



Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of Foreign Languages

# MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages  
English Language Branch  
Sciences of the language

---

Submitted and Defended by:  
**Abdelouahab BENKHOUL**

**The Effects of Anxiety on Students' Achievement in  
Written Examination  
The Case of First-Year LMD English Students at  
Mohamed Kheider University-Biskra**

---

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Sciences of the Language

**Board of Examiners:**

Dr. Slimani SAID	MCB	Biskra	President
Dr. Youcef LAALA	MCB	Biskra	Supervisor
Mrs. Messaibi SAMIRA	MAA	Biskra	Examiner
Mrs. Asma KACHA	MAA	Biskra	Examiner

**Academic Year: 2020-2021**

## **Dedication**

Praise is to God who has given me spirit, courage to overcome all the difficulties and to  
continue the way of my research.

I dedicate all my success in life to: My dear parents, for their encouragement, tiredness,  
and their tenderness.

My dear brothers: Abdelaziz, and Taha.

My lovely sisters: Meriem, and Djenna.

My friends: Redouane, Ahmed, Abdelmadjid, and Youcef.

All my family.

## **Acknowledgements**

I thank Allah for being my source of help and strength.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my supervisors Dr. Youcef LAALA , Dr. Slimani SAID, and Mrs Messaibi SAMIRA for their help and patience with me. It was a pleasure to meet them and benefit from their knowledge and experience.

Special thanks to my devoted teachers. I would like to acknowledge their inspirational guidance.

I dedicate this work to my family and many friends.

A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents.

I dedicate the work also to my grandmother and grandfather for their prayers.

## **Abstract**

This study aims at identifying the main writing difficulties and the effects of anxiety on students' achievements during exams. This dissertation deals with the causes and consequences of anxiety because this phenomenon is considered as a very significant issue that most learners suffer from. It aims also to clarify the writing problems that students face. This research takes the form of an exploratory method to deal with this topic. Indeed, we attempted to explore the situation of students' difficulties in writing and to provide information concerning the phenomenon of anxiety and to suggest some effective solutions to overcome it. Moreover, we have designed a main questionnaire to collect a considerable amount of data. The questionnaire was designed to a sample of 33 students of first year LMD students at the division of English at Biskra University. The analysis of results revealed that students feel anxious most of time when they come to written tests because of anxiety mainly and other different factors such as fear of making mistakes, or lack of self-confidence. Anxiety has confirmed to be an obstacle to students' improvement. To conclude, teachers have to reduce students' anxiety through applying certain strategies like using relaxation strategies, encouraging students, and creating a suitable atmosphere during exams.

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

**BICS:** Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill.

**CALP:** Cognitive Academic Language Ability

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**FL:** Foreign Language

**GAD:**Generalized Anxiety Disorders

**L1:** First Language

**L2:** Second Language

**LMD:** License, Master, Doctorate

**ND:** No Date

**TAI:** Test Anxiety Inventory

**TLU:** Target Language Use

## List of Tables

<b>Table 01:</b> What Writers Deal with as they Produce a Piece of Writing.....	45
<b>Table 02:</b> Students' Gender .....	46
<b>Table 03:</b> Students' Choice of Studying English at University .....	45
<b>Table 04:</b> The Importance of Written Expression Module .....	48
<b>Table 05:</b> Teacher's Motivation for Students to Write .....	49
<b>Table 06:</b> Students' Evaluation of Their Level in Writing .....	50
<b>Table 07:</b> Students' Responses to the time allocated for the exam.....	51
<b>Table 08:</b> Writing Aspects that Hinder Students from Writing Their Answers Effectively .....	52
<b>Table 09:</b> Frequency of Students' Thinking about Their Teachers' Comments When Writing .....	53
<b>Table 10:</b> Students' Consideration of Their Teachers' Feedback .....	54
<b>Table 11:</b> Frequency of Students' Participation in the Class .....	55
<b>Table 12:</b> The Level of Students' Performance in Written Tests .....	56
<b>Table 13:</b> Students' Preparation before Exams .....	57
<b>Table 14:</b> Students' Arrival for Exams .....	57
<b>Table 15 :</b> Students' Feeling of Anxiety during Exams .....	58
<b>Table 16:</b> Students Responses about whether Anxiety Motivates/Hinders Them from Answering in a Good Way or Not .....	59
<b>Table 17:</b> Teacher's Moves and Students' Anxiety during Exams .....	60
<b>Table 18:</b> Students' Use of Relaxation Strategies to Reduce Anxiety during Exams	61
<b>Table 19:</b> Foreign Language Anxiety and EFL Students Academic Achievement	62
<b>Table 20:</b> Students' Difficulties when They Transform Information from Mind to Exam Paper .....	63
<b>Table 21:</b> Students' Difficult Exam Questions .....	64
<b>Table 22:</b> Students' Responses about whether they Consume all the allocated time or Finish early when Sitting for the Exam .....	64
<b>Table 23:</b> Students' Exam Failure Experience .....	65

**Table 24:** Students' Responses about Whether Their Parents' Pressure Makes  
Them Nervous or Not ..... 66

## List of Figures

<b>Figure 01:</b> What Writers Deal with as they Produce a Piece of Writing.....	45
<b>Figure 2:</b> Students' Gender .....	46
<b>Figure 03:</b> Students' Choice of Studying English at University .....	47
<b>Figure 04:</b> The Importance of Written Expression Module .....	48
<b>Figure 05:</b> Teacher's Motivation for Students to Write .....	49
<b>Figure 06:</b> Students' Evaluation of Their Level in Writing .....	50
<b>Figure 07:</b> Students' Responses about whether the time allocated for the exam is enough for them to complete writing their ideas and answers or not .....	51
<b>Figure 08:</b> Writing Aspects that Hinder Students from Writing Their Answers Effectively .....	52
<b>Figure 09:</b> Frequency of Students' Thinking about Their Teachers' Comments When Writing .....	53
<b>Figure 10:</b> Students' Consideration of Their Teachers' Feedback .....	54
<b>Figure 11:</b> Frequency of Students' Participation in the Class .....	55
<b>Figure 12:</b> The Level of Students' Performance in Written Tests .....	56
<b>Figure 13:</b> Students' Preparation before Exams .....	57
<b>Figure 14:</b> Students' Arrival for Exams .....	58
<b>Figure 15:</b> Students' Feeling of Anxiety during Exams .....	59
<b>Figure 16:</b> Students Responses about whether Anxiety Motivates/Hinders Them from Answering in a Good Way or Not .....	60
<b>Figure 17:</b> Teacher's Moves and Students' Anxiety during Exams .....	60
<b>Figure 18:</b> Students' Use of Relaxation Strategies to Reduce Anxiety during Exams.....	61
<b>Figure 19:</b> Foreign Language Anxiety and EFL Students Academic Achievement	62
<b>Figure 20:</b> Students' Difficulties when They Transform Information from Mind to Exam Paper .....	63
<b>Figure 21:</b> Students' Difficult Exam Questions .....	64
<b>Figure 22:</b> Students' Responses about whether they Consume all the allocated time or Finish early when Sitting for the Exam .....	65
<b>Figure 23:</b> Students' Exam Failure Experience .....	66



**Figure 24:** Students' Responses about Whether Their Parents' Pressure Makes  
Them Nervous or Not ..... 67

## Table of Contents

<b>Dedication</b> .....	II
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	III
<b>Abstract</b> .....	IV
<b>List of Acronyms and Abbreviations</b> .....	V
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	VI
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	VIII
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	X

## General Introduction

Background to the Study.....	1
1. Statement of the Problem.....	1
2. Definition of Terms.....	1
3. Significance of the Study.....	2
4. Research Objectives.....	2
5. Research Questions.....	2
6. Research Methodology.....	3
6.1 Population and sample of the study.....	3
7. Structure of the Research.....	3

## Chapter One: Writing Skill

Introduction.....	7
-------------------	---

1.1.	Definition and Nature of Writing.....	7
1.1.1.	Writing as a skill.....	8
1.1.2.	Writing as a system.....	8
1.1.3.	Writing as a process.....	9
1.1.4.	Writing as a genre.....	9
1.2.	The Stages of the Writing Process.....	10
1.2.1	Copying.....	10
1.2.2	Reproducing.....	11
1.2.3	Recombination and Adaptation.....	11
1.2.4	Guided Writing.....	11
1.2.5	Composition.....	12
1.3.	Elements of Writing.....	12
1.3.1.	Ideas.....	13
1.3.2	Organization.....	13
1.3.2.	Word Choice.....	14
1.3.3.	Sentence fluency.....	14
1.3.4	Voice.....	15

1.3.5 Conventions.....	15
1.4. Approaches of Writing.....	16
1.4.1. Product Approach.....	16
1.4.2. Process Approach.....	17
1.4.3. Genre Approach.....	17
1.5. Reasons for Writing.....	18
1.6. Importance of Writing.....	20
1.7. Assessing Writing.....	21
1.8. Factors that Affect Writing.....	22
1.8.1. The role of time.....	23
1.8.2. The role of the teacher.....	23
Conclusion.....	24

## **Chapter Two: Students' Anxiety**

Introduction.....	27
2.1 Definition of Anxiety.....	27
2.2 Types of Anxiety.....	28
2.2.1 Trait anxiety.....	28
2.2.2 State Anxiety.....	29
2.3 Symptoms of Anxiety.....	29
2.3.1 Visible Symptoms.....	29
2.3.2 Intellectual and Behavioral Symptoms.....	30
2.3.3 Emotional Symptoms.....	30
2.4 Causes of Anxiety.....	30
2.5 Consequences of Anxiety.....	32
2.6 The Chemistry of Anxiety.....	33
2.7 How to Overcome Anxiety?.....	34

2.7.1 Before the exam.....	34
2.7.2 The day of the exam.....	35
2.7.3 During the exam.....	36
2.7.4 If anxiety begins to interfere with exam performance.....	37
2.7.5 Relax Your Muscles.....	38
2.7.6 Relax Through Visualization.....	39
2.7.7 Concentrate on Your Breathing.....	39
2.7.8 Relax Your Muscles.....	40
2.7.9 Relax Through Visualization.....	40
Conclusion.....	41

### **Chapter Three: Fieldwork and Data Analysis**

Introduction.....	44
3.1 Description of the questionnaire.....	44
3.2 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire.....	45
Conclusion.....	68
General Conclusion.....	68
Recommendations.....	69

References

Appendices

المخلص

# **General Introduction**

## **Background to the Study**

Anxiety has been defined, the feelings of unease, worry and fear. It incorporates both the emotions and the physical sensations that might be experienced when worried or nervous about something. Thus, this study seeks to know the main sources of anxiety and what should be done to make students avoid it.

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

The consequences of anxiety may cause a serious trouble for those students who suffer from it. A deep investigation may help overcome that situation, includes finding the reasons behind that unpleasant feeling and how to treat it. Anxiety is downright frustrating; after all, it is discouraging when you have put in the time and effort and still do not make the grade. But even worse, it can have real consequences on the students who experience it.

### **2. Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the terms listed below were defined as follows:

- **Exam:** a critical assessment, observation, or evaluation. Specifically:the procedure of submitting a statement to such conditions or operations as will lead to its proof or disproof or to its acceptance or rejection (Merriam-Webster, 2016).
- **Writing:** a writing system is a method of visually representing language, based on a script and a set of rules regulating its use (Omniglot, 2013).
- **Test Anxiety:** A diffuse feeling of worry or discomfort accompanied by negative thoughts in relation to a testing situation as measured by a total score on the Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI) (Spielberger et al., 1980).

- **Academic Achievement:** Final course grade, computed in percentages.

This percentage was determined by adding total points obtained on five unit multiple choice examinations and one comprehensive multiple choice examination. The total was weighted for each examination, divided by the number of points possible, and rounded to the nearest hundredth.

### **3. Significance of the Study**

Exam anxiety is one of the most important problems among moderate and low average students. In the time of examination, many students and parents approach counselors and psychologists which show the existence of the severity of this problem. It prompted the researcher to make an in depth study of this subject. In this context, the aim of our study is trying to understand this phenomenon by making new significant distinctions resulting from getting closer to it and by investigating its effects that could help anxious students to perform well in the exams.

### **4. Research Objectives**

- Finding the causes of students' anxiety during exams.
- Looking for solutions to avoid anxiety.
- Identifying the different writing problems and difficulties.
- Identifying the main strategies that may help students overcome anxiety.

### **5. Research Questions**

- What are the main anxiety causes among EFL students at Biskre University?
- What are the main strategies to deal with anxious learners?
- What are the appropriate solutions to avoid anxiety?
- What are the major writing difficulties that face EFL learners at Biskra University?



## **6. Research Methodology**

Since the research aims at discovering the causes of anxiety and investigating the reasons why students feel so, and putting assumption to reduce such phenomena; an exploratory method is adopted.

### **6.1 Population and sample of the study**

We have chosen first year LMD students to be our population. We have selected 33 students out of about 300 students enrolled in the Department of Foreign Languages, English Division at Biskra University to investigate and observe their attitudes towards the effects of anxiety and to be guided by their answers in analyzing the research.

### **6.2 Data gathering tools**

In this study, in order to collect data, we would design a questionnaire that can serve as a means of collecting a considerable amount of data. The questionnaire will be designed for first year LMD students at the English Division of the University of Biskra.

## **7. Structure of the Research**

This dissertation is basically divided into three main chapters, two theoretical parts and one field work. The first one is concerned with an identification of the major writing difficulties: its definition, stages, elements, and the importance of writing. However, the second chapter is an overview of anxiety that contains the definitions, reasons, effects, types, and the methods that help overcome anxiety. The practical part comprises the analysis of students' questionnaire.

