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Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of Foreign Languages  
Division of English

## **MASTER THESIS**

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages  
Branch of English Languages  
Applied Linguistics

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### **The Impact of Anxiety on EFL Learners' Essay Writing**

### **The Case of Third Year EFL LMD Students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra**

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**Dissertation Submitted as Partial Fulfilment for the Requirement of the Degree of Master.**

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***Dedication***

*Every challenging work needs self-efforts as well as guidance of elders especially those who were very close to our heart. My humblest effort dedicates to my sweet and loving*

*My Mother Atika*

*A strong and gentle soul who taught me to trust in Allah, believe in myself, and learn me that hard work make human stronger*

*My Father Smain*

*For earning an honest living for us and for supporting and encouraging me to believe in myself*

*To my Lovely Sisters*

*for their incomparable supports, deepest love, boundless patience, and for their greatest encouragement .*

*To my Precious Brothers*

*for their outstanding support and encouragement to go further and for being my guardians during my career.*

*I also dedicate this work to the souls of my grandparents.*

*To my loyal, truthful, caring and loving friends and classmates of second year master 2019, with whom I shared the best memories.*

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### **Abstract**

Writing in a foreign language is one of the most challenging and complex tasks for language learners. It is a difficult skill that requires considerable efforts, and practice on the learners' part to reach an acceptable level of writing. Due to the complexity of this skill, many students face anxiety while writing essays. Accordingly, the present research aims at investigating the impact of language anxiety and examining the effects of anxiety on EFL writing essays. In addition, it seeks to determine the strategies used by teachers to lower students' anxiety. In order to check the validity of the hypothesis that stipulate if third year students of English read books, novels, articles, and practice the writing skill, their written production will improve, and their anxiety will decrease. Furthermore, the students' deficiency while using the writing stages will decrease. To confirm this hypothesis, a descriptive study has been conducted and questionnaires were used as data gathering instruments. The questionnaires were administered to both teachers and students at the division of English at Mohamed Kheider University – Biskra. Also, the results of this investigation have confirmed that students are in need to deal more with the English language, and thus through the reading and writing skills. Moreover, making third year students aware of the different processes of writing will help them to overcome, the difficulties they face when they write, and will be able to produce well written compositions, and lower their anxiety consequently.

**Key Terms:** Anxiety, writing, essays, written production, EFL, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Biskra University.

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### List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

**AMTB:** Attitude Motivation Test Battery.

**Dr.:** Doctor

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**ESL:** English as a Second Language

**et al.:** et alia - and others

**FL:** Foreign Language

**FLA:** Foreign Language Anxiety

**FLL:** Foreign Language Learner

**FLLs:** Foreign Language Learners

**Ibid:** Ibidem (Latin) - the same previous source

**L2** Second Language

**LMD** License, Master and Doctorate

**p.:** Page

**pp.:** Pages

**%:** Percent

**TL:** target language

**Vs:** versus



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## **General Introduction**

Though students at university had spent many years learning a second or a foreign language, it is still considered as a frightful experience for them. The pressure on students to perform well in the EFL causes them anxiety that is specific to the foreign language. Through the review of literature, this subject will be looked at in greater details by investigating the causes of anxiety and solutions about reducing anxiety in foreign language learning, especially in its impact on students' essay writing. Further, due the importance of understanding this issue we will inquire into some writing anxiety insights, in order to help EFL students enhance their writing essays, and reduce their anxiety since they are using English for writing essays. Finally, the present work will focus on how the collaboration of both teachers and students conduce to lower anxiety at Mohamed Kheider university written expression sessions.

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

In this research, we will shed light on one of the main problems that face the students while writing essays or during exams, which is anxiety. The problem occurs because most students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra do not read or even try to write without being tested or claimed. Moreover, the majority of the students ignore the importance of writing skill in the next years of master's degree or in Doctorate competition.

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

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of language anxiety, and explore the effects of it on writing skill. Also, in this research we will centre our work to find out how foreign language students perceive and live anxiety in written sessions and during

assessments, and determine the strategies used by teachers to lower anxiety among students. Consequently, we will suggest some teaching recommendations that will be of great help for both teachers and learners to overcome the issue of writing essays' anxiety.

### **3. Research Hypothesis**

Throughout this research work we hypothesize that if EFL learners read English books and articles frequently, and if they write essays more than their usual, students' anxiety will decrease, then they will improve their writing. Besides, the students lack of awareness, during the use of the writing stages and techniques. In addition, most teachers and learners are conscious of the impact of language anxiety on students writing. Hence, we will try to establish a link between anxiety and the students' knowledge, personality, attitudes and feelings on one hand, and another for EFL teaching learning strategies on the other hand.

### **4. Research Questions**

The present research attempts to provide answers to the following questions, which investigate the impact of anxiety on EFL learners' essays writing:

- 1) What are the main effects of anxiety in writing skill?
- 2) What are the effective strategies of reducing anxiety among students?
- 3) Why EFL learners feel anxious in written expression tests and exams?

### **5. Significance of the Study**

In fact, anxiety is a major factor that affects foreign language learning. It is primordial to figure out its causes and sources, and to investigate into how to lower language anxiety in order to improve students' essays writing. Studies that examined anxiety and language



learning may serve as a guide for language for foreign language teachers, in terms of helping them to ameliorate learners' writing. Therefore, the present study may add a valuable stone to the field of education in general since it will offer certain suggestions to cope with the issue of anxiety.

## **6. Research Methodology**

In this research we are going to observe a phenomenon and describe it. Thus, we intend to use descriptive method as an approach to acquire and gather data for this thesis.

### **6.1 The Population of the study**

The total population of the third year LMD students of English Division is 314. We will choose randomly to represent our sample 30 students, in sequence to investigate and observe their reactions towards the impact of anxiety on their writing essays proficiency. Further, we will submit questionnaires to four (04) teachers of written expression of English language .

### **6.2 Research tools**

In this research, we used a questionnaire, as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire will be addressed to a sample of students of third year LMD. We used also a questionnaire to teachers of written expression of the division of English at Biskra University. Both tools aim at investigating the causes, effects, and suggest solutions that help students to overcome anxiety and enhance their essay writing.

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## Introduction

Anxiety and language anxiety has become a great concern in foreign language learning research, over the last three decades. In particular, the manner in which individuals both experience, and respond to anxiety has received a remarkable focus. Ground-breaking studies include reports of types of anxiety (Spielberger. 1966), the health impact of anxiety (Kobasa. 1979), and communication anxiety (McCroskey. 1977). The case is entirely related to the psychology of the learner. Thus, it involves a pattern of physiological and psychological reactions like feeling of stress and emotions. Students in many situations during a written expression specifically may experience anxiety in one form or another, and in varying degrees. As such, anxiety can seriously inhibit the ability of concentration and dealing with things. It is considered as an unpleasant state evoking avoided behaviors and defenses.

In addition, it plays an important role in the writing ability of EFL learners, and too much of it has been one of the main problems in language teaching, but sometimes a little anxiety is needed for more concentration and accuracy of the students on their writing performance. According to different studies such as Brown (2007), a little stress about a matter or task at hand is going to be facilitative.

This chapter is devoted to foreign language anxiety in FL writing. First, it reviews the different definitions of anxiety and language anxiety. Then, it identifies the sources and types of anxiety that learners can face. It also provides the factors that contribute in increasing language anxiety during the writing process. In addition, it establishes the conceptual foundations of the construct of FL anxiety in terms of its three components: communication

apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. At the end, the chapter tackles the effects of FL learning anxiety.

### **1.1. Definition of Anxiety**

In *Advanced American English* Longman (2005) anxiety is defined as a feeling of being very worried about something that may happen or may have happened, so that you think about it all the time or is a feeling of wanting to do something very much, but being very worried that you will not succeed. Also, Scovel said that “it is measured by physiological tests, self-reports of internal feelings or reactions, or behavioral tests” (Scovel .1978.p 28).

As cited in Glas anxiety is unlike the term phobia (Greek: phobos, fear), the term anxiety has neither Greek nor Latin origins. The word anxiety (German: angst, meaning worry) probably derives from the Indo-Germanic root ‘angh’, which means to narrow, to constrict, or to strangulate (Glas. 2003). Every one sometimes experiences anxiety in one form or another and in varying degrees. It involves a pattern of physiological and psychological reactions like feeling of stress and emotions. As such, anxiety can seriously inhibit the ability of concentration and dealing with things in a more positive way. It is also considered as an unpleasant state evoking avoided behaviors and defenses.

Furthermore, Scovel points out, “[...] anxiety can be viewed, not as a simple unitary construct, but as a cluster of affective states, influenced by factors which are intrinsic and extrinsic to the foreign language learner...”. External factors may be of different character: they could be, for instance, the relationship of the learner with his interlocutor (e.g. formal, informal) or the environment in which communication is taking place (e.g. a classroom, a

public conference, a job interview). On the other hand, internal components may be psychological or emotional. They may be the shyness people experience in talking with others, or the embarrassment one has in interacting in public, for instance (Scovel, 1978, p.134).

It can also be defined as a specific emotion necessary for an individual to prepare himself for potential danger and threatening situations. Many researchers found that anxiety is still unclear and not easy to define in simple sentences (Brown, 2007). Spielberger also defined anxiety as: “The subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system” (Spielberger, 1983,p.1, cited in Brown, 2007). In addition, Mussen et al concluded that:

Anxiety is not 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. Failure to apprehend danger and to prepare for it may have disastrous results.

(Mussen et al, 1956, p.387)

As cited in Kendall, Chansky, Kane, Kim, Kortlander, Ronan, Sessa and Siqueland (1992), Morris and Kratochwill (1985) define anxiety as “apprehension, tension, or uneasiness related to the expectation of danger, whether internal or external. Anxiety may be focused on an object, situation or activity that is avoided, as in a phobia, or it may be unfocused” (p. 1). Spielberger (1983, as cited in Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986, p.125) has supported that it is a kind of troubled subjective feeling in the mind of tension,

apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.

### **1.2. Foreign Language Anxiety**

Anxiety is one of the most negative psychological factor that hinders many EFL learners. FL anxiety is an emotional response for “a threat to some value that the individual holds essential to his existence as a personality” (Bekleyen. p.50). While learning a second or FL, students may feel “tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system” (Spielberger, 1983, p.1).

In addition, second language (L2) anxiety has been identified as an anxiety specific to learning a second or foreign language (FL) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986), and other researchers in the field have supported this view (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a). Also, according to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope FL anxiety is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feeling, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986). This means that anxiety is related to self-focused, negative and anxious cognition during the learning process.

Further, a number of studies indicate that FL anxiety is unique to language learning and that it influences the ability to process information in classroom settings (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). FLA is also associated with negative beliefs about learning English as a foreign language (Goshi, 2005). Some researchers believe that programs that do not have “a well-articulated framework”, or curricula that does not overly “repeat information and skill development”, may increase FLA. Furthermore, educational

systems that do not require students to begin learning an FL at an early age may also be responsible for creating higher levels of FLA at a later age (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2004,p.24).

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope defined foreign language anxiety as “a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process”. During this period of anxiety students go through feelings of worry and dread, have trouble concentrating, sweat, experience heart palpitations, and become forgetful. These psycho-physiological symptoms hinder the language learning experience (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope .1986, p.128). Horwitz et al claimed that Kleinmann’s findings in 1977 show that students with high levels of anxiety perused less difficult grammatical constructions than the less anxious students did (Horwitz et al,1991, p. 192).

According to Spielberger et al language anxiety is the fear that an individual feels when he has to use a second or a foreign language in which he is not fully proficient. Spielberger et al (2004, p.423). Spielberger considers language anxiety as a stable personality trait related to the individual’s tendency to react nervously when speaking, listening, reading or writing in the second or foreign language. Anxious students have been shown to be less likely to volunteer answers in class and to be hesitant in expressing personally relevant information in the TL.

### **1.3. Different Perspectives: Trait, State and Situation Specific Anxiety**

MacIntyre and Gardner delineate three perspectives from which anxiety has been investigated. Thus, Anxiety is classified into three types: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and

situation specific anxiety. The first one according to MacIntyre and Gardner is a “general personality trait relevant across several situations”. Trait anxiety, as MacIntyre and Gardner describe, refers to a more permanent feeling of anxiety, i.e. a learner suffering from this type is likely to be highly apprehensive in a number of objectively non threatening situations (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991, p.87). It is provoked by the confrontation with threat. And, according to Spielberger et al trait anxiety is a general characteristic of an individual's personality (Spielberger et al, 2004). Individuals, who experience an anxiety trait, will tend to have an attitude and reaction which reflects their ability to understand the nature of certain environmental stimuli and stressful situations as more or less difficult or threatening. Its negative effects are thought to “impair cognitive functioning, to disrupt memory, to lead to avoidance behaviours, and to have several other effects” (Eysenck, 1979, in MacIntyre et al.1991).

The second is “interested in the here and now experience of anxiety as an emotional state” (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991). State anxiety is a unique emotional case characterized by feelings of distress and tension about real or future anticipated threats that may have cognitive, behavioural, or physiological manifestations. It may negatively influence FL learning and learners' performance, as it can interfere with their learning, social, and emotional development (Salkind, 2008, p.38). In addition, it is considered as an obstacle and an interruption of individual's emotional equilibrium. For example, when the person hears bad news about a very close friend, he becomes so anxious, so that emotional equilibrium will be put into question (Spielberger et al, 2004). A person who experienced a state anxiety is more likely to feel stress and nervousness or unable to confront any event. In such moments, the person may feel nervous and can easily react to external stimuli. State anxiety



is an unpleasant feeling which can seriously disturb the individual's ability to react positively to any situation and in a certain environment. Moreover, state anxiety can even disable the person's tendency to engage in adaptive behavior aimed to end and overcome this feeling, for example encountering lot of difficulties. In the question of the exam makes the learner bored and very disturbed emotionally and hence very much anxious about his future.

