

The Correlation between Language Anxiety and Foreign Language Achievement among undergraduate students at University of Tabuk

Dheifallah Hussein Falah Altamimi¹

Abstract

English language learning attracts individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds due to a global demand and is seen as a gateway to academic and professional success. Language anxiety is seen as a reoccurring issue among these learners of foreign language. This research paper examines the relationship between language anxiety and foreign language achievement of learners by conducting a quantitative study with a sample of 80 undergraduate students at University of Tabuk-Haql College using a scale (FLCAS) to measure the levels of anxieties induced in the process of foreign language learning. A survey questionnaire was developed using Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ). The results of the research revealed a negative correlation between the two variables, stressing that language anxiety is a hindering factor in language achievement. There was no statistical difference found in FLA and its effect on language achievement based on gender among the students. The findings of the present research provide emphasis on the significance of equipping educators with the tools to assess language anxiety among learners effectively. Foreign language anxiety can be reduced in learners by creating a supportive classroom environment, fostering encouragement, and developing interventions for situation specific anxiety such as fear of making mistakes and classroom participation can lead to more successful and confident language learners.

Keywords: *Language Anxiety, foreign language anxiety (FLA), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ), English language learning, foreign language, Language achievement.*

INTRODUCTION

Language anxiety (LA) is a perception of uneasiness or fear, it is an anxiety that is induced by sentiments, behaviors, and reactions linked to the unique characteristics of language acquisition in the learning process (Hashemi, 2011). Dorneyi (2013) characterized anxiety as one of the five well-recognized elements, alongside Linguistic ability, drive, study preferences, and educational techniques, constituting a unique and intriguing variable in acquiring new language skills. Language learners frequently experience anxiety while acquiring a foreign language, which is a barrier that can adversely affect a learner's ability to acquire and effectively utilize new languages. There were increasing concerns by researchers over anxiety induced by foreign language

¹ Languages and Translation Department, Haql college, University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia

learning in the 1980s (Matsumoto, 1889; Horwitz et al., 1986). Researchers during this period recognized the significance of understanding and addressing anxiety in language learning, leading to a rise in studies focused on this aspect of the educational experience.

Researchers have recognized LA as a critical aspect in influencing achievement in foreign languages, as it can hinder students' engagement and performance in language learning tasks. Studies have outlined that elevated language anxiety often leads to lower expected and actual grades due to the fear of failure, thereby affecting the overall learning process negatively (e.g., Zheng & Cheng, 2018; Alsowat, 2016; Alrabai, 2015). Alsowat (2016) reports that foreign language anxiety is often associated with motivation to learn the language, self-confidence, and efficacy. Researchers in the West have highlighted the issue through their perspective and conducted studies in the Western education system while existing research has addressed foreign language anxiety (FLA) in Asian countries. The research regarding the amount of FLA in the context of learners in classroom settings and their relationship with performance and achievement is limited and there is a need for this area to be explored and investigate if reducing language anxiety also leads to language achievement.

This study aims to assess the intricate correlation between language achievement and anxiety among learners in courses of foreign language particularly in the languages and translation department at the University of Tabuk-Haql College. Educators are one of the primary drivers of induced anxiety among learners. Educators are required to critique and provide feedback to the learners and negative feedback in a group setting or cultural setting may induce FLA which makes learning a foreign language a different experience. A study by Doğan & Tuncer (2016) discovered an inverse relationship between foreign language achievement and classroom anxiety. This relationship was made possible by using the Horwitz et al. (1986) tool to measure students' anxiety in foreign language classes and by considering students' grades obtained from the School of Foreign Languages. The study's conclusions highlight the negative correlation between students' success in their accomplishments and their anxiety levels during foreign language classes; thus, two assessment tools to gauge this phenomenon – firstly FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) for situational specific anxiety evaluation within such environments. Secondly, The Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) aids us in quantifying emotions tied to learner's accomplishments during foreign language acquisition. The research questions addressed in the study are the following:

1. Is there a significant correlation between foreign language anxiety and foreign language achievement in undergraduate students majoring in English?
2. Is gender a demographic factor that has an impact on FLA and language achievement?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Concept of LA

