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**The effects of Anxiety  
On Students' Achievement  
The case of third year LMD students:  
Department of English  
University of Constantine**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign  
Languages in Partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER (LMD) Sciences of Language**

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## **Dedication**

To the dearest people to my heart

To my parents with love

To my sisters “Nawel” and “Amel”

To my brothers “Reda” and “Karim”

To all my teachers

Special gratitude is due to all those extraordinary People who have stood  
by me in very hard moments.

## *Acknowledgement*

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My profound thanks to the third year LMD students for being completely collaborative during the administration of the questionnaire.

## *Abstract*

Any situation that threatens the well-being of any creature is assumed to produce a state of anxiety within that creature. As for example, internal conflicts and other types of frustration are considered as potential sources.

In the field of education, direct threat to the learner's self-esteem and enormous pressure to perform beyond the learners capabilities will produce within him tremendous amount of anxiety.

In the present study, anxiety means those unpleasant emotions the learner feels during the process of learning.

This study also comprises different questionnaires that were addressed to teachers and learners to know more about the threshold at which these learners feel anxious. It also includes different discussions of the results obtained from these questionnaires, in addition to; some recommendations are suggested at the end of this study.

## *List of abbreviations*

**%:** Percentage.

**BICS:** Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills.

**CALP:** Cognitive Academic Language Ability.

**FL:** Foreign Language

**LMD:** License Master Doctorate

**SL:** Second Language.

**SLA:** Second Language Acquisition.

**TL:** Target Language

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## ***Introduction***

### **1.1. Statement of the problem**

The effects of anxiety always occur in educational settings. It can seriously inhibit learning and performance particularly during the period of exams. The main source of anxiety is students' fear of failure.

Anxious students may have difficulty learning in the first place, difficulty using or transferring knowledge, and difficulty demonstrating their knowledge on tests. The questions which arise here are: what are the main sources of anxiety that may affect the learners' achievement? What should be done to make learners avoid anxiety?

### **1.2. The aim of the study:**

The main objective of this research is to shed some light on the effects of anxiety on students' learning and what should be done to help learners overcome it, to achieve a better performance.

### **1.3. Hypothesis:**

We hypothesize that if learners can overcome their anxiety in learning, they will be able to gain a high self-confidence and motivation to learn.

### **1.4. Tools of research:**

In this study, we would direct two main questionnaires, one to teachers, who have been teaching different modules such as teachers of psychopedagogy, written expression and oral expression, to make sure that



their responses are the product of continuously interacting with different students during many years of observation of learners' needs.

The second questionnaire will be directed to 3<sup>rd</sup> year English learners, at the department of Constantine in order to investigate and observe their attitudes towards the effects of anxiety, and to be guided by their answers in analyzing our research.

After collecting the required data, for our research, we would analyze them quantitatively and qualitatively to shed more light on the impact of students' anxiety on the progress of learning.

### **1.5. The structure of the study:**

This research is basically divided into two (02) main chapters. Chapter one is devoted to the literature review and chapter two which is concerned with the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative results obtained from teachers' and learners' questionnaires.

The first chapter is concerned with a brief theoretical overview of anxiety, types of anxiety, the main sources of anxiety, in addition to the main strategies used by learners to reduce the effects of anxiety, in order to improve students' performance.

The second chapter of the proposed research is basically an investigation of the main causes of anxiety experienced by third year LMD English learners.

# **Chapter One**

## **Anxiety in learning and instruction**

- 1. Introduction.**
- 2. Definition of anxiety.**
- 3. Theories of anxiety.**
- 4. Types of anxiety.**
- 5. Sources of anxiety.**
- 6. Anxiety as a hindrance to learning.**
- 7. Learners' differences.**
- 8. Improving students' performance by reducing anxiety.**
- 9. Conclusion.**

## **1. Introduction:**

The second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has been variously designated as the “age of stress”, or “age of anxiety”, while stress and anxiety are universal human experiences, intrinsic to the human condition, the nature of the specific environmental stimuli evoking stress and anxiety emotions has changed remarkably over the year. (Gaudry. E and Spielberger, C.D, 1971:04).

## **2. Definition of anxiety:**

Every one sometimes experiences anxiety in one form or another and in varying degrees. It involves a pattern of physiological and psychological reactions like feeling of stress and emotions. As such, anxiety can seriously inhibit the ability of concentration and dealing with things in a more positive way. It is considered as an unpleasant state evoking avoided behaviors and defenses. It can also be defined as a specific emotion necessary for an individual to prepare himself for potential danger and threatening situations.

Many researchers found that anxiety is still unclear and not easy to define in simple sentences. (Brown, 2007).

Spielberger (1983:1) also defined anxiety as:

*“The subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system”.*

(Spielberger, 1983: 1, cited in Brown, 2007).

Mussen et al (1974) concluded that:

*“Anxiety is not a pathological condition in itself but a necessary and normal physiological and mental preparation for danger ... anxiety is necessary for the survival of the individual under certain circumstances. Failure to apprehend danger and to prepare for it may have disastrous results.*

(Mussen et al, 1974: 387).

### **3. Theories of anxiety:**

Freud, who was one of the first to focus on the importance of anxiety, differentiated between objective anxiety, and neurotic anxiety. Freud viewed objective anxiety as a realistic response to perceived danger in the environment, synonymous with fear. He saw neurotic anxiety as an unconscious conflict within the individuals since the conflict was unconscious, the person was not aware of the reason for his or her anxiety. Just as there are varying degrees of anxiety, there are also varying degrees of awareness of the cause of one's discomfort (Bennett, 1982).

### **3.1. Anxiety as an unconscious conflict:**

Freud believed that neurotic anxiety was the result of an unconscious conflict. Many id impulses pose a threat to the individual, because they are contradictory to personal values, or because they are in opposition to what society will permit. For example, a young girl who has strong hostile behavior toward her mother may not consciously acknowledge these feelings because they conflict with her belief that one should love one's parents. To acknowledge her true feeling, would destroy her self-concept as a loving daughter and place her in danger of losing her mother's love and support.

### **3.2. Anxiety as a learned response:**

Social learning theory focuses not on the internal conflict but on ways in which anxiety becomes associated with certain situation via learning. Sometimes fears learned in childhood are very difficult to extinguish. Since the first reaction is to avoid or escape the anxiety producing situation, the child will not get a chance to find out that the situation is no longer dangerous.

## **4. Types of anxiety**

Anxiety is like other affective factors such as: tiredness, boredom, anger and emotional disorders. It is entirely related to the psychology of the individual. It does not occur as a single issue; it can rather acquire forms of manifestation and can be categorized as: state and trait anxiety, situation-specific anxiety, and facilitative versus debilitating anxiety.

According to Spielberger et al (2005) trait anxiety is a general characteristic of an individual's personality. Individuals, who experience an anxiety trait, will tend to have an attitude and reaction which reflects their ability to understand the nature of certain environmental stimuli and stressful situations as more or less difficult or threatening.

People who develop a more anxiety-trait are much more prone to reacting to a large level of stimuli, and will be more able to worry in less dangerous and hard situations. These individuals are more likely to present state-anxiety in some circumstances, especially in normal day-to-day activities, as an example, people who are accustomed to facing tremendous amount of difficulties in their everyday life.

The second type of anxiety known as state anxiety is considered as an obstacle and an interruption of individual's emotional equilibrium. For example, when the person hears bad news about a very close friend, he becomes so anxious, so that emotional equilibrium will be put into question (Spielberger et al, 2005).

A person who experienced a state anxiety is more likely to feel stress and nervousness or unable to confront any event. In such moments, the person may feel nervous and can easily react to external stimuli. State-anxiety is an unpleasant feeling which can seriously disturb the individual's ability to react positively to any situation and in a certain environment.

Moreover, high levels of state anxiety are particularly harmful. It can even disable the person's tendency to engage in adaptive behavior aimed to end and overcome this feeling, for example encountering lot of difficulties. In the question of the exam makes the learner bored and very disturbed emotionally and hence very much anxious about his future.

Anxiety caused by different learning situations, such as learner's like trying to understand mathematical quizzes or presenting an oral conversation in classroom.

The third type is situation-specific anxiety which is related to the general orientation of anxiety and certain situations, or on a learning context in which the learner does not find himself capable to be proficient in a second language in speaking or reading passages.

Anxiety can have also debilitating and facilitative forms. Whereby stress can be a good a motivator, for example may keep a person alert and provide him with motivation. But some stress can have devastating effects and can lead him to forget several issues at one go during an exam. This positive anxiety is called a facilitating anxiety, and this negative anxiety is called debilitating one. The former does not inhibit the preparation for tests and exams, and can motivate the learner to learn and succeed.

In fact, this type of anxiety helps him to improve the progress of learning and performance. Debilitating- anxiety, however, has a negative impact on student's motivation and his preparation before and during

exams, like waiting until the last minute to revise and prepare for a big test or exam, feeling more anxious and unprepared or arriving at a test late and having to answer all of the questions in time. (Alpert and Haber, 1960).

According to Scovel (1978) facilitating-anxiety keeps the learner motivated and “**fight**” the new information and pushing them to do more efforts to reduce the negative impact of anxiety. (Scovel 1978, cited in Ellis 1994: 482).

In the work of Bailey (1983), facilitating and debilitating anxiety are closely related with the self-image of language learners and the learners to compare themselves continually with others and react emotively to such comparison, wish to perform better results and evaluation (Bailey, 1983: 96, Cited in Graham 1997).

They may experience anxiety, with in regard to language lessons if their competitiveness is found or an unsuccessful self-image. Such anxiety may be facilitating if it prompts the learner to devote more effort to language learning; in turn the self image will be enhanced as learning outcomes are enhanced. (Hedge and Tricia, 2000).

Dörnyei (2005) concluded that anxiety does not only hinder achievement but in some cases improves and develops it. Stress is considered as the cognitive part of anxiety and can have a negative effect on performance. For example failing to answer the question will only hinder the future performances of the learner, and makes him less and less efficient in the classroom.



## 5. Sources of anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is the feeling of worry and nervousness experienced by non-native speakers, when learning or using a second or a foreign language. These feeling may interrupt the desire to develop any second language context whether associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing, or the receptive skill, of reading and listening.

