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**Enhancing Foreign Language Students' Speaking  
Performance through Overcoming Anxiety**  
**A Case Study of Third Year LMD Students of English at  
Biskra University**

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for  
Master degree in Science of the Language**

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*Dedication*

*We dedicate this modest work to*

*Our families “Achbi” and “Sebaà”*

*Our parents, sisters, brothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles for their love, support, and help.*

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## **Abstract**

Foreign language anxiety is considered as a very important issue that most foreign language learners suffer from. The present study examines the issue of foreign language speaking anxiety, and it aims to realize two main objectives. First, it aims to explore the causes that lead to students' foreign language speech anxiety, and the negative effects that hinder their speaking performance. Second, it aims to look for effective strategies that teachers and learners can use in order to decrease anxiety and enhance students' foreign language speaking performance. The study depends on two main data gathering tools: a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire is administered to eighty students of third year LMD of English at Mohammed Khider Biskra University. The interview is done with eight teachers from the department of English teaching different English modules at Mohammed Khider Biskra University. The findings of the study illustrate that most foreign language students tend to be anxious in speaking situations more than the other situations like listening, reading and writing. There are different factors that lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety which hurdle their learning and their speaking performance. The outcomes also show plenty and divers strategies that learners and teachers can depend on to minimize foreign language speaking anxiety and that can lead to students' better speaking performance. The findings prove the hypothesis which states that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills; thus, if we look for effective procedures to reduce it, we may help learners to enhance and promote their speaking performance.

## Definition of Terms and Some Abbreviations Used

**Anxiety:** Fear, Apprehension, Nervousness

**Language anxiety:** it is subjective feelings of apprehension and fear associated with language learning and use. Foreign language anxiety may be a situation-specific anxiety, similar in that respect to public speaking anxiety. Issues in the study of language teaching anxiety is a cause or an effect of poor achievement, anxiety under specific instructional conditions, and the relationship of general language anxiety to more specific kinds of anxiety associated with speaking, reading, or examinations(Richards 285).

**Speech anxiety (speaking anxiety):** is stress that results from having to speak in front of a group (Kanar 292).

**Learner diary:** in language teaching, it is a record prepared by a learner of students' learning experiences and describing what activities they have done in class, the progress they have made, and any problems they may have (Richards 298).

**Performance:** it is the actual use of language. A difference is made between a person's knowledge of a language (competence) and how a person uses this knowledge in producing and understanding sentences (performance) (Richards 392).

**Second language:** in broad sense, it is any language learned after one's has learned his native language. The term refers more narrowly to a language that plays a major role in a particular country or region though it may not be the first language of many people who use it (Richards 472).

**Foreign language:** a language which is not the native language of large numbers of people in a particular country or region, is not used as a medium of instruction in schools, and is

not widely used as a medium of communication in government, media, etc. Foreign languages are typically taught as school subjects for the purpose of communicating with foreigners or for reading printed materials in the language (Richards 2006).

**Note:** in our research, we use second language and foreign language interchangeably to mean any language learned after the first language.

**Affective factors:** refer to personality characteristics, attitudes, and emotional responses to the language process (Hedge 20).

**Procedures:** ways, strategies

**TD:** travaux dirigés (Directed Works)

**LMD:** License Master Doctorate

**BA:** Bachelor of Arts

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## **Introduction**

The most important issue in second language learning is developing the ability to use it. In other terms, students learning the second language should make great effort to speak it. However, unlike speaking their first language, speaking the second language is a difficult task for most second language learners. This difficulty in speaking is a result of various factors that obstruct the learning process. Therefore, establishing an effective teaching and learning environment requires the awareness of all factors influencing students' learning; affective factors are the most important ones effecting on students learning and performance. Anxiety is one of these affective factors which tends to have considerable role in students' foreign language learning. Because many FL (Foreign Language) students are suffering from anxiety and because of the importance of the speaking skill in second language learning, we find it a necessary matter to explore the link between anxiety and the speaking skill.

### **I. Statement of the problem**

Listening, speaking, writing, and reading have a significant role in learning the second language. This means that second language learners should develop the ability to listen, to speak, to read, and to write in the second language. However, developing this ability is somewhat difficult for most second language learners because of the numerous troubles they may face when learning the second language. One of these troubles is anxiety which plays a great role in preventing learners to be good at learning different skills. Consequently, second language learners may feel anxious and nervous when acquiring these skills. Although anxiety influences the four skills, the majority of second language learners seem to be more anxious and apprehensive when acquiring the speaking skill. As it is stated by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991): "*The greatest anxiety seems to relate to negative experiences in speaking activities*" (qtd. in Hedge 21).

## **II. Research question**

✚ To what extent is anxiety related to the speaking skill in comparison to the other skills, and what can be done to reduce it in order to enhance FL students' speaking performance?

## **III. Hypothesis**

We hypothesize that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills; thus, if we look for effective procedures to reduce it, we may help learners to enhance and promote their foreign language speaking performance.

## **IV. Objectives of the study**

We have two major objectives from this research. First, we intend to explore the causes that lead to students' foreign language speech anxiety, and the negative effects that hinder their speaking performance. Second, we aim to look for effective strategies that teachers and learners can use in order to decrease the level of anxiety and enhance students' foreign language speaking performance.

## **V. Limitations of the study**

This research is determined by several limitations. The first one is the topic under research in which we tackle the issue of foreign language anxiety from a specific angle. Our study deals with the relationship between anxiety and the speaking skill as well as the procedures that have to be followed by teachers and students to reduce anxiety, thus, enhancing the speaking performance. The second limitation is the time devoted to conduct this research that tends to be a very short period of time. The third determining factor is the size of the population which is 1/3 from the whole number of third year LMD students from the department of English at the level of Biskra University and some teachers of English from the same department. The fourth governing factor is the instruments used: a

questionnaire and an interview. The reliability and the validity of the obtained data depend on the credibility of the students answering the questionnaire and the frankness of the teachers responding to the interview.

## **VI. Significance of the study**

Whenever talking about the affective factors influencing second language learning, most researchers refer to anxiety as the most important factor effecting second language learning. According to H. D. Brown, "*the construct of anxiety plays a major affective role in second language acquisition*" (161). Even though some researchers have found that anxiety may have a positive influence on second language learning, the majority of the researchers claim that anxiety has a negative effect on students' performance. Because of the importance as well as the difficulty of speaking the second language, we can say that the negative effects of anxiety on students' performance are related more to the speaking skill. Hedge reported that: "*speaking activities are probably the most demanding for students and teachers in terms of the affective factors involved. Trying to produce language in front of other students can generate high levels of anxiety*" (292). Knowing the causes that lead to students' speech anxiety may help in finding ways to reduce it, and its reduction may assist in enhancing students' speaking performance. This study is also significant in the sense that it exposes some appropriate teaching methods and it gives students some proper ways to decrease their speech anxiety, therefore, assisting them to enhance their speaking performance.

## **VII. Research Methodology Design**

### **1. Research method**

We find it an appropriate matter to choose the Descriptive Method in the study of our research. According to Richards and Rodergs, "*Descriptive studies are designed to determine the facts of current situations and thereby to clarify status*" (60). Consequently,

the first reason for adopting this method is the nature of our subject. The issue of anxiety and particularly students' fear of speaking is not a matter which existed only in the past to choose the historical method. Moreover, it is not a phenomenon that needs an experiment to select the experimental method, but it is a matter which used to be and still exists; thus, it is suitable to adopt the descriptive method. The second reason is that the descriptive method is the used method by researchers studying the issue of anxiety. Those researchers collect data from students' questionnaires and/or diaries; then, they analyze and describe these data. According to Allright and Bailey, "*The dairy study is a first person account of a language learning or teaching experience ...*" (171). Therefore, following experienced researchers' method would be better in conducting our research. The last and the most important reason is that we aim to display the important role anxiety plays in FL classrooms especially in students' speaking performance, so describing is the best method for realizing this aim.

## **2. Population**

### **❖ Learners**

We find that students of third year LMD are the most appropriate population for our study. The problem of anxiety might be clearly apparent with students of third year LMD, who are at the year of graduation to earn their BA degree, because they have to master the language. Those students are selected from the department of English at the University of Biskra. The sample of the study consists of eighty participants chosen by random from the whole population of third year LMD which is 245 learners.

### **❖ Teachers**

We deal with eight teachers of English from the department of English at the University of Biskra. We choose some teachers teaching oral expression and/or other

modules (linguistics, grammar, written expression, psycho-pedagogy, American civilization, phonetics, and second language acquisition).

### **3. Data Gathering Tools**

In investigating the research problem, we depend on two tools: questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire is administered to eighty students of third year LMD of the department of English at the University of Biskra. The reason behind the choice of this tool is that it can provide a great amount of information in a short period of time. According to J. D. Brown, "*The advantage of [the questionnaire] is that substantial amounts of information can be collected in a relatively short time*" (3). Concerning the interview, it is directed to some teachers of Oral Expression in order to know the extent to which anxiety exists in oral modules, or specifically the extent to which anxiety is related to the speaking skill. This interview is also oriented to some teachers of other subjects for the sake of exploring the existence of anxiety within these subjects. The advantage of using the interview is found in what Denzin and Merriam state: "*[interviews] can provide access to things that cannot be directly observed, such as feelings, thoughts, intentions, or believes*" (qtd. in Ohata 140).

### **VIII. Structure of the study**

The dissertation is divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to the Literature Review, and it contains two chapters. The first chapter is entitled "Foreign Language Learning Anxiety" aims to provide an insight about the issue of anxiety in foreign language classes. The second chapter is entitled "Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety" aims to provide an overview about the issue of foreign language speech anxiety. The second section is devoted to the Field Work. It contains chapter three which is entitled "Analysis of Data Collected". In this section, we aim to explore the causes that lead to

students' foreign language speaking anxiety and the strategies that teachers and learners can depend on to reduce it.

**Section One**  
**Literature Review**

## **Chapter One**

# **Foreign Language Learning Anxiety**

## **Introduction**

Many researches have been conducted in studying several issues related to language learning. Among these issues, there are attitudes, motivation, self-confidence, anxiety, and so on. These issues have been proved that they affect language learning. Foreign language anxiety is considered by many researchers, teachers, and learners as the most important affective factor influencing foreign language learning. For example, Oxford states that "*Anxiety is quite possibly the affective factor that most perversely obstructs the learning process*" (8). In addition, Zheng indicates that "*The number of students who report that they are anxious language learners is astonishing*" (1). Consequently, foreign language anxiety can have a negative effect in foreign language learning, and it can be considered as one of the factors that controls students' success in the foreign language.

In this chapter, we try to give clear insight about this issue of foreign language anxiety. We begin by exposing the definition of foreign language anxiety, the studies done in its investigation, and the instruments used in collecting data about it. Then, we move to present the main causes, and types of foreign language anxiety. After that, we display the characteristics of foreign language anxious learners and the role that anxiety plays in their learning. Finally, we try to show the link between anxiety and foreign language learners' speaking skill.

### **I. Foreign Language Learning Anxiety**

#### **1. Definition of Anxiety**

Anxiety is an emotion that tends to have great effects in many aspects of human being life. One of these aspects is human learning. In general terms, Spielberger defines anxiety as "*the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system*" (qtd. in H. D. Brown 161).

Anxiety is controlled by human's nervous system. The arousal of this system leads to anxiety which is reflected in feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry.

In foreign language learning context, anxiety is called second or foreign language anxiety which has been given many definitions. Irzeqat states that "*foreign language anxiety is associated with sentiments of fear, uncertainty, disturbance, and worry in accordance with situations where the language is learned such as English as foreign language classrooms*" (2). In addition, MacIntyre defines anxiety as "*the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning a second language*" (Lucas et al. 97). Moreover, (Horwitz et al.) conceive foreign language anxiety as "*a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process*" (128). Foreign language anxiety is considered as a combination of different states of apprehension and worry associated with foreign language learning. Learners experience it as a result of their perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about language learning.

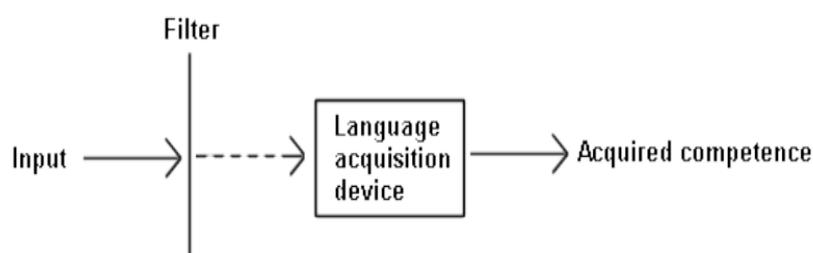
Although second language researchers, teachers, and learners are aware that anxiety is associated with language learning and it hinders the learning process, language anxiety has been neither precisely defined nor its effects on language learning specifically described.

## **2. Anxiety in the Language Learning Theory**

Just like first language acquisition, foreign language learners should be exposed to the input of the foreign language which they are learning. However, the pass and the reception of this input are influenced by many factors. One of these factors is anxiety that has an important effect on foreign language learning. The idea of the effect of anxiety on the pass and the reception of the input are introduced by Krashen in his hypothesis that is called "*The Affective Filter Hypothesis*". This hypothesis was intended to explain the

ability of some learners to learn foreign language instead of others .It clarifies the relationship between some affective factors and the process of second language acquisition (Gass and Selinker 402).

For Krashen, these affective factors include motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. Krashen’s use of the term "*The Affective Filter*" is a result of his consideration to "*the learner’s emotional state or attitudes as an adjustable filter that freely passes, impedes, or blocks input necessary to acquisition*" (Richards and Rodgers 183). The work of the affective filter as an obstacle or a helpful in the pass and the reception of the foreign language input depends on the rate of the affective factors (motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety). The affective filter is high when learners have low motivation, little self-confidence, and high anxiety (Chao 2). Its raise prevents the input from passing to students’ language acquisition device that can result in no acquisition. However, its decrease enables the input to pass to the language acquisition device resulting in second language acquisition (Gass and Selinker 402). Consequently, anxious students seem to have a high affective filter which prevents them to learn the second language naturally and successfully (Rechards and Rodgers 183).



**Figure 01: Operation of the ‘affective filter’ (Krashen 32)**

In sum, (Horwitz et al.) described anxiety as a "*mental block*" which stands in the face of learners in learning to speak other languages (Irzeqat 3). Second language learners’ input should be comprehensible and must be provided in low anxiety contexts. This is confirmed by Richards and Rodgers who state that "*the input has to be comprehensible,*

*relevant, quantity sufficient, and experienced in contexts that are low anxiety provoking”* (Irzeqat 3). It is stated by Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, and Daley that anxiety plays the role of an affective filter that hinders students’ ability to receive the input necessary for second language learning; it leads them to lack confidence in using this input (Ibidem). Thus, anxiety leads to reduce students’ willingness to speak and communicate in the target language classrooms (Ibidem).