Third is "the specific forms of anxiety that occur consistently over time within the given situation" (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). The last one seems likely to be more closely related to attempts to learn a FL and communicate in it, for instance the event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation. So, this type is related to the general orientation of anxiety and certain situations, or on a learning context in which the learner does not find himself capable to be proficient in a second language in speaking or reading passages.

According to Horwitz and Young (1991) there are primarily two types of anxiety facilitative and debilitating. Whereby stress can be a good motivator, for example may keep a person alert and provide him with motivation. But some stress can have devastating effects and can lead him to forget several issues at one go during an exam. This positive anxiety is called a facilitating anxiety, and this negative anxiety is called debilitating one. Wilson claimed that:

Anxiety is usually a warning that alerts a person to the fact that something is wrong prepares him or her to face the anxiety-producing situation. A lack of anxiety may result in an "I don't care" attitude that, in fact, may increase the potential for failure. Moderate increase the however, are

beneficial, they supply motivation and added energy and increases one's ability to focus on the task at hand.

(Wilson,2006,p. 40)

Facilitative anxiety helps a learner to be more attentive to a task and this is considered as positive factor in order to accomplish a task, it's a motivation factor make the student to attempt understanding the new learning task and prepares the student emotionally to approach the learning task as a challenge. Thus, it helps him to improve the progress of learning and performance.

However, the second type; debilitating anxiety, urges the student to avoid the new learning task and stimulates the student to adopt avoidance behavior. It has a negative impact on student's motivation and his preparation before and during exams, like waiting until the last minute to revise and prepare for a big test or exam, feeling more anxious and unprepared or arriving at a test late and having to answer all of the questions in time.

MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997) found that learners with high anxiety seemed to be in a viciously debilitating cycle, where high anxiety led to lower participation, which led to even greater anxiety, and hence even lower participation. (Alpert and Haber,1960).

According to Scovel facilitating-anxiety keeps the learner motivated and "**fight**" the new information and pushing them to do more efforts to reduce the negative impact of anxiety. (Ellis, 1994, p. 482). In the work of Bailey, facilitating and debilitating anxiety are closely related with the self-image of language learners and the learners to compare themselves continually with others and react emotively to such comparison, wish to perform better results and evaluation (Bailey, 1983,p. 96, Cited in Graham 1997). They may experience anxiety, with in regard to language lessons if their

competitiveness is found or an unsuccessful self-image. Such anxiety may be facilitating if it prompts the learner to devote more effort to language learning; in turn the self image will be enhanced as learning outcomes are enhanced. (Hedge and Tricia, 2000). Dörnyei (2005) concluded that anxiety does not only hinder achievement but in some cases improves and develops it.

#### **1.4. Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety**

##### **1.4.2. The classification of Horwitz and Cope (1986)**

According to Horwitz et al, foreign language anxiety consists of: “Self perception, beliefs, feelings and behavior related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Dörnyei 2001,p.364). Also, language anxiety is attributable to different causes. The primary sources of language anxiety, explicated by Horwitz et al (1986) are communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety.

##### **1.4.1. The classification of Young (1991)**

According to Young there are six potential sources of foreign language anxiety classified under three aspects:

- the learner
- the teacher
- the instructional practice.

He claimed that language anxiety is caused by (a) personal and interpersonal anxiety, (b) learner beliefs about language learning, (c) instructor beliefs about language teaching, (d) instructor-learner interactions, (e) classroom procedures, and (f) language testing. And he claimed that all these sources of language anxiety are interrelated (MacIntyre, 1991).

Investigations have been quantitative studies (Chastain, 1975; Gardner et al., 1976), focusing on the correlation between anxiety and language proficiency (Young, 1986, MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) in written and oral tests and production. In MacIntyre and Gardner's study (1989) one hundred and four subjects were tested in two different groups. Employing nine scales, measuring various forms of anxiety, they conclude that production would suffer in those students with a high level of anxiety.

Other approaches to analyzing these relationships have been offered by qualitative researches, which allow the investigator to observe the phenomena from the point of view of the learner. Founded on personal diaries or comments from students, it has been possible to gather important information, otherwise difficult to obtain through empirical studies.

#### **1.4.2.1. Communication apprehension**

Generally communication apprehension is the fear of communicating with other people, According to Horwitz the construct of communication apprehension plays an important role in language learning. Difficulty in speaking in groups (oral communication anxiety) or in front of the class ("stage fright"), or in listening to or learning a spoken message (receiver anxiety) are suggested to be all manifestations of communication apprehension (Horwitz, 1986, p. 127).

In other words communication apprehension is quite relevant to the conceptualization of FLA. Learners who exhibit communication apprehension do not feel comfortable communicating in the target language (TL) in front of others, due to their limited knowledge of the language, especially in relation to speaking and listening skills.

#### **1.4.2.2. Fear of negative evaluation**

The second main component of foreign language anxiety identified by Horwitz et al. (1986) as relating to foreign language anxiety is the fear of negative evaluation. Watson & Friend defines this factor as the “apprehension of other’s evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectations that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Watson & Friend, 1969, p.448). Fear of negative evaluation differs from test anxiety in that it is a tension which is not limited to testing situations; rather, it may occur in any social, evaluative context, like a job interview or speaking in public (Horwitz et al., 1986). It is the fear of exams, quizzes, and other assignments used to evaluate the students’ performance.

Also, fear of negative evaluation, is the learners feeling about how other teachers or classmates may negatively evaluate their language ability. Learners who experience fear of negative evaluation do not consider their language mistakes as a natural thing or as an attempt to learn a new language, but as a danger for them especially in front of their teachers or their peers.

When performing in the foreign language, the learner enters into a completely different dimension, encountering difficulties, especially if the target language is not yet well mastered. In this case, the learner is in fact more exposed to criticism and humiliation than in other courses like mathematics or history, since the probability of making mistakes is much higher. Even if the learner provides the right answer in terms of the content, he may get the pronunciation or the grammar wrong (Tsui, 1996, pp.145-167). MacIntyre & Gardner (1991a,p.296) find that “For many students, language class can be more anxiety-provoking than any other course that they take”. Follow-up studies support similar findings (Price,

1991; Phillips, 1992; Aida, 1994; Bailey, 1996). As a consequence, many nervous students prefer quitting the language programme as soon as their requirement is met (Young, 1999). Otherwise, they continue attending the course, even if frustrated by negative thoughts which affect their performance in the language.

This fear is defined by Leary (1982, cited in MacIntyre, 1995, p.93) as a fear which arises from "the prospect or presence of interpersonal evaluation in real or imagined social settings". Students may experience fear from being negatively evaluated by their classmates or the teacher, fear from having other students laugh or even being aware of their mistakes. Fear of negative evaluation is explained as the learners' expectation to be evaluated negatively by others in any kind of situation (Wörde, 2003). Fear of negative evaluation is an extension of test anxiety component of FL anxiety because it is not only restricted to test situations. It can rather occur in any evaluative situation such as attending an oral expression classroom (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986, p.27).

#### **1.4.2.3. Testing anxiety**

According to Horwitz et al (1986), test anxiety is a form of performance anxiety, in which the learner feel the fear of failure and doing badly in a text. It is also the worry about how others view the speaker or the teacher's view of what is written.

Test anxiety, arises out of the fear of failing to perform. It can be explained through the high demands that learners put on themselves to be perfect masters of the foreign language. However, Aida (1994) in his factor analytic study argues that number of scholars misinterprets the communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation as the underlying subcomponents of FLA while Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) suggested them as analogies to FLA.

### 1.4.3. Sources of writing anxiety

As the fact that foreign language anxiety is the feeling of worry and nervousness experienced by non-native writers, when learning or using a second or a foreign language. These feeling may interrupt the desire to develop any second language context whether associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing, or the receptive skill, of reading and listening. For example, you might feel perfectly fine writing a biology lab report but apprehensive about writing a paper on a novel. You may confidently tackle a paper about the sociology of gender but delete and start over ten times when composing an email to apologize from a friend. Therefore, People aren't born anxious writers; rather, they become anxious or blocked through negative or difficult experiences with writing.

Hence, writing anxiety can result from a variety of social and academic factors. A learner may worry about their grade in a class, nervous about the deadline for a paper, be pressured by their parents to excel, fear failure, be competitive by nature, be preoccupied with other issues and classes, or the professor may seem intimidating and relentless (Ryan,pp.51-2, Sherwood,p.6). Such circumstances are typical and understandable. They do, however, increase stress levels and turn paper writing into a fraught ordeal. The good news is that they do not have to dictate either a writer's state of mind or the paper they produce. Once a writer has identified if any of the factors above resemble their anxiety, they can then try to locate and evaluate these triggers. Recognition begins the process of reevaluation and relief.

The appropriate answers to the following questions can guide the writers to define, and limit the sources of writing anxiety.

- Being reasonable and fair: Ask: What are my expectations for myself? What are other's expectations of me? Are these appropriate? Intimidating? Motivating?
- Using realistic language: Would a less-than-perfect grade on one assignment literally ruin my academic record?
- Living with balance and contentment: Is my anxiety a one-time occurrence or a common situation for me? Does the pursuit of doing something perfectly keep me from participating in things I enjoy? How do my lifestyle choices affect my academics and vice versa?

#### **1.4.3.1. Lack of motivation**

First, motivation can be defined as the desire to achieve a goal or to do something; it energizes students and provides direction. It is one of the most important keys to success. When there is a motivation students attain greater and better results, development and achievement.

Since 1980s when Krashen (1981) hypothesized that the affective factors (anxiety, motivation and self confidence) correlate with the success in foreign language learning, one of the most examined affective variables in the field of foreign language learning was foreign language anxiety.

Moreover, English plays an important role in the global market as it is a communication language of business, education, science and technology and an effective oral communication is seen as a socially valued skill. This fact may, on the one hand, serve as a



motivator for learners, but on the other hand, it may be perceived by learners as pressure and consequently negatively contribute to FLA (Tran, Moni, & Baldauf, 2012).

The pioneer in studying affective variables in foreign language learning R. C. Gardner (1985) hypothesized that anxiety specific to foreign language learning is related to foreign language achievement. He introduced the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) to measure affective factors significant in foreign language learning such as motivation, attitude and anxiety.

However, the absence or the lack of motivation whether intrinsic or extrinsic might make the student frustrated, depressed and anxious to speak or to learn a foreign language. The lack of extrinsic motivation may appear in the case of severe error correction and no rewards on the part of the teacher as well as laughing at his mistakes on the part of his classmates might make the student anxious to speak the target language. On the other hand the lack of intrinsic motivation may manifest when the student has no desire to study the target language because the bad perspective he/she has on that language.

#### **1.4.3.2. Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is considered an important affective element in the process of scholastic and educational achievement. Henceforth, its absence results the mistrusting of learners own abilities which lead them to perform low as an outcome of this lack of confidence. In this context Brown (2007, p.154) posits that

Self-esteem is probably the most pervasive aspect of human behavior. It could easily be claimed that no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried

out without some degree of self esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself and self-efficacy belief in your own capacities to successfully perform that activity. (Brown ,p.154)

What makes language learning a distinct and unique process is its interaction with the concept of one's self-esteem. Brown (2007, p.155) identified three levels of self-esteem:

- **General or global self-esteem**

It is said to be fairly constant in a mature adult, and is disobedient to change. It is the general evaluation that one makes of oneself over time and across a number of situations

- **Situational or specific self-esteem**

It refers to self-evaluation in particular life situations, such as social interaction, work, school, or on certain relatively distinct characteristics such as intelligence, communicative ability, or personality traits such as empathy, and flexibility.

- **Task self-esteem**

Task self-esteem in second language acquisition has to do with one's assessment in a particular facet of language, speaking or writing, for example. Heyde (1979) studied the effects of the three levels of self-esteem of an oral production task by American college students learning French as a foreign language. She uncovered the positive correlation between task self-esteem and performance on oral production (Brown, 2007). Teachers so in their role they have to boost their learner's self-esteem and convincing them to trust themselves.

#### 1.4.3.3. Severe error correction

Teachers that are curt, insensitive and brazenly correct ELL errors in front of the class “may lead students to associate anxiety with language learning itself” (Arnold, 2000, p. 778). Teachers that have not established a non-threatening environment may thus find it is difficult to elicit participation from ELLs and improve academic performance in the classroom (Folse, 2006).

Discussing these and other assessment measures in detail with ESL students may lower overall anxiety levels and produce more accurate results. In addition, “Allowing students to experience success with a particular method may also help lower anxiety” (Oh, 1992, p. 176). Therefore, error correction strategies should be chosen carefully, rather than put students in an embarrassing or singled out position, teachers should go a long way in making students feel comfortable and confident enough, such as asking clarifying questions, rephrasing the statement in a correct manner.

For example : “Yesterday I go to the Zoo with my friends” the teacher would respond. “You went to the Zoo with your friends yesterday?” The teacher provides effectively the corrected feedback while also continuing the conversation. Finally, teachers' expectations of the students have to be realistic, that is to encourage students to do as language researchers expect, while taking into consideration of students beliefs and attitudes to language teaching and learning.

#### **1.4.3.4. Lack of linguistic competency**

Every human being naturally experiences a certain anxiety when dealing with something unfamiliar, especially when it's a foreign language that operates with different grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and so on. Some psychologists believe that some amount of anxiety is healthy because it elevates adrenaline and improves performance. It's just that the level of anxiety in FLA is so extreme that it hampers performance and productive learning.

FLA is debilitating, often leaving students trying to camouflage themselves against the walls during classes. Because of their anxiety, students suddenly become painfully shy and find every excuse to keep them or even miss the class. They don't remember the lessons, much less focus on what the teacher's doing.

In addition to the above-mentioned influences, many other factors have received research attention: age; length of foreign language study, self-perceived foreign language proficiency; academic achievement, perfectionism, competitiveness among learners and evaluation coming from the classmates, societal interference and lack of preparation, error correction techniques and self-presentation concerns.

