

Comparative Study of the Pakistani and Indonesian Student's Anxiety Towards the English Language Learning

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Abstract: This study aims to evaluate the postgraduate student's level of anxiety towards the English language learning. The intended population for this study was the postgraduate students of the Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang, Indonesia and The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. A sample of three hundred and forty students (170 from each University) was selected randomly. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz *et al.* [1] was partially adapted to assess the respondent's anxiety level towards the English language learning. Statistical Package for Social Sciences version XX was used to analyze the data. An independent samples t-test carried out to compare the mean scores of the students. We found that both the Pakistani and Indonesian students have anxiety towards the English language learning. Mean scores of male and Indonesian students were significantly lower than the mean scores of female and the Pakistani students respectively suggesting that the male and the Indonesian students were more different in learning English. Based on findings it can be recommended that the collective efforts of teachers and students can reduce the student's level of anxiety towards the English language learning.

Key words: English language learning • Language anxiety • Postgraduate students • Measures • Significant difference

INTRODUCTION

An anxiety can be defined as a form of uneasiness or nervousness that is associated with students' behavior towards second language learning including listening and speaking skills as well [2]. Trylong [3] designated anxiety as the most complicated psychological phenomenon of human mentality that is why it is rather complex to define anxiety appropriately.

The psycholinguists observed that a considerable strength of students experience anxiety while learning English as a second language. Anxiety increases the student's heart beating and sometimes makes them stuttering. This is a burning issue that has captured the attention of many linguists in recent years [4].

Anxiety is known as one of the substantial factors that affect tremendously in the process of language acquisition and learning. The previous researches [2, 5-7] were carried out to identify the prospective relationship between the student's level of anxiety and academic achievement in the learning process of different foreign languages. Most of the previous researches [2, 6] revealed that anxiety and academic achievement have negative correlation.

With regard to the student's anxiety towards the English language learning, different studies have been done in the world especially in China. Most of them were conducted at college and university level students. However, the findings of these studies show that the students have a comparatively low level of anxiety [8].

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The present study is an effort to find out the anxiety level of the students from two different cultures, languages and even different Asian countries such as Pakistan and Indonesia. A comparison has been made amongst the anxiety level of the students of Soijigaparanata Catholic University Semarang, Indonesia and The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. No similar research could be found regarding these two Asian countries [4]. However, this research would help the ESL students hailing from different nations to understand the level of anxiety among Asian students.

Review of Literature: An anxiety is a state of mind or a natural uncontrollable fear that occurs due to some uncertainty. In other words, this is a kind of worry or nervousness associated with the psychological system or human mental health condition [6]. Commonly, anxiety is divided into three categories such as state anxiety, trait anxiety and situation-specific anxiety. Scovel [9] illustrated that state anxiety is a severe kind of anxiety. It seems to be a permanent mental disorder whereas both the 'state and situation-specific anxiety' generally are associated with any particular occasion or happening [10].

The present study belongs to the last category, namely the situation-specific anxiety' or, in other words, language anxiety. It is a situational anxiety because the English/second language learner faces such type of anxiety during the learning process [11].

There are multifarious factors that affect the second language acquisition and learning. Positive attitudes and motivational forces are worth mentioning in this respect. Both the language learning and anxiety are associated with each other. Therefore, most of the studies have been carried out to explore this relationship since 1970s [12].

The researches, particularly related to language anxiety, carried out by Horwitz [6] and MacIntyre and Gardner [13, 14] indicate that the English language learning is strongly associated with language anxiety. Mostly, the non-native English-speaking students suffer from anxiety while learning the English language. The other researches show that the anxiety affects the student's academic achievement and proficiency as well. The findings of the previous researches [3, 6, 11, 15, 16, 17] show the negative correlation between language anxiety and student's academic performance. Matsuda and Gobel [18] concluded in their research that the language anxiety puts negative impacts on students' academic grades. They suggested that more subtle and

minor aspects involved in the process of language learning and anxiety should be explored in this respect, whereas Horwitz [6] proposed to discover the effects of anxiety on communication in depth. The language anxiety also affects the students' communicative faculty [19]. The previous studies [2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 20-31] concluded that anxiety is one of the major factors that impede the student's performance in the English language learning. According to the findings of Campbell and Ortiz [32], more than 50% English language learners undergo dreadful and a severe type of anxiety. It creates problems and decreases the language learners' communicative capability [33]. It reduces the language learners' confidence too [24]. Moreover, Crookall and Oxford [21] stated that the language anxiety deteriorates and even damages the students' caliber regarding the English language learning.