Learning a foreign language induces elements of anxiety in the process. A constructive form of anxiety called facilitative anxiety, can help learners engage more actively in the language-learning process. (Tochahi & Sangani, 2015). Moreover, anxiety can be further characterized as either trait or state anxiety. Trait anxiety represents a more enduring personality characteristic, affecting learners across various situations, while state anxiety is situational and transitory, impacting learners in specific contexts. Distinguishing between these dimensions of anxiety is critical in evaluating and addressing foreign language anxiety FLA (Marwan, 2007). According to Sadiq (2017), the experience of LA may differ from person to person but there is a relationship between the two variables. Hakim's (2019) study emphasizes the connection between language anxiety and inadequate proficiency in a foreign language, an issue that results from learners'

encounters with language barriers. This relationship underscores the significance of confronting linguistic obstacles in language acquisition to mitigate anxiety levels and improve the language learning experience. Zheng & Cheng (2018) highlighted the relationship between secondary language acquisition and anxiety. The findings of the study revealed that anxiety and lack of self-confidence were key factors adversely affecting success in foreign language education. Test anxiety, another form of anxiety that affects academic performance, has also been found to have a negative correlation with grades expected and achieved in language classes.

FLA

FLA (Foreign Language Anxiety) can hinder progress in foreign language acquisition, whether through detrimentally affecting oral presentations and interactions with native speakers or negatively influencing vocabulary learning tasks. It poses a feeling of nervousness and includes aspects such as anxiety in tests and communication. Several studies have found a positive relationship between FLA and language achievement (Alkhannani, 2021). Foreign Language anxiety can impede progress in foreign language acquisition, affecting tasks such as oral presentations, interactions with native speakers, and vocabulary learning, and can include elements such as test and negative feedback anxieties (Horwitz et al., 1986). FLA differs from state and trait anxiety and is more closely classified as situation-specific anxiety (Al-Saraj, 2016). Kofand & Louis (2017) conducted a study focusing on the factors influencing anxiety in students within the context of universities in Erbil. Their research adopted a quantitative approach to assess various dimensions of anxiety, including fear of negative feedback, communication, and test anxieties. The study used a sample of 92 participants and surveyed them, the findings revealed that fear of negative feedback was the primary driver of nervousness among students when learning a new language, while anxiety induced by tests exhibited a lower level of influence relative to other variables.

Identifying FLA

The significance of FLA as a dynamic aspect of students' language learning is recognized globally. Public speaking fear has been seen as a common experience among students acquiring foreign language skills (Alamer and Almulhim, 2021). FLA has a moderately negative correlation to linguistic achievement. Foreign Language Anxiety identification involves recognizing the signs and symptoms that are apparent in language learners. FLA can be indicated through factors such as when learners show reluctance to participate in language activities, avoid interacting and speaking in the target language, and display a heightened self-consciousness about language performance. The students experiencing FLA often display visible signs of distress and discomfort in language learning environments. Recognizing these signs is the first step in addressing and mitigating FLA. Foreign language anxiety negatively impacts learners' academic performances and can manifest in various forms, such as negative feedback, tests, and specific language skill anxieties. This anxiety can obstruct a learner's fluency and confidence in using the language.

Additionally, language anxiety is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon that affects learners differently based on their ethnic background, prior language experience, and personality traits (Horwitz et al., 1986). The physical effects of FLA can be recognized if the learner is experiencing sweating, trembling, or other stress-related symptoms, while the emotional learner may exhibit signs of frustration, low self-esteem, and even symptoms of anxiety disorders, such as panic attacks; this can significantly impact the learner's ability to achieve language learning goals. Iranian English language learners' nervousness when speaking a foreign language was examined in a study conducted by Sadighi & Dastpak (2017). The participant's data was collected from the responses and the findings highlighted that negative feedback and assessment from educators, speaking

in large group settings, fear of making errors, and inadequate knowledge of language vocabulary were drivers of induced anxiety among learners of foreign language.