Language anxiety is attributable to different causes. The primary sources of language anxiety, explicated by Horwitz et al (1986) are communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety.

According to them, foreign language anxiety consists of:

*‘Self perception, beliefs, feelings and behavior related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process’* (Horwitz et al 1986: 128, cited in Dörnyei 2001: 364).

Communication apprehension, on the one hand, is quiet relevant to the conceptualization of foreign language anxiety. Learners who exhibit communication apprehension do not feel comfortable communicating in the target language (TL) in front of others, due to their limited knowledge of the language, especially in relation to speaking and listening skills.

Communication apprehension has a great influence on students’ communication competence. Learners who typically have difficulty speaking in front of other people are likely to be less able to learn a second language (SL) and develop their communication skill.

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

As a result, they keep silent most of the time and refuse to participate in language classroom activities.

According to Horwitz et al (1986), test anxiety is a form of performance anxiety, in which the learner feel the fear of failure and doing badly in a text. Learners who experience text anxiety consider the foreign language process and especially oral production, as a threatening situation, rather than an opportunity to improve their communicative competence and speaking skills (Horwitz et al, 1986, cited in Dörnyei, 2001).

## **6. Anxiety as a hindrance to learning**

Learning a second language means acquiring new techniques that are used in this foreign culture. This can be seen as a threatening to a learner's consciousness, rather than encouraging him to perform well.

Some learners come over many difficulties, when learning a second language. It because of lot of emotional factors that are experienced by learners in foreign language learning, and which affect their abilities such

as: intelligence, motivation, attitudes and anxiety. Anxiety stands as one of the main influential factors for effective language learning. (Brown, 2007).

According to Spielberger et al (2005) language anxiety is the fear that an individual feels when he has to use a second or a foreign language in which he is not fully proficient. He considers language anxiety as a stable personality trait related to the individual's tendency to react nervously when speaking, listening, reading or writing in the second language (SL).

Anxious students have been shown to be less likely to volunteer answers in class and to be hesitant in expressing personally relevant information in the target language (TL).

Spielberger have explained the negative effects of anxiety on second or foreign language learning by the fact that anxiety deviates attention and cognitive resources that could otherwise be effectively used to improve performance in the second language. It is claimed that the more anxious the learners, the less proficient in speech skills they are.

Moreover, Spielberger (ibid) predicted that the existing of several variables can affect the learning process. Two of these variables are trait anxiety i, e the case of some learners to become anxious in any situation, and the other one is state. Anxiety for example when the learner has to present an oral production in front of his classmates or when the teacher authorizes him to correct his own mistakes. All this is experienced in relation to some particular event or activity.

There is also an other variable that affects language acquisition, which is that of students' perception for their own communicative competence in second language acquisition (SLA), however, these students tend to underestimate their competence in relation to less anxious students, and therefore become themselves anxious about their performance.

Therefore, since the detrimental effects of anxiety on achievement are evident, efforts should be made to lower levels of anxiety in the class. This can be done if teachers or educational board attempt to create a more relaxed atmosphere and to have a less authoritative attitude towards their students (Spielberger et al, 2005).

## **7. Learners' differences**

### **Introverted and extraverted learners:**

A number of personality traits may affect the acquisition of a second language, and this can decrease the progress of learning and discourages risk-taking which is necessary for the continuity of students' performance (Lightbown and Spada, 2006).

According to Brandes et al (2006) there are two types of personality dimensions which are relevant to the study of anxiety in learners: Introversion and extraversion. Introversion refers to the learners' tendency to cope with stress and emotions.

On the one hand, learners who are high in introversion are most of the time anxious, sad, shy and angry at anything that moves in front of them. On the other hand, extraverted learners are less anxious and feel active, bright and warm more than introverted ones. Both of introversion and extraversion are closely related. This means that one can be high in introversion and extraversion, high in one but not the other, or low in both of them (Brandes et al, 2006).

Brown (2007) distinguished between two (2) types of learners: extraverted and introverted learners. He believes that extraverted learners be more proficient and active than the introverted, they behave in an extraverted manner and can engage easily with other learners and participate freely during a classroom discussion. Moreover, they learn best when they can work in groups and learn by trying something themselves, instead of watching or listening to other when they have difficulty with understanding; they prefer to exchange their ideas with others.

Myer (1995) defined extraverts as:

*“The after thinkers, they cannot understand life until they have lived it. Their attitude is relaxed and confident, they expect the waters to prove shallow, and plunge readily into new and untried experiences. Minds outwardly directed, interest and attention following objective happenings, primarily those of the immediate environment. Their real world therefore is the outer world of people and things”*

(Myer 1995:77).

Myers (1995) wants to show that extraverts are very social, they enjoy being part of a conversation and they are interested in trying new things and often work well with others. Introverted learners, however, have an inner strength of character i. e. they prefer to study alone, refuse to be part of a classroom discussion; they focus on listening to others talk and think about what has been said before.

According to Myer (1995), the introverts' main focus is in the internal world of ideas and acts, whereas the extraverts' primary focus is in the external world of people and activities i. e. they enjoy to interact with others and exchange ideas with them.

Many language teachers found that, the personality of their students plays a crucial role during the progress of their learning. Learners themselves consider that personality is an important factor which influences the learning process.

Naiman et al (1978) investigated in their research about personality variables that extraversion was helpful for the acquisition of oral skill, and create an opportunity to develop their communication competence inside or outside the classroom setting.

Eysenck and Chan (1982) concluded that:

*Extraverts are sociable, like parties, have many friends and need excitement, they are sensation-seekers and risk takers, like practical jokes and are active.*

*Conversely introverts are quiet prefer reading to meeting people, have few but close friends and usually avoid excitement.* (Eysenck and Chan 1982: 154, cited in Ellis 2008: 673).

Eysenck and Chan identified that extraverted and introverted learners do not all learn in the same way, because each one of them adopts an approach to learning which makes him feel completely at ease.

A major hypothesis regarding the relationship between extraversion, introversion and second language learning (2). The first part of this hypothesis investigated that extraverted learners will achieve better results in acquiring basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), because they appear a low level of anxiety. This hypothesis is aiming to investigate that extraversion offer more chances to practice a second language.

The second part of this hypothesis, however, is willing to investigate that learners will reach better performance at developing cognitive academic language ability (CALP) i, e introverted learners have more opportunities to be successful in academic performance, perhaps because they spend a lot of time thinking, reading and writing (Griffiths 1991, cited in Ellis 2008: 674).

Pritchard (2009) pointed out that it is helpful for learners if they are aware of their own particular approach of learning, and take more opportunities to improve their way of learning.

Differences between extraversion and introversion

<b>Extraversion</b>	<b>Introversion</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prefer the outer world of people and thing to reflection.</li> <li>➤ Active.</li> <li>➤ Gain energy from others.</li> <li>➤ Want to experience things in order to understand them.</li> <li>➤ Work by trial and variety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prefer reflection and the inner world of action.</li> <li>➤ Prefer writing to talking.</li> <li>➤ May enjoy social contact but need to recover from it.</li> <li>➤ Want to understand something before trying it.</li> <li>➤ Like a quiet space to work in.</li> </ul>

**Table 01**

Source: Myer ( 1995:77) .

**8. Improving students’ performance by reducing anxiety:**

Iakovos Tsiplakides (2006) suggested the following interventions which were implemented in a variety of educational institutions to help learners overcome anxiety:

- 1. Project work:** were used due to the following benefits of project work in foreign language settings cited in the literature:



- a) Students are more personally involved, so they usually have increased motivation. They do not feel that they are constantly assessed.
- b) It is easier for them to focus on communication, rather than on accuracy, and are less concerned with language errors and the consequences of “imagined failure”.

An additional advantage of project work is that students have an active role and responsibilities in the implementation of project work, which can boost their confidence and reduce the affect of perceptions of low ability in the target language.

## **2. Establishing a learning community and a supportive classroom**

**atmosphere:** Creating a learning community that provides the environment for optimal motivation and a collaborative atmosphere can help reduce fear of errors. The following classroom interventions were made, drawing principally on suggestions for creating a supportive learning classroom community.

### **a) Teacher –students relations:**

A set of classroom rules and norms was negotiated with the student- making fun of a wrong answer was not accepted and a norm of mistake tolerance was ratified.

Errors were considered a natural part of learning a foreign language and students were encouraged to ask for help without running the risk of embarrassment (Dörnyei, 2001).

In addition, teaching practices communicated expectations of success for all students for example: as far as grouping practices were concerned, groups were formed from mixed ability students, students were given equally academically challenging tasks, and the same questioning strategies were used for all students, so that they realized that there was no differential treatment with respect to their language performance and out of school support.

**b) Providing indirect rather than direct correction:**

We avoided direct, on the spot correction in speaking activities, since it can undermine student's confidence and because it discourages learners especially anxious learners.

(Lightbown and Spada, 2006). Anxious students that they should aim at continuing a speaking activity, despite making errors for example: the teacher provided a relaxed atmosphere so that the students had an opportunity to continue speaking despite making a mistake.

**c) Teacher immediacy:**

Both Verbal (use of humor, use of student first names) and Nonverbal (eye contact, positive gestures) types of immediacy behavior were employed, since they can reduce anxiety and impact positively on motivation to learn.

**d) Provision of praise:**

We soon realized that praising these students in front of their classmates for a minor accomplishment had a negative effect, since they considered it as an indication that the teacher had little confidence in their abilities. As a result, non-verbal praise (for example: a positive head movement) was most often used, instead of direct verbal praise

**9. Conclusion:**

Teachers should realize that language learning, and particularly oral production is a potentially stressful situation for some students, and that the tension and discomfort related to language learning call for the attention of the language teaching profession.