The major purpose of the previous researches was to find out the causes behind the arousal of anxiety amongst second language learners. Bailey [5] analyzed the diaries of 11 learners comprehensively and found that there are three aspects; exams, competitive environment and students expected relationship with their teachers that affect their level of anxiety. Subsequent researchers, particularly Horwitz and Young [23] pointed out the same aspects and concluded that these are fundamental factors that cause the language anxiety.

Young [30] carried out a research on anxiety related to language learning and concluded that there are six different prospective causes of language anxiety such as scheduled and unscheduled or surprise exams, teacher's style of teaching in the classroom, student-teacher relationship, student's intra-personal and interpersonal traits, student's belief about language learning and teacher's belief about language teaching methodology.

These six points show that all the causes of anxiety are related to three elements such as students, teachers and teaching methodology. Furthermore, these findings are similar to the findings of Bailey's [5] study. However, the findings of a research carried out by Horwitz *et al.* [1] are very significant in this respect. They divided the language anxiety into three major categories namely the student's level or ability of understanding, teachers' behavior and exams. On the foundations of these three components, they designed a comprehensive Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and included thirty-three different items related to different aspects of anxiety. This scale has been used by many

researchers in different contexts to find out the level of students' anxiety towards the English language learners.

Alpert and Haber [34] conducted research on different aspects of language anxiety and explored a unique anxiety; that is known as the debilitating anxiety. Most other researches concluded that there is a negative correlation between anxiety and student's academic achievement, thus it can be said that anxiety is debilitating in the process of language learning. Krashen [24] found that the high rate of anxiety creates hindrance in the smoothness of the process of language acquisition and learning. Horwitz [35] also stated that sometimes language anxiety becomes so uncontrollable that the learners have to postpone the study.

MacIntyre and Gardner [2] carried a research on ninety-seven college students who were studying French. Their findings show that the students feel more difficulty in expressing their own views and the other students who were not learning French underestimated their caliber. They also found that language input, information processing system and language output have negative correlation with language anxiety. Pan [36] carried out a research to find out the correlation between language anxiety and speaking. He found that the students with low anxiety show better performance in speaking than that of the students with high anxiety.

However, few other studies show the positive correlation between anxiety and academic achievement in second language learning. A study, carried out by Bailey's [37] in Taiwan, show that some other factors like culture and learner's proficiency also have influence upon students' academic achievement besides anxiety.

A few more researches [19, 38-40] carried out in China found a positive correlation between anxiety and academic achievements at college level students. Many researches [6] have used FALCAS and found a negative relationship between anxiety and language learning. Many researchers [35] have used this scale because of its high reliability and validity for the measurement of anxiety [20, 41]. The contribution of Horwitz [6] in measuring the language anxiety is valuable in this respect [9, 13, 23, 33].

According to the findings of Campbell and Ortiz [32] and MacIntyre and Gardner [14], the majority of the learners thinks that anxiety is more associated with language learning than any other subject. Different reports show that anxiety puts a tangible impact on

language learning and production stage. The students hesitate to participate in the classroom activities due to the high rate of anxiety [42]. They also avoid contributing in the complex process of second language structure [3, 43]. A research conducted by Stein and Seedat [44] revealed that the students suffer from an anxiety associated with the English language learning. Moreover, they recommended that the students, who are suffering from anxiety, should be treated tenderly and sympathetically to reduce the level of anxiety. Generally, a multilingual country has a dilemma regarding the acceptability of the English language for medium of instruction. This situation is leading to the students into the realm of anxiety and uneasiness [45, 46]. Another study conducted by Mkuti [47] revealed that the students' anxiety level is a significant factor that creates complications in learning the English language.