### **3. Studies on Foreign Language Anxiety**

Crucial researches and discussions have been arisen about the issue of anxiety because of its importance in the process of second language learning. Thus, language anxiety is taken into account as an affective factor which scholars studied in addition to other individual learners’ differences (Katalin 40). Djigunovic indicates that researchers handled the study of the link between anxiety and language learning around 1960’s (Tianjian 95).

MacIntyre and Gardner state that researches on language anxiety adopted three main perspectives. The first perspective studied anxiety as being a trait anxiety which is a feature of individuals’ personality. The second perspective studied anxiety as being a state anxiety that means the apprehension one experiences at a particular moment in time. The third perspective studied anxiety as being a situation- specific anxiety that person may have over time within a given situation (Subaşlı 31). From these three perspectives, it is stated by MacIntyre and Gardner that the better results were achieved by the latter group which is situation-specific approach (Tianjian 96). Based on situation-specific perspective, researchers emphasize on anxiety that is related to specific language situations (Chan and Wu 292). (Horwitz et al.) report that through empirical studies, researchers claim that language anxiety differs from other types of anxiety (Ibidem). Consequently, MacIntyre

and Gardner believe that foreign language anxiety is a situational anxiety that takes place in the foreign language classroom (Katalin 40).

Considering foreign language anxiety as a distinct type from other types of anxieties, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope were the first researchers who dealt with foreign language anxiety as a situation-specific anxiety particular to language learning (Subaşlı 31). Ganschow and Sparks state that (Horwitz et al.) developed a scale which they called it "*Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale*" (FLCAS), a questionnaire, consists of thirty-three question items that reflect three interrelated components of anxiety (communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation) (Chan and Wu 292) because these anxieties are seen by Horwitz et al as having a negative effect on foreign language learning (Subaşlı 31). This scale is oriented to respondents in order to measure speaking and listening in the second language (Ellis 693). These are some question items of the FLCAS:

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language classroom.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.

After that, FLCAS was used by many researchers to study the relationship between anxiety and language learning (Goshi 61). For instance, Goshi points out that Phillips and Aida are among the researchers who used the FLCAS to measure anxiety in foreign language learning. Phillips found a negative relationship between anxiety and oral exam grades among her students of French class concluding that students with high language anxiety speak less, and produce shorter structures unlike those with low anxiety. In addition to Phillips, Aida investigated the relationship between anxiety and grades among Japanese students. She reported that unlike learners with low anxiety, learners with high

anxiety receive low grades (61). Researchers have investigated the issue of foreign language anxiety from various directions (Subaşlı 31). Some of them investigated its existence (Young 426), and others looked for the theoretical background of its relationship with learners' achievement (Subaşlı 31). In addition to these studies, there are other studies which explored the link between anxiety and other factors such as its relationship with willingness to communicate and with ability in the language (Tianjian 96).

#### **4. Instruments Used in Studying Foreign Language Anxiety**

MacIntyre and Gardner state that in investigating the issue of foreign language anxiety, researchers use various instruments including diaries, questionnaires and interviews which are oriented to both learners and teachers (Young 427). For example, by using the diary data, students are asked to record their classroom experiences and perceptions (Allright and Bailey 4). MacIntyre and Gardner also state that interviews with language specialists such as instructors can give access to their points of view (Young 427). In brief, these instruments can help researchers to investigate any aspect of foreign language learning.

#### **IV. Types of Language Anxiety**

Many researchers have distinguished between different types of anxiety. Spielberger recognized two types of anxiety: trait and state. Drawing upon the work done by Spielberger, MacIntyre and Gardner identified another type of anxiety which is situation-specific anxiety (Pappamihel 333). Consequently, the majority of the researchers indicate to three types of anxiety: trait, state, and situation -specific anxiety.

##### **1. Trait Anxiety**

Scovel defines trait anxiety as “*a more permanent predisposition to be anxious*” (qtd. in Ellis 691). Based on this definition, it seems that students who suffer from trait anxiety

tend to be anxious all the times and whatever the situation is. Therefore, different researchers believe that trait anxiety is a characteristic of one's personality; for instance, Spielberger considers trait anxiety as "*a stable feature of personality*" (Wilson 42).

## **2. State Anxiety**

Spielberger defines state anxiety as a "*transitory state or condition of the organism that varies in intensity and fluctuates over time*" (Wilson 42). In addition, Dörnyei defines it as "*the transient, moment-to-moment experience of anxiety as an emotional reaction to the current situation*" (198). Accordingly, we deduce that state anxiety is a temporary anxiety that learners may experience at a transient moment of time as a result of specific conditions or stimulus such as an important test. Unlike trait anxiety, state anxiety is not permanent, and it diminishes over time.

## **3. Situation-Specific Anxiety**

MacIntyre and Gardner states that situation-specific anxiety "*can be considered to be the probability of becoming anxious in a particular type of situation, such as during tests (labeled as "test anxiety"), when solving mathematics problems ("math anxiety"), or when speaking a second language ("language anxiety")*" (Wilson 44). Ellis claims that situation-specific anxiety "*consists of the anxiety which is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation*" (691). Through these definitions, we arrive that situation-specific anxiety refers to the permanent type of anxiety which is related to specific type of situation.

In sum, trait and situation-specific anxiety are permanent types of anxiety. Trait anxiety is considered as a feature of one's character which is experienced in any situation while situation-specific anxiety occurs within a specific situation. However, state anxiety is a temporary anxiety that occurs in a specific moment of time and decreases over time.

Many researchers claim that the type of anxiety which is related to foreign language is a situation-specific anxiety. Foreign language anxiety is linked to the situation where the language is learned. In other words, it is associated with a particular situation such as classrooms, but not with any situation (trait anxiety); consequently, it is called foreign language classroom anxiety.

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

Foreign language anxiety has many sources. Researchers like Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope recognized three causes of foreign language anxiety which they called components. In addition, other researchers like Dolly J. Young indicate to six main potential sources.

### **1. The Classification of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope**

Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope describe three components of foreign language anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

#### **1.1. Communication Apprehension**

Richmond and McCroskey define communication apprehension as "*the fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons*" (Wrench et al. 56). Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope consider listening and speaking as the two components of oral communication (Chan and Wu 292). According to MacIntyre and Gardner, speaking provokes anxiety in foreign language activities; they also view listening as a problem for language learners. This view is also confirmed by Feryal Cubukcu who states that "*communication apprehension in foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge that one will almost certainly have difficulty understanding others and making oneself understood*" (135).

Accordingly, communication apprehension results when learners think that they will not understand or be understood by others. Consequently, learners fear to communicate

with others. Unlike low communicatively apprehensive learners, high communicatively apprehensive learners are characterized by lacking self-control, not being adventurous, being introverted, having low self-esteem, and being unassertive (Wrench et al. 56).

## **1.2. Test Anxiety**

Oxford states that test anxiety occurs when learners are asked to communicate in the target language in evaluative situations. However, it also occurs in non-communicative situations (64). According to Chan and Wu, test anxiety results from a fear of failure and evaluative situations and they also claimed that oral tests provoke both test anxiety and oral communication apprehension (293). Young reports that learners with low level of oral proficiency are affected by test anxiety more than learners with high level of oral proficiency. He also stated that researchers find unfamiliar and official conditions increase the level of anxiety (293).

## **1.1. Fear of Negative Evaluation**

Watson and Friend define fear of negative evaluation, the third component of anxiety, as "*apprehension about others' evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, and expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively*" (qtd. in Chan and Wu 293). This means that learners experience fear of negative evaluation in situations where they think that others will give them negative evaluations. Fear of negative evaluation is not restricted only to test-taking situations, but also to other evaluative situations such as interviews for getting jobs or speaking the second language in the classroom (Ibidem). According to MacIntyre and Gardner, this component of anxiety is closely linked to communication apprehension which occurs when second language learners are in doubt about their speech and their ability to make a positive impression on others (Chan and Wu 294).

Negative evaluation in language classroom comes both from the teachers since one of their tasks is to evaluate students and from peers that anxious students may be sensitive of their evaluation (Chan and Wu 294). Aida views that learners with fear of negative evaluation are characterized by withdrawing from classroom activities, escaping from their classes, and being passive in the classroom (Ibidem).

Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope state that communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation have a great effect on second language acquisition; they overlap and they are closely related to each other (Ibidem). Foreign language anxiety is not restricted only to these components, but also there are other aspects in foreign language learning that provoke it such as beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning (Horwitz et al. 128).

## **2. The Classification of Dolly J. Young**

Dolly J. Young divided the sources of language anxiety into six potential ones:

### **2.1. Personal and Interpersonal Anxiety**

This source involves different issues. Some of these issues are competitiveness, self-esteem, ability, social anxiety, and existential anxiety.

#### **2.1.1. Competitiveness**

Bailey linked anxiety to competitiveness. Through her analysis to the diaries of 11 learners, she claimed that "*[the learners] tend to become anxious when they compare themselves with other learners in the class and found themselves less proficient. She noted that as the learners perceived themselves becoming more proficient, and therefore better able to compete, their anxiety decreased*" (qtd. in Ellis 692). This means that when learners compete with each other and recognize that they are less proficient, they may feel anxious. However, when they find themselves more proficient, they may feel less anxious. In

Bailey's model of competitiveness and anxiety in the second language learner, anxiety resulting from competitiveness is classified into debilitating anxiety which impedes learning and facilitating anxiety which enhances learning (Allright and Bailey 177).

### **2.1.2. Self-Esteem**

Richards and Schmidt define self-esteem as a person's judgments of their own worth or value, based on a feeling of "*efficacy*", a sense of interacting effectively with one's own environment (475). It has been suggested by Krashen that there is a consistent relationship between anxiety and self-esteem. According to price, learners with low self-esteem are more anxious than learner with high self-esteem. Unlike learners with high self-esteem, learners with low self-esteem can be unsuccessful in foreign language learning (Oxford 62).

Krashen states that: "*people with low self-esteem worry about what their peers think; they are concerned with pleasing others*" (qtd. in Young 427). Learners with low self-esteem fear that their classmates will evaluate them badly, so they give a great concern to how to satisfy their peers in order to give them a good evaluation. In other words, they are anxious of being perceived as having lower abilities by their peers. Horwitz, Horwitz, and cope report that low self-esteem prevents learners to communicate freely and to take risks of making errors (oxford 62). Self-esteem can be a characteristic of one's personality (trait self-esteem) or linked to specific situation (Ibidem).

### **2.1.3. Ability**

Hembree examined the link between ability and anxiety and he found that "*the higher the students' ability level, the lower the test anxiety*" (qtd. in young 427). This means that learners with low ability in the second language tend to be anxious in tests. Moreover,

Young states that the low ability level of learners leads not only to anxiety in tests, but also to anxiety in other aspects of second language learning (427).

#### **2.1.4. Social Anxiety**

Oxford states that "*Social anxiety occurs along with the prospect or actual presence of interpersonal evaluation*" (63). Social Anxiety reveals when people or learners give a great concern to others' evaluations. According to Leary, social anxiety involves speech anxiety, shyness, stage fright, embarrassment, social evaluative anxiety and communication apprehension (Ibidem). In addition, learners suffering from social anxiety might avoid the interaction with others in the classroom. Among the characteristics of this type of learners in language classrooms are keeping silent, responding only when necessary, being passive, or avoiding class entirely (Ibid 64).

#### **2.1.5. Existential Anxiety**

Radin describes existential anxiety as a type of anxiety that "*touches the core of one's self-identity, one's self-Image*" (qtd. in Young 428). She believes that the learner who has this type of anxiety thinks that if he learns another language; he will lose his identity, self-image, and self-existence (Ibidem).

### **2.2. Learner' Beliefs about Language Learning**

Studies in language anxiety suggest that there is a relationship between learner's beliefs and language anxiety (Oxford 65). Gynan collects and reports a number of practices from learners which they consider as important to them for being successful in language learning. For instance, among these practices, some learners consider pronunciation as the most important practice; however, others think that vocabulary is the most important one. Likewise, In Horwitz' s study, learners have different believes about language learning; For example, some them give a great concern to the correctness of their utterances. Others

believe that they have to speak with an excellent accent, or to be fluent in the second language on two years. When learners find their beliefs unrealistic, they may feel anxious about the language learning (Young 428).

### **2.3. Instructors Beliefs about Language Teaching**

In addition to the suggested link between learners' beliefs about language learning and language anxiety, researchers also connect language anxiety to teachers' beliefs about language teaching (Oxford 65). Brandl found that the majority of the instructors considered "*A little bit of intimidation a necessary and supportive motivator for promoting students' performance*" (qtd. in Young 428). Accordingly, some teachers think that creating frightening atmosphere in the classroom can improve students' performance. Moreover, Young states that Language learners' anxiety may arise in language classrooms when teachers adopt the beliefs that they should be authoritarian, intimidating, directive and correcting learners' mistakes (428).

### **2.4. Instructor-Learner Interaction**

Many researchers like (Horwitz et al.), Koch and Terrell, Price, and Young report that instructor-learner interactions lead to language anxiety (Young428). Oxford considers that "*Harsh error correction, ridicule, and the uncomfortable handling of mistakes in front of a class are among the most important instructor- Learner interaction issues related to language anxiety*" (66). Students may feel anxious not necessarily because of the error correction itself, but because of the manner of the error correction. Learners' apprehension is a result of responding incorrectly in front of their peers and seeming stupid (Ibid 429).

### **2.5. Classroom Procedures**

One of the classroom procedures that primarily allow anxiety to exist among learners is when they are asked to speak the target language in front of their peers in the classroom;

for instance, oral presentations, skits, and quizzes are found by Koch and Terrell as the most anxiety producing activities (Young 429).

## **2.6. Language Testing**

According to Young, anxiety can result from aspects of language testing. Students can experience anxiety when the given tests deal with different materials other than the materials that have been emphasized by the teacher in the classroom which they have spent hours studying them. In addition, Daly asserts that in language testing, students may feel apprehensive when the situation is new or ambiguous (429). He means that language anxiety stems from unfamiliar or vague test tasks learners may face.

## **III. Language Anxiety and Students ' Learning**

### **1. The Effects of Anxiety on Students ' Learning**

Like many other affective factors such as attitudes, motivation, etc..., anxiety may influence second language learning. Many researchers have investigated the relationship between anxiety and learning. E. K. Horwitz states that "*Scholars have entertained the possibility that anxiety interferes with second language learning*" (113). (Ganschow et al.) report that foreign language educators view the link between anxiety and language learning in foreign language classes where they found that anxiety affects learners' success or failure (Chan and Wu 294). In addition, one might consider that anxiety has a negative effect on second language learning; however, it can also have a positive effect. Allright and Bailey claim that "*despite the unpleasant associations we may have with it, it is not necessarily a bad thing in itself*" (172). Consequently, researchers make a distinction between the positive and the negative effects of anxiety on second language learning by classifying it into one that gets in the students' way of learning a second language or one that helps them for better achievement.