# *Chapter Two*

*Investigating the effects of anxiety on 3<sup>rd</sup> year LMD  
students*

- 1. Analysis of the teachers' questionnaire.*
- 2. Analysis of the learners' questionnaire.*

# ***Chapter Two***

## ***Investigating the effects of anxiety on 3<sup>rd</sup> year LMD students***

### ***1. Analysis of the teachers' questionnaire.***

**1.1.** Introduction.

**1.2.** Description of the questionnaire.

**1.3.** Analysis of the results.

Conclusion

### ***2. Analysis of the learners' questionnaire.***

**2.1.** Introduction

**2.2.** Description of the questionnaire.

**2.3.** Analysis of the results conclusion.

Conclusion

## **1. Analysis of the teachers' questionnaire**

### **1.1. Introduction:**

The principle aim of this research is to investigate the effects of anxiety on students' achievement. With the constraint of time, the administration of a test to explore the impact of anxiety on students' performance, during their exams and classroom participation, would not be completed with regard to the very limited time allocated for the present research.

For this reason, we found that it is necessary to administer two main questionnaires: one for teachers, and one for learners, because questionnaires are easy to administer and take less time.

### **1.2. Description of the questionnaire:**

Teachers' questionnaire consists of (11) multiple choice questions. It was given to (15) teachers as the total number of the whole population. The teachers have been teaching various modules such as oral expression and psychology in the department of foreign languages, university of Constantine. The example of six (06) teachers will be taken randomly from the total number of the population.

### **1.3. Analysis of the results**

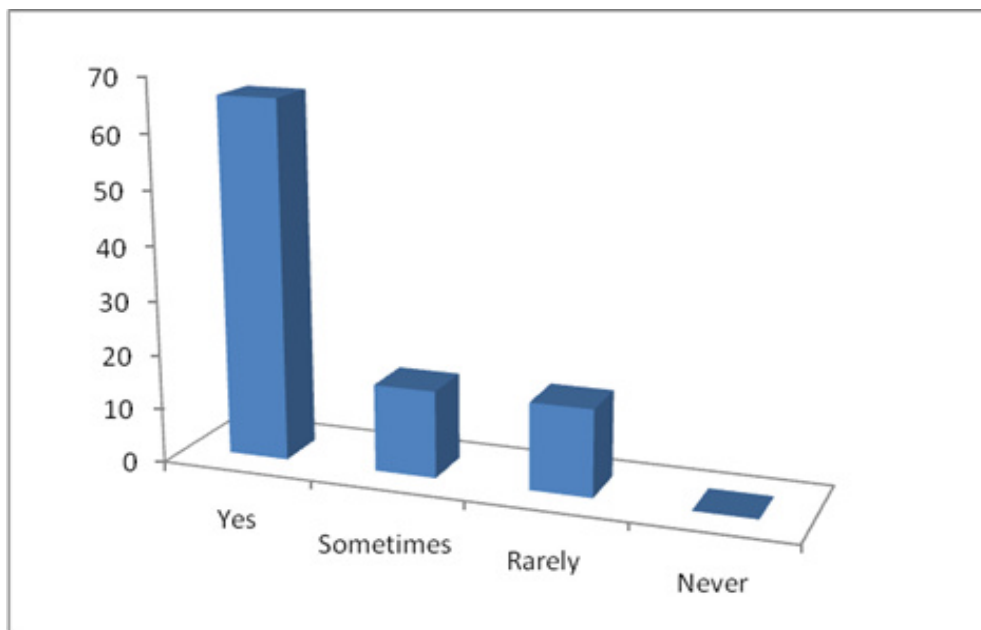
#### **Question one: Teachers' qualification**

Teachers, who were given the questionnaire, are highly experienced educators, and have been teaching different modules such as oral expression, written expression and psychopedagogy. Their experience and the degree they hold let us consider their testimony and suggestions as very reliable and especially the vital role they play and their evaluations and observations of learners' needs and requirement.

**Question two:** Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class? If yes, say how?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	04	66
<b>Sometimes</b>	01	16
<b>Rarely</b>	01	16
<b>Never</b>	00	00

**Table 02**



**Figure 01**

The great majority of teachers 66% have declared that they try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class. This type of atmosphere is an important affective factor in learning. Not only does it contribute to eliminating anxiety and creating motivation in learners, but it also encourages creative use of English and meaningful learning because in the existence of such an atmosphere, students are not inhibited to learn and to

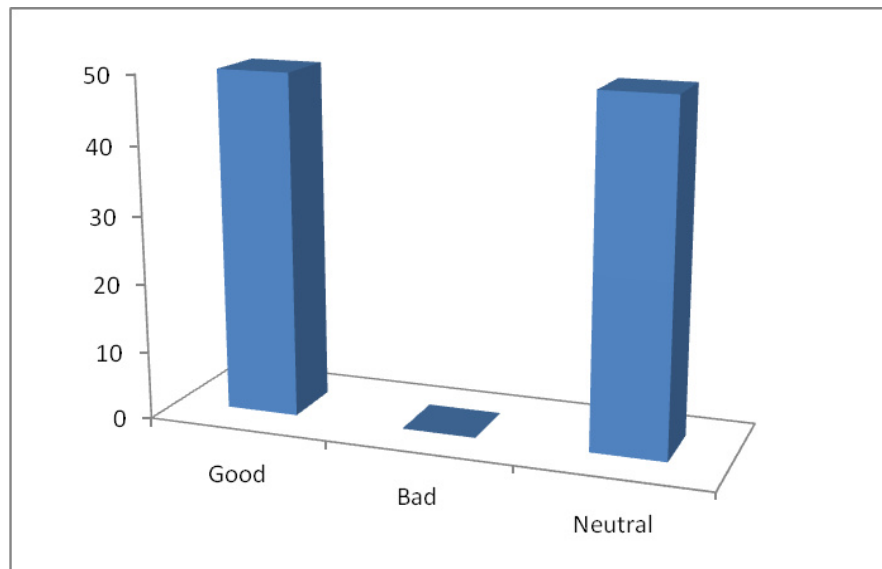


take an active role in learning. However, 16% of teachers have declared that they sometimes try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class. This is due to the fact that if they try to do so, but they will be faced with a problem of discipline because of the large number of students per class.

**Question three:** What type of relationship exists between you and your students?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Good</b>	03	50
<b>Bad</b>	00	00
<b>Neutral</b>	03	50

**Table 03**



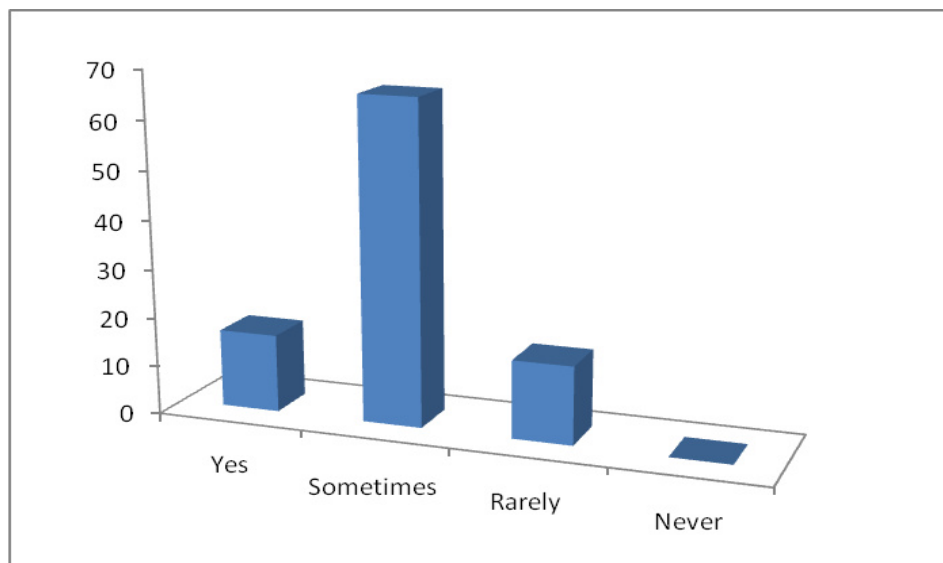
**Figure 02**

It seems from the results obtained in the table above 50% of the teachers declare that, the relationship that exists between them and their students is a good one. This may help learners to increase their self-confidence, decrease their inhibition and encourage them to talk freely and easily when they engage in conversations. Beside 50% of the participants in this questionnaire declare that the relationship that exists between them and their students is neutral, i, e, neither good nor bad.

**Question four:** Do you talk with your learners about their learning problems?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	01	16
<b>Sometimes</b>	04	66
<b>Rarely</b>	01	16
<b>Never</b>	00	00

**Table 04**



**Figure 03**

As the results in the table above shows that 66% of teachers declare that they sometimes allow their students to talk about their learning problems. This is due to the fact that lack of time for this or because students are not interested in talking about their learning problems. If students are helped by getting more information about language as well as to take on more responsibility for their self-instruction.

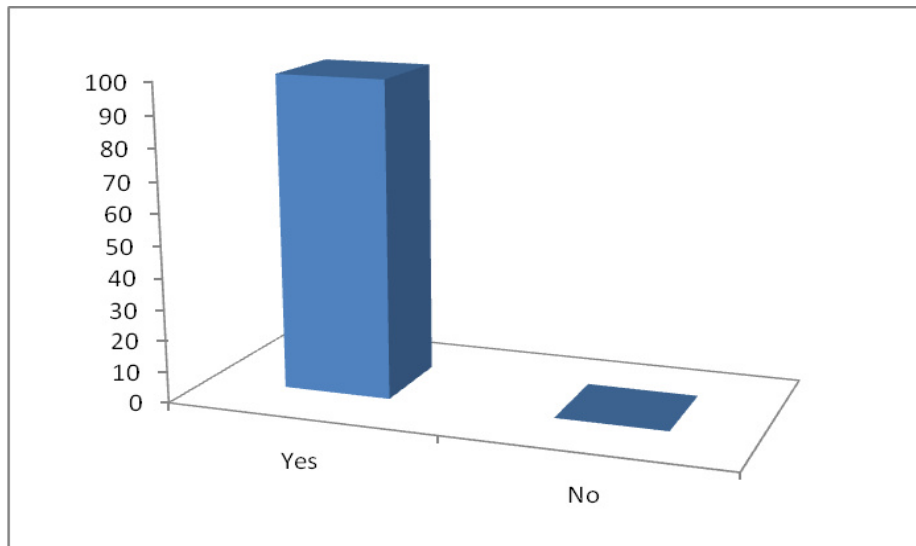
While 16% of the teachers say that they give their students opportunity to talk about their learning problems, and only 16% said rarely.