As regards the present study, it was an attempt to examine the students' anxiety level towards the English language being taught as a second language in Pakistan and Indonesia as well. The findings of this study indicated that anxiety affects on the English language learning.

Objectives of the Present Research: The key objective of this study was to identify those factors as perceived by the students that may cause to anxiety at postgraduate level in learning English as a foreign or second language in Pakistan and Indonesia. Another objective was to compare the level of anxiety amongst male and female students of these universities.

Research Questions: The main research questions used in this study were as follows:

- Which factors do students believe contribute to anxiety? 2. What is the difference between the level of anxiety among male and female students? 3. What is the difference between the level of anxiety among the Pakistani and Indonesian students?

Hypotheses: Following hypotheses were made to find out the level of anxiety among students:

H₀: There is no anxiety regarding the English language learning.

H₁: There is an anxiety regarding the English language learning.

H₀: There is no significant difference between male and female students' level of anxiety regarding the English language learning.

H₁: There is a significant difference between male and female students' level of anxiety regarding the English language learning.

H₀: There is no significant difference between the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety regarding the English language learning.

H₁: There is a significant difference between the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety regarding the English language learning.

Population and Sampling: The participants for this study were selected from a diverse set of languages such as Urdu, Punjabi and Bahasa Indonesia. The subjects of the study were 340 university level students, out of which 170 (95 male and 75 female) were from Sojigaparanata Catholic University Semarang Indonesia and 170 (81 male and 89 female) were from The Islamia University of Bahawalpur Pakistan. All the students belonged to the postgraduate level. Their average age was 19.5. They all had 5-7 years of experience of learning English as a second language.

Instrument: FLCAS designed and developed by Horwitz *et al.* [1] consisting of 33 items, was partially adapted for this study. The Scale consisted of two parts. One was intended to collect personal information about participants, such as their name, age and gender etc. and the other consisted of the relevant questions. The FLCAS was scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) to capture the specific essence of second language anxiety in a classroom setting and to provide investigators with a standard measure.

Data Collection and Analysis: FLCAS was administered personally to the students of Sojigaparatana Catholic University Semarang, Indonesia and The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan for which the return rate was 100%. The response of every respondent for each question on the scale was entered into a database. SPSS 20.0 was employed to analyze the data. Firstly, descriptive analysis was performed to compute the percentage and the average response of each item and

each kind of anxiety to see the general situations of students' anxiety in the English language classrooms. Secondly, t-tests (t distribution tests) were employed to see if there were any differences in language anxiety among the Indonesian and the Pakistani students and male and female students of both the countries as well.

RESULTS

All the items included in the FLCAS were analyzed separately. However, it was not possible to describe all those results here that expanded in 33 tables. Therefore, the consolidated results of the study were presented in three Tables only consisting of important 16 items. Moreover, 16 important items have been mentioned in three Tables.

- According to Table 1, the results of this study show that out of the initial pool of 340 students, 49 (70%) students strongly agreed that learning English is really great for them. The average response to this statement is 1.41 that lies between the 1st and the 2nd options which are closer to 'agree' (2nd option), it means the students agreed with this statement.
- 51 (72.86%) students (Q.2) strongly agreed that they feel hesitation while speaking in English. The average response to this statement is 1.56 that lies between the 1st and the 2nd options which is also closer to 'agree' (2nd option), it means they collectively agreed that they feel hesitation while speaking in English.
- The majority of the students (58.57%) strongly agreed that it frightens them when they could not understand what the teachers say in English. The average response (1.84) indicates that they agreed to this statement.
- 60% students (Q.3) stated that they think in their mother tongue first and then they try to translate it into English, which is the sign of anxiety regarding the English language.
- 39 (55.71%) students strongly agreed that they feel troublesome when they have to speak without any preparation (Q.5).
- 38 (54.29%) students strongly agreed that they feel troublesome when they have to speak to a native speaker. The average response (1.86) also lies between 'strongly agree' and 'agree', which is the clear sign of anxiety towards the English language learning (Q.6).