# **Chapter One**

## **Writing Skill**

## Table of Content

Introduction.....	7
1.1 Definition and Nature of Writing.....	7
1.1.1 Writing as a skill.....	8
1.1.2 Writing as a system.....	8
1.1.3 Writing as a process.....	9
1.1.4 Writing as a genre.....	9
1.2 The Stages of the Writing Process.....	10
1.2.1 Copying.....	10
1.2.2 Reproducing.....	11
1.2.4 Recombination and Adaptation.....	11
1.2.4 Guided Writing.....	11
1.2.5 Composition.....	12
1.3 Elements of Writing.....	12
1.3.1 Ideas.....	13
1.3.2 Organization.....	13
1.3.2 Word Choice.....	14
1.3.3 Sentence fluency.....	14
1.3.5 Voice.....	15

1.3.5 Conventions.....	15
1.4 Approaches of Writing.....	16
1.4.1 Product Approach.....	16
1.4.2 Process Approach.....	17
1.4.3 Genre Approach.....	17
1.5 Reasons for Writing.....	18
1.6 Importance of Writing.....	20
1.7 Assessing Writing.....	21
1.8 Factors that Affect Writing.....	22
1.8.1 The role of time.....	23
1.8.2 The role of the teacher.....	23
Conclusion.....	24

## **Introduction**

The writing skill is not only a hard task but it is a sophisticated one as compared to other skills. Consequently, it needs more effort and practice to accomplish a good level of proficiency. This chapter attempts to discuss basic principles underlying the teaching of writing starting by a definition of writing and its nature, its stages and its elements. Besides to this, it includes the approaches to teaching writing. In addition to the various stages which learners have to go through, this chapter we will discuss the reasons of writing and its importance and assessing it. Last but not least, it will tackle some factors that affect the writing process.

### **1.1 Definition and Nature of Writing**

Writing is a crucial means of communication. It is the skill which is most needed in educational settings where learners down written records of lectures and assemble for written assignments, write outlines and reports, and sit for written exams in all most their modules.

Brooks and Grundy (2001, p.1) claims that:

The study of language in the 20th century has tended to concentrate on spoken language, many linguists from Saussure through to Chomsky, for what seemed like good reasons at the time, neglecting the written mode in favor of the spoken. This, however; contributed to the fact that writing was for a long time a neglected area in language teaching. Moreover, writing ability is a skill-based, and like any skill it gets better with practice because it helps students think about ideas and how to express them.

The nature of writing might be linked to writers and their nature, such as students or other people. According to Stark (2005), Writing is just ideas we put them on paper. That is to say, students and writers prefer to express their thoughts in a piece of paper. On the other hand, some of them consequently attempt to protect their ideas and keep them in their minds for themselves. Therefore, a large number of ideas and information will never exist, since their creators do not prefer to express them.

Writing is a productive skill that involves producing language rather than receiving it. Many scholars defined writing from different angles of study. Thus, its definition differs in relation to the term associated. Therefore, there is writing as a skill, as a system, as a process, and as a genre.

### **1.1.1 Writing as a skill**

Writing is considered as a productive skill. Learners are required to write accurately in order to express their beliefs, ideas, and feelings in well written forms. Weigle (2002) claimed that writing is not only a matter of putting one's thoughts or ideas in a paper, but it is actually used to create new knowledge. Thus, being a good writer means to have the skill of producing new knowledge effectively.

### **1.1.2 Writing as a system**

Writing as a system refers to the use of graphic symbols that signify sounds of text in a visible form. It does not just involve, representing through using symbols, but also it involves respecting rules that rule those symbols, to produce effective language. As an illustration, Rogers (2005) defined writing as the process of making the Language visible using graphic marks. These graphic marks stand together to form words following certain instructions, words to make sentences and sentences to form paragraph. Byrne (1993)

believed, “Writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as a speech is more than the production of sounds. The symbols have to be arranged, according to a certain convention, to form words and words have to be arranged to form sentences” (p.01).

### **1.1.3 Writing as a process**

Writing is a logical process that takes into accounts certain steps. This process respects the specific order of stages to produce a meaningful piece of writing and express thoughts easily. In connection to this point, Zamel (1982) said, “Writing is a process through which students can explore their thoughts” (p. 207). Writing is somehow a difficult process. That is what Lado (1983) asserted, “We mean by writing in a foreign language the ability to use structures, the lexical items and their conventional representation in the ordinary matter of fact writing” (p. 248). Thus, writers must be competent and knowledgeable about rules when they produce a piece of writing, and high efforts are required from writers to write a coherent written discourse.

### **1.1.4 Writing as a genre**

Several scholars consider writing as a genre. According to Harmer (2007), genre mainly refers to the various types of writing. It means that there are different forms of writing that are called “Genre”. He also stated, “Students who are writing within certain genre need to consider a number of different factors. They need to have knowledge of the topic, the conventions style of the genre and the context in which their writing will be read as well as by whom” (p. 327). Each form of writing has its own rules and regulations. writers must pay attention to a particular structure, grammar, vocabulary and punctuation

of a particular genre. Additionally, the nature of writing is highly affected by the extent to which learners are influenced by their first language and its impact on their production

## **1.2 The Stages of the Writing Process**

The importance of teaching writing to EFL learners is a skill in which it has to be taught through formal and academic instructions. Rivers (1968) claimed that in order to learn how to express oneself clearly, learners need to go through five stages of development in writing which are copying, reproducing, recombination and adaptation, guided writing, and composition (p.245).

### **1.2.1 Copying**

Copying is also called “transcription”. It means putting down what L2 students of English have in their minds from the prior knowledge which are mostly learned inside the classroom.

According to Brookes and Grundy (1998), copying “is as much about using writing to support language learning as about teaching writing itself” (p.22). That is to say, copying is important in modifying L2 learners with the foreign language script. This stage will be an effective in writing if teachers pay attention to some principles about copying, i.e. The work set for copying should consists 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. So, he deepens the impression of his mind of the sounds the symbols represent, and he has further repetition practice of basic dialogue or pattern sentences (Rivers, 1968, p.246).



### **1.2.2 Reproducing**

Reproducing is the second stage of development in writing. It is mainly related to the production of students' copies without any reference to the original copy. According to Rivers (1968) point of view about this stage, 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 copy stage (p. 246). It means that the students will repeat what they copied in the first stage, and reproduce pieces of writing without referring to the original copy, but orally and reading with the teacher before reproducing. In addition of that, training in accurate copy will be beneficial for EFL learners, and dictation activity is taking place in this stage of developing writing.

### **1.2.3 Recombination and Adaptation**

The third stage of developing is called "recombination and adaptation". EFL learners are provided training in an accurate construction of sentences, how much significant for an intelligible transmission of messages. That is to say, learners can replace noun with pronouns, transform or return sentences in active and passive form, turning the direct speech into an indirect one and so forth. Moreover, they can add adjectives, adverbs, or conjunctions to sentences. For that reason, Rivers (1968) argued that recombination is relegated to later stage, till firm grounds are established in substitution, transformation, expansion, and contraction (p.248).

### **1.2.4 Guided writing**

Students in this stage are given a limited freedom in lexical and grammatical choices, i.e. changing some elements, but within their level. For instance, students can

paraphrase or any text. Here, they are considered neither controlled nor totally free, they are in between. In this case, Kroll (1990) stated that a good example of guided writing the production of a short text by answering direct and open-ended questions (p.250).

### **1.2.5 Composition**

The last stage of development in writing is called “Composition”. learners in this stage have more freedom than they were in the previous stage, and their freedom consists in the selection of words and structures. That is to say, they will think and write more in the foreign languages. Thus, Heaton (1975, as cited in Bader, 2007) who stated, “The writing of a composition is a task which involves the students in manipulating words in grammatical correct sentences and in linking to those sentences to form a piece of continuous writing which successfully communicate the writer’s thoughts and ideas on a certain topic” (p.25). This stage of development in writing focuses more on mastery the language form by the learners, concentrating on the coherent of their sentence, and their thoughts and ideas.

### **1.3 Elements of Writing**

Writing is the most commonly used skill that learners employ to express their ideas to others. Thus, they need to take into consideration six traits that are the qualities that teachers, writers, and readers think are important in good writing. These traits are ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and conventions.

Spandal (2005) points out as follows:

So when you become familiar with those criteria, you are not only prepared to assess writing with greater skill, ease, and consistency than ever before, but you are

also prepared to teach it with confidence and insight you never thought. The traits will fully support, complement, and enhance the best of your own curriculum (p. 09).

Hence, the aforementioned traits do not only enable writers to express themselves in a very accurate and appropriate way but also allow them to reach a higher level of formality. These criteria are explained in details as follows:

### **1.3.1 Ideas**

According to Peha (2003), “Ideas are the heart of the message, the content of the piece, the main theme, together with the details that enrich and develop that theme” (p. 1). Thus, Firstly, the topic should be narrow, clear and manageable. Secondly, the supporting details provide information about what was stated. Thirdly, the writing must show knowledge and experience about the idea. Finally, through these ideas, the reader should be able to understand what the writer is trying to convey

### **1.3.2 Organization**

Peha (2003, p.7) describes it as “the internal structure of the writing piece and how it is presented”. Besides, it holds the information together and can be easily comprehended by the author" Also, this criterion should be based on contrast, comparison, and logical chronological order. Also, he added that the organization should catch the audience’s attention at the start and makes them want to read more. Additionally, it must feel finished at the end and make the audience think about what was written. Furthermore, the parts should be arranged in the best order and easy to follow from a part to another. Using organizational methods in writing allows writers to present their ideas in a structured way so that readers can follow them.

### **1.3.3 Word Choice**

According to Peha (2003) word choice involves the use of the appropriate words that clarify and evoke feelings, moods, likes, and dislikes, and creates vivid pictures in the reader's mind. Hence, this trait has a specific guideline. First, words must be specific in order to make the reader understand what it is written. Also, the language must be used appropriately and effectively for the meaning to be conveyed. Third, writers should select words that demonstrate an action or movement and words that help the reader see, feel, hear, taste and understand. Peha (2003) supported this view and he added that the word choice is a trait that involves the use of strong verbs that tell how actions are performed. It includes adjectives and adverbs that make things more specific. Additionally, it comprises words and phrases that make the reader remember them after he finished reading them.

### **1.3.4 Sentence Fluency**

In a well-written piece of writing, sentences should vary in length and structure allowing the reader to add expression while reading them. Peha (2003) describes it as the rhythm and flow of the written language where sentences are used smoothly and clearly. Likewise, this trait has the following guidelines. Sentences should enhance the topic or the main idea. Next, they also need to match the mood of writing and vary in the length and structure. Furthermore, sentences beginning must have a purpose and variety. Additionally, transitions and connections must be found in the sentences to show how they are related and built upon each other. Moreover, sentence fluency includes variety in the sentence beginnings, variety in the sentence length and structure. Besides, it must be easy to be read, sound great when reading aloud, and uses rhythm, rhyme, alliteration and other sounds.

### **1.3.5 Voice**

According to Peha (2003), voice indicates a sense of the writer's personality that comes out throughout the writing piece. It shows the engagement of the writer and leaves a sense that a real person is speaking to them and caring about the topic. The author should add a sense of emotions, motivation, and enthusiasm to build a relationship between him and the reader. Also, this criterion has a lot of features. First, the writers should use ways that show that they are interested in the topic and also, they should use ways to make the readers engage in their writing pieces. Next, throughout their writing, writers should make their readers connected to them and highly engaged. In addition, another important aspect of this trait is that the writer's personality must be revealed and presented.

### **1.3.6 Conventions**

Peha (2003) states that "conventions in writing are the editing process. This includes spelling, indentation, punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and paragraphing" (p, 19). The appropriate use of convention rules allows readers to follow the text and gain meaning from it. He added that convention involves the use of outside punctuation, which includes periods, interrogation and exclamation marks. It involves the use of the inside punctuation, which includes the use of commas, colons, dashes, parenthesis, and semicolons. Furthermore, this trait also involves the consistent use of capitalization throughout writing to indicate where new ideas begin and also to indicate names and places.

## **1.4 Approaches of Writing**

Writing can be taught in different ways using various approaches. Stressing on different aspects of writing can be used on the product, on the process which writers go through, or in a particular genre.

### **1.4.1 Product Approach**

Nunan (2000) defines the product approach as “a product-oriented approach, as the title indicates focuses on the end result of the learning process, what is expected from the learner is to do as fluent and competent uses of the language” (p.86). Writing coherent and relevant pieces is one of the main goals that the product approach focuses on in addition to make students more competent in the language. It became to be known as the product approach because it focuses on the end of the results of students’ productions which are the final products. The product approach “encourages a focus formal text units or grammatical features of texts” (Hyland, 2003, p.3).

Furthermore, the product approach also focuses more on the model-based approach, i.e. teachers taught their students by providing them with model types’ texts which considered as the main elements in the product approach. Thus, Pincas (1984) also summarized the writing stages. The first one is getting students’ attention towards the main elements making the model and manipulating the most important ideas, and the second stage is to ask them making a connection between sentences based on the model itself.

However, this model-based approach was criticized because it gives no chance for students’ creation. In addition of that, this approach has been criticized specially in the concept of imitation. Here, the teachers in product approach escape from the learner’s writing problems.

### **1.4.2 Process Approach**

Writers do not rely on the lack or inspiration to produce effective pieces of writing, instead good writers plan what they want to say, write a rough draft, revise that draft, edit their work, and proof read the final copy. Leki (1991) defined the writing process as “the wandering path learners use to get the final product” (p.10). Another definition was given by Zamel (1982) who states that “writing is a process through which students can explore their thoughts” (p.147), where meaning is shaped. EFL writers begin to write in the process without knowing what they are going to write, and their productions go through certain steps; they firstly generate ideas and thoughts, pre-write or plan them, organize, proof read, and the last thing edit them in a final product.

Coming to the final product is not an easy as following a model, but the process activity takes too much time as the learners add and remove word. For that, the aim of the process approach is to encourage self-discovery and authorial and to make L2 learners write about topics that are interested in and important for them.

