Investigating the Effects of Teachers’ Positive Feedback on Minimizing Students’ Anxiety in EFL Classes

Case Study of First Year LMD Students of English at Larbi Ben M’hidi University-Oum El Bouaghi

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Language Sciences and Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

This work is dedicated to:

My parents

My sister

My brothers

My friends

And every one helped me or supported me to accomplish it
Acknowledgement

All praise be to Allah and his peace and blessings be upon his messenger

I would like to thank my supervisor Miss. H. Maamouri for supervising and guiding me to accomplish this work

I would like also to thank my examiner Mr. H. Merabet for accepting reading my dissertation and correcting it

My special thank is also for teachers as well as first year students in the department of English for cooperating with me and answering my questionnaires
Abstract

The present study aims at serving teaching and learning foreign languages by raising teachers’ awareness about the importance of their feedback through investigating the effects of their positive feedback on diminishing students’ anxiety. Consequently, the hypothesis has been stated for this research is:” teachers’ positive feedback helps in minimizing students’ anxiety in EFL classes”. In order to reach the aim of the study and, therefore, confirm or reject the aforesaid hypothesis, two questionnaires were designed. One of them was delivered to forty (40) first year LMD students in the department of English at Larbi Ben Mhidi University. The other one was distributed to a sample of fifteen (15) teachers in the same department. The participation of both students and teachers in this study is very important in order to know their opinions about the topic under investigation and obtain more reliable data. After analyzing the data and interpreting the results, our hypothesis was confirmed. In other words, teachers and students agreed upon the point that teachers’ positive feedback is a helping factor for decreasing students’ anxiety in EFL classes.
List of abbreviations

EFL : English as a Foreign Language
FL : Foreign Language
FLCAS : Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
FLL : Foreign Language Learning
LMD : License, Master, Doctorate
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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

FL teachers are facing challenges in order to fulfill their duty and convey their noble message. Learners, on the other hand, are struggling under the impact of the affective variables influencing their progress in language learning. One of these variables is anxiety. Anxiety can be a serious problem and a great obstacle in the way of the learners’ achievement. Anxiety is a kind of fear, stress and sometimes panic people may experience in some situations of their lives. It is a frustrating feeling most of the Algerian university students, as well as their peers all over the world, suffer from when they learn a second or foreign language. First year English students at Larbi Ben Mhidi University are a living example of that although they spent many years studying English. An anxious student becomes very sensitive to any feedback or reaction to his/her performance especially that comes from the side of the teacher. Good teachers, in this case, should be wise in their interferences. In this research, we assumed that the use of positive feedback is one of the appropriate solutions to overcome anxiety. It is likely to help students feel at ease and, therefore, minimize their anxiety. So, throughout this research, we will attempt to investigate this issue.

2. Aim of the Study

The aim of the present study is to investigate the effects of teachers’ positive feedback on the students’ anxiety in EFL classes. To put it in another way, this research attempts to prove or disprove the effectiveness of teachers’ positive feedback in minimizing EFL students’ anxiety.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses
This research addressed the following question:

- Does teachers’ positive feedback help in minimizing students’ anxiety in EFL classes?

In order to answer the aforementioned question, the following hypothesis is stated:

- Teachers’ positive feedback helps in minimizing students’ anxiety in EFL classes.

4. Research Methodology

The present study is a descriptive one in which two questionnaires are designed and delivered to both teachers and students in order to prove or reject the stated hypothesis. The participants are 40 first year LMD students and 15 teachers in the Department of English at Larbi Ben Mhidi University. First year students are chosen to be the pivot of this research for the reason that they study English for the first year as a speciality. They are likely to be anxious because they are supposed to deal with English all the time while they used to study it as a single module in the secondary school.

5. Structure of the Study

This research consists of two chapters. The first chapter is a review of literature which is divided, itself, into two sections. Section one is about the concept of anxiety. It covers the definition of anxiety, types of anxiety, FL anxiety, sources of FL anxiety, anxiety and FL learning, and the importance of teacher’s role in minimizing anxiety. Section two is about feedback. It tackles the definition of feedback, its forms and positive vs. negative feedback. The second chapter is the practical part. It is devoted to
the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the questionnaires that have been delivered to students and teachers. Based on these interpretations, the aforesaid hypothesis will be either confirmed or rejected.
Chapter One: Theoretical Background

Section One: The Concept of Anxiety

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Introduction

By the expansion of learning foreign languages all over the world, the field of language learning has been the pivot of a great deal of research. The essential goal of those studies is to identify the different problems facing learners and, therefore, investigating the best ways to cope with them. The learner’s variables were and still are of primary focus, particularly in FL research, and anxiety is a case in point. The interest being given to anxiety is due to its recognized relationship with debilitating students’ achievement and preventing them from exploiting their abilities successfully.

1. Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety is an unpleasant feeling experienced by people in different situations of their daily lives. In its general meaning, anxiety is defined by Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary in two ways; as a “concern and fear” especially “about what might happen” and also a “strong desire” as in “anxiety to please”. “Nervousness; worry” is the definition provided by NTC’s Pocket Dictionary of Words and Phrases.

Although anxiety is a common feeling all people often experience, most of them do not know what exactly it is. Furthermore, it is one of the most tackled psychological issues among researchers, however, it is hard to find a clearly agreed upon definition of it. Accordingly, several definitions were provided based on each researcher’s reasoning about this concept. A few are introduced here. To begin with, Spielberger’s words (as cited in Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, p.125) show that “anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system”. So, anxiety for Spielberger involves a number of frustrating feelings
related to some changes on the level of the brain. To put it another way, it is a matter of upsetting psychological changes going hand in hand with physiological ones. From another viewpoint, anxiety is tension, expectation of something bad but obscure will happen, and an emotion of disturbing suspense (Rachman, 2004). Hayes (2006) explained anxiety, from his viewpoint, as a logical response to a perceived danger or something worrying.

All in all, it can be said that the psychological phenomenon termed anxiety refers to a number of unpleasant and frustrating psychological emotional states one may be liable to when feeling threatened.

2. Types of Anxiety

Anxiety, as a complex phenomenon that has causes as well as effects, has widely investigated by researchers. Accordingly, different types have been distinguished. Trait anxiety, state anxiety and situation specific anxiety are the most talked about types of anxiety which were classified based on its sources. Brief explanations will be provided for each type successively as follows:

2.1. Trait Anxiety

Trait anxiety is considered as a part of personality. This type of anxiety is talked about when one is an “anxious person” (Thot, 2010, p.5). In other words, it is a permanent tendency of being anxious in a variety of cases (Macintyre as cited in Subasi, 2014).

