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**Investigating Foreign Language Anxiety among
Middle School Learners :The Case of Fourth Year
Pupils in Djaber Ben Hayen Middle School School,M'sila**

**A dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Master Degree in Linguistics .**

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Declaration

WE , Chergui Nour Elhouda and Mansour Fayza, do hereby solemnly declare that the work we are going to present in this dissertation is our own and has not been submitted before to any other institution or university for a degree.

This work is to be carried out and completed at Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'SILA , ALGERIA.

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the level of foreign language anxiety experienced by fourth year pupils in Djaber Ben Hayen Middle School . Thus , to reach our objectives, we conducted two main questionnaires the first one aimed to investigate the level and the sources of FL anxiety among middle school learners ; whereas , the second was directed to language teachers to examine whether they are aware about this problem and whether they are working to find some effective solutions to reduce anxiety in their classes, The findings of our present study revealed that middle school pupils indeed had a moderate level of anxiety resulted from : communicative apprehension , fear of negative evaluation ,fear of failing in language tests. The students' lack of self-confidence let them fear of peers in particular .They also believe that teachers ' questions and error correction in the classroom are the main sources of anxiety . Finally , in an attempt to find some solutions , we propose some strategies that the classroom atmosphere should be motivating and encouraging . Teachers are recommended to deal with anxiety-provoking situations carefully as they are the most involved part in this process.

Keywords: anxiety, fear, test, comprehension, performance, communication, failure, low self-esteem, unconfident, learner, teacher, facilitator, sweatnig, hesitation, test anxiety, negative evaluation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FLA : Foreign Language Anxiety

FLCA : Foreign language Classroom Anxiety

FL: Foreign Language

TL : Target Language

FLL : Foreign Language Learners

FLCAS: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

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Introduction

Learning a new language is not an easy task, but it is really a valuable investment. Fear of attending a foreign language class causes for few if not many people nervousness and anxiety that leaves them demoralized and frustrated instead of satisfied and motivated. Many people know how beneficial learning a foreign language is, fear keeps preventing them from trying to use a language they are not comfortable with yet. All these syndromes mean one thing, those people suffer from foreign language anxiety which can be considered as one of the major obstacles that may face the language learners so that it may prevent them from acquiring and developing the target language.

According to (Spielberger, 1983) language anxiety is the fear of that individual experiences when he has to use a foreign language due to the fear of negative evaluation or as a result of low self esteem. Despite the special attention given to this phenomenon; many teachers are unaware about its harmful effects and they are even unable to identify the anxious students in their classes and often think that they refuse to participate because of their disability to learn a foreign language or to the lack of motivation.

Thus, our study arises from our strong desire to find out more about foreign language anxiety in an attempt to help teachers to cope with this problem that learning can be more effective especially for those anxious learners in middle schools where learners are exhibited to the English language for the first time in their scholar career.

General Introduction

It is really worthwhile thinking about the sources of foreign language anxiety and at the same time the solutions that may help to minimize its negative effects on learners ' foreign language acquisition .

1. Literature Review

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has always been a topic of interest for many scholars and researchers such as :Horwitz , Oxford , MacIntyre , Gardner , Young due to its negative effect on the language learning process and it has long been considered as a great obstacle that may face the language learners.

Foreign Language Anxiety plays a significant role in the field of language learning as a debilitating factor that may strongly affect students' acquisition for the foreign language as a result it was a of much interest for many researchers and educational stockholders . FLA was defined by (Horwitz et al , 1986) as a "distinct complex of self perception , beliefs , feeling , and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process " and it was defined by (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) as " the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts including speaking , listening , and learning . However, many psychologists such as MacIntyre and Catell have categorized anxiety into three types : trait anxiety , state anxiety , and specific anxiety this latter is the type under which foreign language anxiety is classified.

Situation – specific anxiety as it was defined by (MacIntyre,1991) is anxiety that " occurs when a person feels nervous in specific situation but not in the others " . So language anxiety can be experienced only when students are exposed to the learning of a foreign language not in the other subjects.

The earlier studies have much focused on investigating the sources of language anxiety .Thus, according to Young (1991) there are six possible causes which include : personal and interpersonal, learners beliefs about language learning, instructors beliefs about language teaching ,instructor-learner interactions, classroom

General Introduction

procedures and language tests . And studies have reported that the majority of people who experience anxiety have a fear of negative evaluation , low self esteem , and a low self confidence . However , the latest studies and one of the most influential ones in this field that of Professor Horwitz and Cope (1981) has focused on three causes of FLA such as : communication apprehension , test anxiety , and fear of negative evaluation.

Moreover , much more studies have focused on investigating to what extent can language anxiety affect language performance . Most of these studies were based on the study of Krashen (1981) anxiety causes arousal of an "effective filter " which inhibit students from understanding input :and receiving information as a result they become unable to make any progress in their learning and language acquisition . The more anxious students are the less performant are . So many Researches have shown the harmful effect of anxiety on the students' achievements in terms that students who experience anxiety are likely to achieve below their real abilities ,according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) , language anxiety has much more effects on the output stage in terms of production , performance , and course grade because the output stage is generally considered as the most important one and the most indicator of students learning for almost teachers and even for parents who tend to practice more pressure on the students which usually create a kind of anxiety and stress that may reduce their abilities and performance .

Almost all the previous studies have focused on language anxiety among university students , in our study we try to investigate whether middle school students may experience this kind of anxiety and to what extent .

2. Problem Statement

Despite the fact that foreign language anxiety is a common phenomenon in the teaching of English as a foreign language . Teachers are not always able to identify anxious students , and often attribute their unwillingness to engage in the learning tasks to factors such as lack of motivation , or “poor attitude” the Therefore , it is important to be able to identify those students who experience higher level of anxiety in the foreign language classroom

3. Research Questions:

Our study tends to examine one major question: To what extent may middle school learners experience anxiety? This in turn can lead us to investigate two more sub questions:

- 1- What are the sources of language anxiety?
- 2- How teachers can support anxious students?

4. Objectives:

- 1 To find out the level of anxiety experienced by middle school pupils
- 2 To identify the causes of foreign language anxiety.
- 3 To provide teachers with series of suggestion that may help them to support those anxious students?

5. Research Hypothesis:

We hypothesize that if teachers are able to find out where foreign language anxiety come from then they will be able to find the appropriate strategies that may help them reducing anxiety and promoting learners' accomplishments.

6. Significance of the study:

Our present study intends to investigate the severity and the potential effect that may language anxiety have on middle school learners and to provide teachers with some solutions that may help them to identify and support anxious students. Thus our study is of profound significance due to the negative effects that language anxiety cause on the students' language acquisition.

7. Method

To reach the aim of our research, we will rely on the descriptive approach using classroom based case study. This approach is based on collecting, analyzing and integrating a qualitative data. Therefore, it enables us to investigate the existence of foreign language anxiety among the middle school learners.

8. Research Instrument:

In our current study, questionnaire is the most suitable research instrument due to the fact that it enables us to collect a large amount of data and it also helps to save time and efforts. Thus, we would direct two main questionnaires, one to middle school teachers, who have been teaching English as a foreign language for more than ten years, to make sure that their responses are the product of their interacting with different students during many years of observation. The second one is directed to fourth year pupils in Djaber Ben Hayen Middle School in order to investigate the level of anxiety experienced by those learners and at the same time to find out the different sources where this anxiety comes from.

9. 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 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 middle school learners.

Chapter One: Literature Review

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Introduction:

Learning a second language can be a frightful experience . The apprehension and pressure on students to perform well in the second language causes them anxiety that is specific to the second language classroom (FLCA) . However , anxiety is a common phenomenon which affects people universally , no matter what age , gender or race .