Furthermore, this approach focuses on planning writing which is to pass through stages in the writing activity, additionally, writing process concentrate on writing as a recursive process in which writers have the opportunity to plan, edit, and revise their works. Writing in process approach is seeing as free-dominantly to do with linguistic skill such as, planning, drafting and there is much less emphasis on the linguistic knowledge such as, knowledge about grammar, vocabulary and texts’ structure.

### **1.4.3 Genre Approach**

The genre is defined in the Oxford Dictionary (1991) as “a style or kind”, which means, each text conveys a purpose. For example, as Harmer’s view, newspapers have

their genre (2001), telephone, dialogue and informal conversations hold another genre too (Hedge, 2000, p.320)

The genre approach can be viewed as a stretch to a product approach. Both genre approach and product approach consider writing as pre-dominantly linguistic. But, the genre approach emphasizes that writing differs according to the social context in which it is produced. In this context, writing in a genre approach is considered as a social act that often leads; therefore, to successful communication. Swales (1990) asserted that members of the same community share a number of communicative purposes through genre approach as a type of communicative event.

Similarly, Hyland (2004) stated, "The concept of genre enables teachers to look beyond content, composing processes, and textual forms to see writing as an attempt to communicate with readers to better understand the ways that language patterns are used to accomplish coherent, purposeful prose" (p. 05). Thus, one feature of the genre approach is that the writer's selections depend on the context, the relationship between the writer, and the reader, and the purpose.

## **1.5 Reasons for Writing**

the purposes of the students behind the writing is Expressing thoughts, feelings, arguments and opinions regarding certain topics, as well as to their wishes to improve their writing ability for a number of reasons. Barrass (2005, pp. 11-19) claimed that writing helps students to remember, to observe, to think, and to communicate.



- **Write to Remember**

Noting the main points of a lecture, meeting or other academic events requires a good writing ability to remember. Writing is a useful tool for remembering through making good and comprehensive notes.

- **Write to Observe**

The author stated that writing is a helpful tool for learners to observe. Learners may prepare in a lecture in advance a data sheet that includes the essential elements of the observation. This may help to increase their concentration on the event and take precise notes.

- **Write to Think**

Writing works like taking a picture to the ideas and thoughts in mind. Barrass (2005) declared, "We may think in words or picture situation in our imagination, and then use words to capture our thoughts and feelings for later consideration" (p.17). Since writing is a creative process, there is a strong link between writing and thinking.

- **Write to Communicate**

Writing is one of the shapes of communication, which might be via either speaking or writing. Again, Barrass (2005) stated, "The development of writing was a great innovation, and it is still by writing, whether using pen and paper or a computer keyboard and electronic media, that important communications are prepared even if they are not delivered in writing but, for example, as songs, plays, speeches or talks" (p. 19). Writing through different tools is still an important skill that we need in different domains.

## 1.6 Importance of Writing

Writing is one of the four skills that students are required to master in learning English. They need to write for their academic purpose to be able to write clear and well-organized compositions. In education, the ultimate objective of learning the foreign languages is learning how to write for most students, to be able to participate many aspects of language society. The value behind that is being able to write effectively, in particular, it is not only considered as a system of communication, but also as an essential tool for learning languages. Writing expresses the social relationships through the individual's creation in his/her writing style. According to Hyland (2003), "writing is one of the main ways that we create a coherent social reality through engaging with others" (p.69).

Harmer (2004, pp. 33- 34) listed the following important reasons for learning writing:

- A.** Writing encourages students to focus on accurate language use because they think as they write. It may provoke well development as they resolve problems which writing puts their mind.
- B.** Writing also allows learners to perform different types of activities. It enables learners to design questions, interviews, questionnaires, and surveys.
- C.** Writing can be also used as an integrated part of a larger activity where the focus is on something else, such as language practice, acting out, or speaking. The teachers ask their learners to write a short dialogue in which they will act out.
- D.** Writing can be used as a warm-up for some activities in which the students are asked to write some sentences expressing their ideas and thoughts

**E.** Writing is a tool that is used in reinforcing language that has been taught. Teachers use writing tasks and ask learners to practice the recently learned grammar point.

**F.** Unlike speaking activities, writing activities provide students with a longer time to think and choose and to write. Thus, students are able to select the suitable words that enable them to express their own ideas they can also have time review their grammar pattern and correct their spelling mistakes.

In this respect, it is clear that the significance of writing makes a strong link between this skill and the EFL level of proficiency. Writing is no longer seen as a draft, rather; it is considered as a means of communication whereby learners translate their thoughts and ideas into a concrete final product. The rationale behind writing is strongly related to many aspects of one's life. It is not only being involved in language learning through using words, but it also elaborates one's thinking to explore new subjects and experience in a second language.

## **1.7 Assessing Writing**

Assessment is a fundamental procedure that cannot be separated from the learning and the teaching process. It serves identifying the learner's level, weaknesses, abilities, progress

through judging their outcomes. Writing is challenging to be assessed, especially in an L2 context; since it's based on different standards of tasks and evaluations that teachers should consider when assessing their learners' written productions (Brown, 2003). Writing assessment must not be done in a vacuum. EFL teachers should take a lot of criteria into consideration when evaluating their learner's written productions. Also, when assessing a

student's writing, teachers should consider the learners' writing deficiencies (O'Neil, Moor, Huot, 2009).

Writing is the most difficult language skill for learners to master. According to Byrne (1993), writing is considered to be a difficult skill to master even in the mother tongue. This is mainly due to three factors: physiological, linguistic and cognitive reasons.

Linguistically, language learners often have to look for an alternative for the absence of speaking features. They have to make efforts in order to keep the communication act open by considering the selection of sentence structure, as well as the sequence sentences, and how sentences are linked to each other (Byrne, 1993).

In the cognitive side, these learners have to learn and master the written forms of the language and to know the right writing structures by following specific procedures of instruction. In addition, learners have to be able to present their ideas clearly to make it easier and understandable for the reader even S/he does not know the writer (Byrne, 1993).

Finally, the psychological part is about, when learners write, they write on their own, without taking into consideration the feedback or possible interaction and since writing is a solidarity activity, this makes it difficult (Byrne, 1993). Writing as a process seems too simple. It is just to gather words and put them into sentences, and link these sentences together to have a paragraph. However, it is not easy to that extent; there are factors such as motivation, anxiety that affects the process of writing.

## **1.8 Factors that Affect Writing**

Writing is the core of learning. Teachers use writing to teach and improve content learning. Learners must learn new techniques and strategies to write. So, when teachers

come to teach writing in the content areas, they have to take into consideration certain assumptions to work on.

### **1.8.1 The Role of Time**

Time plays a major role since it is a critical aspect of learning. According to Robinson (2016), one of the most important things that can have an influence on our writing is time. He claimed that a successful writer is the one who is able to manage his/her writing time effectively. He said, “Time management in writing is very essential and if you are capable of managing time well, you will be successful as a writer” (Robinson, n.d, para. 06). Urquhart and McIver (2005), concerning writing topics, claimed that everything has to be organised in accordance with time. The writers also indicated, “When you provide your students with the time they need to prewrite, draft, revise, and edit, you are helping them improve as writers” (p. 23). This simply means time is a necessary factor for the writing process. the needed time should be devoted to each stage.

### **1.8.2 The Role of the Teacher**

According to Dominican University of California (2018), to effectively foster a community of budding young writers, teachers need to create an environment that is safe, encourages risk, and provides the support for learning the skills essential to the craft of writing. Balanced Literacy provides the teacher with many opportunities to model writing for their students, thereby infusing the skills necessary for their students to develop (para. 6).

As a teacher inside the classroom, his role is very crucial to help in the creation of good future writer through providing learners with effective support and encouraging them to overcome their obstacles and fears. Urquhart and McIver (2005) focused on the idea of

giving substantive feedback to the students, stating that “When you integrate reading and writing, use writing-to-learn, provide students with substantive feedback, and use exemplary examples in your classroom, students become better writers” (pp. 70-71). Moreover, they believed that it is very necessary to share knowledge with your learners about the learning content through conferring and discussing some important issues and considering the writing requirements, which are particular to that discipline. They considered motivation as a key factor for writing; one of the ways suggested by the authors to enhance learners' motivation is through doing by heart what you ask them to do as a teacher

### **1.8.3 The role of Assessment**

Identifying the purpose of writing, modelling the process, and relying on useful applications of educational technology, are the main goals of writing instruction, especially in the content area (Urquhart and McIver, 2005, p. 05). It means relying on good assessment methods pave the way to identify the purpose of any piece of writing, which may aid in motivating the students to write whether inside or outside the classroom, and improve their writing performance.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, writing is one of the most important and effective skills, it is the most difficult and complex skill to master from its nature. Yet, it is the most important and effective skill compared with the other skills by using different styles in writing such as, process, product, and genre approaches. However, students at the university level face a great difficulty to produce correct pieces of writing because of numerous factors affecting their productions.

# **Chapter Two**

## **Students' Anxiety**

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	27
2.1 Definition of Anxiety.....	27
2.2 Types of Anxiety.....	28
2.2.1 Trait anxiety.....	28
2.2.2 State Anxiety.....	29
2.3 Symptoms of Anxiety.....	29
2.3.1 Visible Symptoms.....	29
2.3.4 Intellectual and Behavioral Symptoms.....	30
2.3.5 Emotional Symptoms.....	30
2.4 Causes of Anxiety.....	30
2.5 Consequences of Anxiety.....	32
2.7 The Chemistry of Anxiety.....	33
2.7 How to Overcome Anxiety?.....	34
2.7.1 Before the exam.....	34
2.7.2 The day of the exam.....	35
2.7.3 During the exam.....	36
2.7.4 If anxiety begins to interfere with exam performance.....	37
2.7.5 Relax Your Muscles.....	38
2.7.6 Relax Through Visualization.....	39
2.7.7 Concentrate on Your Breathing.....	39
2.7.8 Relax Your Muscles.....	40
2.7.9 Relax Through Visualization.....	40
Conclusion.....	41



## **Introduction**

Feeling a little jittery right before a test is completely normal; in fact, some nerves can actually help you to focus and keep you motivated. But when those nerves become so out of control that you lose all concentration and your ability to test becomes hindered, it's known as anxiety. And it has been found to affect anywhere from 10% to 40% of all students at any given time. However, experiencing too much anxiety can result in emotional and physical distress leads to difficulty in concentrating, and emotional worry. Inferior performance arises not because of intellectual problems or poor academic preparation, but because testing situations create a sense of threat for those experiencing test anxieties; further this anxiety disrupts attention and memory function.

### **2.1 Definition of Anxiety**

Anxiety is one of the most unwelcomed emotional states that everyone might feel at some points of their lives. In this research, a deep investigation is tackled in order to understand its nature, causes, and effects on students during tests. Anxiety is defined as a kind of mental response marked by feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and self-blame (Sarasan1977). It was seen as a state of incapability of handling a difficult situation or a challenge in satisfactory manner.

Anxiety has been seen As apprehension, tension or uneasiness from anticipation of danger, the source of which is largely unknown or unrecognized primarily of intrasychic origin, in distinction fear, which is the emotional response to a consciously recognized and usually external threat or danger. Anxiety may be regarded as pathologic when it interferes with effectiveness in living, achievement of desired goals or satisfaction, or reasonable emotional comfort” Azimi (2016, p. 30)

Zeidner (1998, p.25) describes anxiety as “the set of cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions that accompany concern over possible negative consequences contingent on a test or evaluative situation”, with Nicaise, (1995) and Whitaker Sena et al., (2007) considering test anxiety to be" an individual’s physiological, cognitive, and behavioral responses that stimulate negative feelings about an evaluation. Moreover, researchers made clear distinction between two main forms of anxiety: test anxiety and anxiety disorder.

Anxiety disorder considered as a group of mental illnesses that cause constant and overwhelming anxiety and fear. The excessive anxiety can make you avoid work, school, family get-togethers, and other social situations that might trigger or worsen your symptoms (Bhargava, 2010). On the other hand, test anxiety is specific to examinations and other situations of performance evaluation, which is going to be studied in this research.

## **2.2 Types of Anxiety**

Anxiety is a common human emotion. Many people feel anxious before a test or exam, or when they are making an important decision. Some level of nervousness before tests can motivate you; however, too much stress can interfere with your ability to prepare for and perform on tests. Thus, many psychologists determinate between different types of anxiety, greater number of them illustrate two main types: trait and state.

### **2.2.1 Trait Anxiety**

Trait anxiety deals with the steady propensity to attend, to experience, and list negative emotions such as fears, worries, and anxiety across many situations. This is part of the personality dimension of neuroticism versus emotional stability. Trait anxiety also

demonstrates by repeated concerns about and reporting of body symptoms. Trait anxiety is characterized by a steady perception of environmental stimuli (events, others' statements) as threatening. Trait-anxious students often face and express also state anxiety, in situations in which most people do not experience such responses. This bias is thought to reflect a cognitive-perceptual bias. At the perceptual level, there is an over intentional bias to threatening stimuli. At the cognitive level, there is a distorted negative interpretation of information congruent with and fostering anxious responses. Finally, at the level of memory, there is over recall of threatening information Gidron (2013).

### **2.2.2 State Anxiety**

State anxiety deal with anxiety that begin in a specific situation. Everybody faces state anxiety, but the stimulus can vary. Like in sport state anxiety may rise when an athlete is in a high-pressure situation and is called upon to perform. Examples of this include: serving for the match in tennis, taking a penalty shot in soccer, converting a try in rugby, or shooting a free throw in basketball. State anxiety is also named situational anxiety'; it is originated in a particular situation, and can be reduced over time (Riasati, 2011, p. 908).

### **2.3 Symptoms of Anxiety**

Although most learners suffer from test anxiety, its symptoms differ from one to another. Some students have moderate anxiety in which they still do fairly on tests while others suffer from extreme anxiety that affect their learning achievements. As a result, they perform badly on tests and are nearly unable to deal with any sort of activities. Symptoms of anxiety can behavioral physical, cognitive, and emotional Spielberger (2015) and Vaez (2008).

