students' performance positively.
2. The alleviation of the foreign language classroom anxiety level would lead to better performance.

5. Significance of the Study

This study endeavors to develop a better understanding of anxiety as an existing effective variable in EFL classrooms and the effects it may result in. It also seeks to highlight the teacher's role in noticing learners' anxiety, understanding it, and adopting some anxiety reduction strategies to create a healthy environment that enables learners to perform successfully.

6. Tools of Research

In our research, we attempt to administer a questionnaire for second year EFL students in the Department of English at Mila University in order to know their views and attitudes towards the effects of helpful anxiety on their achievement. For more support to our research, we will adopt the Alpert and Haber Facilitative Anxiety Scale; through which we will be guided in determining how the facilitating effects of anxiety occur during exam moments. Another questionnaire is for the English teachers of our department. By this mean of research we will investigate the instructors' perceptions of facilitative anxiety and highlight their significant role in managing classroom anxiety.

7. The Structure of the Study

This dissertation is divided into two parts, a theoretical and a practical one. The theoretical framework is made up of one chapter that is divided into two sections. The First section is devoted to conceptualizing and providing an overview of the concept of foreign language anxiety to offer the readers a clearer picture and avoid vagueness. The second section will deal chiefly with learning outcomes and how can anxiety influence performance positively on two levels, linguistic and psychological. Furthermore, this section tries to discuss the crucial role of teachers in managing learners' anxiety, in addition to what strategies could teachers and students use to reduce the negative effects of anxiety and increase its helpful impact. The second chapter in this work is devoted to practical implications, which is a profound exploration of our variables through the use of students' and teachers' questionnaires along with a facilitative anxiety scale. In this chapter we will focus on analyzing and interpreting the data collected from the questionnaires in addition to discussing the obtained results.

Section One: Conceptualization of Anxiety

Introduction

Learning a foreign language is, in fact, important and at the same time a very complex task that is influenced by many factors such as motivation, attitudes, personality and anxiety. Among these factors, language anxiety has been distinguished to be the most affective one, particularly due to its strong relationship to learners' achievement (Baily, 1983; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986; Young, 1991; Aida, 1994; Gass & Slinker, 1994; McIntyre & Gardner, 1995). As there is discrepancy in defining anxiety, psychologists prefer to define it operationally. In other words, anxiety is a human condition that everyone knows and experiences and what its theories brought cannot be denied, contributing in a valuable understanding of the nature of this phenomenon. By exploring the presence of anxiety in language learning, researchers have succeeded in identifying its existence in foreign language classrooms, pointing at its inhibitory and beneficial effects, extracting its components and coming at the potential sources that it emanates from. Foreign language anxiety has received massive interest since the 1970s and the discussion about which is still up to date hoping that a good, if not a perfect, image of such type of anxiety can be put.

1. Definition

In order to find out a logical account and a clear comprehension of the concept of anxiety, it seems beneficial to have a look at a good deal of researchers' works who posit various definitions. These definitions may differ according to one's understanding of the concept or according to the angle one views it from. As a start, it is commonly agreed that

anxiety is viewed as a negative emotion that individuals experience from time to time causing an inevitable influence on their psychological states and their behavior as well (Szyszka, 2017). Abu-Rabia (2004) defines anxiety as: “a fear, panic, and worry” and Chastain (1975) confirms that anxiety is a state of uneasiness and apprehension or fear caused by an anticipation of something threatening. On the same path, Corr and Fajkowska (2011) address the phenomenon of anxiety as: “...worry, fear, feelings of apprehension, threat vigilance, and danger anticipation” (as cited in Szyszka, 2017, p. 52). According to Aydin (2013), anxiety refers to: “an uncomfortable emotional state in which one perceives danger, feels powerless, and experiences tension when faced with an expected danger” (p. 64). Comprehensively, anxiety occurs when an individual faces inevitable situation, which is considered as threatening, either physically or psychologically (Szyszka, 2017). Spielberger (1983) further suggests that anxiety is: “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (as cited in Awan, Azher, Anwer & Naz, 2010, p. 33). However, many researchers found that anxiety is still not clear to some extent and difficult to be put in simple words (Brown, 2007).

In the present research, our concern is oriented towards language anxiety which is, for many researchers, associated with language learning and use. In this context, McIntyre (1998) asserts: “language anxiety is defined as the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language” (as cited in Zheng & Cheng, 2018, p. 2). On their part, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) claim that language anxiety is: “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning” (as cited in Aida, 1994, p. 156). That is to say, each individual learner constructs his/her own notion and view about the language on the one hand, and on the other hand, the assumptions or feelings he/she brings to his/her own mind during the task of foreign language acquisition.

Many language researchers and educators assumed that anxiety is one of the several affective factors that can distract attention and hence deteriorates language performance. However, anxiety is seen as a natural reaction and a necessary warning response. Mussen, Canger, and Kagan (1956) proved that: “Anxiety is a pathological condition in itself but a necessary and normal physiological and mental preparation for danger ... anxiety is necessary for the survival of the individual under certain circumstances” (as cited in Sartaj, Hafiz, Farrukh, Ferasat & Akbar, 2014, p. 1774).

2. Theories of Anxiety

In the area of investigating the concept of anxiety, there has been a considerable overlap between different theories of anxiety. According to strongman (1995), those theories are: the psychoanalytic theory which is developed by Sigmund Freud (1917, 1926) who views anxiety as the result of the repression of unconscious sexual instinctive drives, the learning / behavioral theory where behaviorists consider anxiety as a learned response to elicited danger, and the physiological theory that is suggested by Gray (1983) who believes that anxiety is the product of the activity of the behavioral inhibition system. In phenomenological / existential theory, Soren Kierkegaard (1844) sees anxiety as a human condition that is always present and William Fischer (1970) explains the state of being anxious. The cognitive theory proposes that anxiety cannot be explained by ignoring cognition.

2.1. Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory was mainly the product of Sigmund Freud (1917) who was interested in anxiety and worked on it since the start of his medical carrier till the end of his life. Kihlstrom (1999) states the central idea of Freud’s psychoanalysis:

..., Freud derived the insight that we do not necessarily know why we do what we do, and that behavior may have a deeper significance than its surface appearance might suggest. This deeper meaning is rooted in conflicts concerning ideas and impulses which are typically sexual in nature. These sorts of conflicts produce anxiety, leading the person to defend himself against this "mental pain" by rendering the conflictual ideas and impulses unconscious. Nevertheless, Freud held, these unconscious ideas and impulses continue to strive for expression, and may actually be expressed in disguised form.

For Freud then, anxiety is the unconscious primary fear or hysteria that develops since birth from events such as birth trauma, possible mother loss, and infantile experiences such as fear of castration and sexual instinctual energy and drives towards parents.

Freud's theory falls into two visions, anxiety being the result of the repression of sexual instincts, and repression of sexual drives being the result of anxiety. Strongman (1995) presents that the first formulation suggests that the repression of certain human instinctive acts, sexual urges, results in anxiety. In other words, the inhibition of human drives will generate anxiety; the symptoms of the latter in turn, will cease more anxiety from developing. Chapman (2007) asserts "...This anxiety results from the repression of Hans's sexual impulse.... In the equation Freud later used in reference to this theory of anxiety, repression produces anxiety" (p. 35).

Strongman (1995) states that in the second formulation Freud reversed the linkage between anxiety and repression. According to him, repression occurs when one experiences anxiety (1995). Freud reveals ".... It was anxiety which produced repression and not, as I formerly believed, repression which produced anxiety" (as cited in Christopher, 1929, p.34-35). That is to say, anxiety produces repression in the sense that anxiety is considered as an

alert that signals the organism when a potential danger occurs, and to stop the sexual instinct that may initiate the danger. i.e., repression.

There has been an increasing lack of support for some of the assumptions about the human personality in Freudian psychoanalytic theory of anxiety. Kihlstrom (n.d.) was one of those who criticized his work and perspectives and who actually used the expression “he just made that up” to describe his notions. He rejected the idea that infants develop sexual tendencies towards their parents and that those instincts result in any kind of anxiety. He insists that there is no concrete evidence to support this belief, and that the only explanation provided by Freud does not happen in real world but rather happens in his fantasies.

Myers (2010) contributed in the criticism of this theory remarking that the assumption that personality traits, such as anxiety, develop during early childhood is a debatable one. In Freud’s conceptualization of anxiety, he argues that anxiety is either inherited or learned at birth or during early childhood. However, Myers (2010) disagrees as many other psychologists who believe that personality development occurs during lifespan in different stages and not during infancy only.

Westen (1998) remarked that Freud’s propositions were archaic. He questioned the correctness of his belief. That our thoughts, feelings and actions are driven by repressed sexual urges i.e., it is true that unconscious motives play a role in governing behavior, but one cannot relate every feeling or deed to the unconscious instinctive energy. For that, in our case, anxiety cannot be explained in terms of the infantile repression of sexuality towards parents.

2.2. Behavioral Learning Theory

Theories of anxiety that rise from the area of learning are actually derived from the behavioral convention. By definition, behavioral learning theory explains the way behaviors are learned through the classical conditioning and the operant conditioning which are the two

primary ways of how organisms learn and that also account for much emotional behavior in humans. Those theories are linked to the work of Pavlov and Watson which offers an explanation about punishment. The core idea of Pavlov and Watson is that the conditioned or the unconditioned stimulus eventually, after pairing associations, results in a conditioned response; which is in this case fear, phobia or anxiety in order to avoid punishment. That is to say, the organism learns to avoid harmful overstimulation through a mediating mechanism which is called anxiety (Strongman, 1995).

Mowrer (1953) supports and develops the assumptions of Pavlov and Watson that anxiety is a learned emotional behavior. He says:

in contrast to the older views, which held that anxiety (fear) was an instinctive reaction to phylogenetically predetermined objects or situations, the position here taken is that anxiety is a learned response occurring to 'signals' (conditioned stimuli) that are premonitory (i.e., have in the past been followed by) of situations of injury or pain (unconditioned stimuli). (p.11)

Put simply, according to behavioral conventions, when a traumatic stimulus occurs, the organism produces a reflexive response or a behavior. Then, by associating the traumatic unconditioned stimulus (pain) with a conditioned stimulus (danger) through the process called 'paired associations', the traumatic stimulus begins to be perceived as elicited danger which will lead to weaken the behavior; the avoidance of this stimulus will produce the emotional state of the anxiety.

From the behavioral convention, Staats and Eifert (1990) developed their Multi-level behavioral theory of anxiety. They believe that humans learn more of their emotional characteristics through language cognitively rather than through classical conditioning only. Under this theory, there are two main principles. First, there is a central emotional response at

the basis of anxiety, and second, this emotional response can be acquired in a direct manner through aversive classical conditioning or symbolically through language in an indirect manner. Staats and Eifert (1990) write:

..., while sufficient, it is not necessary for an individual to have an actual traumatic experience to develop a phobia. The association of inappropriate or negative emotion eliciting verbal-symbolic stimuli with objects or situations is sufficient for those objects to acquire aversive properties. Hence phobias with no history of overt aversive conditioning can be acquired vicariously and/or by means of language conditioning. (p.19)

In other words, through the principles of classical conditioning, the emotional part of language is learned. For example, when an individual receives some negative words (not correct or wrong) along with an aversive stimulus (an aggressive behavior), that person will be conditioned to respond with a negative response to those words (fear or anxiety). Then, through classical conditioning, that person will learn a basic set of those negative words. This set of emotional words can transfer their emotion-eliciting power to other verbal and non-verbal (objects, images, magazines or books) stimuli which will also come to elicit a new response after pairing those words on both verbal and symbolic basis (figure 01).

On the basis of language conditioning, humans build a repertoire of words through which they elicit emotional responses. Staats and Eifert (1990) believe that emotions were built cognitively based on language conditioning, and that emotional behavior is determined cognitively. For that, this process for them is cognitive in nature.

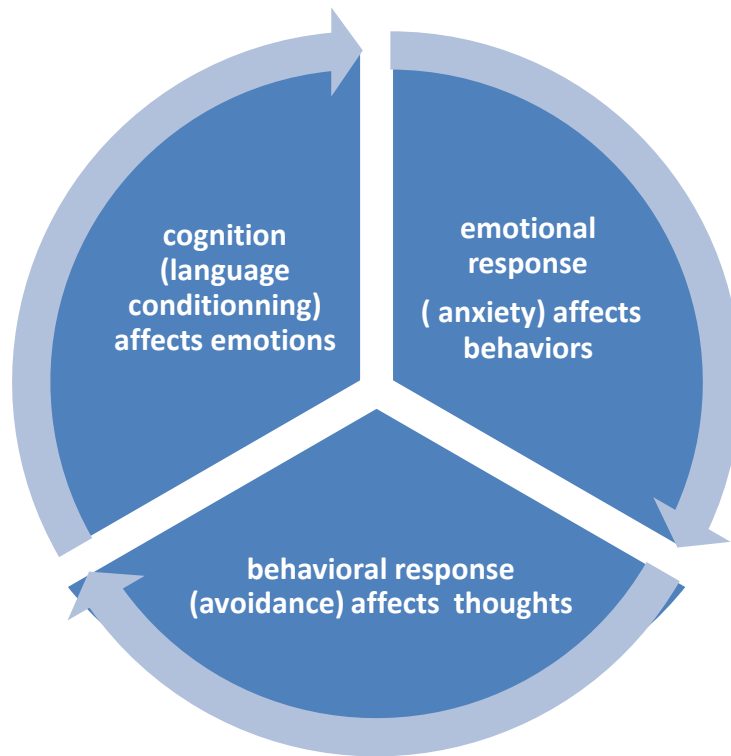


Figure 1: Emotion, cognition, and behavior.

As previously discussed in details, this cycle shows how emotion, behavior, and cognition influence each other based on the principles of the multi- level behavioral theory.

2.3. Physiological Theory

Strongman (1995) states that the physiological theory of anxiety is concerned with mainly with the investigation of what specific parts of the central nervous system are in charge of emotion in general and fear or anxiety in particular. Gray (1983) in his reinforcement sensitivity theory (RST), emphasizes the relationship between personality dimensions and reinforcement either reward or punishment. He believes in the existence of three motivational systems within the mind that govern human's behavior, those are: the fight-flight system (FFS) which is the physiological mediated reactions to unconditioned aversive stimuli such as harmful or threatening situations. The behavioral activation system

(BAS) also referred to as the reward system. From its name, the BAS is a system that responds to appetitive stimuli such as rewards, and is able to activate and regulate approach behaviors in the presence of those rewards. The behavioral inhibition system (BIS), also named the punishment system, on the other hand is the one responsible for activating and regulating inhibitory behaviors and avoidance as a response to non-rewarding stimuli or punishment. This system is generally associated with negative emotional states such as frustration and anxiety as a response to punishment and the sense of possible danger. Gray (1983) notes also that the specific part of the central nervous system that is involved in fear or anxiety is the one called septa-hippocampus system which is the key substrate to the BIS (as cited in Levita, Bois, Healey and Hartley, 2014).

Gable, Reis, and Elliot (2000) looks at BIS as a system that is activated in events which involve punishment or frustration, and is responsible for predicting individual's response to anxiety- relevant cues during those events. In other words, the behavioral inhibition system is a part of the nervous system which is involved in emotions such as anxiety, and that is responsible for repressing any actions that might threaten an undesirable outcome. Fuentes, Barrósx-Loscertales, Bustamante, Rosell, Costumero and Ávila (2012), in their discussion of individual differences, argue that some individuals experience a high level of anxiety whereas others experience a low or a moderate one. That is due to the fact that differences in the sensitivity of the behavioral inhibition system and its activity that may be high or low.

2.4. Phenomenological/Existential Theory

The phenomenological and existential theory of anxiety was originated in Kierkegaard (1844) 150 years ago (Strongman, 1995). Under the light of this theory, anxiety is described as a naturally occurring state of the person. Kierkegaard (1844) indicates that from birth

onwards, anxiety is unavoidable and it must be fought in every choice point in order to move on. This way of looking at things is centered on the idea that development and maturity take place, only if individuals are aware of the possibilities which exist in life (Strongman, 1995). No doubt, anxiety is involved in considering those possibilities. That is, anxiety is a human condition of life that every human being has to cope with because it is always present in every decision-making. May (1953) says that if individuals accept anxiety as always present in their life, they are going to see it as a nature's way of indicating that there is an unsolved situation or conflict that needs to be solved (De Castro, 2004). May (1953) adds: "anxiety is the human being's basic reaction to danger to his existence, or to some value, he identifies with his existence" (as cited in De Castro, 2004, p. 42). In this context, Kierkegaard (1844) suggests that anxiety is human's best professor because it is a sign that is pointing out to what one has to confront and resolve (De Castro, 2004).

Fischer (1970) spent a great deal of efforts to bring a phenomenological or experiential approach to the understanding of anxiety. His attention was upon the phenomenon of being anxious. According to him, a theory about anxiety should not be formulated before placing and understanding it in the concrete situation and context in which it occurs. Fischer (1970) postulates that anxiety is both anxious experiencing and the experiencing of self or the other being anxious (Strongman, 1995). i.e., comprehending both the meaning of the experience of being anxious for the person who experiences it and the way that person assumed and confronted this experience of being anxious. Talking about the person who is experiencing anxiety, is not merely including some details under this issue (being anxious) but mainly including the understanding of that person who is anxious and the meaning of his/her experience of being anxious for himself / herself. Fischer (1988) comments: "...only from the perspective of the person living the particular affect, can that affect be completely understood" (as cited in De Castro, 2004, p. 33).

From this, what can be said is that human beings do not have anxiety, but they are anxious. It implies that their anxiety is not an object or something strange to them, but it is created or based on their experience as being in the world (De Castro, 2004).

2.5. Cognitive Theory

Anxiety has had a place in recent theories of cognition. Two main theories have been developed to bring a particular explanation to the phenomenon of anxiety (Strongman, 1995). The first of which was introduced by Michal Eysenck. According to Eysenck (1988) emotions (anxiety) cannot be explained adequately by ignoring cognition. He criticized the view that looks at anxiety as being caused by physiological processes. On the basis of this, Eysenck (1988) believes that if this was true, the individuals who have especially responsive physiological systems should tend to be anxious and stressed in most stressful situations, whereas those with unresponsive physiological systems, should experience little anxiety in any situation (Cassidy, 1999). That is to say, people with high anxiety appear to react anxiously to life situations, while the ones with low anxiety tend to react less anxious in those situations which are considered as anxiety provoking. Eysenck (1988) goes on to argue that anxiety has a number of systems rather than the physiological system and that traditional anxiety approaches are inadequate because they ignore the role of the cognitive system (Strongman, 1995).

His theory pivots on the fact that the cognitive system acts as a gateway to the physiological system (Strongman, 1995). i.e., when it comes to a better understanding of anxiety, it is necessary to include not only the physiological system, but the cognitive system as well. Eysenck (1967) suggests that anxiety is directly related to the levels of physiological arousal in the central nervous systems claiming that some people have central nervous

systems which are easily aroused and hence have high anxiety, unlike those with less easily aroused central nervous systems who have low anxiety (Cassidy, 1999).

Eysenck (1984) also indicates the idea that individuals with differences of the information stored in their long-term memory, show differences in the amount of anxiety that might be either high or low (Strongman, 1995). Put simply, some people experience anxiety in certain situations but not in others because of the amount of the specific worries that might be stored in long-term memory. That is why he operationally defined the processing which leads to high or low anxiety as worrying (Cassidy, 1999). The focus on selecting threatening stimuli and the bias towards seeing ambiguous stimuli as threatening, leads to a processing of information which reflects the process of worrying. Cassidy (1999) states that worry involves “catastrophizing”, a process where everything is viewed negatively and the negative consequence exaggerated. For example, not passing an exam would lead to losing the chance for getting a job, disappointment of the parents and ending up on the streets. For that, as it has been explained before, worrying and/or anxiety depends on the store of information that already exists in memory and the way it is organized or constructed in the mind.

The second theory was developed by Arne Öhman. He (1993) introduces what he terms an information processing model of anxiety, although he departed from the idea that information processing sources lead to biological based defenses that in turn produce anxiety (Strongman, 1995).

At first, in order to explain how anxiety is processed in the human mind, Öhman establishes a clear distinction between “automatic” and “controlled” or “strategic” information processing. According to him (1993) many perceptual channels can be automatically observed for potential danger at the same time. When the automatic system locates the stimulus (which implies threat), attention is oriented to the stimulus itself. The latter is further analyzed and transformed to the strategic level of information. The shift of

control from automatic to strategic information processing is associated with activation of physiological responses which are characterized by heart deceleration for example.

Öhman (1993) argued that the automatic system is unintentional (involuntary), in the sense that it is hard to be repressed consciously once it is initiated; it has nothing to do with central attention. It means that, when the automatic system is initiated it is difficult to be suppressed consciously and it is not easily distracted by attended activities. Controlled or strategic information processing, on the other hand, is governed by attention and its capacity is limited. Therefore, interference is possible between strategically controlled processes. It works sequentially rather than in parallel and it is more conscious.

Öhman's (1993) conceptualization suggests that the automatic sensory monitoring processes have a stronger capacity for sensory events than that of the controlled strategic processes. For that, they can allow many channels to pass, only one of which can be chosen to take place in the strategic processing. Sensory messages in their turn have to strive for access to the strategic processing channel for a complete sensory analysis. Of course, events that imply specific degree of danger or threat should have prior selection for strategic processing.

This theoretical analysis suggests that after quick, unconscious analysis of stimuli, anxiety and fear are activated in relation to recruitment of defense responses (Öhman, 1993). As a result of this analysis, threatening stimuli are selected for further conscious and controlled processing. The person is not necessarily aware of the stimulus which may result in anxiety, because it is located by automatic perceptual mechanisms. Öhman(1993) confirms: "...Indeed, what appear from the inside to be 'spontaneous' episodes of anxiety may in fact be the results of unconscious stimulation" (p. 713).

Öhman (1993) illustrates his theoretical principals in a schematic version of emotion activation (anxiety) that consists of five major aspects.

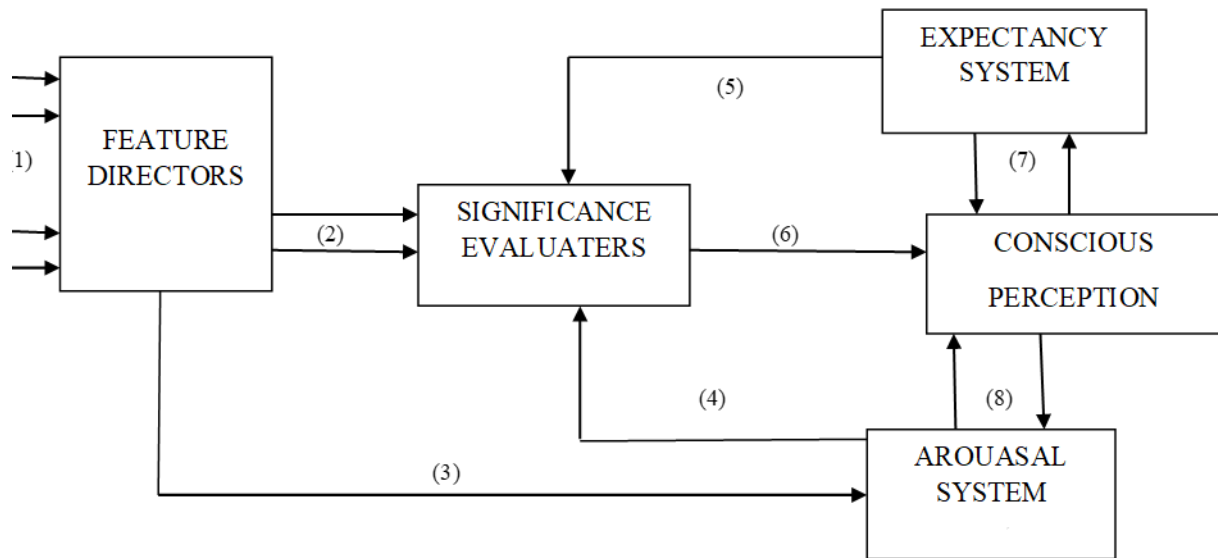


Figure 2: Öhman's Information Processing Model of Anxiety (Strongman, 1995).

Stimulus information goes into (1) feature detectors, detecting potential stimuli (threat). Information is passed on to (2) 'the significance evaluator' that automatically assesses the stimuli. Memory has an important role to play at this level and meaning is analyzed at this point without any conscious access to what is going on. Öhman (1993) says: "... the importance implication for anxiety is that unconscious discovery of potential threat through the significance evaluator does not result in activation of the arousal system unless it results in conscious perception of threat" (as cited in Strongman, 1995, p. 7). 'The arousal system' (3) receives information from the feature detectors and initiated a surge of automatic activities to prepare action. Then, feedback (4) is provided to tune up the significance evaluator for danger evaluation which (5) is also biased by an 'expectancy system' that is responsible for the organization of emotion in memory. Inputs are given to the 'conscious perception system' after being evaluated at the level of the significance evaluator (still

unconscious). The conscious perception system (6) is part of larger system, which is the mind. It integrates input from the expectancy system (7) and the arousal system (8) and chooses an appropriate action to cope with the perceived threat (Öhman, 1993)

Öhman (1993) believes that anxiety is different from fear. Fear is an emotion that is being consciously avoided or escaped and anxiety will result, if response to that fear is blocked (Strongman, 1995). That is, if avoidance or escape is possible, the result is fear. If not, the result is anxiety. According to him (1993), fear is also considered as having a noticeable outcome and anxiety is not. That is why he suggests that fear or phobia disorder have physiological roots and anxiety comes from cognitive basis (Strongman, 1995).

Despite the fact that Öhman's theory model seems to be rich and has some reasonable things to say about anxiety, it suffers from the same difficulty that many cognitive psychologists usually face when using what is known as 'boxology' (strongman, 1995). As it is shown above in figure 2, some possible functions of the human brain are named and put into boxes in some indeterminate space in the brain. This does not indicate that those functions really exist. Strongman (1995) points out at Öhman's shortcomings, believing that although it is well worked out, it tells less about the nature of anxiety which Kierkegaard (1844) believed in.

3. Types of anxiety

Building on the works and findings of researchers over the years, anxiety can be categorized into five types:

3.1. Trait Anxiety

Eysenck (1979) looks at anxiety as being "a personality trait", which occurs in a specific situation (as cited in Katalin, 2006). According to Spielberger (1971) trait anxiety is a general characteristic of individuals' personalities. Spielberger (1971) confirms that

personality traits can be conceptualized as relatively enduring differences among people. Therefore, this type refers to relatively stable individual differences in anxiety-proneness; differences between people in the tendency to perceive stressful situation as dangerous or threatening and response to such situation.

Goldberg (1993) demonstrates that people who are nervous are ones who highly experience trait anxiety because they lack emotional stability, whereas those who experience low levels of trait anxiety, are emotionally stable and tend to be less nervous and they may seem relaxed and calm (McIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

3.2. State Anxiety

The second type of anxiety is labeled ‘state anxiety’. Spilberger (1971) portrays that state anxiety is fear or apprehension people experience as a response to a specific situation, such as public speaking or an important test, at a particular moment in time and at a given level of intensity. In other words, it is considered as an interruption to individual’s equilibrium after making a mental assessment of some type of threat at a given moment. When the threat disappears, the person no longer experiences anxiety. Compared with trait anxiety which is viewed as a general characteristic of individual’s personality, state anxiety is considered as a temporary condition in response to certain stimuli.

3.3. Situation-Specific Anxiety

As its name suggests, situation-specific anxiety refers to the kind of anxiety which an individual may experience in a specific situation. According to Ellis (1994), it is “aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation” (as cited in Chakrabarti & Sengupta, 2012, p. 59). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) points out that situation-specific anxiety is similar to trait anxiety except that it is related to particular or one situation only (Chakrabarti & Sengupta, 2012). Being anxious

when solving a mathematical problem, during a test, or speaking in public serve as good examples in this case.

3.4. Debilitative/Facilitative Anxiety

Debilitative anxiety refers to state of unease, worry or fear which makes a person unable to perform a certain task or function in a situation. Therefore, anxiety is thought to be an obstacle that may hamper individuals' desire to act and affects their performance in a bad way. This type of anxiety is a detrimental agent holding negative effects that one has during speaking activities, affective reaction and overall attitudes towards learning. Students, in their turn, may experience debilitative anxiety which threatens their capacities and affects their learning process negatively (Philips, 1992).

Also called positive or helpful anxiety, facilitative anxiety is that kind of tension which functions as a good motivator to learners, keeps them alert, and improves the progress of the learning process and their performance (Scovel, 1978). Facilitative anxiety was also discussed by Bailey (1983) who views anxiety as competitiveness and as one of the keys to success. She adds that this competitiveness does not necessarily hinder the way to successful performance, but other times, it helps one perform better. Horwitz (1990) also states: "a great deal of anxiety may help performance of a task that has been practiced enough to eliminate competing responses" (as cited in Idri, 2014, p. 63).

4. Language Anxiety

Recently, researchers oriented their attention to psychological theories of language learning and tried to touch upon the affective factors that influence language learning process and its outcomes. For that, language anxiety became an area of focus and deep investigation where different researchers contributed their perspectives about it. Horwitz, Horwitz and

Cope (1986) identify two approaches from which language anxiety can be defined. The first approach explains that language anxiety can be a matter of transfer of another kind of anxiety from another area such as communication apprehension or test anxiety into the sphere of language learning. The second approach suggests that an aspect of language can produce language anxiety during the process of language learning such as the negative feelings and fear learners experience during learning or using the language itself (Young, 1998).

Gardner on his part states: “language anxiety is a pervasive and prominent force in the language learning context, and any theoretical model that seeks to understand and interpret the language learning process must consider its effect” (1991; as cited in He, 2018, p. 3). In other words, language anxiety is an existing phenomenon in the language learning field and in order to develop a better understanding of this phenomenon, one must study its inevitable effects on the process and the outcomes of language learning.