In this chapter we are going to give an overview about foreign language anxiety. We will include few definitions of anxiety in order to make the term clear. We will talk about the nature of foreign language anxiety, the causes and sources of foreign language anxiety, factors related to foreign language anxiety, signs of FLA , types of anxiety , the effects of language anxiety on students' academic achievements.

Nature of the problem:

Many people claim to have a mental block against learning a foreign language ,although these same people may be good learners in other situation , strongly motivated , and have a strong desire to speak the target language (TL) . what , then , prevent them from reaching their goals . In many cases they may have foreign language anxiety that impedes them from acquiring the target language successfully

Definition of FLA

In order to define foreign language anxiety , it is important to describe anxiety as a general term , anxiety was defined by Freud as “ a specific unpleasurable quality” , later on by (Spielberger ,1983) as ” an unpleasant emotional state of condition which is characterized by subjective feelings or tension , apprehension and worry , and by activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system that accompanies these feelings

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However , anxiety that is related to learning a foreign language is known as a foreign language anxiety (FLA) and which is totally different from general anxiety it can be defined as and he considered FLA as a unique type of anxiety specific to foreign language learning the feeling of worry and nervousness experienced by non-native speakers , when learning or using a foreign language , or as it was defined by Horwitz as a distinct complex of self perception , beliefs related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process (Horwitz & Cope 1986 , p128). Whereas “MacIntyre (1999) described anxiety as a negative emotional reaction and the feeling of worry when learning a second language , from this perspective they claim that foreign language anxiety is unique due to the way that involves learners in specific set of conditions within the language classes.

Although FLA is a merely psychological phenomenon which is not easily observable , but it can seriously inhibit the ability of concentration and dealing with things in a more positive way. Horwitz asserted that one third of students at least experience anxiety and distress in their language classes . as a result these students lose faith in their abilities , get discouraged and they stop progressing in learning the foreign language, however the resulted frustration and discomfort that many student experience can even affect their determination to learn FL and they may never use it again due to the bad psychological experience resulting from high levels of FLA .

I.3. Sources of language anxiety

A number of causes of foreign language anxiety (FLCA) have been identified in many studies . Young (1991) determined three main categories :

1. Learner characteristics
2. Teacher characteristics
3. Classroom procedures

Learner characteristics:

Young has identified three factors which are : self esteem and confidence - learner's belief - fear of negative evaluation

Self esteem and Confidence:

Students with low self -esteem are more likely to be exposed to anxiety and frustration whereas those who are more self confident usually believe in their capacity to adequate with any situation and their ability to learn and succeed and this will reduce any feeling of anxiety and uneasiness that might be felt in the classroom . In general , unsuccessful language learners often have lower self-esteem than successful language learners (Price, 1991) . Learners who have high levels of self-esteem are less likely to be anxious than those with low self-esteem (Horwitz et al,1986,p 129).

Learner's beliefs

Learners' opinions and beliefs about language learning may provoke language anxiety , thus anxious students always think about the difficulties that may encounter them when learning a language ; these beliefs may include : the language is difficult to learn , I am not clever enough to learn it . Those Students who believe that language learning is difficult , tend to exhibit higher anxiety than students who believe that the target language that they are studying is not difficult (Horwitz, 1989; Kuntz, 1997) . An additional belief that is related to anxiety is a belief about self-efficacy . Truit t (1995), Kuntz (1997) and Horwitz et al. (1986) found that students who believe in their abilities were more likely to have lower LA compared to those who were not quite sure about their language ability . Young (1999) confirmed that anxiety

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arousal may be associated to self related thoughts of failure and negative self perception about the subject's own L2 capacity .

Fear of negative evaluation:

Individuals who are highly concerned about people's evaluation cannot manage to concentrate on the language task because they think that any mistake would destroy their image in front of their classmates . So instead of focusing on communicating and producing language they tend to control their errors , pronunciation , making comparison with their peers . As a result , they keep silent most of the time and refuse to participate in language classroom activities . In his researches Young (1991) found that anxious learners thought their skills in language were weaker than their peers' and they were looking down which makes them fear of speaking out loud in front of them .

Teacher characteristics

Teacher can serve as another source of anxiety due to their wrong beliefs about teaching and language learning . Some teachers tend to believe that their role should be authoritarian , directive , and intimidating and that they are on a mission to correct every error that students make rather than to facilitate the leaning process . Young (1991) describes it best by stating that : Instructors who believe their role is to correct students constantly when they make any error , who feel that they cannot have students working in pairs because the class may get out of control, who believe that the teacher should be doing most of the talking and teaching , and who think their role is more like a drill sergeant's than a facilitator 's may be contributing to learner language anxiety . (p. 428)

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On the other hand ,those friendly and patient teachers create warm and healthy atmosphere for their learnerswhich may help to reduce language anxiety in the language classes.

Classroom procedures

Classroom procedure was counted another source of anxiety . Young (1990) in terms that The FL classroom involves many activities that may provoke students anxiety . Kosh and Terrell cited in Horwitz (2001: 118) suggest that students find the most anxiety provoking activities are giving a presentation , oral skits , and speaking in large groups , however students may feel more at ease if they work in pairs or in small groups , many researchers reported that there are certain classroom characteristics that are anxiety producing such as oral participation , feelings of being put on the spot , the pace of the class , and fear of negative evaluation . Young (1990) outlines a list of classroom activities that are perceived by students as provoking anxiety : (1) unplanned role-play (2) speaking (3) oral presentations or skits (4) exchange of ideas (5) writing work on the board (6) putting a considerable emphasis on grammar or avoiding grammar Young (1999) On the other hand , the more friendly and informal the language classroom environment , the less it is likely to be anxiety provoking.

Components of language anxiety:

Horwitz et al. (1986) classified foreign language anxiety into three components as:

Communication apprehension:

According to Mc Croskey (1977) communication apprehension is a type of shyness characterized by fear of anxiety about communicating with people. It implies the difficulty to speak in groups as in oral communication anxiety or in public or “stage fright”. In communication apprehension, foreign language learners have difficulty not only in speaking but also comprehending messages from others (Horwitz et al., 1986). In other words, learners have difficulty in understanding others or in being understood.

Fear of negative social evaluation:

It arises from a learner’s need to make a positive social impression on others. This type of anxiety has been defined by Watson and Friend (1969) as apprehension of others’ evaluations of their FL performance. This leads the students to avoidance of evaluative situations, because they have a pre judgment that others would evaluate them negatively.

It is closely related to communication apprehension (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Additionally, especially “students whose personalities tend to fear negative evaluation seem to be strong candidates for experiencing anxiety in foreign language classrooms” (Kitano, 2001) his type of anxiety is broader than test- anxiety because it is not limited to test-taking; rather, it occurs in any social evaluative situation as in job interviews or oral communication language classroom contexts.

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Test anxiety:

Test anxiety is the uneasiness, apprehension, or nervousness felt by students who have a fear of failing an exam. Test or examination anxiety appears not only in foreign language classes but in connection with any field or subject where testing is involved. While taking the test, examinees fail to read the test content properly or grasp the meaning of test questions, thus causing them to perform less well than expected.

Signs of Foreign Language Anxiety:

Learner of any foreign language encounter some difficulties when using it. Therefore, the teacher can notice some signs on their faces, or behaviour that show him/her that they are anxious, and are not likely to behave in a normal way. So, the signs of anxiety include psychological and physiological. The physical symptoms of anxiety are caused by the brain sending messages to parts of the body to prepare for the "fight or flight" response. The heart, lungs and other parts of the body work faster. The brain also releases stress hormones including the adrenaline.