### **2.3.1 Visible Symptoms**

Physical symptoms of anxiety include:

- Sweating
- Shaking
- Rapid heartbeat
- Dry mouth
- Fainting
- and Nausea

Moderate cases of anxiety can cause a sense of "butterflies" in the stomach, while more extreme cases can actually cause students to become physically ill.

### **2.3.1 Intellectual and behavioral symptoms**

Mental and behavioral symptoms might include avoiding any testing situation. In other words, students avoid tests to feel free of any state of anxiety. This might result in quitting school since it is considered as a source of fear. One of the common symptoms of test anxiety is that many students who suffer from anxiety tend to leave test answers blank although they knew the answers. Trouble concentrating on tests, negative self-talk, and racing thoughts are also mental symptoms of test anxiety.

### **2.3.2 Emotional symptoms**

Emotional symptoms of test anxiety can include

- Depression
- Low self-esteem

- Anger
- and a feeling of hopelessness

## **2.4 Causes of Anxiety**

Spielberger (2015) and Vaez (2008) declared that the causes of anxiety aren't fully understood. However, a number of different factors may result to this dilemma. While test anxiety can be very stressful for students who experience it, many students do not realize that is actually quite common. Nervousness and anxiety are perfectly normal reactions to stress. For some students, however, this fear can become so intense that it actually interferes with their ability to perform well. So what causes test anxiety? For many students, it can be a combination of things. A few potential causes of test anxiety include:

**2.4.1 Fear of failure:** when the student do not trust himself enough , he may put a pressure on himself that can cause a severe anxiety.

**2.4.2 Poor testing history:** many students who experienced a past failure, they will be always afraid of tests and exams that will lead them to a severe anxiety .

**2.4.3 Unpreparedness:** without any doubt , when the students do not prepare very well , they will feel anxious .

### **2.4.4 Medical causes**

For some students, anxiety may be linked to an underlying health issue such as

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Thyroid problems, such as hyperthyroidism

- Respiratory disorders, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma
- Drug misuse or withdrawal
- Withdrawal from alcohol, anti-anxiety medications (benzodiazepines) or other medications
- Chronic pain or irritable bowel syndrome
- Rare tumors that produce certain fight-or-flight hormones

#### **2.4.5 Ongoing Stressful Events**

Anxiety may develop because of one or more stressful life events include:

- work stress or job change
- change in living arrangements
- pregnancy and giving birth
- family and relationship problems
- major emotional shock following a stressful or traumatic event
- verbal, sexual, physical or emotional abuse or trauma
- death or loss of a loved one.

#### **2.4.6 Personality Factors**

- Research suggests that students with certain personality traits are more likely to have anxiety. For example, children who are perfectionists, easily flustered, timid, and inhibited, lack self-esteem or want to control everything, sometimes develop anxiety during childhood, adolescence or as adults.

## 2.5 Consequences of Anxiety

Despite the usefulness of anxiety in certain situation like when someone is in danger for instance (falling from the stairs) It can also help to increase our attention to the threatening event and improve our response. It is not so helpful when the threat we are faced with is cognitive, like an exam.

Since our education system mainly uses written examinations as the main means of assessment, evaluation and comparison. This, however, causes some students to be very distressed by the negative experience. The entire examination experience for students becomes excruciatingly painful, with their self-esteem and motivation put under threat. Students who repeatedly experience low-test performances despite putting in much effort commonly feel shame, stupidity, and incompetence. Therefore, majority of research concluded that test anxiety is one of the factors which are responsible for students' underachievement and low performance (Rothman, 2004)

Anxiety does not just affect students during their examinations. It can also affect students as they prepare for the exam. This can cause poor understanding and association of content; which inhibit the student's ability to recall information. A research supported by Dr. Rizwan Akram Rana and Dr. Nasir Mahmood. In their article "*The Relationship Between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement*", they concluded that "The effect of anxiety on motivation can also influence the success expectancy" . Consequently, students with higher anxiety might minimize the success expectancy's level and relegate significant learning outcomes protectively. Other negative connotations include low self-esteem, reading difficulties, negative thoughts about the school, and feelings of unease and fear, which is the result of an extreme fear of failure (Rana, & Mahmood, 2010).

Moreover, anxiety causes detrimental effects to some somatic processes which can lead to tachycardia, sweating, muscle tension, and also affected respiration. Aysan et al., asserted that anxiety can have negative physiological effects to the body like hypertension, coronary heart disease, respiratory distress syndrome and suppressed immune system functioning (Aysan, Thompson & Hamarat, 2001).

## **2.6 The Chemistry of Anxiety**

Hall noticed that rushes of adrenaline were experienced by students with anxiety during their examinations. As a result, the brain might be blocked and cannot think or trigger fight response. Therefore, learners should know how to recover and control from adrenaline effects on their thinking. Adrenaline might be burned off while exercising therefore; it is advisable to practice any kind physical activities before tests. During physical activity, the body processes chemical release of adrenaline in order to remove its effects on the brain.

During tests, students are likely to experience adrenaline flow therefore; an advisable strategy is to start with the activities that student feels confident about. When student is more confident, the brain would recover from adrenaline and might do more complex questions

## **2.7 How to Overcome Anxiety?**

According to Greenberger & Padesky (1995), it is natural that Approximately students feels nervous before an exam. Students may feel the following:

- “Butterflies” in the stomach
- “Will I be able to answer the questions?”
- “Have I done enough preparation?”



Greenberger & Padesky (1995) suggested some tips that will help reduce anxiety and turn those uncomfortable feelings, thought, behaviors away. these tips are as follows:

### **2.7.1 Before the Exam**

#### **2.7.1.1 Study Habits**

- Study so you may recall material even when stressed
- Study throughout the semester to avoid last minute cramming
- Learn to concentrate on the material you are studying
- Generate questions from textbooks and lecture notes
- Focus on key words, concepts and examples
- Make charts and outlines that organize information
- Take short breaks while studying to refresh yourself
- Learn and practice good time management habits
- Avoid procrastination, too frequent daydreaming, and unproductive time-filler activities

#### **2.7.1.2 Stress Reduction**

- Practice methods of relaxation and stress reduction
- Listen to Quran

#### **2.7.1.3 Healthy Living**

- Practice good nutrition and maintain regular exercise
- Create a balanced schedule that includes some breaks, exercise and social activity
- Sleep well
- Set realistic study goals

- Identify, evaluate and replace unhealthy, inaccurate or irrational thoughts (REC exercise)

## **2.7.2 The Day of the Exam**

### **2.7.2.1 Prepare**

- Eat a moderate and healthy breakfast (and lunch)
- Take it easy on caffeine and other stimulants
- You may already feel light headed or jittery on the day of the exam and don't need any extra stimulants
- Arrive at the exam location early
- Choose a seat that is comfortable and away from distractions

### **2.7.2.2 Relax**

- Do something relaxing the hour before the exam
- -Last minute cramming may cloud your course knowledge
- Avoid classmates that could upset your composure by wanting to chat or go over last minute information
- If anxiety increases while you wait for the exam to begin, use relaxation and visualization methods or distract yourself by thinking of your after-exam plans

### **2.7.2.3 Reflect**

- Reflect on whether what you are experiencing could partly be excitement rather than anxiety (The physical indicators of excitement are almost identical to those of anxiety)

### **2.7.3 During the Exam**

#### **2.7.3.1 First Impression**

- Read the directions first, review the entire exam, then read the directions again
- Think of the exam as an opportunity to show off what you know (which may be more than you first think)
- Organize Yourself
- Organize your time efficiently – work on the easier portions of the exam first
- This can increase confidence and reduce anxiety
- Pace yourself throughout the exam
- Check to see if you are rushing or getting behind

#### **2.7.3.2 Tackling Exam Questions**

- Essay Questions: construct an outline to organize and avoid rambling, repetition, and missed information
- Short-Answer Questions: answer only what is asked and keep it short and to the point
- Multiple Choice Questions: read all alternatives then eliminate those that are incorrect
- Watch for qualifying words – “only”, “always”, “most”

#### **2.7.3.3 Possible Worries**

- Difficulty with a question: show the material that you do know
- Think you are unable to finish the exam: concentrate on those portions that you can answer well
- No time to review exam: review your answers as you go and recheck answers only if you have time

## **2.7.4 If Anxiety Begins to Interfere with Exam Performance**

### **2.7.4.1 Overcoming Anxiety**

- Slow down and become intentional about your physical movements, this can increase your sense of self-mastery and control
- Use relaxation and visualization methods (ie. Controlled breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualizing peak performance)
- Stretch, stand up or walk around to relax tight muscles

### **2.7.4.2 Calming Distractions**

- Focus on an inanimate, calming object (ie. Wall, floor, pen)
- Perform a calming action (ie. Rubbing a stone)
- Use a mantra (ie. Silently, slowly repeat a calming word/phrase)
- Use affirmative self-talk (ie. Relax, concentrate, it is okay)
- Create a mild, harmless pain that can override over other thoughts and impulses (ie. Pressing fingernails into palm)
- Have a drink of water or a snack
- Wear, touch or look at something with positive associations; this can trigger a calming response (ie. Photo, special stone)

## **2.7.5 After the Exam**

### **2.7.5.1 Learn**

- Learn from the experience
- Keep notes about what does and does not work for reducing exam anxiety

- It helps to be strategic, intentional and creative in developing and applying an anxiety reduction plan

#### **2.7.5.2 Reward**

- It is not helpful to punish yourself and mull over what did not go well
- Treat yourself well and give yourself a reward for your efforts

#### **2.7.5.3 Review**

- Review what worked well for you and increase your awareness of those assets and resources for the future
- Review what did not go as well so that you can develop new strategies
- Continue to practice and develop relaxation and visualization methods

#### **2.7.6 Relaxation Methods**

The body and the mind are interconnected, as a result, becoming relaxed physically helps us to relax mentally, and becoming relaxed mentally helps us to relax physically.

The following physical and mental relaxation methods can help ease exam anxiety since it is very hard for the body or mind to carry on with the anxiety at the same time the body or mind is becoming relaxed.

#### **2.7.7 Concentrate on Your Breathing**

Anxiety can lead to shallow, fast, or irregular breathing. Likewise, shallow, quick, or irregular breathing can increase physical sensations of anxiety. Those breathing patterns can create an imbalance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the body and brain, heightening physical indicators often associated with anxiety and, in turn, increasing our cognitive interpretations that what we are experiencing is due to anxiety.

### **2.7.7.1 Controlled Breathing Strategies**

Practice this method of breathing for at least 4 minutes because that's roughly how long it takes to restore the optimal balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide.

- Breathe in slowly and deeply to a count of **4**, hold the breath for a count of **2**, and breathe out for a count of **8**.
- With one hand on your upper chest, and the other on your stomach; the hand on your stomach should move in and out as you breathe, the hand on your chest should remain stationary.
- Breathe either through your mouth or nose; whichever is more comfortable.
- Breathe gently, slowly, and deeply and avoid taking big gulps of air.
- Practice this method of controlled breathing a few times each day in situations in which you feel anxious

### **2.7.8 Relax Your Muscles**

Tense muscles can be a result of anxiety as well as a cause of anxiety. Although most people carry muscle tension in different areas of their bodies, most people report increased levels of relaxation and decreased levels of physical tension and anxiety on completing the progressive muscle relaxation exercise.

#### **2.7.8.1 Progressive Muscle Relaxation Strategies**

- Progressive muscle relaxation is a technique where the body's major muscle groups are alternately tensed and relaxed
- The process can proceed from head to feet or feet to head
- Tense and relax the muscles in the forehead, eyes, jaw, neck, shoulders, upper back, biceps, forearms, hands, abdomen, groin, hips, buttocks, thighs, calves, and feet.
- Tense the first muscle group for **5** seconds and then relax for **10-15** seconds;

repeat, and do the same for the next muscle group until all muscle groups have been tensed and relaxed.

### **2.7.9 Relax Through Visualization**

Visualization (or imagery) methods are techniques for learning to relax and reduce anxiety.

Imagery involves actively visualizing scenes that are tranquil and relaxing for you.

#### **2.7.9.1 Visualization Strategies**

- The scenes you imagine can be scenes that may or may not exist. The important thing is that they are tranquil and relaxing for you
- The specific scene is less important than how the image makes you feel
- The more senses you incorporate in your image, the more relaxing the visualization is likely to be.
- By imagining smells, sounds, tastes, and tactile sensations that go along with your image, you will increase your ability to relax
- ie. – If you imagine yourself walking along a tree-lined mountain path, notice the bird songs, the light through the trees, the fragrance and color of the leaves, and the feel of the breeze on your skin.

### **Conclusion**

No research is absolutely complete and consequently no researcher can claim that the results of her/his study can be applied in all possible cases. The findings of the present study is important to the teachers showing them the causes of anxiety and also give the some possible ways to decrease it. The other support which anxious students can be

received is informational and emotional support which lead to decreasing academic stress and anxiety.



**Chapter Three**

**The Fieldwork and Data  
Analysis**

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	44
3.1 Description of the questionnaire.....	44
3.2 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire.....	45
Conclusion.....	68
General Conclusion.....	68
Recommendations.....	69
References	
Appendices	
المخلص	

## **Introduction**

This chapter is about the analysis of the results obtained in the questionnaire as a method used that we believe it will fit our study this analysis will be from different angles. Basically, it is directed to first year LMD students at English department at Biskra University in order to determine the effects of anxiety on students' achievements in written examination and its main causes and consequences and how to overcome it.

### **3.1 Description of the questionnaire**

For the present research we have administered a questionnaire of twenty five items to learners. The items were developed, to explore the attitudes of first (1st) year LMD students toward their exams and to investigate their performance in writing. Learners' questionnaire was administered to thirty (30) students of the first (1st) year LMD students of English language, constituted participants as the total number of the population from which the sample will be at random. The learners' questionnaire was administered to a random sample of thirty (30) students selected from a total population of first year LMD students at the department of English in university of Biskra.