Giving students an opportunity to talk about their learning problems is what teachers should do.

**Question five:** Do you think that there are some learners feel anxious when the teacher corrects their mistakes?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	06	100
<b>No</b>	00	00

**Table 05**



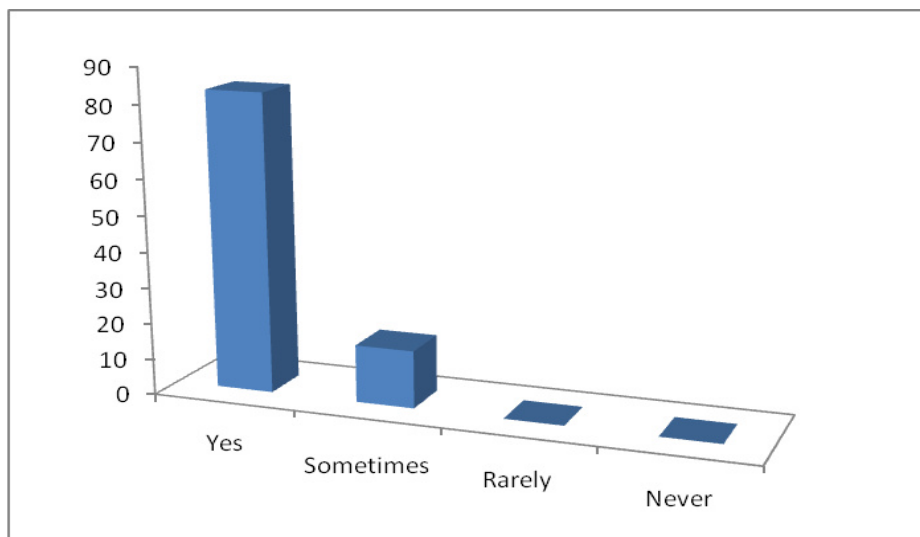
**Figure 04**

It seems from the results obtained in the table above that 100% of the teachers who participate in this questionnaire do agree that there are many students who feel anxious when their teachers ask them to correct their mistakes. This question reveals the fact that anxious learners are less able to interact and correct their own mistakes, especially in front of their teachers and classmates.

**Question six:** Do you think that the use of materials would help students feel more comfortable?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	05	83
<b>Sometimes</b>	01	16
<b>Rarely</b>	00	00
<b>Never</b>	00	00

**Table 06**



**Figure 05**

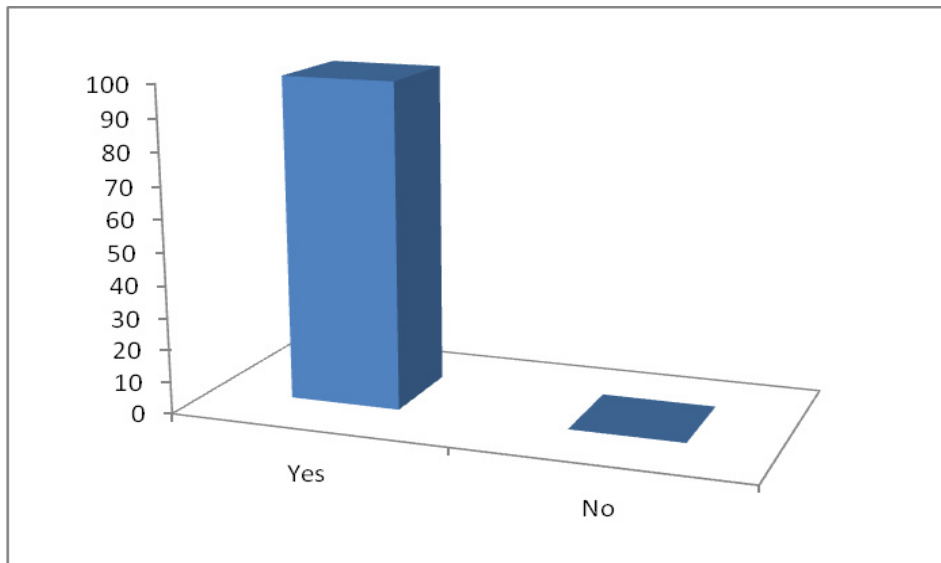
The results in the table above reveal that about 83% of the teachers do agree with the fact that the use of authentic materials helps learners to learn, because they provide them with a desire to listen, to speak and encourage them to make use of all the language they have at their disposal. They also create a real interest in the foreign language, and increase the learners' motivation. Beside 16% of the teachers declared that the use of materials is sometimes helpful to students to be motivated.

This is also due to the fact, that using advanced materials in learning a language will accelerate the process of learning not only in the department of English University of Mentouri, but also in any Algerian educational institution.

**Question seven:** Do you think that learners need to be helped to develop speaking skills?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	06	100
<b>No</b>	00	00

**Table 07**



**Figure 06**

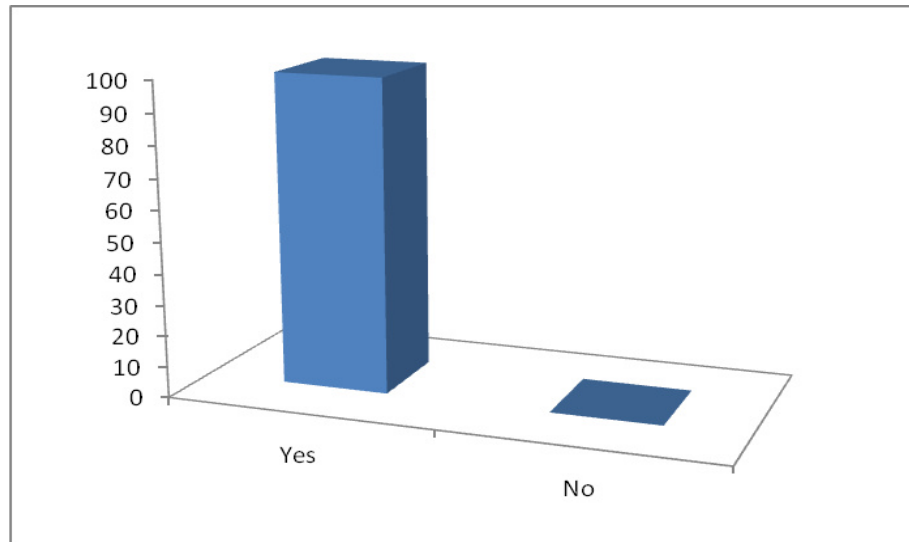
As it was expected, all the teachers (100%) said that learners need to be helped to develop their speaking skills. Learners need to develop their communication competence, which is particularly important to improve their language learning, and to be less hesitant in expressing personally relevant information in the target language. This question reveals the fact that, the more anxious the students, the less proficient in speech skills they become.



**Question eight:** Do you think that your method of teaching encourages learners to learn effectively?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	06	100
<b>No</b>	00	00

**Table 08**



**Figure 07**

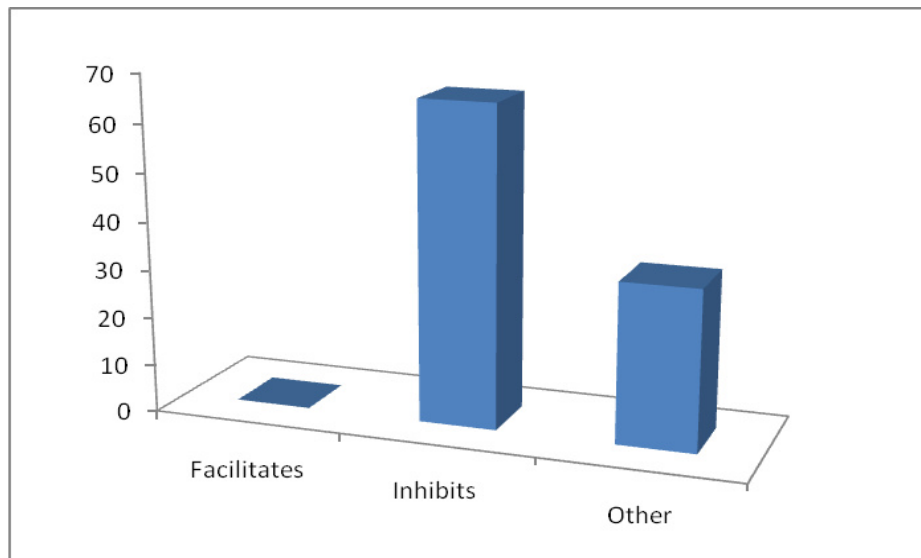
As the results in the table shows, (100%) of the teachers use effective methods of teaching in order to keep their learners motivated and active.

This question reveals the fact that, it is necessary for teachers to emphasize certain strategies, willing to improve students' mental abilities such as attention, concentration and memory which will keep learner alert and engage easily to the lesson.

**Question nine:** Do you think that anxiety facilitates or inhibits learning?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Facilitates</b>	00	00
<b>Inhibits</b>	04	66
<b>other</b>	02	33

**Table 09**



**Figure 08**

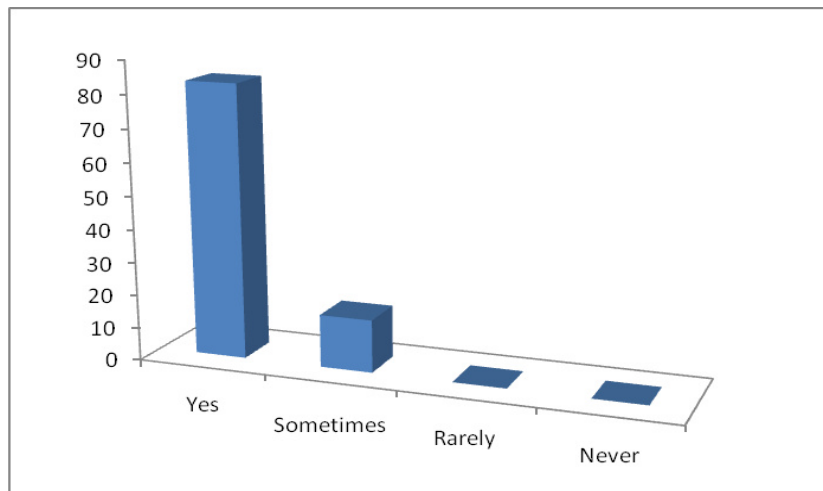
As the results in the above table show, teachers responses to this question reveal that about 66% of them agree about the fact that anxiety inhibits students' progress of learning, rather than facilitating it. Besides 33% of the participants said that anxiety is not only considered as a threatening situation to learning process, it can also improve and develop it in some cases.