Types of Anxiety:

MacIntyre (1999) distinguished between three types of anxiety—“ even if one views language anxiety as being a unique form of anxiety, specific to second language contexts. It is still instructive to explore the links between it and the rest of anxiety literature “ (p28). Thus, three types of anxiety can be distinguished :

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ait Anxiety :

It is the lack of emotional stability in any situation (Speilberger defined anxiety as the probability of becoming anxious in any situation . He added also that trait anxiety refers to a stable predisposition to become nervous in a wide range of situations in another words people with high level of trait anxiety are generally nervous people , whereas people with low trait anxiety are emotionally stable and tend to be calm and relaxed .

State anxiety:

This type is defined as “ an unpleasant emotional arousal in face of threatening demands or dangers ” . State anxiety is fear experienced at a particular time . Everyone experiences state anxiety but the stimulus can vary . State anxiety causes individuals to feel nervousness , stress or the disability to face any event . High levels of state anxiety are specifically harmful that they can disturb the individuals to work positively in any situation .

Situation-specific anxiety:

A third type of anxiety is called situation specific anxiety , which refers to anxiety experienced in a well-defined situation (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991a). Situation specific studies can offer more to the understanding of anxiety because various aspects of the situation can be interfered together . A key difference is that subjects are tested for their anxieties in limited circumstances such as taking a test , speaking in public, writing examinations, performing math or participating in a language class . Situation specific constructs can be seen as trait anxiety measures limited to a given context (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991b) .

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Effects of Language Anxiety:

According to Elaine Horwitz one of the leading researchers in the field , anxious learners have difficulty in understanding what is being said and they may have also many problems in producing the language when they are anxious . It seems that anxiety reduces language learning and debilitates learners' performance . So, that Anxious students are more likely than non-anxious students to be slow to learn the foreign language ; Although these effects may vary from person to person . Horwitz also asserts that big importance should be given to understand the frustration and discomfort that a huge number of students seem to be suffering from when learning a foreign language . Many researchers such as Spielfmann & Radnofsky have supported Horwitz point of view and they insisted on the importance of (FLL) learners' psychological experience rather than language proficiency levels itself . Indeed , the consequences of FLA may extend beyond the classroom to the point that those who pursue the study of a foreign language until graduation may actually never use the language again as a result of high levels of FLA (Dewaele, 2007) .

Levels of anxiety:

Investigations have showed the interference of anxiety at three different levels of cognition : Input , Processing and Output as it was shown (Tobias, 1986) modal..

The input level :

Input which is the first stage of the language learning . At this stage learner may experience anxiety when he meets a new word , phrase or a sentence in the target language input anxiety may prevent the student from perceiving the information received . For this reason , for instance , highly anxious learners tend to experience

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difficulties in understanding what the teacher is saying in the FL . Horwitz et al. (1986: 126) report that one of their male students admitted to hearing “only a loud buzz” . Thus , high levels of anxiety at the input stage may make those learners unsure of themselves , which makes them feel in need to listen for the same item in the foreign language more than one time and they may have to reread in the foreign language on several occasions to compensate for the missing input .

Processing stage :

Anxiety reflects the apprehension the learners experience when cognitive actions are performed on the external stimuli ; that is when learners are trying to organize and store the input . What happens at this stage is that anxiety may lessen the efficiency with which memory processes are manipulated to achieve the task . High levels of processing anxiety may diminish the learner's ability to understand messages or to learn new vocabulary items in the foreign language .

output stage :

It is the final step of learning , involves the worry experienced when learners are required to demonstrate their ability to produce previously learned material. It is assumed that output anxiety interferes with the processing of previous learning , and hence high level of anxiety at this stage might inhibit the learner's ability to speak or write in the foreign language .

I.9.Conclusion:

To sum up, the first chapter is devoted to examine one of the most ongoing debatable topics across several specialism which is Foreign Language Anxiety through providing a theoretical perspective starting by defining the term Anxiety, identifying the nature of foreign language anxiety along with it its causes and sources, then shedding the light on the various kinds of Anxiety including Trait anxiety and other types and ending up by investigating the aftermath of it on learners' academic achievements and acquisition of foreign language .

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Discussion of Results

Research Methodology and Design:

Introduction:

Many studies have been conducted to investigate how students struggle with language anxiety but few have been concentrated on young learners especially middle school learners . Thus , our study tends to fill in the gap and our aim was to investigate FLCA among those young learners from pupils and teachers" perception using two questionnaires in order to find out the level of anxiety and the factors that really affect middle school pupils ,, learning of FL .

Research Sample and Population:

We have chosen to work with fourth year pupils since they are the most influenced ones by the problem of anxiety in this level because they are supposed to pass the BEM exam , and anxiety can be noticed easily in their case For this reason , we think that they are the most appropriate ones who work well with our study. Our population consists of 95 pupils but the sample participated in in this study were 48 pupils their ages between 12-14, all the participants are fourth year pupils in the same school Djaber Ben Hayen Middle school . They have studied English since their first year of middle school for three hours per week .

Research Methodology:

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLAS) , which was developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) and considered by several researchers as a "valid" and "credible" measuring instrument , was used as the data collection instrument in the research.

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Data Collection Tools:

The instrument used to assess learner foreign language anxiety was adapted from Horwitz , Horwitz, and Cope"s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) . The scale was revised and translated into Arabic and reduced into 24 items to be more appropriate for use with young middle school pupils .Nine original FLCAS items were excluded from the revised version as they might cause confusion for pupils . For example , one item asks the respondents whether they feel nervous when speaking English with native speaker , however these pupils may never have had the opportunity to talk with a native speaker.

The questionnaire was given to the participants by their English teachers during their regular lessons . As the participants were young , The students were informed about the purpose of the research in order to make sure they understood what was being asked they were given (30 minutes) to answer the questionnaire.

The participants of this study were asked to rate each of the Statement in the FLCAS using the 4- point interval of which 1 refers to strongly disagree, 2 as disagree, 3 as agree, 4 as strongly agree .

Data Collection and Procedure Analysis:

The purpose of this research was to examine foreign language anxiety level of students studying English as a foreign Language in Djaber Ben Hayen Middle School , fourth year ,as far as to identify the sources of this anxiety . Taking into consideration that The FLCAS is based on the analysis of the potential sources of anxiety in a language classroom , integrating three related sources of anxiety (communication apprehension , fear of negative evaluation , test anxiety and general feeling of anxiety .The mean of the scores for each question is to be calculated . It has to be either higher or lower than

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2,5 according to which it will be judged whether there is some level of anxiety or not . Based on that, Table (1) shows the questions indicating levels of anxiety for scores lower than 2,5and for scores higher than 2 ,5

Table1. FLCAS items with numbers of students selecting each item

	<u>SN</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>Mean</u>
1. <u>I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class.</u>		1	11	34	1	2,72
2. <u>I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.</u>	14	15	18	11		2,22
3. <u>I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.</u>	14	18	22	4		2,54
4. <u>I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes</u>	8	9	18	13		2,83
5. <u>It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.</u>	4	12	23	9		2,77
6. <u>During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.</u>	12	17	16	3		2,20
7. <u>I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.</u>	3	14	22	9		2,77

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

20 13 13 2 1,93

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

6 10 26 6 2,66

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

11 9 18 10 2,56

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

7 12 21 8 2,56

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

7 12 23 6 2,68

13. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.