Trait anxiety is distinguished from the other types in the sense that it is not related to a specific time or situation. That is to say, the one suffers from it is always anxious whatever the situation or the time is. For this reason, it is the most problematic one among the anxiety types mentioned before.
2.2. State Anxiety

Contrary to trait anxiety which is characterized by being stable, state anxiety is temporary. Therefore, the individual meant, in this case, is “anxious at the moment” (Thot, 2010, p.5). Similarly, Macintyre described it as experiencing anxiety momentarily (as cited in Thot, 2010). In line with this, state anxiety is a temporary feeling of anxiety, and is not so damaging as the previous type. The good thing about state anxiety is that it dies away by time (Riasati, 2011) i.e. the anxious person feels safe when the situation passes.

2.3. Situation-specific Anxiety

Situation-specific anxiety, as its name indicates, is a type of anxiety related to particular situations. It can be said that this type is a combination of the aforementioned two ones. To put it another way, it is similar to but different from the two in the same time. To make it clearer, it is similar to trait anxiety in being permanent, and to state anxiety in being limited to some situations. That is, situation-specific anxiety is provoked by a particular situation, and is aroused each time the provoking stimulus appears.

One good example of a situation-specific anxiety is foreign language anxiety which will be introduced hereafter.

3. Definition of Foreign Language Anxiety

Various situations, including learning contexts, may be anxiety provoking. Yet, this anxiety can, sometimes, be related to or restricted to foreign language learning more than the other learning subjects. Anxiety, in this case, is termed as foreign language anxiety. Many learners may do well at different learning tasks, but when it comes to learning a FL, they feel as they have a barrier in their minds against this language (Horwitz et al., 1986).
Foreign language anxiety was distinguished from the other anxieties, and has been in the focus of a good number of researches in the field. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) conceived foreign language anxiety as a “distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language process”, and they were the first who perceived foreign language anxiety as a distinct type particular to foreign language learning, and different from the other anxieties just like the language learning process is different from the other contexts. Moreover, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994, p. 284) stated that foreign language anxiety is “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning”. Similarly, MacIntyre (1999) explained it as a “worry and negative emotional reaction” (p.27) which is provoked by using or learning a second language.

In short, what is agreed upon is that foreign language anxiety is a number of negative feelings and behaviours incited when learning or using a foreign language.

4. Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety felt by non-natives when learning or using a foreign language, represented by emotions like worry, apprehension and fear can be underlain by different causal factors. In addition, it may works as a hindrance of students’ learning as it prevents them from performing well in their tasks. Horwitz et al. (1986) associated it with three anxieties, namely, communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. The three of them are related to performance since foreign language anxiety, according to them, has much to do with performance evaluation in academic and social contexts.
4.1. Communication Apprehension

Speaking in the target language is an anxiety provoking task for most foreign language learners. Being supposed to express themselves in a language that they do not master yet, or do not even have enough knowledge about may be a good reason of that. Students suffering from communication apprehension do not feel at ease when communicating in the second or foreign language.

Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127) defined communication apprehension as “a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people”; they further explain that it results, also, from the belief that one will not find easy to understand others or even make them understand him/her. This point may explain why most talkative individuals remain quiet in their foreign language classes (Horwitz et al., 1986).

So, learners’ limited knowledge about the target language causes them to be shy and anxious about using it in front of people because they fear not to use it successfully, or to fail in conveying their messages or receiving the others’ ones.

4.2. Fear of Negative Evaluation

One of the considerable sources of anxiety among foreign language learners is the fear of being negatively evaluated either by the teacher or by their peers. The learners, in this case, prefer to keep silent and avoid participation in order not to make mistakes, and therefore, receive a negative feedback. The problem with students who fear negative evaluation is that they do not look at errors and mistakes as a necessary step any one passes through when learning a new language but as something that is self-deprecating.
4.3. Test Anxiety

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are similar to each other except that the former is narrower than the later in the sense that it is restricted only to situations of test taking. So, test anxiety, in fact, is a fear of academic evaluation. The special thing with tests is that they will be marked. This is why even good students sometimes feel anxious and make silly mistakes.

5. Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning

Anxiety is one of the problematic issues in the field of language learning that have been the focus of many researches in the last few decades.

While most researchers believe that anxiety is a reason behind the poor performance of students, others, however, look at it as a result (Trang, 2012). It is true that anxiety can be a consequence of poor performance or insufficient preparation and efforts, but most of the time, it is the reason behind all these. A question that could be asked here is: is anxiety always harmful for foreign language learning?

Although foreign language anxiety is a negative emotion that usually perceived as a threat for the learning process, it is not always as harmful as it is generally thought about. As it may be an obstruction in the way of learning a second or foreign language successfully, anxiety can also be a helping factor to enhance this later. To clarify more, little amounts of anxiety can work as a motivator and help the individual to perform well, whereas a high level of it may be detrimental (Chinpakdee, 2015). Similarly, Torres and Turner (2014) and Zheng (2008) said that anxiety and language achievement have been negatively associated by many researchers, while few studies established a positive
association (khodadady&Khajavy, 2012). As a result of these views and understandings, two forms of anxiety were deduced, namely facilitating and debilitating or beneficial and inhibitory as mentioned in Dornyei (2005).

Jahangiri, Rajab, Jahangiri, Honarvar, and Sharif (2014) claimed that people do not react to the stressful situation in the same way, because some of them might perceive it as a challenge. This paves the way for speaking about the fight-flight response. It is known that the body, when perceiving a danger, prepares to respond, and, consequently, the person behaves in one of two ways: either he/she takes the risk and fights to overcome the threatening situation or runs away from it to feel safe. To relate this with the learning context and, specifically, the foreign language learning, Scovel (as cited in Hashemi&Abbasi, 2013, p. 641) explained that facilitating anxiety “motivates the learner to ‘fight’ the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behavior” whereas debilitating anxiety “motivates the learner to ‘flee’ the new learning task, it stimulates the individual emotionally to adopt avoidance behavior”.

More clarifications about the contradictory effects of anxiety can be offered by this diagram taken from Mahmoud (2011, p.12):
Figure 1. Integrative Model for Studying Anxiety

It would be safe to say that facilitating anxiety is the positive type of anxiety by which stress is turned into a driving force for the learner to work harder in order to improve his/her performance and, therefore, achieve the desired goals. For example, the slight anxiety a student experiences before a presentation or a test may push him/her to make more efforts and to prepare well for it. Hence, anxiety, in this case, is helpful for the learner and beneficial for the learning process.
Debilitating anxiety, on the other hand, is thought about as the negative type of anxiety which is associated with poor learning and unsatisfactory performance. By contrast to facilitating anxiety, it causes the students to delay their tasks and approach them with laziness. Moreover, the debilitating role of anxiety can go beyond this. This type of anxiety may prevent even good and well prepared students from performing in the expected manner.

Debilitating anxiety was the focus of most studies investigating the effects of anxiety on foreign language learning (e.g. Horwitz et al., 1986; Macintyre & Gardner, 1991) and it is the type that concerns the present study too.

The conclusion to be drawn is that anxiety is a double-edged sword. In other words, it can either be beneficial or detrimental for the foreign language learning process. Little amounts anxiety keep the students alert and active whereas high levels of it lead to unpleasant outcomes.