5. Foreign Language Anxiety

When shifting to foreign language learning, many voices can be heard revealing a significant discussion on the issue of anxiety and its importance. Foreign language anxiety was firstly treated as a separate phenomenon by Horwitz et al. (1986) who consider the kind of anxiety which affects language learning, and foreign language learning in particular, as a special kind (Idri, 2014). They (1986) define FLA as “a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (He, 2018, p. 3). That is, FLA is associated with a mixture of feeling, beliefs and behaviors that are related to the learning process of a foreign language. Further supporting ideas can be found in McIntyre and Gardner (1993) who express foreign language anxiety as “fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the second or foreign language” (Idri, 2014, p. 55). McIntyre (1998) continues to

define anxiety as “worry and negative emotional reactions aroused when learning or using a second language” (as cited in Zheng & Cheng, 2018, p. 2). These definitions hint at FLA as being a situation specific anxiety which takes place inside the classroom and it is remarkably different from trait and state anxiety that are discussed before (McIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), just as anxiety may get in the way of learners’ success in mathematics or science, it can also emanate from foreign language learning, especially classroom situation that is believed to be stressful. They (1986) argue that FLA prevents learners from performing successfully although these same learners may be good learners in other situations. Horwitz et al. (1986) writes some statements which are believed to be familiar to teachers of foreign languages, indicating that anxiety is the main obstacle to overcome in learning another language:

"I just know I have some kind of disability. I can't learn a foreign language no matter how hard I try."

"When I'm in my Spanish class I just freeze! I can't think of a thing when my teacher calls on me. My mind goes blank."

"It's about time someone studied why some people can't learn languages." (p. 125).

In his book, He (2018) suggests that there are three different correlations between anxiety and academic performance. Some studies reveal no relation between anxiety and achievement in language learning (Backman, 1976; Brewster, 1975) or no relation between anxiety and one skill not the others (Chastain, 1975). Others show that anxiety correlates positively with language learning (Chastain 1975; Kleinman 1977), indicating that students with lower anxiety level tend to perform better than those with high level of anxiety and vice versa (Philips, 1991).

By way of conclusion, FLA for many teachers is not merely a phenomenon studied by theorists and researchers. It is a reality confronted in the classroom (Philips, 1991). That is to say, while learning a foreign language, a degree of anxiety is always present.

6. Theories of Foreign Language Anxiety

In order to have a deeper understanding of the concept foreign language anxiety, one must consider taking a look at theories of foreign language anxiety that provide a useful insight of this phenomenon. Those theories are Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) and Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's Foreign Language Anxiety Theory (1986).

6.1. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis

One of the main five hypotheses suggested by Stephen Krashen in his theory of second language acquisition is the affective filter hypothesis which demonstrates how affective factors are related to second/ foreign language acquisition. Krashen states that the affective filter hypothesis was initially proposed by Dulay and Burt (1977) then later in (1982) it was incorporated into his theory of second language acquisition as one of the five input hypotheses (1982). The main idea of this hypothesis is that second/foreign language acquisition takes place only if there is a comprehensible input presented to learners, and if their affective filter is low to a certain level which enables them to let the input in (Du, 2009). The affective filter can be simply defined as: "a block that prevents comprehensible language input from reaching the mental Language Acquisition Device (LAD), thus preventing language acquisition" (Nath, Muhamad & Yamat, 2017). Krashen (1982) categorizes three main affective factors that can influence the affective filter, those are: a) motivation, b) self-confidence and c) anxiety. He discusses that these three affective variables can influence the learning process and allow or prevent the input from making its way in to the LAD. In other words, when the learners experience a high level of anxiety, low motivation and low self-

confidence, their affective filter will be high and function as a barrier between the input and the language acquisition device. However, when the learners experience a low level of anxiety, high motivation and high self-confidence, their filter will be low which will allow the input to reach the LAD and be acquired. Anxiety in this theory is seen both as a debilitating factor that hinders language learning or a facilitating factor that enhances language learning. Oteir and Al-Otaibi (2019) assert:

The importance of this hypothesis in pedagogy is that the idea of affective filter presents a language instructor in a new way, in which the language instructors who can effectively facilitate input and make it understandable in a low anxiety situation where an appropriate classroom environment can be created. (p. 312)

That is to say, if teachers created a low anxiety classroom, affective filter will be low and successful language learning will take place.

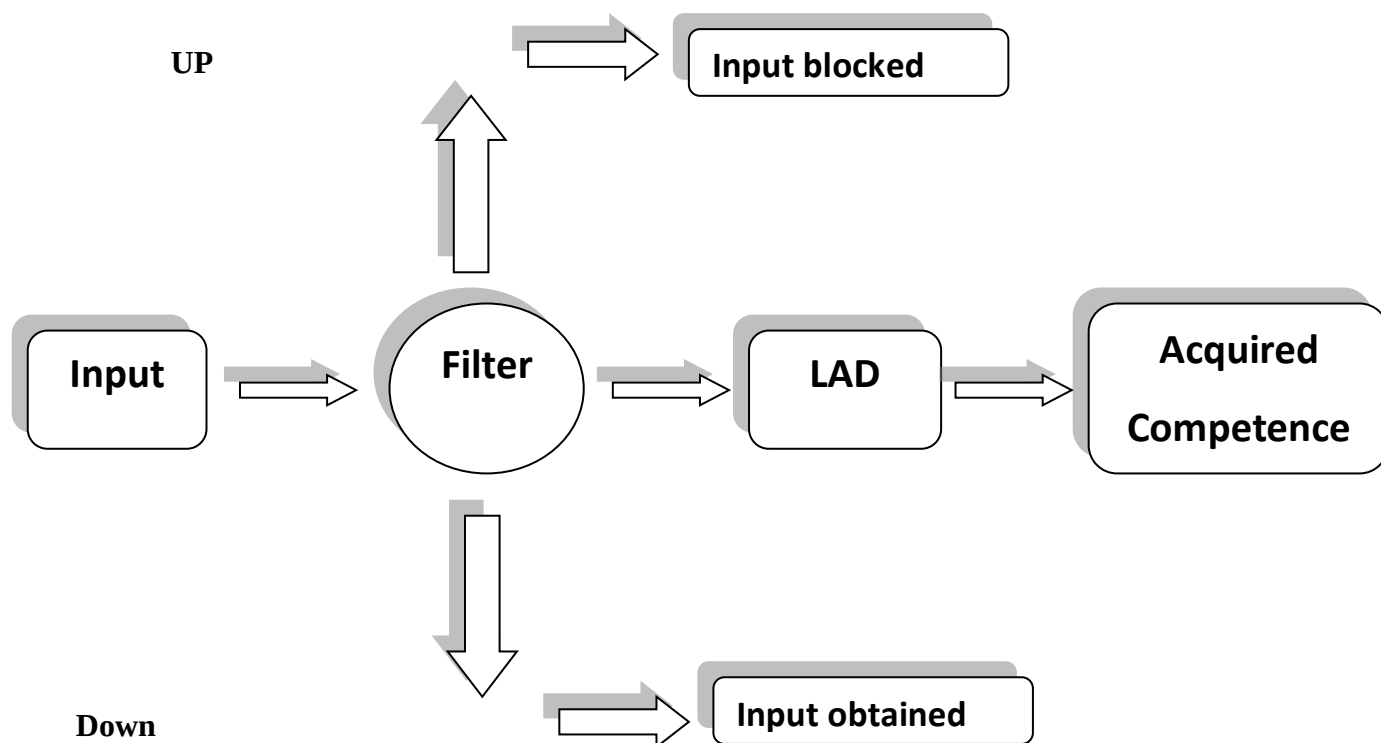


Figure 3: Operation of Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982).

Figure 03 represents the operations of the Affective Filter. It demonstrates how a raised affective filter can block the input from making its way to the LAD, and how a lowered affective filter enables the input to go in and be acquired. In other words, affective variables such as anxiety can either hinder or allow the delivery of input to the language acquisition device.

6.2. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope' Theory of Foreign Language Anxiety

In their well-known article, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope established a clear linkage between anxiety and foreign language achievement. They write: “we conceive foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). In other words, they view foreign language anxiety as a distinct form of anxiety that emerges in the process of foreign language learning ,i.e. unique to FLL which makes it a situation specific anxiety, and not one that is arising due to the transfer of a general form or other forms of anxiety into the experience of foreign language learning. In their theory of FLA, the authors state that:

The importance of the disparity between the "true" self as known to the language learner and the more limited self as can be presented at any given moment in the foreign language would seem to distinguish foreign language anxiety from other academic anxieties such as those associated with mathematics or science. Probably no other field of study implicates self- concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does. (1986, p. 128)

That is to say, the field of foreign language learning requires a high degree of self-concept and self-expression unlike the one required in other fields such as mathematics,

which generates foreign language anxiety that is distinctive from other academic anxieties. Horwitz et al. write that: “Since anxiety can have profound effects on many aspects of foreign language learning, it is important to be able to identify those students who are particularly anxious in foreign language class” (1986, p. 128). This pushed them to provide another major contribution in their theory in order to identify and measure the levels of anxiety experienced by learners in foreign language classes; this instrument is called the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS).

7. Components of Foreign Language Anxiety

Based on the work of Horwitz et al. (1986), FLA consists of three different components which are related to academic situations: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. The description of those components gives an insight to the causes that anxiety can originate from.

7.1. Communication Apprehension

Generally speaking, communication apprehension refers to the fear to speak in front of others or it is “a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people (Horwitz et al., 1986). McCroskey (1977) defines it as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (as cited in He, 2018, p. 21). According to Horwitz et al. (1986) communicative comprehension plays a significant role in FL anxiety believing that students who speak in front of the classroom are more likely to face some difficulties and feel uncomfortable. Besides, Horwitz et al. (1986) declare:

The special communication apprehension permeating foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge that one will almost certainly have difficulty

understanding others and making oneself understood. Possibly because of this knowledge, many otherwise talkative people are silent in a foreign language classroom. (p. 127)

That is, learners' inability to express themselves or to comprehend others leads to frustration and fear of getting into real communication (McIntyre & Gardner, 1989). They are neither able to understand people with whom they talk nor to express themselves and convey messages to the listener. Even if they are talkative students, they seem to be silent and tongue-tied.

7.2. Test Anxiety

The pedagogical requirements of the classroom entail that students continually are assessed. For that, the aspect of anxiety, includes fear of failure, may result during tests and examinations. Horwitz et al. (1986) confirm: "test anxiety refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure" (p. 127). Even if they are well prepared, students feel anxious while passing a test or an exam and they may encounter inevitable difficulties since tests and quizzes are frequent. This is due to their beliefs of being imperfect as Horwitz et al. (1986) want to say: "test anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves and feel that anything less than a perfect test performance is a failure" (p. 127). It is important to note that oral or speaking tests evoke test anxiety and also oral communication anxiety. For that, they are both derived from fear of failure that prevent student from getting good grades in oral exams although this does not reflect their real level (Horwitz et al., 1986).

7.3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

It is a third anxiety component related to foreign language learning. Horwitz et al. (1986) define it as "apprehension of others' evaluation, avoidance of evaluative situations,

and the expectations that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (p. 128). i.e., when students are afraid from being evaluated negatively, either by the teacher or by their peers, they become unsure of themselves that they don’t make the proper impression in the others. Hence, they often avoid speaking and participating in the classroom. Aida (1994) confirms that students who experience fear of negative evaluation often sit passively in the class adopting the action of avoidance and keep silent. Horwitz et al. (1986) continue to say that fear of negative evaluation is similar to test anxiety. However, it is not restricted to testing contexts; rather it may occur in other social evaluative situations such as interviewing for a job or speaking in a foreign language class.

8.Symptoms of Foreign Language Anxiety

Many students who experience FL anxiety display a wide range of negative behaviors and symptoms (Torres &Turner, 2016). Delmont and Lucht (1975) consider these symptoms as useful means to identify anxiety (as cited in Idri, 2014). Therefore, teachers would easily observe their learners and recognize those who are anxious. According to Leitenberg (1990), anxiety can be expressed in several ways; psychologically; physically, and behaviorally (as cited in Ingman, 1999).

8. 1. Psychological Symptoms

In relation to foreign language anxiety, learners may feel the fear of external judgment, embarrassment, isolation and lack of control inside the classroom, feelings of helplessness, fear, going blank, inability to concentrate, as well as poor memory recall and retention. All these psychological implications may result insecurity feelings (Han, 2006; as cited in Torres &Turner, 2016).

8. 2. Physical Symptoms

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), anxiety includes many symptoms such as shortness of breath, clammy sweat, irregularities in heartbeats, dizziness and even faintness. Students have also reported that they experience a wide array of physical symptoms in relation to FL anxiety such as headaches, shaking, tiredness, foot-tapping and desk-drumming (Worde, 2003; as cited in Torres &Turner, 2016).

8. 3. Behavioral Symptoms

Handley (1973) declares that high anxiety communicates itself through movements, speech and voice (as cited in Idri, 2014). As for movements, the most apparent sign for highly anxious learners is eye-contact. Handley (1973) claims that eye-contact is low in highly anxious persons. Additionally, students often play with hair or clothing and nervously touch objects. Concerning speech and voice, students would not be able to reproduce the sounds or intonation of the target language even after repeated practice (Idri, 2014).More importantly, Horwitz et al. (1986) see that anxiety can be manifested in negative avoidance behaviors like inappropriate silence, non-committal responses, unwillingness to participate, coming late, arriving unprepared, showing indifference, cutting class, withdrawal from the course and postponing home works.

9. Potential Sources of Foreign Languages Anxiety

Young (1991) identifies six potential sources of anxiety that are related to the learner, to the teacher and to the instructional practice. Young (1991) argues that, at least, six factors contribute to the arousal of foreign language anxiety.

9.1. Personal and Interpersonal Anxiety

Young (1991) believes that personal and interpersonal issues are the most discussed sources of language anxiety in most studies. She argued that this category covers: self-esteem, competitiveness, speech anxiety, shyness, stage fright, embarrassment, and communication apprehension. Krashen (1991) contributes that the level of self-esteem is largely related to language anxiety believing that students with low self-esteem worry much about what others think in order to please them, this would lead to a great level of anxiety (Young, 1991).

Besides, students who think that their ability to learn or use a foreign or second language is low are more expected to experience foreign language anxiety (Young, 1991). Another important factor stated by Young (1991) is competitiveness as discussed by Baily (1983). Competitiveness can lead to language anxiety when language learners compare themselves to others or to an idealized self-image. That is, Language learners who compete to shout the answer first or to be the first to finish a task are more likely to be anxious.

Speech anxiety, communication apprehension, shyness, stage fright and embarrassment are the last ones discussed by Young. According to her (1991), all the previous mentioned factors compass one psychological phenomenon which is social anxiety. By definition, it refers to the interpersonal evaluation in real or imagined social settings. For example, when someone speaks in front of others, he/she would experience social anxiety and such terms like audience anxiety or speech anxiety can be used.

9.2. Learners' Beliefs about Language Learning

According to young (1991), EFL learners' unrealistic beliefs and expectations about language learning may create tension and frustration in the classroom, which is one of the major factors that generate anxiety. Young states that one of most common beliefs among language learners is that they think pronunciation is the most important features of language

and that fluency can be achieved within two years which will in turn create a state of frustration (1991). Horwitz (1988), on her part contributed a set of language learners' beliefs, those are:

1)expressed great concern over the correctness of their utterances; 2)placed a great deal of stress on speaking with an “excellent accent”; 3) supported the notion that language learning is primarily translation from English; 4) believed that two years is enough time to become fluent in another language; and 5) believed some people were more able to learn a foreign language than others. (as cited in Young, 1991, p. 428)

Such wrong beliefs about the mastery of language learning will put learners into a serious state of stress resulting in language anxiety and the inhibition of their achievement. As Young puts it: “when beliefs and reality clash, anxiety results” (1991, p. 428).

9.3. Instructor Beliefs about Language Teaching

Other than the learners' beliefs about language learning, teachers themselves can also be a major source of language anxiety. That is due to their beliefs about language teaching, such as believing that being authoritative, unfriendly, harsh and frightening will certainly motivate learners to perform better. However, these beliefs are more likely to generate anxiety in the classroom rather than motivation (Young. 1991). In addition to that, Brandl (1987) asserts that some language instructors think that they exist in language classes just to correct learners' errors, showing the position of power and controlling the classroom by not allowing group-work and by being the only one to do most of, if not all, the talk and the teaching. While in fact, the true role of the instructor is being a facilitator rather than an authoritative classroom controller (Young, 1991). This kind of beliefs would frustrate learners, keep them from participating and expressing their ideas, and promote classroom anxiety instead.

9.4. Instructor-Learner Interaction

One of the ways through which the learning process can be improved is having and maintaining a good instructor- learner relationship and interaction. However, in the case of mistake correction, teacher- student interaction can turn into an unpleasant one. That is so, not because of the action, but due to the manner through which the teacher corrects his/ her students' errors. The teacher may provide error correction in a harsh unfriendly way in front of the other peers which will in turn embarrass the one being corrected. Due to this kind of interaction, learners experience anxiety (Young, 1991). Koch, Terrel and Horwitz on their part confirm that: "some students feel that error correction is necessary. The issue for the students, then, is not necessarily error correction but the *manner* for error correction – when, how often, and most importantly, how errors are corrected" (as cited in Young, 1991, P. 429).

9.5. Classroom procedures

Classroom procedures refer to the different activities that are dealt with in the classroom. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) suggest some examples where students tend to be anxious in FL classroom settings when they:

- Need to convey difficult or personal messages in the target language.
- Take part in role play activities.
- Have a test or an oral exercise with many grammar points to be remembered and coordinated simultaneously.
- Know the correct answer but provide the wrong one because of nervousness.
- Over study with no improvements in grades (as cited in He, 2018, p. 36).

Young (1991) emphasizes that oral activities and oral presentations are among the major sources of language classroom anxiety. However, even other skills such as writing, listening and reading were identified by some students to be anxiety provoking.

9.6. Language testing

Especially in foreign language tests, students may experience a certain degree of anxiety. Young (1991) declares that students react anxiously to some tests format because they produce more anxiety than others. For instance, translation and story-telling are found to be more anxiety-provoking than others like dictation and true-false.

In addition, apprehension results when students prepare well for a test and at last, they find out that the test items are different from those they dealt with before (Young, 1991). Moreover, there are other variables that can increase students' anxiety and frustration while being tested; the situation is new, ambiguous, and highly evaluative. As Young (1991) puts it: "in language testing, the more the greater the degree of student evaluation and the more unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the more the learner anxiety produced" (p. 429).

10. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Foreign language anxiety has been considered as one of the factors affecting the process of language learning and its effectiveness as well. For that, a good deal of studies attempted to investigate the influence of anxiety on language learning (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner 1989; Young 1991; Alpert & Haber 1960; Scovel 1978; Chastain 1975). The findings of these studies varied between ones that focus on the idea of anxiety serving as a debilitating factor, and the idea that focuses on anxiety being a facilitating one. Paee and Misieng (2012) state:

In explaining the varied conclusions reported by many researchers, Horwitz et.al. (1986) attributed them to the insufficient conceptualizations of the construct of anxiety made worse by the fact that there is a lack of valid and reliable anxiety measure specific to FL learning. Consequently, she and her colleagues developed an instrument called FLCAS to measure the level of learners' anxiety. (p. 43)

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which is considered the most comprehensive anxiety scale, is a self-report instrument that measures the levels of anxiety in foreign language classes. It consists of thirty-three items, each of which is answered on a five point Linkert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree", these items were developed from student reports, interviews with specialists about their clinical experiences with anxious language learners, the authors' teaching experiences, and a review of related measures of anxiety. According to Horwitz and her colleagues (1986), the items of FLACS measure three distinct forms of anxiety that occur when performing in a foreign language, those are: a) communication apprehension, b) test anxiety, and c) fear of negative evaluation. They continue to discuss that if language learners score high in this instrument, it means that they experience a higher level of foreign language anxiety. However, when they score low, it indicates that they have a low level of FLA.

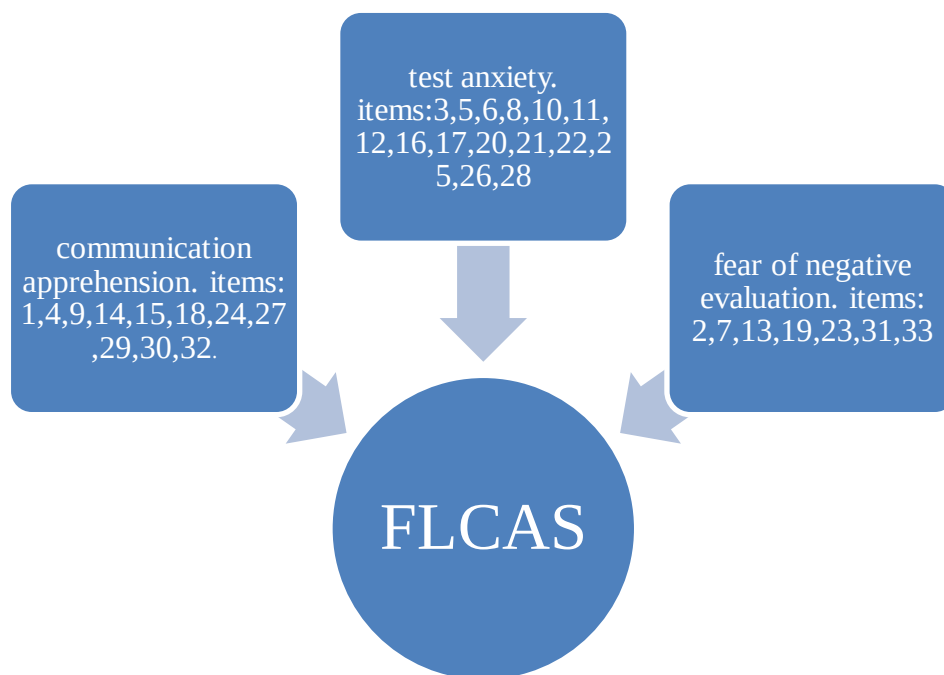


Figure 4: FLCAS Model (Horwitz et. al., 1986; as cited in Paee & Misieng, 2012).

Figure 04 represents a model of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's FLCAS. It shows the three foreign language anxiety fundamental forms which are: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. This model also demonstrates how Horwitz and her colleagues subcategorized the thirty- three items under those three forms.

Conclusion

Since it has been proven that anxiety is a human condition and an existing phenomenon in anybody's daily life, it is worth mention that, in the sphere of language learning, language anxiety is regarded as an emotion that is central and crucial in influencing second/foreign language learning. Through this section, our aim was to provide a lengthy conceptualization of anxiety. This conceptualization includes a definition of the term and its types. After that, the interest was placed on foreign language anxiety which was our main concern in this section by spotting light on its nature, theories, components, symptoms, major sources, and the most common tool for its measurement. Having covered what has already

been mentioned, it is now possible for one to develop an accurate perspective of foreign language anxiety which is an indispensable step in the stairway leading to understanding its major effects on learning outcomes.

Section Two: Effects of Helpful Anxiety on EFL Learners' Performance

Introduction

After establishing the conceptual foundation of foreign language anxiety and after reviewing its literature, it is somehow guaranteed that sufficient enlightenment concerning the construct "FLA" was provided in the first section of this work. This enables one to shift to another detailed discussion that covers other angles of the topic that includes the facilitating effect of anxiety and its role in promoting academic achievement. Facilitating anxiety is characterized by its exceptional level that ranges from a low amount to a moderate one; this appropriate level of apprehension is believed to serve as a motivating force in the process and performance of foreign language learning. Moreover, even though a successful foreign language performance equals mastering all the language skills, the productive skills are more highlighted in this field. This is for the fact that the actual performance is only achieved when learners produce the language either through speaking and oral communication or through writing performance. Following this belief, the helpful role of anxiety is discussed in terms of its positive effects on speaking and writing in addition to tests that considered as a tool to measure performance achievement. Since it has been proven that anxiety is a human vital variable in language classes, alleviating its high levels following a range of teaching strategies is highly called for. For that, most of the studies conducted to tackle anxiety have highlighted the significant role of the instructors in managing classroom anxiety and creating a healthy environment that, in turn, enables engaging the students into a successful learning process and getting them to work on reducing their own fears. All things considered, anxiety does have a vital role in boosting EFL learners' performance which will be discussed in length.

1. Learning Outcomes

In order to provide a clear account for the construct “learning outcome”, it has to be noted that academic performance, academic achievement and learning outcomes are three constructs that create confusion in the educational research area. For that, some researchers conducted works to reveal the differences between them, while others addressed them as synonyms that refer to: “the different levels of measurable and observable behavior of learners” (Yusuf, 2002, p. 1). He further defines academic performance as the measurable and observable behaviors of learners in educational situations; academic achievement as a measurable behavior in relation to what is accomplished at the end of a learning course using a valid and standardized test, and a learning outcome as a broader concept which covers both performance and achievement, and measures the actions that are required to fulfill future behaviors (Yusuf, 2002). Such definitions are said to be operational, and in the present work these terminologies are going to be used inter-changeably.

The outcome of foreign language learning, i.e., language performance, is defined as the observable production of language either by speaking or writing (Bukta, 2013). Bachman and Clark (1987) describe foreign language performance or language use as the receptive and productive performance of language that involves knowledge, competence, and skills, such skills as the psycho-physiological skills, listening and reading, speaking and writing. Vail (1940) places some emphasis on the productive skills in his discussion of the outcomes of language learning that include: “the ability to pronounce language understandably, to translate it into intelligible English; to write or speak it with some degree of freedom; and to comprehend it orally” (p.66). In the same sphere, Fulcher (2003) argues that achievement in

language classes is an observable behavior that can be measured through the tasks performed by learners inside the language class such as speaking.

From the above mentioned literature, it can deduced that foreign language learning outcome is the observable and measurable production of the acquired language and knowledge through speaking and writing, which can be demonstrated at varying levels of performance achievement, such levels can be distinguished mainly through tests. The differences in students' levels of performance achievement are the result of it being influenced by linguistic and psychological factors. Linguistic factors such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar. Robinson (2001) adds that variations in task performance levels can be the result of task difficulty stating that:

Task difficulty concerns learners' *perceptions* of the demands of the task, and these are determined by both *affective* variables (such as motivation to complete the task) and by *ability* factors such as aptitude.... Task difficulty should therefore help explain variation in task performance between any two learners performing the same task. (p.295)

In addition, there are psychological factors such as aptitude, motivation, attitudes, competitiveness and anxiety (Gass & Slinker, 2014).

2. Manifestation of Foreign Language Anxiety in Foreign Language Learners' Performance

As has been discussed in reviewing the literature of language learning outcomes, it seems that these latter cover three main performance areas, namely productive skills performance and test performance which are used to evaluate and measure the achievement of language performance.

2.1. Anxiety and Speaking Skill

In foreign language learning, speaking has been considered as one of the most important elements of the language and the most needed skill to be developed by learners due to the current need for highly competent and skillful language speakers. In other words, mastering speaking skill is regarded as mastering the language. Thornbury (2006) affirms: “speaking is generally thought to be the most important of the four skills. The ability to speak a second language is often equated with proficiency in the language, as *in she speaks excellent French*” (p.208). This complex skill is not only a matter of producing spoken utterances, but it includes spontaneous use of language through both planning and production that require a linguistic knowledge including such aspects of language as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy. In addition to linguistic competence, speaking requires a communicative competence, as Pawlak and Klimczak (2015) State: “Learning a language is learning to communicate” (p.143). That is to say, speaking skill is regarded as one of the most fundamental elements of the language that learners need to develop and in order for them to develop their oral performance, certain competences are essential; those are namely linguistic competence and communicative competence.

For the value that speaking skill has received and for the complexity that it holds, speaking a foreign language is said to be influenced by psychological variables which pushed many scholars to work on accounting for affective factors that has an influence on this kind of performance. In this vein, Oflaz (2019) states: “as a productive skill, speaking is strongly affected by psychological factors such as anxiety” (p. 999). Likewise, in her contribution on the effect of anxiety on speaking skill, Melouah (2013) asserts that foreign language learning is generally influenced by a set of affective variables such as anxiety, specifically, on the oral production phase while communicating using the foreign language. On her part also, Young

(1991) discusses that performing speaking tasks in the foreign language is often regarded by students as their most anxiety-generating situation. He (2018) declares that there has not been a common definition of the construct foreign language speaking anxiety, however, he suggests that FLSA is: “an individual’s fear or nervousness associated with either real or anticipated oral communication in foreign language with another person or persons” (p.4). From the above stated literature, one can deduce that foreign language classroom speaking anxiety is the fear experienced by students while performing oral tasks in classroom, this fear can stem from the competencies speaking requires, from the high complexity of speaking a foreign language or from the importance this skill has received over time. However, these are not the only potential sources of speaking anxiety.

According to Kitano (2001) foreign language speaking anxiety stems mainly from fear of negative evaluation and self-perception of speaking ability in the target language. Horwitz et al. (1986) discussed that fear of negative evaluation is one’s fear of the teacher or the peers’ evaluation and the anticipation that it may be negative. In a situation where learners are performing orally, they expect that they would be negatively evaluated by their instructor for, according to them, the instructor is the most competent and native-like language speaker in the classroom. Moreover, they may also be concerned about being laughed at by their classmates. As a result, they will be focused on the fear of making mistakes which gets them in a state of worry and nervousness, that is, speaking anxiety. Additionally, Young (1991) argued that learners’ beliefs about language learning are one of the sources of anxiety. Pronunciation and fluency were two of the aspects discussed by Young (1991), if learners were too concerned over their fluency and the correctness of their pronunciation while performing an oral task; they will end up feeling frustrated about their ability to speak a foreign language. Furthermore, He (2018) on his part provides: “The reasons leading to students’ speaking anxiety included: inappropriate teaching methods (e.g., putting students on

the spot unexpectedly), peer competition, fear of making errors and hence being laughed at, and teachers' harsh error correction and low tolerance of errors" (p.64). Given these points, it is clear that foreign language speaking anxiety stems from: (a): fear of the instructor's teaching methods and manner of providing feedback, (b): the uncomfortable classroom atmosphere, (c): learners' attitudes, expectations and beliefs about foreign language and their performance ability, and (d): fear of being laughed at or judged by peers.

2.2. Anxiety and Writing Skill

Due to the interest in oral communication in foreign language curricula and Compared to the attention speaking skill has received; writing has not received a great deal of focus in research area. However, in recent decades, writing has captured more importance and regained its spot in the research field. Writing is regarded as a productive skill that requires such abilities as producing correct and accurate grammar, the ability to produce well connected sentences along with the appropriate punctuation, a considerable knowledge foundation of vocabulary, and the ability to create a comprehensible and connected discourse (Thornbury, 2006).

As has been noted above, EFL learners' performance is affected by affective variables such as anxiety, and as they suffer some anxiety while performing orally, they undergo some anxiety when performing written tasks as well. There has been a considerable number of works conducted to tackle the type of anxiety that manifests itself in EFL learners' written performance (Daly & Miller, 1975; Hassan, 2001; Madigan, Linton, & Johnson, 1996; Cheng, 2004).

