
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Language Anxiety for Non-Native Speakers: A Review Paper

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ABSTRACT

Glocalization is a trend that requires individuals to be literate in their native languages and a target language. The use of a foreign language or a non-native language leads to language anxiety. This review paper aims to look into the commonalities and the gaps in the read studies. The researcher found that language anxiety happens in foreign language learning and teaching and at the macro-level of learning. With this, the studies used scales to measure the levels of anxiety of the respondents; they also aimed to study the precedents and effects of language anxiety and the coping strategies of learners and teachers to lessen language anxiety. Finally, gaps in the studies include a need for a language teaching anxiety focusing on macro skills of the teachers; mixed-method studies are rare for qualitative methods and a need to employ effective strategies to cope with language anxieties.

KEYWORDS

Foreign language, Language anxiety, Non-native speakers, Second language learning, Second language teaching

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1. Introduction

Going glocal demands learning and using languages (Baykara & Aksu Ataç, 2021) like the English language (Hakim, 2019) and other languages commonly used in the academe, in the economy, and in other sectors. This is why many countries opted to offer subjects and courses related to foreign languages like English. Foreign language proficiency results in positive learning, living, and migrating labor (Frolova et al., 2021). Yet, many learners worldwide display difficulty in comprehending and using the learned languages (Sadiq, 2017).

Using other languages besides the first language can result in "stress and anxiety" (Frolova et al., 2021), which is expected (Oflaz, 2019). Anxiety has been one of the trending studies in the language (Aydin & Ustuk, 2020). Anxiety is considered an individual difference when using or learning a particular language (Yelgec & Dagyar, 2020). Language anxiety, then, is the affective domain (Yelgec & Dagyar, 2020; Galante, 2018; Kasbi & Shervan, 2017; Razak et al., 2017), where someone feels apprehensive and nervous when using a specific language (Malini & Janakavalli, 2018) or any learning processes (Hakim, 2019).

When language anxiety is linked to a foreign or second language, it now becomes "second/foreign language anxiety" (Hakim, 2019), also called "xenoglossophobia" (Altunel, 2019). Foreign language anxiety (FLA) studies focus on Language Learning Anxiety (Kralova & Tirpakova, 2019) and Language Teaching Anxiety (Aydin & Ustuk, 2020), where the former focuses on the learners while the latter on the teachers and they are both non-native speakers. Despite having these focuses on language anxiety, this RRL combines the two to see the commonalities observed in Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLLA) and Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety (FLTA) as both affect the acquisition of a second or a foreign language.

2. Macro Levels of Language Anxiety

Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are the macro skills in learning or mastering a particular language. Foreign language

reading anxiety (FLRA) prevents comprehension (Bahmani & Farvardin, 2017) and higher-order thinking skills (Aghajani & Gholamrezapour, 2019). This anxiety affects the reading proficiency of the user (Hamada & Takaki, 2021). Foreign language writing anxiety focuses on written outputs like sentence construction (Liu, 2020).

On one side, foreign language speaking/pronunciation anxiety (Kafes, 2018; Oflaz, 2019) and listening language anxiety affect each other (Hamid & Idrus, 2019). Studies claim that speech anxiety is unavoidable in ESL classrooms (Abbasi et al., 2019), and speaking is the most challenging among the macro levels of language (Baykara & Aksu Ataç, 2021). This includes stuttering (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019). Withal, foreign language listening anxiety (FLLA) results from worry about new pieces of information in specific situations, fear in processing information, and difficulty in schematic interpretation response (Babakhuya & Elikhadiri, 2019).

2.1. Language Anxiety Scales

Scales were and are being developed to determine the level of FLA. Saito et al.'s Foreign language reading anxiety scale (FLRAS) was crafted in 1999 (Aghajani & Gholamrezapour, 2019; Bahmani & Farvardin, 2017; Bensalem, 2020; Ghaith, 2020), and Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory (FLRAI) by Zoghi in 2012 (Miao & Vibulphol, 2021) are for reading anxiety. Next, the Foreign language listening anxiety scale (FLLAS) was crafted by Kim in 2000 (Babakhuya & Elikhadiri, 2019). Foreign Language Pronunciation Anxiety Scale (FLPAS; Kralova et al., 2018), Speaking Anxiety Scale (Mede & Karairmak 2017), and Anxiety Scale in Spoken Englishes as a Lingua Franca (ASSELF; Wilang & Singhasiri, 2017) are into oral skills.

Some scales look into the totality of anxiety in the teaching-learning process, like the Foreign Classroom Anxiety Scale (FCLAS) Horwitz et al. in 1986 (Altunel, 2019; Balla, 2017; Baroi et al., 2020; Frolova et al., 2021), English Language Anxiety Scale (ELAS; Guibanguibang, 2020), Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale (FLTAS; Kobul & Saraçoğlu, 2020).

FCLAS has three sub-dimensions: "communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of evaluation" (Altunel, 2019). Many researchers have used FCLAS for years (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018; Aslan & Thompson, 2018, Aydun et al., 2017, Castillejo, 2018; Djafri & Wimbarti, 2018). Saltan adopted this in 2003 as a foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS; Baykara & Aksu Ataç, 2021).