#### **Section one**

This section is entitled "General information "(Q1-Q2). It consists of two questions aiming to gain personal information about students.

#### **Section two**

The second is about 'Writing skill' (Q3-Q9). It attempts to investigate the students' Writing difficulties, their level, interests, and motivation, and the value of their teachers' feedback.

### Section three

It is about anxiety. It focuses precisely on the effects of anxiety during exams, the Impacts of teachers, parents, the atmosphere of the exam, and the healthy habits.

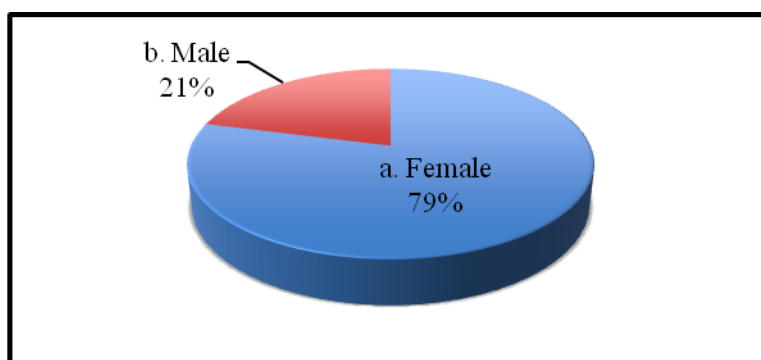
## 3.2 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

### Part One: General Information

**Item 1.** Would you specify your gender, please?

**Table 3.1:** Students' Gender

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Female	26	79%
Male	7	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



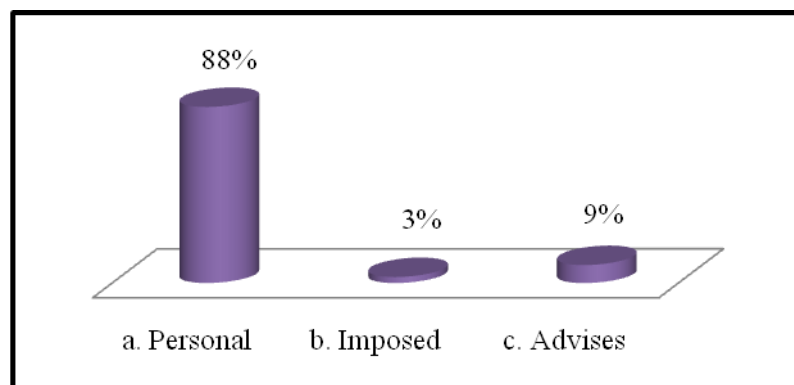
**Figure 3.1:** Students' Gender

According to the table, the number of females is about (79%) and the number of males is about (21%). It is clearly seen that the majority of first year LMD students are females, this means that the desire for learning English as a foreign language for the female respondents is more than for the male respondents.

**Item 2.** Your choice to study English at university was:

**Table 3.2: Students' Choice of Studying English at University**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Personal	29	88%
Imposed	1	3%
Advises	3	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.2: Students' Choice of Studying English at University**

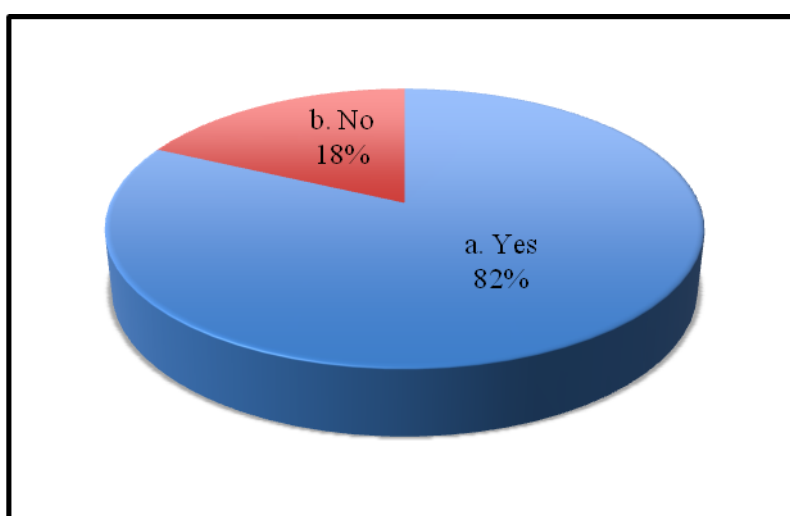
The majority of students have opted for studying English as a personal choice, they represent (88%) from the total sample. This means that they are motivated to learn English. While the rest was either advised (9%) or imposed (3%). This is maybe related to their parents' decision or to some other reasons. However, according to this table, the reasons that make the majority of students study English with their free will are numerous. Firstly, because they like it so much, and secondly because it is an international language which serves as a means to communicate with English people from other countries. For other students, it is because they get good marks in BAC exam. For other, they want to be teachers and they need it to get a job in the future.

## Section Two: The Writing Skill

**Item 3.** Do you find the module of written expression interesting?

**Table 3.3: The Importance of Written Expression Module**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	27	82%
No	6	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.3: The Importance of Written Expression Module**

The table above shows that (82%) of the students find the module of “Written Expression” interesting. On the other hand, there is only one student (18%) who said that “Written Expression” is not interesting. This result demonstrates that the students are aware of the importance of writing. It is to teachers to guide them and help them get more motivated and interested.

### **Students’ justification**

Students declared that the "written expression" module is interesting because it is one of four fundamental skills to learn any language, it helps them to express their

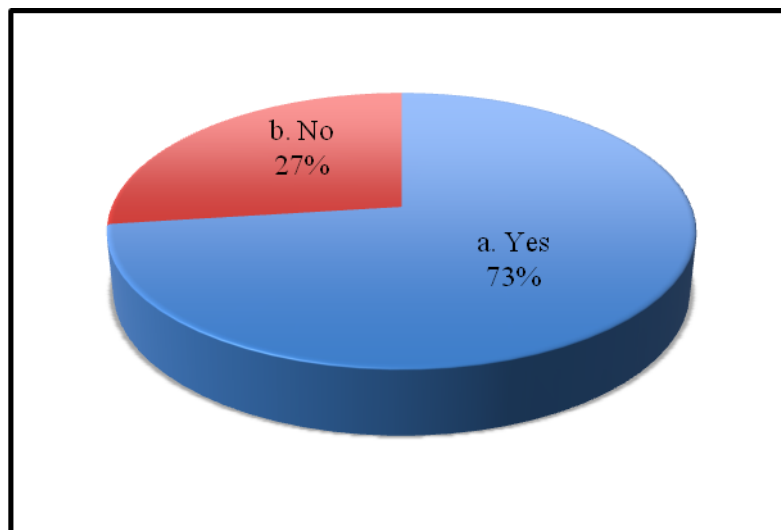
thoughts, they use all the knowledge and structures they have learned, it is a crucial element for communication and critical thinking, and it increases creativity.

For others, they find it not interesting because they are not good at writing or due to teachers being boring, tedious, and traditional topics.

**Item 4.** Does your teacher motivate you to write?

**Table 3.4: Teacher's Motivation for Students to Write**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	24	73
No	9	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



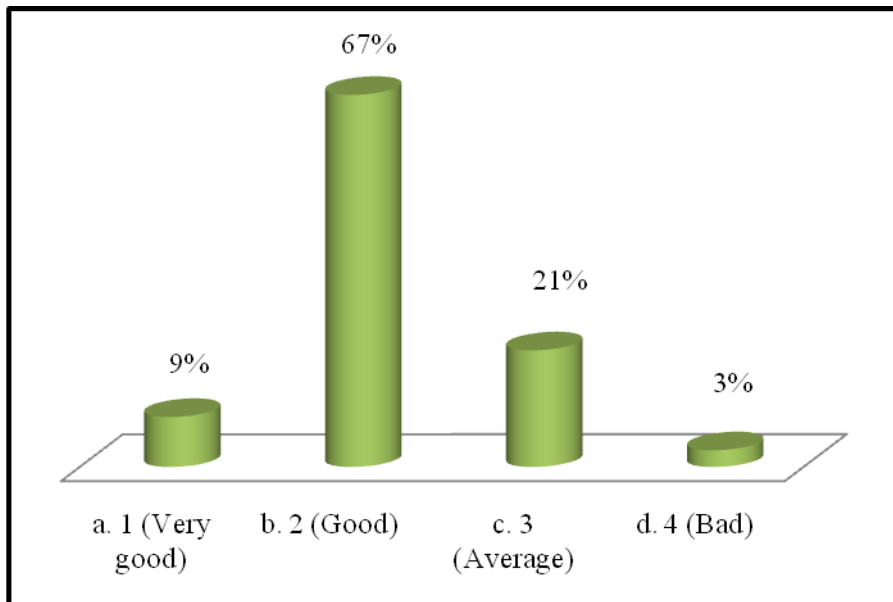
**Figure 3.4: Teacher's Motivation for Students to Write**

A (73%) of students said their teachers motivate them to write, since the teacher plays the important role for students' improvement, while (27%) said they do not motivate them.

**Item 5.** How can you evaluate your level in writing

**Table 3.5: Students' Evaluation of Their Level in Writing**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
1 (Very good)	3	9%
2 (Good)	22	67%
3 (Average)	7	21%
4 (Bad)	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.5: Students' Evaluation of Their Level in Writing**

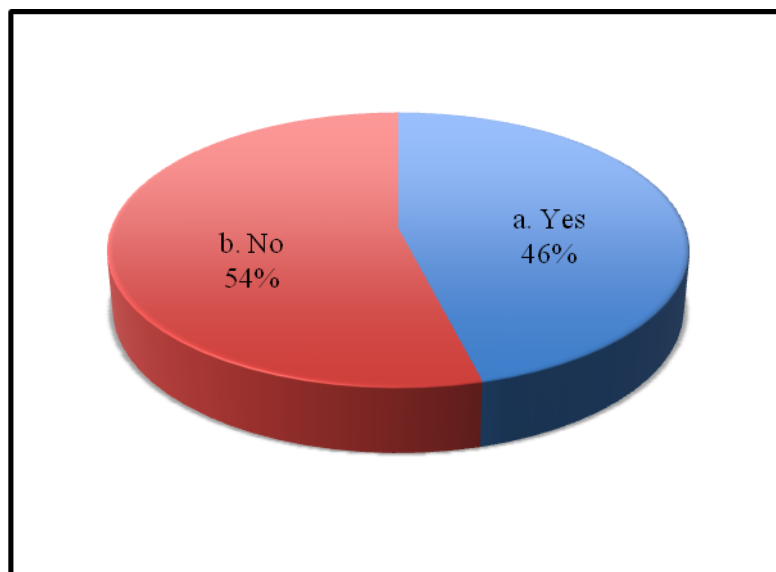
Many students see their level of writing is good (67%), another number of students see that their level is average, whereas a few see they are neither very good (9%) nor bad (3%).



**Item 6.** For you, is the time allocated for the exam enough for you to complete writing your ideas and answers?

**Table 3.6: Students' Responses to the time allocated for the exam**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	15	46%
No	18	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



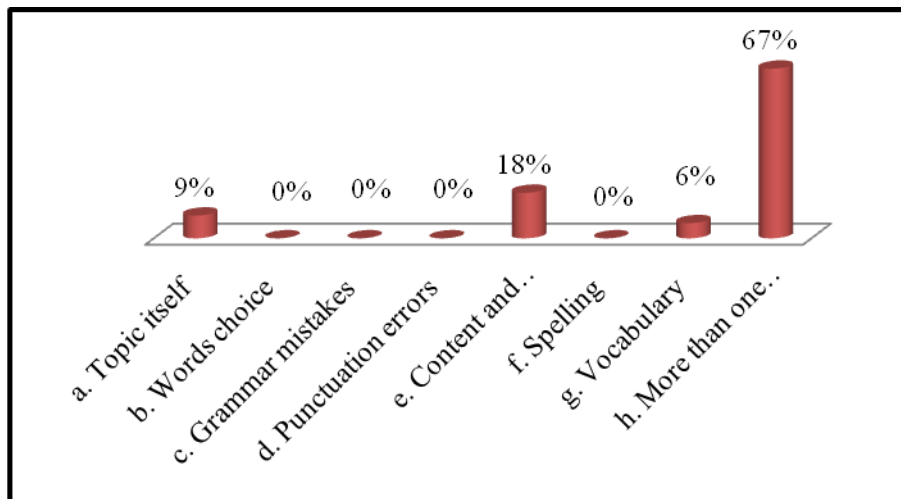
**Figure 3.6: Students' Responses to the time allocated for the exam**

It seems that more than half of students (54%) find that the time allocated for the exam is not enough to complete writing their ideas and answers which make them nervous, on the other hand, a (46%) of students agreed that the time is suitable for them.