The term writing apprehension refers to writing anxiety, and it was first coined by Daly and Millers (1975) who define writing anxiety as: " a general avoidance of writing and of situations perceived by the individuals to potentially require some amount of writing accompanied by the potential for evaluation of that writing" (as cited in Hassan, 2001, p. 4).

Put simply, writing anxiety refers to EFL learners' avoidance of performing written tasks and situations where their writing may be evaluated by their instructor. This evaluation covers grammar, syntax, ideas, vocabulary, and style.

2.3. Anxiety and Testing

Tests are considered as a means for evaluating and determining learners' performance throughout all stages of education and a significant tool for measuring learning outcomes achievement and success. For this very reason, students experience some anxiety in exam or test situations and this anxiety seems to affect their overall performance in return (Aydin, 2010; Rana & Mahmood, 2010; as cited in Hürsen & Tekman, 2014). In order to set a clear account of the construct test anxiety, some literature reviewing is of great worth. Additionally, Sarason (1978) refers to test anxiety as: "the tendency to view with alarm the consequences of inadequate performance in an evaluative situation" (as cited in Aida, 1994, p.157). Put simply, test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety that is regarded as the uneasiness one experiences before, during, or after an exam situation, due an anticipated assumption of failing the test or based on predicting poor grades. Results obtained from previous studies highlight some other factors from which test anxiety stems and increases among foreign language learners. According to Young (1999), test anxiety manifests itself in the presence of various factors, those are: "perceptions of test validity, time limit, test techniques, test format, length, testing environment and clarity of test instructions" (as cited in Aydin, Yavuz, & Yeşilyurt, 2006, p. 147). In the same work, Aydin et al. (2006) discussed additional factors that generate test anxiety such as task difficulty, concern over getting low grades and learners' capabilities. Moreover, in the discussion of Yazici (2017) regarding McDonald's (2001) suggested factors that shape the origins of test anxiety; Yazici (2017) affirms: "certain emotional states, students' past experiences and beliefs affect the development of test anxiety" (p.62).

3. Facilitative Anxiety

The literature review on affective factors in EFL learning reveal that the most widely studied emotional concepts in psychological and educational research areas is the notion of anxiety (Cakici, 2016). The effects of foreign language anxiety were the main concern of many researchers throughout their investigations. Anxiety that is experienced in a foreign language setting can facilitate or debilitate the learning potential of the FL learner. Although there have been a number of research studies (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Young, 1991; Philips, 1992; Aida, 1994) demonstrating the negative effects of anxiety on foreign language learning, not all anxiety has detrimental effects on learners' outcomes. It is for this reason that Alpert and Haber (1960), Chastain (1975), Kleinmann (1977) and Scovel (1978) have made a distinction between facilitative and debilitating anxiety. Alpert and Haber (1960) studies were among the first to refer to the facilitative effects of anxiety on FLL. Their study includes a description of a new Achievement Anxiety Scale (AAS) which indicates not only the present of anxiety in academic performance, but also to state its facilitating effects (Alpert & Haber, 1960). Besides their argument that anxiety could serve as a helpful agent to promote foreign language learning, Alpert and Haber (1960) support their view by Sarason, Handler and Craighill (1952) study which reveals that when anxiety aroused in an examination, it will facilitate performance (Alpert & Haber, 1960). Sarason, Handler and Craighill (1952) confirm: "...when anxiety-provoking cues are present in the environment, these stimulus elements will raise [his] general drive level and result in improved performance..." (as cited in Alpert & Haber, 1960, p. 213).

Chastain (1975) conducted a study at the university level and his primary purpose was to examine three affective variables, including anxiety which seems to have great influence on students' success or failure in the classroom. Chastain (1975) implied a facilitating influence

of anxiety based on his findings that anxiety was a significant predictor of success in learning Spanish as a foreign language. According to him (1975) little anxiety is beneficial for getting desirable results while too much anxiety can produce negative results: "...perhaps some concern about a task is a plus, while too much anxiety can produce negative results" (p. 160).

Kleinmann (1977) in his turn, reported that facilitative language anxiety exists as one affective measure and it influences learners' behavior positively in the target language. Kleinmann (1977) was concerned in examining the relationship between the syntactic structures in English that are avoided by foreign students and syntactic structures of the students' native languages. His interest was about the relationship between the avoidance behavior of the subjects and anxiety. He assumed that facilitating anxiety would encourage learners to employ the very English structures that their native language group would tend to avoid.

Another important study is made by Scovel (1978) who found a positive correlation between anxiety and performance, believing that a proper amount of anxiety can lead to an approved performance. Thus, he states: "A good performance...in language learning, especially the overt social act of speaking, depends on enough anxiety to arouse the neuromuscular system to optimal levels of performance..." (p. 138). He further suggested that facilitating anxiety keeps the learner motivated to fight the new situation. It helps the learner and pushes him/her to do more efforts to reduce the negative impact of anxiety. He confirms: "Facilitating anxiety motivates the learner to "fight" the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behavior" (Scovel, 1978, p. 139).

Moreover, Krashen, Omaggio Hadley, Terrell, and Rardin have been interviewed by Young (1992) that if they can attribute a positive aspect to anxiety. The interview reveals that all of them point at the role of facilitative anxiety on language learning. They (1992) believed that a little bit of tension motivates, alerts the person and creates a desire to learn. Facilitating

anxiety is considered to be a positive and constructive force in language learning (Young, 1992).

Under the light of what has been mentioned, facilitative anxiety can be simply defined as a positive drive that enhances learning and thus performance. Facilitative anxiety motivates the learner and increases the tendency to make more efforts to learn the language. It may also be triggered by competition among the learners and make them alert. Facilitative anxiety enhances the learning process by constantly maintaining the learners' attention keeping them concentrated to the input.

4. Levels of Helpful Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is one of the affective factors that affect EFL learners' learning outcomes which has long been an area of investigation. Some researchers conducted studies to state its debilitating effects (Aida, 1994; Horwitz et al., 1986) while others, who are few, tried to reveal its vital role in promoting learning outcomes (Chastain, 1975; Kleinmann, 1977; Scovel, 1978), and such effects of anxiety are related to its levels. Horwitz et al. (1986) developed their FLCAS which is a tool that enables and facilitates the measurement of the levels of anxiety experienced by FL learners. According to them, there are three levels of anxiety: low, moderate and high. Anxiety can only be called beneficial when it occurs with a specific amount, that is to say, when anxiety ranges from a low level to a moderate level it facilitates language learning and affects learning outcomes positively. As discussed by Scovel (1978), helpful anxiety does exist, and language learners can actually benefit when exposed to it. According to him, experiencing a moderate level of foreign language anxiety enables learners to perform well and it is indeed helpful for them. Liu (2006) asserts: "As for the relationship between proficiency and anxiety levels, the more proficient in English the students were, the less anxious they seemed to be" (p. 314). In other words, students with an advanced level of performance had lower levels of anxiety.

The relation between anxiety levels and students' performance can be best illustrated in the Yerkes and Dodson (1908) Inverted U-shape. Meijer (2004) clarifies what is meant by the Inverted U-curve: "The inverted U-curve describes the relation between performance and arousal. At first, performance increases arousal until the top of the curve is reached. Thereafter, it declines as arousal increases" (as cited in Idri, 2014, p. 67). Williams (1991) adds: "when arousal is low, performance is low. Then, for a time, as arousal increases, so does performance to an optimal point. As arousal increases further, performance falls ultimately to zero" (p. 19).

In his discussion of the inverted U-curve which is proposed by Yerkes and Dodson (1908), Jahangiri (2015) affirms that a moderate level of anxiety functions as a helpful factor in the process of learning. As Young (1991) puts it: "As arousal increases so does performance. Too much arousal, however, can lead to a decrease in performance. This curve-like relationship between arousal and performance changes depending on the complexity of the task" (p.24).

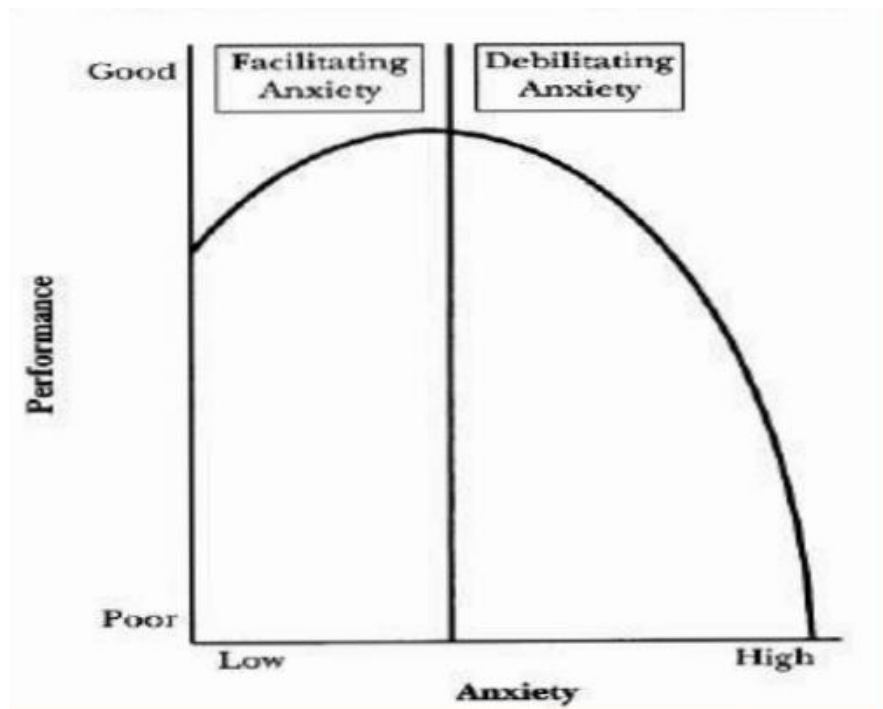


Figure 5: Inverted “U” Shape Relation between Anxiety and Performance.

(Yerkes-Dodson Law, 1908; as cited in Chakrabarti and Sengupta, 2012, p. 56)

Looking at the above inverted U-shape relation between anxiety and performance, facilitating anxiety might just be the left side of the curve, where performance level increases as a function of arousal. To explain further, when the learner starts learning, he feels a level of anxiety which is moderate, this helps him learn and pushes him to make more efforts. This is labeled facilitating anxiety. Starting from the top of the curve, anxiety becomes higher and it is from here that it starts being harmful. Hence, the right part of the curve refers to debilitating anxiety. So, the stronger anxiety is, the lower performance is too.

Jahangiri (2015) states: “Facilitative anxiety is closely associated and is bound to occur at medium levels of intensity along the continuum of anxiety and the creation of moderate levels of anxiety may lead to optimal performance” (p. 32). Moreover, Krashen (1982), in his affective filter hypotheses contributed his own beliefs concerning anxiety as an affective variable, its levels, and how the latter determines the effectiveness of language

learning process which in turn determines the quality of production. He further (1982) puts: “Low anxiety appears to be conducive to second language acquisition whether measured as personal or as classroom anxiety” (p.31). In other words, when anxiety level is lowered, learners tend to receive enough comprehensible input which in turn enables them to feel at ease during the process of learning and consequently during the production phase as well.

Furthermore, the awareness of one’s level of anxiety and the consistent efforts to lessen it and cope with anxiety-triggering situations can actually boost performance, as Denning (2011) affirms: “while you are in the process of changing anxiety into useful and actionable behavior seeing the progress, you make can be helpful. Tracking the level and the frequency of the anxiety you experience over time will add to your sense of accomplishment” (p.12).

Arslan, Içbayon, Gallard, and Ramos (2016) on their part discuss the significance of defining anxiety levels experienced by learners, stating that depicting the sources of FLA as well as its levels, enables lessening anxiety levels to a moderate one which increases the levels of proficiency.

5. Positive Effects of Anxiety on Performance

Even though most of the studies that have been conducted to investigate the effects of anxiety on foreign and second language learning and performance have mainly suggested negative effects, there are other researchers who actually initiated the belief that anxiety may have negative effects as well as positive ones (Young, 1991). Such effects of anxiety can manifest in EFL learners’ psychological state as a motivating force and in their spoken or written production of the language.

5.1. Linguistically

Concerning the formal side of the language, as discussed by Terrel (1991) when he was interviewed about whether he attributes any positive effect to anxiety, he answered: “Yes,

except that I wouldn't call the state anxiety. What I call it is "attention", and specifically the verb I like to use is "to attend to" the input" (as cited in Young, 1991, p. 10). In other words, the efforts that have been devoted to making connections between the grammatical markers that were implied in the input will possibly be fruitful in the performance phase. However, it is noteworthy, as has already been discussed, that a moderate level of anxiety is what characterizes facilitating anxiety. Hence, high levels of anxiety are more likely to hamper learners' performance while a level that ranges from moderate to low improves their performance. Following the trace of this idea, Daly (1978) affirms that students whose anxiety is high tend to compose more simple written assignments compared to those whose anxiety level is low (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015). In the same vein, Hassan (2001) adds that, compared to students who are highly anxious, those with decreased anxiety levels produce better quality structures in their writing assignments. Moreover, Masny and Foxall (1992) claimed that low apprehensive students pay a great deal of attention to the structure and form of their writings compared to high apprehensive students which enables them to outperform their peers (Hassan, 2001). Similarly, Boening, Anderson, and Miller (1997) indicate that moderate levels of anxiety in writing performance account for writing achievement, they state: "... these students, who have excelled in the classroom, are capable writers" (as cited in Hassan, 2001, p. 9).

5.2. Psychologically

When it comes to the psychological effects of facilitative anxiety, this later has been linked by many researchers to motivation, alertness and even with risk-taking (Scovel, 1978, Bailey, 1983; Hadley, 1992; William, 2008, Spielman & Rednofesky, 2001; Ehrman, 1996). Williams (2008) claims that the facilitative anxiety is an encouraging force to learning believing that it sounds as 'facilitating motivation' in making a task easier. Compatible with that, Selvam, Swaminathan, Baskaran (2016) review in their study that anxiety is supposed

not to deter students' performance, but to be beneficial and motivates learners to work more efficiently and encourages learners to make extra effort in overcoming feelings of anxiety. According to Skehan (1989), little stress may elevate students' motivation (Idri, 2014). Consequently, it influences learning positively because motivation has a crucial role in learning as it pushes students forward in order to boost their learning outcomes. Hadley (1992) agrees on attributing positive aspects to anxiety (Young, 1992). Young (1992) considers anxiety as a positive energy that could serve as a motivator to language learning when she declares: "But yet, I don't really like to use the word "anxiety" for that, but rather something like an "incentive" of some kind to improve. But not a painful or a negative incentive. So, there is a positive aspect to this idea of tension. There is a good kind of tension" (as cited in Young, 1992, p. 161).

More precisely, the facilitating effects of anxiety (as being a motivator) on student's oral performance also proved to be of great importance, as Jahangiri (2015) shows that anxiety might exert a positive effect on oral performance motivating the speaker for further or optimal practice, preparedness and performance in a highly-competitive environment. Siswa and Sebaya (2018) on their part mention that when students feel anxious before performing speaking tasks, anxiety can be helpful in preparing their speech very well, either by learning it by rote or present and practice with someone else in advance. A repeated effort like this will increase students' confidence and motivate them to work to their full potentials. In addition, Ito (2008) points at facilitative anxiety as Euphoric Language Tension (ELT) believing that students with a high level of ELT may turn their communication apprehension in the classroom into motivation, because they see the pressure as a chance for them to show a new aspect of themselves. Moreover, an appropriate level of anxiety can motivate students during test/exam periods. Hashemi and Mashayekh (2011) state that low level of test anxiety may

encourage students to study harder and motivate them. On the same path, Engbretson and O'Brien (1968) imply:

Feelings of anxiety over examinations are a frequently expressed experience in our present day competitive academic structure. It is even suggested that a certain amount of anxiety is a good thing since it makes the student motivated and directed toward giving a good performance (p. 572).

In this sense, a certain level of anxiety can really make learners more motivated and prepared for their exams.

As it is linked to alertness, Scovel (1978) also demonstrates that facilitative anxiety was one of the keys to success and could serve as an alert to promote foreign language learning. In a state of readiness and preparedness, facilitative anxiety pushes the learners and triggers the need for more efforts (Scovel, 1978).

Last but not least, Ito (2008) states the linkage between anxiety and risk-taking in language learning believing that euphoric language tension gives students the reason to be brave and it can promote risk-taking that is necessary to communicate in a new language.

6. Teacher's Role and Strategies for Alleviating Students' Anxiety

Since evidence indicates that students with high level of anxiety tend to exhibit poor performance toward language learning, it is unlikely that they will continue foreign language study if they feel so anxious about being in class (Philips, 1991). Therefore, several strategies and classroom activities are suggested through which teachers focus their attempt to lower the level of anxiety to a proper amount that would be beneficial for students to be involved in the learning process:

a- Creating a Supportive Atmosphere: in an emphasis on eliminating provoking-anxiety situations, much work has been carried out (Young, 1991; Philips, 1991; Gregerson & Horwitz, 2002; Andrade & Williams, 2009) proposing a variety of techniques and approaches that can be applied in the field of teaching. Arguably, one of the most important roles of the teacher is to create an anxiety-free learning environment that can be reached through encouraging and maintaining a relaxed and supportive classroom atmosphere (Young, 1991). Students want to feel comfortable and accepted before sharing their ideas, because a low-stress language environment is believed to facilitate language learning by allowing students to focus more on learning rather than being distracted by fear of instructor or peer evaluation (Philips, 1992).

b- Building a Friendly Relationship: another technique which is frequently suggested for teachers to adopt in order to diminish anxiety is to create a friendly relationship with their students (Andrade & Williams, 2009). Students need to see their teacher as a friend, not only a teacher whom they need to obey all the time. Gregerson and Horwitz (2002) confirm: “presenting themselves as helpful instructors concerned primarily with promoting student learning, rather than an authority figures concerned primarily with evaluating students’ performance” (p. 569). Such technique can make the classroom environment very comfortable for students, which will in turn leads to more effective learning.

c- Teacher/ Learner Interaction: here a great amount of anxiety is experienced; the instructor has to lessen students’ anxiety to a moderate level by giving them the opportunity to express their fears (Young, 1991). Philips (1991) agrees on this when she suggests that the instructor must make his/her learners feel that they are not alone in their anxieties by asking them to discuss their fear and apprehension. She (1991) continues to claim that discussion in itself helps students to relax.

d- Good Sense of Humor: having a good sense of humor also is proved to have positive effects on students' feelings. Philips (1991) declares: "injecting levity into the language lesson is worthy of consideration due to its possible impact on attitudes and its inherent tension-reduction function" (p. 9). She believes that its advantage is to relieve boredom and highlight student's attention and involvement for better performance (1991). However, Phillips (1991) cautious that humor should not be used in the classroom to mock or make fun of someone who might be insulted by some jokes.

c- Appropriate Error Correction: with the aim of making the learning context less stressful, teachers are advised to follow an efficient technique to correct students' mistakes. Young (1991) and Philips (1991) insist on a non-harsh attitude towards error correction arguing that doing mistakes is part of learning and the teachers must be aware not to contradict this belief through their exaggeration in correcting everything. Young (1991) says: "...instructors can reduce language anxiety by adopting an attitude that mistakes are part of the language learning process and that mistakes will be made by everyone. Students felt more at ease when the instructor's manner of correction was not harsh and when the instructor did not overreact to mistakes" (p. 432). Philips (1991) adds: "Certainly, for those students whose language egos are relatively fragile, the method of correction must be given careful consideration" (p. 7). With an interview with Young (1992), Omaggio Hadley (1992) also indicates that the selection of students' errors should be identified and corrected without pinpointing on their inadequacies:

I also think that some teachers might inadvertently create anxiety in that board writing situation when the focus of the activity is on Formby pointing out errors rather than pointing out correct responses. What I like to do is find an appropriate response, point it out and then make sure everyone looks at it and corrects his own work, so that the person making a mistake is not put on the spot. (p. 165)

d- Cooperative Learning: In addition to the aforementioned suggestions in lowering classroom anxiety, cooperative learning is widely considered as an effective strategy that can be used to minimize the level of anxiety. Because teachers probably have noticed negative anxiety effects on learners' outcomes, mainly in communicative situations, Philips (1991) encourages small-group work in providing students with a less threatening situation for oral activities than when they are called upon to answer individually in front of the class. Likewise, Andrade and Williams (2009) recommend pair/group work activities in the language classroom for reducing high level of anxiety. The reason they mention for this is that when in pairs or groups, students can feel more relaxed because they are talking with their friends and their English is the same, so if they make a mistake, they don't feel anxious (2009). For Young (1991) group work not only addresses the affective concerns of the students, it also rises their motivation, self-esteem and increases the amount of comprehensible input.

e- Teacher Immediacy: other examples are discussed in reducing anxiety, create interest, motivate students, encourage participation and maintaining self-confidence including the use of both verbal (calling students by their first names) and nonverbal (positive gestures) types of behavior (Christophel, 1990& Frymier, 1993: as cited in Tsiplakides, 2009), language games, with an emphasis on problem-solving (Young, 1991) and giving students equally academically challenging tasks, and using the same questioning strategies for all students (Alderman, 2004, as cited in Tsiplakides, 2009)

In a nutshell, teachers should not assume that all is well simply because nothing seems particularly wrong. As foreign language teachers, their role is to create a friendly and supportive environment for effective language learning and an attitude in their learners that reflects honest interest and motivation to boost their learning. In the long run, whatever is

done in the classroom that helps students feel better about themselves as language learners will be important.

7. Learners' Role in Reducing Anxiety

For the probable negative effects that FLA can have on EFL learners' performance, and in order for them to take part in lessening it to its helpful levels, the use of an array of learning strategies by learners is called for. On the basis of three approaches: cognitive, behavioral and affective, Kondo & Ying-Ling (2004) suggest a variety of strategies used by language learners in the process of dealing with their anxiety:

a- Preparation: the kind of anxiety that is encountered in the language class can simply be decreased through prior preparation of the material by students. As discussed by Kondo & Ying-Ling (2004), exerting efforts before, during and after the lectures in addition to taking notes and trying to create comprehensible summaries of what has been learnt "would be expected to increase students' subjectively estimated mastery of the subject matter" (p. 262).

b- Relaxation: according to Kondo & Ying-Ling (2004), relaxation includes the use of a set of arrangements that lead to ease one's bodily anxiety. Examples of that would be: taking a deep breath and trying to relax.

c- Positive thinking: it includes strategies that redirect students in the language learning situations from extensive tension and anxiety to a more positive atmosphere. As an example, Kondo & Ying-Ling (2004) mention trying to enjoy the tension taking place and imagining oneself as successfully performing as strategies for positive thinking which in turn would help learners feel relieved and reduce their anxiety.

d- Peer seeking: as the name suggests, peer seeking refers to learners' attempts to look for and reach their classmates who seem to have been facing the same problems in language classes and who seem to share FLA as a common condition. According to these

anxious students, ascertaining that other peers may be sharing the same dilemma would solace them and serve as a contributing factor to reduce their anxiety (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004).

Benmostefa (2016) suggested some tips through which students can set an ending for their test anxiety and achieve high academic performance. Those tips are categorized under three categories: mental, physical and emotional.

1- Mental Strategies:

- Advanced preparation to gain sufficient time for making a progress.
- scheduling study programs
- studying in an appropriate, well-organized environment.
- Keeping study material in the same place so it can be found easily.
- Forming study groups and meeting on a regular basis to keep motivation high. .

2- Physical Strategies:

- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- Sleep adequately because being exhausted will not help in any way.
- Taking short, frequent breaks while studying.

3- Emotional Strategies:

- Don't think of all or nothing; remember "grasp all lose all".
- Plan time for relaxation.
- Expect some anxiety. It's normal human condition.

Conclusion

This section highlighted the role of helpful anxiety and its facilitating influence on students' performance. First of all, by reviewing the literature, it has been noticed that facilitative anxiety does exist in foreign language classrooms and experiencing a proper amount of anxiety can indeed improve students' performance. Next, the image of the

facilitative anxiety would not be clear without addressing its manifestation with student's performance. For this reason, this work suggested linguistic as well as psychological impact on their achievement. Finally, it is also concerned with the significant role of the teacher in alleviating students' high level of anxiety, suggesting some positive attitudes and some strategies that can be used in the classroom. This was accompanied by some techniques, on the part of the students, that may help them to cope with their fear and stress that could deter their performance.

Chapter Two: Fieldwork

Introduction

As every research paper should depart with a theoretical part which provides an interesting area to work on, it has to be supported with a practical one which is a field work that put the hypothesis into testing. The previous chapter provided a theoretical conceptualization of anxiety; this chapter is devoted to describe the methodology used in the practical part. It also aims at testing our hypothesis, that is through the analysis of the results obtained from the students' questionnaire which is an effective and a practical tool for gathering data, the facilitative anxiety scale, and the teachers' questionnaire. Throughout this chapter, an analysis to each question or statement was provided and it followed by a discussion of the obtained results.

1. Means of Research

In our attempt to investigate the role of helpful anxiety in promoting learning outcomes, we have decided to use two questionnaires and a self-reported scale in order to gain access to sufficient data and increase the credibility of the findings. A questionnaire was addressed to students and so was the facilitative anxiety scale, in addition to another questionnaire which was directed to teachers. Our informants, both teachers and student, were expected to share their attitudes about FLA, their perceptions of helpful anxiety and its position in language performance, and the strategies or ways adopted to alleviate the amount of anxiety to a moderate one.

2. Sample

The present work was conducted in the Foreign Languages Department at Abd Elhafid Boussouf University- Mila. The population we dealt with was second year LMD students of

English at the department of foreign languages. The reason behind our decision to work with second year students is their familiarity with foreign language learning at university, their ability to express feelings and attitudes, their awareness of the existence of such phenomenon as foreign language classroom anxiety and at least how to cope with it having passed the first two semesters at university. Out of a population that consists of 240 students, we have randomly selected a sample that constitutes 70 second year students as representatives of the population. Concerning the teachers' questionnaire, we have randomly chosen 18 teachers from the whole population. These teachers have been teaching a variety of modules (Oral Expression, Written Expression, TEFL, Translation, ESP, Psycho-pedagogy ...etc.) during their EFL teaching experience at university.

3. Students' Questionnaire

3.1. Description and Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire in this work was addressed to 70 second year EFL students at Mila University in the presence of their teacher, in order to investigate their attitudes about anxiety in English classes, its impact on their performance, and how to deal with it as well. We have used the students' questionnaire because it is an effective tool that allows the collection of data from a large sample in a short period of time. Hoadjli (2015) affirms: "The popularity of a questionnaire is usually due to the fact that this tool is easy to administer since it is versatile and uniquely comparable of gathering a large amount of information quickly" (as cited in Hoadjli, 2016, p.44). When administering it, we have explained the difficult terms and the statements that some learners found unclear, and we have not faced difficulties mainly because the sample and the instructors were interested and very cooperative.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections made of 20 questions. The first section, "general information", contains two multiple choice questions; it aims at investigating

personal information about the participants. The second section, “the existence of classroom anxiety”, contains four Yes/ No questions and three multiple choice questions, is about learners’ awareness about the existence of anxiety in English classes, when and why it arises and how it affects their performance. And the third section “Helpful anxiety”, which is a modified version of Mohammad Jahangir’s (2014) facilitating anxiety questionnaire, contains 12 items that are answered on a Likert scale that ranges from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. This section aims at investigating students’ opinions about certain ways to deal with or reduce anxiety.

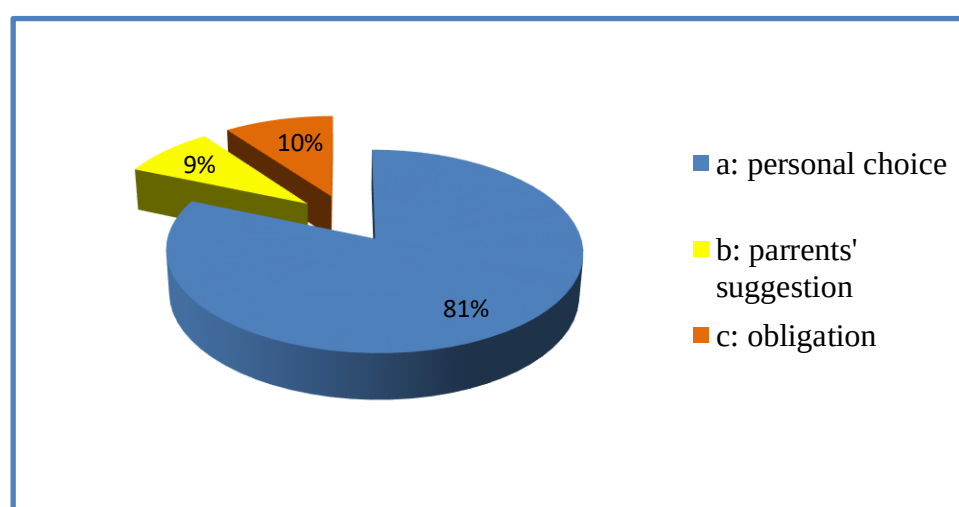
3.2. Analysis of the Students’ Questionnaire

Section one: General Information

Q01. You choose to study English because...

Options	Number	percentage
a) Personal choice	57	81.43%
b) parents’ suggestion	6	8.57%
c) obligation	7	10%

Table 01: Reasons for Studying English.



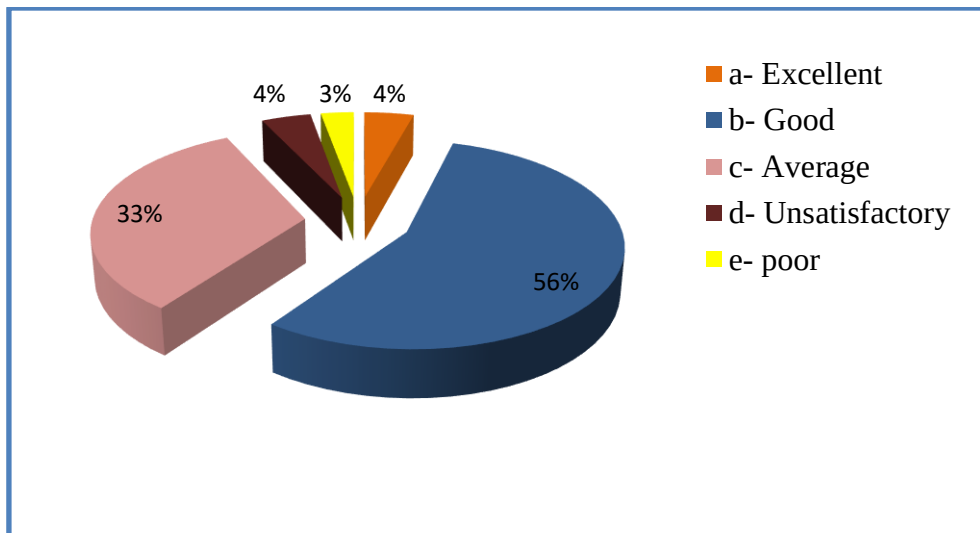
Graph01: Reasons for Studying English.

