

*A Study on Classroom Anxiety among English Learners at Secondary School Level*Muhammad Bilal Ahmad

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ABSTRACT

A significant emphasis was focused on the classroom anxiety that English learners in the district of Vehari were feeling. The study's primary goal was to determine the level of classroom anxiety experienced by English learners while learning English at the secondary school level. The participants in this study were all secondary school students in the district of Vehari who were learning English. Participants in the study were recruited from secondary schools, which served as a sample ground for the research. The FLCAS questionnaire, which Horwitz and his colleagues designed, was chosen as the standard questionnaire for use in the study. The questionnaire indicated above has undergone extensive validation, and it has been widely utilized in the field of language learning research since its inception. The data were evaluated using the mean and standard deviation statistics, respectively. The researchers noticed that students grow nervous when they cannot comprehend every word that their language lecturers say. Furthermore, according to the findings, English learners did not appear to be content or at ease when in the company of native English speakers

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For many people, learning another language is a daunting challenge that demands time and concentration (Kline, 2006). Learning a new language can take months or even years for an international student. Students' proficiency and accuracy in a foreign language are determined mainly by their level of anxiety, motivation, and teaching methods. Anxiety and motivation connected with language learning fascinate linguists specializing in applied linguistics. Foreign language fear and the desire to learn a foreign language are inextricably linked (Wong, 2012).

There is a strong link between second language anxiety and second language success in the Second Language Learning study. Chakrabarti and Sengupta (2012) argue that the low English (L2) performance of Indian learners in native language medium schools demands additional investigation, yet research on this topic is scarce. The effects of anxiety on English language learners are also being studied. It has been found that L2 anxiety harms students' L2 achievement in the classroom, which is the most significant factor. The foreign language classroom anxiety assessment was done using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986).

Some of the anxiety symptoms associated with learning a foreign language are more common than others. Some students may choose to avoid foreign language instruction to avoid being exposed to situations that cause them anxiety, which is understandable. Students anxious about learning a new language tend to sit quietly in the back of the classroom and avoid making eye contact with their classmates. A cumulative effect to all of this might lead to lower grade point averages.

Students' levels of success in a second or foreign language learning environment are influenced by several factors (Duverney, 2008). Learners' attitudes and behaviors toward learning the target language are also necessary, as are aspects of the learner's social and cultural environment. Motivation to learn the language and classroom anxiety were the subjects of a small-scale case study for research purposes (an affective, emotion-driven element). The purpose of this study is to investigate the elements that influence classroom anxiety among English learners in secondary school and to test a hypothesis for an ideal classroom setting in which these two components can be utilized to their maximum capacity. Before doing a short case study in a classroom, it is necessary to research various cultural concepts of anxiety to make recommendations for use in an EFL classroom setting. The study aims to find out what causes English pupils to become anxious in the classroom.

Review of Related Literature

A root term for the unease that may be found in words like "to be burdened down by misery" and "strangle" is the source of words such as "strangle" and "angh," among others. While experiencing anguish, it is essential to remember that a person is not alone in his/her feelings. On the contrary, subjective feelings of stress, apprehension, tension, and concern, according to Spielberger (1983), are produced by the arousal of the neurological system in the human body. In Spielberger's opinion, these feelings are associated with the arousal of the nervous system in the human body. Individuals who suffer from this illness frequently describe their symptoms as a combination of anxiety, fear, and tension, among other things.

Learning a new language can make people feel uncomfortable or guilty in social situations because it affects their ability to interact with others. The feeling of disquiet associated with linguistic anxiety might be challenging to express in a single line, even though it exists. Frustration can be expressed as worry, anger, or a combination of these emotions (Brown, 2000). In 2005, Gregersen (2005) proposed that anxious and restless students in their foreign language learning

experience may perceive their lessons to be less engaging and enjoyable due to their worry and restlessness.

For international students, learning a new language may be a challenging experience. They are frequently plagued with foreign language anxiety, one of the most significant roadblocks to their academic success. Because lower levels of success are connected with higher levels of anxiety, the detrimental effects of anxiety on foreign language learners are likely responsible for this association. A learner's sentiments of humiliation when learning a foreign language might be exacerbated by the social connotations associated with the language itself (Gardener, 2010).

According to the findings of several pieces of research, anxiety has a substantial impact on the learning process of foreign language learners. According to the research available, anxiety is a significant predictor of performance and presentation skills when communicating in a foreign language. In learning a second language, students may grow apprehensive about a range of problems that they may face. Worrying about oral communication, worrying about exams, and worrying about getting a lousy grade are the three primary sources of anxiety in foreign language acquisition that have received the most significant study attention.

It is known as verbal communication dread if you are terrified of making a mistake when speaking or misinterpreting what is being said to you in a conversation. Many students studying a foreign language feel concerned when they have to communicate vocally with their teachers or classmates. In addition to formal exam anxiety, there are many other types of test anxieties that might occur as well. Middle and final exams are excellent instances of this type of examination. This term can also describe the feelings of anxiety that children have when working on school projects or activities. When studying a foreign language, the fear of receiving a negative review is more common than test anxiety, which is primarily concerned with receiving a poor grade in the course.

The researcher has taken note of students' feelings of worry and discomfort when learning and creating a foreign language and the feelings of other English language teachers in the field. Anxiety in language learners has been thoroughly researched, and various studies have been conducted to support the authors' claims.

Debilitating anxiety is the medical word used to describe this type of anxiety, which has been the focus of numerous studies. Liu (2006) published his findings the following year after investigating the fears of 100 EFL students at three different proficiency levels in a classroom setting. Similarly, students with higher levels of English proficiency demonstrated less hesitation and concern, according to the findings of the same study.