Researchers provide different names to this distinction. Albert, Hiber, and Scovel call it debilitating/ facilitative, Oxford used harmful/helpful, and Spielman and Radnofsky preferred euphoric (beneficial)/dysphoric (determinal) (H. D. Brown 162). Moreover, Ellis claims that there are three different opinions that can be identified which reflect the relationship between anxiety and language learning. The first opinion states that anxiety facilitates language learning, the second one states that anxiety has a negative impact on language learning, and the third one states that language anxiety is the result of difficulties with learning rather than the cause (693-694).

### **1.1. The Negative Effects of Anxiety on Students ' Learning**

Krashen contended that *“there is no helpful aspect to anxiety in language acquisition which almost by definition requires that anxiety be zero”* (Oxford 62). In addition to Krashen, there are other researchers who investigated the effect of anxiety on second language learning. Some of these researchers found that anxiety has negative effects on second language learning and achievement such as on: performance, grades, motivation, and so on.

#### **1.1.1. Performance**

- MacIntyre and Gardner discovered that there is negative correlation between language anxiety and performance in the second language; however, they did not find such correlation between anxiety and the learners' first language (Ellis 694).

- Trylong and Young found that anxiety has a negative effect on performance in speaking and in writing tasks (Oxford 61).

- Radriguez, Saito, Samimy, and Kim also found that there is a negative correlation between anxiety and performance (Cubukcu 136).

### **1.1.2. Grades**

- Many researchers like Aida, Chang, Horwitz et al., and Liao found that course grades were negatively affected by anxiety (Chan and Wu 296).

### **1.1.3. Motivation**

- Ely suggested that motivation is negatively affected by anxiety because highly anxious learners are less likely to take risks in class (Ellis 694).

## **1.2. The Positive Effects of Anxiety on Students' Learning**

Scovel mentions that "*Some researchers suggested that language anxiety was actually 'helpful' or 'facilitating' in some ways...*" (Oxford 61). In addition to the researchers who claim that anxiety has a negative impact on second language learning, there are others who indicate to the existence of the positive effect as well; for example, some researchers found that anxiety has a positive effect on motivation, marks, competitiveness, achievement, and so on.

### **1.2.1. Motivation**

- Eysenck noted that there is a correlation between anxiety and motivation in which he stated that low levels of anxiety increase students' motivation by urging them to make more effort (Ellis 694).

### **1.2.2. Competitiveness**

- Bailey, through a study on anxiety and competitiveness in second language learning, discovered that competitiveness can lead to students' success (H. D. Brown 162). Her study was done by writing a diary of her own language learning and then classifying the situations where anxiety pushes her to do better and the others where it impedes her learning (Hedge 21). For instance, Bailey indicates that sometimes anxiety resulting from

competitiveness motivated her to study harder by reviewing and preparing materials in order to feel at ease during the oral tasks in the classroom (H. D. Brown 163).

### **1.2.3. Achievement**

- Chastain and Kleinman pointed out that there is a relationship between anxiety and achievement; For example, students with higher levels of anxiety showed higher achievement scores (E. K. Horwitz 113).

## **2. Language Anxiety as a Result or as a Cause**

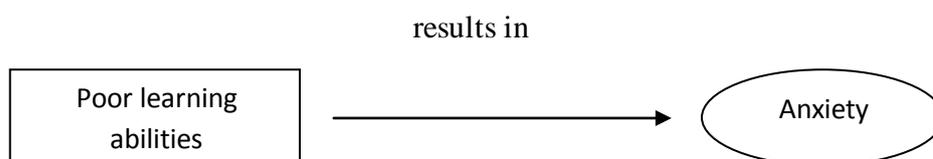
Many studies have been carried by various researchers to answer the question of whether anxiety is the cause of poor performance or the result of less than satisfactory performance. However, those researchers do not agree about a constant answer. Some of them claim that anxiety plays a causal role while others indicate that anxiety is a result rather than a cause (H. D. Brown 163).

Claiming that anxiety is the result, Sparks, Ganschow, and Javorsky developed a hypothesis which is called "*Linguistic Deficit Coding Hypothesis*". This hypothesis states that foreign language anxiety could be the result of the students' deficit in their first language; these deficits are the difficulties that students face with the language "*codes*" (phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic features). In contrast, other researchers like E. K. Horwitz do not agree with those who claim that anxiety is the result, she rejected the explanation which was provided by the Linguistic Deficit Coding Hypothesis (H. D. Brown 163). Despite that Horwitz does not assert that anxiety is the cause, she argues that the difficulties, proposed by The Linguistic Deficit Coding hypothesis, are not always the cause of learners' anxiety since even advanced and experienced learners can experience anxiety (Ellis 695).

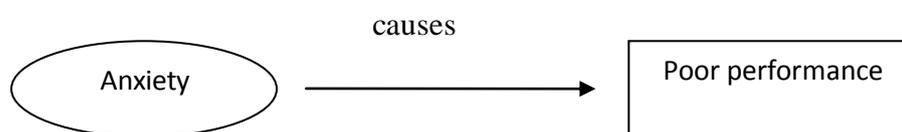
She also notes that "*with over one-third of language learners reporting forms of anxiety, it seems highly implausible to attribute anxiety to first language deficits*" (qtd. in H. D. Brown 163). Horwitz refused the idea that foreign language anxiety is the result of the students' deficits in their first language because she notes that the majority of second language learners report experiencing anxiety.

Whatever the handled studies and whatever the provided supports, researchers are still in debate about the role of anxiety whether it is the result or the cause. We arrive that anxiety can play the role of either a cause or a result or both of them. Our opinion is displayed in diagrams which are as follows:

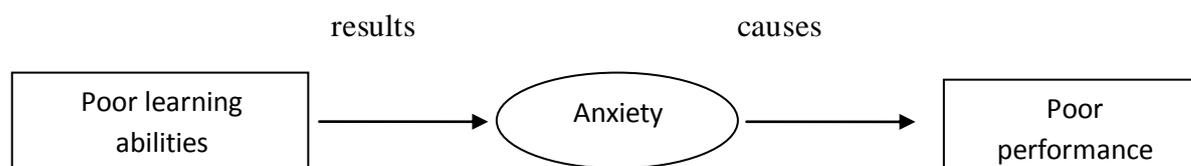
**Anxiety as a result**



**Anxiety as a cause**



**Anxiety as a result and as a cause**



**Figure 02: Anxiety as a result or as a cause of learners' poor performance**

In brief, despite that anxiety can be facilitating or debilitating, it is often considered to have negative effects on students' learning and performance as it is stated by MacIntyre and Gardner that "*Although anxiety could be facilitating or debilitating, it affects negatively in most cases performance in the second language*" (Chan and Wu 295). In

addition, H. D. Brown points out that a little tension in learning the second language could be beneficial for second language learners. He also claims that "*Too much and too little anxiety*" might impede second language learners' success (163).

### 3. The Relationship between Anxiety and Students' Stages of Development

Researchers like MacIntyre and Gardner relate foreign language anxiety to learners' stages of development. They propose the Developmental Model which they called "*Model of the Role of anxiety in the Developmental Process*". This model explains the relationship between anxiety, learners' stage of development, and situation-specific learning experience (Ellis 695). It illustrates three stages of learners' development. Each stage is characterized by specific type of anxiety.

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Type of anxiety</b>	<b>Effect on learning</b>
<b>Beginners</b>	Very little-restricted to state anxiety.	None
<b>Post-beginners</b>	Situation anxiety develops if learner develops negative expectations based on bad learning experience.	Learner expects to be nervous and performs poorly.
<b>Later</b>	Poor performance and continued bad learning experiences result in increased anxiety.	Continued poor performance

**Table 01: MacIntyre's and Gardner's model of the role of anxiety in the developmental process (Ellis 696)**

In this model, the first stage is when the learner is a beginner. In this stage, the learner experiences very little anxiety restricted to state anxiety and which has no effect on learning. The second stage is the post-beginner stage where anxiety can arise because the learner had bad learning experiences which lead him to develop negative expectations. In other words, the type of anxiety the post-beginner has is situation anxiety. Consequently, in

this stage, the learner feels anxious and his anxiety can lead to his poor performance. As the learner becomes in the third stage which is called by MacIntyre "*later*" and his bad experiences are continuing, his anxiety will be increased resulting in continued poor performance.

In short, we deduce from the model proposed by MacIntyre and Gardner that learners' anxiety increase according to their stages of development. This means that the increase of anxiety is positively related to the progress of the learner from beginner to intermediate then advanced. However, some researchers do not agree with this model; for instance, the study done by Elkhafaifi arrived at opposite results to MacIntyre's and Gardner's model. He found that beginner learners experience higher levels of listening anxiety than intermediate and advanced learners (Ellis 695).

## **V. The Characteristics of Foreign Language Anxious Learners**

Since anxiety has a deep impact on different aspects of foreign language learning, it is preferable and very important for teachers to identify learners who suffer from anxiety in their foreign language classrooms.

Oxford states that language anxiety can be easily observable through different signs (66). She classifies these signs into the following:

### **1. General Avoidance**

Language anxiety manifests among foreign language learners in a number of ways such as forgetting the answer, showing carelessness, cutting class, coming late, having low levels of verbal production, lack of volunteering in class, and seeming inability to answer even the simplest questions (Oxford 66).

## **2. Physical Actions**

Language anxiety can be presented in different physical actions such as squirming, fidgeting, playing with hair or clothing, nervously touching objects, stuttering or stammering, and being unable to reproduce the sounds or the intonation of the target language even after repeated practice (Oxford 66)

## **3. Physical Symptoms**

Anxious students may suffer from several physical symptoms that can be revealed as complaining about a headache, experiencing tight muscles, feeling unexplained pain or tension in any part of the body (Oxford 66).

## **4. Other Signs of Language Anxiety**

In addition to the above signs, there are other signs that can reflect language anxiety such as conversation withdrawal, lack of eye contact, hostility, monosyllabic or noncommittal responses, image protection or masking behaviors (exaggerated smiling, laughing, nodding, joking), and excessive self-criticism like the expression "*I am stupid*" (Oxford 66).

## **VI. The Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and the Speaking Skill**

Anxiety is accounted as an affective factor that hinders foreign language learners' performance. Students' foreign language competence is represented by their production of the input of this foreign language i.e. their production shows their level of competence (Hwang 17). Because of the negative effect of anxiety on students' performance, it seems that anxiety effect students' speaking skill. In other words, anxiety has a relationship with speaking in the foreign language.

Chang, Horwitz, and Schallert report that “*speaking is the most anxiety provoking aspect in a second language learning situation*” (Tsiplakides 40). This means that speaking the foreign language generates learners’ anxiety. One reason that makes speaking as the most anxiety provoking is the nature of its activities. As it is stated by Hedge that these activities of speaking need much effort from students and teachers since they tend to be so sentimental (292). In this case, learners feel anxious and insecure to speak the foreign language (Hung 78). MacIntyre and Gardner state that high levels of anxiety are linked to negative experiences in speaking activities (Hedge 21).

We deduce that anxiety is negatively correlated with speaking the foreign language. This is confirmed by Allright and Bailey who claim that “*the more anxious learners are, the less likely they are to do well at speech skills*” (173). Consequently, researchers and teachers perceive foreign language anxiety as a hindrance for foreign language learners to achieve good speaking abilities (Irzeqat 7). However, it is not clear whether it is the increasing anxiety that hinders developing learners’ speech skills, or whether it is the poor speech skills that provoke anxiety (Allright and Bailey 173).

## **Conclusion**

Foreign language anxiety has been studied by many researchers and from different aspects. These numerous studies reflect its importance in language learning. In studying foreign language anxiety, researchers can use diaries, questionnaires, and interviews for collecting data necessary for their studies. Foreign language anxiety has been recognized to have many sources related to the classroom. Some of these sources result from the learner, some from the teacher and others from the instructions and the activities given in the classroom. Researchers have identified three types of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Foreign language anxious learners can be distinguished from non-anxious ones by various characteristics. Some of these characteristics are

manifested in general avoidance, physical actions, physical symptoms, and other signs. Several researches have been conducted to seek the impact of anxiety on students' learning. Some of them proved that anxiety has negative effects on students' foreign language learning process, and others claimed that it can have positive effects. In addition, other studies have been carried out to answer the question of whether anxiety is a result or a cause of learners' poor performance. Despite of these different views, the majority of the researchers assert that anxiety has a great role in preventing learners to succeed in learning the foreign language. Moreover, Studies investigating the effects of anxiety on foreign language learning proved that anxiety is negatively correlated with speaking the foreign language.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

## **Introduction**

Speaking is considered as one of the most important aspects in learning foreign languages. Irzeqat states that “*speaking is the core of learning languages since speaking a language means knowing that language*” (6). However, because of the existence of anxiety in foreign language learning, speaking is also affected by this anxiety. As it is mentioned in the first chapter, speaking is negatively correlated with foreign language anxiety. Subaşlı claims that the majority of foreign language learners are highly anxious when they are engaged in speaking activities (32).

In this chapter, we try to give a clear insight about the phenomenon of speaking anxiety. We start by providing different definitions to foreign language speaking anxiety and exposing some studies which have been conducted about this issue. Then, we move to present the major causes of speech anxiety. Further, we exhibit the characteristics of learners suffering from speech anxiety. After that, we talk about the effect of speech anxiety on learners’ learning and speaking performance. Moreover, we explore the relationship between foreign language anxiety and the four skills. Finally, we display some tips that help learners overcome their speech anxiety and some procedures teachers can do to conquer foreign language speaking anxiety in their classrooms.

### **I. Definition of Speech Anxiety**

Chastain defines speaking as “*the process of combining background and linguistic knowledge in order to build an oral message to be conveyed to the intended audience*” (Irzeqat 6). Speaking is the act of employing the acquired linguistic and background knowledge in constructing oral utterances and expressions when interacting with other people. Since speaking is a very important skill, most of the learners are often worried about their abilities to use the foreign language especially in situations where they are

asked to speak (Ay 84). Thus, they experience a type of fear which is called speech anxiety.

Researchers provide various definitions to speech anxiety. Kanar defines speech anxiety as “*a stress that results from having to speak in front of a group*” (292). According to Basic, speech anxiety is “*a fear of expressing oneself orally*”. She also views it as “*a fear of exposure since fear of speaking is often triggered by the surrounding*” (4, 9). Moreover, Ayres, Hopt and Peterson relate speech anxiety with “*the delivering of speech or the fear or anxiety associated with anticipating the delivery of a speech*” (69). Accordingly, speech anxiety is feelings of apprehension, tension, and stress that individuals experience when they have to speak in front of an audience.