Though the correlation studies of FLA and proficiency at different language levels have been by far outnumbered by skill-specific studies, there was also found the negative relationship between FLA and foreign language vocabulary and grammar across studies (Van Patten, & Glass, 1999; Sheen, 2007). For instance, learners were concerned about their lack of vocabulary and less concerned about grammar and not concerned about the limited knowledge of foreign language culture (Kim, & Kim, 2004).

#### **1.5. Effects of Foreign Language Learning Anxiety**

MacIntyre (1998) shows the effects of foreign language learning anxiety on the learner from

five perspectives; academically, socially, cognitively, communicatively and personally:

- a. First, academically, language anxiety is one of the best predictors of language proficiency (see Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000). It seems clear that high levels of language anxiety are associated with low levels of academic achievement in second/foreign language learning
- b. Second, socially, learners with higher language anxiety have the tendency to avoid interpersonal communication more often than less anxious learners. This issue becomes even more prominent when the authentic communicative competence is emphasized in current language education
- c. Third, cognitively, anxiety can occur at any stage of language acquisition. Anxiety can become an affective filter that prevents certain information from entering a learner's cognitive processing system (see Sellers, 2000). Anxiety can influence both speed and accuracy of learning.
- d. Fourth, anxiety arousal can impact the quality of communication output as the retrieval of information may be interrupted by the "freezing-up" moments that students encounter when they get anxious.
- e. Finally, personally, language learning experience could, under some circumstances, become a traumatic experience. This kind of unpleasant experience may deeply disturb one's self-esteem or self-confidence as a learner.

Horwitz found that students experiencing an anxiety-producing condition attempted less interpretive (more concrete) messages than those experiencing a relaxed condition. These studies indicate that anxiety can affect the communication strategies students employ in language class. That is, the more anxious student tends to avoid attempting difficult or

personal messages in the target language. These findings are also consistent with research on other types of specific communication anxiety. (Horwitz, 1986, p. 126).

Krashen concluded also that;

Anxiety contributes to an affective filter, according to Krashen, which makes the individual unreceptive to language input; thus, the learner fails to "take in" the available target language messages and language acquisition does not progress. The anxious student is also inhibited when attempting to utilize any second language fluency he or she has managed to acquire. The resulting poor test performance and inability to perform in class can contribute to a teacher's inaccurate assessment that the student lacks either some necessary aptitude for learning a language or sufficient motivation to do the necessary work for a good performance.

(cited in Horwitz et al, 1986)

### **Conclusion**

Writing anxiety is common among first, second, and foreign language writers (Cheng, 2004; Daly & Miller, 1975a; Daly & Miller, 1975b). Second and foreign language learners, who experience feelings of anxiousness associated with writing, often fear not being able to express themselves clearly in their writing and worry that readers of their writing will judge them negatively as a result. Writing anxiety manifests itself much as general language anxiety, through excessive worry, self-evaluation, fear of others' judgments, and avoidance or excessive time spent on the composition process (Cheng, 2004; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

To sum up, there are so many issues to be considered when identifying the sources of anxiety and the ways of reducing it everything from research results to teachers' input in the classroom, from teachers' attitude to errors to teachers' beliefs about students, contributes a lot to our understanding of language learning and teaching. Teachers, of course, cannot be expected to make all students "relaxed" or "happy" all the time, but they can certainly strive toward reducing tension and anxiety and setting up a climate where all students feel confident and comfortable.

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## **Introduction**

This chapter will proceed from a general definition of learning, to a specific definition of learning to write. It also looks at the connection of writing to other language skills, more precisely to reading and speaking. Besides the stages of development in writing and writing process, the criteria that contribute in producing an effective piece of writing, is also taken into account. In addition, a scope on essay and its structure is crystallized. Last but not least, teachers' responses to learners' writing are also considered in this chapter through an investigation about the assessment, feedback, and correction used by teachers during the learning teaching process. It also explores the approaches to writing in EFL.

Writing, therefore, is a fundamental skill in language learning; it is also a difficult skill that requires considerable effort and practice on the learner's part to reach an acceptable level of writing. Finally, an increased level of effectiveness in writing can be acquired through a thorough understanding about the nature of the skill itself

### **2.1. Definition of Learning**

Fontana considers learning as a change in the potential behaviour of an individual that results from experience, and Davis et al conceive learning as an active process of transforming new knowledge and skills into behaviour (Davis et al, 1994, p.12). Ingram, on her part, views that an individual is learning if s/he manages to do what s/he could not do before (Ingram, 1975, p.218). As cited by Brophy, Wittrock (1977) defined learning as, "learning is the term we use to describe the processes involved in changing through experience. It is the process of acquiring relatively permanent change in understanding, attitude, knowledge, information, ability, and skill through experience" ( Brophy, 1986,

p.124). In addition, Brophy noted that learning and thinking are not the same, referring thinking to the exercise or application of cognitive skills, and defining learning as change induced through experience (including inner reflection) rather than defining it more restrictively as change induced through encounters with the external environment. (Brophy, 1986, p.124-125).

Accordingly, learning to write is increasingly becoming a necessity in life, no matter what career one will embrace. Writing is a communication tool that translates thoughts into language, and pedagogically speaking, it is the means by which learners' achievements are generally examined.

## **2.2. Definition of Writing**

Writing, in general means words in symbols (for example, Hieroglyphics) written down as a mean of communication.(Encarta Dictionary, 1999: 2151). Apart from a piece of written language designed to be read, writing also refers to the activity through which such a piece of written language is produced. However, it is far from being a matter of transcribing language into symbols. So, writing is not as simple as it seems to be. "But writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds" (Byrne,1979,p.1). This means that the graphic symbols have to be arranged in certain ways and conventions to form words, and the latter are arranged to form sentences. We produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain manners. They form a coherent whole, what we call a 'text'.

In line with this, White and Arndt (1991,p.3) see that: Writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols: it is a thinking process in its own right.

It demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable effort of time. The research of White and Arndt (1991) into writing is based on the assumption that requires a high level of abstraction and actually demands conscious work in that “it is a skill that must be learnt by doing it”.

Lado views writing in a foreign language in terms of the ability of manipulating structures, vocabulary and their conventional representations. He puts it as follows: “We mean by writing in a foreign language the ability to use structures, the lexical items, and their conventional representation in ordinary matter of fact writing” (Lado, 1983, p.248). Similarly, Widdowson relates the act of writing to the activity of producing correct sentences and “transmitting them through the visual medium as marks on paper” (Widdowson, 1978, p.62). So, the idea we draw from the previous definitions is that writing is the activity of being able to communicate with the language through graphic representations of ideas, respecting the correction of the different structures and vocabulary items in order to share ideas to convince and persuade, to arouse feelings clearly concisely and understandably. Byrne (1979) states that writing is transforming our thoughts into language. It is a very complex skill that requires both physical and mental activity on the part of the writer.

Learning a foreign language requires learning the four skills of this language. Language teachers usually follow a certain order; beginning with listening, speaking, reading and then writing. The reason behind leaving writing at the end is that it is viewed as the most important, most difficult and most sophisticated one compared with the other language skills. Bacon (1605) emphasized the importance of writing when he wrote “writing makes an exact man”. So, writing is a basic skill in language learning, since the learner has to make

considerable effort and practice many writing activities to reach an acceptable level of writing.

Byrne (1979) argues that writing is neither easy nor spontaneous; it requires conscious mental effort. He divides the problems that make writing difficult into three categories. The first category is purely psychological in that the writer faces the problem of lack of interaction and feedback between the writer and the receiver i.e., the reader. The second category is characterized by linguistic problems. In speech, grammatical mistakes can be tolerated because of the spontaneous nature of the skill which prevents us from checking or monitoring what we produce, whereas in writing and in order to compensate for the absence of some features we use in speech, like gestures and immediate feedback, for example, we have to express ourselves in a clearer and more grammatical manner. The third category consists of cognitive problems in that writing, has to be taught through formal instructions where the organization framework of our ideas in written.

### **2.3. Writing and the Other Skills**

While writing constitutes what many people report as the most frustrating skill in language learning, writing in a foreign language is even more complex, as it is not just a matter of transferring new codes into the target language. Rather, it involves the mastery of several skills. Unlike speaking, for instance, writing does not come naturally to human beings. Moreover, writing requires more effort than recognizing meaning through listening and reading. In either case, contrary to oral language skills, academic language skills require professional teaching and training. Many researchers agree that writing is a skill that must be taught. However, writing is not viewed as a skill or set of skills in itself, it has been viewed

recently as intimately interwoven with other language skills, particularly to reading and speaking.

### **2.3.1. Writing and speaking**

Teachers can deal with their L2 students as individual, solitary writers, and there are times in most writing courses when it is necessary to do that. However, teachers also have the option to create within their classrooms a community of writers who, through dialogue, serve each other as tutors and critical readers, such as in peer review conferences. And according to Brookes and Grundy (1990, p.17), “both in logic and in practice the spoken and written mode share more common purposes than we sometimes realize”.

Therefore, most scholars in the area of L2 writing, and researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) and applied linguistics in general, have recently come to see the written and oral modalities as inextricably linked, and to view social interaction as a powerful impetus to language development (e.g., Pica, 1986; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). And according to Weisberg (2006), the argument for using a dialogue approach to teaching L2 writers rests on assumptions similar to those that underlie communicative language teaching, and that it also owes much to more recent interactionist and sociocultural theories of SLA.

Weisberg lists four main assumptions: First, the most effective language lessons are those that are genuinely communicative, meaningful, and relevant to learners; it is by being conscious of their readers that good writers are able to construct texts that anticipate their readers' information needs and possible reactions. Second, communicative language use involves people working together to exchange information, negotiate meaning, and accomplish tasks; this assumption calls for the use of pair and small group tasks in the

writing classroom. Third, classroom language learning is by nature a social enterprise. Thus, interaction is not just a precursor to, or a condition for, language learning, it is in itself a way of learning language; this implies that the teacher is an important factor in the social dialogue of the classroom and has an important role to play at all times, not just during whole-group instruction.

Weisberg (2006) concludes that, taken together, these four assumptions suggest that making interactive dialogue a regular feature of the writing classroom is a logical and natural extension of communicative language teaching. Finally, social interaction provides an ideal context for mastering complex cognitive skills like writing. This last assumption captures the notion that social communication is the foundation on which an individual's literacy skills develop.

### **2.3.2. Writing and reading**

The reading-writing connection has received considerable attention from theorists, researchers, and practitioners (e.g., Eisterhold, 1990; Heller, 1999). The connection between reading and writing has often been viewed in straightforward terms: those who read well write well. For example, researchers come to view reading and writing as two skills that share similar processes. They argue that readers and writers go through similar processes to either comprehend or create meaning. Eisterhold (1990) came up with three possible hypotheses for the reading-writing relationship. These hypotheses are directionality, bidirectionality, and nondirectionality.

The reading-writing relationship however is most often viewed from one direction: the influence of reading on writing. In other words, reading is said to affect writing more than

writing affects reading. This direction may be substantially important for EFL students, who have fewer opportunities to engage in reading activities. Fitzgerald (1989) argues that writing and reading, or, more specifically, such sub processes of writing and reading as revision in writing and critical reading are “highly related and draw on similar thought processes” (Fitzgerald, 1989, p.42).

Hence, despite their different characterizations, writing as a productive skill, and reading as a receptive skill, both complement each other, and skill in one results in a proficient user of the other. In this respect, Stotsky (1983) advances that: Better writers tend to be better readers (of their own writing as well as of other reading material), that better writers tend to read more than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers (Stotsky,1983, p.636).

As for Stotsky (1983), good writers tend to be good readers, and those who are good writers tend to read more than poor writers. What's more, those who read a lot come out with good writing, unlike those who do not read a lot. Writing and reading seem closely tight since reading results in good writing, and good writing is the result of exposure to a lot of readings. Reading is slowly creeping into the composition class; researchers like Raimes (1979), for example, suggests that teachers cannot restrict themselves solely to composition, they should also consider reading which is essential because it is the study of what has been written. Some reports reported by Krashen (1984) compared classes that did more reading than writing and he came to the conclusion that the reading group showed more progress than the writing classes (groups) in the writing test (Krashen, 1984, p.10). To wrap up such convergences and divergences between skills, be they receptive or productive, Mackey



considers that all four skills are interwoven and contribute to an effective learning, when he states that before one can write, s/he has to be able to read and shape the letters of the alphabet and has, before writing sentences, to say them aloud (Mackey, 1965, p.436).

Finally, Menzo and Menzo (1995, p.113) describe the relationships between reading and writing as an interrelated treatment; they call this connection the "Two- way relationship between reading and writing" as it is illustrated in Table 1:

Reading to write	Writing to read
1-Reading increases the knowledge individuals have to write about.	1-Understanding of subjects, making subsequent reading easier.
2-Reading instills knowledge of linguistic pattern and form.	2-Writing helps one to read like a writer, hence, sparking insights into writer mechanism and enhancing comprehension.
3-Reading builds vocabulary and familiarity with writer craft.	3-Revision in writing or making changes at various point in the process, involves many of the same high-order thinking strategies involved in critical reading

**Table 1: Reading and Writing Connection (Menzo & Menzo, 1995, p.113)**

Accordingly, providing student writers with well-written models of many styles and genres in any topic (Linguistics, Literature, Civilisation, etc.) will enlarge the resources they use when they write. Moreover, teachers should place students into the writers' roles and encourage them to read like a writer, in order to help them better write.

## **2.4. Effective Writing**

Writing in English within an academic context requires some criteria of acceptability relative to different aspects of writing which include organization, vocabulary, language use, punctuation, accurate capitalization and paragraphing. According to Starkey (2004), an effective piece of writing is the one that is organized, clear, and coherent, with accurate language and effective word choice.

### **2.4.1 Organization**

In the process of writing, information should be presented to readers in a structured format, even short pieces of writing have regular, predictable patterns of organization. The striking advantage of organization is to help the reader to believe what you are saying, and to willingly follow your lead. Starkey states that by following an organized method of writing, you will guide your reader from your first to last sentence (Starkey, 2004, p.2). He or she will be able to see how the various points you make in your piece of writing work together and how they support your thesis. Organization is usually decided upon through certain techniques that precede the actual act of writing. In other words, the writer decides about the organization of his written work before engaging into the physical act of writing through some prewriting techniques including mainly free-writing and brainstorming.