7 11 23 7 2,62

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

11 12 23 2 2,62

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

8 14 16 10 2,58

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

13 15 18 2 2,62

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17. If I learn to speak English very well , I will feel more confident .
- | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|------|
| 6 | 8 | 15 | 19 | 2,91 |
|---|---|----|----|------|
18. I don "t sa y an ythi n g in Engli sh unt il I c an sa y it cor rectl y .
- | | | | | |
|---|----|----|---|------|
| 7 | 11 | 21 | 9 | 2,66 |
|---|----|----|---|------|
19. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.
- | | | | | |
|----|----|----|---|------|
| 12 | 13 | 16 | 7 | 2,37 |
|----|----|----|---|------|
20. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
- | | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|------|
| 11 | 8 | 22 | 7 | 2,52 |
|----|---|----|---|------|
21. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
- | | | | | |
|---|----|----|---|------|
| 7 | 13 | 19 | 9 | 2,62 |
|---|----|----|---|------|
22. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
- | | | | | |
|---|----|----|---|------|
| 1 | 15 | 24 | 8 | 2,81 |
|---|----|----|---|------|
23. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
- | | | | |
|----|----|----|------|
| 10 | 17 | 16 | 2,33 |
|----|----|----|------|
24. I feel embarased when the teacher corrects every mistake I make .
- | | | | | |
|---|----|----|---|------|
| 5 | 11 | 27 | 5 | 2,62 |
|---|----|----|---|------|

SD = strongly disagree , D = disagree ; A = agree ,SA =strongly agree.

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In Table 1, all numbers indicate students who chose each answer from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). The mean FLCAS score of the participants in this study was found to be 2,65 which indicated that the participants reported a moderate or level of anxiety. with (Mean=2,64) .students with averages around 2,5 should be considered as moderate anxious , while students with averages below 2,5 are probably not very anxious. Students with average more than 2,5 and above, are high anxious". Therefore, the findings of the study revealed that middle school students do experience anxiety with a moderate level .

According to the participants" responses to the FLCAS, more than the half of the participants did not "feel more tense and nervous" in their English classes than in other classes (more than 52 %), and "Even if I am well-prepared for English classes, I still feel anxious about them" (60.4%). Nearly o (70 %) agreed with the item that " If I learn English very well , I will feel more confident ."

It seems that (66%) of pupils start to panic when they have to speak without preparation and (72%) of them don"t feel quite sure when they are speaking in their English class . (66,66%) agreed that it would not bother them at all to take more English classes, 58% disagreed with the statement that "the more I study for an English test, the more confused I get," and(68%) rejected the fact that that they were usually at ease during English tests.

In addition, (58%) reported that in English classes, they could get so nervous that they forgot things they knew, another 58 %) agreed with the statement , "When I am on my way to English classes, I feel very sure and relaxed." . (66,66%) "I get nervous when I don't understand every word "the language teacher says., and "I get nervous when I don't understand what the English teacher says in English" (66,66%) "I get upset when I don't

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understand what the English teacher is correcting in English” however , (60,41%) reported that “ I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.”

From another hand , activities related to speaking were one of the most anxiety -provoking tasks as (66,66 %) reported that they started to panic when they had to speak in English without preparation in English classes , and (60,41%) added that they get nervous and confused when they are speaking in their English class . Likewise , (60,41%) disagreed with the item “.During language class , I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course .” whereas (64,58%) agreed with the statement that they kept thinking that the other students were better at English than them .

B / Turning to the second research question regarding the causes of FLCA and in order to identify the sources of foreign language anxiety , the questionnaire was divided into three subscales related to the three sources of anxiety :communication anxiety, fear of negative evaluation , test anxiety and anxiety in English classroom classes as it shown in table (2). Then each subscale was statistically analyzed in order to find out the differences between different levels .

Sources of anxiety	FLCA items
Communication Apprehension	1,3,9,11,18,22
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2,4,7,13,14,15,17,20,23,24
Test anxiety	8,16
General feeling of anxiety	10,12,19,21

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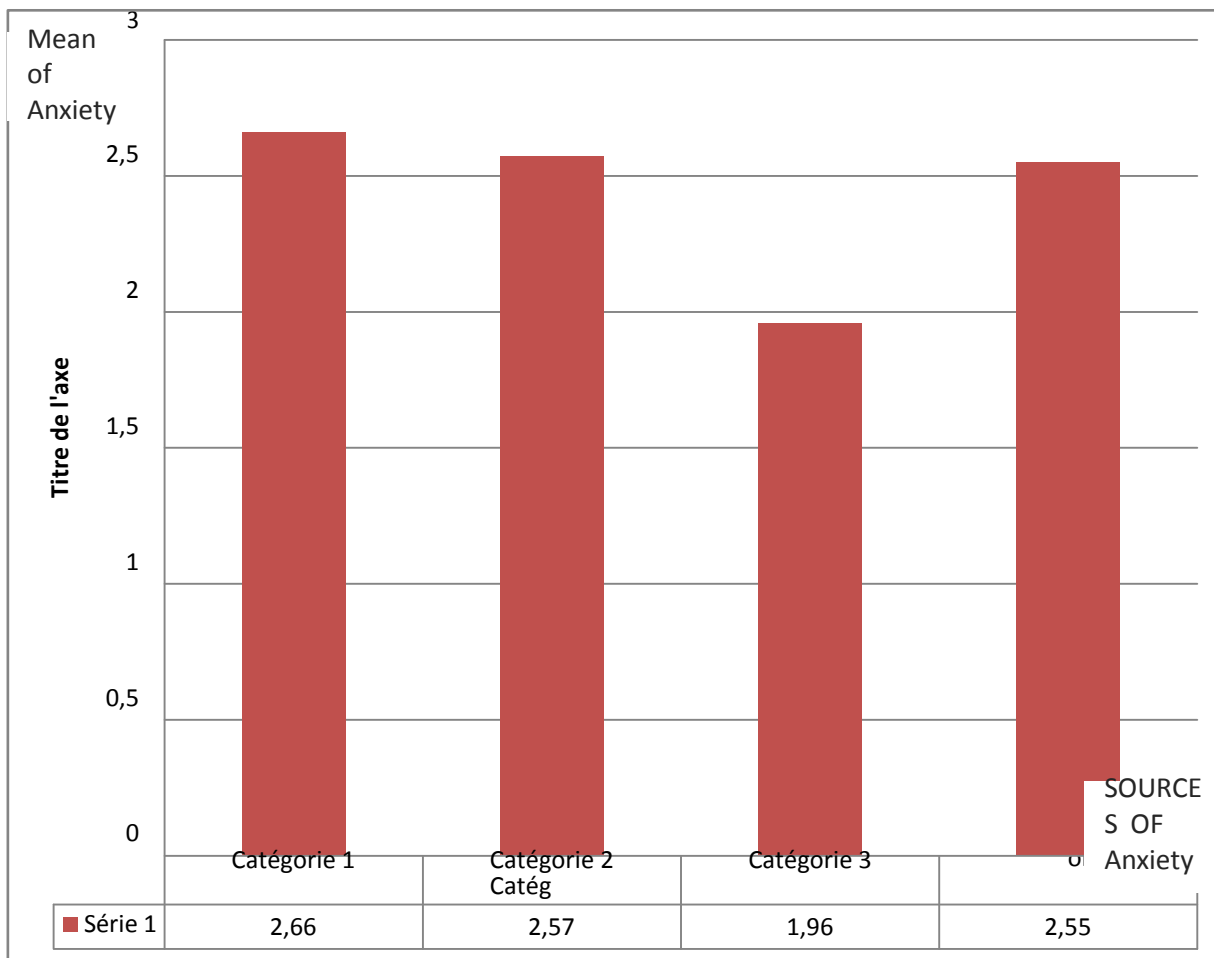
Moreover , through the computation of means of each kind of anxiety, it was found that the communication apprehension factor , the mean of which reached 2,66 ,was higher than other kinds of anxiety.