Assessing FLA

To understand how to measure FLA, researchers and educators have developed various measuring tools. These tools are designed to measure the extent and nature of FLA experienced by learners. Horwitz et al. (1986) developed a scale to measure FLA in classrooms which is widely used by researchers. The FLCAS comprises of various self-report items that assess different dimensions of FLA, including anxieties induced by tests and during communication. Botes et al. (2022) report that another tool that is recently being employed to measure FLA is Short-form (S-FLCAS) discovered in 1992, but Dewaele & MacIntyre (2014) were the first researchers to use the eight-item measure of S-FLCAS which refers to the number of items used to assess foreign language anxiety. This FLA assessment tool, although effective in reducing the time required in administration so researchers can acquire a large number of measures, has recently been employed in research, and it is yet to be fully validated; hence, it isn't used in this paper. A research study conducted by Djafri & Wimbari (2018) compared FLA among learners of various languages, including within the context of an Indonesian university. Their research examined what students think of their teachers' behavior and their motivations, which are the critical factors of FLA. The research was framed within the social and educational model of learning a foreign language, highlighting the interaction between motivation and anxiety in the language learning process. Notably, FLA was one of the components assessed within the Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery, which is a widely used test that measures foreign language anxiety as one of its components, emphasizing its significance as a fundamental aspect of learners' attitudes and motivation in foreign language education.

FLA and Its Relationship with Culture

Research by Horwitz et al. (1986) indicated that culture can induce anxiety in learners acquiring foreign languages. In a classroom setting learners may have different cultural backgrounds with different values, and due to these aspects, a different conception and expression of FLA have been observed. A large group setting where social acquiescence is prioritized may cause FLA anxieties such as apprehension about making errors and negative feedback in public and with peers. Toyama & Yamazaki (2022) argued that individualistic culture which is related to expressing oneself and personal achievement, may cause FLA caused by self-analysis and individualistic performance. The cultural effects of FLA and learners' expressions when making mistakes have been well researched by Dewaele & MacIntyre (2014), according to them some cultures don't allow room for making mistakes and have stigmatized the concept by raising expectations from learners to speak in the target language. This can induce increased anxiety in these learners. In the findings of Zheng & Cheng (2018) research, cultural differences in foreign language anxiety levels among students have been observed their research found that Asian learners, particularly students from Korea and China, reported higher levels of anxiety when using foreign languages compared to their counterparts from North American and European cultures. Teacher-student stereotypes, negative feedback, expectations about classroom interactions, and scholarly traditions were factors that contributed to language anxiety. The study also highlighted teachers and parents as figures of authority, inducing culture-specific anxiety. Their study presents the importance of assessing test anxiety with cultural context because practices and expectations from parents can differ from cultures, placing varying levels of pressure on students to succeed. The presence of different high-stakes testing systems in diverse cultural contexts was noted as an additional contributor to elevated test anxiety levels among students.

In Saudi culture, collective values often take precedence over individual expression. This emphasis on social harmony can lead to language anxiety in a classroom setting, where

students may fear making errors or receiving public negative feedback, as it can be seen as a loss of face or a source of disappointment.

Proficiency in Arabic, the official language of Saudi Arabia, is highly regarded due to its cultural and religious significance. This can create added pressure for learners to excel in Arabic, potentially leading to heightened language anxiety when learning a foreign language.

Saudi culture values tradition and tends to be conservative. This can discourage risk-taking and experimentation in language learning, as students may fear that making mistakes could be perceived as a violation of cultural norms and traditions, exacerbating language anxiety.

Saudi culture places a strong emphasis on respecting authority figures, including teachers. Students may be reluctant to ask questions or seek clarification, fearing that it may challenge the teacher's authority. This can hinder their language learning progress and contribute to language anxiety.

In Saudi Arabia, gender segregation is a common practice in education. For students from segregated backgrounds, interactions with the opposite gender in a foreign language learning environment can be a source of additional anxiety, as it deviates from cultural norms. Arabic language holds a high value in Saudi culture, given its close ties to the country's identity and Islamic heritage. Learning a foreign language may not be as highly prioritized, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy among students when learning another language.