The aim behind asking this question is to get to know students' attitudes towards English and whether or not the reason why they are studying it is an anxiety provoking factor. The results obtained reveal that the majority of the sample 81% chose studying English as a personal Choice. This shows that they are highly motivated to study this language and willing to succeed since it is a global language which may provide better opportunities in both academic and vocational areas. No more than 10% of the representative sample chose parents' suggestion as a reason for studying English at university, which is partly not a voluntary choice. Parents may have suggested English for the already mentioned reasons and because they believe they are capable of making the right decision for a more promising future on their children's behalf. Only 9% of the students selected the last option "you were obliged to study English", and that can only be due to their baccalaureate average. Since studying English is the majority's personal choice, we can say that they have a positive attitude towards it. We can also note that even if studying English as a foreign language is an anxiety provoking situation, students' motivation and desire can make them less anxious.

Q02. How do you see your English achievement?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Excellent	3	4,28%
b) Good	39	55,71%
c) Average	23	22,85%
d) Unsatisfactory	3	4,28%
e) poor	2	2,85%

Table 02: Students' Estimates of their English Achievement



Graph 02: Students' Estimates of their English Achievement

By raising this question, we aimed at knowing how students appraise themselves and how they rate their level of achievement in order to figure out their attitudes toward learning English and towards the outcomes they have attained. We also tried to highlight the effects of anxiety on students' self-perception. The table above demonstrates that 4% of the participants believe they have reached excellence and they outperformed their peers. These participants may be the exception of the sample. We think they experience a very low amount of anxiety, for they believe that anything short of perfection is not acceptable and we can assume that they think so on the basis of their competence, their performance, and their marks. However, there is a possibility that some of them might be showing off since they were asked to answer anonymously. Whereas the majority of students 56% assert they have attained a good level of achievement, we suppose that these participants are highly motivated and enthusiastic towards this language and they hold enough self-confidence and satisfaction to declare that they have scored a satisfactory level of achievement. Thirty-three percent of the subjects have the average level. We suppose that these subjects as the ones who are competent enough yet are either not motivated, not exerting enough efforts or indifferent to excelling others. The last two categories with a good level and an average level of achievement must have experienced

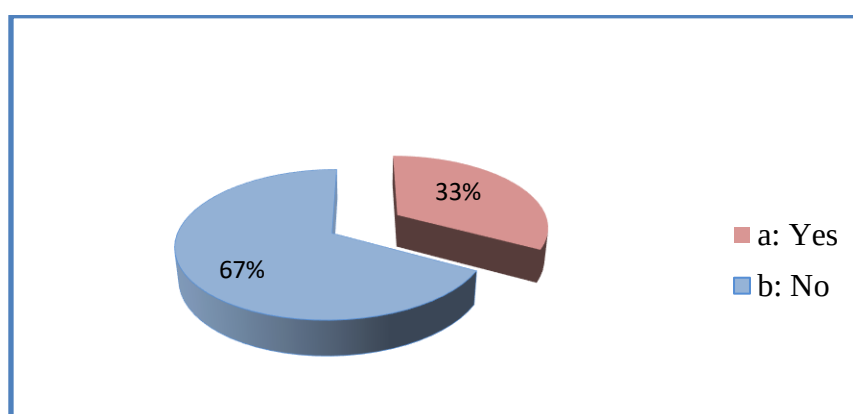
some anxiety inside the classroom. However, we take into consideration the possibility of them experiencing a moderate level of anxiety which did not prevent them from performing well. Four percent believe their level is unsatisfactory. We assume that these students are anxious which affected their achievement negatively; they may not be satisfied with their current level of achievement because they believe they can do better. Only 3% declare that they have a poor achievement level, these might be the same individuals who are involuntarily studying English. And another possibility for these participants declaring that they have a poor level of achievement is that they might be highly anxious.

Section Two: The Existence of Classroom Anxiety

Q.03. Do you consider learning a foreign language as an anxiety provoking situation?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	47	67%
b) No	23	33%

Table 03: Students' Perception of Foreign Language Anxiety.



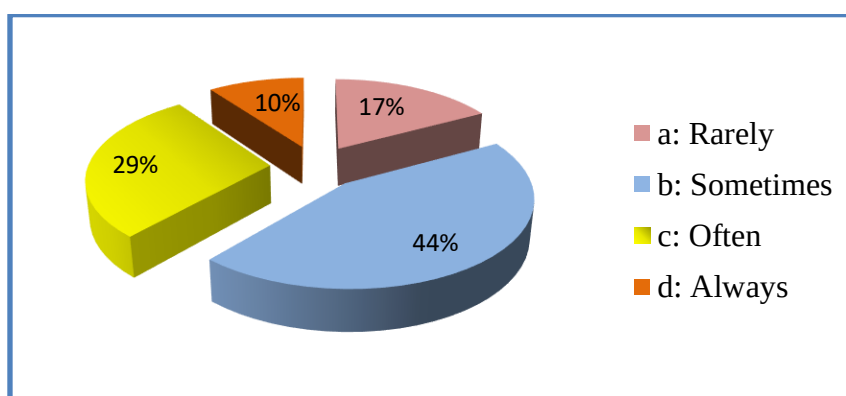
Graph 03: Students' Perceptions of Foreign Language Anxiety

The aim behind this question is to know students' opinions about whether or not learning a foreign language is an anxiety provoking situation. The table demonstrates that the majority of the participants (67%) consider learning a foreign language as an anxiety provoking situation which suggests that these learners are fully aware of the fear they go through in EFL classes. The remaining participants (33%) do not regard it as anxiety provoking situation. we think that these participants are either not aware of the existence of such emotional state in foreign language classes, or they have only low amounts of it and enough control over it that they do not consider this situation as an anxiety provoking one anymore.

Q04. How often do you experience anxiety in the classroom?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Rarely	12	17,14%
b) Sometimes	31	44,28%
c) Often	20	28,57%
d) Always	7	10%

Table 04: Frequency of Experiencing Anxiety



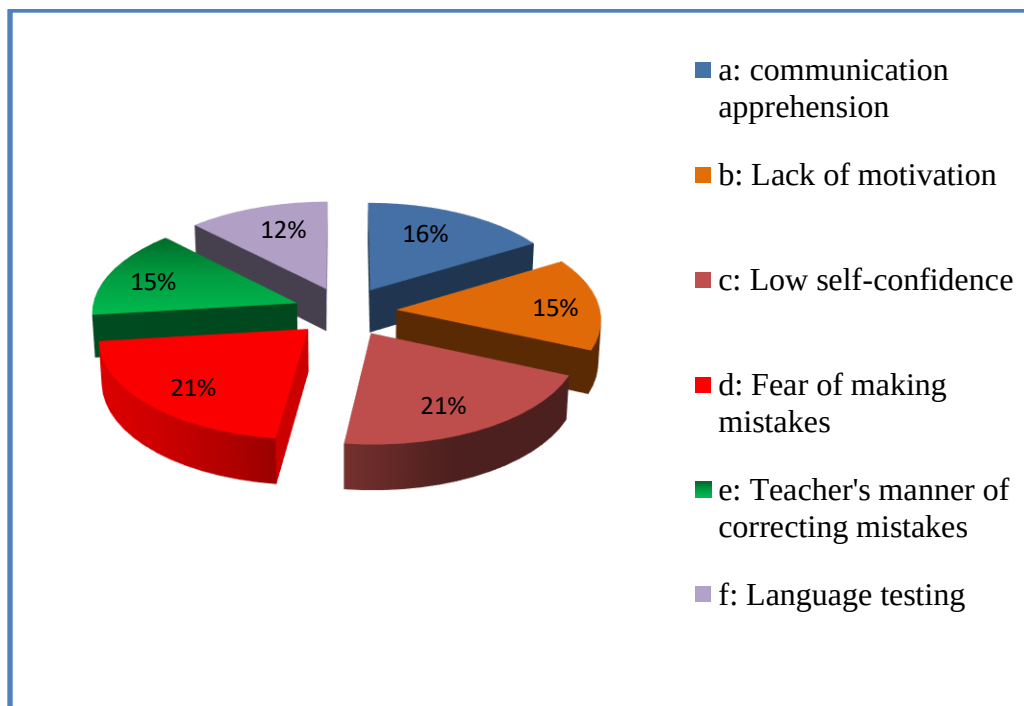
Graph 04: Frequency of Experiencing Anxiety

The table above shows that 44% of the informants sometimes experience anxiety inside the classroom, 29% believe they often experience it, 17% declared that they rarely experience anxiety, and 10% think that they always experience anxiety. By asking the sample such a question, we aimed at investigating whether students believe in the existence of anxiety in foreign language classes, and to know how frequently they go through such an emotional state. These results show that anxiety is indeed a phenomenon that exists in foreign language classes in varying frequency. The variation in the frequency of experiencing anxiety is a result of individual differences and the various causes and sources of anxiety such as classroom atmosphere, communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and tests.

Q05.What are the major sources of anxiety according to you?

Options	Number of answers	Percentage
a) communication apprehension	28	16,37%
b) Lack of motivation	26	15,20%
c) Low self-confidence	35	20,47%
d) Fear of making mistakes	36	21,05%
e) Teacher's manner of correcting mistakes	25	14,62%
f) Language testing	21	12,28%
Total	171	100,00%

Table 05: Major Sources of Anxiety



Graph 05: Major Sources of Anxiety

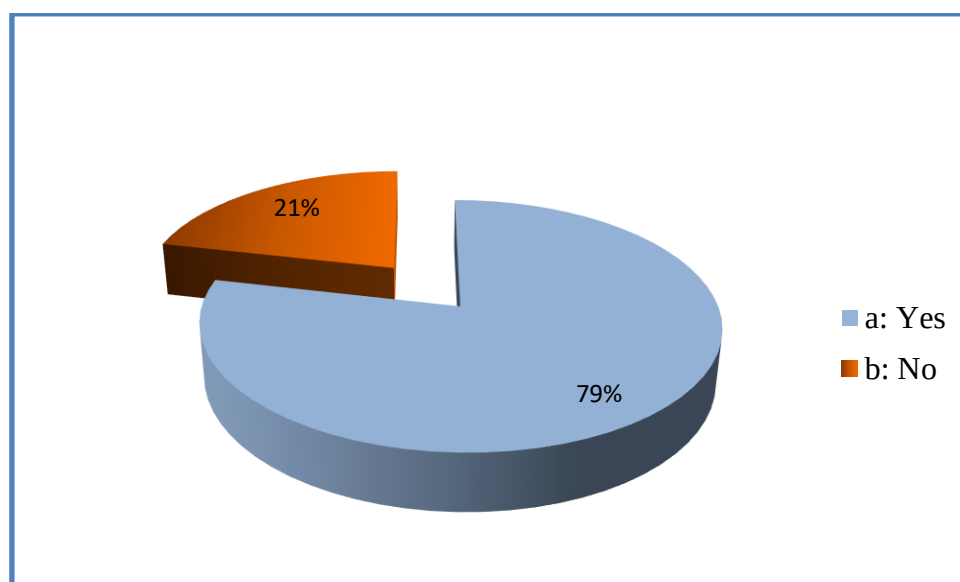
When we asked this question, we gave the informants the freedom to select more than one of the options that represent the major sources of foreign language anxiety; because there are those who believe they have more than one source for their FLA. This question aims at investigating students' perceptions of what causes their anxiety in language classes. The obtained results show that 21% of the answers were fear of making mistakes and another 21% of the answers was for low self-confidence. From this, we assume that these two options are the major first and second common sources of foreign language anxiety. Even if students were competent, they may not feel confident or feel embarrassed and over think the matter of committing mistakes in front of their peers and teachers which results in anxiety. The table also shows that 16% of the answers were for communication apprehension. Nowadays, Communicating using the language being learnt is the ultimate aim for learning it. This very fact makes communication a hard task which in turn creates anxiety for EFL learners. Furthermore, 15% of the answers were lack of motivation. We think that these learners may not be motivated because of the classroom atmosphere, the teaching method, the syllabus, or

any other personal reasons which makes it a common source of an anxiety. And another 15% was teacher's manner of correcting mistakes. We suppose that when learners participate and perform a task then receive teacher's feedback in a harsh and a humiliating manner in front of their peers, they will be embarrassed and anxious. And only 12% of the answers were for language testing. We believe that students, when being tested, will certainly go through stress and tension because it is already agreed upon that tests generate such feelings including anxiety as well.

Q06. Do you feel anxious during speaking session?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	55	78,57%
b) No	15	21,42%

Table06: Students' Speaking Anxiety



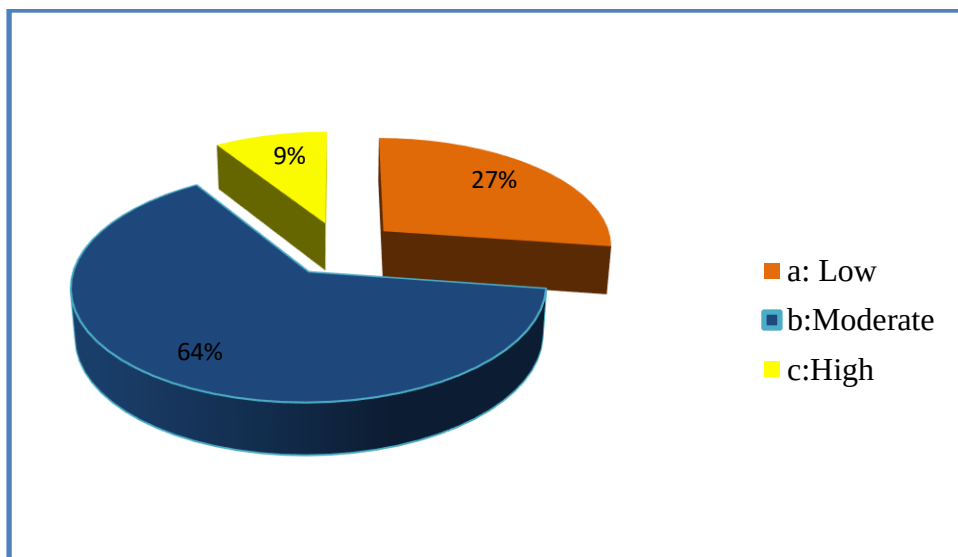
Graph 06: EFL Students' Speaking Anxiety

The aim from this question is to know whether or not students feel anxious when they speak English and perform orally. The table above demonstrates that on the one hand, 79% of students feel anxious during speaking sessions. On the other hand, 21% of them declared that speaking English in classroom does not make them anxious. We assume that those who feel anxious when speaking may have low self-confidence or may be afraid of losing flow of communication, making grammatical errors, being judged, being corrected in a harsh manner in front of peers, or being laughed at. However, those who perform orally at ease are self-confident and know how to control their emotions in such situations.

If yes, how do you rate your speaking anxiety level:

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Low	15	27,27%
b) Moderate	35	63,63%
c) High	5	9,09%
Total	55	100%

Table07: Levels of EFL Students' Speaking Anxiety



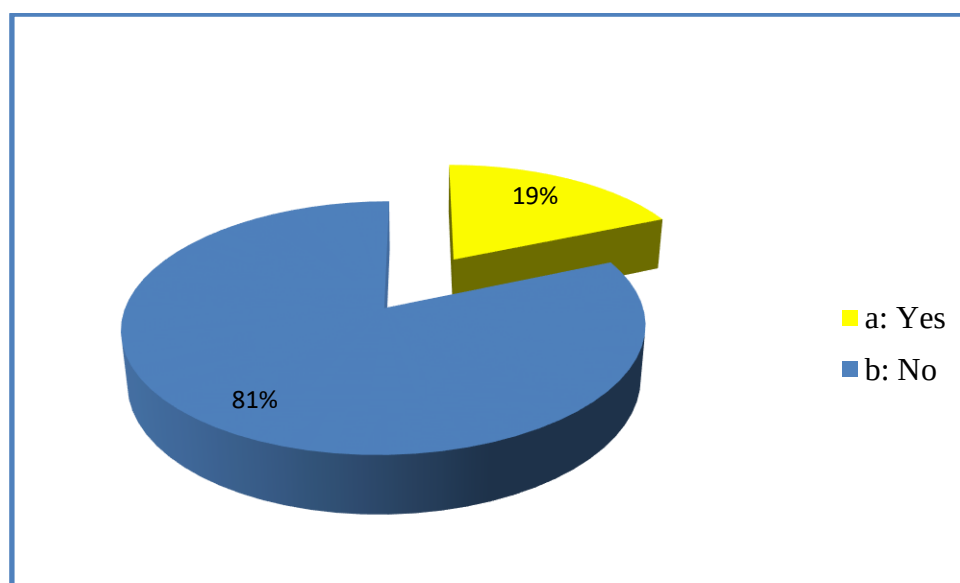
Graph 07: Levels of EFL Students' Speaking Anxiety

In this question, the total number of participants represents the number of students who gave positive responses to the previous question which is 55 students. The results obtained indicate that 64% of the participants declare that they have a moderate level of speaking anxiety, 27% of them asserted they have a low amount only, and only 9% believe that they are highly anxious in speaking sessions. These results show that even though 55 students declared that they experience speaking anxiety, yet this anxiety varies from one student to another on three different levels (low - moderate - high). This variation may be due to such factors as classroom atmosphere, personality type, or teacher's style. We think that experiencing a low or a moderate amount of anxiety can actually result in positive outcomes. Because when students realize that they are experiencing such feeling they will orient their attention towards enhancing their performance in order to avoid undesirable results. However, a high level of anxiety or a severe speaking anxiety will hamper EFL learners' speaking performance; in this case, we believe they need to get their anxiety reduced by the help of the instructor.

Q07. Do you feel anxious during writing sessions?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	13	18,57%
b) No	57	81,42%

Table08: EFL Students' Writing Anxiety



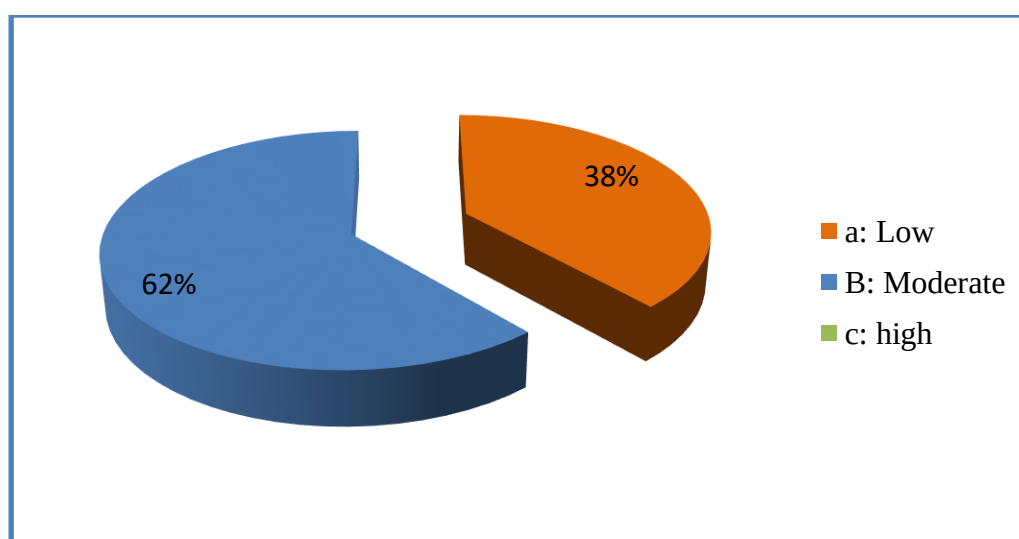
Graph 08: EFL Students' Writing Anxiety

By asking this question we aimed at examining whether EFL students experience anxiety during writing or not. The above stated results show that the majority of participants 81% do not experience writing anxiety. We assume that EFL learners do not experience such anxiety because performing written tasks does not put learners under the stress they go through while performing oral tasks. It is also noteworthy that when students are expected to perform a writing task, they may possibly have sufficient time to finish their writing which excludes the high possibility of experiencing anxiety. On the other hand, only 19% of them suffer from anxiety while writing. We consider that fear of committing grammatical mistakes or lacking vocabulary are major sources for such kind of anxiety.

If yes, how do you rate your writing anxiety level:

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Low	5	38,46%
b) Moderate	8	61,53%
c) high	0	0%
Total	13	100%

Table 09: EFL Students' Writing Anxiety Levels



Graph 09: EFL Students' Writing Anxiety Levels

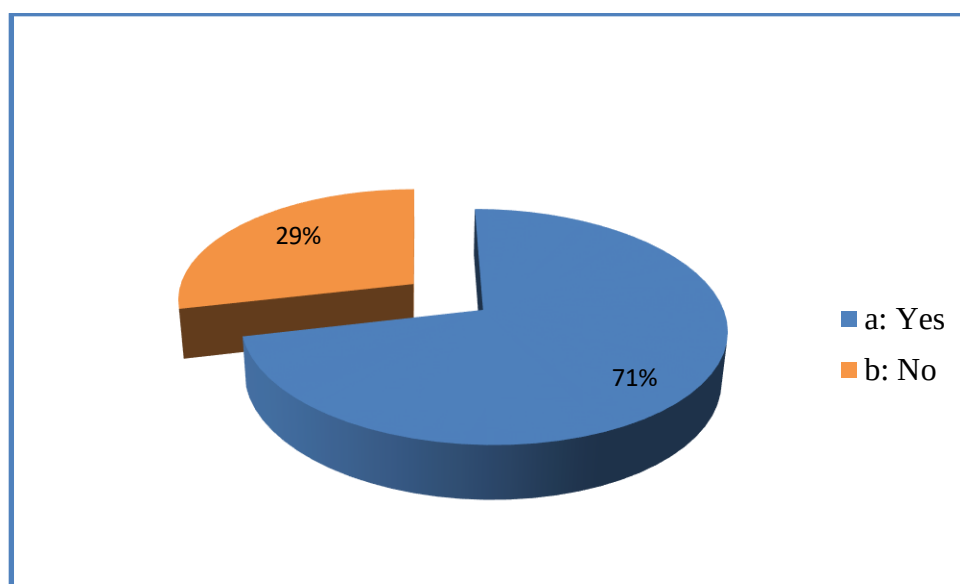
In this question, the total number of the participants is 13 students, who are the same students who declared they suffer from writing anxiety. Few students with the highest percentage of 62% of the informants asserted that they have a moderate amount of writing anxiety. We can say that these students are aware of their anxiety and that such amount of anxiety is a helpful one, for it pushes learners to work hard in order to achieve the desired results. This is also the case for the 38% of them who experienced a low level of writing anxiety and no student 0% declared a high level of this anxiety. We believe that this is due to

the nature of writing skill, which enables students to feel at ease while putting their thoughts into written pieces because they are not being watched by their instructor or their peers.

Q08. Do you feel anxious during exams?

Option	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	50	71,42%
b) No	20	28,57%

Table10: EFL Students' Tests Anxiety



Graph10: EFL Students' Test Anxiety

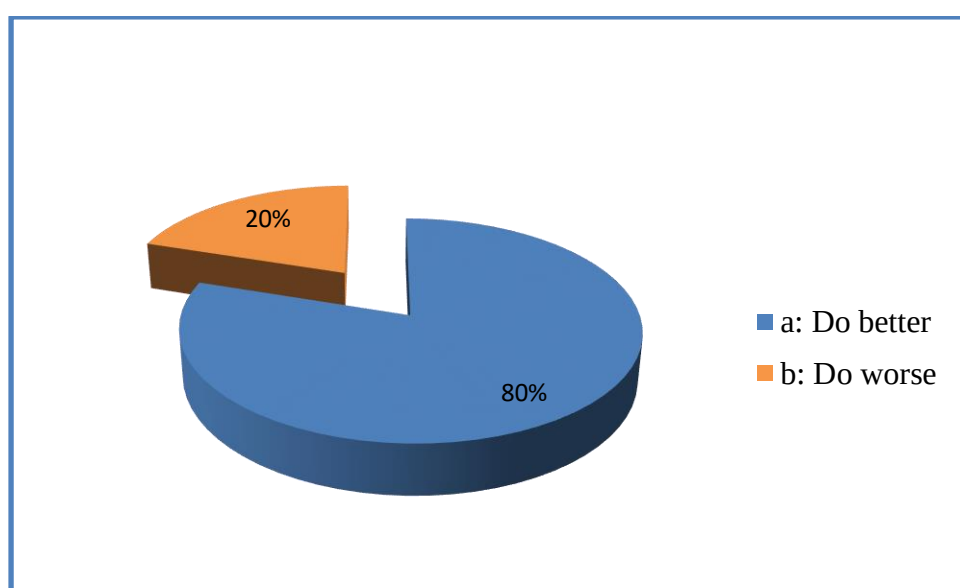
The results obtained from the table indicate that the majority of students 71% do feel anxious during exams which is not a very surprising result, because exams are known to be a stress provoking situation for students. We suppose that the kind of anxiety students experience when sitting for a test might stem from pressure and fear of failing; Students may have several modules to prepare for in a given period of time, under certain circumstances, with specific desired results and expectations from them and from their parents. Such factors

can be the reason behind students' test anxiety. On the other hand, only 29% do not experience anxiety during exams. We think that this category includes both, those self-confident students who have developed a good ability to regulate themselves in stressful situations, and those who may be indifferent to exams and success.

If yes, does it make you:

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Do better	40	80%
b) Do worse	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Table11: Influence of Anxiety on Students' Test Achievement



Graph11: Influence of Anxiety on Students' Test Achievement

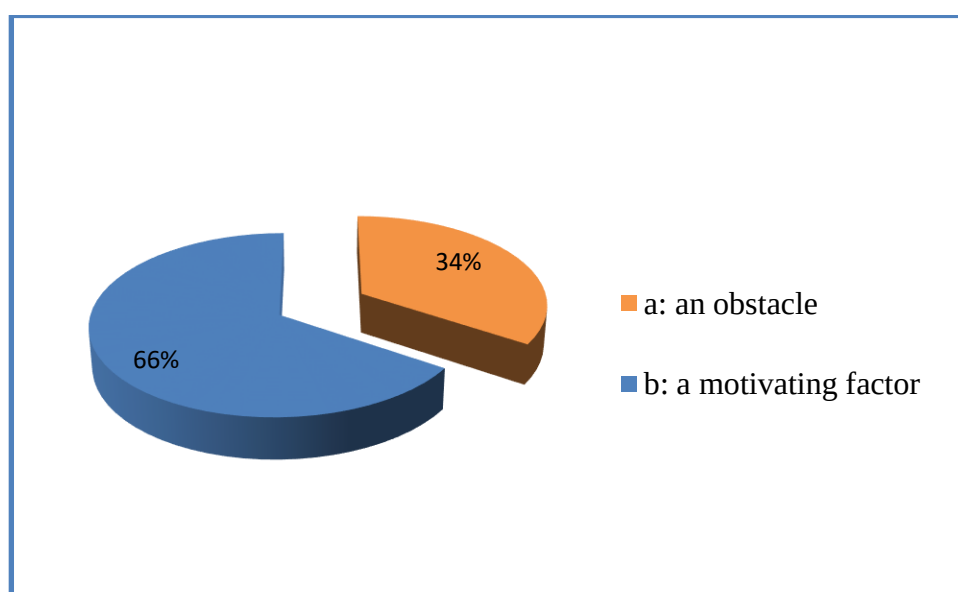
In this question, the total number of students is the same number of participants who declared that they do experience anxiety during exams (50 students). As shown above, the majority of students 80% believe that experiencing anxiety during exams enables them to

perform better. We assume that these students might have experienced a moderate amount of anxiety which puts them in a state of beneficial stress. The latter pushes them to be enthusiastic about preparing well in order to avoid any undesirable outcome which in turn directs their attention to performing well. On the other hand, only 20% of the subjects declare that being anxious during exams impedes their performance. We believe that these participants do not know how to intelligently control their negative emotions and benefit from anxiety- provoking situations. For that, some strategies and instructions from the part of teachers are necessary in order to walk students through such situations.

Q9. Once experiencing anxiety, do you think that it is...

Options	Number	Percentage
a) an obstacle	24	34,28%
b) a motivating factor	46	65,71%

Table 12: Students' Opinion about FLA



Graph 12: Students' Opinion about FLA

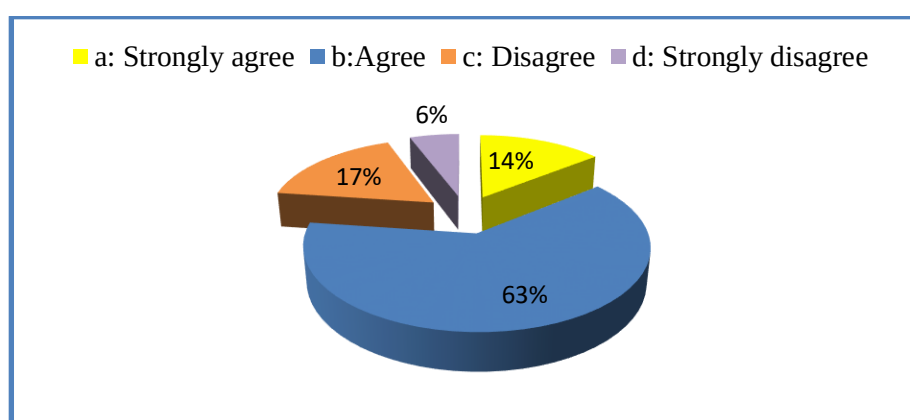
By asking this question, we aimed at investigating how learners perceive the effect of FLA on their academic achievement. Data obtained from the above table reveal that actually 66% of the participants look at anxiety as a motivating factor that encourages them to do well and attain desired learning outcomes, whereas 34% of them believe that anxiety is but an obstacle that affects language performance negatively. This category includes learners who give too much concern about not being able to perform well under such pressure stemming from being overly cautious about negative emotions as fear and anxiety.