This question also reveals the fact that anxiety is considered by many teachers as a hindrance to learning, but in such moments it can be a motivator to learning.

**Question ten:** Do you think that learners’ preferences (learning styles) have an effect on their motivation to learn?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yes</b>	05	83
<b>Sometimes</b>	01	16
<b>Rarely</b>	00	00
<b>Never</b>	00	00

**Table 10**



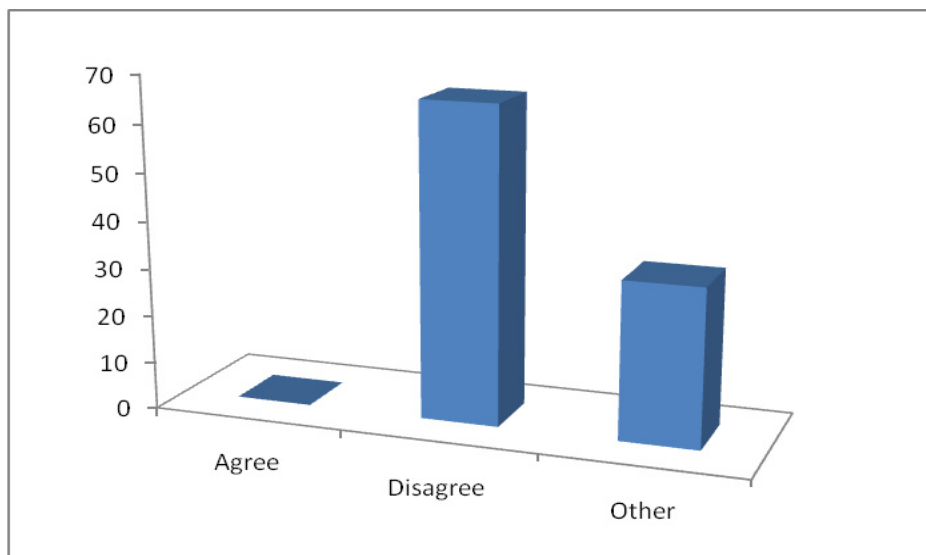
**Figure 09**

The results in the table show that, teachers responses to this question was revealing that about 83% of them do agree that learners’ styles in learning have a great impact on their capacities to do well, and to be more willing to participate in learning activities. Beside 16% of the teachers who participate in this questionnaire said that learning styles are sometimes affecting students’ motivation to build up a good performance. This is due to the fact that, students also would like to deploy their own strategies of learning in order to make learning even much easier for them.

**Question eleven:** Anxiety can help learners to do well during their exams,  
do you agree?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	00	00
<b>Disagree</b>	04	66
<b>other</b>	02	33

**Table 11**



**Figure 10**

It seems from the results obtained in the above table that 66% of the teachers being given the questionnaire, are against the fact that anxiety can help learners to perform well during their exams, which means that they consider anxiety as a hindrance to learning, particularly in the period of exam, rather than encouraging learners to reach better performance. Beside 33% of the respondents who said that anxiety may affect students' concentration in their exams or it can be considered as a good motivator to learn.

**Conclusion:**

The data and the obtained results show that the level of anxiety can really hinder the ability of learners to perform well during the learning process, but low levels of anxiety can motivate students to improve their abilities and develop new strategies in learning, and this is in the direction of our research hypothesis which states that if learners can overcome anxiety they will be able to develop their self-confidence and motivation. Besides this, learners need to be instructed to think positively in building up a new way of learning.

## **2. Analysis of the learners' questionnaire:**

### **2.1. Introduction:**

It is important in this research, to give learners the opportunity to express their own idea concerning the effects of anxiety on their achievement such as, their attitudes toward exams and their participation in classroom. Learners' questionnaire was designed to investigate the impact of anxiety on the performance of third year LMD students in the department of English Mentouri university of Constantine.

### **2.2. Description of the questionnaire:**

For the present research we have administered a questionnaire of thirteen items to learners. The items were developed, to explore the attitudes of third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year LMD students toward their exams and to investigate their oral competence during a classroom discussion.

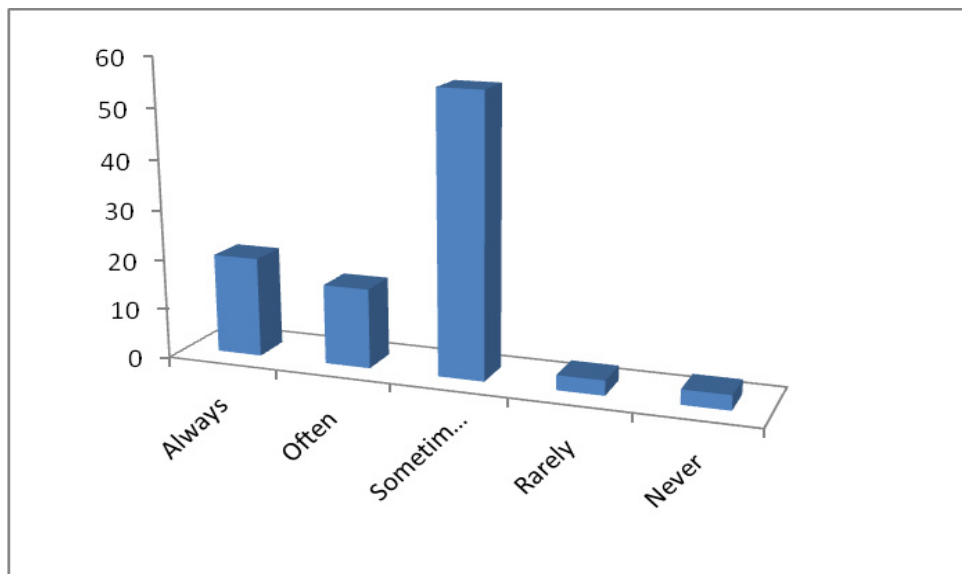
Learners' questionnaire was administered to twelve (12) groups of the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year LMD students of English language, constituted 745 participants as the total number of the population from which the sample will be at random. The learners' questionnaire was administered to a random sample of thirty (30) students select from a total population of 745 third year LMD students at the department of English in university of Constantine.

### 2.3. Analysis of the results

**Question one:** Nervousness while taking an exam or a test hinders me from doing well.

Option	N	%
Always	06	20
Often	05	16
Sometimes	17	56
Rarely	01	03
Never	01	03

**Table 12**



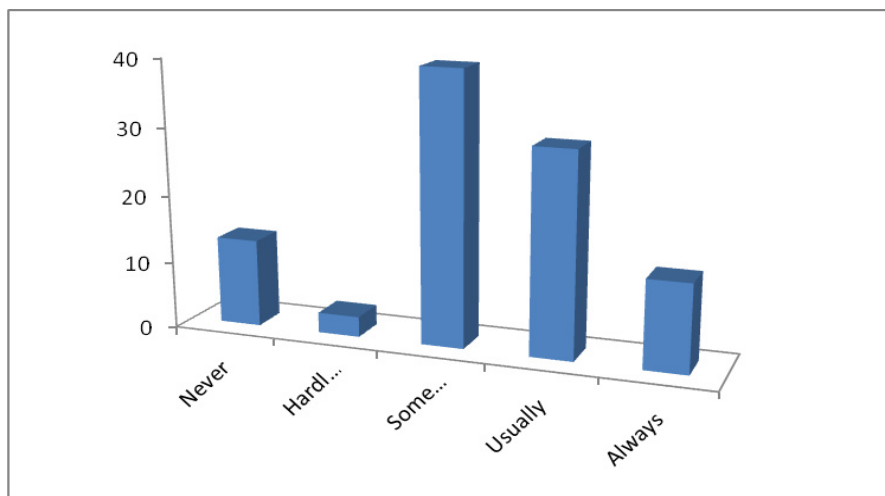
**Figure 11**

The results in the table above indicate that (56%) as the highest percentage of the subjects who participate in this questionnaire, said that, nervousness sometimes hinders them from doing well in a test or an exam, whereas (20%) show that anxiety during the exam, is really blocking their ability to do well in their exams, and then (16%) said often only (3%) said never.

**Question two:** When I perform badly in an exam, I feel anxiety because of the probability of having bad mark?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Never</b>	04	13
<b>Hardly ever</b>	01	03
<b>Sometimes</b>	12	40
<b>Usually</b>	09	30
<b>Always</b>	04	13

**Table 13**



**Figure 12**

The results in the table above reveals that (40%) of the respondents, are anxious when they are about to receive their marks. Furthermore, (30%) of the students usually feel anxious about the possibility to have a bad mark, whereas (13%) said never, and then (13%) are always afraid of receiving unexpected evaluation.

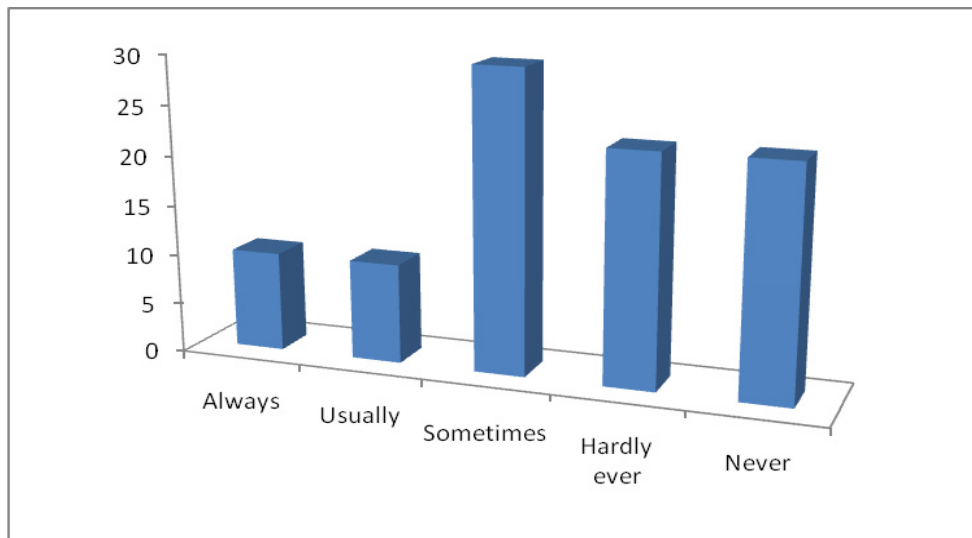
Finally, only (03%) of the participants said hardly ever, which show indifference.