Table.2 shows means of students in terms of each kind of anxiety

Communication Apprehension	2,66
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2,57
Test anxiety	1,96
General feeling of anxiety	2,55

As shown in Table 1, a total of sixteen FLAS items exceeded the neutral mean of 2,5, suggesting that these various items are the most provoking anxiety for our participants . However , the most anxiety-provoking items, according to table 2, were related to the factor of communication apprehension (Mean = 2,66) which is related to the fear of not being able to comprehend what the teacher is saying in English , followed by the fear of negative evaluation (Mean= 2,57) , this item is related to their fear of being less competent than their peers or their low self - confidence about their English ability . However the items related to test anxiety were ranked at the bottom of the scale .

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1 = communication comprehension

2 = fear of negative evaluation

3 = test anxiety

4 = general feeling of anxiety

To sum up , It seems that communicative apprehension , fear of negative evaluation, and low self-confidence were the most common causes of FLA among middle school pupils .

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Teacher's Questionnaire:

Despite the fact that foreign language speaking anxiety is a common phenomenon in most of foreign language classes , teachers do not always identify anxious students , and often attribute their unwillingness to take apart in the learning process to factors such as lack of motivation, or low performance. Thus , this questionnaire aims to investigate whether middle school teacher are aware about the problem of language anxiety and its negative effects on students performance .

Description of the Questionnaire:

The questionnaire consists of (7) multiple choices questions. It was given to (10) teachers as the total number of the whole population . our questionnaire aims to investigate : what do they know about language anxiety , their teaching strategies and how do they support their anxious learners to overcome their learning problems .

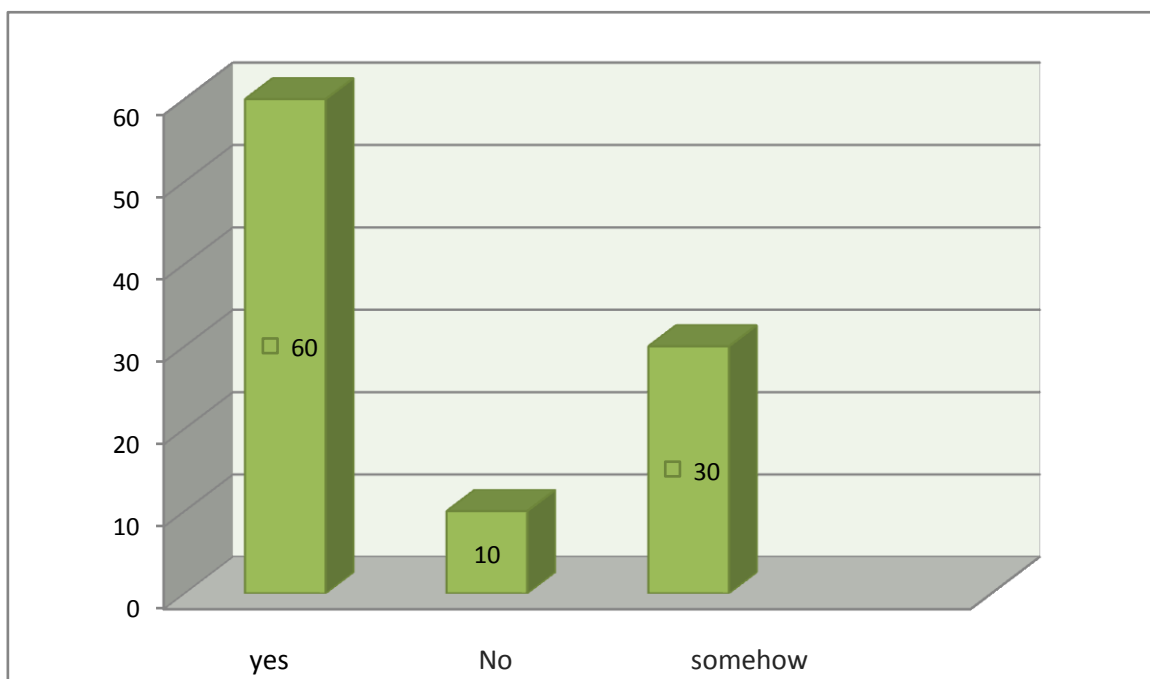
They were informed that the completion of the questionnaire would be an important part of a scientific project , and consequently their participation would be very appreciated.

Discussion:

Question one :Do you think that anxiety may hinder pupils foreign language acquisition?

Options	N	%
Yes	6	60%
No	1	10%
Somehow	3	30%

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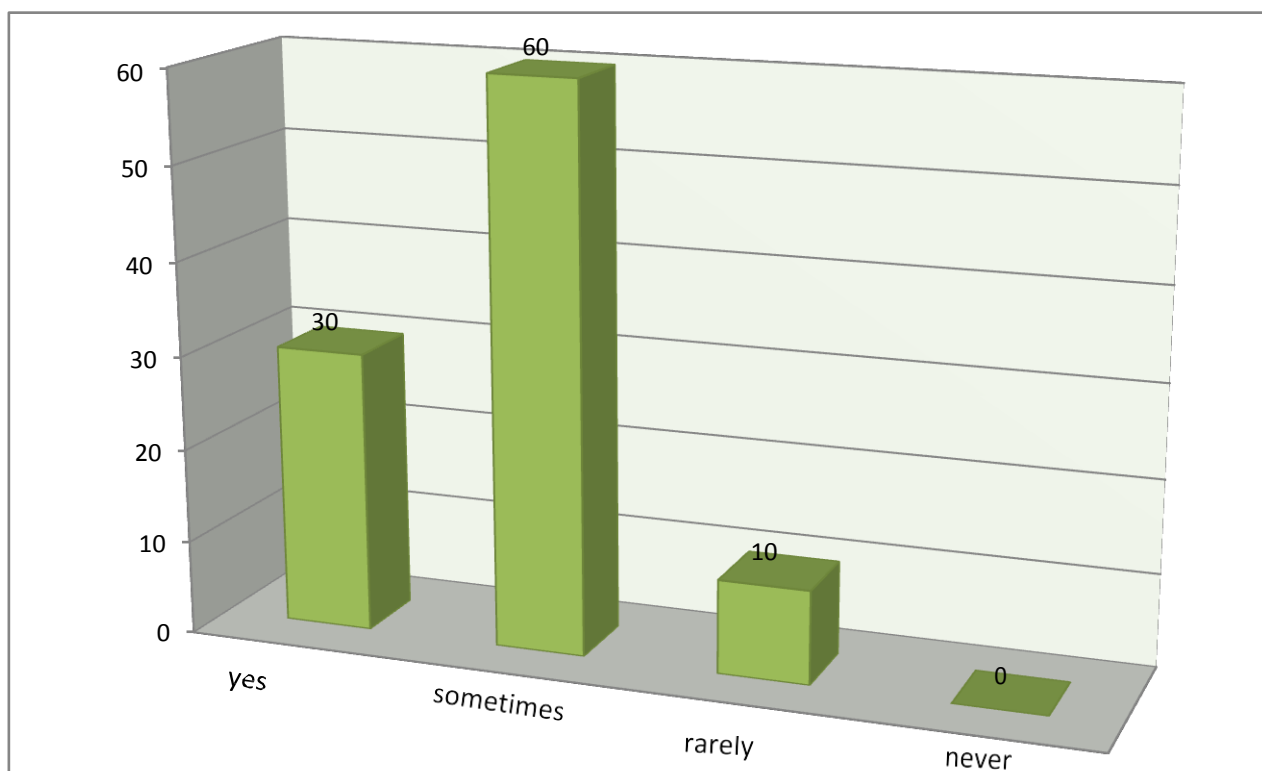