### **2.4.2. Clarity**

The learner's goal when writing in an academic context is to convey information, including the fact that he can write well (Starkey, 2004, p.11). Clarity is an essential element of writing, where the learner should become skilled at in order to make his writing readable,

and guarantee that those who read it understand exactly what he means to say. Murray and Hughes emphasize the importance of clarity as a fundamental element in making one's writing easy to be read and accessible. According to them, the key to achieve clarity is to make sentences short and to the point; writing without unnecessary spinning around, worthless repetition or wordiness, and the learner/writer should be relevant, making every word count, and try not to express more than one idea in each sentence (Murray and Hughes, 2008, p.86).

In order to achieve clarity in writing, according to Starkey , the learner should eliminate ambiguity by avoiding words or phrases that have more than one possible interpretation (Starkey,2004, pp.12-9). And use powerful, precise adjectives and adverbs. One way to accomplish clarity is to use powerful and specific adjectives and adverbs. Hence, the right modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) help out the learner to convey his message across in fewer and more accurate words. Starkey (2004, p.15) sees that: "wordiness is boring, and it takes up valuable time and space.

Furthermore, simplicity of text and of text composition are important prerequisites to readability. You should always try to write in a plain, clear and straightforward manner. Overlong sentences or lengthy chains of clauses and groups of words can easily prevent your reader from understanding what you want to say. As a rule, you should not add more than two to three clauses of any sort to form one sentence. Repeating words, signposting and using linking devices which help the reader to connect and relate information are useful ways of achieving clarity and readability

### **2.4.3. Coherence**

Coherence is an important element in any kind of writing. It is particularly crucial in academic writing, where success or failure may depend upon how clearly the learner has managed to communicate his ideas and points of argument to his reader. Kane (2000) and Creme and Lea (2008) among others, agree that coherence has a great role in making a good piece of writing. According to them, coherence has to do with arranging and linking one's ideas in a way that makes them most easily understood by the reader.

### **2.4.4. Word choice**

The best way for the learner to accurately convey his ideas in writing is to choose the right words. Doing so ensures that the reader understands what the writer is really writing. According to Starkey (2004) and Kane (2000), there are two aspects the learner should consider while choosing the words to be used: denotation and connotation. However, this is not all, the learner should also consider whether the used words might confuse or possibly offend his audience. This means avoiding informal language, clichés and slang words.

### **2.4.5. Mechanics**

Furthermore, in composition, 'mechanics' refers to the appearance of words, to how they are spelled or arranged on paper. The fact that the first word of a paragraph is usually indented, for example, is a matter of mechanics (Kane, 2000, p.15). Conventions of writing require that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with full-stop punctuation (period, question mark, or exclamation point). These types of conventions or mechanics are very significant in putting together a good quality piece of writing, because no matter how

original are the learner's ideas, if he cannot express them in a clear and accurate manner. Starkey (2004) addressed writing mechanics in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

## **2.5. Stages of Development in Writing**

Another equally important difficulty in writing is that it is a skill which has to be taught through formal instruction. Rivers (1968) argues that in order to learn how to express oneself comprehensively and clearly, learners need go through five stages of development: copying, reproduction, recombination and adaptation, guided writing, and composition. And according to Rivers all the five stages overlap.

### **2.5.1. Copying**

Some foreign language teachers see that copying is an unworthy activity since the students already know the script. However, we believe it is quite an important skill. Copying, also called transcription, involves the exact reproduction of what one sees before her/him in print. It is generally presented as the first stage in a writing programme, especially if learners come from a different writing system. Rivers and Tremperly argue that:

The work set for copying should consist of sections of work already learned orally and read with the teacher.

As the student is copying, he should repeat to himself what he is writing. In this way he deepens the impression in his mind of the sounds the symbols represent, and he

has further repetition practice of basic dialogue or pattern sentences. (Rivers and Temperly, 1978, p.263)

Similarly, Harmer (2004) recognizes the importance of copying as an important stage in the development of the writing skill, and considers it as an activity that helps learners gain a basic mechanical competence (Harmer, 2004, p.44). Also, Rivers (1968) insists on accurate copying at early stages of language learning because bad writing habits, for her, are difficult to eradicate at later stages.

### **2.5.2. Reproduction**

The second stage after copying is reproduction, which relates to the production of copies without reference to the original copy. Rivers defines this stage as follows:

During the second, or reproduction, stage the student will attempt to write, without originality, what he has learned orally and read in his textbook. This he will be able to do all the more successfully if he has been trained in habits of accuracy in the copying stage. (Rivers, 1968, p.246)

### **2.5.3. Recombination and adaptation**

The third stage of development, that is combination and adaptation, engages learners in the reproduction of a learned section with minor adaptations that vary from substitution and transformation to expansion and contraction of sentences. According to Rivers (1968), learners can substitute or replace nouns with pronouns, transform or turn sentences from the

active to the passive form, turn direct speech into indirect speech, or change words from singular to plural (Rivers, 1968, p.248). Furthermore, they can expand sentences by adding adjectives, adverbs, or conjunctions to sentences. This stage provides training in an accurate construction of sentences, how much valuable for an intelligible transmission of messages. Recombination is relegated to later stages, till firm grounds are established in substitution, transformation, expansion, and contraction.

#### **2.5.4. Guided writing**

The fourth stage of development involves guided writing where learners are given some freedom in lexical and grammatical choices, but within a framework. This latter will prevent learners from trying to write at a level that exceeds their state of knowledge (Rivers, 1968, p.250). Learners can summarize a text, or paraphrase it. They are neither strictly controlled nor totally free. In like manner, Kroll states as examples of guided writing the production of a short text by answering direct and open-ended questions ((ibid, p.250).

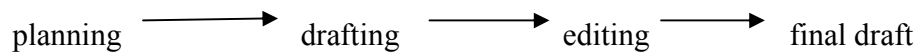
#### **2.5.5 .Composition**

In this stage of the writing process, the composition, the students select his/her vocabulary and structure to express their ideas as Rivers (1968) puts it: “The final stage of composition involves individual selection of vocabulary and structure for the expression of personal meaning” (Rivers, 1968, p.252). Composition writing largely depends on a sufficient training in the preceding four stages; that is, copying, reproduction, reproductions with minor adaptations, and guided writing.

## 2.6. Stages of the Writing Process

Probably the model of writing most widely accepted by EFL learners is the original planning writing-reviewing framework established by Flower and Hayes (1981). According to Zamel this model sees writing as a “non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning” (Zamel, 1983; in Hyland, 2003, p.11). Hyland explains that these stages do not occur in a linear sequence; they are recursive, interactive, and potentially simultaneous; i.e. all the work can be reviewed, evaluated and revised, even before any text has been produced at all (Hyland, 2003, p.11)

To explain more, we will present Harmer's (2004) figures of the writing process:



**Figure 1: Process of Writing. (Harmer, 2004: 5)**

### 2.6.1. Prewriting

The writer gathers, generates information and plays with ideas during the prewriting stage. Prewriting techniques may include brainstorming, free writing, clustering, mapping or listing. The writer can also use graphic organizers like charts, story maps, diagrams or clusters. Prewriting is an important phase in the writing process because as stated by Parson (1985,p.105): “...students who are encouraged to engage in an array of prewriting experiences have a greater chance for writing achievement than those enjoined to ‘get to work’ on their writing without this kind of preparation”. As well, according to Murray (1988,p.16), prewriting exercises do not only help students to find something to say about a



specific topic, they also help them improve their writing skills in that they provide them with opportunities to generate ideas and write with confidence.

An effective plan could guarantee organization, clarity and coherence for the written form since it gives direction to the work by following a logical order in dealing with ideas and information. In emphasizing the importance of planning, Zemach and Rumisek (2003) match the importance of an outline in writing to the importance of skeleton in body. In the writing class, it is crucial to make students aware of the importance of the prewriting stage. Before getting started to write, it is always helpful that the learner takes a moment and thinks about what he knows about a given topic.

The prewriting activity could be practiced in groups or with the whole class participation when it is a group work or individually when the writing assignment is individual. Here, teachers are advised to encourage students spend much more time in the prewriting stage because, we believe, it is the activity that reinforces the different steps of the process and ensures a more acceptable product.

### **2.6.2. Drafting**

Drafting is the 'physical act of writing' as referred to by Lindermann (1987,p. 26). It is the real writing stage where the writer develops his topic on paper. Hedge defines drafting as the stage where the writer "puts together the pieces of the text through developing ideas into sentences and paragraphs within an overall structure" (Hedge, 1988, p. 89). When writing the first draft, the student writer should focus on content only and forget about language and mechanical aspects such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Concerning the drafting stage Galko states that drafting means writing a rough, or scratch, form of your

paper (Galko, 2002, p.49). It is a time to really focus on the main ideas you want to get across in your paper.

### **2.6.3.Reviewing**

Reviewing is the stage that always follows the drafting stage and comes before the final stage in the writing process which is editing. The reviewing stage is the process of looking again and discovering a new vision of the writing produced in drafting. It is the stage during which the writer corrects mechanical errors and realizes substantial changes in his writing. Reviewing may involve additions and deletions; changes in word use, sentence structure, and organization. Brown and Hood stress that reviewing includes more than only checking spelling, grammar and punctuation, it also includes checking that content and purpose are clear and appropriate for the reader in the particular writing situation (Brown and Hood, 1989, p.20). According to Johnson (2008), reviewing is the heart of the writing, and it could be more productive of advanced final products if it includes input from teachers and/or peers. Indeed, peer review is a key classroom activity that enhances the students' ability to organize texts and increases their awareness of the importance of readership and that of purpose.

### **2.6.4.Editing**

Editing is the stage where the draft is polished; it is the final step before handing out the final draft. The writer gives attention to mechanics such as punctuation, spelling and grammar. Also, editing involves the careful checking of the text to ensure that there are no errors of spelling, punctuation, word choice and word order. To shed more light on the drafting phase, we will quote the meaning of editing according to Johnson:

Basically 'editing' means making your piece as reader friendly as possible by making the sentences flow in a clear, easy to read way. It also means bringing your piece of writing into line with accepted ways of using English: using the appropriate grammar for the purposes of the piece, appropriate punctuation and spelling, and appropriate paragraphing. (Johnson, 2008, p.167)

## **2.7. Essay Writing**

In order to be able to write essays it is first of all essential to make sure that you understand the purpose of the task. It may seem obvious: the purpose is to test your ability to write essays in English. However, a moment's reflection will make it clear that the test task is quite unlike a university essay, since it is typically one to two pages long, it is written on an unprepared topic and in limited minutes. Thus, the student should be aware at least about the structure and the criteria of good essay. And follow certain rules, strategies and stylistic conventions.

### **2.7.1. Definition of an essay**

An essay (one of the most common types of assignment at university) is a piece of academic writing generally between 500 and 5000 words long. The word 'essay' originally meant a first attempt or practice, which perhaps suggests some kind of provisional exploration. Essays are an intellectual exploration of a topic, involving looking at different

arguments and evidence and developing the writer's perspective. An essay is more 'discursive' than a report. Thus, the points are developed in more depth and the language may be a little less concise.

Typically, it will consist of a number of paragraphs that are not separated by subheadings or broken up by bullet points (unlike in a report). However, some lecturers may allow or encourage subdivisions and headings, as this can help both the writer and the reader with the structure of the content. In that case, an essay may begin to look more like the preferred format of some journal articles. The essay is simply a document that adheres to certain rules, strategies and stylistic conventions, all of which can be learnt and mastered.

### **2.7.2. The structure of an essay**

Writing an academic essay presents a coherent set of ideas that lead to an argument. Since essays are linear, they display ideas at once, yet they much present the ideas in certain understandable order that can successfully fit the readers' logic. Consequently, the academic essay has a certain structure that clearly spells the information that the reader needs to know and the order through which they require to receive it. Meanwhile, coherence and unity keep the structure consistent and comprehensible.

The essay structure is unique although there are certain guidelines for writing essay types. Connelly and Forsyth (2012) state that the challenges of writing an essay are in terms of its planning and preparation. Accordingly, an academic essay has certain implicit conventions. Therefore, structure helps the students to plan their essays and to organize their material by distributing and expanding them through three elements which constitute the essay. The introduction, the body and the conclusion are the major parts of the essay.

An essay introduction consists of two parts: a few general statements to attract your reader's attention and a thesis statement to state the main idea of the essay. A thesis statement for an essay is like a topic sentence for a paragraph. It names the specific topic and gives the reader a general idea of the contents of the essay. The body consists of one or more paragraphs. Each paragraph develops a subdivision of the topic, so the number of paragraphs in the body will vary with the number of subdivisions or subtopics. The conclusion, like the concluding sentence in a paragraph, is a summary or review of the main points discussed in the body.

### **2.7.3 Writing a good essay**

Writing an essay is no more difficult than writing a paragraph except that an essay is longer. The principles of organization are the same for both, so if you can write a good paragraph, you can write a good essay. Essays allow students to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of a topic based on research and reading. The skill of good essay writing is to be able to critically discuss and evaluate ideas within a set word limit. The focus of an essay is usually on developing an argument or analyzing ideas rather than on description.

And in order to develop a good essay structure, we should respect the following points:

- Made it easier by prior planning.
- Make it clear how you are going to address the question, where you are going and why.
- Set out your main ideas clearly.
- Make it clear how the main ideas relate to each other.
- Take the reader through your answer in a logical, progressive way.

- Help the reader to remember what you have said.
- Organize groups of related information in paragraphs.
- Use connecting words and phrases to relate each point/idea to earlier and later points.