6. The Importance of the Teacher’s Role in Mitigating Anxiety in FL Classes

From what have been mentioned before, it is now clear that coping with anxiety is something required to put the students in a healthy atmosphere that helps them make use of their abilities. Creating an environment free from stress and negative feelings is believed to facilitate FLL by making students feel at ease and ready to be an active part of the process. In relation to this, it is worth to mention the vital role of the teacher which was emphasized by researchers in the field of language learning.

Teaching is not an easy task. Though, it is not impossible to be a successful teacher when one likes this job and tries his/her best to create an enjoyable classroom for better teaching
and learning. Krashen (1982) gave a definition of the effective language teacher based on the Input Hypothesis and the Affective Filter Hypothesis, two of the famous hypotheses of his second Language Acquisition Theory, and he described him/her as “someone who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation” (p. 32). Horwitz et al. (1986) also believed that realizing inhibitory foreign language anxiety, coping with it, and defeating it is a must to make FLL better. The teacher, then, has an important role to play by creating a healthy and anxiety-free environment for his/her students.

Moreover, studies in the field came up with different approaches to language learning that teachers may adopt in their classes. Some of which (e.g. suggestupedia) aim at creating a positive classroom atmosphere which is free from stress and boredom.

**Conclusion**

To sum up, foreign language anxiety is one of the most affective factors in learning a foreign language. It can be either beneficial or detrimental for the learners’ achievement. However, its negative effects are, apparently, the most common ones. For this reason, it is crucial to find efficient solutions for this problem in order to help students overcome it, and, therefore, make foreign language learning more enjoyable.
Section Two: Teachers’ Positive Feedback

Introduction

1. Definition of Feedback
2. Feedback Modes
   2.1. Oral/Verbal Feedback
   2.2. Written Feedback
   2.3. Non Verbal and Non Written Feedback
3. Positive Vs Negative Feedback

Conclusion
Introduction

Feedback is a well documented issue in education and in language teaching in particular. Many research studies have been devoted to this concept due to its importance as a technique that cannot be abandoned in the teaching/learning process. Feedback, in the classroom, can be provided by the teacher as well as the classmates; but the teacher’s feedback is the most influential one since the teacher is considered as the most knowledgeable person in the class. Teacher’s feedback has different types. One of which is positive feedback which is recognized that it has positive consequences on the students’ psychology. Therefore, it is the first concern of this section.

1. Definition of feedback in the context of teaching

Feedback was seen by Cohen (1985) as “one of the more instructionally powerful and least understood features in instructional design” (p.33). This may explain the great number of research studies conducted on this concept which is one of the important tools to enhance learning.

Feedback was defined by Ur (as cited in Pérez, Fuentealba, De La Bara, Rojas & Cisternas, 2013) as any kind of information students receive on how they perform in order to ameliorate their performance. A similar definition was proposed by Hattie and Timperley (2007) in which they gave examples about the sources by which feedback could be provided like “Teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience” (p.81). Seliger (as cited in Reigel, 2005, p.30) saw feedback as” language-related responses to learners’ utterances, upon which the learner is focused and which can be used by the learner to validate or invalidate concepts he or she has about the target language”. 
Feedback, then, is a process by which the learner is informed whether his/her performance in tasks, tests or whatever is equivalent to the one targeted or not. However, knowing how good or bad one’s performance is does not always depend on the teacher’s or peers’ comments, but sometimes the learner him/herself may check to what extent he/she has achieved the determined goals.

2. Feedback Modes

Feedback can be delivered in three forms: oral form, written form or non verbal and non written form.

2.1. Oral/verbal Feedback

Oral feedback, as its name indicates, is the feedback provided orally. Because of its nature, it could be easily and timely given. Thus, it gives students the opportunity to know what they have done correctly, and what they need more practice in right after the task. Therefore, it helps them gain time to improve their weaknesses as opposed to the feedback received one day or more after the performance. Another advantage of oral feedback is that it can be given to one student, to a group of students, or to the whole class(Brookhart, 2008). Moreover, it gives the learner a chance to seek clarifications about it from the teacher or sometimes argue one’s ides. All these, make verbal feedback almost the most frequently used form of feedback in a language classroom setting.

2.2. Written Feedback

Written feedback is the feedback delivered in a written form. It is another form of feedback the teacher may provide his/her students with along with oral feedback and they have the same goals. An example of it is the written comments on a student’s written work
(Brookhart, 2008). She also believed that one advantage of written feedback is its being more permanent than verbal feedback. This gives students the opportunity to review it when needed.

2.3. Non verbal and nonwritten feedback

This form refers to the feedback which is neither oral nor written. It can be gestures, facial expressions or other body movements. This feedback mode is most of the time used by the teacher as an alternative to oral feedback. Sometimes, a gesture or a simple look convey the intended message more effectively than words. Therefore, speaking in some situations is not so necessary.

Here are some examples of good choice and bad choice of feedback modes by Brookhart (2008, p. 16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of good feedback mode</th>
<th>Examples of bad feedback mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Using written feedback for comments that students need to be able to save and look over.</td>
<td>• Speaking to students to save yourself the trouble of writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Using oral feedback for students who don’t tread well</td>
<td>• Writing to students who don’t tread well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Using oral feedback if there is more information to convey than students would want to read.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrating how to do something if the student needs to see how to do something or what something “looks like”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Examples of good and bad mode of feedback Brookhart (2008 p. 16)
So, the best way of providing students with feedback depends on their level and also their ability to understand it to meet the aims behind it. Feedback becomes useless if the student does not grasp it and benefit from it in developing his/herself.

3. Positive Vs Negative Feedback

Teachers’ feedback is an important factor that interests students. Therefore, creating a positive and relaxed atmosphere is one of the most powerful tools that should be used to encourage learners and free them from negative emotions.

One way of classifying feedback is whether it is positive or negative (Abbasi, Ganbari & Zaré, 2015).

Positive feedback is an indication that the student’s response is correct. It is, generally, seen by students as pleasing. So, they are likely to feel supported when receiving it. It is also said to motivate them. This makes it one of the preferable types of feedback among students. Negative feedback, on the other hand, is the indication that the student’s answer is incorrect. Most of the time students do not like to receive it because they may perceive it as a negative judgment.

Conclusion

This section was devoted to the concept of feedback with a focus on positive feedback which is the independent variable of the present research. First, some definitions of feedback were provided. Then, the modes or forms of feedback may have been discussed. After that, positive as well as negative feedback were introduced.
Chapter Two: Practical Part

Introduction

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2. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

3. Teachers’ Questionnaire
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4. Students’ Questionnaire
   4.1. The Sample
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   4.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results
   4.4. Summary of the Results

Conclusion
Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study. It tackles the methodology used and a brief introduction of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) of Horwitz et al. (1986) from which we adopted some items to the students’ Questionnaire. A description of the questionnaires will also be provided in addition to the sampling, analysis and interpretation of the results obtained and, at last, summaries of the results.