According to the teacher's answers 60% of them are aware about the fact that anxiety affects pupils' learning and inhibits their progress , and 30 % of them declare that anxiety can be considered as an obstacle that impede pupils' learning as it can be a motive for them to challenge their fears and do their best to reach their goals . Besides 10 % of the participants said that anxiety has no effects on their learners

Question two : Do you talk with your pupils about their learning problems?

options	N	%
yes	3	30%
sometimes	6	60%
rarely	1	10%
never	0	0%

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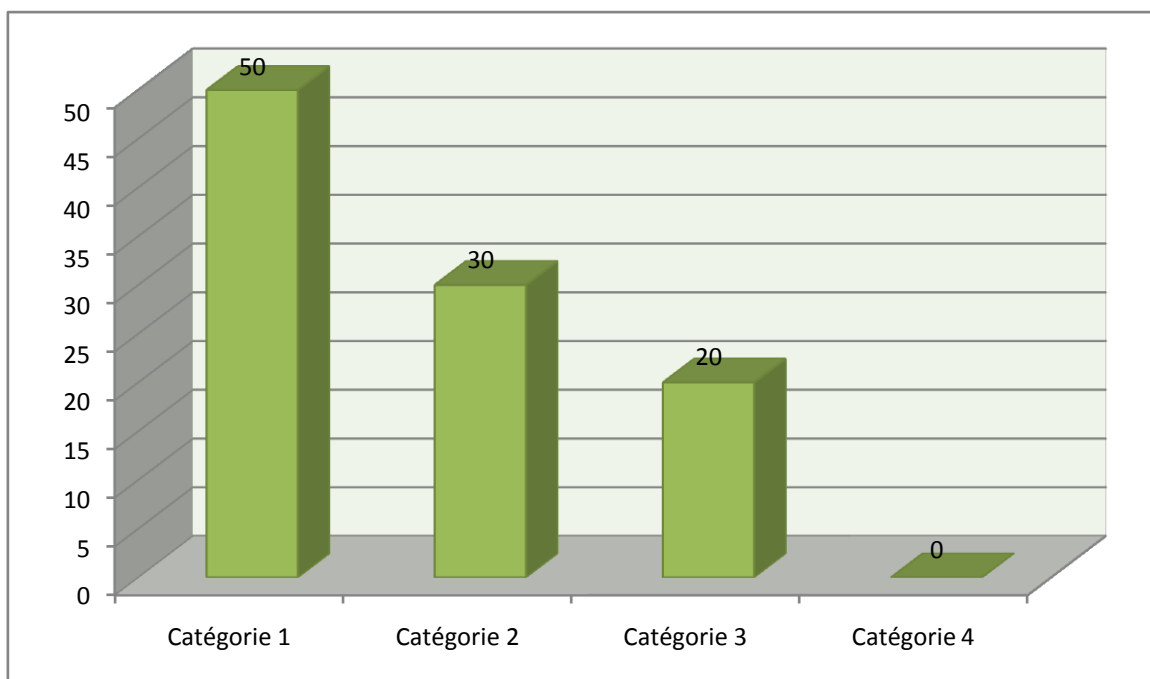


As the results shown in the table above , 40% of teachers reported that they do regularly give the opportunity to their learners to talk about their learning problems , whereas 60% of them said that they sometimes organize special sessions for students to talk about their learning problems , and only 10% said rarely they do that because they think that most of students are not interested in talking about their learning problems .

Question three : Do you try to establish a healthy atmosphere to help those anxious pupils in class ?

Options	N	%
Yes	5	50%
Sometimes	3	30%
Rarely	2	20%
Never	0	0%

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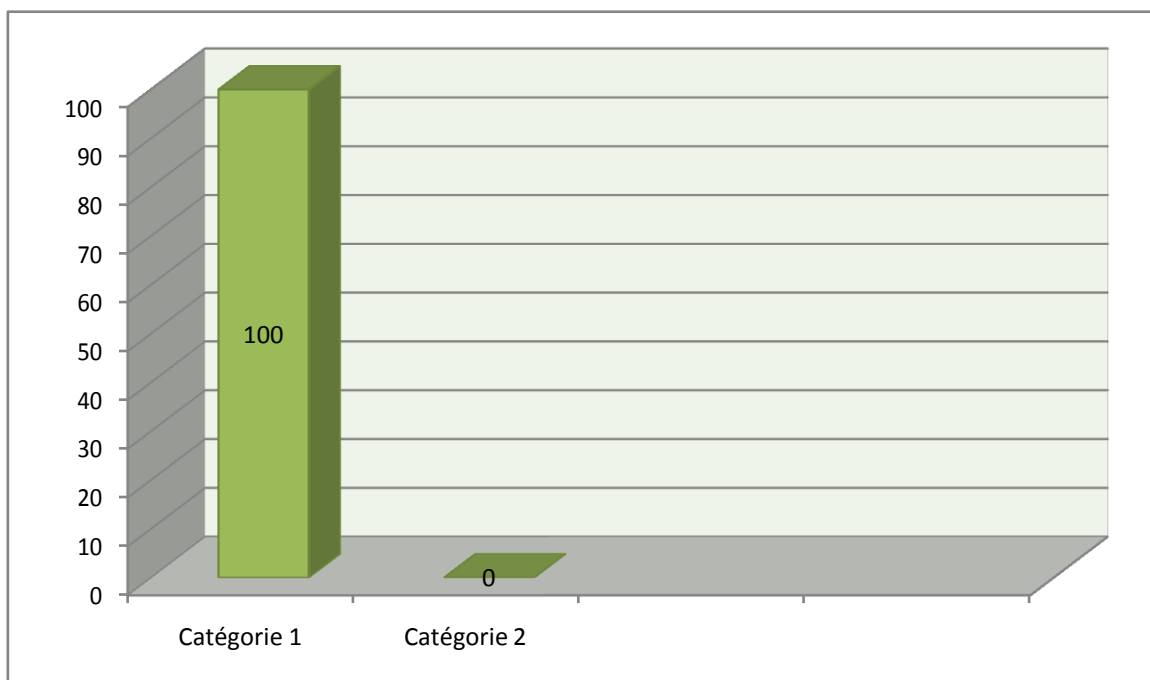


The half of the interviewed teachers 50% have declared that they try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class and they think that doing so will help to diminish anxiety , increase pupils " productivity and create more motivation for learners . However 30 % said that they sometimes try to create a relaxed atmosphere in their classes and 20 % said that they rarely do that because they fear that they will lose control over their classes and face a problem of discipline due to the large number of pupils per class .

Question four : Do you think that there are some pupils feel anxious when the teacher corrects their mistakes?