## **2.8. Assessment, Feedback, and Correction**

Assessment, feedback and correction cannot be dissociated from instruction, they are closely related. Teachers' response to what learners have written has to be effective and appropriate because such responses evaluate learners' progress and development in a skill recognized as the least easy to acquire, and the more demanding physically and mentally. Diagnosis of learners' weaknesses and strengths in writing is critical to learners' progression and improvement.

### **2.8.1. Assessment**

Assessment is the process that defines the extent to which educational objectives are achieved by learners. There are two types of assessment, formative and summative. The formative assessment aims at informing teachers and pupils on levels reached. It helps find out in what areas difficulties in learning lie, so as to offer strategies intended to promote learning. The summative assessment, on the other hand, takes place at the end of a pre-set period, learning cycle, or study program; it is widely used to decide about learners' placement in appropriate levels.

### 2.8.2.Feedback

Ur defines feedback as the “information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance” (Ur , 1996, p.242). Hence, feedback is the information learners are provided with about how good or bad their performance is. If some distinguish correction and assessment as two separate evaluation tools, Ur regards them as two essential components of feedback. For him, via assessment the learner is simply told how well or badly s/he has done, percentage grades can be an example, and via correction learners are provided with information on aspects of their performance, through explanation, or proposition of better options (ibid, p.242).

Providing feedback is often regarded as one of the most important tasks for L2 writing teachers. The way that teachers structure the writing classroom, and the type of feedback they give will no doubt determine how their students approach the writing process, consider feedback, and revise their writing (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996; Lockhardt & Ng, 1995; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger,1992). “Feedback therefore emphasizes a process of writing and rewriting where the text is not seen as self-contained but points forward to other texts the students will write” (Hyland, 2003, p.177).

It is via feedback that students learn to appreciate the various aspects of the process of composing. The feedback which the learner gets on his or her piece of writing plays a very important role, both in motivating further learning and in ensuring that the teacher's texts gradually come wider and never to written fenny (Hamp-Lyons & Condon 2000,p.143).

Keh (1990) distinguishes three types of feedback: Peer evaluation, conferences, and written comments. Peer evaluation is a possibility to stress the role of the student in the

writing process. To emphasize the role of the students is an important issue and has to be carefully planned and incorporated in the writing activity. Students need to know all about evaluation; that is to say, what to evaluate and how to do it. McDonough and Shaw (1993,p.191) pointed out that peer evaluation “will only be effective with guidance and focus”. It can help our students to see what they produce critically and more consciously.

Bowen (1993) sees that conferencing as the second type, is an efficient way of dealing with writing in that the latter is freed from its isolation, and integrated with another skill, speaking. It is a good opportunity for the students to meet with their teacher and ask questions about the different aspects of writing. One of the interesting characteristics of writing workshop and the way it creates a working atmosphere is that the teacher is given the opportunity to confer with students on a regular basis (Weaver 2006,p.92). Here, the students need to focus on two important points. First, to make of conferencing a successful technique to improve writing and have some knowledge and ideas about what a successful text consists of and how it should be presented. Second, teachers and/or students need to give an encouraging and positive feedback and offer suggestions for improvement.

The third type, written comments are helpful in that they help students correct their writing and find solutions to their problems. In this regard, giving clues whether in the form of questions, suggestions, codes symbols or error sheets was considered more effective than correction of mistakes. (Brock and Walters 1993,p.97) .We believe that written comments give a certain security to writing students if they are clear and not misleading.

### **2.8.3. Correction**



Harmer points out to correction as an indication that a performance is wrong (Harmer, 2004, p.108). Rivers argues that regular training in writing necessitates correction of individual scripts, if what is written is to be effective; in like manner she advances that careful correction of short writing assignments at regular intervals, provides the most effective form of practice in writing (Rivers, 1968, p.255-6). Along the information learners receive on their achievement, grades are allotted to determine the quality of what has been written. Grades, according to Rivers, need to: be a composite one, allowing a certain percentage for grammatical accuracy, for lexical choice, for expression of time sequence, for general feeling for authentic expression, and for arrangement of ideas. The emphasis given to each area will vary as students acquire more skill. (1968, p.257).

As far as the grades learners receive on their writing, Rivers suggests that grades reflect how error-free of what has been written is, how appropriate the vocabulary selected is, how authentic the message is, and how smooth the flow of ideas is. And it can be concluded that although, teaching writing can take different orientations, language formal features seem to be the only aspect teachers care for while considering their learners' writing. Moreover, within this scope, Zamel reveals that:

despite the influence of process oriented research, teachers  
are still and by large concerned with accuracy and  
correctness of surface-level features of writing and that  
error identification the practice of searching and calling  
attention to error is still the most widely employed

procedure for responding to ESL writing.

(Zamel,1985,p.84)

### **2.8.3.1.Ways of correcting**

Among the many ways teachers can adopt to correct their learners' writing, Harmer (1998) proposes the following ways:

- Selective correction which is a technique whereby teachers avoid overcorrecting papers. Correction is restricted to only one aspect; it can be spelling or punctuation for example. To render this way of correcting more effective, teachers should discuss in advance with learners what aspects will be looked for.
- Using marking scales involves teachers in marking, out of 10, categories such as grammar, coherence, or vocabulary. To concentrate on such features helps the teacher diagnose the areas that need to be worked out.
- Using marking symbols subsumes the categorization and coding of mistakes. Unless learners recognize the type of mistake they are making, they will continue to make it. A code correction can be applied by teachers while correcting, an S for example attracts learners' attention to a spelling mistake, a G to a grammar mistake, and a T to a wrong tense.
- Reformulation is another way of writing correctly what learners have already written.
- Referring learners to a dictionary or a grammar book entails the consultation of non human material such as dictionaries or grammar books, as an individual step on learners' part in correcting their mistakes.

- Asking the teacher implies a face to face interaction between learners and teachers that can help sort out the problems learners encountered while writing.
- Remedial work encompasses the actions teachers undertake to deal with the problems learners could not surmount while writing. Teachers can show anonymous sentences containing mistakes, and then ask learners to correct them.

All in all, approaches to marking writing vary from one teaching context to another and from one teacher to another, but what has to be taken into account is that assessment, feedback, or correction should not consider form and forget about the intended meaning, because writing is whole whose constituents are interrelated.

## **2.9. Approaches to Writing in EFL**

Practitioners in EFL writing classes have widely contributed to enrich the writing instruction literature. As a result, these contributions have yielded a sequence of approaches that view writing from different angles. The approaches have been influencing and guiding writing instruction at schools and universities all over the world.

### **2.9.1. Product-based approach to EFL writing**

During the audio-lingualism era, writing has been less important because it has been considered as a supporting skill. Therefore, EFL writing has focused on sentence structure as a support for the grammar class. The audio-lingual method which originates from the works of structural linguists of 1950s tends to focus on the sentence form rather than its context. On the other hand, writing has been emphasized because audiolingual view emphasizes listening and speaking skills rather than reading and writing skills. It is used to highlight form and

syntax, and the emphasis is rhetorical drills (Silva, 1990). Product-oriented approach to writing focuses on forms method (Shortall, 2006).

Nunan (1999) also considers mastery of writing skills as knowledge about the structure of the target language. Since audio-linguism tenets focus on extensive drill in the classroom, product approach is built on small parts of language like morphemes or words to reach the communicative purpose of the text. Nunan (1999) calls this approach as bottom-up processing, for it commences from the detached elements of the target language. Hence, the product approach to writing is the creation of grammatically accurate texts, so audience, text, and purpose of writing are not the objectives of product-based instruction in EFL writing classes. Product-based approach has served to reinforce EFL writing in terms of grammatical and syntactical forms. A variety of activities in product based writing grade from lower level of writing proficiency to more advanced proficiency among EFL students.

Raimes (1983) also assume that product-based writing is linear. Stages in writing a text are of less concern, and the students are expected to read and to imitate the text, and then the evaluators compare the product of the students to the imitated texts considering grammar and sentence structure as the primary rubric for their scoring. Badger and White (2000) state that writing involves linguistic knowledge of texts that students can learn partly through imitation. The students follow rules and achieve technical mastery of formal conventions and modes, yet the instructors must work individually on writing tasks without forgetting the technical aspects of the text such as grammar and sentence structure.

### **2.9.2. Process approach to EFL writing**

After a long focus on the product-based approach to writing in educational institutions, curriculum design has been directed to the writing process rather than its product. This new trend brings several unsolved issues. Firstly, it is related to the amount of time and resources that should be directed to each text, then second one is related to how formative and summative evaluation should be balanced, also it is related to writing instructors who should put into helping students to find more independence when they assign writing practices for testing requirements of each educational institution.

Process writing is an approach that requires focusing on the process by which the students produce their written products rather than on the products themselves. By focusing on writing process, they come to comprehend themselves more and find how to work through writing. They may also explore what strategies conform to their style of learning. Brown (2001) states that writing is a thinking process, and students produce their final written product based on their thinking process.

Therefore, writing a paper moves through a set of steps that must be respected to produce an effective text rather than an imitation of other texts. It is rather a process of expressing ideas, so students better display their linguistic and pragmatic competencies. In process approach, students are considered as central part in learning process, so students' needs, expectations, goals, learning styles, skills and knowledge are taken into consideration. Through writing process, they are required to make the most of their abilities with cooperation of their instructors and the other peers.

The process of writing usually involves three steps that are typically arranged as follows: prewriting, drafting and revising. Some use four steps, such as thinking, planning, writing,

and editing while others use five steps, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and evaluating. In other words, each student has a favorite way of approaching the writing process that depends on the level of the students and the purpose of their writings. These steps are generally implemented in sequence, but it is not necessarily a linear process. It is rather more a recursive or spiraling process as the students move around these steps, and it sometimes goes forward and retraces their steps. For example, brainstorming is an important skill, for the prewriting stage can be exercised again and again at different stages if the students need new ideas later in the process. Thus, students can achieve their writing goals through the process differently.

### **2.9.3. Genre-based approach to EFL writing**

Scholars' efforts also focus on the nature of writing in various situations which give birth to genre approach. It is an approach to writing which is based on models and key features of texts that pay much attention to their purpose and audience. In process-based writing class, the instructors' task is typically to teach their students to follow the steps of prewriting, writing, revising and editing before achieving the final product, and this sequence teaches students how to write. Whereas, in the genre approach, samples of a specific genre are introduced to grasp some distinctive characteristics of a given genre: academic, creative and business.

Therefore, EFL students are expected to decide their texts' audience and purpose at early stages of writing. The genre framework supports EFL students writing with generalized and systematic principles about the way to produce meaningful passages. The genre approach is defined as "a framework for language instruction" (Byram, 2004, p. 234) that relies on a

particular genre. Further, Swales (1990) defines a genre as “a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990, p. 58). He states the central idea that a writer purports certain conventions or rules. For example, business letters describe business affairs, book reviews criticize books, and lab reports describe what happens in a lab experiment.

Writing is, thus, considered as a set of linguistic and social features that distinguish a text from another on the bases of its purpose and its audience. Badger and White (2000) contrast the genre approach to the product approach, for it emphasizes on linguistic competence; however, it differs in its focus on social context. This reflects the two dimensions of the genre approach to writing: linguistic and social. In other words, it aims to use vocabulary and grammar for a certain social group: audience

### **Conclusion**

From what has been said before, we come to a conclusion in which we say that writing is a difficult skill that requires both learners and teachers to have some necessary knowledge and information that would reinforce and make of the teaching/learning of the writing skill easier and important. One way to achieve this is to look at writing as a process that contains different stages rather than a product of accurate use of grammar and syntax and good range of vocabulary. Hence, teachers can guide learners through some stages of development, or recommend some types of writing. Whatever approach is adopted, product, process, or genre-based, teachers have to respond to learners' writing. And this response can be an assessment, a feedback, or a correction.

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## **Introduction**

As we have been already stated in the introduction, through this quantitative study we intend to discover if there is a remarkable influence of anxiety on student's writing essays in EFL at Biskra University. Therefore, the present chapter is devoted to the analysis of both teachers and learners questionnaires. In the first section of this chapter, we will deal with the students' questionnaire and in the second section of the same chapter; we will analyze the teachers' questionnaire. The collected data and the obtained results will enable us to diagnose the impact of anxiety on the teaching learning of writing essays. In addition, we will suggest the appropriate solutions to the existing problems faced by students when they write. The participation of teachers is very important because they are aware of the students' abilities and the writing skill complexities.

### **3.1. Administration of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire was administered to 30 students chosen randomly from the population of third year at the Division of English at Mohamed Kheider University – Biskra. The students answered the questionnaire in the amphi, and this number of students constitutes the sample of this research. The administered questionnaire discusses an issue that is shared by almost all students; it does not need a great number of students to be analyzed, the majority of third year students face the same writing anxiety since it is this year that they are asked to write essays probably in all compositions.

### **3.2. Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire consists of nineteen open-ended, multiple-choice questions, and for some questions, the students are requested to provide an explanation, justification, or suggest their ideas (See appendix A), divided into three sections as follows:

#### **3.2.1. Section one: Background information**

In this section, students are asked four questions about their gender, whether the English branch was their own choice, their marks in “written expression in last exam, and their level at university.

#### **3.2.2. Section two: Writing anxiety**

It is about the writing anxiety. It aims at exploring how students deal with anxiety during writing, taking into account the different situations and factors that lead to this feeling.

#### **3.2.3. Section three: writing essays**

This section is composed of questions seeking information about students' awareness of the writing different stages, classification, and the importance of proceeding through these stages to achieve a good quality of writing, or producing an excellent essay.