**Item 7.** Which of the following writing aspects hinder(s) you from writing your answers effectively in the exam? (You can tick more than one answer)

**Table 3.7: Writing Aspects that Hinder Students from Writing Their Answers Effectively**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Topic itself	3	9%
Words choice	0	0%
Grammar mistakes	0	0%
Punctuation errors	0	0%
Content and organization of ideas	6	18%
Spelling	0	0%
Vocabulary	2	6%
More than one aspect	22	67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



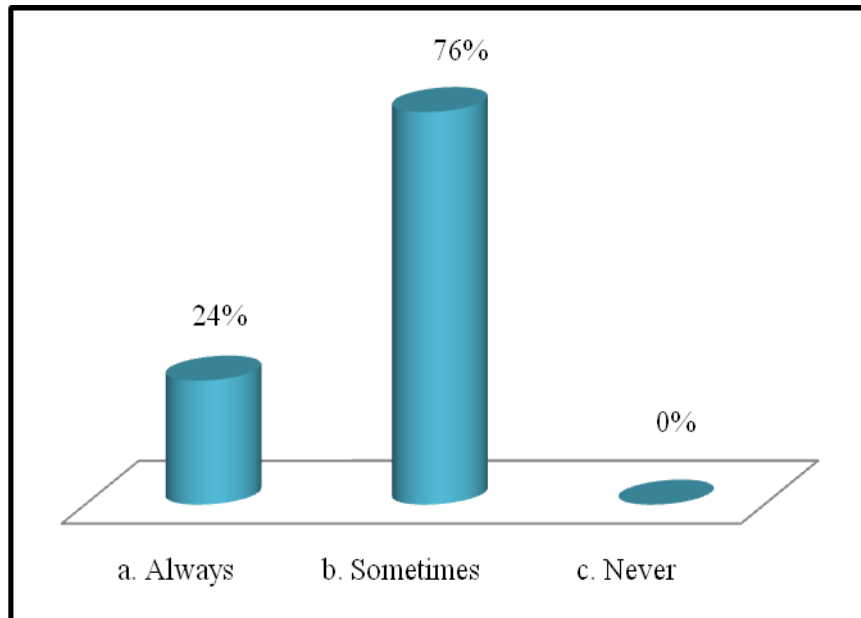
**Figure 7: Writing Aspects that Hinder Students from Writing Their Answers Effectively**

As can be noticed that many reasons hinders students from writing effectively. The main reason is the content and the organization of ideas, followed by the topic itself and the vocabulary. which leads us to that the problem is a problem of ideas.

**Item8.** How often do you think about your teachers' comments when writing?

**Table 3.8: Frequency of Students' Thinking about Their Teachers' Comments When Writing**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	8	24%
Sometimes	25	76%
Never	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



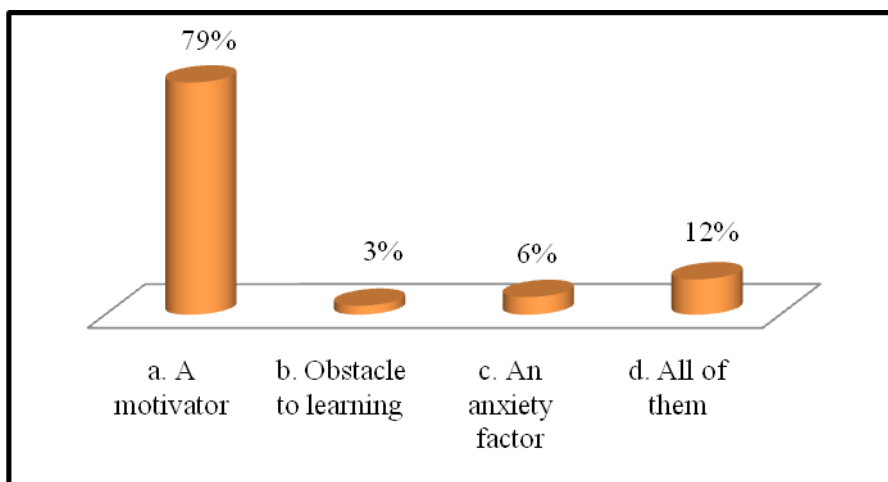
**Figure 3.8: Frequency of Students' Thinking about Their Teachers' Comments When Writing**

The table shows that all students think about their teachers comments with degrees and that might be a strong factor of anxiety.

**Item 9.** How do you consider your teacher's feedback?

**Table 3.9: Students' Consideration of Their Teachers' Feedback**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
A motivator	26	79%
Obstacle to learning	1	3%
An anxiety factor	2	6%
All of them	4	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.9: Students' Consideration of Their Teachers' Feedback**

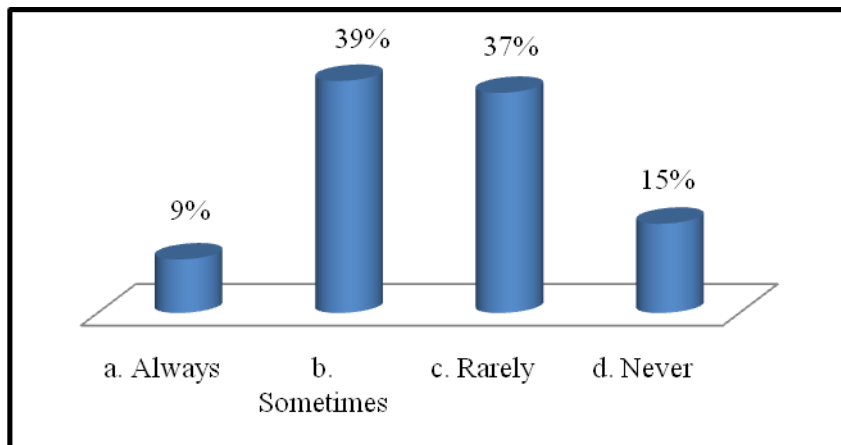
Teachers' feedback is an essential part in the process of learning and to reduce students anxiety. According to the table above the majority of students (79%) believe that teachers feedback is a factor of motivation, whereas a few consider it as an anxiety factor (6%) or an obstacle to learning (3%). Others said that their teachers do not give them feedback, however, there are some who said that their teachers' feedback is a kind of assessment and a mean of correcting mistakes and errors.

### Section Three: Test Anxiety

**Item 10.** In the class, how often do you participate and answer the question?

**Table 3.10: Frequency of Students' Participation in the Class**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Always	3	9%
Sometimes	13	39%
Rarely	12	37%
Never	5	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



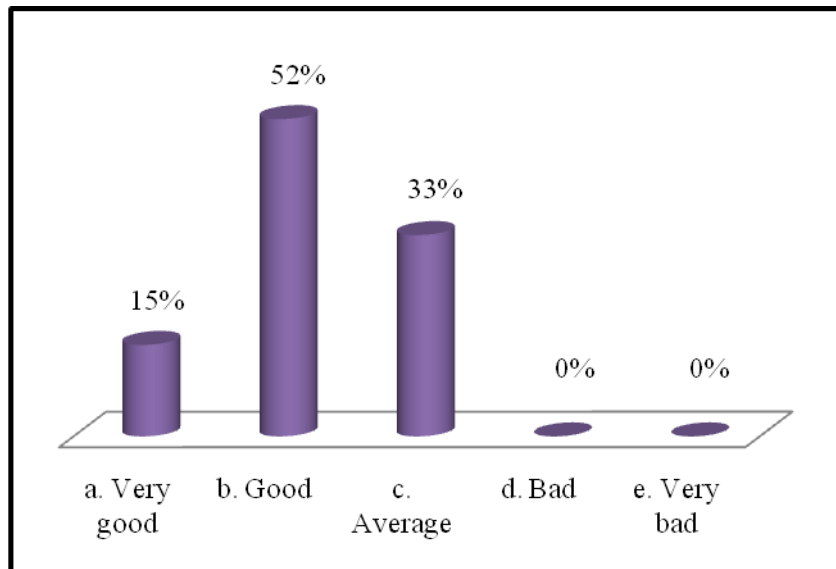
**Figure 3.10: Frequency of Students' Participation in the Class**

The above table shows that (9%) of the students "always" participate in the classroom; while the majority of students "sometimes" participate in the classroom; they represent (39%) from the total sample because of some factors such as anxiety, demotivation or they may find difficulties to express their ideas. However, (37%) affirmed that they "rarely" participate in class whereas (15%) answer they "never" participate in the classroom.

**Item 11.** When it comes to written tests, do you perform?

**Table 3.11: The Level of Students' Performance in Written Tests**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Very good	5	15%
Good	17	52%
Average	11	33%
Bad	0	0%
Very bad	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



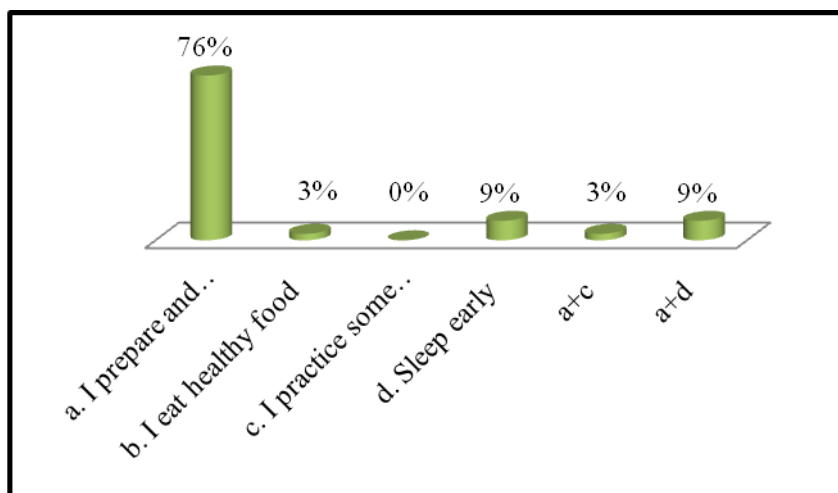
**Figure 3.11: The Level of Students' Performance in Written Tests**

According to the table most of students do not have problems in written tests, all of them are between average and very good, no one is bad.

**Item 12.** Before exams?

**Table3.12: Students' Preparation before Exams**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. I prepare and revise my lessons very well	25	76%
b. I eat healthy food	1	3%
c. I practice some exercises(sport)	0	0%
d. Sleep early	3	9%
a+c	1	3%
a+d	3	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



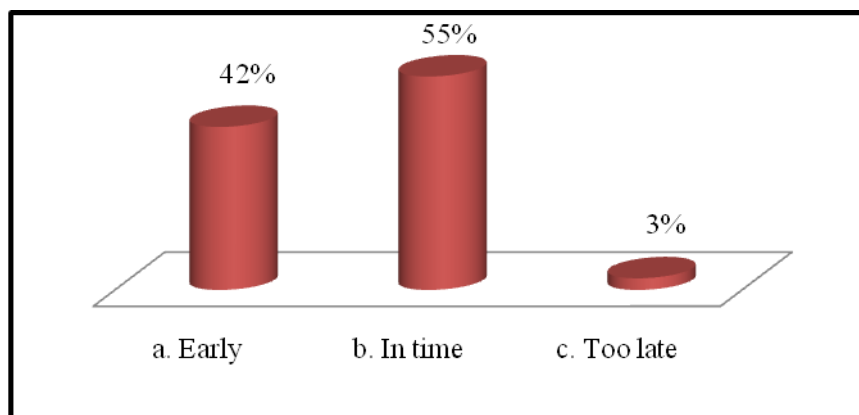
**Figure 3.12: Students' Preparation before Exams**

Daily habits such as eating healthy foods, practicing sports, and sleeping early are important in everyone life, it helps free the mind from worries and stress. However, and according to the table, students are not aware of this fact even before exams. But most of the students prepare and revise their lessons very well before exams.

**Item 13.** During exams, do you arrive...?

**Table 3.13: Students' Arrival for Exams**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Early	14	42%
In time	18	55%
Too late	1	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.13: Students' Arrival for Exams**

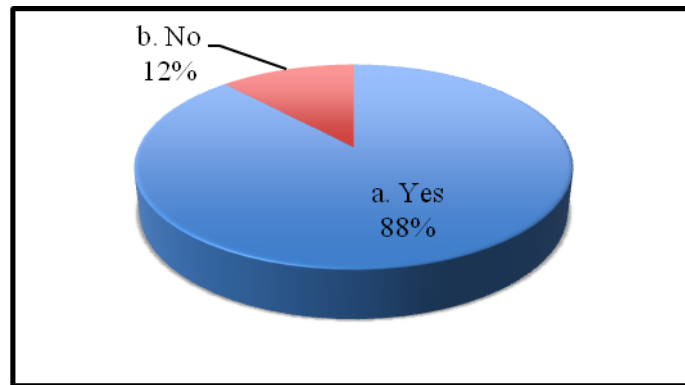
From the table, the majority of students either arrive early (42%) or in time (55%), while a few number arrive late (3%).

**Item 14.** Do you feel anxious/ stressed during exams?

**Table 3.14: Students' Feeling of Anxiety during Exams**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	29	88%
No	4	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>





**Figure 3.14: Students' Feeling of Anxiety during Exams**

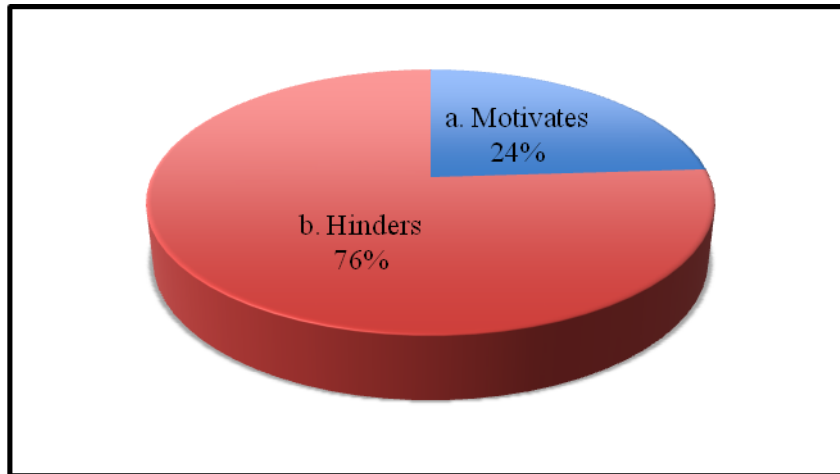
The main question in our study is this, whether students feel anxious during exams or not? The results shows that a recognizable number of students (88%) feel stressed during exam, on the other hand, a little number (12%) do not feel so.

Students admit that when they are stressed they feel some pain consists of certain symptoms like headache, rapid heartbeat, depression, low self-esteem, hands tremble and they change their answers which affects their grades.