Section Three: Helpful Anxiety

Q10. I am aware of my anxiety and I know how to cope with it.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	10	14,28%
b) Agree	44	62,85%
c) Disagree	12	17,12%
d) Strongly disagree	4	5,70%

Table 13: Students' Awareness of Anxiety and Coping with It



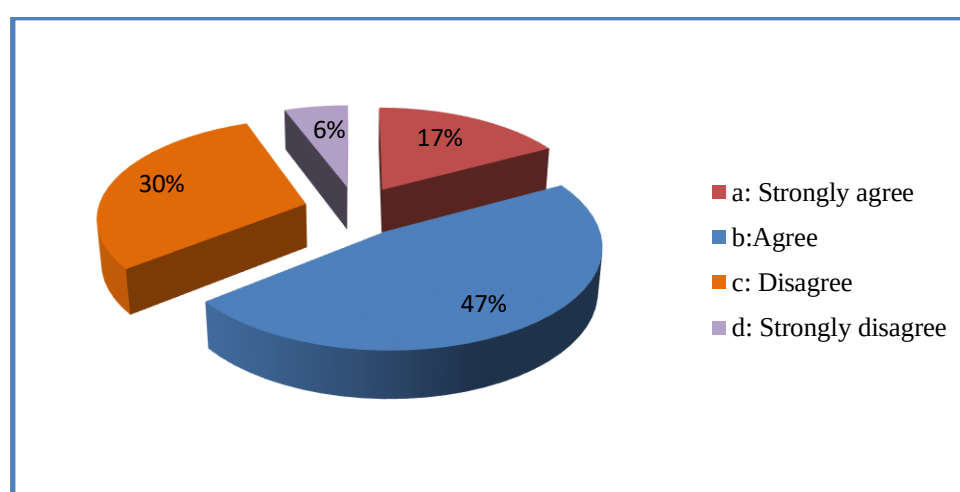
Graph 13: Students' Awareness of Anxiety and Coping with It

This question is asked in order to know the extent to which learners agree that being aware about one's foreign language anxiety helps gaining insights about how to cope with it. The table shows that most of students 62.85% agree that awareness of anxiety enables them to cope with it and 14.28% strongly agree on that too. On the other hand, 17% of the informants do not agree that awareness of one's anxiety is actually of great importance when it comes to coping with it, and 6% of them show strong disagreement about that.

Q11. Working under a certain level of anxiety makes me do better.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	12	17,14%
b) Agree	33	47,14%
c) Disagree	21	30,00%
d) Strongly disagree	4	5,70%

Table 14: Students' Attitudes towards the Relationship between Anxiety and Performance



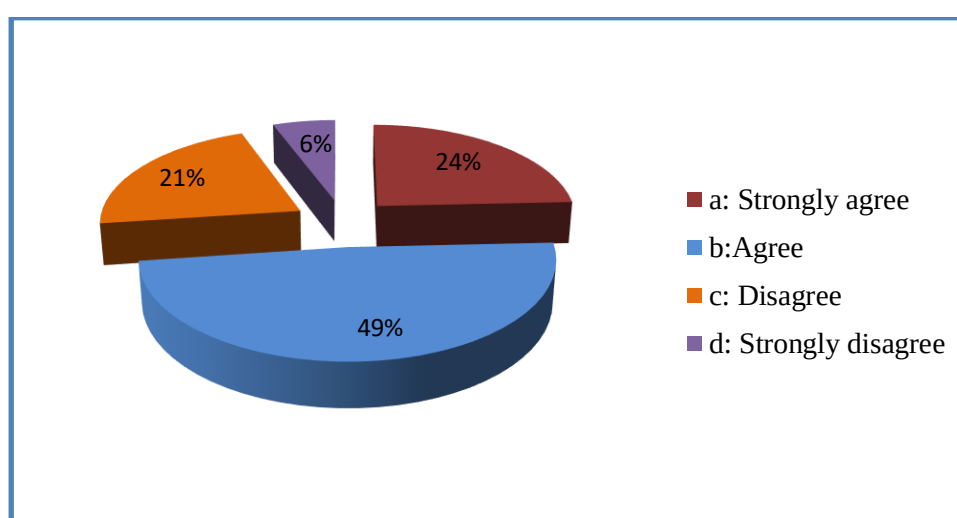
Graph 14: Students' Attitudes towards the Relationship between Anxiety and Performance

This particular question aims at exploring whether or not students are more likely to perform well under a certain level of FLA. The obtained data reveal that the majority of the participants (47%) agree that working under a specific amount of anxiety permits a better performance and 17% of them strongly agree on that as well. From this, we believe that a moderate amount of anxiety is actually a helpful factor which pushes learners to perform well. The rest of students are divided between those who disagree on the statement (30%), and those who strongly disagree (6%) that a certain amount of anxiety might help them.

Q12. When I worry, I turn my anxiety into motivation for further work/study/practice.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	17	24,28%
b) Agree	34	48,57%
c) Disagree	15	21,42%
d) Strongly disagree	4	5,70%

Table 15: Students' Motivation When Experiencing Anxiety.



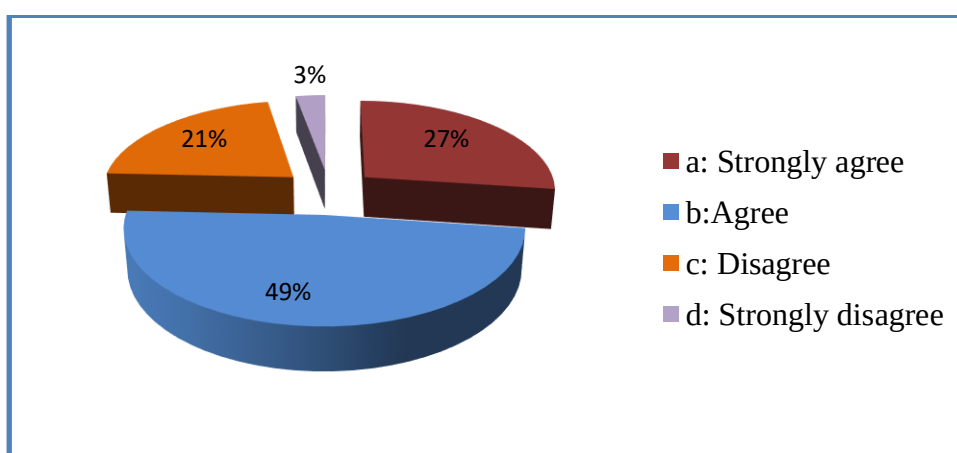
Graph 15: Students' Motivation When Experiencing Anxiety

From the previous question we deduced that a moderate level of anxiety functions as a facilitator in foreign language performance, and in this question, we wanted to confirm that by asking whether students turn their anxiety into motivation for further work in order to attain desired outcomes. Indeed, the data obtained from the table above indicates that the two major percentages are divided between students who agree 49% and students who strongly agree 24% that when worried or under anxiety they work on turning their anxiety into a motivating force. On the other hand, 21% of the informants claim that they do not agree on the suggested statement and 6% of them strongly disagree.

Q13: When I worry in language classes, I maintain self-confidence.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	19	27,14%
b) Agree	34	48,57%
c) Disagree	15	21,42%
d) Strongly disagree	2	2,85%

Table 16: Maintaining Self-confidence When Experiencing Anxiety.



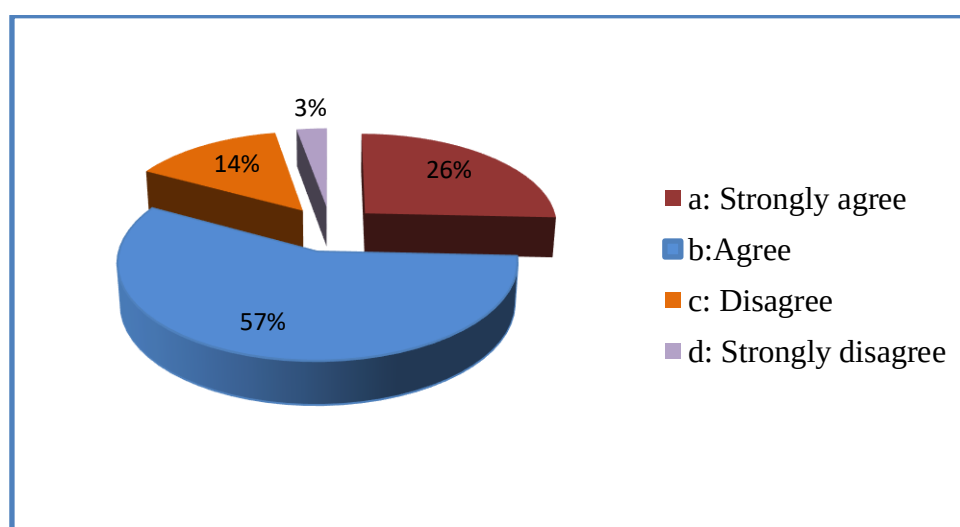
Graph 16: Maintaining Self-confidence When Experiencing Anxiety.

In order to investigate whether students maintain self-confidence when experiencing a certain amount anxiety in language classes, we asked them the present question. Again, the majority of the participants 49% showed that they do agree that even when they worry in classroom, they manage to maintain self-confidence and 27% strongly agree on that too. Concerning the second category, 21% of the students claim that the possibility of maintaining self-confidence is not something they are likely to agree on, and only 3% of them showed strong disapproval.

Q14. I welcome competitions although they make me anxious or nervous.

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	18	25,71%
b) Agree	40	57,14%
c) Disagree	10	14,28%
d) Strongly disagree	2	2,85%

Table 17: Students' Attitudes towards Classroom Competition



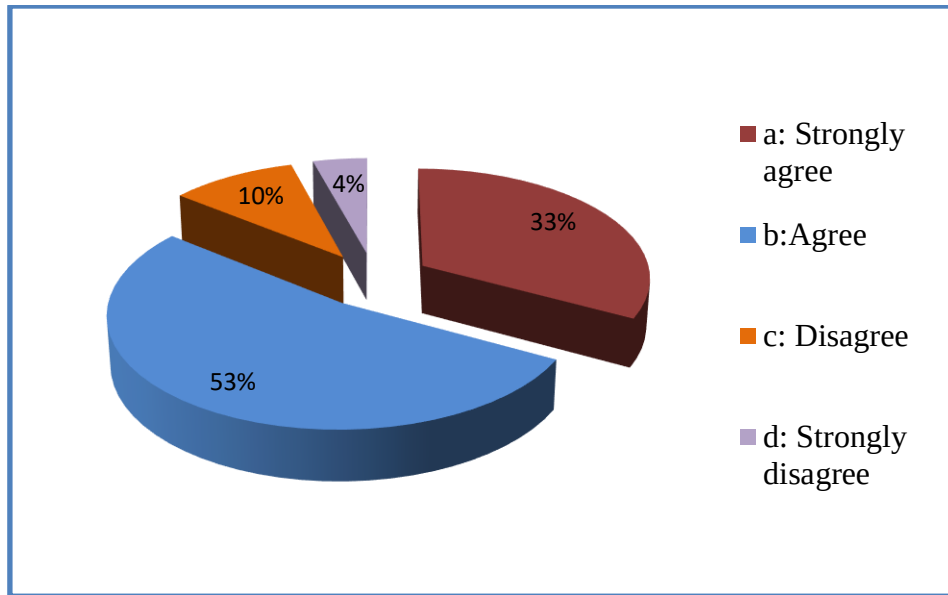
Graph 17: Students' Attitudes towards Classroom Competition

We provided this statement in the questionnaire aiming at knowing how EFL students perceive classroom competition and their attitudes towards this construct. Those who welcome competition, despite it being an anxiety provoking factor, scored the highest percentage 57%, and 26% of them showed stronger agreement. Competition may involve learners into interesting discussions, enable them to benefit from each other's knowledge, develop their abilities, and drive them to work hard in order to achieve higher grades. The rest of the participants are divided into those who do not agree 14% on enjoying classroom competition and those who strongly disagree 3% on that. That is due to the fact that competition in classroom for some individuals might have some damaging effects such as causing low self-esteem, self-doubt and selfishness.

Q15. If I am planning to do something difficult or worrying, I exert efforts and I practice a lot doing it

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	23	32,85%
b) Agree	37	52,85%
c) Disagree	7	10,00%
d) Strongly disagree	3	4,20%

Table 18: Students' Efforts When Performing a Difficult Task



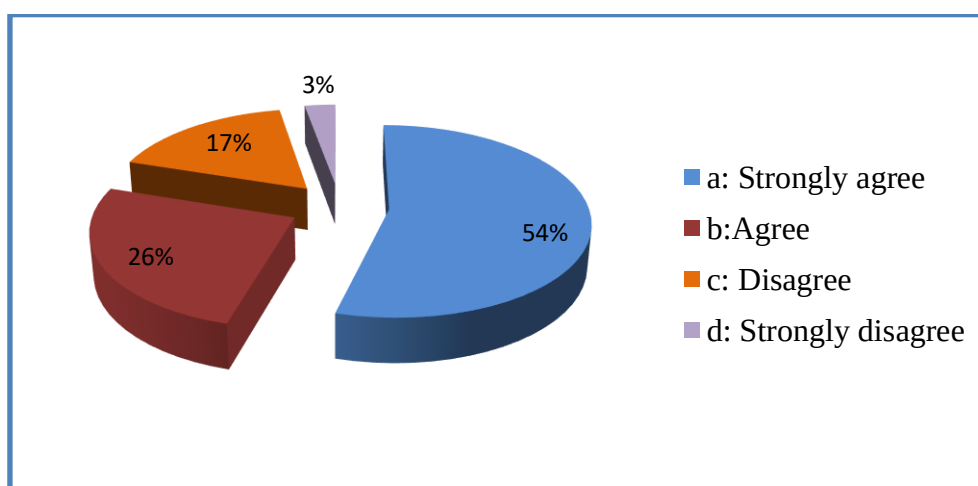
Graph 18: Students' Efforts When Performing a Difficult Task

We have asked this question on the basis of the strong relationship existing between anxiety, effort and performance, and in order to know whether students work harder when they are planning to attain certain outcomes even when they are anxious or under the pressure of task difficulty. As it was anticipated, the results represented in the table above show that most of students 53% agree that making efforts when faced with a difficult task regardless of their emotions is an indispensable step in performance achievement, and so do the other 33% of the informants who strongly agree on that. Unlike them, only a small portion of the sample indicates those who do not agree 10% and those who strongly disagree 4%; these might have the belief that exerting efforts when dealing with difficult learning situation is of no value.

Q16. I feel anxious before taking tests and exams, but that pushes me to prepare well in order to succeed.

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	38	54,28%
b) Agree	18	25,71%
c) Disagree	12	17,14%
d) Strongly disagree	2	2,85%

Table 19: Effect of Test Anxiety on EFL Students' Willingness to Succeed



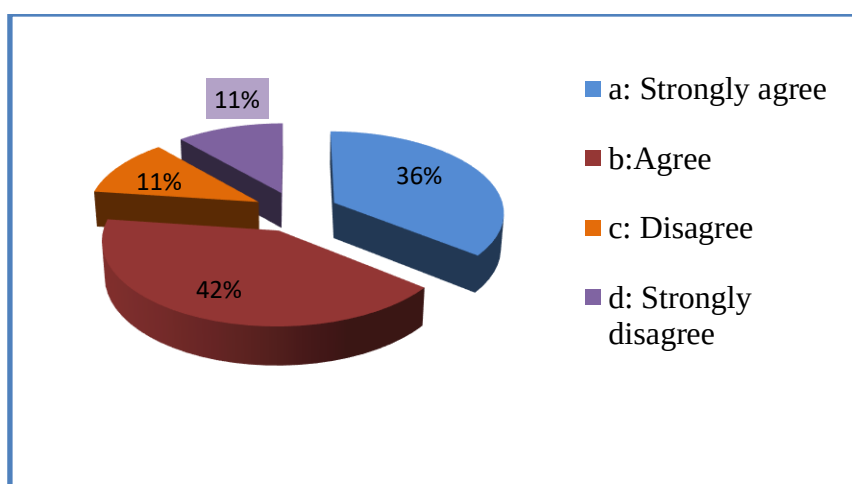
Graph 19: Effect of Test Anxiety on EFL Students' Willingness to Succeed

We have asked this question in order to examine the effect of test or exam anxiety on EFL learner's willingness to succeed and its effect on their achievement as well. Unexpectedly, those who strongly agree 54% that anxiety is an alert and push for them to run an effective preparation for exams outnumbered those who agree 26% on the same statement which leaves us with 17% of learners who disagree and only 3% who even strongly disagree on that. we suppose that students of this category do not know how to make use of the panic they go through when faced with a stressful situation.

Q17. When I am anxious, I relax and I think that everything is going to be fine

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	25	35,71 %
b) Agree	29	41,42%
c) Disagree	8	11,42%
d) Strongly disagree	8	11,42%

Table 20: EFL Students' Trials for Relaxation as a Way to Reduce Anxiety



Graph 20: EFL Students' Trials for Relaxation as a Way to Reduce Anxiety

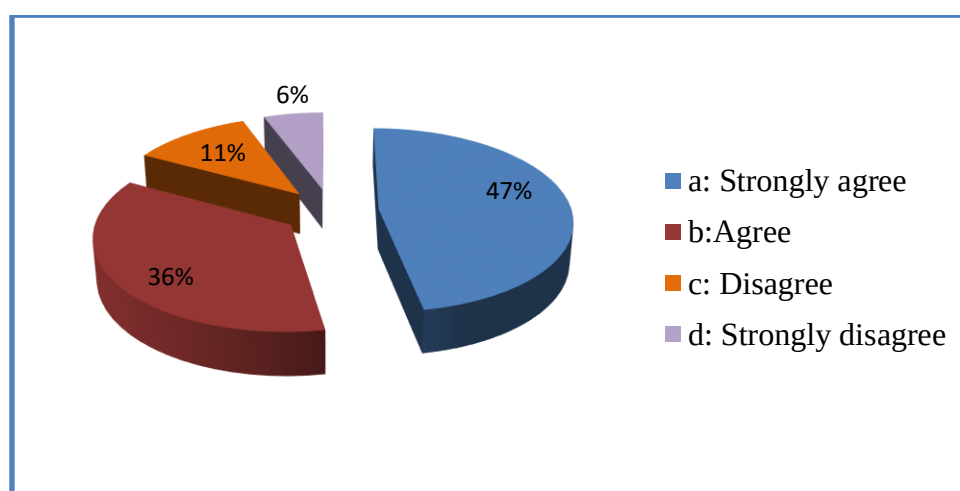
As a suggested self-initiated strategy for overcoming or reducing one's anxiety, relaxation seems of great significance. For that, we have supplied learners with such statement in order to examine whether they find it beneficial and whether it meets their preferences as well. As expected, the results obtained indicate that most of the participants 42 % agree to some extent that they are likely to overcome their anxiety when they deliberately try to relax and think more positively; similarly, informants who showed strong approval 36% scored a high percentage as well. Conversely, students who raised objection were equally divided into

a group that disagrees 11% and a group that strongly disagrees 11% on the fact that trying to drag one's mind out of negative thoughts and towards relaxing ones is actually an effective strategy for anxiety reduction.

Q18. Working with peers reduces my anxiety and helps me perform better.

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	33	47,14%
b) Agree	25	35,71%
c) Disagree	8	11,42%
d) Strongly disagree	4	5,70%

Table 21: Peer Work and Anxiety Reduction



Graph 21: Peer Work and Anxiety Reduction

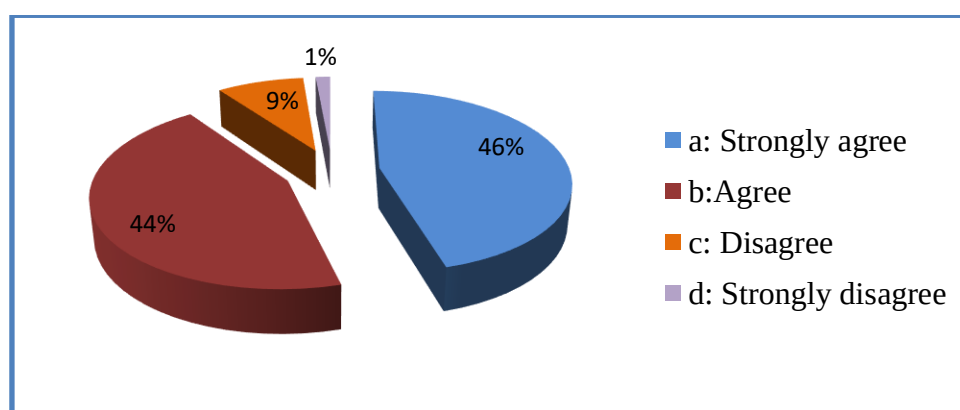
Having said that relaxation is actually an anxiety reducing strategy, it is as important to investigate the effectiveness of other strategies as well. The aim behind this statement is examining EFL learners' attitudes towards the effectiveness of peer work as a way to lessen FLA. Again, the gathered results indicate great approval on the suggested statement. We

notice from the table above that 47% of the participants strongly agree that collaborative work inside the classroom does reduce anxiety; likewise, 36% claim that they certainly agree on the statement. As for the individuals who do not agree on this strategy, the table shows that 11% disagree to a certain extent and only 6% totally and strongly disagree. We suppose that students who disagree that peer work reduces anxiety are those students who prefer individual work and do not feel at ease when having to interact with classmates during working on certain tasks.

Q19. If I am planning to do something difficult, I visualize myself as successfully doing it.

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	32	45,71%
b) Agree	31	44,28%
c) Disagree	6	8,50%
d) Strongly disagree	1	1,40%

Table 22: EFL Students' Positive Self-visualization



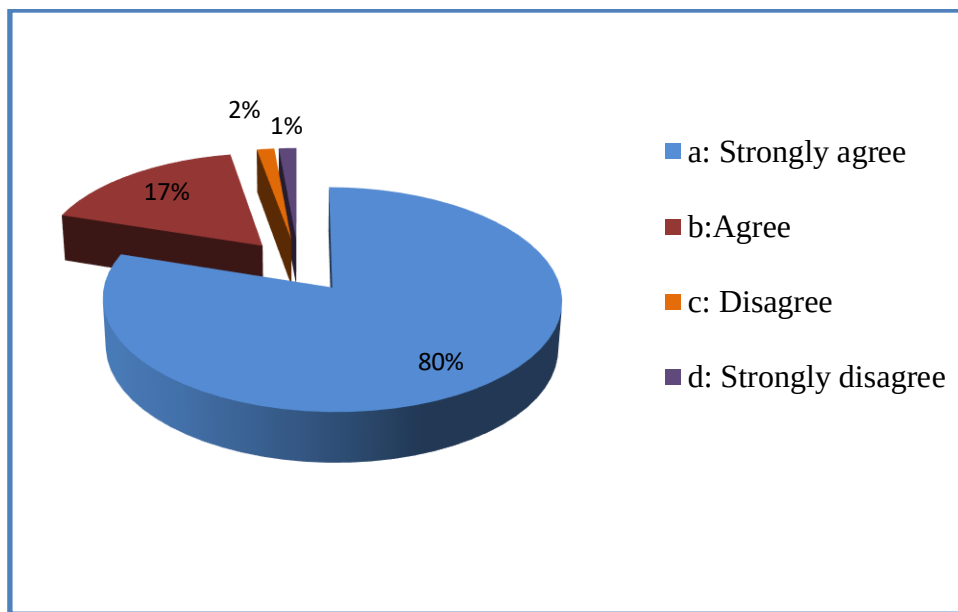
Graph 22: EFL Students' Positive Self-visualization

By asking this question we aimed at investigating the effectiveness of self-visualization as a way to reduce negative emotions when encountering difficulties during language learning. As shown in table above, students who strongly agree that visualizing themselves as successful ones when faced with difficult learning situation does help them control their anxiety scored the highest percentage 46%, almost equally, 44% informants claimed that they do agree on the same statement. The remaining 10% of learners who showed disapproval concerning the efficacy of imagination and positive self- visualization as a strategy for anxiety reduction is divided into 9% who disagree and 1% who strongly disagree.

Q20. The teacher's friendly style makes me feel at ease and encourages me to take part in the lesson.

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	56	80,00%
b) Agree	12	17,14%
c) Disagree	1	1,40%
d) Strongly disagree	1	1,40%

Table 23: Role of the Teacher's Style in Creating an Appropriate Learning Atmosphere



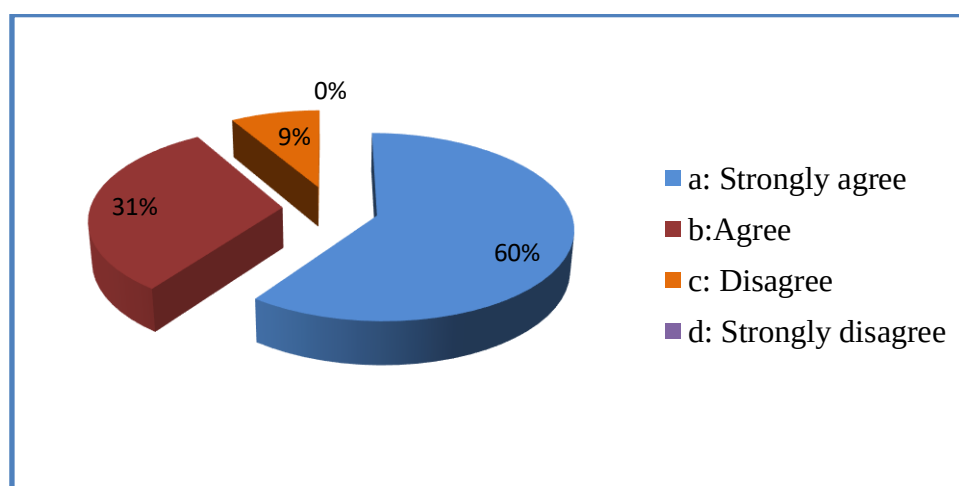
Graph 23: The Role of the Teacher's Style in Creating an Appropriate Learning Atmosphere

The teacher has an important role when it comes to reducing anxiety, for the fact that teachers are considered as not only primary information providers, assessors and guides, but also as facilitators. Aiming at investigating this claim, we have asked this question, to know whether teacher's friendly style and appropriate methods help engaging students in the discussion and make them feel at ease. The results obtained indicate the majority of students are either those who strongly agree 80% or those who agree 17%. This strongly supports our claim, that teacher's role is of a great significance when it comes to managing and lessening classroom anxiety. Concerning the group of students who showed disapproval, only 2% of them disagree and 1% of them raise strong objection.

Q21. It does not frighten me when I participate, because of the Teacher's appropriate manner in providing constructive feedback.

Options	Number	percentage
a) Strongly agree	42	60,00%
b) Agree	22	31,42%
c) Disagree	6	8,75 %
d) Strongly disagree	0	0,00%

Table 24: Teacher's Manner in Correcting Mistakes



Graph 24: Teacher's Manner in Correcting Mistakes

Being a source of learners' foreign language anxiety, it can be a way to reduce it as well. Teachers' manner in providing feedback is of a great significance when done appropriately. That is to say, when learners commit errors in the process of language learning or during production, they will either feel at ease and benefit from teacher's manner in correcting those errors or feel uncomfortable and anxious; it all depends on the way feedback is given. In this question we tried to investigate students' perception about teacher's manner in providing correction and whether it invites them to take part in the lessons. From the data

represented above, we notice that the majority of students 60% strongly agree that it does not frighten them to take part in the discussion due to the teacher's manner in providing constructive feedback which creates a friendly and a fruitful classroom atmosphere; another 31% of the informants do agree on that as well. However, only 9% of the students do not agree that teacher's appropriate manner in correcting mistakes is enough to involve them in classroom activities.

3.3 Discussion of the Results

The students' questionnaire intends to investigate learners' attitudes towards classroom anxiety and their perceptions of its role and how it affects their learning outcomes. Under the light of the findings obtained from the questionnaire, one can say that the results are in the direction of our hypothesis. Fortunately, this paved the way to revealing the existence of a helpful impact of moderate levels of anxiety experienced by foreign language learners on their performance. Due to this fact, the need for some efficient anxiety reduction strategies that learners may or may not have sufficient knowledge about, was emphasized.

The first section in the questionnaire, General Information, covers some background information about the sample in order for us to gain insights about them. The data obtained demonstrate that, on the one hand, the majority of participants have been studying English at university willingly as their personal choice, which strengthens the idea that they are interested, motivated and willing to master this language. On the other hand, few of the subjects have been studying English out of obligation or following their parents' desire. This section demonstrates students' estimates of their level of achievement where most of subjects are divided between students who believe they have an average level and others who claim to have a good level at English academic achievement. From this, one can deduce that such positive attitudes and enthusiasm towards learning EFL, and having such high self-esteem

might be a great motivator for learners to be more productive in language classes despite any obstacles they might face.

The second section entitled “The Existence of Classroom Anxiety” is devoted to present anxiety as an existing phenomenon in foreign language learning sphere, to investigate its major sources, to identify situations where this phenomenon occurs, and most importantly, to tackle the amounts of anxiety experienced by learners. The obtained results display that most of students believe in the existence of anxiety and have been experiencing it in EFL classes very often. However, the other subjects tend to feel more relaxed in EFL classes. According to what has been gathered, it can be elicited that low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, communication apprehension, lack of motivation, teachers’ manner of correcting mistakes and language testing are, indeed, the major sources of anxiety in Language classes. Furthermore, the majority of students perceive oral performance as more anxiety provoking than writing performance. Additionally, most of them agreed upon sharing moderate levels of anxiety while performing oral tasks and written ones, while others claim to have either low levels or high ones. Concerning tests or examinations, most of students report suffering anxiety during tests and examinations which mainly stems from fear of evaluation and poor grades and only few of them claim to feel at ease when sitting for a test. However, the majority of subjects who feel anxious during exams believe that they tend to perform better under certain amounts of anxiety, for the fact that they consider this anxiety as a motivating factor which pushes them to exert more efforts seeking success and better performance and avoiding failure. By the end of this section, we gained a clear idea about learners’ attitudes about anxiety and the existence of the construct “Helpful Anxiety”. The results obtained demonstrate that most of the subjects regard anxiety as a motivating factor that boosts language performance, while fewer number of subject claim the opposite and deem anxiety as an obstacle.