### **3.3. Analysis of the students' questionnaires**

#### **3.3.1. Analysis of section one: background information**

**Question One:** gender                      a- Male         b- Female

Sudents' Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	5	16,7	16,7	16,7
	Female	25	83,3	83,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

Table 2 : Respondents' Gender

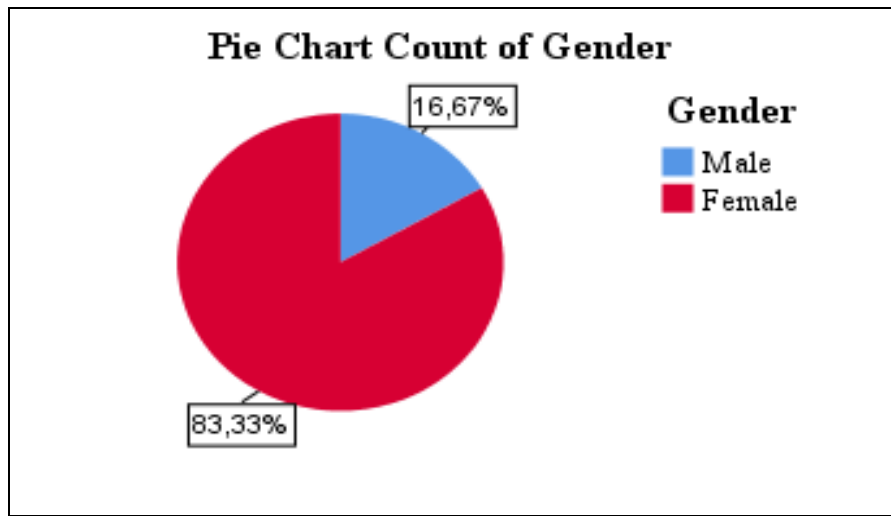


Figure 2: Students' Gender

The figure 2 shows that 83.33% of the students surveyed are females and only 16.67% are males, taking into account that I asked all the males found in the Amphi. This result demonstrates that female students are more interested in learning the English language than males do. Hence, this variation is due to the females' interest in learning literature and foreign languages, in addition to the teaching profession which is considered by society to be

a feminine job. Further, current studies show that females are most suitable for learning and acquiring multiple languages rather than males, but this is not an alternate reality because there are a lot of males dominating the females to learn more than one language.

**Question Two:** Is the choice to study English your own?

a- Yes

b- No

The Choice of Studying English					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	24	80,0	80,0	80,0
	No	6	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 3: Students' Choice to Learn English at University**

The second question in this questionnaire aims to indicate the students' choice to study of English at the university. Table 3 shows that 80% of the participants had chosen to study English as a free choice because they like the English language and they want to develop their level. While 20% of students did not choose freely and were obliged to study English, because of their marks which are not qualified to study other branches, or because of some reasons like parents' pressure as they see English more appropriate for their future or for some other various reasons.

**Question Three:** What is your mark in written expression in the last exam?

		Marks of Students in Written Expression
N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		12.9917
Median		13.0000
Mode		12.00 <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation		1.25341
Minimum		11.00
Maximum		16.00

**Table 4: Statistics of Students' Marks in Written Expression**

Students' Marks	Frequency	Percent
Below 13	12	40%
Above 13	18	60%

**Table 5: Students' Marks in Written Expression**

The above tables, Table 4 and Table 5 show that, students' marks range mainly between 11 to 16. More specifically, 40% of the participants' scores are between 11 to less than 13. While 60% of the students obtained from 13 to 16. Alternatively, the minimum mark was

obtained by four respondents. Also, there is no participant got neither less than 10 not more than 16.

**Question Four:** How would you assess your present level at English?

a- Very good     b- Good     c- Poor

Student's Level in English at University					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very good	4	13,3	13,3	13,3
	Good	25	83,3	83,3	96,7
	Poor	1	3,3	3,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 6: Students' level at University**

This question in this questionnaire aims to indicate the students' academic level at university. They have been studying English for eight academic years, the last two years at the University, having different English subjects including written expression as a fundamental course. Their general proficiency in English is supposed to be good. Similarly, Figure 3.4 shows that 83.3 % of the participants have a good level and 13.3% have a very good level. Yet some of them 3.3 % believe that they have a poor level. Since the main aim of this survey is to examine the effects of anxiety on students' essay writing, thus we asked

them before about their scores in written expression. Equally, the results of their marks in the last passed exam in written expression confirm the results of their level.

**3.3.2. Analysis of Section two: writing anxiety**

**Question One:** I do not worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions.

a- Yes

b- no

Students' Worry of Others Thoughts					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	53,3	53,3	53,3
	No	14	46,7	46,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 7: Students' Worry of Others Thoughts**

Table 7 reveals that 53.3% of the sample says that they do not worry at all about what other people would think of their English compositions, whereas 46.7% of participants think the opposite. And it is clearly obvious that only two students, who diverge the balance to the positive thinking.

**Question two:** I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write essays in English.



a- Yes

b- no

d- sometimes

Avoiding Writing in English					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	6	20,0	20,0	20,0
	No	5	16,7	16,7	36,7
	sometimes	19	63,3	63,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 8: Students' Avoiding Writing in English**

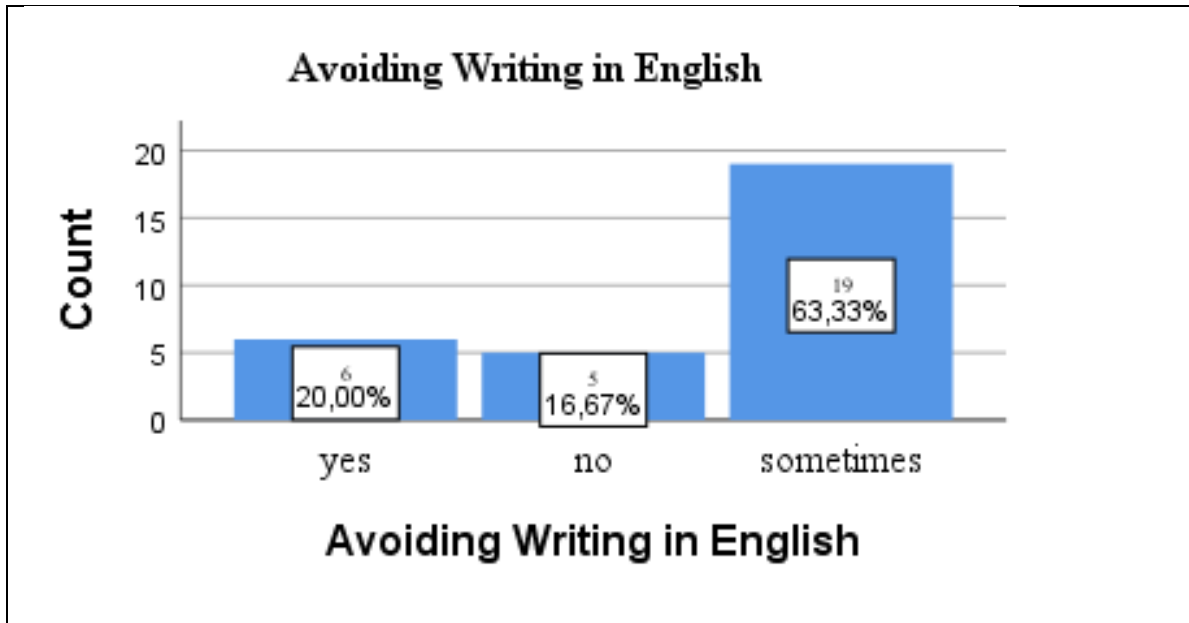


Figure 3: Students' Avoiding Writing in English

As it is demonstrated in the table 8 and in the figure 3, 63.33% of the students avoid situations in which they have to write essays in English due to different reasons. And 20 % of the respondents dislike writing through avoiding it when possible. Whereas, only 16.67% think that they do not have to avoid writing essays in English. Thus, shows us the difficulty of the skill and the awareness of the students about their less proficiency in writing.

**Question Three:** Are you afraid that the other students would think your English composition or essay was terrible if they read it.

a- Yes

b- no

Students Fear of Others' Negative Thinking					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	40,0	40,0	40,0
	No	18	60,0	60,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 9: Students' Fear of Others' Negative Thinking**

The results in the table 9 above reveals that 40% of the respondents are afraid about what would other students think of their written essays, whereas 60% said that they have no problem if their classmates or other students read their English compositions. Thus, this emphasizes that the majority of the sample are confident of their written essays.

**Question Four:** If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would worry about getting a very poor grade.

- a- Strongly disagree       b- disagree       c- no strongly feeling either way   
 d- agree       f-strongly agree

The Worry of Evaluated Composition					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	strongly disagree	4	13,3	13,3	13,3
	Disagree	6	20,0	20,0	33,3
	no strongly feeling either	9	30,0	30,0	63,3
	Agree	8	26,7	26,7	90,0
	strongly agree	3	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 10: The Worry of Evaluated Composition**

The results in the table 10 above reveals that the majority of about 30% of the respondents have no strongly feelings towards the evaluation of their English composition, or being worried about getting a very poor grade. And in the figure 4 it is obvious that four females and four males agree that they will feel differently if their compositions will be evaluated.

**Question Five:** While writing in English, you can be anxious due to (you can tick more than one box)

- a- Insufficient writing practice.  b- Insufficient writing techniques
- c- Problem with topic  d- Linguistic difficulties  e- Time pressure
- f- The pressure of work to be done perfectly  g- Less confidence
- h- Writing test  i- High frequency of writing assignments

Anxiety factors	frequency	Percent
insufficient writing practice	8	26.66%
insufficient writing techniques	4	13.33%
problem with topic	5	16.66%
linguistic difficulties	7	23.33%
time pressure	13	43.33%
the pressure of work to be done perfectly	3	10%
less confidence	0	0%
writing test	3	10%
high frequency of writing assignments	1	3.33%

**Table 11: Anxiety Factors**

The purpose behind this question is to investigate the major factors that affect the students' written expression and increase their writing anxiety. The above table 11 shows that 43.33% of the respondents can be anxious due to the time pressure, 23.33 % linguistic difficulties, and 26.66% of the respondents think that insufficient writing practice contributes to students' feeling anxious. Besides, few students emphasized also the other factors, which impact their writing essays. However, we can realize that no one believe that s/he can be anxious due to less confident.

**Question Six:** While writing in English, I feel fear of teacher's negative comments

- a- Strongly disagree  b-disagree  c-no strongly feeling either way   
d- agree  f-strongly agree

The Fear of Teacher's Negative Comments					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	5	16,7	16,7	16,7
	Disagree	9	30,0	30,0	46,7
	no strongly feeling either way	4	13,3	13,3	60,0
	Agree	7	23,3	23,3	83,3
	strongly agree	5	16,7	16,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

Table 12: The Fear of Teacher's Negative Comments

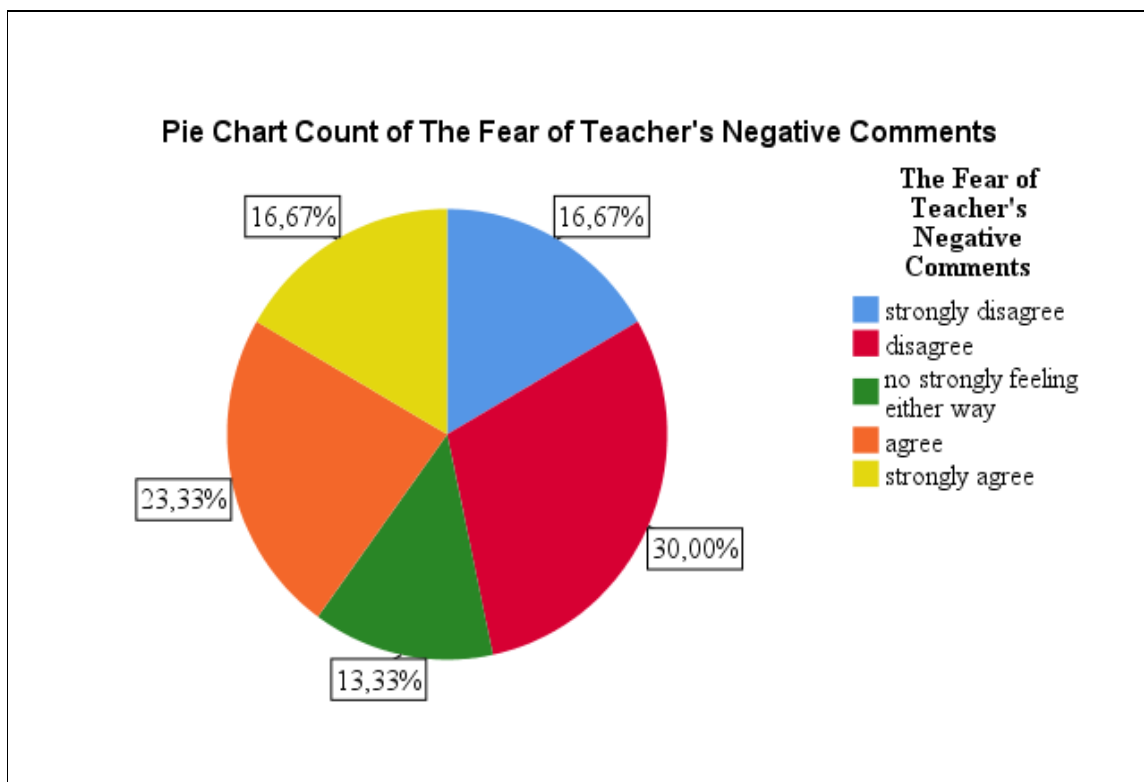


Figure 4: The Fear of Teacher's Negative Comments

As can be observed in the figure 4 above, the majority of students 30% picked the option two moderately disagree on the choices, which said that they do not fear of getting teacher's negative comments, 23.33 % of the respondents emphasized their dislike of negative comments, and 13.33% have no strong feeling either way. While 16.67 % insist on their strong disagree, the same number of students declared that they strongly agree.

Nelson and Carson (1998) found that students actually preferred negative comments that showed them where their problems were. However, we do not agree with Nelson and Carson mainly because we believe it is worth making positive comments that make the students more confident and aware about their strengths, thus give them a chance to improve by themselves. Additionally, it is our opinion that when teachers of writing provide clear, unambiguous and more specific comments, it can be more efficient in promoting student revision and can even lead to improve learners' abilities to self-correct all types of errors; syntactic, lexical and spelling ones. Nevertheless, we should confess that adopting such a method to respond to students' productions may not seem to be practical in our department - university, because teachers are overburdened with huge amounts of corrections due to the huge numbers of students.