1. Methodology

In order to conform or reject the stated hypothesis and answer the research question, the data needed was gathered through two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was delivered to the teachers in the department of English at Larbi Ben Mhidi University to see their views about the possible effects of their positive feedback on minimizing students’ anxiety. The participation of teachers in the present study is so important due to their experience in teaching and dealing with students. Therefore, the information they gave was truly valuable. Another questionnaire was targeting first year LMD students in the same department. Section two of the students’ questionnaire was an adoption of 17 items from FLCAS which will be introduced hereafter.

2. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

FLCAS is a scale was devised by Horwitz et al. (1986). It consists of 33 items to be answered on a 5-point likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale is used to examine the level of anxiety and its sources in FL classes. The items represent communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety and
another category called language anxiety. FLCAS has been employed by many investigators in language anxiety studies. This reveals its reliability as a useful tool to investigate this concept. In this study, we adopted 17 items of the scale in the second section of students’ questionnaire involving the four categories mentioned. The items are (1,2,3,8,9,10,11,16,18,19,21,23,24,26,29,30,33) as it will be explained in the description of the questionnaire. When analyzing the results of FLCAS, we combined percentages of the options agree and strongly agree together and those of disagree and strongly disagree together as Horwitz et al. and the researchers who used this scale did.

3. Teachers’ Questionnaire

3.1. The sample

The target population of this questionnaire is teachers in the department of English at Larbi Ben Mhidi University. The sample was chosen randomly. It consists of 15 teachers. The questionnaire was given to the teachers by hand, and they returned it in the same day. Teachers were so cooperative. Therefore, all the questionnaires were returned back.

3.2. Description of the Questionnaire

This Questionnaire consists of four sections:

**Section One: Background Information (Q1- Q3)**

This section contains three questions. Teachers are asked about their degree, years spent in teaching English, and whether or not they like teaching English.
Section Two: Students’ Anxiety in EFL classes (Q4-Q12)

This section contains 9 questions. (Q4 and Q5) are asked to get information about the classroom environment. (Q6-Q10) are about the three anxieties mentioned in the theoretical part of this study. Namely, communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. (Q11 and Q12) aimed to know the effects of anxiety on students’ level.

Section Three: the Role of Teachers’ Positive Feedback in minimizing Students’ Anxiety (Q13-Q19)

This section contains 6 questions. (Q13 and Q14) are about the awareness of teachers of the importance of their role as well as their feedback in the language classroom. (Q15-Q17) tackle the effects of teachers’ feedback on students’ anxiety with a specification of positive feedback in (Q17). (Q18) aims at knowing whether teachers use positive feedback to minimize their students’ anxiety when necessary.

Section Four: Further suggestions

In this section, teachers are free to add any suggestions or ideas related to our topic according to their experience in the field of teaching FL.

3.3. Analysis and interpretation of the Results

Section One: Background Information

Q1. Degree held:
   
a. BA (License)
   
b. MA (Master /magister)
   
c. Ph. D (Doctorate)
Figure 2. Teachers’ Qualifications

According to the results of this question, (93.33%) of teachers hold a master or magister degree, (6.67%) hold a PHD, and no one holds a BA degree. So, the majority of teachers hold a MA degree, but this does not mean that they are less knowledgeable because most of them are continuing their studies i.e. many of them are PHD students.
Q2. How long have you been teaching English?

Figure 3: Years Spent in Teaching English

Percentages reveal that the majority of teachers have an experience of five years or more in teaching English as a foreign language. This means that most teachers have a good experience in dealing with students’ problems in the classroom especially psychological ones like anxiety.
Q3. Do you like teaching English?

a. Yes b. No

Figure 4: Teachers’ liking for teaching English

(100%) of the teachers responded to this question by yes i.e. all of them like teaching English. This makes them motivated to teach and deal with students in a good way.
Section Two: Students’ Anxiety in EFL classes

Q4. What type of relationship exists between you and your students?

a. Good  b. Bad  c. Neutral

Figure 5: The Relationship between Teachers and Students

(73.33%) of the teachers said that they have a good relationship with their students. (26.67%) claimed that their relationship with their students is neutral. However, no one have a bad relationship with his/her students. This makes students feel at ease, and free them from an additional source of stress.
Q5. Do your students consider the language classroom as a stressful environment?

a. Yes  

b. No

![Bar graph showing percentages of teachers' responses to the question]

Figure 6. Students’ attitudes towards the FL classroom

(66.67%) of the teachers responded to this question by “yes”. (33.33%) of them responded by “no”. This means that most teachers recognized that their students suffer from foreign language anxiety which is the problem that this study aims at finding a solution to.
Q6. Do they feel anxious prior or while taking a test or an exam?

a. Yes  

b. No

**Figure 7: Students’ test anxiety**

(80%) of the teachers believe that their students experience test anxiety while (20%) do not. Students, generally, suffer from test anxiety because they are graded on their tests and exams. Therefore, their success and failure depend on them. So, they always worry about that.
Q7. Do they feel anxious when they are asked to speak or communicate in the target language?  

- a. Yes  
- b. No

Figure 8: Students’ Communication Apprehension

(73.33%) of the teachers’ answered this question by “yes” i.e. their students experience communication apprehension in the classroom while (26%) answered by no. Communication apprehension is most of the time related to FL because learners find themselves expected to communicate in a language which they do not have full knowledge about, and do not master yet in terms of fluency or accuracy.
Q8. Do you think that students in your classroom feel afraid of negative evaluation?

a. Yes b. No

Figure 9: Students’ Fear of Negative Evaluation

All teachers (100%) responded to this question by “yes”. This reveals that all teachers noticed that their students are afraid to be negatively evaluated either by the teacher or by the classmates. Students may not have full confidence in their level and if they receive negative evaluation they will underestimate their abilities.
Q9. If yes, then whose evaluation they worry about the most?

a. Yours                          b. Their classmates’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>teacher's evaluation</th>
<th>classmates' evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percentages</td>
<td>0.87%</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure10: The Evaluation that Students Worry About the Most

The majority (86.67%) said that students worry about the teacher’s negative evaluation more than the classmates’ one. The teacher is the guide of the classroom, and is considered as the most knowledgeable person in it. This makes students interested in anything he/she says about their performance. Therefore, they will be affected by his/her negative comments or evaluation.
Q10. Among the anxieties mentioned in questions (6, 7, and 8) which one you think is the most prevalent in your classroom?

a. Test anxiety

b. Communication apprehension

c. Fear of negative evaluation

Figure 11: The Most Prevalent Anxiety in the Classroom

The three anxieties received the same percentages (33.33%). According to the teachers, the three anxieties are equally prevalent in the FL classroom.
Q11. Does anxiety affect the students’ level?

a. Yes  

b. No

If yes, how does it affect them (positively or negatively)? Please explain more

![Bar Chart](image)

**Figure 12: Anxiety and Students’ Level**

The majority of teachers (93.33%) believe that anxiety affects students’ level. Teachers were also asked to explain how does anxiety affects their students (positively or negatively). Few of them see that anxiety may have a positive effect on students’ level when it motivates them to make more efforts to learn better. However, most of them believe that it has a negative effect because it does not allow them to perform well. Here are the explanations they provided:

- It hinders their capacities.