The mentioned language anxiety scales were developed decades ago, so their appropriateness may not fit the current situation. Because of this, some researchers aimed to develop and validate new scales to measure English language learning anxiety, like the study of Ali in 2017.

2.2 Precedents and Effects of Language Anxiety

Precedents here include factors, causes, or any relationship to foreign language anxiety. Effects here include the results of foreign language anxiety to any person learning or using it. Communication apprehension is a primary source of FLA (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018). Further, fixed mindsets (Altunel, 2019), fear of ambiguity (Aslan & Thompson, 2018), comprehension (Bensalem, 2020), fear of evaluation (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018; Aydun et al., 2017), fear of outcomes (Liu & Wu, 2021) and committing mistakes (Sadighi & Dastpak, 2017; Alnahidh & Altalhab, 2020) and low self-efficacy (Mede & Karairmak, 2017; Ozer & Ispinar Akçayoglu, 2021; Yelgeç & Dagyar, 2020) result to FLA. Besides personality, there are other precedents of language anxiety like economic status and place (Baroi, et. al, 2020), nationality (Djafri & Wimbarti, 2018; Miao & Vibulphol, 2021; Yassin & Razak, 2018; Baykara & Aksu Ataç, 2021), age (Eginli & Solhi, 2020; Karabiyik & Ozkan, 2017; Sadiq, 2017; Choi et al., 2019), language experiences (Kafes, 2018; Yassin & Razak, 2018; Yentürk & Dağdeviren-Kırmızı, 2020), specialization (Kobul & Saraçoğlu, 2020; Tanielian, 2017) and gender (Bensalem, 2020; Geckin, 2020; Karabiyik & Ozkan, 2017; Malini & Janakavalli, 2018; Tuncel, et al. 2020; Yentürk & Dağdeviren-Kırmızı, 2020; Po-chi Kao et al., 2017). However, other researchers claim that gender (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018; Kobul & Saraçoğlu, 2020; Tanielian, 2017) and age (Tuncel et al., 2020; Yentürk & Dağdeviren-Kırmızı, 2020) have no effect on FLA.

Further, studies discovered that high proficiency of language teachers Abbasi et al. (2019), strict young teachers (Dewaele & Magdalena, 2019), and parental pressure (Choi et al., 2019) increase speech anxiety of new students. Decreased FLA means improved critical thinking skills (Aghajani & Gholamrezapour, 2019) and confidence to interact (Aslan & Thompson, 2018). Adverse effects of FLA include fear of communication (Balla, 2017), an increase in shyness for both teachers and learners (Oflaz, 2019; Aydun et al., 2019), and low academic performance (Said & Weda, 2018; Sajedi, 2017).

2.3 Strategies in Coping with Language Anxiety

Psychosocial pieces of training like pronunciation pieces of training (Kralova et al., 2018) or paralinguistic activities (Uştuk, 2016), camping (Noguchi, 2019), mindfulness pieces training (Charoensukmongkol, 2016; Guo, 2018), and befriending native speakers (Lia & Liang, 2021) decrease FLA. In addition, sentence writing practice (Liu, 2020), genre-based writing module (Uzun & Topkaya, 2018), and extensive reading (Bahmani & Farvardin, 2017) result in lessened anxiety and improved grammar. Also, decision-making strategies involving both teachers and learners (Demir & Zaimoğlu, 2021), virtual reality computer-mediated communication (York et al., 2020), positive consultation (Lia & Liang, 2021), and internal motivation (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017; Zhang et al., 2020) are helpful in avoiding FLA. This help to strengthen learners' self-efficacy and self-directed learning (Choi et al., 2019). Having limited research on strategies or techniques in decreasing language, there are even unsuccessful results (Galante, 2018).

3. Research Problem/ Gap

Some researchers focused on Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (Aghajani & Gholamrezapour, 2019; Bahmani & Farvardin, 2017; Bensalem, 2020; Ghaith, 2020; Miao & Vibulphol, 2021) and Foreign Language Speech/Pronunciation/Spoken Anxiety (Kafes, 2018; Abbasi et al., 2019; Kralova et al., 2018; Wilang & Singhasiri, 2017; Baykara & Aksu Ataç, 2021; Oflaz, 2019) and stuttering (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019) but few pieces of research were conducted in Foreign Language Listening Anxiety (Babakhouya & Elkhadiri, 2019) and writing anxiety which focused only on sentence-making practice (Liu, 2020).

Further, researchers used FCLAS for adults (Altunel, 2019; Amengual-Pizarro, 2018; Aslan & Thompson, 2018). However, only one among the read researchers (Aydun et al., 2017) adopted the scale to test its appropriateness for children ages 7-12.

Finally, there is also a paucity of studies on reducing FLA, and some are not even successful (Galante, 2018). Many kinds of research used quantitative (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018; Aslan & Thompson, 2018, Aydun et al., 2017, Castillejo, 2018; Djafri & Wimbarti, 2018; Aghajani & Gholamrezapour, 2019; Bahmani & Farvardin, 2017; Bensalem, 2020), few on mixed-method (Galante, 2018; Tanielian, 2017; García-Pastor & Miller, 2019) and rare on qualitative method like a case study (Baykara & Aksu Ataç, 2021; Liao & Liang, 2021).

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