Options	N	%
Yes	10	100%
No	00	0%

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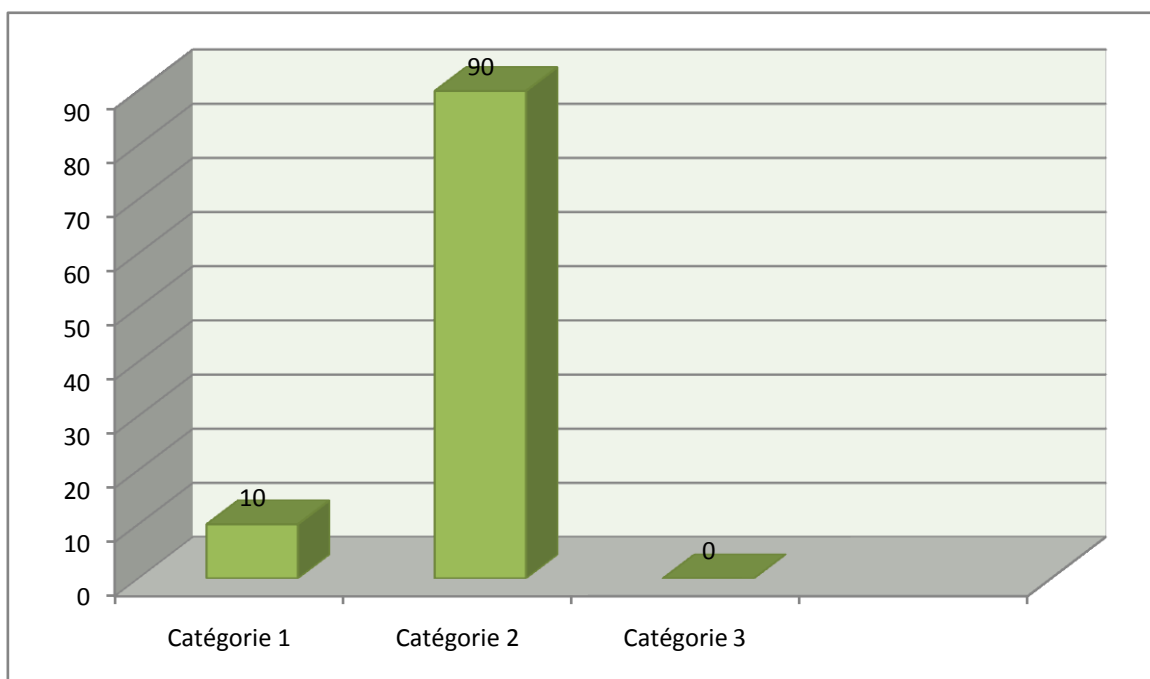


It seems from the results obtained in the table above that 100% of the teachers who participate in this questionnaire do agree that many learners feel anxious when they are being corrected by their teachers especially in front of their classmates which may prevent them from progressing and taking part in the learning process

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

Options	N	%
Agree	1	10%
Disagree	9	90%
Neutral	0	0%

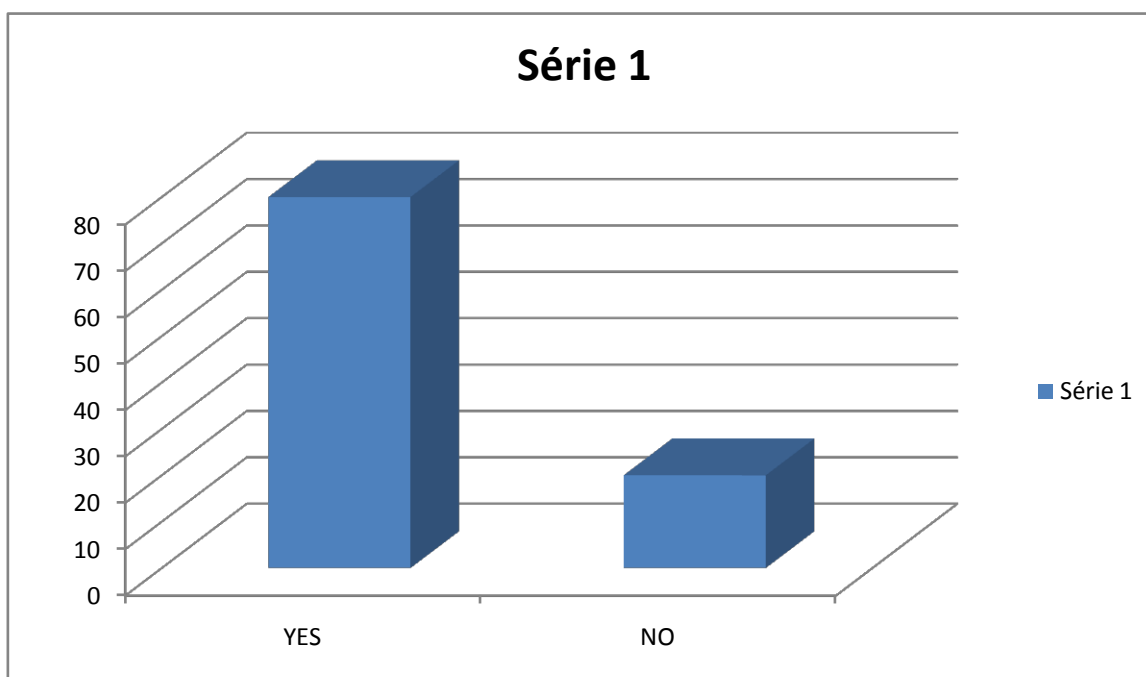
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As it shown in the table above that 90% of teachers disagree with the fact that anxiety may help learners doing well in their exams and they asserted that anxious students always score below their abilities when it comes to tests and exams because they lose concentration and often forget all what they have learnt before . however 10 % of them said that anxiety has no effects on pupils performance in the period of exams.

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

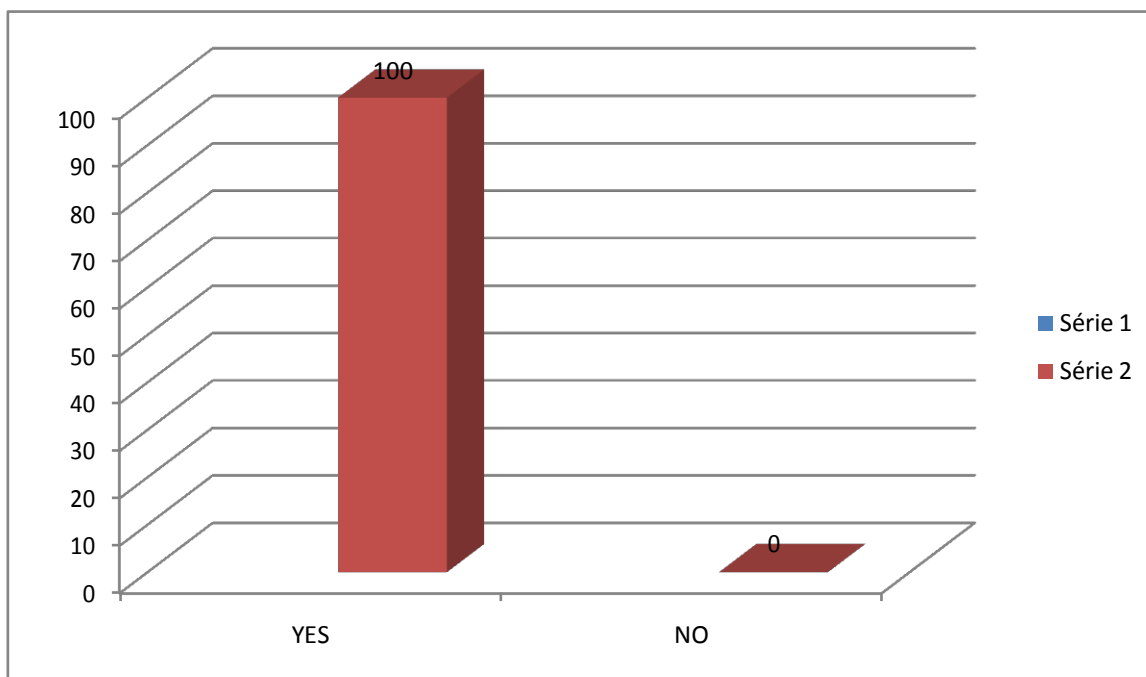
Options	N
Yes	80
No	20



The results in the table above reveal that 80% of the teachers believe that the use of the new materials helps learners to learn better because they help to create a good atmosphere that facilitate the learning process ,they may also captivate learners attention and make them more interested about the language learning .