The third section is mainly concerned with learners' perception of facilitating anxiety and anxiety alleviating strategies in addition to learners' perceptions of their instructor's role in managing their anxiety. From what has been collected, most of the informants tend to either agree or strongly agree that awareness of anxiety is an important step in the course of trying to cope with it. In addition to that, the majority of them agree upon the fact that working under a certain degree of pressure and anxiety permits motivation for more hard work. After all, an acceptable amount of concern over achieving learning outcomes will not hurt, but it raises more interest and devotion instead. Moreover, students have stated that they are ready to welcome classroom competition and still maintain self-confidence even though competition is actually an anxiety provoking factor. The results obtained from this section highlight the effectiveness of several strategies that enable coping with classroom anxiety and lessen it to a moderate level. Positive thinking and positive self-visualization while preparing for performing successfully received great approval from the subjects. In addition to that, the majority of them reported that they absolutely support peer work as a technique to overcome anxiety and reduce stress, while only few do not agree on that. By the end of the questionnaire, we tried to draw attention to teachers' role in managing classroom anxiety and to investigate students' perceptions of that. The obtained information reveals that most of students do believe that teachers' friendly style invites them to take part and participate in the classroom discussion and overcome their anxiety. The results also demonstrate that the majority of them believe that classroom participation does not frighten them, due to the appropriate manner through which the teacher provide feedback on what has been presented by learners. This invites us to notice that the manner of correcting mistakes and providing feedback can be, both, the source of anxiety or the solution to lessening anxiety, it all depends on teachers' style.

By way of brief conclusion, one can say that the results of the students' questionnaire strengthen our ideas and hypothesis to a very considerable degree.

4. Facilitative Anxiety Scale (Alpert & Haber, 1960)

4.1. Description of the Scale

In order to support this research, we adopt Alpert and Haber (1960) facilitative anxiety scale which intends to examine the impact of students' anxiety on exam/test taking and their study behavior for upcoming exams. We also seek to know students' attitudes and feelings about foreign language anxiety during tests/exams and how its facilitating role could boost their performance.

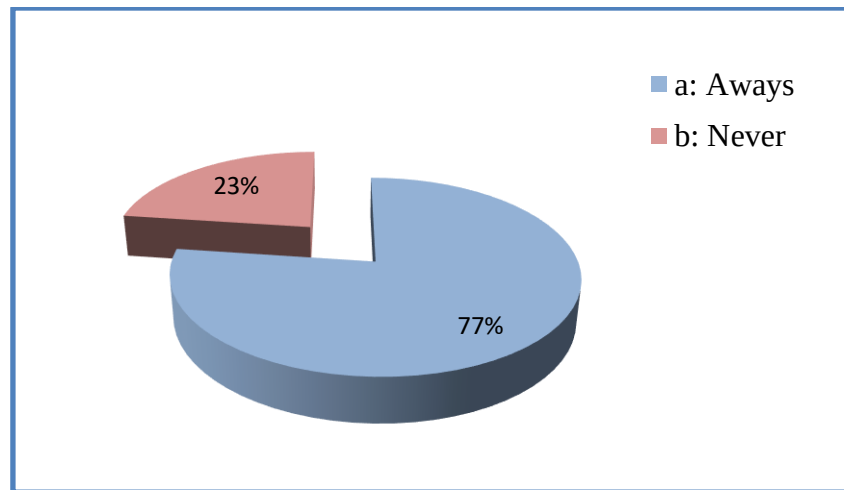
It was handed out to seventy (70) EFL students at Mila University after submitting the questionnaire for them. It consists of nine items that are answered on two different levels of frequency (always, never). We were obliged to use other languages (French and Arabic) in order to explain some difficult words concerning the item number seven.

4.2. Analysis of the Facilitative Anxiety Scale

1. I work most effectively under pressure, as when the task is very important.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Always	54	77,14%
b) Never	16	22,85%

Table 25: Students' Performance under Pressure.



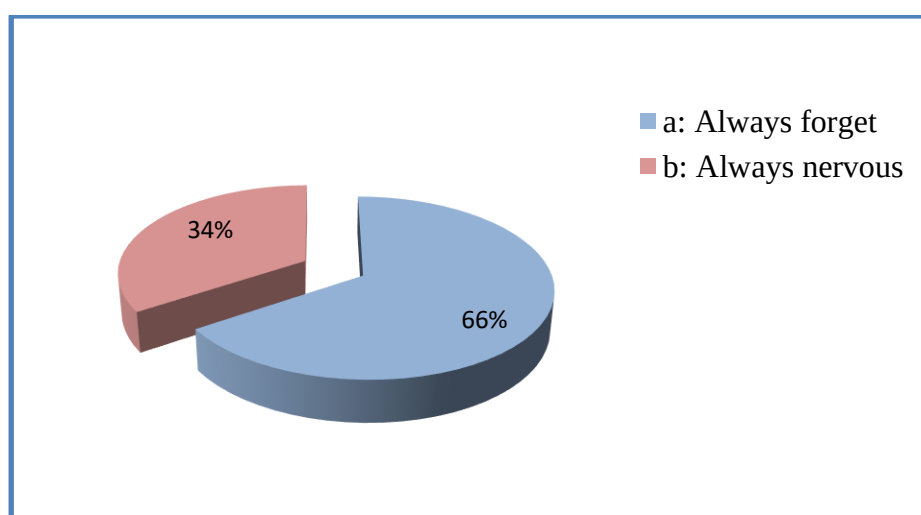
Graph 25: Students' Performance under Pressure.

It has been said that working under pressure is an extremely valuable quality and it could enable students to perform well. From the above representation, we notice that the great majority (77%) of students, even though they are under pressure and feel stressful, they perform language tasks that are important effectively. This result is in accordance with what we have discussed before that a specific amount of anxiety may help learners perform better, especially, when the tasks are important for them. In addition to that, these same learners are aware that the importance of the task is the reason behind their stress and they succeeded in overcoming their negative emotions and turn them in their favor. However, the rest (23%) answered that working under pressure prevents them from performing the task effectively and correctly. This is due to their belief that they may fail in accomplishing the task because their anxiety will control them. Also, we can attribute this result to the students' over thinking or exaggeration in imagining the situation that since the task is very important for their grades, they worry too much and give things more than they deserve.

2. While I may (or may not) be nervous before taking an exam, once I start, I seem to forget to be nervous.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Always forget	46	65,71%
b) Always nervous	24	34,28%

Table26: Students' Nervousness before Exams.



Graph26: Students' Nervousness before Exams.

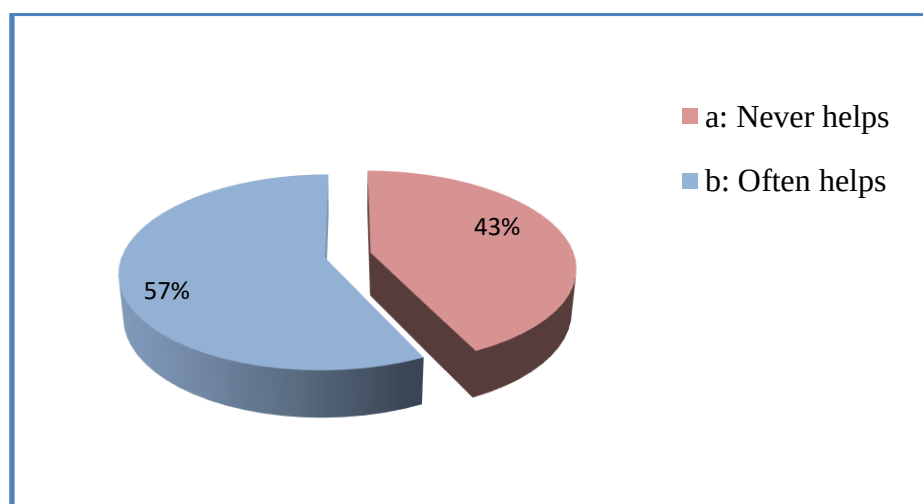
This item is set in order to figure out whether nervousness before exams helps students to perform well or not and how they react once they start taking their exam. Students' responses to this item demonstrate that the majority (66%) of the sample always forget about their nervousness and worries once they start performing their exams. Even if they feel anxious and nervous before taking their exams; students hide their anxiety and forget about the negative effects that it could result in. This could be related to their awareness that negative thinking about anxiety only causes debilitating anxiety. Thus, they could forget about the negative thoughts and rather concentrate on the topic and try to do their best. On the

contrary, 34% of students are always nervous during an exam. They are not lucky in hiding their worries and they fell into the trap of their negative thoughts. Their anxiety controls them and they have no chance in overcoming it and this is one of the reasons behind their poor performance.

03. Nervousness while taking a test helps me do better.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Never helps	30	42,85%
b) Often helps	40	57,14%

Table27: Students' Nervousness during Exams.



Graph27: Students' Nervousness during Exams.

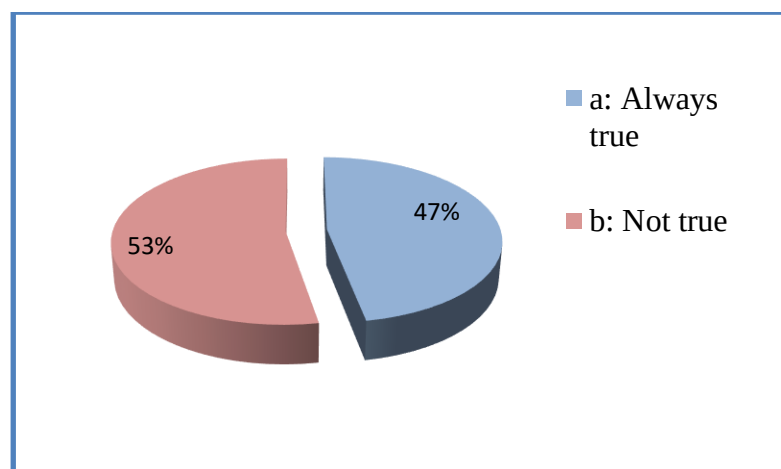
The aim of this item is to see how students perform during exams when they are nervous. On the one hand, it seems that nervousness during exams for 43% of the students never helps. This can be due to their panic or fear that has been increased and may impact their ability to complete the exam. For those students, nervousness in an inevitable situation that causes some difficulties even if they have prepared for; they may forget their ideas and everything they prepare for the exam. Their high anxiety can tip them into a sense of extreme

panic that hamper their performance. On the other hand, nervousness for 57% often helps. Those students experience low/moderate levels of anxiety and may feel a little nervous about exams, but they are still able to focus their attention on their studies or the questions asked during the assessment. Usually students with low anxiety are not struck with intrusive thoughts or feel debilitated by the exam.

04. When I start a test, nothing is able to distract me.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Always true	33	47,14%
b) Not true	37	52,85%

Table28: Distraction During tests.



Graph28: Distraction During tests.

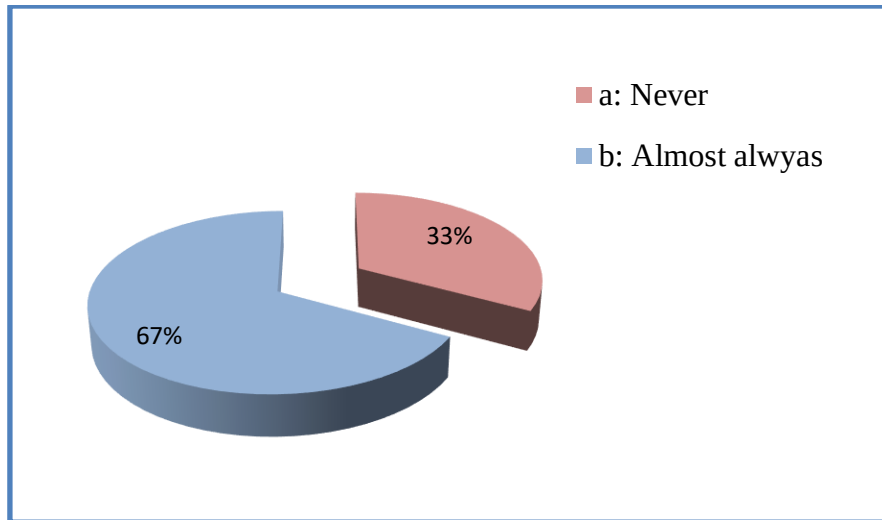
Through this item we want to know to which extent students are distracted during tests. The results shown above demonstrate that 47% of the participants are not distracted when they take a test. This indicates that these students are well prepared and their sense of control is increased. For them, worry, stress, or anxiety is turned to be a facilitator rather than a detrimental. It keeps them alert and motivated and helps them in focusing their attention to

continue the test without any interruption. On the contrary, 53% of the students are distracted during tests and experience a situation of uneasiness. There are many factors that can interfere and hinder their attention, preceded by the difficulty of the test, insufficient time and how much they are prepared for the test. This only leads to one thing: fear of failure. Therefore, we can attribute test-anxious students' poor performance to the aversive effects of worrying during examination at first place. Their stress controls them and their high anxiety gets in the way of their success. The best example in this case is when students recall similar or previous test situation, concerning a specific module that ended in disaster. Such intrusive worry may inhibit, even, the simplest responses.

05. In courses which the total grade is based mainly on one exam, I seem to do better than other people.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Never	23	32,85%
b) Almost always	47	67,14%

Table 29: Students' Performance in Courses Based on One Exam.



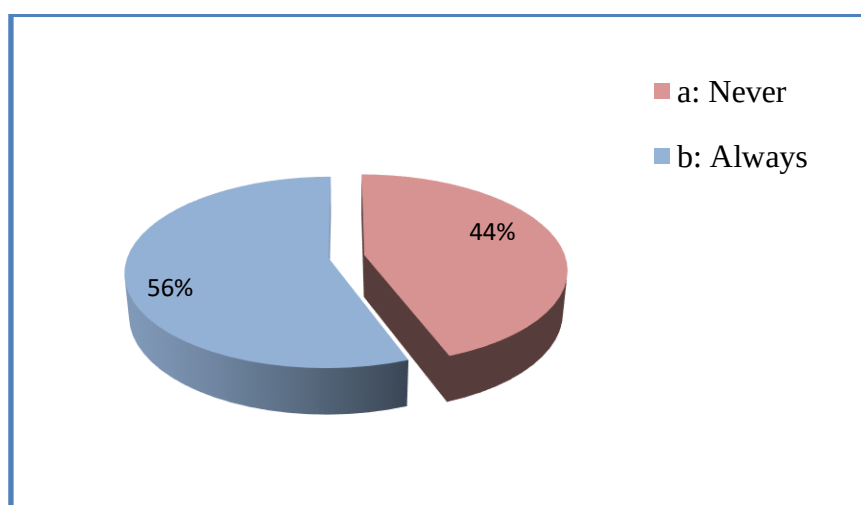
Graph 29: Students' Performance in Courses Based on One Exam.

Item number five is set to know how students perform in courses in which the total grade is based on one exam only. From the results obtained in the table above, it seems that the majority (67%) declared that they almost always perform better than other people in courses which are based on one exam. In such courses, these students are aware that they have to do their best in order to succeed. Despite their worry and stress, they seem to work hard and revise well in order to overcome any difficulty they may encounter during the exam. Because they prefer to study for one exam rather than many, stress and fear could play a positive role in motivating those learners to do well. Thus, they are pushed to work effectively to ensure their whole success. However, 33% of the students never do better in such type of courses. Since the total success depends on passing one exam, students panic and experience fear of failure which affects them negatively. In other words, debilitating anxiety may result during examination, regarding the great importance of this exam for the learners and its great influence on their grades.

06. I look forward to exams.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Never	31	44,28%
b) Always	39	55,71%

Table30: Looking Forward to Exams.



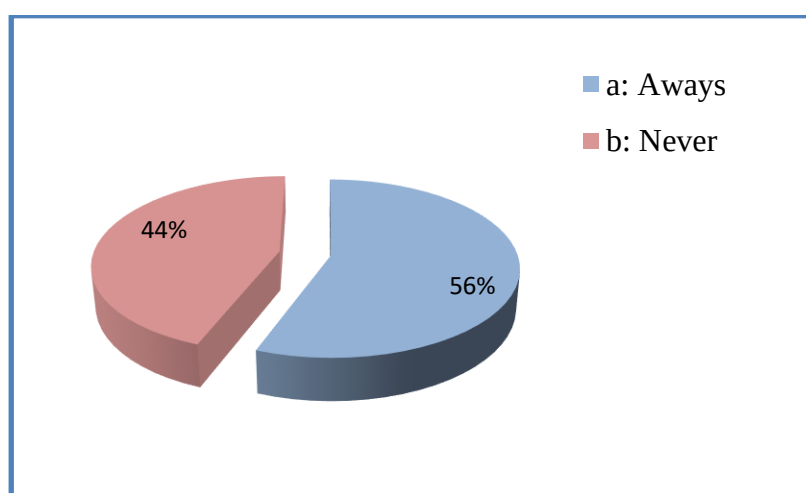
Graph30: Looking Forward to Exams.

Concerning this item, we want to figure out if students look forward to take exams or not. As the results show, 56% of students always feel quite excited about their exams. Exams could be a breeze for them. They don't mind being assessed, maybe because revision is going very well and they are fully prepared, or they are just their favorite modules, so that they can work better. These students worry less about exams and they are capable to find a way to control the situation. Additionally, it is not deranging for them to sit exams since they put their efforts beforehand. By contrast, 34% of the students never feel excited about exams. For them, exam moments are so difficult to endure and, sometimes, they may become sick. Apprehension before or during exams may have negative effects on their performance, that is why they tend to seek different solutions in order to reduce pressure.

07. Although “cramming” under pre-examination tension is not effective for most people, I find that if the need arises, I can learn material immediately before an exam, even under considerable pressure, and successfully retain it to use on the exam.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Always	39	55,71%
b) Never	31	44,28%

Table31: Cramming Under Pre-Examination Tension.



Graph31: Cramming Under Pre-Examination Tension.

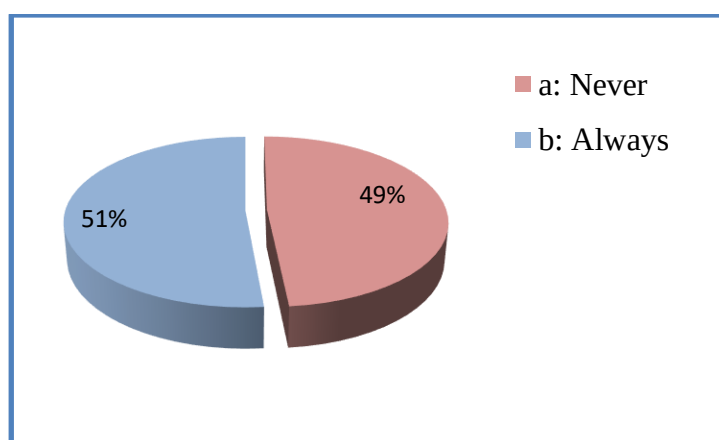
This item is set in order to check whether students are capable of learning specific material immediately before exams and successfully keep it even if they are under pressure. As the table demonstrates, the majority (56%) of the sample said that they are able to use the “crammed” material successfully before exams even under considerable stress. Cramming means more work and study. For those learners, cramming before an examination is an aid that enables them to memorize particular lessons and get by in a course, even if they feel

stressful. The positive effects of stress and anxiety during exams can be best shown in such cases; in order for these learners to pass the exam, they have no choice, but putting stress aside or turning their anxiety into a motivator to start working. Indeed, the purpose of cramming is only to make the best of their situation and raise their grades, especially if they have been attentive in class, have taken fair notes, and have read or skimmed most of the material for the course. Conversely, the rest (44%) reveals that they never succeeded in using the crammed material successfully under pressure. Stress is a great obstacle that prevents them from using the crammed material effectively. In addition to that, the more courses students have to cram for, the more stress will result in. Thus, cramming under pressure is less effective for them and it does not help in retaining it to be used on the exam.

08. I enjoy taking a difficult exam more than an easy one.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Never	34	48,57%
b) Always	36	51,42%

Table32: Difficult Exams.



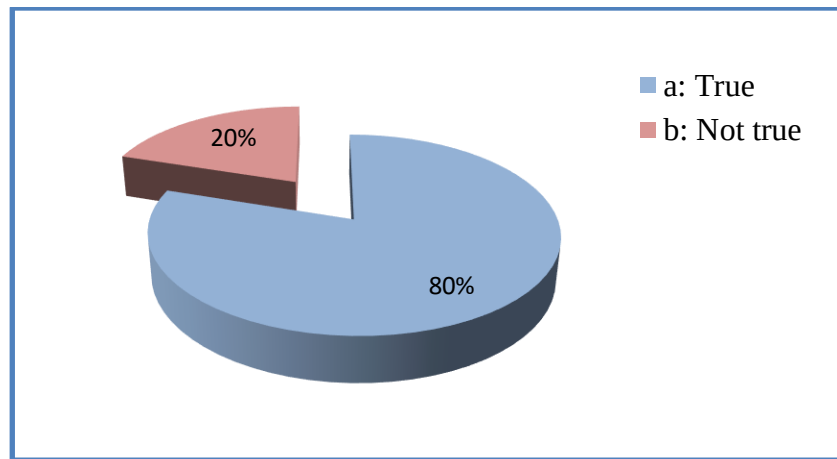
Graph32: Difficult Exams.

Through this item, we want to know whether students enjoy taking difficult exams more than easy ones. From the results represented above, we notice that 49% of students do not enjoy taking difficult exams. This can be due to their beliefs that hard exams are sources of detrimental anxiety which leads to failure. Difficult exams could put them under pressure and may feel uncomfortable or un capable of doing anything. For that, they prefer taking simple and easy questions rather than hard and difficult ones. On the other side, 51% of the total students enjoy taking difficult exams. They don't feel anxious or afraid. Contrarily, they enjoy risk taking and challenge their abilities. Through difficult exams, they can see how much they know about that particular module and what they don't know. Besides, they require more thinking and more solid knowledge. So, they can fill their knowledge gaps which can be used to improve themselves.

09. The more important the exam or test, the better I seem to do.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) True	56	80,00%
b) Not true	14	20,00%

Table33: The Relationship between Exam Importance and Students' Performance



Graph33: The Relationship between Exam Importance and Students' Performance.

This item seeks to unveil the relationship between the importance of the exam and student's performance. On the one hand, the data clearly shows that the great majority of the students (80%) seem to do better when the exam is very important. Those participants tend to push themselves to work hard and make more efforts because they are aware of the importance of the exam in raising their grades. They are capable to control any unfavorable situation, and know how to cope with any stress or anxiety. For them, anxiety is a facilitator that keeps them alert and prepares them well in order to achieve better results. On the other hand, only 20% of the students seem to perform less when the exam is of great importance. Since the exam is essential for their success, apprehension may occur, nervousness may control them and debilitating anxiety may hinder their achievements.

4.3. Discussion of the Results

Because the facilitative anxiety scale can be considered as a vehicle for justifying students 'good performance, it is set in order to specify and clarify the positive effects of anxiety on students' academic achievements. On the basis of the results obtained from the analysis and interpretation of the facilitative anxiety scale, it can be said that our hypothesis is valid and goes in the right direction to enrich our aim. On the one hand, the majority of

students' answers on the first four items which refer to nervousness and pressure reveal that experiencing fear or anxiety before or while taking tests /exams enables students to do better. According to them, anxiety can be turned to be a motivator and a facilitator that pushes students to prepare well for the exam and make more efforts in order to get good results. On the other hand, statements five, six, eight, and nine refer to what could be called stressors. In other words, the situation presented in each statement (when the total grade is based on passing one exam, looking forward to exams, cramming materials before exams, the difficulty of the exam, and the importance of the exam) could create anxiety in students. The answers show that the majority considers those stressors as motives for good performance. Sometimes working under stress might raise student's awareness and can make them alert. This would lead to an increasing sense of control and self-confidence. Thus, students succeeded in forgetting their anxiety and worry and rather feel at ease. However, looking at the rest of the students' answers leaves us with another assumption; the level of anxiety that they experience is high and it is one of the reasons behind their unfortunate performance. High level of anxiety equals debilitating anxiety which has a negative impact on students' motivation and their preparation before and during exams. Some stress can have devastating effects and can lead the students to forget several issues as they go during the exam.

Finally, it may be concluded that the students' facilitative anxiety scale greatly supports our hypothesis. Anxiety does not only hinder achievement but, in some cases, improves and develops it. Anxiety may be a facilitating power that prompts the learner to devote more efforts to language learning, so that performance will be enhanced.

5. Teachers' Questionnaire

5.1. Description and Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

The Teachers' questionnaire is addressed to 18 teachers from the department of English at Mila University. Through this questionnaire, we aimed at gathering data concerning teachers' perceptions of the role of helpful anxiety in promoting learning outcomes, their opinions about their role in managing classroom anxiety and the appropriate strategies needed for alleviating anxiety levels.

The teachers' questionnaire is composed of 19 questions that varied between multiple choice questions and open-ended questions and are arranged in three sections. It begins with a brief introduction that explains the aim of the questionnaire as well as the procedure of answering the questions. The first section attempts to gather general information about the degrees held by teachers and their experience in the field of EFL teaching. The second section "Identifying Facilitative Anxiety in the Language Classroom" is designed to have an insight about teachers' attitudes towards foreign language anxiety faced by their students and their perceptions of facilitating anxiety. The third section "alleviating students' anxiety is devoted to discuss the relationship between learners and instructors, and the use of some strategies and actions that combine together to create a supportive classroom atmosphere which in turn reduces anxiety levels.

It is worth mentioning that the teachers' questionnaire was put together in a form of Google Questionnaire and sent to the teachers of the sample via their professional E- mails. Most of them have acknowledged the receipt and, in fact, have been very cooperative by providing us with answers to all the questions.

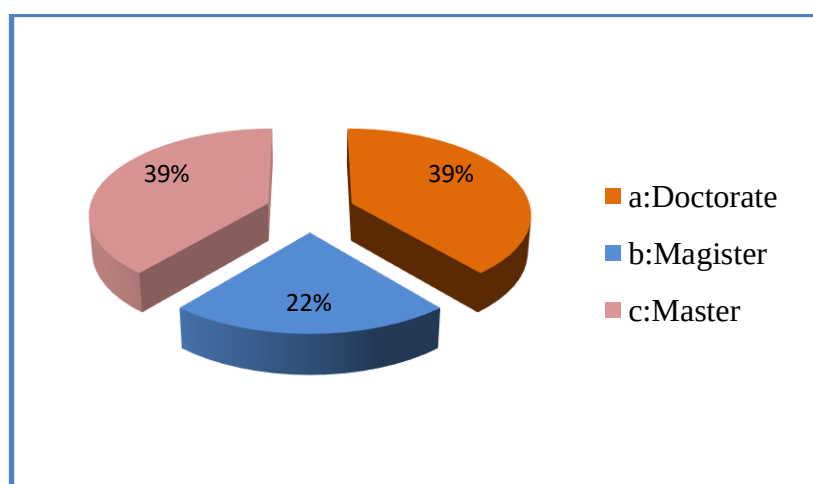
5.2. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section one: General Information

Q1: Degree (s) held:

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Doctorate	7	38,90%
b) Magister	4	22,20%
c) Master	7	38,90%

Table 34: Teachers' Academic Degree.



Graph 34: Teachers' Academic Degree

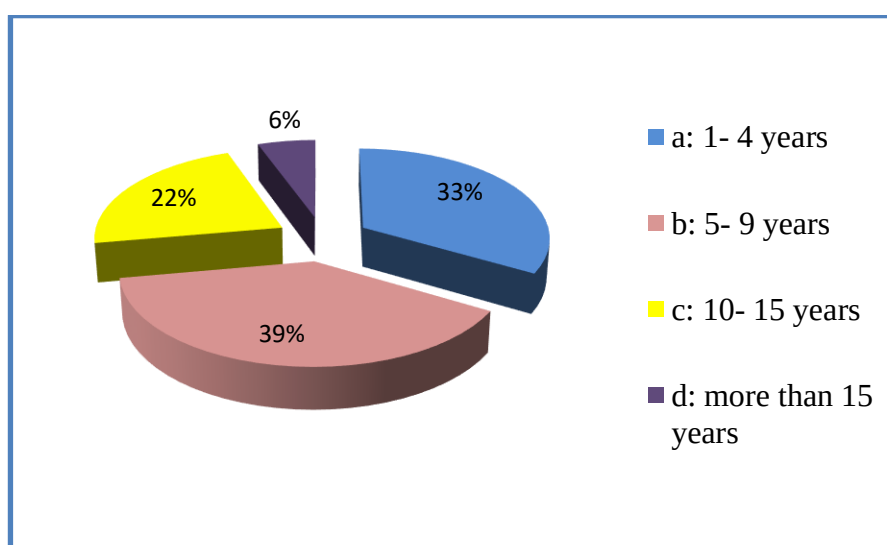
In order to establish the valuable contributions of instructors who hold high degrees in EFL teaching, we have asked them about their degrees and qualifications. Among the whole sample which represents 18 teachers, we notice that 39% of the teachers have a doctorate degree in the English language, 39% also have master degree and 22% have magister degree. The variety of degrees held by those teachers helps us to take into account the suggestions as very reliable for this study to be successful. This answer also reflects teachers' qualification

and the great experience they have passed in the field of teaching English as a foreign language.

Q2. How long have you been teaching English?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) 1- 4 years	6	33,30%
b) 5- 9 years	7	38,90%
c) 10- 15 years	4	22,20%
d) More than 15 years	1	5,60%

Table 35: Years of Teaching English



Graph 35: Years of Teaching English

The aim of this question is to reveal the teachers' experience in teaching EFL. As teachers were asked to give the number of years experienced in teaching English, the table shows that seven teachers which represent the majority (39%) have taught English for about 5-9 years. Then, there are six (06) teachers (33%) who have spent about 1-4 years teaching English which means that they have little experiences in teaching English. Also, there is 22%

of the total number which refers to four (4) teachers who taught for 10-15 years and interestingly only one teacher (6%) who have been exerting it for more than 15 years that means he/she is the most experienced teacher in the sample. Their experience is considered as a fundamental requirement in the way they deal with learners, especially those who suffer from high level of anxiety during their scholastic career. By this result, we understand that the sample includes experienced teachers and this will positively contribute to reaching the purpose of this investigation.

Q3. During your teaching experience at university, what are the modules you have been teaching?