Table 1: Students' level of Anxiety regarding the English Language Learning (n=340).

Q No	Statements	Strongly Agree(1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree 4)	Strongly Disagree (5)	Average Response
1	Learning English is really great for me.	49(70%)	17(24.29%)	0(0%)	4(5.71%)	0(0%)	1.41
2	I feel hesitation while speaking in English.	51(72.86%)	9(12.86%)	2(2.86%)	6(8.571%)	2(2.857%)	1.56
3	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in English.	41(58.57%)	15(21.43%)	3(4.285%)	3(4.29%)	8(11.43%)	1.84
4	I think in my mother/national language first and then try to convert it into English while writing or speaking.	42(60%)	14(20%)	5(7.14%)	6(8.57%)	3(4.29%)	1.77
5	I feel trouble when I have to speak without preparation.	39(55.71%)	7(10%)	12(17.14%)	9(12.86%)	3(4.29%)	1.73
6	I feel trouble while speaking to a native speaker.	38(54.29%)	16(22.86%)	8(11.43%)	4(5.71%)	4(5.71%)	1.86
7	I am afraid that my teacher will find out mistakes what I make.	52(74.28%)	8(11.43%)	3(4.29%)	3(4.29%)	4(5.71%)	1.56
8	I am afraid of thinking that other students will laugh at me in case of any wrong pronunciation during speaking.	53(75.72%)	6(8.58%)	4(5.71%)	2(2.85%)	5(7.14%)	1.57
9	I feel trouble in learning the rules and regulations of English.	22(31.43%)	33(47.14%)	11(15.71%)	2(2.86%)	2(2.86%)	1.98
10	I want to get rid of English learning.	12(17.14%)	16(22.86%)	6(8.57%)	11(15.72%)	25(35.71%)	3.30
11	I need more courses to improve English.	39(55.72%)	20(28.58%)	9(12.85)	2(2.85%)	0(0%)	1.63
12	I think that learning English is boring.	5(7.14%)	4(5.72%)	3(4.29%)	24(34.28)	34(48.57%)	4.11
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer to answer in English.	49(70%)	4(5.71%)	7(10%)	3(4.29%)	7(10%)	1.78
14	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English.	41(58.57%)	10(14.29%)	6(8.57%)	7(10%)	6(8.57%)	1.96
15	I never feel confident when I speak in English.	49(70%)	7(10%)	2(2.86%)	6(8.57%)	6(8.57%)	1.76
16	Do teachers help to remove language anxiety?	5(7.15%)	1(1.43%)	4(5.71%)	39(55.71%)	21(30%)	3.43

- About 75% students (Q.7) strongly agreed that they are afraid of thinking that the teacher will find out what mistakes they make. The average response (1.56) also lies between 'strongly agree' and 'agree', which is the clear indication of anxiety towards the English language learning.
- Three-fourth of the students (75%), with reference to Q.7, strongly agreed that they are afraid of thinking that the other students will laugh at them if they make any wrong pronunciation during speaking. The average response (1.57) also lies between 'strongly agree' and 'agree', which is also an observable mark of anxiety towards the English language learning.
- The average response of Q.9 is 1.98, which lies between the 1st and the 2nd options. It means the students agreed that they feel trouble in learning the rules and regulations of the English language. It shows that they have anxiety regarding the English language learning.
- The average response (3.30) of Q.10 demonstrates that they do not want to get rid of the English language whereas they want to continue it willy-nilly and want to improve it by doing more courses (Q.11). The average response (1.63) of Q.11 shows that they agreed to do more courses to improve the English language.
- 34 (48.57%) students think that English is not boring for them (Q.12).
- The average responses; 1.78, 1.96 and 1.76 of Q14, 15 and 16 respectively lie between the 1st and the 2nd options which show that the students feel embarrassment, confusion and lack of confidence regarding the English language learning.

It can be concluded in the light of null and alternative hypotheses that our null hypothesis is rejected because the anxiety regarding the English language learning exists amongst students.