Research Hypothesis

The negative relationship of language anxiety with academic achievement that is measured by FLCAS in foreign language classes. The hypothesis that is established is that language anxiety has an overall effect on learner's performance and achievement in that foreign language.

METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology

A correlational study is a method of research in which the relationship between two variables is examined (Seeram, 2019). This research has employed this approach to identify the relationship between Language anxieties among students in the languages and translation department at the University of Tabuk-Haql College. A quantitative methodology has been employed and a survey has been conducted as a primary data source. The survey questionnaire included items that assessed different variations of language anxieties. Furthermore, it also gathered data on participants' expected and actual grades in foreign language classes according to the literature review and the gap in the research. The validity of the study was maintained through a comprehensive questionnaire design and correlation matrix assessment (Taherdoost, 2016), while ethical guidelines ensured that participant values were upheld, and data was secured and confidential to promote transparency and engagement. (Hasan et al., 2021)

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data has been conducted using SPSS. To analyze the primary data, Pearson correlation and descriptive analysis have been used. To investigate the relationship between language anxiety and achievement in a foreign language, a correlation analysis was carried out. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used as an instrument to measure language anxiety.

Data Collection Instrument

Language anxiety will be measured by several reported items on the survey questionnaire. Horwitz et al. (1986) utilized the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to directly gauge participants' situational anxiety linked with the precise context of a foreign language classroom; this scale comprises 33 self-report items, measured on a 5-point Likert scale--ranging from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree,' denoted as (SA, A, N, and D) among these, ten were specifically contextualized. The FLCAS demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$) (Horwitz, 1986). These questionnaires were intended to elicit self-reported perceptions of participants' foreign language achievement, proficiency, and confidence. AEQ (Achievement Emotions Questionnaire) was employed to test the emotions of participants in a foreign language context (Pekrun et al. 2011). The questionnaire has been catered to assess the range of emotions experienced by learners. AEQ internal consistency was found to be Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$). Which is considered good.

Target Population

The students in the languages and translation department at the University of Tabuk Haql College were the primary participants of this research paper and a target population. These students were ideal because as learners of foreign languages, they provided contextual information. The primary data consisted of 80 undergraduate students out of 100 University of Tabuk Haql College. There gender ratio was equally divided between 40 males and 40 females to consider the inclusion criteria.

RESULTS

This section presents the results of the study that sought to investigate the correlations between language anxiety and foreign language achievement. Language anxiety refers to the fear or apprehension experienced when using one's native language, while foreign language anxiety pertains to the anxiety encountered when using a foreign language, typically in a learning or communicative context. This research aimed to examine whether a significant relationship exists between these two types of anxiety and to understand the associations between these correlations.

Table 1 provides an overview of the Likert scale and the responses and number of students against Table 2 show the correlation models between language anxiety (LA) and foreign language achievement (FLA), as well as their relationships with class-related emotions, language-related emotions, and test emotions while table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for language anxiety, class-related emotions, language-related emotions, test emotions, and gender.

The table's percentage signifies the proportion of students who chose each Likert scale response category for every question; it elucidates--amongst a total participant count denoted as 'N'-the distribution of responses. For instance, in the initial row: "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class"-this is how the distribution of students' responses across each Likert scale category manifests. A quarter--a significant 25% to be precise; that's equivalent to 20 out of an overall cohort numbering eighty (N = 80)-selected precisely this response option during our survey period.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Number of Students (N)	Percentage
1.						20	25%
2.						15	18.75%

3.	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class	10	12.5%
4.	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in a foreign language	20	25%
5.	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes	5	6.25%
6.	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	10	12.5%
7.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am	5	6.25%
8.	I am usually at ease during my tests in my language class	15	18.75%
9.	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class	10	12.5%
10.	It does not embarrass me to volunteer answers in English in my English class	10	12.5%

Table 1 Results of the survey questionnaire using the Likert scale and the percentages.