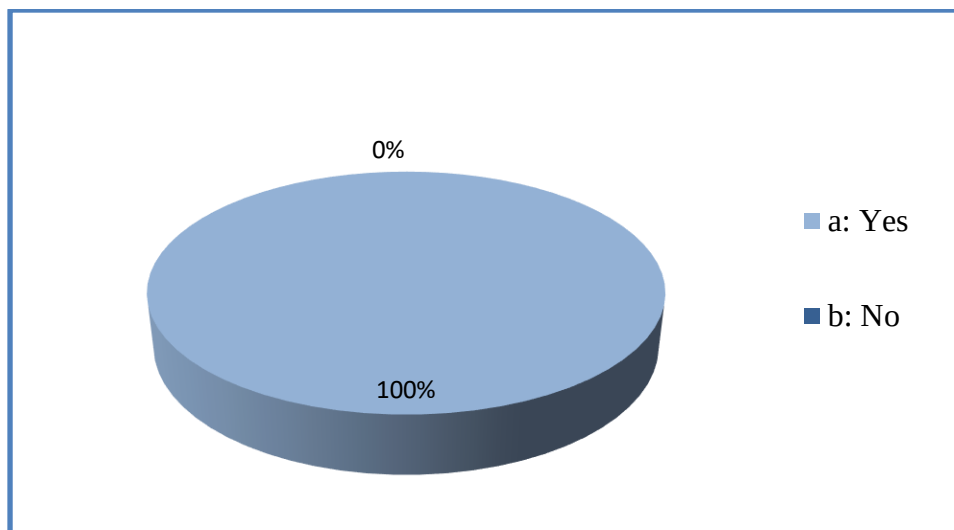
The informants are asked to name the modules they have taught. This question intends to gather more information about their experience, because we believe that the more modules teachers cover, the more experience they gain. According to them, different modules are dealt with, such as oral expression, written expression, translation and psychopedagogy. Their experience with various modules let us consider their testimony and suggestions as very reliable and especially the vital role they play, their evaluation and observation of the learners' needs and requirement in each module.

Section Two: Identifying Facilitating Anxiety in the Language Classroom

Q4: Are you able to detect your learners' problems in the classroom?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	18	100%
b) No	0	0%

Table 36: Detecting Students' Problems



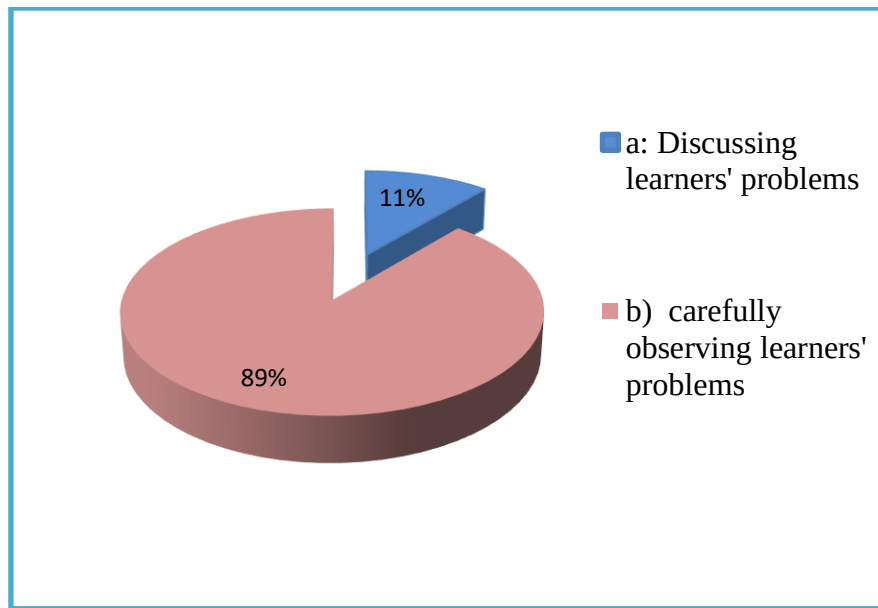
Graph36: Detecting Students' Problems

Through this question, we aim at knowing if teachers are able to detect their students' problems as an important step by instructors to ensure a fruitful learning atmosphere. Fortunately, all the teachers (100%) are able to detect their student's problems. This may be due to their constant concern about where the major sources of student's performance deficiencies lie, or simply because they are aware that the first step in helping students with their complications is by recognizing and identifying them. Since high anxiety is one of the students' obstacles, teachers' answer to this question reveals also teachers' ability in identifying what seems unwell with anxious students.

Q5. If yes, how do you detect those problems?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Discussing learners' problems	11	11,00%
b) Carefully observing learners' problems	16	88,90%

Table 37: Teachers' Ways to Detect Learners' Problems



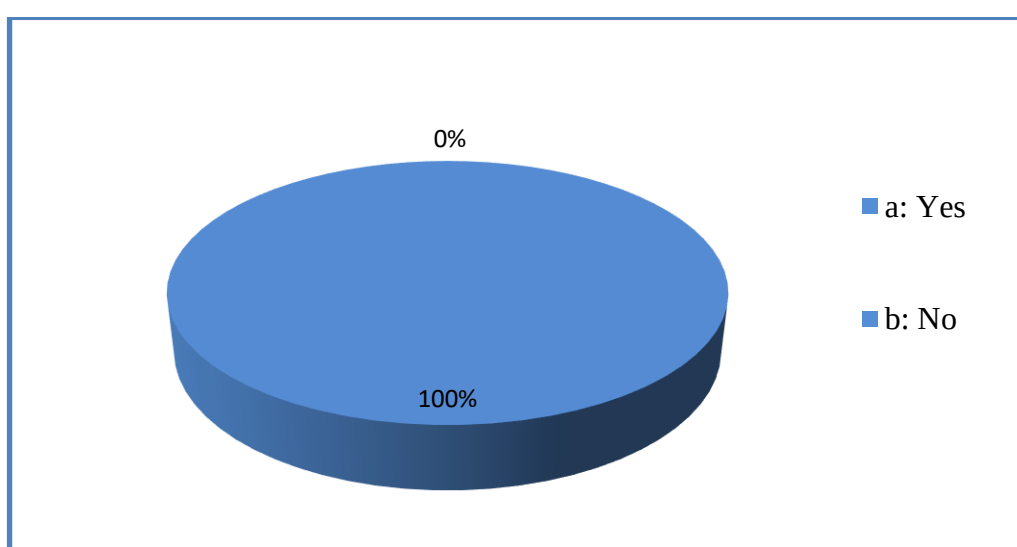
Graph 37: Teachers' Ways to Detect Learners' Problems

By asking the teachers of the sample this question, we aimed at knowing the ways through which teachers spot their learners' problems in the classroom. The table above shows that the majority of teachers (89%) try to carefully observe their students' behaviors and elicit the problems they may encounter without having to discuss the matter with them. The results show also that only 11% of the informants prefer to discuss their learners' problems with them. From what has been mentioned, we assume that both ways are actually effective because each teacher has his/ her own style or method in managing their classrooms and also in detecting issues such as fear and anxiety. We think that when teachers observe learners' anxiety with or without raising the matter in the classroom, they are trying either to reach possible solutions without triggering learners' awareness or with raising their full awareness and attention to the problems they encounter. After all, teachers' ways in spotting classroom issues such as anxiety differ, but they all fall for the sake of helping learners.

Q6. As teachers of English language, do you think that foreign language learners experience uneven levels of anxiety in their language performance?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	18	100%
b) No	0	0%

Table 38: Teachers' Perceptions of Foreign Language Anxiety levels



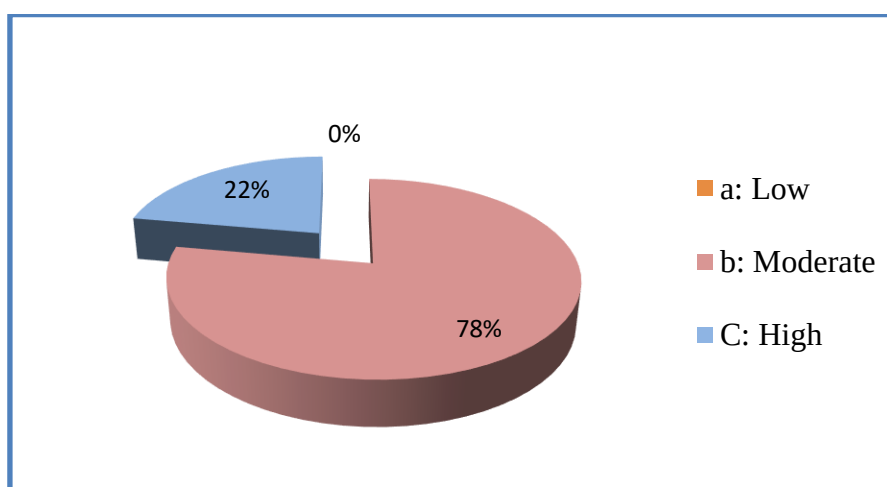
Graph 38: Teachers' Perceptions of Foreign Language Anxiety levels

The reason behind asking this question is our intention to figure out teachers' perceptions of the existence of a variety of anxiety levels that learners experience. The collected data shows that all the teachers who answered the questionnaire believe that language learners do experience uneven levels of anxiety in their language performance. We believe that due to teachers' knowledge of individual differences and experience in the field of foreign language teaching, they are able to tell the varying degrees (high, moderate, and low) of anxiety that learners encounter when they are performing oral and written tasks or even when they sit for exams.

Q7: If yes, how do you rate the amount of anxiety experienced by them?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Low	0	0%
b) Moderate	14	77,80%
c) High	4	22,20%

Table 39: The Level of Anxiety Experienced by Students.



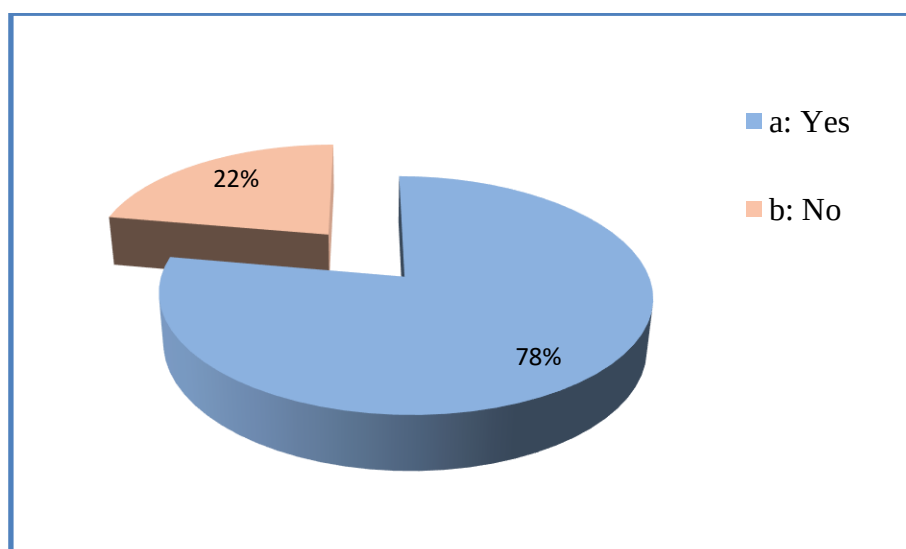
Graph 39: The Level of Anxiety Experienced by Students.

We asked this question in order to investigate teachers' opinions and views towards the real levels of students' anxiety during their experience in teaching English. The above representation shows that the majority of the teachers (78%) attribute moderate level of anxiety to their students, while the rest of the teachers (22%) indicate that students also experience high levels of anxiety. This answer confirms the idea that not all FL anxiety that is experienced inside the classroom is high; rather it could be moderate which is advantageous for learners' outcomes. In addition to this, we can say that the instructors are able to distinguish the most anxious students and the little anxious ones based on how well they look and care about students' feelings and emotions.

Q8: Do you think that a level of anxiety, ranging from low to moderate, facilitates learning?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	14	77,80%
b) No	4	22,20%

Table 40: Teachers' Perceptions of Facilitating Anxiety Levels



Graph 40: Teachers' Perceptions of Facilitating Anxiety Levels

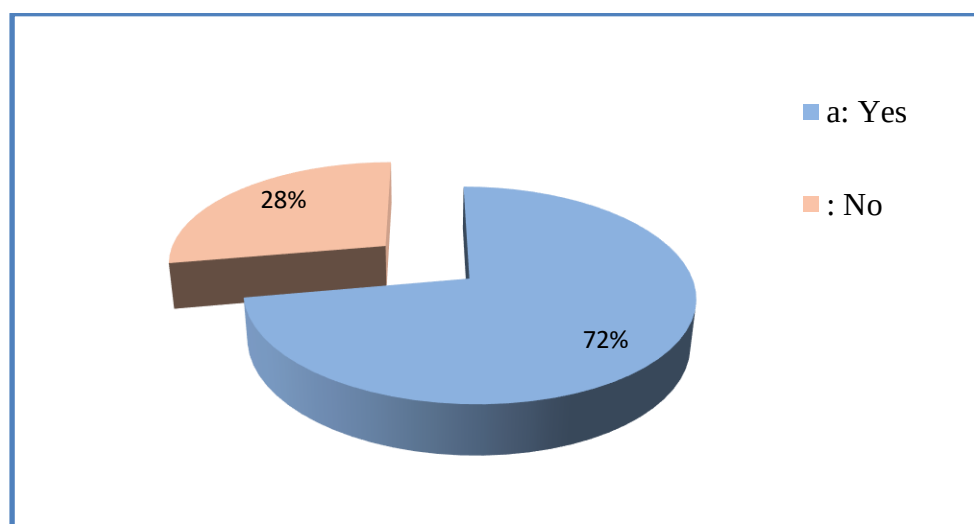
This question endeavors to know whether teachers perceive anxiety levels that range from low to moderate as helpful anxiety amounts. The results that are represented in the table demonstrate that 78% of the instructors do confirm the idea of facilitating anxiety levels, while only 22% of them do not actually support this belief. From what has been presented, on the one hand, we suppose that the majority who supports this claim may be acquainted with the helpful effects that anxiety can result in. On the other hand, we assume that those who answered by *No*, do not believe in the facilitating power of certain anxiety levels because they tend to keep a negative attitude towards a negative feeling such as anxiety. Furthermore, they

may be convinced that anxiety can only hamper performance due to the numerous studies that have been carried out to prove the negative impact of anxiety.

Q9: Do you attribute any positive feature to anxiety?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	13	72,20%
b) No	5	27,80%

Table 41: The Existence of Positive Features of Anxiety



Graph 41: The Existence of Positive Features of Anxiety

The main reason why we asked such question is the need to know whether teachers believe in the existence of any positive characteristics of anxiety. As the table reveals, a considerable number of teachers (13) with a percentage of 72% said that they do attribute some positive features to anxiety, while only 28% of the informants state that they do not believe in the existence of any positive facet to anxiety. We assume that the majority of the instructors are aware that anxiety is not characterized by debilitating effects that hinder

learning outcomes only, but they are familiar with its constructive features that add to performance achievement.

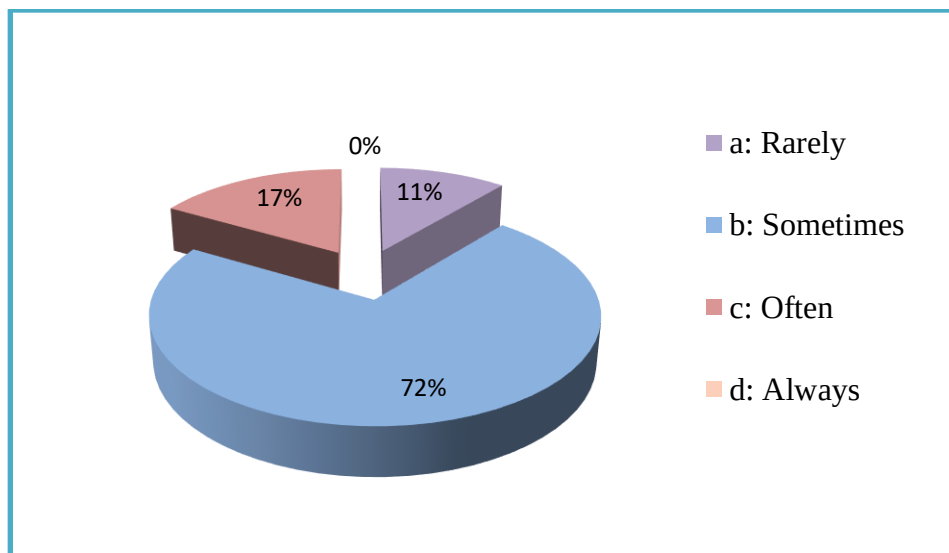
Q10: Whatever your answer, please explain.

This question aims at providing an explanation of what features instructors attribute to anxiety. As it was specified before, the majority of the sample agrees on attributing positive features to anxiety. Luckily, they highlighted many areas in which anxiety is perceived to have a helpful influence linguistically as well as affectively. Some view anxiety as a sort of motivation in EFL learning that triggers the need to make more efforts as it pushes the learners and provides them with a lot of energy. Others perceive anxiety as raising students' alertness and attentiveness which generates more focus on the structure and composition of the language. One of the teachers' answers was so interesting that sometimes people experiencing anxiety are better at responding to the threat, since their brain process the threat more efficiently. It is further suggested that some degree of anxiety can display an improved performance and activate students' problem-solving skill to some extent. Looking at these answers makes us assume that teachers are fully aware of what helpful anxiety is and how its positive effects will be in EFL learning process and performance.

Q11: Does a moderate level of anxiety raise student's alertness?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Rarely	2	11,70%
b) Sometimes	13	72,20%
c) Often	3	16,70%
d) Always	0	0%

Table 42: Students' alertness as it is Triggered by Moderate Anxiety



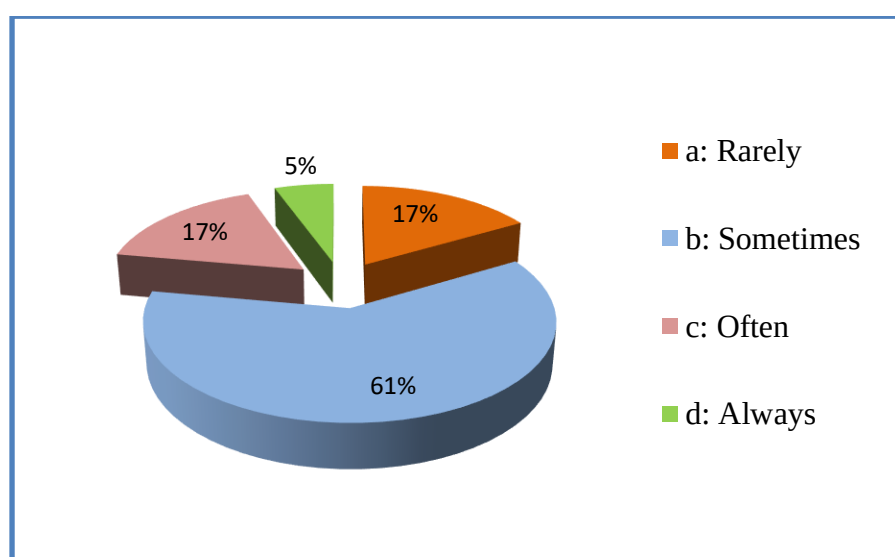
Graph 42: Students' alertness as it is Triggered by Moderate Anxiety

We asked this question aiming to know instructors' opinions about how frequently experiencing moderate amounts of anxiety triggers more alertness in students. The above demonstrated answers display that the greater part of the answers goes to teachers who believe that, sometimes, moderate anxiety raises students' alertness in classroom. The table shows also that 17% of the informants' responses were "*Often*" and only 11% of them think that this claim happens rarely, while zero answers were for always. From this we can deduce that when learners are a bit anxious in classroom, they may pay more attention in order to keep up with the teacher's explanation and obtain as much information as possible. In addition to that, we assume that moderately anxious learners tend to favor perfection in their performance, for that they put much effort and attentiveness in the process of learning.

Q12: Does a moderate level of anxiety serve as a motivator in enhancing students' performance?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Rarely	3	16,70%
b) Sometimes	11	61,10%
c) Often	3	16,70%
d) Always	1	5,60%

Table 43: Students' Motivation as it is Triggered by Moderate Level of Anxiety.



Graph 43: Students' Motivation as it Triggered by Moderate Level of Anxiety.

This question is set in order to figure out teachers' perception toward moderate level of anxiety as it motivates students in their language learning. From the results presented in the table, we notice that the majority (61%) of the total number of teachers declares that moderate level of anxiety sometimes motivates students in enhancing their performance. Teachers who claim that it often motivates students are of 17% from the whole sample. Only 5% sees anxiety as always, a motivator for learning, while 17% of the teachers admit that

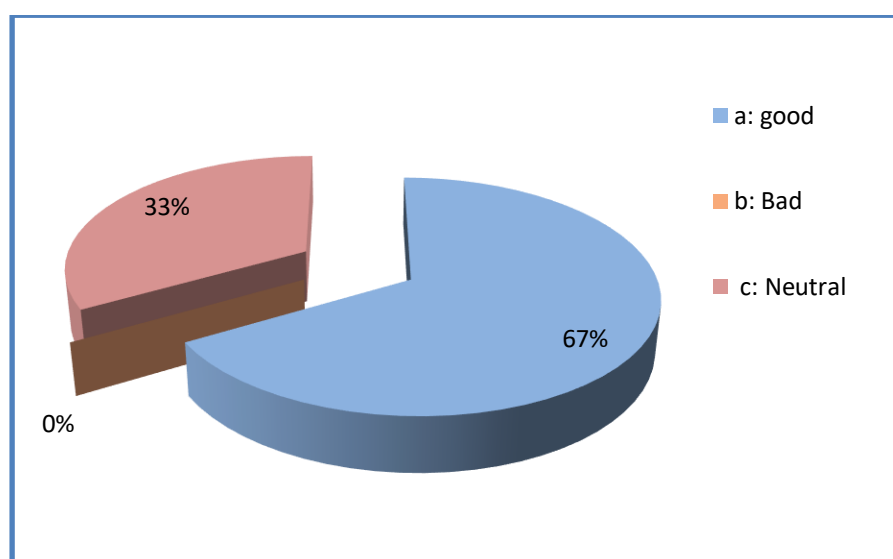
anxiety rarely motivates learners. Along these responses, we think that teachers recognize that anxiety can indeed motivate students and raise their desire to learn. This can be due to their belief that the positive feature of anxiety is when it stops to be a hindrance for learning and turns to be helpful and boost students' motivation and thus, their performance. Also, we think that teachers who rarely see anxiety as a motivator are the same teachers who did not attribute positive features of anxiety believing that it influences the learning process negatively and makes language acquisition more difficult.

Section Three: Alleviating Students' Anxiety

Q 13. What type of relationship exists between you and your students?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) good	12	66,60%
b) Bad	0	0%
c) Neutral	6	33,30%

Table 44: Teacher/ Students Relationship



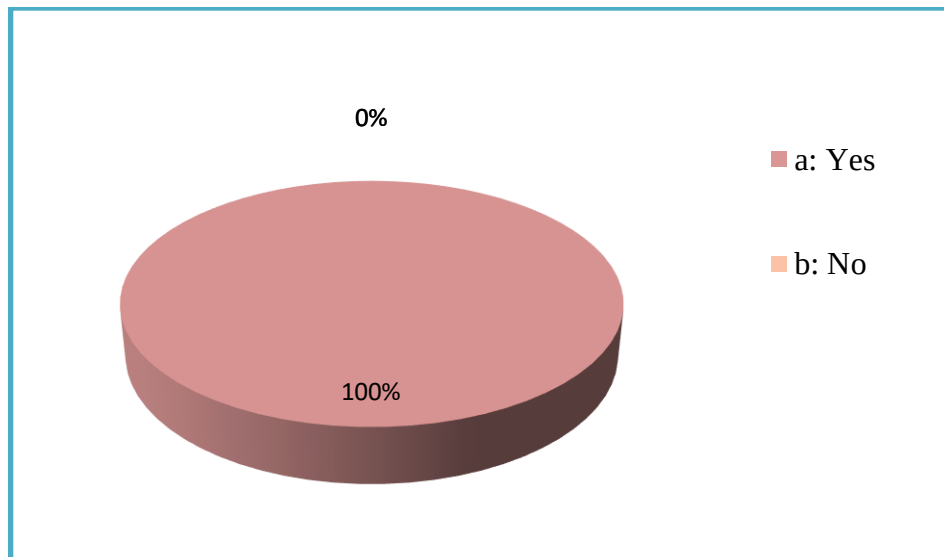
Graph 44: Teacher/ Students Relationship

The existing relationship between teachers and students is a twofold factor that affects learning either positively or negatively; this concern pushed us to ask this question. From the results obtained and represented in the table, we notice that most of teachers (67%) declared having a good relationship with their students. The rest of the informants (33%) claim to have a neutral relationship with their learners, leaving us with zero answers concerning having a bad relationship. We come to deduce that teachers who declared having a good relationship are more sociable and tend to show their positive bond to learners knowing what benefit it might have under certain boundaries. This increases learners' self-confidence and invites them to volunteer and take part in classroom discussions. Additionally, it created a friendly atmosphere which helps reducing stress and anxiety. Concerning the teachers who declared having a neutral relationship with their students, one can assume that they prefer to keep their classroom more professional and under absolute control for the fact that being close to learners can, sometimes, go the unexpected way and create absolute chaos.

Q14: Have you ever tried to help your learners in resolving their anxiety problems?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Yes	18	100%
b) No	0	0%

Table 45: Teachers' Position in Resolving Learners' Problems



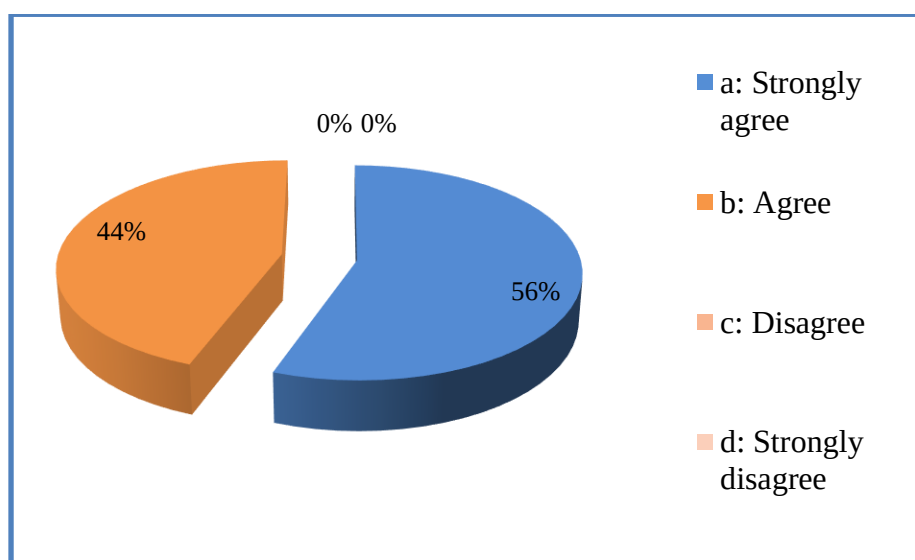
Graph 45: Teachers' Position in Resolving Learners' Problems

The aim of this question is investigating whether teachers try to go further than just providing information by helping students in resolving their issues. The collected data that is represented above reveals that all the informants declared positive responses when they were asked whether they have ever tried to help their students in resolving their problems. Fortunately, we have noticed zero answers concerning the second option “*No*”. We suppose that teachers are aware of their multiple roles in the classroom. In other words, teachers are not only material creators or authority figures, they are in fact guides, assessors, counselors, motivators and facilitators. In this sense, teachers are expected to lecture their students as much as they are expected to interfere when problems are raised. Such teacher features give students the impression that teachers are more than an authority figure which in turn invites them to feel at ease while they are learning. Moreover, teachers’ attempts to help learners will, to a great extent, minimize classroom anxiety.

Q15: Creating a supportive/ friendly atmosphere enables students to reduce their anxiety.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	10	55,60%
b) Agree	8	44,40%
c) Disagree	0	0%
d) Strongly disagree	0	0%

Table 46: Supportive and Friendly Atmosphere in Alleviating Students Anxiety.



Graph 46: Supportive and Friendly Atmosphere in Alleviating Students Anxiety.

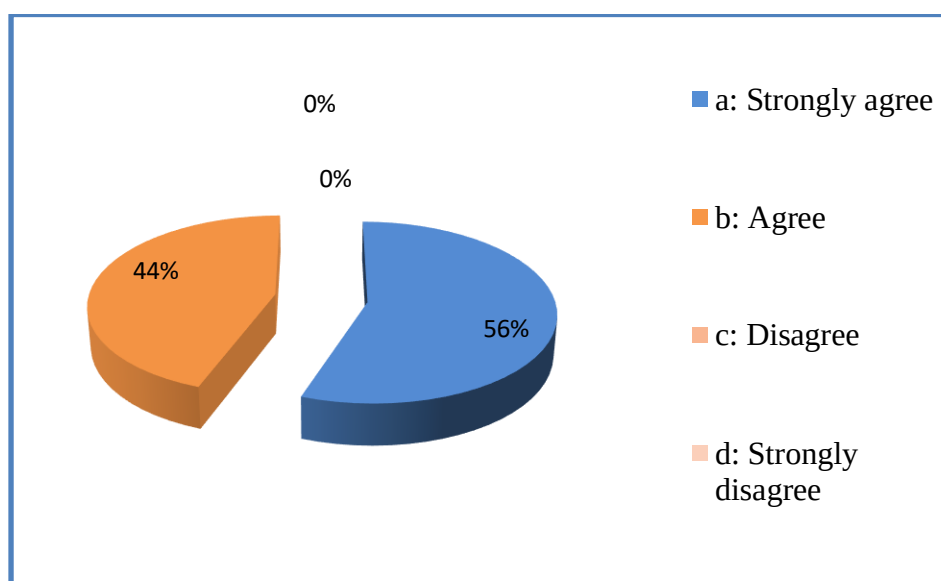
By creating a supportive and helpful classroom atmosphere, teachers insure less stressful environment for learning to take place. This question aims at looking to what extent teachers agree with that. Teachers' answers go only for two options, strongly agree (56%), agree (44%). However, no teacher (0%) shows a disagreement about this suggestion. This leads us to say that the teachers believe that they should provide a relaxed and a calm atmosphere for their students in order to obtain an effective environment for learning, because they agreed that the classroom is not always a pleasant setting for foreign language learning.

So, they attempt to create a warm and social environment that minimizes the debilitating effects of high anxiety in order to encourage them to become more engaged in the classroom, hence, to improve their learning outcomes.

Q16: Good sense of humor, calling students by their first names and positive gestures can reduce student's anxiety?