**Question Seven:**

While writing in English, I'm not nervous at all.

a- Yes

b- no

Nervousness During Writing in English					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	36,7	36,7	36,7
	No	19	63,3	63,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 13: Nervousness during Writing in English**

The results in the table 13 above indicate that 63.3% as the highest percentage of the respondents , who participate in this questionnaire, said that, they are nervous while writing in English, indeed the results are surprising, being third year LMD results. Whereas 36.7% shows that anxiety during the writing skill is not an option.

**Question Eight:** If yes or no say why?

The aim of this correlation question is to identify students' opinions about their feeling while writing in English. It is worth noting that out of the 30 respondents, ten students i.e 33.33%, did not give any explanation. The explanations of the others can be summed up as follows;

For students who answered with no, they relate their nervousness to: the time pressure, difficulty of the topic; problem with topic, the fear of negative evaluation, and the pressure of work to be done perfectly. In addition, losing ideas as a psychological reaction is the reason of making students nervous during the writing essays.

Besides, the rest who answered with yes relate their positive feelings to: their confidence while writing due to the knowledge gained through reading, and considering errors as a part



of the learning process. Further, they believe that writing in a language you like help them expressing their ideas and feeling good. Furthermore, following certain organized steps in writing essays, being familiar to the topic and freedom of teachers' negative comments.

**Question Nine:** I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint and/or time pressure.

a- Yes                       b- no

Composition Writing Under Time Pressure					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	25	83,3	83,3	83,3
	No	5	16,7	16,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

Table 14: Composition Writing Under Time Pressure

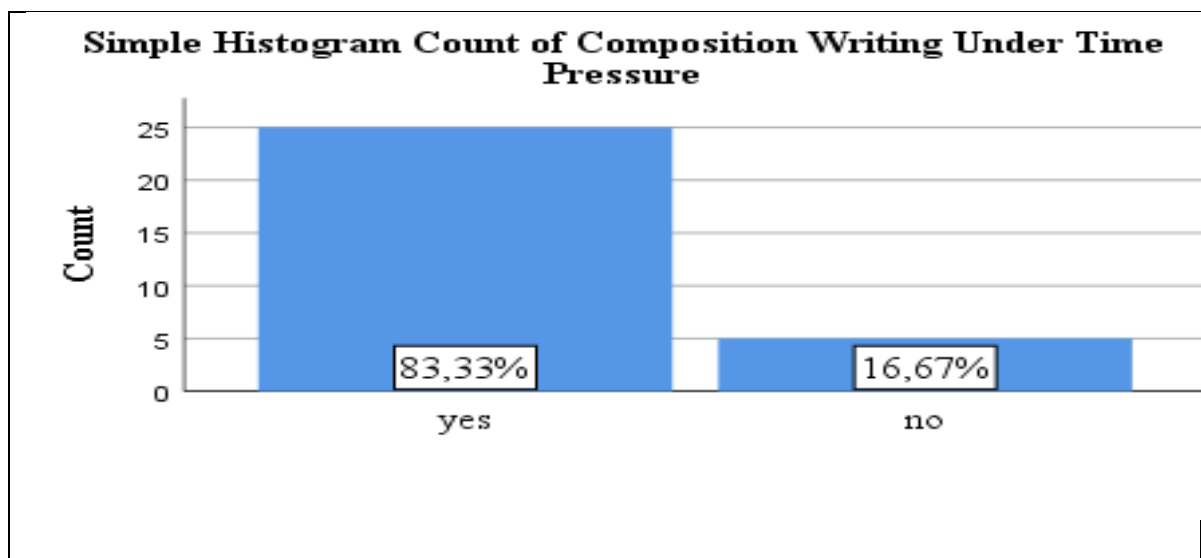


Figure 5: Composition Writing Under Time Pressure

The purpose behind this question is to investigate time pressure impact on students' composition writing. The above table shows that only 16.67 % of the respondents do not write under pressure. While, the great majority of the respondents 83.33 % their physical state could change, and their hearts may pounds, if they write in such situation. Besides, that is what was confirmed in the table of anxiety factors.

**Question Ten:** Do you freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions?

- a- Yes       b- no       d- it depends

Students' Feelings While Writing					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	16,7	16,7	16,7
	No	8	26,7	26,7	43,3
	it depends	17	56,7	56,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 15: Students' Feelings While Writing**

The results in the table above (table 15) reveals that the majority of the students 56.7% refer such feelings on the circumstances under which they are asked to write English compositions. Besides, 26.7% of the participants who said that they do not feel anxious, and 16.7% affirm their fear of unexpected written compositions in English.

**Question Eleven:** Do you think writing an essay at home is less anxious than at classroom?

- a- Yes       b- no       d- it depends

Writing Essays at Home					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	24	80,0	80,0	80,0
	No	1	3,3	3,3	83,3
	it depends	5	16,7	16,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 16: Writing Essays at Home**

As displayed in the table, the great majority of the students, 80% of the respondents believe that writing essays at home will not be stressful as a duty. Besides, only one student who said that she feels anxious, while writing essays even at home. However, 16.7% respondents believe that it depends on the conditions and the environment of their home.

**Question Twelve:** I'm afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample for discussion in class.

a-Yes

b- No

The Essay Chosen as a Sample					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	15	50,0	50,0	50,0
	No	15	50,0	50,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 17: The Essay Chosen as a Sample**

It is certainly clear that half of the sample, 50% of our participants agree that they are afraid if their teacher choose their English composition as a sample for discussion in class. Besides, the other half of respondents said that they do not have to be afraid, and they were totally confident of their piece of writing; essay.

### 3.3.3. Analysis of Section three: writing essays

**Question One:** While writing an essay, do you use the stages of writing?

a-Yes  b- no

The Use of the Writing Stages					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	17	56,7	56,7	56,7
	No	13	43,3	43,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 18: The Use of Writing Stages**

The table 18 reveals that the majority, 56.7% of the students follow all the writing stages when producing essays. An attitude that is very encouraging because it is very important for students to emphasize the process of writing rather than the product when they write, especially when the process approach is adopted. However, 43.3 % of the students do not follow all the writing steps when producing essays. Here, and because of the great benefits of following the writing process, we asked teachers to reassert to stick to all the writing steps in their teaching.

**Question Two:** Enumerate the stages from 1 to 4

a- prewriting     b- drafting     c- revising     d- editing

The Classification of Writing Stages					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right answer	13	43,3	43,3	43,3
	wrong answer	17	56,7	56,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

**Table 19: The Classification of the Writing Stages**

Table 19 shows that the majority of the students 56.7 % do not know the stages of writing an essay. As it is said in chapter two, writing is a developmental process that contains different stages to pass through. Even if it is not a big percentage, only 43.3 % of the respondents who know the right classification of the writing steps, we cannot consider that as a failure of the teaching of the writing skill.

**Question Three:** In three or four sentences write what makes your essay excellent.

The aim of this open ended question is to identify students' opinions about the elements that lead students to produce an excellent essay. It is worth noting that out of the 30 respondents, seven students did not give any clarification. The latter of the others can be summed up as follows;

Students claimed that following the writing techniques, and stages starting with brain storming ending with edition, will help them a lot. Besides, the importance of reading English books, novels and essays, contributes in improving the linguistic knowledge and

developing their writing skill. In addition, writing on interesting and familiar topics, using the appropriate vocabulary, ideas and style of writing can impart to produce good essay. Furthermore, they believe that writing academically, taking into account the need of writing well structured essay in content and form.

### **3.4. Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was given to four teachers of "Written Expression" in the Department of English at Mohamed Kheider University – Biskra, who have the adequate experience that makes their suggestions and observations valuable for the aim of this research. The teachers were very cooperative in that they handed back the answered copies in the same day.

### **3.5. Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire consists of fourteen open-ended, multiple-choice questions, and for some questions, the teachers are requested to provide an explanation, justification, or suggest other alternatives (See appendix B), divided into three sections as follows:

#### **3.5.1. Section One: Background information**

The aim of the first section is to elicit the background information of teachers: how long they have been teaching English, and how many years they have been teaching written expression module.

#### **3.5.2. Section Two: Writing Essays**

The general objective of this section is to help us to find out the teachers' views about teaching the writing skill in general. For example; whether the time devoted to written expression course is sufficient, whether the module's programme is sufficient in developing

students' writing level in English, and other question was devoted to shed the light on the teaching learning process of writing. Also, these questions aim to determine the understanding of the abilities of the students the written expression.

### 3.5.3. Section Three: Writing Anxiety

In this section teachers are asked about the importance of writing practice in reducing anxiety. And suggest other alternative factors that help students decreasing their writing anxiety in EFL.

## 3.6. Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire.

### 3.6.1. Analysis of section one: background information.

**Question One:** How long have you been teaching English?

Years of teaching	Frequency	Percent
10-15	3	75%
15-30	1	25%
Total	4	100%

**Table 20: Years of teaching English**

As it is shown in Table 20, 75% of the questioned teachers have been teaching English for 10 to 15 years, and only one teacher of them have been teaching English for more than 15 years. The obtained results imply that teachers' experience is to some extent reliable in the analysis of this questionnaire.

**Question Two**

How long have you been teaching the module of “Written Expression”?

Years of teaching Written Expression	Frequency	Percent
1-5	1	25%
5-10	3	75%
Total	4	100%

**Table 21: Years of Teaching “Written Expression”**

Table 21 shows that the majorities, 75% of the teachers have been teaching writing for five to ten years, and one teacher of them have been teaching writing for less than five years. When we compare the years of teaching “Written Expression” with those of teaching English, we can see that teachers are not always affected to teach the module of writing. Teachers should acquire more experience in teaching writing so as they could teach efficiently and let students take advantage of such an experience to improve their writing.

### 3.6.2. Analysis of section two: writing essays.

**Question One:** Do you think that one and half hours a week are enough for “Written Expression?”

a- yes

b- no



<b>Teachers Opinion about the Time Allotted to Writing</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	2	50,0	50,0	50,0
	No	2	50,0	50,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 22: Teachers Opinion about the Time Given to Writing**

As the table above shows, 50% of the teachers claim that the time allocated for “Written Expression” is not enough, the other half of them said that one and half hours a week are enough for “Written Expression”. Hence, the teachers’ perspectives differ in regard of how students will enhance writing essays in EFL. Further, time pressure should be avoided in order to help students perform well in writing.

**Question two:** Do you think that the “Written Expression” programme you are teaching is enough to improve your students’ level in writing?

a- yes

b- no

<b>"W E" Programme sufficiency in Improving Writing</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	2	50,0	50,0	50,0
	No	2	50,0	50,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 23: "W E" Programme sufficiency in Improving Writing**

Table 23 results that, 50% of teachers believe that the “Written Expression” programme they are teaching is enough to improve students’ level in writing. Whereas, 50% believe that the programme they teach is insufficient.

**Question three:** If “No”, please, explain why.

Although only 50% of the teachers added suggestions , it is really encouraging to find that these teachers are eager to contribute significantly in clarifying some points that might be helpful in overcoming (some of) the problems our students face. The two teachers suggested that the programme lacks practice sessions and feedback. Teachers’ comments concentrated on practice as the best way for improving students’ level in writing. Among the answers that support practice, “they need more practice”. Besides, one teacher sees that the programme lacks feedback, “the programme lacks practice sessions and feedback”. Hence, we can emphasize the importance of the process approach in the teaching learning process.

**Question four:**

In your point of view, what is the approach that helps your students decrease their writing anxiety?

a- The Product Approach       b- The Process Approach       c- Both

Approaches Used by Teachers in Writing					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	The Process Approach	1	25,0	25,0	25,0
	Both	3	75,0	75,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 24: Approaches Used by Teachers in Writing**

From the table 24 above, we can see that 75% of the teachers use both approaches to teach writing; both approaches combined together can be efficient and helps alternate between them depending on the writing task necessities. And 25% of them admit using the process approach. Teachers who choose to use the process approach view writing as an exploratory and recursive process that involves moving forward and backward respecting the different stages of writing. No one had chosen the product approach; concerned with the final result of the writing process, as a single option. Furthermore, teachers told me that they use the genre approach as well.

#### Question Five:

What stage of the writing process is most difficult for your students?

a- generating ideas  b- writing initial drafts  c- revising  d- editing

The Most Difficult Stage for Students in the Writing Process	Frequency	Percent
generating ideas	1	25%
writing initial drafts	3	75%
Revising	2	50%
Editing	2	50%

**Table 25: The Most Difficult Stage for Students in the Writing Process**

From the table 25 above, we can see that 75% of teachers claim that students face the greatest difficulty in writing initial drafts, 25% of the teachers see that students have problems in generating ideas, and 50% of the teachers see that the difficulty students face in the process of writing lies in revising and editing respectively.

As far as revising and editing are concerned, we note that they do not pose many problems to students when they tackle writing. This finding is really encouraging because it is our belief that these stages are very essential in the writing process since they give the opportunity to students to correct, polish and refine their drafts before handing them out. Generating ideas and writing initial drafts are the stages that cause most difficulty for students according to the teachers' responses. As far as generating ideas is concerned, it is our belief that jotting down ideas and getting prepared to write is very essential for producing appropriate compositions that is why teachers need to focus on this stage and prepare students well to write.

On the other hand, writing initial drafts is the heart of the writing process, and it is logical to consider it as the most difficult step in the writing process; however, students can succeed through it if they bear in mind that whatever they write is not the final draft, they have to come to revise and edit what they have written. In other words, they should follow the flow of their ideas without worrying about the writing mechanics.

**Question six:**

Do you help your students when they write?

a- yes                       b- no

Teachers Helping Students When they Write					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	75,0	75,0	75,0
	No	1	25,0	25,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 26: Teachers Helping Students When they Write**

The Table 26 reveals that 50% of the teachers help their students when they write. Walking around and helping students while writing is essential in guiding them through all the writing steps and raising their awareness of audience consideration.