Sellnow states that speech anxiety has been given various names such as speech fright, stage fright, and public speaking anxiety. All these names refer to anxiety arising when giving a speech in public (35). The following story represents a state of an anxious learner expected to give a speech in the classroom:

During Jason’s first semester teaching, he had a student who ended up in the hospital because of her anxiety. The student was preparing for her first speech in a public speaking class. As she was preparing the speech, she grew more and more anxious and finally had a panic attack and stopped breathing. If her husband had not been with her and rushed her to the hospital, it is very likely that she may have died. The doctors eventually had to medicate her, so that she could give her speeches in the class. (Wrench et al. 55).

## **1. Studies on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

Because of the importance of speaking and the great effects of anxiety on it, there have been many studies focusing on students’ speaking anxiety (speech anxiety). Among

these studies is the study that has been done by (Cheng et al.) which investigates the relationship between anxiety and foreign language speaking and writing achievement. Another study has been done by Aydlen to explore the sources of Turkish foreign language students in the productive skills, speaking and writing. Besides, Kitano has investigated anxiety sources of college learners of Japanese in oral practice. In addition, Liu examined anxiety in oral English classrooms in a Chinese university. Moreover, Tsiplakides and Keramida have studied the characteristics of anxious students in order to reduce their anxiety in speaking (Subaşl 33-35).

The handled researches brought valuable insights into the area of foreign language anxiety. Their outcomes showed that anxiety in oral production plays the role of a negative factor that hinders the learning process. The researchers of these studies recommended for further researches to be done concerning foreign language speaking anxiety (Subaşl 36). Accordingly, we deduce that foreign language speaking anxiety is an important issue in foreign language learning that needs more researches to be conducted.

## **II. Causes of Speech Anxiety**

Students' speech anxiety is the result of numerous factors. There are many studies that seek to explore these factors. For example, researchers like Xiuqin and Liu have investigated the causes that lead to students' speech anxiety by making a study on Chinese English learners. The following are some of the causes which most of foreign language learners suffer from:

### **1. Lack of vocabulary**

One of the causes of students' speaking anxiety is lack of vocabulary. Foreign language learners may feel anxious because of the limited amount of vocabulary they have. Liu extracted through a survey study with Chinese English Learners that the learners in his

study think that *"vocabulary is a big obstacle for their English learning "*. For instance, one of those learners stated *"I am a little afraid of speaking English because my vocabulary is poor ..."*. Another learner stated *"I can't speak on when suddenly come to a new word I never knew. How shy I will be!"* (128-129). Consequently, we deduce that lack of vocabulary has a considerable role in arising students' speaking anxiety.

## **2. Lack of Preparation**

This is another important cause for students' speech anxiety. It is stated by Kanar that *"Speech anxiety is usually the results of not being prepared"*. She claims that being unprepared when giving a presentation may lead to students' anxiety (239). This is confirmed by the results reached by Liu in his survey with Chinese English learners. Liu found that the majority of the students attributed their anxiety to their lack of preparation. They acknowledged that if they are prepared, they feel less anxious and more confident to speak. For example, one of these students stated *"I am often nervous if asked to speak English without preparation and it is much better if I am prepared"* (129). Consequently, students should be well prepared and knowledgeable enough about the topic which they are required to give a presentation on or to look for an answer to a question about this topic; being prepared may give the students the ability and the confidence to speak.

## **3. Lack of Practice**

Students' speech anxiety can arise from the students' lack of practice to the foreign language which they are studying. Liu reported that Chinese English learners did not have many opportunities to practice the language because of the limited class time, the big class size, and the lack of chances to practice the language outside the classroom. Consequently, the majority of those students were anxious when speaking English in class. For instance, one of those students said *"I am nervous may be because I didn't practice it and I am not used to it"* (129).

#### **4. Inability to Express Ideas**

Foreign language learners sometimes find it difficult to express their ideas in the foreign language they are studying. This difficulty tends to be a problem for most foreign language learners as well as it contributes to their anxiety. Liu states that many Chinese English learners experienced speech anxiety because they are unable to express their ideas in English. One of those learners acknowledged that "*Sometimes I am afraid of talking to others. For I have no ideas [of] how to express my meanings by the words I've learned. I feel nervous when speaking in front of others because I'm afraid I would speak no thing and only stand there embarrassedly*" (131). Students can also face this problem of the inability to express ideas when they cannot translate their ideas from their native language to the language they are learning. For example, a student in Liu' s study stated "*when I speak English in front of others, I'm nervous because I don't know what to say or even if I know what to say, I can't translate it into English or speak it smoothly*" (Ibidem).

#### **5. Fear of Making Mistakes**

Fear of making mistakes is considered as another cause of students' speech anxiety. Foreign language learners experience speech anxiety and avoid speaking in the class may be because of their fear of making mistakes. Xiuqin claims that "*Students often feel frightened at the idea of making mistakes and receiving negative evaluations from the peers*" (35). This means that students may be anxious if they are apprehensive of making mistakes and being laughed at. For instance, one of the learners in Liu' s study said "*I like to speak English, but when I am in front of others, I will be nervous and can't say any words, because I am afraid others will laugh at me if make some mistake*" (130). However, students should not be frightened of making mistakes and being negatively evaluated because this way prevents them from speaking in the class.

## **6. Fear of Being Focus of Attention**

Another cause that leads to learners' speech anxiety is their fear of being focus of attention. According to the results of the study done by Liu, many learners experienced anxiety when they were singled out to speak the language in front of their classmates. One of those learners reported "*I am often nervous when speaking English in front of others, because I think too many eyes were gazing at me*" (130).

## **7. Low English Proficiency**

Learners' speech anxiety may emerge from their low English proficiency. Through a survey study, Liu indicates that low English proficiency provoked anxiety among the Chinese English learners. One of them stated "*I'm a little afraid of speaking English, because my speaking English is poor*" (129). Moreover, the results of the study done by Xiuqin on Chinese English learners show that those learners are afraid to speak because they are less proficient English speakers. He claims that those students, with low English proficiency, have difficulty understanding what the teacher says in the class as well as they are unable to respond to the teacher' questions. They also avoid asking the teacher to repeat what was said because they fear that their peers would think that their English is poor. Consequently, those learners withdraw from speaking in the classroom because of their "*face keeping*". Their face keeping prevents them from many opportunities to practice the language in the class (35).

## **III. The Characteristics of Students Suffering from Speech Anxiety**

Students who suffer from speech anxiety are characterized by a number of features that make them different from other learners. Some of these characteristics appear as physical symptoms among the anxious speakers; for instance, Morris states different signs that many anxious speakers experience such as: dry mouth, sweaty palms, shaking hands,

pale skin, quivering voice, shallow breathing, pounding heart, dizziness, numbing body, etc (1).

There are other characteristics which reveal as mental symptoms among the anxious speakers. According to Kanar, learners who experience anxiety in speaking are characterized by these mental symptoms: disorganized thoughts, forgetting what they had planned to say, feeling of inadequacy, and negative self-talk. She claims that students experience these physical and mental symptoms before speaking or when they begin to speak. She states that the first case of learners, who experience them before speaking, become "*tongue-tied*". However, the second case of learners, who experience them when starting to speak, may be fine once they get going (292).

In addition to these physical and mental symptoms, there are other signs which distinguish anxious speakers from non-anxious ones. For example, Basic claims that foreign language anxious speakers are often very calm, silent, passive, and can receive less attention from teachers. Moreover, they do not make any disruptive behavior, give up very early, and continue to be quiet through their years of study (10).

#### **IV. The Effects of Speech Anxiety on Students' Learning and Speaking Performance**

*"Anxiety has been considered a very negative factor in learning a foreign language, especially in learning to speak the language"* (Xiuqin 37). In addition, Horwitz, Horwitz, and cope state *"anxiety is a major obstacle to be overcome in learning to speak another language"* (qtd. in Xiuqin 37). Accordingly, it seems that speaking anxiety has a negative impact on learning and speaking the second language. Speaking anxiety affects many aspects of learning. Some of these aspects are identified as follows:

## **1. Language Learning Process**

According to MacIntyre and Gardner, speaking anxiety has negative effects on students' concentrating and processing the input in the class; consequently, their output of the language is also negatively affected (Xiuqin 37).

## **2. The Practice of the Target Language and the Development of the Speaking Skill**

MacIntyre and Gardner state that speaking anxious students tend to withdraw from participating in the class and are unwilling to take risks. These behaviors deprive learners from many opportunities to practice the target language. Therefore, the speaking skill of those speaking anxious students will be less developed (Xiuqin 37).

## **3. Grades**

Basic states that speaking anxious students are less motivated than other learners. Consequently, their learning is affected as well as their grades. She also demonstrates that learners' grades depend on their participation on classroom activities. Unlike learners who participate more in these activities, learners who are calm and do not participate tend to receive lower grades. Thus, their less learning is the result of their lack of chances to participate in classroom activities (10).

## **4. Speaking Ability**

The outcomes of the study carried out by Fang Peng and Dong on Chinese college students proved that high anxious learners had low spoken English ability. Some problems appeared during their oral production such as in their pronunciation and the interference of their mother tongue (Subaşlı 35).

## **5. Self-Confidence**

Through an empirical study done by Aydlen to find the sources of foreign language anxiety on Turkish students learning English as a foreign language, the results showed that anxiety prevents learners to speak the target language and reduces their self-confidence (Subaşl 34). In addition, Basic claims that speaking anxiety pushes learners to remain quiet and lead them to have low self-confidence (4).

## **6. Performance in Oral Exams**

Speaking anxiety influences students' performance in oral exams. Phillips, through her study, found that there is a negative relationship between students' anxiety and their performance in oral exams. The outcomes of her study revealed that unlike learners with low anxiety, learners with high anxiety tend to speak less (Huang 21).

## **V. Foreign Language Anxiety and the Four Skills**

Ay states that in addition to the studies done about the relationship between students' anxiety and the speaking skill, recent researches have attempt to explore the relationship between foreign language anxiety and reading, writing, and listening; however, much more emphasis has been given to the correlation between foreign language anxiety and the speaking skill (84).

### **1. Foreign Language Anxiety and Reading, Listening and Writing**

#### **1.1. Foreign Language Anxiety and the Reading Skill**

Sellers has carried out a study that explore the link between foreign language anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. He reported that unlike low anxious learners, high anxious learners tended to recall less the content of the passages they read. He concluded that students with high anxiety lose their concentration during the reading tasks. Consequently, they were confused and unable to focus on tasks which in

turn affect their comprehension of the reading passages (Cheng 13, 14). Accordingly, it seems that reading is an anxiety provoking for some students. The reading skill of anxious readers tends to be less developed than the reading skill of non-anxious ones.

### **1.2. Foreign Language Anxiety and the Listening Skill**

Cambell claims that one may consider that listening is not an anxiety provoking; however, the current research has shown that listening activities may also cause anxiety (Ay 84). The results of Dixon's study to investigate the relationship between anxiety and listening comprehension on Spanish college students show that there is a difference between anxious learners and non- anxious ones. In the listening comprehension tests, the scores of the students who did not experience anxiety were higher than the scores of those who experience it (Cheng 15).

In addition to Dixon, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope report that anxious learners tend to have difficulties in differentiating the sounds and the structures of the target language. They may also face difficulties in grasping the content of the target language message (126). Based on the results of Dixon and (Horwitz et al.), it seems that listening also generates learners' anxiety. Students' anxiety of listening leads them to face some difficulties which inhibit the development of their listening skill.

### **1.3. Foreign Language Anxiety and the Writing Skill**

Other studies have been also undertaken to look for the link between foreign language anxiety and the writing skill. (Cheng et al.) searched to explore the link among Taiwanese students studying English as a foreign language. They concluded that significant and negative associations exist between second language writing anxiety and students' writing achievement (Wilson 123). Consequently, we deduce that writing is also

an anxiety provoking for second language learners, and it influences the development of their writing skill.

## **2. Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety in Comparison to the Other Skills**

Through a review of the literature, we have noticed that anxiety is negatively correlated with the speaking skill. In addition, students' learning and speaking performance seem to be strongly affected by their speaking anxiety. We have also noticed that anxiety can affect the other language skills: listening, reading, and writing. However, most of the researchers like Young and (Horwitz et al.) agree that speaking is the most anxiety provoking skill. Consequently, most of the researches have been done on the relationship between anxiety and the speaking skill (Cheng 13). Young states that both teachers and learners acknowledge that speaking is the most stressful skill among the other skills (Subaşl 32). (Horwitz et al.) claim that both teachers and learners associate anxiety with the situations in which the students are required to speak (Irzeqat 1). In addition to considering speaking as the most anxiety provoking, researchers like Leki consider writing as the list anxiety provoking skill (Ay 84).

## **VI. Tips for Helping Learners Overcome their Speech Anxiety**

In addition to teachers' duties of helping learners overcome their speaking anxiety, learners also should make some contributions to decrease it. McCroskey indicates that "*if we are fearful or anxious about something, we are not given to liking it*" (qtd. in Xiuqin 37). Based on McCroskey statement, it seems that when students are anxious about learning specifically speaking, they will develop negative attitudes towards it. These negative attitudes may lead to bad learning. Learners should realize that anxiety has an effective role in impacting their speaking performance. They should know how to deal and decrease their nervousness about speaking. The following are some researchers' suggestions that may help students cope with their anxieties:

## **1. Practice and Preparation**

Practice and preparation are ways that may help learners to deal with their speaking anxiety. Kanar states that “*preparation and practice are the keys to feeling confident about giving a speech or presentation*” (293). In other words, preparation and practice increase learners’ self-confidence in speaking which can decrease the level of their anxiety. (Bt Mohamed et al.) claim that students should try to practice speaking the foreign language with their friends, family or sending messages using the foreign language. They indicate that practice can increase learners’ proficiency of the language, thus, helping them in reducing their anxiety (77).

Furthermore, learners in Liu’s study reported that they should develop self-confidence in order to reduce their anxiety. They thought that increasing their self-confidence will be done through preparation and practice (132). Learners should practice the language inside and outside the classroom and prepare themselves well to increase their foreign language proficiency and to decrease their speaking anxiety as the saying goes 'Practice makes perfect'.

## **2. Eliminating Fear of Making Mistakes**

Another way that students should adopt in order to decrease their speaking anxiety is to eliminate their fear of making mistakes. (Bt Mohamad et al.) suggest that learners should know how to control their nervousness because the audience can not realize their fear unless they show signs of apprehension. Students must concentrate much more in delivering their messages without being afraid of making mistakes. They state that “*Mistakes are the best way of learning*” (77). Consequently, students have to take risks of making mistakes and should bear in their minds that mistakes are not something frightening, but they are part of learning languages.