- It makes them not sure about their answers or performance.

- It is a hindrance to communication.
- It lowers the level of concentration.

- It hinders their potentialities.

Q12. Do some good students make silly mistakes during exams and tests?

a. Yes  

b. No

Figure 13: The Effect of Anxiety on Good Students

The majority of teachers (93.33%) said that even some good students make silly mistakes during exams and tests. This could be due to the anxiety experienced when taking tests and exams. What can also be understood from these results is that anxiety does not affect poor students only but bright ones could also be liable to it in some situations.
Q13. Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

*Figure 14: Teachers’ Establishment of a Relaxed Atmosphere in the Classroom*

Higher percentages were for the options “always” (73.33%) and “sometimes” (26.67%). This means that teachers are aware of and interested in making their students feel at ease. Therefore, they try to free them from stress and negative feelings such as anxiety.
Q14. How often do you provide your students with feedback?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

Figure 15: Providing students With Feedback

Teachers answer this question either by “always” (46.67%) or “sometimes” (53.33%). These results reveal that teachers are aware of the importance of their feedback. Teachers’ feedback is something crucial in FL classroom because it helps students see their strengths as well as their weaknesses.
Q15. Have you ever noticed that some types of feedback increase students’ anxiety?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, what are they according to your experience?

Figure 16: Effects of Some Types of Feedback on Students’ Anxiety

Most of the teachers have noticed that students’ anxiety may be increased by some types of feedback.

Teachers were asked about the feedback types that increases students’ anxiety. The majority of them answered by “negative feedback”. Some of them specified by adding that students become anxious when they get low scores, when they are punished, or when they are interrupted by the teacher. According to some teachers, this sensitivity to negative feedback is due to the fact that most students perceive it as a personal judgment.
Q16. Which type of feedback do your students prefer to receive?

Figure 17: The Type of Feedback Students Prefer to Receive

The majority of teachers (80%) responded that positive feedback is the most preferable type of feedback for students. (13.33%) did not answer the question while (6.67%) immediate oral feedback is the type their students prefer to receive. Positive feedback makes them feel that their performance is valuable and they are on the right way. So, they become more motivated to work harder.
Q17. According to your experience, does your positive feedback help in minimizing students’ anxiety?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, why is that in your opinion?

![Bar chart showing percentages]

**Figure 18: The Role of Teachers’ Positive Feedback in Minimizing Students’ Anxiety**

Most of teachers (93.33%) noticed that students’ anxiety can be reduced with the help of positive feedback.

Teachers were asked to provide explanations for these results. Some of them just said that this is a natural phenomenon i.e. everyone likes to receive positive feedback. However, others clarified more. Their explanations are as follows:

- It provides a positive atmosphere in the classroom.

- It makes students more comfortable.
- It boosts motivation, self-confidence and intimacy inside the classroom.

**Q18. If positive feedback minimizes students’ anxiety, do you use it to overcome this problem when necessary?**

a. Yes  
b. No

![Bar graph showing the percentage of teachers using positive feedback to minimize students' anxiety.]

**Figure 19: Teachers’ Use of Positive Feedback to Minimize Students’ Anxiety**

The results reveal that the majority of teachers (93.33%) are aware of the importance of their positive feedback in FL classrooms especially in reducing students’ anxiety which is most of the time destructive to language learning.

**Q19. Further suggestions**

In this section, teachers were free to add any comments or suggestions related to our topic and might not be mentioned in the previous questions. From the whole sample, only three teachers (20%) wrote some notes. One teacher said that teacher/student relationship during the course counts in minimizing anxiety. Moreover, another one sees students’ anxiety as
part of the teacher’s responsibility who should do his/her best to decrease it. The third one believes that feedback either positive or negative is crucial in the teaching/learning process. Yet, teachers, according to him, should provide feedback in a way that motivates learners. In brief, teachers agreed about the importance of the teacher’s role in diminishing students’ anxiety in side EFL classrooms; and this is what the present study aims to highlight.

3.4. Summary of the Results

Very important information was derived from the analysis of teachers’ questionnaire. In the first section, we gathered some personal information through three questions. The data of this section revealed that the lower degree teachers in our sample have is a master or magister one. Moreover, according to what we know as students in the same department, many of them are continuing their PHD studies. We also found that most teachers have an experience of five years or more in teaching the English language, and all of them like their job. These results mean that the majority of them have the needed qualifications to be good teachers and to deal with students’ problems successfully. The results may also mean that the data collected from their answers is reliable. The second section was devoted to students’ anxiety in EFL classes. To insure that teachers are not an additional cause of anxiety inside the classroom, we asked them about their relationship with their students. The majority of them described it as a good one. Teachers’ answers also confirmed that students, even good ones, suffer from FL anxiety. Moreover, they asserted that students experience test anxiety, communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Students could be negatively evaluated by the teacher as well as their peers, but the one they worry about the most is that comes from the side of the teacher. The third section, however, tackled the role of teacher’s positive feedback in reducing students’ anxiety. The
results obtained from this section showed that teachers are aware of their role in establishing a healthy atmosphere in the classroom and providing students with feedback as a tool of enhancing learning. Most teachers recognized that their students become more anxious when they receive negative feedback. Therefore, they do not like it but rather they prefer positive feedback because it makes them feel more comfortable and minimizes their anxiety according to what teachers noticed. Teachers also claimed that they do use positive feedback as much as necessary to help their students overcome anxiety. At last, teachers provided us with some suggestions and notes related to our topic based on their experiences. In short, Results of teachers’ questionnaire confirmed our hypothesis and gave a positive answer to our research question.

4. Students’ Questionnaire

4.1. The Sample

The sample of this questionnaire consists of 40 students among a population of 370 first year students in the department of English at Larbi Ben Mhidi University. First year students were chosen to enrich this study because they are taught to be more anxious than their peers in the other levels. One reason behind their anxiety is that it is their first year at university which is a different environment comparing to secondary school especially in the way of learning. Another reason is that the majority of their modules are in the English language while they used to have it as a module few sessions a week. The sample was chosen randomly. Students were very co-operative, and they returned the questionnaire in the same day.
4.2. Description of the Questionnaire

Students’ questionnaire consists of three sections:

**Section One: Background Information (Q1-Q4)**

In this section, students are asked about the number of years spent in studying English, whether or not English was their choice, whether they like it or not, and if they find it easy or difficult. The aim behind these questions is to see if there are other reasons that make students feel anxious other than the fact that English is a FL.