**Question three:** The more difficult the exam is, the less efficient I become:

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	03	10
<b>Usually</b>	03	10
<b>Sometimes</b>	09	30
<b>Hardly ever</b>	07	23
<b>Never</b>	07	23

**Table 14**



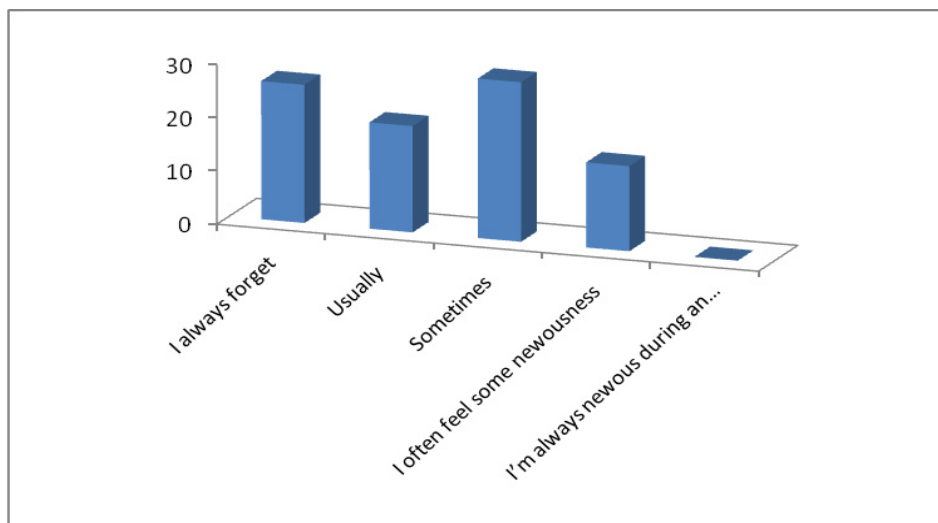
**Figure 13**

The results in the tables shows that (30%) of the students who participate filling in the questionnaire prefer to say that, the difficulty of their exams sometimes makes them less able to perform effectively, and (23%) said hardly ever and also (23%) said never, whereas only (10%) who said that the difficulty of the exams really hinders them from doing well, and (10%) usually feel less confident handle a difficult exam.

**Question four:** I feel anxious before the start of one exam but once I start, I forget my anxiety.

Option	N	%
<b>I always forget</b>	08	26
<b>Usually</b>	06	20
<b>Sometimes</b>	09	30
<b>I often feel some nervousness</b>	05	16
<b>I'm always nervous during an exam</b>	00	00

**Table 15**



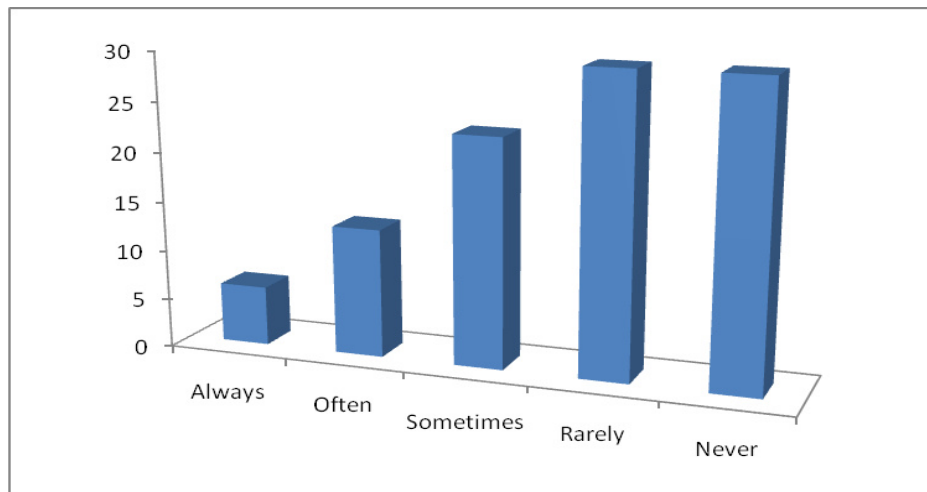
**Figure 14**

The results in the table above demonstrate that (30%) of the participants are sometimes feel anxious before an exam, but once they start answering the questions, they overcome their anxiety during the control, and then (20%) who said that they usually feel anxious before the start of an exam, but they surmount when they start answering the exam's questions, and finally (16%) said they often feel some nervousness.

**Question five:** Feeling anxious while taking a test helps me do better.

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	02	06
<b>Often</b>	04	13
<b>Sometimes</b>	07	23
<b>Rarely</b>	09	30
<b>Never</b>	09	30

**Table 16**



**Figure 15**

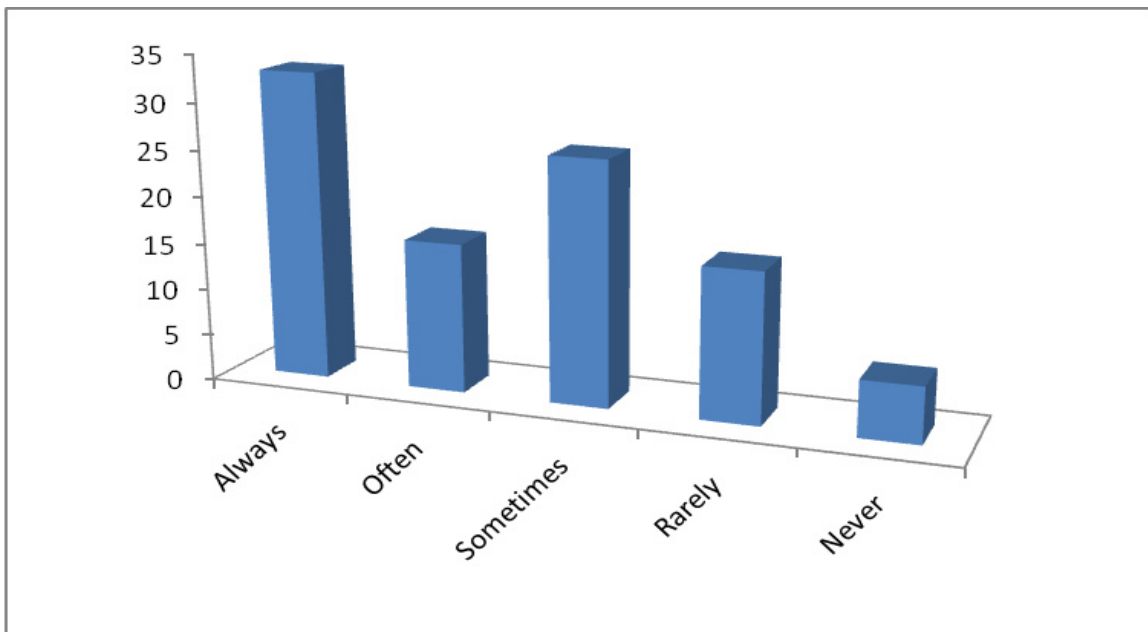
Anxiety has a negative impact on student's motivation to succeed in an exam, it does not merely hinder achievement, but in some cases it enhances it.

The results in the table above shows that (30%) of the participants do prefer to say that feeling anxious while taking exams is rarely helpful in drawing fruitful consequences, while (23%) sometimes feel anxious during an exam, and then (13%) said often, and only (06%) said always. This reveals the fact the majority of students considers anxiety as a threatening situation, rather than encouraging them to do well.

**Question six:** I enjoy an easy exam more than a hard one:

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	10	33
<b>Often</b>	05	16
<b>Sometimes</b>	08	26
<b>Rarely</b>	05	16
<b>Never</b>	02	06

**Table 17**



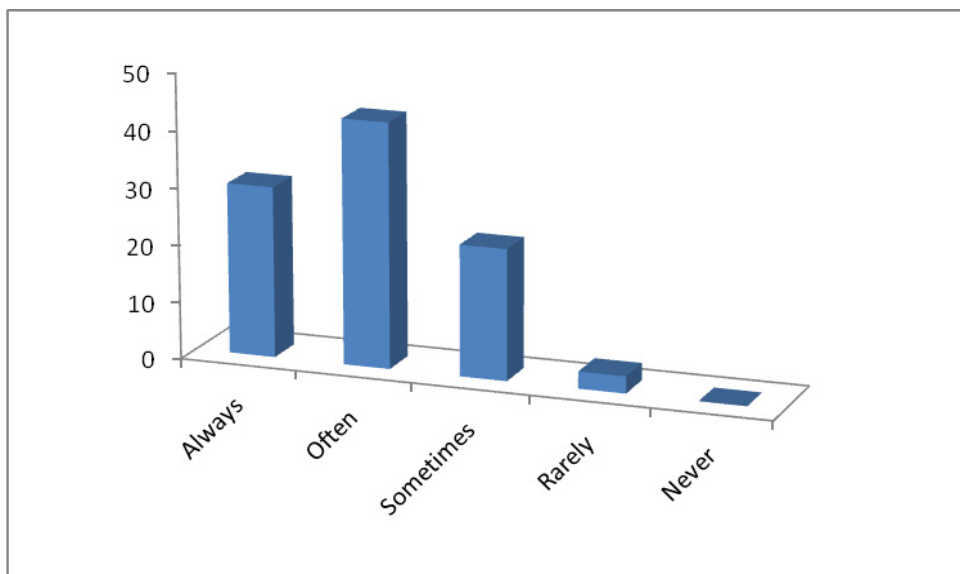
**Figure 16**

This percentage (33%) indicates clearly that the highest percentage of learners prefer to have easy questions in exams, rather than difficult ones. Beside (26%) of the students who said that they prefer also to take difficult questions, whereas (16%) said often, and then rarely (16%). Finally, only (06%) said never.