### **3. Positive Self-Talk**

Positive self-talk is considered as a helpful way for learners to reduce their speaking anxiety. Oxford states that positive self-talk is a kind of "*self-encouragement*" that help learners get rid of irrational and negative ideas (67). Moreover, Kanar claims that positive self-talk is a strategy used to give more support to anxious learners; for instance, learners can say to their selves "*My ideas are good. I can contribute something useful for this discussion*" (293).

### **4. Relaxation**

Relaxation is another way that enables learners to reduce their anxiety. Learners can use this way before giving their speeches in order to feel much better (Kanar 293). Bryan states that relaxation can be done through following some techniques. For example, anxious learners should take a deep breath before speaking which may help them feel comfortable. They can also relax by forgetting everything and repeating the words "*I am calm and relaxed*" (114). Moreover, (Meckerrow et al.) claim that learners can manage their fear of speaking through realizing that tension and nervousness are normal and they will be reduced by the act of speaking (17).

### **5. Visualization**

Learners can use this strategy of visualization to help them relax and reduce the rate of their speaking anxiety. According to Kanar, visualization is a mental picture that learners have to form in which they have to see themselves speaking confidently (293). Moreover, Bryan states "*See yourself performing as a confident presenter who is enjoying the performance*" (144). It means that students should visualize the picture of being confident and enjoying their performance. Bryan suggests that students should rehearse this activity of visualization to be able to control their speaking anxiety (293).

In brief, there are many strategies that students can depend on to cope with their speaking anxiety. Recognizing these strategies and trying to follow them can help students

reduce their speaking anxiety. Practice and preparation, eliminating fear of making mistakes, practicing positive self-talk, relaxation and visualization are among the major helpful ways for learners to conquer their speaking anxiety; therefore, their foreign language learning and speaking performance can be enhanced. Even if these strategies cannot totally eliminate speaking anxiety, it can at least help students to manage it and develop self-confidence.

## **VII. Pedagogical Implications for Overcoming Speech anxiety in Language Learning**

Because of the great effects of speaking anxiety on students' learning and speaking performance, some interventions must be done to reduce it. It is stated by Oxford that the best language acquisition do not take place in situations where anxiety exists (Xiuqin 37). Teachers have the ability to reduce their students' speaking anxiety. However, they should first recognize that foreign language learning especially oral production is an anxiety provoking situation for most second language learners (Tsiplakides 43). Consequently, teachers should not always attribute their students' poor performance to the lack of ability, but they should take into consideration the probability that anxiety is the cause (Cubukcu 139). Aida claims that teachers should try to make some interventions to help anxious learners (Tsiplakides 43). The following are some ways provided by researchers that teachers can use to minimize the level of students' speaking anxiety:

### **1. Relaxed Atmosphere**

Many researchers like Liu, Tsiplakides and others agree that creating a relaxed atmosphere in foreign language classrooms is one of the most affective procedures that help in reducing anxiety among foreign language learners. Liu claims through his study that students need a supportive and non-threatening environment established by the teacher in order to be less anxious to speak the foreign language (133). In addition, Xiuqin states that teachers should make efforts to build a relaxed environment in the foreign language

classes because alleviating students' anxiety is the top priority for foreign language classes (38). Creating a relaxed atmosphere can be done by using different procedures that may help learners feel more comfortable in foreign language class. According to Tsiplakides, teachers can create this relaxed atmosphere by being tolerant to students' mistakes and avoiding making fun of their wrong answers (41). Moreover, they should bear in mind that mistakes are "*part of the language learning process and that mistakes will be made by everyone*". So they should not correct students' mistakes with harsh manner to make them feel at ease (young 432). Holly and King argue that anxious learners may feel better if the teacher allows more time for learners to respond correctly after posing a question (Tsui 124). Tsui claims that reducing anxiety in foreign language classrooms may be done through providing opportunities to learners to write down their answers of the teachers' questions or to share them with each other before presenting them in front of the class (124). Other researchers suggest further ways to establish the relaxed atmosphere. Oxford states that games, laughter and music encourage learners to relax. She also suggests that giving meaningful rewards can support and urge students to use the target language (67).

## **2. Group Work**

Group work is considered as another procedure for overcoming students' speaking anxiety that many foreign language researchers are unanimous on. Tsui states that students' collaboration is an effective means to reduce anxiety among foreign language learners (Allright and Bailey 27). Moreover, Allright and Bailey assimilate learners group work to "*a group of runners training to beat their previous best time in 400 meter relay*" who they must work together to have good achievement. When they earn, they see the benefits of their collaboration and develop confidence in their efforts as individuals and as a team (78).

Group work has many advantages that may help learners reach better results in their foreign language learning process. It can decrease students' fear of failure since in group work; they have the opportunity to share their answers with each one in the group. Group work is also beneficial in the sense that students have time to think and to rehearse their answers which encourage them to participate in the classroom. Besides, it can increase students' motivation because in group work, students can assist each other, encourage, and support their contributions. In addition to these benefits, group work can also increase students' self-confidence and promote interaction (Grandall 233, 235).

### **3. Speaking Activities**

Among the previous given procedures, teachers can use another technique which is varying speaking activities that should be organized and designed to help learners feel better in the foreign language classrooms. Liu states that teachers can reduce their students' speaking anxiety by varying their speaking activities (133). Discussions and debates are one type of the speaking activities suggested by (Davies et al.). These activities require from the teacher to organize discussion for students about interesting topics or giving them the opportunity to choose the topic (82). They state that the interesting topics "*take the learners' mind off the language, at least a little*" (73). In other words, choosing interesting topics or giving students the chance to select the topic can get them involved in the speaking activity.

Moreover, group project is another type of speaking activities that is characterized by making groups of three to five members. The groups prepare posters for the cause of their topic choice without using their first language which costs them points during their discussion. Then, they expose their posters to the rest learners to vote and classify the works from the best to the less good (83). In addition, teachers can incorporate activities about real life communication such as events and changes in the classroom (the weather,

the learners' clothes, their health and mood, etc.), events in the world outside (national sport victory, new films, etc.) (74). These real life communication activities can help in motivating students and getting them involved in the speaking activities. In addition to the above activities, teachers can also reduce their students' speaking anxiety and raise their motivation by making them have roles in amusing role plays (Davies et al. 74).

In sum, creating relaxed atmosphere, making group works, and varying speaking activities are some of the procedures that teachers can use to reduce students' speaking anxiety. Teachers should be knowledgeable about the great effect of speaking anxiety on students' learning. Consequently, they should try to help them decrease their anxieties by following the above procedures or any other ones they think are useful for their learners. Cubukcu states that *"It is imperative that efforts continue to be made to help foreign language learners overcome their fears and become more confident, proficient communicators and problem solvers"* (139). In other words, teachers should try their efforts to help their students conquer their speaking anxiety which gets in their ways to become self-confident and good speakers.

## **Conclusion**

Foreign language speaking anxiety has been studied by many researchers who provided it with different names and definitions. Foreign language speaking anxiety can be called speech anxiety, stage fright, speech fright, and public speaking anxiety. All these names refer to one thing which is anxiety or stress that people may have when they are required to speak. The issue of foreign language speech anxiety has been studied from different angles. For example, some researchers have investigated its relationship with language skills, others have explored its sources and others have looked for strategies to cope with it. The researches done to seek the causes of foreign language speech anxiety have showed different factors such as students' lack of vocabulary, lack of practice,

inability to express ideas, fear of making mistakes and so on. Moreover, learners who experience speech anxiety are characterized by a number of characteristics: some of them are physical and others are mental. Most of the researchers agree that foreign language speech anxiety has negative effects on students' learning and speaking performance. It can affect students' grades, their speaking ability, their self-confidence, their performance in oral exams, etc. Anxiety can affect the four skills; however, it has a great effect on the speaking skill more than the other skills. Hence, speaking is considered as the most anxiety provoking skill. Furthermore, learners can conquer their speaking anxiety by following some helpful ways as having more practice of the language, eliminating their fear of making mistakes, practicing positive self-talk, etc. Besides, teachers can also contribute in reducing anxiety in their foreign language classes and help learners to cope with their speaking anxiety by creating relaxed atmosphere, varying speaking activities, making group works and so on. By reducing anxiety, learners can improve their speaking skill and enhance their foreign language learning.

**Section Two**  
**Field Work**

# **Chapter Three**

## **Analysis of Data Collected**

## **I. The Analysis of the Students' Feedback Questionnaire**

### **Introduction**

One of the instruments that we have used in collecting data is a questionnaire. Through this questionnaire, we aim to discover the existence of anxiety in learning the foreign language. Besides, we intend to know the causes that may lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety, and the effects of anxiety on their speaking skill development. In addition, our main goal is to discover ways that can help students cope with their speaking anxiety, and some strategies that teachers can do to assist them. The questionnaire was distributed to eighty participants from the whole population of third year LMD students of English at Mohammed Khider University of Biskra. However, we have received only seventy seven copies from the whole number. The students' feedback questionnaire contains five sections. The first section is entitled "Background Information" aims to obtain information about the participants such as their gender, attitudes towards English, etc. The second one is entitled "Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning" aims to discover the existence of anxiety on the participants' foreign language learning. The third one is entitled "Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety" aims to explore the effects of foreign language anxiety on the participants' speaking skill in comparison to the other skills. The fourth one is entitled "Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety" aims to recognize the causes that lead to the participants' foreign language speaking anxiety. The fifth one is entitled "Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety" aims to know the importance of reducing foreign language speaking anxiety in promoting the participants' speaking performance and the appropriate ways to reduce it. This questionnaire consists of six item questions (modified) from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.

## The Analysis

### Section One: Background Information

1. You are

Male  Female

Responses	Participants	%
Male	30	38,96
Female	47	61,03

**Table 02: Participants' gender distribution**

It is seen from the table that the number of females is 47 (61.03%), and the number of males is 30 (38.96%). This reflects that our sample consists of both male and female students; however, the number of female students is more than the number of male students (female over presentation).

The information got from this table can affect the results of our study. It can help us in discovering whether anxiety exists among one gender or among both of them. It can also affect our study in the sense that our population includes both genders and the number of females is more than males.

2. In secondary school, you were in:

Literary stream  scientific stream

Responses	Participants	%
Literary stream	37	48,05
Scientific stream	40	51,94

### Table 03: Participants' streams

From this table, we notice that learners who were in literary streams are 37 (48.05%), and those who were in scientific streams are 40 (51.94%). This means that the participants of our study came from both literary and scientific streams. However, the number of scientific stream students is a little bit higher than the number of literary streams students.

Since our sample includes participants of both streams, we may find that anxiety influences the participants of both of them.

3. You have started studying English in:

Primary school  Middle school  High school

Responses	Participants	%
Primary school	5	6, 49
Middle school	61	79, 22
High school	1	1, 29

### Table 04: Participants' experience in studying English

From this table, we notice that the participants who started studying English at primary school are 5 (6, 49%), those who started studying it at middle school are 61 (79, 22%), and those who started studying it at high school are only 1 (1, 29%). It can be deduced that the participants have various experiences in studying English. The majority of them have nearly the same experience in studying English since most of them have started to study it at the middle school.

Based on these results, we can say that most of the participants have intermediate experiences in studying English. This may influence the outcomes of our study in the sense that the participants' long experience in studying English may control the level of their anxiety.

4. Your choice to study English at the university was :

Voluntary  Obligated

Responses	Participants	%
Voluntary	73	94, 80
Obligated	4	5, 19

**Table 05: Participants' choice to study English**

This table reveals that the participants who chose to study English voluntarily are 73 (94, 80%), and those who are obliged to study it are 4 (5, 19%). The number of the participants who chose to study English voluntarily is more than those who are obliged to study it; consequently, studying English is the choice (desire) of the majority of the participants.

Since the majority of the participants chose to study English voluntarily, it seems that they are sure of their abilities to study it. However, if we find that anxiety exists among them, we can say that even if they have the ability to learn English, their anxiety prevents them from achieving better learning.

5. Do you like English language?

Yes  No

Responses	Participants	%
Yes	74	96, 10
No	3	3, 89

**Table 06 : Participants' attitudes towards English language.**

The table shows that the participants who like English are 74 (96, 10%), and those who do not like it are 3 (3, 89%). The number of the participants who like English tends to

be much more than the number of those who do not like it. The great number of the participants who like English reflects that the majority of the participants have positive attitudes towards English language.

Since the majority of the participants like to study English, we suppose that the foreign language learning of those participants will be easy. However, if we find that they face difficulties in their learning, it may be because of their anxiety.

## Section Two: Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning

1. Do you think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult?

Yes  No

Responses	Participants	%
Yes	32	41, 55
No	45	56, 44

**Table 07: Participants' opinion about learning English as a foreign language**

We can see from this table that the participants who think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult are 32 (41, 55%), and those who think that learning English as a foreign language is not difficult are 45 (56, 44%). The amount of the participants who think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult is less than the amount of those who think that it is not difficult to learn it. Based on this table, we discover that a great number of the participants believe that learning English as a foreign language is not a difficult task.

The majority of the participants think that learning English as a foreign language is not difficult. However, if we find that they suffer from anxiety, we can deduce that they

perceive foreign language learning as an easy task, but anxiety tends to make it difficult for them.

2. If yes, is anxiety among the causes of your foreign language learning difficulties?

Yes  No

Responses	Participants	%
Yes	36	46, 55
No	11	14, 28
No answer	30	38, 96

**Table 08: Participants' perception of whether anxiety is among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties**

We notice from this table that the participants who reported that anxiety is among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties are 36 (46, 55%), those who reported that anxiety is not among the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties are 11 (14, 28%), and those who provided no answer are 30 (38, 96%). The participants who provided no answer may be because the current question contains 'If yes', and if they answered 'no' in the previous question, they see themselves as not concerned to answer. However, if we compare the results given in the table (7), which show that those who answered 'yes' are 32 (41, 55%), with the results given in the table (8), which show that those who responded to the question are 47 (61, 03%), we can grasp that there are some participants who answered 'no' in the previous question also answered the current question.

Based on these results, we can say that the participants do not consider learning English as a foreign language as a difficult task, and they trust their abilities to learn it; however, anxiety gets in their way of learning and makes it difficult for them.

Consequently, we can consider anxiety as one of the factors that contributes in the participants' foreign language learning difficulties.

3. Does anxiety affect your foreign language learning?

Yes  No

Responses	Participants	%
Yes	51	66, 23
No	26	33, 76

**Table 09: Participants' perception about the effect of anxiety on their foreign language learning**

It appears from this table that the participants who reported that anxiety affects their foreign language learning are 51 (66, 23%), and those who reported that anxiety does not affect their foreign language learning are 26 (33, 76%). The number of the participants who believe that anxiety affects their foreign language learning is higher than those who see it as having no impact on their foreign language learning.

If we compare the results of this table with the results of the table (8), we notice that the number of the participants who think that anxiety affects their foreign language learning is more than the number of those who consider anxiety as one of the causes of their foreign language learning difficulties. Accordingly, we deduce that the number given in the table (8) does not give the exact number of the anxious participants because based on the table (9); it seems that their number is more than the number shown in the table (8). The data provided in both tables tell us that anxiety has a great and a serious impact on the foreign language learning of the majority of the participants.