- According to data presented in the Table 2, the average response of male and female students is 1.21 and 1.55 respectively. The male students' average response is closer to 'strongly agree' (option 1) while female students' average response is closer to 'agree' (option 2) which means the male students' opinion is slightly different than that of female students (Q 1).
- According to the responses of Q 2, both the male and female students have almost the same views with the slight difference about the hesitation during speaking

English because both the responses are closer to 'agree' (option 2). It means both the genders agreed that they feel hesitation while speaking English.

Moreover, the following two types of hypotheses were made to compare the level of overall anxiety on gender basis:

H₀: There is no significant difference between male and female students' level of anxiety regarding the English language learning.

H₁: There is a significant difference between male and female students' level of anxiety regarding the English language learning.

In the light of these hypotheses, a comparison between male and female students' level of anxiety regarding the English language was made in Table 2. The results revealed significant difference between male and female students' level of anxiety regarding the English language. The calculated t-value (1) for level of anxiety was significant at $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance because this calculated t-value does not lie between the accepted region, therefore the null hypothesis (2-H₀) was rejected and it can be concluded that male and female students' level of anxiety towards the English language was not the same.

- According to data presented in Table 3, the average response (Q 1) of the Pakistani and Indonesian students is 1.57 and 1.26 respectively. The Indonesian students' average response is closer to 'strongly agree' (option 1) while the Pakistani students' average response is closer to 'agree' (option 2), which means the Pakistani students' opinion is slightly different than that of the Indonesian students.
- According to the responses of Q 2, both the Pakistani and Indonesian students have slightly different views about the hesitation during speaking English.
- It was found, based on findings, that the results of the remaining variables are slightly different.

Moreover, following two types of hypotheses were made to compare the level of overall anxiety on country basis:

Table 2: Comparison of male and female students' level of anxiety towards the English Language Learning (n=340).

Q No (With ref to Table 1)	Male Students (n=176)					Female Students (n=164)					Average Response	t-value	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree			
1	22	6	0	0	0	1.21	27	11	0	4	0	1.55	1
2	2	10	5	9	2	2.89	9	14	7	12	0	2.52	
3	2	8	5	7	6	3.25	3	10	6	21	2	3.21	
4	4	16	2	5	1	2.39	10	16	9	5	2	2.36	
5	2	12	4	9	1	2.82	5	17	8	10	2	2.69	
6	3	7	3	13	2	3.14	3	21	5	11	2	2.71	
7	3	7	5	8	5	3.18	5	11	4	15	7	3.19	
8	1	5	2	16	4	3.61	5	12	2	16	7	3.19	
9	3	7	5	12	1	3.04	4	19	5	11	4	2.88	
10	5	4	3	4	12	3.50	5	12	3	9	13	3.31	
11	16	8	3	1	0	1.61	23	12	6	1	0	1.64	
12	1	0	1	12	14	4.36	4	4	2	12	20	3.95	
13	18	9	1	0	0	1.39	21	12	3	1	5	1.98	
14	3	7	5	6	7	3.25	6	7	16	6	7	3.02	
15	2	9	2	11	4	3.21	4	15	4	12	7	3.07	
16	3	5	3	12	5	3.39	3	15	2	18	4	3.12	

Table 3: Comparison of the Pakistani and Indonesian Students' Level of Anxiety towards the English Language Learning (n=340).