Question seven : Do you think that learners need to be helped to achieve a better language learning ?

Options	N	%
Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%



As it was expected , all the teachers (100%) said that learners need to be helped to achieve a better language learning because they need their teachers" support to overcome the difficulties that may face them in their language classes and to be more aware about their learning objectives .

Conclusion:

The finding of this questionnaire revealed that many teachers are aware about the negative effects of anxiety on pupils performance and they consider it as a hindrance to learning . Thus many of them are trying to find solutions that may help to support those anxious students by adopting new teaching strategies , creating healthy atmosphere to motivate their learners and also by discussing the problems that may face them and helping them to develop their self confidence and to build up a new way of learning that reflect their real abilities.

Recommendations:

Introduction:

Language anxiety plays a significant role in the field of teaching foreign languages as it can dramatically influence the process of language learning and teaching . Therefore , it is necessary that language teachers not only recognize that anxiety is a major cause of students failure but also support them to cope with this feelings of uneasiness and discomfort in order to help them achieve their goals in acquiring the target language successfully .

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study and similar researches in the same field , teachers can play a major role in reducing anxiety among their pupils . the following recommendations may help them better to cope with the problem of language anxiety felt in their classrooms :

- 1.The teacher should create a friendly atmosphere to facilitate the process of learning especially when speaking and holding conversations .
2. The teacher should encourage and praise the students" for their positive behavior.
3. The teacher should have a clear language and simple explanation of the lesson.
4. The teacher should involve and engage students" to share ideas with their classmates.
5. Teachers should encourage those learners who are afraid of making mistakes to feel free to make mistakes in order to acquire communication skills.

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6. Sometimes language teachers should initiate discussion in the class about the feelings of anxiety and should take measures to reduce the sense of competition among them

7. To give language learners a feeling of success and satisfaction when using English , language teachers should avoid activities that enhance early frustration . They can instead start with simple step by step lessons so that learners can feel satisfied and relaxed when participate in language classes for the first time .

8 .The teacher has to think about his/her method of teaching and the type of activities such as group works , workshops , group dynamics which will engage the anxious and isolated pupils " within the group because this type of activities makes the anxious students feel at ease while working with other members which lead them to participate in holding conversation , and using the target language .

Implications of the study

The findings of this study have pedagogical implications. First, it remains important that teachers must be aware about the problem of FLA within their classrooms . Second , it becomes a quite clear and obvious that foreign language anxiety can probably be reduced , at least to an extent, by a supportive teacher who will acknowledge students' feelings of isolation and frustration and offer concrete suggestons for obtaining foreign language confidence . But if we are to improve foreign language teaching at all levels of education, we must recognize and cope with the problem of debilitating foreign language anxiety as a factor shaping pupils ,, foreign language learning . Finally , this study may help teachers in building their knowledge of how to support the foreign language learners to overcome their difficulties in their language learning .

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Limitation of the study:

Teachers may find that implementation of the suggested strategies in this study are not enough for their pupils .Some amount of anxiety may still continue , and in some cases, anxiety may be more severe and require the attention of a specialist such as a counselor or psychologist . Furthermore , this study does not provide a detailed list of all anxiety –reduction strategies , and there may be other useful strategies that are not included here.

Future studies:

Future studies could investigate the sources of foreign language classroom anxiety FLA for each of the language skills , such as reading , writing , and listening and find out the best methods and strategies that works better with each type of them .

Conclusion:

In order to better understand and help our students who experience high levels of language learning anxiety , It is important to be familiar with the primary causes of language anxiety within the classroom. In addition , it is important for language teachers to recognize that language learning anxiety can have significant negative effects on learning and performance so that they will understand the importance of taking steps to reduce anxiety levels in their classrooms.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

this study was conducted to focus on two main purposes : to investigate the level of foreign language anxiety among our participants and to identify where this anxiety comes from , we have posed two main questions and one sub –question that have been answered at the end of this investigation , which are “to what extent may middle school learners experience anxiety?”, and “what are the main causes of this anxiety and ”How teachers can support thos anxious learners ’ So, those questions led us to formulate our hypothesis ; “if teachers are able to find out where foreign language anxiety comes from . then they will be able to find the appropriate strategies that may help them reducing anxiety and promoting learners' accomplishments”.

In fact , foreign language anxiety has drawn the attention of many researchers due to its significant role in the field of language teaching and learning . Therefore ,all the researches which has been conducted on this issue has focused on foreign language anxiety as one among the most effective factors and the best affective obstacle for the foreign language Learning since students' anxiety level in a foreign language class may be “an early indicator of basic language problems" (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996 : 199). Thus ,all the previous studies aimed to investigate the nature of this problem in order to find out the best solutions that serve better to cope the

General Conclusion

problem of FLA in the classroom.

The results of the present study revealed moderate anxiety among the participants, it showed also the major sources of language anxiety reported by the sample of our study were : communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, general feeling of anxiety and test anxiety as the last factor which gives us the impression that students in this stage don't give much interest to the language test . From another hand , the second questionnaire's results revealed that language teachers are aware about the severity of this problem and they do believe that many factors such as error correction fear of negative evaluation may make their pupils anxious which may affect their performance and they reported also that try many strategies in order to cope with this problem .

APPENDICES:

Appendix A : Foreign Language Anxiety Scale

Please answer the following questions by providing the number correspondent to the option that best describe your opinion.

1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
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.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
11. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
12. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.

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13. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
14. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
15. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.
16. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.
17. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
18. I don't say anything in English until I can say it correctly .
29. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.
20. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
21. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
22. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
23. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
24. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

APPENDIX

Appendix B : Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teachers

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 in filling in the questionnaire :

1. Do you think that anxiety may hinder pupils ' foreign language acquisition?

Yes No Somehow

2. Do you talk with your pupils about their learning problems ?

Yes Sometimes Rarely Never

3 .Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere to help those anxious pupils in your class ?

Yes Sometimes Rarely Never

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

Yes No

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

Agree Disagree Neutral

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

Yes No

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7. Do you think that learners need to be helped to achieve a better language learning ?

Yes No

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Résumé

Cette étude vise à explorer le niveau d'anxiété en langue étrangère vécu par les élèves de quatrième année de l'école Djaber Ben Hayen . Pour atteindre nos objectifs, nous avons dirigé deux questionnaires principaux dont le premier vise à étudier le niveau et les sources d'anxiété de les apprenants des langues étrangères, alors que le deuxième s'adressait aux professeurs de langues . Pour voir si les enseignants d'anglais étaient conscients de ce problème et s'ils cherchaient des solutions efficaces pour réduire l'anxiété dans leur cours.

Les résultats de notre étude ont révélé que les apprenants avaient en moyenne un niveau d'anxiété modéré résultant de : l'appréhension de la communication, la peur d'une évaluation négative, la peur d'échouer à leur test de langue . le manque de confiance des élèves les laisse surtout craindre des camarades, ils croient aussi que les questions des enseignants et la corrections des erreurs en classe sont les principales sources d'anxiété. Enfin, pour essayer de trouver des solutions , nous proposons quelques stratégies pour aider les enseignants à confronter ce problème .

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