4. If yes, to what extent anxiety affects your foreign language learning?

High extent  Intermediate extent  Low extent

Responses	Participants	%
High extent	12	15, 58
Intermediate extent	37	48, 05
Low extent	6	7, 79
No answer	22	28, 57

**Table 10: Participants' perception about the extent to which anxiety affects their foreign language leaning**

It seems from the table that the participants who reported that anxiety has a high extent in effecting their foreign language learning are 12 (15, 58%), those who reported that it has an intermediate extent are 37 (48, 05%), those who reported that it has a low extent are 6 (7, 79%), and those who provided no answer are 22 (28, 57%). The number of the participants who think that anxiety has an intermediate extent in effecting their foreign language learning is more than the other numbers. Because the current question contains 'if yes', we expected that only those who answered with 'yes' in the previous question will answer the current question. The number of the participants who answered 'yes' in the previous question is 51 (66, 23%), and the total number of the participants who answered the current question is 55 (71, 42%).

These results clarify that not only those who answered 'yes' in the previous question answered the current question. It means not only 51 (66, 23%) participants who think that anxiety affects their foreign language learning as it is shown in the table (9), but there are more than this number of the participants. All the above results can give us an idea that anxiety effects foreign language learning of the majority of the participants; some of them are aware of its effects and others are not. We figure out that anxiety influences most of the participants' foreign language learning, but with various extents.

### Section Three: Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

1. Do you face difficulties in learning the four skills?

Yes  No

Responses	Participants	%
Yes	51	66, 23
No	26	33, 76

**Table 11: Participants' perception about the difficulties they may face in learning the four skills**

The table manifests that the participants who reported that they face difficulties in learning the four skills are 51 (66, 23%), and those who reported that they do not face difficulties in learning the four skills are 26 (33, 76%). The number of the participants who believe that they do not face difficulties in learning the four skills is less than the number of those who reported that they face difficulties. Based on this number, we can say that approximately two-third of our sample tends to suffer from difficulties in learning the four skills.

We extract that learning the four skills is a difficult task for the most of the participants. The difficulties in learning the four skills may result because of some problems that the participants face. Based on the table (8) which shows that the majority of the participants consider anxiety as a cause of their foreign language learning difficulties, we can say that one of the causes of their difficulties in learning the four skills is anxiety.

2. What do you think about speaking the foreign language?

Easy  Difficult

Responses	participants	%
Easy	31	40, 25
Difficult	46	59, 74

**Table 12: Participants' opinion about speaking the foreign language**

The table illustrates that the participants who think that speaking the foreign language is easy are 31 (40, 25%), and those who believe that speaking the foreign language is difficult are 46 (59, 74%). The number of the participants who perceive speaking the foreign language as a difficult task is more than the number of the participants who perceive it as an easy task. This means that the vast number of the participants find speaking the foreign language difficult.

Since anxiety affects the foreign language learning of the majority of the participants as it is mentioned in the table (9), it is possible that anxiety is the cause of their speaking difficulty. This supports our perception that speaking is difficult for most foreign language learners.

3. If you have difficulties in speaking the foreign language, do you consider anxiety a cause of these difficulties?

Yes  No

Responses	participants	%
Yes	56	72, 72
No	16	20, 77
No answer	5	6, 49

**Table 13: Participants' consideration of whether anxiety is/is not a cause of their difficulties in speaking the foreign language**

The table demonstrates that the participants who consider anxiety as a cause of their difficulties in speaking the foreign language are 56 (72, 72%), and the participants who do not consider anxiety as a cause of their foreign language speaking difficulties are 16 (20, 77%). However, the participants who provided no answer are 5 (6, 49%). The number of the participants who believe that anxiety is the cause of their difficulties in speaking the foreign language is higher than the number of those who reported that anxiety is not the cause.

From these results, we deduce that anxiety affects speaking the foreign language of the majority of the participants. This means that anxiety is one of the causes of the participants' speaking difficulties. This proves our opinion about considering anxiety as a cause of the learners' foreign language speaking difficulties.

4. You feel more anxious when you:

Write  read  listen  speak

Responses	participants	%
Write	7	9, 09
Read	2	2, 59
Listen	12	15, 58
Speak	42	54, 54
Speak & read	4	5, 19
Speak &listen	3	3, 89
Listen & write	2	2, 59
Write & read	1	1, 29
No answer	4	5, 19

**Table 14: The skill (s) in which the participants feel more anxious**

The table shows that the participants who feel more anxious in writing are 7 (9, 09%), those who feel more anxious in reading are 2 (2, 59%), those who feel more anxious

in listening are 12 (15, 58%), and those who feel more anxious in speaking are 42 (54, 54%). However, there are some participants who reported that they feel more anxious in more than one skill: in speaking & reading are 4 (5, 19%), in speaking & listening are 3 (3, 89%), in listening & writing are 2 (2, 59%), and in writing & reading is 1 (1, 29%). Besides, the participants who provided no answer are 4 (5, 19%). According to the above numbers, it seems that the majority of our participants tend to feel more anxious in speaking.

We can say that speaking is the most anxiety provoking skill for our sample participants in comparison to the other skills.

5. You achieve better in:

Written tests  Oral tests

Responses	participants	%
Written tests	50	64, 93
Oral tests	26	33, 76
Both	1	1, 29

**Table 15: Participants' perception about their achievement in written and oral tests**

The table reveals that the participants who achieve better in written tests are 50 (64, 93%), and those who achieve better in oral tests are 26 (33, 76%). However, there is only 1 (1, 29%) participant who think that he achieves better in both written and oral tests. The number of the participants who achieve better in written tests is more than the number of those who achieve better in oral tests. Based on these results, we can consider that oral tests are more difficult than written tests.

According to the table (14) which shows that the majority of the participants feel more anxious in speaking, we deduce that students' low achievement in oral tests is due to their speaking anxiety.

6. If you are anxious speaker, you classify yourself as:

High anxious speaker  low anxious speaker

Intermediate anxious speaker

Responses	Participants	%
High anxious speaker	11	14, 28
Intermediate anxious speaker	46	59, 74
Low anxious speaker	15	19, 48
No answer	5	6, 49

**Table 16: Participants' perception about the level of their foreign language speaking anxiety**

The table clarifies that the participants who are anxious speakers are 11 (14, 28%), intermediate anxious speakers are 46 (59, 74%), low anxious speakers are 15 (19, 48%), and those who see that they are non-anxious speakers are 5 (6, 49%). From all these numbers, it seems that the number of the participants who perceive themselves as intermediate anxious speakers is the largest number. It also seems that the majority of the participants are anxious speakers. In addition, the participants who perceive themselves as high anxious speakers are less than those who perceive themselves as low anxious speakers.

We figure out that most of the participants experience the feeling of anxiety, but with various levels. Since the majority of the participants experience anxiety in speaking, we can say that we succeeded in choosing the appropriate population (third year) for our study.

## Section Four: Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

1. You never feel quite sure of yourself when you are speaking in your foreign language classroom.

SA  A  N  D  SD

Responses	participants	%
Strongly agree	13	16, 88
Agree	37	48, 05
Neutral	20	25, 97
Disagree	5	6, 49
Strongly disagree	2	2, 59

**Table 17: Participants' perception about their uncertainty in speaking the foreign language in the class**

The table shows that the participants who strongly agree about their uncertainty to speak the foreign language in the class are 13 (16, 88%), those who agree are 37 (48, 05%), those who are neutral are 20 (25, 97%), those who disagree are 5 (6, 49%), and those who strongly disagree are 2 (2, 59%). The number of the participants who agree is more than the other numbers, and the number of the participants who strongly disagree is the least number.

The majority of the participants lack the confidence which makes them feel unsure about themselves in speaking the foreign language. We deduce that the lack of confidence creates participants' speaking anxiety. In other words, lack of confidence is one of the causes of the participants' speaking anxiety.

2. You start to panic when you have to speak without any preparation in language class?

SA  A  N  D  SD

Responses	participants	%
Strongly agree	16	20, 77
Agree	34	44, 15
Neutral	10	12, 98
Disagree	12	15, 58
Strongly disagree	5	6, 49

**Table 18: Participants' perception about starting to panic when they have to speak without preparation**

The table shows that the participants who strongly agree that they start to panic when they have to speak without any preparation in language class are 16 (20, 77%), those who agree are 34 (44, 15%), those who are neutral are 10 (12, 98%), those who disagree are 12 (15, 58%), and those who strongly disagree are 5 (6, 49%). The number of the participants who agree is more than the other numbers. Besides, the number of the participants who strongly agree is more than the rest numbers.

These numbers show that the majority of the participants start to panic when they have to speak without preparation. We deduce that being unprepared is one of the sources that generate participants' speaking anxiety.

3. It embarrasses you to volunteer answers in your language class.

SA  A  N  D  SD

Responses	participants	%
Strongly agree	9	11, 68
Agree	37	48, 05
Neutral	12	15, 58
Disagree	14	18, 18
Strongly disagree	6	7, 79

**Table 19: Participants' perception about the embarrassment when volunteering answers in the class**

The table clarifies that the participants who strongly agree that it embarrasses them to volunteer answers in their foreign language class are 9 (11, 68%), those who agree are 37 (48, 05%), those who are neutral are 12 (15, 58%), those who disagree are 14 (18, 18%), and those who strongly disagree are 6 (7, 79%). The number of the participants who agree is more than the other numbers, and the total number of those who agree and strongly agree which is 46 (59, 74%) is more than the total of the rest numbers which is 32 (41, 55%).

These outcomes signify that the majority of the participants experience this feeling of embarrassment when volunteering answers in class. Their embarrassment may be due to their anxiety. Consequently, we extract that volunteering answers is one of the causes of the participants' foreign language anxiety that prevents them from speaking and participating in the class.

4. You are afraid that your language teacher is ready to correct every mistake you make.

SA  A  N  D  D

Responses	Participants	%
Strongly agree	7	9, 09
Agree	25	32, 46
Neutral	12	15, 58
Disagree	26	33, 76
Strongly disagree	7	9, 09

**Table 20: Participants' perception about the fright because of the teacher's correction of their mistakes**

The table reveals that the participants who strongly agree that they are afraid when the teacher is ready to correct every mistake they make are 7 (9, 09%), those who agree are 25 (32, 46%), those who are neutral are 12 (15, 58%), those who disagree are 26 (33, 76%), and those who strongly disagree are 7 (7, 909%). The total number of the participants who strongly agree and agree is 32 (41, 55%) which is nearly the same total number of the participants who strongly disagree and disagree which is 33 (42, 85%). Despite that there are some participants who agree that they are afraid when the teacher is ready to correct every mistake they make, there are others who disagree.

These results lead us to deduce that another cause that creates participants speaking anxiety is the fear of their teacher's mistakes correction. However, this cause creates anxiety for only some participants. The other students who their anxiety seems to be not emerged by this reason may have another reason for their anxiety. This shows that anxiety is provoked by many factors, and the participants vary in their causes of anxiety.

5. You are afraid that the others students will laugh at you when you have not prepared in advance

SA  A  N  D  SD

Responses	participants	%
Strongly agree	11	14, 28
Agree	17	22, 07
Neutral	13	16, 88
Disagree	23	29, 87
Strongly disagree	13	16, 88

**Table 21: Participants' perception about the fright from their peers' laugh when being unprepared**

We notice from the table that the participants who strongly agree that they are afraid that the other students will laugh at them when they have not prepared in advance are 11 (14, 28%), those who agree are 17 (22, 07%), those who are neutral are 13 (16, 88%), those who disagree are 23 (29, 87%), and those who strongly disagree are 13 (16, 88%). The number of the participants who disagree is more than the other numbers, and the total number of those who agree and strongly agree which is 28 (36, 36%) is less than the total number of those who disagree and strongly disagree which is 36 (46, 75%).

We can understand from the provided data that fear of peers' laugh is another cause of the participants' anxiety. It is not the cause for all anxious participants, but it is the cause of only some of them. We can also understand that fear of peers' laugh is not the major cause of the majority of the participants' anxiety.

6. You get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which you have not prepared in advance.

SA  A  N  D  D

Responses	Participants	%
Strongly agree	18	23, 37
Agree	28	36, 36
Neutral	9	11, 68
Disagree	15	19, 48
Strongly disagree	7	9, 09

**Table 22: Participants' perception to the nervousness due to the teacher questions when being unprepared**

It is seen from the table that the participants who strongly agree that they get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which they have not prepared in advance are 18 (23, 37%), those who agree are 28 (36, 36%), those who are neutral are 9 (11, 68%), those who disagree are 15 (19, 48%), and those who strongly disagree are 7 (9, 09%). The number of the participants who agree that they get nervous when the teacher asks questions that they have not prepared is more than the other numbers. In addition, the total number of the participants who strongly agree and agree which is 46 (59, 74%) is more than the total number of those who disagree and strongly disagree which is 22 (28, 57%).

The great number of the participants who showed their agreement with the statement indicates that fear of answering questions when being unprepared plays a great role in provoking most of the participants' anxiety. We can say that anxious participants' anxiety arises when they have no idea about the question or the topic provided by the teacher. In other words, being asked about topics which the participants are unfamiliar with creates their speaking anxiety.

7. Do you have difficulty in expressing your ideas in English?

Yes  No

Responses	participants	%
Yes	148	62, 33
No	28	36, 36
No answer	1	1, 29

**Table 23: Participants' perception about their difficulty in expressing their idea in English**

We notice from the table that the participants who reported that they have difficulty in expressing their ideas in English are 48 (62, 33%), and those who reported that they do not face difficulties are 28 (36, 36%). However, there is only 1 (1, 29%) participant who provided no answer. The number of the participants who face difficulty in expressing their ideas in English is higher than the number of those who do not face difficulty.

The results shown in this table give us an idea that the majority of our participants have difficulty in expressing their ideas in English. As it is reached from the table (13) that anxiety affects speaking the foreign language of the majority of the participants, we can say that the participants' difficulty in expressing their ideas in English is one of the causes of their speaking anxiety.

8. In the oral tasks, where do you feel more anxious?

Role plays  Free discussions  Oral presentations

Responses	Participants	%
Role plays	19	24, 67
Free discussions	23	29, 87
Oral presentations	31	40, 25
Role plays & free discussions	1	1, 29
Role plays & free discussions & oral presentations	1	1, 29
Free discussions & oral presentations	2	2, 59

**Table 24: Participants' perception about the oral tasks in which they experience more anxiety**

The table reveals that the participants who feel more anxious in role plays are 19 (24, 67%), those who feel more anxious in free discussions are 23 (29, 87%), and those who feel more anxious in oral presentations are 31 (40, 25%). However there are other participants who reported that they feel more anxious in more than one oral task: in role plays and free discussion is 1 (1, 29%), in role plays, free discussions, and oral presentations is 1 (1, 29%), and in free discussions and oral presentations are 2 (2, 59%). The number of the participants who feel more anxious in oral presentations is more than the number of those who experience more anxiety in free discussions and role plays. Besides, the number of the participants who feel more anxious in role plays is the least number.