**Question Seven:**

If “Yes”, do you help them editing: (you can tick more than one box)

- a- content organization
- b- vocabulary
- c- grammar
- d- punctuation
- e- spelling

Aspects Teachers Help Students Editing	Frequency	Percent
content organization	3	75%
vocabulary	2	50%
Grammar	0	0%
Punctuation	2	50%
Spelling	0	0%

**Table 27: Aspects Teachers Help Students Editing**

Table 27 reveals that 75% of the teachers help their students editing content organization, 50% of them help students editing vocabulary and punctuation respectively. Walking around

and helping students while writing is essential in guiding them through all the writing steps and raising their awareness of audience consideration.

However, all teachers do not help their students editing spelling and grammar. These results support the claim of using the process approach to teaching writing which emphasizes more on the different stages and “the teachers’ role is to guide students through the writing process, avoiding an emphasis on form to help them develop strategies for generating, drafting, and refining ideas” (Hyland, 2003,p.12).

**Question eight:**

Do your students follow all the writing stages?

a- yes

b- no

Students Following All the Writing Steps					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	4	100,0	100,0	100,0

**Table 28: Students Following All the Writing Steps**

From Table 28 we see that all the teachers believe that their students follow the writing steps. Though, the results of students’ questionnaire had shown that more than half of students do not know even the classification of writing steps.

**Question nine:**

Do you ask your students to proceed through all the writing steps?

a- yes

b- no

Teachers Asking Students to Proceed Through All the Stages					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	1	25,0	25,0	25,0
	No	3	75,0	75,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 29: Teachers Asking Students to Proceed Through All the Stages**

The results in the table above reveal that 75% of the teachers do not ask their students to follow all the stages while writing. The teachers believe third year students does not need that advice. While one teacher do ask her students to follow all the writing stages when producing a composition, an attitude that is very encouraging because it is very important for students to emphasize the process of writing rather than the product when they write, especially when the process approach is adopted. Here, and because of the great benefits of following the writing process, we advise teachers to help students stick to all the writing steps when they produce compositions.

**Question ten :**

If “No”, please specify the stages your students proceed through (You can tick more than one box)

- a- prewriting       b- drafting       c- revising       d- editing

Writing stages	Frequency	Percent
prewriting	1	25%
Drafting	2	50%
Revising	0	0%
Editing	4	100%

**Table 30: Stages Students Proceed Through**

From table 30, we can see that the editing stage is the most common to students according to all teachers, followed by the drafting stage 50%. At the end come the prewriting and revising stages with 25% and 0% respectively. It is really surprising to find that the editing stage is the most followed by students since it is the last writing stage. However, from the teachers' responses to this question, we find that revising and prewriting are the most ignored steps by students, a fact that is not beneficial for students when tackling the writing activity, since all the writing steps are all of use when producing a piece of paper. Revising for example, is the stage when students look back at their writing and try to adjust content and realize substantial changes.

### 3.6.3. Analysis of section three: Writing anxiety

#### Question one:

How much do you think following the stages within the writing process will help your students to lessen anxiety, and produce better compositions?

a- a lot

b- a little

c- not at all



Proceeding through the Writing Steps for Better compositions					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a lot	4	100,0	100,0	100,0

**Table 31: Proceeding through the Writing Steps for Better compositions**

Table 31 reveals that all the teachers agree that their students should follow all the steps while writing. Because proceeding through all the stages of the process is very helpful in improving students' writing, teachers should always encourage students to approach writing in terms of the process that contains several steps when they produce compositions.

**Question Two :**

Do you think that making learners write essays or summarizing essays every week reduces their writing anxiety?

a- yes                       b- no

The Importance of the Writing Practice					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	75,0	75,0	75,0
	No	1	25,0	25,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 32: The Importance of the Writing Practice**

Table 32 reveals that 75% of the teachers agree about the importance of writing practice. However, one teacher does not believe that practicing the writing skill can help students

reducing their anxiety. This result supports the aim of our research in which we seek to know to what extent following the writing process and the stages it entails will help students produce more effective compositions.

**Question Three:** Do you think your students write under anxiety if they;

- a- misunderstand the composition question  b- can't choose the right essay's type   
 c- both

Student's Writing Under Anxiety					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	cannot choose the right essay type	1	25,0	25,0	25,0
	Both	3	75,0	75,0	100,0
	Total	4	100,0	100,0	

**Table 33: Student's Writing Under Anxiety**

Table 33 reveals that 75% of the teachers agree about the importance of choosing the right essay type contribute in increasing anxiety among writers and students as well, and how students' can be confused and stressed if they misunderstand the composition question. However, one teacher does believe that only the choice of the right essay type contribute in increasing anxiety.

If you can give us other factors, would you write it down, please?

In this correlation question that invites teachers to make any comments or suggestions, that might help us indicate the factors of writing anxiety, teachers' comments concentrated

on large groups of students at classrooms, poor linguistic background, careless of students, and writing about an imposed topic especially during tests and assignments. Also, lack of practice due to the short time allotted to the written expression sessions. Further, one teacher emphasized the importance of the reading skill in reducing anxiety.

### **3.7. Discussion of the Results of the Questionnaires**

The findings show that writing anxiety is found at high level among third year English students, in regard to the English language learning years. Fear of teacher's negative feedback, time pressure, and poor cultural and linguistic knowledge were reported as the main causes of foreign language writing anxiety. The pedagogical implications of this study are as under:

- Writing anxiety can be decreased among students, through appreciation of the students by the teachers, and finishing the fear of writing tests.
- Sufficient writing practice and awareness of writing techniques can lessen the level of writing anxiety among learners.
- Writing anxiety can be minimized by solving students' linguistic difficulties through the reading skill, which can help them if they have problems with topics as well.
- Abundance of writing assignments should be avoided so that the students may feel relaxed writing tasks.
- The teachers should guide the students to minimize their anxiety making the classroom environment as at home as they can.

- The role of teachers in making students aware about the writing stages and their benefit in minimizing the pressure of time.
- The anxiety due to negative comments, of other learners and/or teachers can be reduced through positive reinforcements. Hence writing anxiety can be lowered and gradual improvement in learners' writing can be ensured.
- Though from the students' questionnaires confidence are observed, writing anxiety exists among students. Therefore, the difficulty of the writing skill is proved as researchers mentioned in the second chapter.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of this questionnaire shows that all teachers were aware of the difficulty of the writing task for third year EFL students, and the students' problems in all the aspects that make up the act of writing essays. The results also indicate that teachers were unified in agreeing that following the writing stages will better their writing skill, and essay's writing as a result. Besides, teachers focus on the writing practice, in order to ensure good and proficient written pieces. More importantly, in the light of the foregoing data analysis, it becomes clear that teachers were aware of the benefit of using both approaches help their students achieve a better writing ability.

## **General Conclusion**

Knowing that success is not guaranteed, but that making a real effort might make all the difference between success and failure, we may do better precisely because our anxiety has spurred us on. If, on the other hand, we would really like to succeed but feel that, no matter how hard we try, we are most likely to fail, and then our anxiety is likely to make it even

more difficult for us to produce our best. Equally, writing is definitely a fundamental creative skill; consequently, our case study sharing the light on the impact of anxiety on EFL learners' writing essays. Therefore, we have to overview the importance of reading skill to help foreign language learners widen their linguistic knowledge and cultural understanding so as to boost their level in writing production.

The present study has investigated the foreign writing anxiety among English third year Masters' degree at the Department of Languages, University of Biskra. It has explored the relationships between anxiety and writing, on one hand, and stages of writing and essays' structure, on the other one. Anxiety is an important affective variable which must not be overlooked and should be investigated since it may interfere negatively with the learning process at different levels affecting the learners' performance and achievements. It is important to detect its presence among our students not just by mere intuition and diagnose the main actual sources of this phenomenon as a construct, particularly the one which is related to written expression. Creating warm and friendly relationships and atmospheres in the English academic settings, especially in the classroom, is an important prerequisite to language learning success.

The results from the collected data show that the main important provoking FLA factors for our tested subjects are: time pressure, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and lack of writing practice, respectively from a higher level to a lower one. Therefore, the teachers can take the lead in helping anxious learners to cope with their anxiety. They have to pay more attention to those provoking anxiety aspects through reconsidering the immense negative impact on students' writing. In other words, educators should help anxious students cope

with the existing anxiety provoking situations and try to make the learning atmosphere less stressful.

This study raises the English instructors' awareness about the crucial negative effect of FLA among EFL learners at a Master's level. By understanding the extent of learning anxiety our students have, the teachers will then be more aware of how to help them reduce their learning anxiety and maintain and even promote their learning process, especially for highly anxious learners.

The study of the impact of anxiety on EFL learners' essay writing has many limitations, the most important of which may be:

To begin with, the results of this study have been applicable only to the sample of population in this study; it cannot be generalized to all the EFL learners at the University at all levels. Second, self-reported measures obtained from the FLA. Second, may not reflect accurate and real psychological status in EFL learning. Due to some reasons, the participants may be afraid to express themselves honestly or desire to report that they have had lower written engagement, grades, or achievements because of the anxiety factors.

Finally, despite writing anxiety negative effects, we cannot attribute all the negative behaviours and fears of students to the construct of anxiety only since there are other affective variables affecting FL learning which are also important. For instance, personality, self-perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and intelligence; they should also be considered as important variables in acquiring foreign languages. Based on the findings and limitations of the present study, the results have given evidence about the existence of FL writing anxiety among our subjects.

Some suggestions for further research may be in order here: First, to investigate learners' affective variables related to FL learning, further research should involve more EFL learners at different levels, first, second, or third LMD students, for instance. This study can be also replicated at the level of two or more foreign languages, between English and French at this University as it can tackle more than one affective variable such as motivation, self-esteem, age, sex, attitudes...etc. In addition, we have suggested that the potential affective interactions between the learners' writing anxiety, engagement, and teachers' sociability require more empirical evidence to produce a clearer teaching approach that emphasizes both teachers' cognitive and pedagogical competency and the social and behavioural competence in academic settings.

Finally, we hope that this study can help EFL learners to create a positive and useful experience in English learning and to raise teachers' awareness about the solutions that may do to reach higher academic success.

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c- problem with topic  d- linguistic difficulties  e- time pressure

f- the pressure of work to be done perfectly.  g- less confidence.

h- writing test  i- high frequency of writing assignments.

6- While writing in English, I feel fear of teacher's negative comments

- a- Strongly disagree  b- disagree  c- no strongly feeling either way   
d- agree  f- strongly agree

7- While writing in English, I'm not nervous at all.

- a- Yes  b- no

8- If yes or no say why?

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

9- I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint and/or time pressure.

- a- Yes  b- no

10- Do you freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions?

- a- Yes  b- no  d- it depends

11- Do you think writing an essay at home is less anxious than at classroom?

- a- Yes  b- no  d- it depends

12- I'm afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample for discussion in class.

- a- Yes  b- no

### 3.2.3. Section Three: Writing Essays

1- While writing an essay, do you use the stages of writing?

- a- Yes  b- no

2- Enumerate the stages from 1 to 4

a- prewriting     b- drafting     c- revising     d- editing

3- In three or four sentences write what makes your essay excellent.

.....


.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much for your help 





### Question Six

In your point of view, what is the approach that helps your students decrease their writing anxiety?

a- The Product Approach       b- The Process Approach       c- Both

### Question Seven

What stage of the writing process is most difficult for your students?

a- generating ideas       b- writing initial drafts       c- revising   
d- editing

### Question Eight

Do you help your students when they write?

a- yes       b- no

### Question Nine

If “Yes”, do you help them editing: (you can tick more than one box)

a- content organization       b- vocabulary       c- grammar   
d- punctuation       e- spelling

### Question Ten

Do your students follow all the writing stages?

a- yes       b- no

### Question Eleven

Do you ask your students to proceed through all the writing steps?

a- yes       b- no

### Question Twelve

If “No”, please specify the stages your students proceed through (You can tick more than one box)

a- prewriting       b- drafting       c- revising       d- editing

## Section three: writing anxiety

### Question One

How much do you think following the stages within the writing process will help your students to lessen anxiety, and produce better compositions?

a- a lot       b- a little       c- not at all

### Question Two

Do you think that making learners write essays or summarizing essays every week reduces their writing anxiety?

a- yes                       b- no

### Question Three

Do you think your students write under anxiety if they

a- misunderstand the composition question     b- can't choose the right essay's type

c- both

If you can give us other factors, would you write it down, please?

Thank you very much for your help 😊

## Arabic Summary

تهدف هذه الدراسة لبحث مدى تأثير القلق في القدرة الكتابية و كتابة المقالات لطلبة السنة الثالثة ماستر لغة إنجليزية. و تعتمد في ذلك على إظهار العلاقة الوطيدة المتواجدة بين الكتابة ومهارتي القراءة و الإستماع، و كما تعمل على تبيان دور ممارسة الكتابة في تحسينها والتقليل من القلق. ومن أجل تأكيد الاحتمالية التي تنص على أن تحسين قدرات الطلبة الكتابية تكون من خلال الوعي بضرورة إستخدام مراحل الكتابة الاكاديمية، و وجوب تفسير أهميتها في التقليل من ضغط الوقت خلال الكتابة من طرف الأساتذة. وقد بينت نتائج تحليل إستبيان قدم لعينة من الطلبة أن الشعور بالقلق أثناء الكتابة يمكن أن يكون مصدره الخوف من الفشل في الإختبار أو التقييم السلبي من الأساتذة أو الطلبة. كما أكد الطلبة و الأساتذة في استبيان خاص بهم على تأثير عدم ممارسة الكتابة والقراءة و ضيق الوقت في إحساس الطلبة بالقلق. و يلخص البحث على دور الأساتذة في إقامة أسس بيداغوجية جديدة، تكون أكثر نجاعة في التدريس و تعمل على تحسين مهارة الكتابة لدى الطلبة، و على دور ممارسة الكتابة أو الحد من القلق.