**Item 15.** Does anxiety motivates you or hinders you from answering in a good way?

**Table 3.15: Students Responses about whether Anxiety Motivates/Hinders Them from Answering in a Good Way or Not**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Motivates	8	24%
Hinders	25	76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.15: Students Responses about whether Anxiety Motivates/Hinders Them from Answering in a Good Way or Not**

The results in the table above indicate that (76%) as the highest percentage of the subjects who participate in this questionnaire, said that, anxiety hinders them from doing well in a test or an exam, whereas (24%) show that anxiety during the exam, is really motivates them to do well in their exams.

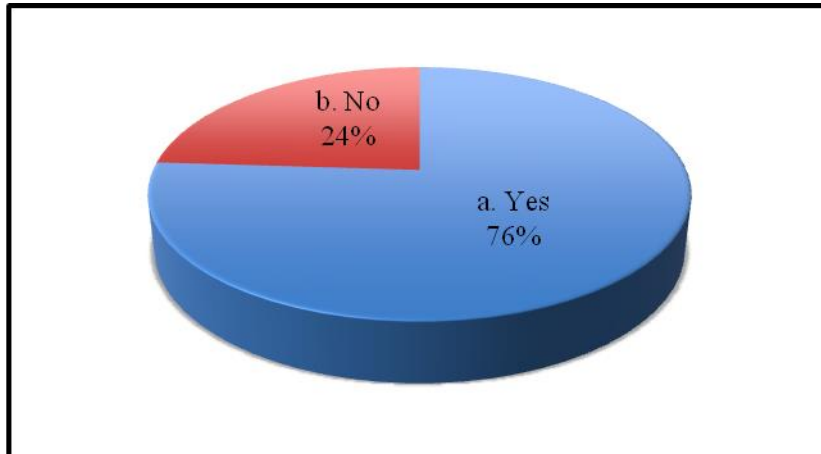
#### **Students' justifications**

Most students said that anxiety hinders them from answering in a good way in the exam because they feel stressed , they forget what they have revised, they feel uncomfortable, they can not focus, and they start panicking. While there are a considerable number of students who feel motivated, they said that they do not let the negative thoughts affect their attitude, and they remember the hard work they suffered.

**Item 16.** Could the teacher make you anxious when s/he moves around during the exam

**Table 3.16:Teacher's Moves and Students' Anxiety during Exams**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	25	76%
No	8	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



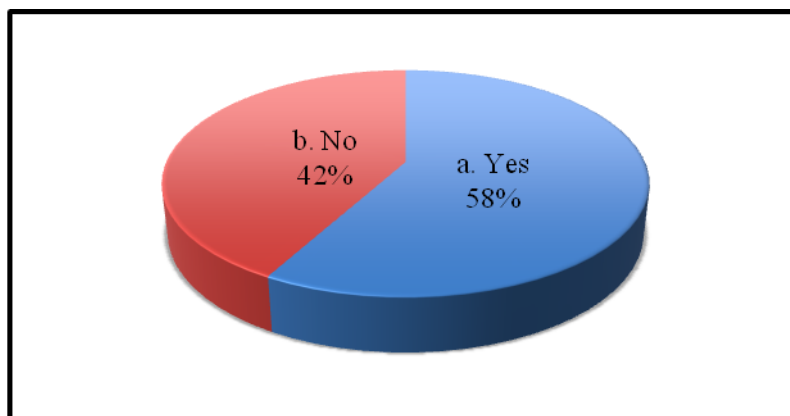
**Figure 3.16: Teacher's Moves and Students' Anxiety during Exams**

Although the role of teachers during exams is to move around the class to help the students if they need something or control if they are cheating, many students (76%) feel stressed when they see them.

**Item 17.** When you feel anxious during exams, do you use any relaxation strategies?

**Table 3.17: Students' Use of Relaxation Strategies to Reduce Anxiety during Exams**

Option	Percentage	Percentage
Yes	19	58%
No	14	42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.17: Students' Use of Relaxation Strategies to Reduce Anxiety during Exams**

When feeling stressed it is been found that more than half of students(58%) know how to use relaxation strategies, while the other half (42%) do not.

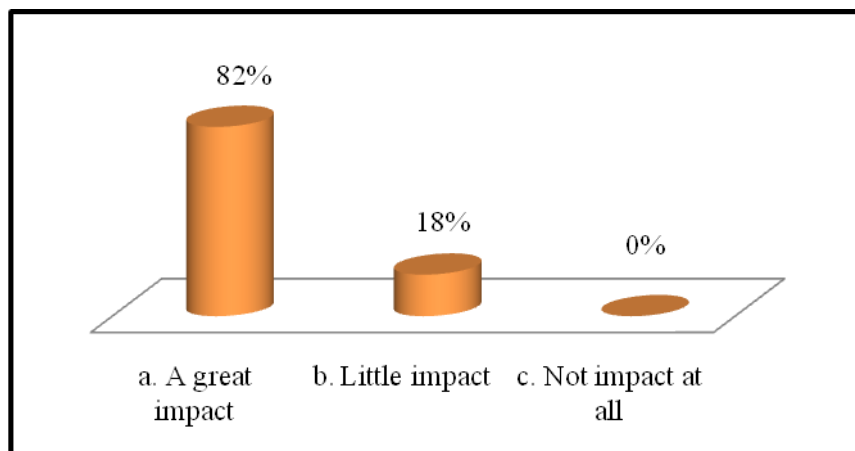
When feeling stressed students start doing the following things:

- Taking a deep breath .
- Reciting Quran and Duaa
- Thinking about positive things outside the exam
- Mediating
- Writing
- Some move their feet
- And other useful strategies

**Item 18.** According to you, to what extent can foreign language anxiety affect EFL students’ academic achievement?

**Table 3.18: Foreign Language Anxiety and EFL Students Academic Achievement**

Option	Percentage	Percentage
A great impact	27	82%
Little impact	6	18%
Not impact at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



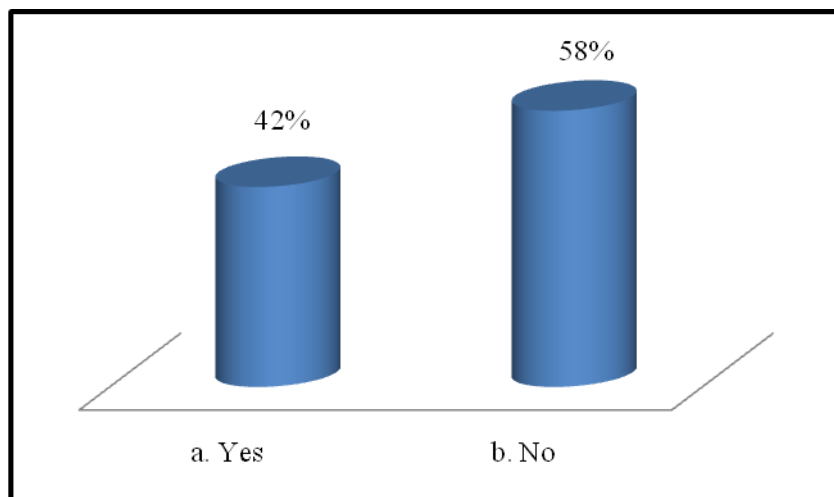
**Figure 3.18: Foreign Language Anxiety and EFL Students Academic Achievement**

It is obvious from the table that foreign language anxiety has a great impact on EFL students achievement. The majority of EFL students (82%) feel stressed because of the foreign language, while, a few (18%) feel a little impact. Students said that foreign language anxiety hinders them from performing in a good way because it affects their cognitive ability and changes their perception.

**Item 19.** Do you find any problem(s) when transferring information from your mind to the exam paper?

**Table 3.19: Students’ Difficulties when They Transform Information from Mind to Exam Paper**

Option	Percentage	Percentage
Yes	14	42%
No	19	58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.19: Students’ Difficulties when They Transform Information from Mind to Exam Paper**

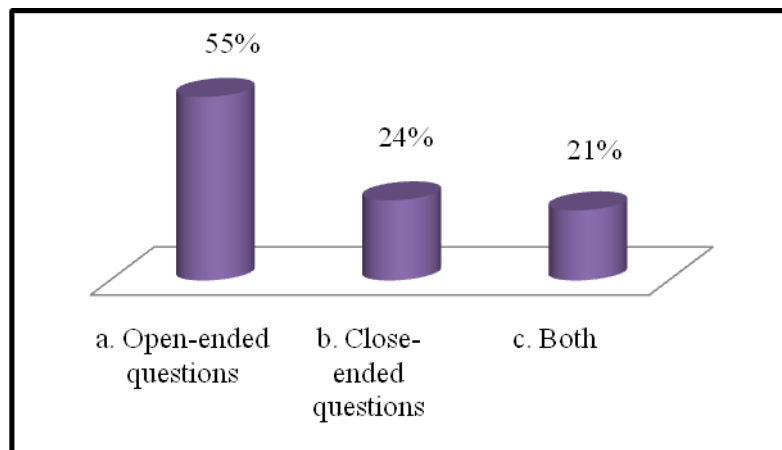
Transferring information from the mind to the mind is crucial. Although most of students (58%) do not have difficulties, a critical number (42%) find it hard somehow.

Students find difficulties when transferring information with word choices, they can not find the suitable word that serves the meaning due to the lack of vocabulary that make them stressed.

**Item 20.** Do you find difficulties with?

**Table 3.20: Students' Difficult Exam Questions**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Open-ended questions	18	55%
Close-ended questions	8	24%
Both	7	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



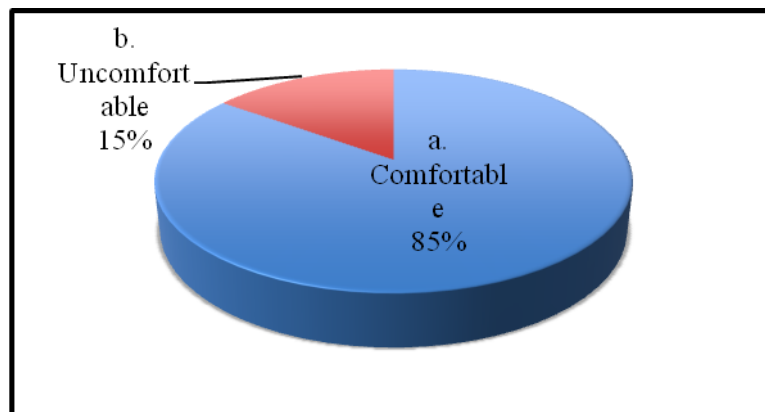
**Figure 3.20: Students' Difficult Exam Questions**

According to the table, students (55%) find difficulties with open-ended questions more than close ended questions (24%). In open-ended questions students are asked to answer using their own thoughts and words that what makes it difficult for them.

**Item 21.** Does the complete silence make you feel

**Table 3.21: Students' Feeling during the Complete Silence**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Comfortable	28	85%
Uncomfortable	5	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



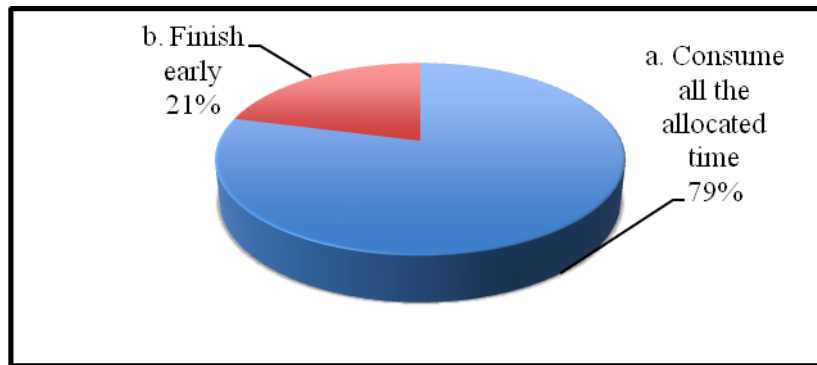
**Figure 3.21: Students' Feeling during the Complete Silence**

The majority of students (85%) find the complete silence during exam comfortable, whereas, a few (15%) find it uncomfortable.

**Item 22.** When sitting for the exam, do you

**Table 3.22: Students' Responses about whether they Consume all the allocated time or Finish early when Sitting for the Exam**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Consume all the allocated time	26	79%
Finish early	7	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.22: Students' Responses about whether they Consume all the allocated time or Finish early when Sitting for the Exam**

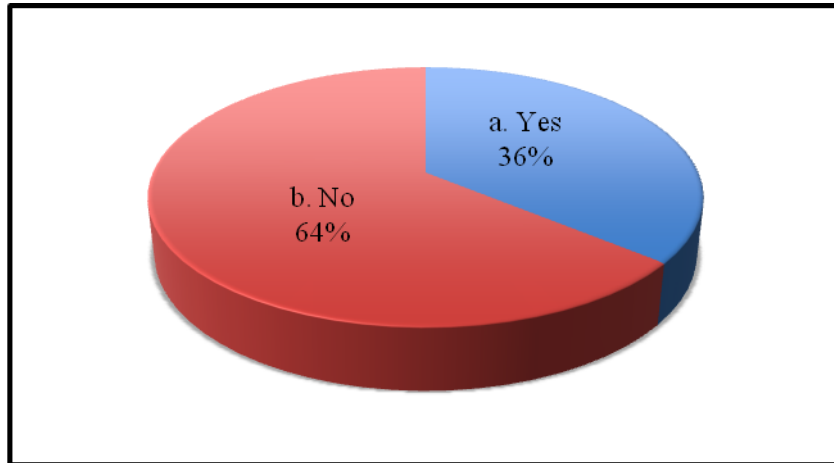
The table shows that most of students (79%) consume all the allocated time for the exam, while, others (21%) finish early. Some students said that although they consume all the allocated time for the exam, it is not enough for them because they find some difficult questions that take time to answer. Others said that, they do not finish early because they are afraid to regret. In the opposite, some students said that they prefer to finish early or they will start to change answers that will make them commit some mistakes.