**Section Two: Anxiety in FL Classroom (5-21)**

In this section, we adopted (17) items from the FLCAS which have been mentioned earlier in this chapter. These items are numbered (1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, and 33) in the original source. In the students’ questionnaire, they are numbered (5-21). Statements: (5-9) represent communication apprehension, (10-13) represent fear of negative evaluation, (14-17) represent test anxiety, and (18-21) represent another category called classroom anxiety. This section aims at detecting students’ FL anxiety.

**Section Three: the Role of Teachers’ Positive feedback in Minimizing Students’ Anxiety (22-25)**

This section aims at knowing whether or not teachers’ positive feedback reduces students’ anxiety. The first question deals with the familiarity of students with feedback by asking them how much they receive it from their teachers. The other three questions are about teachers’ positive feedback. They were asked whether or not they like to receive it, what form of it they prefer, and whether or not it helps them minimize their anxiety.

44
4.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

Section One: Background Information

Q1. How many years have you been studying English?

a. 8 years

b. More than 8 years

c. Less than 8 years

![Bar Chart: Years Spent in Studying English]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 8 years</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 8 years</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure20: Years Spent in Studying English**

We chose eight years, here, as a criterion because students of our sample have studied English for seven years in the middle and secondary school and for one year in the university. We counted this academic year for the reason that the questionnaire was delivered at the end of it. The option ‘more than 8 years’ is for students who repeated one year or more in the middle or secondary school or even in the university. The other option
i.e. ‘less than 8 years’ is for those who studied in the classical way where English was taught in the middle school for two years only.

The results showed that 85% (34 students) have studied English for eight years whereas 12.5% (5 students) have studied it for more than eight years. However, only one student (2.5%) claimed that he has studied it less than eight years because his class did not have a teacher of English during some years in the middle or secondary school. What is noticed here is that almost all students have been studying English for eight years or more which is not a small period of time. This means that students are very familiar with English, and anxiety they may experience could not be due to the newness of this language for them but rather to other reasons.

Q2. Was studying English at university your choice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Yes</th>
<th>b. No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 21: Choice of Studying English**

80% (32 students) responded by ‘Yes’ and 20% (8 students) responded by ‘No’.

Since most students chose studying English, they are likely to have the will and
motivation to study it. However if they feel obliged to study it, especially if they do not like it, they will be more anxious.

Q3. Do you like English?

a. Yes                      b. No

Figure 22: Students’ Liking for English

95% (38 students) said that they like English whereas only two students (5%) said that they do not. We noticed here that the majority of students like English even some of those whom English was not their choice. The results of this question area confirmation of what have been discussed in the previous one.
Q4. How did you find learning English?

a. Easy  

b. Difficult

Figure 23: Students’ Attitudes towards Learning English

(50%) of students found learning English easy and (50%) found it difficult. Although half of students claimed that learning English is an easy task for them, they still suffer from anxiety in the classrooms as it has been showed in teachers’ questionnaire and as it will be manifested in the second section of this one too.

Section Two: Anxiety in FL Classroom

Q5-Q9: Communication Apprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA+A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I start panic when I have to speak without preparation in</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Communication Apprehension

Students responded to the questions of communication apprehension as follows:

45% (18 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the (statement 5), 32.5% (13 students) agreed or strongly agreed with it and 22.5% (9 students) were neutral. This idea was confirmed by students in the following item (item 6). 70% (28 students) agreed or strongly agreed with it whereas 22.5% (9 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed and 7.5% were neutral. These results revealed that most students feel confident when speaking in FL class, and they do not have any problems in communicating with the target language. However, the answers of these two items contradict with the results of the other items of communication apprehension and with the results of the teachers’ questionnaire that clearly showed problems of communication among EFL students.

50% (20 students) agreed or strongly agreed, 35% (14 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 15% (6 students) neither agreed nor disagreed with (item 7). This means that students prefer to prepare well before they speak in language class in order not to hesitate or forget what they want to say.

(Item 8) was agreed or strongly agreed upon by 62.5% (25 students). 30% (12 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 7.5% (3 students) were neutral. Percentages
show that most students feel anxious if they do not grasp every word they hear from the teacher. These students think that understanding the target language messages and communicating effectively with it need the understanding and well grasping of every single word have been heard and this is, unfortunately, a wrong idea held by many FL learners.

60% (24 students) agreed or strongly agreed with the last item of communication apprehension, 27.5% (11 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 12.5% (5 students) were neutral. These students, most of the time, could not speak spontaneously because they are considered as monitor-over-users.

**Q10-Q13: Fear of Negative Evaluation**

<table>
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<th>Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA+A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I tremble when I know that I’m going to be called on in language class</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I always feel that other students speak the foreign language better than I do</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I don’t worry about making mistakes in language class</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Fear of Negative Evaluation**

57.5% (23 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 10), 30% (12 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed and 12.5% (5 students) were neutral. 70% (28 students)
agreed or strongly agreed with (item 11), 25% (10 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 5% (2 students) were neutral. The results of these two items reveal that most students do not like to be called on in FL class especially when the teacher asks questions they do not have an idea about. Most of the time these students do not volunteer to speak in the language class for fear of making mistakes and, therefore, be negatively evaluated.

55% (22 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 12), 40% (16 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 5% (2 students) were neutral. Percentages showed that a big number of students underestimate their abilities and they always feel that the other students are better than them. This problem could inhibit them from participating in the language class because they fear to be compared with their classmates or evaluated by them.

65% (26 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 13), 27.5% (11 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed and 7.5% (3 students) were neutral. Most students claimed that they do not feel anxious about making mistakes in their language class. However, these results do not conform with the previous results of fear of negative evaluation.

**Q14-Q17: Test Anxiety**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SA+A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I’m afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I am usually at ease during tests in my language class</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I worry about consequences of failing my foreign language class</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4: Test Anxiety**

45% (18 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 14), 45% also disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 10ù (4 students) were neutral.

47.5% (19 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item15), 17.5% (7 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 35% (14 students) were neutral.

75% (30 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 16), 20% (8 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 5% (2 students) were neutral.

55% (22 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with (item 17), 30% (12 students) agreed or strongly agreed with it and 15% (6 students) were neutral.

Results of (item 14) showed that 45% of students are not afraid if the language teacher corrects every single mistake they make. The same proportion responded that they do feel afraid about that. Percentages of (item 16) may make the picture clearer. 75% said that they worry about consequences of failing in FL class. So, students worry about getting low grades and fail their class because their mistakes were counted by the teacher.

Responses to (item15) revealed that students usually feel at ease during tests. These results, however, contradict with the teachers’ answers of (Q6) in the teachers’ questionnaire.
Answers to (item17) showed that 30% of students get more confused the more they study for a language test whereas 50% do not.

**Q18-Q21: Classroom Anxiety**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>SA+A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD+D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I don’t understand why some people get upset over foreign language classes</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Classroom Anxiety

50% (20 students) agreed or strongly agreed and 40% (16 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with (item 18) whereas 10% (4 students) were neutral. Most students feel anxious about language class even if they are well prepared for it. Students could consider language classroom as a stressful environment, therefore, they keep thinking about what might happen there.