Several studies have found that students in China's high schools are apprehensive about learning English as a foreign language, according to an online poll performed by Na in 2007 and confirmed by other research. In her research, she discovered that female student is less concerned with learning English than male students, while male students are more concerned about the process. High levels of anxiety interfere with high school students' capacity to learn English as a foreign language, which has implications for the future of language learning. For students facing

severe language anxiety levels, it is recommended that they take a break from their studies and engage in another activity to relieve their symptoms.

Wang (2010) argues that foreign language anxiety is one of the best indicators of individual differences in language learning performance in Second Language Acquisition. It has been validated by scientific evidence as one of the strongest predictors of language learning performance in Second Language Acquisition (Wang 2010). (SLA). Many studies have discovered that this aspect is critical and significant in learning a foreign language. According to the study, several unfavorable relationships were discovered between classroom anxiety and listening achievement in English listening classes, which comprised 125 Chinese students majoring in English as a second language.

After Khan and Zafar put video cameras in the classes, the number of anxious international students soared (2010). According to the findings of the study, a correlation was also established between various language learning impairments and limits. In order to avoid feeling uncomfortable or unwilling to speak in their native language in front of a large audience, it has been widely documented that foreign learners experience sentiments of uneasiness or unwillingness to speak in their native language.

Not all parts of worry, on the other hand, are directed towards hindering efforts to learn a foreign language. When it comes to learning a foreign language at the most significant level possible, it is well acknowledged that students require a certain amount of worry. The word "facilitative anxiety" is used to characterize this particular type of anxiety. According to the Oxford learner's lexicon, interfering with a student's concentration and awareness during a class session can be advantageous.

In a study conducted by Mills and Pajares (2006), they investigated males and girls enrolled in a foreign language learning program, and they discovered a link between listening anxiety and listening ability. Vazalwar (2011) did a study on the function of anxiety throughout learning a second language to achieve this goal (L2). Even though the data imply a negative relationship between anxiety and English reading comprehension, the findings also demonstrate that an average level of anxiety is associated with improved English reading comprehension.

Research Methodology

The researchers in this study opted for a descriptive approach to data collection. According to Ezeani (1998), A descriptive survey tries to collect detailed and factual information about a recent occurrence. Students who are studying English face much stress in the classroom. A questionnaire was used as a research method to accomplish this purpose. Every Vehari district secondary school English student was included in the study's sample population. 200 English learners were selected from the general public as a representative sample.

Because the study was exploratory, students were asked to fill out a questionnaire and observe it in class. In survey research, Hartas (2010, p. 261) states that questionnaires are the most often used approach and the most commonly used type of data collection. The questionnaire for anxiety in foreign language classrooms was developed after researchers examined the FLCAS. Researchers turned to the Horwitz Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FALCAS) to gather

information for this study. The systematic instrument developed by Horwitz and his colleagues has made a significant addition to our understanding of the range of anxiety associated with learning a foreign language. In order to collect data from the desired sample of students, the researcher gave each of them a questionnaire and then went out to interview them on their own (as previously described). Prior to beginning the questionnaire, they were given detailed instructions on answering all of the questions.

When performing research, it is essential to employ data analysis to draw conclusions and draw conclusions. This research instrument was used to gather, appraise, and analyze data under the study's goals and objectives. With the help of the SPSS 16 statistical program, the most appropriate statistical tools, such as the mean and the standard deviation, were determined (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

Data Analysis

The study objective was to investigate secondary school-level classroom anxiety among English language learners, and it succeeded. The information gathered through surveys was collated, examined, and interpreted in light of the conclusions. The next part provides a full explanation of how the data was analyzed and interpreted:

Table 1

Classroom anxiety among English learners

Item No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	When I speak in front of my foreign language class, I never feel entirely confident in myself.	2.47	1.19
2	When I have to speak in front of a group of people in a language class without any preparation, I get nervous.	3.24	1.21
3	I would not be intimidated by the prospect of speaking a foreign language with native speakers.	2.64	1.24
4	When I speak in a foreign language class, I have much self-assurance.	3.28	1.46
5	I am self-conscious when speaking a foreign language in front of my peers.	3.58	1.01
6	When I speak in front of a group of people in my language class, I get scared and confused.	2.25	1.23
7	When I do not comprehend all the language teacher says, I get a little frightened.	3.28	1.24
8	I would most likely feel comfortable in the company of native speakers of the other language.	2.35	1.26

The mean score for students' anxiety in the classroom has increased from 2.25 to 3.58, indicating that English learners are experiencing anxiety throughout their English lessons, according to the data in the table above. In addition, the standard deviation has grown from 1.01 to 1.46, indicating that English learners are experiencing anxiousness in their speech throughout their English class sessions. It has been discovered that most students have less nervousness while speaking English in front of their peers and that English learners enjoy better confidence throughout their talks when learning a foreign language in general. On the other hand, students become anxious when they are unable to comprehend every word that their language instructors say. In addition, English learners did not appear to be content or at ease in the presence of native English speakers.

Discussion and Conclusion

Anxiety in the classroom among English language learners was the primary focus of this study. In this study, secondary school pupils were less worried about learning and speaking English than their primary school counterparts. Chakrabarti and Sengupta (2012) claim that the study's pedagogical implications can assist educators and policymakers in creating a less stressful and more productive learning environment. A study has found no fear of speaking in front of their peers when learning a language like English. A study by Motallebzadeh, Mirzaee, and Baghaei found that participants' anxiety levels dropped dramatically when required to participate in task/performance-based assessments (2012). According to a separate study, when asked to speak English in a classroom, female pupils exhibit higher levels of nervousness than male students (Ozturk & Gurbuz, 2012). Furthermore, pupils grow anxious, according to the study's findings, when they are unable to understand what their language lecturers say. As a result of the study, English learners are not content when they are around fluent English speakers.

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