Language Anxiety and Foreign Language Achievement

The correlation coefficient between class-related emotions and language anxiety is 0.008, suggesting a very weak positive correlation. This correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as indicated by the non-significant p-value of 0.941, while the coefficient between language-related emotions and language anxiety is -0.302, indicating a moderate negative correlation. This correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as indicated by the p-value of 0.006. The Pearson correlation coefficient between test emotions and language anxiety is 0.143, suggesting a weak positive correlation. However, this correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as indicated by the non-significant p-value of 0.205. The Pearson correlation coefficient between class-related emotions and language-related emotions is 0.008, suggesting a very weak positive correlation. This correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as indicated by the non-significant p-value of 0.941. The Pearson correlation coefficient between class-related emotions and test emotions was -0.063, indicating a very weak negative correlation. This correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as indicated by the non-significant p-value of 0.577. The coefficient between language-related emotions and test emotions was found to be 0.041, suggesting a very weak positive correlation. This correlation is not significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), as indicated by the non-significant p-value of 0.718. The results indicate a negative correlation between language-related emotions and language anxiety, while the correlations between other variables are either very weak or not significant.

		Language Anxiety	Class Related Emotions	Language Related Emotions	Test Emotions
Language Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	.008	-.302**	.143
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.941	.006	.205
	N	80	80	80	80
Class Related Emotions	Pearson Correlation	.008	1	-.063	-.092
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.941		.577	.416
	N	80	80	80	80

Language Related Emotions	Pearson Correlation	-.302	-.063	1	.041
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.577		.718
	N	80	80	80	80
Test Emotions	Pearson Correlation	.143	-.092	.041	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.205	.416	.718	
	N	80	80	80	80
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Table 2

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for language anxiety, class-related emotions, language-related emotions, test emotions, and gender. The interpretations of the results show that the mean language anxiety score is 3.023, with a standard deviation of 0.414. The scores range from 2.0 to 3.9. This indicates that, on average, the participants in the study had a moderate level of language anxiety, with a relatively low level of variability. Class-Related Emotions: The mean class-related emotions score is 3.04375, with a standard deviation of 0.576127. The scores range from 2.0 to 4.375. This suggests that, on average, the participants experienced moderate class-related emotions, with a moderate level of variability. The average score for emotions associated with language is 3.05, with a standard deviation of 0.57. The range of scores is 1.62 to 4.62. This suggests that there was a considerable degree of variability in the participants' average language-related emotions. With a standard deviation of 0.498, the mean test emotions score is 3.098. The range of scores is 1.85 to 4.28. This suggests that the test emotions experienced by the participants were mild on average, with a low degree of variability.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Language Anxiety	80	2.0	3.9	3.023	.41
Class Related Emotions	80	2.000	4.375	3.043	.576
Language Related Emotions	80	1.625	4.625	3.050	.575
Test Emotions	80	1.857	4.000	3.095	.49
Gender	80	1	2	1.51	.503
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

A standard deviation of 0.503 and a mean gender score of 1.51 are present. Males get a score of 1, while females receive a score of 2. This suggests a nearly equal proportion of the two genders among the participants, with an average of slightly more males than females. In terms of test emotions, class emotions, language anxiety, and language-related emotions, study participants exhibited moderate degrees of each. It is possible that the participants' experiences were not very consistent because of the moderate variability in these factors. With somewhat more men than women, the gender distribution was fairly equal. The relationships between language anxiety, test-related emotions, class-related emotions, language-related emotions, and foreign language achievement are provided by the descriptive statistics and correlation models. In terms of test emotions, class emotions, language anxiety, and language-related emotions, study participants exhibited moderate degrees of each. This suggests that students engaged in their language learning process with a respectable degree of emotional involvement. It was evident from the moderate variability in these emotional experiences that the participants' experiences were not very constant. Different teaching styles, individual differences, or the kind of language being

learned might all be to blame for this. Emotions associated with language and language anxiety were significantly correlated negatively. This suggests that language anxiety lessens in students as their favorable emotions toward language learning improve. The role of good emotional experiences in language learning has been emphasized in earlier research, which is congruent with our conclusion. There were either little or no significant relationships found between test-related emotions, language anxiety, and class-related emotions. This suggests that the impact of these emotional experiences on language anxiety may not be very powerful. Other factors, such as individual differences or the specific context of the language learning environment, may play a more significant role in shaping students' language anxiety levels. The results suggest that language-related emotions play a significant role in shaping students' language anxiety levels. However, the relationships between other emotional experiences, such as class-related emotions, test emotions, and language anxiety may be more complex and require further investigation.