47.5% (19 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 19), 20% (8 students) disagree or strongly disagree and 32.5% (13 students) were neutral. However, these results
contradict with the results of (item 18). Students might not be fully concentrated when reading the item or when ticking the answer.

70% (28 students) agreed or strongly agreed with (item 20), 15% (6 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed and 15% (6 students) were neutral. The majority of students are overwhelmed by the huge number of rules they are expected to learn in order to use the target language appropriately. Students may feel helpless especially when these rules are totally different from those of the mother tongue.

42.5% (17 students) agreed or disagreed with (item 21), 35% (14 students) disagreed or strongly disagreed with it and 22.5% (9 students) were neutral. These results supported the idea of Horwitz et.al (1986) that language anxiety is a distinct type of anxiety has to do only with FL classes. Students, generally, have special beliefs about FL class make them worry about it. The disagreement of the other portion (35%) may be due to the fact that they do not have any other classes other than English ones except the French class which is also a FL.
Section Three: The Role of Teachers’ Positive Feedback in Minimizing Students Anxiety

Q22. How often do your teachers provide you with feedback?

a. Always  

b. Sometimes  

c. Rarely  

d. Never  

Figure 24: Providing Students with Feedback

From the figure above, 32.5% (13 students) said that they always receive feedback from their teachers, 52.5% (21 students) replied with sometimes; however, the option “rarely” has got only 12.5% of the answers (5 students) followed by the option “never” with 2.5% (1 student). The higher percentages of this question were for the options “always and sometimes”. These results match those of (Q14) in the teachers’ questionnaire. A conclusion that could be drawn based on this is that teachers are aware of the importance of their feedback, and that students have recognized and understand that.
Q23. Do you like to receive positive feedback?

a. Yes  b. No

Figure 25: Students’ Liking for Positive Feedback

97.5% (39 students) responded to this question with “Yes” whereas only 2.5% (1 student) responded with “No”. According to this figure, almost all students like to receive positive feedback. These results confirm those of (Q16) in teachers’ questionnaire where teachers asserted that positive feedback is the most preferable type of feedback among their students. Liking positive feedback is not something surprising for the reason that everyone wants to feel that he/she is on the right way and his/her performance was valuable and accepted by the teacher.
Q24. Which form of positive feedback do you prefer to receive?

a. Oral  

b. Written

c. Non verbal and non written

d. All of them

Figure 26: The Preferable Form of Positive Feedback for Students

The greatest percentages of this question were for the last option “All of them” with 35% followed by the first and the second one (oral and written) with 30% for both. Non verbal and non written feedback, on the other hand, was chosen by only 5% of the students. The highest percentages are approximate. They reveal that all forms of positive feedback have positive impacts on students’ psychology, especially oral and written ones. Many students prefer to receive positive feedback orally. This could be due to the fact that being praised in front of their classmates makes them feel more self-confident. Others, however, better like it in a written form. A good reason for that may be because they can read the teacher’s comments any time and whenever they feel themselves in
need to be motivated. Another reason is that some students are shy and they do not like to be praised in public.

**Q25. Does positive feedback help you to minimize your anxiety?**

a. Yes  

b. No

![Figure 27: The Effect of Positive Feedback on Students’ Anxiety](image)

This is the most important question in this section. 92.5% (37 students) responded to it with “Yes” whereas 7.5% (3 students) responded with “No”. So, the results show that the majority of students feel that their anxiety diminishes when they receive positive feedback from their teachers. This question is related to (Q17) in the teachers’ questionnaire where we obtained the same results. Consequently, from the teachers’ answers and from our experience as students, positive feedback is a motivational factor for students. It boosts their motivation and strengths their self-confidence and self-esteem. All in all, it provides a positive atmosphere that helps students feel more comfortable during their language classes.
4.4. Summary of the Results

The analysis of students’ questionnaire revealed interesting information. In the first section of the questionnaire, we asked students some personal information to insure that the anxiety they feel is related only to EFL and not to other factors as the dislike of the English language or its newness for them. The results showed that the majority of students are familiar with English for more than eight (8) years. Most of them, also, said that they like English and it was their first choice to study it in the university. The last question in this section was about the easiness or difficulty of learning English. 50% of students said that it is an easy task, whereas the other 50% said that they found it difficult. The second section of the questionnaire consists of 17 items from FLCAS represent communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety and classroom anxiety. The aim of this section is to make sure that students suffer from FL anxiety. Students’ answers show that most of them experience these anxieties in their classroom. However, some contradictions were found between students’ and teachers’ answers or even between students’ answers themselves. This could be explained by a lack of concentration or honesty from the part of students when answering the questions meant. The third section is about the role of teachers’ positive feedback in diminishing students’ anxiety. The answers of students showed that they are familiar with feedback. Students also emphasized their love for positive feedback in all its forms especially oral and written ones. At the end, they confirmed our hypothesis by saying that teachers’ positive feedback helps them to minimize their anxiety.
Conclusion

This chapter was concerned, in the first place, with the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from the data collected through the two questionnaires. After analyzing and interpreting the results, important conclusions have been deduced. The most important conclusion that was drawn is that teachers’ positive feedback is a good solution for decreasing students’ anxiety in EFL classes which is a confirmation of the hypothesis stated for this study.

General Conclusion

The present study was conducted in the department of English at Larbi Ben Mhidi University. Its aim is to find a solution to diminish students’ FL anxiety. Because teachers’ feedback is very interesting for students and could have positive as well as negative effects on their psychology, we suggested that positive feedback might be helpful in mitigating their anxiety. The study was based on two chapters. The first one is a theoretical background in which we tackled the concepts of anxiety and teachers’ positive feedback in one section for each. The second chapter was devoted for the practical part of the research. In this chapter, we focused on the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from the two questionnaires. After interpreting both teachers and students’ questionnaires results, our hypothesis was confirmed.
Pedagogical Implications

Throughout this research, the debilitating effects of anxiety have been proved as well as the importance of teachers’ role in coping with it. So, based on what have been said in the theoretical part and the results of the practical one, some pedagogical implications have been deduced. First, teachers should be aware of the importance of their feedback. Therefore, they use it in a way that helps their students and guides them to achieve their desired levels. Furthermore, they should try to establish a positive atmosphere in their classes to free their students from the negative feelings they may suffer from especially anxiety. Since teachers’ positive feedback is seen by students as a helping factor for minimizing anxiety, it should be used to overcome this problem as much as necessary.
References


Subasi, G. (2010). What are the main sources of Turkish EFL students’ anxiety in oral practice?. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry, 1*(2), 29-49.


Apéndices

Apéndice A: Teachers’ Questionnaire

Apéndice B: Students’ Questionnaire
Teachers’ Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire serves as a tool of gathering the data required to fulfill my master dissertation which aims at serving English teaching/learning by investigating the effects of teachers’ positive feedback on minimizing the students’ anxiety in EFL classes. Therefore, I would be so grateful if you devote a few minutes of your time to share your experience with us by answering the questions below. Your contribution would be with a great value and deeply appreciated.