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	10	55,60%
b) Agree	8	44,40%
c) Disagree	0	0%
d) Strongly disagree	0	0%

Table 47 : Teachers' Immediacy



Graph 47: Teachers' Immediacy

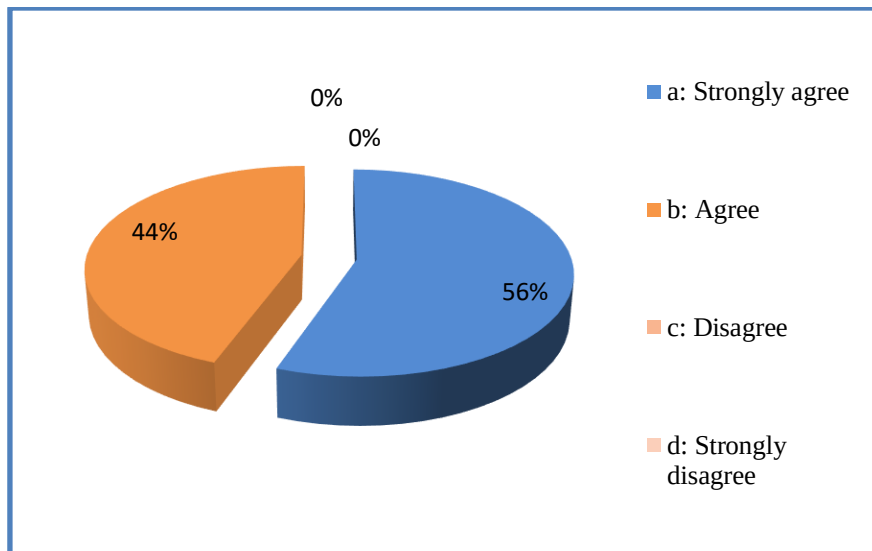
In order to reveal the role of teachers' closeness to students in reducing anxiety, we have asked this question. From the above represented data, on the one hand, we notice that 56% of the teachers strongly agree on good sense of humor, calling students by their first

names, and using positive gestures as ways to reduce anxiety and 44% of them agree on that as well. On the other hand, no one showed any kind of disapproval on the statement. We assume that most of teachers are aware of the great positive change they can make in their students' psychological state through using a set of techniques such as verbal (good sense of humor, using students' first names and giving advice) and non-verbal (positive gestures, facial expressions and eye contact) immediacy. We believe that applying such practices in language classes would create a positive and a relaxed atmosphere where students can feel more at ease and less anxious which will affect language performance positively.

Q17: Knowing what, when and how students' errors should be corrected can reduce students' fear of making mistakes.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	10	55,60%
b) Agree	8	44,40%
c) Disagree	0	0%
d) Strongly disagree	0	0%

Table 48: Appropriate Error Correction in Reducing Students' Fear of Making Mistakes.



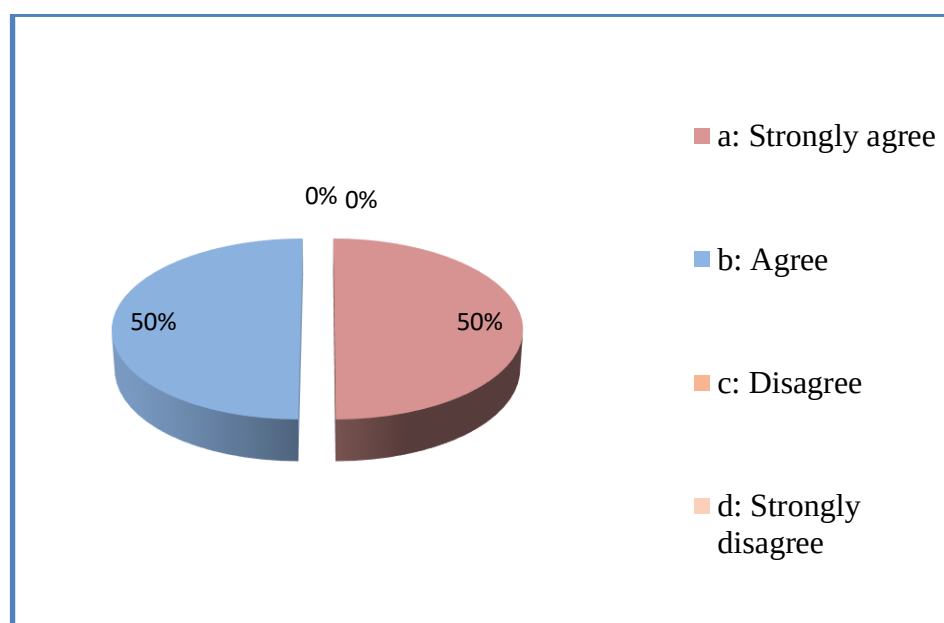
Graph 48: Appropriate Error Correction in Reducing Students' Fear of Making Mistakes.

The reason behind asking this question is to support the idea that an appropriate correction of student's errors contributes in reducing their fear of making mistakes as an obstacle for their participation and engagement in the classroom. According to that representation, a great part of the informants (56%) reported that they strongly agree with the suggestion that providing an appropriate error correction is an effective method in eliminating students' fear of making mistakes, and 44% also agree on that. Yet, a zero answer (0%) goes to the other options which represent teachers' disagreement. In the light of these answers, we may state that teachers know that one of the sources that generate anxiety is students' fear of making mistakes in front of the whole class. That is why they point at the importance of knowing that the choice of students correction (spelling mistakes or miss-pronunciation), time of correction (immediately or delayed) and the manner of correction (explicitly/ implicitly, harsh/ friendly) can reduce students' fear of committing mistakes that in turn changes the negative perception they hold concerning error correction and not to contradict with the belief that making mistakes is part of learning.

Q.18: From time to time, encouraging group work and pair work puts students at ease.

Options	Number	Percentage
a) Strongly agree	9	50,00%
b) Agree	9	50,00%
c) Disagree	0	0%
d) Strongly disagree	0	0%

Table 49: Teachers' Evaluation of Cooperative Learning as a Strategy for Reducing Anxiety



Graph 49: Teachers' Evaluation of Cooperative Learning as a Strategy for Reducing Anxiety

By including this question in the questionnaire, we were seeking to investigate how far teachers agree on Cooperative learning as a strategy to minimize students' anxiety in EFL classes. As has been anticipated, the represented data shows a total agreement by teachers on with a percentage of 100%. The responses are equally divided between teachers who strongly agree (50%) and who agree (50%) on cooperative learning as a way to overcome anxiety. we

assume that teachers do know the significance of including learners in pair or group work from time to time, such as engaging them in oral presentations or writing tasks in small groups. This would reveal to learners that anxiety is a common classroom issue which would raise their self- confidence and give them a sense of relief. Moreover, we suppose that cooperative learning would make learners more enthusiastic and push them to work on lessening their anxiety levels. Eventually, this strategy can result in positive effect on learning outcomes.

Q.19: what do you suggest as a solution to reduce EFL learner's test/exam anxiety?

In this question, we gave the informants total freedom to share their true opinions concerning test apprehension by asking them to suggest what they believe to be effective in reducing test/exam anxiety. It is worth mentioning that the informants' responses were various and interesting. Most of their suggestions fall into the following categories: good preparation, time organization and schedules, making test more reliable through applying its criteria, creating a healthy and an encouraging test environment and manner of correcting mistakes. A considerable number of teachers stated that a good preparation for exams comes before everything. More specifically, teachers believe that learners should schedule and organize their time ahead of the exams because having a schedule to follow can help students to manage stress, feel confident in their preparation efforts, and make more productive use of their study time. Other teachers stated that creating an appropriate environment is a key factor in reducing anxiety. They have suggested that encouraging students before and during exams through communication can make students feel at ease. Moreover, asking students to relax and provide them with tips for a successful performance before sitting for an exam would reduce their tension. Interestingly, some of the teachers suggested keeping exams more reliable by guaranteeing the provision of all test criteria including: making tests more comprehensible and well organized, specifying the material

on which they are going to be tested, specifying the form by which they are expected to answer, providing sufficient time that suits the length of the test, respecting the level of learners, and ensuring a suitable setting (appropriate time, place, supervisors, papers, rooms ...). Providing these aspects in an exam setting would certainly guarantee its success and learners would feel more relaxed and direct their attention to perform better. Motivating students in such situations was suggested by most of the teachers due to their awareness of its role in reducing anxiety and promoting achievement. Furthermore, the informants focused also on providing a constructive feedback as a way to reduce test anxiety, because through CF learners can benefit and look up to avoiding their previous mistakes. Last but not least, cutting off subjectivity when scoring and marking students' work was mentioned by few instructors. We believe that they are absolutely right, because grading learners fairly can increase learners' interest, motivation and positive attitudes towards exams. Consequently, their anxiety would be reduced. We believe that what has been suggested by teachers as means to reduce test anxiety seem to tackle most of the angels of the raised issue. Due to their experience in the field of foreign language teaching, their answers are certainly of great significance and are definitely suitable for lessening test anxiety.

5.3. Discussion of the Results

The findings obtained from the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire strengthen our ideas to a very large extent. By reconsidering the answers provided by the participants, the existence of a positive correlation between their responses and the stated hypothesis was found, revealing that during FL classroom the majority of the teachers attribute helpful influence of anxiety that positively impacts their attitude and boosts their language achievement. Additionally, it was proved that the role of the instructor in alleviating foreign language classroom anxiety is indispensable. Hence, the obtained results might lead to a

conclusion that the more the level of classroom anxiety is reduced, the better students' performance will be.

In the first section, which is concerned with general information, the findings demonstrate that the degrees held by the informants vary which indicate that there is a mixture in the sample between experienced teachers and novice ones. Regarding their teaching experience, the dominant percentage of the teachers questioned has been teaching English for a long period of time covering various modules. This will guarantee that their responses are very important and valid, since they have a rich background and lot of experience with their learners' emotions and feeling.

The second section entitled "Identifying Facilitative Anxiety in the Language Classroom", by definition, is concerned with identifying the existence of facilitating anxiety among learners in the language classroom. After interpreting the obtained data, we note that the majority of teachers are able to detect their students' anxiety while performing and even in the process of learning, which is either by discussing their issues with them or by carefully observing their behaviors and intelligently electing their problems. When teachers were asked whether they believe that learners experience uneven levels of anxiety, all of them confirmed the idea explaining that anxiety is not of one level but it ranges from a high level to a low one. Furthermore, from the analysis of the instructors' answers, we notice that most of them are actually aware that a level of anxiety ranging from high to low can facilitate learning and affect performance positively. According to them, anxiety can be facilitating due to the alertness and motivation it generates, which would push learners to be more attentive to the input during the learning process and more productive in the performance phase by applying all what has been actively learnt.

The last section is mainly devoted to identify the strategies teachers adopt to overcome high level of anxiety. All the teachers who participate in this questionnaire seek to create a

relaxed environment by means of various approaches, preceded by establishing a good and friendly teacher/learner relationship, because classroom is not always a pleasant setting for learning to take place and learners need to feel a sense of closeness to their teachers and not as a source of anxiety in itself. Teachers also indicate that adding a sense of humor and showing some positive attitudes inside the classroom may put harmful effects of anxiety at bay; instead, with a sense of empathy, tolerance and patience, students would feel at ease. Concerning students' fear of making mistakes, instructors believe in the power of constructive feedback in eliminating that fear. Providing students with the right choice of error correction, time of correction and manner of correction, helps with overcoming their difficulties. Moreover, we noticed that the participants are aware about the importance of cooperative learning as a technique for reducing their students' apprehension and improving their learning outcomes, because under a considerable level of pressure, students prefer to work in pairs or in groups to get rid of negative emotions. Finally, when talking about the strategies teachers suggest as the most susceptible ones to alleviate test/exam anxiety, the plurality of them selected more than one approach which confirms that educators would seek any strategy to help their student overcome their anxiety during exam moments.

In the light of the analysis of the data gathered from teachers' questionnaire, we are now able to provide a clearer image of our claims. We can, by some means, declare that the results are following the path that motivated us to go with this topic at the first place. Since we have received such great engagement from teachers through their interesting responses, we can probably say that the existence of facilitative anxiety is real and its facilitating effects on performance are valid. However, that is constrained by a moderate level of anxiety which can be reached through appropriate practices and strategies by teachers and by creating a proper environment.

Conclusion

This chapter is devoted to examine students' as well as teachers' perspective toward the existence of facilitative anxiety and its role in boosting students' achievements and how both of them contribute in alleviating the harmful effects of high anxiety level. The different analyses and interpretations of the answers obtained from the students' questionnaire, the facilitative anxiety scale and the teachers' questionnaire reveal that positive anxiety is healthy and productive and could enable students to get ready and prepare well for their studies and motivates them to make extra efforts to enhance their learning. In addition, this chapter acknowledges diversified coping strategies arise from the two questionnaires that were used for both teachers and students which are perceived to be most effective for reducing anxiety levels. Finally, it can be concluded that facilitative anxiety is that type of anxiety that serve as a motivator and a positive force that pushes students to work successively on their foreign language learning and the role of the teachers' is of great importance in lessening anxiety detrimental effects and insure students' involvement in the learning process.

6. Limitations of the Study

Some limitations are encountered during the accomplishment of this research. Firstly, in order to carefully manage the study, it was delimited only to second year students of English at Mila University. We would have added more generalized information if it had included wider samples of different study levels and universities throughout the country. Secondly, as for us to establish a clear image about anxiety in foreign language learning, the deeper we delved into this phenomenon, the more complex its identification and explanation became. Finally, the world pandemic 'Covid-19' is an unexpected infectious disease that occurred in the first two months of our work. It led to catastrophic worldwide consequences which in turn pushed our government to announce an obligatory lockdown. The exceptional

circumstances that the country went through prevented us, as a team, from meeting to discuss our work plan and progress together.

7. Future Study Recommendations

- Anxiety is being treated as the core reason for poor performance, where actually it is not the only cause of that. Further research should cover other affective factors that could have undesirable effects on learning outcomes. Motivation, self- esteem and self- efficacy are examples of that.

- Further detailed works must be conducted intensively and thoroughly to investigate the positive effects of anxiety on deeper and more specific aspects of EFL performance. In addition to that, educators should provide more evidence showing that not all anxiety is of detrimental effects on learning outcomes. This would add more clarity to this topic.

- Using a qualitative research that includes an observation for a considerable period of time in order to gain more insights about facilitative anxiety in EFL classes, would guarantee more reliable results. Despite the fact that questionnaires are regarded as practical for gathering data from a large population in a short period of time, it is not enough to announce a confirmed hypothesis. In other words, using an observation hand in hand with a questionnaire gives more strength to the obtained results.

8. Pedagogical Implementations:

- Teachers and students should collaborate to create an active environment. Teachers should encourage students continuously so as their self- confidence is increased and their anxiety is decreased. Moreover, making errors during performance should be treated as an indispensable and a normal condition by teachers. Students, on their part, should trust that

making errors is an important step in language learning. Put simply, it is through our mistakes that we learn.

- Educationist awareness about anxiety should be raised through professional training so they develop a better understanding about students' emotions and transmit their positive attitudes about anxiety to their learners. Therefore, anxiety levels will be reduced.

- Students should realize that anxiety in educational sphere is a common issue that exists in all levels. Being stressed out about one's fear all the time would lead to failure. However, students should direct their negative sentiments towards a path that raises motivation and, consequently, success.

- Teachers should be fair with their students; this includes fair scoring and marking and giving fair opportunities for classroom participations.

General Conclusion:

In the field of foreign language learning, learners' affect is of a crucial role and such affective variables as motivation, attitudes and anxiety are regarded as weighty factors in the language classroom. More specifically, anxiety, as a present factor in language learning settings, may interfere negatively in the learning process as it may bring about some positive change as well. For that, the present study tries to contribute to knowledge on the role of helpful anxiety in promoting learning outcomes.

In order to gain a holistic perspective, the above chapters provided a detailed description on the nature of this phenomenon and a practical framework to put the hypothesis into exploration. Primarily, understanding such affective variable includes making an enquiry on its major sources. Foreign language anxiety happens to stem from learners, teachers, peers, classroom setting, language practices, fear of negative evaluation and testing. Moreover, FLA seems to manifest itself in many performance areas, essentially, in the production phase while performing or communicating using FL. Furthermore, the primary objective of this work was to go profoundly into investigating one of the types of anxiety, which is facilitative anxiety.

Following the already mentioned objective, this work has detailed the account on the construct 'helpful anxiety' and how it positively affects learning outcomes. Helpful anxiety, by definition, was addressed as the kind of anxiety that increases learners' motivation and alertness during learning process and reveals its fruitfulness on the performance of certain tasks which opens the lines for better learning outcomes. Moreover, what characterizes facilitating anxiety is its appropriate level; such level does not go beyond a moderate one and is not equal to an extremely low or non-existing level. The perfect anxiety level is that one ranging between low and moderate amounts. Put simply, helpful anxiety equals moderate

levels of anxiety. emphasis has been deliberately placed on the existing relationship between anxiety and the achievement of learning outcomes. This has been supported by the valuable works of previous researchers who initiated and backed their beliefs up explaining how certain governed arousal of anxiety leads to an arousal in performance attainment. There has been an attempt along this work to defend this view that is through providing as much as possible related literature, in addition to our attempt to place attention on two levels on which helpful anxiety spreads its roots. The first level is psychological and the second one is linguistic. Thus, psychologically speaking, in foreign language classrooms and when faced to certain learning situations, the learner's appropriate levels of anxiety would function as a motivating drive which in turn will direct more attention to the input and create more interest in the material. These psychological positive drives would have certain effects on learners' language and its production. In this vein, it has been explained how moderately anxious learners produce more complex structures in their works, and tend to be more enthusiastic about oral performance.

Having discussed and emphasized the positive effects of anxiety on academic performance, does not necessarily exclude debilitating anxiety from the whole image. On the basis of this claim, teachers' role in managing such classroom issue had been addressed. We have shed light on the interesting role of teachers that go beyond being authority figures and primary information supplier. They have been addressed as facilitators, counselors and motivators which helps creating a warm and friendly teacher/learner relationship. This dissertation also covered a set of strategies that all fall in anxiety reduction pot. Strategies such as: creating a supportive environment, tolerating grammatical and spelling mistakes, encouraging interaction, cooperative learning and appropriate error correction and feedback provision were highlighted. Equally important, is the role of students in handling their emotional troubles such as anxiety through the use of a variety of tactics, namely, good

preparation, building up self- confidence, continuous relaxation, positive thinking and peer seeking. Moreover, we attempted to spot light on a variety of strategies used to alleviate test anxiety to permit better performance.

As the core of this paper was to test our hypothesis, we have administered the students' questionnaire hand in hand with the Facilitative Anxiety Scale in the Department of English at Mila University and teachers' questionnaire for the English teachers of the same department. The analysis and interpretation of these tools supported our claims to a very large extent. From both instructors' and learners' perspectives, the presence of helpful anxiety levels was confirmed, and sufficient anxiety alleviating strategies were reported.

All in all, through the analysis and interpretation of the already mentioned tools, our hypotheses have been confirmed. It can be clearly said that experiencing a moderate amount of anxiety affects performance positively and promotes learning outcomes. Furthermore, when teachers exert efforts and follow anxiety alleviating strategies in EFL classes, student anxiety will be reduced and their performance will be enhanced. Therefore, teachers should take the lead in managing their learners' problems and help them cope with their anxiety, and students should collaborate with their instructors in this process.

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Appendices

Appendix I:

Students' Questionnaire

You are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire which is a part of a research work for the Master Degree in Didactics at Mila University. Through this piece of research, entitled “investigating the role of helpful anxiety in promoting learning outcomes”, we intend to show the positive aspects of anxiety on students' performance by gathering information about your attitudes towards foreign language anxiety.

We would be very grateful if you could help us accomplishing our research because your answers will be of a great help. Please read each statement carefully and tick (✓) the appropriate answer. Your cooperation would be deeply appreciated Thank you in advance.

Section One: General Information:

1. You choose to study English because:

- a) It is your desire to study English ☐
- b) It is your parents' suggestion ☐
- c) You were obliged to study English ☐

2. How do you see your English achievement?

- a) Excellent ☐
- b) Good ☐
- c) Average ☐
- c) Unsatisfactory ☐
- e) Poor ☐

Section Two: The Existence of Classroom Anxiety:

3. Do you consider learning a foreign language as an anxiety provoking situation?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

4. How often do you experience anxiety in the classroom?

a) Rarely ☐ b) sometimes ☐ c) often ☐ d) always ☐

5. According to you, what are the major sources of anxiety?

a) Communication apprehension ☐

b) Lack of motivation ☐

c) Low self-confidence ☐

d) Fear of making mistakes ☐

e) Teacher's manner of correcting errors ☐

f) Language testing ☐

6. Do you feel anxious during speaking sessions?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

7. if yes, how do you rate your speaking anxiety level?

a) Low ☐ b) Moderate ☐ c) High ☐

8. Do you feel anxious during writing sessions?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

9. If yes, how do you rate your writing anxiety level?

a) Low ☐ b) Moderate ☐ c) High ☐

10. Do you feel anxious during exams?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

11. If yes, does it make you:

a) Do better ☐

b) Do worse ☐

12. Once experiencing anxiety, do you think that it is:

a) A great obstacle that hinders effective learning? ☐

b) A motivating factor for academic achievement? ☐

Section Three: Helpful Anxiety:

Please read the following statements carefully and say whether you: Strongly agree, agree disagree or strongly disagree

13. I am aware of my anxiety and I know how to cope with it.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

14. Working under a certain level of anxiety makes me do better.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

15. When I worry, I turn my anxiety into motivation for further work/study/practice.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

16. When I worry in language classes, I maintain self-confidence.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

17. I welcome competitions although they make me anxious or nervous.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

18. If I am planning to do something difficult or worrying, I exert efforts and I practice a lot doing it.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

19. I feel anxious before taking tests and exams, but that pushes me to prepare well in order to succeed.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

20. When I am anxious, I relax and I think that everything is going to be fine.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

21. Working with peers reduces my anxiety and helps me perform better.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

22. If I am planning to do something difficult, I visualize myself as successfully doing it.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

23. The teacher's friendly style makes me feel at ease and encourages me to take part in the lesson.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

24. It does not frighten me when I participate, because of the teacher's appropriate manner in providing constructive feedback.

a) Strongly agree ☐ b) Agree ☐ c) Disagree ☐ d) Strongly disagree ☐

Appendix II:

Facilitating Anxiety Scale:

We really appreciate your cooperation in this research. We seek to know your attitudes and feelings about foreign language anxiety while performing an exam. Please tick (✓) what seems appropriate for you. Thank you very much in advance.

1.I work most effectively under pressure, as when the task is very important.

a) Always ☐

b) Never ☐

2. While I may (or may not) be nervous before taking an exam, once I start, I seem to forget to be nervous.

a) I always forget ☐

b) I am always nervous during an exam ☐

3. Nervousness while taking a test helps me do better.

a) It never helps ☐

b) It often helps ☐

4. When I start a test, nothing is able to distract me.

a) This is always true of me ☐

b) This is not true of me ☐

5. In courses in which the total grade is based mainly on one exam, I seem to do better than other people.

a) Never ☐

b) Almost always ☐

6. I look forward to exams.

a) Never ☐

b) Always ☐

7. Although "cramming" under pre-examination tension is not effective for most people, I find that if the need arises, I can learn material immediately before an exam, even under considerable pressure, and successfully retain it to use on the exam.

a) I am always able to use the "crammed" material successfully ☐

b) I am never able to use the "crammed" material successfully ☐

8. I enjoy taking a difficult exam more than an easy one.

a) Never ☐

b) Always ☐

9. The more important the exam or test, the better I seem to do.

a) This is true of me ☐

b) This is not true of me ☐

Appendix III:

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

This questionnaire is an essential part for the accomplishment of our Master Degree dissertation in Didactics at Mila University under the title: “The Role of Helpful Anxiety in Promoting Learning Outcomes”. Through this questionnaire, we aim at gathering information about your attitudes towards foreign language anxiety, your perceptions about helpful anxiety, and your significant role in alleviating classroom anxiety level.

We would be very grateful if you could help us completing our research because your answers will be of a great value. Please read each statement carefully and tick (✓) the appropriate answer or indicate your true opinion where necessary. Your cooperation would be sincerely appreciated. Thank you in advance.

Section one: General Information

Q1: Degree (s) Held:

a) Doctorate ☐

b) Magister ☐

c) Master ☐

Q2: How long have you been teaching English?

a) 1 - 4 Years ☐

b) 5 - 9 Years ☐

c) 10 - 15 Years ☐

d) More than 15 years ☐

Q3: During your teaching experience at university, what are the modules you have been teaching?

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Section Two: Identifying Facilitative Anxiety in the Language Classroom

Q4: Are you able to detect your learners' problems in the classroom?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Q5: If yes, how do you detect those problems?

a) I talk to my students about their problems. ☐

b) I carefully observe my students and elicit their problems without having to discuss that with them. ☐

Q6: As teachers of English language, do you think that foreign language learners experience uneven levels of anxiety in their language performance?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Q7: If yes, how do you rate the amount of anxiety experienced by them?

a) Low to moderate ☐

b) Moderate to high ☐

Q8: Do you think that a level of anxiety, ranging from low to moderate, facilitates learning?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Q9: Do you attribute any positive feature to anxiety?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Q10: Whatever your answer, please explain.

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Q11: Does a moderate level of anxiety raise student's alertness?

a) Rarely ☐

b) Sometimes ☐

c) Often ☐

d) Always ☐

Q12: Does a moderate level of anxiety serve as a motivator in enhancing students' performance?

a) Rarely ☐

b) Sometimes ☐

c) Often ☐

d) Always ☐

Section Three: Alleviating Students Anxiety:

Q13: What type of relationship exists between you and your students?

a) Good ☐

b) Neutral ☐

c) bad ☐

Q14: Have you ever tried to help your learners in resolving their anxiety problems?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Q15: Creating a supportive/ friendly atmosphere enables students to reduce their anxiety.

a) Strongly agree ☐

b) Agree ☐

c) Disagree ☐

d) Strongly disagree ☐

Q16: Good sense of humor, calling students by their first names and positive gestures can reduce student's anxiety.

a) Strongly agree ☐

b) Agree ☐

c) Disagree ☐

d) Strongly disagree ☐

Q17: knowing what, when and how students' errors should be corrected can reduce students' fear of making mistakes.

a) Strongly agree ☐

b) Agree ☐

c) Disagree ☐

d) Strongly disagree ☐

Q18: From time to time, encouraging group work and pair work puts students at ease.

a) Strongly agree ☐

b) Agree ☐

c) Disagree ☐

d) Strongly disagree ☐

Q19: What do you suggest as a solution to reduce EFL learner's test/exam anxiety?

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ملخص

تم التأكيد على دور العاطفة عموماً والقلق خصوصاً في مجال تعلم اللغة الثانية أو الأجنبية لفترة طويلة. تعتبر هذه الدراسة استجابة للداء حول توضيح الدور الميسر الذي يلعبه القلق والذي لم تبرز أهميته سابقاً. تسعى الرسالة الحالية إلى الكشف عن دور القلق الإيجابي في تعزيز نتائج متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة ميلة. في البداية، تم التدبير لإعادة النظر في الخلفية الأولية التي مهدت الطريق لتصوير جلي لظاهرة القلق وتحديد طبيعتها ونظرياتها وأنواعها وأعراضها ومصادرها. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم إبراز كيف للقلق تجاه تعلم اللغة الأجنبية أن يظهر في أداء الطلاب والدور النسبي لمستوى القلق المعتدل وإيجابياته المحتملة فيما يخص تحسين انجازات الطلبة. بما أن التأثير المعيق للقلق اللغوي أمر متفق على حتميته، فإن هذا البحث مكرس لتخفيف آثاره من خلال مجموعة وافرة من استراتيجيات التأقلم سواء من طرف الأستاذ أو الطالب. للتحقق من صحة فرضياتنا وإضفاء تناسق على البحث تم توزيع استبيان للطلبة مرافقاً بمقياس القلق الميسر على عينة تتكون من 70 طالب في السنة الثانية، بالإضافة إلى استبيان آخر على 18 مدرسا من قسم اللغة الأجنبية في جامعة ميلة. تؤكد النتائج وجود القلق المسهل في أقسام اللغة الأجنبية وأنه يمكن أن يكون بمثابة منبه أو محفز لتعلمهم. إلى جانب ذلك، تؤكد نتائج التحليل وتوصي بأهمية دور المعلمين في التخفيف من قلق الطلاب إلى مقدار مناسب قد يمكنهم من الأداء بشكل أفضل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القلق، القلق المسهل، نتائج التعلم، القلق المتعلق باللغة الأجنبية، مستوى القلق المعتدل، محفز، تخفيف

Résumé :

Le rôle des émotions en général et de l'anxiété en particulier dans le domaine de l'apprentissage des langues étrangères a été trop longtemps un objet de recherche. Notre étude est une réponse à l'appel lancé pour reconnaître le rôle facilitateur de l'anxiété qui n'avait jamais été pris en considération auparavant. A travers cette présente thèse on va tenter de s'approfondir dans le rôle de l'anxiété positive dans l'amélioration des résultats des apprenants de langues étrangères L.L.E à l'université de Mila. D'abord, le but est de reconsidérer le contexte préliminaire qui ouvre la voie à une conceptualisation claire du phénomène de l'anxiété, en précisant sa nature, ses théories, ses types et ses sources. De plus, on va montrer comment l'anxiété liée aux langues étrangères se manifeste dans les performances des étudiants, ainsi on va essayer de prouver la relation entre le rôle d'un niveau d'anxiété modéré et ses avantages potentiels dans l'amélioration des résultats des étudiants. Étant donné qu'il était largement reconnu que l'anxiété linguistique présumée est inévitable, cette recherche est également consacrée à trouver la façon d'atténuer ce comportement psychique avec des moyens et des stratégies d'adaptation, soit de la part de l'enseignant, ou de la part de l'apprenant. Et afin de vérifier la validité de notre hypothèse et donner de la cohérence à la présente étude, un questionnaire avec une échelle d'anxiété facilitante ont été soumis à un groupe composé de 70 étudiants, et un autre questionnaire fourni à 18 enseignants du département d'anglais de l'université de Mila. Les résultats indiquent que l'anxiété facilitante existe dans les classes de langue étrangère et qu'elle peut vraiment servir comme un encouragement ou une motivation pour leur apprentissage. En outre, les résultats de cette analyse confirment et recommandent que le rôle des enseignants est important pour atténuer l'anxiété des étudiants à un niveau approprié qui peut les pousser à mieux performer.

Mots clés : Anxiété, Anxiété Facilitante, Résultats d'Apprentissage, Une Langue Étrangère-Anxiété, Modérée-Niveau d'Anxiété, Motivateur, Allègement.