DISCUSSION

The instrument demonstrated its capacity to pinpoint specific anxiety-related areas that hinder students' performance by revealing a strong negative correlation between foreign language performance and scores of FLCAS. The AEQ provided an expansive view of emotional components correlated with successful second language learning; these are intrinsically tied to linguistic anxiety. Assessing language anxiety and achievement, a questionnaire guided the study's collection of responses from 80 participants. Pearson correlation engaged in the data analysis, and its results unveiled captivating revelations about how language anxiety affects foreign language achievement: specifically, participants rated their level of agreement on a ten-statement set (Q1 to Q10) to gauge their experience with language anxiety. This encompassing collection covered an array of situations related to languages; it extended from feeling uncertain during speech within a foreign language class-- up until panic-inducing moments when unprepared speaking was demanded. As language anxiety levels escalated, we noticed a distinct negative correlation with foreign language achievement: particularly among participants who fervently concurred with sentiments of unease or uncertainty in their language classes – these individuals tended to garner lower scores in their second-language studies.

Previous research in the field of language education concurs with these findings, which establish a longstanding recognition: language anxiety impedes both learning and performance (Shahnaz & Khalid, 2014). Often—when students grapple not only with their making errors but also peers judging or comprehending material—they divert cognitive resources from the task at hand. This diversion impairs their capacity to absorb and apply linguistic content (Muntazer Hakim, 2019). The study's findings revealed an intriguing aspect: a variation in responses among different statements. To illustrate, participants showcased heightened anxiety levels when confronted with unprepared speaking tasks (Q9) or perceived their peers to excel more in language proficiency (Q7). The strongest indicators of these situations generating intense anxiety emerged from their robust negative correlations with achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

The current study examined the intricate connection between language anxiety and achievement in a foreign language among undergraduates in the languages and translation department at the University of Tabuk Haql College. An organized tool for gathering data for the study was the (FLCAS)-scale and the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) to uncover how language anxiety impacts students' language achievement and performance.

Summary of Findings

The study found a consistent inverse correlation between LA and FLCAS-measured proficiency in foreign languages. This relationship was seen in a variety of anxiety-inducing scenarios, including speaking in a foreign language class and interacting with new vocabulary. Students' results in their foreign language studies tended to be lower when they reported higher levels of language anxiety, as measured by their agreement with statements in the FLCAS that caused anxiety. This research highlights the significant influence that language anxiety has on students' performance and how it may impede their acquisition of a foreign language.

The negative correlations observed in the study align with studies, which have long recognized the inhibitory effects of language anxiety on language achievement and performance. Language anxiety can act as a cognitive barrier, diverting students' attention away from the language content and undermining their ability to perform at their best. The FLCAS proved instrumental in identifying specific areas where students' anxiety levels were particularly detrimental, offering valuable insights for educators and institutions aiming to develop targeted strategies. The study also considered demographic factors, including gender, and catered the questionnaire to be inclusive. The chosen questions assessed various aspects of FLA, including the fear of making mistakes, nervousness about classroom participation, and anxiety surrounding unfamiliar vocabulary. The purpose of selecting these questions was to provide a thorough grasp of the frequency of FLA, the variables that contribute to it, and its relationship with language achievement. This will help shed light on the intricate dynamics of FLA within this population.