**Question seven:** The more difficult the exam or test, the better I seem to do well.

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	09	30
<b>Often</b>	13	43
<b>Sometimes</b>	07	23
<b>Rarely</b>	01	03
<b>Never</b>	00	00

**Table 18**



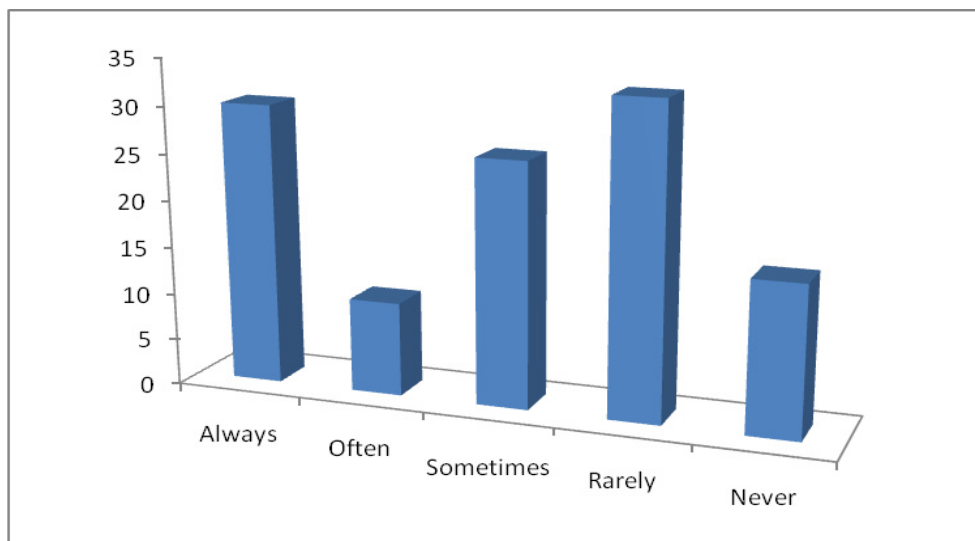
**Figure 17**

The results in the table above shows that (43%) of the respondents often do well in difficult exams, beside (30%) of the students who said that always achieve better results in more difficult questions, which means that this category of learners prefer to challenge taught boundaries, which explains a high level of motivation to learn of English language. Whereas (23%) said sometimes, and (03%) said rarely and never no one.

**Question eight:** I make mistakes on easy questions, and write answers in the wrong places.

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	09	30
<b>Often</b>	03	10
<b>Sometimes</b>	08	26
<b>Rarely</b>	10	33
<b>Never</b>	05	16

**Table 19**



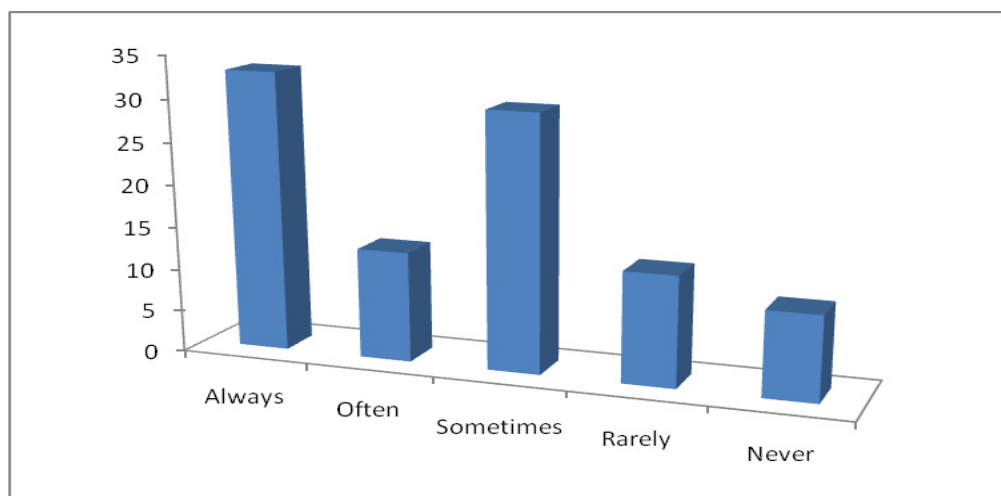
**Figure 18**

From the results obtained in the table above, we notice that (33%) of the students who said that they rarely make mistakes on easy questions and write answers in the right places. Beside (30%) of the participants who said that they always make mistakes on easy exams, and put answers in the wrong places, whereas (26%) of the said sometimes, (16%) said never, and finally only (10%) said often.

**Question nine:** Do you anxious when you give oral presentation in front of the whole class?

Option	N	%
Always	10	33
Often	04	13
Sometimes	09	30
Rarely	04	13
Never	03	10

**Table 20**



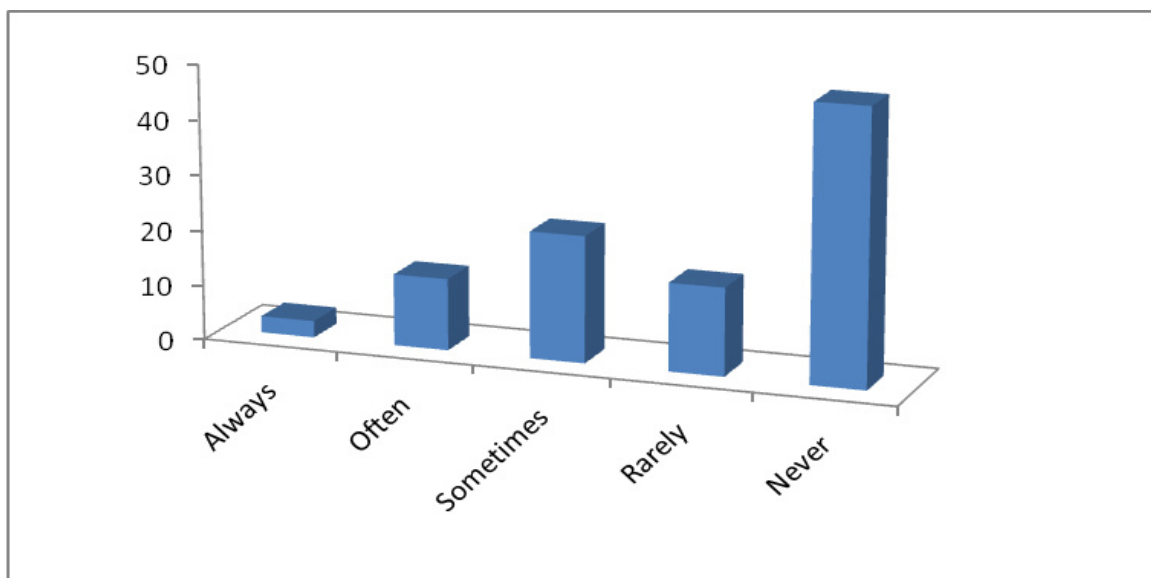
**Figure 19**

As the results in the table reveal, the majority of the students (33%) said that always feel anxious when they give oral production in front of the whole class, which means that they refuse to speak or to be part of a classroom conversation. Beside (30%) of the participants who said that they sometimes feel anxious when they have to practice their oral skills in front of their classmates, whereas (13%) said often, (13%) rarely, and only (10%) said never.

**Question ten:** Do you mind if the teacher asks you to correct your own mistakes?

Option	N	%
Always	01	03
Often	02	13
Sometimes	07	23
Rarely	05	16
Never	15	50

**Table 21**



**Figure 20**

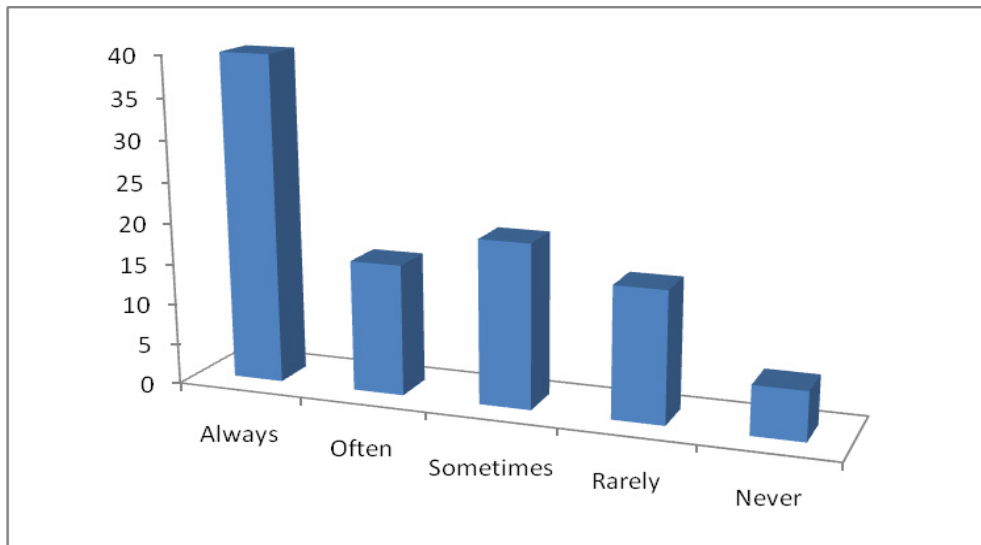
It seems from the table above that (50%) of the participants never feel anxious when their teachers asks them to correct their mistakes, which indicates the motivation to put their draw backs under the scope. Beside (23%) of the students who said that they sometimes feel worried when they have to correct their mistakes, whereas (16%) said rarely, and only (03%) said always.