We notice that the task which tends to provoke much anxiety for the participants is oral presentations. Since in oral presentations, learners are obliged to speak in front of the whole class, we can say that the participants' great anxiety in oral presentations is due to the stress of being obliged to speak and being the focus of attention of their peers and teachers.

9. Check any of the following factors that may cause your fear of speaking.

Lack of vocabulary

Lack of preparation

Lack of practice

Fear of being focus of attention

Responses	Participants	%
Lack of vocabulary	27	35,06
Lack of preparation	10	12,98
Lack of practice	13	16,88
Fear of being focus of attention	5	6,49
Lack of vocabulary & practice	5	6,49
Lack of vocabulary , practice & preparation	3	3,89
Lack of vocabulary, practice, preparation & being focus of attention	2	2,59
Lack of vocabulary & fear of being focus of attention	3	3,89
Lack of practice & fear of being focus of attention	3	3,89
Lack of vocabulary, practice & fear of being focus of attention	1	1,29
Lack of vocabulary & preparation	3	3,89
No answer	2	2,59

**Table 25: Participants' causes of their speech anxiety**

The table illustrates that the participants who attributed their fear of speaking to lack of vocabulary are 27 (35,06%), those who attributed it to lack of preparation are 10 (12,98%), those who attributed it to lack of practice are 13 (16,88%), and those who attributed it to being focus of attention are 5 (6,49%). In addition, there are other participants who attributed their fear of speaking to more than one cause. Those who

attributed it to lack of vocabulary and practice are 5 (6, 49%), those who attributed it to lack of vocabulary, practice and preparation are 3 (3, 89%), those who attributed it to lack of vocabulary and being focus of attention are 3 (3, 89%), those who attributed it to lack of practice and fear of being focus of attention are 3 (3, 89%), those who attributed it to lack of vocabulary, practice and fear of being focus of attention are 1 (1, 29%), those who attributed it to lack of vocabulary and preparation are 3 (3, 89%), and those who attributed it to all of them are 2 (2, 59%). However, there are 2 (2, 59%) participants who provided no answer. The number of the participants who attributed their fear of speaking to lack of vocabulary is more than the rest numbers. Moreover, there are some participants who provided us with other causes of their speaking anxiety which are: low level of grammar, the type of speaking activities, fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation, lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, unfamiliarity with the topic, and teachers' discrimination between their students. Even if this question is concerned only with the participants who reported that they are anxious, their number is 36 (46, 55%), we find that all the participants answered this question except for two participants.

These results inform us that the majority of the participants experience the feeling of anxiety. Based on the causes reported by the participants, we can say that there are many causes of students' speaking anxiety. Each participant has a cause or more than one which lead (s) him/her to be anxious speaker; however, the participants vary in the causes of their speech anxiety.

### **Section Five: Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

1. In order to enhance your speaking performance, reducing your anxiety is:

Very important  Less important  Not important

Responses	Participants	%
Very important	61	79, 22
Less important	10	12, 98
Not important	6	7, 79

**Table 26: Participants' perception to the importance of reducing their anxiety in enhancing their speaking performance**

The table demonstrates that the participants who think that reducing their anxiety is very important to enhance their speaking performance are 61 (79, 22%), those who think that it is less important are 10 (12, 98%), and those who think that it is not important are 6 (7, 79%). The number of the participants who see that reducing their anxiety is very important for enhancing their speaking performance is astonishing. In addition, the number of the participants who see that it is not important is the least number.

The astonishing number of the participants who think that reducing their anxiety is very important to enhance their speaking performance signifies that the majority of the participants have great desire to reduce their anxiety. It also means that they attribute their obstacles in speaking the foreign language to their anxiety; thus, if they reduce it, they may enhance their speaking performance. These results give support to our hypothesis which states "Anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills; thus, if we look for effective procedures to reduce it, we may help anxious learners to enhance and promote their speaking performance". Moreover, we may understand from the small number of the participants who think that reducing anxiety is not important that they may have other factors which affect their speaking performance. Consequently, we can say that even if anxiety has a great effect in the speaking performance of the majority of the participants, there are other factors which may hinder the speaking performance of some learners.

## **2. What do you think you can do in order to reduce your anxiety?**

The number of the participants who responded to this question are 58 (75, 32%), and the number of the participants who did not respond to it are 19 (16, 88%). The number of the participants who answered the question is more than the number of those who did not answer it. The ways that the participants think they can do in order to reduce their anxiety are summarized as follows: practice, preparation, developing self-confidence and self-esteem, avoiding fear of making mistakes, practicing positive self-talk, avoiding fear of being focus of attention, and learning in groups with classmates. This means that the majority of the participants thought about some solutions to reduce their speaking anxiety. The great number of the participants who answered this question shows that they are aware of the effects of their anxiety in hindering their speaking performance; it also shows that they are aware of the ways that they can depend on to reduce their speaking anxiety. Since in the table (25), we reached that nearly all the participants are anxious speakers, and the number of the participants who answered this question is only 58 (75, 32%), it seems that not all the anxious participants answered the question. The reason behind their non-answering to this question may be because they do not know how to reduce their anxiety, and they need some advice.

## **3. What do you want from your teacher to do in order to reduce your anxiety?**

The number of the participants who answered this question is 61 (79, 22%), and those who did not answer it is 16 (20, 77%). The number of the participants who answered this question is more than the number of those who did not answer it. They reported a variety of needs from their teachers. These needs are summarized as follows: creating relaxed atmosphere, motivating and encouraging students, choosing interesting topics and activities, providing students with the opportunity to speak, avoid correcting all learners' mistakes, being leader teachers rather than boss teachers, managing disruptive behaviors, increasing students' self-confidence, giving advice for learners, avoiding to criticize

learners, and adopting good teaching strategies. If we compare the number of the participants who answered the previous question which is 58 (75, 32%) with the number of the participants who answered this question which is 61(79, 22%), we find that the number of the participants who answered this question is more than the number of the participants who answered the previous question.

All these results indicate that teachers may play a great role in creating learners' speaking anxiety as well as in reducing it. It also means that the students indeed need the help of their teachers in order to reduce their speaking anxiety. Furthermore, the increase in the number of the participants who answered the current question in comparison to the previous question shows that the participants are aware of their needs from their teachers more than their awareness of their abilities to overcome their speaking anxiety.

## **Conclusion**

From the analysis of the students' feedback questionnaire, we conclude that most foreign language learners choose to study the foreign language with their desires; consequently, the majority of them have positive attitudes towards the foreign language. Foreign language learners select to study another language in addition to their first language because they think that they have the ability to learn it. However, these learners before starting to learn another language, they were not aware of the difficulties that they may face when learning and which will prevent them from realizing their goals. When these learners start learning, they discover these difficulties that may get in their way of leaning. One of the causes that lead to students' foreign language learning difficulties is anxiety. Anxiety tends to play a major role in the learners' foreign language achievement. Even if the students perceive foreign language learning as an easy task, the existence of anxiety in their learning tends to make it difficult for them. Anxiety has a very important role in learning foreign languages, it tends to have negative effects on most foreign language learners' learning, and it hinders it whatever their genders. Among the effects of

anxiety on students' learning are its effects on the development of the four skills. Despite that it influences all the four skills, its effects tend to be more on the speaking skill. Therefore, speaking can be considered as the most anxiety provoking skill. Students' speaking anxiety is generated by many factors; some of these factors are generated from teachers, some from peers, some from speaking tasks, and some from the anxious students themselves. Most foreign language learners attribute their speaking anxiety to difficulty in expressing ideas in the foreign language, lack of preparation, lack of being focus of attention, fear of teacher's correction to their mistakes, fear of peers' laugh, unfamiliarity with the topic, low level of grammar, fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, and teachers' discrimination between their students. Most foreign language learners consider anxiety as one of the causes that hinders their speaking performance. In addition, most of them need some advice to control their speaking anxiety, and some contributions from their teachers to reduce it. The students can rely on various ways to decrease their speaking anxiety. These ways are: practice, preparation, developing self-confidence and self-esteem, avoiding fear of making mistakes, practicing positive self-talk, avoiding fear of being focus of attention, and learning in groups with classmates. Moreover, teachers can play a great role in helping the students to decrease their speaking anxiety. This can be done through creating relaxed atmosphere, motivating and encouraging students, choosing interesting topics and activities, providing students with the opportunity to speak, avoiding correcting all learners' mistakes, being leader teachers rather than boss teachers, managing disruptive behaviors, increasing students' self-confidence, giving advice to learners, avoiding criticizing learners, and adopting good teaching strategies.

## **1. The Analysis of the Teacher's Feedback Interview**

### **Introduction**

Another instrument that we have used in addition to the questionnaire is an interview. The interview was done with eight teachers from the department of English at Mohammed Khider University of Biskra. These teachers teach different English Modules. Via this interview which contains fourteen questions, we aim to know about the issue of foreign language speaking anxiety and its existence through the views of teachers. Besides, we intend to know the awareness of teachers about this phenomenon as well as we want to get their suggestions about the appropriate ways to decrease students' foreign language speaking anxiety.

### **The Analysis**

#### **1. How many years have you been teaching at the university?**

From the interviews done with teachers, we have found that their experience in teaching English at the university is restricted between four and twenty years.

Accordingly, we can consider these teachers as experienced teachers. Besides, teachers' distinctive experiences in teaching English can help us in taking a clear view about the phenomenon of foreign language speaking anxiety.

#### **2. What are the courses that you have been teaching throughout your experience?**

Through the interview which has been done with the teachers of oral expression and other modules, we have found that all these teachers have taught various modules. Some of them have taught oral expression in addition to other modules, and some of them have taught other modules rather than oral expression. The courses taught by these teachers are: linguistics, grammar, written expression, psycho-pedagogy, American civilization, phonetics, and second language acquisition.

The various modules taught by these teachers can help us to recognize if anxiety exists only within oral module or also within the other modules.

**2. Have you noticed that some of your students are reluctant to speak the foreign language?**

All the teachers responded to this question with “yes”. Some of them claimed that many of their learners are reluctant to speak and others claimed that only some of them are reluctant. In addition, there are some teachers who used some special expressions when responding to this question like “*yes, many learners*”, “*for sure*”, and “*of course*”.

Teachers’ positive responses and their special expressions show that their students’ reluctance in speaking the foreign language has strong existence in their classes.

**4. In which course do you feel your students more reluctant to speak?**

The teachers stated various responses about the course where their students feel more reluctant to speak the foreign language. Some of them reported that the learners feel more reluctant to speak in lectures, in which the teacher is expected to provide information more than interaction, and some of them reported that the learners feel more reluctant to speak in oral module, in which they are supposed to speak more than the teacher. However, the majority of the teachers reported that their students are more reluctant to speak in oral module.

We can understand that the students are reluctant to speak the foreign language whether they are expected to speak more as in oral sessions or less as in lectures. However, their reluctance of speaking can be apparent in oral module and TD sessions more than in lectures and other courses.

**5. Do you consider anxiety as one of the causes of your students' reluctance to speak the foreign language?**

All the respondents considered anxiety as one of the causes of their students' reluctance of speaking the foreign language. They responded to this question with "yes", and there are others who added some expressions like "*of course*", "*absolutely*", and "*yes of course, it takes a big role*".

The responses provided by the teachers signify that they are aware of the existence of anxiety in their classes. They also show that anxiety plays a great role in students' foreign language learning especially in their speaking the foreign language.

**6. Some researchers believe that anxiety is the most affective factor influencing the foreign language learning. Do you agree with those researchers or do you have another factor that you consider as the most affective one?**

The teachers provided various answers to this question; there are some who agreed with the statement 'some researchers believe that anxiety is the most affective factor influencing foreign language learning', and there are others who disagreed. However, most of the teachers agreed with this statement. Those who agreed used utterances like "*Yes, anxiety is the most affective factor*", "*It is the major one for the majority*", and "*yes, it is the main reason*". Those who did not agree provided other factors like motivation and attitudes.

From these answers, we deduce that students' foreign language learning is affected by many factors. Anxiety is considered as one of the major factors that tend to have great effects on students' foreign language learning.

## **7. What do you think about the impact of anxiety on foreign language learning?**

All the respondents reported that anxiety has high negative effects on students' foreign language learning. It creates tension and prevents learners to express themselves. They also reported that anxiety impacts learners' performance, achievement, progress, and their involvement in foreign language learning even if they are good learners. Nevertheless, there are two respondents who stated that anxiety has both positive and negative effects on students' foreign language learning, but its positive effects tend to be rare. One of the positive effects of anxiety as it is claimed by one of the respondents "*when learners are afraid to receive low marks, their anxiety help them to achieve better*".

These opinions indicate that the teachers are aware of the negative effects of anxiety on their students' foreign language learning. They also show that even though anxiety sometimes has positive effects, it usually has negative effects on students' foreign language learning.

## **8. Do you think that anxiety affects the four skills?**

All the teachers responded with "*yes*" to this question. In other words, they agreed that anxiety affects the four skills.

This means that the teachers throughout their different experiences in teaching various modules, they came across their learners' difficulties in learning the four skills. Accordingly, we can say that anxiety affects foreign language learners' four skills.

## **9. Do you think that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills?**

Teachers' responses to this question are positive "*yes*". All of them agreed that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills. They claimed that anxiety is related more to the speaking skill because speaking is spontaneous and can be considered as the clear area that enables teachers to recognize the anxious learners.

These results show that anxiety exists within all the skills; however, it can be more noticeable in the speaking skill. The nature of this skill provokes students' foreign language anxiety since in speaking learners are required to express their ideas in front of others and are exposed to their evaluations and judgments.

**10. What are the causes that you think are responsible for generating students' speaking anxiety?**

The respondents provided various causes of their students' foreign language speech anxiety. These causes are: shyness, lack of vocabulary, lack of preparation, inappropriate atmosphere, teachers' authority and seriousness, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, lack of interest to the foreign language, fear of making mistakes, and inability to express ideas.

Based on these answers, we deduce that anxiety emerges due to various factors. Besides, we understand that the teachers are aware of the factors that lead to their students' speech anxiety.

**11. Through your teaching experience, what are the characteristics of the students who are anxious in speaking?**

The respondents stated different characteristics that they have noticed in their students. They reported that anxious students are characterized by uncertainty of oneself, shaking hands, sweat, stammering, hesitation, mispronunciation, stopping speaking, committing mistakes, shyness, asking for clarification, trembling, unclear of the voice, low voice, sitting at the back, avoiding eye contact with the teacher, silence, calm, touching their nose, and avoid attending class.