Limitations and Future Directions

The study used self-reported data, a method that is prone to response biases. Participants may not consistently provide appropriate assessments of their anxiety levels or performance (Rosenman et al. 2011). The questionnaire used in this study, while extensive, may benefit from more refinement to include more intricate dimensions of language anxiety. Future research could consider incorporating open-ended questions to allow participants to express their experiences in their own words. Additionally, the study's findings are limited to a specific demographic – undergraduate students majoring in languages and translation at the University of Tabuk Haql College. The implications drawn from this study may not be fully generalizable to other populations or educational contexts. To better understand how language anxiety affects a wider spectrum of students and to create strategies that are appropriate for various educational environments, further research is required. Even though the study made use of validated measures such as the FLCAS and AEQ, it's possible that these tools did not fully capture the range of language anxiety and achievement. There are several elements to language anxiety, and some may not be covered by the surveys. The FLCAS was primarily used in the study to gauge language anxiety. A more complete understanding of language anxiety and its effects may be obtained by using a variety of assessment methods or by fusing quantitative and qualitative information from focus groups and interviews with measuring tools.

Longitudinal studies that monitor students' language achievement and language anxiety over an extended period might be conducted as part of future research. This research might shed light on the development of language anxiety, its long-term effects on language learning, and the efficacy of certain methods and strategies for lowering LA and enhancing foreign language achievement. Through the implementation and evaluation of focused interventions in various educational environments, researchers may provide educators with empirically supported methods to tackle language anxiety. Additionally, it's critical to research the impact that technology has in lowering anxiety and facilitating language learning. The combination of digital tools and online language learning environments may open up new avenues for engaging and supporting students in ways

that help them reduce their anxiety. According to Toyama & Yamazaki (2022), cultural differences can have a substantial impact on students' anxiety levels, and understanding these dynamics can lead to more effective strategies for culturally diverse student populations. Understanding which specific language-related situations induce the most anxiety is essential for educators and institutions to develop targeted interventions.

FLA in Undergraduate Students

The study conducted at the University of Tabuk Haql College consisted of students studying in languages and the translation department confirmed the pervasive presence of FLA within this demographic. The results indicate that a substantial proportion of undergraduate students experience some level of language anxiety. FLA, in various forms, was reported by a majority of participants. These findings align with the existing body of research, emphasizing that FLA is not an isolated occurrence but a prevalent aspect of language learning (DemiR & ZaiMoğlu, 2021). Those who reported higher levels of FLA tended to achieve lower grades in their language courses. This correlation underscores the potential hindrance that FLA poses to academic success in language learning. The impact of FLA on achievement is a consistent finding in the literature (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Horwitz, 1986). The study's results affirm that FLA is not merely an emotional state; it can directly influence educational outcomes.

This study establishes that undergraduate students experience FLA especially since the Arabic language is widely spoken throughout the country of Saudi Arabia where the University of Tabuk is situated making errors or mistakes, apprehension about class participation, and anxiety associated with unfamiliar vocabulary are some common factors foreign language learners may experience (Shahnaz & Khalid, 2014). The socio-educational model of FLA is especially relevant in this context, as it emphasizes the role of classroom conditions, including evaluation and interpersonal dynamics, in inducing and perpetuating anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). The study's findings highlight how crucial it is to take these contextual factors into account while treating FLA in college students. One important finding of this study is that gender did not show up as a significant factor impacting FLA or its effect on undergraduate students' language success. This is in contrast to several previous studies (Piniel & Zólyomi, 2022) that revealed gender differences in FLA. The study's findings highlight the fact that FLA is a complicated phenomenon that is impacted by a range of personal and environmental variables, with gender being less significant in this specific scenario.

Implications for Language Education

Undergraduate students' language anxiety may be lessened by using targeted interventions and strategies that enhance the language learning process. The relationship between language anxiety and proficiency in a foreign language highlights the need for interventions and strategies aimed at reducing LA and improving students' language learning experiences. Students should be inspired by them to take on difficulties and understand that errors or mistakes are a natural aspect of language learning. Opportunities for practice, feedback, and self-assessment can help students build confidence in their language skills. Activities that promote interaction, collaboration, and cultural immersion can make language learning more engaging and enjoyable, ultimately reducing anxiety.

Addressing language anxiety is crucial for creating a positive and productive language learning environment. This study reaffirms the importance of equipping educators with the knowledge and tools to identify and address language anxiety effectively. It highlights the value of interventions that target specific anxiety-inducing situations, ultimately contributing to more successful and confident language learners and benefitting undergraduate students' academic achievement.

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