Thank you in advance

Larbi Ben M’hidi University
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English
Miss. Radjah Fairouz
Section One: Background Information

**Q1.** Degree held:

a. BA (License) 

b. MA (Master /magister) 

c. Ph. D (Doctorate) 

**Q2.** How long have you been teaching English?  

**Q3.** Do you like teaching English?

a. Yes 

b. No 

Section Two: Students’ Anxiety in EFL Classes

**Q4.** What type of relationship exists between you and your students?

a. Good 

b. Bad 

c. Neutral 

**Q5.** Do your students consider the language classroom as a stressful environment?

a. Yes 

b. No 

**Q6.** Do they feel anxious prior or while taking a test or an exam?

a. Yes 

b. No 

**Q7.** Do they feel anxious when they are asked to speak or communicate in the target language?

a. Yes 

b. No
Q8. Do you think that students in your classroom feel afraid of negative evaluation?

a. Yes ☐    b. No ☐

Q9. If yes, then whose evaluation they worry about the most?

a. Yours ☐    b. Their classmates’ ☐

Q10. Among the anxieties mentioned in questions (6, 7, and 8) which one you think is the most prevalent in your classroom?

a. Test anxiety ☐

b. Communication apprehension ☐

c. Fear of negative evaluation ☐

Q11. Does anxiety affect the students’ level?

a. Yes ☐    b. No ☐

If yes, how does it affect them (positively or negatively)? Please explain more……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q12. Do some good students make silly mistakes during exams and tests?

a. Yes ☐    b. No ☐
Section Three: The role of teachers’ positive feedback in minimizing students’ anxiety

Q13. Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom?

a. Always □
   c. Rarely □

b. Sometimes □
   d. Never □

Q14. How often do you provide your students with feedback?

a. Always □
   c. Rarely □

b. Sometimes □
   d. Never □

Q15. Have you ever noticed that some types of feedback increase students’ anxiety?

Yes □
No □
If yes, what are they according to your experience?
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................

Q16. Which type of feedback do your students prefer to receive?
........................................................................................................................................................................

Q17. According to your experience, does your positive feedback help in minimizing students’ anxiety?

a. Yes □
   b. No □
If yes, why is that in your opinion?

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Q18. If positive feedback minimizes students’ anxiety, do you use it to overcome this problem when necessary?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

Section Four: Further suggestion

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

.................................................................................................................................
Students’ Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly invited to fill in this questionnaire. It is a part of a master research study aims at investigating the effects of teachers’ positive feedback on minimizing students’ anxiety in EFL classes.

I would be so thankful if you read the questions carefully and answer them according to your own point of view.

Thank you in advance

Here are brief explanations of the key words:

**Teachers’ positive feedback:** information students receive about their right responses (.e.g. good, excellent …)

**Anxiety:** fear and worry especially about what might happen

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

Larbi Ben M’hidi University

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Miss. Radjah Fairouz
Section One: Background Information

Q1. How many years have you been studying English?

a. 8 years  

b. More than 8 years  

c. Less than 8 years  

Q2. Was studying English at university your choice?

a. Yes  

b. No  

Q3. Do you like English?

a. Yes  

b. No  

Q4. How did you find learning English?

a. Easy  

b. Difficult  

Section Two: Anxiety in Foreign Language Classroom

Please tick the appropriate answer:

SA= strongly agree

A= agree

N= neither agree nor disagree

D= disagree

SD= strongly disagree
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N°</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I start panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I get nervous when I don’t understand every word the language teacher says</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>I tremble when I know that I’m going to be called on in language class</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>I always feel that other students speak the foreign language better than I do</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>I don’t worry about making mistakes in language class</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>I’m afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>I am usually at ease during tests in my language class</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>I worry about consequences of failing my foreign language class</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>I don’t understand why some people get upset over foreign language classes</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Section Three: the Role of Teacher’s Positive Feedback in Minimizing Students’ Anxiety

**Q22.** How often do your teachers provide you with feedback?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

**Q23.** Do you like to receive positive feedback?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**Q24.** Which form of positive feedback do you prefer to receive?

- a. Oral
- b. Written
- c. Non verbal and non written
- d. All of them

**Q25.** Does positive feedback help you to minimize your anxiety?

- a. Yes
- b. No
Résumé

La présente étude vise à servir l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues étrangères en sensibilisant les enseignants à l'importance de leur rétroaction en étudiant les effets de leurs retombées positives sur la diminution de l'anxiété des élèves. Par conséquent, l'hypothèse a été énoncée pour cette recherche: les commentaires positifs des enseignants contribuent à minimiser l'anxiété des élèves dans les cours d'anglais comme une langue étrangère. Afin d'atteindre le but de l'étude et, par conséquent, confirmer ou rejeter l'hypothèse précitée, deux questionnaires ont été conçus. L'un d'entre eux a été livré à quarante (40) étudiants de première année LMD au département d'anglais de l'Université Larbi Ben Mhidi. L'autre a été distribué à un échantillon de quinze (15) enseignants du même département. La participation des étudiants et des enseignants à cette étude est très importante pour connaître leurs opinions sur le sujet à l'étude et obtenir des données plus fiables. Après avoir analysé les données et interprété les résultats, notre hypothèse a été confirmée. En d'autres termes, les enseignants et les étudiants ont convenu que les commentaires positifs des enseignants contribuent à diminuer l'anxiété des élèves dans les cours d’anglais comme une langue étrangère.
ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى جمعة تعليم وتعلم اللغات الأجنبية من خلال رفع وعي الأساتذة حول أهمية تقييمهم للطلبة وذك

واسطة بحث آثار تقييمهم الإيجابي في تقليل قلقهم وعليه فالفرضية التي تم وضعها لهذا البحث هي أن التقييم الإيجابي

للأساتذة يساعد على إنقاص قلق الطلبة في أقسام تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. لتحقيق هدف الدراسة وبالتالي

تأكيد أو نفي الفرضية المذكورة سابقا تم تصميم استبيانين. أخذهما سلم ل 40 طالبا من السنة الأولى نظام (L M D) في

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة العربي بن مهدي. أما الآخر فتم توزيعه على عينة من 15 أستاذًا في نفس القسم. مشاركة

كلي من الطلبة و الأساتذة في هذه الدراسة مهمة جدا وذك لمعرفة آرائهم حول الموضوع المدرس وعندن تلك نيل

معلومات موثقة. بعد تحليل المعلومات وتفسير النتائج تم تأكيد فرضيتنا أي بعبارة أخرى اتفق كل من الطلبة و

الأساتذة حول فكرة أن التقييم الأساتذة الإيجابي يعتبر عاملًا مساعدًا لإنقاص قلق الطلبة في أقسام تدريس اللغة

الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.