Q No. (With ref to Table 1)	Pakistani Students (n=170)					Indonesian Students (n=170)					Average Response	t-value	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree			
1	23	8	0	4	0	1.57	26	9	0	0	0	1.26	1
2	5	13	5	12	0	2.69	6	11	7	9	2	2.71	
3	3	7	5	15	5	3.34	2	11	6	13	2	2.97	
4	7	16	4	6	2	2.43	7	16	7	4	1	2.31	
5	5	17	5	6	2	2.51	3	12	7	12	1	2.89	
6	3	18	3	9	2	2.69	3	10	5	15	2	3.09	
7	6	14	4	6	5	2.71	2	4	5	17	7	3.66	
8	4	13	0	11	7	3.11	2	4	4	21	4	3.60	
9	6	13	3	10	3	2.74	1	13	7	12	2	3.03	
10	3	6	2	4	20	3.91	4	10	4	7	7	2.83	
11	22	10	3	0	0	1.46	17	10	6	2	0	1.80	
12	4	4	0	13	15	3.97	1	0	3	11	20	4.40	
13	16	13	2	0	4	1.94	23	8	2	1	1	1.54	
14	6	11	12	2	4	2.63	3	3	9	10	10	3.60	
15	4	13	1	11	6	3.06	2	11	5	12	7	3.49	
16	5	10	2	13	5	3.09	1	9	3	18	4	3.43	

H₀: There is no significant difference between the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety towards the English language learning.

H₁: There is a significant difference between the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety towards the English language learning.

In the light of these hypotheses, a comparison between the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety regarding English language was made in Table 3. The results revealed a significant difference between the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety regarding the English language. The calculated t-value (1) for level of anxiety was significant at $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance because this calculated t-value does not lie between the accepted region, therefore the null hypothesis (2-H₀) was rejected and it can be concluded that the Pakistani and Indonesian students' level of anxiety towards the English language was not the same.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

With regard to the results of this study, it can be concluded that the overall students have anxiety regarding the English language learning. Previous researches [41, 48, 49] support these findings. The students state that learning English is really great for them but they feel hesitation during speaking in English. They worry about the taunt of the teacher in case they could not understand what the teacher says in the English language. The majority of the students thinks in their mother tongue first and then tries to translate it into English while writing or speaking. They also feel trouble when they have to speak to a native speaker or without preparation. They are afraid of their teachers and fellows that they would laugh at them in case of any wrong pronunciation during speaking English with others. They also feel trouble in learning the rules and regulations of the English language. Therefore, they need more courses to improve English. The majority of the students think

that learning English is boring; that is a clear indication of anxiety towards the English language learning. They also feel embarrassment to answer the questions in English voluntarily. They also become nervous and confused when they speak in English. They never feel confident when they speak in English. All the above-mentioned results show that they feel anxiety regarding the English language learning. The results are similar to the findings of Krashen [50, 51] who concluded that the English language learning creates risk, extroversion, introversion, field dependence and anxiety among students. Subsequently, the students are unable to achieve a high level of proficiency in English. The findings of another study conducted by Carrier [52] revealed that the students have complications in communication skills of the English language that is inevitably due to the existing element of the language anxiety. Mesthrie [53] revealed in his study that English, as a foreign/second language remained a problematic language and one of the major factors in creating high level of anxiety among students. Consequently, the students have a poor acquisition level in the English language. Moreover, the students hardly used the English language other than their educational context [54].

With regards to the research questions 2, the male students' level of anxiety is different than that of female students. The previous researches [55, 56] also showed almost the same results. In the light of the research question 3, Pakistani students' have different level of anxiety than Indonesian students regarding the English language learning. According to the results of the study, it can be concluded that anxiety plays somewhat a vital role in the learning of English as a second language.

Recommendations: In the light of the findings, the students are recommended that they should try themselves to remove hesitation regarding the English language learning. They should be attentive in the class so that they may understand the teacher fully. They should think in the English language from the very beginning to broaden their vision about the English language. The students should pay full attention to prepare themselves before speaking in the classroom for it will help them to remove hesitation. They should also try to learn the rules and regulations of English so that they can write and speak with confidence. The students should not worry about the teachers and fellows that they will laugh at them in case of any mistake. They should not feel embarrassment, confusion, oppressed and nervousness towards the English language learning, by

doing this, they would be able to remove language anxiety. The teachers should also help and encourage the students to learn English more and more, in this way the students would be able to minimize the anxiety towards the English language learning.

Given the situation, that anxiety is prevalent in an English language classroom in Pakistan and Indonesia; teachers must pay more attention to it. They should try to create a relaxed atmosphere for students, which can make them feel confident to speak or express their views in English.

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