**Item 23.** Have you experienced exam failures before that made you stressed?

**Table 3.23: Students' Exam Failure Experience**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	36%
No	21	64%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>





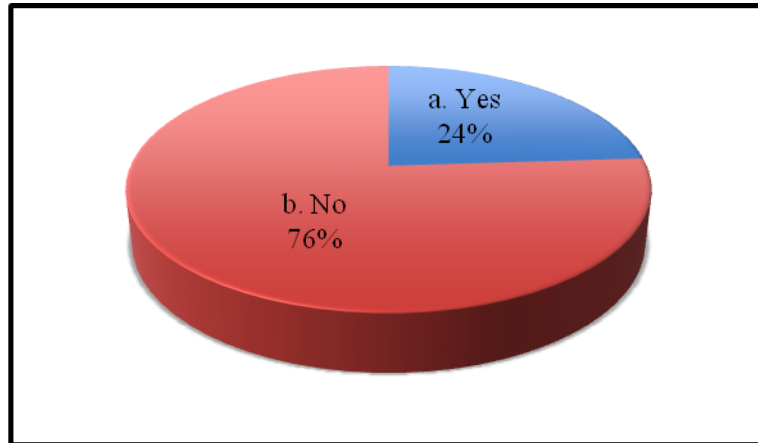
**Figure 3.23: Students' Exam Failure Experience**

It is clear from the table that many students (64%) have experienced an exam failure that made them become stressed during the exam. Students declared that due to the past failure in certain modules they become anxious, they are afraid to fail again and repeat the same mistakes.

**Item 24.** Does your parent's pressure to succeed make you nervous?

**Table 3.24: Students' Responses about Whether Their Parents' Pressure Makes Them Nervous or Not**

Option	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	8	24%
No	25	76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 3.24: Students' Responses about Whether Their Parents' Pressure Makes Them Nervous or Not**

According to the table just a quarter of the students (24%) face pressure from their parents that make them nervous, the majority do not face that issue. Students who face pressure said that their parents work very hard to provide them with everything they need just to succeed in their education career, as a result they will feel guilty if they do not get a good mark. The rest said that even if they fail, their parents do not blame them and stay supportive and tell them that the failure is the road to success.

**Item 25.** In your opinion, what can be done to reduce anxiety during exams?

Students have given a variety of answers to this question, to sum up :

- Good preparation is always the best key to reduce anxiety
- Relaxing and taking a deep breath
- Staying concentrating during exam and avoid thinking about results
- Self-confidence and self coaching
- Practice tests and exams before the official exam
- Healthy foods and practices besides sleeping early especially during exams
- Encouragement words from the teachers
- Stay positive and organized
- Teachers should stop gossiping during exam
- Visualize success and avoid negativity

## **Conclusion**

The data we have collected from the questionnaire administered to first year LMD English students; let us investigate the great impact of anxiety on students' achievement. Thus, we can say that the results in students' questionnaire are in the direction of our study, which can possibly be confirmed through designing an experimentation or a test to analyze the correlation which existed between anxiety and achievement.

The students' questionnaire let us notice that anxiety can really inhibit the capacity of students of. It is true that a high level of anxiety interferes with concentration and memory, which is critical for academic success and a moderate amount of anxiety, helps academic performance by creating motivation.

## **General Conclusion**

The fundamental aim of our dissertation was to investigate the problem of anxiety which is considered to be one of the most difficult and harmful psychological phenomena that the majority of EFL students encounter. Researchers' studies have showed that anxiety is a hard feeling that requires more consideration and interest from students, teachers, and psychologists. Moreover, this study had as goal to demonstrate that the environment surrounding students is as an external factor that affects them directly in order to overcome anxiety. This research work also aimed to clarify how valuable the role of teachers to overcome these barriers of fear and anxiety in written examination.

To conduct this study we have used an exploratory method because it is the most appropriate to deal with this theme. Indeed, we attempted to discover the situation and provide information concerning the problem of anxiety and to suggest some strategies to hinder it as relying on certain relaxation strategies. Mainly this study comprised

three main chapters: the first chapter was a general overview about Anxiety ; it contained the definitions of anxiety, types, theories, sources, then some strategies to overcome students anxiety. The second chapter was about writing skill and its relation to anxiety in written examination. It basically contained several definitions, types of test. Concerning the third chapter, it included the analysis of students' questionnaires. It was directed to a sample of first year LMD students at the section of English at Biskra University and aimed to identify their attitudes towards anxiety in written examination.

### **General Recommendations**

This section proposes some suggested practical remedial recommendations for learners

- Study throughout the semester to avoid last minute cramming
- Learn and practice good time management habits
- Practice methods of relaxation and stress reduction
- Listen to Quran
- Practice good nutrition and maintain regular exercise
- Create a balanced schedule that includes some breaks, exercise and social activity
- Sleep well
- -Last minute cramming may cloud your course knowledge
- If anxiety increases while you wait for the exam to begin, use relaxation and visualization methods or distract yourself by thinking of your after-exam plans
- Read the directions first, review the entire exam, then read the directions again
- Think of the exam as an opportunity to show off what you know (which may be more than you first think)
- Slow down and become intentional about your physical movements, this can increase your sense of self-mastery and control

- Focus on an inanimate, calming object (ie. Wall, floor, pen)
- Learn from the experience
- It is not helpful to punish yourself and mull over what did not go well

## References

- Aysan.F., Tompson.D., & Hamarat, E. (2001). Test anxiety, Coping Strategies, and Perceived health in a group of high school students: A Turkish sample. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 162(4): 402–411.
- Azimi, M. (2016).The Relationship Between Anxiety and Test-Taking C-Test and Cloze-Test. *The Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Science*. 2016 (Volume4 - Issue 1)
- Barrass, R. (2005). *Students Must Write: A Guide to Better Writing in Coursework and Examinations* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Bhargava , D . Hansa (2010) .www.webmd.com . June 25, 2010.
- Brooks, A., & Grundy.P. (2001).*Writing for Study Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, D. (2003) *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy, Second Edition*. New York: Pearson Education
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (4th ed). SanFrancisco State University: Longman.
- Byrne, D. (1993). *teaching writing skills*. London: Longman Handbook for Language Teachers.
- Cassidy, H. (2020) .Understanding Test Anxiety 970-351-2496 Dominican University of California. (2018, January 17). Importance of Teaching Students How to Write. Available at:  
[//dominicancaonline.com/skillful-writing/teachingstudents-write/](http://dominicancaonline.com/skillful-writing/teachingstudents-write/)
- Gidron Y. (2013) Trait Anxiety. In: Gellman M.D., Turner J.R. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Behavioral Medicine*. Springer, New York, NY. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1005-9\\_1539](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1005-9_1539)

- Greenberger, D., & Padesky, C. A. (1995). *Mind over mood: Change how you feel by changing the way you think*. Guilford Press.
- Harmer, G. (2004). IEEE Sensors 2004 Conference. doi:10.21236/ada430135.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English Language Teaching with DVD* (4th ed.). Harlow, UK: Pearson Longman ELT.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hyland, K (2003). *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 162(4): 402–411.
- Kroll, B. (1990). *Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Lado, R. (1993). *Language Testing*. Addison Wesley Longman ELT Division.
- Leki, I. (1991). *Teaching Second Language Writing: Where We Seem to Be*. English Teaching Forum 29. 2: 811-26.
- Nicaise, M. (1995). Treating test anxiety: A review of three approaches. *Teacher Education and Practice*, 11(1), 65–81.
- Nunan, D. (2000). *Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers*. Malaysia: Longman.
- O'Neill, P., Huot, B. A., & Moore, C. (2009). *Guide to college writing assessment*
- Peha, S. (2010). *Assessing Writers, Assessing Writing: Learning About Writers Through Rubrics and Reflection*. US: Teaching
- Perceived health in a group of high school students: A Turkish sample. !e
- Pincas, A. (1984). *Writing in English*. London: Macmillan.

- Riasati, M. J. (2011) Language Learning Anxiety from EFL Learners' Perspective. *Middle East Journal of Science Research*, 7 (6), pp. 907-914.
- Rivers, W.M. (1968). *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*. Chicago: the University of Chicago Press.
- Rizwan Akram Rana and Nasir Mahmood. (2010). The Relationship Between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement", *Bulletin of Education and Research*
- Robinson, K. (2016). The Role of "Time" in Writing | Writers and Authors. Retrieved from <https://www.writersandauthors.info/2016/03/the-role-of-time-in-writing.html>
- Rogers, H. (2005). *Writing Systems: A Linguistic Approach*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd
- Rothman, D. K. (2004).New Approach to Test Anxiety.*Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 18(4), 45–60
- Sarasan, G Irwing. (1977). *The Test Anxiety Scale: Concept and Research*. Washington University of Seattle Department of Psychology.
- Spandel, V. (2005). *Creating writers: Through 6-trait writing assessment and instruction*. Boston: Pearson/AandB.
- Stark, R. (2005). *Writing Skills Success in 20 Minutes a Day* (3rd ed.). New York: LearningExpress, LLC
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Urquhart, V., & McIver, M. (2005). *Teaching Writing in the Content Areas*. Virginia, USA: *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)* Vol. 32, No. 2 pp. 63- 74.
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Whitaker Sena, J. D., Lowe, P. A., & Lee, S. W. (2007).Significant predictors of test anxiety among students with and without learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 40, 360–376. <http://doi.org/10.1177/00222194070400040601>.



Zamel, V. (1982). Writing: The Process of Discovering Meaning. *TESOL Quarterly*,  
16(2),195-209.

Zeidner, M. (1998). Test anxiety: The state of the art. New York: Plenum Press

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

### Section One: General Information

**Item 1.** Would you specify your gender, please?

- Female
- Male

**Item 2.** Your choice to study English at university was:

- Personal
- Imposed
- Advised

### Section Two: Writing Skill

**Item 3.** Do you find the module of written expression interesting?

- Yes
- No

Justification

.....  
.....

**Item 4.** Does your teacher motivate you to write?

- Yes
- No

**Item 5.** How can you evaluate your level in writing?

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Bad

**Item 6.** For you, is the time allocated for the exam enough for you to complete writing your ideas and answers?

- Yes
- No

**Item 7.** Which of the following writing aspects hinder(s) you from writing your answers effectively in the exam? (You can tick more than one answer)

- Topic itself
- Words choice
- Grammar mistakes
- Punctuation errors
- Content and organization of ideas
- Spelling
- Vocabulary

**Item 8.** How often do you think about your teachers' comments when writing?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

**Item 9.** How do you consider your teacher's feedback?

- A motivator
- Obstacle to learning
- An anxiety factor
- All of them

### **Section Three: Test Anxiety**

**Item 10.** In the class, how often do you participate and answer the question?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

**Item 11.** When it comes to written tests, do you perform?

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Bad
- Very bad

**Item 12.** Before exams?

- I prepare and revise my lessons very well
- I eat healthy food
- I practice some exercises(sport)
- Sleep early

**Item 13.** During exams, do you arrive...?

- Early
- In time
- Too late

**Item 14.** Do you feel anxious/ stressed during exams?

- Yes
- No

**Item 15.** Does anxiety motivates you or hinders you from answering in a good way?

- Motivates
- Hinders

Justification

.....

.....

**Item 16.** Could the teacher make you anxious when s/he moves around during the exam?

- Yes
- No

**Item 17.**When you feel anxious during exams, do you use any relaxation strategies?

- Yes
- No

**Item 18.** According to you, to what extent can foreign language anxiety affect EFL students' academic achievement?

- A great impact
- A little impact
- No impact at all

**Item 19.** Do you find any problem(s) when transferring information from your mind to the exam paper?

- Yes
- No

**Item 20.** Do you find difficulties with?

- Close-ended questions
- Open-ended questions
- Both

**Item 21.** Does the complete silence make you feel

- Comfortable
- Uncomfortable

**Item 22.** When sitting for the exam, do you

- Consume all the allocated time for the exam
- Finish early

**Item 23.** Have you experienced exam failures before that made you stressed?

- Yes
- No

**Item 24.** Does your parent's pressure to succeed make you nervous?

- Yes
- No

**Item 25.** In your opinion, what can be done to reduce anxiety during exams?

.....

.....

## ملخص

هذه الدراسة تتناول تأثيرات القلق على انجازات طلبة السنة اولى ليسانس شعبة الانجليزية بجامعة بسكرة في الامتحانات الكتابية وعليه يعتبر القلق من ابرز الظواهر النفسية التي لطالما اثارت جدلا في اوساط علماء النفس والاساتذة فهو من بين واهم واصعب المشاكل النفسية التي يعاني منها الطلبة بحيث انها تعيق تعلمهم واداءهم في الامتحانات الكتابية , وعليه هذه الدراسة تهدف الى اكتشاف اهم الاسباب المؤدية الى القلق وتسعى جاهدة للوصول الى حلول ناجحة على ضوء الدراسات العديدة التي تطرق اليها العديد من الباحثين . من بين هذه الحلول تهدئة النفس التي تعتبر عامل حيوي من حيث مساهمته الفعالة في كبح القلق وتخفيض نسبته . تم اعتماد استبيان مهم موجه ل33 طالب من طلبة السنة اول ليسانس شعبة الانجليزية بجامعة بسكرة باختيار عشوائي يهدف لمعرفة اسباب القلق اثناء الامتحانات الكتابية مع ادراج الحلول المقترحة . هذه الدراسة تتضمن ثلاثة فصول . الفصل الاول حول القلق وانواعه اسبابه ونتائجه وحلول مقترحة . الفصل الثاني يدور حول الكتابة وانواع الفروض المعتمدة في الامتحانات الكتابية . الفصل الثالث الاستبيان الموجه للطلبة يتضمن معرفة أدائهم الكتابية والاسباب التي تؤدي الى القلق اثناء الامتحانات الكتابية بغية تقديم حلول لمواجهة هذه الظاهرة .