**Question eleven:** Do you mind if other students correct your written work?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	12	40
<b>Often</b>	05	16
<b>Sometimes</b>	06	20
<b>Rarely</b>	05	16
<b>Never</b>	02	06

**Table 22**



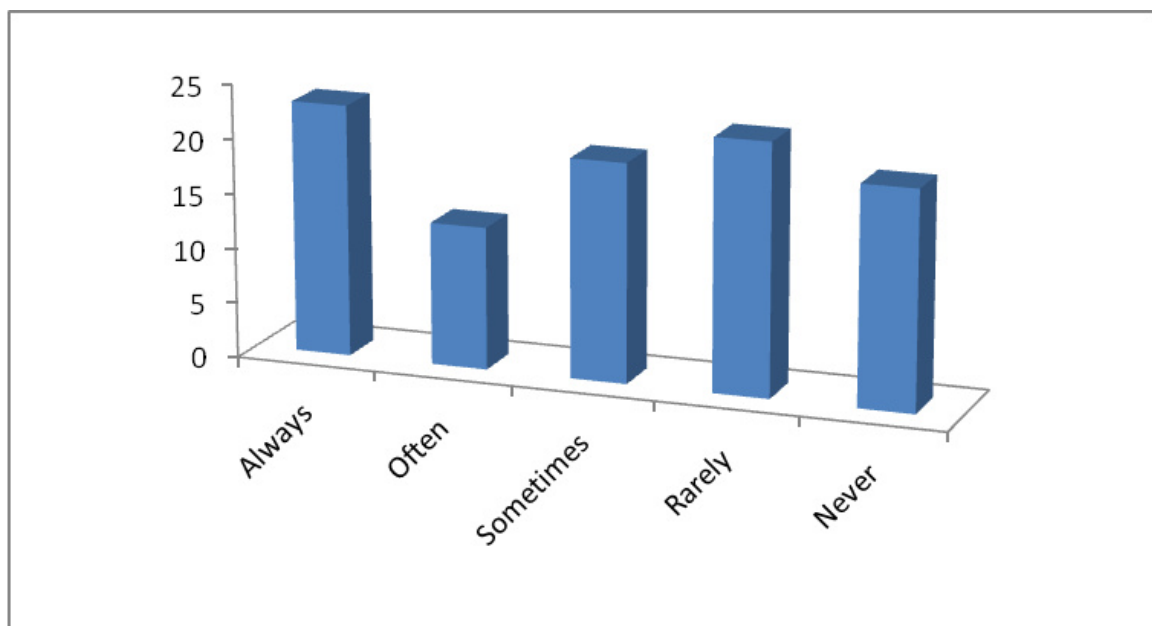
**Figure 21**

From the results obtained in the table above, we notice that (40%) of the students always feel anxious when other students correct their written work. Beside (20%) of the participants who said that they sometimes feel anxious when their classmates asks them to correct their works. Whereas (16%) said often, (16%) said rarely, and finally only (06%) who said never. This question reveals the fact, that, the majority of the participants claims that believe in their own capacities, and they don't accept any interference.

**Question twelve:** Do you feel anxious when you have to answer the teacher’s questions in the classroom?

<b>Option</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Always</b>	07	23
<b>Often</b>	04	13
<b>Sometimes</b>	06	20
<b>Rarely</b>	07	23
<b>Never</b>	06	20

**Table 23**



**Figure 22**

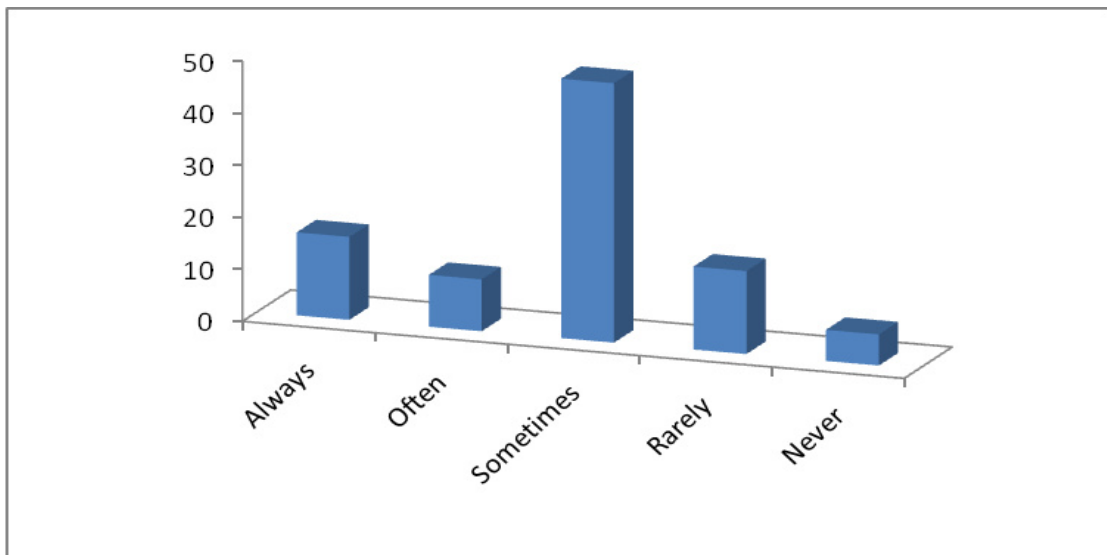
The results in the table above shows that only (23%) of the students who said that they have never been anxious when they have to answer their teachers’ questions in the classroom. Beside (23%) of the participants who said that they always feel anxious when their teachers asks them to answer their questions, which explains that this category of learners refuses to be

part of the classroom discussion or to speak at all. Whereas (20%) of the respondents who claimed that sometimes worry about their teachers' questions, and then only (13%) said often, and finally (20%) said rarely, which means a high level of self-confidence.

**Question thirteen:** Do you wrong if your classmates speak English better than you?

Option	N	%
Always	05	16
Often	03	10
Sometimes	15	50
Rarely	05	16
Never	02	06

**Table 24**



**Figure 23**

From the results obtained in the table above, we notice that the majority (50%) of the participants said that sometimes they feel worried when their classmates, speak English better than them. Beside only (16%) of the students claim that always feel anxious when other students use the language effectively, whereas (16%) said never, and (10%) said often, and finally only (06%) of the students who said rarely.

This question reveals the fact that the majority of the participants in this questionnaire are less able to speak English correctly when they compare themselves with their classmates. Beside this we can say that, anxiety can affect negatively learners before, during and after the exam.

### **Conclusion**

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

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

## *General conclusion*

We all know that sometimes we find it difficult to produce our best that success is virtually guaranteed, if there is no reason to be at all anxious about the possibility of failure. Knowing that success is not guaranteed, but that making a real effort might make all the difference between success and failure, we may do better precisely because our anxiety has spurred us on.

If, on the other hand, we would really like to succeed but feel that, no matter how hard we try, we are most likely to fail, then our anxiety is likely to make it even more difficult for us to produce our best. Some aspects of receptivity, then, are not dependent upon just removing anxiety, but upon minimizing the sources of debilitating anxiety, and optimizing the sources of facilitating anxiety so that learners can work with a relaxed concentration.

## *Appendix I*

People Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Constantine

Department Of English

Third year LMD Students

### *Teachers' questionnaire*

Dear educators

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering information needed for the accomplishment of a master thesis. We seek to shed some light on teachers' observation and attitudes towards students' anxiety in classroom. We would be very grateful if you could help us accomplishing in filling in the questionnaire.

#### **1. Teacher's qualification**

BA

Master / Magistere

Doctorate

2. Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class?

Yes                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

If yes, please say how?

3. What type relationship exists between you and your students?

Good                      Bad                      Neutral

4. Do you talk with your learners about their learning problems?

Yes                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

5. Do you think that there are some learners feel anxious when the teacher corrects their mistakes?

Yes                      No

6. Do you think that the use of materials would help students feel more comfortable?

Yes                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

7. Do you think that learners and to be helped to develop speaking skill?

Yes                      No

8. Do you think that your method of teaching encourages learners to learn effectively?

Yes                      No

9. Do you think that anxiety facilitates or inhibits learning?

Facilitates                      Inhibits                      Other



**10.** Do you think that learners' preferences (learning styles) have an effect on their motivation to learn?

Yes                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

Anxiety can help learners to do well during their exams? Do you agree?

Agree                      Disagree                      Other

Thank you for your collaboration

## *Appendix II*

People Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Constantine

Department Of English

Third year LMD Students

### *Learners' questionnaire*

Dear students

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering information needed for the accomplishment of a master dissertation. We direct this questionnaire in order to investigate the negative impact of anxiety on students' achievement. We would be very grateful if you could help us accomplishing our research in filling in the questionnaire.

1. Nervousness while taking an exam or test hinders me from doing well.

Yes                      Sometimes                      Rarely                      Never

2. In a course where I have doing poorly, my fear of a bad mark makes me less efficient

Never                      Hardly ever                      Sometimes

Usually                      Always

3. The more difficult the examination, the less efficient I become.

Always                      Usually                      Sometimes

Hardly ever                      Never

4. I feel anxious before the start of an exam, but once I start, I forget my anxiety.

I always forget                      Usually                      Sometimes

I often feel some nervousness                      'm always nervousness during an exam

5. Feeling anxious while taking a test or an exam helps me do better.

Always                      Often                      Sometimes

Rarely                      Never

6. I enjoy taking an easy exam more than a hard one

Always                      Often                      Sometimes

Rarely                      Never

7. The more difficult the exam or test, the better I seem to do well

Always                      Often                      Sometimes

Rarely                      Never

8. I make mistakes on easy questions, and write answer in the wrong places

Always                      Often                      Sometimes

Rarely                      Never

**9.** Do you feel anxious when you give oral presentation in front of the whole class?

Always	Often	Sometimes
Rarely	Never	

**10.** Do you mind if the teacher asks you to correct your own mistakes?

Always	Often	Sometimes
Rarely	Never	

**11.** Do you mind if other students correct your written work?

Always	Often	Sometimes
Rarely	Never	

**12.** Do you feel anxious when you have to answer the teacher's questions in the classroom?

Always	Often	Sometimes
Rarely	Never	

**13.** Do you worry if your classmates speak English better than you?

Always	Often	Sometimes
Rarely	Never	

Thank you for your collaboration

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