All these features reflect that the phenomenon of speech anxiety really exists in foreign language classes, and it can be recognized through different signs.

**12. Do you think that students' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced?**

All the respondents agreed that students' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced. They used special terms like "*absolutely*", "*of course*", "*definitely*".

The respondents' agreement and their significant terms show that they are sure that learners' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced. They also show that reducing students' speaking anxiety is very important in order to improve their speaking performance.

**13. What are the strategies that you think you have to do in order to reduce your students' speaking anxiety?**

The respondents suggested different strategies that they can do to in order to reduce their students' speaking anxiety. These strategies are: motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, giving them time to prepare and organize their ideas, creating relaxed atmosphere, accepting their mistakes, providing them with an authentic context, managing disruptive behaviors, varying tasks and activities to involve all of them, giving them the opportunity to participate, avoiding immediate correction, making games, and trying not to oblige them to speak.

These answers indicate that teachers are aware of their crucial role in reducing students' speaking anxiety. They also show that they are knowledgeable about the appropriate ways that can help their learners to get rid of their anxiety. Accordingly, we can say that teachers are capable to decrease the level of anxiety in their classes.

#### **14. What do you advice anxious learners to do in order to decrease their speaking' anxiety?**

The respondents provided different advice to anxious learners in order to decrease their Speaking' anxiety. They recommended them to: practice the foreign language inside and outside the classroom, practice listening, develop their self-confidence, and face more often the audience and accept their criticisms.

These answers show that not only teachers have the ability to reduce students' speech anxiety, but also learners have the ability to decrease it through following some ways that help them cope with their anxiety.

#### **Conclusion**

Through the analysis of the interviews done with some experienced teachers teaching different English modules, we arrived at diverse outcomes. Anxiety is a phenomenon that always exists in foreign language classes. It is considered as a big handicap that extremely has negative effects on students' foreign language learning. It influences many aspects of foreign language learning such as its impact on the four skills. Despite that anxiety affects the four skills, it greatly impacts the speaking skill. This is because when speaking, students are required to talk and express their ideas in front of the audience. Consequently, anxiety exists in oral courses more than the other courses, and it is clear to recognize anxious students in speaking tasks more than the other tasks (listening, writing, and reading). Students' speaking anxiety is generated by numerous factors which include shyness, lack of vocabulary, lack of preparation, inappropriate atmosphere, teachers' authority and seriousness, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, lack of interest to the

foreign language, fear of making mistakes, and inability to express ideas. Anxiety tends to have great effects on learners' foreign language learning and speaking performance. It affects their performance, achievement, progress, and their involvement in foreign language learning even if they are good learners. Anxious learners can be distinguished from non-anxious ones by different signs such as uncertainty of oneself, shaking hands, sweat, stammering, hesitation, mispronunciation, stopping speaking, committing mistakes, shyness, asking for clarification, trembling, unclear of the voice, low voice, sitting at the back, avoiding eye contact with the teacher, silence, calm, touching their nose, and avoid attending class. Although anxiety has great effects on students' learning and speaking performance, it can be reduced by a collective work between teachers and students. The efforts done by teachers and students can help in reducing learners' anxiety and enhancing their speaking performance. To reduce students' speaking anxiety, teachers can use these strategies: motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, giving them time to prepare and organize their ideas, creating relaxed atmosphere, accepting their mistakes, providing them with an authentic context, managing disruptive behaviors, varying tasks and activities to involve all of them, giving them the opportunity to participate, avoiding immediate correction, making games, and trying not to oblige them to speak. The students can depend on the following ways to get rid of their speaking anxiety: practice the foreign language inside and outside the classroom, practice listening, develop their self-confidence, and face more often the audience and accept their criticisms. If teachers and learners adopt these strategies and ways, they can decrease the level of anxiety.

## **General conclusion**

Foreign language anxiety is an important phenomenon that has great effects on students' learning. Because of its importance, there have been numerous studies exploring it from different angles (its existence, its relationship with learners' achievements, with willingness to communicate, with ability, etc). These studies have showed that foreign language anxiety affects different learning aspects of the majority of foreign language learners. However, researchers explain its effects differently since some of them consider that it has negative effects; others think that it has positive effects; others believe that it is the cause of learners' poor performance and others believe that it is the result of learners' poor performance. This phenomenon is generated in foreign language classrooms because of many causes: some of these sources result from the learner, some from the teacher and others from the instructions and the activities given in the classroom.

Most of the studies done on foreign language anxiety proved that students feel more anxious when they are required to speak. Because of the great role played by speaking in provoking students' foreign language anxiety, there have been many studies which seek to explore the phenomenon of foreign language speech anxiety. Researchers provide different names to foreign language speech anxiety such as stage fright, speech fright, and public speaking anxiety. Researchers dealing with foreign language speech anxiety examine it from various sides such as its relationship with language skills, its sources, and the appropriate strategies to cope with it. Foreign language speech anxiety is generated due to many factors which effect students' learning and speaking performance. Foreign language

speaking anxious students can be distinguished from non anxious ones by several symptoms: some of them are physical and others are mental. The previous researches showed that foreign language speaking anxiety can be reduced through the interventions of both teachers and learners.

The current study reveals various outcomes concerning the relationship between anxiety and the speaking skill in comparison to the other skills as well as its causes, appearances on learners, and the appropriate strategies to reduce it. Foreign language anxiety touches the learning of the majority of the learners. Both teachers and learners are aware of this matter, and they consider it as a big obstacle in learning the foreign language. Even though there are other factors that tend to influence students' foreign language learning, anxiety is considered by both teachers and learners as the major affective factor affecting students' learning. They assert that speaking the foreign language is the most aspect impacted by anxiety; consequently, anxiety tends to be more related to the speaking skill. Anxiety hinders learners to develop their speaking skill which results in their poor speaking performance. Students' speech anxiety is generated by several factors such as shyness, lack of vocabulary, lack of practice, lack of preparation, inappropriate atmosphere, teachers' authority and seriousness, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem, lack of interest to the foreign language, fear of making mistakes, and inability to express ideas. Foreign language speech anxiety can be recognized by different signs like uncertainty of oneself, shaking hands, sweat, stammering, hesitation, mispronunciation, stopping speaking, committing mistakes, shyness, asking for clarification, trembling,

unclear of the voice, low voice, sitting at the back, avoiding eye contact with the teacher, silence, calm, touching their nose, and avoid attending class.

Teachers and learners can reduce speaking anxiety since both of them may contribute in its emergence. Learners can reduce their speech anxiety by preparing themselves well, practicing the foreign language inside and outside the classroom, practicing listening, developing their self-confidence, avoiding fear of making mistakes, practicing positive self-talk, avoiding fear of being focus of attention, learning in groups, and facing more often the audience and accepting their criticisms. Teachers can use some strategies that help in decreasing the existence of anxiety in their classes by motivating and encouraging learners to express themselves, giving them time to prepare and organize their ideas, creating relaxed atmosphere, accepting their mistakes, providing them with an authentic context, being leader rather than boss teachers, managing disruptive behaviors, varying tasks and activities to involve all of them, giving them the opportunity to participate, avoiding immediate correction, making games, and avoiding obliging them to speak. Trying to eliminate the causes that lead to students' foreign language speaking anxiety can help them enhance and promote their speaking performance. Based on these results, we can say that the current study answers our dissertation' research question. The findings of this study show that anxiety is highly related to the speaking skill more than the other skills. They also display different strategies that teachers and learners can use to conquer anxiety and help in enhancing foreign language learning and speaking performance.

## **Recommendations**

For the purpose of reducing foreign language speech anxiety and achieving better learning and speaking performance, we provide some suggestions for both teachers and learners.

1. Teachers' and learners' awareness of the appropriate strategies of reducing foreign language speaking anxiety without implementing them cannot help in enhancing students' foreign language learning and speaking performance.

2. A good relationship should be constructed between teachers and students to create the safe atmosphere which enables teachers to do their best and helps learners to benefit and to promote their foreign language learning.

3. Students should bear in their minds that nervousness is natural and it can be controlled. Everybody can experience this feeling as it is stated by (Bt Mohamad et al.) "Even professionals such as artists or experienced speakers may feel some sort of anxiety when they have to speak in public" (77).

4. Students should also bear in their minds that mistakes are part of the learning whether learning the foreign languages or other types of learning, so they should not be afraid of making mistakes.

5. Students should know that worthy things cannot be accessed easily as the say goes "No gains without pains", so they should struggle to conquer their anxiety and improve their learning and speaking performance.

6. Foremost, learners have to practice the language in order to increase their English proficiency and to reduce their anxiety as the say goes “Practice makes perfect”.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

**1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.**

Strongly agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**17. I often feel like not going to my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

**33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.**

Strongly agree   Agree   Neither agree nor disagree   Disagree   Strongly disagree

## Appendix II

### Students' feedback questionnaire

We have tried to make this questionnaire for the purpose of realizing our master dissertation objectives. By this questionnaire, we aim to discover the causes of foreign language students' speaking anxiety and to find ways to reduce it. We have chosen third year LMD to be our research sample.

We expect from you to be helpful and help us to realize our objectives.

#### **Note:**

**Anxiety:** it is subjective feelings of apprehension and fear associated with language learning and use (Richards 285).

**Please put a cross (X) in the appropriate box.**

**SA=** strongly agree    **A=** agree    **N=** neutral    **D=** disagree    **SD=**strongly disagree

#### **Section One: Background Information**

1. You are

Male       Female

2. In secondary school, you were in

Literary stream       scientific stream

3. You have started studying English in

Primary school       Middle school  High school

4. Your choice to study English at the university

Voluntary  Obligated

5. Do you like English Language?

Yes  No

**Section Two: Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning**

1. Do you think that learning English as a foreign language is difficult?

Yes  No

2. If yes, is anxiety among the causes of your foreign language learning difficulties?

Yes  No

3. Does anxiety affect your foreign language learning?

Yes  No

4. If yes, to what extent anxiety affects your foreign language learning.

High extent  intermediate extent  Low extent

**Section Three: Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

1. Do you face difficulties in learning the four skills?

Yes  No

2. What do you think about speaking the foreign language?

Easy  Difficult

3. If you have difficulties in speaking the foreign language, do you consider anxiety as a cause of these difficulties?

Yes  No

4. You feel more anxious when you

Write  Read  Listen  Speak

5. You achieve better in

Written tests  Oral tests

6. If you are anxious speaker, you classify yourself as

High anxious speaker  Intermediate anxious speaker

Low anxious speaker

#### **Section Four: Causes of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

1. You never feel quite sure of yourself when you are speaking in your foreign language class.

SA  A  N  D  SD

2. You start to panic when you have to speak without any preparation in language class.

SA  A  N  D  SD

3. It embarrasses you to volunteer answers in your language class.

SA  A  N  D  SD

4. You are afraid that your language teacher is ready to correct every mistake you make.

SA  A  N  D  SD

5. You are afraid that the other students will laugh at you when you haven't prepared in advance.

SA  A  N  D  SD

6. You get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which you haven't prepared in advance.

SA  A  N  D  SD

7. Do you have difficulty in expressing your ideas in English?

Yes  No

8. In the oral tasks, where do you feel more anxious?

Role plays  Free discussions  Oral presentations

9. Check any of the following factors that may cause your fear of speaking

Lack of vocabulary  Lack of preparation

Lack of practice  Fear of being focus of attention

- If there are other causes, please state them.

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

**Section Five: Reducing Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety**

1. In order to enhance your speaking performance, reducing your anxiety is

Very Important  Less Important  Not Important

2. What do you think you can do in order to reduce your anxiety?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. What do you want from your teacher to do in order to reduce your anxiety?

.....

.....

.....

.....

*Thank you*

## **Appendix III**

### **Teachers' feedback Interview**

#### **Would you please answer the following questions?**

1. How many years have you been teaching at the university?
2. What are the courses that you have been teaching throughout your experience?
3. Have you noticed that some of your students are reluctant to speak the foreign language?
4. In which course do you feel your students more reluctant to speak?
5. Do you consider anxiety as one of the causes of your students' reluctance to speak the foreign language?
6. Some researchers believe that anxiety is the most affective factor influencing foreign language learning. Do you agree with those researchers or do you have another factor that you consider as the most affective one?
7. What do you think about the impact of anxiety on foreign language learning?
8. Do you think that anxiety affects the four skills?
9. Do you think that anxiety is related to the speaking skill more than the other skills?
10. What are the causes that you think are responsible for generating students' speaking anxiety?
11. Through your teaching experience, what are the characteristics of the students who are anxious in speaking?
12. Do you think that students' speaking performance will be enhanced if anxiety is reduced?

**13.** What are the strategies that you think you have to do in order to reduce your students' speaking anxiety?

**14.** What do you advise anxious learners to do in order to decrease their speaking anxiety?

## ملخص

يعتبر القلق النفسي من أهم المشاكل التي يعانيها الكثير من طلبة اللغات الأجنبية. و تقوم الدراسة الحالية على معالجة هذه الظاهرة المتولدة عن تكلم اللغة الأجنبية، و تهدف إلى: أولاً: اكتشاف الأسباب المؤدية إلى القلق النفسي عند تكلم الطلبة للغة الأجنبية و الآثار السلبية التي تعرقل أدائهم الكلامي. ثانياً: البحث عن سبل ناجحة تستخدم من قبل الطلبة و الأساتذة للتقليل من هذه الظاهرة، و محاولة تحسين الأداء الكلامي للطلبة. وتعتمد هذه الدراسة على وسيلتين أساسيتين لجمع المعلومات: استبيان و مقابلة. الاستبيان موجه إلى ثمانين طالباً من طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية سنة ثالثة نظام (ل. م. د) بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة. و المقابلة، فتجرى مع ثمانية أساتذة يدرسون مقاييس مختلفة في قسم الإنجليزية بذات الجامعة. و قد أظهرت النتائج، أن معظم طلبة اللغات الأجنبية يتعرضون لهذه الظاهرة في حالات الأداء الكلامي أكثر منه في حالات الاستماع، أو القراءة، أو الكتابة، إذ أن هناك العديد من العوامل التي تؤدي بالطالب إلى القلق النفسي، والتي تشكل عائقاً في مجاله الدراسي أثناء أداءه الكلامي. و تظهر النتائج طرقاً مختلفة تمكن كلا من الأساتذة و الطلبة من التقليل من هذه الظاهرة، أثناء تكلم اللغات الأجنبية. و بذلك تحسين الأداء الكلامي عندهم. فالنتائج المتوصل إليها تثبت صحة الفرضية القائلة: "القلق النفسي مرتبط بمهارة الأداء الكلامي أكثر منه في المهارات الأخرى. و نتيجة لذلك فإن إيجاد حلول فعالة للتقليل منه قد يساعد طلبة اللغة الأجنبية على تحسين و ترقية أدائهم الكلامي. "